

Homelessness Strategy 2013 - 2018



South Tyneside Council

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Foreword

Foreword by Councillor Jim Foreman, Lead Member for Housing and Transport

I am proud to present South Tyneside's third Homelessness Strategy 2013-2018. This Strategy aims to prevent homelessness and will support homelessness households and also those at risk of homelessness in South Tyneside.

A considerable amount has been achieved since the last Homelessness Strategy was published and this Homelessness Strategy will continue to build on these successes which will further develop initiatives to improve the lives of those at risk of, or affected by homelessness in the Borough.

The Strategy sets out our priorities for homelessness for the next five years and includes a detailed action plan necessary to meet our goals.

The main objectives of the Strategy are to prevent homelessness and ensure that sufficient accommodation and support is available for people who are or may become homeless.

Through partnership working in the public, private and voluntary sectors by sharing skills, expertise and supporting one another, I am confident that those affected by homelessness can be helped to make the necessary steps to a settled future.



1. Introduction

Setting the Scene

South Tyneside has achieved significant success in the delivery of homelessness services since the last Strategy was produced. A full review of the Strategy was published in April 2013. The purpose of the review was to assess current and future homelessness need in the Borough so that appropriate provision can be planned and provided for.

Since the publication of the last Homelessness Strategy and in line with the national picture, homelessness in South Tyneside has increased. This is largely down to applicants being asked to leave their home mainly in the private rented sector, followed by parents no longer being able to accommodate them. This combined with personal debt leads to applicants being at risk of, or losing their home.

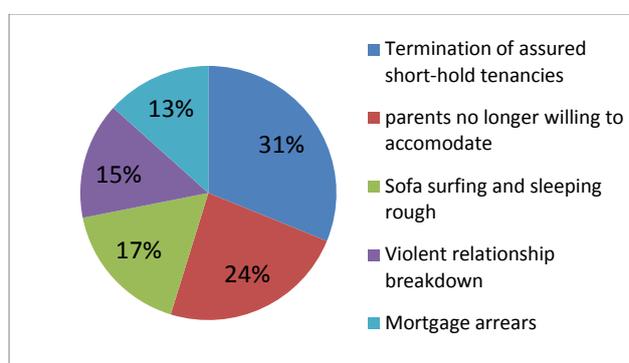


Fig 1: The reasons why applicants became homeless during 2011/12

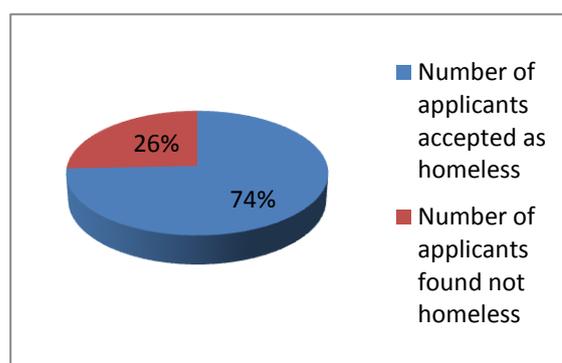


Fig 2: Shows how many presentations were found to be homeless during

These issues compounded by the introduction of the Government's suite of Welfare Reforms add increased pressure to an already limited supply of social housing.

Some of the successes that have been achieved since the last Homelessness Strategy was produced include:

- Developing a housing options service called South Tyneside Homefinder
- Implementing a revised Your Choice Allocations Scheme
- 334 privately let properties directly accredited with the Council and a further 200 via The Letting Group, that agree to only let properties that would meet the accreditation standard
- A Joint Protocol for Homeless 16-17 year olds was established following the Southwark ruling
- The successful delivery of a Kaizen event improving homelessness services and support for young people
- No families have been placed in bed and breakfast accommodation during 2012/13

The Homelessness Strategy is a living document and will be reviewed annually so that it responds to emerging needs.

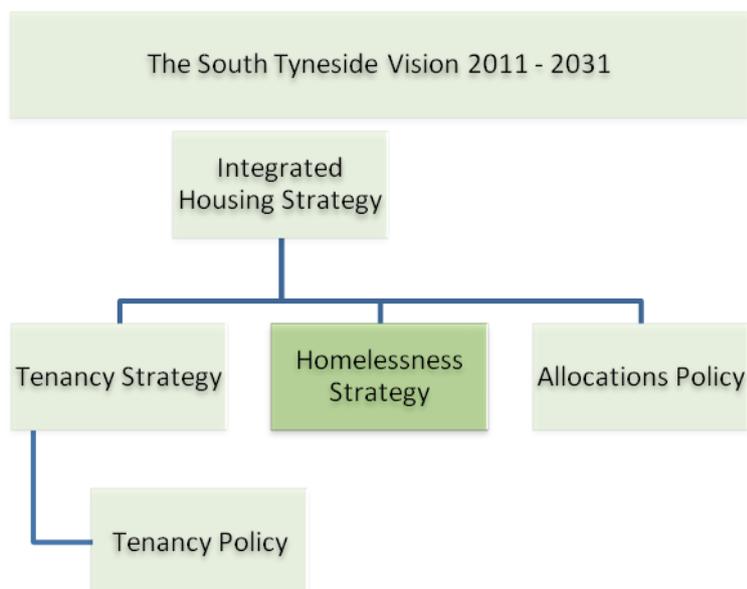
Links with other strategies and plans

The Homelessness Strategy 2013-18 forms part of a framework of Strategies and Policies developed by the Council and its partners. All of which seek to transform national Strategies and objectives into real improvements and contribute to the overall vision of **“South Tyneside being an outstanding place to live, invest and bring up families”**.

The Homelessness Strategy will contribute to the delivery of six of the ten strategic outcomes that the Council has set to be achieved over the next 20 years. These are:

- Stable and independent families
- Less people in poverty
- Better housing and neighbourhoods
- Healthier People
- Protect Children and Vulnerable Adults
- Less Crime and Safer Communities

The strategic link to other housing Strategies and Policies is demonstrated in the diagram below, however the link is wider reaching and includes the ‘Joint Strategic Needs Assessment’, ‘Children and Families Plan and Child Poverty Strategy 2011-14’, ‘Making Communities Safer’ – South Tyneside’s Community Safety Strategy and the ‘NHS South of Tyne and Wear Strategic Plan 2010-15’:



2. Strategic Context and National Priorities

There is an extraordinary amount of policy and economic change that directly impacts on homelessness in the Borough, for example:

The Localism Act 2011

The Localism Act 2011 gave local authorities more freedom and flexibility for Local Government, rights and powers to local communities, reform to the planning system and decisions about housing to be made locally.

This Act gives local authorities more power, freedom and flexibility in the allocation of social housing, particularly around determining which applicants do or do not qualify for an allocation of social housing. Authorities are able to operate a more focussed list which better reflects local circumstances and needs which can be understood more readily by local people.

Through the Military Covenant, the Government has made clear its responsibility to support our Armed Forces in return for the important contribution they make to the country.

Local Authorities are also encouraged to create a broader range of housing options utilising the private rented sector.

The Governments Housing Strategy

The Governments Housing Strategy 'Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England 2011' builds on existing policy through key measures and introduces reforms and initiatives in relation to housing and homelessness. These are:

- Creation of new flexible tenancies to encourage the efficient use of social housing
- Introduction of Home Swap Direct to enable social housing tenants to identify properties they could exchange to anywhere in the Country
- Tackling rough sleeping through initiatives such as 'No Second Night Out' which targets support to people new to rough sleeping
- Establishment of a new multi-agency team to work around troubled families
- Introduction of the Social Sector Size Criteria to reduce under-occupation and create movement in the social rented sector
- Armed Forces service personnel with urgent housing need to receive additional priority within the Allocation Schemes of Local Authorities
- Providing support to home owners through independent debt advice, free legal advice at possession hearings and access to information and advice
- Encouraging social housing providers to tackle tenancy fraud in their stock as a way to release much needed stock for families who need it

Many of the reforms highlighted in the Government's Strategy will pose key challenges for the Local Authority in the delivery of this Homelessness Strategy.

Homelessness Prevention Strategy

The Department for Communities and Local Government in August 2012 published its Homelessness Prevention Strategy '**Making every contact count: a joint approach to preventing homelessness**'.

The Strategy highlights five priority areas for the Government using an integrated approach at a local level posing ten local challenges for local authorities to consider. The ten challenges are set out below and include how we will meet these challenges in South Tyneside:

Challenge	Homelessness Strategy Actions that meet the challenge
To adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local authority services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Housing Options Service. • Produce Supporting People Commissioning Strategies. • Develop information sharing protocols to identify potentially homeless households.
To actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and promote independent financial debt advice schemes. • Develop protocol on re-housing intentionally homeless households with children. • Introduce homelessness prevention packages into schools and colleges. • Link the new housing options service to the Headway Scheme. • Establish links with the Department for Work and Pensions regarding employment opportunities. • Provision of a foyer.
To offer a Housing Options Prevention Service to all clients including written advice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop housing options service.
To adopt a 'No Second Night Out' model or an effective local alternative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopted model.
To have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that include appropriate accommodation and support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor Nominations Agreement ensuring nominations are maximised. • Review application of Housing and Resettlement Protocol (HARP). • Provide support to persons residing in temporary accommodation. • Expand mediation service. • Monitor and review the Homelessness Protocol for Young People up to 18 years of age.
To develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both client and landlord.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor impact of Private Rented Accreditation Scheme. • Review and monitor Tenancy Deposit Scheme.

To actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate and promote independent financial and debt advice schemes.
To have a Homelessness Strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually to be responsive to emerging needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homelessness Forum.
To not place any young person aged 16 or 17 years old in Bed and Breakfast accommodation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and review Homelessness Protocol for Young People up to 18 years of age Provision of a Community Hub for young people
To not place any families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and for no longer than 6 weeks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue placing no families in Bed and Breakfast. None were placed during 2012/13.

Tenure Reform and our Tenancy Strategy 2013

The Localism Act 2011 placed a duty on every local housing authority to publish a Tenancy Strategy. The provisions in the Act gave landlords more flexibility to decide what sort of tenancy they should offer based on their current levels of housing stock and the needs of individual tenants. The flexible tenancy is for a fixed term and will be regularly reviewed.

Social housing in South Tyneside is seen as a desirable tenure and the authority would like it to remain so. The threat of losing a home if circumstances improve may act as a disincentive to gain employment. South Tyneside's Tenancy Strategy therefore promotes the use of secure lifetime tenancies over that of flexible tenancies.

It is a requirement that Registered Providers of affordable housing must publish policies that outline their approach to tenancy management, including interventions to sustain tenancies and prevent unnecessary eviction, tackling tenancy fraud and granting discretionary succession rights.

Registered Providers operating in the Borough must have regard to South Tyneside's Tenancy Strategy when developing their policies so that they align with the expectations set out in the Strategy and that tenancies they issue are compatible with the purpose of the accommodation needs of individual households and sustainable communities. The efficient use of housing stock will assist in meeting the needs identified in South Tyneside.

Early indications show that Registered Providers will be limiting the use of flexible tenancies. These may be used on occasions to assist the delivery of affordable new homes by some Registered Providers operating in the Borough. The Council would expect Registered Providers who are offering flexible tenancies to provide high quality advice and information to tenants to ensure a smooth transition to alternative accommodation.

The Housing Providers Forum now re-established will monitor the use of flexible tenancies and will agree a consistent transitional approach.

The Council also has the ability to discharge its homelessness duty in the private sector. In doing so the Council must ensure that properties are checked to make sure they are suitable for the occupant. This could prove to be a mechanism in providing an appropriate solution for people experiencing a homelessness crisis at the same time as focussing the Housing Register on those that have a real need for social housing

Housing Allocations Scheme

In July 2013, the Council's Cabinet approved the new Housing Allocations Policy as a result of changes brought about by the Localism Act 2011. This changed the way in which local authorities can deal with applications for social housing under Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996. The most significant change to the policy is that the Council can now impose restrictions on who qualifies to access the Housing Register.

The Council's qualifying criteria means that some people who would have otherwise been eligible to join the register will no longer be allowed. For example, owner occupiers with the financial resources to meet their own housing need and those that have been guilty of unacceptable behaviour, including housing related debt. Some exceptions do apply to the qualification criteria.

The policy aims to provide a simple, fair scheme which meets housing need, makes the best use of the housing stock and contributes to safe and sustainable communities.

The Housing Allocations Policy has set out revised priority bandings including the introduction of Band 1+. Band 1+ allows the Council to discharge its statutory duty for homeless cases, where the full duty is owed, as a matter of urgency. Band 1 will be used for homeless prevention and will be available to those applicants that are at risk of becoming homeless but not in immediate need within 28 days. This should improve the service officers provide to households threatened with homelessness, as a priority banding for housing will be implemented at an earlier stage.

The Housing Allocations Policy is a living document and will be reviewed on an annual basis. This will allow for continuous improvement and for it to be more focussed on local needs and changes in legislation.

The Welfare Reform Act 2012

The Welfare Reform Act sets out in law fundamental changes to the welfare system. This is aimed at improving the benefits system to reduce dependency on welfare, improve incentives to work, making work pay and reducing overall spend at a time of economic instability.

The relevant changes that are likely to impact on homelessness are:

- **Shared Accommodation Rate for under 35's**

The Shared Accommodation Rate for single tenants living in privately rented accommodation was increased from age 25 to 35 in January 2012.

This has affected a number of existing claimants in the Borough who would have seen their benefit drop from a rate for self contained accommodation to the Single Room Rate.

- **Under-occupancy charge for social housing tenants**

Working age households deemed to be under occupying their social home will see a reduction in their Housing Benefit. The Council has approximately 2,961 households under occupying their home. Tenants under occupying by one or more bedrooms will see the eligible rent for Housing Benefit purposes reduced.

Where the tenant is under occupying by one bedroom there will be a reduction of 14% and those under occupying by two or more bedrooms will see a reduction of 25%.

In 2012 the Council gave permission for South Tyneside Homes to recruit a Welfare Reform Team to support tenants through the changes. Early indications show that 78.5% are preparing to pay the under occupation charge to remain in their current home and 21.5% are wanting to move to a smaller home suitable for their needs.

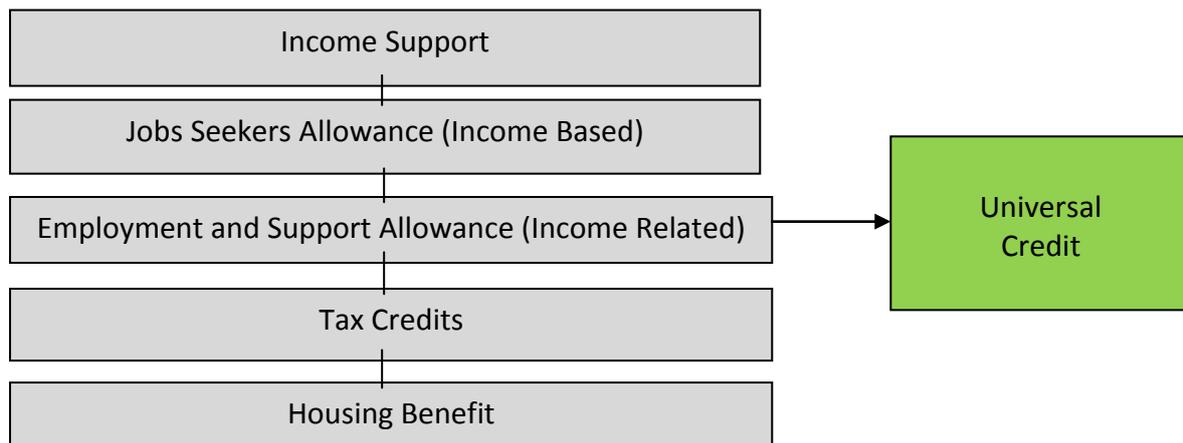
The Housing Allocations Policy will support tenants of the Council who can demonstrate they are suffering genuine financial hardship as a result of Welfare Reform to access a priority banding within the allocations scheme to downsize. Applicants applying to the Council requiring support to move will inevitably add increased pressure to an already pressurised Housing Register, as there are not enough smaller homes into which Council tenants can downsize. This is reflected in the Strategic Housing Plan and is evidenced by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. This will be taken into account in the planning of future affordable homes in the Borough.

We may also see an increase in tenants applying to mutually exchange their home in a bid to avoid paying the extra charge. For those who cannot downsize or choose not to move, it is likely that we will see social housing tenants in greater financial difficulty as a direct result of the under occupation charge.

The Welfare Reform Team will continue dialogue with residents affected by the changes and appropriate tenancy support will be available so that households can be supported to manage their money and pay their rent.

- **Universal Credit**

Universal Credit is the biggest change in the Welfare State system for over 50 years. The proposed reforms will see a selection of different benefits eradicated including Income Support, Jobs Seekers Allowance (income based), Employment and Support Allowance (income related), Tax Credits and Housing Benefits. These will be replaced by one single award which will be Universal Credit and will be paid on a monthly basis and in most cases direct to the customer.



There are major concerns regarding the ability for some customers managing Universal Credit. The Council is concerned about rent arrears increasing because households will be required to pay their rent direct. Exceptions will be made to some vulnerable households. Some applicants will require help using the web based service for Universal Credit as this is an online system. The Council and partners will work with local services to provide access and support in various locations around the Borough.

- **Benefit Cap**

The benefit cap will come into effect from April 2013. The maximum amount of state benefit that a person under pension age can receive will be £500 per week for couples and £350 per week for single customers.

Although not a major problem in South Tyneside, there will still be approximately 50 households in South Tyneside affected by the benefit cap.

Case Study

Mrs Robinson receives £450 per week in Income Support and child related benefits. This means that the maximum Housing Benefit they will receive is £50.

- **Council Tax Localisation**

The Government requested that each local authority establish a set of rules within their own area for the management and payment of Council Tax Benefits. Guidelines received were that people of pensionable age must be protected, however, for all other claimants the Council needed to decide and agree at a local level who would be eligible for support and how much support would be given.

As a result, the local Council Tax Support Scheme will:

- Protect people of pensionable age.
- Protect people who qualify for one of the following disability premiums: Disability Premium; Severe Disability premium and Disabled Child Premium.
- Protect those with a family with children under the age of 5.

People who are not in one of the protected groups mentioned above will receive a 30% cut to their benefits.

The Council through its scheme has tried to protect those most vulnerable in our communities by minimising the risk of affordability issues. The example used below demonstrates one group of residents that the Council has helped protect:

Case Study

Mr and Mrs Garside are married. Mr Garside is unemployed and Mrs Garside is disabled and is entitled to a disability premium in her benefit assessment.

Their weekly Council Tax charge is £24.76 per week and prior to April 2013 they received full Council Tax Benefit of £24.76 per week.

Because claimants with a disability are protected there will be no charge under the local scheme.

Private Rented Sector

The Localism Act introduced new powers to enable the main housing duty under S193 of the Housing Act 1996 to be ended with offers of accommodation in the private rented sector that do not require the applicant's consent, a potentially significant reform of homelessness legislation. South Tyneside Homefinder will explore all of the housing options available to the applicant based on their need. This is discussed later in Priority 1: Preventing Homelessness Action Plan.

Under previous homelessness legislation people were able to refuse offers of accommodation in the private rented sector and insist that they should be housed in temporary accommodation until a long term social home became available. The Localism Act introduced a new power that allows Local Authorities to meet their statutory duty by providing good quality private rented homes.

Using this new power has significant implications for the homelessness and housing advice service in South Tyneside. Sourcing suitable private rented accommodation would become an important part of the service alongside the existing focus on homeless prevention and homeless decision making.

This option could provide an appropriate solution for people experiencing homelessness crisis and thereby make more social housing lettings available to people in need on the Housing Register. It may over time result in a smaller number of homelessness applications if homelessness is no longer an automatic route to a social rented tenancy.

As part of the wider homelessness prevention agenda there has been significant progress in working with private landlords in South Tyneside.

The private rented sector offers an additional source of good quality accommodation across the Borough for homeless and potentially homeless households. Working with private landlords can therefore help to avoid homeless situations and provide more settled homes for those in insecure situations.

In order to help homeless and potentially homeless households to access accommodation in the private rented sector a Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme was launched in June 2008, which gives applicants the bond they may not have to commence a tenancy. The aim of this is to assist households threatened with homelessness by providing a financial guarantee to landlords and lettings agents to enable families to secure privately rented accommodation. This has been a hugely effective homelessness prevention tool, preventing or relieving 347 cases of homelessness between 2008/09 and 2011/12.

Empty Properties

The Government recently announced funding through the Empty Homes Programme to help bring long term empty properties in the private sector back in to use. The Council was successful in its bid. To date, 5 properties have received refurbishment works with a further 6 properties in the process of refurbishment.

The chosen approach is to take management control of the properties using enforcement powers contained within the Housing Act 2004, refurbish the properties and rent them out. The rental income is used to recover the costs of refurbishment and then the recycled money can be used for further properties, with the intention of the scheme becoming self financing and extending beyond the original contract agreement.

Properties will be advertised through Tyne and Wear Homes and will be let on a non-secure tenancy.

There are plans and funding available for a further 16 properties to be brought back in to use using this method.

The Council also intends to introduce a Private Rented Sector Leasing Scheme where the Council leases empty properties from owners for up to 10 years. These are then rented out and managed by the Council.

Supporting People / Commissioning Programme

The former Supporting People programme introduced in 2003 funded housing related support services in the Borough. In 2010 the Government removed the ring-fencing of the grant.

The Council and its partners are putting provisions in place to help support vulnerable people in South Tyneside. These are discussed later in the Strategy.

3. Legal Framework

Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and the Homelessness Act 2002 provide the statutory underpinning for action to tackle homelessness. It is a vital safety net for homeless people and those at risk of homelessness.

The homelessness legislation places a general duty on housing authorities to ensure that advice and information about homelessness and preventing homelessness is available to everyone free of charge.

The legislation also requires authorities to assist individuals and families who are homeless or threatened with homelessness who apply for help.

This Strategy has been developed taking in to account local and national Policies and Strategies and has included carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment as part of the Strategy development.

4. Our Priorities 2013 – 2018

This section of the Strategy looks at our priorities in relation to homelessness for 2013-2018. There are five strategic priorities identified in the Strategy, they are:

Homelessness Strategy Priorities 2013-2018	
Priority 1	Preventing homelessness
Priority 2	Effective partnership working
Priority 3	Preventing youth homelessness by providing appropriate support and housing options
Priority 4	Supporting and protecting the most vulnerable
Priority 5	Support residents through the changes implemented by the Government's suite of Welfare Reforms

Each of the strategic priorities will have a number of key challenges which have been identified through the Homelessness Review. We have also incorporated the recommendations of service users, staff, elected members, Registered Providers and other stakeholders where necessary. These will form some of the targets listed in our action plans.

Priority 1: Preventing homelessness

Offering appropriate support at an early stage and exploring the housing options available to the applicant are fundamental factors of homelessness prevention and repeat homelessness.

The Council working with partners will help people stay in their current home wherever possible and where this is not, assist them in finding another home suitable for their needs elsewhere. This work may reduce the need for a homeless application to be made.

The number of cases where homelessness has been prevented has declined since the last Homelessness Strategy was produced in 2008 and is shown in the table below:

Presentations with successful homeless prevention or relief	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
	1409	1017	1061	1300

The Council in April 2011 successfully merged the Homelessness Service and the Your Choice Service into one service known as 'South Tyneside Homefinder'. This brought with it many benefits including the ability to pool resources, share knowledge and ensure a better customer experience.

South Tyneside Homefinder has recently moved into state of the art premises which will allow for a complete enhanced housing options service to be provided. This includes the ability to offer support to applicants suffering financial hardship, employment and training opportunities and assist those requiring specialist accommodation such as Housing Plus.

A review of South Tyneside Homefinder Service was commissioned in September 2012. Northern Housing Consortium was appointed to review the service and look at five key areas:

- The customer experience
- Skills and capacity of front line and back office staff
- The existing triage system
- Allocation of funding under the Homefinder budget
- Exploring a new service model

This brought with it recommendations for service improvement including re-evaluating the staffing structure and developing a training programme for staff to further enhance skills and knowledge as the service grows and also office opening hours.

The Council and its partners recognise the need to continually review and shape the service to tackle homelessness in South Tyneside. An outline of prevention methods used in South Tyneside is detailed below:

Prevention method	Organisation providing service
Housing Advice	South Tyneside Homefinder
Tyne and Wear Homes Choice Based Lettings Service	South Tyneside Homefinder
Tenancy Support	South Tyneside Homes and Registered Providers
Mortgage Rescue	South Tyneside Council
Pre-action Protocol for Repossession cases	South Tyneside Homes
Customer Care visits for tenants of Council properties	South Tyneside Homes
Support to access the private rented sector	South Tyneside Homefinder
Discretionary Housing Payments	BT South Tyneside Housing Benefits Team
Support to those suffering financial hardship	South Tyneside Homes Welfare Reform Team, Citizens Advice Bureau, Welfare Rights and South Tyneside Homefinder
Mediation service	South Tyneside Homefinder and South Tyneside Churches Key Project
Housing and resettlement of prisoners	Probation Service, Shelter, Foundation Trust, South Tyneside Homefinder and other necessary partners required to support the applicant

The Council recognises that a lot of work has been done to prevent homelessness in South Tyneside and this is reflected in the statistics above, however there are still improvements that need to be made. These improvements have been considered and are included in the following action plan:

Preventing Homelessness Action Plan

Priority 1: Preventing Homelessness

To help applicants stay in their current home or assist them to make a planned move into alternative accommodation.

What we will do?	When will we do it?	Who will help?	How will we measure success?	Resources	Progress
Review and further develop the Mortgage Rescue Scheme for households at risk of repossession.	December 2013	Mortgage/Secure loan providers, Citizens Advice Bureau, Money Advice Agencies and South Tyneside Homefinder.	Number of households assisted to remain in their homes.	Repossession Grant funding from DCLG. Further training for staff of National Homeless Advice Service and South Tyneside Homefinder.	
Monitor the outcomes of Registered Providers Tenancy Policies in line with our Tenancy Strategy.	Quarterly	Housing Providers Forum, Housing Strategy and South Tyneside Homefinder.	Quarterly data collection of Registered Providers lettings. Housing Providers Forum will consider outcomes.	Housing Providers Forum, monitoring of allocations through Tyne and Wear Homes Performance Monitoring framework.	
Review the Housing Allocations Policy to ensure it meets legislation and reflects the needs of the Borough.	July 2014	Service user consultation groups, Housing Strategy and external partners.	Monitoring of allocations in each new priority banding category and monitor reduction in direct offers.	Performance Monitoring Framework and Housing Allocations Policy Working Group.	
Support tenants to sustain their tenancy and explore the options of a tiered approach to evictions with South Tyneside Homes.	April 2014	South Tyneside Homes Income Team, South Tyneside Anti-Social Behaviour/Tenancy Enforcement Team, South Tyneside Homefinder, Welfare Reform Team, Money Advice Agencies, Tenancy Support Services and Private Landlords.	Number of households supported to remain in their homes and number of failed short lived tenancies.	Review of current Pre-Action Protocol, Multi-agency support visits and development of pathway to support.	

Explore the options of discharging our statutory duty in the private sector and produce a Private Sector discharge policy if required.	March 2014	South Tyneside Homefinder, Environmental Health Service and Private Landlords Forum and Tyneside Cyrenians.	Completion of policy and of successful discharges into the Private Sector.	Staffing resources.	
Introduce a target of 28 working days for which the authority makes decisions and issues written notification to an applicant on a homelessness application.	December 2013	South Tyneside Homefinder.	Number of homeless decisions made within target.	New Abrisas homeless module and training on new system suite of letter templates.	
Collect and analyse data relating to the number of times individuals present as homeless during the financial year.	October 2013	South Tyneside Homefinder.	Production of monthly report and analysis.	Development of Performance Monitoring Framework and new reporting mechanism on homeless module.	
Understand the reasons for repeat homelessness and develop prevention protocols around this.	April 2014	South Tyneside Homefinder, internal and external partners, Homeless Forum and Domestic Violence Co-ordinator.	Production of regular monitoring report and analysis to inform future service development.	Joint working arrangement with South Tyneside Homefinder and Abrisas homeless report monitoring.	
Establish a data monitoring framework (where and what is reported).	October 2013	Abrisas Service, South Tyneside Homefinder, Homeless Forum and Domestic Violence Co-ordinator.	The production of monthly reports containing relevant and meaningful information to inform policy and service development.	Input from South Tyneside Homes into Abrisas homeless module reporting capabilities and training South Tyneside Homefinder staff.	
Carry out a review of homeless data collection.	April 2014	South Tyneside Homefinder, Housing Strategy and Domestic Violence Co-ordinator.	Production of critical report highlighting areas for improvement in new homeless module purchased.	Existing staffing resources.	

Review homelessness prevention packs in schools and colleges.	April 2014	Services for Young people, South Tyneside Homefinder, Youth Homelessness Lead, South Tyneside Churches Key Project, Education Services, Youth Homelessness North East and Homeless Forum.	Monitor effectiveness of learning outcomes through workshop monitoring and questionnaires.	Development of appropriate materials, service development with Services for Young People, South Tyneside Homefinder, Education Services training and allocation of funding.	
Review the information requested on housing application forms in relation to convictions and spent convictions.	October 2013	South Tyneside Homefinder, Probation Service, Council Anti-Social Behaviour/ Tenancy Enforcement Team Shelter, Foundation Trust, Homeless Forum and Tyne and Wear Homes Management Board.	Transparent processing of applications involving a conviction disclosure, removal of blanket approach.	Develop transparent process and agreed criteria, safer estates information exchange and content review and Designated Team members to process cases.	
Establish an employment link and embed this into the enhanced housing options service at South Tyneside Homefinder.	September 2013	South Tyneside Homefinder, Jobcentre Plus, Lifelong Learning & Skills and Services for Young People.	Number of referrals to partner employment agency, number of applicants helped into training, education or employment.	Procure joint working arrangement with external partners and staff training.	
Evaluate the introduction of the Private Sector Leasing Scheme.	April 2014	Environmental Health Service, South Tyneside Homefinder, South Tyneside Homes and Housing Management Team.	Number of lets achieved through Tyne & Wear Homes, number of applicants sustaining tenancy, number of housing management incidents including rent collection and monitoring of financial viability.	Training for South Tyneside Homes Housing Management staff on Non-Secure Tenancies and monitoring of tenancies and collection of rent.	

Review of South Tyneside Homefinder opening hours to ensure an accessible housing options service is provided.	September 2013	South Tyneside Homefinder and Housing Strategy.	Number of service users using service during opening hours, feedback from service user questionnaires on accessibility.	Reports of customer contacts from QMatic system, purchase of updated QMatic system and training on system. Redesignation of front line staff service rota.	
Review the provision of emergency direct access accommodation in the Borough.	April 2015	South Tyneside Homes Housing Management Service, Housing Strategy Team, Empty Homes Team, South Tyneside Homefinder, Commissioning Unit, The Consortium and external partners.	Improved quality, mix and number of emergency bed units. Units are better dispersed throughout the Borough for improved community cohesion.	Staffing and funding resources.	
Develop a protocol for dealing with rough sleeping in South Tyneside.	April 2014	Housing Strategy team, South Tyneside Homefinder, Homelessness Forum, The Consortium and external partners.	Publication of a protocol.	Staffing resource and Newcastle Gateway System.	

Priority 2: Effective Partnership Working

The Council acknowledges that the success that has been achieved in homelessness so far would not have been possible without the help and support of partners. South Tyneside Council has a strong track record of working collectively together with other agencies and service users to tackle and prevent homelessness. Working as part of a team means that there is a far better chance of achieving successful outcomes. A changing policy environment and challenging economic climate means that there is an increasing demand for services and assistance but reduced resources and capacity in which to deliver.

The Homelessness Forum was recently re-established and meets on a quarterly basis. This is attended regularly by officers from the Council, South Tyneside Homes, Registered Providers and a range of other representatives with an interest in homelessness. The group has been involved in the review of the last Strategy and production of this Homelessness Strategy.

There will on occasions be opportunities presented by Central Government for the delivery of joint services. The Forum will explore the options of pooling resources where there are shared aims and objectives with a view to securing additional funding.

South Tyneside Housing Providers Forum will bring together Registered Providers operating in the Borough, Estate Agents and Private Sector landlords. This Forum will link into the Homelessness Forum where there are cross cutting issues ensuring that all opportunities are maximised.

Effective Partnership Working Action Plan

Priority 2: Effective Partnership Working

To work collectively with partners and service users to achieve successful outcomes.

What we will do?	When will we do it?	Who will help?	How will we measure success?	Resources	Progress
Re-establish the South Tyneside Housing Providers Forum.	October 2013	Housing Strategy.	Forum established.	Meeting facilitator.	
Review the information sharing protocol between partners incorporating a means of identifying those at risk of homelessness at the earliest opportunity.	October 2014	Homeless Forum, South Tyneside Housing Providers Forum, South Tyneside Homefinder, internal and external partners, National Homeless Advice Service, Shelter, Crisis, BT South Tyneside Benefits Team and Homeless Link.	Number of interventions achieved in preventing homelessness.	Homeless Forum Co-ordinator and Kaizen/Workshop event.	
Create a relationship between the homelessness service and 'High Impact Families'.	October 2013	South Tyneside Homefinder, Youth Homelessness Lead and High Impact Families Lead.	Number of families receiving South Tyneside Homefinder support as part of Common Assessment Framework action plan. Develop reporting system to identify potential High Impact Families.	Attendance at Common Assessment Framework review meetings. Continued funding of South Tyneside Homefinder Youth Homeless Lead to facilitate this work.	

Explore the options of a tiered approach in relation to evictions with Registered Providers.	October 2014	Registered Providers, Homeless Forum, Housing Strategy and South Tyneside Homefinder.	Number of households supported to remain in their home at each tier.	Development of procedure/process monitoring framework.	
Review offender's protocol and develop an effective partnership to help access accommodation and service delivery.	December 2013 and ongoing	South Tyneside Homefinder, Probation Service, Shelter, Foundation Trust, external support and accommodation providers.	Number of offenders supported into accommodation and number of indemnity bonds used.	Develop pathway process with partners and procure private rented sector scheme with indemnity. Establish single point of contact for all agencies.	
Maximise all funding opportunities.	Ongoing	South Tyneside Homefinder and BT Strategic Partnership.	Amount of external funding obtained.	Services of specialist lead from BT Strategic Partnership and Regional Homeless Forum.	
Explore the options of replicating the St Mary's Community Hub model	December 2015	The Consortium, Housing Strategy, South Tyneside Homefinder, Youth Homelessness Lead	Evaluate options appraisal.	Staffing and funding resources.	

Priority 3: Preventing youth homelessness by providing appropriate support and housing options

Young people between the ages of 16-25 years face a range of life changes including leaving home or care, leaving mainstream education and finding employment.

These issues facing young people are also compounded by widespread funding cuts, reductions in services and changes to the welfare system. Adapting to change can prove difficult and some young people may require help and support throughout this period in their life. Some young people may have specific support needs or require support to enhance their social skills in order to become independent and fully integrated into the wider community.

A 'Homes and Support for Vulnerable Young People Strategy' has recently been developed to identify areas where there are gaps in provision or room for improvement and outlines current emerging changes in accommodation and support services. The Homelessness Strategy will support the vision that:

“Every vulnerable young person in South Tyneside has access to integrated, flexible services and that they are fully informed of help that is available. It also will ensure that young people have access to a full range of appropriate housing and support services when they are needed.

Agencies will work in partnership to prevent youth homelessness and to ensure the delivery of accessible, and integrated homelessness, housing and support services to young people throughout South Tyneside.”

In 2012 a specialist Youth Homelessness Lead post was created to sit within South Tyneside Homefinder. The role is to co-ordinate housing options for 16 to 24 year olds helping young people to understand the options available to them and pursue the approach that best meets their need. This officer is trained to provide mediation services so that they are able to work with young people and their families to avoid parental evictions wherever possible.

In 2012/13 the Youth Homelessness Lead worked with 235 young people who initially presented as homeless.

There are currently 26 units of supported accommodation and 55 units of 'floating support' for young people aged 16-25 years in South Tyneside which are funded through Housing Supporting People.

We have a number of partners offering support to young people including:

- Places for People
- Tyne Housing
- Tyneside Cyrenians
- South Tyneside Churches Key Project
- De Paul

Funding for youth homelessness comes from the Housing Support Grant.

Support is also provided for care leavers to manage the transition between being looked after and independence. A number of taster flats are used to promote independence with outreach support.

In 2010/11 the Council received a grant of £40,000 to fund the 'Move On' project for young people. This project once fully developed will see the provision for young people increased.

A Consortium consisting of De Paul UK, Places for People and the South Tyneside Churches Key Project has been established in South Tyneside. The aims of this group are to provide more efficient and effective services for young people, through pooling together budgets, experience, competence and the infrastructure of the three agencies.



Comments of one service user aged 18 years old:

One young person shared with us their experience of the homelessness service and said:

'Leaving my mother's home at such a young age was a frightening experience for myself. I had no clothes, money or anywhere to call home. I struggled to feed and shelter myself on no income and sometimes thought about giving up. But with the help and support I got from South Tyneside Homefinder and Places for People I got put in an emergency bed unit at Dock Street and received free food parcels from the Key Project. Dock Street helped me contact the right people to get some money and helped me to get onto a course to gain some skills to get a job. Now 2 years later I'm 18, living independently in my own flat and am a Housing Strategy Apprentice for South Tyneside Council based at the Town Hall.'

Prevent Youth Homelessness by Providing Appropriate Support and Housing Options Action Plan

Priority 3: Prevent youth homelessness by providing appropriate support and housing options
 Work together to meet the needs of young people, focussing on prevention, support and resettlement.

What we will do?	When will we do it?	Who will help?	How will we measure success?	Resources	Progress
Ensure young people are ready to take up their own tenancy and live independently to ensure tenancy sustainment.	August 2013 ongoing	Leaving Care Service, Service Providers, The Consortia and South Tyneside Homefinder.	Number of young people sustaining tenancies and number of young people failing tenancies.	Tenancy Agreement for 16/17 year olds.	
Work to mitigate the impact of welfare reform on young people.	April 2014	The Consortia, South Tyneside Homefinder and Welfare Reform Team.	Successful contacts, reduction in failed tenancies and number of supported young people.	St. Mary's Community Hub and Welfare Reform Team.	
Provide additional support for young people with higher support needs including young care leavers and young offenders.	December 2013	Commissioners, Youth Homelessness Lead and The Consortia.	Common Assessment Framework assessment and review outcomes.	Commissioning, South Tyneside Homefinder, The Consortia, Services for Young People, external partners and Registered Providers.	
Develop better information sharing systems to ensure we have a full and accurate picture about need, demand and spend.	December 2013	South Tyneside Homefinder and The Consortia.	Monitoring framework.	Existing staffing resources.	

Review the effectiveness of the mediation service and strengthen this if required.	April 2014	South Tyneside Homefinder, The Consortia and South Tyneside Churches Key Project.	Monitor agreed outcomes against targets set.	Funding identified and transferred to The Consortia.	
Provide training to young people to enable them to become mentors in raising awareness of homelessness and how to prevent it.	December 2013	South Tyneside Homefinder, The Consortia and Services For Young People.	Delivery of training outcomes.	St. Mary's Community Hub, Housing Strategy Apprentice, Services for Young People and The Consortia.	
Explore the options for implementing a homelessness awareness programme as part of schools and colleges.	April 2014	South Tyneside Homefinder and Services for Young People.	Successful take up of awareness programme.	Education, Services for Young People and South Tyneside Homefinder.	
Explore the use of social media to raise awareness and improve young people's access to information and advice about homelessness and living independently.	December 2013	South Tyneside Homefinder, Housing Strategy, BT South Tyneside and Communications Team.	Website development completion, completion of ICT services to facilitate social media communication.	Funding resources, website and social media development and links to HYPE webpage.	
Explore the options of producing a young person's handbook to assist young people in their first tenancy.	December 2013	Young Service Users, South Tyneside Homefinder, South Tyneside Homes Housing Management Service and Youth Homelessness Lead.	Production of handbook.	Research best practice and publication costs.	

Identify the pathways for youth homelessness referrals and implement a 'single pathway' to avoid duplication.	December 2013	The Consortia and South Tyneside Homefinder.	Percentage of young people using single pathway. Target is 75%.	Youth Homelessness Lead.	
Review the Joint Protocol for Homelessness 16 and 17 year olds.	April 2014	South Tyneside Homefinder, Children Adults and Families Service, Youth Homelessness Lead and Legal Services.	Producing new protocol.	Existing staffing resources.	
Ensure that quality and monitoring arrangements are robust for emergency accommodation.	April 2015	South Tyneside Homes Housing Management Service, Housing Strategy, South Tyneside Homefinder and Empty Homes Team.	Monitoring of temporary accommodation visits, monitoring the quality of the accommodation provided.	Appointment of Accommodation Officer, review of all emergency accommodation and review of current management of emergency accommodation.	
Develop systems to improve data collection about 16-24 year olds who present as homeless.	October 2013	South Tyneside Homefinder, Children Adults and Families and Youth Homelessness Lead.	Establish data monitoring framework.	Staff training on system reports and agree reporting mechanisms with Abritas.	
Fully develop and roll out the move on project for young people.	September 2013	South Tyneside Homefinder, The Consortia, Housing Strategy, Legal Services and Services for Young People.	Number successfully moved on into permanent accommodation, number of young people in Education, Training and Employment.	Funding to be identified and staffing resources.	

Priority 4: Supporting and protecting the most vulnerable

People can be vulnerable for a wide range of reasons and at different stages in their life. For some there is a need for long term support, but for many, a short term, one off intervention is sufficient. Supported accommodation and housing related support present a significant opportunity to deliver cost savings and provide better outcomes for vulnerable people, improving health and reducing inequalities.

There are a range of services available for vulnerable people who are homeless and potentially homeless in South Tyneside. These include:

- Hostels and supported accommodation
- Floating support and tenancy sustainment services
- Move on accommodation and support to assist people when they are ready to move into independent living
- A range of specialist services for vulnerable clients groups
- Homeless prevention services

Domestic violence and abuse continues to be a significant causal factor of homelessness in South Tyneside. Meeting housing needs is an important part of providing support to victims of domestic violence and abuse and their children. Housing issues for victims of domestic violence and abuse are extremely complex and can change dramatically in a short period of time. Meeting the needs effectively and contributing to reducing risk requires co-ordination at both strategic and operational levels. A clear understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence and abuse within all housing related agencies is essential.

Partners are committed to working together to support those children, adults and families that are subject to domestic violence and abuse and are currently working to strengthen the approach through ongoing activity in a number of key areas including:

- Options Domestic Abuse Service
- Independent Domestic Violence Advisors
- South Tyneside Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme
- Places for People Women's Refuge
- Sanctuary Scheme

The Sanctuary Scheme is a multi agency, victim-centred initiative which aims to enable those people at risk of domestic abuse to remain safely in their homes by installing extra security, or a 'Sanctuary'. Since the start of the scheme in 2008 South Tyneside have received over 300 referrals.

Homelessness and re-offending are closely linked and national policy emphasises the need for housing and homelessness organisations to work with criminal justice and other support agencies to provide the necessary support to help break the cycle of re-offending and the factors that drive it.

A Housing and Resettlement Protocol (HARP) was implemented in January 2009. The aim of the protocol is to improve access to suitable settled accommodation for all offenders in need of housing or housing support in the North East on release from prison. Suitable accommodation is a key factor in reform, resettlement and risk management.

As the protocol has been in place for four years now, officers consider this as an appropriate time to review the existing protocol and consider alternative options if required. This will form part of the action plan for this section of the Strategy.

An Independent Supported Living Framework Contract is in place whereby a number of housing providers within the Borough provide supported accommodation and support to individuals with their own tenancies, people with learning and physical difficulties, people with mental health problems, people with substance misuse issues, young people at risk and young parents. A number of housing providers also provide specialist care facilities for those needing dementia care.

South Tyneside Council works closely with South Tyneside Homes, NHS and rehabilitation centres to ensure the right advice is available for residents on support in their home or for specialist accommodation. We also provide health and housing assessments and home adaptations to allow people to remain in their homes as long as possible.



Supporting and Protecting the Most Vulnerable Action Plan

Priority 4: Supporting and protecting the most vulnerable
 Improve the outcomes for vulnerable people in South Tyneside

What we will do?	When will we do it?	Who will help?	How will we measure success?	Resources	Progress
Hold a Kaizen event aimed at providing Homes and Support for Vulnerable Adults and Families.	December 2013 ongoing	Director of Public Health, Commissioning Unit, South Tyneside Homefinder, Adult Services and North East Council on Addictions Street Level.	Event and agreed action plan.	Facilitator to coordinate Kaizen event and develop pathway.	
Develop a Homes and Support for Vulnerable Adults and Families Strategy.	September 2014	Director of Public Health , Commissioning Unit, Adult Mental Health, Adult Learning, Disabilities Team, Housing Strategy, Housing Support Providers, Homeless Forum, Registered Providers, Drug /Alcohol support agencies and South Tyneside Homefinder.	Completion of the Strategy, Pathway completion, Performance Monitoring Framework, procure and monitor welfare support funding.	Existing staffing and Strategy Co-ordinator.	

Establish a joined up relationship with the Public Health Service.	March 2014	Director of Public Health, Commissioning Unit, Housing Strategy and South Tyneside Homefinder.	Regular participation and Homelessness Forum.	Staffing resources and Kaizen event Co-ordinator.	
Develop a range of out of hours support in a number of formats.	March 2015	South Tyneside Homefinder, Emergency Duty Team, Customer Contact Centre, Communications Team and BT South Tyneside.	Develop a range of accessible options.	Funding to be identified.	
Develop single pathway towards Domestic Abuse.	December 2015	South Tyneside Homefinder, Employment Support, Tenancy Services and Supported Housing Team.	Develop single pathway and staff training.	Existing staffing. Funding to be identified.	
Explore alternative Housing options for vulnerable adults.	September 2014	South Tyneside Homefinder, Probation Service, Homelessness Forum and external partners.	Appropriate accommodation.	Funding to be identified.	
Establish co-location with Adult Mental Health Services.	December 2013	Director of Public Health, Adult Mental Health Service and South Tyneside Homefinder.	Joint assessment tool, number of joint assessments needed. Monitor public health outcomes through tool.	Staffing resources.	

Review barriers for vulnerable adults accessing housing.	December 2013 and ongoing	Public Health, Commissioning Unit, South Tyneside Homefinder, Housing Strategy Team, Adult Services and Housing Plus Team.	Number of households successfully housed and number of households sustaining a tenancy.	Staffing resources.	
Ensure tenancy support is provided to vulnerable people to help them sustain a new tenancy or remain in their existing home.	April 2014	South Tyneside Homes Tenancy Services, South Tyneside Anti Social Behaviour/Tenancy Enforcement Team, South Tyneside Homefinder, Welfare Reform Team, Money Advice Agencies, Tenancy Support Services, Private Landlords, Registered Providers and external partners.	Number of Households supported to remain in their home.	Staffing resources and develop pathway to support.	

Priority 5: Support residents through the changes implemented by the Government's suite of Welfare Reforms.

The scale of the Government's programme of Welfare Reform is likely to place such a notable pressure on household finances that some will struggle to manage. Around 40,000 households in South Tyneside receive some form of state benefit due to low income, disability or sickness. For these residents the reality is that if their income from benefits hasn't already reduced, it will do over the forthcoming years. The threat of homelessness will become very real for them if we do not collectively provide effective advice and support interventions.

The Council recognises that reforms to welfare are going to impact widely, even on those households who may never have previously required additional support or assistance. A newly established Welfare Reform Team along with other partners including BT South Tyneside Benefits Team will ensure that all households are provided with advice and assistance at an early stage to prevent them being threatened with homelessness.



Supporting residents through the changes implemented by Welfare Reform Action Plan

Priority 5: Support residents through the changes implemented by the Government's suite of Welfare Reforms.

To meet the challenges of welfare reform and provide advice and assistance to the residents affected by the changes.

What we will do?	When will we do it?	Who will help?	How will we measure success?	Resources	Progress
To make contact with all residents affected by the under-occupation charge and discuss with them options and solutions to help with this.	April 2013	South Tyneside Homes and the Welfare Reform Team.	Introducing success criteria, including measuring rent arrears and income.	Welfare Reform Team supported by other housing staff in South Tyneside Homes.	We have achieved this and contacted every affected customer, either by letter, phone or home visit.
We will offer appropriate tenancy support to those residents affected by Welfare Reform.	Ongoing from April 2013	South Tyneside Homes Welfare Reform Team will lead this working with other South Tyneside Homes and Council officers.	As above, plus we have a target of ensuring 80% of tenants affected are supported to stay in their current home.	Welfare Reform Team supported by other staff in South Tyneside Homes and Department for Work and Pensions.	
We will set up a framework for monitoring the impact of Welfare Reform, this will include those residents wishing to downsize to alternative accommodation and the use of Discretionary Housing Payments.	30 th June 2013	South Tyneside Homes Welfare Reform Team will lead this, working with other South Tyneside Homes and Council officers.	We are introducing success criteria, including measuring rent arrears and income and have a target of ensuring 80% of tenants affected are supported to stay in their current home.	Welfare Reform Team supported by other staff in South Tyneside Homes. Monitoring by South Tyneside Homes and Housing Strategy.	

We will develop procedures which will be included as part of the Housing Allocations Policy Procedures for Council tenants to obtain a priority banding to downsize as a result of welfare reform under the allocations scheme.	August 2013	South Tyneside Homefinder, Housing Strategy and other South Tyneside Homes staff.	Number of allocations achieved through applying priority banding.	Within existing South Tyneside Homefinder resources and cost involved in implementing changes to existing Allocation System.	
Maintain a communications plan to ensure households are aware of the implications of welfare reform and what support is available.	Ongoing	South Tyneside Homes and Council Communications Team, Welfare Reform Team, South Tyneside Homes Income Team and BT South Tyneside Benefits Team.	Introducing success criteria, including measuring rent arrears and income and have a target of ensuring 80% of tenants affected are supported in staying in their current home.	South Tyneside Council and South Tyneside Homes Communications Teams supported by the Welfare Reform Team.	In place from October 2012, but subject to regular review and updating.
Continue to support bringing empty properties back into use to meet the housing need in the Borough.	August 2013 ongoing	Housing Strategy and Environmental Health Service.	Number of empty properties brought back into use.	Homes and Communities Agency grant funding, Environmental Health Service and South Tyneside Homes.	
Develop a Welfare Reform Strategy.	December 2013	South Tyneside Homes Welfare Reform Team, Housing Strategy and Adult Services.	Completion of Strategy and Action Plan.	Staffing resources.	

<p>Ensure new housing developments in the Borough align with the housing need and demand as identified by the 2012 Strategic Housing Market Assessment.</p>	<p>August 2013 ongoing</p>	<p>Housing Strategy, South Tyneside Homefinder and the Planning service.</p>	<p>Trends and analysis in allocation of housing stock to be monitored and reported on regular basis to inform housing need.</p>	<p>Monitoring systems to be established.</p>	
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5. Consultation and Involvement

In preparing this Homelessness Strategy we have worked with a wide range staff, elected members, partners and stakeholders to ensure that the document was shaped to reflect legislation, national priorities and key local objectives

Consultation has been undertaken to get the views of as many people and organisations as possible to inform the development of this Strategy. This included focus groups, questionnaires and the Homelessness Forum.

6. Monitoring and Review

To ensure that the Homelessness Strategy 2013-2018 is responsive to emerging needs it will be reviewed annually. South Tyneside's Homelessness Forum meets on a quarterly basis and will be responsible for operationally monitoring the actions in the 'Our priorities' section of this document. People Scrutiny Panel and Children, Adults and Families Board will also oversee this work from a strategic level.

7. Useful Links and References

Useful Links:

The National Homelessness Advice Service (NHAS)

www.nhas.org.uk

Offers advice agencies the specialist support and professional resources to give appropriate and accurate housing advice

Homelessness Link

www.homeless.org.uk

Offers advice agencies specialist support and professional resources

Vision to end rough sleeping – No second night out

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/visionendroughsleeping

Guidance to Children's Services and district housing authorities about Provision of Accommodation for 16 and 17 year old young people who may be homeless and/or require accommodation

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/homelessseventeen

Making Every Contact Count

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/makeeverycontactcount

Information on housing services in South Tyneside

www.southtyneside.info/article/175/housing-counciltax

Information on the Council's Housing Company, South Tyneside Homes

www.southtynesidehomes.org.uk

Free confidential advice for people with housing problems

<http://england.shelter.org.uk>

References:

Homelessness changes in the Localism Act 2011: supplementary guidance
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-changes-in-the-localism-act-2011-supplementary-guidance>

8. Comments

We welcome any comments or queries about this document. These should be returned to:

Housing Strategy
South Tyneside Council
Town Hall and Civic Offices
Westoe Road
South Shields
NE33 2RL

Tel: 0191 424 7197

Email: strategichousing@southtyneside.gov.uk

The Homelessness Strategy is available for inspection free of charge at our principal office, Town Hall and Civic Offices, at the above address during normal office hours. A copy can be provided on payment of a reasonable fee upon request. A copy is also available online at www.southtyneside.info/article/175/housing-counciltax.

If you require this document in another language, format or require the use of an interpreter, please contact South Tyneside Council on 0191 424 7385.

