

Homeless and Homeless Prevention Strategy
Action Plan 2008-2013

Actions	Outputs and targets	Key Partners	Lead	Target date
Objective 1: Prevent homelessness through early intervention and targeted Housing Advice				
1. Develop best practice procedures to assist tenants being illegally evicted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Set up an internal working group -Review procedures for previous illegal evictions -Develop agreed protocol -Consult and distribute protocol with partner agencies 	East Herts Legal Services, Environmental Health, Housing Options, CAB	East Herts	Jun-08 Jul-08 Dec-08 Apr-09
2. Make available accessible housing options literature and protocols to our partners and service users to support prevention and sustain tenancies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Develop separate service user and partner literature -Promote advice services available from the Council and other agencies eg by posters & links to other partner's websites 	East Herts Housing Service, East Herts Homeless Strategy Group	East Herts Housing Service	Apr-09 Sep-08
3. Continue to maintain and extend relevant housing advice services that are accessible to all sections of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continue to monitor the causes of homelessness - Develop a recording mechanism to review social housing evictions. -Identify barriers and improvements to the service by working with other agencies - Review existing preventions options and ensure they continue to be relevant. 	East Herts Housing Service, RSLs, East Herts Homeless Strategy Group	East Herts Housing Service	Ongoing Jun-08 Ongoing Ongoing
4. Continue to ensure money advice services and other services offering help with financial problems are available to all those who need them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continue to support the funding of the joint working CAB and East Herts debt advice worker - Monitor value for money of the Debt Advice Service 	East Herts Housing Service, CAB	East Herts Housing Service	Ongoing Ongoing

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5. Ensure all agencies are aware of referral routes for access to floating support services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support and influence Herts County Council's development of floating support service provision. - Disseminate information made available by Herts County Council to our partners agencies. - Obtain data from County Council to monitor take-up of services for East Herts residents 	East Herts Housing Services, Herts County Council	Herts County Council	Jun-08 Mar-09 Ongoing
6. Investigate funding and establishment of a Court desk at Hertford County Court.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research format and costs of other Court desks in the County - Approach possible partner agencies with a view to them running a court desk - Agree a protocol -Set up a court desk. - Monitor outcomes and value for money -Develop a continuation strategy for when CLG funding ceases in March 2010 	East Herts Housing Service, East Herts Homeless Strategy Group, Communities and Local Government Department	East Herts Housing Service	May-08 May-08 Jun-08 Jun-08 Ongoing Sep-09

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Objective 2. Develop and improve services to young people				
7. Support the effective working of the of the Young Persons Protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure East Herts are represented at protocol development meetings and publicise content to partners - Ensure East Herts representation on training & monitoring of protocol 	Herts County Council, Herts Young Homeless Group, East Herts Housing Services	Herts County Council	Apr-09 Ongoing

Actions	Outputs and targets	Key Partners	Lead	Target date
8. Support the County Council's LAA one to increase the number of young people sustaining their tenancy for longer than 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to collate figures from partners RSLs & send to HCC - Ensure, when needed, Floating Support referral processes are accessible for young people placed in RSL accommodation. 	Herts County Council, Herts Young Homeless Group, RSLs, East Herts Housing Services	Herts County Council	<p>Mar-09</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
9. Continue to seek initiatives for the provision of additional accommodation for young people aged 16-17 and 18-25 year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support Herts County and the Crouchfield Trust to increase amount of supported accommodation for young people in East Herts including the development of a young persons hostel. - Continue to monitor outcomes and support the YMCA project for 16 and 17 year olds. - Support partner agencies and HCC with initiatives such as supported lodgings, crash pad etc. 	<p>Herts County Council, Crouchfield Trust, East Herts, RSL(s),</p> <p>East Herts Housing Services, YMCA</p> <p>Herts County Council, East Herts Housing Services</p>	<p>East Herts and Herts County Council</p> <p>East Herts Housing Service</p> <p>Herts County Council</p>	<p>Planning permission Mar 09; final build 2010</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
10. Work with HYHG, Aldwyck Housing Association and the County Council to increase the homeless prevention initiatives available for young people including awareness events at school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To reduce the number of 16 and 17 year olds placed in the Council's Homeless Hostels - 12 placements 07/08. - Reduce the number of 16 and 17 year olds who present as homeless. Baseline of 12 presentations in 07/08 	East Herts Housing Services	East Herts Housing Services	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

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Objective 3: Improve the type and use of temporary accommodation for homeless households				
11. Work in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council Supporting People to develop suitable Housing/Housing Support for identified groups	- Attendance at Supporting People consultation and decision making meetings. Continue to engage with Hertfordshire SP regarding de-commissioning and commissioning SP funded services in East Herts.	Herts County Council, East Herts Council	Herts County Council	Ongoing
12. Halve the number of households in temporary accommodation by 2010 - National Indicator	- Develop a supply and demand model, based on the London Commuter Belt framework, that helps to plan the future supply needs of temporary accommodation balanced against the availability of social housing.	London Commuter Belt Housing Strategy Group, East Herts Housing Services	London Commuter Belt Strategy Officers	Mar-09
	- Monitor and measure the number of households on quarterly basis and report to Homeless Strategy Group and Homeless Directorate. Target of 33 households by March 2010	East Herts Housing services	East Herts Housing services	Mar-10

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13. Ensure we continue to provide B&B accommodation only in an emergency and not more than 6 weeks and not for 16/17 year olds.	- Monitor and measure the number of households on quarterly basis and report to Homeless Strategy Group and the Governments Homeless Directorate. In 2007/08 the Council placed a total of 13 households in B&B for an average of ten nights	East Herts Housing Services, East Herts Homeless Strategy Group, RSLs	East Herts Housing Services	Ongoing
14. Continue to improve the quality and appropriateness of temporary accommodation available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to review the type and amount of temporary accommodation required to ensure it meets demand - De-commission of Thele House as a temporary accommodation hostel. - Re-develop Hillcrest to make the accommodation self contained. 	East Herts Council, Herts County Council	East Herts Housing Services	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Mar-09</p> <p>Mar-09</p>

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Objective 4: Improve services to homeless households and households in housing need				
15. Continue to make good use of Discretionary Housing payments	- Provide reports on spend and situations where DHP used.	East Herts Benefits Service	East Herts Benefits Service	Ongoing

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16. Enhance & Improve Choice Based Lettings in East Herts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor the impact of CBL on Homeless prevention and Homeless households being housed and compare to previous years data. - Commence an Equality Impact Assessment on CBL to ensure policy does not have a detrimental impact on particular client groups accessibility to social housing; amend policy as required. - Review implementation of CBL and present report to Community Scrutiny Committee - Consider widening the scope of CBL for example include private sector rented properties - Commence an Equality Impact Assessment on the Housing Register Policy to ensure policy does not have a detrimental impact on particular client groups accessibility to social housing; amend policy as required. 	East Herts Housing Services, RSLs	East Herts Housing Services	<p>Mar-09</p> <p>Mar-09</p> <p>Sep-08</p> <p>Mar-09</p> <p>May-08</p>
17. Increase capacity of rent deposit scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to promote the scheme to private landlords particularly through the Council's Private Sector Landlord Forum to build and maintain a base of landlords. - Strengthen recovery procedures and monitoring on the Rent Deposit scheme to ensure the Council are maximising the financial benefit and re-cycling of money. - Develop a tracking system to monitor the number and reason where tenancies fail within first 6 months. 	East Herts Housing Services, Environmental Health,	East Herts Housing Services	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Sep-08</p>

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18. Monitor trends, identify demand and provide evidence for services for 'Rough Sleepers' and 'Hidden Homeless' households.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to carry out annual surveys of 'Rough Sleepers' and 'Hidden Homeless' households to monitor needs - Publicise count/ survey results to Homeless Directorate and Homeless Strategy Group. 	East Herts Housing Service, East Herts Homeless Strategy Group	East Herts Housing Service, East Herts Homeless Strategy Group	Ongoing Annual Dec-08
19. Improve communication with homeless households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Housing Options staff to maintain a schedule of visits to hostels that is publicised. - Review the role of the Floating Support Officer to maximise communication with homeless households - Relaunch the Homeless User Survey. 	East Herts Housing services	East Herts Housing services	Ongoing Mar-09 Oct-08

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Objective 5: Develop and improve partnership working to maximise benefits to homeless households				
20. Ensure links are made and influence sought in all relevant published documents /Strategies with partner agencies.	- Each partner on the East Herts Homeless Strategy Group to make aware to the Group documents to be published by their organisations that may have an impact on homelessness or Homeless prevention.	East Herts Housing Services, East Herts Homeless Strategy Group	East Herts Homeless Strategy Group	Ongoing

Actions	Outputs and targets	Key Partners	Lead	Target date
21. Ensure existing services are working together effectively and meeting the needs of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure the Homeless Strategy Group is as fully representative of agencies in the District as possible by expanding the membership through targeted promotion - Develop a page on the Council's website promoting the Homeless Strategy Group and publishing minutes. -Agree a rolling timetable of training and topic discussions at the East Herts Homeless Strategy Group 	East Herts Housing Services, East Herts Homeless Strategy Group	East Herts Housing Services	<p>Sep-08</p> <p>Mar-09</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
22. Agree an information sharing protocol for relevant partners within data protection guidelines for the prevention of homelessness and the Housing Options Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Check Council's Corporate Data Sharing protocol and tailor for Housing Options Service -Agree scope of information to be shared & draft protocol -Consult and distribute protocol with partner agencies for signing 	East Herts Council, RSLs, advocacy groups in East Herts, Statutory and Voluntary agencies	East Herts Council	<p>Sep-08</p> <p>Dec-08</p> <p>Mar-09</p>
23. Encourage RSLs to develop their role in Homeless prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Request a nominated Homeless Champion from each RSLs and invite them to East Herts Homeless Strategy Group - Commence involvement in the development of each RSLs Homeless Action Plan as proposed by Housing Corporation in November 06. 	East Herts Housing Services, RSLs	RSLs	<p>Jul-08</p> <p>Sep-08</p>
24. Improve information exchange and planning across local authority boundaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure representation by East Herts in key government and sub-regional working/information sharing groups for example the London Commuter Belt Homeless Group. 	East Herts Housing Services	East Herts Housing services	Ongoing

Actions	Outputs and targets	Key Partners	Lead	Target date
25. Consider adopting the National Homeless Advice Service model for joint working between local authorities and independent advice agencies on the prevention of homelessness.	- Assess the implications and consider adopting with partner agencies	East Herts Housing Services, CAB, Shelter	National Homeless Advice Service	Mar-09

Actions	Outputs and targets	Key Partners	Lead	Target date
Objective 6. Increase the supply of appropriate, good quality affordable housing				
26. Monitor the number of new affordable homes in the District NI 155	-Maximise number of units produced & monitor percentage of affordable housing on schemes eligible for affordable housing. Target of up to 40%	East Herts Housing Services	East Herts Housing Services	Ongoing
27. Continue to work with the LCB Empty Homes Group to maximise the number of empty homes brought back into use and offered to rent	- Publicise scheme to identify suitable properties - Monitor the number of properties brought back into use via the scheme. No target set.	East Herts Council, LCB Empty Homes Group	East Herts Environmental Health Service	Ongoing
28. Encourage private landlords to engage with the Housing Options Team and provide accommodation for households on low incomes	- Lead the Council's Private Sector Landlords Forum to establish options for working together, advising of changes in legislation and generally improving relationship.	East Herts Council Environmental Health Service and Housing Services	East Herts Council Environmental Health Service	Ongoing

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29. Ensure Council receives at least its legal entitlement of tenancies from RSLs and other not for profit landlords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthened the Council's monitoring procedures for the size and type of properties offered to East Herts Housing Register applicants for the smaller RSLs in the district - Provide an annual report to each RSL on their performance 	East Herts Council Housing services, RSLs	East Herts Council Housing services	<p>Mar-09</p> <p>Mar-09</p>
30. Improve the current approach to reducing under occupation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask RSLs to provide estimates of the current levels of under occupation and where it is concentrated. - Research good practice in effective under occupation schemes - Work with RSLs to develop initiatives/ incentives to reduce under occupation and set targets for households moving into smaller accommodation. 	East Herts Council Housing services, RSLs	RSLs	<p>Mar-09</p> <p>Jun-09</p> <p>Mar-10</p>
31. Implement a District Wide Common Housing Register (CHR) and maximise the number of HAS that are participating in CHR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote the benefits of a CHR to those landlords not yet participating - Develop a CHR protocol for all participating RSLs to sign up to. 	East Herts Council Housing services, RSLs	East Herts Housing Services	<p>Sep-08</p> <p>Mar-09</p>

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