

Sevenoaks DC Action Plan

Enhanced housing service to reduce worklessness and welfare dependency whilst improving the quality of life by empowerment.

MAIN AIM: BY A ONE STOP APPROACH - TO REDUCE WORKLESSNESS AND DEPENDENCY ON WELFARE BENEFITS, AND TO EMPOWER RESIDENTS TO PLAN FOR THEIR OWN HOUSING AND CAREERS.

KICKSTART INITIATIVE: TO ENHANCE THE SUCCESSFUL 3 SURGERIES CURRENTLY ADMINISTERED BY HOUSING BENEFIT OFFICERS. TO EXTEND THIS ONE STOP APPROACH TO THE MAIN COUNCIL OFFICES AND TO RESIDENTS OF THE COUNCIL OWNED GYPSY/TRAVELLER SITE. TO WORK WITH WEST KENT HA TENANTS TO IDENTIFY TRAINING NEEDS AND IMPROVE SKILLS.

WHAT WE WILL DO	WHEN BY	WHO WILL DELIVER	RESOURCES NEEDED	MEASURE/ BASELINE	TARGET/OUTCOME	WHAT WOULD SUCCESS LOOK LIKE
1. Employ 1 x FTE officer to lead on initiative and work closely with Housing Benefits officers at the local surgeries, and provide an outreach service to WKHA tenants and residents of Council owned Gypsy/Traveller site. (Appendices (1) and (4))	April 2009	Housing Services (Jane Ellis) Housing Benefits (Meryl Young) Job Centre Plus (Jane Faulkner) WKHA (Deborah White) FTE officer will lead on the above, but be managed by the Social Housing Manager at SDC	1 x FTE officer CLG funding SDC funding Training provided by Job Centre Plus and WKHA and SDC			To provide a one-stop approach providing advice on benefits, housing, careers and skills
2. Provide training for officer in all areas of homelessness and housing advice, employment and training opportunities and benefits etc.	April 2009	Housing Services (Jane Ellis) Housing Benefits (Meryl Young) Council Tax (Stan Goldsack) Job Centre Plus	Officer time from various partner organisations	EH3 EH2	- To reduce the number of benefit claimants moving into employment - To reduce the number of benefit claimants moving into training or education	To have an officer who is trained in housing, welfare benefits, employment, and is aware of appropriate training opportunities to improve skills. With

		(Jane Faulkner) WKHA (Deborah White)		EH8	- To increase the number of benefit claimants moving into employment	awareness of other agencies such as Business Link.
3. To enhance existing surgeries in 3 areas of the District and at the Council offices, providing a triage service covering the full range of advice	From May 2009	Dedicated officer Housing Services (Jane Ellis) Housing Benefits (Meryl Young) Council Tax (Stan Goldsack) Job Centre Plus (Jane Faulkner) WKHA (Deborah White)	Resources already in place for surgeries - making use of existing surgeries will reduce costs significantly	EH9 EH4 NI117 NI 152 EH5 NI117 NI 152	- To reduce 5% pa homeless acceptances - To increase the number of long term unemployed moving into training or education - To increase the number of long term unemployed moving into employment	To extend advice provided to include housing, careers and training. To empower residents to manage and plan their own housing and careers.
4. Once a month, the officer with the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer to attend the Council's owned Gypsy/Traveller site in Edenbridge.	From June 2009	Officer GTLO (James Nicholls)	£15,000 pa Supporting People funding for 09/10 secured to provide floating support services to Gypsies and Travellers. SDC funding CLG funding	EH12 EH13 EH15 NI117 NI 152 EH14 NI117 NI 152	- To increase advice - To decrease by 5% non payment of rent - To increase the number of residents referred to Job Centre Plus - To increase the number of residents referred for training or education	To sustain the local community. To support and work closely with the Council's highest BME group resident in the Council owned site in Edenbridge. As a result empower residents to work and train and be part of the local community.
5. To advertise and promote the Council's new service widely.	April 2009	Housing Services (Jane Ellis) Communications Officer (Daniel Whitmarsh) RSLs	CLG funding SDC funding Officer time	EH1	- To increase the number of people approaching the Council for advice by 5% pa	A well publicised scheme that is promoted, not only by the Council, but by organisations across the District and this will

		CABs Job Centre Plus (Jane Faulkner) Parish and town councils Local press In Shape Website				maximise the uptake of the services provided.
6. To build accessibility into the surgeries and ensure they are accessed by vulnerable and BME groups	2009/10	Housing Services (Jane Ellis) Officer Contact Centre Manager (Brian Hatt) SDC equalities officer (Sarah Andrews)	CLG funding SDC funding	EH10	- To increase the number of vulnerable and BME clients accessing services	To provide an outreach service through the surgeries which embraces the equality agenda and is accessible to all.
7. To develop a new housing options diagnostic tool in the Council's new website, due to go live in 2009/10.	April 2010	Housing Services (Jane Ellis) Housing Initiatives Officer (Liz Crockford) Officer	Council staff CLG funding SDC funding	EH1	- To increase housing advice by 5% pa	An easy to use system for residents to obtain appropriate information through the Council's website.
8. Strengthen partnerships with statutory and voluntary partners to build an effective service.	2009/10 Ongoing	Officer Housing Services (Jane Ellis) CABs Shelter KCC Supporting People (Claire Martin)	Officer time		- To develop a robust and effective partnership with all appropriate agencies to identify the most appropriate agency to provide support and funding.	To work in partnership to deliver a seamless service which spans housing, benefits, careers and training opportunities but also embraces other areas such as debt counselling and floating support.
9. Review this initiative with a view to building the scheme further.	Every 6 months	Housing Services (Jane Ellis) Housing Benefits	Officer time		- To identify any areas that require refining and include new ideas. To review and formulate an effective	To have in place an exit strategy identifying the way forward when the

		Manager (Meryl Young) Job Centre Plus (Jane Faulkner) WKHA (Deborah White)			exit strategy when the initiative ends.	CLG funding ceases.
10. The officer to work closely with WKHA to deliver an outreach service to tenants to identify training needs to improve skills with signposting.	When required	Officer WKHA (Deborah White)	SDC funding CLG funding Officer time	EH6 NI117 NI 152 EH7 NI117 NI 152	- To increase the number of tenants moving into training or education by 125 pa - To increase the number of tenants moving into employment by 12 pa	To empower residents to improve skills and reduce worklessness.
11. To train housing officers in the Social Housing Team to provide a one stop shop approach (as above) to those residents who require housing advice (Appendix 5)	May 2009	Housing Services Manager (Jane Ellis) Social Housing Team	Officer time	NI156 EH1	- To achieve reduction of temporary accommodation of 50% by 2010 - To increase housing advice by 5% pa	To empower residents to plan their own housing, careers and training, and reduce worklessness.