

Notes from Homelessness Consultation Event 1st December, 2006

1. Debt Prevention Course
 - Home restart course inc:
 - Tenancy sustainment
 - Debt
 - With multi-agency approach
 - Parenting
 - Etc .../asb issues
 - Possibly funded by multi agency
 - Incentive of tenancy
 - People on scheme to 'Teach'

Pilot – early warning system

 - a. Newton farm
 - b. To finance – CAB advice, RSL, H Benefit advice
 - Identify partnership protocols and working – at all levels and champion from each agency

Consultation “ownership by Individuals”

2. Early Intervention
 - Looking at specific details from HP – ie: pregnancy
 - Data protection
 - Identify agencies that can provide early warning
 - Evidence agencies about Homelessness
 - Census data – ID – H/Benefits to put in mechanisms
 - Schools 'Respect Agenda' parenting for teenagers
 - JD, Substance misuse issues
3. Resources
 - Instant access to prevention fund
 - SP funding for pre-engagement work
 - Schools education funding
 - Identity funding possibilities
 - ID appropriate accommodation, resources eg: foyer
4. Debt – HB – Homeless Team to enquire with interventions eg: suspend claims
 - Intensive Debt and Budgeting advice – base level
 - More Welfare Officers DWP
 - In prevention team
 - In RSLs
 - Front line advice – easy accessible to welfare and promote DHP topups
5. Homepoint

6. & 7 NTQs and Local PS

- Early warning signals from PSL – “Investigate – can we make an attachment to earnings – to re??? Debt – RSLs
- Build up relationships
- Invite PSL/Agencies to Homeless conferences/ and training sessions and Interhome events

8. HB / and Rent Levels

- AW
- Front line team – CSOs – to have good HB training and homeless training
- DHP – marketing
- Build relationships with Rent Officers
- Rent Officers to visit properties

Affordable Housing

- RSLs to be more pro-active
- Working partnership with E Grid
- ID – more exception sites
- More staff for enabling team
- Is S/O affordable and research

Debt

Link to other areas of advice

Financial capability

Advice

County poorly serviced in terms of info and advice

Link to wider advice strategy

Personal housing plans

Preventative advice

Budget/housing clinics

Credible and relevant advice and accessible – what are access points

Basic knowledge of housing options

Different ways of delivering advice

Target most vulnerable

Info zone – Wyebridge (Haywood)

Locating housing for challenging/socially excluded

Look at causes of problems and what support needed and actions required

Rent arrears – back to debt

One to one work with families and sustainability of some

Community conferences to solve problems (Rochdale example)

Recognising that housing is not the only issue

Induction course at the beginning of tenancies

Conditional acceptance of “intentional homelessness”

Look at benefits that are not necessarily monetary

Building upon prevention as a viable alternative

Ensuring right resources available

Current capacity issues within other organisations – inc vol sector

Current capacity issues within homeless prevention team knowing where those resources are and working together

APPENDIX A

How much is social housing and homelessness/BS/RSLs all have a part to play
Better definition of roles and responsibilities amongst organisations and provides =
better efficiency

Planning service falling short on 35% affordable housing – what proportions socially
rented?

Need for socially rented housing

Planning Policy

- Lower the threshold for affordable housing or move to 0 threshold. If one house they contribute to develop elsewhere (affordable house). Move to 50% affordable requirements on sites of 2 or more houses?
- Change exception policy to allow landowners a small amount of market in exchange for affordable homes eg: 2 market to 4 affordable
- Are we making best use of housing stock in social rented sector
- 2nd home council tax @ 90% - extra income should go to affordable housing capital pot
- locating re-housing for “blocked” households
- Family support (intensive) in “pepper potted” properties
- Identify levels of support (case by case) which will give RSLs confidence to re-house. S People funded? And family support workers
- Prevention and deterrent group (Police, education) (part of CSDAP)
Homelessness prevention team should be part of this.
- Young people/children can often be cause of AS Behaviour
- Use S.106 funding to support costs/support for 1 year for problem family (South Gloucestershire)
- Comprehensive support package to encourage RSLs to drop restrictive policies/lettings policies
- Protocols should aim to set criteria which would bypass policies

Benefits

- Speed up assessments to RSL tenants and especially challenging households
- Is housing benefits adequately staffed? And computer systems adequate?

Communication

- Needs to be increased communication between homeless teams and voluntary sector
- Get together to show what each is trying to do and how each can assist the other
- Link person is a good idea for each to access
- Build on the success in the aftercare arena where prevention/housing and aftercare has worked

Building upon prevention

- Maximising services and resources to help reduce chances of homelessness occurring in RSL tenancies
- DVD for schools ref: homelessness or youth theatre group

APPENDIX A

- Rolling out work with schools so children are educated about realities of homelessness
- Parenting skills
- Develop role of housing related support – early intervention – Shelter

Tackling Debt Driven Homelessness

- Talk about financial management and budgeting with schools ie: skills for life (Could SHYPP help?)
- Family support (also around parenting) can help reduce debt and risks around anti-social behaviour and potential homelessness