

Cambridge Sub-region Enhanced Housing Options Kick Start Plan

Action A

Action – What, when, who and outcome factors.	Outputs/Milestones		Cost to Programme (£)	Match Funding (£)
	2009.10	2010.11		
A.1 Service Development Capacity				
<p>A key objective of the Plan is to secure capacity to allow us to improve our systems and develop new services in respect of Enhanced Housing Options. We will do this by freeing up the capacity of the Project Manager of the Sub-Region's choice-based lettings system (Home-Link). The post is joint-funded by the seven local authorities in the Cambridge sub-region. Currently one day a week of the Project Manager's role involves the development of Home-Link. We will use part of the Kick Start Funding to employ a Systems Administrator which will free up the Home-Link Project Manager to work on service development for three days a week.</p> <p>South Cambridgeshire District Council is the host employer and the Home-Link Project Manager is managed by the District's Housing Advice and Options Manager. The service development function will be accountable to the Home-Link Operations Group who in turn report to the Home-Link Board a sub-group of the Cambridge Sub-Regional Housing Board. The new post would also have a critical link to the Sub-Regional Homelessness Group, also an existing task group of the Cambridge Sub-Regional Housing Board.</p> <p>In order to free-up the Home-Link Project Manager's time a Systems Administrator will be recruited. A part-time administrator currently supports the Project Manager. This post is currently filled on a temporary basis to the end of March 09. The opportunity will be taken to extend</p>	<p>Advertise Systems Administrator post – March 2009</p> <p>Recruit June 2009</p>		<p>Recruitment 4000</p> <p>Remuneration 42,000</p>	<p>Remuneration 72,000</p>

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<p>the Job Description and relieve the Project Manager of some of the more routine administrative tasks required for the operation of Home-Link.</p> <p>Outcomes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Kick Start Action Plan will be delivered. - There will be increasing coherence across the Sub-Region between the housing options that are available for people whether homeless; older people looking to move to more manageable housing; or those seeking a home of their own for the first time. 				
<p>A.2 General Home-Link Web-site Development</p>				
<p>A key aspect of our Action Plan is the establishment of the Home-Link web-site as a portal for Enhanced Housing Options. Specific improvements to the web-site are detailed under the Outcome Themes 1 to 4 below.</p> <p>Outcome :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Home-Link will be recognised as the portal for information and advice on Enhanced Housing Options – It is estimated that 20,000 web-site hits are made a month on Home-Link. <i>Our target is to increase the number of hits by 10% a year and to improve our knowledge on which parts of the web-site people are using most.</i> - Home-Link will be increasingly used by staff, partner agencies and stakeholders alike – <i>we will estimate a baseline for staff hits on the web-site and seek to increase hits by 10% a year.</i> - Customers will experience fair, equal and consistent support in respect of their housing issues, with clear and interactive links to other means of support that will help them sustain their housing eg employment or health advice. In May 	<p>These web-site enhancements will be ongoing through the two year period</p>	<p>By the end of March 2011 there will be a clear continuation plan in respect of Enhanced Housing Options using Home-Link at the centre of the process with further funding any requirements registered with the Local Area Agreement process</p>	<p>Our contractor has provided an indicative cost for the development of the Home-Link web-site and a contingency is included to cover these improvements.</p> <p>14,000</p>	

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<p>2008 asked users how easy they found the web-site to use. The responses were;</p> <p>% accessing Home-link through webs-site – 70%</p> <p>% finding easy to use – 90%</p> <p>% finding Home-Link easy to understand – 90%</p> <p>We will repeat and extend these customer satisfaction surveys with a view to increasing satisfaction by 1% per annum and by seeking views on at least 5 subject matters a year.</p>				
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Outcome Theme 1 – Meeting Housing Need with a Wider Range of Solutions

Action	Outputs/Milestones		Cost to Programme (£)	Match Funding (£)
	2009.10	2010.11		
1.1 Home-Link Mutual Exchange Module				
<p>Sub-regional partners have agreed to joint fund the implementation of the module to enhance a sub-regional approach and raise the profile of exchanges as an effective housing option.</p> <p>Outcomes : <i>A 10% per annum increase in the number of mutual exchanges facilitated across the Sub-Region.</i></p>	Launch and implement Mutual Exchange Module by <i>March 2009</i>	Review effectiveness of module by end <i>March 2010</i>		15,000
1.2 Home-Link Homeless Module				
Sub-regional partners have agreed to joint fund the implementation of this module to effectively link homeless applicants into choice-based lettings and enable the parallel management of homeless applications.	Launch and implement Homeless Module by <i>April 2009</i>	Review effectiveness of module by end <i>March 2010</i>		25,000

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<p>Outcomes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We will begin to collect of consistent and improved performance information across the sub-region in respect of Homeless applicants by June 2009. - This will enable us to produce baseline regular reporting and monitoring of performance information by December 2009 to inform service development to be prioritised by the Sub-Regional Homeless Task Group in their Action Plan for 2010/11. 				
<p>1.3 Aid the improvement of Homeless Prevention</p>				
<p>Use Home-Link as the source of Sub-Regionally developed guidance and protocols.</p> <p>Outcomes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A professionals guide for partners and stakeholders is being produced to reinforce the multi agency approach to homelessness prevention and raise awareness about support services available and the referral routes to these services. All guides to be produced by end Oct 09. - Cambridgeshire-wide protocol is being introduced between the Housing Authorities and the Office of Children and Young People to reinforce joint working on homelessness amongst young people and children. Protocol to be in place by April 09 - A Sub Regional vulnerable persons protocol is being produced between the housing authorities and the RSLs. Protocol to be in place by Jan 2010. 	<p>All documents in place by end March 2010</p>	<p>All accessible through Home-Link web-site by end June 2010</p>	<p>Costs included in A2 above</p>	

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1.5 Developing Home-Link IT link connection with Key Homes East				
<p>An IT link is in place from the Home-Link website to the Key Homes East intermediate housing website. It is proposed to work to improve the link to promote intermediate housing opportunities and disseminate publicity material.</p> <p>Outcomes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customers are easily able to access a range of information on intermediate tenure options through Home-Link with easy access to the Key Homes East web-site. <i>We will begin measuring the number of Home-Link web-site hits that originate via Key Homes and visa-versa.</i> 	<p>Effect improvements to both web-sites by <i>end March 2010</i></p>		<p>Costs included in A2 above</p>	
1.6 A Sub-regional approach to Supported Lodgings Schemes				
<p>Supported Lodgings schemes are beginning to be developed across the Sub-Region. For example, St Edmundsbury Borough Council are working with Suffolk County Council and a local RSL partner. The scheme enables young people to receive support from a host family and support worker in a location where they can maintain their network of support ie in relation to education and employment. The aim here is to roll out a consistent approach to Supported Lodging Schemes across the sub-region including consideration of other groups eg Returning from Forces; Asylum Seekers; Migrant Workers. The Home-Link Project Manager will facilitate this process by co-ordinating a Sub-Regional brief and best practice using Home-Link as the hub to access information and advice on how to access schemes and how they operate.</p>	<p>Assess the extent of development of Supported Lodging initiatives and co-ordinate a sub-regional brief and best practice for the establishment of schemes by <i>end March 2010</i></p>	<p>Audit need for extension of concept to other groups and co-ordinate actions between partners by <i>end March 2011</i></p>	<p>Costs included in A1 and A2 above</p>	

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Outcomes : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information on all Supported Lodgings Schemes in the Sub-Region is accessible via Home-Link by April 2010 - 12 potentially homeless or rough sleeping customers are assisted in securing accommodation in Supported Lodgings by April 2010 increasing to 25 by end March 2011. - 100% of those accessing Supported Lodgings are supported to move-on to suitable permanent accommodation 				
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Outcome Theme 2 – Using Stock More Effectively

Action	Outputs/Milestones		Cost to Programme (£)	Match Funding (£)
	2009.10	2010.11		
2.1 Advertising private sector properties via Home-Link				
<p>As part of a package of measures to foster best use of the private rented sector we will develop a module to allow private landlords to advertise direct through Home-Link. The aim will be to encourage private landlords & letting agents to advertise good quality homes, with rents within HB thresholds, to applicants on the housing register in need agreeing appropriate advertising fees to cover additional costs that may be incurred.</p> <p>Outcomes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greater Awareness of private sector as housing options - Improved access to available properties, thereby improving customer choice - Links to housing benefit and welfare benefit advice 	Develop specification and feasibility of module with software supplier.	Implement module by October 2009 . Review effectiveness of module by March 2010 .	£20,000	

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2.2 Homelessness Prevention ~ assistance for home owners				
<p>Agree good practice across the sub-region in relation to minimising mortgage repossessions by agreeing referral protocols with money advice agencies, developing Lay Advocacy schemes at county courts and discussing alternative to possession proceedings with mortgage lenders. Investigate the feasibility of a sub-regional telephone hot-line for private landlords.</p> <p>Outcomes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistent advice for home owners across the sub region - Improved access to advice and early intervention tools - Reduction in number of cases proceeding to repossession 	Progress against this action to be monitored by the Sub-regional Homelessness and Housing Options Group		See A1. No other resource implications anticipated.	Cost of telephone hot-line to be covered by partners.
2.3 Advertising adapted private homes through Home-Link				
<p>Linking with the County Council Disability Housing Strategy, local Home Improvement Agencies and sub-regional Disabled Facility Grant systems, we will develop a process to allow owner occupied and privately rented housing that has been specifically adapted for disabled people to be advertised through Home-Link. This will improve the efficient use of adapted housing and help create a level playing field across tenure in relation to access to appropriately adapted housing.</p> <p>Outcomes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Properties will begin to be advertised in line with Home-Link's current definitions of 'accessibility' by end March 2010. - At least 6 matches of households to adapted properties will be made during the first year. 	This will be developed in line with 2.1 above with an aim to have properties beginning to be advertised by end March 2010.		Any costs have been captured in 2.1 and A2 above.	

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Outcome Theme 3 – Tackling Worklessness

Action	Outputs/Milestones		Cost to Programme (£)	Match Funding (£)
	2009.10	2010.11		
3.1 Improve the link between housing advice and employment advice				
<p>Working with the Sub-Regional Homeless Group to establish formal working arrangements links with Job Centre Plus.</p> <p>Outcomes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear protocols for joint working in place by end March 2010 - Housing advice staff more aware of local employment initiatives with appropriate training in place by April 2010 - Customers provided with employment related options in their area through Fact Sheets produced in conjunction with Job Centre Plus by April 2010. 	<p>By March 2010 - Consult with customers; housing advice staff, JC+, Nextstep, LSC to build spec for information held on Home-Link and how registration process can deliver employment related advice too</p>			
3.2 Development of Home-Link to facilitate monitoring of employment advice				
<p>Use Home-Link to facilitate ease of access for housing customers to employment advice.</p> <p>Outcomes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact information for local Job Centre Plus accessible via Home-link website by April 2010 - Evaluation Report on impact of these measures produced by June 2010. 		Evaluate what difference this had made to customers and housing advice staff – not just through website hits but through consultation		

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3.3 Advertising employment related advice through Home-Link				
Outcomes : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fact Sheets available on-line through Home-Link <i>by April 2010</i> 			Costs included in A2 above	
3.4 Advertising jobs or employment initiatives through Home-Link				
Outcomes : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jobs to be advertised on Home-Link <i>by April 2010</i> 			Costs included in A2 above	

Outcome Theme 4 – Improving Customer Service

Action	Outputs/Milestones		Cost to Programme (£)	Match Funding (£)
	2009.10	2010.11		
4.1 Improved marketing of Home Improvement Agency services through Home-Link				
<p>In line with the County Supporting People review of Home Improvement Agencies take the opportunity to improve the marketing of services on a sub-regional basis.</p> <p>Outcomes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customers are able to access information on the core and ancillary services available from the different HIAs operations across the Sub-Region <i>by Dec 09</i> - Customers are able to access contact details for the HIAs and can make contact via Home-Link <i>by Dec 09</i> 	Begin advertising <i>by Dec 2009</i>		Costs included in A2 above	