

Haringey's Homelessness Strategy

2008-11

Year 2 (2010) Review

A celebration of our achievements
and the way forward

Tuesday 23 November 2010



Haringey Council

Background

Haringey's three year Homelessness Strategy¹ was launched in September 2008. This comprehensive strategy acknowledged the scale of homelessness and deprivation in Haringey and set out the Council's multi agency approach to tackling homelessness. This was to be achieved through nine key objectives:-

1. Actively support and promote a partnership approach to preventing homelessness
2. Invest in early intervention and effective homelessness prevention
3. Increase the supply of affordable homes
4. Provide choice and encourage independence
5. Halve the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation
6. Improve the quality and suitability of temporary accommodation
7. Work proactively to safeguard children and vulnerable adults
8. Improve customer service, involvement and satisfaction
9. Ensure that our policies and procedures are fair, transparent and widely understood

The first year review which took place in 2009, celebrated unprecedented levels of partnership working through the Homelessness Strategy Delivery Groups, set up to implement and monitor the strategy action plan. This work resulted in 46% of the 234 specific actions being completed.

Achievements included the significant reduction of the number of households in temporary accommodation which was supported further by the restructure of Strategic and Community Housing Services (S&CHS) and the creation of new Housing Advice, Options and Private Sector Lettings teams. New and existing forums were also developed to provide opportunities to work in partnership and enable service users to be a part of improving services.

The review also considered the future targets, priorities and timescales for the following year, including the original structure of the strategy delivery groups. The review process, along with the work done over the last year, has resulted in a number of changes; it has ensured the best use of time and resources, and that objectives remain in line with Council priorities and the needs of service users. The main changes include the merger of certain delivery groups and the revision of some of the specific actions contained within the action plan.

¹ A full version can be found at http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/housing_and_planning/housing/housingstrategy/homelessness.htm

Introduction

This review will set out the progress we have made, identify the outstanding actions, outline some of the main achievements linked to the strategy action plan and look forward to our plans for the next year and beyond.

Given the current financial climate it is clear that there will be fewer resources available to deliver our objectives, however it is important that we maintain the momentum gained over the last two years. This is an opportunity to look at innovative ways to move forward with our plans and ensure that homelessness prevention, the reduction of the Council's use of temporary accommodation and raising standards remain the highest priorities.

The 2008-2011 strategy described our strategic priorities through nine key objectives², with 64 key actions providing details of the work to be done. Each key action was then defined further with specific actions (234 in total).

In recognition that significant change can present new challenges, to take into account lessons learned, and to ensure that this strategy remained relevant, the key and specific actions were reviewed. As a result 36 of the original specific actions have been deleted (31 of these were either replaced with revised actions, or are now contained or are being developed further within sub-strategies such as the new Move-on and Rough Sleepers strategies). The Children, Young People and Families Delivery Group made the most amendments to their action plan, resulting in a number of new actions.

Since the launch of this strategy 170 of the specific actions have been completed (50 of the Key Actions), representing 83% of the total.

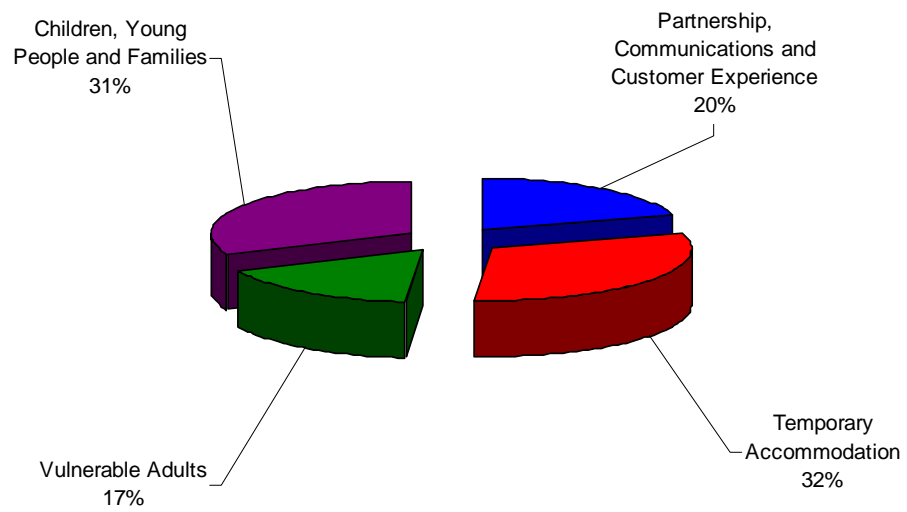
The achievements of this strategy have also been acknowledged by the Audit Commission, who reported that *"An effective homelessness strategy is in place and being delivered with partners. There is now a comprehensive approach to preventing homelessness and offering housing options and appropriate standards of casework advice. There has been a significant reduction in the use of temporary accommodation, increased support to the households that remain, and bed and breakfast targets have been met"*.

While it is right that these achievements are celebrated we must also be clear that there is more to do to ensure that we continue to meet our objectives. Appendix A provides a summary of the number of specific actions completed under each priority, along with the status of outstanding actions. A detailed breakdown of the remaining specific actions is also provided in Appendix B.

² See page1

The distribution of all remaining specific actions, across each delivery group are shown below.

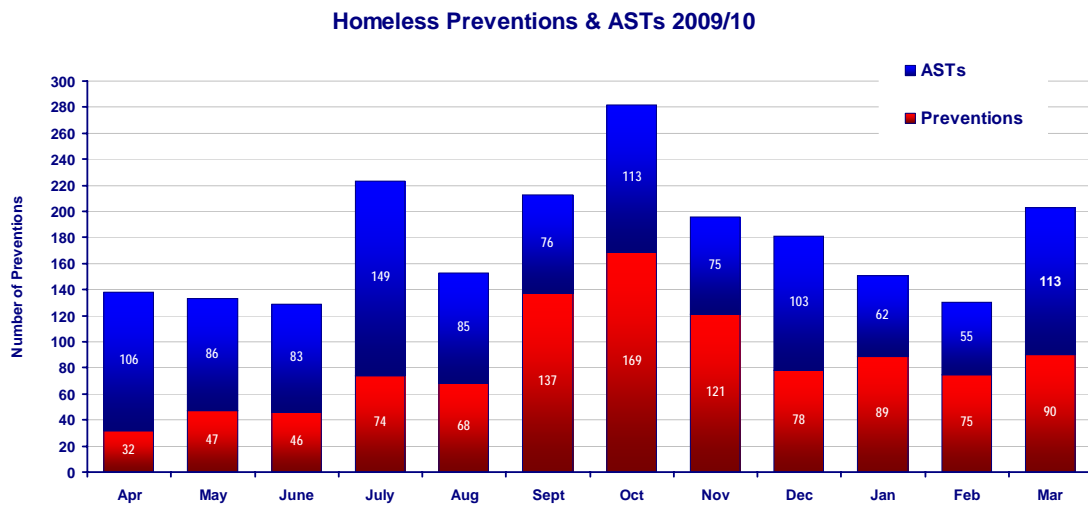
Distribution of Remaining Specific Actions (2010)



Achievements

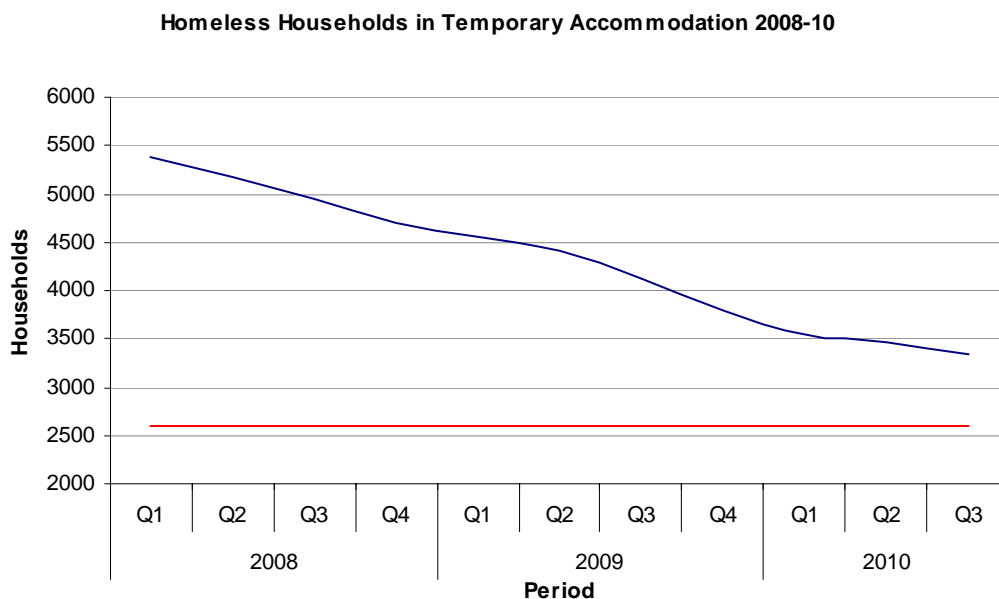
The prevention of homelessness and private sector lettings

The restructure of S&CHS in 2009 created three new teams focused on preventing homelessness, providing settled housing solutions and supporting the reduction of the Council’s use of temporary accommodation. The combined effort of these teams (Housing Advice, Options and Private Sector Lettings) during 2009/2010 resulted in preventing 2,132 households becoming homeless, with 1,026 of these being helped into private sector rented accommodation. Accessing the Mortgage Rescue Scheme also resulted in two vulnerable families being able to remain in their own homes.

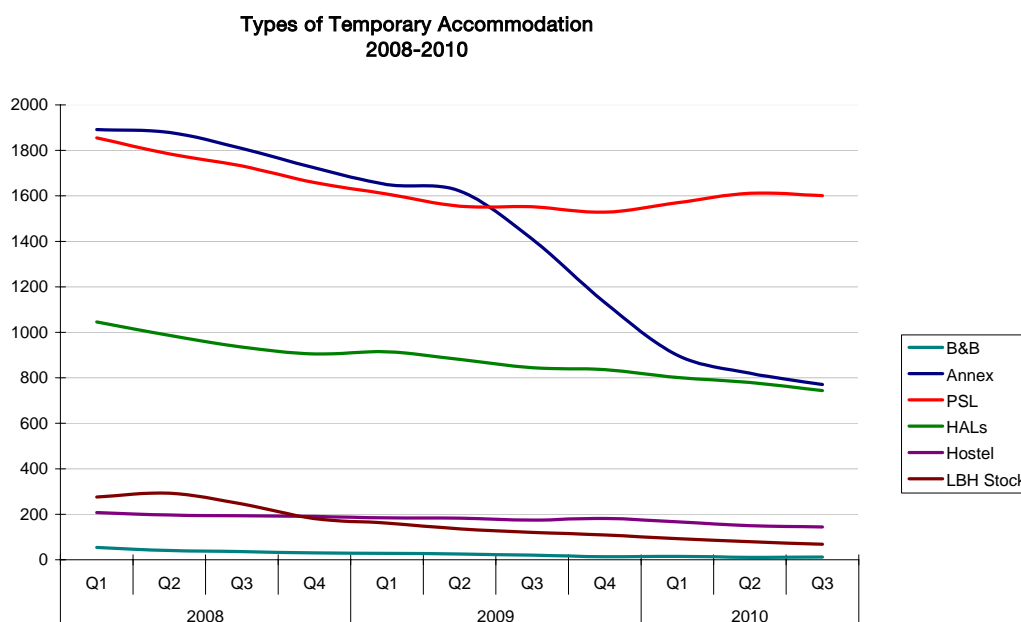


Reducing the use of temporary accommodation (TA), the cost of TA and improving standards and suitability

There are 2,048 fewer households living in temporary accommodation since the development of the Homelessness Strategy in 2008. This chart shows the rate of reduction of households in TA against the Council’s target.



In addition to the overall reduction of the use of TA the Council focused on reducing the use of nightly paid accommodation (which is the most costly) saving an estimated £600,000.

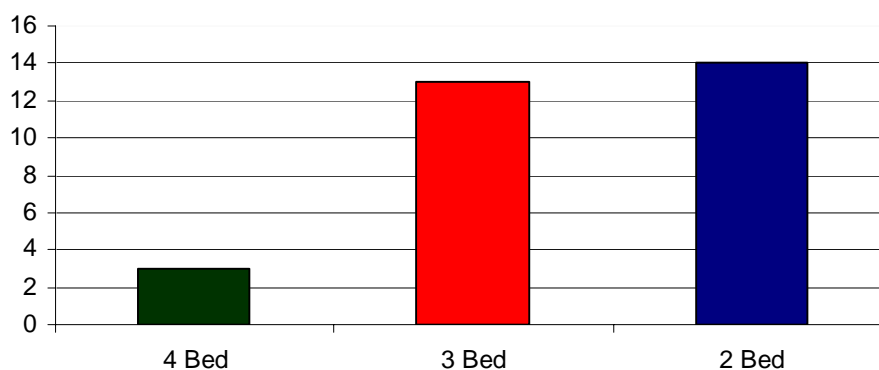


To ensure all households in temporary accommodation receive up to date housing options advice, a rolling programme of visits to people in temporary accommodation was introduced. This process will also enable us to identify and address any disrepair and assess any changes in circumstances more quickly.

Overcrowding and Under-occupation

Since the beginning of this year the Overcrowding and Under-occupation Officers based within the Housing Options Team have assisted 47 social housing tenants move to suitably sized accommodation. This work has freed up 30 family sized social housing properties which will be let to homelessness families. Seventeen overcrowded households have also been assisted. Fifteen were moved to larger (mainly private sector) accommodation and two families were assisted by extending or converting part of their accommodation.

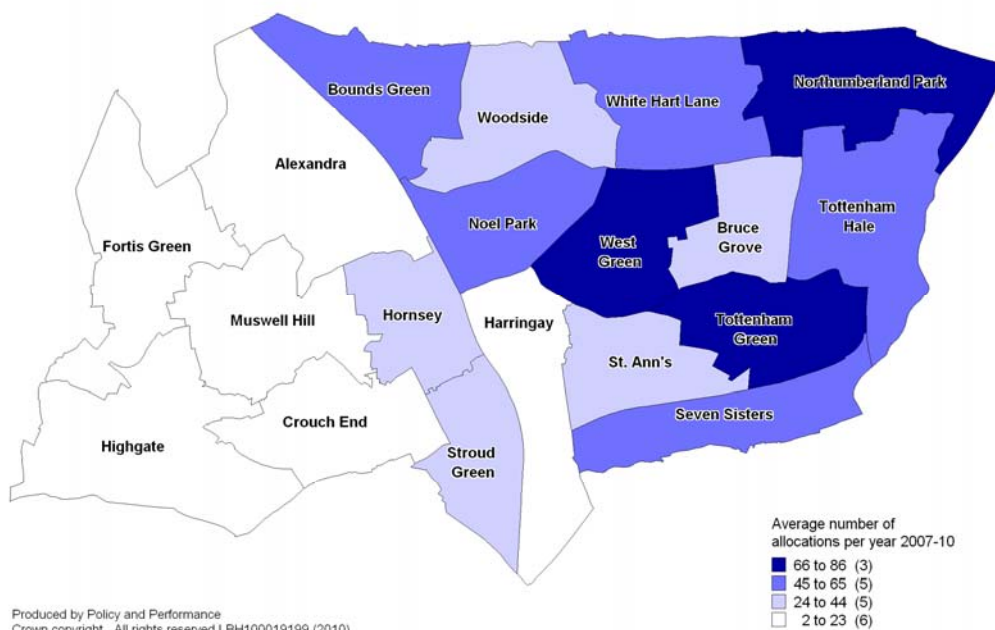
Under Occupied Properties Released Q1 & Q2 2010



Social Housing Guide

To help people understand their prospects of obtaining social housing in the near future, we have developed an interactive social housing map which is now available through Haringey Council's website. This map provides a ward by ward analysis of the types and availability of social housing in an accessible and easy to use printable format.

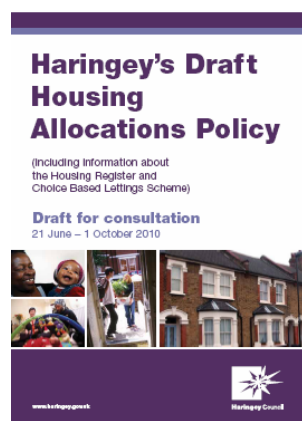
Average number of social housing allocations per year 2007-10



Housing Services Directory

Bringing together all aspects of Housing, Health, Community and Education and Employment, our new directory provides access to advice, information and services for new and existing service users.

Draft Allocations Policy



Our Draft Housing Allocations Policy has been very well received. The banding approach is considered a much more transparent way of prioritising households for new social housing allocations. The priorities set out have also been broadly accepted as the way forward, given the high demand and low supply of social housing. It has also been acknowledged that placing housing association and council tenants on an even footing, will provide greater mobility and more choice across the social housing sector. With consultation now complete, the policy will come into effect from mid-January 2011 and we are confident

that this comprehensive policy will provide a clear and effective system of housing allocations for the future.

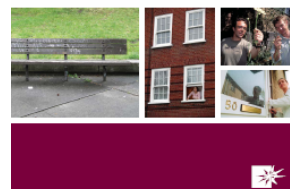
Rough sleeper's and Move- on Strategies

The partnership approach used through the Homelessness Strategy Delivery Groups has served as a platform to develop two sub strategies. The Move-On Strategy and the Rough Sleepers Strategy have both been developed with our partners and approved by the Integrated Housing Board, a theme board of Haringey's Strategic Partnership.

Rough sleeping has been recognised as an increasing challenge in Haringey. With our partners, we will provide a coordinated approach to tackling rough sleeping in the Borough over the next two years, to ensure that we reduce and sustain the number so people sleeping rough on the streets of Haringey to as close to zero as possible by 2012.

Haringey's Rough Sleepers Strategy 2010 - 2012

Strategic and Community Housing Services



Haringey's Move-on Strategy 2010 - 2015

Strategic and Community Housing Services



We also know that a significant proportion of people living in short term supported accommodation are ready to move out but are unable to do so. The Move-on Strategy focuses on identifying and providing solutions to the barriers that prevent people that are ready, from moving on, freeing up this valuable resource for people that need it.

Private Sector Improvement

The Private Sector Improvement Team is the driving force behind raising private sector property and management standards. During 2009-2010 the team dealt with 1,863 complaints and served 268 enforcement notices. The team also licensed 255 houses in multiple occupation overall. Through Empty Property Grants, 22 private sector properties have now been utilised as temporary accommodation. The use of Compulsory Purchase Orders has enabled a further 4 family homes to be brought back into use, with a further 4 properties partway through the process.

Hearthstone

Hearthstone has continued to provide an essential service to survivors of domestic violence over the last year, with over 600 enquiries from agencies and members of the public between April and September this year alone. This multi-agency team *"...is providing effective one-stop help to people facing domestic abuse"*³ and has provided support and interventions for 581 clients over the last year. This approach will be strengthened further with the recent appointment of a new Domestic Violence Social Worker.

³ Allocations Lettings and Homelessness Re-inspection , July 2010, p5 (Audit Commission),

Partnership

In 2008 we recognised that the successful implementation the Homelessness Strategy was dependant upon everyone working together. From the very beginning all partners have shown an outstanding commitment to the delivery of our strategic objectives. The recent Audit Commission re-inspection of this service found that *“The 2008-2011 Homelessness Strategy is an effective tool for improving services. It is a genuinely multi-agency strategy, developed and implemented with partners. The strategy covers all key aspects of homelessness, including rough sleeping, and is being delivered by nine delivery groups, attended and in some cases chaired by partners. The partners spoken to praised the content of the strategy and the partnership approach taken by the Council. This is helping to ensure that progress is made in addressing key areas of homelessness”*.

Actions and Challenges for Year 3

The Housing Strategy Review Event is a celebration of what we have achieved together, but it also serves as an opportunity to look forward with our partners to establish the priorities for the next strategy.

Workshops will consider:-

- Learning points from the 2008-2011 strategy
- Future challenges
- Priorities for the next strategy

Recommendations from these workshops will be fed back to the Strategy Delivery Groups and the new Homelessness Strategy Steering Group.

Homelessness Strategy 2008 -11

Review summary 2010

1 Actively support and promote a partnership approach to tackling homelessness

Number of sub Actions: 16 Number of completed sub Actions: 14	Number of outstanding sub Actions: 2 RED 0 AMBER 0 GREEN 2
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2 Invest in early intervention and effective homelessness prevention

Number of sub Actions: 37 Number of completed sub Actions: 28	Number of outstanding sub Actions: 9 RED 2 AMBER 0 GREEN 7
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3 Increase the supply of affordable homes

Number of sub Actions: 25 Number of completed sub Actions: 21	Number of outstanding sub Actions: 4 RED 0 AMBER 0 GREEN 4
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4 Provide choice and encourage independence

Number of sub Actions: 27 Number of completed sub Actions: 27	Number of outstanding sub Actions: 0 RED 0 AMBER 0 GREEN 0
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5 Halve the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation by 2010

Number of sub Actions: 21 Number of completed sub Actions: 16	Number of outstanding sub Actions: 5 RED 0 AMBER 0 GREEN 5
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6 Improve the quality and suitability of temporary accommodation

Number of sub Actions: 16 Number of completed sub Actions: 14	Number of outstanding sub Actions: 2 RED 0 AMBER 0 GREEN 2
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Review summary 2010

7 Work proactively to safeguard children and vulnerable adults

Number of sub Actions: 36 Number of completed sub Actions: 28	Number of outstanding sub Actions: 8 RED 0 AMBER 0 GREEN 8
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8 Improve customer service, involvement and satisfaction

Number of sub Actions: 17 Number of completed sub Actions: 12	Number of outstanding sub Actions: 5 RED 0 AMBER 0 GREEN 5
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9 Ensure that our policies and procedures are fair, transparent and widely understood

Number of sub Actions: 10 Number of completed sub Actions: 10	Number of outstanding sub Actions: 0 RED 0 AMBER 0 GREEN 0
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Homelessness Strategy 2008-11

Progress report

Live: HSI:
 Revised: Vulnerable Adults:
 Deleted: Children, Young People and Families:
 Temporary Accommodation and Housing Options:
 Partnership, Communications and Customer Experience:

Priority: 1 - Actively support and promote a partnership approach to tackling homelessness

Key Action: 6 - Work proactively with local RSLs and Homes for Haringey to ensure the success of Haringey's Area Based Homelessness Action Planning pilot.

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG
3	<p>Jul-09</p> <p>Dec-10</p>	Partnership, Communications and Customer Experience	launch date moved to December 2010, update from KY after November meeting	Live	Green
4	<p>Apr-10</p> <p>Jul-11</p>	Partnership, Communications and Customer Experience		Live	Green

Priority: 2 - Invest in early intervention and effective homelessness prevention

Key Action: 9 - Improve procedures for dealing with hospital discharge, prison leavers and care leavers, in order to improve planned move on and the prevention of homelessness

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG
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6	Develop procedures so that care leavers receive an options interview 6 months before leaving care	Jan-11	Children, Young People and Families	new addition	Revised	Green
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Key Action: 16 - Develop and promote a range of services and interventions for young people (including mediation, supported lodgings and mentoring) to prevent homelessness and sustain tenancies.

Sub Action		Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG
1	Undertake research to understand the needs of homeless young people and the reasons why they become homeless. Research should include an analysis of ethnicity, worklessness, teenage pregnancy, education attainment and family support networks	Apr-10 Oct-10	Children, Young People and Families	Initial data analysis provided to the group - discussed similarities across services particularly in relation to NEETs and Excluded pupils - completion expected end of November 2010	Live	Red
2	Undertake research to identify good practice	Apr-10 Oct-10	Children, Young People and Families	Literature review underway- completion expected end of November 2010	Live	Red
3	Evaluate each of the services and interventions, based on their success in preventing homelessness and sustaining young people's tenancies	Jul-09 Dec-10	Children, Young People and Families	Literature review underway-	Live	Green

4	Consult with service users, the Haringey Youth Council and other stakeholders.	Aug-09 Dec-10	Children, Young People and Families		Live	Green
5	Brief HSIG on the options with a view to them being incorporated into a youth homelessness plan.	Sep-09 Dec-10	Children, Young People and Families		Live	Green
6	Implement recommendations of the HSIG	Dec-09 Mar-11	Children, Young People and Families		Live	Green

Key Action: 17 - Provide schools and the Youth Service with advice and support to help them run a 'Leaving Home' project for 14-16 year olds, enabling young people to make informed choices about their future housing.

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG
4	Dec-10	Children, Young People and Families		Revised	Green

5	Implement the plan	Apr-11	Children, Young People and Families		Revised	Green
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Priority: 3 - Increase the supply of affordable homes

Key Action: 18 - Set up a rent deposit scheme for homeless people deemed by the Council not to be in 'priority need'

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG
5	Jul-10 Nov-10	Temporary Accommodation and Housing Options	Full launch expected by target date	Live	Green

Key Action: 20 - Make it easier for low income households to access the private rented sector, and maximise the Council's tenancy nominations rights to private rented accommodation

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG
5	Apr-09 Mar-11	Temporary Accommodation and Housing Options		Live	Green

7	Publish a 'Good Lettings Guide' for private landlords	Dec-09 Dec-10	Temporary Accommodation and Housing Options	SR leading	Live	Green
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Key Action: 21 - Make best use of Haringey's social housing stock by minimising voids and reducing the number of under occupied family homes.

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG
2	Dec-08 Apr-11	Temporary Accommodation and Housing Options	Action plan being devised by internal working group - CA to confirm when action plan can be shared with the DG	Live	Green

Priority: 5 - Halve the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation by 2010

Key Action: 34 - Amend the lettings policy to ensure that it assists the prevention of homelessness and reduced use of TA

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG
3	Jan-09 Jan-11	Temporary Accommodation and Housing Options	Banding method agreed by Cabinet, public consultation running until 1/10 then results back to Cabinet. Method of implementation including re-registration being worked through by the project group	Live	Green

Key Action: 39 - Work proactively with RSLs to convert temporary homes into settled accommodation

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG
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1	Organise a workshop with the RSLs (as part of Haringey's Joint Action Planning pilot) to discuss the opportunities to convert temporary homes into settled accommodation	Jan-09 Apr-11	Temporary Accommodation and Housing Options		Live	Green
2	Produce a three year plan to prepare for future conversions in a managed way that contributes positively to the successful implementation of the Homelessness Strategy and the TA Reduction Plan	Mar-09 Apr-11	Temporary Accommodation and Housing Options		Live	Green
3	Implement the 3 year plan	Mar-09 Apr-11	Temporary Accommodation and Housing Options		Live	Green

Key Action: 67 - Develop a protocol to facilitate(with the necessary permission) the sharing of information with voluntary and community sector support providers, ensuring that information held and advice on the prospects for re-housing is up to date

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG
1	Apr-11	Temporary Accommodation and Housing Options	New action replacing Key Action 38	Revised	Green
produce a draft protocol in partnership with key voluntary/community sector groups which will enable :- receiving households changes in circumstances and the production of a letter where households are advised of their prospects of re-housing or other H/Op					

Priority: 6 - Improve the quality and suitability of temporary accommodation

Key Action: 41 - Improve the physical condition of TA (ensuring that all properties are well-managed and that all repairs are completed within agreed timescales) through routine inspections and by ensuring the robust enforcement of contracts and standards

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG
2	Jan-09 Nov-10	Temporary Accommodation and Housing Options	Arrangements reviewed, guidance to be confirmed.	Live	Green
3	Apr-09 Nov-10	Temporary Accommodation and Housing Options	To be contained within Consultation and Communication Plan (RG)	Live	Green

Priority: 7 - Work proactively to safeguard children and vulnerable adults

Key Action: 47 - Adopt a shared strategic approach to the provision of housing and support for homeless children, young people and vulnerable adults

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG
5	Mar-11	Children, Young People and Families		Revised	Green

Key Action: 48 - Improve joint working (especially between Housing and Children's Services) to help children and young people achieve the 5 'Every Child Matters' outcomes.

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG
2	Jan-11	Children, Young People and Families	Key staff attended Integrated Working training to increase awareness and make appropriate referrals, update of assessment expected Jan 2011	Revised	Green

Key Action: 49 - Provide joined-up services that are responsive to the needs of young people and vulnerable adults, and focus on homelessness prevention.

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG
14	Nov-10	Vulnerable Adults	Initial contact made with local agency to establish what data is available.	Live	Green
15	Nov-10	Vulnerable Adults	see 49.15	Live	Green
7	Nov-09 May-11	Vulnerable Adults	Revised due date to allow for re-registration and up to date information	Live	Green

9	Make recommendation to improve early intervention, support and housing options for disabled people (including children) and their carers and families and remove barriers to accessing services, through early intervention and better joined-up services	Apr-10 May-11	Vulnerable Adults	Revised due date to allow for re-registration and up to date information	Live	Green
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Key Action: 50 - Undertake holistic needs assessments and tailor support packages to the specific needs of families and vulnerable adults

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG	
1	Assist the assessment process by producing a checklist of support needs	Apr-09 Jan-11	Vulnerable Adults	Joint action with children young people and families group - CHYP DG will satisfy this action through revised KA 48. Vulnerable Adults DG to consider checklist at next meeting (Dec'10)	Live	Green
2	Ensure that all services use the same process for assessing the needs of families and vulnerable adults in respect of housing, health, recreation, education, training and employment	Sep-09 Jan-11	Vulnerable Adults	Joint action with children young people and families delivery group - CHYPF DG will satisfy this action through amended key action 48 Vulnerable Adults to consider at next meeting	Live	Green

Priority: 8 - Improve customer service, involvement and satisfaction

Key Action: 55 - Improve the quality of customer care and ensure that all customers are treated with courtesy and respect.

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG
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2	Establish a Customer Service Forum and a Mystery Shopping Team, comprising past and present service users, to discuss and monitor the quality of customer care	Apr-09 Mar-11	Partnership, Communications and Customer Experience	To be included in Consultation and Communications Plan (RG)	Live	Green
3	Undertake periodic exit surveys in the Customer Service Centres, together with an annual postal survey, inviting service users to provide feedback on the quality of service they have received	Apr-09 Mar-11	Partnership, Communications and Customer Experience	To be included in Consultation and Communications Plan (RG)	Live	Green

Key Action: 58 - Develop and actively promote a range of opportunities for service users to get involved in shaping, monitoring and improving services.

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG	
3	Actively promote the benefits of getting involved, ensuring that all activities are widely publicised well in advance.	Jun-09 Mar-11	Partnership, Communications and Customer Experience	To be included in Consultation and Communications Plan (RG)	Live	Green

Key Action: 59 - Produce and publicise an annual programme of consultation and service user involvement

Sub Action	Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG	
1	HSIG to co-ordinate and publish an annual programme of events and activities relating to service user consultation and involvement.	Apr-09 Mar-11	Partnership, Communications and Customer Experience	To be included in Consultation and Communications Plan (RG)	Live	Green

Key Action: 60 - Improve communication and the co-ordination of services, encouraging joint-working and meeting customer's needs more quickly and efficiently.

Sub Action		Due	Responsibility	Progress	Status	RAG
3	Support and promote the work of Haringey's Homelessness Forum and Single Homelessness Forum	Jun-09 Mar-11	Partnership, Communications and Customer Experience	Move-On Strategy implementation of single homeless forum Jan 2011	Live	Green

Homelessness Strategy 2008-11: performance summary

Total No Sub Actions:	35
Total deleted:	0
Total revised:	6
Total completed:	0
Live sub actions:	35

RED:	2	5.7%
AMBER:	0	0.0%
GREEN:	33	94.3%
NO RAG STATUS:	0	0.0%
		100.00%

Percentage complete:	0.0%
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HSIG:	0
Vulnerable Adults:	6
Children, Young People and Families:	11
Temporary Accommodation and Housing Options:	11
Partnership, Communications and Customer Experience:	7

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