

WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL

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**PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH
SLEEPING STRATEGY
2020 – 2024**

November 2019

Foreword by Portfolio Holder for Housing

Whilst Woking residents enjoy the benefits of its excellent location and facilities, these qualities mean property prices to rent and buy are beyond the reach of many. This creates need for more affordable housing for which the demand far exceeds the supply.

Homelessness and poor housing can have a profound effect on people's lives. It has a detrimental effect on health and wellbeing and reduces life opportunities. For these reasons, preventing homelessness and reducing rough sleeping are high priorities for Woking Borough Council. This Strategy sets out how we will work collaboratively to address housing crises and deliver the best possible outcomes for our customers.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 introduced the biggest change in homelessness legislation in forty years, which in turn brought in a new way of working with, and supporting, people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This Strategy outlines how we will continue to develop our services to deliver the most effective support for our customers and ensure compliance with the Act.

We will work with people to understand their needs and support them holistically, preventing homelessness at the earliest opportunity wherever possible. We will also work closely with our partners in both the statutory and voluntary sectors, including taking advantage of the co-location of some of our partners within the Civic Offices.

We recognise that we need our partners and stakeholders to help us achieve the priorities within this Strategy and we are lucky to have such a range of committed partners in Woking. It is this collective effort that will ensure that households facing homelessness are supported to address their housing crises and sustain long-term housing solutions.

Cllr. Debbie Harlow
Portfolio Holder for Housing

November 2019

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1.0 Introduction

The Council has a legal duty to provide services to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The Housing Act 1996, Part 7, is the primary legislation governing homelessness. It has seen several changes over the years, but the most recent, fundamental and far-reaching are the amendments brought about by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. This introduced new requirements to “Prevent” and “Relieve” homelessness and came into force on 3rd April 2018.

The Act represents a strategic change from the Housing Options model to an emphasis on improving how the Council engages with and supports its customers. The focus is on developing a more holistic approach to preventing and resolving homelessness. The main aim is to increase early interventions, which achieve more sustainable outcomes for customers.

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires all local housing authorities publish a Homelessness Strategy following a review of homelessness in their area. The Council carried out a Homelessness Review in 2019 and this is available on the Council’s website.

The Government’s Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 sets out its plan to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end it by 2027. The accompanying Delivery Plan includes an expectation that all local authorities update their strategies and rebadge them as Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategies.

The Council’s “Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024” sets out how it will work with partners to address homelessness in the Woking Borough and support residents in housing crisis. Actions will be targeted at delivering on the following four strategic priorities:

1. To prevent homelessness and offer early help
2. To provide a range of accommodation options
3. To support vulnerable residents through partnership working
4. To reduce rough sleeping

The Strategy will be kept under continuous review and will be available on the Council’s website at www.woking.gov.uk

2.0 Local Context

Woking is a very expensive housing market area and house prices have increased significantly over the last 5 years. According to the Land Registry, the average price of a home in the Borough was £415,171 in February 2019, significantly higher than the England average of £242,964. There are also very high rent levels in the private sector and even Affordable Rents (set at 80% of market rent) are out of the reach of many low-income households. The average private rent for a 2-bedroom property in Woking is £1,285 per month, compared to the Local Housing Allowance rate of £966 per month.

There is a steady demand for advice and assistance from the Housing Options Team, as it becomes increasingly challenging for residents to secure homes that are affordable for them. Affordability is becoming more and more of an issue, particularly for larger families with children affected by the benefits cap. Between April 2018 and March 2019, the Council undertook 282 homelessness assessments with 108 households being owed a duty (either prevention, relief or full). People are often worried about being given notice to leave their homes in the private rented sector (29%), which together with relationship (8%) and family breakdown (23%), are the main reasons they approach the Council for housing advice and help. There are also risks to wider services associated with reductions in public spending, which have inevitably increased pressure on the Council's services.

Further information on housing and homelessness in Woking can be found in the Council's Homelessness Review, which can be downloaded from <https://www.woking.gov.uk/housing/housing-documents> .

As the number of Council-owned properties have reduced through the Right to Buy and waiting times for social housing have increased, the Housing Options team has increasingly focused on providing homeless households with suitable homes in the private rented sector. The team use a range of other tools to prevent and address homelessness, including family mediation, home visits, negotiation with landlords, landlord incentives, prevention funding to help with rent arrears and floating support to name just a few.

However, recent trends in the housing market, coupled with welfare reform, make it increasingly difficult for low income households to access private rented housing. The Council needs to develop new ways of working focused on preventing homelessness. This includes enabling more people to stay in their homes or find sustainable alternatives, which reduce repeat intervention from various public services.

People approach the Council for housing advice and information for a variety of reasons. Those reasons are not necessarily caused by their housing situation, but may be rooted in their budgeting difficulties, unemployment, ill health, substance misuse, relationship breakdown or other underlying reason. Whatever the reason, it often isn't being addressed by the Council or other public services. This Strategy is about how the Council and its partners can

start to address those underlying issues and prevent or relieve homelessness in a more effective way.

From April 2018, the Council's new approach has placed customers at the centre of all it does. The focus is on supporting customers not just to resolve their housing issues, but also encouraging them to improve their wellbeing.

Every person who is homeless or threatened with homelessness receives a written Personal Housing Plan (PHP) following a thorough assessment of their housing situation and support needs. The PHP sets out in detail the steps and actions required to be taken by both the customer and the Council in order to find a solution. The Housing Options team also works with partner agencies who have a "Duty to Refer" to help achieve the best possible outcome for customers at the earliest possible opportunity.

The Council has continued to prioritise its frontline services, has continued to invest in its Housing Services and is committed to improving the way it engages and supports people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless or rough sleeping.

There are challenges facing the Council and its partners, so it is crucial that all stakeholders continue to work together, exploring new opportunities and finding new ways of working.

3.0 Priority 1 - To prevent homelessness and offer early help

Preventing the distress and disruption caused by homelessness is a key priority for the Council. Wherever possible, the Council will seek to prevent homelessness from occurring and assist people in sustaining their homes.

Successful homelessness prevention has been the main aim of Woking's Housing Options approach for many years and it will need to remain so with the added duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The Strategy focuses on maintaining and building on previous successes in this area. This includes developing a partnership approach to tackling homelessness and continuing to use budgets flexibly on a "spend to save" basis to prevent homelessness where it is in the Council's and the applicant's interest to do so.

Between 2020 and 2024, the Council will:

- Continue to prevent homelessness using a range of tools available
- Develop a Pre-Tenancy Training Scheme
- Implement the OPENHousing IT system and support customers to self-serve
- Continue to offer an Outreach Advice Service at key local venues
- Continue to work closely with New Vision Homes to increase the focus on tenancy sustainment
- Continue to develop Personal Housing Plans (PHPs) to become more holistic and with regular reviews/updates.
- Ensure agencies are aware of, and participate fully, with the Duty to Refer
- Continue to train Housing Options staff on the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 duties

4.0 Priority 2 - To provide a range of accommodation options

Woking is one of the most sought-after and expensive places to live in the UK. This means that house prices, housing costs and private rent levels are often beyond the reach of many people, particularly those reliant on welfare benefits.

The Council has had a strong delivery record for new affordable homes, including the PFI project at Kingsmoor Park. However, planning applications and permissions for new affordable homes have tailed off over the last two years, which is negatively impacting completion numbers. The Council will continue to actively identify and pursue development sites for affordable housing, so that it returns to delivering its target of 102 affordable homes per annum. The Sheerwater regeneration project has now commenced and the additional affordable homes on this scheme will help to meet demand.

Woking also has an excellent track record in pioneering new initiatives to maximise access to private rented accommodation on behalf of its customers. The Council will continue to provide accommodation through its Let's Rent Schemes and work with its partners to maximise the availability of existing social and supported housing.

It is important that the Council has access to good quality temporary accommodation (ideally within the Borough) to assist homeless households in an emergency. The Council is currently in the process of refurbishing its current temporary accommodation portfolio and has recently purchased a town centre property, which will be converted into purpose-built temporary accommodation units.

Between 2020 and 2024, the Council will:

- Develop new affordable housing, including delivering the Sheerwater Regeneration Project
- Continue to increase supply of private rented accommodation available for households facing homelessness
- Develop a new Temporary Accommodation scheme
- Reduce the number of households placed in B&B, particularly outside the Borough.
- Carry out a strategic review of the Council's Temporary Accommodation portfolio
- Develop and implement an Exit Strategy for households living in temporary accommodation within the Sheerwater regeneration area

5.0 Priority 3 - To support vulnerable residents through partnership working

One of the key ways to prevent homelessness is to ensure that households receive the necessary support to enable them to maintain their tenancy. This can range from help with filling in forms to claim benefits to negotiation and advocacy with landlords and social care/health professionals.

Assisting customers retain existing accommodation avoids additional expense for households and the Council in finding and securing alternative accommodation and it also prevents disruption to social, education and employment networks. Where retaining existing accommodation is not possible, it is crucial that any alternative accommodation starts on the right footing, particularly as the loss of private rented accommodation is the main cause of homelessness locally and nationally. Good housing support is key to this particularly given the complexities and vulnerabilities of many homeless households.

As the financial landscape becomes increasingly challenging for both statutory and voluntary services, it is even more important to look at how the Council can work together with its partners. Partnerships with local lettings agents, private landlords and Thamesway Housing have all been key to providing access to affordable private rented sector properties.

The Council continues to fund Citizens Advice Woking (CAW) in its work providing independent advocacy and advice on a full range of issues facing Woking's residents such as welfare benefits, debt, housing, relationship breakdown, employment issues and so on.

The Council will also be building on its relationships with Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Education and Health & Wellbeing services.

Between 2020 and 2024, the Council will:

- Continue to develop the Housing Options Floating Support Service
- Tackle hoarding and provide intensive support for hoarders
- Maintain Housing representation and participation at multi-agency meetings
- Continue to work closely with Your Sanctuary to support to people suffering domestic abuse
- Arrange and co-ordinate an annual Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy meeting
- Continue to work closely with the Women's Support Centre

- Continue to build working relationships with JobCentre+ and develop opportunities for customers to access employment and develop life skills
- Work with Registered Providers to address factors such as arrears, anti-social behaviour and other issues which may have a negative impact on a tenant sustaining their tenancy
- Maintain protocols and housing pathways with partners for vulnerable groups (for example, care leavers)
- Develop good working relationships with local Mental Health services
- Promote local charities who can help homeless households including the local Food Banks

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6.0 Priority 4 - To reduce rough sleeping

The Council is committed to reducing and ending rough sleeping in Woking by 2027 in line with the Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy. It is understood that rough sleeping is the most extreme form of homelessness and many rough sleepers have complex needs, including mental health and substance misuse support needs. This means there is an ongoing need to support rough sleepers, not only to leave the streets but to prevent them coming onto the streets in the first place.

The Council needs to make sure that there is support in place to help people move into appropriate, suitable accommodation and to set up their homes to give people the best possible chance of maintaining a tenancy and helping with their recovery from rough sleeping. This may include signposting to additional support needs around emotional or traumatic issues. This support will also focus on the welfare system, which for some people with highly complex needs, is very difficult to navigate. It is also important for the Council to continue to work with its partner, the Women's Support Centre, who support women who are in, or at risk of moving into the criminal justice system and also at greater risk of rough sleeping.

It is important that the Council understands who is rough sleeping and the annual Rough Sleeping Estimate helps to identify and monitor individuals and their specific support needs. The Council will look to develop improved ways of recording and assessing rough sleeping with its partner, the York Road Project. The Council would also like to understand the day-to-day experiences of people who are rough sleeping and the impact on their lives and what would help them to move off the streets.

There is a clear link between homelessness and health and wellbeing. In Surrey, there is a Housing representative on the Health and Wellbeing Board and in the spirit of joint working a bid has been placed with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for a specialist in psychological support, working with those who have experienced complex trauma, and increasing staff resilience and skills.

The Safeguarding Adult Boards are also attended by Housing professionals. The Council aims to ensure that Safeguarding Adult Reviews are requested when a person who sleeps rough dies or is seriously harmed as a result of abuse or neglect, whether known or suspected, and there is concern that partner agencies could have worked more effectively to protect the adult. Lessons learned from the reviews will help to improve local systems and services.

Between 2020 and 2024, the Council will:

- Provide new premises for the York Road Project
- Provide suitable Local Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) accommodation.

- Participate in Woking's Rough Sleeping Estimate Count
- Continue to joint fund with Waverley Borough Council the outreach support post managed by the York Road Project (formerly known as SHAWS) and seek additional resources to expand the outreach offer available.
- Work with identified landlords in the private rented sector to provide accommodation for people who sleep rough or with a history of rough sleeping
- Investigate possibility of enabling "No Second Night Out" in Woking
- Explore alternative approaches and funding streams to further support rough sleepers, including securing long-term, stable accommodation and sustaining tenancies.

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7.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

Woking Borough Council and its statutory and voluntary sector partners have a good record in preventing homelessness and reducing rough sleeping across the Borough. The Action Plan in Appendix 1 aims to build and improve on this success by continuing to focus on homelessness prevention, housing options and a partnership approach and prioritising resources on a variety of measures to ensure this good work is continued.

The Council will establish a Woking Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Group to lead on monitoring delivery of the Strategy. This Group will meet at least once per year to review progress against the Strategy Action Plan and to respond to changes that emerge over the strategy period. Updates will also be provided to the Council's Housing Task Group.

The Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan is intended to be a live document, which will be subject to continuous review and updating to ensure it remains effective and current. Updates will be published on the Council's website.

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Appendix 1 – Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan

| No. | Action | Outcome | Lead Officers | Partner Agencies | Progress |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------|----------|
| PRIORITY 1 - TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS AND OFFER EARLY HELP | | | | | |
| 1.1 | Maintain good quality Housing Options advice and casework | Staff to have a good working knowledge of new legislation and discharge statutory duties appropriately, and residents feel supported when they face a housing crisis. | Housing Needs Manager | N/A | |
| 1.2 | Continue to prevent homelessness using a range of tools available (e.g. Spend to Save / Let's Rent / Sanctuary Scheme / Home Visits / Mediation / Negotiation with landlords, etc.) | To prevent as many households as possible from becoming homeless and to help them remain in their own homes | Housing Needs Manager | N/A | |
| 1.3 | Develop a Pre-Tenancy Training Scheme for households facing homelessness | To enable prospective/new tenants to sustain tenancies and be good tenants, with an emphasis on educating them on tenants' rights and responsibilities, budgeting and benefit changes. | Housing Strategy and Enabling Team Leader | N/A | |

| No. | Action | Outcome | Lead Officers | Partner Agencies | Progress |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 1.4 | Continue to monitor the impact of Welfare Reform (e.g. Benefit Cap/Universal Credit/LHA) | To keep up-to-date with any changes, so that the Council can assist customers appropriately | Housing Needs Manager | DWP | |
| 1.5 | Continue to target resources to where they can be most effective (e.g. DHP / floating support / employment advice) | To have as many options as possible available to help prevent homelessness | Housing Needs Manager | DWP | |
| 1.6 | Implement OPENHousing IT system and support customers to self-serve | To ensure data can be up-to-date and as comprehensive as possible, including capturing the necessary details to populate the new HCLIC Government returns; To enable customers to self-serve, including tracking their homelessness case. | Housing Needs Manager and Allocations Team Leader | Capita | |
| 1.7 | Encourage local housing associations to tell us at an early stage where tenants are at risk of losing their tenancy | To work with Registered Providers at an early stage to prevent eviction/homelessness of tenants with rent arrears. | Senior Housing Options Officer | Registered Providers | |

| No. | Action | Outcome | Lead Officers | Partner Agencies | Progress |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1.8 | Continue to offer Outreach Advice Service at key local venues (i.e. B&B / Refuge / York Road Project) | To ensure that Council services are available to the more vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups in the community | Senior Housing Options Officer | Your Sanctuary, York Road Project, Thamesway Guest Houses Ltd | |
| 1.9 | Continue to joint-fund CAW Court Desk | To ensure that households with rent / mortgage arrears are provided with the Court Desk service at Guildford Court in order to help prevent homelessness | Housing Needs Manager | Citizens Advice Woking (CAW) | |
| 1.10 | Ensure Woking Borough Council website is kept up-to-date with good quality housing advice | To ensure free advice is available to all groups of homeless households 24/7 | Housing Needs Manager | N/A | |
| 1.11 | Continue to work closely with New Vision Homes to increase the focus on tenancy sustainment | To ensure Woking Borough Council tenants are supported to sustain their tenancy wherever possible, with eviction being the last resort. | Corporate Client Manager (Housing) | New Vision Homes | |

| No. | Action | Outcome | Lead Officers | Partner Agencies | Progress |
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| 1.12 | Continue to develop Personal Housing Plans (PHPs) to become more holistic and with regular reviews/updates. | To ensure that homeless households receive as much advice and support as possible (including referrals to local partner organisations where appropriate) to enable them to live in a healthy environment, where they can prosper, have a sense of wellbeing and live meaningful lives. | Senior Housing Options Officer | Local voluntary sector agencies, including CAW, Your Sanctuary, Mind, etc. | |
| 1.13 | Ensure agencies are aware of, and participate fully, with the Duty to Refer | Agencies are able to correctly identify and refer clients to the Council and in doing so are able to set customer expectations at a realistic and consistent level | Housing Needs Manager | All agencies subject to the Duty to Refer | |
| 1.14 | Continue to train Housing Options staff on the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 duties and update legislative training as required, in particular on new case law | Staff have a good working knowledge of new legislation and discharge statutory duties appropriately. Homeless households are appropriately supported. | Senior Housing Options Officer | N/A | |
| PRIORITY 2 - TO PROVIDE A RANGE OF ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS | | | | | |
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| No. | Action | Outcome | Lead Officers | Partner Agencies | Progress |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 2.1 | Develop new affordable housing, including delivering the Sheerwater Regeneration Project | To provide affordable, additional, decent and settled homes in Woking Borough. | Housing Strategy and Enabling Team Leader | Thamesway Housing Registered Providers | |
| 2.2 | Continue to increase supply of private rented accommodation available for households facing homelessness, particularly via the Council's Let's Rent Scheme | To provide more settled homes in Woking's private rented sector, including outside the Borough (where appropriate). | Housing Strategy and Enabling Team Leader | Independent Private landlords Thamesway Housing Lettings Agents | |
| 2.3 | Continue to work with Ethical Lettings, in particular on the Sharers' Project | To provide shared accommodation with low level support for single people on limited incomes/benefits | Housing Needs Manager | Ethical Lettings Waverley Borough Council | |
| 2.4 | Improve the standards across the Council's current Temporary Accommodation portfolio | To undertake works to the communal facilities within the Council's current temporary accommodation stock, so that homeless households are provided with better quality emergency accommodation. | Housing Needs Manager Corporate Client Manager (Housing) | New Vision Homes | |

| No. | Action | Outcome | Lead Officers | Partner Agencies | Progress |
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| 2.5 | Develop a new Temporary Accommodation scheme within the town centre | To convert Waterman House into a new, self-contained temporary accommodation scheme | Director of Housing | Thamesway Developments | |
| 2.6 | Encourage and incentivise tenants who are under-occupying Council and housing association homes to downsize | To ensure the optimum use of the Council's and other providers' accommodation, to free-up family homes and to ensure people are housed in the most appropriate homes | Housing Allocations Team Leader | Registered Providers | |
| 2.7 | Reduce the number of households placed in B&B, particularly outside the Borough. | To reduce the impact B&B has on families and children; to improve wellbeing and educational prospects; to reduce B&B costs. | Housing Needs Manager | N/A | |
| 2.8 | Carry out a strategic review of the Council's Temporary Accommodation portfolio | To ensure WBC has the most appropriate temporary accommodation and is making the best use of its temporary accommodation stock; to ensure that homeless households are placed in decent, suitable temporary accommodation with appropriate support and management | Director of Housing Housing Needs Manager | New Vision Homes | |

| No. | Action | Outcome | Lead Officers | Partner Agencies | Progress |
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| 2.9 | Investigate the need for shared accommodation with support for single people | To improve the accommodation offer available for single people with complex needs to prevent multiple evictions | Housing Needs Manager | TBC | |
| 2.10 | Investigate the possibility of a Homeshare Scheme in Woking | To provide an additional source of accommodation for single people and to reduce social isolation for residents living in larger homes. | Director of Housing | Homeshare UK | |
| 2.11 | Develop and implement an Exit Strategy for households living in temporary accommodation within the Sheerwater regeneration area | To find alternative, settled accommodation for households in temporary accommodation within the Sheerwater regeneration area to enable the continued redevelopment | Housing Needs Manager | Thameswey Housing | |
| 2.12 | Continue to encourage home owners to cooperate with the Empty Homes Scheme | To bring empty homes back into use | Housing Strategy and Enabling Team Leader | N/A | |

| No. | Action | Outcome | Lead Officers | Partner Agencies | Progress |
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| 2.13 | Continue to work with the Housing Standards Team to improve living conditions in the private sector, including ensuring that Housing Options are involved early where action may result in households becoming homeless. | To ensure properties in the Borough meet required standards for Woking residents. | Housing Standards Team Leader | Private landlords | |
| PRIORITY 3 - SUPPORT VULNERABLE RESIDENTS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP WORKING | | | | | |
| 3.1 | Continue to develop the Housing Options Floating Support Service | To provide intensive, targeted support to vulnerable people in order to remain at home, sustain their tenancies, prevent their homelessness; to support people who have become homeless to resettle into a new home (including B&B/TA) | Housing Needs Manager | N/A | |
| 3.2 | Tackle hoarding and provide intensive support for hoarders | Specialist Task Force set up to work with Hoarders to prevent eviction/Anti-Social Behaviour complaints and homelessness | Housing Needs Manager | Hoarding Task Force | |

| No. | Action | Outcome | Lead Officers | Partner Agencies | Progress |
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| 3.3 | Promote use of Boom Credit Union to homeless households | To enable households on low incomes to manage their finances better. | Senior Housing Options Officer | Boom Credit Union | |
| 3.4 | To work closely with other WBC support teams, including the Family Support Team, Independent Living, New Vision Homes Tenancy Support and the Sheerwater Regeneration Team | To ensure that all vulnerable residents are provided with the most appropriate support | Housing Needs Manager | New Vision Homes | |
| 3.5 | Maintain Housing representation and participation at multi-agency meetings (e.g. Surrey Housing Needs Managers' Meetings/MAPPA/MARAC/CHaRMM/Social Services Case Conferences/Care Leavers' Meetings /Domestic Abuse Forum) | To meet the needs of customers with higher support needs | Housing Needs Manager Allocations Team Leader Senior Housing Options Officer | Police, Probation, Children's Services, Looked After Children's Team, Care Leavers' Team, Adult Social Care, Mental Health Services, Your Sanctuary | |

| No. | Action | Outcome | Lead Officers | Partner Agencies | Progress |
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| 3.6 | Continue to work closely with the Family Support Team and C-SPA | To ensure that families with support needs are referred to the C-SPA for appropriate services | Housing Needs Manager Allocations Team Leader Senior Housing Options Officer | SCC Children's Services | |
| 3.7 | Continue to work closely with Your Sanctuary to support to people suffering domestic abuse | To provide advice and assistance to women (and men) who are at risk of, or have suffered, Domestic Abuse | Housing Needs Manager | Your Sanctuary | |
| 3.8 | Arrange and co-ordinate an annual Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Meeting | To monitor the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and ensure it is meeting the needs of homeless households. | Housing Needs Manager | All partners | |
| 3.9 | Procure Tablets/I-Pads to enable outreach work and home visits | To enable staff to work more effectively with customers | Housing Needs Manager | N/A | |
| 3.10 | Continue to work closely with the Women's Support Centre | To provide advice and assistance to women who are within, or at risk of entering, the Criminal Justice System | Senior Housing Options Officer Allocations Team Leader | Women's Support Centre | |

| No. | Action | Outcome | Lead Officers | Partner Agencies | Progress |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| 3.11 | Continue to build working relationships with JobCentre+ and develop opportunities for customers to access employment and develop life skills | To enable customers to sustain tenancies/be good tenants/ be economically active/ improve wellbeing and life skills | Housing Strategy and Enabling Team Leader | JobCentre+ | |
| 3.12 | Work with Registered Providers to address factors such as arrears, anti-social behaviour and other issues which may have a negative impact on a tenant sustaining their tenancy | To prevent homelessness by early intervention | Senior Housing Options Officer | Registered Providers | |
| 3.13 | Maintain protocols and housing pathways with partners for vulnerable groups (for example, care leavers) | To provide an effective pathway /process for vulnerable people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness | Housing Needs Manager | All relevant partners | |
| 3.14 | Develop good working relationships with local Mental Health services | To have a strong working relationship and excellent communication with local mental health services in order to provide good advice and assistance to customers; to adhere to the Mental Health Protocol | Housing Needs Manager | Local Mental Health Services | |

| No. | Action | Outcome | Lead Officers | Partner Agencies | Progress |
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| 3.15 | Promote local charities who can help homeless households including the local Food Banks | To provide food, basic items of furniture/flooring and any items which may benefit people's wellbeing | Senior Housing Options Officer | Local food banks | |
| 3.16 | Maximise funding for homeless households by bidding for government grants | To maximise resources to prevent and address homelessness | Housing Needs Manager | Dependent on funding criteria | |
| PRIORITY 4 – TO REDUCE ROUGH SLEEPING | | | | | |
| 4.1 | Provide new premises for the York Road Project at 8 Church Street West. | New purpose-built hostel accommodation with intensive support for rough sleepers. Local Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) accommodation provision. | Housing Needs Manager | York Road Project | |
| 4.2 | Provide suitable Local Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) accommodation. | Provide suitable accommodation in extreme weather conditions for rough sleepers | Housing Needs Manager | York Road Project B&B providers | |
| 4.3 | Participate in Woking's Rough Sleeping Estimate Count | To monitor the number of rough sleepers in Woking in order to understand the service need | Senior Housing Options Officer | Police York Road Project | |

| No. | Action | Outcome | Lead Officers | Partner Agencies | Progress |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 4.4 | Continue to joint fund with Waverley Borough Council the outreach support post managed by the York Road Project (formerly known as SHAWS) and seek additional resources to expand the outreach offer available. | To offer intensive, outreach support to rough sleepers with complex needs who are hard-to-reach | Housing Needs Manager | Waverley Borough Council York Road Project | |
| 4.5 | To work with identified landlords in the private rented sector to provide accommodation for people who sleep rough or with a history of rough sleeping | To provide suitable accommodation in the private rented sector for rough sleepers (where appropriate) | Housing Strategy and Enabling Team Leader | Landlords in the private rented sector York Road Project | |
| 4.6 | Investigate possibility of enabling “No Second Night Out” in Woking | To provide a rapid response to new rough sleepers and provide an offer that means they do not have to sleep out for a second night. | Housing Needs Manager | York Road Project | |
| 4.7 | To investigate alternative approaches and funding streams to further support rough sleepers, including securing long-term, stable accommodation and sustaining tenancies. | To support rough sleepers find and sustain permanent homes. | Housing Needs Manager | York Road Project | |