

## Homelessness Strategy 2009 – 2011: Year 3 Action Plan (Update May 2011)

Reflecting the significant changes that have taken place since the 2009 – 2011 homelessness strategy and action plan were formulated and published the year 3 action plan has been revised as compared to the original version (approved in February 09) and is now made up of the following actions:

- 4 actions that have been carried forward from the year 2 action plan for further work (a revised set of milestones & target dates have been included with all actions carried over from year 2)
- 2 of the original year 3 actions (there were originally 6 actions in the year 3 action plan; of these 3 have been removed because they are no longer applicable / achievable and 3 have been included in the revised action plan with 2 of them being merged into 1 action)
- 5 new actions which reflect changing national and local priorities and developments that have taken place over the first 2 years of delivery

In light of the target timescales for many of the actions included in the updated action plan it is proposed that the remit of year 3 be extended to the end of the 2011/12 financial year (31/03/11) with a review of the strategy to be carried out late 2011 / early 2012 and a new 3 year strategy and action plan approved to cover 2012 - 2015.

### **Priorities Key:**

- P1a - Preventing homelessness through effective housing advice and options**  
**P1b - Preventing homelessness through the provision of timely education and information**  
**P1c - Preventing homelessness through supporting vulnerable people**  
**P2 - Preventing youth homelessness & ensuring that a range of housing options are available to those young people in housing need**  
**P3 - Meeting housing needs through the supply of permanent and temporary accommodation and supported housing**  
**P4 - Working more effectively with relevant statutory and voluntary organisations to prevent homelessness from occurring and to provide advice and assistance where it does**  
**P5 - Improving services to customers**

### **Partners Key (Lead Role in Bold Text in the Action Plan)**

AC – Age Concern	I&AT – Income & Awards Team (SMBC)
ASC – Adult Solihull Care (People Directorate)	JCP – Job Centre Plus
B&SMHT – Birmingham & Solihull Mental Health Team	LSC – Learning & Skills Council
BSWA – Birmingham and Solihull Women’s Aid	MAHF – Multi-Agency Homeless Forum
CAB – Citizens Advice Bureaux (Chelmsley Wood, Solihull & Shirley)	RHSIG – Regional Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group
CA&RA - Chelmsley Advice & Resources Agency	SCH – Solihull Community Housing
CST – Customer Services Team (SMBC)	SHA – Stonham Housing Association
C&YPS – Children & Young People Services (People Directorate, SMBC)	SIL – Solihull Independent Living
EDT – Economic Development team (SMBC)	SMBC – Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
GOWM – Government Office West Midlands	UASC – Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children Team
HA’s – Housing Associations	VCS – Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations
HCA – Homes & Communities Agency	WMFS – West Midlands Fire Service
HST – Housing Strategy Team (SMBC)	WMP – West Midlands Police
	WMPS – West Midlands Probation Service

\*The Homelessness Strategy Action Plan will be a ‘live document’ and the quarterly updates will take into account any changes or developments which may impact upon the delivery of the actions. As a result targets will be flexible in order to ensure they remain relevant.

**Homelessness Strategy Review 2009 – 2011: Action Plan**  
**Section 3: Year Three Actions (January 2011 – March 2012)**

No	Action – Description	Lead Role & Key Partners	Milestones & Target Dates	Update / Comment – as @ May 11 (RAG Assessment)
<b>Priority 1 – Preventing homelessness through:</b> <b>a) effective housing advice and options</b> <b>b) the provision of timely education and information</b> <b>c) supporting vulnerable people</b>				
3.1	Work with SCH and partners to review the Enhanced Housing Options (EHO) Programme and to agree options for future scope and delivery of enhanced services in Solihull.	<b>SCH &amp; HST</b> LSC, JCP, EDT, CAB, ASC, Joint Director of Public Health, Connexions, Pertemps, VCS, Sustain, CAB, HA's, Private Landlords, AC & CA&RA	Review of enhanced services carried out in line with suggested model set out in the Council's Common Commissioning Framework <b>(May 11)</b> Potential options for delivery investigated in consultation with partners <b>(October 11)</b> Recommendations for future delivery of enhanced services made <b>(December 11)</b> Recommendations implemented <b>(From April 12)</b> <b>Implemented from: April 2012</b>	<b>On Target.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial meeting held with representatives from Solihull Partnership to scope out breadth of the review and agree actions.</li> <li>Final evaluation of 2 year trailblazer programme to be completed following final report of KPI's for January to March 2011.</li> <li>Contracts for SCH Money Advisor &amp; Employment Co-ordinator posts have been extended to the end of March 2012 with recommendations from the options appraisal to be implemented from April 2012.</li> </ul>
3.2	Increase housing options and support for single and non-priority homeless households	<b>SCH &amp; HST</b> HA's, ASC, VCS, private landlords & support providers	Launch, deliver & monitor Enhanced Housing Options (action 1.9) <b>(April 09 &amp; on-going)</b> Review of existing prevention initiatives (action 1.10) <b>(April 09 &amp; On-going)</b> Feasibility assessment for expanding RDGS to assist single & non-priority homeless (action 2.24) <b>(March 10)</b> Liaise with neighbouring authorities re: direct access provision for single non priority households (due to the lack of provision / options in Solihull) <b>(July 11)</b> Taking into account evidence from the above actions produce a paper setting out the housing options available for single and non-priority homeless households in Solihull <b>(September 11)</b> <b>Implemented By: September 2011</b>	<b>On Target.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As per action 3.1 EHO is to be evaluated and options for future delivery explored in consultation with key partners.</li> <li>RDGS for single &amp; non-priority homeless households in place since September 2009.</li> <li>The increase in the upper age limit for the single room rate from Jan 2012 (from 25 up to 35) is likely to impact upon the availability / affordability of privately rented accommodation for single and non priority homeless households. SCH and the Council will be working with private landlords to analyse the impact of these changes and look at ways to mitigate the likely effects.</li> <li>Plans to increase capacity within the homelessness and housing advice team to enable more focused work with single &amp; non-priority homeless households.</li> </ul>

No	Action – Description	Lead Role & Key Partners	Milestones & Target Dates	Update / Comment – as @ May 11 (RAG Assessment)
3.3	<p>Monitor the implementation of changes to Housing Benefit &amp; Local Housing Allowance from April 2011 and ensure that appropriate responses are in place to work with private landlords and tenants to raise awareness and mitigate the impact of any changes that may affect them directly (in terms of homeless prevention and operation of the RDGS).</p>	<p><b>SCH, HST &amp; I&amp;AT</b> CAB CA&amp;RA, VSC, Support Providers</p>	<p>Liaise with Income &amp; Awards Team re: potential impacts, awareness raising and local procedure for the allocation of Discretionary Housing Payments <b>(March 11)</b></p> <p>Liaise with local private landlords to raise awareness of the changes and potential impacts on their tenants and to encourage them to work with SCH &amp; the Council to resolve any issues and to continue to let their properties to people in housing need <b>(May 11 &amp; On-going)</b></p> <p>Monitor demand for housing options and homelessness advice from private rented tenants who have been affected by the changes in housing benefits <b>(monthly &amp; quarterly monitoring)</b></p> <p><b>Implemented from: April 2011</b></p>	<p><b>On Target.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing &amp; Money Advice meetings held quarterly (and attended by income &amp; awards).</li> <li>• Joint working with Income &amp; Awards to produce a briefing on the changes to Housing Benefit from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 – this was circulated to all organisations providing advice and guidance to customers in Solihull and also to all members via the Council's members newsletter.</li> <li>• Details of all the changes along with supporting information and FAQ's have been added to the Council's website under the advice and benefits section (there is also currently a link from the front page of the website)</li> <li>• Income &amp; awards have also written directly to all the landlords they currently work with.</li> </ul>
3.4	<p>Monitor &amp; review existing prevention initiatives in light of spending cuts &amp; changing policy agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sanctuary Scheme (current funding ceases 31.03.11)</li> <li>- Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme (RDGS)</li> <li>- Money Advice</li> <li>- Employment Support</li> <li>- Tenancy Support</li> <li>- Mortgage Rescue</li> <li>- Prevention Fund</li> <li>- Life Skills Pre-Tenancy Training Programme</li> </ul>	<p><b>SCH &amp; HST,</b> BSWA, WMP, WMFS, SCT, Private Landlords, Support Providers, CAB, VSC &amp; HA's</p>	<p>Regular monitoring in place <b>(monthly &amp; quarterly monitoring)</b></p> <p>Homelessness grant funding for prevention initiatives agreed for 2011/12 and 2012/13 <b>(March 11)</b></p> <p>Complete bid for external funding to allow continuation of the sanctuary scheme and agree with partners capacity for the scheme to continue when current funding runs out on 31/03/11 <b>(March 11)</b></p> <p>Work with local partners to explore the potential for joint delivery of the life skills programme and to agree the future of the programme <b>(July 11)</b></p> <p>Complete review of RDGS and launch revised scheme <b>(September 11)</b></p> <p>Review of Enhanced Housing Options Services complete and recommendation implemented (as per action 3.1) <b>(April 12)</b></p> <p><b>Implemented By: April 2012</b></p>	<p><b>On Target &amp; On-Going.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of homelessness grant agreed for 11/12 &amp; 12/13 – the majority of the grant is being used to fund staff. There will be a ring-fenced pot for prevention initiatives across both years.</li> <li>• Funding for the sanctuary scheme ended on 31/03/11. Bid for external funding submitted but unsuccessful. Whilst high risk cases (defined through MARAC) can still be considered general referrals cannot be accepted.</li> <li>• All 3 strands of the RDGS have been reviewed. Recommendations will be implemented during 2011/12 and will aim to improve the operation of the scheme and to reduce the financial liability of SCH and the Council.</li> <li>• Arrangements for mortgage rescue have been confirmed – funding is available up to 31/03/13 and each area has been allocated a set number of cases (5 each year for Solihull)</li> <li>• Employment &amp; Money Advice part of EHO review (action 3.1)</li> </ul>

No	Action – Description	Lead Role & Key Partners	Milestones & Target Dates	Update / Comment – as @ May 11 (RAG Assessment)
<b>Priority 2 – Preventing youth homelessness and ensuring that a range of accommodation options are available to those young people in housing need</b>				
3.5	Work with internal and external partners to explore the feasibility of introducing a single point of access / pathway style approach in Solihull for all homeless 16 & 17 year olds.	<b>HST, SCH, C&amp;YPS &amp; ASC</b> Connexions, SHA, UASC, Bromford, St Basil's & Other Support Providers	<p>Research best practice in other local authority areas <b>(By March 11 &amp; On-going)</b></p> <p>Develop a briefing note setting out how the concept would work in Solihull and related issues as a basis for discussion / consultation <b>(By March 11)</b></p> <p>Consult with all key partners (commissioners &amp; service providers) and develop detailed model / procedure for how the service might operate in Solihull <b>(By September 11)</b></p> <p>If recommended model is agreed by all stakeholders work with partners, providers and commissioners of SP services to build new arrangements into service delivery <b>(By March 12)</b></p> <p><b>Implemented from: April 2012</b></p>	<p><b>On Target.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steering group of key partners (SCH, 16+ team &amp; Housing Strategy) set up – first meeting held March and follow up planned for 24<sup>th</sup> May 11.</li> <li>Steering group visited St. Basils in April 11 to see how the process works in Birmingham and to learn from the best practice carried out.</li> </ul>
3.6	<p>Ensure appropriate supported accommodation is available for young people in Solihull:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review existing provision for vulnerable young people</li> <li>Explore options for the provision of emergency accommodation for 16 &amp; 17 year olds &amp; develop as appropriate</li> <li>Ensure appropriate support and provision for young people with high &amp; complex support needs</li> </ul>	<b>HST, SCH, C&amp;YPS (16+ &amp; YOS) &amp; ASC</b> Connexions, SHA, UASC, Bromford, St Basil's & Other Support Providers	<p>Review of supporting people services completed by SCT &amp; detail on future service provision available <b>(By March 11)</b></p> <p>Link review of provision to consultation re: housing pathway approach for young people &amp; include within this an assessment of provision for young people with high and complex support needs (ref action 3.5 above) <b>(By September 11)</b></p> <p>Work with partners to investigate the possible options for emergency / assessment provision for 16 &amp; 17 year olds <b>(By December 11)</b></p> <p>As per action 3.5 revised model of assessment and provision for young people developed <b>(By March 12)</b></p> <p><b>Implemented from: April 2012</b></p>	<p><b>On Target.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting People review completed &amp; funding confirmed for 2011/12 (with a 0.8% reduction to all contracts) – further reviews will be carried out during 2011/12 to inform funding from 2012/13 onwards and key partners on the steering group mentioned in 3.5 above will ask to be involved in this process for young people's services.</li> <li>One-off allocation of funding from CLG to assist in the development of emergency accommodation options for young people.</li> <li>Partners are currently exploring the possibility of developing a supported lodgings scheme in Solihull to offer temporary accommodation for homeless 16 &amp; 17 year olds (longer than a night stop scheme but not as a longer term option – suggested 28 days)</li> </ul>

No	Action – Description	Lead Role & Key Partners	Milestones & Target Dates	Update / Comment – as @ May 11 (RAG Assessment)
3.7	<p>Work with local schools and colleges to raise awareness of homelessness and housing advice and prevention services</p> <p>Re-launch the homeless education programme to prevent homelessness amongst young people.</p>	<p><b>SCH &amp; HST</b> C&amp;YPS, local schools &amp; colleges, St Basils &amp; Connexions</p>	<p><b><u>Revised Milestones &amp; Target Dates (project carried forward from year 2 action plan):</u></b></p> <p>Draft version of the programme agreed <b>(by June 11)</b></p> <p>Programme piloted <b>(by October 11)</b></p> <p>Final version of the programme agreed and resource material produced <b>(by March 12)</b></p> <p>Liaison with identified schools to agree delivery during 2012/13 academic year (identify each school &amp; level of engagement) <b>(from March 12)</b></p> <p>Delivery of full programme in schools <b>(from September 12)</b></p> <p><b>Implemented By: September 2012</b></p>	<p><b>On Target.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-off allocation of funding from CLG to assist in the development of the education programme</li> <li>• Working group has agreed the draft format of the programme and a brief has been put together for a professional media organisation to assist with the production of a DVD and resource material. It is hoped that work will begin on developing the DVD and training material in June 11.</li> <li>• The working group is also working in partnership with media students from CTC Kingshurst Academy who are using the programme as one of their projects and will be assisting with the marketing and launch. The students are currently making short films about homelessness from a young persons perspective and these will be used to both launch and highlight the need for the programme.</li> </ul>
<b>Priority 3 – Meeting housing needs through the supply of permanent and temporary accommodation and supported housing</b>				
3.8	<p>Explore alternative temporary accommodation options including private sector leasing</p> <p>Provide additional temporary accommodation in South Solihull</p> <p>Increase the number of larger family units available</p>	<p><b>SCH &amp; HST,</b> Private Landlords, Support Providers, UASC Team &amp; I&amp;AT.</p>	<p><b><u>Revised Milestones &amp; Target Dates(project carried forward from year 2 action plan):</u></b></p> <p>Identification of landlords and properties to be included in the pilot <b>(March 11)</b></p> <p>Pilot scheme developed &amp; ready to launch <b>(March 11)</b></p> <p>Pilot scheme launched <b>(April 11)</b></p> <p>Pilot evaluated and recommendations re: longer term use and development of PSL made (to include work with UASC team to look at viability of introducing PSL for looked after UASC clients <b>(By April 12)</b></p> <p><b>Implemented By: April 2012</b></p>	<p><b>On Target.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private Sector Leasing Scheme developed and lease along with accompanying policies &amp; procedures have been agreed by all partners.</li> <li>• Scheme launched in April 11 with 1 property (3 bed) which will be used to test out the policies and procedures. If this goes well there are several other landlords in discussion with the Council who would be willing to sign up to the scheme.</li> </ul>

No	Action – Description	Lead Role & Key Partners	Milestones & Target Dates	Update / Comment – as @ May 11 (RAG Assessment)
3.9	Develop plans and secure funding for the improvement of Mildenhall House <sup>1</sup>	HST, SCH, ASC, St Basils & Waterloo HA HCA, Support Providers & C&YPS	<p><b><u>Revised Milestones &amp; Target Dates (project carried forward from year 2 action plan) :</u></b></p> <p>Identification of alternative funding sources (in light of lack of capacity in HCA programme) <b>(June 11)</b></p> <p><b>If additional funding is identified:</b> Agreement of final plans, existing tenants re-located / moved-on &amp; redevelopment work commenced <b>(October 11)</b></p> <p>Referral process for new scheme / additional units agreed <b>(December 11)</b></p> <p>Redevelopment work complete <b>(Summer / Autumn 12)</b></p> <p><b>Implemented By: September 2012</b></p>	<p><b>On Target.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waterloo Housing have included Mildenhall House as part of their submission to the HCA for the Affordable Homes Programme which closes on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2011. The HCA will then spend May and June negotiating with providers about the options before announcing which bids have been successful for the 2011 – 2015 programme in July 2011.</li> <li>If the HCA bid is not successful the Council and partners will identify any possible alternative funding sources and decide whether or not the scheme would be viable. The Council's own quantity surveyor has visited Mildenhall to draw up a schedule of works and provide a cost estimate.</li> </ul>
<b>Priority 4 – Working more effectively with relevant statutory and voluntary organisations to prevent homelessness from occurring and to provide advice and assistance where it does</b>				
3.10	Ensure that all partner organisations & frontline service providers continue to receive up-to date, accurate and consistent information on housing advice and homeless prevention	SCH & HST, CST, ASC, VCS, HA's HA's, Support Providers, CAB, Local Schools & Colleges & other community service providers	<p>Identify appropriate methods for updating the following 'groups' of frontline services who require regular updates re: homelessness &amp; housing advice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Income &amp; awards</li> <li>- Money advice organisations</li> <li>- Job centre plus &amp; employment organisations</li> <li>- Sustain / VCS organisations</li> <li>- Connect &amp; SCH Contact Centre</li> </ul> <p><b>(By March 11)</b></p> <p>Develop templates for providing relevant information <b>(By March 11)</b></p> <p>Updates provided at regular intervals (to be agreed with each service area) <b>(From April 11)</b></p> <p><b>Implemented from: April 2011</b></p>	<p><b>On Target.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular updates provided via a range of different methods (e.g. email updates, housing &amp; money advice forums, Sustain email alerts, updates to contact centre and connect scripts etc)</li> <li>Updates to be provided quarterly in a format agreed with each service area.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> NB: This action will be dependent on the ability of partners to identify suitable and available funding sources and may not therefore progress as set out under the milestones column.

No	Action – Description	Lead Role & Key Partners	Milestones & Target Dates	Update / Comment – as @ May 11 (RAG Assessment)
3.11	Monitor the number of rough sleepers in the Borough and develop personalised housing options to prevent rough sleeping wherever possible.	<b>HST &amp; SCH</b> ASC, VCS, Support Providers & WMP & Joint Director of Public Health	<p><b><u>Revised Milestones &amp; Target Dates (project carried forward from year 2 action plan):</u></b></p> <p>Review &amp; update rough sleeper leaflet / information <b>(May 11)</b></p> <p>Organise partnership meeting re: rough sleeper count &amp; agree a rough sleeper protocol <b>(June 11)</b></p> <p>Carry out rough sleeper count &amp; respond to any identified need <b>(November 11)</b></p> <p>Monitor the number of rough sleepers in the Borough – count or estimate provided annually to CLG <b>(December 11 &amp; annually thereafter)</b></p> <p><b>Implemented By: December 2011</b></p>	<p><b>On Target.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding for West Midlands Council's received from the CLG to support joint working in relation to single homelessness and rough sleeping issues – meeting of the West Midlands LA's due to be arranged for June</li> <li>Review of literature to coincide with partner meeting and development of a protocol – meeting of local stakeholders to be arranged for June 2011.</li> <li>Plans for rough sleeper count to be discussed and agreed at stakeholder meeting.</li> </ul>
<b>Priority 5 – Improving service to customers</b>				
3.12	<p>Develop joint working arrangements with key partner agencies to share relevant information re: homeless and potentially homeless households and to agree relevant signposting &amp; referral mechanisms with a key focus on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental Health Teams</li> <li>Hospitals (Hospital Discharge Protocol)</li> <li>Prisons &amp; Probation</li> <li>Victims of Domestic Abuse</li> <li>Access to &amp; utilisation of Solihull Home Options (SHO)</li> </ul>	<b>HST, SCH</b> <b>ASC, WMPS</b> <b>B&amp;SMHT</b> Support Providers, HA's & C&YPS, LSC, JCP, EDT, CAB, SCT, CA&RA Connexions, Pertemps, VCS, Sustain, CAB, HA's, Private Landlords, AC, SIL	<p>Research best practice at the national and regional level <b>(April 11)</b></p> <p>Make necessary links and agree referral and signposting arrangements <b>(October 11)</b></p> <p>Develop and agree protocols with each key agency and monitor implementation <b>(December 11)</b></p> <p>Ensure that consultation is carried out re: any changes made to the allocations policy in light of the proposed new powers included in the Localism Bill. If a new policy is agreed ensure that relevant information is made available to partners so that they are able to advise and support their clients in making housing applications <b>(March 12 &amp; On-going)</b></p> <p><b>Implemented By: December 2011</b></p>	<p><b>On Target.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Best Practice available from homelessness link and CLG housing options tool kit – examples included.</li> <li>Monthly surgeries being held at the Probation Service offices &amp; protocol for providing accommodation and support to ex-offenders is in place across the region (co-ordinated by National Offender Management Service for the West Midlands)</li> <li>SCH are regular attendee's at the domestic abuse Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and both Housing Strategy and SCH attend the domestic abuse strategic group.</li> <li>SHO open day for partners and stakeholders (including VCS organisations and support agencies) held annually (16/06/09 and 17/09/10)</li> <li>Further work required re joint work with mental health teams and hospital discharge.</li> </ul>