

## **Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan 2014 – 2019**

### **2015-16 update**

<b>Priority 1: Preventing homelessness by sustaining tenancies</b>						
How this priority will be achieved	Key Actions	Smart target	By When	By Whom	Update 2015	Update 2016
Increase the provision of tenancy support including floating support to tenants in social rented sector	1.1 Encourage the take up of tenancy floating support through One support to vulnerable tenants moving into accommodation 1.2 Tenancy support Officers to identify and support clients in accommodation	Increased take up of One support service – increase in tenants sustaining their tenancy – reduction in number of evictions for rent arrears and ASB	Throughout the lifetime of the strategy	Customer Service Centre/Colchester Borough Homes/Registered Providers  Colchester Borough Homes – Tenancy Support Officers		One Support has increased the number of referring agencies to the service. Additional drop in services have been created at the Job Centre and the Library – there are approximately 260 referrals per month to the service.

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Prevent Homelessness by helping people sustain their tenancies, through the increased provision of debt and welfare rights advice.	<p>1.3 Provide support and advice to tenants on managing debt and welfare benefits including organisations working with single homeless</p> <p>1.4 Increase the availability and provision of debt advice in the Borough and promote existing services including the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).</p> <p>1.5 Continue to raise awareness of the Credit Union to avoid clients using expensive</p>	<p>Reduction in the number of evictions for rent arrears</p> <p>Increase take up of welfare benefits</p> <p>Increase in number of people using the Credit Union</p>	Throughout the lifetime of the strategy	Colchester Borough Homes – Financial Inclusion Officer/CAB/Credit Union/Beacon House/Night Shelter	<p>19 CBC tenants were evicted in 2014/15 for rent arrears. CBH Financial Inclusion Officer continues to support tenants to manage budgets. The Night Shelter has appointed a Tenancy Sustainment worker and is holding pre tenancy workshops – 100% success rate.</p>	<p>20 CBC tenants were evicted in 2015/16 for rent arrears.</p> <p>During 2015-16 the Financial Inclusion Officer visited 152 tenants to provide support and debt advice including; opening bank accounts, applying for welfare benefits and preventing homelessness, evictions and court action. Colchester Emergency Night Shelter (CENS) Tenancy Sustainment Officer continues to have 100% success with all clients supported into the</p>

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	doorstep credit providers				<p>A Housing Benefit Officer is working within the front facing office with housing staff at CBH; this allows for crisis resolution at the front end of the service.</p> <p>The CAB has been grant funded to provide an enhanced money management advice service which housing options</p>	<p>PRS and general needs accommodation.</p> <p>Beacon House – has set up ‘Bridging a gap’ to help clients with ID, moving support, financial support and skills to maintain tenancies</p> <p>Beacon House – awarded CBC Homelessness Prevention Grant Funding to provide homelessness prevention and support for single homeless. Open Road are developing money and work mentors to assist service users to</p>

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					services staff can refer their clients into directly.	maintain accommodation.
Reduce the number of owner occupiers losing their properties through mortgage arrears	1.6 Provide advice and support services to home owners threatened with repossession at an early stage so that homelessness can be prevented in a sustainable way 1.7 Promote the Governments Mortgage Rescue Scheme	Reduction in homeless applications due to repossession	Throughout the lifetime of the strategy	Colchester Borough Homes - Housing Options Team	Mortgage rescue scheme has now ceased and no longer exists.	CBH Housing options Team continue to provide advice and support to homeowners to help prevent homelessness through repossession.

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Provide services that will support young tenants to maintain their tenancy and prevent unnecessary evictions through ASB and Arrears	1.8 Develop early intervention programmes for young people under 25 including pre eviction panels/pre tenancy workshops 1.9 Joint working with Supported Housing Schemes for under 25's on Notice to Quit Panels to	Reduction in Young People being evicted from their tenancy including Temporary Accommodation and Supported Housing	October 2014	Colchester Borough Homes – Housing Options Team/Supported Housing Network, CBH TSO's	Pre tenancy workshops now mandatory. 15 young people attend per workshop. 5 Young people evicted for rent arrears by CBH in 2014/15. Tenancy Support Team now supporting	Youth Enquiry Service (y.e.s.) - Pre tenancy workshops with young people in supported housing – focus on priority debts to help prevent homelessness by maintaining move – on accommodation.  3 young people were evicted for rent arrears/ASB from CBC properties  Bernard Brett House

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	prevent evictions				new young tenants for 6 months. DWP quarterly Liaison meetings set up - helping to engage young people that are hard to reach.	track and support their clients for 2 years after being rehoused to support them in maintaining a tenancy.
Improve release programmes for people leaving Care and Institutions' such as Prison and Armed Forces	1.10 Set up monitoring of release programmes from Prisons and Armed Forces 1.11 Work with Prisons, Armed Forces and Social Services on planned move-on routes - The April Centre	Data collected to inform policy  Release programmes in place	Monitoring set up by April 2015  October 2015	Colchester Borough Homes	'Help for single homeless' funding secured by CBC, Tendring DC and Ipswich BC to provide early intervention for prison leavers.	Referrals to ACT since the service began from Colchester is 59. Referrals predominantly from CBH, Colchester probation and the Community Rehabilitation Company.

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	is conducting visits to prisons to help those ready to be released			The April Centre has now closed.	Anglia Care Trust to provide Early Intervention Service for 18 months.	
Increase prevention of homelessness caused by domestic violence	1.12 continue to support the multi-agency partnership work with local domestic abuse agencies through the Domestic Violence Forum 1.13 Monitor the take up of the Sanctuary Scheme	A reduction In homelessness caused by domestic violence	Throughout the lifetime of the strategy	Community Initiatives Team/Housing Options Team	Domestic Abuse protocol being set up by ECC.	The Colchester Sanctuary Scheme received 62 high risk domestic violence security reports from Essex Police between 1/4/15 – 31/3/16, to which CBC have responded.  CBC and CBH have worked in partnership with ECC on the Domestic Abuse Joint Commissioning Strategy for Essex. This included the commissioning of the Independent

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						Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service to support households experiencing domestic violence (100% of high risk victims known by Essex Police are now supported by an IDVA)
Set up a system to monitor and analyse the demand for TA, repeat homelessness applications and the reasons for homelessness including where tenancies have broken down	Identify what data is already being collected and where there are gaps.	Set up a template to collate and monitor the demand and supply for temporary accommodation.	Set up system to capture data on a quarterly basis from April 2016	CBH- Housing Options Team/CBC- Housing Strategy Officer		Temporary accommodation (TA) position statement reviewed and updated. Demand for TA being monitored including use of B&B.



Priority 2: Mitigating the negative impacts of welfare reform						
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Provide advice and support to tenants/residents potentially affected by the welfare reforms	2.1 Promote the availability of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) 2.2 Work with the Job Centre Plus to help assist tenants to access employment 2.3 Promote mutual exchange to encourage tenants to move including via Mutual Exchange fairs 2.4 Review existing policies to encourage tenants to move and make better use of housing	Reduction in tenants /residents affected by welfare reforms	April 2017	Colchester Borough Council/Colchester Borough Homes/Job Centre Plus	DHP used predominately to assist families in the PRS. There has been a 43% reduction in the budget for 2015/16 from the previous year. On 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2015 the number of families affected by the benefit cap was 54 which is a reduction from 228 families in 2012. CBC is working in partnership with JCP which includes an Officer being seconded from the JCP to provide job search advice to clients. CBH has changed its Transfer	DHP funding for 2015/16, fully spent. £50,000 CBC / £239,924 DWP. CBC DHP budget for 2016/2017 is £50,000 CBC and £292,170 DWP. A Welfare Reform project has been set up at CBC. Specialist team being recruited within the Customer Service Team for 3 year project. This will include

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	stock 2.5 Identify and support tenants with managing budgets – Financial Inclusion officer				<p>Incentive Scheme and now offers tenants £500 for help with moving costs and £500 per bedroom given up, to a maximum of £2,000. A CBH enabling team support tenants to make decisions and take care of practicalities, to help them move.</p> <p>Since April 2013 the number of residents affected by the spare room subsidy has been reduced by 36%; this has been achieved by proactive support, early intervention and partnership working. Universal Credit was rolled out 16<sup>th</sup> March</p>	<p>proactive work on the impact of the benefit cap. Customer Service – new DHP online form to go live June/July 2016. Successful Joint working with the DWP and the JCP. CENS – assisting clients with welfare benefits. y.e.s. – now based at the Job Centre once a fortnight to offer support to young people who have been sanctioned – to stop rent</p>

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					<p>2015 for single people making new 'simple' claims only. Supported Housing is exempt. Colchester council has entered into a delivery partnership agreement with DWP to deliver four key elements of support for claimants inc: support with housing costs; triage with debt and budgeting advice; using PCs; and informing landlords of the changes. Within this agreement Colchester will deliver personal budgeting support (PBS) and digital inclusion support through a dedicated customer</p>	<p>arrears getting out of control and leading to homelessness. y.e.s. – pre tenancy workshops includes mitigating the forthcoming impact of UC for young people. Beacon House provides food parcels for rough sleepers and helping with opening bank accounts for this group. Financial Inclusion Officer continues to support tenants</p>

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					<p>support team. Financial Inclusion Officer continues to support tenants to manage budgets including helping 15 tenants with children to secure DHP to clear arrears and avoid eviction and secure DHP awards for 29 tenants living in an adapted property to cover under occupation charges. The Financial Inclusion Strategy is being updated.</p>	<p>with budgeting: In 2015/16, 152 tenants were visited. DHP awarded to tenants to clear rent arrears to avoid homelessness amounted to £94,051. 50 Tenants had joint debt advice/solution home visits with the CAB. 25 tenants supported to open basic bank accounts. 64 DHP awards were made to CBC tenants who had council tax arrears with</p>

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						some facing court action, total amounted to £6846.81.

Priority 3: Improving the Health and Wellbeing of homeless people						
How this priority will be achieved	Key Actions	Smart target	By When	By Whom	Update 2015	Update 2016
Work in partnership with	3.1 Work with ECC and other	Meetings set up and work plan	October 2013	ECC/CBC/One Support/Beacon	Health Needs Audit completed and report	<b>Action completed</b>

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the Public Health Team at Essex County Council (ECC) on the Homelessness Health Needs Audit to gather local information on the health needs of homeless people.	Local Authorities in North Essex to progress the Health Needs Audit – Project Group set up for Colchester to complete audit - CBC, One Support and Beacon House	agreed  Representatives for Project Group agreed		House	published.	
Collate the information from the Health Needs Audit to identify services to meet the health needs of homeless people in Colchester. The results will inform ECC's Joint Strategic Needs assessment	3.2 ECC and Colchester Project Group to work in partnership to collate information from the audit	Information Collated  Services to meet the health needs of homeless people identified	April 2014	ECC/CBC/One Support/Beacon House	Beacon House have been awarded a contract from the CCG for 3 years to provide health provision for street homeless clients and outreach including a mental health drop-in service	
Promote the	3.3 Work in	Identified	April 2016	ECC/CBC/CCG	CBC attending	New role in

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integration between health and housing to meet the actions identified in the Public Health Outcomes Framework Improving the wider determinants of Health for homeless acceptances and households in temporary accommodation	partnership with ECC Public Health Team to progress the actions in the framework	outcomes in the framework met			meetings set up to improve partnership working between Housing Health and Social Care.	Private Sector Housing - Public Health Improvement coordinator will help to build links between health and housing. Projects to improve health and wellbeing of homeless household includes: y.e.s – offer a Counselling service for clients up to the age of 25. y.e.s. Teenage Pregnancy Midwife, has a new role as the Vulnerable

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						<p>Women's Midwife so as well as offering a service to teenage mums also opens up the service to women who are pregnant and considered vulnerable. Beacon House – received a grant from Reaching Communities to provide aspirational activities for their clients including Kayaking, Climbing and Coracle making. Beacon House</p>



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						has 2 barbers and also provides Podiatry services and Occupational therapy support. One Support now has a mental health crisis team. The team also have a weekly drop in at Beacon House.
Progress work with ECC and North and Mid Essex on the actions from the ECC Mental	3.4 Colchester represented at meetings with North and mid Essex Locality Group.	Actions from strategy implemented  Hospital discharge	November 2015	ECC/CBC/CBH	Mental Health Accommodation Pathway set up in September 2014 which included a MH JRP introduced to	

<b>Priority 3: Improving the Health and Wellbeing of homeless people</b>						
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Health Accommodation Strategy including the hospital discharge process	3.5 Priorities identified Project groups set up to progress actions.	process in place			improve access to accommodation and support for this group.	

<b>Priority 4: Changing the perception and culture of social housing through education – managing expectations</b>						
How this priority will be achieved	Key Actions	Smart target	By When	By Whom	Update 2015	Update 2016
Provide wider	4.1 Improve	Statutory and	Throughout the	Community	2 successful	A successful

<b>Priority 4: Changing the perception and culture of social housing through education – managing expectations</b>						
How this priority will be achieved	Key Actions	Smart target	By When	By Whom	Update 2015	Update 2016
communication of Colchester Borough Council's Housing and Homelessness services	communication of services provided by the Council to statutory and voluntary sector organisations through Information days 4.2 Identify gaps in information and publish and promote leaflets on the Council's homelessness and housing service for partner organisations and young people, and distribute widely at key Service Locations.	Voluntary organisations and Service Users more aware of services provided by Colchester Borough Council	lifetime of the strategy	Initiatives/Housing Options –Young Persons Housing Forum	homelessness events held in 2014.  Pocket Guide to Homelessness and Young Persons Guide updated and published. COYOHO – a website providing housing and homelessness advice for young people set up and publicised in 2014.	Homelessness Information event was held in March 2016 – 45 people attended excluding organisers – very good feedback. CBC and CBH websites are being updated to improve information provided on housing and homelessness.  In May 2016 the Housing Options Team achieved the DCLG Silver

<b>Priority 4: Changing the perception and culture of social housing through education – managing expectations</b>						
How this priority will be achieved	Key Actions	Smart target	By When	By Whom	Update 2015	Update 2016
						Standard award for their housing and homelessness service.
Develop early intervention and prevention options for Young People at risk of becoming homeless in the Borough through the Young Persons Housing Forum	4.3 Work with the Homeless Response Team to raise awareness of family breakdown and provide basic strategies and signposting to support families to resolve conflict 4.4 Continue to work in partnership with Schools in the Borough to educate young people and their parents of the risks of leaving	An increase in homelessness prevention for young people  A decrease in homeless applications for young people	Throughout the lifetime of the strategy	Community Initiatives/Housing Options – Young Persons Housing Forum	Feasibility study for a Peer Educator programme for schools has been carried out. Project being developed.	y.e.s. – working in partnership with Social Care to prevent homelessness for 16/17 year olds.

<b>Priority 4: Changing the perception and culture of social housing through education – managing expectations</b>						
How this priority will be achieved	Key Actions	Smart target	By When	By Whom	Update 2015	Update 2016
	home in an unplanned way.				COYOHO – a website providing housing and homelessness advice for young people set up in 2014	
Increase and support housing options for single people and vulnerable groups including Move-on options from supported Housing	4.5 Identify, support and promote alternative housing options including Solo Housing Scheme, YMCA Supported Lodgings Scheme and Genesis Leasing Scheme	Increase in alternative housing options and planned move on routes	Throughout the lifetime of the strategy	Young Persons Housing Forum/Supported Housing Network	Improvement in culture for young people in Supported Housing with less reliance on social housing as a move on option.	y.e.s. – exploring private rented options with young people to promote the idea that social housing is not the only housing route available to them.

<b>5: Rough Sleepers</b>		
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How this priority will be achieved	Key Actions	Smart target	By When	By Whom	Update 2015	Update 2016
Establish a multi-agency group of support services for single homeless and rough sleepers	5.1 Re establish the Co-ordinated Welfare Meeting with organisations that support single homeless and rough sleepers – will help to identify duplication in services	Multi Agency Group established	April 2014	Beacon House/Night Shelter/CBC	CHASUP set up for organisations to work collaboratively with entrenched rough sleepers to help them access accommodation and support. Meetings held monthly. Currently have 22 active cases and a watching brief.	Since July 2015 CHASUP has worked with 65 clients of which 25 have been rehoused.
Set up a protocol between voluntary sector organisations to enable data on rough sleepers to be shared	5.2 Set up protocol through the CHASUP meeting	Protocol established	November 2014	CHASUP	Joint working agreement set up through CHASUP	<b>Action Completed</b>
Identify the support needs of different types of	5.3 Work to be progressed through the Street	Support needs identified	November 2015	Beacon House/Night Shelter/CBC	Support needs being identified through	One Support now has a mental health

<b>5: Rough Sleepers</b>						
How this priority will be achieved	Key Actions	Smart target	By When	By Whom	Update 2015	Update 2016
rough sleepers including entrenched rough sleepers, young people that are 'new' to the streets and people suffering from mental health to help engage with different groups	Outreach Service set up for 2 years from November 2013 with funding from the DCLG and provided by the April Centre				Outreach and CHASUP.	crisis team. The team also have a weekly drop in at Beacon House. Due to the closure of the April Centre the street outreach project (grant funding provided by CBH for the project) is now being run by Beacon House – the project signposts rough sleepers to services and is 'catching' people that are new to the streets. The project also helps to move

<b>5: Rough Sleepers</b>						
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						<p>people on from a street lifestyle once they are housed and feeds into CHASUP.</p> <p>Foundation 66 – Support and Mentoring Services programme – Provides a peer mentoring service for people over 18 recovering from drug and alcohol addiction across Essex.</p> <p>Open Road are providing a street based worker to support rough sleepers and</p>



<b>5: Rough Sleepers</b>						
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						street drinkers and drop in activities for those with alcohol or drug issues CENS – Meaningful use of time – programme offering volunteering opportunities and Mersea conservation – weekly.
Explore the possibility of extending the opening times of agencies to reduce the amount of time that rough sleepers spend on	5.4 To be progressed through the Co-ordinated Welfare meeting	Opening times extended – more places for rough sleepers to go during the day	November 2014	Beacon House/April Centre/Night Shelter		CENS – now provide longer daytime opening hours to ensure that their service users are engaging with

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the street						support. Clients who have been rehoused but were previously at the Night Shelter can benefit from the service. (50+ a week use the service) During the winter months, St Peters Guest House in conjunction with Beacon House provided shelter and food. The service was run by a paid Co-ordinator and volunteers. Between 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2015 – end of February 2016

<b>5: Rough Sleepers</b>						
How this priority will be achieved	Key Actions	Smart target	By When	By Whom	Update 2015	Update 2016
						(Over 66 nights) the centre provided for 26 guests and received donations from local businesses. Beacon House looking to increase capacity at the centre by refurbishing the ground floor.
Identify move-on opportunities for rough sleepers to help with transition from living on the street	5.5 To be progressed through the Street Outreach Service 5.6 Monitor and promote the Solo Lodgings Scheme set up in July 2013 with funding from the DCLG	Move-on options identified Increase in number of Landlords signing up to the scheme Decrease in number of rough sleepers	November 2015  Monitored quarterly	Beacon House	Solo housing scheme no longer exists.  The April Centre was funded by the Greater Haven Gateway to provide an Outreach	Due to the closure of the April Centre the street outreach project (grant funding provided by CBH for the project) is now being run by Beacon House

5: Rough Sleepers						
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					<p>response to rough sleepers across the sub region. The April Centre were able to provide a fast response to rough sleepers identified by members of the public as well as partner agencies and help them to access accommodation and support.</p> <p>Action being progressed through Help for single homeless bid - Breaking the</p>	<p>– the project links service users to services that provide support and accommodation and is ‘catching’ people that are new to the streets. The project also helps to move people on from a street lifestyle once they are housed and feeds into CHASUP.</p> <p>Anglia Care Trust (ACT) was successful in bidding for the Help for Single Homeless</p>

5: Rough Sleepers						
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					cycle of rough sleeping though Intensive Brokerage and Increasing the range of accommodation with support.	funding. 70 referrals have been made to ACT since the service began from CBH, Open road, One Support, Beacon House, CRC and the National Prison Service (NPS). Open Road are working with Dimensions to help Support single homeless people with Drug & alcohol issues into settled accommodation. CBH, CBC and partner agencies conducted a

5: Rough Sleepers						
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						rough sleepers count in November 2015 and 9 rough sleepers were identified. 5 were referred to supported accommodation or Anglian Care Trust for assistance into private rented accommodation. The remaining 5 were referred to CHASUP and the Outreach Worker at Beacon House to help them engage with services.
Set up an	To produce	A reduction in the	Estimated start	Essex Police, CBC,	Initial funding	<b>Action</b>

5: Rough Sleepers						
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<p>'Alternative Giving Campaign' to discourage members of the public from giving money to beggars.</p> <p>To educate the public so that their donations get spent on charitable work to help those in need to reduce street begging in Colchester.</p>	<p>leaflets and media publicity to raise awareness of perpetuating street begging.</p> <p>To encourage residents to give donations to charities for homeless clients instead of street beggars.</p> <p>Signpost street beggars that need support to organisations that provide the service required.</p>	<p>number of street beggars.</p> <p>Increase in funds for local charities for those who really need it.</p> <p>Increase in street beggars accessing services.</p>	<p>date August 2015.</p>	<p>CBH, Beacon House and the Safer Colchester Partnership.</p>	<p>identified for leaflets/media publicity through Police Crime Commissioner for Essex.</p>	<p><b>completed.</b> Anecdotal evidence suggests that the campaign has reduced the amount of begging in the town.</p>