

# HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY FOR HEREFORDSHIRE 2003 – 2008

Subject to Annual Review and  
Evaluation in partnership with  
Herefordshire Homelessness Forum



# Contents

**Introduction**

**Signatories to the Strategy**

**Chapter 1 The National Framework**

**Chapter 2 Background to the Development of the Strategy & Aims and Objectives**

**Chapter 3 Strategic and Operational Links**

**Chapter 4 Strategy Outcome 1 and Associated Targets: To reduce the levels of homelessness in the County**

**Chapter 5 Strategy Outcome 2 and Associated Targets: To reduce the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation as temporary accommodation for homeless households**

**Chapter 6 Strategy Outcome 3 and Associated Targets: To improve joint working across the voluntary and statutory sectors and other agencies concerned with homelessness to enable a more co-ordinated and effective response**

**Chapter 7 The Monitoring and Evaluation Process**

**Herefordshire Homelessness Strategy – Action Plan 2003 - 2004**



## INTRODUCTION

### **HEREFORDSHIRE HAS A SUBSTANTIAL AND INCREASING HOMELESSNESS PROBLEM**

The Homelessness Strategy is based on a Review of homelessness in Herefordshire. The Review document sets out the local context through an analysis of the reasons for homelessness in the county, the numbers of people becoming homeless and the resources and activities currently directed towards homelessness and preventative services.

In Herefordshire there is a strong commitment to homeless prevention and the provision of high quality services for homeless people and those at risk of homelessness. The Strategy identifies the ways in which these problems will be addressed and what we intend to achieve.

### **THE HOMELESSNESS REVIEW AND THE HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY ARE LINKED AND COMPLIMENTARY DOCUMENTS**

The development of Herefordshire's Homelessness Strategy has been made more complex through two major events, occurring during the same time period, which stretched the resources available to the Housing Services Division. These were:

- Large Scale Voluntary Transfer of the housing stock – 26<sup>th</sup> November 2002
- The Choice Based Lettings Pilot – 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2002

**The Strategy Development Group have agreed that, due to the scale of the Strategy and the significant issues that have been identified, there will be an Annual Review and Development process and an Annual Action Plan.**

### **LARGE SCALE VOLUNTARY TRANSFER**

The 'Homelessness Strategies – Good Practice Handbook' emphasises that where authorities have transferred, or are planning to transfer their housing stock it is important that clear arrangements are in place for the housing of homeless people. In addition, Local Authorities must consider their ability to discharge their duties towards homeless households when consulting on and preparing for transfer and clear provisions need to be made in the transfer agreement.

In order to ensure this, with the transfer of the council's housing stock on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2002, a Housing Agency Agreement was put in place. The responsibilities for establishing the council's duties to homeless households was contracted to Herefordshire Housing and all existing designated temporary accommodation, with the exception of Blackfriars Hostel, also transferred.



# HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

The Housing Agency Agreement sets out the relationship between the council and Herefordshire Housing for homelessness provision in the county and identifies the standards and performance that the Company is expected to achieve.

The Agreement covers:

- The scope of the homelessness and housing advice service to be provided in Herefordshire
- The provision of temporary accommodation to homeless households (the Agency Agreement also specifies that the council will utilise temporary accommodation of other RSLs, as well as accommodation owned by Herefordshire Housing to house homeless applicants).
- The Local Public Service Agreement
- The protection of property of homeless households
- Specification for the homelessness service, Service standards and Performance Monitoring
- Customer Care and Access to Advice Services
- Equal opportunities issues
- Homelessness Appeals and Reviews

## CHOICE BASED LETTINGS – HOME POINT HEREFORDSHIRE

The idea to test Choice Based approaches to lettings with pilot schemes was originally proposed in the Housing Green Paper, “Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All.” Herefordshire was one of twenty-seven successful pilot bids.

Since the commencement of the Strategy, Home Point Herefordshire has become a reality (on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2002). **It is important to note therefore, that the Homelessness Review will reflect the change from data held on the Council’s Housing Register to data held on the Home Point Register.** At the commencement of the Review Process, the council still held a Housing Register.

Home Point Herefordshire operates as a partnership arrangement between Herefordshire Council and the major Registered Social Landlords in the county:

- Bromford Housing Group
- Elgar Housing Association
- Marches Housing Association
- St John Kemble Hereford Housing Association
- Herefordshire Housing

Following the commencement of the Choice Based Letting pilot, none of the partner organisations maintained a Housing Register. A list of all households



seeking social housing, or wishing to transfer within existing social housing stock is held by Home Point.

Applicants on the Home Point list are allocated one of a series of three banding categories according to their current housing need. Applicants can also be awarded a Priority Card on a set-term basis of 16 weeks. If it is established that the applicant could not have found suitable accommodation during this period, the Priority Card can be issued for a further 16 weeks.

Priority Cards are awarded in the following circumstances:

- Statutorily homeless households with a duty to re-house
- Rent (Agriculture) Act 1976 - tied accommodation coming to an end
- Where the Social Landlord needs to undertake emergency works to an applicant's existing home and they do not wish to return to the property on completion

Gold band applicants include those households where the applicant is found to be homeless, but where there is no duty to re-house.

All properties that become vacant in the partner agencies housing stock<sup>1</sup> are extensively advertised and any eligible household can apply. Eligibility covers such things as an age requirement for older people's housing and sheltered accommodation and compatibility between household composition and the size of the vacant property applied for. Eligibility increasingly includes the support a potential tenant may need to maintain and sustain their tenure, and the integration between Social Care and Housing means that a more holistic assessment of these needs is possible, thus assisting people to access suitable housing.

## CONSULTATION

The Review process and Strategy development has been informed by consultation with homeless and previously homeless people and consultation and involvement with other agencies in the county that, directly or indirectly provide services for homeless people and those at risk.

Independent research on the views of homeless and previously homeless people was undertaken by Dr Joan Smith, Dr Jane Henriques and Mary Ing of the Centre for Housing and Community Research, Staffordshire University, following a competitive tendering process.

## SIGNATORIES

**We will be inviting partners, particularly those involved in key actions, to sign up to the Strategy.**

---

<sup>1</sup> The only exception to this is where the vacant accommodation is part of specialist housing provision e.g. misuses of drugs or alcohol, although the Council's Strategic Housing Service intends to incorporate specialist housing provision into Choice-Based Lettings within the near future.

## CHAPTER 1 THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

### **The Homelessness Act 2002**

The Homelessness Act 2002, which received Royal Assent on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2002, makes the following changes to the Parts VI and VII of the Housing Act 1996

1. New duties on local authorities to carry out a Review of homelessness in its area and to publish a Homelessness Strategy to tackle and prevent homelessness
2. Extended homelessness duties
3. Changes to the legislation covering lettings

#### **1. A Strategic approach to Homelessness**

The Act introduces a new requirement on local authorities to produce a Homelessness Strategy, taking a long-term strategic approach, with particular emphasis on prevention.

The DTLR produced a Good Practice Handbook<sup>2</sup> to assist Local Authorities with the development and implementation of their Homelessness Strategies. The following summarises the main points of document.

**DTLR Good Practice Handbook** (now ODPM – Office of the Deputy Prime Minister)

#### **NEW DUTIES IN THE HOMELESS ACT 2002**

The provisions in the Homelessness Act require housing authorities to:

- Carry out a review of homelessness in their areas
- Formulate and publish a Homelessness Strategy based on this review
- Keep the Strategy under review
- Consult other local or public authorities, or voluntary organisations before adopting or modifying the Strategy

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires local authorities to publish the first Homelessness Strategy for their district within 12 months of the Act coming into force.

The Social Services authority for the district must give such assistance to the Housing Authority in carrying out the Review and drawing up the Strategy as

---

<sup>2</sup> Homelessness Strategies – A Good Practice Handbook, DTLR February 2002

the housing authority may reasonably require. Both Housing and Social care must take account of the Strategy in formulating policy and providing services.

Homelessness reviews must consider:

- The levels and likely future levels of homelessness in the district
- The activities and services provided which help to prevent homelessness, help to find accommodation for homeless and potentially homeless people, or provide support for them, including support to prevent them from becoming homeless again
- The resources available to the authority and to social care, other public authorities, voluntary organisations and other agencies for providing those services

### **Aims and Objectives**

The overall aims of the Strategy as set out in the Homelessness Act are:

- The prevention of homelessness
- Ensuring there is sufficient accommodation available for people who are, or who may become homeless
- Ensuring there is satisfactory support for people who are, or who may become homeless, or who need support to prevent them from becoming homeless

Homelessness Strategies must include plans to address these Aims

### **SCOPE OF THE STRATEGY**

The Strategy must cover all those people who are homeless as defined by Part VII of the 1996 Housing Act, not only those for whom the authority would have a duty to secure accommodation.

The Strategy must therefore include:

- All homeless people, including those who would not be considered to be in priority need for accommodation
- All people at risk of becoming homeless, whether within 28 days or a longer period
- People who might become homeless intentionally
- Homeless people in the area who might not have a local connection

The Strategy should be consistent with and integral to the authority's broader Housing Strategy and in particular, with Supporting People strategies. Other relevant strategies include Crime and Disorder Strategies, plans for the provision of Community Care Services and local community strategies.

## WHAT SHOULD THE STRATEGY CONTAIN?

### **The Strategy must be based on a needs assessment including:**

- An assessment of the current and likely future levels of homelessness
- An analysis of the needs of different groups, for example, families, young people and older people, with gender and ethnic breakdowns for each
- An analysis of the most common routes into homelessness locally, for example, family breakdown, domestic violence, termination of tenancies, people leaving institutions such as local authority care, prisons and hospitals

### **There should also be an audit of services, including:**

- An audit and evaluation of current provision for homeless people, including;
  - Temporary and permanent accommodation
  - Support and preventative services
  - Services not directly targeted at homeless people, but whose clients will include homeless people, such as drug and alcohol users
- An analysis of gaps in service provision, identified by comparing present and future needs with current provision
- Identification of resources which might be available for filling these gaps

### **Action on planning and implementing the Strategy including:**

- The involvement of partner agencies in the public, voluntary and private sectors in formulating and implementing the Strategy
- Consultation with other agencies in contact with homeless people, even if they are not involved with service provision
- Consultation with service users and other homeless people
- Defining key aims and objectives of the Strategy
- Agreeing priorities for action
- A timetable and costed programme
- Identification of which agencies will do what and when
- Mechanisms for joint and partnership working
- Mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy and individual elements in the programme, including targets and performance indicators
- Mechanisms for regular review and amendment of the Strategy



Consultation with service users and if possible, homeless people, who do not use services, should be a key part of strategic planning.

### **Strategy Review**

Authorities are required by the legislation to keep their strategies under review.

The Strategy group will need to put in place monitoring procedures, including setting performance indicators. Performance indicators should focus on outcome measures, for example:

- The number of cases where homelessness has been prevented
- The number of homeless people housed
- The number of homeless people successfully resettled
- The number of unplanned moves from tenancies where support has been provided

The measures should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timetabled)

### **JOINT WORKING**

A key objective of homelessness strategies is to bring local agencies together, so that their work can be better.

Ensuring that mechanisms are in place for successful joint work should be one of the priority tasks of the Homelessness Strategy Group.

### **ASSESSING NEEDS AND RESOURCES**

Accurate information on the scale and type of homelessness (including hidden homelessness) and those threatened with homelessness is fundamental to the development of the Strategy.

A comprehensive and accurate picture of homelessness needs can only be achieved **“by agreeing common monitoring systems for local agencies, with unique identifiers for individual client.”**

Such systems use forms held in common to record demographic data, housing histories and support needs. They eliminate multiple counting of clients in different agencies.

The review of resources should include an audit of existing provision and plans for the future. The audits should cover staff, property and funding.

The review of needs and audit of services should identify where needs are not being met and where there is any unnecessary duplication of services.



## **SPECIALIST SERVICES FOR PARTICULAR GROUPS:**

The Strategy will need to incorporate specialist preventative and support services for particular groups of homeless people and those of risk of homelessness, where a need is identified, including the following:

- Homeless families
- Those homeless as a result of relationship breakdown and domestic violence
- Homeless young people
- Older people
- Black and minority ethnic homeless people
- Rough sleepers
- People leaving hospital
- Prisoners and other people in contact with the criminal justice system
- People leaving the Armed Forces
- People with drug and alcohol problems
- Homeless people with multiple needs

## **HOMELESSNESS SERVICES PROVIDED BY OTHER AGENCIES**

Many agencies will need to be involved in developing and implementing the Strategy and the provision of services to homeless people, including:

### **Social Services**

- Many homeless people will be in contact with Social Services, or are potentially eligible for services
- The Homelessness Strategy should include mechanisms for ensuring access to assessments by homeless people through joint protocols between housing, social care, health, probation, police and voluntary agencies

### **Health Services**

- Homeless people often suffer from poor health, along with difficulties in accessing health services
- Health services can identify those at risk of homelessness and direct them to accommodation and support services. Primary health care services encounter many problems linked to housing. Better information and training can help them to make more effective referrals to homeless services. It is particularly important that hospital discharge arrangements ensure patients are not homeless when they leave.



### **Employment and Training services**

- Employment and training schemes have an important role in the prevention of homelessness and in the resettlement of homeless people, both by lifting them out of poverty and by re-integrating them into society
- The Careers and Employment services and Learning and Skills Councils should be engaged with the Homelessness Strategy

### **Education and youth services**

Education and youth services can contribute to the prevention of homelessness among young people by:

- Education in leaving home in a planned manner and sustaining an independent home, including peer education
- Identifying young people at risk of homelessness and referring them to support services such as family mediation
- Information, advice, advocacy and counselling for homeless young people
- Support and mentoring, especially through the Connexions service

### **Criminal justice**

The police, probation services, Youth Offending Teams, courts and prisons should all be engaged with the Homelessness Strategy and the provision of accommodation for ex-offenders

### **Voluntary organisations**

Voluntary organisations should play a central role in homelessness strategies, particularly in providing for some specific groups of homeless people.

They can often provide more flexible services that are more acceptable to certain client groups, than statutory services.

Voluntary agencies can also help to attract additional funding from private and public sources

### **Registered Social Landlords**

Local authorities will need to work in close partnership with RSLs in formulating their strategies for meeting homelessness needs through the provision of social housing.

### **Temporary Accommodation**

The Homeless Act provides that ensuring sufficient accommodation is available for people who are, or may become homeless in an integral part of a Homelessness Strategy.

- Homelessness Strategies should include a comprehensive Strategy for the most effective use of temporary accommodation.

# HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

- Plans for support for people staying in temporary accommodation, including families and vulnerable people without children
- Monitoring of standards and performance
- Plans for rehousing and resettlement support into permanent housing, whether fully independent or supported according to their needs

## **Integrating homelessness strategies with Supporting People**

The aims of the programme are to enable local authorities to develop a more flexible range of services, including floating support not tied to particular properties.

In order to achieve this local authorities have been encouraged to:

- Undertake supply and needs mapping exercises of support services
- Develop a local Supporting People Strategy closely linked to other local strategies, including the Homelessness Strategy
- Make arrangements to ensure that people moving from other areas will receive support, including women fleeing domestic violence or transient homeless people
- Apply new quality and monitoring arrangements
- Apply a simple and common monitoring system

There will be many overlaps and common features in local authorities homelessness strategies and the Supporting People strategies, such as appropriate support for young people in need of housing having left the 'looked after' system.

It is essential for Homelessness Services and the Homelessness Strategy to be well integrated with the Supporting People Strategy.

## **Private Sector Housing**

Local authorities and voluntary sector partner agencies have a key role to play both in preventing homelessness among residents of private sector housing and in enabling access to private housing for homeless and potentially homeless people.

The Homelessness Strategy should set out clear plans to make the best use of private sector housing to meet local needs, while maintaining and improving standards.

## **Maintaining and improving standards**

Improvement of standards in private rented housing, particularly in houses in multiple occupation (HMOs)

Poor conditions and bad management can cause some private tenants to become homeless. It is therefore, essential to involve housing improvement and enforcement staff in the preparation of the Homelessness Strategy.



- There is a range of measures local authorities can take to improve standards in the private rented sector, including:
  - Voluntary accreditation schemes to certify that landlords reach approved standards
  - Compulsory registration schemes for houses in multiple occupation to ensure minimum standard
  - Enforcement action against landlords whose properties are in poor condition
- The prevention of harassment and illegal eviction
- Adaptations and improvements can enable owners and tenants, particularly those who are elderly or disabled to stay in their homes and Home Improvement Agencies and other such services should be included in the Homelessness Strategy

## 2. Extended Homelessness Duties

The Homelessness Act makes a number of changes to the existing provisions for homeless households.

### Abolition of minimum two-year duty

The Housing Authority's full duty to provide settled accommodation to homeless households is restored and is no longer limited to two years. In effect this means that temporary accommodation must be provided until a settled home is offered to the applicant. Linked to this is the repeal of Section 207, which removes the time limit that the Housing Act 1996 placed on using local authority stock as temporary accommodation.

### Abolition of duty under Section 197

The legislation completely abolishes section 197 of the Housing Act 1996. This states that where the Housing Authority accepts a household as unintentionally homeless and in priority need, if accommodation is available in the private rented sector, the only duty is to provide advice and assistance to help that household secure it.

### Right of Review

This part of the Act provides that the main homelessness duty cannot be brought to an end unless the applicant has been informed of the right to request a review of the suitability of the accommodation offered. A review may be requested whether or not the offer of accommodation has been accepted.

### Homeless People who are not in Priority Need

The Act strengthens the duties on Local Authorities to assist homeless people who are not in priority need:

- The previous duty to provide such advice and assistance as is considered 'appropriate in the circumstances' is replaced by a clear duty to provide advice and assistance
- Before advice and assistance is provided, an assessment of the applicant's needs must be carried out
- The advice and assistance provided must include information about the availability, location and sources of accommodation appropriate to the applicant's needs

These provisions also apply to households found to be intentionally homeless and those who are although not homeless are threatened with homelessness, but not in priority need.

### **Homeless families with children**

The Act strengthens the current duty on Housing and Social care to co-operate where a family will not be provided with accommodation under the main homelessness duty and children are involved.

Where a family is found to be intentionally homeless or ineligible for assistance due to their immigration status, the Housing Department must, with the applicant's consent, inform Social care about the facts of the case at an early stage and notify them of their subsequent decision.

The housing department must also provide 'such advice and assistance as is reasonable in the circumstances' in helping Social care exercise their functions to children in need under the provisions of the Children Act, when they request them to do so.

### **3. Changes to Lettings**

As well as making some significant changes to the homelessness legislation, the Act makes a number of important changes to the framework that Local Authorities use for letting social housing in their areas.

The main policy aim behind the changes is to provide a framework that is suitable for the operation of Choice Based Lettings Schemes.



## CHAPTER 2 BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY AND STRATEGY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

### Background

In September 2001 an inter-agency Homelessness and Homelessness Advice Seminar was held, with the aim of sharing knowledge and information about the problems of homelessness in Herefordshire and to discuss the development of a Homelessness Strategy for the county.

45 delegates attended the Seminar including local Councillors and representative from Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), the Voluntary Sector including Shelter, Social Services, Mental Health and Housing staff.

Representatives agreed that there is a substantial homelessness problem in Herefordshire, but that awareness of the issues amongst the general population is low. In addition it was emphasised that homelessness and homelessness prevention is not just about housing, but is also about the provision of, and access to, appropriate advice, support and resettlement services.

Following the Seminar, a multi-agency Steering Group and a smaller Editorial Team was set up to facilitate the strategy development process.

From the outset the vital importance of ensuring the voluntary sector could participate effectively was recognised. It was also recognised however, that in Herefordshire this sector is relatively small, often over-stretched and has limited access to resources. In order to maximise participation by the smaller voluntary agencies in the county, it was agreed that formal links would be made with the **Herefordshire Homelessness Forum**.

### Defining Homelessness

The legislation relating to homelessness is contained in the Housing Act 1996, Part VII, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002. The sections defining homelessness state that:

**175 – (1)** *A person is homeless if he has no accommodation available for his (her) occupation, in the United Kingdom or elsewhere, which he (she)-*

- (a) is entitled to occupy by virtue of an interest in it or by virtue of an order of a court*
- (a) has an express or implied licence to occupy, or*
- (b) occupies as a residence by virtue of any enactment or rule of law giving him (her) the right to remain in occupation or restricting the right of another person to recover possession*

# HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

(2) A person is also homeless if he (she) has accommodation but –

(a) he cannot secure entry to it, or

(b) It consists of a moveable structure, vehicle or vessel designed or adapted for human habitation and there is no place where he (she) is entitled or permitted both to place it and to reside in it

(3) A person shall not be treated as having accommodation unless it is accommodation which it would be reasonable for him (her) to continue to occupy

(4) A person is threatened with homelessness if it is likely that he will become homeless within 28 days

**176.** Accommodation shall be regarded as available for a person's occupation only if it available for occupation by him together with -

(a) any other person who normally resides with him (her) as a member of his (her) family, or

(b) any other person who might reasonably be expected to reside with him (her)

**177.** – (1) It is not reasonable for a person to continue to occupy accommodation if it is probable that this will lead to domestic violence or other violence against him (her) or against –

(a) a person who normally resides with him (her) as a member of his (her) family, or

(b) any other person who might reasonably be expected to reside with him (her)

For this purpose “violence” means –

(a) violence from another person; or

(b) threats of violence from another person which are likely to be carried out;

and violence is “domestic violence” if it from a person who is associated with the victim

**Homelessness / threatened homeless will therefore include the following situations:**

## Currently Homeless

- Sleeping rough for example, in streets, fields, derelict buildings, barns, sheds, vehicles, tents etc
- Living in insecure / temporary accommodation: such as Night shelters, hostels or bed and breakfast accommodation



- Living in accommodation which is a moveable structure such as caravan and having nowhere where he/she is entitled and permitted to park it and live in it
- Squatting
- Living in accommodation in which it would be unreasonable to remain due to for example, poor conditions, overcrowding, harassment, domestic violence or other violence and/or threats of domestic violence or other violence

### Threatened with Homelessness

- Asked to leave by family / friends
- In insecure accommodation where homelessness is threatened within 28 days – required to leave rented accommodation due to termination of tenancy and/or possession proceedings, or other insecurity of tenure such as holiday lets
- Required to leave owner occupied housing due to possession proceedings
- Needing to leave current accommodation due to relationship breakdown violent / non-violent
- In institution or care for example, hospital, residential home, prison etc
- Young people unable to continue living at home due to mental, physical and/or sexual abuse

### Hidden Homelessness

- Staying with relatives or friends and unable to remain – so called ‘sofa surfers’ - where someone has to move frequently and does not have their own room

### STRATEGY VISION

To develop a multi-agency Homelessness Strategy for Herefordshire that seeks to address the accommodation, health, support and other needs of homeless people and ensure the provision of high quality homelessness advice and other services to prevent homelessness occurring.

### STRATEGY AIMS

The group agreed that the Strategy should have the following Aims:

- To seek to reduce the amount of homelessness within the county through the identification and implementation of effective preventative programmes

# HOMELSSNESS STRATEGY

- To reduce the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless households by developing more suitable forms of temporary accommodation
- To facilitate, where appropriate, the availability of support services for those who are homeless, or threatened with homelessness
- To ensure there is sufficient accommodation available for people who are, or who may become homeless
- To promote more effective joint working across the voluntary and statutory sectors and other agencies concerned with homelessness

The Strategy Development Group agreed that the above Aims could only be achieved by adopting the following approach:

- By ensuring that the Strategy is jointly developed and agreed and that the partner agencies work together for the benefit of homeless people
- By developing a jointly agreed, time tabled programme for Strategy implementation of the Strategy recommendations
- By developing a co-ordinated approach to homelessness and homelessness advice amongst the partner agencies and maximising the use of existing sources and new sources of funding
- By developing means through which the effectiveness of the Strategy can be monitored and amended as necessary
- By developing ways of enabling user involvement in Strategy implementation and service provision
- By developing a set of agreed core data to be held in common by the partner agencies where this is appropriate
- By developing a set of commonly agreed minimum standards where this is appropriate
- By promoting equality of opportunity and of access to homeless and housing advice services

**THE ACTION PLAN SETS OUT THE OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS THAT WILL BE UNDERTAKEN IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THE AIMS.**



## CHAPTER 3 STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL LINKS

### THE HEREFORDSHIRE PLAN

The Herefordshire Plan is the overarching strategic document for Herefordshire Council and its partners. The Partnership involves public, private and voluntary sector organisations working together to make the best use of the county's resources, to co-operate, to share information and resources and to avoid duplication. The main agencies involved in the Herefordshire Partnership are:

- West Mercia Constabulary
- Voluntary Sector
- Herefordshire Council
- Herefordshire Primary Care Trust
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce
- Advantage West Midlands
- Learning and Skills Council.

The Herefordshire Plan aims to provide an Action Plan for Herefordshire through the realisation of 10 'ambitions' for the county. Ten Ambition Groups provide the focus for Partnership activity. These are multi-sector themed groups, with each Ambition Group being responsible for one of the ambitions in the plan. The ambition, which is directly related to homelessness, is to:

'Meet Herefordshire's Accommodation Needs'

There are exiting strategic links between the Housing Ambition Group and the Homelessness Strategy Development Group.

### THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE PARTNERSHIP

It was recognised at the outset of the Homelessness Strategy development process that there were fundamental links between the provision of housing related support to vulnerable groups through the Supporting People programme, and the prevention of homelessness. As a consequence, efforts have been made to ensure that the Homelessness Strategy is well integrated with the Shadow Supporting People Strategy.

The Supporting People Partnership aims to deliver preventative services that will:

- Reduce the level of homelessness in Herefordshire
- Delay an individual's need to access more intensive services due to a deterioration in health, or ability
- Improve the spectrum of choice in the supported housing sector
- Seek to ensure equal access to services throughout Herefordshire

# HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

- Expand the concept of 'floating' services to ensure that people who own, or rent their homes can access housing related support
- Make more effective use of all available resources to meet people's housing and support needs

## HOUSING INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Housing Investment Strategy is an analysis of the local housing situation, a statement of the overall goals of the housing authority in tackling the situation and a strategy to achieve the goals over time.

The West Midlands Regional Housing Statement 2001 identifies key issues for the region, all of which are relevant to the scale of homelessness in the district and preventative activity:

- **Affordable Housing** – improving the access of all households to quality housing, recognising that the cost of quality housing is likely to continue to exceed the ability of some groups within the community to rent, or purchase housing supplied by the market
- **Supported Housing** – improving the access of households with special needs, or support needs to appropriate affordable housing
- **Housing Choice** – widening the choice of housing available in terms of quality, location and affordability
- **Housing Conditions** – improving the condition of the existing stock of housing to increase choice and deliver wider social and environmental benefits
- **Urban and Rural Renaissance** – contributing to the aim of focusing development on existing settlements and regenerating areas of deprivation
- **Economic Development** – supporting both the planning growth in the economy and assisting in the spread of resulting benefits to less advantaged sections of the community

## SOCIAL SERVICES

Strong strategic and operational links with Social Services are vital to the effective implementation of the Homelessness Strategy and preventative activity. The Code of Guidance to the Homelessness Act states:

*'Since a number of people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness will require social services support, it is unlikely that it would be possible for a housing authority to formulate an effective homelessness strategy without assistance from the Social Services authority.'*

*'In unitary authorities, the authority will need to ensure that the social services department assist the housing department in carrying out homelessness reviews and formulating and publishing homelessness strategies.'*

There are a number of Strategic Plans and Programmes produced by Social Services which the Homelessness Strategy will need to link to. These include:



- **Housing Plans for specific client groups** – many homeless people will have support needs and it is important that housing strategies for individual user groups and Homelessness Strategies are well integrated
- **Children and Young People’s Partnerships** – local Children’s and Young People’s Strategic Plans – particularly relevant to homeless young people and families with children
- **Quality Protects Programmes** – most young people leaving care will have support needs and Housing and Social Services should have joint protocols in place to ensure that these needs are met

## CONNEXIONS

The Connexions services offer advice, guidance and information services for young people on employment, education, training and personal development. Support and access to specialist services for young people who are not participating in learning is also provided. The Connexions service is well placed for identifying young people at risk of homelessness and in assisting access to preventative services.

## HEREFORDSHIRE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FORUM

Domestic violence is a major cause of homelessness in Herefordshire. The Herefordshire Domestic Violence Forum was established in May 1999. As part of its strategic role the Forum acts as the implementation group on domestic violence for the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy, which is produced by the Community Safety Partnership. The Forum also works very closely with the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) a multi-agency body that seeks to address the needs of vulnerable children in Herefordshire.

## HEREFORDSHIRE DRUG ACTION TEAM

The Drug Action Team and Herefordshire Family Drug Support have representation on the Homelessness Strategy Development Group and have also applied for membership of the Herefordshire Homelessness Forum.

The Drug Action Team ‘Communities Action Plan for 2003-04’ includes a section relating to housing and homelessness.

The Key Points for the DAT and partner agencies to plan and develop more effective services for homeless drug users are:

- Understanding the key issues: homelessness and drug use are closely linked.
- Planning a joint Drug and Homelessness Strategy.
- Building stronger links between drug treatment services, housing and homelessness service providers.
- Planning specialist services for homeless drug misusers.

- For the drug action team (DAT)/PCT to work in partnership with Strategic Housing to develop a comprehensive picture of the housing needs of drug misusers, with the aim of developing a range of housing solutions to meet the housing/support needs of this client group.
- Emergency accommodation available for stable users leaving remand, custody or rehab.
- Supported accommodation whilst in rehab.
- Floating housing support to maintain individual tenancies – this point and the above point should be linked.

## **CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION STRATEGY**

Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategies are relevant to Homelessness Strategies because some homeless people become trapped in a cycle of prison (often for minor offences) and insecure accommodation, ranging from moving between friends to rough sleeping. Ex-prisoners who become homeless are also much more likely to re-offend.

The priority actions for Herefordshire are to tackle:

- Alcohol related crime and disorder
- Anti-social behaviour
- Domestic violence
- Drugs and drug related crime

It is also recognised that for crime prevention work to be effective, young people must be engaged. Youth work is therefore, to be incorporated into each priority as a cross-cutting theme.

## **WORCESTERSHIRE AND HEREFORDSHIRE YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE**

Homelessness, or lack of satisfactory accommodation, is a significant factor linked to offending. There is substantial evidence showing that young people who are homeless are much more likely to offend again.

Young People in contact with the Youth Offending Service often have complex needs. They may be substance users, have mental health issues, be facing pressure associated with release from custody, lack family support and are often in contact with Social Services.

Given the highly complex needs and chaotic lifestyles of these young people they are often excluded from existing accommodation provision. For these reasons the Youth Offending Service has been recognised as an important partner in the development of the Homelessness Strategy and has been actively engaged.



## HEREFORDSHIRE HOMELESSNESS FORUM

Herefordshire Homelessness Forum is a vital partner in the Homelessness Strategy and formal links have been established to ensure that the Forum plays an active role in Strategy development, implementing its objectives and monitoring its effectiveness.



## CHAPTER 4 STRATEGY OUTCOME 1 AND ASSOCIATED TARGETS

### OUTCOMES AND TARGETS

Homelessness Strategies must include plans for the prevention of homelessness.

The Homelessness Strategy Development Group set the following Aim:

**To seek to reduce the amount of homelessness within the county through the identification and implementation of effective preventative programmes.**

This is in line with the Homelessness Directorate Advice Note to Local Authorities, 'Achieving Positive Outcomes on Homelessness' (April 2003), which recommends that Authorities consider adopting the following:

#### 1. Reduced Levels of Repeat Homelessness

A reduction in repeat homelessness is a target, which has been set in Herefordshire's Local Public Service Agreement.

#### 2. Reduced Levels of Homelessness Against Main Causes.

'Homeless prevention in these circumstances may be defined as 'activities that enable a household to remain in their current home, where appropriate, or that provide options to enable a planned and timely move and help to sustain independent living.'

Homelessness has inevitably damaging and sometime long-term consequences for the families and individuals that it affects. It can impact on physical and mental health, disrupt employment and children's education and have a detrimental effect on well being and life opportunities.

There are unacceptably high levels of homelessness in Herefordshire and the Strategy Development Group are committed to preventing this happening wherever it is possible to do so. The following Strategy outcome has therefore, been set:



**HOMELESS STRATEGY OUTCOME 1:  
TO REDUCE THE LEVELS OF HOMELESSNESS IN THE COUNTY**

**CURRENT ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES AIMED AT HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION<sup>3</sup>:**

- Countywide Women's Aid Outreach and Resettlement Support Service for women and their children affected by domestic abuse
- SHYP Countywide Outreach Support Project – supports 50 young people to retain their accommodation and get into training and employment
- SHYP – Lone Parent Outreach Worker
- SHYP – Schools Project (Housing, Homelessness and Leaving Home)
- SHYP – Nightstop scheme
- Countywide floating support service for people with mental health problems
- Herefordshire Council Mortgage Rescue and Low Cost Home Ownership Scheme
- Provision of 7 units of transitional supported housing for people with long term mental health problems
- Provision of 4 self-contained units of accommodation, which provide settled housing with support for people with serious mental health problems
- Methods of Delivery Pilot Telephone Advice Line – funded by the Legal Services Commission and delivered by Shelter West Midlands
- Herefordshire Housing Floating Support Worker for homeless people in temporary accommodation aimed at assessing support needs, accessing services to provide for these needs and enabling successful re-settlement
- Herefordshire Homelessness Forum – priority activities directed towards the prevention of homelessness:
  - Facilitate research into substance misuse and homelessness (linked to Drug Action Team)
  - Look into preventative work on homelessness awareness issues in schools

---

<sup>3</sup> More detailed information of existing preventative activity is contained in the Homelessness Review document – Chapter 4

# HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

- Establish and maintain links with similar forums in the region to share information and good practice
- Respond to the findings of the independent research conducted by Dr Joan Smith, Staffordshire University
- Produce regular press releases to highlight the work of homeless agencies in the county
- Herefordshire Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Team
- Herefordshire Housing Tenancy Support Worker
- Herefordshire Council (Registration of Houses in Multiple Occupation) Control and Special Control Schemes 1999
- Traveller Liaison Service
- Anchor Staying Put Scheme
- Full House Furniture Project
- Provision of 'Starter Packs' for homeless young people

## **PRIORITIES**

- Reduce the numbers of young people becoming homeless from the parental home, which is a major cause of homelessness in the county.
- Ensure there is an adequate supply of accommodation for care leavers and other young people.
- Reduce the number of repeat homelessness households.
- Prevent people becoming homeless due to their anti-social behaviour.
- Reduce the number of Young Offenders, who are at risk of homelessness due to their offending behaviour
- Understand in more detail the reasons for homelessness through Termination of Assured Shorthold Tenancies and identify if there are any preventative measures, which could be implemented. This is a major cause of homelessness for families with dependent children in the county.
- Reduce the numbers of people becoming homeless for other reasons, wherever it is possible to do so.
- Ensure the provision of high quality housing advice and more effective promotion of advice services aimed at preventing homelessness occurring.



## KEY ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THIS:

- Identify funding sources to set up and implement a pilot mediation service for young people becoming homeless from the parental home.
- Provision of an additional floating Homelessness Support Worker.
  - The Floating Support Service aims to provide appropriate and effective support to homeless households in temporary accommodation, which help them retain that accommodation, identify any specialist support needs and enable successful and sustained resettlement into permanent accommodation.
- Continue to investigate opportunities for the provision of free independent specialist housing advice in the county
  - Preliminary discussions with Shelter West Midlands has established that, whilst the provision of a 'satellite office' serving Herefordshire is not feasible at present, there is commitment to engage in negotiations for such provision within a five year time frame.
  - Herefordshire has not yet been prioritised by the Legal Services Commission for the development of housing advice services. Herefordshire will continue to lobby for funding to meet this identified need, and will continue to work with the Legal Services Commission to review the need for such advice service.
- Development of a Housing Advice Strategy
  - There is a need for a separate Housing Advice Strategy for the county, which will review existing housing advice services and identify mechanisms for maximising the effectiveness of housing advice services in the prevention of homelessness.
- Undertake research on the operation of the private rented sector in Herefordshire to identify if there is any preventative activity, which could be implemented.
- Provision of Supported Transitional Housing for Care Leavers through the Supporting People programme within the 2003/04 financial year
  - The Supporting People Strategy and a Project Brief prepared by the After Care Team (February 2002) clearly demonstrated significant unmet need for supported housing for young people leaving care.
  - The identified unmet need is for 4 self-contained single person units and 1 two-person unit to provide transitional housing for up to 2 years. It is estimated that up to 10 hours per week housing related support would be required to supplement the services provided by the After Care Team.
  - These young people will require support to move-on from transitional to settled accommodation therefore, 3 whole time equivalent workers would be required to deliver an effective re-settlement and homeless preventative scheme.

# HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

- Provision of 6 units of supported transitional housing, through the Supporting People Programme, for women and their children who have more complex issues as a consequence of their exposure to domestic violence.
  - The supported transitional housing will enable these issues to be addressed and promote effective and sustained re-settlement.
- With a lead from Herefordshire Women's Aid, work towards the provision of a 24 hour advocacy support service. Advocacy workers would accompany the police to domestic violence incidents to provide immediate support and information to the victim. Out of hours this service to be delivered by multi-agency volunteers, with appropriate support at all times.
- Work with the Youth Offending Team with the intention of developing specialist supported lodgings and specialist floating support for young offenders and with providers to increase intensively supported housing opportunities
- Undertake research to establish the extent of the support required by Travellers who are choosing to move into the county's social housing stock.
  - As previously identified Herefordshire appears to have a much higher than average Traveller population, currently estimated at 5% and consisting of both 'New Age' Travellers and Romany Travellers.
- Discuss with RSLs working in the district the possibility of providing a furnished tenancy option as this can help to prevent repeat homelessness.
- Look at the feasibility of undertaking a pilot 'Homelessness to Home' service in the county, such as those currently operated by Shelter.
- Undertake a rough sleepers count during the summer of 2003 and identify what services are needed to reduce the numbers of rough sleepers in the county
- Implement more effective measures to quantify the extent of rural homelessness, particularly 'hidden homelessness.' This can be achieved by using the methodology recommended by David Robinson, 'Estimating Homelessness in Rural Areas – A Step by Step Guide' (November 2002).



## TARGETS FOR OUTCOME 1 AND HOW WE WILL MEASURE THIS

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS	SMART TARGETS
<p><b>Objective</b> Reduce the numbers of people becoming homeless from the parental home</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of people who become homeless from the parental home per annum and are accepted as being in priority need and unintentionally homeless</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A 10% reduction by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective</b> Reduce the numbers of repeat homeless households</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number and proportion of those households assessed as in priority need, are found to be unintentionally homeless and are re-housed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No more than 1% of homeless acceptances per annum to be repeat homeless cases</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective</b> Ensure there is sufficient support for people who are, or who may become homeless (e.g. Care-Leavers)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number and proportion of accepted homeless households receiving housing related support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A 100% increase, by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2004, in the number of hours of floating support provided to homeless households in temporary accommodation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective</b> Enable access to affordable and/or appropriate housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of additional RSL rented stock available to rent in the county</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development of 103 additional RSL rented properties to be advertised and let via Home Point during the 2003-04 financial year</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective</b> Enable access to low cost home ownership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of additional new scheme low cost shared ownership properties becoming available to low income households</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development of an additional 27 shared ownership properties becoming available during the 2003-04 financial year</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective</b> Enable access to low cost home ownership for people with learning disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of shared ownership properties accessed by people with learning disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A 100% increase in the number of shared ownership properties accessed by people with learning disabilities</li> </ul>



## CHAPTER 5 STRATEGY OUTCOME 2 AND ASSOCIATED TARGETS

Homelessness Strategies must include plans for ensuring that there is sufficient accommodation available for people who are, or who may become homeless.

The Homelessness Strategy Development Group set the following Aims:

To reduce the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless households by developing more suitable forms of temporary accommodation.

And:

To ensure there is sufficient accommodation available for people who are, or who may become homeless.

This is in line with the Homelessness Directorate Advice Note to Local Authorities, 'Achieving Positive Outcomes on Homelessness' (April 2003), which recommends that Authorities consider adopting the following:

### **'Reduced inappropriate use of Temporary Accommodation'**

The following Strategy Outcome has therefore, been set:

### **HOMELESS STRATEGY OUTCOME 2: TO REDUCE THE USE OF BED AND BREAKFAST ACCOMMODATION AS TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION FOR HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS**

#### **CURRENT ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES AIMED AT PREVENTING THE USE OF BED AND BREAKFAST ACCOMMODATION**

- Homeless Support Service
  - Provision of 35 units of supported self-contained temporary accommodation through the conversion of 2 blocks of 2 bedroom properties – provision primarily for homeless families.
  - 10 flats are fully furnished for allocation to homelessness households who do not have their own furniture.
  - Floating Support provision – aims to assess, provide and access additional specialist support to enable sustained resettlement and prevent homelessness reoccurring.
  - Where, unavoidably, temporary accommodation is provided away from current health care the Floating Support Worker will assist households to access GPs and Health Visitors on a temporary basis.



- A communal building is planned at the scheme, which will be available to all households in temporary accommodation. The facility will act as a resource for the provision of support and social activities. Including training, advice surgeries and childcare provision.
- Other designated temporary accommodation provision:
  - 9 geographically dispersed self-contained houses located in larger villages and in the market town of Ross-on-Wye.
  - 11 x 3 bedroom properties at Ross on Wye, which were purpose built as temporary accommodation for homeless families. The properties are all unfurnished and are owned and managed by the Salvation Army Housing Association.
- 16 private sector leased properties for use as temporary accommodation, all located in Hereford City.
- Provision of new social housing – 133 properties built during 2002 - 03.
- Special needs refurbishment projects:
  - 9 units of transitional housing for 16-25 year olds in Ross-on-Wye – SHYP.
  - 9 units of transitional housing for people with history of offending and/or substance misuse problems in Hereford City – Stonham Housing Association.
  - 1 unit of sheltered accommodation – Abbeyfield Society.
- Empty properties brought back into use:
  - 9 units of transitional housing for 16-25 year olds – SHYP.
  - 6 units of settled housing with support for people with serious mental health problems – St John Kemble and MIND.
- 27 properties purchased through Low Cost Home Ownership Schemes during 2002-03 – Homebuy and DIYSO schemes.

## **PRIORITIES:**

- Development of supported temporary accommodation for homeless vulnerable single people.
  - The identification of homelessness need and the audit of existing provision clearly established a gap in current service provision for vulnerable single homeless people both in terms of access to managed temporary accommodation and appropriate support services.
- Development of a specialist supported housing project for homeless 16-17 year olds.

# HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

- Identify the means through which more comprehensive information on the needs of single non-priority homeless households can be obtained, in particular the extent to which they are having to access low quality bed and breakfast accommodation.
- Investigate the feasibility of increasing the supply of private sector leased properties for use as temporary accommodation for homeless households

## KEY ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THIS:

- Negotiations are currently underway with Stonham Housing Association to develop intensively managed and supported housing for vulnerable single homeless people as an alternative to 'bed and breakfast' and hostel accommodation.
  - The intended scheme will remodel an existing, but outdated hostel into 21 self-contained units, with an appropriate level of staffing to ensure that people are fully supported to enable them to develop the skills, motivation and confidence to move-on to and retain settled housing.
  - Effective links will need to be made with other specialist floating support providers and the Homelessness Support Service to ensure uninterrupted support provision and prevent homelessness re-occurring.
- Investigate best practice initiatives for the provision of supported temporary housing for vulnerable 16-17 years and identify funding opportunities.
- Identify if the direct access night shelter in Hereford City is sufficient and of an appropriate standard for the numbers of non-priority need single homeless men wanting to gain access, or if other types of provision and assistance are wanted and required.



## TARGETS FOR OUTCOME 2 AND MEASUREMENT

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS	SMART TARGETS
<p><b>Objective</b> Reduced use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation through the provision of alternative supported temporary accommodation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of people placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation for the financial year 2004-05 and onwards (NB The temporary accommodation will be remodelled from an existing bedsit scheme to provide high quality supported self contained flats. The scheme will be ready for occupancy in Sept 2004 - opportunities to extensively reduce the use of B &amp; B accommodation prior to this are therefore limited.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No households placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation except in an emergency</li> </ul> <p>NB. The parameters of what constitutes an emergency will be clearly defined</p>

## CHAPTER 6 STRATEGY OUTCOME 3 AND ASSOCIATED TARGETS

The voluntary and statutory sectors and other agencies concerned with homelessness and homelessness prevention in Herefordshire are highly committed to ensuring effective joint work and set this as a Strategy Aim.

This is fundamental if we are to implement successful preventative activities and address the issues of homelessness in the county. The following Strategy Outcome has therefore, been set:

### **HOMELESS STRATEGY OUTCOME 3: TO IMPROVE JOINT WORKING ACROSS THE VOLUNTARY AND STATUTORY SECTORS AND OTHER AGENCIES CONCERNED WITH HOMELESSNESS TO ENABLE A MORE CO-ORDINATED AND EFFECTIVE RESPONSE**

#### **CURRENT ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES INVOLVING JOINT WORKING**

- Homelessness Agency Agreement
- Herefordshire Homelessness Forum
- SHYP – Schools Project (Housing, Homelessness and Leaving Home)
- Domestic Violence Protocol
- Multi-Agency Protocols for the Management of Potentially Dangerous Offenders

#### **PRIORITIES**

- Ensure that the needs of homeless people are considered in the development of strategies, plans and policies across statutory and voluntary bodies and partner organisations
- Ensure existing services are working together effectively and coherently and are meeting the needs of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Promote the involvement of RSLs working in the district in the provision of temporary accommodation for homeless households and homelessness prevention
- Ensure that the health needs of people who are homeless are identified and provided for



## KEY ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THIS

- Ensure that the needs of homeless people are considered in the development of strategies, plans and policies across statutory and voluntary bodies and partner organisations through:
  - Providing input into strategy / policy development processes through Senior Management Team structures across the council and external strategic links through the Herefordshire Plan Ambition Groups
  - Continuing to review the Homelessness Strategy in the light of other relevant developing Strategies and Plans, including those produced by the council itself and by partner agencies
- Appointment of a Housing Advocacy Development Worker to ensure that vulnerable people have maximum access to the Choice Based Lettings Scheme. The post holder will have the following prime responsibilities:
  - Engage the full range of statutory and voluntary service providers to maximise their roles and skills in ensuring vulnerable households are either prevented from becoming homeless, or can access housing or advice appropriate to their needs.
  - Develop appropriate mechanisms, in partnership with care and support providers, to ensure that vulnerable people are fully assisted in accessing the Choice Based Lettings scheme and any support or advice they need to successfully maintain a tenancy.
  - Identification of service gaps and development opportunities for partnership working and policy development linking to the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy.
  - Work closely with Herefordshire Housing's Homelessness Support Workers on developing services to prevent repeat homelessness amongst vulnerable households and in preventing the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for this specific group.
- Improving information about agency roles and responsibilities and identifying opportunities for enhanced joint work through holding an Agency Awareness / Training Day
  - Agency Awareness / Training Day
  - Through the development of a Supported Housing and Homelessness Mapping Database
- Implement mechanisms for closer joint working between Drug Agencies working in the county and homelessness and housing advice services.
  - Consultation with Homelessness Officers and Herefordshire Drug Action Team (Communities Group) has identified a need for more effective referral processes, closer working and reciprocal training to promote mutual understanding between drug agencies working in the county and the Housing Agency.

# HOMELINESS STRATEGY

- Review the existing joint Housing and Social Services Protocol for homeless 16 and 17 year olds. The levels of homelessness of these very young people are unacceptably high in the county
- Develop and implement a joint Housing and Social Services Protocol for Care Leavers. The main Department of Health document 'Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 – Regulations and Guidance,' states that:
  - *'The housing needs of care leavers should be addressed before they leave care and arrangements made for joint assessment between social service and housing authorities, as part of the multi-agency assessment on which an individual after-care plan, or pathway plan should be based.'* and
  - *'It is important that local housing departments and social services departments have joint protocols in place for dealing with care leavers, to ensure that housing and social services each play a full role in providing support to these young people.'*
- Development of a joint Housing and Social Services Protocol for early intervention where families with children are at risk of homelessness.
- Development of a joint protocol between Housing Services and Health Services for the discharge of homeless people leaving hospital. The Department of Health publication 'Discharge from Hospital: Pathway, Process and Practice' May 2003 states that,
  - *'All acute hospitals should have formal admission and discharge policies, which will ensure that homeless people are identified on admission and their pending discharge notified to relevant primary healthcare services and to homeless services providers. In addition, for patients in psychiatric hospitals / units a post-discharge care plan will need be drawn up well in advance of discharge and procedures put in place to ensure appropriate accommodation and continuity of care is in place for each person discharged'.*
- Development of a joint Protocol between Housing Services and the Probation Service for the assessment and referral of ex-offenders to the Homelessness Service. In addition a greater mutual understanding of the respective legislative regimes, processes and procedures of the Homelessness Agency and the Probation Service is needed.
- Improving the quality and consistency of homelessness data collection, with the aim of identifying the true extent of homelessness in the county. This is crucial to the establishment of a multi-agency monitoring and evaluation process. This will be achieved through:
  - Agreeing and implementing a Common Monitoring System for local agencies, with unique identifiers for individual clients. Common monitoring systems eliminate multiple counting of homelessness households and those at risk of homelessness, as well as identifying those who may not make an approach to the local authority.
- Work with those RSLs, who are not currently providing temporary accommodation for homeless households, to increase the supply in areas of the county where there is insufficient or inadequate provision.



- Work with RSLs in the county to ensure that they are fully engaged in homelessness prevention services, including those directed towards prevention of eviction for arrears or anti-social behaviour
- Ensure that the health needs of people who are homeless are identified and provided for by:
  - Enabling, wherever possible, for homeless households to be provided with temporary accommodation that is as close as possible to current GP
  - Recording information about GP registration of all households who are assessed as homeless
  - Ensure that Homeless Support Workers provide assistance to households in temporary accommodation to access health services, including GP and Health Visitor provision
- Ensure that the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan is reviewed and re-produced annually as part of the annual Monitoring and Evaluation process
- With partner agencies carry out a comprehensive Annual Strategy Review in line with the legislative requirement to keep the Strategy under review

## TARGETS FOR OUTCOME 3 AND MEASUREMENT

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS	SMART TARGETS
<p><b>Objective</b> Enable existing services and agencies to work more effectively and coherently together to meet the needs of homeless people and those at risk of homelessness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of vulnerable people who are supported in accessing appropriate accommodation through Herefordshire Home Point</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A 10% increase by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004 in the number of vulnerable people receiving advocacy support to access accommodation through Home Point Herefordshire</li> </ul>

## CHAPTER 7 THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROCESS

### INTRODUCTION

The Strategy Development Group consider that, due to the short time scale for the development of the Strategy and the significant issues that have been identified there will be an Annual Review and Development process and an Annual Action Plan.

**As part of this process we will consider current Strategy Outcomes and Performance targets and add to these, or make them more stringent as appropriate.**

The Annual Review will enable:

- The regular and consistent monitoring of performance against targets
- An evaluation of the effectiveness of the Strategy
- The tracking of homelessness trend data and preventative activity

This will be timetabled to correspond with, and be consistent with, that relating to the Supporting People programme. The Homelessness Strategy will be modified and published, should this be necessary, to reflect the findings of the Annual Review.

### THE ANNUAL REVIEW PROCESS

- The setting up of a small Review Team made up of staff representing key statutory and voluntary agencies, Herefordshire Homelessness Forum and housing providers in the county. This will replace the existing Strategy Editorial Group and will meet quarterly.
- The remit of the Review Team will be to:
  - Monitor and evaluate performance against identified outcomes and targets
  - Monitor Strategy implementation against the Action Plan
  - Monitor statistical data relating to homelessness activity in the county
  - Make recommendations in the light of the monitoring and evaluation process
- A quarterly evaluation report will be submitted to the Chair of the Herefordshire Homelessness Forum
- A quarterly evaluation report on the results will be submitted to the Head of Strategic Housing



- An annual evaluation report will be submitted to members of the wider Strategy Development Group. This Group will meet annually as a means of maintaining consultation on Strategy implementation and effectiveness
- A lead person will be appointed with responsibility for co-ordination and ensuring compliance with the above
- Scrutiny Committee Programme

#### **FINALLY**

The Strategy sets out the ways in which we will address the substantial homelessness problem in our county. This will inevitably be a long term and developing process, which will require an imaginative and flexible approach and the continued commitment and energy of our voluntary sector partners.



**HEREFORDSHIRE HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY  
ACTION PLAN 2003 - 2004**

**STRATEGY OUTCOME 1 – TO REDUCE THE LEVELS OF HOMELESSNESS IN HEREFORDSHIRE**

<b>OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)</b>	<b>Key Actions (to achieve this)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Time Scale</b>	<b>Lead &amp; Links</b>
1. Reduce the numbers of young people becoming homeless from the parental home	a) Identify funding sources to set up and implement a pilot mediation service. Linked to this, consider the development of a pilot 'homeless at home' scheme for 16-17 year olds enhanced by the provision of support and mediation services.	Pilot scheme to be funded by Supporting People Grant. Will need to seek additional funding for early intervention mediation.	Commission by the 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2003	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Herefordshire Housing, Social Services, Connexions Service, other floating support providers, mediation service providers
	b) Continue to work with SHYP on the Schools Project aimed at homelessness prevention through raising awareness of housing and leaving home issues	Commitment to assist SHYP in the identification of continued funding	Ongoing	Lead: SHYP  Links: LEA, Strategic Housing Services, Homelessness Agency (currently Herefordshire Housing)

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
2. Reduce the numbers of repeat homeless households	a) Provision of an additional floating Homelessness Support Worker <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Develop &amp; implement procedures to identify the support needs and resettlement needs of homeless households &amp; ensure these needs are met</li> <li>➤ Provide support to ensure that the health and educational needs of single homeless people and homeless families are met</li> <li>➤ Implement procedures to monitor homeless households satisfaction with resettlement support</li> </ul>	Supporting People grant allocation to recruit two Floating Support Workers	Ongoing	Lead: Homelessness Agency  Links: Strategic Housing Services, other providers of specialist support services, LEA, PCT
	b) Identify the main causes of repeat homelessness and target preventative activity	Existing resources	Ongoing	Lead: Strategic Housing Services / Homelessness Agency  Links: All providers of social housing, providers of specialist support services, Herefordshire Homelessness Forum (HHF)
	c) Look at the feasibility of implementing a pilot 'Homelessness to Home' scheme such as those operated by Shelter	Existing	By 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2003	Lead: Strategic Housing  Links: Shelter, Homelessness Agency, all providers of specialist support services, HHF, Health Providers, LEA, RSLs

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
	d) Discuss with RSLs the feasibility of providing a furnished tenancy option in the county	Resource implications for RSLs in setting up a scheme, but ultimately self-finding	Identify potential by 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services Links: All general needs RSLs
3. Ensure young people do not become homeless when leaving the 'looked after' system.	a) Develop 6 units of supported transitional housing for young people leaving care. Implement effective re-settlement & repeat homeless prevention through the provision of 3 whole time support & resettlement workers.	Supporting People Grant, Housing Corporation / Council Capital Development funding	Completion by April 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services – Supporting People Team, Enabling Team  Links: Social Services – Children's Services, Aftercare Team
	b) Develop and implement a joint Housing and Social Services Protocol for Care Leavers (Links to Objective 14e)	Existing	By 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2003	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Social Services – Children's Services, Aftercare Team, Homelessness Agency, all general needs RSLs

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
<p>4. Ensure that women &amp; their children with more complex issues arising from their exposure to domestic violence have access to appropriate housing and support</p>	<p>a) Provision of 6 units of supported transitional housing to enable these more complex issues to be addressed to promote effective and sustained resettlement</p>	<p>Housing Corporation Approved Development Funding 2003/04 £415,000</p> <p>Supporting People Funding £55,000</p>	<p>Start on site by April 2004</p>	<p>Lead: Women's Aid, St John Kemble Housing Association</p> <p>Links: Strategic Housing Services – Supporting People Team, Enabling Team</p>
	<p>b) Work towards the provision of a 24 hour advocacy support service to enable fully trained advocates to accompany the police to domestic violence incidents</p>	<p>To be identified</p>	<p>Project6 Plan by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2004</p>	<p>Lead: Herefordshire Women's Aid</p> <p>Links: Police, all members of the Domestic Violence Forum, Victim Support, Health and Social Services, Strategic Housing</p>
<p>5. Identify if there are any preventative measures which could be implemented to reduce the numbers of households becoming homeless due to termination of Assured Shorthold Tenancy</p>	<p>a) Undertake research on the operation of the private rented sector in Herefordshire</p>	<p>Existing</p>	<p>Complete by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2004</p>	<p>Lead: Strategic Housing Services – Enabling Team</p> <p>Links: Homelessness Agency, Private Sector Landlords Fair, Lettings Agents</p>

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
6. Identify people at risk of homelessness and target assistance	a) Develop joint Housing and Social Services protocol for homeless 16 and 17 year olds and those at risk of homelessness (Links to Objective 1a and to Objective 14f)	Existing	By 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2003	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Social Services – Children’s Services, Aftercare Team, Homelessness Agency, Youth Services, Connexions, all general needs RSLs
	b) Develop a joint Housing and Social Services protocol for early intervention where families with children are at risk of homelessness (Links to Objective 6c and Objective 14g)	Existing	Complete by 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Social Services – Children’s Services, Aftercare Team, Homelessness Agency, specialist support providers, all general needs RSLs
	c) On the basis of the above protocol work with RSLs and/or acquire a small number of private sector leased properties to provide intensively supported transitional housing for families, with dependent children, found to be intentionally homeless. The support to be directed towards resolving the problems which lead to homelessness and enable move on to sustained settled housing	Existing	Develop an outline scheme by 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services – Supporting People Team, Enabling Team  Links: Social Services – Children’s Services, Aftercare Team, Homelessness Agency, all general needs RSLs, specialist support providers

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
	d) Develop a joint Housing and Health Services protocol for the discharge of homeless people leaving hospital (Links to Objective 14i)	Existing	Draft Protocol agreed by 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services Links: Acute Trust, Homelessness Agency, Social Services – Adults Teams, all general needs RSLs
	e) Promote the involvement of other RSLs in the county in the Multi-Agency Protocol for the Management of Potentially Dangerous Offenders (Herefordshire Housing is already a partner agency)	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: West Mercia Police, Strategic Housing Services / RSL Forum Links: all general needs RSLs, Probation Service,
	f) Develop a joint Housing and Probation Services protocol for the assessment & referral of ex-offenders to homeless services (Links to Objective 14h)	Existing	Draft Protocol agreed by 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services Links: Probation Service, Homelessness Agency, support providers for ex-offenders
	g) Implement mechanisms for closer joint work between Drug Agencies working in the county and homelessness and housing advice services to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Develop more effective referral process to housing and homelessness services</li> <li>➤ Undertake reciprocal training</li> </ul> (Links to Objective 14d)	Existing	Agree procedures by 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services Links: Drug Action Team (Communities Group), DASH (Drug Action Services Herefordshire), Homelessness Agency, PCT, HHF

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
	h) Encourage private sector landlords / agents and RSLs to develop an early warning systems for potential tenancy failure and make appropriate referrals for homeless prevention	Existing	Commence discussion by 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2004 and timetable completion of draft procedures	Lead: Strategic Housing Services – Enabling Team / RSL Forum  Links: Private Sector Landlords, Lettings Agents, all RSLs, Homelessness Agency, support providers
	i) Review arrangements for pursuing landlords who harass and / or illegally evict tenants	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: Strategic Housing Services / Homelessness Agency  Links: Private Sector Landlords Fair
	j) Continue to support the Mortgage Rescue Scheme	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: Elgar Housing Association, Strategic House – Enabling Team  Links: Homelessness Agency

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
7. Ensure housing management practices of all social landlords work to prevent homelessness and repeat homelessness where possible	a) Work to prevent / resolve harassment that might otherwise end in homelessness. This will include people being harassed because of their race, sexuality or mental health problems b) Work to promote arrears resolution services amongst RSLs operating in the county to actively prevent homelessness from social housing, such as that implemented by Herefordshire Housing c) Work to promote anti-social behaviour resolution services amongst RSLs operating in the county to actively prevent homelessness from social housing, such as that implemented by Herefordshire Housing	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Homelessness Agency & Herefordshire Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Team, all RSLs, Herefordshire Race Equality Partnership, Police, RSL Tenants Groups, Herefordshire Tenants Federation
8. Ensure there is sufficient support available for people who are, or who may become homeless	a) Development of a county wide floating support scheme for people with mental health problems	Supporting People Grant	Achieved	Lead: Herefordshire MIND  Links: Strategic Housing Services - Supporting People Team, Integrated Mental Health Team, service users

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
	b) Development of a county wide floating support scheme for women and their children at risk of, or experiencing domestic violence	Supporting People Grant	Achieved	Lead: Herefordshire Women's Aid  Links: Strategic Housing Services – Supporting People Team, Homelessness Agency, general needs RSLs, Police, service users
	c) Provision of housing related floating support to teenage parents to enable successful maintenance of the tenancy	Supporting People Grant	Achieved	Lead: SHYP  Links: Strategic Housing Services – Supporting People Team, Herefordshire Teenage Pregnancy Strategy Group, general needs RSLs, service users
	d) Provision of housing related floating support for young people at potential risk of homelessness to enable successful maintenance of tenancy	Supporting People Grant	Achieved	Lead: SHYP  Links: Strategic Housing Services– Supporting People Team, general needs RSLs, Social Services – Children's Services, service users
	e) Undertake research to establish the extent of the support required by Travellers, who are choosing to move into the county's social housing stock	To be identified	Commission research during 2004-05 financial year	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Council's Environment Directorate, Traveller Liaison Group, general needs RSLs

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
9. Identify and reduce the numbers of rough sleepers in the county and 'hidden homeless' households	a) Undertake a rough sleepers count for the county	Existing	Overdue (completion timetabled for July 2003)	Lead: Strategic Housing Services - Enabling Team  Links: HHF, Open Door Project, Shelter
	b) Work with the Open Door Project to establish effective means for identifying the needs of rough sleepers and the services required to enable a reduction in numbers	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: Strategic Housing Services, Open Door  Links: HHF
	c) Enhance awareness of homelessness and housing advice services for people in contact with rough sleepers e.g. police	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: HHF, Local Police, Hope Scott House, Diocese
	d) Implement more effective measures to quantify the extent of rural homelessness, particularly 'hidden homelessness' by using the methodology recommended by David Robinson, 'Estimating Homelessness in Rural Areas.' (November 2002)	Existing	Implement by 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Homelessness Agency, local voluntary organisations, RSLs
10. Enable access to affordable and/or appropriate housing	a) Continue to implement affordable housing programmes to increase the supply of good quality rented housing for those in housing need and set achievement targets	Local Authority Capital Investment, Housing Corporation Capital Investment	Ongoing via Annual Development Programme	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: RSLs  NB 5 Year Capital Investment Plan refers

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
	b) Continue to promote and enable access to Low Cost Home Ownership Schemes in the county and set achievement targets	Local Authority Capital Investment, Housing Corporation Capital Investment	Ongoing via Annual Development Programme	Lead: Strategic Housing Services, Elgar Housing Association  Links: Homelessness Agency, Home Point Herefordshire, general needs RSLs
	c) Continue to enable people with learning disabilities to access to Low Cost Home Ownership	Housing Corporation Capital Investment, Supporting People Grant	An additional 5 units by March 2004 & then 5 units p.a. on an ongoing basis until March 2006	Lead: Strategic Housing Services, Integrated Adult Learning Disability Team  Links: SOLD (Shared Ownership for people with Learning Disabilities)
	d) Enable people with serious and enduring mental illness to access Low Cost Home Ownership	Housing Corporation Capital Investment 2004-05, Supporting People Grant	5 units by March 2005	Lead: Strategic Housing Services, Integrated Mental Health Team  Links: OWN Home Scheme, Advance Housing Support Ltd
	e) Continue to bring empty properties back into use for general needs housing and specialist provision and set achievement targets	Multiple: Private Sector Funding, Local Authority Capital Funding, Housing Corporation Funding	Ongoing	Lead: Strategic Housing Services – Enabling Team  Links: Private Sector Landlords, RSLs, Empty Homes Agency, Private Sector Housing Team, Empty Homes Strategy 2002-05

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
	f) Continue to improve the quality and safety of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in the county through the Herefordshire Council (Registration of Houses in Multiple Occupation) Control and Special Control Schemes 1999 and set achievement targets	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: Strategic Housing Services – Private Sector Housing  Links: Private Sector Landlords, Lettings Agents, Private Sector Landlords Fair
	g) Ensure that vulnerable homeless households have support to ensure equality of access to the Home Point Choice Based Lettings system through the appointment of a Housing Advocacy Development Worker (Links to Objective 15a)	ODPM Revenue Grant £28,000	Immediate	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Home Point Herefordshire, all housing related support providers, Homelessness Agency, Social Services teams
	h) Develop 4 units of supported settled housing for people with serious mental health problems	Housing Corporation Capital Grant, Supporting People Grant	Achieved	Lead: St John Kemble Housing Association, Herefordshire MIND  Links: Strategic Housing Services, Integrated Mental Health Service
	i) Develop a supported housing scheme for people recovering from alcohol misuse	Local Authority Capital Grant	Identify and acquire site by March 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Stonham Housing Association

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
	j) Develop 9 additional units of supported accommodation for young people between the ages of 16 – 25 years	Local Authority Capital Grant, Private Sector Funding	Achieved	Lead: SHYP  Links: Strategic Housing Service – Enabling Team, Homelessness Agency, youth workers and organisations
11. Ensure the provision of high quality housing advice and more effective promotion of services aimed at homelessness prevention	a) Review existing housing advice services and identify mechanisms for maximising the effectiveness of housing advice in the prevention of homelessness	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Homelessness Agency, CAB, Newton Farm Community Advice Centre, Info in Herefordshire, Shelter, Herefordshire Community Legal Services Partnership
	b) Identify and agree ways in which the quality of housing advice provided by the Homelessness Agency can be routinely monitored	Existing	By 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Homelessness Agency, Service Users
	c) From the above, plan the development and implementation of a separate Housing Advice Strategy for the county	To be identified in 2004-05 Action Plan	To be identified in 2004-05 Action Plan	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Homelessness Agency, HHF, voluntary agency advice providers

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
	d) Ensure that information and advice work is equally accessible to all through the consideration of barriers to language and of cultural sensitivities	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Homelessness Agency, Race Equality Development Officer, Herefordshire Race Equality Partnership
	e) Ensure that information and advice work is equally accessible to all through the consideration of people with low levels of literacy, learning or other disabilities	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Homelessness Agency, specialist support and advocacy organisations
	f) Review the quality, content and comprehensiveness of homelessness and housing advice on the council's website and identify opportunities for improvement	Existing	By 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Herefordshire IT Services, Homelessness Agency, HHF
	g) Discuss with partner agencies opportunities for signposting / promoting homelessness and housing advice services on their websites	Existing	By 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Homelessness Agency, general needs RSLs, supported housing providers, voluntary organisation providers of homelessness prevention services

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
	h) Continue to investigate opportunities for the provision of a free independent specialist housing advice service	Explore funding opportunities from Legal Services Partnership	Ongoing	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Herefordshire Legal Services Partnership, Shelter
	i) Promote the availability of the Methods of Delivery Pilot Telephone Advice Line, funded by the Legal Services Commission and delivered by Shelter	Non required	Ongoing	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Homelessness Agency, Info in Herefordshire, HHF, Shelter
	j) Promote the availability of Shelter line locally	Non required	Ongoing	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Homelessness Agency, Info in Herefordshire, HHF, Shelter
12. Identify means through which the employment and training needs of homeless and previously homeless people can be met	a) Work through existing strategic links, agencies concerned with employment and training, the Homelessness Support Workers and with homeless people, or those who have been homeless to identify potential for employment projects linked to homelessness, for example the provision of a train and build development for homeless people	Existing, but potential for Local Authority Capital Funding, Housing Corporation Capital Funding	Approved Development Programme 2004-05	Lead: Strategic Housing – Enabling Section  Links: General needs RSLs, Connexions, employment and training agencies, service users

## STRATEGY OUTCOME 1: INDICATORS AND TARGETS

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS	SMART TARGETS
Objective 1: Reduce the numbers of people becoming homeless from the parental home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people who become homeless from the parental home per annum and are accepted as being in priority need and unintentionally homeless</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A 10% reduction by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005 (Baseline data for 2002-03 = 90 cases)</li> </ul>
Objective 2: Reduce the numbers of repeat homeless households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and proportion of those households assessed as in priority need, are found to be unintentionally homeless and are re-housed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ No more than 1% of homeless acceptances per annum to be repeat homeless cases</li> </ul> <p>NB the definition of 'repeat homelessness' will be clearly defined.</p>
Objective 8: Ensure there is sufficient support for people who are, or who may become homeless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and proportion of accepted homeless households receiving housing related support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A 100% increase, by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2004, in the numbers of hours of floating support provided to homeless households in temporary accommodation (this will represent an increase to 68 hours per week) (baseline data: number of hours currently provided = 34)</li> <li>➤</li> </ul>
Objective 10: Enable access to affordable and/or appropriate housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of additional RSL rented stock available to rent in the county</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The development of 103 additional RSL rented properties to let during the 2003-04 financial year</li> </ul>
Objective 10: Enable access to low cost home ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of additional new scheme low cost shared ownership properties becoming available to low income households</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The development of an additional 27 shared ownership properties becoming available during the 2003-04 financial year</li> </ul>

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS	SMART TARGETS
Objective 10: Enable access to low cost home ownership for people with learning disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of shared ownership properties accessed by people with learning disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A 100% increase in the number of shared ownership properties accessed by people with learning disabilities (baseline data: 5 shared ownership properties 2003-04)</li> </ul>



**STRATEGY OUTCOME 2 – TO REDUCE THE USE OF BED AND BREAKFAST ACCOMMODATION  
AS TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION FOR HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS**

<b>OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)</b>	<b>Key Actions (to achieve this)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Time Scale</b>	<b>Lead &amp; Links</b>
13. Reduced use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation through the provision of alternative supported temporary accommodation	a) Ensure the development, by September 2004, of a supported housing scheme providing 23 units of self-contained accommodation for single, vulnerable homeless people between the ages of 18 and 25 years	Local Authority Capital Funding £900,000, Private Sector Funding £300,000, Supporting People Revenue £350,000	Scheme completion by September 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services, Stonham Housing Association  Links: Homelessness Agency, Social Services – Children’s Teams
	b) Work with RSLs to increase the supply of good quality temporary accommodation for homeless households in areas of the district where this is insufficient or inadequate	Existing	By 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: All RSLs not currently engaged in temporary housing provision

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
	c) Investigate the feasibility of increasing the supply of private sector leased properties for use as temporary accommodation for homeless households	To be identified	By 31 <sup>st</sup> April 2004 & then ongoing as required	Lead: Strategic Housing Services – Enabling Team  Links: Private Sector Team, Private Sector Landlords
	d) Investigate best practice initiatives for the provision of supported temporary housing for vulnerable 16-17 year olds, identify funding opportunities and develop an appropriate scheme. This to include consideration of the development of a 'homeless at home' scheme, enhanced by a mediation and support service (Links to Objective 1a)	Supporting People Funding and (possibly) existing 'bricks and mortar' provision	Identify funding opportunities & draw up project specification by 31 <sup>st</sup> April 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Homelessness Agency, Social Services – Children's Services, Connexions, support providers, mediation services, all general needs RSLs
	e) Work with SHYP to identify situations in which an appropriate referral can be made to the Nightstop scheme	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: Homelessness Agency  Links: Strategic Housing Services

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 1)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
	f) Continue to develop Jubilee Court as supported temporary accommodation for homeless families with the provision of a communal building. This facility to be used as a resource for social activities, advice surgeries, childcare provision and the promotion of training and employment opportunities	£400,000 Capital Funds from the Local Authority	Start on site August 2003	Lead: Homelessness Agency  Links: Strategic Housing Services, training and employment services
	g) Identify the means through which more comprehensive information on the emergency accommodation needs of single non-priority homeless people can be obtained, in particular the extent to which they are having to access low quality Bed and Breakfast accommodation	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: Homelessness Agency  Links: Strategic Housing Services, HHF, Open Door

## STRATEGY OUTCOME 2: INDICATORS AND TARGETS

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS	SMART TARGETS
<p><b>Objective 13:</b> Reduced use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation through the provision of alternative supported temporary accommodation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of people placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation for the financial year 2004-05 and onwards (NB The temporary accommodation will be remodelled from an existing bedsit scheme to provide high quality supported self contained flats. The scheme will be ready for occupancy in Sept 2004 - opportunities to extensively reduce the use of B &amp; B accommodation prior to this are therefore limited).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No households placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation, during 2004-05, except in an emergency</li> </ul> <p>NB. The parameters of what constitutes an emergency will be clearly defined</p>

**STRATEGY OUTCOME 3 – TO IMPROVE JOINT WORKING ACROSS THE VOLUNTARY AND STATUTORY SECTORS AND OTHER AGENCIES CONCERNED WITH HOMELESSNESS TO ENABLE A MORE CO-ORDINATED AND EFFECTIVE RESPONSE**

<b>OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 3)</b>	<b>Key Actions (to achieve this)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Time Scale</b>	<b>Lead &amp; Links</b>
14. Improve joint working between services	a) Improve information about agency roles and responsibilities and identify opportunities for enhanced joint working through holding an Homelessness Agency Awareness / Training Day	Existing	By December 2003	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Homelessness Agency, HHF, voluntary and statutory organisations
	b) Improve mechanisms for effective referral and signposting between agencies through the development of a Supported Housing and Homelessness Mapping database	Existing	By September 2003	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Homelessness Agency, HHF, voluntary and statutory organisations, all special needs RSLs

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 3)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
	c) Improve the quality and consistency of statistical data relating to homeless households and those at risk through the development of an agency Common Monitoring System, with unique identifiers for individual clients and agree procedures for the collection, collation and distribution of data	Existing	By 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Homelessness Agency, HHF, voluntary and statutory organisations
	d) Implement mechanisms for closer joint working between Drug Agencies working in the county and homelessness and housing advice services, including more effective referral processes and reciprocal training (links to Objective 6g)	Existing	Agree procedures by 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Drug Action Team (Communities Group), DASH, Homelessness Agency, RSLs
	e) Develop and implement a joint Housing and Social Services Protocol for Care Leavers (links to Objective 3b)	Existing	By 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2003	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Social Services – Children’s Services, Aftercare Team, Homelessness Agency, RSLs

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 3)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
	f) Develop and implement a joint Housing and Social Services Protocol for homeless 16 and 17 year olds and those at risk of homelessness (Links to Objective 1a and Objective 6a)	Existing	By 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2003	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Social Services – Children’s Services, Aftercare Team, Homelessness Agency, Youth Services, Connexions, RSLs
	g) Develop a joint Housing and Social Services Protocol for early intervention where families with children are at risk of homelessness (links to Objective 6b and Objective 6c)	Existing	Ongoing – complete by 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Social Services – Children’s Services, Homelessness Agency, specialist support providers, RSLs
	h) Develop a joint Housing and Probation Services Protocol for the assessment and referral of ex-offenders to the Homelessness Service (links to Objective 6f)	Existing	Draft Protocol to be agreed by 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Probation Service, Homelessness Agency, support providers for ex-offenders, RSLs

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 3)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
	i) Develop a joint Housing and Health Services Protocol for the discharge of homeless people leaving hospital (links to Objective 6d)	Existing	Draft Protocol agreed by 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Acute Trust, Homelessness Agency, Social Services – Adult's Teams, RSLs
	j) Work with educational providers to develop ways to prevent disruption to children's education potentially resulting from homelessness	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: Strategic Housing Services, LEA  Links: Homelessness Agency, Social Services – Children's Services
	k) Develop training programmes for all agencies involved in dealing with homelessness – teachers, youth workers, tenants groups, social services, education staff, health services personnel and support providers. Identify most appropriate mechanisms / format for delivery	Identify funding	To be negotiated - work to end of December 2004	Lead: Homelessness Agency, Strategic Housing Services  Links: HHF, LEA, Tenants Federation, Social Services, Youth workers, Connexions, support providers, Health agencies, RSLs

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 3)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
	l) Ensure that the roles of different partners are agreed in relation to homelessness services	Existing	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing, Homelessness Strategy Review Team  Links: All partner agencies to the Homelessness Strategy
15. Enable existing services and agencies to work more effectively and coherently together to meet the needs of homeless people and those at risk of homelessness	a) Appoint a Housing Advocacy development Worker to work in partnership with care and support providers to ensure that vulnerable people have maximum access to Home Point Herefordshire and re-settlement and tenancy support (links to Objective 10g)	ODPM Revenue Grant £28,000	Immediate	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Home Point Herefordshire, all housing related support providers, Homelessness Agency
	b) Ensure continued Strategic Housing representation on the Herefordshire Homeless Forum	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: HHF

<b>OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 3)</b>	<b>Key Actions (to achieve this)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Time Scale</b>	<b>Lead &amp; Links</b>
16. Ensure that the needs of homeless people are considered in the development of strategies, plans and policies across statutory and voluntary bodies and partner organisations	a) Provide input into strategy / policy development processes, through Senior Management Team structures across the council and external strategic links through the Herefordshire Plan Ambition Groups	Existing	To coincide with the strategic and policy development process of identified key links	Lead: Strategic Housing Services  Links: Social Services & Health Services Strategic Plans & Programmes, Herefordshire Domestic Violence Forum, Safer Herefordshire, DAT Communities Plan, Connexions, HHF
	b) Continue to review the Homelessness Strategy in the light of other relevant developing Strategies and Plans, including those produced by the council itself and by partner agencies	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: Homelessness Strategy Review Team  Links: All relevant developing strategic plans

<b>OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 3)</b>	<b>Key Actions (to achieve this)</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Time Scale</b>	<b>Lead &amp; Links</b>
17. Develop ways in which homeless people and previously homelessness people can participate effectively in seeking practical solutions to tackle homelessness and social exclusion	a) Identify ways in which Groundswell UK training and involvement approaches can be implemented. (Groundswell is a national charity that promotes practical solutions that involve homeless people, to tackling homelessness and social exclusion).	Resource implications not yet identified	Establish links by 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2004	Lead: Strategic Housing  Links: Homelessness Agency, existing and previous service users, HHF
18. Ensure that the health needs of homeless people are identified and provided for	a) Record information about the GP registration of all households who are assessed as homeless	No additional resources required	Ongoing	Lead: Homelessness Agency  Links: Strategy Housing, PCT
	b) Ensure that, wherever possible, homeless households are provided with temporary accommodation that is as close as possible to current GP	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: Homelessness Agency  Links: Strategic Housing Services

OBJECTIVES (to achieve Outcome 3)	Key Actions (to achieve this)	Resources	Time Scale	Lead & Links
	c) Ensure that Homeless Support Workers provide assistance to households in temporary accommodation to access health services, including GPs and Health visitors	Existing	Ongoing	Lead: Homelessness Agency  Links: Strategic Housing Services, PCT

### STRATEGY OUTCOME 3: INDICATORS AND TARGETS

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS	SMART TARGETS
<p><b>Objective 15:</b> Enable existing services and agencies to work more effectively and coherently together to met the needs of homeless people and those at risk of homelessness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of vulnerable people who are supported in accessing appropriate accommodation through Herefordshire Home Point</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A 10% increase by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004 in the number of vulnerable people receiving advocacy support to access accommodation through Home Point Herefordshire</li> </ul>