

# **North Norfolk District Council Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2008-11**

## **Summary**

This is the second Homelessness Strategy produced by North Norfolk District Council based upon a review of homelessness services in the area. Both the review and the development of the strategy were undertaken in partnership with key partners and stakeholders operating in the district. A significant number of the actions in the Action Plan which covers the period 2008-2011 will be delivered in partnership although the strategy does not cover all of the services being delivered to those who are homeless in the district.

The strategy covers homelessness prevention in its widest sense and seeks to deliver an Enhanced Housing Options Service in line with the latest guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government [view this document at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/expandingchoice> ].

The incidence of homelessness in North Norfolk is relatively low with 2.6 households being accepted as homeless per thousand households. The Council has been successful in preventing homelessness with reductions in the number of homeless applications taken and in the number of households accepted as homeless. The main reasons for homelessness have tended to remain constant with the loss of private rented accommodation, parents no longer willing or able to accommodate and violent breakdown of relationship with partner being the main reasons for homelessness. Most households accepted as homeless are in the 16-24 and 25-44 age groups.

The strategy identifies a number of issues that are likely to impact on homelessness and the delivery of housing options services in the short term (the availability of mortgage finance and the impact of the 'credit crunch'), medium term (the increasing numbers of European economic migrants) and the long term (coastal erosion and flooding).

The recent review of homelessness services in the district identified that the aims of the first strategy were still relevant and that further work needed to be undertaken in these

areas to move towards the delivery of an Enhanced Housing Options Service. These aims have however been revised to reflect the vision we have for the housing service and are as follows:

1. to deliver a customer focused service to standards influenced by the customer
2. to increase the accessibility of the housing service ensuring equity of access for all
3. to increase the range of housing options available and to provide a service that enables customers to make informed choices about their housing options and which empowers customers to pursue their chosen housing option
4. to reduce the incidence of homelessness through effective homelessness prevention services
5. to reduce the use of temporary accommodation for households accepted as homeless and where temporary accommodation has to be used to ensure that it is of a reasonable standard and in a location which enables the household to maintain stability.

The Action Plan contains specific actions to deliver the aims above with actions being identified for each of the three years covered by the strategy. Delivery against the strategy and action plan will be monitored by the Council along with its group of key partners and stakeholders who will meet on a quarterly basis. An annual progress report will be produced in September of each year.

### **Acknowledgements**

North Norfolk District Council would like to thank its key partners and stakeholders listed in appendix 1 for their assistance in undertaking a review of homelessness services in North Norfolk and in producing this strategy. The Council looks forward to working with these key partners and stakeholders in delivering this strategy and action plan.

## **Contents**

	<b>Page</b>
Summary	1
Acknowledgements	2
Introduction	4
An overview of the main issues in North Norfolk	5
What are our aims?	7
How will we deliver our aims?	12
How will we monitor and review the strategy?	12
Action Plan	14
<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix 1 – List of key partners and stakeholders	25

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Local authorities are required to undertake a review of homelessness in their area and publish a Homelessness Strategy based upon the findings of the review every 5 years (Homelessness Act 2002). North Norfolk District Council undertook its first review and published its first strategy in 2003.
- 1.2 A further review of homelessness in North Norfolk has therefore been undertaken in recent months in order to inform the development of this second strategy.
- 1.3 Due to the current uncertainty over future local government arrangements in Norfolk and the consultation on options for local unitary government it is felt that the strategy should only cover the period to 2011. This is also in line with the 3 year funding settlements for local government following the Government's 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review.
- 1.4 The strategy must include plans for:
- 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 again.
- 1.5 The strategy must cover:
- 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 have become homeless intentionally;
  - homeless people in the area who might not have a local connection
- 1.6 This strategy considers homelessness prevention in its widest sense and seeks to deliver an enhanced Housing Options service in line with the latest guidance issued

by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) [view this document at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/expandingchoice> ].

- 1.7 The strategy identifies actions to be delivered by the Council either on its own or in partnership with a range of other agencies including other statutory agencies (including Norfolk Children's Services, Adult Social Services, Supporting People and Norfolk Probation Area), Housing providers (including Registered Social Landlords, Supported Housing providers and private landlords) and voluntary and community sector organisations. It does not however, cover all of the services being delivered to those who are homeless by these agencies.
- 1.8 The strategy has been developed with the assistance of a group of key partners and stakeholders (see Appendix 1).
- 1.9 This strategy has been developed using intelligence gathered from the recent review of homelessness services in the district. The review sought to gather intelligence on the following:
  - The current 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 to them, including support to prevent them from becoming homeless again;
  - The resources available for providing these services
- 1.10 The review also sought to provide an update against the actions contained in the first homelessness strategy. The review document will be published alongside this strategy.

## **2.0 An overview of the main issues in North Norfolk**

- 2.1 The incidence of homelessness in North Norfolk is relatively low with 2.6 per thousand households being accepted as homeless in 2006/07. This compares with 4.2 per thousand households being accepted as homeless in Great Yarmouth, this being the highest level in Norfolk and 1.9 in Breckland, the lowest in Norfolk. The Council has been successful in preventing homelessness over the past six years since the introduction of the Homelessness Act 2002 with

- homelessness applications reducing from 367 in 2002/03 to 177 in 2007/08 and homelessness acceptances reducing from 214 in 2002/03 to 102 in 2007/08. The main reasons for homelessness have tended to remain constant with the loss of private rented accommodation, parents no longer willing or able to accommodate and violent breakdown of relationship with partner being the three main reasons for those accepted as homeless.
- 2.2 Historically there have been very few applications received from owner occupiers facing repossession due to mortgage arrears. It is anticipated however that the number of applications might increase as a result of the 'credit crunch' and that numbers will increase further if the country falls into recession. It is also considered likely that there will be increased demand for private rented accommodation due to the lack of availability of mortgage finance for first time buyers, despite falling house prices. This is likely to lead to increases in rents which will reduce access to the private rented sector for households of lesser means as they will be unable to compete for accommodation with those who can afford to pay higher rents. This may also lead to an increase in the number of households being evicted for rent arrears as they struggle to pay higher rents and are unable to find accommodation with rents at a level they can afford. It is not considered that this will result in a significant increase in homelessness over the period of the strategy but this situation will need to be monitored.
- 2.3 Those accepted as homeless tend to be in the 16-24 and 25-44 age groups, with much smaller numbers of acceptances in the 45-59 age group and with acceptances in the 60+ age groups being negligible. This could be considered as unusual given the high proportion of elderly people in the district; however the majority of such households are owner occupiers with no mortgage commitment.
- 2.4 There are increasing numbers of European economic migrants coming to North Norfolk and increasing numbers from these groups are approaching the housing service for help. As yet however we have not seen significant numbers of European economic migrants presenting or being accepted as homeless. It is possible that this may change as more European economic migrants settle/become established in the area.

2.5 In the longer term coastal erosion and flooding are likely to feature increasingly as a cause of homelessness in the area although it is not considered that this is something that needs to be taken into consideration during the life of this strategy.

### **3.0 What are our aims?**

3.1 The first homelessness strategy identified a number of aims and actions to deliver these aims. The recent review of homelessness services in the district and consultation with key stakeholders has identified that these aims are still relevant and that further work needed to be done to build upon the work already undertaken so as to further improve services in order to move towards the delivery of an enhanced Housing Options service. The original aims have been revised however to reflect the vision we have for the housing service and are as follows:

#### **3.2 Aim 1: To deliver a customer focused service to standards influenced by the customer**

3.3 The Council has an aspiration to deliver an excellent customer focused service. It believes that the best way to achieve this aim is to involve the customer in the design of the service. The Council will increasingly involve the customer in the development of the service over the strategy period starting with consulting customers on the development of service standards and encouraging feedback from customers. Performance against the service standards and details of how feedback has been used to develop the service will be reported to customers on an annual basis along with other changes in the service and progress against the strategy.

3.4 The Council is in the process of procuring a new I.T system for the Housing Options Service which will enable the Council to improve levels of service by enabling customers to 'self serve' through accessing of information and the submission of housing and other related applications online. The Council would also like to speed up communication with customers and will be looking at introducing text messaging services recognising the benefits of such technology and its wide use/application by key client groups i.e. younger people.

3.5 These changes will be complemented by the implementation of a new team structure with an increased customer focus. This will be supported by the training of team members to ensure that they are equipped to deliver an excellent service to our customers.

**3.6 Aim 2: To increase the accessibility of the housing service ensuring equity of access for all**

3.7 The Council is aware that customers may sometimes struggle to access the housing service due to the size of the district and its rural nature. This is exacerbated by the lack of public transport and the cost of maintaining a car. The Council is aware that the majority of customers would prefer to access its services over the telephone and we would therefore like to focus on the telephone as a delivery channel for the service and increase the confidence of both the customer and staff in using this access channel thus minimising the need for face to face contact.

3.8 We are aware however that there will still be a need for face to face contact with customers, particularly if we have been unable to prevent a customer becoming homeless and need to progress to a formal assessment under the homelessness legislation. Where face to face contact is necessary we want to provide a number of options to increase the accessibility of our service to ensure that we are not subjecting customers to unnecessary cost and inconvenience.

3.9 We are aware that the Council is not the first port of call for some customers. We are also aware that assistance with housing might not be the only help needed by our customers. Many of our customers will have been working with other agencies prior to approaching the Council and we would like to develop systems for information sharing and undertaking joint assessments to avoid customers having to approach a number of different agencies and repeating their story/circumstances. We would seek to do this through the identification of a lead agency chosen by the customer, giving them the opportunity to choose the organisation who they feel most comfortable in dealing with. We would also like to empower and enable other agencies to provide information, advice and

- guidance on housing options to their customers without the need for referring customers to the Council.
- 3.10 We believe that a number of customers would be able to resolve their own housing difficulties without the need to speak to a council officer if we improved the availability of information in written form (including leaflets and guides) and made these more widely available in community settings e.g. doctors surgeries, libraries and Citizens Advice Bureaux and on our website.
- 3.11 We need to ensure that we identify those customers who need additional help to access the Council's housing service due to disability, English not being their first language or other support needs. We are currently undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment of the housing service to identify how we need to change our service to reflect such needs. We also need to consider potential customers who are 'hard to reach', those that would benefit from accessing our service but who don't and consider how we can change our service to make it accessible for all.
- 3.12 In addition there will be potential customers who would benefit from accessing our service but who are not aware of its existence. We will therefore be developing a programme of community roadshows and consultation events to promote the work of the service.
- 3.13 Aim 3: To increase the range of housing options available and to provide a service that enables customers to make informed choices about their housing options and which empowers customers to pursue their chosen housing option**
- 3.14 The Council is aware of the challenges that many households face in finding housing of the type and at a level that they can afford in the district. This is due to the high house prices in the area relative to the low average earnings/ incomes. The 2007 Housing Needs Survey identified a need for 921 units of affordable housing per year over the next 5 years to 2011 to address the need for affordable housing in the district. The Council through its Corporate Plan has a target to deliver a further 300 affordable homes over the next 3 years which equates to 100 units per year and this is proving challenging.

- 3.15 As at 1 April 2008 there were 3697 households on the district Housing Register. The number of households on the Housing Register has increased year on year in recent years. In 2007/08 there were 385 vacancies in the social housing stock which could be allocated to households on the Housing Register. With this level of vacancies only around 10% of applicants on the housing register will be successful in being housed in any one year. It is essential therefore that those on the register are able to assess their likelihood of being housed in social housing so that they can pursue other options. Information will be provided to those on the Housing Register on the location of social housing, the turnover of housing in these locations, numbers on the Housing Register waiting for particular sizes and types of accommodation and the level of need required in order to be successful in being allocated such accommodation.
- 3.16 The Council is committed to making the allocation of social housing more transparent and will do this initially by providing more information to those on the housing Register, secondly by reviewing the current allocations policy and ultimately through the implementation of Choice Based Lettings.
- 3.17 The Council will work with partners to ensure that best use is made of the social housing stock and will consider the feasibility of introducing incentives to tenants to free up properties that are under-occupied to make these available for larger households in higher levels of need.
- 3.18 The Council recognises that social housing will not provide a solution for most households on the Housing Register and is therefore committed, in addition to increasing the provision of affordable housing, to increasing the range of options available to applicants e.g. through increasing the availability of shared ownership, increasing access in the private rented sector and improving standards, developing a register of available lodgings and bringing empty properties back into use. This will be complemented by information, advice and guidance on all of these options.
- 3.19 The Council will work closely with the Norfolk Supporting People Team and other commissioners to identify gaps in provision for supported housing and housing-

related support across all client groups and will work with supported housing providers to improve provision for young people, older people and families under pressure. The Council will also seek to increase the housing options available for those with learning difficulties and physical disabilities able to live independently with support. The Council is also currently working with partners to develop a domestic violence refuge in the district.

**3.20 Aim 4: To reduce the incidence of homelessness through effective homelessness prevention services**

3.21 The Council has reduced the number of homelessness applications taken from 367 in 2002/03 to 177 in 2007/08 and has reduced the number of households accepted as homeless from 214 in 2002/03 to 102 in 2007/08. This has been achieved by focusing the housing service on the prevention of homelessness rather than assessment of homeless households and managing homelessness. The Council wants to build on these achievements and reduce homelessness further and will do this by evaluating the effectiveness of the prevention tools being used, developing initiatives targeted at reducing the main causes of homelessness, empowering customers to tackle their housing issues and to find their own solutions and by working with partners to share information and undertake joint assessments which are holistic in nature identifying all the customers needs.

3.22 The Council recognises that most customers have support needs which go beyond solely the provision of a housing solution and that if the housing issues are addressed in isolation then the solution may only prove to be temporary. The Council is therefore keen to explore how it can work in partnership interdepartmentally and with other agencies to deliver sustainable solutions to the needs of the customer and will be looking at initiatives addressing worklessness, financial exclusion and fuel poverty.

**3.23 Aim 5: To reduce the use of temporary accommodation for households accepted as homeless and where temporary accommodation has to be used to ensure that it is of a reasonable standard and in a location which enables the household to maintain stability**

3.24 The Council has reduced the number of households in temporary accommodation from 54 as at 31 December 2004 to 36 as at 30 June 2008. It has achieved this through its focus on homelessness prevention as detailed above. The Council will continue to work on reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation further so as to meet the Government target of reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010. As the number of households in temporary accommodation has been reduced the portfolio of accommodation used by the Council to accommodate homeless households e.g. private sector leasehold properties will also be reduced. The Council will seek to retain within its portfolio a range of accommodation types and sizes of good quality and in sustainable locations across the district i.e. largely in the eight principal settlements. The main focus will be on minimising the use of bed and breakfast accommodation and only using such accommodation in emergency situations where no other more suitable accommodation can be provided.

**4.0 How will we deliver our aims?**

4.1 A number of actions have been identified to contribute towards delivering against each of the five aims outlined above and are contained in the following Action Plan. For each action we have identified the partners that we will work with, the timescale (being either year 1, 2 or 3 of the strategy period), where the resources will come from and the outcomes that we are seeking.

**5.0 How will we monitor and review the strategy?**

5.1 The homelessness review and strategy were developed with the assistance of a group of key partners and stakeholders. This group will continue to meet on a quarterly basis to monitor progress against the action plan and to review the continued relevance of the actions in the plan up to 2011 or as appropriate depending on the outcome of the current consultation on options for unitary local government in Norfolk.

5.2 An annual progress report will be produced and this will be reported to customers of the housing service via an annual newsletter in September of each year.

## North Norfolk District Council Homelessness Strategy - Action Plan 2008-11

Aim	Action	Agency	Timescale	Resources	Outcome
<b>Aim 1: To deliver a customer focused service to standards influenced by the customer</b>	Develop service standards in conjunction with the customers of the Housing Service and undertake an annual review of the standards	North Norfolk District Council (NNDC)	Year 1 - ongoing	Housing Service revenue budget	Improved customer service demonstrated through increased customer satisfaction – feedback from customers in year 1 will provide a baseline for setting a target for subsequent years
	Implement and monitor performance against the agreed service standards reporting performance to customers on an annual basis	NNDC	Year 1 - ongoing	Housing Service revenue budget	Improved customer service demonstrated through increased customer satisfaction
	Encourage feedback from customers through use of the Corporate Complaints and Compliments process and customer satisfaction surveys designed in consultation with service users. Monitor feedback on a monthly basis and incorporate into monthly service development and planning sessions. Report on how the service has developed as a result of customer feedback on an annual basis	NNDC	Year 1 – ongoing	Housing Service revenue budget	Improved customer service demonstrated through increased customer satisfaction
	Undertake an annual review of business processes and process maps to subject the service to scrutiny and challenge and ensure continuous improvement	NNDC	Year 1 – ongoing	Housing Service revenue budget	Improved customer service demonstrated through increased customer satisfaction
	Procure a new I.T. system to improve the administration of the Housing Options Service thus speeding up administrative processes	NNDC	Year 1	Housing Service capital budget and Homelessness Prevention Grant	Improved customer service demonstrated through increased customer satisfaction
	Consider the feasibility of using text messaging services to contact customers thus speeding up administrative processes	NNDC	Year 1	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Improved customer service demonstrated through increased customer satisfaction

	Implement a new team structure which increases customer focus and performance monitoring and management	NNDC	Year 1	Housing Revenue Budget	Improved customer service demonstrated through increased customer satisfaction
	Undertake an analysis of the training and development needs of the members of the Strategic Housing Team to support the restructure and officers undertaking new roles to ensure that the team can deliver the objectives of the service	NNDC	Year 1	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Improved customer service demonstrated through increased customer satisfaction and well trained and effective staff
<b>Aim 2: To increase the accessibility of the Housing Service ensuring equity of access for all</b>	Review access channels to the Housing Service to ensure that they provide equity of access for all. Undertake in conjunction with an Equality Impact Assessment for the service	NNDC	Year 1	Housing Service revenue budget	Increased equity for all in accessing the Housing Service demonstrated through increased diversity in the customers accessing the service
	Train staff to deliver the Housing Service over the telephone and promote use of this access channel so as to reduce where appropriate the need for face to face contact with the customer	NNDC	Year 1 - ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Increased equity for all in accessing the Housing Service demonstrated through increased diversity in the customers accessing the service and a reduction in the number of face to face transactions
	Procure a new I.T. system to provide a higher level of functionality and interactivity with the customer enabling 'self service' by the customer remotely or from the Council's Offices but negating the need to necessarily interact with an officer	NNDC	Year 1	Housing Service capital budget and Homelessness Prevention Grant	Increased equity for all in accessing the Housing Service demonstrated through increased diversity in the customers accessing the service and a reduction in the number of face to face transactions
	Work with partners to develop information sharing and joint assessments and protocols and lead professionals for customers with complex needs to avoid the need for customers to deal with more than one agency direct	NNDC, Children's Services, Adult Social Services, Norfolk Probation Area, Youth Offending Team, Health Agencies, Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and voluntary and community sector	Year 1 – ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Increased equity for all in accessing the Housing Service demonstrated through increased diversity in the customers accessing the service and a reduction in the number of face to face transactions. Improved partnership working.

	Work with partners to increase the number of agencies able to provide information, advice and guidance on housing thus increasing the accessibility of the service	NNDC, Children's Services, Adult Social Services, Probation, Youth Offending Team, Health Agencies, RSLs and voluntary and community sector	Year 1 – ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Increased equity for all in accessing the Housing Service demonstrated through increased diversity in the customers accessing the service and a reduction in the number of face to face transactions. Improved partnership working.
	Work with partners to increase the accessibility of the Housing Service through improving the information available via the Council's website, links to other websites and improved written and targeted material and guides for specific client groups	NNDC, Children's Services, Adult Social Services, Norfolk Probation Area, Youth Offending Team, Health Agencies, RSLs and voluntary and community sector	Year 1 – ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Increased equity for all in accessing the Housing Service demonstrated through increased diversity in the customers accessing the service and a reduction in the number of face to face transactions. Improved partnership working.
	Provide information to customers on options for accessing the Housing Service and related services and, in the event of face to face contact being necessary, consider the availability of transport and resources to the customer and arrange for the service to be delivered in a way that results in the minimum amount of cost and inconvenience to the customer	NNDC	Year 1 - ongoing	Housing Service revenue budget	Increased equity for all in accessing the Housing Service demonstrated through increased diversity in the customers accessing the service and a reduction in the number of face to face transactions. Reduction in disadvantage to customers.
	Review the procedures in place for meeting the needs of customers requiring additional assistance in accessing the Housing Service including translation of literature and production of literature in different formats. Undertake in conjunction with the Equality Impact Assessment. Ensure that the availability of these services is promoted	NNDC	Year 1	Housing Service revenue budget	Increased equity for all in accessing the Housing Service demonstrated through increased diversity in the customers accessing the service.

	Review the client group strategies developed Norfolk wide as part of the Supporting People programme to identify any particular access issues relevant to the delivery of the Housing Options Service. Undertake in conjunction with the Equality Impact Assessment	NNDC, Supporting People	Year 1	Housing Service revenue budget	Increased equity for all in accessing the Housing Service demonstrated through increased diversity in the customers accessing the service. Improved partnership working
	Review the Norfolk wide BME research to identify any particular access issues relevant to the delivery of the Housing Options Service. Undertake in conjunction with the Equality Impact Assessment	NNDC	Year 1	Housing Service revenue budget	Increased equity for all in accessing the Housing Service demonstrated through increased diversity in the customers accessing the service.
	Develop a programme of community roadshows and consultation events to promote the work of the Housing Service	NNDC	Year 2 – ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Increased access to the service
	Work with partners to develop a programme of educational workshops for local schools on topics linked to homelessness prevention and awareness including domestic violence	NNDC, Schools Children’s Services, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, Domestic Violence Support Agencies, community and voluntary sector organisations	Year 1 – ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Increased access to information and awareness on housing options and homelessness prevention and related issues
<b>Aim 3: To increase the range of housing options available and to provide a service that enables customers to make informed choices about their housing options and which empowers customers to pursue their chosen housing option</b>	To increase the availability of social rented and shared ownership housing through the development of a further 300 properties over the next 3 years	NNDC, RSLs, Housing Corporation, Parish Councils, Local Strategic Partnership, Developers and landowners	Year 1 – ongoing	Housing Services Capital budget, RSL private finance, Second Homes Council Tax Income, Housing Corporation Grant, Developer contributions	To increase the number of households housed in social housing from the Housing Register and to reduce the number of households in the highest levels of housing need

	To provide information to applicants on the Housing Register which will enable them to assess the likelihood of being housed in social housing and make choices about the type of property they would like to be considered for and the areas they would consider living	NNDC	Year 1 - ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Grant	An increase in the number of housing applicants who are able to make informed choices about their housing options
	To provide information to housing applicants on the availability of social housing in a given location and information on local amenities to assist applicants in choosing suitable areas for which they can be considered	NNDC	Year 1 – ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Grant	To increase the number of successful tenancies and increase the sustainability and cohesion of communities. To reduce the incidence of social exclusion and repeat homelessness.
	To provide information about available properties on the Council's website	NNDC	Year 1 – ongoing	Housing Revenue Budget	To increase the transparency of the housing allocation process
	To review the policy for the allocation of social housing	NNDC, RSLs	Year 1	Housing Revenue Budget	To update the allocations policy to reflect current housing need and supply and demand for social housing
	To undertake a review of all applications on the Housing Register and implement the revised Allocations Policy	NNDC	Year 1	Housing Revenue Budget	To update the Housing Register to ensure that all applicants are assessed in accordance with the new allocations policy
	To procure a new I.T. system to hold the Housing Register and improve its administration and enable self service of housing applicants	NNDC, RSLs	Year 1	Housing Capital Budget, Homelessness Prevention Grant	Improved administration of the Housing Register to enable housing applicants to self serve thus improving customer service and empowering the customer
	Work with RSLs to make best use of the available housing stock in meeting the highest levels of housing need through a review of allocations policies and property designations and advertising of harder to let properties	NNDC, RSLs	Year 1 – ongoing	Housing Revenue budget	The use of the social rented housing stock is maximised

	Work with RSLs to consider the feasibility of introducing a tenant incentive scheme to free up properties which are under occupied to make these available for households in high levels of housing need	NNDC, RSLs	Year 2	Homelessness Prevention Grant	The use of the social rented housing stock is maximised
	Work with RSLs to consider options for the development of Choice Based Lettings in North Norfolk	NNDC, RSLs	Year 2	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Increased transparency in the allocation of social housing
	Increase the availability of shared ownership and promote it as a thriving tenure and a tenure of choice and work with RSLs and Homebuy Agents to market available properties	NNDC, RSLs, Housing Corporation, Parish Councils, Local Strategic Partnership, Developers and landowners, Homebuy Agents	Year 1 – ongoing	Housing Services Capital budget, RSL private finance, Second Homes Council Tax Income, Housing Corporation Grant, Developer contributions, Housing Revenue Budget, RSL and Homebuy Agents marketing budgets	An increase in the range of housing options available
	To build on the existing good working relationships with private landlords in North Norfolk and develop a range of initiatives to increase access to the private rented sector for households in housing need who choose this as a tenure of choice and for those households for whom the private rented sector presents the only option	NNDC	Year 2	Homelessness Prevention Grant	An increase in the range of housing options available
	Consider the feasibility of developing and maintaining a register of available lodgings	NNDC	Year3	Homelessness Prevention Grant	An increase in the range of housing options available

	Review the operation of the Rent in advance and Damage Deposit scheme to seek additional resource and enable the scheme to be available to assist a wider range of customers. Seek to improve the administration of the scheme and reduce the level of unrecoverable monies	NNDC	Year 1	Homelessness Prevention Grant	An increase in the range of housing options available
	Develop an Enforcement Policy which ensures compliance with housing standards whilst promoting good practice and supporting the improvement of housing standards in the private sector	NNDC, private landlords	Year 1	Housing Revenue Budget	An improvement in the housing standards in the private rented sector
	Develop a newsletter for private landlords to communicate changes in legislation and regulations which affect them across all Council functions and which promotes good practice	NNDC, private landlords	Year 2 – ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Grant	An improvement in the housing standards in the private rented sector
	Develop and launch a guide for tenants in the private rented sector	NNDC, private landlords	Year 2	Homelessness Prevention Grant	An improvement in the housing standards in the private rented sector and an increased understanding of tenants of their rights and responsibilities
	Consider the feasibility of providing financial assistance to private landlords to improve the standard and energy efficiency of their properties in return for nomination rights to the property	NNDC	Year 2	Housing Capital Budget	An improvement in the housing standards in the private rented sector and an increase in the range of housing options available
	Review the effectiveness of the Empty Homes Grant in bringing empty properties back into use and consider how it could be used more effectively	NNDC	Year 2	Housing Capital Budget	An increase in the range of housing options available
	Develop the Empty Homes Strategy to undertake enforcement action to bring properties back into use	NNDC	Year 1	Housing Capital Budget	An increase in the range of housing options available

	Develop tailored information packs detailing housing and support options for target client groups including young people, older people and people with physical disabilities	NNDC, RSLs, Children's Services, Adult Social Services, Home Improvement Agency, accommodation and support providers, voluntary and community sector, Connexions	Year 1 – ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Customers enabled to make informed choices about their housing options
	Work with private landlords, RSLs and the voluntary and community sector to consider the feasibility of developing housing and support solutions for young people in areas where the development of a supported housing scheme would not be viable including further development of the Supported Lodgings Scheme to be delivered	NNDC, RSLs, Voluntary and Community Sector, Children's Services, Youth Offending Team, Supporting People, Connexions	Year 3	To be determined Housing Capital Budget, use of existing partner resources e.g. RSL properties, charitable sources Supporting People revenue funding	An increase in the range of housing and housing related support options available
	Consider the pattern of supported housing provision in the district and how it could be remodelled to better meet the housing and housing related support needs of residents in the district in line with the findings of the Rural East Anglia Partnership's Hostels Review, Sheltered Housing Strategic Review and other client-based strategic reviews	NNDC, Supporting People, Rural East Anglia Sub Regional Partnership, supported housing providers	Year 1	To be determined Housing Capital Budget, use of existing partner resources e.g. RSL properties, charitable sources Supporting People revenue funding	An increase in the range of housing and housing related support options available
	Work in partnership to deliver refuge provision for victims of domestic violence	NNDC, Supporting People, Circle Anglia, Leeway, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership	Year 1	Supporting People, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership funding	An increase in the range of housing and housing related support options available

	Further promote the Sanctuary Scheme as a homelessness prevention option for victims of domestic violence	NNDC, Sanctuary Scheme partners	Year 1	Homelessness Prevention Grant	An increase in the range of housing and housing related support options available
	Lead on the development of a county wide strategy to identify and address the Housing and Housing Related Support needs of Young People in Norfolk	NNDC, RSLs, Voluntary and Community Sector, Children's Services, Youth Offending Team, Supporting People, Connexions, Drug and Alcohol Action Team, Norfolk Probation Area	Year 1	Homelessness Prevention Grant	An increase in the range of housing and housing related support options available for young people
<b>Aim 4: To reduce the incidence of homelessness through effective homelessness prevention services</b>	Undertake an appraisal of the effectiveness and value for money of homelessness prevention activities and use of the Homelessness Prevention Fund to inform the service planning and budget setting processes	NNDC	Year 2	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Increased effectiveness of homelessness prevention services and better value for money
	Develop and implement a plan of homelessness prevention activities targeted to reduce the main causes of homelessness	NNDC	Year 2	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Increased effectiveness of homelessness prevention services
	To develop a model of service delivery which empowers customers, develops skills and increases confidence enabling customers to be better equipped to deal with issues in the future	NNDC	Year 2	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Increased effectiveness of homelessness prevention services
	Work with partners to develop information sharing, joint assessments, protocols and lead professionals for customers with complex needs to ensure a holistic assessment is made of all of the customers needs and support provided as appropriate	NNDC, Children's Services, Adult Social Services, Norfolk Probation Area, Youth Offending Team, Health Agencies, RSLs and voluntary and community sector	Year 1 – ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Increased effectiveness of homelessness prevention services and development of sustainable solutions

	Work corporately and with other partners to develop a Financial Inclusion Strategy	NNDC, RSLs, Children's Services, Adult Social Services and voluntary and community sector	Year 2	Homelessness Prevention Grant	A reduction in homelessness as a result of debt and financial hardship
	Work with RSLs to develop a package of information for new tenants to promote tenancy sustainment including details of local amenities, budgeting and the costs of running a home including fuel bills	NNDC, RSLs	Year 3	Homelessness Prevention Grant	A reduction in repeat homelessness
	Work with partners to develop a Fuel Poverty Strategy	NNDC, RSLs, energy companies, energy efficiency agencies, private landlords	Year 3	Homelessness Prevention Grant	A reduction in homelessness as a result of debt and financial hardship
	Continue to work with Revenues and Benefits to determine applications for Discretionary Housing Payments and develop action plans for those in receipt of the payment to develop sustainable solutions	NNDC	Year 1 – ongoing	Housing Revenue Budget	A reduction in homelessness as a result of debt and financial hardship
	Continue to work with key stakeholders to implement the Homelessness Strategy and develop homelessness services in the district designed to prevent homelessness	NNDC (Strategic Housing and Revenues and Benefits), Norfolk Children's Services (Leaving Care Team), Norfolk Probation Area, Benjamin Foundation, Citizens Advice Bureau (North Walsham Branch), HEART Foyers, Julian Housing Support, Stonham Homestay, Victory Housing Trust	Year 1 – ongoing	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Increased effectiveness of homelessness prevention services
	To hold an annual stakeholder workshop to report on the progress made against the Strategy Action Plan to raise the profile of the work of the sector	All partners	Year 1, Year 2, Year 3	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Increased effectiveness of homelessness prevention services

	Work with the Norfolk RSL Strategic Alliance to ensure the alignment of their Homelessness Strategy with the Strategy for North Norfolk	NNDC, Norfolk RSL Strategic Alliance	Year 1	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Increased effectiveness of homelessness prevention services
	Work Corporately and with partners to provide information, advice and guidance to address issues of worklessness	NNDC, Job Centre Plus, Learning and Skills Council, Connexions	Year 2	Homelessness Prevention Grant	Increased effectiveness of homelessness prevention services
<b>Aim 5: To reduce the use of temporary accommodation for households accepted as homeless and where temporary accommodation has to be used to ensure that it is of a reasonable standard and in a location which enables the household to maintain stability</b>	Continue to work towards a reduction in the number of households in temporary accommodation by 50% by 2010, retaining the best standard properties and those in the more sustainable locations	NNDC, RSLs	Year 1 - ongoing	Housing Revenue Budget	A reduction in the use of temporary accommodation and improved standards within temporary accommodation used
	Optimise use of temporary accommodation and minimise void loss through effectively managing handback and disposal of properties	NNDC, RSL's, owners of leased properties	Year 1 – ongoing	Housing Revenue Budget	Optimisation of temporary accommodation
	Coordinate the work to reduce the use of temporary accommodation with work on homelessness prevention and increasing access to housing options to ensure that an adequate supply of temporary accommodation is maintained to reduce the need to use Bed and Breakfast accommodation	NNDC, all partners	Year 1 – ongoing	Housing Revenue Budget, Housing Capital Budget, Homelessness Prevention Grant	Coordination of work streams to ensure a reduction in the need for temporary accommodation

## **Appendix 1 – List of key partners and stakeholders**

Age Concern  
Blakeney Housing Society  
Broadland Housing Association  
Canaan Centre  
Citizens Advice  
Co-op Homes  
Cotman Housing Association  
Cromer Job Centre Plus  
Diana Princess of Wales Treatment Centre  
Hanover Housing Association  
Hastoe Housing Association  
Holt Housing Society  
Housing 21  
John Grooms Housing Association  
Julian Housing  
Leeway Norwich Women's Aid  
Mancroft Advice Project  
Move On East (formerly Association for the Care & Resettlement of Offenders)  
NORCAS  
Norfolk Constabulary  
Norfolk Money Advice  
Norfolk Rural Community Council  
Norman Lamb MP  
North British Housing (East Anglia)  
North Norfolk Victim Support  
Norwich YMCA  
Olive Tree Project Ltd  
Orbit Housing Association  
Peddars Way Housing Association  
Rural Advice Project  
Salvation Army  
Shelter  
Space East  
Suffolk Heritage Housing Association  
Surestart  
The Bure Centre  
The Guinness Trust  
The Matthew Project  
Wherry Housing Association  
Yesu