

NATIONAL HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN UP-DATE –January 2007

Section 1: Prevention

Action	Target Date	Progress
Local Authority Housing Options and Advice		
1 Disseminate the Tarkitechnology report, and encourage authorities to review their services in the light of its recommendations.	June 2006	Issued to all authorities. All authorities are being questioned on how they are addressing recommendations during progress visits.
2. Revise the statutory guidance to local authorities to reflect a stronger housing options and advice approach.	June 2006	Guidance has been redrafted for consultation-with WAG legal department
Independent Housing Advice		
3. Explore with the LSC the performance monitoring and review arrangements for independent advice services, in order to secure improved analysis of outcomes.	June 2006	Initial discussions have taken place, but are on hold due to reorganisation at LSC. Discussions will proceed with individual services and at Housing Advice Forum Cymru.
Local Implementation of the Homelessness Duty		

<p>4. Revise our statutory guidance on the application of homelessness legislation.</p>	<p>June 2006</p>	<p>Guidance redrafted for consultation-see 2</p>
<p>5. Foster access to training in homelessness legislation, particularly in changes to law, and to case law updates.</p>	<p>June 2006</p>	<p>Free websites circulated. Several projects in Good Practice programme will raise awareness of correct application of current law.</p>
<p>Legislation 6. Ensure that any proposals to amend legislation are subject to full consultation in Wales.</p>	<p>Dec 2007</p>	<p>No prospect of legislation in the near future-to be reviewed in the light of Gov of Wales Act.</p>
<p>Housing Benefit</p>		
<p>7. Support an event to exchange good practice on working with the HB system and private rented sector.</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>Events took place in North and South Wales in autumn 06, through Shelter Cymru.</p>
<p>8. Seek to influence the development of the Local Housing Allowance in Wales in discussions with the DWP.</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>The Minister has made representations to the DWP in order to ensure access to affordable accommodation is maintained.</p>
<p>Repossessions and Evictions</p>		
<p>9. Work with advice agencies and local authorities to promote the tackling of illegal evictions in the private sector.</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>Discussion has taken place with Shelter Cymru on this, and good practice proposal on awareness raising planned.</p>
<p>10. Will consider with the Council of Mortgage Lenders what other measures are required to</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>This point has been referred to the CML, and we are awaiting a response. Shelter Cymru have been funded to carry out</p>

promote sustainable home ownership.		research into prevention of repossessions.
Children and Young People		
11. Introduce legislation to provide better protection for children in homeless families.	June 2006	The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (Wales) Order was passed on 8 th March 2006.
12. Require YPPs to work with housing colleagues to identify the particular housing needs of young people.	Dec 2007	This requirement has been set for YPPs, to be completed by March 2007.
13. Explore the development of a training package for youth workers on dealing with housing issues.	Dec 2007	Project underway with Shelter Cymru and Youth sector on developing a training pack for youth workers.
14. Establish a consultation mechanism on the National Homelessness Strategy to involve young people in its development.	Dec 2006	Discussions with Youth officials have taken place, and the Strategy is being drafted into a young person friendly form.
15. Introduce the National Service Framework for Children to promote joint working to support successful transitions for families affected by homelessness.	June 2006	This was published in July 2006.
Education		
16. Ensure that good practice in education young people on homelessness prevention is disseminated across Wales.	Dec 2006	Reviewed with Shelter Cymru in June 06, and mapping of local action is nearly complete.
17. Take account of the role that education on	Dec	This will be taken into account within the curriculum review, and

<p>housing within the PSE can play in preventing homelessness, and ensure that continuing opportunities to teach this issue are promoted.</p>	<p>2007</p>	<p>also through Shelter Cymru 'Homeworks' project.</p>
<p>Mediation</p>		
<p>18. Encourage all local authorities and their partners to establish mediation schemes in their areas with the aim of preventing homelessness.</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>This is being taken forward through Llamau project and Code of Guidance (CoG).</p>
<p>19. Promote awareness of good practice in mediation for young people.</p>	<p>Dec 2007</p>	<p>Presentation to local authority network February 06. To be promoted through Llamau good practice toolkit project and other good practice on website.</p>
<p>20. Explore with Relate the possibilities for widening the scope of relationship counselling to address homelessness.</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>To be taken forward with Relate Cymru as they become established during 2007.</p>
<p>Rural Homelessness</p>		
<p>21. Publicise the research report into rural homelessness, and consider how findings should influence policy and practice.</p>	<p>June 2006</p>	<p>Final report from Cardiff University published September 2006. Good practice event with CIH took place in July 06, and a good practice advice note is being produced.</p>

Section 2: Access to Housing

Action	Target Date	Progress
<p>Supply</p> <p>22. Issue revised guidance and associated documents to facilitate the planning of affordable housing supply.</p> <p>23. Implement new arrangements for procurements of social housing to enable longer term programming to meet needs.</p> <p>Access to Social Housing</p> <p>24. Publish guidance on how social landlords should ensure that their housing is accessible to, and meets the needs of homeless people.</p> <p>25. Promote choice for homeless people setting out in statutory guidance how local authorities should take account of individual needs and preferences.</p> <p>Bond, Deposit and Rent in Advance Schemes</p> <p>26. Support the further development of bond</p>	<p>June 2006</p> <p>June 2006</p> <p>June 2006</p> <p>June 2006</p> <p>Dec</p>	<p>Revised guidance and toolkit issued May 06.</p> <p>Phased implementation of new partnership arrangements from 2005/6 to 2007/8.</p> <p>To be addressed in CoG and new guidance for RSLs. Guidance with lawyers.</p> <p>To be addressed in revised CoG. Research report drafted January 2007, now being considered by officials.</p> <p>This will be taken forward with 'CRISIS' good practice project,</p>

<p>schemes across Wales, taking account of gaps in current provision, the review of the Cardiff Custodial Bond Scheme, and the need for more generic inclusive services which include more private landlords.</p>	<p>2006</p>	<p>and working group on access to private rented housing. CRISIS have already completed mapping exercise.</p>
<p>27. Review our policy and practice guide for bond schemes in Wales.</p>	<p>Dec 2007</p>	<p>To be reviewed, linked to above working group.</p>
<p>Exclusions</p>		
<p>28. Issue regulatory guidance for housing associations on suspensions which mirrors the Homelessness Act provisions due to unacceptable behaviour contained in the Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness.</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>Draft guidance with Legal Services</p>
<p>29. Monitor social landlord compliance with guidance on restricting access to social housing through audit and regulation.</p>	<p>Dec 2007</p>	<p>WAG currently undertaking review of local authority allocation policies. To be approved by Minister and published early 2007.</p>
<p>30. Promote multi-agency arrangements which review the circumstances of excluded people and provide support to enable them to be reconsidered for social housing.</p>	<p>Dec 2007</p>	<p>Research project on this by WAG in progress.</p>
<p>Temporary Accommodation</p>		
<p>31. Introduce legislation to place new requirements</p>		

<p>on local authorities from April 2006 to consider social and personal factors when finding temporary accommodation for homeless people.</p>	<p>April 2006</p>	<p>The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (Wales) Order was passed on 8th March 2006. This requirement came into effect on 3.4.06</p>
<p>32. Introduce legislation setting new standards for the use of temporary accommodation.</p>	<p>April 2006</p>	<p>As above. The new standards came into effect from April 07.</p>
<p>33. Monitor the progress authorities are making on their temporary accommodation targets through the Policy Agreements.</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>Monitoring and performance issues taken up through local authority visits and other bi-lateral contacts. Performance is improving.</p>
<p>Bed and Breakfast</p>		
<p>34. Legislate to bring into effect new restrictions on the use of B & B by local authorities.</p>	<p>April 2006</p>	<p>The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (Wales) Order was passed on 8th March 2006. This requirement came into effect from April 07.</p>
<p>35. Monitor the progress local authorities are making in reducing the use of B & B by reference to the Policy Agreements.</p>	<p>June 2006</p>	<p>As above. Performance improving in most areas of Wales.</p>
<p>36. Continue to provide support to local authorities to deliver improvements in temporary accommodation responses through support for spend to save initiatives.</p>	<p>June 2006</p>	<p>Being taken forward through Prevention and Temporary Accommodation grant programme, and discussions with individual authorities through visits etc.</p>
<p>Private Rented Sector</p>		
<p>37. Introduce a national mandatory licensing</p>		

<p>scheme for houses in multiple occupation, which aims to provide safe, acceptable living accommodation.</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>Mandatory licensing scheme introduced from end of June 06.</p>
<p>38. Establish a task and finish group to identify good practice in engaging the private sector in tackling homelessness.</p>	<p>June 2006</p>	<p>Task and Finish Group established following Shelter Cymru research completed in October 2006. First meeting held December 06.</p>
<p>Move-on</p>		
<p>39. Promote local joint working to secure adequate provision of move-on accommodation.</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>Taken forward with local authorities through progress visits. Planning for move-on good practice event March 07.</p>
<p>Partnership with Housing Associations</p>		
<p>40. Examine how current strategic partnership arrangements are working and how these can best be organised to deliver effective joint working in the field of homelessness, including research into the role Community Housing Agreements can play.</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>Research into partnership arrangements underway, led by Simon Inkson Associates. To be completed early 07.</p>
<p>41. Discuss with WFHA and WLGA ways to improve dialogue and joint strategic positions on partnership working to tackle homelessness.</p>	<p>June 2006</p>	<p>Joint discussions have taken place, and joint conference November 06 included homelessness agenda.</p>

3: Resettlement and Support

Action	Target Date	Progress
<p>Rough Sleeping</p> <p>42. Require local authorities through their local homelessness strategy to specify how they will provide accommodation for rough sleepers.</p> <p>43. Set a target to reduce rough sleeping once a statistical baseline has been established.</p> <p>44. Support services which work with rough sleepers to offer them resettlement pathways.</p> <p>Supporting People</p> <p>45. Support changes to objectives or specifications in Supporting People Revenue Grant (SPRG) projects where they are compatible with tackling homelessness.</p> <p>46. Promote the use of Supporting People services as part of the homelessness prevention and repeat homelessness agenda.</p>	<p>June 2006</p> <p>Dec 2007</p> <p>June 2006</p> <p>Dec 2006</p> <p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>This has been incorporated in guidance on local housing strategies.</p> <p>Rough sleeping counts to be carried out March 07. Guidance published autumn 06. Support for counts to be provided by 'REACH'.</p> <p>Homelessness grant and Supporting People programmes continue to support a range of resettlement services. Performance indicators to be developed for grant-funded projects.</p> <p>This is being taken forward on a case-by-case basis. Re-focusing of services on homelessness approved in 8 local authority areas.</p> <p>Joint working relationship between SPIN and homelessness network being developed, and planning for joint conference. New co-ordinator to promote joined-up agenda between SP and Homelessness networks.</p>

<p>47. Review the impact of proposed legislation on tenure on the Supporting People policy context and criteria.</p>	<p>Dec 2007</p>	<p>Rented Homes Bill published May 06. Minister has met with Law Commissioners June 06.</p>
<p>Learning and Employment</p>		
<p>48. Review the pilot programme to assess its value in aiding the process of resettlement of people at risk of homelessness.</p>	<p>Dec 2007</p>	<p>To be taken forward with EIWa and Cymorth.</p>
<p>49. Encourage the development of skills and employment assessments for homeless people, and referral arrangements to maximise their career and income opportunities.</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>To be addressed in revised Code of Guidance, and Homelessness Grant programme including Solas project piloting assessment model.</p>
<p>Positive Lifestyles</p>		
<p>50. Promote positive lifestyles as part of the resettlement process through disseminating examples of successful practice.</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>Good practice to be promoted through evaluation of Homelessness Grant programme, particularly Solas Project in Newport.</p>
<p>51. Support the bid for the Homeless Football World Cup to be held in Wales.</p>	<p>Dec 2007</p>	<p>Awaiting proposal from voluntary sector.</p>

Section 4: Cross-Sector Working

Action	Target Date	Progress
<p>Former Prisoners & Prevention of Re-Offending</p> <p>52. Progress our commitments under the AWYOS by working with YOTs and the Youth Justice Board to identify and meet the housing needs of young offenders and those at risk of offending in each area</p> <p>53. Monitor and advise on the development of SPOPs and Local Homelessness Strategies to ensure they reflect joint working with criminal justice agencies to prevent homelessness.</p> <p>54. Review the implementation of the Prison Link Cymru scheme to ensure it is working effectively to support the prevention of homelessness.</p> <p>55. Explore with criminal justice agencies the scope for joint working and commissioning in preventing homelessness amongst ex-offenders.</p>	<p>June 2006</p> <p>Dec 2006</p> <p>Dec 2006</p> <p>June 2006</p>	<p>Working group established under AWYOS. Objectives for 06/7 in place.</p> <p>Completed assessment of SPOPs for 06/7, and feedback provided.</p> <p>Discussions held with criminal justice partners. More detailed review planned for 2007.</p> <p>Ongoing through All Wales Offender Housing Task Group, and discussions with NOMs.</p>
<p>Social Services</p> <p>56. Consider how we can strengthen the assessment of how Social Services Departments (SSDs) meet their statutory responsibilities within</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>Following discussions with SSIW/Social Care officials, the annual performance evaluation of SSDs now incorporates homelessness.</p>

<p>the (Social Services Inspectorate (SSIW) inspection programme.</p>		
<p>57. Foster development and dissemination of good practice and joint working between housing and social services.</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>Initial discussions have taken place with SSIW. WHQ to produce good practice note in 2007/8.</p>
<p>Health</p>		
<p>58. Consider the recommendations emerging from the Health and Homelessness conference in May 2005.</p>	<p>June 2006</p>	<p>Joint audit work on 6 areas completed, together with survey report from Homeless Link Cymru. Health and Homelessness Facilitator appointed, to be in post March 07.</p>
<p>59. Publish the health policy guidance which the Selected Minority Group will produce in 2006.</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>Guidance issued July 2006.</p>
<p>Domestic Abuse</p>		
<p>60. Expand our grant programme for domestic abuse services to improve support for women to remain in their homes and reduce the likelihood of homelessness.</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>The Grant programme for 2006/7 is supporting the work of DA co-ordinators in all local authority areas.</p>
<p>61. Evaluate the outcome of the pilot project and disseminate its findings.</p>	<p>June 2007</p>	<p>The project co-ordinator gave a presentation to WAG in May 06. Discussions continuing with WAIMON to secure successful completion of project.</p>
<p>Substance Misuse</p>		
<p>62. Consult on the framework for the needs of</p>		<p>The SM service framework for homeless has been issued for</p>

homeless people or others in housing need.	Dec 2006	consultation autumn 06.
<p>63. Continue providing capital funding to increase the availability of access to housing for people with substance misuse problems.</p>	April 2006	A further £3m has been made available for capital projects for 2006/7
<p>Care Leavers</p>		
<p>64. Review the survey information to identify and address barriers to the provision of suitable accommodation for care leavers, and address any issues raised.</p>	June 2006	This work is being undertaken by Social Care and Housing officials. Main issues identified and discussed at conference.
<p>65. Promote joint working between housing and social services in the re-housing aspect of the resettlement process, through monitoring of local homelessness strategies and leaving care services.</p>	Dec 2006	This issue has been a theme of an all Wales conference in May 2006, and officials discussing action to follow up its findings. Will form part of policy review on care leavers summer 07.
<p>Armed Service Veterans</p>		
<p>66. Examine the outcome of the current research project and explore its recommendations with partners.</p>	June 2006	This has been discussed with veterans' organisations in January 06. Further research being undertaken by MoD.
<p>67. Promote with the Veterans Agency and partners better joint working between statutory and voluntary agencies to prevent homelessness amongst</p>	June	Joint working conference held November 06. Action plan from the conference being prepared.

veterans.	2006	
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Section 5 Equality of Access

Action	Target Date	Progress
Refugees		
68. Review the effectiveness of the Well-Housing project to ensure it works effectively in reducing homelessness amongst refugees.	June 2006	Review meeting held in December 06. WRC to provide further monitoring information in due course.
69. Publish and implement the Action Plan on Asylum Seekers and Refugees.	June 2006	Action Plan issued July 06.
Black and other Minority Ethnic Groups (BME)		
70. Review how local authorities and their partners are addressing the needs of BME homeless people through their local strategies	Dec 2006	This is being addressed through local progress visits. Also agreed that further investigation would take place in selected areas.
71. Commission/undertake research into homelessness in Wales amongst BME groups.	Dec 2006	This was discussed at BME Housing Group on 20.3.06. Monitoring of data to continue. Full strategy to be subject to race equality assessment
Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People (LGB)		
72. Review the findings of the research into the housing needs for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people.	June 2006	The research findings have been considered with EPU. Recommendations being addressed through funding for local training.
73. Monitor how local authorities consider the specific needs of lesbians, gay and bisexual people	Dec 2006	This will be taken forward with Las through progress monitoring, supported by Stonewall training project.

<p>in their Local Homelessness Strategy.</p> <p>People with Disabilities</p> <p>74. Evaluate the effectiveness of the specialist advice service in South Wales in preventing homelessness.</p> <p>75. Review with partners how specialist advice can best be delivered across Wales.</p> <p>Women</p> <p>76. Review the provision of local authority homeless services to ensure they are appropriate for women as well as men.</p> <p>Older Homeless People</p> <p>77. Work with local services and the UK Coalition on Older Homelessness to address the specific needs of older homeless people.</p> <p>Gypsies and Travellers</p> <p>78. Review the housing needs and service provision for gypsies and travellers in Wales</p>	<p>Dec 2007</p> <p>Dec 2007</p> <p>Dec 2006</p> <p>Dec 2006</p> <p>Dec 2006</p>	<p>To be undertaken during 2007.</p> <p>This review will be linked to above evaluation.</p> <p>To be taken forward through progress monitoring, including rough sleeping returns.</p> <p>Contacts with Coalition made, with advice to be considered.</p> <p>To be taken forward through establishment of new WAG unit.</p>
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Section 6: Delivering and Implementing the Strategy

	Target Date	Progress
Local Homelessness Strategies		
79. Meet annually with every authority to review progress.	Dec 2006	Progress visits all completed.
80. Revise our guidance on local homelessness strategies taking account of experiences so far, and how the duty should be met under the Plan Rationalisation proposals.	June 2006	This will be reflected in revised CoG and Housing Strategy guidance.
Joint Working and Planning		
81. Strengthen the statutory Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness in regard to joint working.	June 2006	Revision of CoG in progress-see 2.
82. Promote and support good practice and joint working.	June 2006	This is being promoted through progress review visits and other strands of action within this Strategy, including Good Practice Grant programme.
Good Practice		
83. Review our homelessness grants programme to ensure that the evidence of effective practice is widely circulated.	Dec 2007	The review of the grants programme is in progress- action plan to be developed and implemented by April 2007
84. Redesign our website to provide more effective	Dec	WAG website has been improved. Good practice section

links to highlight good practice and other websites.	2006	established.
85. Work with local authorities to promote a more effective network for homelessness staff.	June 2006	Funding has been awarded for co-ordinator for the Network, to start from February 07
86. Use our resources to promote continuing innovation and improvement in homelessness practice.	June 2006	The Good Practice in Homelessness grant programme 2006/7 has been approved, with around 35 new projects which will promote excellence and innovation in areas ranging from mediation to working with the private rented sector.
87. Promote information sharing on effective practice in joint working, including joint working between housing, health and social services.	Dec 2006	To be developed with WLGA, Network, and other policy areas. Learning exchange event has been held in April, and further events planned.
Measuring and Analysing Homelessness		
88. Provide advice to each authority on the proper interpretation of national data requirements.	Dec 2006	The LGDU have made a presentation to Network in February 06, and further advice to follow.
89. Take action to address any significant delay in receipt of statutory homelessness returns.	Dec 2006	Recent performance has improved. No current cause for concern.
90. Discuss statistical trends at least annually with each authority.	Dec 2006	Trends are reviewed through progress visits and other contacts. Bilateral discussions include focus on Policy Agreement performance.
91. Publish an annual report on homelessness trends as well as quarterly bulletins.	Dec 2006	The quarterly bulletins now include annual statistics.

Monitoring and Review		
92. Provide annual reports to the Social Justice and Regeneration Committee on progress. This will include updated revisions to the Action Plan.	April 2007	A progress report was presented in summer 06, and a full progress report will be made on 15 th February 07.
93. Carry out a full review of the Strategy.	April 2008	To follow above.
94. Review with partners the need to set further specific target dates, beyond the dates for performance targets already included in the main report.	April 2007	This will be reviewed through Homelessness Strategies Working Group