



Homes for Cathy – Eastern Region Workshop 18 October 2019

Workshop Feedback

Statement 6 – to work in partnership to provide a range of affordable options which meet the needs of all homeless people in their local communities

What is happening in your area?

- Pathways
- Rough sleeper initiative BDC / SNDC
- Cambridge City HFI scheme – Chorus providing training flats to Cambridge Cyrenians
- British Heart Foundation – furniture project – Flagship Group
- Norwich Street Aid
- Ex-offender project – HMO for ex-offenders struggling to obtain accommodation
- Having health funding/contacts work with housing
- Stages of Housing First
- Your own Place – Norwich CC Flat – training testing sustainment
- Help Hubs – RP's, childcare Services, ASC, Police, YOT, Leeway, Carers, Social Prescribing
- NCAN – financial inclusion
- Solo Housing – rural homelessness feasibility study / south Norfolk stakeholder JT work , Broadland, Mid Suffolk
- Debt and Welfare rights workers DRO's = £300k debt write off this year
- Eastern Savings and Loans – Grants and Loans – PRS or RP deposit rent in advance
- Kings Lynn Council Commission HSS, Advice and Debt Service
- Sharing office space with partner agencies
- Rural training flat part of feasibility study – South Norfolk (Solo Housing)
- Reviewing temp accommodation service and is it fit for purpose
- Lodgings / space room matching service (Under occupiers homeowners) Suffolk/Norfolk - 110 lodging beds Solo Housing 200+ bed spaces
- Single Person HMO Housing Manager and low level support exemplar project East Suffolk
- GNHF – action focus

What has been working well in your organisation?

- HALO
- GNHS
- TA – supported by 3rd sector
- MEAN strategic board
- Pathways operational meeting
- Bridging between services – BDC & SNDC internal
- Landlords leading to 3rd sector
- Training flats with support provided
- Housing benefit manager – linking housing and benefits

What are the barriers to meeting this statement?

- Restructures – lack of info and duplication
- Lack of housing related support
- Planning committee
- GND user navigating services
- Competitive process of tendering
- Capacity of social services
- Lack of trust
- Knowing who does what now
- Lack of housing for multiple and complex needs
- Community understanding / landlord and benefits neighbours
- Perceptions of services internally and externally
- Risk adverse landlords
- Accessing services
- Gaps between LHA rates and PRS
- Uncertainty around UC for supported accommodation
- Lack of knowledge of housing first communities
- Homelessness is not just about housing
- Short term commissioning
- Protectionist approach
- Public perception and stereotyping
- Risk adverse landlords
- Less collaborative strategic work

What do we need to do collectively to work in partnership to be able to deliver?

- Mental health and social care public health drug and alcohol
- Sharing data
- Rural services
- Take actions away from this group
- Promotion of what/why are trying to do to key partners and benefits
- Joint strategic need assess / statutory
- Communication
- SS&SH keeping services engaged

- End of S21
- Reduce duplication
- Mapping of services
- Focus on rural homelessness
- Collective strategic approach
- CJJ
- Holistic approach
- Norwich social prescribing partnerships
- Get health on board
- Using resources more creativity – approach landlords land banks
- Lobbying government
- Recognise skills and resources of others
- Housing strategy to inform all departments within LA and others

Statement 2 – to operative flexible allocations and eligibility policies which allow individual applicants’ unique set of circumstances and housing history to be considered

What is happening in your area?

- Data sharing agreement in place
- LA pre-tenancy training/support
- Inconsistent refusal of applicants
- Freebridge – in-house support
- NISPS issued and resulting of in risk of homelessness
- Looking at whole picture
- Changing culture around evictions
- Commit to review debt and lettings policies in relation to homelessness
- Look at refusals – support rather than refuse
- Evictions as a last resort
- Taking on risk rather than refusal
- Sensitive lets on certain schemes

What has been working well in your organisation?

- Starter starter tenancy – 6 months temp accommodation
- Not refusing on affordability – can offer support / case by case
- Specific funded posts in NNDC – tenant sustainment officer
- DHP / loaning money
- Rough sleeping training – budgeting (NNDC)
- Early intervention with debt help
- Direct lets (Freebridge) following a refusal
- Freeze arrears up to 12 months (BHG)
- In-house tenancy support

What are the barriers to meeting this statement?

- People who cannot event access the housing register

- Mapping
- Politics
- Too many differences between local authority registers
- Tenant engagement
- Affordable housing is no longer affordable
- Support for homelessness
- Budgets i.e. to help with hoarding – skips
- LA register is too restrictive – people are unable to move on
- Temp accommodation doesn't always meet vulnerable needs
- Tenant behaviour i.e. hoarding
- Risk of removal of assured shorthold tenancies (S21)
- Impact on community if doesn't event
- Local authorities boundaries
- Not enough stock to allow people to move on

What do we need to do collectively to work in partnership to be able to delivery?

- Joint intensive housing management
- Collective thinking about how to reduce rent arrears evictions
- County wide data sharing
- More open registers
- Review local authority allocation policies
- Consistent approach
- Collective purchasing i.e. mediation house clearance
- Discussion between LA and HA and finding appropriate property
- Empower staff
- Look at refusals data
- More flexibility around debt policies

Statement 8 – to contribute to ending migrant homelessness in the areas Housing Associations operate

What is happening in your area?

- Asylum dispersal accommodation 146 bed spaces (Norwich)
- Street Aid
- Discussions with G45, Home Office at local authority level
- Properties at peppercorn rents – BHA Norwich
- Syrian migrant scheme – Norfolk (150 people)
- Pathways – Quakers – can apply for deposit and rent upfront

What has been working well in your organisation?

- Peppercorn rent for 2 flats provided by BHA
- Private sector leasing in Norwich (transfer tenancy when you can afford)
- Looking at 1 flat over winter as short term support

- Buy in from BHA board to meet commitments

What are the barriers to meeting this statement?

- MASLOW – hierarchy of needs food, water and then Shelter
- Understanding of immigration law and legislation
- Lack of diversity in some areas (Kings Lynn)
- Migrants having the correct documents (passport ID)
- Right to rent regulations
- Competing demand for property [DV] where does resource go?
- No infrastructure in more rural towns
- Lack of high quality homes available
- Some have drug and alcohol problems
- Vulnerable being exploited – County Lines modern day slavery
- EU nationals with settled status change of circumstances have to go through habitual residency test
- People from different nationalities sharing a room
- Changing political climate – BREXIT
- Sporadic working patterns of some migrants
- Lack of housing in high demand areas
- Housing need assessment doesn't include migrant homeless
- Lack of affordable housing

What do we need to do collectively to work in partnership to be able to delivery?

- Look at the alternative options of housing RP's can provide
- BREXIT- profile customers may lose right to work
- Settled or pre settled status
- Work with large employers in region
- Accept no rent 3-6 months while support in place
- Be more creative – NCC (land owners, public sector)
- Lodgings 25% council tax reduction?
- Council economic development team
- Increase board level buy in with other RP's
- Promote the need of migrant homelessness
- Rent envelope scheme
- We need to influence other RP's to commit
- Working with migrants who are settled to apply through LA lettings scheme to free accommodation
- Look at other initiatives nationally