



Homelessness Strategy 2013 – 18

Great Place • Great Community • Great Future

Introduction

The Council is required by The Homelessness Act 2002 to review the issues relating to homelessness and to have a Homelessness Strategy setting out its plans to prevent and tackle the causes of homelessness, support homeless households and ensure that there is sufficient accommodation available for those who do become homeless.

This is the Council's third Homelessness Strategy since 2003 and in that time considerable work has been carried out by the Council and its partners to tackle the issues around homelessness. We have also been able to build a good knowledge base around local issues.

This, and more recent work with partners around developing the Tenancy Strategy, responding to welfare reform and other initiatives, put the Council in a strong position to review the effectiveness of the previous Strategies, identify priority areas for further work and highlight those areas of change and challenge that need addressing in coming months and years.

The objectives of previous strategies have included improving awareness of help and access to services, continuous improvement in the effectiveness of those services measured in improved outcomes for residents, and active and equal partnerships with those organisations who share responsibility for supporting those at risk of homelessness. This ambition continues and in developing the Homelessness Strategy 2013-18 the Council has taken into account the 10 '*Local Authority Challenges*' set out in the Government report '*Making Every Contact Count: A Joint Approach to Preventing Homelessness*' in 2012.

The ten challenges for local authorities to consider form the framework for a 'gold standard' for housing options services. Where it supports local priorities and is within local resource capabilities the Council will work to meet these challenges and is committed to Step 1 of the Challenge to "*strive for continuous improvement in front line housing services*".

Annex 3 details the 'challenges', assess the Council's current performance against them and sets out future work.

The current position

This Strategy has been developed at a time of much change but at the same time many of the challenges have been with us since the first Strategy was published in 2003.

A review of the issues facing homelessness services highlighted three main changes since the last strategy:

- The impact of 'financial crisis' and the new economic situation;
- Austerity measures, most notably welfare reform; and,
- The Localism Act 2011.

While the first two present challenges for residents and those advising and supporting them, the Localism Act has given the Council greater freedom in determining priority through its

Allocations Scheme and introduced the requirement for a Tenancy Strategy which has allowed a strategic approach to making the best use of the limited local social housing stock.

The review also found that there were two main challenges that remained:

1. The main causes of homelessness remain the same (nationally as well as locally);
and,
2. The use of Bed and breakfast for homeless households is still an issue as initial success in reducing reliance on this accommodation has slipped and in 2012/13 the Council was routinely using bed and breakfast, at times in excess of the 6 week regulation.

While these challenges remain it is important to note that in the years leading up to the first Homelessness Strategy in 2003 the Council regularly accepted around 100 households a year as homeless, and while there was an increase in 2012/13, numbers over the last five years have remained well below this. At the same time, year on year more households have had their homelessness prevented than have been accepted as homeless. While there is still more work to do and new issues to deal with this is a success to build on.

In light of the review highlighting challenges both new and old, the Homelessness Strategy 2013 – 18 will focus on three priority areas of activity:

- Reducing homelessness against its main causes;
- Supporting residents affected by welfare reform; and
- Making the best use of the local housing stock to maximise housing options.

As noted in previous Strategies this is not work that the Council can do alone, and in tackling homelessness the Council needs to work effectively with a variety of agencies in equal and active partnerships.

Annex A contains a statistical review showing the recent trends in homelessness that have helped shape our priorities.

The Strategic Context

Surrey Heath Borough Council has come together with other local service providers, business organisations and voluntary and community organisations as the Surrey Heath Partnership to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy following considerable community consultation.

The vision for the Surrey Heath Partnership is:

- To sustain and constantly improve Surrey Heath as a desirable place to live, learn, work and play
- To support individuals to achieve their full potential as a part of the local community

This vision informs the work we do and the Surrey Heath Borough Council 2020 Strategy sets out our key aims and objectives over the next ten years.

The Homelessness Strategy 2013-18 sits within this framework. Through planning to support individuals and families to maintain settled accommodation and settled lives in the Borough, and ensuring that those who need extra help to do this have access to the right services, this Strategy will help meet the Surrey Heath Partnership’s vision and the Council’s corporate priorities.

The Council’s Equality Scheme demonstrates its commitment to equality internally and externally and ensures that all sections of the community are given an opportunity to contribute to the wellbeing of the community. In developing this Homelessness Strategy we have considered the needs of all members of our community and to ensure all residents have access to responsive housing needs services have completed an Equality Impact Assessment.

Priority1: Reducing homelessness against its main causes.

Locally, as nationally, there has been little change in the main causes of homelessness.

In Surrey Heath the two main reasons for becoming homeless are family breakdown and the end of a tenancy in the private rented sector.

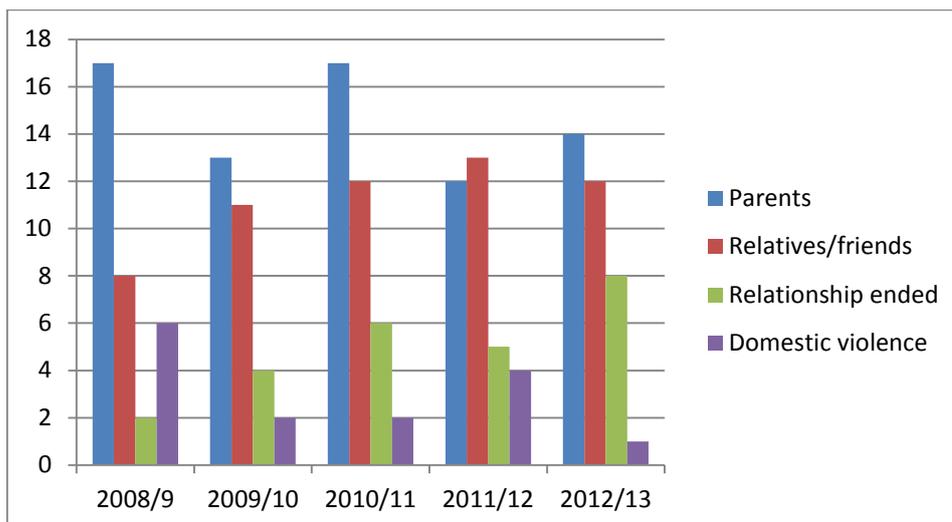
Family Breakdown

This can be parental evictions, evictions by other family members and friends, and relationship breakdown (including domestic violence).

What we know

Over the last 5 years 30% of households accepted as homeless have been excluded by parents, and in total family breakdown is the cause of 60% of accepted homeless applications. Table 1 shows the main reasons for family breakdown.

Table 1

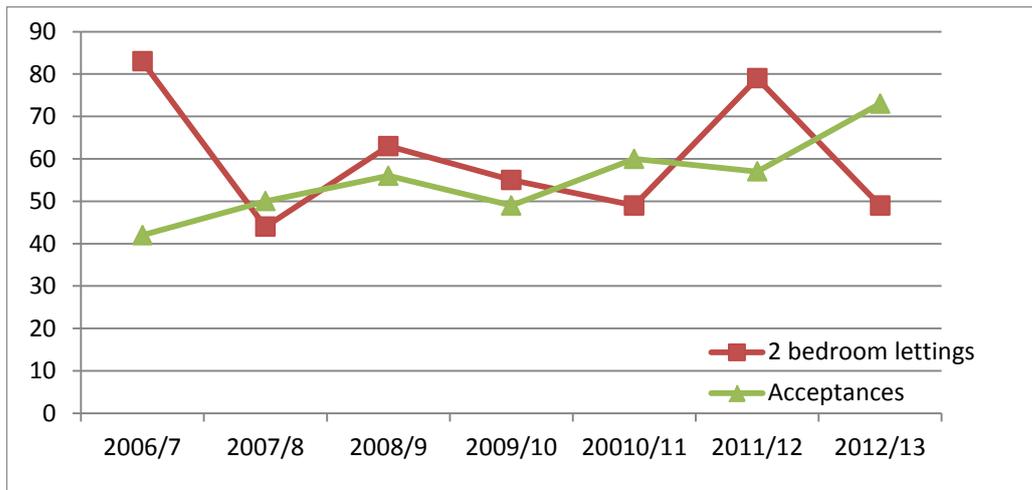


Most households excluded by parents are moving to their first independent home usually with parental responsibilities of their own. Each year in half of the households accepted as homeless the main applicant is aged 16 – 24.

Just over 30% of households becoming homeless due to relationship breakdown are leaving relatives other than their parents or friends but no data is available on what led them to be in this accommodation.

There is a correlation between the number of two bedroom tenancies that become available and homeless acceptances due to parental evictions (i.e. parental evictions decline when there is an increased number of properties available for letting through the Joint Housing Register and housing need is met in a planned way). The spikes in two bedroom lettings in Table 2 showing 2 bedroom social housing lettings and homelessness acceptances are from the Lorraine/Cordwalles development in 2006 and Nottcutts, Clewborough School and garage site developments in 2011/12.

Table 2



What we have done

Carried out home visits to those at risk of family breakdown to try and sustain relationships to allow housing options to be considered in a planned way.

Participated with Surrey County Council, other Surrey LAs, and housing and support providers in a Rapid Improvement Event aimed at tackling homelessness and ending the use of bed and breakfast for 16/17 year olds. We are now part of the multi-agency work that has come out of that process.

Actively participated in Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Committees (MARAC) with Police, Social Services and other agencies, to protect those at serious risk of harm due to domestic violence.

Through Safer Surrey Heath Partnership, with Police and Surrey County colleagues, continued to support a local Sanctuary Scheme providing security works to the homes of those at risk of domestic violence.

Through the development of the Tenancy Strategy looked at how we can support families at risk of exclusion into settled housing without first becoming homeless.

Started work to deliver the Family Support Programme in Surrey Heath which has the potential to have a positive impact on this area of work both now and in the future.

What we will do

Ensure all applicants to the Housing Register who are living with family and friends, either at risk of exclusion or on a temporary basis, are offered a housing options appointment or home visit within 2 weeks of their application being assessed.

Launch the Family Support Programme in Surrey Heath to effect positive change in the lives of excluded families.

Introduce tenancy training to equip young families with the skills to move successfully to independence.

Work with partners in the third sector to identify opportunities to develop services that provide housing and support to prevent our young people becoming homeless.

Continue joint work with Surrey County Council to ensure a co-ordinated approach to young people at risk of homelessness, including participating in local Young Persons Panels and the Care Leavers Protocol as well as effective local working with the youth Support Service.

Continue multi-agency work to tackle homelessness from domestic abuse and seek to ensure the right support and services are available.

Review our work with partner agencies to seek to ensure that the right accommodation is available at the right time for people moving to independence for those who have a need for specialist accommodation or accommodation with support.

What will success look like

Reduced number of homeless applications due to family breakdown.

More planned moves into a variety of housing options.

Reduced Bed and Breakfast use.

Less interventions needed to support tenancies.

End of a tenancy in the private sector

With limited resources the Council has been successful in finding many households at risk of homelessness homes in the private sector. Against this background it is therefore a concern that other households are losing private tenancies without being able to secure a further home.

Action to tackle this cause of homelessness is also linked with our work to increase housing options as it is about how we work with landlords to provide housing and with tenants to sustain tenancies in the private sector.

The main form of tenure in the private rented sector is an Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST).

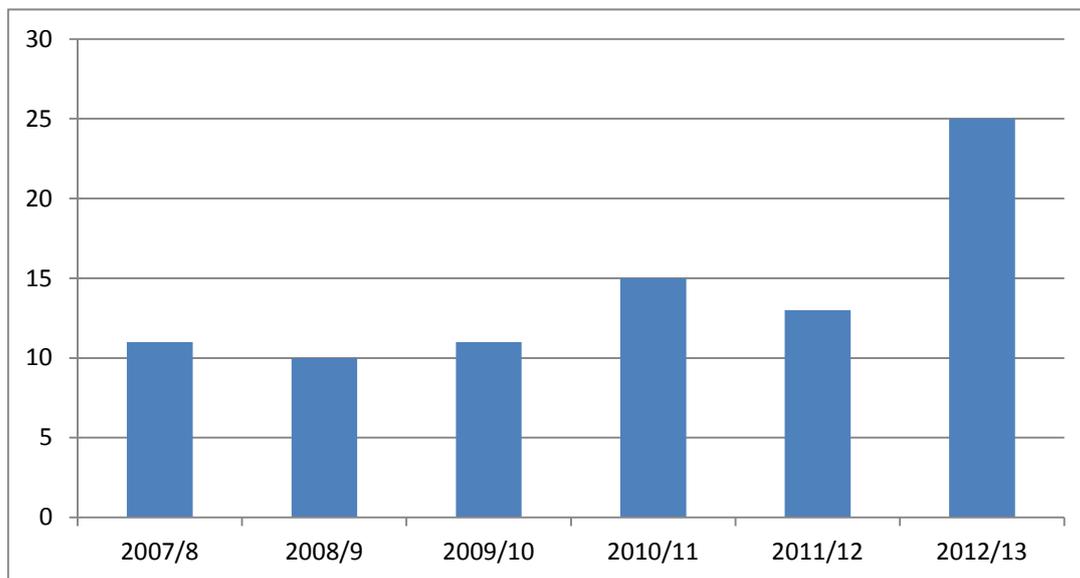
What we know

Homeless acceptances from the private sector due to end of tenancy are on the increase

and in 2012/13 became the main reason for homelessness. This trend is shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Loss of Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST)



It is difficult to capture why this is happening as landlords do not have to give a reason for ending a tenancy. Without this information it is difficult to formulate a response to prevent homelessness for this reason other than negotiation on each individual case.

There is a high demand for private rented accommodation and this puts upward pressure on rents, A Shelter report in January 2013 identified Surrey Heath as the borough with the highest rental inflation in the country at 14.1% from 2010/11 to 2011/12.

High rents make it difficult for households who claim help towards their rent through Local Housing Allowance to access the sector and then to sustain a tenancy in the sector.

Media coverage of welfare reform could have prompted landlords to stop housing tenants who use Housing Benefit.

Housing organisations are concerned that there could be an increase in harassment and illegal eviction of those tenants who are affected by welfare reform.

What we have done

We contact landlords as part of our homeless prevention role to negotiate on behalf of individual tenants.

We have used Preventing Repossession Funding jointly with Camberley CAB to set up a scheme to help tenants who are in arrears due to an income shock.

We have built positive relationships with landlords and agents through our Rent Choice scheme, supporting landlords and tenants deliver successful tenancies.

We have identified a resource within the Team to take on a Lettings Negotiator to proactively work with private landlords to access and sustain tenancies in the private sector.

Officers in Housing Services and Legal Services have attended harassment and illegal eviction training.

We continue to be part of the UK Landlord Accreditation Partnership.

Work has started with Surrey Authorities and other housing and support agencies under the banner of Surrey Homelessness Alliance to increase access to tenancies in the private sector

What we will do

Continue to support landlords to provide accommodation in the Borough.

Promote Landlord Accreditation and facilitate local training.

Fill the Letting Negotiator role to work with landlords.

Work with Surrey Authorities and other housing and support agencies under the banner of Surrey Homelessness Alliance to increase access to tenancies in the private sector.

Develop and publish a Harassment and Illegal Eviction Policy.

Redesign web information for landlords and tenants to promote access to the sector and best practice.

What will success look like

Reduced number of homeless applications from the private sector.

Increased number of tenancies accessed and sustained in the private sector.

Reduction in the use of bed and breakfast.

Increased number of accredited landlords.

Through our private sector housing work we seek to ensure that private sector tenants have access to decent homes and support landlords to meet their obligations. We also take action against the small number of landlords who fail to comply.

As well as doing this on a case by case basis with individual landlord we have also started work to identifying homes in the private sector that could be improved. In 2014 we will produce a refreshed Private Sector Renewal Strategy detailing this work.

Priority 2: Supporting households affected by welfare reform

We recognise that reforms to welfare do and will continue to impact widely, even on those households who may not previously required additional support and advice to meet their housing needs. These households may seek out assistance, or they may be identified and offered advice. The knock-on effect of this will be increased pressure on the capacity and resources of service providers. It is essential however, that these households are provided with advice and assistance as an early intervention to prevent them from becoming the

households in more complicated situations of housing need and threatened with homelessness further down the line.

What we know

234 households were affected by the social size criteria restricting Housing Benefit to most under-occupying social housing tenants at the time of its introduction: 186 under-occupying by one bedroom and 48 under-occupying by two or more bedrooms.

Around 20 households are affected by the benefit cap: losing between £10 and £200 per week.

In 2013/14 the Council received funding of £80,000 for Discretionary Housing Payments. Between April and June 49 applications were received and 24 awards were made.

With the localisation of Council Tax the Council has introduced a scheme that requires most residents to pay at least 30% of their liability.

Universal Credit will mean many people who have not previously had to manage their housing costs will need assistance prioritising their household incomes to avoid debt and potentially homelessness.

What we have done

Formed Surrey Heath Welfare Partnership with Camberley Citizens Advice Bureau, Job Centre Plus and Peerless to co-ordinate local responses to welfare reform.

Jointly funded a Surrey Heath Money Advice service at Camberley CAB with Peerless that provides a fulltime Money Advisor for residents whose home is at risk due to financial difficulties.

Have a joint programme with Peerless to support under-occupiers to move to smaller accommodation. Peerless have an officer working with individual tenants and the Council have provided funding from the Homelessness Prevention Grant to facilitate moves. In 18 months of operation 43 tenants have moved to more suitable homes.

Visited all claimants affected by the benefit cap with the Money Advisor to look at individual options for managing the changes.

With Housing Benefit colleagues developed a Discretionary Housing Payment Policy that as well as assessing needs also challenges claimants to look at longer term options for managing the changes.

Camberley CAB are working with Surrey County Council to provide the Surrey Assistance Scheme in Surrey Heath, the replacement to Crisis Loans and the Social Fund.

Started work to set up a Family Support Team in Surrey Heath. This will include in the programme families affected by welfare changes and will start to move those families towards work and financial inclusion.

Peerless have supported Surrey Save in order to provide accessible financial services to their tenants.

Peerless have equipped an ICT room and provide training to give tenants access to digital

services. This will allow them to be able to develop the skills to manage their finances online, including benefit claims and accessing affordable credit through Surrey Save

What we will do

The Money Advice service is funded to March 2014 and will be reviewed early in 2014 to consider future arrangements.

The Welfare Reform Partnership will continue to meet to review progress and direct local responses.

Peerless are funding their under-occupation work to March 2014 and will continue to work to move affected tenants to more affordable homes.

Work will continue with Surrey County Council and other Surrey Boroughs and Districts to develop partnerships to manage change and share information to monitor the impacts.

The Family Support Team will include in the work with families in the programme an assessment of the effects of welfare changes and the appropriate support and referrals.

What will success look like

Successful case work mitigating the impacts of welfare reform and supporting residents through the changes to longer term financial stability.

Increased moves through exchanges and the Underoccupation Project so tenants are living in affordable homes.

Greater financial inclusion through access to Surrey Save.

Preventing an increase in homelessness due to the welfare reforms.

Priority 3: Making the best use of the local housing stock to maximise housing options

Enabling the delivery of new affordable homes is an important part of our housing role and is an essential strand of the Council's work to prevent homelessness. New supply is not just to house residents who are homeless: it also has the effect of housing people who have a housing need before they become homeless, and providing homes for existing tenants who are either under-occupying or overcrowded, freeing up their current homes to be re-let.

Currently the Council cannot rely on a supply of new homes to meet presenting needs. In light of this, it is necessary to both understand and manage the opportunities in the available housing stock, including making the best use of the new units that do come on line.

What we know

The majority of people applying for a social housing tenancy will not be successful as demand is far greater than supply.

There is only a limited programme of new affordable homes in the Borough now that sites in Bagshot and Frimley have been built out until the Deepcut PRB site starts delivery. Homelessness goes up when there is not a supply of affordable homes to meet need in a

planned way.

The private sector is expensive and competition often excludes those on low incomes and in receipt of Housing Benefit. A Shelter study in January 2013 identified Surrey Heath as having the highest rental inflation in the country at 14.1% increase from the previous year.

There is a limited amount of supported housing for those needing a period of support before moving to independence in the community.

What we have done

Adopted a Core Strategy that includes policies for on-site new affordable homes on sites of 5 or more units, with contributions due from smaller sites.

Run Rent Choice – a scheme to assist tenants access tenancies in the private sector,

Reviewed the Joint Allocation Policy to ensure that we are prioritising the right households, managing expectations and the Housing Team is focused on delivering housing options and not managing a list of people who realistically will not get a housing association home.

Rehoused 43 tenants who were under-occupying and which generated moves for 14 tenants who needed larger homes, whose moves also contributed to homes being provided for 16 homeless households, 23 households from the Housing Register and two other families with a housing need in the 18 months since April 2011.

Introduced a Tenancy Strategy that advocates the use of flexible tenancies and identifies housing pathways for new tenants to make the best use of the stock in the longer term.

Started work to replace the Special Needs Housing Panel. This multi-agency Panel was the way in which people needing specialist housing or housing with support had their housing need assessed and met but new arrangements are needed to make smarter use of the resources available to agencies supporting residents with special needs.

With other Surrey Authorities and housing and support agencies formed Surrey Homeless Alliance and developed a Surrey Action Plan. The plan includes increasing housing options, especially for single people, and is resourced with £372,000 from Department of Communities and Local Government.

What we will do

Bring forward an Affordable Housing SPD to support the affordable housing delivery targets in the Core Strategy and detail how planning contributions will deliver new supply.

Look at new ways of delivering and enabling new affordable housing in the Borough and increase the supply of private sector tenancies.

Develop housing pathways for residents needing specialist accommodation or accommodation with support to replace the Special Needs Housing Panel.

Encourage housing providers to adopt the tenancy regime in the Council's Tenancy Strategy to make best use of the local social housing stock.

Keep the Allocation Policy under review to ensure that as well as meeting individual housing need it enables best use of the local social housing stock.

Employ a Lettings Negotiator to work with local private sector landlords.

Deliver the targets in the Surrey Action Plan to increase the availability of private sector tenancies, especially for single people.

Publish a Private Sector Renewal Strategy that includes a co-ordinated authority-wide approach to tackling the issue of empty homes.

What will success look like

Delivery of new affordable homes through the planning system and the Council's enabling function.

Adoption of the flexible tenancy regime for social rented homes in Surrey Heath.

Increased access to private sector tenancies.

Clear pathways for those needing housing with support or specialist housing.

A proactive approach to empty properties in the Borough.

Other work

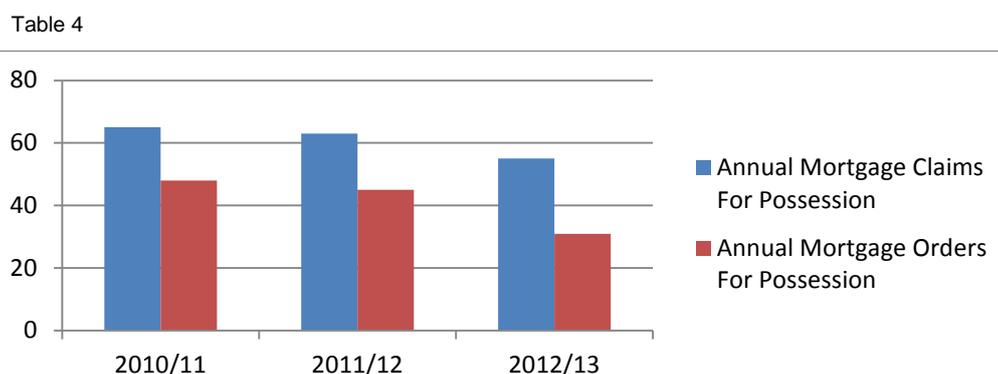
While our review identified the main areas where we need to focus the Council is committed to providing a service that directly, or through partnership working, can support residents with a range of housing issues. The review highlights a number of other areas where residents look to the Council for support so a number of other pieces of work are started or planned that will contribute to tackling homelessness and supporting homeless households. Below are detailed 3 specific areas of this work.

Mortgage repossessions

What we know

The Council received 43 notifications from lenders in 2012/13 of possession proceedings under the Pre-Action Protocol.

Ministry of Justice figures show that the number of Surrey Heath residents being taken to Court because of mortgage difficulties is higher than this and numbers are shown in Table 4.



Only a small number of these households approach the Council for housing assistance and a smaller number are accepted as homeless:

Homeless acceptances	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Mortgage arrears	3	0	0	1	4

There is a property value cap on the Mortgage Rescue Scheme of £235,000 in the South East (although there is some flexibility in this). Of the 43 notifications received only 12 were at the cap or below, with 17 being at over 150% of the cap.

What we have done

We write to all residents lenders notify us that they are taking possession proceeding against with advice and an offer of a housing options appointment.

Funded Money Advice at Camberley CAB and set up a joint scheme with CAB to administer the Council's Repossession Prevention Funding.

Assessed and referred qualifying households to the Mortgage Rescue Scheme.

What we will do

Continue to contact all home owners facing court action due to mortgage arrears.

Continue to assess the options available for those in mortgage arrears including eligibility for the Mortgage Rescue Scheme.

The Money Advice Service is funded until March 2014.

What will success look like

People at risk of losing their homes due to arrears know that assistance is available.

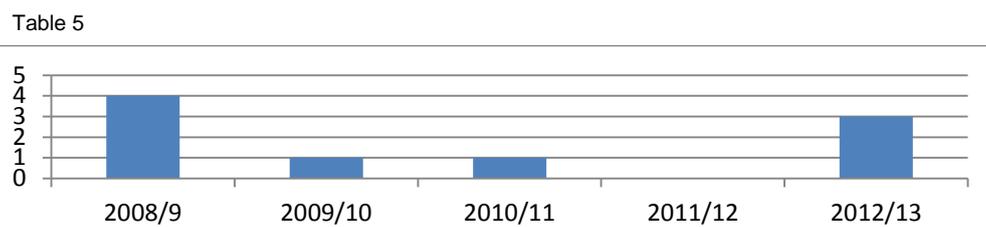
Reduced number of possession proceeding and repossessions in Surrey Heath

Armed Forces

What we know

The Council has historic links with the Forces with Deepcut Station and part of RMAS Sandhurst located within the Borough.

The Housing Service deals with individual households who are leaving the Forces, both in a planned and an unplanned way although numbers are small as shown in Table 5.



What we have done

The Council has signed an Armed Forces Community Covenant. The first of its kind in Surrey, the Community Covenant aims to bring civil and armed forces lives closer together, including activities that integrate serving and ex-Services personnel and their families into local life.

The Covenant will also bring support for armed forces personnel through assisting with healthcare, employment and housing needs during and when they leave service.

The Housing Team have attended workshops to help identify the work needed to support armed forces personnel.

The Council has made amendments to its Allocation Policy so that it meets the requirements of regulations that ensure serving and former members of the Armed Forces and their families have access to the Joint Housing Register.

What we will do

Produce targeted information to support armed forces personnel in finding settled homes in Surrey Heath.

What will success look like

An accessible service and quality information for armed forces personnel.

An open dialogue within Armed Forces Community Covenant to identify housing and housing support needs and plan to meet those needs.

Rough Sleepers

What we know

There is not a significant rough sleeping issue in the Borough. The Council is often aware of a single individual at any given time and since the introduction of the national rough sleepers reporting service in December 2012 only two reports have been received for Surrey Heath.

What we have done

We have been able to access Severe Weather Provision (SWEP) in Guildford and Woking as part of partnership arrangements with those host authorities and Waverley Borough Council.

We have agreed with Stonham that rough sleepers who successfully move through hostel accommodation in other Boroughs can be reconnected to Surrey Heath by accessing rooms in Stonham's Camberley Projects.

We have started work with other Surrey Authorities on a Surrey Action Plan that will seek to increase accommodation available for single people and introduce local 'no second night out' arrangements.

What we will do

Continue to respond to reports of rough sleepers by actively seeking them at reported sleeping sites.

Work with other Surrey authorities as part of the Surrey Homeless Alliance to provide a single offer to homeless single people and increase the supply of housing options.

Consider how a 'No Second Night Out' approach can be adopted within local resources.

What will success look like

Continued low levels of rough sleeping.

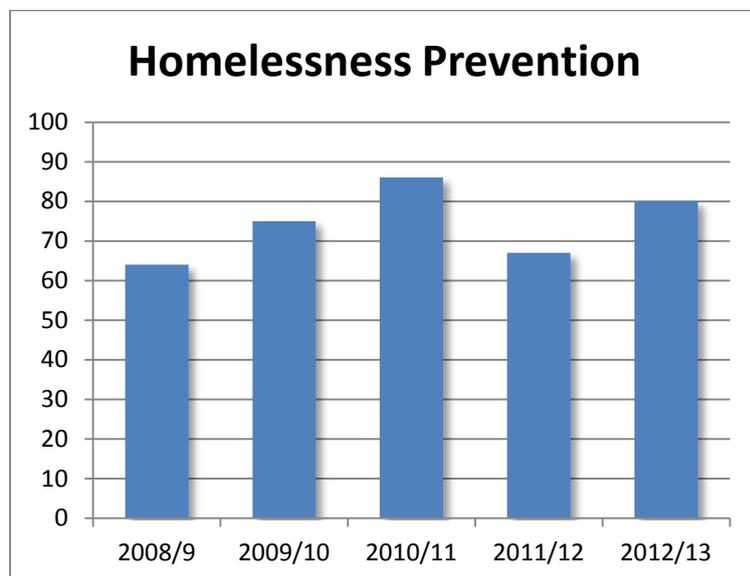
A proactive response to individual rough sleepers to move them off the street and adoption of a local No Second Night Out approach.

The housing issues facing local people will be kept under review, as will changes to legislation, new funding regimes, and other opportunities and challenges. The Council will seek to develop and deliver services and partnerships that meet the needs of residents and maximise the resources we have or that become available. This work will be monitored, along with progress on the action plan, by the Council's Community Services Scrutiny Committee.

Annex 1

This annex contains some trend information and other statistics that have informed our approach and focus in this Strategy.

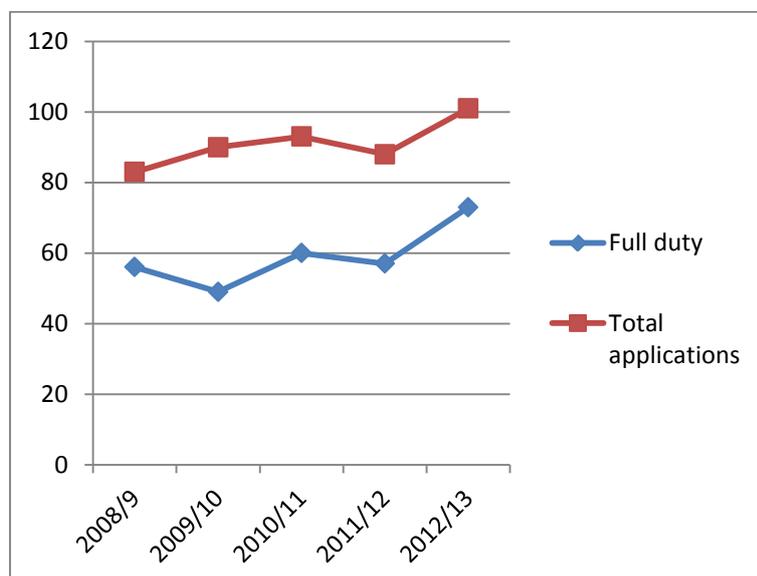
1 Homelessness Prevention



The Housing Needs Team continues to work with residents to either prevent the loss of their current home or find a planned move to alternative accommodation.

More households have their homelessness prevented each year than are accepted as homeless.

2 Homelessness approaches and acceptances

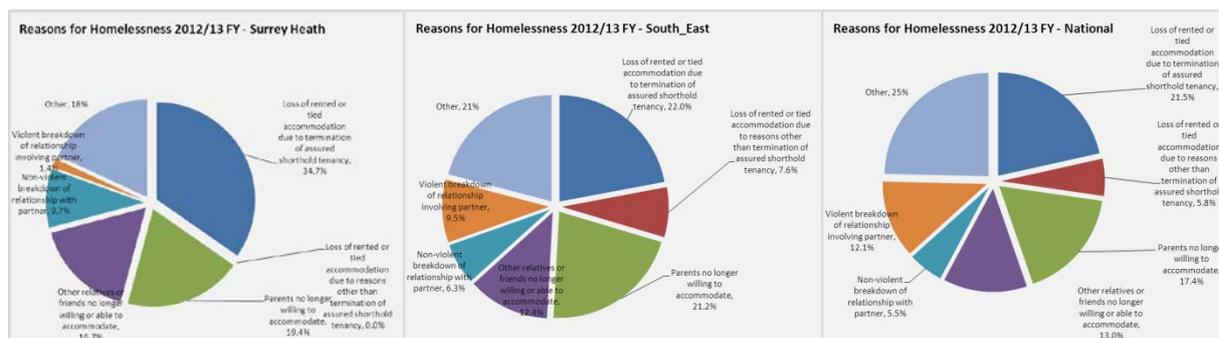
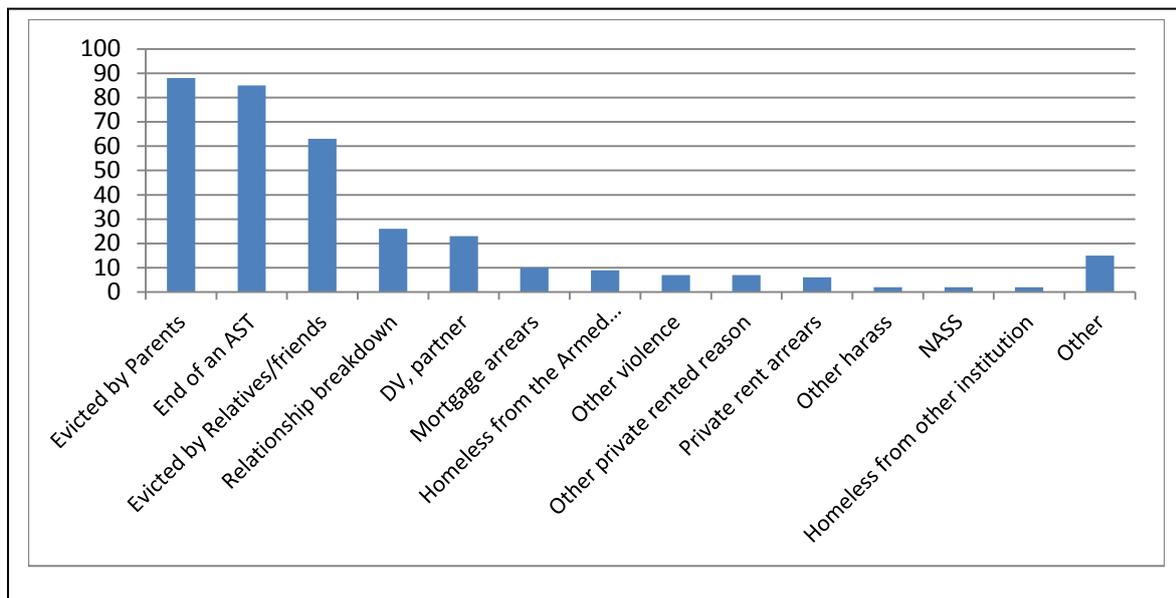


Only those who are eligible, homeless, in priority need, and are unintentionally homeless are owed the 'full' housing duty i.e. to be provided with accommodation until such time as they secure a settled homes.

3 Reasons for Homelessness

	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Evicted by Parents	15	17	13	17	12	14
Evicted by Relatives/friends	7	8	11	12	13	12
Relationship breakdown	1	2	4	6	5	8
Domestic Violence, partner	8	6	2	2	4	1

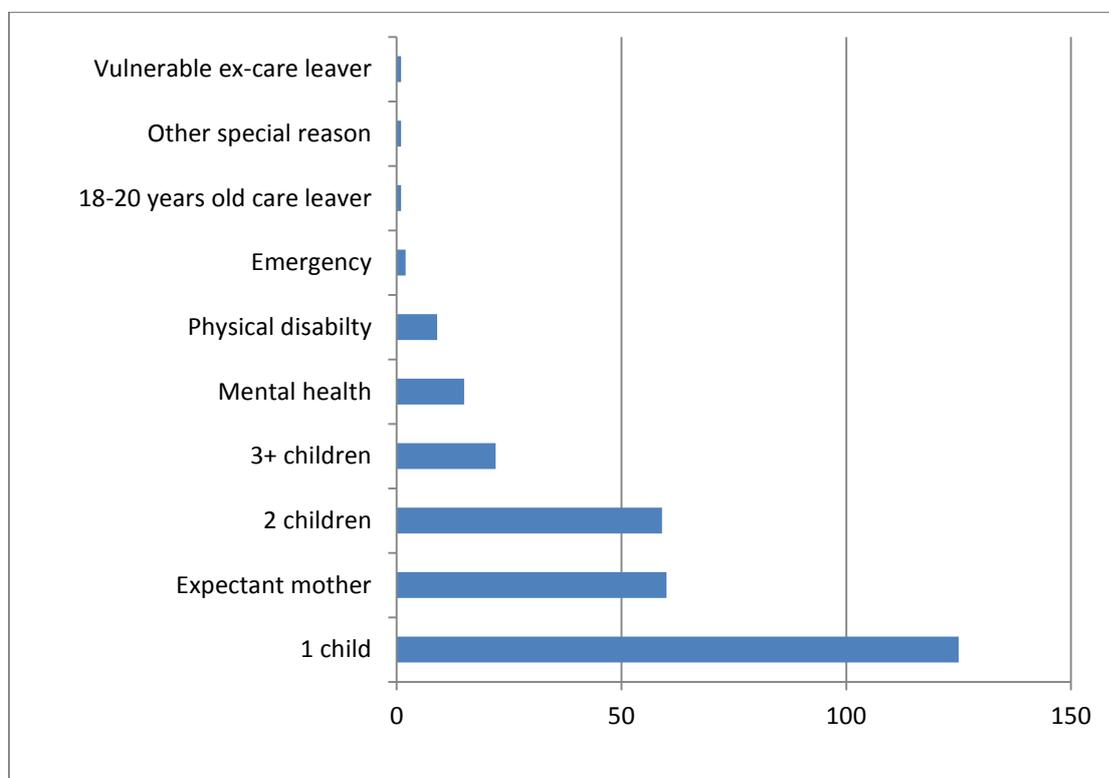
Domestic Violence, associated person	0	0	0	0	0	0
Racial violence	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other violence	1	2	2	1	1	0
Racial harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other harassment	0	0	1	1	0	0
Mortgage arrears	1	3	0	1	1	4
Social rent arrears	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private rent arrears	3	1	0	0	0	2
End of an AST	11	10	11	15	13	25
Other private rented reason	1	0	0	0	6	0
National Asylum Seeker Service accommodation	0	0	1	0	1	0
Homeless from prison	0	0	0	0	0	0
Homeless from hospital	0	0	0	0	0	0
Homeless from other institution	0	1	1	0	0	0
Homeless from the Armed Forces	2	2	1	1	0	3
Other reason	0	4	2	4	1	4
Total	50	56	49	60	57	73



4 Reasons for Priority Need

In order to trigger an accommodation duty homeless applicants need to have a priority need as defined by legislation.

Reason for priority need	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Homeless in an Emergency	1	0	0	1	0
1 child	24	21	25	24	31
2 children	13	7	10	13	16
3+ children	5	3	4	5	5
Expectant mother	11	13	13	8	15
16/17 years old	0	0	0	0	0
18-20 years old care leaver	1	0	0	0	0
Old age	0	0	0	0	0
Physical disability	0	2	2	1	4
Mental health	1	1	6	5	2
Drug issues	0	0	0	0	0
Alcohol issues	0	0	0	0	0
Former asylum seeker	0	0	0	0	0
Other special reason	0	1	0	0	0
Vulnerable ex-care leaver	0	1	0	0	0
Vulnerable ex- Forces	0	0	0	0	0
Vulnerable ex-Prisoner	0	0	0	0	0
Vulnerable due to DV	0	0	0	0	0
Total	56	49	60	57	73



5 Equalities Data 2008/9 – 2012/13

Homeless acceptances: Age

16/17 years old	0
18-20 years old care leaver	1
Old age	0

Homelessness acceptances: Disability

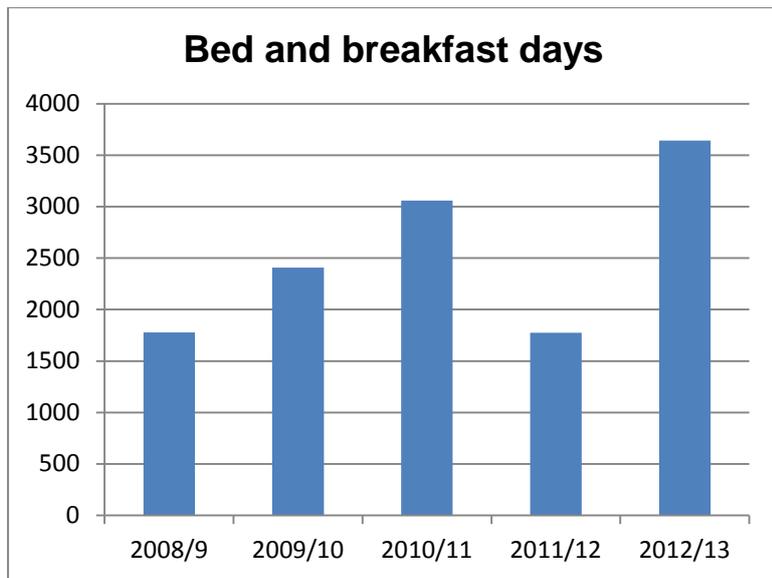
Physical disability	0	2	2	1	4	9
Mental health	1	1	6	5	2	15

Homelessness decisions: Ethnicity

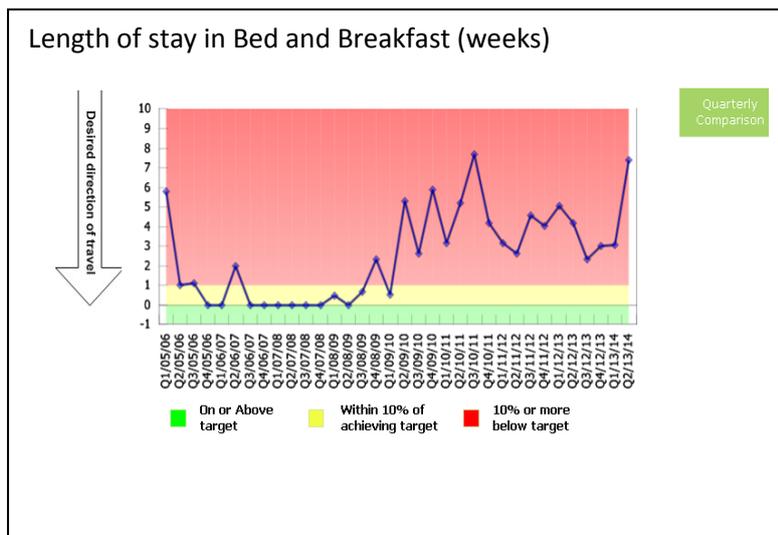
Ethnicity	2011 census	Homelessness acceptances	Applications not accepted
White - British	84.9%	84.6%	87.5%
White - Irish	1.0%	0.7%	1.3%
White - Other White Background	4.1%	1.4%	2.5%
Total White	90.0%	86.6%	91.3%
Black or Black British: African	0.6%	2.4%	0.6%
Black or Black British: Caribbean	0.3%	1.7%	0
Black or Black British: Other Black Background	0.1%	0	0
Total Black	1.0%	4.1%	0.6%
Asian or Asian British: Indian	2.0%	0.7%	0
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	0.8%	1.7%	0
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	0.3%	Counted in 'other Asian'	Counted in 'other Asian'
Asian or Asian British: Other Asian Background	2.5%	1.7%	0.6%
Total Asian	5.6%	4.1%	0.6%
Mixed: White & Black African	0.2%	0.7%	1.3%
Mixed: White & Black Caribbean	0.4%	0	1.3%
Mixed: White & Asian	0.8%	1.7%	3.8%
Mixed: Other mixed background	0.5%	0.3%	0

Total Mixed	1.9%	2.7%	6.3%
Other Ethnic Origin: Chinese	0.6%	0.3%	0
Other Ethnic Origin: Other Groups	0.7%	1.4%	1.3%
Total Other	1.3%	1.7%	1.3%
Ethnicity Not Stated	0.2%	0.7%	0

6 Bed and Breakfast (B&B) and Temporary Accommodation

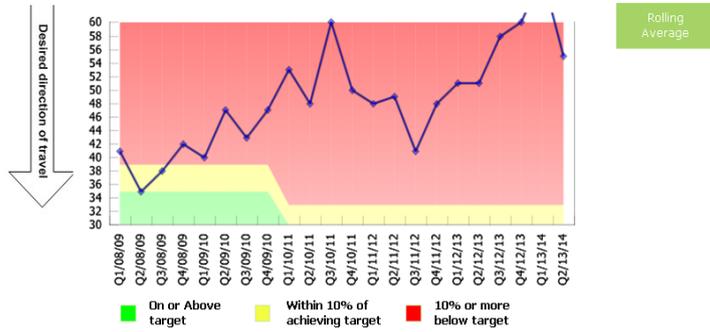


There are a number of measures of B&B use. Perhaps most useful is to look at the total number of Bed and Breakfast days. This is calculated by counting the cumulative number of days spent by households in B&B (e.g. 2 households in B&B for 5 days each = 10 B&B days).



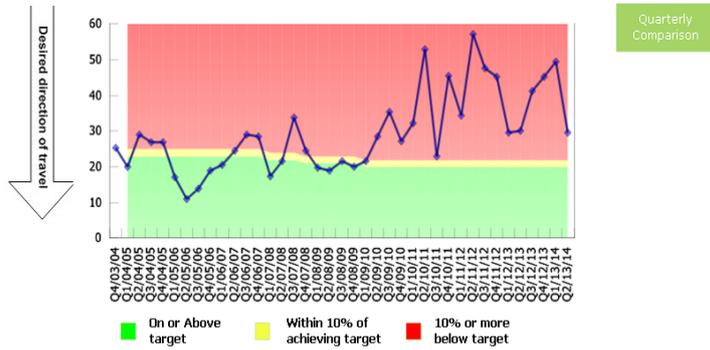
The Council does not want to use bed and breakfast accommodation and has set a target of zero use.

Number of households living in temporary accommodation



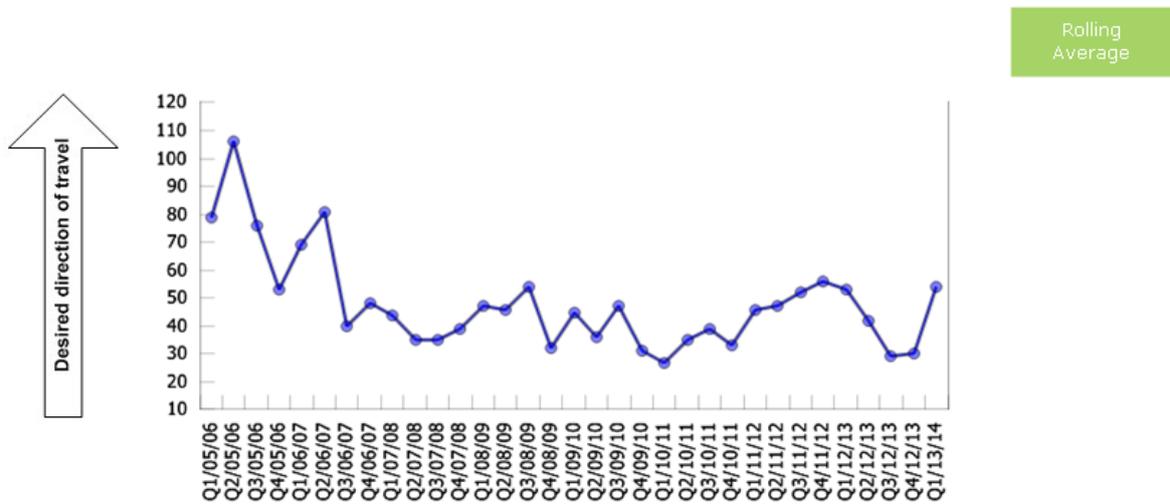
In the first Homelessness Strategy the Council set a target to reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation by half. The target was 30 families.

Length of stay in temporary accommodation (weeks)



The Council has also set a target that for those households who do go into temporary accommodation their stay should not exceed 20 weeks.

7 Social Housing Lettings



Annex 2 Action Plan

Action Plan

Preventing homelessness against its main causes				
Priority area	Action	Outcomes	Lead	Comments / review
Relationship breakdown	Carry out home visits to housing register applicants living with family and friends within 2 weeks of Housing Register application	Families are interviewed at home to support planned housing options and negotiation. To start December 2013	Housing Services	<i>Completed: action is in place and is leading to homelessness prevention and delay</i>
	Initiate Family Support Programme	Support families with multiple needs to build self-reliance and integrate into the community. Programme to be live with effect from October 2013, with 85 families being worked with to March 2015.	Executive Head - Regulatory	<i>Completed</i>
	Tenancy Training and new home information targeted at people likely to be rehoused from the Housing Register.	Residents taking up their first home understand their rights and responsibilities and have the necessary skills to successfully manage a tenancy. Training programme to be ready for delivery April 2014.	Housing Services Manager Accent	<i>Delayed: work is underway to deliver tenancy training to families in temporary accommodation from Spring 2015</i>
	Explore the opportunities to work with local third	Needs map and options evaluated by April 2014 with a costed action plan for any identified work.	Housing Services Manager	<i>Discontinued: joint work with Surrey YSS has replaced this</i>

	sector youth services to deliver housing and support for your people at risk of homelessness		Windle Valley Youth Project	<i>action, although the Council is open to working with third sector partners to deliver additional services that will prevent homelessness</i>
	Work with Surrey County Council to ensure a co-ordinated approach to young people at risk of homelessness	Continue to attend Young Persons Panels, meet under the provisions of the Care Leavers Protocol and meet regularly with the local Youth Support Service to ensure effective working relationships to support young people with housing, education, training and employment	Housing Needs Team Leader	<i>Completed: work embedded into day to day business and reviewed regularly by Surrey Housing Needs Managers Group</i>
	Continue multi-agency work to tackle homelessness from domestic abuse and ensure the right support and services are available	Continue to attend Multi Agency Risk Assessment Committees (MARAC) and participate in Surrey Mobility Scheme to provide the right housing and support to those at risk	Housing Service	<i>Completed: work embedded into day to day business</i>
Homelessness from the Private Sector	Promote Landlord Accreditation	Increase the number of landlords in the accreditation scheme to encourage best practice in the private rented sector. Audit the training needs of accredited landlords and facilitate local training.	Housing Services Manager	<i>Stalled: work to be carried out in 2015</i>

		<p>Monitor reasons for non-accreditation and actively work to overcome any hurdles.</p> <p>Survey landlords to gauge interest in a Landlords Forum.</p>		
	Recruit to Lettings Negotiator role in the Housing Team	Improved relationship with private sector landlords and a named point of contact.	Housing Services Manager	<i>Completed: post filled Summer 2014</i>
	Work with Surrey Authorities and other partners in the Surrey Homeless Alliance to deliver the Surrey Action Plan	Increase access to private rented accommodation and shared housing using DCLG.	Housing Services Manager	<i>Completed: Surrey Action Plan money being used to assist single homeless households into PRS and additional funding successfully attracted to bring on 5 new units of shared accommodation</i>
	Develop and publish a Harassment and Illegal Eviction Policy	Ensure that the right information is available for landlords to fulfil their obligations and set out what action will be taken when there is a breach of responsibility.	Housing Services and Legal Services	<i>Stalled: work to be carried out in 2015</i>
	Refresh and publish a Private Sector Renewal Strategy with a new Action Plan	Support landlords to improve the housing stock, promote best practice and set out enforcement strategy for the small number of landlords who fail to provide decent homes.	Housing Services Manager	<i>On track: policy to be delivered for April 2015</i>

	Review the web content available for landlords and tenants	Redesign web information for landlords and tenants to promote access to the sector and best practice	Housing Services and Media and Marketing	<i>Stalled: work to be started in 2015</i>
Managing the Impact of Welfare Reform	Continue to work with CAB, Peerless and Job Centre+ as Surrey Heath Welfare Reform Partnership	Monitor the impact of welfare reform, identifying affected residents and co-ordinating targeted interventions.	Surrey Heath Welfare Reform Partnership	<i>Completed: liaison now held in other forums</i>
	Fund the Money Advice service at Camberley Citizens Advice Bureau	Targeted money advice available to those whose home is at risk due to financial difficulties. Funding in place until March 2014. Review service in January 2014 to identify on-going need and funding opportunities.	Surrey Heath Borough Council Accent Camberley CAB	<i>On track: funding achieved for financial year 2014/15. Review to be undertaken Autumn 2014 for 2015/16 decision.</i>
	Continue to Identify tenants affected by the social size criteria	Offer underoccupation service to affected tenants to facilitate moves to affordable tenancies.	Peerless	<i>Completed: work embedded into day to day business</i>
	Administer Discretionary Housing Payments	Support tenants to maintain tenancies while considering longer term options including downsizing, entering work and money advice.	Revenues and Benefits, Housing Services	<i>Completed: work embedded into day to day business with joint decision making between Housing Option and Housing</i>

				<i>Benefit Teams</i>
	Monitor the wider impact of welfare reform and ensure that there are appropriate local arrangements for residents to access services	On-going work with Surrey Boroughs and Districts, Surrey County Council and DWP to ensure changes, including deliver changes, are accessible to Surrey Heath Residents e.g. Surrey Assistance Scheme, Universal Credit delivery	Revenues and Benefits, Housing Services	<i>Ongoing engagement as reform is implemented</i>
	Ensure that residents have access to appropriate and timely information to help manage changes to their entitlement	Regular web reviews, articles in relevant publications and press releases	Revenues and Benefits Manager, Media and Marketing	<i>Ongoing as reform is implemented</i>
Maximising housing options	Produce an affordable housing SPD setting out the Council's approach delivery of new affordable homes and the use of planning contributions.	Maximise the delivery of new homes through the Council's Planning policies and enabling role	Planning Policy and Support Manager, Housing Services Manager	<i>On track: policy in development</i>
	Set up new 'pathway' arrangements to replace the Special Needs Housing Panel	People with a special housing need or a need for specialist housing or housing with support have a clear pathway to support them to independence in the community.	Housing Services Manager	<i>Stalled: work to be undertaken in 2015</i>

		The best use is made of supported and adapted housing.		
	Review the Tenancy Strategy	Review the Tenancy Strategy and lobby Registered Providers to adopt the regime in the letting of local properties.	Housing Services Manager	<i>Completed: new Strategy published to 2018</i>
	Review the Allocation Policy	Review the Allocation Policy to ensure it continues to meet local need and make best use of local resources	Housing Services Manager	<i>Completed</i>
	Work with Surrey Authorities and other partners in the Surrey Homeless Alliance to deliver the Surrey Action Plan	Increase access to private rented accommodation and shared housing using DCLG Grant (see Annex 6 for the detailed action plan).	Housing Services Manager	<i>Completed: Surrey Action Plan money being used to assist single homeless households into PRS and additional funding successfully attracted to bring on 5 new units of shared accommodation</i>
	Fill Letting Negotiator role	Provide a single point of contact for private landlords and a proactive approach to securing access to private sector homes.	Housing Services Manager	<i>Completed: post filled Summer 2014</i>
Armed Forces	Produce a Housing Options pack	Up to date information for Armed Forces personnel on housing options within the Borough	Housing Services Manager	<i>Completed Summer 2014 with targeted online advice</i>
Rough Sleepers	Work with Surrey Partners to deliver the Surrey Action Plan	Increase accommodation for single people	Housing Services Manager	<i>Completed: Surrey Action Plan money being used to assist single homeless households into PRS and additional funding</i>

				<i>successfully attracted to bring on 5 new units of shared accommodation</i>
	Consider 'No Second Night Out' arrangements	A local response to move people from rough sleeping to accommodation and support	Housing Services Manager	<i>Stalled: work to be undertaken in 2015</i>

Annex 3 Meeting the Gold Standard Challenges

To reach Gold Standard Status, councils will need to meet key commitments including:

- Offering a comprehensive prevention service, with advice and support for single people as well as families in need
- Working with local agencies to provide employment, education and training opportunities
- Helping householders facing the threat of repossession by providing access to mortgage debt advice and support such as the Mortgage Rescue scheme
- Adopting a local No Second Night Out scheme to help prevent new rough sleepers from becoming entrenched into a street lifestyle

Expert help is available to achieve this, including:

- An online toolkit to help councils identify areas for improvement
- Free training in some of the most complex issues such as housing law
- Expert tailored support to make services run more efficiently

The Council has already taken up training opportunities for frontline staff.

Challenge	Where we are now	What we will do
Adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local authority services	<p>Homeless prevention work is evident through partnership working across the Council with examples including:</p> <p>Joint Housing and Benefits assessment of DHP claims;</p> <p>The co-location of Housing Needs and Private Sector Housing services to deliver a co-ordinated approach to landlords and tenants in the private rented sector;</p> <p>The inclusion of Housing Officers in CIAG and JAG; and,</p> <p>Joint Housing and Legal Services training on Harassment and Illegal Eviction.</p> <p>In 2012 Housing was added as an additional module in the Member training programme and the session was well attended by both new and long standing Councillors.</p>	<p>Ensure that there are links between Housing Needs services and the new Family Support Team.</p> <p>Housing and Legal Services will develop a joint Harassment and Illegal Eviction Policy.</p> <p>Joint work across Teams to ensure when rough sleeping is identified by Council services and contractors there is an effective response.</p>

Actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs	This work already happened on an individual basis: for example through CIAG interventions and the work of the Young Persons Panels.	The development of housing pathways for various client groups will include a holistic assessment that seeks to move residents into independent lives. The Family Support Service will work with a wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies to support families with multiple and complex needs.
Offer a Housing Options prevention service, including written advice, to all clients	All clients have access to a personal housing options prevention service in the Council Offices, on the telephone and where necessary on a home visit.	Consider how to deliver written follow-up for these contacts.
Adopt a No Second Night Out model or an effective local alternative	We have worked with Guildford, Woking and Waverley Borough Council's to provide Severe Weather Emergency Protocol. Currently working with all Surrey LAs to deliver a countywide model.	Deliver the actions in the Surrey Alliance action plan to increase housing options for single people and work towards a local no second night out model.
Have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that includes appropriate accommodation and support		This will form part of the work in the life of this Strategy.
Develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both clients and landlords	The Council provides a private rented offer for all client groups with the Rent Choice Scheme, supported with additional funding from the Homelessness Prevention Grant although there is no dedicated staff resource in place at this time.	Employ a Lettings Negotiator to improve this work.
Actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme	This work already happens	
Have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to	The Council has a Strategy that sets out the priorities for work locally but often	The Strategy will be reviewed annually and monitored by the Community

preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually so that it is responsive to emerging needs	resources mean that services are more reactive than proactive.	Services Scrutiny Committee
Not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed and Breakfast accommodation	This challenge is being met through the Joint arrangements with Surrey County Council's Youth Support Service.	
Not place any families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and then for no longer than 6 weeks	The Council, after a period of success in managing to avoid B&B for homeless households, is failing to meet this challenge.	The Councils Homelessness Strategy is about tackling the causes of homelessness and increasing housing options. Delivery of the Action Plan will take the Council towards meeting this goal.