

20 December 2016

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| Committee | Overview and Scrutiny |
| Date | Tuesday, 10 January 2017 |
| Time of Meeting | 4:30 pm |
| Venue | Committee Room 1 |

ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ARE REQUESTED TO ATTEND



**for Sara J Freckleton
Borough Solicitor**

Agenda

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS

When the continuous alarm sounds you must evacuate the building by the nearest available fire exit. Members and visitors should proceed to the visitors' car park at the front of the building and await further instructions (staff should proceed to their usual assembly point). Please do not re-enter the building unless instructed to do so.

In the event of a fire any person with a disability should be assisted in leaving the building.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

To receive apologies for absence and advise of any substitutions.



| Item | Page(s) |
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| 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST | |
| Pursuant to the adoption by the Council on 26 June 2012 of the Tewkesbury Borough Council Code of Conduct, effective from 1 July 2012, as set out in Minute No. CL.34, Members are invited to declare any interest they may have in the business set out on the Agenda to which the approved Code applies. | |
| 4. MINUTES | 1 - 14 |
| To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2016. | |
| 5. CONSIDERATION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN | 15 - 18 |
| To determine whether there are any questions for the relevant Lead Members and what support the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can give to work contained within the Plan. | |
| 6. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17 | 19 - 22 |
| To consider the forthcoming work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. | |
| 7. GLOUCESTERSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE PRESENTATION | |
| To receive a presentation from the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service. | |
| 8. HOUSING STRATEGY REVIEW REPORT | 23 - 213 |
| To consider the achievements made to date in respect of the outcomes identified in the Housing Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-16; to endorse the Housing Strategy 2017-21 and first year action plan and to refer it to Council for adoption; and to endorse the arrangements in respect of future action plans arising from the strategy and monitoring. | |
| 9. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE | 214 - 229 |
| To consider the report on the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to approve the recommendations set out at Paragraph 2.5. | |

DATE OF NEXT MEETING
TUESDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2017
COUNCILLORS CONSTITUTING COMMITTEE

Councillors: P W Awford (Chair), Mrs G F Blackwell (Vice-Chair), G J Bocking, K J Cromwell, Mrs J E Day, R D East, D T Foyle, Mrs R M Hatton, Mrs H C McLain, T A Spencer, Mrs P E Stokes, P D Surman, M G Sztymiak, H A E Turbyfield and M J Williams

Substitution Arrangements

The Council has a substitution procedure and any substitutions will be announced at the beginning of the meeting.

Recording of Meetings

Please be aware that the proceedings of this meeting may be recorded and this may include recording of persons seated in the public gallery or speaking at the meeting. Please notify the Democratic Services Officer if you have any objections to this practice and the Chairman will take reasonable steps to ensure that any request not to be recorded is complied with.

Any recording must take place in such a way as to ensure that the view of Councillors, Officers, the public and press is not obstructed. The use of flash photography and/or additional lighting will not be allowed unless this has been discussed and agreed in advance of the meeting.

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at the
Council Offices, Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury on Tuesday, 29 November 2016
commencing at 4:30 pm**

Present:

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| Chair | Councillor P W Awford |
| Vice Chair | Councillor Mrs G F Blackwell |

and Councillors:

K J Cromwell, Mrs J E Day, R D East, D T Foyle, Mrs J Greening (Substitute for G J Bocking),
Mrs R M Hatton, Mrs H C McLain, T A Spencer, Mrs P E Stokes, M G Sztymiak,
H A E Turbyfield and M J Williams

also present:

Councillors R E Garnham and Mrs E J MacTiernan

OS.49 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 49.1 The evacuation procedure, as noted on the Agenda, was taken as read.
- 49.2 The Chair welcomed Councillors R E Garnham and Mrs E J MacTiernan to the meeting. Councillor Garnham was the Council's representative on the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel and would be providing an update at Agenda Item 7, and Councillor MacTiernan was the Lead Member for Organisational Development and was present as an observer.
- 49.3 It was noted that this would be the last meeting for the Council's Environmental Health Manager, David Steels, who was leaving the authority in December and the Chair thanked him for his hard work and wished him luck with his new role on behalf of the Committee.

OS.50 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

- 50.1 Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors G J Bocking and P D Surman. Councillor Mrs J Greening would be acting as a substitute for the meeting.

OS.51 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 51.1 The Committee's attention was drawn to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on 26 June 2012 and took effect from 1 July 2012.
- 51.2 There were no declarations made on this occasion.

OS.52 MINUTES

- 52.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2016, copies of which had been circulated were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

OS.53 CONSIDERATION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

- 53.1 Attention was drawn to the Executive Committee Forward Plan, circulated at Pages No. 13-16. Members were asked to determine whether there were any questions for the relevant Lead Members and what support the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could give to the work contained within the Plan.
- 53.2 A Member noted that there were currently no Agenda items scheduled for the meeting in March 2017 and the Chief Executive advised that, whilst it was likely that items would come forward in time, he would have a look at the Forward Plan and see if this could be addressed. A Member indicated that the Forward Plan currently showed that the Executive Committee was due to receive the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy at its meeting on 4 January 2017, however, the report of the Working Group had not yet been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and therefore that date could not be achieved. In response the Economic and Community Development Manager advised that the Working Group had met on a number of occasions and he had previously circulated a Member Update setting out the progress which had been made. Since that time, a seminar had been held for all Members at which representatives from Bruton Knowles had provided feedback on the economic assessment and employment land review which had been undertaken to inform the strategy. The information and work which had been carried out was currently being collated in order to create the strategy and it was anticipated that the report would be taken to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 7 February 2017.
- 53.3 It was
- RESOLVED**
1. That the Executive Committee Forward Plan be **NOTED**.
 2. That the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy be moved from the meeting on 4 January 2017 to 15 March 2017.

OS.54 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

- 54.1 Attention was drawn to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2016/17, circulated at Pages No. 17-21, which Members were asked to consider.
- 54.2 The Head of Corporate Services indicated that it was intended to bring forward the Review of the Effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, currently scheduled for the meeting on 7 February 2017, to the meeting on 10 January 2017. He reminded Members that Ann Reeder from Frontline Consulting had observed the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in June 2016 and her recommendations would be considered in the report. With regard to the Grounds Maintenance Update, which was due to be considered at the meeting on 21 March 2017, it was suggested that it might be more appropriate to combine this with the Review of Ubico on 2 May 2017, rather than have two separate reports, and Members agreed that was sensible. The Head of Corporate Services went on to explain that he was proposing to establish an Overview and Scrutiny Working Group to look at the Borough News; this was something which had come out of a communications workshop which had been held for Members earlier in the year. If Members were

agreeable, he intended to include this as a pending item within the Work Programme and a report would be brought to the Committee setting out the proposed Terms of Reference for the Working Group when the Communications and Policy and Manager returned from maternity leave.

54.3 It was subsequently

RESOLVED That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme be amended as follows:

- Review of Effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be brought forward to the meeting on 10 January 2017;
- Grounds Maintenance Update due to be considered at the meeting in March 2017 to be combined with the Review of Ubico on 2 May 2017; and
- a report to be brought to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to establish a Working Group to undertake a review of the Borough News.

OS.55 GLOUCESTERSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL UPDATE

55.1 Members received an update from Councillor Rob Garnham, the Council's representative on the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel, on matters discussed at the last meeting of the Panel held on 7 November 2016.

55.2 Councillor Garnham advised that the Chair continued to have meetings with the Chairs of Wiltshire and Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panels to ensure collaboration matters were addressed. The Panel had received a presentation on the new operating model which had been adopted by Gloucestershire Constabulary and it had been noted that there was a need for another £30M of savings. One aim of the model was to ensure that the Constabulary was as efficient as possible, for example, by introducing mobile technology, and he reported that Gloucestershire was now amongst the most digitally advanced in the country. The main focus was still protecting the most vulnerable and reducing harm; it was acknowledged that neighbourhood policing was not perfect but a balance had to be struck between using Officers on neighbourhood policing simply because they were available or using them on more productive business. The new Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner would have a focus on neighbourhood policing and further work was needed to develop a better strategy. Superintendent Richard Cooper had given the Panel an update on the results of the operating model and it was noted that Gloucestershire had the lowest violent crime rate per 1,000 population in the country and it was the second most improved Constabulary in the country from June 2015. One of the strengths of the model was greater research being carried out in the control room before despatch; however, this could also be perceived as a weakness because it then took longer to reach incidents. Officers now spent longer at incidents and this could be one of the reasons for improved satisfaction rates. Whilst the amount of crime had not risen, the amount of complex crime had increased and it was a challenge to keep on top of this with a reduced budget.

55.3 Councillor Garnham went on to advise that the Police and Crime Commissioner's latest plan for 2017-21 had been presented for final ratification and, apart from one objection, it had been supported by the Panel. The Chief Executive's report now contained useful crime statistics and data relating to complaints received. There had been an update on the 101 service with ongoing concerns that only 79.2% of callers had their call answered within 40 seconds when this should be 90% or more. One piece of good news that did not appear to have received much media attention

was a report from the Howard League for Penal Reform which had published data relating to the number of children entering the criminal justice system. The report showed that, between 2010 and 2015, the number of children being arrested had fallen by 58% nationally, and by 52% in Gloucestershire which he believed was excellent news. Members were also informed that the Blue Light Collaboration Task Group would begin its work in January and was aimed primarily at looking at how Gloucestershire might respond to the government's ideas around Police and Crime Panels taking responsibility for Fire and Rescue Services. It was noted that the next meeting of the Police and Crime Panel was due to be held on 9 January 2017.

55.4 In response to a query regarding the national initiative to discourage mobile telephone use when driving, Councillor Garnham advised that there had recently been a road safety campaign which had resulted in a number of people being stopped. The Chief Constable was the national lead for road policing and there was a strong message that this was something which was not to be tolerated.

55.5 The Chair thanked the Council's representative for his presentation and indicated that the update would be circulated to Members via email following the meeting. It was

RESOLVED That the feedback from the last meeting of the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel be **NOTED**.

OS.56 GLOUCESTERSHIRE HEALTH AND CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

56.1 Members received an update from Councillor Mrs J E Day, the Council's representative on the Gloucestershire Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, on matters discussed at its last meeting held on 15 November 2016.

56.2 Members were advised that the Committee had been pleased to welcome Deborah Lee, Chief Executive of the Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, and Keith Norton, a newly appointed Non-Executive Director also from the Trust, to discuss the significant and unexpected deterioration in its reported financial position which had been announced in September. Ms Lee had acknowledged that there had been a failure of financial governance and, had the Trust, its regulators and auditors acted differently, it would not be in this position. The sudden nature of the announcement had given rise to the misconception that this situation had developed overnight and she had been clear that the position had developed over time. A high level review of the Trust's financial position and reporting arrangements had highlighted that there was an insufficient level of financial skills and expertise across the Trust's Non-Executive Directors; it was important to note that an externally commissioned review of the Board's arrangements in 2015 had not raised this as an area of concern. Changes to the Trust Board had already been made and the Committee had been assured that the specification for Non-Executive Directors reflected the need for financial expertise. The Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group commissioned the services provided by the Trust and, therefore, there would be a continuation of services to the public; the challenge was to do things better and more efficiently. An independent review of the circumstances that had led to the financial deterioration had been jointly commissioned by the Trust and the regulator NHS Improvement and an extraordinary meeting of the Committee had been set for 30 January 2017 to receive the outcome of the review.

- 56.3 Councillor Day went on to advise that the Committee had been pleased to discuss the Sustainability and Transformation Plan with the commissioners and providers of health and social care services in Gloucestershire. It was noted that the underlying detail on possible service changes would come forward later in 2017. At present the Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group was leading on an engagement exercise to inform and engage with the public. The Committee was clear that it intended to follow the progress and implementation of this plan and would be part of any consultation on service change proposals.
- 56.4 With regard to adult social care and public health performance, Members had welcomed the continued good work and congratulated Forwards Employment Services on winning the employment award at the Gloucestershire Health and Social Care Awards on 8 November 2016. It had been concerning to note that demand for paid carers was outstripping supply and it was thought that this related to some domiciliary care organisations going out of business. Performance against Health Checks targets continued to struggle; all GP practices in the county, apart from two, had signed up to deliver these checks. Advertising the checks and communicating with patients was the responsibility of the GP practice. A particular factor here was that, no matter how the benefits of these checks were communicated, people could not be forced to take them up. In terms of performance of the Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group, cancer targets continued to be a challenge and, whilst there was some improvement in the six week diagnostic target, more needed to be done. The Chair of Healthwatch Gloucestershire had informed the Committee that it would be working with the Care Quality Commission on the forthcoming inspection of the Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. It was also undertaking a follow-up to its report on the hospital discharge process and expected to share this with the Committee in the New Year.
- 56.5 A Member queried whether the Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group survey in relation to the Sustainability and Transformation Plan was being promoted in the national press and she was informed that it was on the Group's website and the link would be in the update which was circulated to Members following the meeting. The Economic and Community Development Manager advised that the consultation was open until the end of February and he had attended a meeting that morning where it had been suggested that an event could be held at the Public Services Centre; he would be happy to go back and confirm these arrangements if Members felt that would be beneficial.
- 56.6 The Chair indicated that the update would be circulated to Members following the meeting and it was
- RESOLVED**
1. That the feedback from the last meeting of the Gloucestershire Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee be **NOTED**.
 2. That arrangements be made for a consultation event to be held at the Public Services Centre as part of the engagement in relation to the Sustainability and Transformation Plan being led by the Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group.

OS.57 PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 2 2016/17

- 57.1 The report of the Head of Corporate Services, circulated at Pages No. 22-52, attached performance management information for quarter 2 of 2016/17. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was asked to review and scrutinise the performance information and, where appropriate, identify any issues to refer to the Executive Committee for clarification or further action to be taken.
- 57.2 Members were advised that this was the second quarterly monitoring report for 2016/17 and progress against delivering the objectives and actions for each of the Council Plan priorities was reported through the Performance Tracker, attached at Appendix 1 to the report. It was noted that Managers had been asked to include target delivery dates for each action which it was hoped made the document more robust. Key actions which had advanced since quarter 1 were highlighted at Paragraph 2.3 of the report and included: the production of the Medium Term Financial Strategy; the approval of a significant commercial property investment which would be supported by a Commercial Property Investment Strategy; completion of the demolition of Cascades; a successful bid of £377,000 to the Local Enterprise Partnership to host a Growth Hub within the Public Services Centre; and the development of a new Council website due to go live the following day. There were some actions which were not progressing as smoothly as anticipated and they were set out at Paragraph 2.4 of the report. These had all been flagged up to the Committee previously and related to the Joint Core Strategy and Borough Plan; the regeneration of Spring Gardens; and the letting of the top floor of the Public Services Centre.
- 57.3 In terms of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Members were informed that the status of each indicator was set out at Paragraph 3.2 of the report. Key areas of interest included KPIs 14-16 which related to the processing of planning applications and it was noted that there had been improved performance in all areas, although the target for minor applications remained a challenge; KPI 20 relating to the number of reported enviro-crimes which remained significant; KPIs 23 and 24 in respect of processing benefit claims and change of circumstances where performance was not as good as the previous year but remained in the top quartile nationally; KPI 29 which had seen an improvement in sickness absence with a reduction in the average number of sick days as a result of less long term absence; and KPI 30 which showed that the direction of travel and target for recycling both remained very positive.

57.4 During the debate which ensued, the following queries and comments were made in relation to the Performance Tracker:

Priority: Economic Development

P34 – Objective 4 – Action a) Put in place a plan to regenerate Spring Gardens, following the opening of the new leisure centre – A Member felt that this action should be given an unhappy face as no progress was being made and he suggested that a meeting of the Spring Gardens and Oldbury Road Regeneration Member Reference Panel needed to be held to discuss alternative solutions.

The Head of Finance and Asset Management explained that the preferred tenant for the site had indicated that it would not be investing in the near future based on concern following the Brexit decision. Unfortunately the whole project had been built on the preferred tenant and alternative options would need to stack up financially. The Chief Executive pointed out that this was a major long-term project for Tewkesbury Town centre and, whilst he appreciated it was difficult not to become impatient, it would be preferable to take the scheme forward as a whole. Notwithstanding this, the Panel would meet in the New Year to consider the issues and take things forward from there.

Key Performance Indicators for Priority: Housing

P40 – KPI 11 – Total number of active applications on the housing register – A Member queried whether the figures for quarter 2 included the same people from quarter 1.

The Housing Services Manager confirmed that was likely to be the case.

Priority: Customer Focused Services

P43 – Objective 1 – Action b) Consider our approach to enviro-crimes with particular focus on fly-tipping and dog-fouling – A Member noted that the Executive Committee had recently received a report regarding the recruitment of an Environmental Warden which would be funded by Parish and Town Councils and he questioned whether the Borough Council should be putting more into the role given that it was a Key Performance Indicator.

The Environmental Health Manager explained that this had been discussed at the Executive Committee the previous week where Members had expressed the strong opinion that the project should be cost neutral to the Borough Council; the Council would offer its expertise in terms of employment, management, legislation, equipment etc. The majority of Parish Councils had reacted well to that and most of the larger ones had indicated that they wished to play a part and would contribute financially. A meeting was being held the following week for further discussions. The Chief Executive clarified that the suggestion for the Environmental Warden role had come from the Parish and Town Councils initially.

P44 – Objective 3 – Action b)
Let out the top floor of the Public Services Centre – A Member welcomed the approval of the Growth Hub bid but questioned whether there would be additional car parking provision as the Public Services Centre expanded further.

The Head of Finance and Asset Management explained that work on the overall plan for the Public Services Centre was ongoing, and footfall would need to be established; however, he understood that parking could be difficult and advised that it was intended to make improvements to Lower Lode Depot, which had spaces for 40-50 vehicles. The Chief Executive indicated that, given the number of potential new users of the building, management of the car park would need to be dealt with effectively through a plan and he provided assurance that would be done accordingly.

In response to a query regarding how the Growth Hub linked with the letting out of the top floor, Members were advised that there were several individual projects underway and they needed to be brought together into a phased plan. A number of positive meetings had been held with another local authority about its potential use of the building and there had been strong interest from an existing partner in relation to letting the top floor but advice was also being taken regarding a marketing strategy for putting it on the open market. Costings were currently being put together for a full package of the works required for the Public Services Centre including refurbishment of the Civic Suite. It was intended that a report would be brought to Members in February setting out the overall plan, the requirements to facilitate the letting out of the top floor and the renovation of the Lower Lode Depot and the Civic Suite which would bring the Public Services Centre to a position where it was fully refurbished.

Key Performance Indicators for Priority: Corporate

P48 – KPI 20 – Number of reported enviro-crimes – A Member indicated that this topic was discussed regularly by the Committee and needed to be addressed. He suggested that achievable targets be introduced so that Members could see exactly what was being done to try to reduce the figures.

The Environmental Health Manager felt that this was a fair comment and he took on board the point about the need for SMART (specific, measurable, agreed upon, realistic and time-based) targets. The Committee was due to receive a further update on enviro-crimes at its meeting in February 2017 and he suggested this could form part of that report depending on the staffing resources at that time. With regard to abandoned vehicles, he had received an email from the Police and Crime Commissioner who was looking to organise a meeting in the New Year to look at introducing community targets and ways of working between authorities; any progress would be shared with Members in due

course. It was to be borne in mind that enviro-crimes was a national issue and one which was very difficult to address.

A Member queried whether focusing additional resources in this area would help to address the problem and was informed that the Council had a deficit of £3.3M over the next five years and, whilst the Council would be discussing growth items in December, it was likely that any additional funding would need to be found from within existing resources. The Chief Executive felt that it was not advisable to take on additional costs given the pressures on the existing budget. There were already considerable resources within the Environmental Health department, the new Deputy Chief Executive would be in post in January and there would be a replacement for the Head of Environmental Services later in the year so he provided assurance that this issue would be dealt with. A Member asked for costings to be included within the update report in February to identify whether any savings could be made and where additional investment may be needed.

P50 – KPI 27 and 28 – Number of anti-social behaviour incidents and number of overall crime incidents – A Member felt that it would be useful if these figures could be broken down to show where the incidents were taking place and to give more detail about the age of the people involved e.g. how many were under 18.

The Head of Corporate Services indicated that he would find out what information was available on MAIDeN (Multi-Agency Information Database for Neighbourhoods); he understood that breakdowns were provided by Ward and Parish but he was unsure about age.

57.5 Having considered the information provided and views expressed, it was

RESOLVED That the performance management information for quarter 2 of 2016/17 be **NOTED**.

OS.58 REVIEW OF CAR PARKING STRATEGY

58.1 The report of the Head of Development Services, circulated at Pages No. 53-57, provided an update on the outcomes arising from the Car Parking Strategy. Members were asked to agree that no changes be made to the existing strategy and that it be monitored by the Head of Development Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Economic Development/Promotion, with a report brought back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee where appropriate, should any amendments need to be considered.

- 58.2 Members were informed that, following a review by an Overview and Scrutiny Working Group, the Council's Car Parking Strategy had been approved by the Council on 27 January 2015 with the new charges introduced on 1 April 2015. The overriding aspiration in the strategy was to support the economic viability and vitality of Tewkesbury and Winchcombe Towns and whilst the strategy had not proposed an increase in parking charges, it had removed the categorisation between long and short stay car parks and changed the charging periods and charges to encourage visitors to stay for longer. Other key recommendations had included the introduction of a new off-peak permit; replacement of signage and introduction of new signage; and introduction of mobile telephone technology as an alternative payment method. It was considered timely to review the outcomes of the strategy in terms of the actions and effectiveness of the new charges and, as part of the review, an analysis of parking usage and income had been undertaken for the first full 12 months of the strategy. A table of ticket sales for 2014/15 and 2015/16 was attached at Appendix 1 to the report and showed that the aspiration to encourage visitors to stay longer had been successful with ticket sales increasing for those staying over three hours. Overall ticket sales had increased by over 4,500 which demonstrated that the strategy seemed to be working well and achieving its aims. In terms of permits, the take-up of the new off-peak permit had been low and it was felt that further promotion of this, and other permits available to businesses, should be undertaken. Whilst the signage in car parks had been improved, and on-street signage removed where practicable, the delivery of further directional signage at town gateways had been delayed to allow for the completion of other signage projects. A programme of inspection and maintenance was in place and improvements such as line painting and installation of barriers had been carried out with plans to replace existing lighting with LED lighting. Given these outcomes, it was recommended that no changes be made to the strategy and that it be monitored by the Head of Development Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Economic Development/Promotion, with the caveat that it could be brought back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee if any amendments were considered to be necessary.
- 58.3 A Member felt that the new strategy was an improvement on the previous one and the overall report was positive; he welcomed the introduction of the LED lighting and agreed that the permits should be advertised more widely as they did offer very good discounts. Conversely, he had been made aware of several issues with visitors being unable to find the car parks and he questioned what was being done to address that. He also queried whether Tewkesbury and Winchcombe Town Councils had been asked for feedback on the strategy and whether income from tickets sales had increased over the last two years. In response, the Head of Finance and Asset Management reiterated that old signage had been removed where possible e.g. long/short stay car park signs, however, a lot of highway signage was multifunctional so it was difficult to remove certain parts. He provided assurance that Officers were working with County Highways where possible and advised that the gateway signage would come forward in 2017. Feedback from the Town Councils would be welcomed and he undertook to contact them, along with the Chamber of Commerce, to obtain their views. With regard to income, the figures for 2015/16 were on par with the previous year; when the new strategy had been introduced it had been anticipated that there would be a reduction of £33,000 in car parking fees but that had not materialised so this was a significant improvement for the Council.

58.4 A Member expressed the view that it was important to publicise the fact that a review had been carried out. He agreed that clear signage was vital, particularly for visitors, and this could be addressed relatively easily. His main concern was regarding the condition of the car parks and he felt that more could be done to improve this. The Head of Finance and Asset Management took on board the point about maintenance, however, he advised that a £5,000 maintenance budget was available and had helped to improve their condition over the last 12 months. Officers worked with Ubico to ensure any issues were addressed and they would continue to do that going forward.

58.5 A Member noted that the number of coaches staying in Tewkesbury Town for half a day was increasing but they did not tend to stay for a whole day and she queried whether anything could be done to address that. The Head of Finance and Asset Management undertook to feed this back to the Economic and Community Development Manager to take into account within the Review of the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy but pointed out that Tewkesbury was viewed very much as a half day destination and it was a question of whether it had enough to offer to encourage longer stays. Whilst he realised the Council had little control over on-street parking, a Member raised concern that the car parking attendants could be overzealous at times, which may discourage visitors, and the Head of Finance and Asset Manager indicated that he would pass this comment on the appropriate Officer to take forward.

58.6 It was subsequently

RESOLVED

1. That the outcomes arising from the Car Parking Strategy be **NOTED** and it be **AGREED** that no changes be made to the existing Car Parking Strategy.
2. That it be **AGREED** that the strategy be monitored by the Head of Development Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Economic Development/Promotion, and a report brought back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, where appropriate, should any amendments to the strategy need to be considered.

OS.59 GLOUCESTERSHIRE FAMILIES FIRST UPDATE

59.1 Attention was drawn to the report of the Head of Development Services, circulated at Pages No. 58-62, which set out the progress made in delivering the Families First programme. Members were asked to consider the update and to agree to remove this from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee reporting cycle.

59.2 Members were advised that Families First Plus, formerly Families First, was the local name for the national Troubled Families programme. It had been introduced in 2013 as a three year programme aimed at turning around the lives of the estimated 120,000 troubled families in the country with the three main criteria being adults on out of work benefit; children not attending school; and family members involved in crime and anti-social behaviour. There was an agreement that an estimated 900 families would be worked with in Gloucestershire 10% of which, i.e. 90 families, were within Tewkesbury Borough. The programme had proven to be a great success with the target for the first phase to engage with 90 families reached a year early in March 2015. Due to the success of the programme in Gloucestershire, the County had been chosen as an 'early adopter' for the next phase of the programme which had widened the criteria to include parents and children involved in anti-social behaviour; children who had not been

attending school regularly; children who needed help; adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion and young people at risk of 'worklessness'; families affected by domestic violence or abuse; and parents and children with a range of health issues including mental health issues.

- 59.3 In terms of the outcomes of the programme, it was noted that there had been some negative articles in the press recently which had suggested that the programme had not been as successful as it was meant to be. Gloucestershire County Council had conducted a survey of the families who had been involved in the programme and had found that they generally felt more supported and confident, particularly in relation to financial matters. 95% of families had indicated that they valued an assertive and challenging approach as it encouraged them to do things for themselves. During the second phase, Gloucestershire had been working to target 3,000 families over five years; the target for the first year was 540 claims across all localities, 55 of which were within Tewkesbury Borough. The programme had changed the way public sector organisations worked together, i.e. taking a joint approach as opposed to single agencies each doing their bit, and the Public Services Centre had played a key part in that. Families First Plus had now been adopted as 'business as usual' by Gloucestershire County Council and the principles and ways of working were embedded into its system. As a result, the Community Development Officer indicated that he no longer had any direct involvement in the programme and it had been removed from the new Council Plan. It was therefore recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee no longer needed to monitor the programme on a six monthly basis and it was proposed that it be removed from the Work Programme. It was noted that the County Council had recently put together a briefing note in respect of the Families First Plus programme and he undertook to circulate this to Members following the meeting.
- 59.4 A Member noted that 90 families within Tewkesbury Borough had been involved in phase one of the programme and she questioned whether some of those were still being worked with, or whether the 55 families introduced for the second phase were completely new. The Community Development Officer explained that some families inevitably came back into the system although it was difficult to know how many, particularly as some children came back as adults. He confirmed that the 55 families in phase two were all new families which had been picked up due to the wider scope. The Member went on to question whether the initial contact was made by the individual families or by the Families First Plus team and she was advised that they came to the attention of the team via referrals from a wide range of partners. There was an allocations group which looked at each case and allocated a key worker to the particular family. The Member felt that some great work was being done through the programme and it would be a shame if progress reports were no longer shared with the Committee. In response, the Community Development Manager advised that there were alternative ways of reporting the success of the programme, for instance, he would be happy to circulate Member Updates as and when necessary. The County Council was able to provide a breakdown by Parish and he could ask for that information if Members so wished. Several Members expressed the view that it would be beneficial for the Committee to be kept informed and it was suggested that an update could continue to be provided on an annual basis.
- 59.5 In response to a query regarding funding, Members were advised that no money was received by the Borough Council; Families First Plus was a Gloucestershire County Council programme and the payment-by-results money went directly to the County Council. The money was used to support the teams locally and to fund the allocations budget.

59.6 Having considered the information provided, it was

RESOLVED

1. That the progress made in delivering the Families First programme be **NOTED**.
2. That reports continue to be brought to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee but on an annual, as opposed to six monthly, basis.

OS.60 DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS REVIEW MONITORING REPORT

60.1 Attention was drawn to the report of the Interim Head of Community Services, circulated at Pages No. 63-69, which set out the progress against the recommendations arising from the Disabled Facilities Grants Review. Members were asked to consider the report.

60.2 Members were reminded that a review of the way in which the Council delivered Disabled Facilities Grants had been undertaken by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group in 2015/16 and the review report had been adopted by the Executive Committee on 6 April 2016. The table at Appendix 1 to the report showed the progress that had been made against actions contained within the report. The review had highlighted the need to change certain processes and ways of working and it was noted that a named Officer working within the Housing Enabling team now worked with new case referrals in order to check whether moving to more suitable accommodation would be a better outcome. This action was known to have saved the Council at least £6,000 to date and particular reference was made to a case where a landlord thought it was inappropriate for a property to be adapted to install a walk-in shower. The client had been given close support to make an informed decision as to what they would like to do and had subsequently moved to a bungalow which had already been adapted; feedback was that, whilst they had not originally considered this as an option, they were very pleased with their new home. In terms of the second action, which related to methods of procuring work such as schedules of rates and preferred contractors, discussions had taken place with Severn Vale Housing Society Ltd around sharing resources and information. Going forward the Council may wish to consider whether Severn Vale, or another housing organisation, might be able to assist the local authority in discharging its statutory duty in respect of Disabled Facilities Grants. These discussions were still at an early stage, with negotiations ongoing within One Legal and Finance, and it was hoped that it would be brought to a conclusion by April as this would coincide with the end of the six month contract of the employee who had been brought in to deliver Disabled Facilities Grants following the retirement of the Officer who had previously been responsible.

60.3 Members were advised that action three had been completed; this related to the review of existing paperwork connected with the Disabled Facilities Grants process. The fourth action, around exploring the further use of technology to speed up the process, had been expanded to include all aspects of Environmental Health delivery. This was being monitored by the corporate project board and initial results were expected in the New Year. With regard to action five, using learning gained from the review to inform local health and wellbeing plans, strategies and processes, it was noted that the report had been shared widely and the outcomes had been used to inform a current review by Supporting People around helping people to live independently. Action six was to review the impact of the other actions on the costs of delivering the service and to subsequently reduce the

Council's capital contribution due to depleting capital resources. As actions two and four had not been completed, this could not yet be quantified, however, there could be savings as a result of action five as Tewkesbury Borough Council currently contributed £45,000 to the 'Safe at Home' Home Improvement Agency and the County Council had resolved not to re-tender for that service.

60.4 A Member indicated that he had sat on the Working Group and pointed out that there had been a lot of 'red tape' so it had been fairly straightforward to streamline the processes. Whilst he could understand the reasons behind the slippages in some of the actions, he felt that it was important that these did not go on beyond 12 months if the Council wanted to become more efficient in this area. The Environmental Health Manager explained that this was the reason behind including a target date for each action; he hoped that they would be delivered sooner than suggested, however, a lot was down to working with partners and this could be difficult to influence.

60.5 It was

RESOLVED That the progress against the recommendations arising from the Disabled Facilities Grants Review be **NOTED**.

The meeting closed at 6:10 pm

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN 2016/17

REGULAR ITEM:

- **Forward Plan – To note the forthcoming items.**

| Committee Date: 1 February 2017 | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Agenda Item | Overview of Agenda Item | Lead Officer | Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required |
| Budget 2017/18 (Annual). | To recommend a budget for 2017/18 to Council. | Simon Dix, Head of Finance and Asset Management. | No. |
| Treasury Management Strategy (Annual). | To approve the Treasury Management Strategy. | Simon Dix, Head of Finance and Asset Management. | No. |
| Financial Update – Quarter 3 Performance (Annual). | To consider the quarterly budget position. | Simon Dix, Head of Finance and Asset Management. | No. |
| Workforce Development Strategy. | To approve the Workforce Development Strategy. | Janet Martin, Human Resources Manager. | No. |

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| Committee Date: 15 March 2017 | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Agenda Item | Overview of Agenda Item | Lead Officer | Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required |
| Fee Charging Strategy | To consider and agree a Fee Charging Strategy for the Council. | Simon Dix, Head of Finance and Asset Management. | Yes – from January 2017. |
| Economic Development and Tourism Strategy. | To approve the amended Economic Development and Tourism Strategy following an Overview and Scrutiny review. | Andy Sanders, Economic and Community Development Manager. | Yes deferred from January 2017 to allow for Overview and Scrutiny Committee consideration. |
| Confidential Item: Spring Gardens/Oldbury Road Regeneration. | To consider the information provided and agree a way forward. | Simon Dix, Head of Finance and Asset Management. | Yes – Deferred from January 2017 to allow time for further information to come forward to allow a decision on the matter. |
| (To be considered in private because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)). | | | |

Committee Date: 26 April 2017

| Agenda Item | Overview of Agenda Item | Lead Officer | Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Performance Management Report – Quarter 3 2016/17 (Annual). | To receive and respond to the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review of the quarter three performance management information. | Graeme Simpson, Head of Corporate Services. | No. |
| Flood Risk Management Group Terms of Reference and Action Plan (Annual). | To undertake an annual review of the Terms of Reference of the Flood Risk Management Group and action plan. | David Steels, Environmental Health Manager | No. |
| Council Plan Update 2016/17 (Annual). | To consider the Council Plan and make a recommendation to Council. | Graeme Simpson, Head of Corporate Services. | No. |
| High Level Service Plan Summaries (Annual). | To consider the key activities of each service grouping during 2017/18. | Graeme Simpson, Head of Corporate Services. | No. |
| Confidential Item: Transfer of Sports Facilities, Cold Pool Lane. | To consider the transfer of sports facilities at Cold Pool Lane to a club or organisation on a 25 year lease. | Andy Noble, Asset Manager | No. |

(To be considered in private because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

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| Committee Date: (Date To be Confirmed) June 2017 | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Agenda Item | Overview of Agenda Item | Lead Officer | Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required |
| Appointment of Portfolio Holders and Support Members (Annual) | To approve the Portfolio Holders and Support Members for the forthcoming Municipal Year. | Lin O'Brien, Head of Democratic Services. | No. |

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

REGULAR ITEMS:

- **Executive Committee Forward Plan**
- **Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2016/17**

Addition to 10 January 2017

- Review of the Effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – brought forward from February 2017.

Deletion from 10 January 2017

- Scrutiny of Community Safety Partnership – moved to pending items.

Committee Date: 7 February 2017

| Agenda Item | Overview of Agenda Item | Lead Officer | Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Economic Development and Tourism Strategy Review Report | To endorse the report of the Working Group and recommend it to the Executive Committee for approval. | Andy Sanders, Economic and Community Development Manager | No. |
| Enviro-Crimes Update | To consider the progress made over the last six months. | David Steels | No. |
| Peer Review Action Plan | To consider - six month update | Graeme Simpson, Corporate Services Group Manager | No. |
| Annual review of the effectiveness of the Council's involvement in the Gloucestershire Health, Community and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee | In order to authorise payment of the Council's contribution to the running costs for the forthcoming year. | Graeme Simpson, Corporate Services Group Manager | No. |

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Agenda Item 6

NB – Changes from previous work programme highlighted in bold

| Committee Date: 21 March 2017 | | | |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Agenda Item | Overview of Agenda Item | Lead Officer | Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required |
| Performance Report – Quarter 3 2016/17. | To review and scrutinise the performance management information and, where appropriate, to require response or action from the Executive Committee | Graeme Simpson, Corporate Services Group Manager | No. |
| Complaints Report | To consider – six monthly update. | Graeme Simpson, Corporate Services Group Manager | No. – Report to be considered on an annual basis in accordance with the decision made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6 September 2016. |
| Flood Risk Management Group Report | To receive an annual report on the progress against the Flood Risk Management Action Plan and to recommend to the Executive Committee that the Flood Risk Management Group Terms of Reference be adopted for the next 12 months. | David Steels, Environmental Health Manager | No. |
| Grounds Maintenance Update | To consider grounds maintenance performance, in particular, the implementation of Key Performance Indicators. | David Steels, Environmental Health Manager | No – agreed by O&S when considering the Grounds Maintenance Update report at its meeting on 18 October 2016. – To be included in the Review of Ubico to be considered at the meeting on 2 May 2016. |

| Committee Date: 2 May 2017 | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Agenda Item | Overview of Agenda Item | Lead Officer | Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required |
| Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2017/18. | To approve the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for the forthcoming year. | Graeme Simpson, Corporate Services Group Manager | No. |
| Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report 2016/17. | To approve the annual report as required by the Council's Constitution to ensure that the activities of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are promoted both internally and publicly to reinforce transparency and accountability in the democratic process. | Graeme Simpson, Corporate Services Group Manager | No. |
| Review of Ubico | To consider – annual update. | Richard Kirk, Interim Environmental and Housing Services Group Manager / David Steels, Environmental Health Manager | No. NB – This will include the grounds maintenance update in accordance with the decision made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 November 2016. |
| Gloucestershire Families First Update | To consider – six monthly update. | Adrian Goode, Community Development Officer | No. Report to be considered on an annual basis in accordance with the decision made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 November 2016. |
| Scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership | To consider – six monthly update. | Paula Baker, Housing Services Manager | No. Moved to pending items. |

NB – Changes from previous work programme highlighted in bold

| Committee Date: 2 May 2017 | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Agenda Item | Overview of Agenda Item | Lead Officer | Has agenda item previously been deferred? Details and date of deferment required |
| Customer Care Strategy | To consider- annual update. | Clare Evans, Communications and Policy Manager | No. |
| Disabled Facilities Grants Review Monitoring Report | To consider - six monthly update. | David Steels, Environmental Health Manager | No. |

PENDING ITEMS

| Agenda Item | Overview of Agenda Item |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Review of Borough News | Terms of Reference to establish a Working Group to undertake the review to be brought to the Committee when the Communications and Policy Manager returns from maternity leave – agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 29 November 2016. |
| Scrutiny of Community Safety Partnership | Deferred pending the arrival of the new Head of Service. |
| Risk Management Strategy Review | Agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 14 June 2016. |
| Absence Management Policy Review | Agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 14 June 2016. |
| Financial Inclusion | Requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12 April 2016 – report to be considered by the Committee prior to the Executive Committee. |

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Report to: | Overview and Scrutiny Committee |
| Date of Meeting: | 10 January 2017 |
| Subject: | Housing Strategy Review Report |
| Report of: | Housing Strategy Review Working Group |
| Corporate Lead: | Mike Dawson, Chief Executive |
| Lead Member: | Cllr D M M Davies, Lead Member for Built Environment Cllr R E Allen, Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing |
| Number of Appendices: | 2 |

Executive Summary:

The Housing, Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-16 was developed by an Overview and Scrutiny Working Group and it was adopted by Council in September 2012. The Overview and Scrutiny Working Group requested that outcomes identified in the strategy action plan be monitored and regular updates presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This report presents Committee with a summary of the key activities that have been achieved in the last 18 months (2015/16 financial year and, where datasets allow, Q1 and Q2 2016/17) against the action plan. A more comprehensive update of actions achieved against each of the action plan targets can be found at Appendix 1. The strategy reaches end of life this year.

A further strategy covering 2017-21 has been developed by an Overview and Scrutiny Working Group. The Housing Strategy 2017-21 will include the Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy. Action plans for each year of the strategy will be produced annually and taken to the Executive Committee for approval. The strategy and action plans will be monitored by the Lead Members together with bi-annual reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Housing Strategy 2017-2021 can be found in Appendix 2.

Recommendations:

- 1. To CONSIDER the achievements made to date in respect of the outcomes identified in the Housing, Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-2016 Action Plan as set out at Appendix 1.**
- 2. To ENDORSE the Housing Strategy 2017-2021 and first year action plan as set out at Appendix 2 and RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that it be ADOPTED with effect from 1st January 2017.**
- 3. To ENDORSE the arrangements in respect of future action plans arising from the strategy and monitoring as set out in Paragraph 4.**

Reasons for Recommendation:

The Homelessness Act 2002 and Local Government Act 2003 require all District Councils to develop a strategy that sets out the Council's policies, commitments and programme for a wide range of housing matters.

Following development of the Council's Housing, Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-16, the Overview and Scrutiny Working Group requested that outcomes identified in the strategy action plan be monitored and regular updates be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Council is required to have an up-to-date five year homelessness strategy and therefore has developed, through a further Overview and Scrutiny Working Group, an overarching housing strategy that includes the homelessness strategy.

Once adopted by Council, the new Housing Strategy 2017-21 will be regularly monitored in accordance with the arrangements set out at Paragraph 4 of this report.

Resource Implications:

Staff and Member time. Resource implications will be met from existing budget allocations and, where they cannot, will be subject to a growth bid within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and a separate report to Members.

Legal Implications:

The Council is required to have a housing and homelessness strategy in place so that its duties under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) and Homelessness Act 2002 and Local Government Act 2003 can be met.

Risk Management Implications:

The review of activities against the strategy action plan has identified that the aims and objectives of the strategy are being delivered in a timely way. This significantly reduces the risk of not meeting statutory housing and homelessness duties. The strategy should be reviewed in approximately 12 months to ensure that the strategy and associated action plan continues to be relevant in the future.

Performance Management Follow-up:

The Housing, Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-16 reaches end of life at the end of December 2016.

A new Housing Strategy 2017-21 has been produced. The Strategy will include the Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy and will be monitored in accordance with the arrangements set out at Paragraph 4 of this report.

Environmental Implications:

There are positive environmental implications in the delivery of the strategy objectives e.g. the strategy supports the delivery of new energy efficient homes and energy efficiency improvements in the existing housing stock across the Borough. The development of more affordable homes, especially those to be developed in rural areas, may have a negative impact upon the environment, however, the level of environmental impact and measures to mitigate them will be assessed as part of a formal planning application.

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The Homelessness Act 2002 (as amended) and Local Government Act 2003 require all District Councils to develop a strategy that sets out the Council's policies, commitments and programme for a wide range of housing matters. The Housing, Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-16 was developed by an Overview and Scrutiny Working Group and was adopted by Tewkesbury Borough Council in September 2012.

2. HOUSING, RENEWAL AND HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2012-16 UPDATE

- 2.1** The current Housing, Renewal And Homelessness Strategy 2012-16 reaches the end of its life in December 2016. The Housing Services Team has presented annual updates to this Committee each year as required. The annual update for 2015-16 can be found at Paragraph 3 of this report and the action plan is attached at Appendix 1.

3. 2015-16 ACTION PLAN ACHIEVEMENTS

3.1 New Affordable Homes

- 3.1.1** There were 229 new-build affordable homes completed during 2015/16. This exceeds the Council Plan target to achieve 150 new homes and 35-40% affordable housing was secured on qualifying sites over the last three years. There was a mix of property types and tenures across all of the sites and this supports the housing need of a range of client groups with different incomes. During the lifetime of the Strategy, 100% of the affordable housing delivery has been built to Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) Level 3 or higher. CSH level 3 is now the minimum standard for all new housing as part of updated Building Regulations 2015.
- 3.1.2** During the first half year of 2016/2017, 111 affordable homes have been completed with a projected total of 197 for the whole year; once again exceeding the Council Plan target.
- 3.1.3** The percentage of affordable homes that met the Lifetime Homes Standard (against a Council target of 10% per year) over the lifetime of the strategy is as follows:
- 2012/13 = 33%
- 2013/14 = 15%
- 2014/15 = 10%
- 2015/16 = 7%
- 2016/17 (Quarters 1 and 2)= 38%
- 3.1.4** A total of 13 new rural exception affordable properties were delivered using the cross-subsidy model in Winchcombe and Badgeworth. Further to this, three rural exception developments are in the planning system for the Parishes of Minsterworth, Norton and Sandhurst. Minsterworth has planning permission for 13 affordable homes which is due to commence development by spring 2017.

3.2 Housing Advice Team Assistance

3.2.1 The Housing Advice Team provided assistance to over 1,500 customers at the Borough Council Offices during 2015/16, of which, 1,350 received housing advice and assistance for housing difficulties/homeless prevention. This was a marked increase on the numbers recorded in 2014/15 where 600 customers were assisted.

3.3 Supported Housing

3.3.1 The young person's supported accommodation within Tewkesbury Borough has been improved by G3/Rooftop this year. The housing association has replaced its outdated provision at Tolsey House, Tewkesbury with a redevelopment of accommodation High Street, also in the town. The new units provide high quality self-contained accommodation for young vulnerable adults on a single site with Jubilee House.

3.4 Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention

3.4.1 In 2015/16 there were 172 preventions, up from 94 in 2014/15. These prevention interventions impacted positively on homelessness and the use and cost of emergency/temporary accommodation use.

3.4.2 A greater emphasis on homelessness prevention has been successfully implemented within the Borough in line with the DCLG's criteria for 'GOLD Standard'. The Standard means a pledge to strive for continuous improvement in front line housing services through 10 challenges.

3.4.3 The first stage is for the housing service to have its peer review; this will be completed by two other districts within Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire. This is timetabled for late spring 2017 where 60% is to be achieved.

3.4.4 If achieved, the Council will be able to proceed with meeting the 10 challenges; upon reaching our first challenge we will achieve the Bronze Standard, meeting five challenges would obtain silver and all 10 Gold.

3.4.5 For more information on the Gold Standard and the requirements of Tewkesbury Borough Council you can visit <http://home.practitionersupport.org> or discuss with the Housing Services Manager.

3.5 Supporting people experiencing domestic violence

3.5.1 The six District Councils in Gloucestershire and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) pilot sanctuary scheme to offer target hardening and sanctuary room measures to residents wanting to remain in their homes and at risk of domestic violence was very successful and has been extended until March 2017.

3.5.2 13 households from Tewkesbury Borough accessed assistance through this scheme during 2015/16 and all continue to remain in their homes. All 13 received target hardening measures (lock changes and minor adaptations) which were funded by the PCC; no households required sanctuary measures which would have been part funded by the Council. All those who benefited were female households.

3.5.3 'Places of Safety' funding, to provide safe self-contained emergency accommodation for those fleeing domestic abuse, has enabled 12 properties to be made available across the County for this purpose. Tewkesbury Borough's first place of safety was made available at the end of November 2016 through partnership with Severn Vale Housing.

3.6 Financial Assistance

3.6.1 Following on from the presentation to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2015 regarding the re-deployment of financial housing options, the Housing Advice Team has successfully assisted the first applicants with deposits and rent in advance to move to alternative accommodation in areas where they want to live near to existing support (i.e. families and schools).

3.6.2 In the 12 months October 2015-September 2016 35 households were assisted to avoid homelessness through opportunities into alternative homes in the private rented sector. A further 16 households have been assisted to remain in their current accommodation as, following help, it was reasonable and sustainable for them to remain. This work has alleviated homeless pressure on the households, demands on homelessness, and social housing within the area.

3.7 Anti-Social Behaviour Diversion Work

3.7.1 The Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Youth Diversion Worker has continued to engage with young and vulnerable members of the community aged 11-19 years. At present the Officer is working with 15 young people. These cases cross over from anti-social behaviour to Families First and also to projects such as sexual exploitation work.

3.8 Rough Sleepers

3.8.1 The rough sleepers estimate for Tewkesbury Borough in 2016 was zero. Whilst there is a low prevalence of rough sleeping within the Borough, it does continue to occur and cause concern.

3.9 Lettings of Affordable Housing

3.9.1 409 social housing properties were let in the Borough in the financial year 2015/16. A breakdown of the housing need of successful applicants indicates that 79% of these lettings were to households in emergency, urgent or significant housing need.

3.10 Working with the Private Rented Sector

3.10.1 At September 2016, there were six landlords with nine properties awarded 'Fit to Rent' status.

3.10.2 Between April and September 2016 a total of 30 Disabled Facilities Grants were approved to a total value of £174,458.

3.10.3 Between April and September 2016, the Warm & Well Scheme received 217 enquiries. The total number of measures installed and properties improved through the Warm & Well Scheme in the period was 20.

4. HOUSING STRATEGY 2017-21

4.1 At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 19 July 2016, it was agreed that a Member Working Group be set up to produce the next strategy which is required over five years in order to meet the statutory requirements of the homelessness strategy element. Seven Members volunteered and the Lead Member for Built Environment Chaired the meetings

4.2 The Working Group met monthly with the first meeting on 18 August and the final meeting on 12 December 2016. Officers presented the housing and homelessness evidence base to Members to inform them of the whole picture of needs and challenges in Tewkesbury Borough. Members agreed priorities and objectives for public and stakeholder consultation which ran for a six month period commencing on 7 September 2016.

4.3 Members were presented with the draft Housing Strategy at its last meeting in December and agreed the documents set out at Appendix 2.

4.4 The Housing Strategy 2017-21 is an overarching strategic document that takes into account the principle national and local issues that are likely to affect Tewkesbury Borough in the foreseeable future. It sets out the housing and homelessness challenges and explains how the Council intends to address these issues through four key priorities:

- Priority 1 - Increase the supply of housing
- Priority 2 - Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention
- Priority 3 - Meeting the housing needs of those who need it most
- Priority 4 - Improving the health and well-being of local people

4.5 Key objectives are detailed within each of the priority areas where targets and outcomes for delivery will be detailed in the annual action plan. Our targets and outcomes for delivering the objectives will be shaped annually in order to be pro-active as well as re-active to the changing needs of our community and the challenges facing us when new government policies are implemented. The Action Plan is to be as flexible as possible so that the Council can continue to take action where necessary and start new actions when appropriate to do so over the five year strategy period.

4.6 Included in the strategy documents are the evidence base, the Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2017-21 and the Tenancy Strategy 2017-21. The Strategy and associated documents to be endorsed by this Committee can be found at Appendix 2. Members are asked to recommend the strategy to Council for adoption at its meeting on 24 January 2017.

5.0 MONITORING AND FUTURE ACTION PLANS

5.1 It is anticipated that action plans for each year of the strategy will be produced annually and taken to the Executive Committee for approval.

5.2 The strategy and action plans will be monitored by the Lead Members together with bi-annual reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 None

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 A six week public consultation on the evidence base for the Housing Strategy 2017-21 commenced on 6 September 2016 and asked all stakeholders for their input, to identify gaps and support for the priorities.

7.2 The Housing Services Team held a stakeholder event for partners and an open public session on 12 October 2016.

7.3 The results from the consultation were publicised and responses considered as part of the development of the Housing Strategy 2017-21.

8.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

8.1 Council Plan 2016-20

Emerging Joint Core Strategy and Tewkesbury Borough Plan

Housing, Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-16

Housing Strategy 2017-21

9.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

9.1 The main documents driving government housing policy and legislation are:

- National Planning Policy Framework 2012
- Homelessness Act 2002 and Housing Act 1996 (as amended) (Housing Standards)
- Local Government Act 2003
- Housing and Regeneration Act 2008
- Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (Housing grants, loans and home improvement assistance)
- The Future Home Improvement Agency (CLG 2009)
- Equality Act 2010
- Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England 2011
- Localism Act 2011
- The Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013
- The Welfare Reform Act 2012
- The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016
- The Housing and Planning Act 2016

9.2 Forthcoming relevant legislation:

- Homelessness Reduction Bill

10.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

10.1 None directly associated with this report other than staff and Member time. Any resources associated with the actions in the strategy will form part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Asset Management Plan. Resources implications will be met from existing budget allocations and, where they cannot, will be subject to a growth bid within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and a separate report to Members.

11.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/Economic/ Environment)

11.1 The strategy includes considerations of sustainability and energy efficiency in addition to the social and economic implications.

12.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

12.1 Housing is a basic human need and, through consultation and the Member Working Group, all relevant groups have been considered.

13.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

13.1 The Housing, Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-16 has been approved and adopted by Council in September 2012.

Background Papers: Existing strategies and policies are available on the Council's website.

Contact Officer: Paula Baker, Housing Services Manager
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Erin Davies, Strategic Housing and Enabling Officer
1684272162 Erin.Davies@tewkesbury.gov.uk

Appendices: Appendix 1 - Housing, Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-16
Action Plan Update

Appendix 2 - Housing Strategy 2017-21



THEME ONE: Housing Supply and Delivery of Good Quality Affordable Homes

Priority 1.1 Housing Supply




| Objective 1.1 | Make sure there is sufficient housing supply to meet needs within the constraints of the borough | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Measures | Increase in net number of dwellings | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | An average of 100 affordable homes per annum in any three year period 2012-16 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Liaise with the Homes and Communities Agency and Registered Providers to deliver priority schemes within Tewkesbury Borough and to support appropriate bids for Homes And Communities Agency or other available funding for affordable housing | Increase in the net number of affordable homes delivered with grant funding/other public subsidy. | Annually 2012-16 |  The development programme in Tewkesbury has been successful and over the 4 years of the Strategy we have exceeded the council's target of 150 per annum. Housing services have worked with the Homes and Communities Agency and providers to maximise to the funding possible into new schemes. The 2011-15 programme funded 197 new dwellings. Total number of new Affordable Housing units completed in Tewkesbury Borough as follows: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Total</th> <th>Social rent</th> <th>Affordable rent</th> <th>Shared ownership</th> <th>Discounted Sales</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2012/2013</td> <td>139</td> <td>51</td> <td>42</td> <td>46</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013/2014</td> <td>155</td> <td>70</td> <td>36</td> <td>49</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014/2015</td> <td>145</td> <td>40</td> <td>78</td> <td>23</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015/2016</td> <td>229</td> <td>70</td> <td>69</td> <td>90</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1 and Q2 2016/17</td> <td>111</td> <td>18</td> <td>33</td> <td>49</td> <td>11</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | Year | Total | Social rent | Affordable rent | Shared ownership | Discounted Sales | 2012/2013 | 139 | 51 | 42 | 46 | 0 | 2013/2014 | 155 | 70 | 36 | 49 | 0 | 2014/2015 | 145 | 40 | 78 | 23 | 0 | 2015/2016 | 229 | 70 | 69 | 90 | 0 | Q1 and Q2 2016/17 | 111 | 18 | 33 | 49 | 11 |
| Year | Total | Social rent | Affordable rent | Shared ownership | Discounted Sales | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2012/2013 | 139 | 51 | 42 | 46 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2013/2014 | 155 | 70 | 36 | 49 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2014/2015 | 145 | 40 | 78 | 23 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2015/2016 | 229 | 70 | 69 | 90 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Q1 and Q2 2016/17 | 111 | 18 | 33 | 49 | 11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | In the last financial year we exceeded the annual Council Plan target of 150 new homes with a total of 229 new affordable homes built. This has been the largest delivery of affordable homes in a | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | | | <p>financial year since 2007/08 when we saw 247 affordable homes delivered.</p> <p>The affordable housing achieved in recent years reflects the council's ability to negotiate the required contributions under planning obligations.</p> <p>Our position to achieve 150 new affordable homes per annum to 2020 remains strong as we have secured 35%-40% affordable housing on qualifying sites over the last 3 years. These sites are coming to fruition with the large developments seeing new housing until 2019, namely Cleavelands and Homelands in Bishop's Cleeve.</p> <p>Our 2016/17 Q1-Q2 affordable homes delivery has been across the Borough in Winchcombe, Bishop's Cleeve, Stoke Orchard, Brockworth and Longford.</p> |
| Providing for housing supply through the Core Strategy | Core Strategy Adopted 2014 | 2014 | <p> Work on the JCS is ongoing. Please see the JCS website for details www.gct-ics.org.</p> |
| Delivery of affordable housing through new approaches and innovative funding options (including cross-subsidy) with Registered Providers and other housing partners, or use public-owned land made available for affordable housing development | Increase in the number of affordable homes delivered through new approaches mentioned within the strategy or on land made available by the council or other public body | Annually 2012-16 | <p> A cross subsidy scheme of 11 market and 10 affordable homes in Winchcombe has also completed this financial year. This scheme includes a bespoke home for a family with a member who is disabled. In Badgeworth, 3 affordable rent units and 3 market houses were also built using the model of cross-subsidy. The market homes have enabled the delivery of the affordable homes.</p> <p>The re-development of garage sites in Bishops Cleeve has brought about 21 affordable homes, of which 6 homes will meet the needs of families with a member who is disabled.</p> <p>Planning permission for 13 affordable homes for Minsterworth was granted in 2016 and the housing provider expects to start on site in the new year 2017.</p> |



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| Objective 1.2 | | Deliver a mix of house types and tenures to reflect local need | | |
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| Measures | | Affordable homes completed are in accordance with latest evidence of need | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Provide appropriate pre-application advice, negotiation with developers and Registered Providers, comment on and inform planning applications | | All schemes that include affordable housing, where appropriate, and supported by evidence, will provide a mix of property types and affordable tenures. | Annually 2012 - 16 |  All housing projects with an affordable housing threshold receive appropriate advice and guidance during all planning stages. Recent projects include Alderton, Gothington, Longford, Stoke Orchard, Toddington and Twynning. The flexibility of delivery in the future, however, is likely to be affected by the Housing and Planning Act emphasis on affordable home ownership; local authorities continue to wait for guidance on Starter Homes for example. Encouragingly the government have revert the decision not to fund new affordable rented housing and so development of noth rent and home ownership products look set to be more promising for the future. |
| Make sure the evidence of need is up to date. | | Increase in the number of new Parish Housing Needs Surveys completed or renewed. | Annually 2012-16 |  Parish Housing Needs Surveys have been completed by GRCC to evidence local housing need. 14. surveys have been undertaken since 2012: 2012 Brockworth, Highnam, Minsterworth 2013 Down Hatherley, Twigworth, Norton 2014 Ashleworth, Gothington 2015 Sandhurst, Shurdington, Staverton 2016 Winchcombe, The Leigh, Norton (update) |
| | | Housing needs assessment and other data sources of housing need are up to date | 2014-16 |  The renewal of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment was completed in 2013 with final publication in 2014. In 2016 the Gloucestershire local authorities began the process of commissioning an updated SHMA to be completed in 2017 on the 5 year anniversary. |

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| | Completion of a new Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) in 2012 | 2012 |  The GTAA was completed in 2013 and further work was commissioned in 2016 to coincide with the change in definition to gypsies and travellers in national planning policy and to provide further evidence to the JCS. |
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Objective 1.3 Support the delivery of new housing throughout the borough through the emerging Core Strategy

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| Measures | Policy supports a contribution towards affordable housing. Number of homes completed and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Making sure that the policies within the Core Strategy include affordable housing requirements. | Core Strategy Adopted 2014 | 2014 |  Work on the JCS is ongoing. Please see the JCS website for details www.gct-jcs.org . |
| Monitor completions of housing across the borough. | Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) completed and numbers of housing (incl. affordable housing) reported. | Annually 2012-16 |  The Annual Monitoring Report data is compiled by the Planning Policy team annually and published when completed. |


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Objective 1.4 Encourage the Construction of High Quality Housing

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| Measures | Planning policy supports the development of high quality housing. Number of homes developed to the required standard. | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Making sure that Developers are aware of the Homes And Communities Agency Design and Quality (or replacement) standards for affordable housing construction. | Better quality affordable homes. | 2012-16 |  All new affordable homes meet the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) required design and quality standards for affordable housing construction and this is secured through s106 agreements and planning conditions. From 2015 the HCA removed all such requirements. The council continues to seek particular standards where appropriate. |
| Assisting in producing Supplementary Planning Documents or Design Briefs to secure housing standards | SPD provides developers with guidance on design and delivery of affordable housing | Annually 2012-14 |  There has been much change during the life of the Strategy and the SPD is now out of date and no longer in line with national policy. The enabling officer seeks to provide evidence of the need for particular house types and has been successful in |

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| | | | <p>achieving higher levels of the Code for Sustainable Homes than the previous basic of level 3 and Lifetime Homes in the absence of government requirements.</p> <p>Work on the affordable housing policies in the new Local Plan will commence in 2017 and are actioned for completion accordingly in the Housing Strategy 2017-2021.</p> |
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| Objective 1.5 | | Work to Bring Empty Homes Back Into Use | | |
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| Measures | | Number of empty homes brought back into use | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Evaluating empty properties for priority action | | Priority actions taken on those properties that are having a detrimental effect on neighbourhoods, are in poor condition, or have been empty longest. | Annually from 2012 |  The council continues to bring homes back into use through information and advice services to home owners and formal Notices to take action. Examples include properties that have been sold after informal discussions with the owner, through to property improvements after service of formal notices. |
| Using a range of enforcement actions to bring the homes back into use | | Most effective and appropriate powers used for each case | Annually from 2012 | |

THEME TWO: Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention

Priority 2.1 Continue to provide housing advice and homelessness prevention to those who require it



| Objective 2.1.1 Prevent Homelessness | | | |
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| Measures | Homelessness Cases as a percentage of the number of advice cases 10% per annum 2012-16 | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Provide comprehensive housing options advice to all customers and provide all customers threatened with homelessness with individualised written Housing Options advice | All customers requiring the service are able to access it and all those in serious housing difficulty will have the information and advice they need to avoid homelessness | 2012-16 | <p>😊 Our Housing Advice Team continues to provide advice and assistance via a drop-in service to over 1360 customers annually (based on the figures of 2015/16). Our figures for 2014/15 were 600 advice customers indicating a rise of 760 customers approaching for advice in a year. This represents a rise of 126%.</p> <p>We have improved our framework for providing written advice so that all customers facing housing difficulty will have bespoke written housing advice they can take away to resolve their difficulties. This is to provide a better service for those in housing difficulty and to be compliant with the guidelines of best practice.</p> <p>Our performance in 2016/17 to date: 2016/17 – Q1 54 homeless preventions 2016/17 – Q2 36 homeless preventions (this figure is significantly lower than the previous quarter and likely to be attributable to the launch of the new choice based lettings (CBL) database/homeless and homeless prevention database. This is because our service was operating minimally with urgent cases only for several weeks during the period when we had no database and whilst we were back loading cases and helping customers to use the new database.</p> |
| Participate in the Mortgage Rescue Scheme | All eligible households are referred to the Mortgage Rescue Scheme. | 2012-16 | <p>😊 The Mortgage Rescue Scheme was discontinued by the DCLG at the end of 2013 to new applicants. The Council continues to offer housing advice, negotiations and money advice</p> |

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| | | | <p>in association with advice agencies and homelessness assistance to this group.</p> <p>Local alternatives to the mortgage rescue scheme will continue to be sought – particularly for customers with disabilities in suitable adapted properties. This action will be carried forward</p> |
| <p>Develop Enhanced Housing Options with other agencies to provide help and support with employment, training and benefit advice.</p> | <p>Repeat homelessness reduced by tackling the root causes.</p> | <p>Annually 2012-16</p> | <p>😊 2015/16 – we have increased the number of homeless preventions within the borough to 172 households from 94 last year. These prevention interventions impacted positively on homelessness and the use and cost of emergency/temporary accommodation use.</p> <p>The housing advice team are going to be implementing and administering a new framework for providing continuous improvement in front line housing services through the development and delivery of the Gold Standard Challenge. This is based on the Government report 'Making Every Contact Count'. More information can be found at http://home.practitionersupport.org/.</p> <p>The initial stage of Gold Standard is a peer review by partner local authorities (known as a DPR). The first DPR was conducted in April 2016 in Stroud DC which was unfortunately unsuccessful in attaining the standard. The timetable for further reviews has been deferred (to incorporate the implementation of the new Choice Based Lettings System. The further reviews will recommence in July 2016 (South Glos) and then deferred until November 2016. Two peer reviews have been conducted at Stroud District Council and South Gloucestershire Council.</p> <p>Tewkesbury Borough Council has acted as the reviewer in one of these reviews. Tewkesbury Borough Council's revised review date is late Spring 2017.</p> |

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| <p>Continue to develop the Assertive Outreach model with St Mungo's Broadway</p> | <p>To prevent and reduce rough sleeping and implement a no second night out alternative</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p> St Mungo's Broadway has been awarded the Assertive Outreach Service within the County and is working with Tewkesbury Borough Council to identify rough sleepers and reduce the numbers in the borough.</p> <p>In November 2016 there no rough sleepers were estimated in Tewkesbury Borough on the night of the count. The estimate/count across the county recorded 42 rough sleepers on the night - which indicate there has been a significant countywide rise this year as in 2015 estimates indicated 20 rough sleepers.</p> <p>Whilst the prevalence of rough sleeping is low within the borough but does continue to occur and cause concern. Since the inception of the Assertive Outreach project earlier in May 2015 there were 46 referrals made to St Mungo's from Tewkesbury Borough from via members of the public, Housing Services, or the parish councils (some of these may include referrals for the same individuals – as referrers often do not know the identity of those sleeping rough and they are not static).</p> <p>The Outreach funding ended in August 2016, and Strategic Directors negotiated ongoing funding and service for the county with contributions from Glos County Council, the PCC and the PCT. The re-procurement of provider from January 2017 is yet to be announced.</p> |
| <p>Continue to work within the County Sanctuary Scheme with the PCC</p> | <p>To prevent households being forced to leave their homes when threatened with domestic violence.</p> | <p>Ongoing – extended until March 2017</p> | <p> The pilot project has been successful in supporting 13 households to remain in their homes during 2015/16 through target hardening and sanctuary measures and will continue to support those experiencing threats of violence who wish to remain in their homes. All successes have been achieved through target hardening measures.</p> |

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| <p>Continue to assist residents within Tewkesbury Borough to understand and manage the effects of Welfare Reform</p> | <p>To prevent households losing their home because of welfare reform – i.e. the benefit cap, under occupation charge, universal credit</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p> Our Housing Advice Team continues to work closely with the Revenues and Benefits team to identify and assist those affected by Welfare Reform.</p> <p>Changes pending introduction through the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 are likely to financially impact on several additional cohorts within the Borough including U35s, large families, and those in affordable rented properties and we will be working closely with Revenues and Benefits and partner agencies within the Borough to prevent homelessness through financial hardship.</p> <p>Housing Services is working within the Financial Inclusion Partnership to establish firm pathways for support to assist customers mitigate the effects of welfare reform.</p> |
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| Objective 2.1.2 | | Provide social housing for those in the most need | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Measures | Emergency Banding Households are Housed within a reasonable timescale | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Continue to implement the Gloucestershire Homeseeker allocations procedure | All households in emergency band are housed appropriately within a reasonable timescale | 2012 and ongoing | <p> Re-housing statistics: Households rehoused 2015-16 by banding:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th colspan="5">Bedroom need</th> <th></th> </tr> <tr> <th>Banding</th> <th>1</th> <th>2</th> <th>3</th> <th>4</th> <th>5</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Emergency</td> <td>6</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gold</td> <td>50</td> <td>61</td> <td>19</td> <td>6</td> <td>2</td> <td>138</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Silver</td> <td>65</td> <td>61</td> <td>40</td> <td>10</td> <td>2</td> <td>178</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bronze</td> <td>30</td> <td>41</td> <td>12</td> <td>4</td> <td>0</td> <td>87</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>151</td> <td>163</td> <td>71</td> <td>20</td> <td>4</td> <td>409</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Detail about this objective are overleaf.</p> | | | | | Bedroom need | | | | | | Banding | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total | Emergency | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | Gold | 50 | 61 | 19 | 6 | 2 | 138 | Silver | 65 | 61 | 40 | 10 | 2 | 178 | Bronze | 30 | 41 | 12 | 4 | 0 | 87 | Total | 151 | 163 | 71 | 20 | 4 | 409 |
| | Bedroom need | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Banding | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Emergency | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Gold | 50 | 61 | 19 | 6 | 2 | 138 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Silver | 65 | 61 | 40 | 10 | 2 | 178 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bronze | 30 | 41 | 12 | 4 | 0 | 87 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 151 | 163 | 71 | 20 | 4 | 409 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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- The average time on the register for any household will depend upon personal circumstances and the appropriateness of the properties available and whether the household bids on available properties. .
- Whilst it appears that households banded as emergency were the least successful band, it is important to note that emergency band constitutes only 1.7% (33 households) of households on the housing register. The band includes emergency situations but also half of this band is made up of under occupying applicants in social housing wishing to downsize but who do not bid. This band was successful on 1.4% of all lets.
- Gold band constitutes 7.3% (113 households) of the housing register and includes those who are homeless or very overcrowded. This band was successful for 33.1% of all lets during the financial year.
- Silver Band constitutes 32.83% (618 households) of the housing register and includes those in significant need to move or one bedroom overcrowded. This group were successful for 38% of all lets.
- Bronze band constitutes 60% (1125 households) of the housing register and includes those who have no housing need (i.e. they are in housing which is considered suitable) but wish to move. This group were successful on 21.25% of all lets.

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| Working with partners to reduce under-occupation | Agreed action plan in place | April 2013 ongoing |  We have continued to work with Revenues and Benefits to identify those who are struggling financially as a result of under occupation. Housing Services contact those who have applied for discretionary housing payments to cover under occupation to give advice on housing options. This action is now covered within the ongoing welfare reform work above. |
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Priority 2.2: Temporary & Supported Housing

| Objective 2.2.1 | Where possible provide sufficient temporary accommodation to meet need. | | |
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| Measures | Zero Use of Bed and Breakfast Accommodation | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Review the need for emergency and temporary accommodation | <p>Clarity about the need for temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Local provision of appropriate accommodation</p> | July 2012 | <p>😊 Following a successful bid to the DCLG for dispersed refuge accommodation for those fleeing domestic abuse, two properties will be procured in each district of Gloucestershire during 2016-17 to accommodate this group. Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) will lease these properties and offer support to occupants. 2 properties have been sourced in Forest of Dean and Stroud District. SVHS have agreed to provide two properties in Tewkesbury Borough. One property is now available within the borough @ November 2016.</p> <p>We have changed the tenure of the 5 temporary houses within Tewkesbury Borough (managed by Stonham) to Licence agreements as appropriate with emergency homeless accommodation. These properties are used as an alternative to B&B accommodation and are a valuable resource.</p> <p>The Crashpad service for young people was introduced in the financial year 2014-15 throughout the county in young people's supported accommodation to avoid the use of bed and breakfast for very young people. Unfortunately cuts in supporting people funding have reduced the numbers available during 2016-17, but we are continuing to part fund Glos Nightstop to offer short term accommodation to young people in housing crisis.</p> <p>Single older (aged 35+) chaotic homeless people with health problems and alcohol and/or drug dependency continue to need emergency homeless accommodation. We have difficulty in sourcing longer term solutions for this client group as all landlords across are reluctant to consider them. We continue to be reliant on B&B accommodation out of Tewkesbury District for this group.</p> <p>At November 2016 we are awaiting the announcement on the new funding grant for temporary accommodation from April 2017 onwards (previously higher</p> |

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| | | | <p>temporary accommodation rents were covered through Housing Benefit). Negotiations were ongoing, however, with Mears Plexus to provide emergency and temporary accommodation within the borough for single person households and difficult to place families.</p> <p>SVHS have also confirmed that they will work with Housing Services to look at emergency and temporary accommodation solutions within the borough. No further action has been possible however between August and the time of writing because the funding levels have not yet been confirmed.</p> <p>If successful, either partnership solution could provide a viable alternative to bed and breakfast and reduce the housing subsidy deficit for homeless households.</p> |
| Work with RPs and private landlords to maximise the availability of stock to house those needing temporary accommodation | Different types and models of temporary accommodation available. | April 2013 & ongoing |  The housing advice team continues its work in ensuring that opportunities to support residents through working with the private sector as well as housing associations. See above. |

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| Objective 2.2.2 | Work with Supporting People and local Registered Providers to make best use of existing accommodation-based housing related support and supported move-on accommodation available where appropriate. | | |
| Measures | Zero under-use of existing supported housing provision | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Work with partners to review the need for supported accommodation and under-use/gaps in provision | Gaps in provision and under-use of existing provision identified | April 2013 then reviewed annually thereafter |  Supporting People contracts have been under review and are working well to support our residents. We continue to be active members of the Supporting People Core Strategy Group in order to monitor this work. Reductions in the Supporting People funding and the possible effects of the Welfare Reform bill 2016 may impact on the success of these schemes and we will be working with partners to minimise the effects of these on vulnerable households. |
| Work with Registered Providers to re-model existing supported housing where appropriate or | Better use of existing stock and new/extended provision where the need has been | April 2013 & ongoing |  The council continues to work with its housing and housing-related support providers to provide suitable move-on accommodation for our residents. Funding and capacity at all |

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| provide new supported move-on accommodation to meet needs. | identified and resources available to support. | | levels continues to hamper our progress. The council is committed to re-addressing these issues with its partners over the next 12 months. Housing services have worked with Rooftop to re-provide for young people's accommodation at Tolsey House in Tewkesbury Town to the service at Jubilee on the High Street. |
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| Objective 2.2.3 | Work with Supporting People to facilitate additional investment into floating support services across Tewkesbury Borough to assist people to live independently | | |
| Measures | Increased investment into floating support services in the borough | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Work with Supporting People and partner support providers to extend support services to borough residents in need. | Realising opportunities to increase the number of additional residents who could be helped. | April 2013 and ongoing | 😊 As above, the council continues to work with Supporting People in commissioning and when appropriate re-commissioning housing-related support to maximise the opportunities for our residents. Contracts for community-based housing related support are in place, and we work closely with support providers to ensure that our clients access all assistance possible. |

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Priority 2.3 Working with the private housing sector



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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Objective 2.3.1 | Work with the private housing sector to provide additional affordable accommodation to meet needs | | |
| Measures | Increased number of private rent homes accessible to people in housing need | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Work with private housing landlords and Mears Plexus (or other housing support providers) to identify additional private rented properties that could be let to households in need. | Increased number of homes available | September 2012 ongoing. Opportunity-led. | 😊 Working with the private sector continues to be ad hoc but our relationships and contacts with the right organisations such as the National Landlords Association and Gloucestershire Landlords Association has helped to spread the message of encouraging landlords to make their properties available. |

APPENDIX 1 - Tewkesbury Borough Council Housing, Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-16 Action Plan Update

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| | | | <p>Aspire Housing have secured 6 properties within Tewkesbury Borough through a project which works with 18-25 year olds not in education or training who are not suitable for supported accommodation.</p> <p>Since the re-introduction of financial assistance to those threatened with homelessness in July 2015 we have increased the ability of our customers to solve their housing crisis in the private rented sector.</p> <p>In the 12 months October 2015-September 2016 we have assisted 35 households to avoid homelessness through opportunities into alternative homes in the private rented sector.</p> <p>We have also assisted a further 16 households to remain in their current accommodation as following help it was reasonable and sustainable for them to remain.</p> <p>We will use the scheme to build a list of contacts within the private sector that will accept homeless applicants and develop working relationships with private landlord portfolio holders.</p> |
| <p>Maintain the “Fit to Rent” Landlord Accreditation Scheme and hold at least one large-scale landlord accreditation training/awareness session per year</p> | <p>Landlords wanting to work with the council better trained to provide quality accommodation and management.</p> | <p>Annual</p> | <p>😊 At September 2016, there were 6 landlords with 9 properties awarded ‘Fit to Rent’ status. Promotion of this accreditation continues in partnership with the other Gloucestershire district authorities through the National Landlords Association and Gloucestershire Landlords Association.</p> |




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Priority 2.4 Work in Partnership to reduce homelessness

| Objective 2.4.1 | Develop our partnership working to improve outcomes for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness | | |
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| Measures | Delivery of agreed outcomes to meet customer needs | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Continue to organise quarterly housing partnership meetings with Registered Providers and private housing landlords | Quarterly meetings attended and positive outcomes realised through improvement to accessing services, provision of support and improvement of relationships. | 2012 & ongoing |  All meetings attended, including but not exhaustive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered Providers Meetings • Gloucestershire Housing Officers Group • Homeseeke Management Board • Gloucestershire Strategic Housing Partnership • Newly established Joint Core Strategy Affordable Housing Partnership Housing service continue to provide a valuable and proactive approach to achieving our housing, housing-related support and homelessness outcomes for our residents as identified in our Housing & Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2012-16. |
| Continue to reduce the risk of homelessness through the provision of services to young people (and their families) through the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Youth Diversion Officer | Reduced number of evictions where ASB is the root cause of the threatened eviction. | 2012 & ongoing |  The council's Anti-Social Behaviour Youth Diversion Worker has continued to engage with young and vulnerable (aged 11-19) members of the community. These cases cross over from ASB to Families First and also to projects such as sexual exploitation work. Cases do not have a definitive beginning and end time and may come back again for further work on a different subject. As at December 2016, the Anti-Social Behaviour Youth Diversion Worker is working with 15 young people. |


THEME THREE: Housing to Meet the Needs of Specific Groups

Priority 3.1 Older People

| Objective 3.1.1 To support independent living for older people and the delivery of suitable older person accommodation | | | |
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| Measures | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased proportion of new-build affordable homes built to lifetime Homes Standard -10% of all affordable homes developed per annum between 2012-16 Number of households aged over 65 having assistive technologies installed in their homes - Annual 2012-2016 Number of older people accessing Home Improvement Agency (HIA) services - Annual 2012-2016 Number of older people receiving affordable warmth improvements - Annual 2012-2016 | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Delivering affordable homes that are built to Lifetime Homes (LTH) Standard | Increased proportion of affordable housing developed to LH standard | 2012-16 |  The council's target throughout the life of this Strategy is 10% of all new affordable homes completed annually. Many developers support this council target. The percentage of affordable homes that met the LTH standard per year is as follows: 2012/13 = 33% 2013/14 = 15% 2014/15 = 10% 2015/16 = 7% Q1 & Q2 2016/17 = 38% LTH Standard is now an historic standard however many affordable homes delivered through planning obligations that were granted previously i.e. Homelands and Cleevelands in Bishop's Cleeve, are subject to meeting the LTH standard. |
| Work with RP's and partners to offer advice and assistance with grants loans and support services (e.g. HIA handyman services) to older people to help insulate, adapt and maintain homes. | Increase in the number of older people accessing these service | 2012-16 |  Environmental health continue to actively promote Gloucestershire Safe at Home Improvement Agency and the Warm & Well Home Energy Efficiency Advice scheme when visiting eligible customers and advice that it might be of benefit to them. Promotion of both continues through the borough website and leaflets. We also work with Severn Vale Housing Society where minor adaptations are completed for vulnerable residents. |
| Promote the benefits of assistive | Increase in the number of | 2012-16 |  The Safe at Home service continues to promote, |


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| technologies (e.g. Telecare) to older people and their families to provide the security and reassurance needed for independent living | older people having assistive technologies installed in their homes | | provide and install Telecare systems. |
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| Objective 3.1.2 | Work with Registered Providers to review the use of existing sheltered housing schemes and identify opportunities for remodelling for a different client group where appropriate. | | |
| Measures | Review completed | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Work with Registered Providers to review the use of existing sheltered housing schemes and identify opportunities for remodelling for a different client group where appropriate. | Review completed Opportunities identified | 2012-16 |  We are continually monitoring this work of our housing associations as they update their asset management strategies. Our aim is to ensure that sheltered housing remains fit-for-purpose and continues to meet future or changing needs. The ability to adapt many schemes within the borough depends highly on its design, suitability for alteration and the costs of doing so. |

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Priority 3.2 People with Disabilities

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| Objective 3.2.1 | Support access to housing that meets everyone's needs | | |
| Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased proportion of new-build affordable homes built to lifetime Homes Standard (As mentioned in 3.1.1 above) - 10% of all affordable homes developed per annum between 2012-16 Number of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) awarded to qualifying residents - Annual 2012 – 2016 | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Continue to promote and deliver Disabled Facility Grants (DFG's) to qualifying residents. | Increase in the number of older people's homes suitably adapted. | 2012-2016 |  Between April and September 2016 a total of 30 Disabled Facility Grants were approved to a total value of £174,458. Much of our work is focussing on the opportunities for residents with mobility needs, for example whether a more appropriate option is to move to a more suitable home. |

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| Continue to prioritise disabled people for wheelchair accessible properties as they become available for re-letting through Gloucestershire Homeseeker | Disabled people allocated tenancies for wheelchair accessible properties | 2012-16 |  The Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer is working closely with developers to ensure that a suitable number of accessible homes are built in the borough to ensure that the number of such homes is increased and people's housing options are enhanced. The ability to let properties largely depends upon the suitability of the home for the individual client. Many registered providers remove aids and adaptations for re-letting but the housing advice team continues to proactive work with providers to retain these and find suitable households. |
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Priority 3.3 Younger People

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| Objective 3.3.1 | To support independent living for younger people | | |
| Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of young people helped by ASB youth diversion officer • Number of young people being offered a starter tenancy | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Reduce the risk of homelessness due to ASB through the provision of support services to young people and their families. | Reduced number of evictions where ASB is the cause. | 2012 and ongoing |  Partnership work is on-going between the Council's housing team, Police and registered providers to prevent the eviction cases where ASB has been identified as a possible reason for eviction. |
| Working with G3 and other support providers to make sure that young people continue to receive housing related support and develop life skills that will help them to sustain their tenancies | Increased number of young people able to move into independent accommodation | 2012 onwards & reviewed annually |  Partnership working is continuing with G3 who is providing 'Skills for Life' training for young entering into their first tenancy or who are struggling with their first tenancy. |
| Provide support by being a 'Bare Trustee' for young people to get their own tenancy/Equitable Tenancies | Increased number of young people benefitting | 2012 onwards |  Currently the council acts as 'Bare Trustee' for young people in need of housing and require their own tenancy/equitable tenancy. |

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Priority 3.4 Military Personnel

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| Objective 3.4.1 | Assist with meeting the needs of serving armed forces personnel and those leaving the service | | |
| Measures | Number of Military Personnel cases receiving housing options advice or housing assistance | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Working closely with the local military bases to understand the impact of the SDSR on the demand for housing in the borough. | Better ability to respond to the demand for housing or housing services | 2013 and ongoing |  Officers have visited the ARRC military base in the borough and offered assistance. However to date, this offer of assistance has not been taken up. |
| Working in partnership with military personnel liaison officers to review cases of irregular occupiers. | Cases reviewed and potential barriers addressed. | 2013 onwards | |
| Identifying the needs of seriously injured or disabled service personnel. | Better knowledge of any increase in demand for housing and other services. | 2012-2016 |  Housing services have attempted engagement with the local military, however a lack of response has resulted in little progress on this to date. However, military personnel can apply for housing through Homeseeker Plus with the right to chose which district their local connection can be applied to and special conditions under the allocations policy when they know they are leaving service. Any medical or physical needs will be identified through the application process. This will include supporting documentation from Occupational Therapists and doctors. |


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Priority 3.5 Travelling Show People, Gypsies and Travellers

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| Objective 3.5.1 | Undertake a reassessment of the Gypsy, Traveller and Show People communities needs | | |
| Measures | Assessment completed - December 2012 | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Working in Partnership with other Gloucestershire Councils to complete a new assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and travelling Show People | Assessment completed and published | June 2013 - completed | 😊 The GTAA was completed in 2013 with the final published in 2014. Further work was commissioned in 2016 to coincide with the change in definition to gypsies and travellers in national planning policy and to provide further evidence to the JCS. |

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| Objective 3.5.2 | Address the accommodation needs of Travelling Show People, Gypsies and Travellers | | |
| Measures | Core Strategy Adopted Number of planning applications decided Number of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People seeking housing options advice | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Provide housing options advice for those Gypsies, Travellers and Show People seeking bricks and mortar accommodation. | Advice provided | 2012-2016 | 😊 Advice has been provided when required by those customers who have approached the Council's Housing Advice Team for assistance. |
| Ensuring that the emerging Core Strategy includes policies relating to the provision of accommodation to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show People. | Core Strategy meets the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show People | 2014 | 😊 The GTAA report provides an evidence base on which to develop appropriate policies in the JCS and Local Plan. Further work was commissioned in 2016 to coincide with the change in definition to gypsies and travellers in national planning policy and to provide further evidence to the JCS. |

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| <p>Consider planning applications relating to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People in light of the existing and emerging planning policies and the evidence of need for accommodation.</p> | <p>Planning decisions meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show People</p> | <p>2012 onwards – demand-led</p> | <p> All Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People related planning applications have been responded to by Housing and Planning Policy in accordance with the need identified by the GTAA 2013 and in line with the emerging Local Plan.</p> |
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THEME FOUR: Neighbourhoods And Housing Standards

Priority 4.1 Supporting Neighbourhoods

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| Objective 4.1.1 | Promote mixed, sustainable and safe communities | | |
| Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results from new-build affordable housing surveys - Increased levels of satisfaction with their new homes. More than 60% satisfied. Strategic Tenancy Adopted - November 2012 | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Undertaking satisfaction surveys of all new-build affordable housing occupiers | Survey completed and results show at least 60% satisfaction rate | Annually September 2012-2016 | <p>☹️ Following the council restructure in 2013 and a new post being created at this time, a 2013 survey was not undertaken. Due to staff capacity it has been suggested that the council monitors satisfaction levels via housing association complaints processes and complaints to the local authority about providers.</p> <p>The Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer meets regularly with all operating housing associations to discuss new-build affordable housing related issues. These meetings address any issues raised to the council about a new-build home and that they are dealt with promptly by the housing association in question.</p> |
| Prepare a Strategic Tenancy Strategy in line with the Localism Act 2011 | Tenancy Strategy adopted | December 2012 | <p>😊 The Strategic Tenancy Strategy was developed and adopted in December 2012. This will be updated as part of the Housing Strategy 2017-21 in accordance with the legislative requirement.</p> |
| Working with the Police, Registered Providers and other partners to tackle ASB and Hate Crime (and the fear of such issues) in neighbourhoods | Reduction in levels of ASB and Hate Crime incidents | Annually 2012-2016 | <p>😊 Hate Crime is a regular agenda item at the Anti-Social Behaviour meeting with partner agencies.</p> <p>In addition Police Officers attend the County Hate Crime Meeting and provide feedback to the council so that any actions to prevent ASB and Hate Crime incidents can be taken by relevant parties.</p> |

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| Working with Registered Providers to develop local lettings plans for new developments where appropriate | Lettings plan in place | 2012 onwards demand-led | ☺ Local Lettings Plans have been agreed with the appropriate housing association in cases where by the Affordable Housing types and location have been justified to require it. |
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| Objective 4.1.2 | Provide targeted groups with the help to maintain their homes |
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| Measures | Number community activities delivered across the borough |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------|


| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
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| Working with partners and local communities to deliver community activities, with the local community leading the way. | Community activities that identify and address community needs are completed with help from the council. | 2012 and ongoing | ☺ Community Development Officers have engaged with Registered Providers, Parish Councils and Community Groups to identify opportunities and ways in which they can jointly deliver community events that will promote social cohesion, engagement and involvement of the residents moving into the large scale new developments. A community event took place in Bishops Cleeve in 2014 and an event took place in Churchdown in November 2015. In June 2016 at Toddington Village Hall, an East Area Affordable Housing Showcase event was organised by the council's Housing Services team to give Borough and Parish Councillors the opportunity talk about affordable housing the housing associations with stock in the East and to discuss options of new delivery with the Council. Future events will take place in due course subject to Council resources. |

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Priority 4.2 Housing Standards

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| Objective 4.2.1 | | Work with landlords and property owners to improve housing conditions | | |
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| Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of clients contacted within three working days of making a complaint about housing standards - 100% Number of Category one hazards dealt with as a percentage of category one hazards identified -95% Increase in the number of properties approved under the Fit to rent scheme - Annual increase 2012 - 2016 | | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress | |
| Respond quickly to customer complaints about housing conditions. | All clients being contacted within 3 working days | 2012-2016 |  The environmental health team continue to respond accordingly. | |
| Taking appropriate action to deal with identified HHSRS Category 1 hazards. | Reduction in the number of Category one hazards identified | 2012-2016 annual |  The environmental health team continue to take action with regards to Category 1 housing in the Borough. Just 1 Category 1 hazard needed to be removed between April and September 2016 as a result of interventions by Tewkesbury Borough Council officers. | |
| Continue to operate the Fit to Rent Scheme in the borough. | Increase in the number of accredited properties. | Annually 2012-2016 |  At September 2016, there were 6 landlords with 9 properties awarded 'Fit to Rent' status. Promotion of this accreditation continues in partnership with the other Gloucestershire district authorities through the National Landlords Association and Gloucestershire Landlords Association. | |

| Objective 4.2.2 | | Improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty | | |
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| Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of new-build homes to Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) level 3 or higher - 10% annually Increased number of energy efficiency measures installed Deliver actions in the Strategy for Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire Action for Affordable Warmth 2008+ | | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress | |
| Negotiating with developers and Registered Providers to develop more homes to the Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) level 3 or above | 10% annual increase in the number of homes built to CSH level 3 or higher. | 2012-2016 |  During the lifetime of the Strategy 100% of the affordable housing delivery has been built to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 or higher. CSH level 3 is now the minimum standard for all new housing as part of updated Building Regulations 2015. | |

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| Working with providers of home energy efficiency measures to improve access to initiatives and guide customers accordingly. | Increase in the number of energy efficiency measures provided through the Warm & Well scheme or similar. | 2012-2016 annual | ☺ The Warm & Well scheme advice continues to receive high numbers of enquiries and in the 6 months of 2016/17 there were 217. The total number of measures installed and properties improved through the Warm & Well scheme in the period was 20. |
| Continue to work in partnership to support and carry out the actions within the Strategy for Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire Action for Affordable Warmth 2008+ | Improved affordable warmth in the borough. | Annually 2012-16 | ☺ Officers attended meetings of the partnership and have continued to support delivery of the actions in the Strategy. |

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| Objective 4.2.3 | Explore the links between housing and health | | |
| Measures | Increased number of clients accessing HIA services. Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Strategy actions achieved | | |
| We will achieve the objective by: | Outcome | Date for Delivery | Update/Progress |
| Continuing to contribute to the work of the Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board and the healthy housing related actions in the Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Strategy | Improved health outcomes for residents of the borough | 2012-16 | ☺ The council continues to contribute to the actions of the Board through support of the Warm & Well Scheme and Safe at Homes Scheme and through removing Category 1 hazards in properties |
| Working in partnership with health and other Gloucestershire local authorities to promote healthy and independent living through services provided through the countywide Home Improvement Agency (HIA) contract | Increased number of clients accessing services from the HIA that allows individuals to live healthily and independently in their own home. | 2012-16 annual | ☺ The council is an active member of all partnerships and is able to challenge the work of the Safe at Homes Improvement Agency (bi-monthly meetings) to ensure that the services are well promoted and taken up. |

At home in Tewkesbury Borough

A housing strategy for our borough



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Foreword



Welcome to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Housing Strategy 2017-2021. As Portfolio Holder for the Built Environment, I recognise how important it is for residents to be able to access good quality housing and housing related services that make a real difference to their lives. Not only is housing important for the health and wellbeing of individuals and families, but it is an important part of building and maintaining strong communities and supporting the overall economic prosperity of the borough.

Under the Housing Act 2002 and the Local Government Act 2003, the Council is required to have a strategy in place to set out its vision for housing and how it will address homelessness across its administrative area. National and local policies guide the principles within this strategy.

This overarching strategy combines the housing, homelessness (Appendix 2) and tenancy (Appendix 3) strategies. This document provides a clear direction and commitment for the delivery of a customer focused, efficient housing service. By having a single overarching strategy should make it easier for our stakeholders to understand what we intend to do to address housing issues and tackle homelessness, and when we hope to do it.

This strategy will enable the council to work effectively and with a range of partner organisations to actively support private sector landlords and tenants and maintain and improve all dwelling stock across the borough. We will need to work with our stakeholders to achieve our annual action plans and in doing so I am confident that the delivery of this strategy, through innovative approaches, will help the council to deliver the right mix of accommodation in the borough and to provide high quality housing advice and support to people when they need it.

Providing our communities with a choice of affordable and private market housing, in an area where they want to live and work now and in the future, will contribute towards making Tewkesbury Borough a place where a good quality of life is open to all.



Councillor Derek Davies
Portfolio Holder for the Built Environment
Tewkesbury Borough Council

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1 Introduction and background

The Housing Strategy 2017-2021 has a key part to play in delivering the council's overarching vision¹ for the residents and communities of Tewkesbury Borough:

“Tewkesbury Borough, a place where a good quality of life is open for all”

Quality housing is fundamental to the health and well-being of our communities and ensures the borough remains a thriving one where people want to live, work and visit. Tewkesbury Borough Council recognises that access to quality affordable housing underpins the success of our area and all of the overarching corporate priorities.

The Council Plan 2016-2020 identifies housing as a priority because:

“We recognise how important it is for residents to be able to access good quality housing and housing related services that make a real difference to their lives.

“Not only is housing important for the health and well-being of residents it is also an important part of building and maintaining strong communities and supporting the economic prosperity of the borough.”

Only with the right supply of homes to meet the housing needs of local people can we achieve our vision of sustainable communities supported by economic growth.

In order to meet this vision, the Tewkesbury Borough Council housing priorities for the next five years are to:

- Increase the supply of sustainable housing across the borough to support growth and meet the needs of our communities
- Achieve a five year supply of land;
- Deliver the homes and necessary infrastructure to create new sustainable communities in key locations;
- Deliver affordable homes to meet local need.

The housing strategy is an overarching strategic document. It takes account of the principle national and local issues that are likely to affect Tewkesbury Borough in the foreseeable future. It sets out our housing challenges and explains how we intend to address these issues through four key priorities. Key objectives are detailed within each of the priority areas with targets and outcomes for delivering these objectives will be detailed annually in the action plan.

The Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2017-2021 can be found in Appendix 2 and the Tenancy Strategy 2017-2021 can be found in Appendix 3.

¹ Tewkesbury Borough Council Plan 2016-2020 <https://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/tewkesbury-borough-council-plan>

2 The local context

2.1 Our profile

Tewkesbury borough is spread across 160 square miles and despite its predominately rural nature it also includes growing communities on the fringes of Gloucester City and the town of Cheltenham. The eastern part of the borough lies within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which accounts for 8.5% of our district².

Flooding is a natural feature of the borough particularly in relation to the River Severn which runs down the western edge of the area and constraints regarding flood plain³. These constraints and the AONB can make development of new homes and other buildings and infrastructure difficult in the borough. However, the borough is at the heart of the economic engine of Gloucestershire, including four junctions of the M5 motorway and has excellent national transport links making it an area of significant growth.

The borough's population is roughly 85,800 with just under 40,000 households. There are 50 parish and town councils (includes parish meetings) covering the borough ranging in size from 3,062 households to as small as 574 households. Information from What Homes Where 2013⁴, a toolkit to help local authorities assess their housing needs shows us some of these key population issues⁵.

Assuming current population trends continue, the ONS projections⁶ for the next 25 years suggest that the population in Tewkesbury Borough will reach 93,400 by 2025 and 100,400 by 2037. The district's growth rates are higher than those predicted for Gloucestershire and England in the short, medium and long term⁷.

The dominating feature of the projected trend for Tewkesbury Borough is a sharp increase in the number of older people (aged 60 and over) to 2033. Projections for children and young people indicate slower growth, while the working-age population is expected to show little change in the long term. There continues to be an increase in one person households with this household type projected to overtake all others by 2033. Couples on their own and small families increases at a relatively steady rate but larger family growth remains small. Other households include couples with adult children living at home, friends living in a property and so on, are predicted to decline⁸.

In 2015, 11.8% of the housing stock in Tewkesbury Borough was affordable housing (owned by housing associations). The percentage increase in the actual number of all dwellings in Tewkesbury Borough from 2009 to 2015 is 7%; the market stock as increased by 7% and the housing association stock has increased by 9.5%. The extent of housing growth across Tewkesbury Borough has been beneficial for our households in need. However the

² Cotswold AONB <http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/userfiles/factsheet-1.pdf>

³ Environment Agency; Tewkesbury Borough flood map for planning <https://goo.gl/PwsxmY>

⁴ What Homes Where, 2013 <http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/userfiles/factsheet-1.pdf>

⁵ Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1a, Section 2, Chart 1, Page 6

⁶ 2012-Based Sub-national Population Projections, Office for National Statistics

⁷ Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1a, Section 2, Chart 3, Page 7

⁸ Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1a, Section 2, Chart 2, Page 7

affordable housing dwelling stock in Tewkesbury Borough has only increased by 0.1% since 2010.

The majority of the borough's housing stock is owner-occupied and is generally in good condition. However the stock is skewed towards larger more expensive properties. Tewkesbury Borough as a whole is generally an affluent area; however this can mask pockets of significant inequality. As an example, housing in Tewkesbury borough is relatively expensive against national and regional averages with the East of the borough having the highest values given its proximity to the AONB. Isbourne ward has the highest average house price of £490,996, with detached properties fetching over £600,000⁹. Compared against data from the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)¹⁰ where the borough has 2 lower super output areas - Tewkesbury Priors Park 2 and Tewkesbury Priors Park 3. Both perform poorly on employment, education, skills and training, and income deprivation affecting children. Tewkesbury Priors Park 3 also performs poorly on income deprivation affecting older people.

The growth in income levels has not kept pace with the increases in property values meaning that many people are priced out of owner occupation the borough. While income growth in Tewkesbury Borough is in line with the rest of England, the average house price increase has been more significant at 2.96 times the values 15 years ago. The income to house price ratio for Tewkesbury Borough in 2013/14 was higher than Gloucestershire overall, the South West and England.

Both private and social housing rents are becoming more unaffordable to our residents. From 2008/09 to 2014/15 private sector rents have increased by 15% and social sector rents have also increased by a substantial 35%¹¹.

2.2 Statutory requirements

Under the Homelessness Act 2002¹², the Council is required to publish a strategy setting out how it will address homelessness in its administrative area. Our Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2017-2021 can found in Appendix 2.

The Localism Act 2011¹³ places a duty on all local authorities to produce a tenancy strategy, setting out what housing associations should take into consideration when making decisions about their individual tenancy policies. Our Tenancy Strategy can be found in Appendix 3.

⁹ Average house price for all properties over the period June 2015-May 2016; Source Land Registry via Local Insight, OCSI

¹⁰ IMD data and maps can be found here

https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/viewpage.aspx?c=page&page=Deprivation_Maps2015

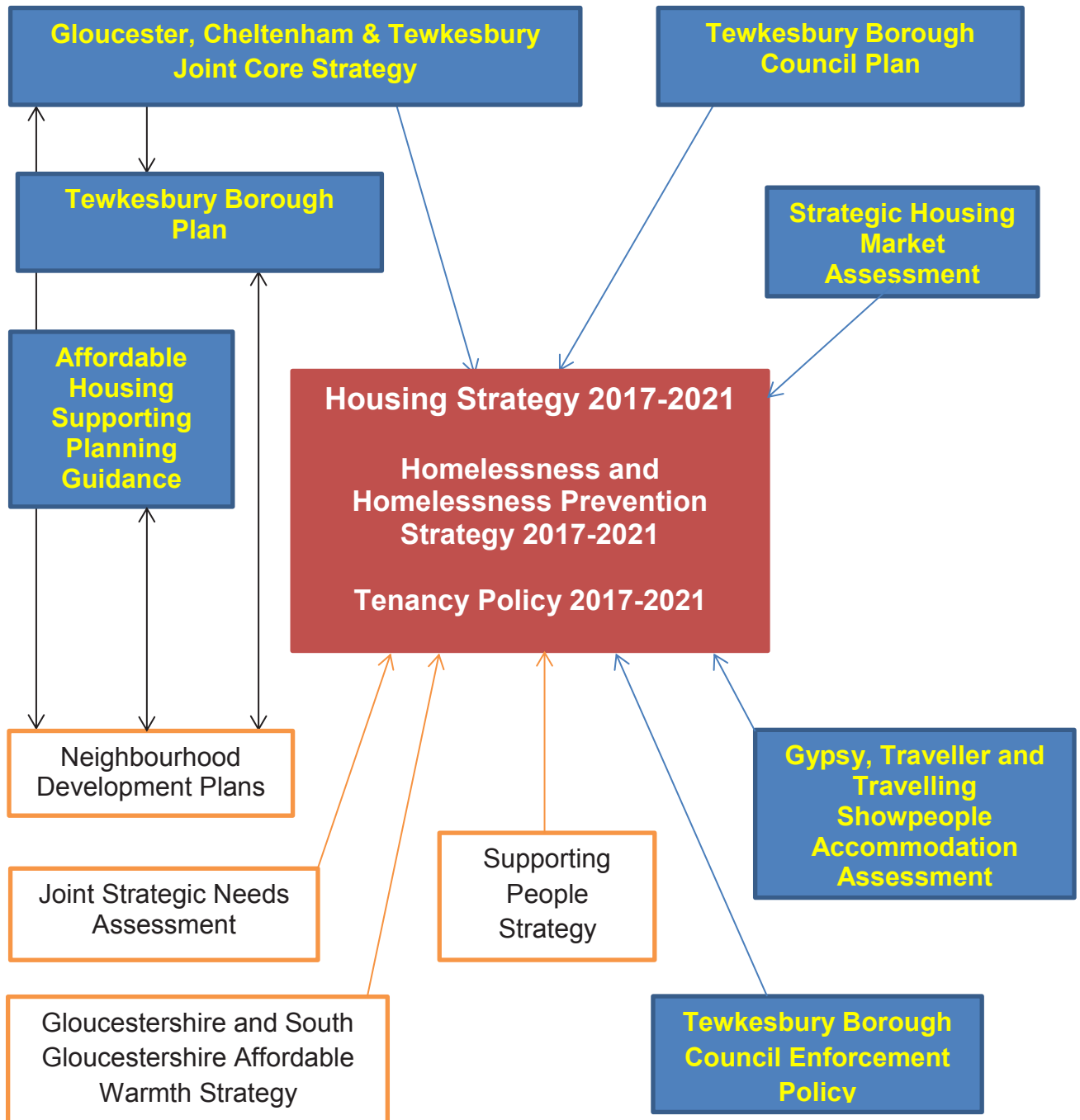
¹¹ Rents are covered in full in Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1b Section 8.

¹² Homelessness Act 2002 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/7/section/1>

¹³ Localism Act 2011 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>

2.3 Where the Housing Strategy fits

The following diagram shows where the Housing Strategy fits with other key Tewkesbury Borough Council and Gloucestershire county-wide strategic-level documents:



Blue boxes represent Tewkesbury Borough Council documents

Orange outlined boxes represent external documents impacting on Tewkesbury Borough Council

3 Policy context and key challenges

We continue to be guided by the National Strategy¹⁴ along with new legislation, such as the Housing & Planning Act 2016 and other government policies and initiatives. Since 2011, there have been several key government initiatives impacting on our housing services in Tewkesbury Borough.

3.1 Increasing housing supply

3.1.1 Universal housing provision

The Joint Core Strategy (JCS)¹⁵ partners will, through the Strategy and emerging Local Plans¹⁶, deliver sufficient housing supply to meet the universal housing provision and economic growth needs of the borough.

Section 4.2 of Appendix 1a evidences our resident's ability to access the housing market and how important it is for the council to consider and provide for the whole market to meet their needs. It is clear that government supported schemes and affordable housing home ownership are extremely popular and needed by our residents, but with these options being less than 12% of all sales in the borough the opportunities for younger people to get on the housing ladder are limited.

3.1.2 Government manifesto to increase home ownership

Whilst there is still some focus on rented housing, home ownership is the government's driver for housing at present believing more homes will be built, particularly Starter Homes, in the near future.

The government manifesto to provide more homes and more homes for sale for young people has meant their Starter Homes initiative being brought in via the Housing and Planning Act 2016. A vision of 'discounting' new homes by up to 20% has been out for consultation and at the time writing the sector is waiting for the decision as to how this product will work in reality. If Starter Homes are to be considered affordable housing in the future, this will affect the council's current position of what we can provide on-site on new developments particularly impacting the rented element. The affects will need to be fully assessed as part of a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment¹⁷ (SHMA) alongside other affordable housing products and the impact of benefit changes (to be discussed later) to ensure the needs of our borough are met.

¹⁴ Laying the foundations: a housing strategy for England 2011

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/laying-the-foundations-a-housing-strategy-for-england--2>

¹⁵ The Joint Core Strategy is a partnership between Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council, and Tewkesbury Borough Council, formed to produce a coordinated strategic development plan to show how this area will develop during the period up to 2031 <http://www.gct-ics.org/>

¹⁶ The Tewkesbury Borough Plan is the development plan solely for Tewkesbury Borough <https://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/tewkesbury-borough-plan/?rq=Tewkesbury%20Plan>

¹⁷ A Strategic Housing Market Assessment or SHMA is a technical study intended to help local planning authorities understand how many homes will be needed in a given period.

Recent development in key locations has significantly increased the supply of affordable homes including shared ownership and shared equity products ensuring that there are opportunities for lower income households to buy a home of their own.

In the June 2014 Financial Stability Report¹⁸, the Bank of England announced measures to cut the risk of a damaging house price bubble emerging by limiting the number of high-risk mortgages. Mortgage lenders must limit the proportion of mortgages at loan to income multiples of 4.5 and above to no more than 15% of their new mortgages. Given this restriction on mortgages, Tewkesbury Borough's income to house price ratio, may make it difficult for first time buyers to get on the property market. This is likely to result in the out-migration of young people in the lower income brackets of our borough and encourage people to commute into Tewkesbury Borough for work, while living in areas where housing is cheaper outside of the borough and in more urban areas.

3.1.3 *Right to Buy extension*

Further to the government home ownership ambition, a pilot commenced in November 2015 of 5 housing associations was undertaken to extend the Right to Buy to their tenants. The outcome to date has shown that just with 48,000 potential sales found that only "a shade under 16,000 of the 48,000 households were allowed to buy under the pilot once the exemptions were applied" and 1.6% (790) households made formal applications to buy their home¹⁹. Applications for the pilot from tenants of the housing associations closed in October 2016; in September 2016, almost a year after the pilot was launched, were sales going through. According to Inside Housing²⁰ this was an unconfirmed figure of 8 sales. In essence the government intends for 1.3million housing association tenants in England to receive Right to Buy and 3 years for the housing associations or local authority (where applicable) to start building a new home for each one sold under the new policy²¹.

3.1.4 *Effects on affordable housing of the economic downturn*

The economic downturn of 2008 saw a reduction in affordable housing delivery as schemes became unviable to deliver. Negotiations with developers meant that very low or zero affordable housing was provided and the loss was felt until delivery gained momentum again in 2012.

Appendix 1a section 2 shows the delivery of new affordable homes in the borough from 2010 when planning permissions previously granted during and post-2008 economic downturn were coming to fruition. It is not until 2013 that we see increases in delivery. In the six year period 2010-2016 there has been 26% affordable housing of all new-build delivery. However just 11.8% of the homes in Tewkesbury Borough is owned by a housing

¹⁸ Bank of England, Financial Stability Report 2014

<http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/Documents/fsr/2014/fsrfull1406.pdf>

¹⁹ Shorthand Social Case Study on the pilot housing association Right to Buy Extension

<https://social.shorthand.com/insidehousing/jydttxO6P/the-right-to-buy-extension>

²⁰ Inside Housing article "First tenants purchase homes under Right to Buy pilots"

<http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/first-tenants-purchase-homes-under-right-to-buy-pilots/7016750.article>

²¹ Memorandum for the House of Commons, Committee of Public Accounts, Department for Communities and Local Government, Extending the Right to Buy <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Memorandum-extending-the-right-to-buy.pdf>

association as affordable housing. According to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Final 2014²² (SHMA) this figure should be nearer 20%.

3.1.5 *Delivering affordable housing*

Tewkesbury Borough Council has a target to deliver 40% affordable housing in accordance with the emerging JCS plan on all market-led development within the Borough. However, the government continues to reduce planning obligations on developers to incentivise development of new homes through a policy of zero affordable housing contributions on small sites of 10 or less dwellings or sites of less than 1000sqm unless in a designated area (for Tewkesbury Borough this is AONB only)²³.

The council seeks to work with developers and housing associations to provide housing for sale within affordable levels, giving considering local incomes and house prices. At present a new-build first sale shared ownership²⁴ share for an applicant cannot exceed 75% of the property's full market value. Typically on first sale the share sold is more likely to be between 35% and 50% of the property's full value depending on the area of the borough.

Evidence from the SHMA informs us of the most suitable mix of tenures across a development. However, like all policies regarding planning obligations we negotiate the percentage of affordable housing that can be delivered considering viability as well as suitable tenure mixes and house types. The council will continue a flexible approach to new development in the borough to ensure that new homes can be delivered within suitable timescales to meet our corporate objectives as well as delivering our housing planning policies of the JCS and Local Plan.

3.1.6 *Challenges for the affordable housing sector*

The rent cap affects housing associations where the rents on their rented properties are to be at local housing allowance (LHA) and will need to be considered in terms of rented housing products. A realistic percentage of rented housing on new developments will need to be established, possibly on a site-by-site basis, so that the affordable housing provision on-site is indeed affordable to local people. This may mean specific house sizes are required to be set at particular rents levels i.e. within the LHA.

The Welfare Reform Act 2012²⁵ is the borough's most significant legislative change impacting on our approaches for meeting housing need. For example, those on low incomes are struggling to find suitable low cost housing as the Localism Act brought in affordable rents. Housing associations are unable to draw down government grant for social rented housing (rented at around 55% of open market rent) and are to seek affordable rent (up to 80% of open market rent, inclusive of service charge). While this generates more income for

²² The Strategic Housing Market Assessment Final 2014 can be found in the housing section of the council's webpage Strategies and Policies <https://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/strategies-and-policies>

²³ National Planning Policy Guidance; Planning Obligations Para 31 <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/planning-obligations/planning-obligations-guidance/>

²⁴ Section 1 and Section 4 of the Capital Funding Guide for Shared Ownership details the main features of the scheme and the rent and service charge element <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/capital-funding-guide/11-shared-ownership>

²⁵ Welfare Reform Act 2012 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/5/contents>

housing associations, our residents in housing need now require more money towards their housing costs, often not fully met by the current housing benefit levels. The council seeks to negotiate rent levels at planning stage but this must be agreed based on the development viability.

Tewkesbury Borough Council's housing services team are working with the revenues and benefits team to identify and contact all residents who are currently claiming discretionary housing payments (DHP) to cover the financial shortfall in their rent through under occupation. This work will be ongoing to support residents to find alternative ways of 'topping up' their rent or to support them to move to a more affordable property and/or suitably sized home.

We continue to monitor the effects of the under-occupation charge, commonly known as the 'bedroom tax', brought in by the Welfare Reform Act where social housing tenants who are under-occupying a property are charged a rate to pay for the extra room. This is 14% of net rent for one spare bedroom or 25% for two or more spare bedrooms. In reality the charge saw a smaller number of households than anticipated move to more suitably sized accommodation with the majority of those affected by the charge able to afford to remain in their home and pay the charge.

Increasing income for housing associations and initiating more housing building by them has been contradicted by the requirement to reduce their rents by 1% per annum in each of the next four years with effect from 1 April 2016. The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016²⁶ requires housing associations to comply with maximum rent requirements for new tenancies. This has placed pressure on housing associations to reduce their costs and has for some limited their capacity. Many Housing associations are committed to their new-build programmes whilst others are reducing theirs. Smaller housing associations whose income is significantly affected by the 1% rent reduction are likely to seek opportunities such as partnering with other housing associations to deliver new homes and small rural and in-fill development.

3.1.7 Environmental impacts of new homes

During our consultation period it was brought to our attention that Tewkesbury Borough Council needs to have an awareness of the potential improvements in construction by incorporating flood resilience measures where appropriate, for example reflecting the Environment Agency flood zones. It is therefore necessary to fully understand the requirements for new homes as well as providing support for communities when they are flooded. It will be for the Council's Flood Risk Management Group to determine measures in new housing development and the planning process; however it is the vision of this document that all possible support will be given to such wider priorities of Tewkesbury Borough Council and its communities.

²⁶ Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/7/contents/enacted>

3.1.8 *Private rented sector and empty homes*

The council recognises that the private rented sector is growing and will continue to do so in a growing area like Tewkesbury Borough; it will also support the borough to meet its housing needs. The council takes its statutory enforcement role seriously and where landlords are not meeting the standards required will deliver a robust service as described above. This is particularly important that the Council can now discharge its homelessness duty into the private rent sector (see Appendix 2: Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy). Ensuring such homes are available and appropriate and that the tenancy can be sustained is, therefore, increasingly important.

However, whilst a large proportion of the environmental health team's time is spent on enforcement this is only to deal with a small proportion of the worst private rented housing. Enforcement should only need to be a last resort. We wish to place a larger emphasis on the proactive role the council will play in helping landlords in the early stages. This is in particular for owners where being a landlord is not their core business, or reluctant landlords such as those who inherit a property but do not wish to sell it. The council will promote sources of advice that are available to landlords, existing private tenants and residents considering private renting.

The council will work with the other Gloucestershire district councils to promote the 'Fit to Rent' common accreditation scheme for landlords and letting agents across Gloucestershire. Sign-up to the scheme has been low and so the environmental health team shall promote the scheme and the benefits of accreditation.

Crucially, prospective tenants need to be made aware of the advantages of selecting a property owned by an accredited landlord or managed by an accredited letting agent. The environmental health team aims to maximise the number of inspections of properties owned by accredited landlords so that they can be given advice on the improvements that could be made.

Further to new-build housing, the council's environmental health team works closely with partners on initiatives handling operational (enforcement) actions to bring empty homes back into use. Most empty homes brought back into use will become private sector homes. The team will aim to ensure that each property achieves the highest standard. Enforcement options will include the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) under the Housing Act 2004²⁷, Empty Dwelling Management Orders, enforced sale and compulsory purchase orders (CPO).

²⁷ Housing Act 2004 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/34/contents>

3.2 Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention

Local housing authorities have a statutory duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone who is homeless or threatened with homelessness (as outlined in the Housing Act 1996²⁸ as amended).

The Council's housing services team undertakes enquiries to assess what duties and assistance can be offered to those seeking help. Our focus is to work with our clients to prevent their homelessness wherever possible. If we are unable to prevent homelessness, the council has further statutory duties to secure accommodation for eligible vulnerable homeless households.

Our focus will be on preventing homelessness wherever possible and our joint interventions with our Council colleagues and partners are likely to include:

- Establishing if households are entitled to exemptions from welfare reform changes
- Advising residents of changes and the personal impact on their household
- How they can avoid financial hardship
- Offer financial advice and advice on the benefits of securing employment, and
- Working with the financial inclusion partnership to offer temporary assistance through discretionary housing payments, advice and assistance on arrears, working with housing providers to avoid possession proceedings.

Changes associated with welfare reform are likely to continue throughout the lifetime of this strategy and we will continue to take a proactive approach to identifying cohorts and clients. We will work with our partners and affected groups to offer early resolution to affordability issues. Those most likely to be affected will be:

- Those under-occupying affordable rented housing
- Those under 35 in unaffordable private rented, affordable rented housing, in supported accommodation, or at risk of homelessness.
- Those likely to be affected by the reduction of the benefit cap
- Those in affordable rents (rents set at 80% of the market rent) who may be affected by unaffordability following the implementation of the welfare reform changes.

The challenges facing Tewkesbury Borough Council, the implications of the above changes and further analysis of homelessness and homelessness prevention can be found in Appendix 2: Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2017-2021. It outlines our commitment, priorities and objectives to meet the needs of those threatened with homelessness within Tewkesbury Borough. Actions to be taken are detailed as part of this overarching document and can be found in Section 8.

²⁸ Housing Act 1996 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/52/contents>

3.3 Meeting the needs of specific groups

3.3.1 Requirements for accommodation assessments

Many information sources have been used to assess housing needs and supply including the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), the housing register for rented affordable housing, the housing register for affordable home ownership schemes, MAIDeN (Gloucestershire Information Observer) and nationally available databases such as the census, Office of National Statistics and Land Registry.

The Borough Council is required to undertake several assessments; a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People Accommodation Assessment (GTTSAA) as per the National Planning Policy Framework²⁹ (NPPF) and associated Planning Practice Guidance³⁰ (PPG).

The planning policy for traveller sites³¹ is one that supports provision such as rural exception sites to meet the housing and accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople. However the updated 2015 policy changes the definition of these groups for planning purposes. Under the JCS the council's requirement for additional pitches and plots to the year 2031 has now reduced owing to households in Tewkesbury Borough not meeting the new definition. We will continue to have an accommodation need for households who do not meet the definition and be required to provide suitable sites. These households will who do not meet the definition will have their needs assessed through the SHMA. Those who do meet the definition will continue to have their accommodation needs assessed through the GTTSAA. The accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople are evidenced in Appendix 1c section 7, page 12.

The SHMA assesses our Borough-wide housing and accommodation needs and we work with our neighbouring authorities as our housing market areas cross administrative boundaries. The most recent assessment was published in 2014³² and identifies the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period. The SHMA has guided us in our requirements for rented and shared ownership affordable housing, however it does not consider more detailed aspects of the sector that are emerging. Further to changes from central government we now require a new assessment in order to meet housing needs against the initiatives. As a county we will continue to work together to appoint consultants in 2017 to address additional areas in the SHMA such as:

- The future impact of welfare reform
- Affordability of the tenures
- Specialist housing and care for older people and people with disabilities
- Self-Build
- Starter Homes

²⁹ National Planning Policy Framework <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

³⁰ Planning Practice Guidance <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/>

³¹ Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2015 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-policy-for-traveller-sites>

³² Gloucestershire SHMA <http://tewkesbury.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1907#SHMA>

- Accommodation needs of non-travelling gypsies and travellers

3.3.2 *Larger families*

The benefit cap for larger families will impact on the willingness of housing associations to develop larger family properties. This has already been noted in ongoing new developments where at the planning stage a 6-bed home was negotiated but at the build stage, the council and the housing association involved agreed to change the property to a smaller home. The members of staff involved from both organisations were unable to find a large family with a suitable level of income to move into the property. Many large households opted to remain in their current home and over-occupy so they can continue to afford their rent.

Welfare reform is likely to cause financial hardship for many residents on low incomes in our borough throughout the lifetime of this strategy. Homeless charities such as Crisis and Homeless Link are reporting that reductions in benefit levels associated with welfare reform, and changes in the way that benefits are paid through Universal Credit are increasing the risk of homelessness³³. We are committed to mitigating the impact of welfare reform on financially vulnerable households in the borough to reduce the risk of homelessness.

3.3.3 *Financial inclusion*

The rationale behind welfare reform is to incentivise work and reduce the cost of welfare³⁴. Households will be exempt from many of the most impactful reforms if they are in employment. Resolving financial hardship and preventing homelessness will inevitably involve supporting affected households to understand how the reforms will impact on them. Tewkesbury Borough Council is a key partner in the borough-wide Financial Inclusion Partnership to encourage households into employment wherever possible.

We are committed to identifying cohorts of clients likely to be affected by forthcoming reforms with a view to early intervention with partners in the Financial Inclusion Partnership. The partnership has recently commissioned research by Policy in Practice³⁵ on the projected cumulative impact of Welfare Reform within the borough with a view to identifying individuals and cohorts of residents likely to be significantly affected.

Evidence from the Policy in Practice research can be found in Appendix 1b where the impact of welfare reform has been analysed for Tewkesbury Borough and includes:

- The under occupation charge
- Local housing allowance
- The benefit cap at £26,000 and the new lower cap of £20,000 as at November 2016
- The profile of households capped
- Changes to benefit for young people
- The removal of the WRAG premium (work related activity group)

³³ Fair welfare campaign <http://www.homeless.org.uk/our-work/campaigns/policy-and-lobbying-priorities/fair-welfare-campaign>

³⁴ Welfare Reform 2.0 - Long-term solutions, not short-term savings
<https://www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/publications/welfare%20reform%202%20point%200.pdf>

³⁵ The cumulative impact of welfare reform in Tewkesbury Borough

- Housing benefit capped at local housing allowance (LHA) rates for social rents
- The LHA freeze
- Removal of the Housing Benefit Family Premium
- The impact of universal credit
- The cumulative impact of welfare reform.

The housing services team are committed to working with our council colleagues in revenues and benefits and partners namely the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), housing associations, support providers, and Citizens Advice Bureau to identify the vulnerable cohorts and work with the affected households to resolve these difficulties. Our strong working relationships within the Tewkesbury Borough Financial Inclusion Partnership will be invaluable in managing the effects of welfare reform.

Revenues and benefits teams can offer temporary support to those affected by welfare reform changes with Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to prevent financial hardship whilst alternative, more permanent solutions are sought. However, this must only be an intervening measure as the DHP funding is not long-term and is likely to diminish over time. Tenants must seek to find employment or increase working hours to enhance their income to afford rents.

We will work with our colleagues in the revenues and benefits team, the DWP and housing associations to identify affected households and offer sustainable solutions. We will also work with housing associations operating within Tewkesbury Borough to establish how they can continue to meet the housing needs of those households unable to meet their housing needs through affordable housing products.

3.3.4 *Older People*

Population changes will present an increasing challenge for the borough in relation to additional pressure on health and social care and the need for more specialist accommodation. There is also evidence that a number of homes in both the social/affordable rented sector and market sector are currently under-occupied, particularly in rural areas.

The Care Act 2014³⁶ includes housing as a fundamental component. The Act looks at the suitability of accommodation for those at home receiving care and support. The Act and the accompanying regulations and guidance outline how housing can support a more integrated approach of particular note:

- A duty to promote well-being.
- Housing not just the 'bricks and mortar' but also includes housing related support.
- Housing must be considered as part of the household's assessment process
- Information and advice should reflect housing options, as part of a universal service offer

³⁶ The Care Act 2014 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted/data.htm>

- Care and support is to be delivered in an integrated way with cooperation with partner bodies, including housing services.

Tewkesbury Borough offers 40 retirement homes, sheltered housing and extra care housing accommodating 1,004 dwellings along with 25 care homes of 798 units of accommodation. Of the care homes, 12 are specific for older people (aged 55 and over), with the remaining accommodating any person with care needs and for people with specific disabilities.

Tewkesbury Borough will see significant growth in its older population and accommodation needs for this group are likely to change. For example, as we live healthier for longer our accommodation needs become different where we stay more active and mobile for longer and seek a more suitable home for our lifestyle. 36.47% of the Homeseeker Plus waiting list state that their vulnerability is worsened by their housing situation. Of this, a quarter (around 180 households) is over 60 years old.

Care homes are typically single bed units; there are few that are for couples or sharing. For many people having a disability and/or care need means living away from their family and friends in specialist housing; for some this is a necessity to receive around the clock care and support. For others their care needs can be and are being met in the family home but this often results in the home being unsuitable. More and more adaptations are required to existing homes across all tenures to ensure homes are suitable.

The countywide home improvement agency, Safe at Home, is funded by the six Gloucestershire district authorities, Gloucestershire County Council and the Gloucestershire NHS Trust, to assist clients with major works to their properties, focussing on providing services and assistance to elderly and vulnerable clients. Whilst this is the contracted countywide home improvement agency, the Council provides information on other agencies and surveyors in the local area that can help. The current contract has been extended until 2017 and at the time of writing, partners are considering priorities for future delivery. Providing adaptations is seen as particularly important given the possible health implications, care and support costs of residents not obtaining essential disabled adaptations in a timely fashion. However, it is essential that delivery of this aspect of the private sector housing service is integrated with all other aspects. We therefore work across services to assess housing need and whether a move to more appropriate accommodation is required.

3.3.5 *People with a disability*

Government statistics³⁷ show that people with disabilities have a poorer quality of life with a *“substantially higher proportion of individuals who live in families with disabled members live in poverty, compared to individuals who live in families where no one is disabled.”*

Barriers to employment and education are improving but remain significant as there is *“a 30.1 percentage point gap between disabled and non-disabled people, representing over 2 million people”* and that disabled people *“are around 3 times as likely not to hold any qualifications compared to non-disabled people, and around half as likely to hold a degree-level qualification”*.

³⁷ Figures published in 2014 by the Office for Disability Issues Department for Work and Pensions <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/disability-facts-and-figures>

In terms of housing these statistics say that “*Although the gap in non-decent accommodation has closed over recent years, 1 in 3 households with a disabled person still live in non-decent accommodation. 1 in 5 disabled people requiring adaptations to their home believe that their accommodation is not suitable*”.

With 2.5% of the housing waiting list requiring a ground floor, wheelchair property with specific adaptations, we must work with partners across the housing, health and social care sectors to consider how these homes will be built.

We must also consider the challenges faced when working with the house-building sector, particularly larger house-builders, when affordable housing that is outside of the norm is requested as part of Section 106 agreements. The Council often has to negotiate reduced overall affordable housing contributions in order to build specialist housing due to the costs associated.

3.3.6 Rural affordable housing

The Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) state that:

“The lack of suitable affordable housing in Gloucestershire is a serious problem for many people who are forced to move home out of the countryside and into our larger towns and cities. The movement of people away from their roots has a major impact on rural communities in Gloucestershire, both socially and economically.”³⁸

The council’s work with GRCC is to facilitate rural exceptional housing whereby under exceptional circumstances development can be brought about to meet a specific need i.e. affordable housing need, in a village, parish or a specific area.

For a rural local authority where housing in villages and small communities (fewer than 3,000 population) comes through on small sites, the government’s small sites policy may come into effect and the Council cannot negotiate on-site affordable housing. This results in less affordable homes for local communities

Whilst planning policies will aim to maximise affordable housing delivery, the council must continue to facilitate rural exceptional housing development to meet local needs. There are numerous struggles that face the council in bringing about rural affordable housing including, sourcing suitable developable land with a willing land owner, building relationships with local representatives such as parish councils, and funding such a project.

Seventeen of our 50 parishes in Tewkesbury Borough have zero affordable housing at this time; this is over a third. In 19 parishes there are less than 1% of dwellings that are affordable. The council is aspiring to deliver more homes in rural areas so that these communities continue to thrive. See Appendix 1c, section 6, page 11 for a full table of the 40 most rural parishes in Tewkesbury Borough and the percentage of affordable housing stock.

³⁸ Gloucestershire Rural Community Council <http://www.grcc.org.uk/affordable-rural-housing/affordable-rural-housing>

There are numerous benefits to rural development including retaining young families in the area to support the local economy, schools and keeping families closer together as well as enabling those wishing to downsize to remain in the village in more suitably sized accommodation.

Housing associations are essential in delivering small-scale rural development and have shown continued commitment to Tewkesbury Borough in recent years and engagement through the Gloucestershire Rural Housing Partnership³⁹.

3.3.7 Asylum seekers and refugees

Tewkesbury Borough is a partner within the Gloucestershire Syrian Resettlement Programme and has worked with our partners Severn Vale Housing and GARAS (Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers) to provide accommodation for vulnerable families in our borough. We will continue to meet our commitment to this group during the lifetime of this strategy.

3.4 Improving the health and well-being of local people

3.4.1 More than bricks and mortar

The Housing Strategy must address more than bricks and mortar; more than simply the number of homes. Tewkesbury Borough Council understands the importance of building communities as well as homes. The Joint Core Strategy not only deals with the housing development but also the infrastructure and economic development of the 3 districts of Tewkesbury, Cheltenham and Gloucester.

Here in Tewkesbury Borough the Council's community development team works from a 'place' perspective; a way of engaging with our communities as well as supporting them to achieve their potential and reduce dependency on the council and other public services. What want our communities to thrive and feel empowered to do for themselves. We truly want Tewkesbury Borough to be a place where a good quality of life is open for all.

We will ensure our residents are well supported to enable them to live life to the fullest and it starts with good quality housing.

3.4.2 Stock condition and fuel poverty

The condition of the existing housing stock is important to ensure that residents are living in decent, safe accommodation which is suited to their needs. The condition of the housing stock is important to ensure that the increase in net housing stock through growth is not offset by a reduction in the number of existing homes which are habitable. Equally it is necessary to mitigate against the potential unintended consequence of growth that poor quality private sector housing leads to migration from existing communities into more attractive new housing developments leading to low demand neighbourhoods.

³⁹ Gloucestershire Rural Housing Partnership <http://www.grcc.org.uk/affordable-rural-housing/gloucestershire-rural-housing-partnership->

Living in poor condition, cold, damp homes that are not suitable for a household's needs have a detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of the occupiers. When accidents and illness occur because homes are not fit, it has an impact on a person's ability to participate in work, education, social and other activities and consequently impacts on social care services and the NHS.

The significant shift in emphasis on home owners being responsible for repairs to their properties has to be reflected in this Strategy. The majority of home owners will, therefore, be offered no more than self-help to secure home improvements. Nevertheless, the Council recognises that there will be situations where support is necessary and appropriate for vulnerable home owners.

The council's environmental health service offers advice that aims to demonstrating to a private landlord the works that are needed to avoid enforcement action being taken against them, for landlord accreditation and or for the property to be accepted onto a Local Letting Agency; they also provide an owner of an empty home with details of the works necessary to put the property in a state suitable for letting or that are likely to affect the sale price of the property.

The Council will take appropriate action against landlords and home owners as appropriate in accordance with the Council's Corporate Enforcement Policy⁴⁰. This includes a period of informal action to encourage a landlord to take action voluntarily.

In the main the council will refer enquirers to the Gloucestershire Warm and Well energy advice helpline for general advice on how to save energy in the home. This service is currently provided by Severn Wye Energy Agency.

The Environmental Health team will establish the suitability or otherwise of the property in regards to condition, affordable warmth and space. If the householder raises a potential need for disabled adaptations details shall be referred to Gloucestershire County Council's Adult and Children Social Care, Customer Contact Centre for assessment.

3.4.3 Houses in multiple occupation

There are thought to be exceptionally few houses in multiple occupation (HMO) requiring mandatory licensing in Tewkesbury Borough. Progressing licenses has, therefore, not been a priority to date. Nevertheless, the Council now recognises it should pursue owners operating a licensable HMO illegally.

Where a HMO requiring a license comes to the attention of the Council, the Environmental Health team shall send a standard application pack to the owner.

There also needs to be some preparation for any possible future changes in HMO licensing and therefore the Council will be aiming to identify all HMOs in the borough.

⁴⁰ The Tewkesbury Borough Council Corporate Enforcement Policy can be found in the housing section of the council's webpage Strategies and Policies <https://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/strategies-and-policies>

3.4.4 *Going the extra mile*

The Gloucestershire Going the Extra Mile (GEM) Project⁴¹ will engage with 1,100 people over three years until December 2019 to support the county's most vulnerable adults into work, training or education. The project will identify potential work related opportunities for its Gloucestershire participants.

Target participants are women, individuals with addictions, over 50's, rural residents, people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, carers, black and minority ethnic residents, homeless applicants, people with mental health issues, and unemployed residents.

The Council will ensure that all possible participants in the borough are signposted to GEM to receive the support they require.

3.4.5 *Supporting residents affected by welfare reform and helping people into work*

Housing associations will be impacted by the 1% rent reduction and have been reviewing business plans. Non-essential services and some community work for example could be affected as housing associations cut back. This is not the case for all and may not affect Tewkesbury Borough social housing tenants greatly, however we must be prepared for possible impacts on housing association tenancy support services.

The Council is increasingly reliant on working in partnership with housing associations with stock in our borough to respond to welfare reform changes. The impact is fully discussed in Housing Strategy Appendix 2 and associated evidence in Appendix 1b.

The Council will be working proactively with housing associations and other partners to support residents not only into work and seek employment opportunities gain qualifications and so on, but to help them gain the skills and confidence they need to active and productive members of their communities.

⁴¹ More information can be found in the Autumn 2016 newsletter
<http://www.gloucestershiregatewaytrust.org.uk/images/pdfs/GGC%20Community%20Partners%20News%20Autumn%202016.pdf>

4 Key Challenges

4.1 Increasing Housing Supply

- Robustness of affordable housing policies in the Tewkesbury Borough Plan that manage home ownership products as well as rented.
- Rent levels and sales values that ensure viability for developers and affordability for our residents.
- Meeting the number of new affordable homes needed.
- The possible reduction in affordable housing stock through the Voluntary Right to Buy (the extension to the Right to Buy for housing associations)
- Empty homes across the borough that should be brought into productive use/
- Quality private sector rented accommodation
- Support for both landlords and tenants in the private sector.

4.2 Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention

- Intervention at the earliest possible stage for households in crisis and ensuring they access our services
- Achieving the GOLD Standard in homeless prevention to give a cost effective and excellent service to those facing housing difficulties
- Working with residents and partners to mitigate the effects of Welfare Reform on tenancy affordability
- Improving choice for residents facing homelessness by improving access to the private rented sector
- Addressing the needs of home owners following the removal of the Mortgage Rescue Scheme.
- Lack of local alternatives to Bed & Breakfast (B&B)
- Limited number of accommodation spaces available for households
- Expense of emergency accommodation/ short term accommodation
- Supporting specific groups to access suitable emergency accommodation
- Supporting households with poor tenancy history to find a sustainable solution
- Lack of temporary accommodation within the borough
- Solutions for single households with dual diagnosis/multiple needs
- Continued use of the social housing sector for discharging homelessness duty
- Sourcing sustainable housing solutions for care leavers and young people under 35.
- Discharging Homeless duties to those affected by welfare reform
- Implement changes associated with the forthcoming Homelessness Reduction Bill

4.3 Meeting the needs of specific groups

- Affordability of housing for low-income households and households affected by Welfare Reform
- Housing large families in affordable accommodation.
- Seeking appropriate accommodation for gypsies and travellers.
- Housing those with very specific housing needs.
- Housing older people as the population ages.

- Meeting the housing needs of our rural communities.
- Understanding, supporting and meeting the demand and need for self/custom-build and Starter Homes.
- Meeting the housing needs of refugees and asylum seekers

4.4 Improving the health and well-being of local people

- How tenants and leaseholders of affordable housing can deal with issues themselves as non-essential services lessen.
- Working with private landlords to provide suitable housing that meet basic standards.
- Ensuring homes are suitably kept warm.
- Meeting the needs of those in houses of multiple occupation and licensing such properties where appropriate.
- Energy saving, particularly for those on low incomes ensuring they are not paying too much in energy costs for their home.
- Providing appropriate support for non-working households to mitigate welfare reform.

5 Addressing the challenges

- 5.1 These challenges will be addressed during the lifetime of the Strategy. Key priorities and objectives have been drawn from these challenges, see Section 6 overleaf.
- 5.2 Following consultation on these priorities and objectives, we believe that Tewkesbury Borough Council is in a good position to address the challenges its housing and related services face over the next 5 years.

6 Tewkesbury Borough Council Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Key Priorities

From this work we have concluded that there are 4 key priorities for Tewkesbury Borough Council; under each priority there are objectives to focus on for the next 5 years.

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Priority 1: Increasing the supply of housing

- 1.1 Encouraging new developments to meet the aims of the Joint Core Strategy.
- 1.2 Develop housing policies in the Tewkesbury Borough Plan that facilitates and enables affordable housing delivery.
- 1.3 Using financial sums from development to fund the building of more specialist and affordable homes.
- 1.4 Bring empty homes back into use across the Borough.
- 1.5 Maximise the opportunities of the private rented sector.

Priority 2: Prevent homelessness

- 2.1 Continue to improve the proactive homelessness prevention programme.
- 2.2 Implement and follow the GOLD Standard.
- 2.3 Evaluate implications of Welfare Reform changes and establish options to minimise the risk of homelessness.
- 2.4 Review the provision of temporary accommodation.
- 2.5 Stop the use of B&B accommodation for homeless households except in emergencies.

Priority 3: Meet the housing needs of specific groups

- 3.1 Consider and act on the outcomes of our accommodation assessments to assess our communities' needs.
- 3.2 Promote and facilitate rural affordable housing development.
- 3.3 Work with the health and social care sectors to provide effective housing-related support for vulnerable people.
- 3.4 Evaluate the provision of accommodation-based support for specific groups.
- 3.5 Work with partners to facilitate appropriate accommodation for refugees and asylum seekers as legislation and policy requires.

Priority 4: Improving the health and well-being of local people

- 4.1 Work with private landlords to ensure their properties meet basic standards and support them to improve the condition of their properties.
- 4.2 Continue working with and supporting schemes that provide advice and assistance to vulnerable households to help them reduce fuel costs and promotes safety through the installation of minor adaptations in the home.
- 4.3 Work with our partners to actively encourage individuals to take up educational, employment or other activities to support independence and create a sense of worth.

7 Monitoring our Strategy

This Strategy will be regularly monitored and reviewed by the Portfolio Holder. Annual action plans will be agreed by Executive Committee with annual reporting to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for review of achievements and future challenges.

Our annual action plan will be updated regularly and will be made publically available on the council's [housing webpages](#)⁴². This will ensure that all our stakeholders can see the progress we are making and when new actions are being taken to achieve our objectives.

Our action is to be shaped annually (calendar year) to be pro-active as well as re-active to the changing needs of our community and challenges facing us when new government policies are implemented.

We want our Housing Strategy to be as flexible as possible so that we can continue to take action where necessary and start new actions when appropriate to do so over the 5 year strategy period.

Each of the 4 priorities are referenced with the letter P and the priority number i.e. Priority 1 is P1. Each action to be achieved is then numbered (in no particular order) with a number to get the ID reference i.e. P1.1; P1.2 and so on. All actions have a deadline date to be achieved.

Section 8 overleaf details the action plan for the first year of the Strategy during the 2017 calendar year; there is at least one action for each objective.

⁴² The council's housing webpages: <https://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/housing-strategy>

8 Housing Strategy Action Plan Year One: 2017

This Housing Strategy Action Plan for 2017 has been created by Tewkesbury Borough Councillors with officer support and with guidance from the consultation responses to prioritise areas of work for the next 12 months. This action plan identifies specific steps Tewkesbury Borough Council needs to take in order to achieve the priorities and objectives of the Housing Strategy during year one of the Strategy.

Priority 1 Increase the supply of housing

| ID ref | Action | Objective to which the action contributes | Responsible Person | Required resources | Deadline |
|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| P1. 1. | Investigate how alternative construction methods can deliver new affordable housing on council-owned land | Objective 1.1 | Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer | Input from: Property Services Development Management Severn Vale Housing Society | July 2017 |
| P1. 2. | Establish detailed affordable housing policies for the Tewkesbury Borough local plan | Objective 1.2 | Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer | Input from: Planning Policy Development Management | July 2017 |
| P1. 3. | Produce a guidance note that determines the use of commuted sums (financial contributions in lieu of on-site affordable housing) and seek Executive Committee approval | Objective 1.3 | Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer | Input from: Democratic Services Housing Services Manager | March 2017 |
| P1. 4. | Identify long-term empty homes and evaluate their potential benefit to the council's housing service. | Objective 1.4 | Environmental Health Manager | Input from: Revenues and Benefits Housing Services | December 2017 |
| P1. 5. | Use a range of enforcement actions to bring vacant properties back into use | Objective 1.4 | Environmental Health Manager | Input from: Revenues and Benefits Housing Services | December 2017 |
| P1. 6. | Evaluate potential for additional promotional activities with private sector landlords to boost availability of homes in the borough. | Objective 1.5 | Environmental Health Manager | Input from: Revenues and Benefits Housing Services | December 2017 |

Priority 2 Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention

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| ID ref | Action | Objective to which the action contributes | Responsible Person | Required resources | Deadline |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| P2. 1. | Improve advice process in prevention paperwork to incorporate action plans that include customer actions. | Objective 2.1 | Housing Services Manager | None | June 2017 |
| P2. 2. | Contact all housing associations and private landlords who have worked with us to prevent homelessness to develop an eviction/ prevention protocol | Objective 2.1 | Housing Services Manager | None | June 2017 |
| P2. 3. | Develop solutions for homeowners with special housing needs in mortgage difficulty | Objective 2.1 | Housing Services Manager | Input from: - Housing association partners - Financial resources need to be identified | April 2018 |
| P2. 4. | Improve housing services website and include a landlord advice section | Objective 2.1 | Housing Services Manager | None | June 2017 |
| P2. 5. | Update the housing services housing options/homelessness form | Objective 2.1 | Housing Services Manager | None | June 2017 |
| P2. 6. | Work with local authority partners on Gold Standard Programme and achieve 60% in peer review | Objective 2.2 | Housing Services Manager | None | September 2017 |
| P2. 7. | Introduce an early intervention protocol for tenants affected by welfare reform including transitional support and assistance to find work | Objective 2.3 | Housing Services Manager | Input from: - Financial Inclusion Partnership - Council's revenues and benefits - Department for Work and Pensions - Housing associations - Citizen's Advice Bureau - Going the Extra Mile Project - Greensquare Support | July 2017 |

Priority 2 Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention continued

| ID ref | Action | Objective to which the action contributes | Responsible Person | Required resources | Deadline |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| P2. 8 | Stop the use of private bed and breakfast for emergency accommodation except in emergencies | Objective 2.4 Objective 2.5 | Housing Services Manager | Input from: Housing association partners | April 2018 |
| P2. 9 | Procure cost effective temporary accommodation within Tewkesbury Borough for accepted households with poor tenancy histories who are difficult to rehouse including properties suitable for households with mobility needs | Objective 2.4 Objective 2.5 | Housing Services Manager | Input from: Housing association partners | April 2018 |
| P2. 10 | Work with county local authority partners to find solutions for high risk/high support/multiple needs homeless households | Objective 2.4 Objective 2.5 | Housing Services Manager | Input from: Partner local authorities for multi-authority solution | Find funding solutions by April 2018 |
| P2. 11 | Implement changes associated with the forthcoming Homelessness Reduction Bill | Objective 2.1 Objective 2.2 Objective 2.3 Objective 2.4 Objective 2.5 | Housing services Manager | To be identified | To be determined by the progress of the Bill. |

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Priority 3 Meeting the housing needs of those who need it most

| ID ref | Action | Objective to which the action contributes | Responsible Person | Required resources | Deadline |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| P3. 1. | Commissioning, along with the district councils in Gloucestershire and other partners as appropriate, Strategy Housing Market Assessment | Objective 3.1 | Planning Policy Manager | Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer | December 2017 |
| P3. 2. | Evaluate the accommodation needs of Travellers and Non-Travellers (as determined by the 2016 updated Gypsy Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTTSAA)) | Objective 3.1 | Planning Policy Manager | Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer | December 2017 |
| P3. 3. | Establish a local connection policy that ensures rural affordable housing development, via rural exception, is prioritised for the needs of the local community. | Objective 3.2 | Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer | Input from: Rural Housing Enabler | In line with the Borough Plan affordable housing policy development timetable |
| P3. 4. | Establish a strategic managers group consisting of housing, health and social care to build relationships and create a joined-up way of working to better support vulnerable residents. | Objective 3.3 | Housing Services Manager | Strategic Housing & Enabling Officer | December 2017 |
| P3. 5. | Profile accommodation-based support that the council has access to in the county. | Objective 3.4 | Housing Services Manager | Input from: Supporting People (Gloucestershire County Council) | December 2017 |

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Priority 4 Improving the health and well-being of local people

| ID ref | Action | Objective to which the action contributes | Responsible Person | Required resources | Deadline |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| P4. 1. | Maintain and promote the “Fit to Rent” Landlord Accreditation Scheme for landlords wanting to work with the council and be better trained to provide quality accommodation and management. | Objective 4.1 | Environmental Health Manager | Input from all Gloucestershire districts (partners in the scheme) | December 2017 |
| P4. 2. | Work with RP’s and partners to offer advice and assistance with grants, loans and support services (e.g. handyman services) to vulnerable and older people to help insulate, adapt and maintain homes. | Objective 4.2 | Environmental Health Manager | Warm and Well contract and partnership agreement, agency services agreement / contract | December 2017 |
| P4. 3. | Respond within 3 working days to customer complaints about housing conditions. | Objective 4.2 | Environmental Health Manager | Environmental Health team | December 2017 |
| P4. 4. | Reduce poor quality housing by taking appropriate action to deal with identified Housing Health and Safety Rating System Category 1 hazards. | Objective 4.2 | Environmental Health Manager | Environmental Health team | December 2017 |
| P4. 5. | Carry out the actions within the Strategy for Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire Action for Affordable Warmth 2013 -2018 | Objective 4.2 | Environmental Health Manager | Gloucestershire Affordable Warmth Partnership | As per Strategy action plan |

Priority 4 Improving the health and well-being of local people continued

| ID ref | Action | Objective to which the action contributes | Responsible Person | Required resources | Deadline |
|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| P4. 6. | Regulate the standards of larger houses in multiple occupation and caravan sites by enforcing mandatory license conditions | Objective 4.2 | Environmental Health Manager | Environmental Health team Housing Benefit team | December 2017 |
| P4. 7. | To work with the council's community development team to ensure all council services are signposting residents to the 'Going the Extra Mile' Project | Objective 4.3 | Tewkesbury Navigator | Funded through GEM Funding | Ongoing to September 2019 |

9 Glossary of key terms

This glossary is intended to cover all terms within the Housing Strategy 2017-2021 documentation. The Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy Appendix 3 provides its own Glossary of Terms to complement.

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Affordable Homes Programme | DCLG funding that is available for Housing associations and house builders via the Homes and Communities Agency to increase the supply of Affordable Housing and specialist housing in England. Programmes are normally over a 3 year period with set target dates for drawing down grant and new-build completion. https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/affordable-homes-programme-2015-to-2018-guidance-and-allocations |
| Affordable Housing | Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Full definition as per National Planning Policy Framework 2012 or any successor document https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2 |
| Affordable rent levels | Rented housing provided by a housing association subject to a rent of up to 80% of local market rents (inclusive of any Service Charge where applicable) |
| Building Regulations 2010 Approved Document M: Access to and use of buildings (and associated volumes and corrections) or any successor document | Building regulation in England to ensure that people are able to access and use buildings and their facilities https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m |
| Category 2 Housing | Optional requirement M4(2) – Category 2: Accessible and Adaptable dwellings https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m |
| Category 3 Housing a) Adaptable and b) Accessible | Optional requirement M4(3) – Category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m |
| Code for Sustainable Homes | The Code is the national standard for the sustainable design and construction of new homes. The Code aims to reduce our carbon emissions and create homes that are more sustainable. This policy was withdrawn on 27 th March 2015. |
| Compulsory purchase order (CPO) | A legal function in the United Kingdom and Ireland that allows certain bodies which need to obtain land or property to do so without the consent of the owner. |
| Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) | A UK Government department established to create great places to live and work, and to give more power to local people to shape what happens in their area. Responsibilities include driving up housing supply, increasing home ownership, devolving powers and budgets to boost local growth in England, supporting strong communities with excellent public services. |
| Empty Dwelling Management Order | Empty Dwelling Management Orders: guidance https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/empty-dwelling- |

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | management-orders-guidance |
| Gloucestershire Going the Extra Mile (GEM) Project | The project will be managed by Gloucestershire Gateway Trust (GGT) on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council (GCC). The Gloucestershire GEM Project will engage with 1,100 people over three years from October 2016 and will focus on people who face challenges in getting into work, and support them to move closer towards education, training, volunteering or employment. |
| Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People Accommodation Assessment (GTTSAA) | A document to provide an evidence base to enable authorities to comply with their requirements to gypsies, travellers and show people under the Housing Act 2004, the National Planning Policy Framework 2012, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2012 and 2015. |
| Homeseeker Plus | Homeseeker Plus is our choice based lettings system for letting social housing. It is a partnership formed between all six local Councils in Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire District Council and many of the Housing Associations and social landlords operating in the area. Note: formerly known as Gloucestershire Homeseeker |
| Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) | The national housing and regeneration agency for England, with a capital investment budget https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/homes-and-communities-agency |
| Houses of multiple occupation (HMOs) | As per government definition https://www.gov.uk/private-renting/houses-in-multiple-occupation |
| Housing associations | As defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008; also known as Registered Providers or Registered Social Landlords |
| Housing Benefit | Financial support to pay a tenant's rent if they are on a low income. |
| Housing & Planning Act 2016 | Legislation that makes changes to housing policy and the planning system that includes Starter Homes; Extension of the Right to Buy; Sale of high value social housing; Improvements to the private rented housing sector; Self-build duty on local authorities; Planning policy for traveller sites. http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/22/contents/enacted |
| Lifetime Homes Standard | The Lifetime Homes standard is a set of 16 design criteria that provide a model for building accessible and adaptable homes http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/ . |
| Local Housing Allowance (LHA) | LHA is used to calculate the amount of Housing Benefit for tenants who rent privately. |
| Low cost home ownership | The collective term for home ownership products under the Affordable Housing definition. |
| National Planning Policy Framework | " <i>The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied</i> " https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf |

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| National Planning Practice Guidance | Guidance to assist practitioners in the use of the NPPF http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/ |
| Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2012 and updated 2015. | Sets out the Government's planning policy for traveller sites https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-policy-for-traveller-sites |
| Rural exceptional housing development | Where, particularly in rural areas, a local need for affordable housing can be clearly demonstrated, and cannot be met in other way; exceptionally the council may permit residential development in accordance with the appropriate housing policies. |
| Social rent levels | Rents that are set by the housing association in accordance with the formula set by the Homes and Communities Agency (or its successor body) |
| Strategic Housing Market Assessment | A document that assesses the district's full housing needs and is the first step in the process of developing local plans as set out in the Planning Policy Guidance http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/housing-and-economic-landavailability-assessment/stage-5-final-evidence-base/#paragraph_045) |
| Warm and Well Scheme | Warm & Well can ensure older people stay safe and warm, whether they live in their own home or a rented property, by improving the energy efficiency of their homes. This will keep fuel costs down and reduce the risk of health problems linked to the cold http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/article/106393/Gloucestershire-Warm--Well---Energy-savinggrants-keep-older-people-safe-in-winter |

At home in Tewkesbury Borough

A housing strategy for our borough 2017-2021

Appendix 1a: Our Local Evidence – Increasing Housing Supply



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1 Introduction

This document outlines the evidence gathered by Tewkesbury Borough Council showing the housing and homelessness context in which the council is working.

We have used this evidence to identify 4 priorities for housing and homelessness along with key objectives for the next 5 years.

The strategy will link with the priorities outlined in the Council Plan 2016-2020, set out the council's priorities and objectives for housing, and appropriate activities that will help us to meet our statutory housing duty under the Housing Act 1996.

Housing is a priority in the Tewkesbury Borough Council Corporate Plan because:

"We recognise how important it is for residents to be able to access good quality housing and housing related services that make a real difference to their lives.

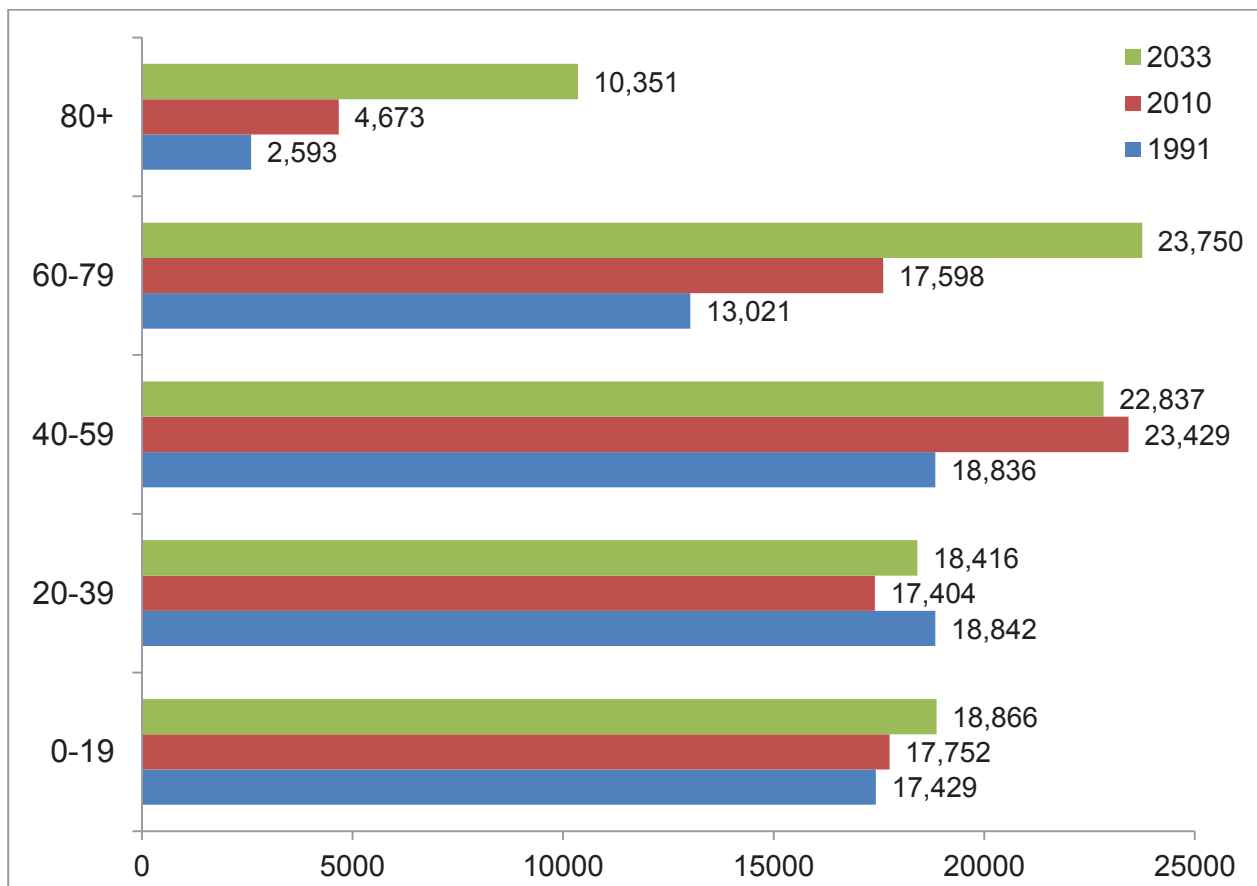
"Not only is housing important for the health and well-being of residents it is also an important part of building and maintaining strong communities and supporting the economic prosperity of the borough."

Tewkesbury Borough Council recognises that access to quality affordable housing underpins the success of our area and all of the overarching council priorities.

2 Population and households

Information from “What Homes Where 2013”, a toolkit¹ to help local authorities assess their housing needs shows us some of the key population issues. Our borough population is roughly 85,800; assuming current population trends continue, the ONS projections² for the next 25 years suggest that the population in Tewkesbury Borough will reach 93,400 by 2025 and 100,400 by 2037. The district’s growth rates are higher than those predicted for Gloucestershire and England in the short, medium and long term.

Chart 1: Tewkesbury Borough age profile: how the age profile has changed and may change 1991 - 2010 - 2033



Source: What Homes Where 2013

As shown above the dominating feature of the projected trend is a sharp increase in the number of older people aged 60 and over, particularly those aged 80+. Projections for children and young people indicate slower growth, while the working-age population is expected to show little change in the long term.

Population changes will present an increasing challenge for the borough in relation to additional pressure on health and social care and the need for more specialist accommodation. There is also evidence that a number of homes in both the social/affordable rented sector and market sector are currently under-occupied, particularly in rural areas.

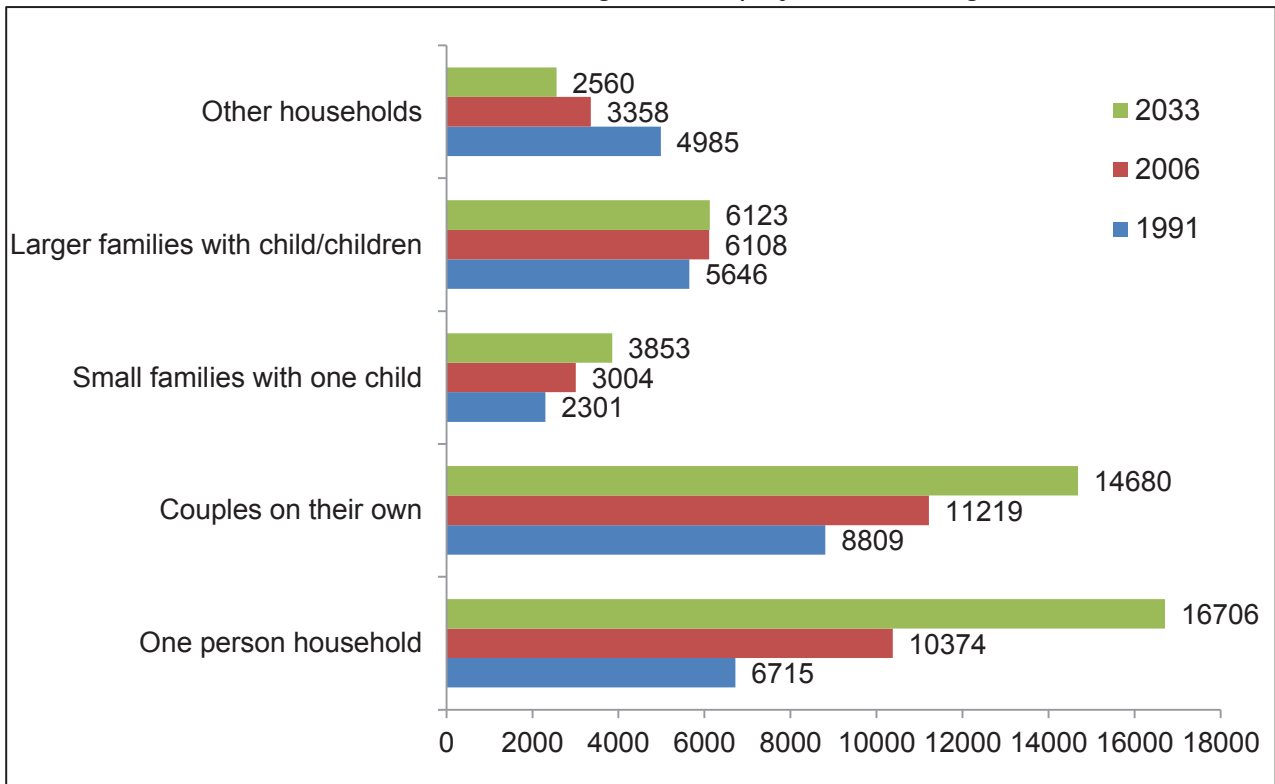
There continues to be an increase in one person households with this household type projected to overtake all others by 2033. Couples on their own and small families increases at a relatively

¹ What Homes Where, 2013 <http://www.howmanyhomes.org/>

² 2012-Based Sub-national Population Projections, Office for National Statistics

steady rate but larger family growth remains small. Other households include couples with adult children living at home, friends living in a property and so on, are predicted to decline:

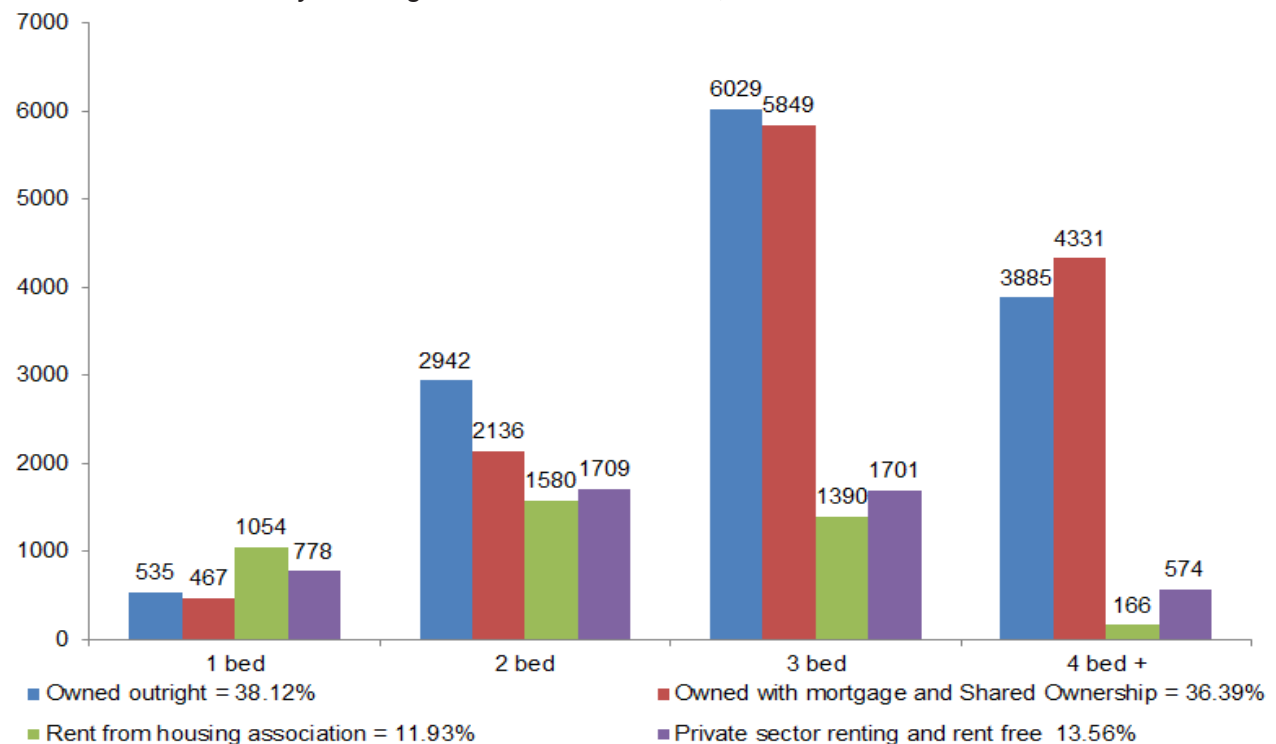
Chart 2: How the mix of households has changed and is projected to change



Source: What Homes Where 2013

The Census 2011 shows 35,126 households in Tewkesbury Borough. It informs us of the tenure that households state they are living in along with number of bedrooms, see Chart 3 below.

Chart 3: Households by housing tenure and house size, 2011



Source: ONS, Census 2011

Based on population and household changes, the What Homes Where toolkit also advises on suitable house sizes. For Tewkesbury Borough the main need is for smaller family housing:

Table 1: Mix of household sizes required to 2033

| House size | 1 bed | 2 bed | 2/3 bed | 3 bed | 3/4 bed | 4/5+ bed |
|--------------------------|-------|--------|---------|--------|---------|----------|
| As % of all homes | 3.12% | 14.14% | 27.59% | 23.31% | 17.64% | 14.19% |

Source: What Homes Where 2013

The extent of housing growth across Tewkesbury Borough has been beneficial for our households in need and the affordable housing dwelling stock in Tewkesbury Borough has been gradually increasing; however as an overall percentage of total dwelling stock there are just 11.8% of social housing stock homes. This number has increased by only 0.1% since 2010³.

The majority of the borough's housing stock (88.2%) therefore is privately owned (outright, mortgaged and private rented) and is generally in good condition. However homes in our borough are larger, more expensive properties. Affordable housing needs registers, Homeseeker Plus and Help to Buy South, as at July 2016 inform us of the needs of households currently seeking to rent or buy an affordable home in Tewkesbury Borough, see Table 2. The actual need/demand is for smaller properties:

Table 2: July 2016 housing register data as percentage of need

| House type | 1 bed | 2 bed | 3 bed | 4 bed | 5+ bed |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| As % of all Homeseeker Plus Tewkesbury Borough need | 52.45% | 32.88% | 10.25% | 3.90% | 0.52% |
| As % of all Help to Buy South Tewkesbury Borough need | 12.20% | 53.90% | 32.20% | 1.69% | 0.00% |
| Total | 64.65% | 86.78% | 42.45% | 5.60% | 0.52% |

Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council datasets

The Homeseeker Plus rented housing register has seen no turn around in need/demand for social rented housing. Since the commencement of choice based lettings in October 2009 and despite new build affordable rented homes (as shown in Table 3 overleaf), housing need in Tewkesbury Borough sees little shrinkage.

³ ONS Dataset: Housing summary measures: summary measures data, Table 14, October 2016

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/housingsummarymeasuressummarymeasuresdata>

Table 3: Number of completions and number of households registered for social housing

| Year End | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | Total |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Homeseeker snapshot as at 1 st April* | 1498 | 1702 | 1877 | 2405 | 2010 | 1662 | 1928 | |
| Open Market | 261 | 271 | 277 | 322 | 360 | 428 | 390 | 2309 |
| Affordable Housing rented | 34 | 48 | 33 | 93 | 86 | 122 | 159 | 575 |
| Affordable Housing home ownership | 3 | 12 | 8 | 46 | 70 | 23 | 70 | 232 |
| Total of all new build** | 298 | 331 | 318 | 461 | 516 | 573 | 619 | 3116 |
| Percentage of which is Affordable Housing | 12% | 18% | 13% | 30% | 30% | 25% | 37% | 26% |

*Source: DCLG Local Authority Housing Statistics

**Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council Annual Monitoring Reports

The total number of Homeseeker Plus applicants fluctuates all year round but the snapshot in the table depicts an accurate picture of the number of households in need based on issues occurring, such as the commencement of initiatives of the Localism Act 2011 and Welfare Reform Act 2012.

The need for smaller homes is further demonstrated by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Final 2014⁴ (SHMA) as below:

Table 4: Size of additional units required to meet housing need (general needs) in Tewkesbury Borough-excluding households suitable for shared housing

| Size of home | Need requirement | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | Gross annual need | Gross annual supply | Net annual need | As a % of total net annual need | Supply as a % of gross need |
| One bedroom | 218 | 67 | 151 | 29.7% | 30.9% |
| Two bedrooms | 490 | 179 | 311 | 61.4% | 36.5% |
| Three bedrooms | 81 | 61 | 20 | 3.9% | 75.6% |
| Four or more bedrooms | 38 | 13 | 25 | 5.0% | 33.2% |
| Total | 827 | 320 | 507 | 100.0% | 38.7% |

Source: Gloucestershire County Strategic Housing Market Assessment, 2013

⁴ Strategic Housing Market Assessment Final 2014
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4KyFQA43JaOZTR5S2RGR21sUDA/view>

3 Planning for Development

3.1 Affordable Housing Objectively Assessed Need

The Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAN) for Tewkesbury Borough 2011-2031 is 9,983 dwellings. Of this, 5,514 is already delivered or committed in this period. There is therefore 4,469 housing left to deliver in the period 2016-2031.

The OAN determines an annual requirement of 495 homes per year with 2,475 homes over first 5 year period (starting 2016/17). Tewkesbury Borough saw 2,469 delivered over the previous 5 year period (2011-2016).

Our net affordable housing need based on the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) is 126 affordable homes per year (from 2015 SHMA base date). This means that over the next 5 year period from 2016/17, delivery must be 630 affordable homes. 25% of total housing need of 5 year period is for affordable housing.

From Table 3 on the previous page we can see that from 2010 to 2015, gross delivery of new affordable homes was 578 dwellings; net delivery in that period being 404 dwellings. This equates to 67 new affordable homes per year in that period; significantly below the requirement of 126. Therefore the Tewkesbury Borough Council Plan 2016-2020 target is 150 affordable homes per year so that we can ensure that we meet the net requirement. Reasons to build above the net requirement include:

- Where developments are not policy compliant due to viability and therefore a lesser number of homes are built.
- Tewkesbury Borough Council housing services team must consider the introduction of new government initiatives and policies such as removing planning obligations for small sites (10 dwellings or less), Starter Homes and so on.
- The losses of rented homes through the Right to Buy⁵
- The losses of shared ownership dwellings through household's staircasing to 100% ownership.

We are seeking to be as ambitious as possible as a Local Planning Authority and Local Housing Authority to meet the needs of our community now and in the future.

3.2 Planning Policy

Tewkesbury Borough Council Saved Local Plan 2006-2011 requirement for Affordable Housing through planning obligations stated 30%, of which rented 68% and shared ownership 32%.

The emerging Gloucester, Cheltenham & Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) requirement is 40%; there is no tenure split suggested at this level as it will be detailed in the new Tewkesbury Borough Plan.

⁵ Right to Buy <https://righttobuy.gov.uk/>. Also see Section 5 of this document.

3.3 Delivery against Local Plan Policy

Five yearly analyses of the Council's new-build affordable housing completions shows that:

- In the period 2001-2006 (5 years prior to the Local Plan 2006-11), affordable housing delivery was 23% of all new build housing in the borough.
- In the Local Plan 2006-2011 period, delivery was 25% of all new build housing in the borough.
- From 2011-2016 where we have had saved affordable housing policies and the JCS emerging policy, delivery was 29% of all new build housing in the borough.

3.4 Construction

3.4.1 Self-Build and Custom-Build

Paragraphs 50 and 159 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2012⁶ and related planning practice guidance make it clear that local planning authorities need to identify local demand for people who want to build their own homes and make provision for it in their local plans. Failure to do this may lead to plans being found unsound, as highlighted in the letter from the Minister for Housing and Planning to all English Local Authorities on 5 March 2015.

Self-build is where the individual partly or wholly controls the design, funding, planning and building of a home. This can involve building part or all of a home oneself or alternatively hiring a contractor to do the same. Self-builders can work as individuals or as a group. Self-build can offer an alternative to traditional home ownership and an opportunity to own a sustainable and high quality designed home.

Custom Build Homes describe that custom-build it can be *“purchasing a fully serviced plot from a custom build developer and working with either the site architect, or your own, to design a home that's truly yours. It's all about choice, flexibility and putting you in control.”*⁷

The Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015⁸ places a duty on local authorities to maintain a register of people who have expressed an interest in self-build and custom build projects and to have regard to the demand on their local Register when exercising their planning and other relevant functions.

Tewkesbury Borough Council's register⁹ as at November 2016 had 21 entries for self-build or custom-build housing within the borough:

- 7 of the 21 entries are interested in considering potential 'collective' or 'serviced plots on a larger development' as an option.
- 17 of the 21 entries are interested in building detached homes, with 2 of these specifically planning to build bungalows.

⁶ National Planning Policy Framework, march 2012

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

⁷ Custom Build Homes <http://custombuildhomes.co.uk/what-is-custom-build/>

⁸ The Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/17/contents/enacted/data.htm>

⁹ Self-Build Register: Tewkesbury Borough Council <http://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=3051>

- 10 of the 21 entries are interested in building 4 or 5 bedroomed homes, 6 interested in 3 or 4 bedroomed and only 3 interested in 2 bedrooms, 1 in 2 or 3 and 1 in a home of any size.
- 16 of the 21 entries are interested in building a home with a Garage and Garden.
- 3 of the 21 entries are not looking for a plot; 2 owning their own land and 1 has an option on land.

There are several approaches the council could consider in meeting this need for example, including but not exclusively:

- Allocating suitable housing sites in the Tewkesbury Borough Plan where private homebuilding is encouraged or preferred;
- Selling either our own or encouraging the County Council to sell land.
- Buying land ourselves for this purpose, working through the proposed Borough Council development company to provide serviced plots
- Adopting policies in the Tewkesbury Borough Plan that ask for a mix of different types of housing on larger sites, with self-build and custom house building listed as suitable development Councils want to see coming forward;
- Adopting policies which ask for a percentage of self-build and custom housebuilding plots to be provided when larger housing projects come forward.
- Prepare and adopt Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents on self-build as the Tewkesbury Borough Plan may take a long time to go through all of its processes.

To continue to understand the need/demand and affordability of Self-Build and Custom-Build housing, the council will include this as part of a newly commissioned Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

3.4.2 Flood resilience

During our consultation period it was brought to our attention that the borough needs to have an awareness of the potential improvements to new housing developments in terms of flood resilience. Flood resilience measures can be incorporated in construction where appropriate, for example reflecting Environment Agency flood zones.

Whilst planning permission requires zero effect in terms of flooding, the cost, both emotional and financial, of being flooded would be far less if measures are taken at the start of the development process. There are a variety of possible measures that can be taken at the construction stage and also post-flooding 'resilient repair'. For example, Two Castles Housing Association in Carlisle have constructed homes that have built in flood defence measures; the details can be found here <http://www.ukfloodbarriers.co.uk/2016-the-changing-face-of-uk-flood-defence>

The Tewkesbury Property Support Network¹⁰ is a project set up to provide support, solutions and low-cost measures for communities at risk of flooding. "*The project's aim supports the long-term goal of enabling individuals and communities to take more ownership for the management of their flood risk and to recover more quickly as a result.*" The project's flood repairable project leaflet provides information about resilient repair¹¹.

¹⁰ Tewkesbury Property Support Network website <https://floodrepairable.wordpress.com/>

¹¹ Tewkesbury Property Support Network, flood repairable project leaflet <https://floodrepairable.files.wordpress.com/2016/01/flood-repairable-project-leaflet.pdf>

Tewkesbury Borough Council continues to support communities through the employment of a Tewkesbury Borough Flood Project Support Officer that reports regularly to the Flood Risk Management Group.

3.4.3 Alternative construction methods

The need to increase the supply of new homes and the high demand has meant that house builders have not been able to keep up; with manufactures unable to supply to sheer amount of bricks for example pushes such prices too high. This, along with labourer wages, that according to the EAC¹² rose in London to £240 per day in 2013 means that traditional construction methods are dwindling and alternatives are reaching new heights.

Alternative construction methods are not new, yet the mass-builders have largely retained traditional methods. Tewkesbury Borough Council is currently working with Severn Vale Housing Society, as our stock transfer housing association provider, to seek alternative, modular and off-site construction of new homes on council-owned land. The aim is to speed up the delivery of homes in a much more sustainable, productive, efficient, and environmentally-friendly manner for our communities. .

¹² EAC website <http://www.building.co.uk/>

4 Incomes, house prices and home ownership

The growth in income levels has not kept pace with the increases in property values meaning that many people are priced out of owner occupation the borough.

Table 5 shows the disparity between incomes and house prices. Median house prices and median incomes are shown from the year 2005 to show the change from pre-economic downturn.

Table 5: Median income and house prices 2005 and 2015, along with the ratios for 2015¹³

| District | 2005 Median House Price | 2015 Median House Price | 2005 Median Gross Annual Salary | 2015 Median Gross Annual Salary | 2015 Income:House Price ratio |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Cheltenham | £175,000 | £225,000 | £20,917 | £24,051 | 9.36 |
| Cotswold | £242,000 | £319,000 | £18,560* | £19,131** | 15.42** |
| Forest of Dean | £160,000 | £182,975 | £18,920 | £20,682 | 8.85 |
| Gloucester | £132,000 | £165,000 | £17,206 | £20,779 | 7.94 |
| Stroud | £180,000 | £225,000 | £19,378 | £23,282 | 9.66 |
| Tewkesbury | £167,500 | £225,000 | £19,485 | £23,524 | 9.56 |
| Gloucestershire | £176,083 | £223,663 | £15,984 | £21,908 | 10.21 |
| South West> | £180,368 | £224,181 | £12,283 | £18,272 | 12.27 |
| England>> | £168,428 | £238,406 | £17,071 | £20,847 | 11.44 |

*Cotswold data for 2006 as 2005 not available

**Cotswold data for 2014 as 2015 is not available.

>Several Local Authorities' data missing

>> Several Local Authorities' data missing

The ONS state that “Average house price statistics themselves do not give a full picture of the affordability of privately owned housing, because these figures do not take into account average earnings which in part dictate how much people can afford to pay to buy their own home. Looking at the ratio of median house prices to median annual salary sheds light on the relative affordability of owner occupied housing across the local authorities of England...”

Housing in Tewkesbury borough is relatively expensive as against national and regional averages with the east of the borough¹⁴ having the highest values given its proximity to the AONB. Isbourne ward has the highest average house price of £490,996 with detached properties fetching over £600,000. The disparity between incomes and house prices in the Borough continues to escalate.

In their essay, *Unfinished Business: The ownership agenda, thirty years on*¹⁵, ResPublica state that more people are private renting their homes than ever before:

“...thirty years ago 61% of the UK’s households owned their own home...The main shift in the ownership of the UK’s housing stock is around rented accommodation, with the number of households renting from private landlords doubling in thirty years. In 1985 30% of households rented from public landlords, and 9% from private landlords. Today the emphasis has changed, with 22% renting from private landlords and 9% from public.”

¹³ ONS Dataset: Housing summary measures: summary measures data Release date: 7 October 2016, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/housingsummarymeasuressummarymeasuresdata>

¹⁴ Tewkesbury Area Map <http://tewkesbury.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=2912&p=0>

¹⁵ ResPublica Essay published October 2015 <http://www.respublica.org.uk/our-work/publications/unfinished-business-the-ownership-agenda-thirty-years-on/>

4.1 Ability to purchase a home in Tewkesbury Borough

Mortgage lenders must limit the proportion of mortgages at loan to income multiples of 4.5 and above to no more than 15% of their new mortgages. Given this restriction on mortgages, Tewkesbury Borough's income to house price ratio, may make it difficult for first time buyers to get on the property market. This may result in the out migration of young people in the lower income brackets or alternatively encourage people to commute into Tewkesbury Borough for work, while living in areas where housing is cheaper outside of the borough.

In the June 2014 Financial Stability Report¹⁶, the Bank of England announced measures to cut the risk of a damaging house price bubble emerging by limiting the number of high-risk mortgages; the proportion of mortgages at loan to income multiples of 4.5x and above to no more than 15% of their new mortgages.

The impact therefore in Tewkesbury Borough will be continued difficulties for (young) local people to purchase a home in the areas and the likelihood they'll be forced to bordering authority areas in search of more affordable housing to buy, private rented or increased demand on shared ownership and other intermediate housing products.

4.2 Accessing the housing market

With a small private rental market in Tewkesbury Borough, the demand for home ownership has been growing since 2012 when Help to Buy South¹⁷ became our area's help to buy agent.

As at April 2012 just 52 households were registered for home ownership schemes; these include shared ownership and shared ownership resales, rental schemes, and developer schemes (such as help to buy equity loan). As at November 2016, 359 households are currently registered.

It is to be noted that under the help to buy equity loan scheme and previous mortgage guarantee scheme, households register at the time of application. Therefore we will never see the true picture of demand.

In the 4 year period April 2012 to March 2016, there were a total of 23,656 house sales (existing dwellings and new-build) in Tewkesbury Borough. Of these:

- 4,139 (17.5%) were new-build housing¹⁸.
 - Just 438 (10.5%) of this new-build development were supported through a government scheme or as affordable housing, that is help to buy equity loan and shared ownership.
- Less than 1% of all existing dwelling sales¹⁹ were shared ownership re-sales.

A total of 451 home ownership sales were logged in this time period under the help to buy agent. Table 6 overleaf shows the sales by schemes and by Tewkesbury Borough parish.

¹⁶ Financial Stability Report, 2014, Bank of England
<http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/Pages/fsr/2014/fsr35.aspx>

¹⁷ Help to Buy South <http://www.helptobuysouth.co.uk/>

¹⁸ ONS: Number of residential property sales for national and subnational geographies (newly built dwellings) – HPSSA Dataset 7 table 2a <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/numberofresidentialpropertysalesforationalandsubnationalgeographiesnewlybuiltdwellingsquarterlyrollingyearhpssadataset07>

¹⁹ ONS: Number of residential property sales for national and subnational geographies (existing dwellings) – HPSSA Dataset 8 table 2a
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/numberofresidentialpropertysalesforationalandsubnationalgeographiesexistingdwellingsquarterlyrollingyearhpssadataset08>

Table 6: Home ownership sales under the help to buy agent, by Parish, Tewkesbury Borough April 2012-March 2016

| Parish | Help to Buy Equity Loan | Shared Ownership | Shared Ownership Resale | Total |
|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Alderton | 0 | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| Badgeworth | 0 | 24 | 0 | 24 |
| Bishop's Cleeve | 70 | 79 | 8 | 157 |
| Brockworth | 68 | 56 | 0 | 124 |
| Longford | 68 | 10 | 0 | 78 |
| Norton | 0 | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| Stoke Orchard | 24 | 11 | 5 | 40 |
| Winchcombe | 0 | 20 | 0 | 20 |
| Total | 230 | 208 | 13 | 451 |

It is evident that government supported schemes and affordable housing home ownership are extremely popular and needed but with these options being less than 12% of all sales in the borough the opportunities for younger people to get on the housing ladder are limited.

Many young people may not be accessing all the options available to them due to lack of understanding of the range open to them. Tewkesbury Borough Council believes that it can do more to encourage local people to register for home ownership schemes.

4.3 Starter Homes

The government manifesto to provide more homes and more homes for sale for young people has meant their Starter Homes initiative being brought in via the Housing and Planning Act 2016.

A vision of 'discounting' new homes by up to 20% has been out for consultation and at the time writing the sector is waiting for the decision as to how this product will work in reality.

Home ownership is the government's driver in housing at present believing more homes will be built, particularly Starter Homes, in the near future. If Starter Homes are to be considered Affordable Housing in the future, this will affect the council's current position of what we can provide on-site on new developments particularly impacting the rented element. The affects will need to be fully assessed as part of the SHMA alongside other home ownership products.

4.4 Planning obligations: changes to government policy

The government continues to reduce planning obligations on developers to incentivise development of new homes through a policy of no affordable housing contributions on sites of 10 or less dwellings or less than 1000sqm unless in a designated area (for Tewkesbury Borough this is AONB only).

For a rural local authority where much development comes through on small sites this will result in less Affordable Housing for Tewkesbury Borough. Housing services must work with planning and development management colleagues to ensure that both the JCS and Tewkesbury Borough Plan policies maximise affordable housing delivery.

The impact can be quite significant as we currently estimate that just under 12% of our Affordable Housing stock is in our most rural parishes.

5 Right to Buy

Although Right to Buy (RTB) applications fluctuate year on year in Tewkesbury Borough Council, the loss of housing stock puts pressure on our affordable housing supply no matter how many are bought. The removal of a rented home in Tewkesbury Borough impacts greatly on our ability to house those in housing need.

Since the transfer of the council housing stock to Severn Vale Housing Society in 1998, there have been 300 RTB sales (see Table 7).

Table 7: Sales of Severn Vale Housing Society residential dwellings under Right to Buy from 1998/99 to July 2016

| Year End | N.o. properties sold | Year End | N.o. properties sold |
|---------------------|----------------------|----------|----------------------|
| 2017 (to July 2016) | 6 | 2007 | 3 |
| 2016 | 2 | 2006 | 7 |
| 2015 | 5 | 2005 | 11 |
| 2014 | 9 | 2004 | 23 |
| 2013 | 1 | 2003 | 32 |
| 2012 | 4 | 2002 | 32 |
| 2011 | 1 | 2001 | 32 |
| 2010 | 1 | 2000 | 67 |
| 2009 | 0 | 1999 | 68 |
| 2008 | 2 | | |

Source: Severn Vale Housing Society dataset

According to ResPublica, the Right to Buy has increased the number of private landlords: *“The Right to Buy programme will undoubtedly have increased home ownership in the short term, but the long term housing landscape is more a story of replacing public landlords with private landlords, rather than with home owners.”* A ResPublica Essay, Unfinished Business: The ownership agenda, thirty years on, 2015²⁰

5.1 Voluntary Right to Buy

In 2015, the government announced the extension of the Right to Buy to housing association tenants. The Voluntary Right to Buy (VRTB) is still being planned out along with housing associations and the National Housing Federation to ensure it scheme works effectively for housing associations and their tenants. In additional, the Autumn Statement 2016²¹ stated that the pilot scheme will be extended:

“The government will fund a large-scale regional pilot of the Right to Buy for housing association tenants. Over 3,000 tenants will be able to buy their own home with Right to Buy discounts under the pilot.”

Housing associations are currently producing their sales policies in which they will details the principles for selling a rented home to an eligible tenant. Eligibility is yet to be determined by government. Tewkesbury Borough will need to be up to speed eligibility and understand each the sales policies that each housing association with stock in the borough are operating.

²⁰ ResPublica Essay, Unfinished Business: The ownership agenda, thirty years on, 2015

<http://www.respublica.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Unfinished-Business-1.pdf>

²¹ Autumn Statement 2016 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/autumn-statement-2016-documents/autumn-statement-2016>

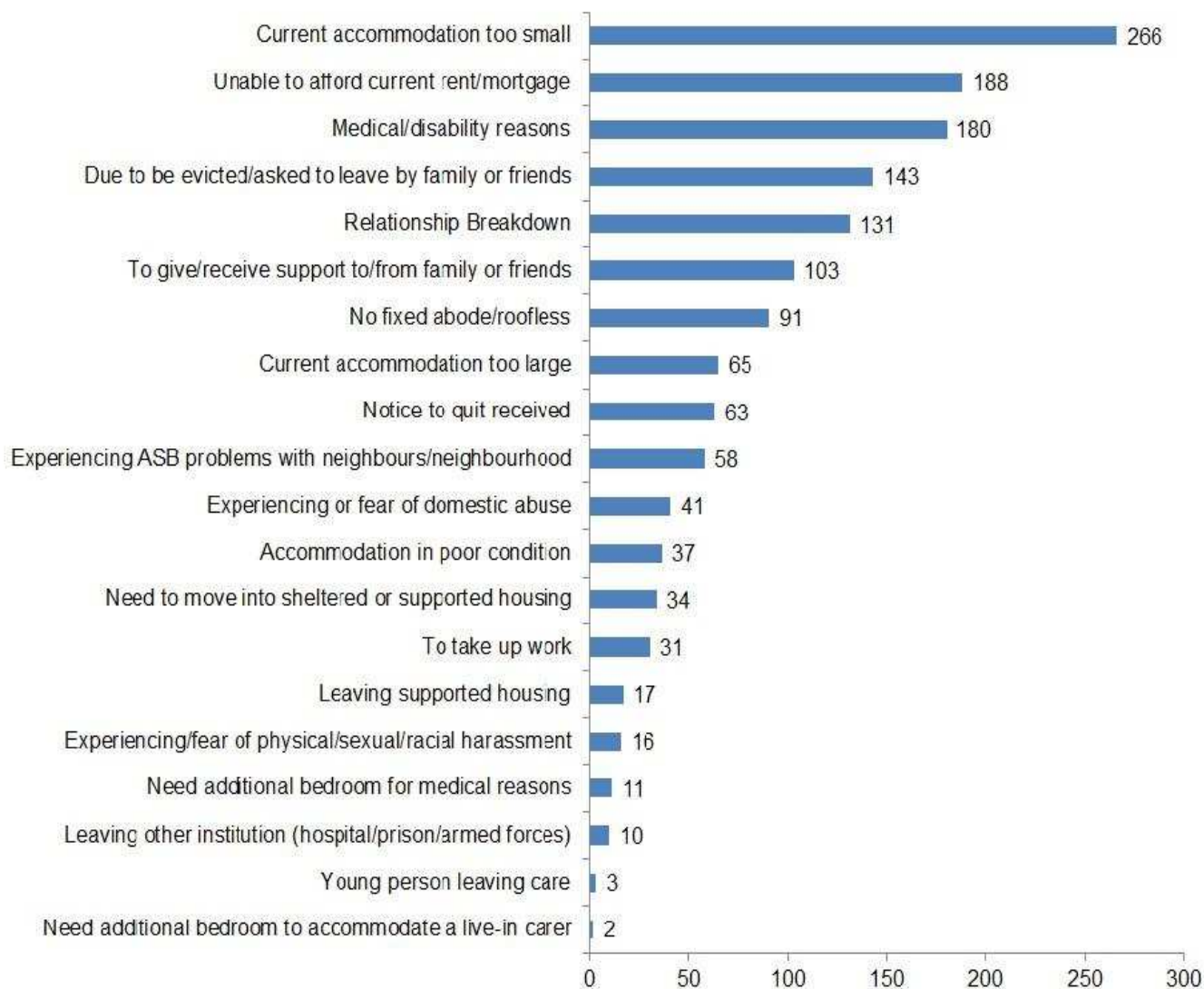
6 Housing Register (choice based lettings)

As at July 2016 there were 1,925 households registered for housing in Tewkesbury Borough on the Council's choice based lettings system, which is now known as Homeseeker Plus.

Households are able to tick a box or state the reason why they have applied to Tewkesbury Borough Council for housing. The majority of applicants stated their accommodation is too small.

'Other' (438) allows applicants to write in their circumstances but this is difficult to analyse. The reason typically fits into one of the tick box categories:

Chart 4: Main reason for applying to Homeseeker

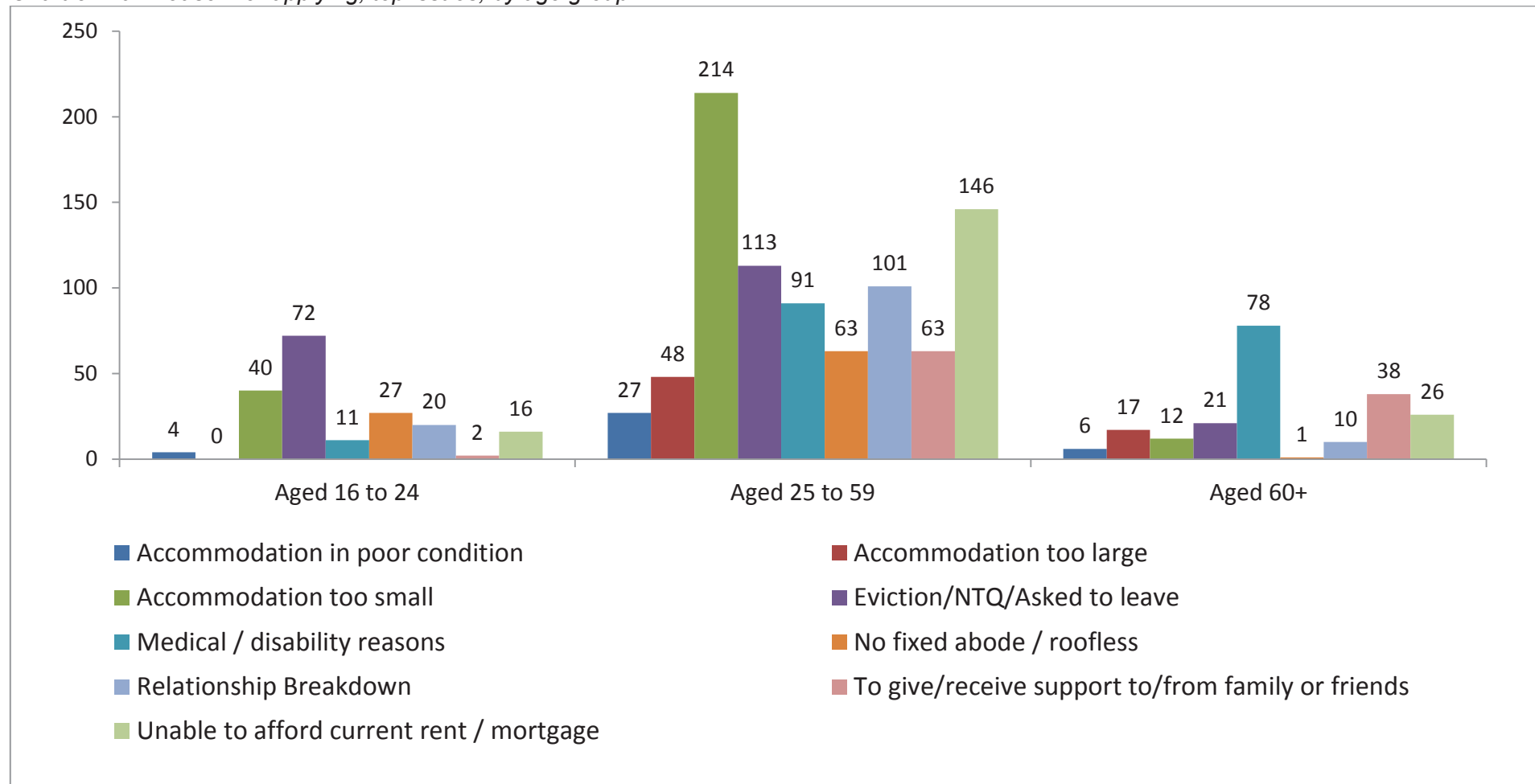


Source: Gloucestershire Homeseeker dataset July 2016

Chart 5 overleaf details the main reasons by age group. In summary:

- 66% of applicants are aged 25 to 59 living in accommodation that is too small for their needs or unable to afford their current property as the 2 most significant issues.
- For young people aged under 25 the majority have been asked to leave their accommodation.
- For older people aged 60+ the main reason is medical or disability reasons require them to move.

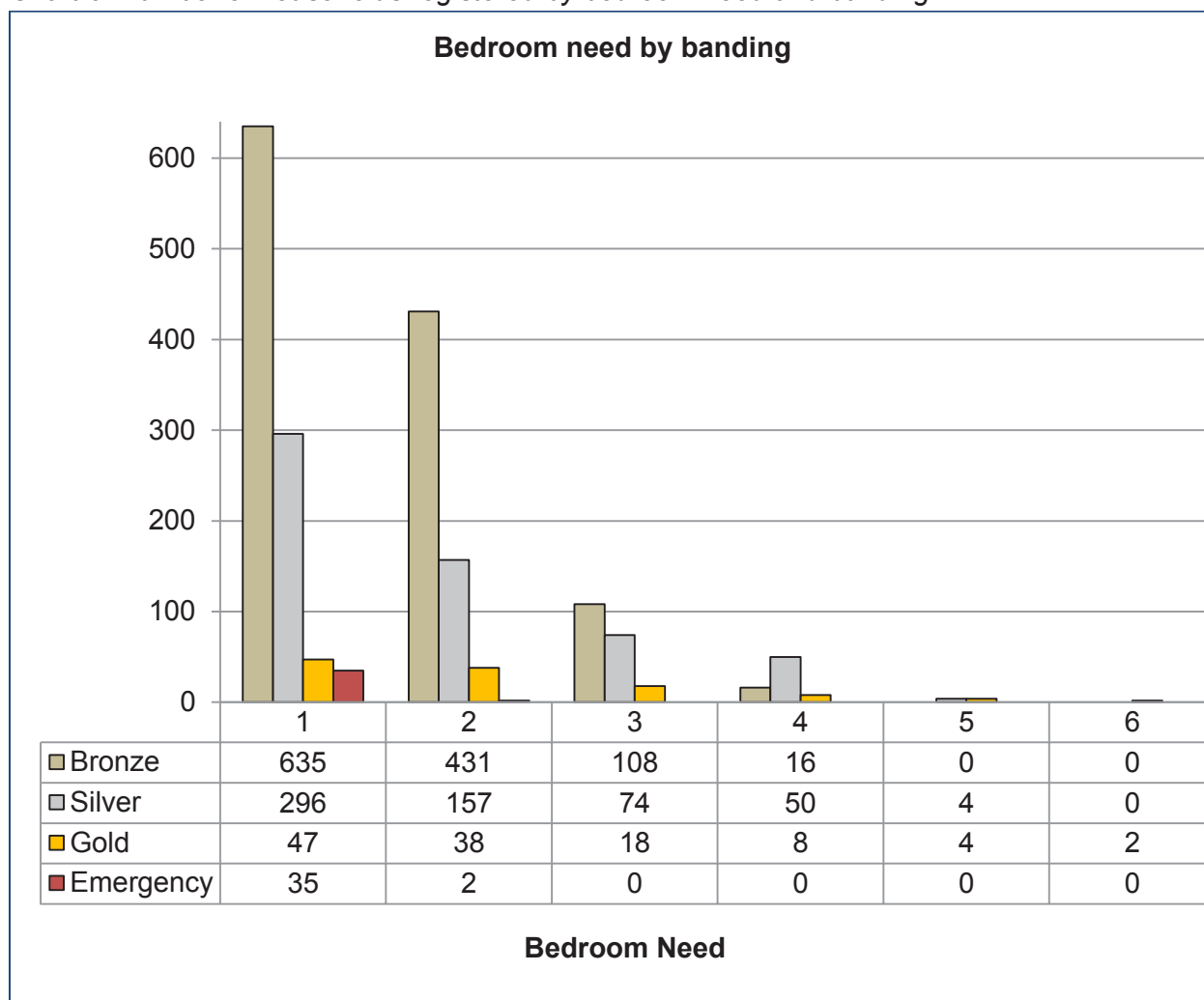
Chart 5: Main reason for applying, top issues, by age group



Source: Gloucestershire Homeseeker dataset July 2016

A third of all households registered in July 2016 were in 1-bed need in Bronze banding. Overall nearly 62% of the housing register applicants are in Bronze with little or no housing need. In addition Table 8 overleaf shows the bedroom need and banding as a percentage of the housing register.

Chart 6: Number of households registered by bedroom need and banding



Source: Gloucestershire Homeseeker dataset July 2016

Table 8: Households registered by bedroom need and banding as a percentage of all applicants

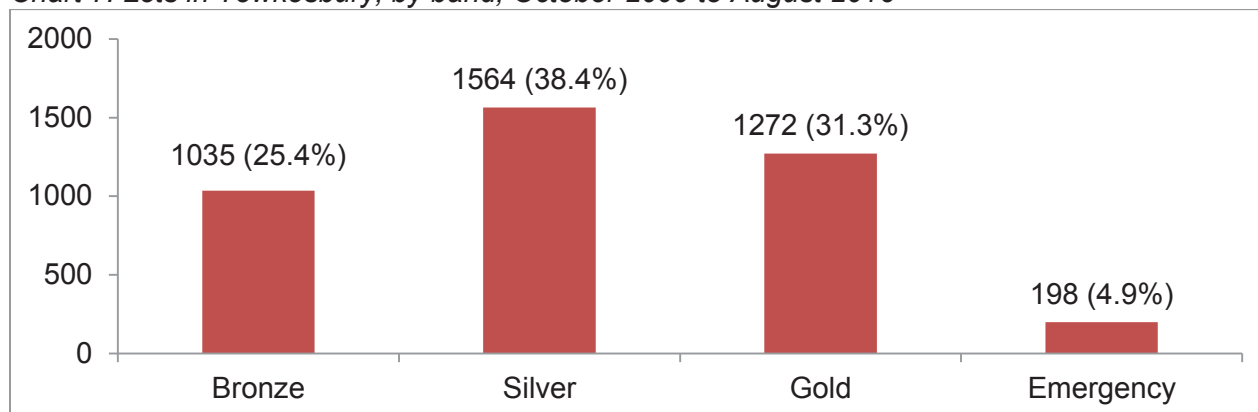
| Band | Bronze | Silver | Gold | Emergency | Total |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------|
| 1-bed | 33.16% | 15.23% | 2.39% | 1.82% | 52.60% |
| 2-bed | 22.30% | 8.21% | 2.13% | 0.10% | 32.74% |
| 3-bed | 5.56% | 3.79% | 0.94% | 0.00% | 10.29% |
| 4-bed | 0.83% | 2.60% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 3.85% |
| 5-bed | 0.00% | 0.21% | 0.21% | 0.00% | 0.42% |
| 6-bed | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.10% | 0.00% | 0.10% |
| Total | 61.85% | 30.04% | 6.19% | 1.92% | |

Source: Gloucestershire Homeseeker dataset July 2016

There have been 4,069 lets in Tewkesbury Borough from October 2009 to August 2016. Chart 7 shows the distribution across each of the bandings. When compared to the

percentage of applicants by band in Table 8 on the previous page, there is a good spread of homes let across the bandings in Tewkesbury Borough Council.

Chart 7: Lets in Tewkesbury, by band, October 2009 to August 2016



Source: Gloucestershire Homeseeker dataset July 2016

It is also useful to understand those households seeking a larger home, smaller home or same size home. Table 9 shows how many households currently registered have a calculated bedroom need that means their move would be like-for-like in terms of number of bedrooms, whether they'd be up-sizing to a larger property or downsizing to a smaller property.

In terms of whether a household is seeking a larger or smaller home or they require a like-for-like move, Table 9 below shows the bedroom need by house type required. In summary:

- 51% of households are in need of a 'like for like move' i.e. a 2-bed for a 2-bed. The majority of which, 50% are 1-bed need:
 - 214 (21%) of households in 1-bed need are seeking a home of their own (as they state they are living in a shared house or with friends/parents/relatives).
 - 19% of households in 2-bed need are seeking a like for like move; this may simply mean they live in a flat and are seeking a house with garden for example.
- 23% require a larger home (are up-sizing); 11 households are in need of a 5 or 6 bed home.
- 26% downsizing - the majority (61.8%) of which are in 1-bed need.

Table 9: Bedroom need and current house type

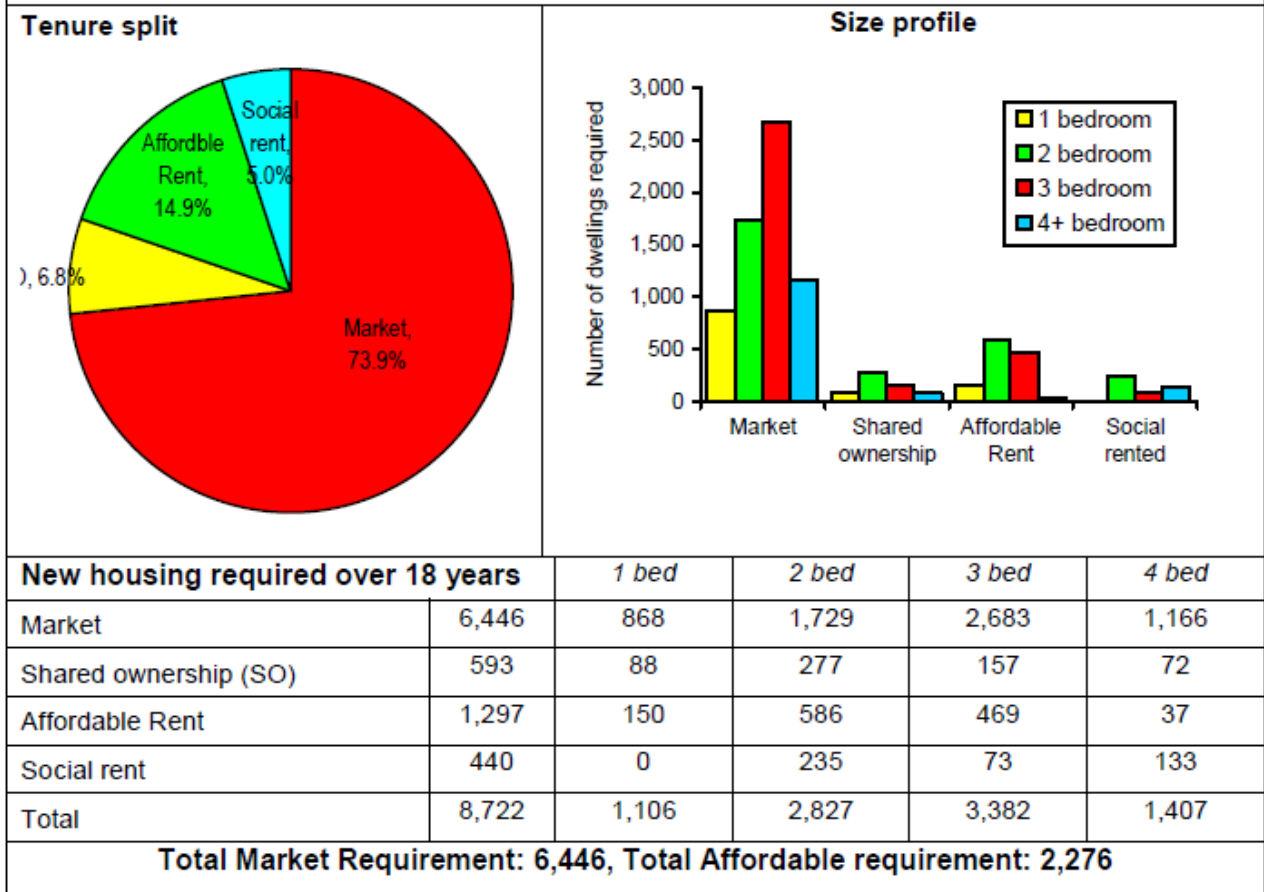
| Bedroom Need | 'Like for like' move | Up-sizing | Down-sizing |
|--------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1-Bed | 493 | 214 | 311 |
| 2-Bed | 367 | 100 | 161 |
| 3-Bed | 108 | 61 | 28 |
| 4-Bed | 13 | 60 | 3 |
| 5-Bed | 0 | 9 | 0 |
| 6-Bed | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Total | 981 (51%) | 446 (23%) | 503 (26%) |

Source: Gloucestershire Homeseeker dataset July 2016

7 Profile of new accommodation

The SHMA 2014 informs us that Tewkesbury Borough requires a minimum of all new build housing to be 27% affordable housing. The assessment provides us with evidence of the affordable housing tenures and house types that the council should be negotiating on new developments to 2031:

Chart 8: Profile of new accommodation required in Tewkesbury (lower scenario)



Source: Gloucestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment updated household dataset 2013

Over the last 8 years the affordable housing split overall in Tewkesbury Borough has been 64% social and affordable rented housing to 36% shared ownership on completed eligible sites. The percentage varies on a site by site basis depending on the constraints of the development such as the location of the site and local demand and specific housing need, i.e. bungalows and wheelchair accessible homes, and viability where a site may require an increase in homes for sale in order to achieve a policy compliant overall percentage of affordable homes.

The Council’s housing services team continues to negotiate a suitable percentage of rent and home ownership across appropriate house types and will continue with a flexible approach to achieving policy compliant developments to meet the housing needs of our borough. This is likely to mean that while the SHMA analysis guides our negotiations we must stray from these figures on occasions and when appropriate to create the best possible development for local people and taking into account the particular needs of our communities.

At home in Tewkesbury Borough

A housing strategy for our borough 2017-2021

Appendix 1b: Our Local Evidence – Homelessness Prevention



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2 Introduction

This document outlines the evidence gathered by Tewkesbury Borough Council showing the homelessness context in which the council is working.

We have used this evidence as part of identifying our 4 key priorities for housing and homelessness along with key objectives for the next 5 years. Priority 2 of the Housing Strategy 2017-2021 is Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention.

The Housing Strategy will link with the priorities outlined in the Council Plan 2016-2020, set out the council's priorities and objectives for housing, and appropriate activities that will help us to meet our statutory housing duty under the Housing Act 1996.

Housing is a priority in the Tewkesbury Borough Council Corporate Plan because:

“We recognise how important it is for residents to be able to access good quality housing and housing related services that make a real difference to their lives.

“Not only is housing important for the health and well-being of residents it is also an important part of building and maintaining strong communities and supporting the economic prosperity of the borough.”

Tewkesbury Borough Council recognises that access to quality affordable housing underpins the success of our area and all of the overarching corporate priorities.

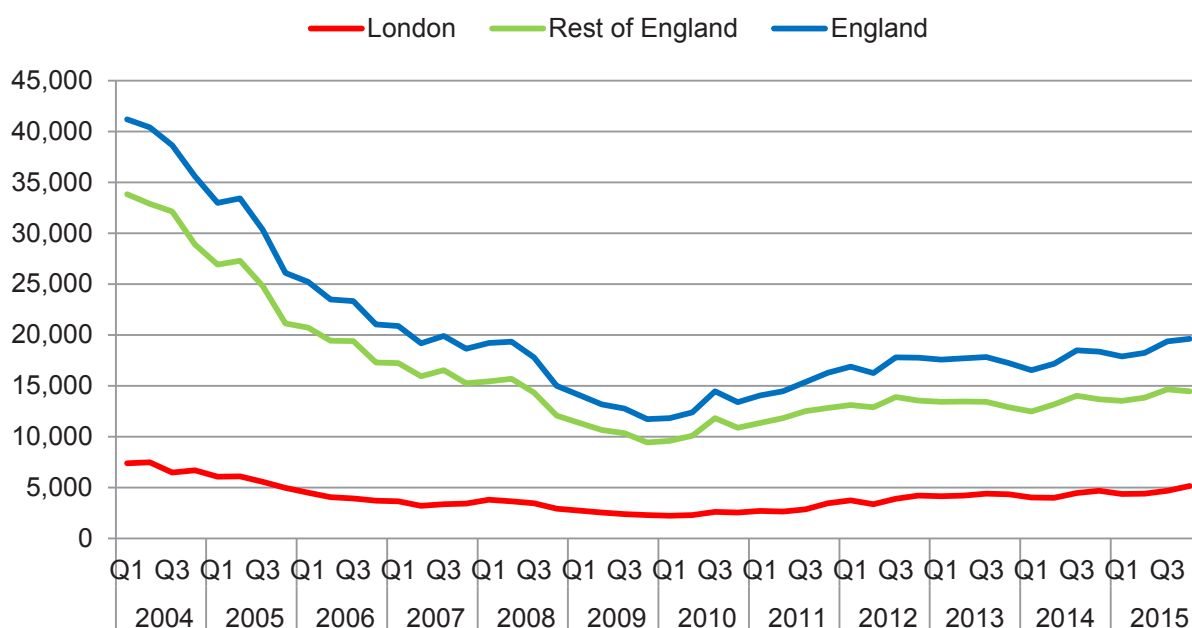
3 Homelessness in Tewkesbury Borough

Local Housing Authorities have a statutory duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone who is homeless or threatened with homelessness (as outlined in the Housing Act 1996 as amended).

3.1 Homelessness acceptances

Chart 1 shows the national trends in accepted homeless cases, compiled by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) 2016. It indicates a sharp fall in homeless acceptances between 2004 and 2010, and a gradual ongoing increase in homeless acceptances from 2011 onwards.

Chart 1: UK Homelessness acceptances



Source: DCLG, 2016

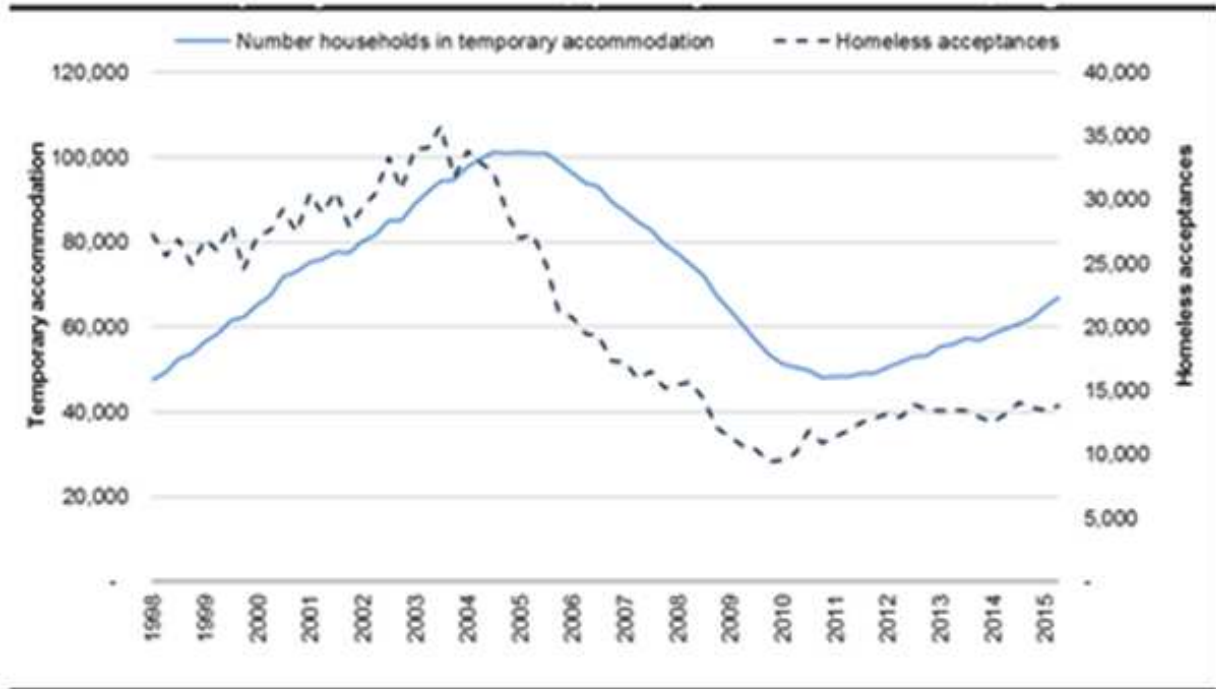
Points to note regarding this chart:

- Acceptances in 2015 are up 6% on 2014
- Acceptances up 6% on same quarter last year
- London saw a 10% increase in acceptances on Q4 2014.

We look at ethnicity of our homelessness cases in order to determine whether any groups are disproportionately affected by homelessness. Our homelessness data submitted to the DCLG shows that in 2015/16, 100% of our homelessness acceptance households were White.

Chart 2 overleaf demonstrates that the use of temporary accommodation nationally is rising with homeless acceptances. According to our own dataset of the number of households who have approached the Council by quarter over the last 5 years, there does not appear to be a seasonal pattern to the Borough’s homelessness approaches.

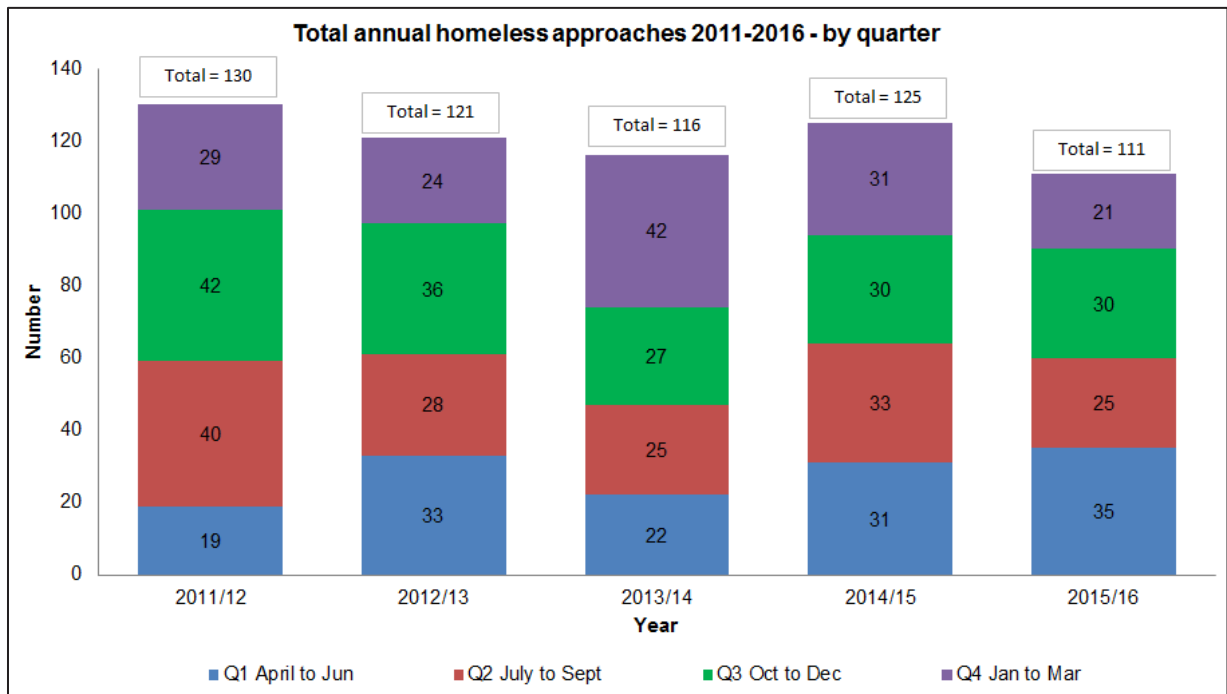
Chart 2: The trends of homeless acceptances and households in temporary accommodation



Source: DCLG, 2016

Overall we are unable to predict the number of households that will approach. Chart 3 shows the change in annual figures and by quarter to shows no trends.

Chart 3: Total approaches over the last 5 financial years by quarter: Tewkesbury Borough



Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council dataset

The three primary causes of homelessness within Tewkesbury in 2015/16 were:

- Loss of Assured Shorthold tenancy (private sector tenancies) (20%)
- Relationship breakdown involving domestic abuse (19%)
- Parents or family no longer willing to accommodate (17%)

Underlying vulnerabilities often contribute to the immediate causes of homelessness outlined above. These vulnerabilities include poor education, poor physical and mental health, involvement in crime, unemployment, and poor life skills. The government have set out overarching priorities to meet these vulnerabilities¹. These are:

- tackling troubled childhoods and adolescence
- improving health
- reducing involvement in crime
- improving skills, employment and the availability of financial advice.

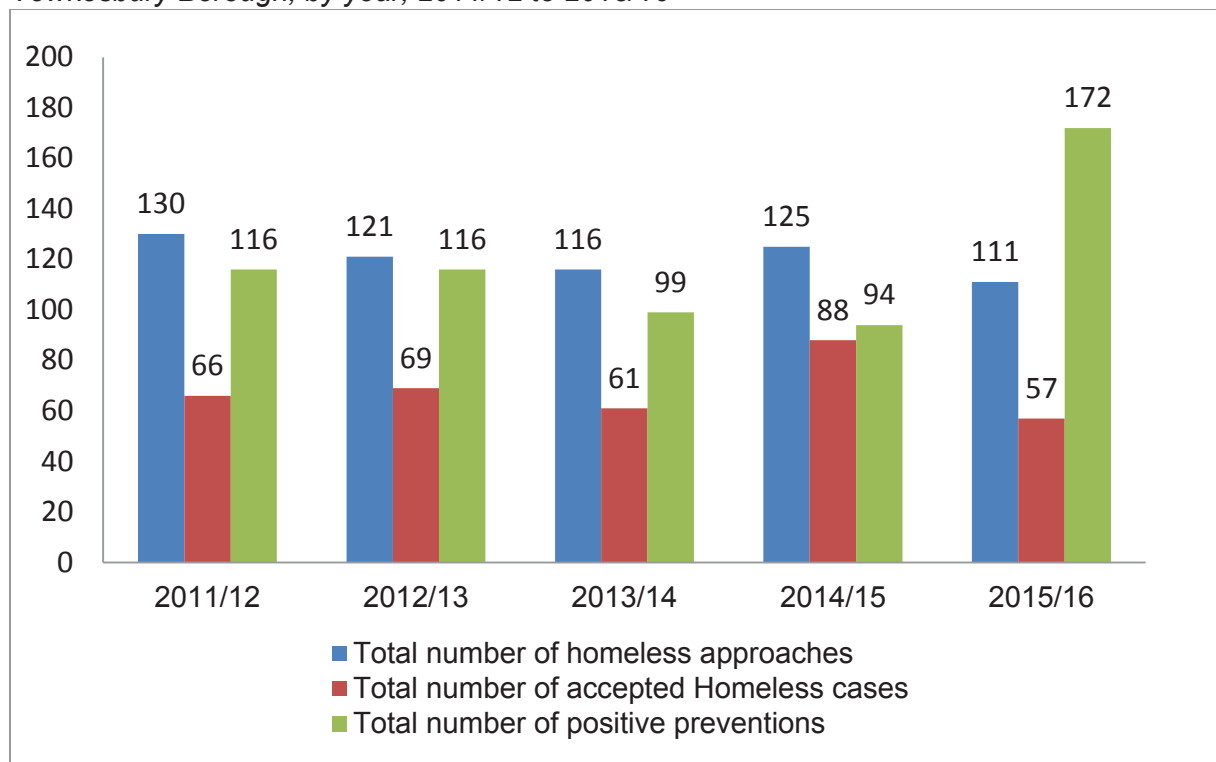
The importance of partnership working is imperative to tackle homelessness, particularly the underlying vulnerabilities and priorities. Tackling underlying causes and the prevention of homelessness is better for those affected and more cost effective than seeking to assist households through statutory homelessness provisions or bringing them inside from rough sleeping.

Chart 4 overleaf shows the number of approaches each year alongside the number of homeless cases accepted and number of positive preventions by housing services. From the start of 2015, the council's housing services team have concentrated efforts towards a more prevention-focussed service and are enhancing their housing advice work to support people to remain in their present homes if possible or find an alternative solution with the household.

Homeless acceptances have fallen within Tewkesbury Borough as a result of this, as households are assisted to find alternative housing solutions. The numbers approaching our service, however, have increased as indicated by the national statistics indicated by the DCLG.

¹ Making Every Contact Count
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7597/2200459.pdf

Chart 4: Homeless approaches, accepted homeless case and positive preventions: Tewkesbury Borough, by year, 2011/12 to 2015/16



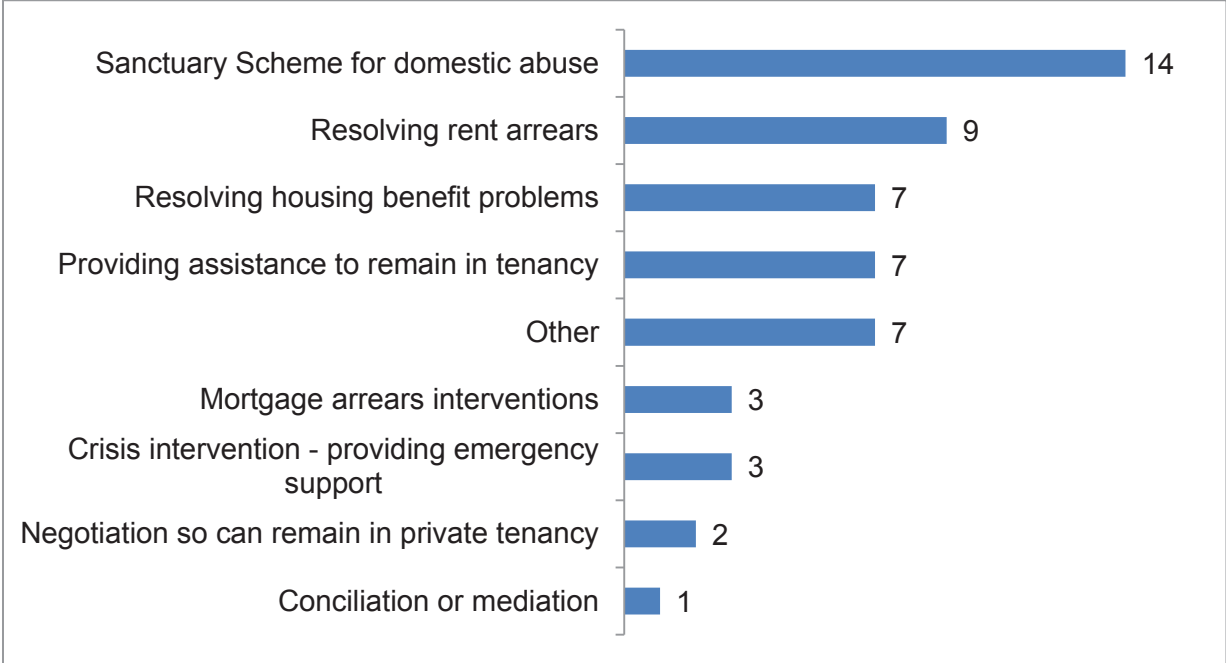
Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council dataset

Accepted homeless households are prioritised on the council's choice based lettings system, Homeseeker Plus, and therefore are able to be placed relatively quickly providing the right type of accommodation becomes available in good time.

3.2 Homelessness prevention decisions

For the 12 months October 2105-September 2016 the housing advice team assisted 53 households to remain in their home, see Chart 5.

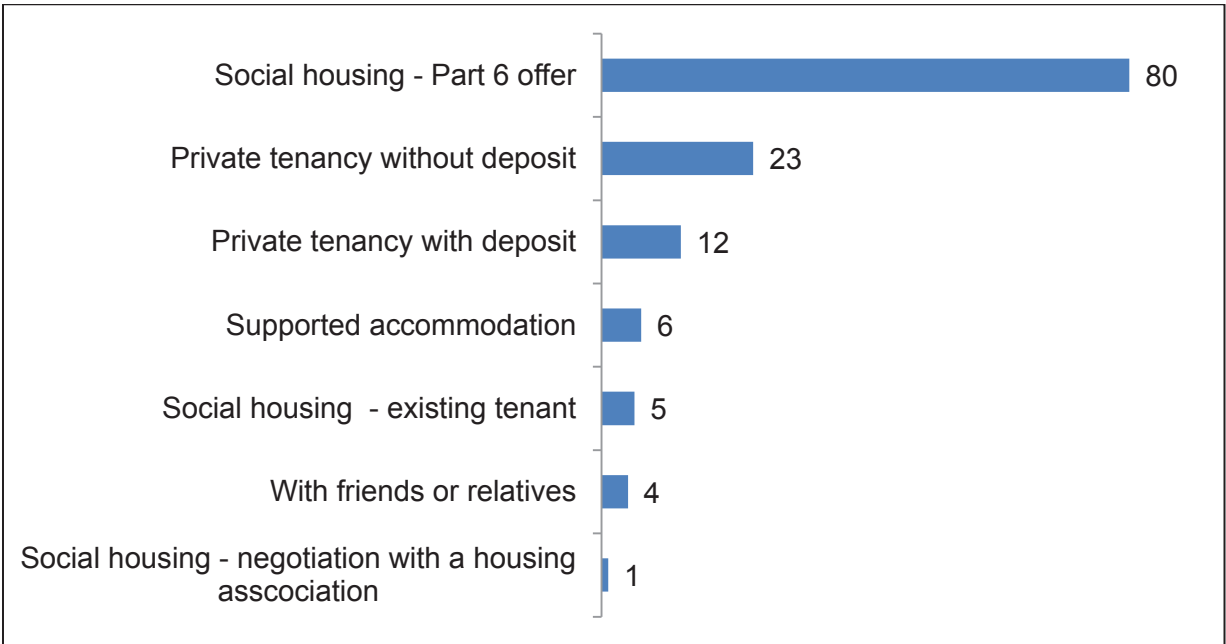
Chart 5: Homelessness preventions in Tewkesbury Borough where household was able to remain in their existing home, October 2015-September 2016



Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council dataset

For the 12 months October 2105-September 2016 the housing advice team prevented or relieved 131 households homelessness, see Chart 6 below.

Chart 6: Homelessness prevented or relieved in Tewkesbury Borough where households moved to alternative accommodation, October 2015-September 2016

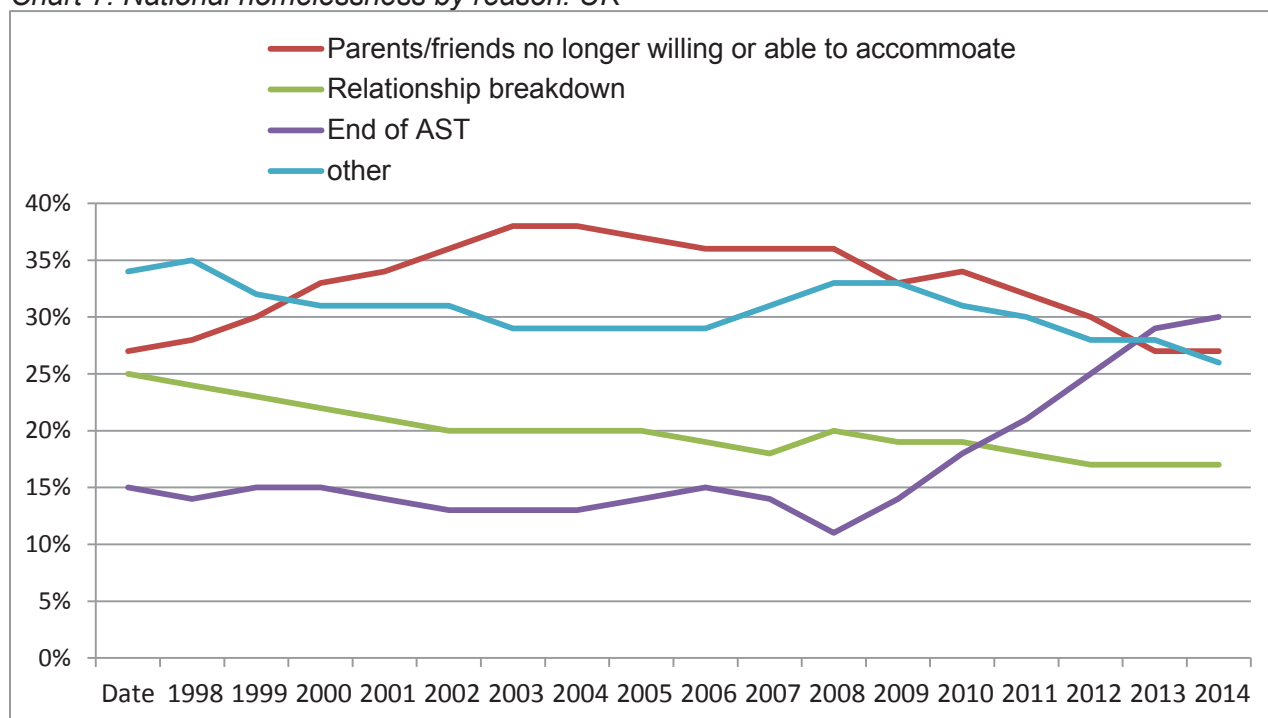


Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council dataset

3.3 Reason for loss of last settled home

Chart 7 shows the main reasons for the loss last settled homes for homeless households nationally. It demonstrates that the loss of private rented tenancies has become the primary cause of homelessness nationally, having risen from just over 10% of homeless applications in 2008 to 30% in 2014.

Chart 7: National homelessness by reason: UK



Source: DCLG 2016

Table 1 below lists the main reasons for loss of the last settled homes the Borough for the 57 accepted homeless cases during the financial year 2015-16.

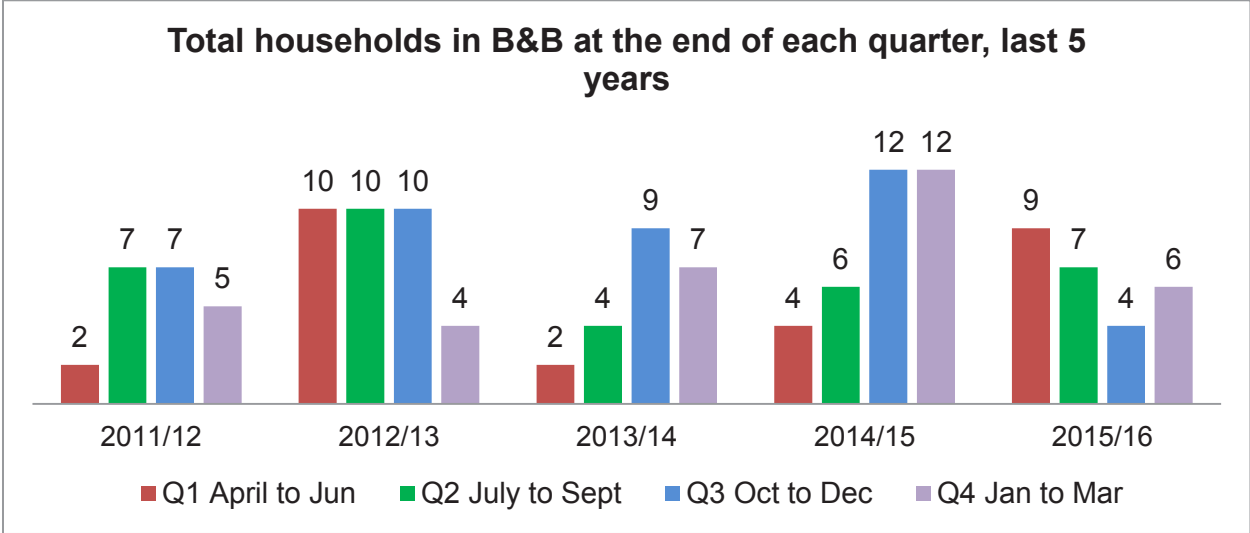
Table 1: Main reason for loss of last settled home of accepted homeless cases: Tewkesbury Borough 2015/16

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Termination of Assured Shorthold Tenancy | 20% |
| Violent breakdown of relationship with partner | 19% |
| Parents no longer willing/able to accommodate | 17% |
| Other forms of harassment | 14% |
| Non-violent breakdown of relationship with partner | 10% |
| Other forms of violence | 5% |
| Other | 4% |
| Mortgage Arrears | 3% |
| Other relatives/friends no longer willing/able to accommodate | 3% |
| Violent breakdown of relationship with associated persons | 2% |
| PRS rent arrears | 2% |
| Left prison/ on remand | 2% |

Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council dataset

Placing households in bed and breakfast (B&B) is a last resort but continues to be used to provide short term emergency accommodation for individuals and families. Chart 8 below indicates the snapshots of numbers in B&B at the end of each quarter in the P1E returns to DCLG². The numbers of households placed in B&B have fluctuated year on year. There does not appear to be seasonal trends.

Chart 8: Snapshot numbers of households in B&B: Tewkesbury Borough



Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council dataset

Our review of homelessness indicates that violent relationship breakdown continues to be one of the main causes of homelessness locally. We have worked hard to develop solutions and alternatives to emergency accommodation for those who are experiencing violence in their home.

Following the recent closure of women’s refuges in the county, a joint bid from the six District Councils in Gloucestershire to the DCLG was successful in securing £500,000 for ‘Places of Safety’ to provide safe self-contained emergency accommodation for those fleeing domestic abuse in April 2015. 12 properties will be made available across the county for this purpose in partnership with Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Services (GDASS) and local housing associations.

Four properties are currently available across Gloucestershire, and in Tewkesbury Borough our partner Severn Vale Housing Society is currently identifying two properties which will be available within our area. These will be used as emergency homeless accommodation for all household types, including men, and households with older boys, with bespoke support from GDASS. We will continue to work with this group and our partners to ensure that a high quality alternative to bed and breakfast continues to be available for those who become homeless as a result of violence.

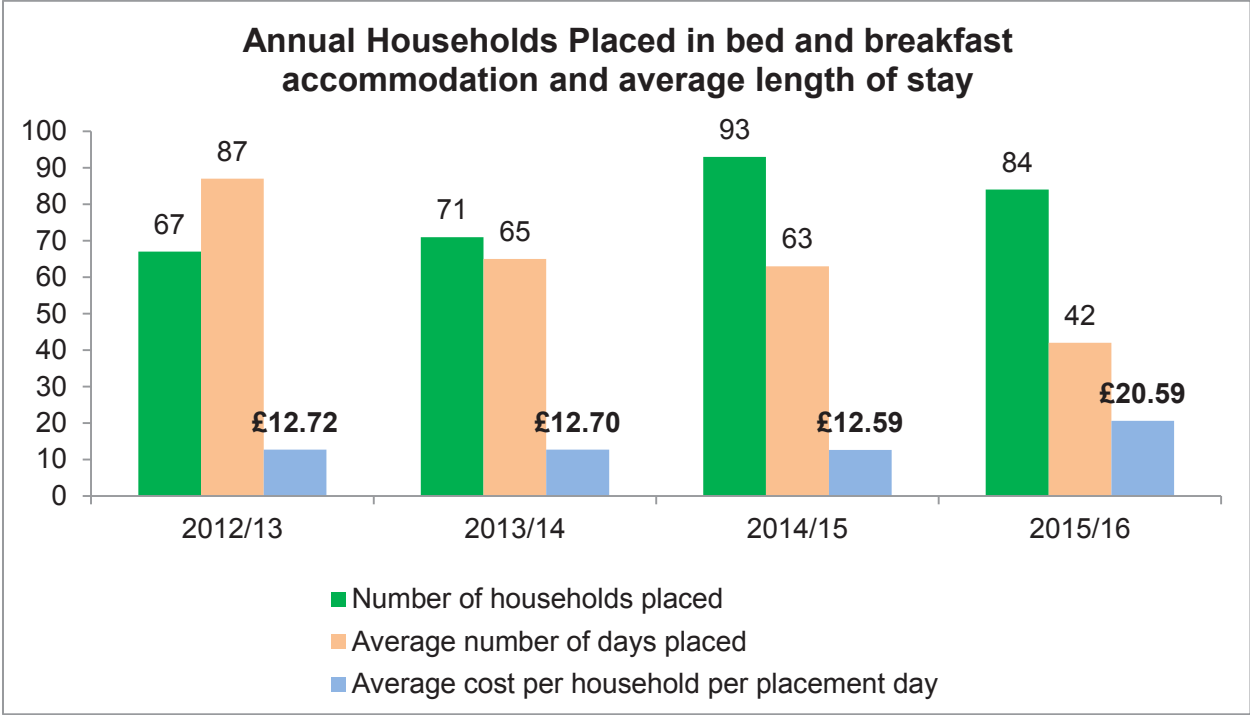
The council has access to five three bedroom houses across the borough which is primarily used for homeless family households and has been invaluable to largely avoid the use of bed and breakfast for families in our area. In times of high demand, however, homeless family

² P1E return is a DCLG form that all Local Housing Authorities complete stating the households dealt with under the homelessness provisions of the 1996 Housing Act, and homelessness prevention and relief.

households may be placed into bed and breakfast, and we will seek further alternative accommodation provision for this group.

Chart 9 overleaf shows the number of households placed in B&B (in green) by the average length of stay per household (in orange) and the cost per household per day whilst they were placed in B&B (in blue).

Chart 9: Households placed in B&B, average length of stay and cost per household per placement day: Tewkesbury Borough



Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council dataset

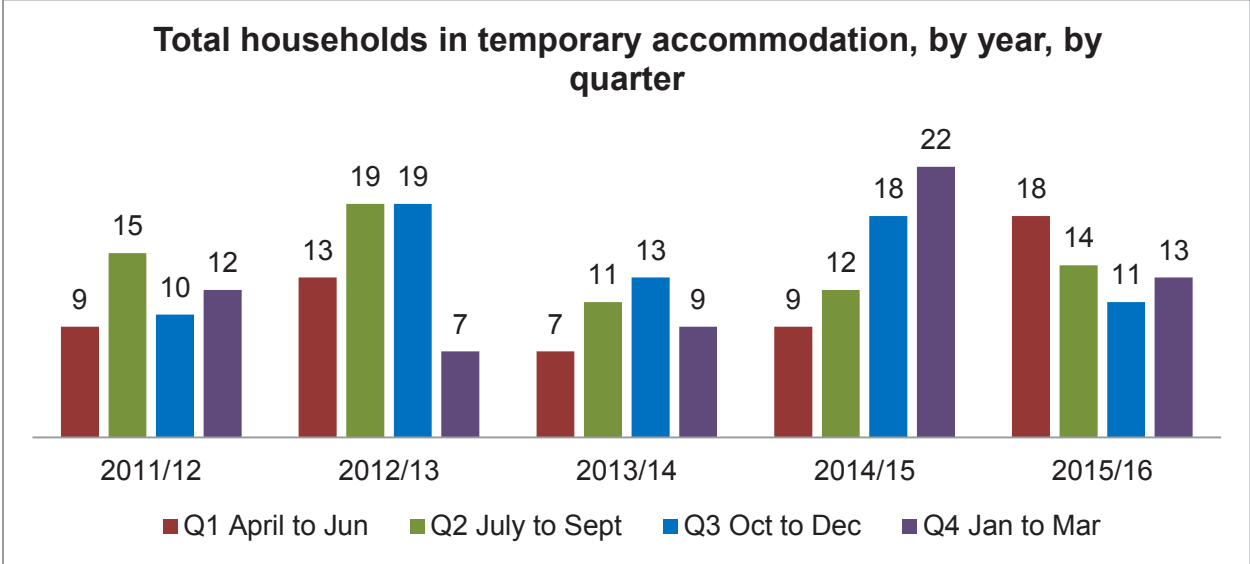
Most B&B accommodation sourced by Tewkesbury Borough tends to be within the urban areas of Gloucestershire, which results in homeless clients having to move out of district. Furthermore, the demand and cost of emergency accommodation across the county has risen, placing extra pressure on the service, and further disruption for homeless households.

Further work needs to be undertaken within the borough to source appropriate emergency accommodation for single homeless people locally. This is important to enable them to maintain their support networks and prevent isolation. As well as being less suitable for our applicants than local solutions, the cost of private B&B continues to be problematic for the service. Whilst we have been successful in reducing the number of placements and length of stay in bed and breakfast during 2015/16, the average cost of emergency B&B has remained similar to previous years. Locally we need to source suitable alternative emergency accommodation which also minimises housing benefit subsidy losses and costs to Housing Services through unsuccessful claims.

While the council’s housing services team have reduced the average number of days placed during 2015/16, Tewkesbury Borough Council is paying much more for B&B because more often than not currently smaller B&B’s are full and the council have to use more expensive national chains of hotels. Whilst such chains are accessible 24 hours a day allowing for better service, the costs are comparatively more expensive.

Chart 10 shows the numbers placed in temporary accommodation (overall) including Tewkesbury Borough Council owned temporary accommodation and B&B. These figures are based on the quarterly snapshot figures collated for the P1E returns. The chart indicates the numbers have fluctuated year on year. There does not appear to be seasonal trends.

Chart 10: Total households placed in temporary accommodation: Tewkesbury Borough



Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council dataset

If vulnerable households are roofless or become roofless during homeless enquiries, local authorities have a duty to provide accommodation, often in an emergency, while homeless enquiries are ongoing. The review of our housing and homelessness statistics indicate that the local demand for emergency and temporary accommodation will continue, and we expect this trend to continue due to the economic climate and the impact of ongoing welfare reform.

Emergency and temporary accommodation is an important resource used to house urgent homelessness cases quickly and locally. Many local authorities, including Tewkesbury Borough Council, rely heavily on privately owned B&B accommodation. However it is widely recognised to be of variable quality, expensive, and damaging to family life as households often don't have their own kitchen facilities or access to more than one room.

We are committed to limit the use of B&B accommodation for all groups. This is especially important for Tewkesbury Borough applicants as there is limited private B&B style accommodation available within our Borough. We are reducing the use of B&B in many client groups through use of prevention initiatives and other more suitable temporary accommodation provision.

4 Rough Sleeping

4.1 Defining rough sleeping

As part of the government's guidance for rough sleeper counts³, they state that:

"In order to ensure a consistency of results, it is essential that those included in the count figure fall into the following definition:

People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or "bashes").

The definition does not include people in hostels or shelters, people in campsites or other sites used for recreational purposes or organised protest, squatters or travellers.

It does not include people who were rough sleeping in the area on a previous night or earlier in the evening but who were not there at the time of the count. It does not include people wandering around or empty sleeping sites.

Bedded down is taken to mean either lying down or sleeping. About to bed down includes those who are sitting in/on or near a sleeping bag or other bedding. The intention is to establish that they are or will be rough sleeping on the night of the count.

Research has found that in many areas people seen drinking in the street or begging (even if they have a blanket or a sleeping bag) are not necessarily sleeping rough and they should not be included unless they are clearly bedded down or about to bed down at the time of the count."

Source: DCLG, Evaluating the Extent of Rough Sleeping: A new approach

4.2 Rough sleeper count

The most recent snapshot rough sleepers count⁴ in 2015 indicated there were no people sleeping rough in Tewkesbury Borough. Whilst the prevalence of rough sleeping within the borough is low, there are instances of rough sleeping throughout the year and we are committed to ensuring that rough sleepers in our area have the assistance they need to find and maintain accommodation.

For the past two years, the officially reported Tewkesbury Borough rough sleepers estimate⁵ indicated that there were zero rough sleepers.

³ DCLG, Evaluating the Extent of Rough Sleeping: A new approach

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6009/1713784.pdf

⁴ A count is a single night snapshot of the number of rough sleepers in a local authority area. Counts are independently verified by Homeless Link.

⁵ An estimate is the number of people thought to be sleeping rough in a local authority area on any one night in a chosen week.

Table 2 shows the number of estimated rough sleepers (individuals) in the borough along with the actual count results on the night of a count from 2011 to 2015. This is compared with the South West and England.

Table 2: Number of rough sleepers reported to DCLG in the P1E returns, Tewkesbury Borough compared to the South West and England for the year 2011 to 2015

| Area | Year | Total (no) |
|----------------------------|------|------------|
| Tewkesbury Borough Council | 2011 | 2 |
| | 2012 | 2 |
| | 2013 | 1 |
| | 2014 | 4 |
| | 2015 | 0 |
| South West | 2011 | 337 |
| | 2012 | 301 |
| | 2013 | 308 |
| | 2014 | 362 |
| | 2015 | 509 |
| England | 2011 | 2181 |
| | 2012 | 2309 |
| | 2013 | 2414 |
| | 2014 | 2744 |
| | 2015 | 3569 |

Source: DCLG, P1E dataset <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2015> Note: Official 2016 data is yet to be released

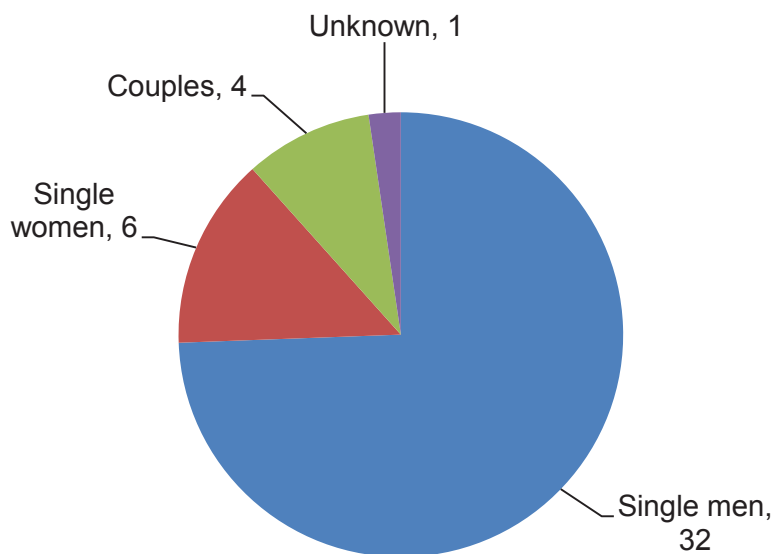
Our low figures are comparable with the Forest of Dean with the other rural districts in Gloucestershire, Stroud and Cotswolds, having a much higher rate; although Stroud have seen a fall from 5 in 2013 to 1 in 2014 and 1 in 2015.

The rough sleeper outreach service within Tewkesbury Borough has been provided as part of a county-wide service by St Mungo’s Broadway with effect from April 2015. Notifications to the service can be made by members of the public or professional agencies via Streetlink⁶. They are then visited by St Mungo’s Broadway to link them into local services, support, housing services, and accommodation in the county.

We have been notified of 43 incidents of people sleeping rough within Tewkesbury Borough by Streetlink since April 2015. The reports indicate that the majority of those who have slept rough in our area have been men. Chart 11 overleaf shows the breakdown of rough sleepers by gender and household type. It is not surprising that the majority are single men.

⁶ Streetlink website: <http://www.streetlink.org.uk/>

Chart 11: Rough sleepers in Tewkesbury Borough, by gender and household type, April 2015-September 2016



Source: Streetlink

The majority of rough sleepers in Tewkesbury Borough are reported to be aged 25-50 (62.7%) and many are identified as likely to have substance misuse and/or mental health problems (37.2%)

Rough sleeping reports indicate that there does not tend to be popular sleep sites within the borough. 58% of rough sleepers were found to be in the Tewkesbury Town area, with the remaining 42% spread across the borough; 9% of were in the rural parishes of Gotherington, Woodmancote, Uckington Sandhurst and Twigworth.

We are unable to understand through the data from Streetlink if any have been double-counted as no data is collected by Streetlink that can identify the individual at this early stage.

5 Impact of Welfare Reform

A number of welfare reforms have already been introduced such as:

- The under-occupation charge (also known as the 'removal of the spare room subsidy' or the 'bedroom tax') reduces Housing Benefit for households living in the social-rented sector who are deemed to have a 'spare' room.
- The Local Housing Allowance limits the amount of Housing Benefit tenants in the private-rented sector can receive.
- The benefit cap limits the total benefit income most working-age households can receive.

A number of further measures were announced in the Summer Budget in July 2015 including:

- The benefit cap has been reduced to £20,000 per year for couples and families with children and to £13,400 for single people without children.
- Work allowances under Universal Credit have been reduced, to £0 for non-disabled households without children and substantially for families with children.
- Reforms affecting young people, including the loss of Housing Benefit for people under 21; the introduction of 'earn or learn' for 18-21 year olds, and the capping of Housing Benefit at LHA rates for tenants in the social-rented sector (overwhelmingly affecting people under 35).
- The withdrawal of entitlement to child tax credit for families having a third child (to be introduced after April 2017).
- Increases in the minimum wage, the personal allowance, and additional childcare support for 3-4 year olds.

In 2016 Policy in Practice⁷ undertook analysis of all households receiving either Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction as at May 2016. There are 5,217 households in the cohort, which represents approximately 14.85% of the population of Tewkesbury Borough.

Of the cohort, 46.27% is of pension age and thus protected from the vast majority of welfare reforms.

The remaining 53.73% of the cohort are working-age households and are the focus of analysis in this report.

⁷ The Cumulative Impact of Welfare Reform in Tewkesbury Borough, Policy in Practice

5.1 General statistics about the cohort

44% are lone parents
33% are single
18% are couples with children
5% are couples without children
37% are receiving DLA and/or ESA (the remaining 63% are not disabled)
60% are in social rented housing
29% are in private rented accommodation
11% are owner occupiers
0.46% are temporary accommodation
24% of households have no savings
39% are in employment

Policy in Practice assessed those affected by the under-occupation charge. The under-occupation charge (or more commonly known as the bedroom tax) was introduced in April 2013. It applies to households who are tenants of social housing who are deemed to have a 'spare' room. The rent used in the calculation of any Housing Benefit is reduced by 14% if the house is assessed as having one spare room and 25% if the house is assessed as having two or more spare rooms.

A total of 322 (19.3%) of the 1,687 working-age households living in social housing, receive reduced Housing Benefit due to the under-occupation charge. The average Housing Benefit reduction is £16.49 per week for affected households.

The majority of affected households, 81.73%, have one spare room and 17.34% have two or more spare rooms.

The majority of households affected are singles (50.15%), followed by lone parents (20.80%). 31.80% of households affected by the under-occupation charge have children.

There are 171 children living in affected households in Tewkesbury Borough.

5.2 Characteristics of households affected by the LHA cap

The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) was introduced in April 2008 and significantly changed Housing Benefit for people living in the private-rented sector. It places a cap on the maximum amount of rent taken into account for the purposes of Housing Benefit calculation. The applied LHA rate is based on broad geographical regions, household composition and age of household members. In effect, Housing Benefit is not related to the actual rent charged unless the rent is at or below the applied LHA amount.

There are 1,152 households living in the private-rented sector in the cohort. The data shows that 55.58% (657) of these households are charged rent at a level that is above the LHA rate applied to calculate their Housing Benefit. Households paying rent above their applied LHA rate have an average reported difference between their rent and their Housing Benefit of £31.97 per week.

The Local Housing Allowance applies to both working age and pension age households. The majority (72.30%) of the 657 households affected by the LHA cap in Tewkesbury Borough are of working-age.

5.3 Analysis of the Benefit Cap

5.3.1 Number of households affected by the current benefit cap of £26,000 per annum, by weekly Housing Benefit reduction

There are 5 households in Tewkesbury Borough affected by the benefit cap, with an average Housing Benefit reduction of £45.17 per week. The household most heavily affected has a £95.64/week reduction to their Housing Benefit. No households currently lose all of their Housing Benefit as a result of the benefit cap.

All of the affected households have children, on average 4.20 per household. 60% of households affected are lone parent families and 40% of households are couples with children. A total of 21 children are currently affected.

None of these households appear to be living in temporary accommodation. The majority of affected tenants are in the social rented sector (60%), with the remainder (40%) being private renters.

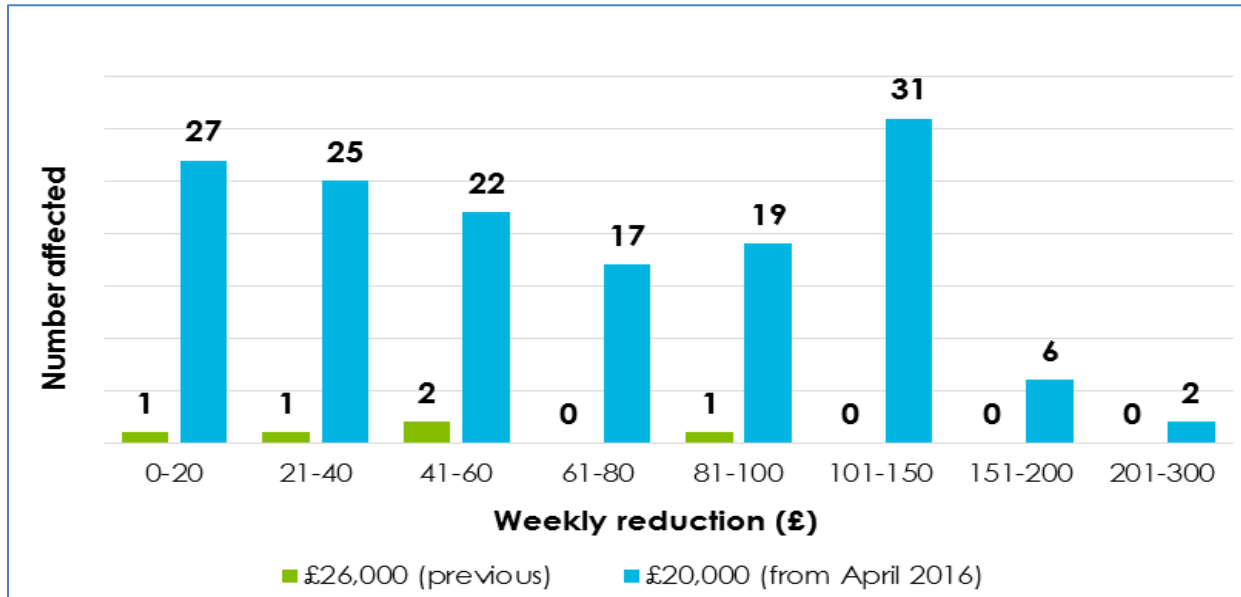
5.3.2 Reducing the benefit cap to £20,000

The benefit cap in Tewkesbury Borough will be reduced to £20,000 per year (£380 per week) for couples and households with children and to £13,400 per year (£258 per week) for single people with no children.

Policy in Practice's analysis estimates that the number of households that will be affected by the lower benefit cap will range between 149 (for couples and households with children) and 80 (for single people with no children). This is between 29.8 times and 16 times the number of households that are currently capped.

The analysis finds that the average Housing Benefit reduction as a result of the benefit cap will increase from £45.17 per week under the current benefit cap to £68.41 per week under the new, lower, benefit cap. For households already affected by the benefit cap, the average weekly loss under the new cap will be £120.71 see Chart 12.

Chart 12: Number in the cohort affected by the Benefit Cap: Tewkesbury Borough



Source: Policy in Practice

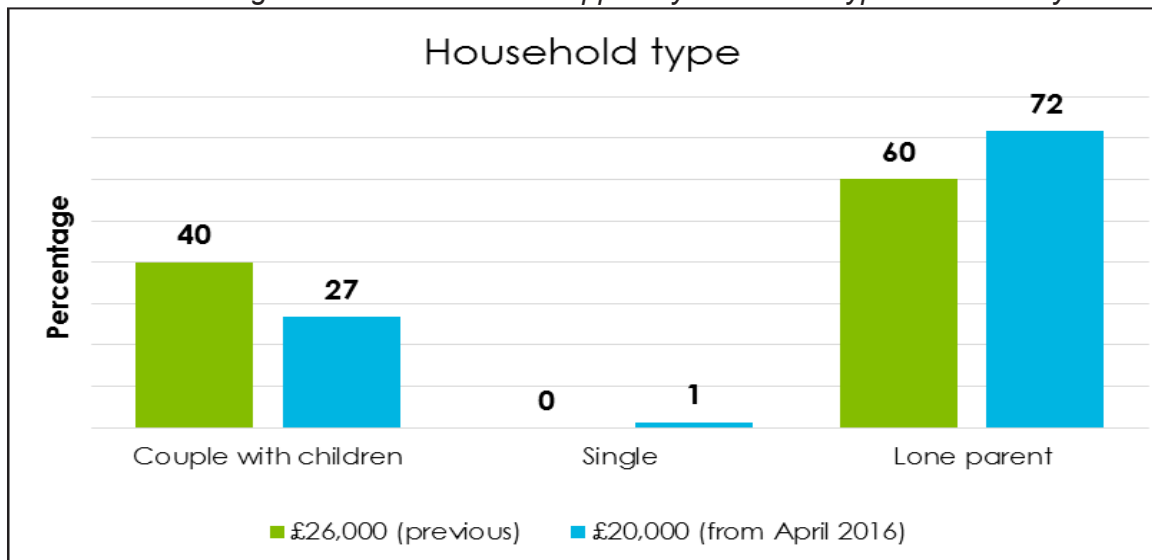
32 households can expect to lose their Housing Benefit altogether as a result of the lower cap. Under Universal Credit these households may lose even more income since the cap will be achieved through reduction from all Universal Credit and not be limited to just the housing element.

5.3.3 The profile of households that will be capped

72% of those capped are lone parent households, with 27% couples with children and just 1% single households. 79% live in social rented housing with 21% in private rents.

Chart 13 shows all household types affected by the £26,000 benefit cap (in green) and now the £20,000 benefit cap (in blue).

Chart 13: Percentage of those that will be capped by household type: Tewkesbury Borough



Source: Policy in Practice

The lower benefit cap (to £20,000) will change the types of families that are affected:

- Smaller families.
- The number of children affected by the reduced benefit cap will rise from 21 to 499.
- 1.34% of those affected have no children; these new cases occur due to the lower benefit cap of £13,400 for single households having to rent 1-bedroom properties as introduced in November 2016.
- Those affected by the lower benefit cap are predominantly lone parents, and from the social rented sector.
- The proportion of affected households living in the private-rented sector will fall significantly from 40% to 21.48%. A greater proportion of households living in the social rented sector properties will be affected, rising from 60% to 78.52%.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has also announced his intention to freeze LHA rates in the United Kingdom for the next four years. The Government has stated that this will provide a cap on rental increases. However, this did not occur in most areas with the introduction of LHA rates and therefore the freeze in LHA rates is unlikely to have any significant impact on rent levels.

We assume that private rents in Tewkesbury Borough will continue to rise at the current rate of 1.5% p.a. for the next four years while LHA rates remain stable. Rents for social tenants are assumed to fall by 1% per year as instructed by the Government in the Summer Budget 2015.

Table 3 shows average rents according to our model in the social and private sectors, in 2015 and in 2020.

Table 3: Rent uprating in the social and private sectors, from 2015 to 2020: Tewkesbury Borough⁸

| | Private Rent | | Social Rent | |
|------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| | Current average | 2020 average | Current average | 2020 average |
| 1 bedroom | £98.32 | £102.80 | £97.24 | £94.36 |
| 2 bedrooms | £140.43 | £143.25 | £101.05 | £98.06 |
| 3 bedrooms | £160.14 | £163.35 | £111.12 | £107.83 |
| 4 bedrooms | £204.38 | £208.48 | £135.91 | £131.88 |
| 5 bedrooms | £201.83 | £205.89 | £150.82 | £146.33 |

Source: Policy in Practice

Analysis suggests that an additional 28 private tenants would be affected by the LHA cap if rents in Tewkesbury Borough continue to increase at current rates. This would bring the total number of households affected by the LHA cap to 685, and the average weekly shortfall of these households, between their rent and their Housing Benefit, will be £33.73. For social sector tenants, 51 properties could fall back below the LHA cap once the LHA rate is applied to all social tenancies in 2018.

⁸ Table note: rents for 5 bedroom properties in the private rented sector are slightly lower than for 4 bedroom properties; this is likely to be due to the low number of households living in such large properties.

5.4 Cumulative impact of Welfare Reform

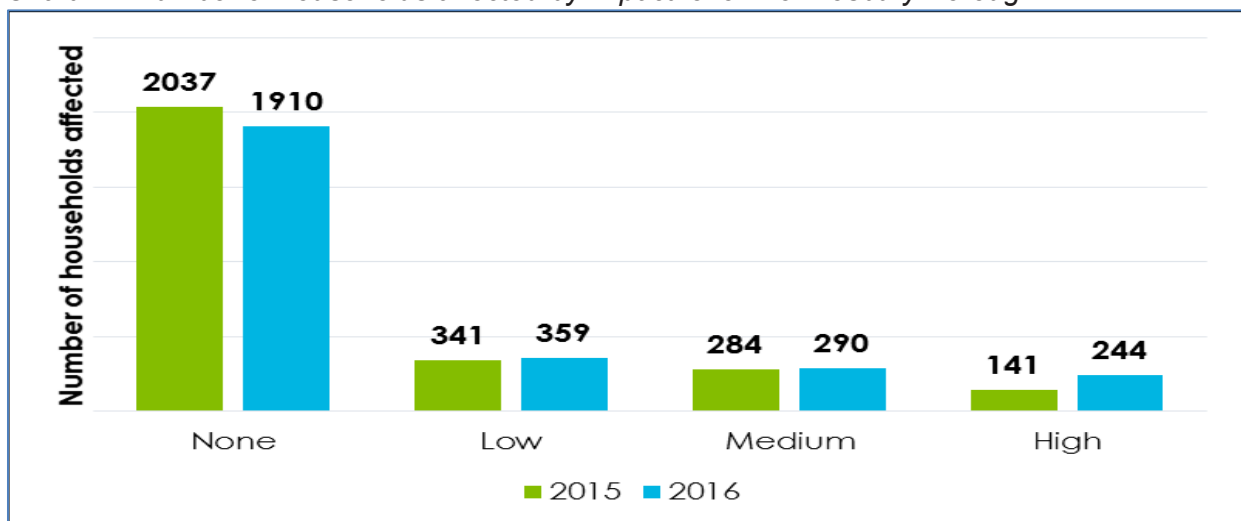
By taking into account the impact of reforms already effective, we identify 141 households will be highly impacted. The analysis suggests that as a result of the reduced benefit cap, there will be an additional 103 further households for which welfare reform will have a high impact.

Low-income working-age households in Tewkesbury Borough have seen their incomes fall by an average of £6.30 per week as a result of welfare reforms implemented in the previous parliament. These include the under-occupation charge, the benefit and LHA caps.

The lower benefit cap introduced in November 2016 will result in a rise in the average income loss to £9.85 per week across the whole working age cohort of this analysis. As Universal Credit is rolled out, these losses will be partly mitigated by increases in the minimum wage and tax allowance. This could lead to an average loss of £7.22 per week by 2020 compared to 2016 if Universal Credit is fully rolled out.

Chart 14 shows 244 households are estimated to face a 'high' impact, defined as a fall in household income of over £30 per week as a result of the under-occupation charge, the reduced benefit cap, LHA cap, and cuts to council tax support. Lone parents, households in the private-rented sector, and those in work are most likely to have a 'high' impact due to welfare reform. There are no households affected by four welfare reforms.

Chart 14: Number of households affected by impact level: Tewkesbury Borough



Source: Policy in Practice

5.5 The impact of Universal Credit

Universal Credit (UC) will replace six⁹ existing means-tested benefits and is intended to simplify the system and improve work incentives. The implementation of UC in Tewkesbury Borough has begun for single people making a new claim for who would have claimed income-based Jobseeker's Allowance.

⁹ The six existing means-tested benefits: income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit, Child Tax Credit, and Working Tax Credit.

Numbers in receipt of UC will remain low in the short term, but our analysis estimates that at least 2,932 households in Tewkesbury Borough will receive UC when it is fully implemented.

For modelling purposes, if we assume that Universal Credit was fully rolled out in 2016 and circumstances remained the same, then:

- 1,291 households (44.03%) would have a lower benefit entitlement under Universal Credit and need transitional protection
- 702 households (23.94%) would have a higher income under Universal Credit
- 939 households (32.03%) would see no change in entitlement.

The transition to Universal Credit is expected to extend over the course of the next five years. Based on the same cohort in 2020, and assuming circumstances remained the same:

- The percentage of households with lower benefit entitlement and in need of transitional protection will fall slightly to 41.58%
- 27.11% of households would see their entitlement increase under Universal Credit
- 31.31% would face no change in income.

The extent to which the reduction in work allowances will affect income will depend upon level of earnings, as well as household type. It is estimated that at least 2,932 households in Tewkesbury Borough will receive UC when it is fully implemented. This is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: A summary of the reduction of work allowances by household type: Tewkesbury Borough

| | 2015 | 2016 | Change |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Single person | £1,332.00 | £0.00 | -£1,332.00 |
| Lone parent (without housing support) | £3,156.00 | £2,304.00 | -£852.00 |
| Lone parent (with housing costs) | £8,808.00 | £4,764.00 | -£4,044.00 |
| Couple without children | £1,332.00 | £0.00 | -£1,332.00 |
| Couple with children (with housing support) | £2,664.00 | £2,304.00 | -£360.00 |
| Couple with children (no housing costs) | £6,432.00 | £4,764.00 | -£1,668.00 |
| Disabled people (no housing support) | £2,304.00 | £2,304.00 | - |
| Disabled people (no housing costs) | £7,764.00 | £4,764.00 | -£3,000.00 |

Source: Policy in Practice

5.5.1 Assuming full Universal Credit implementation 2016

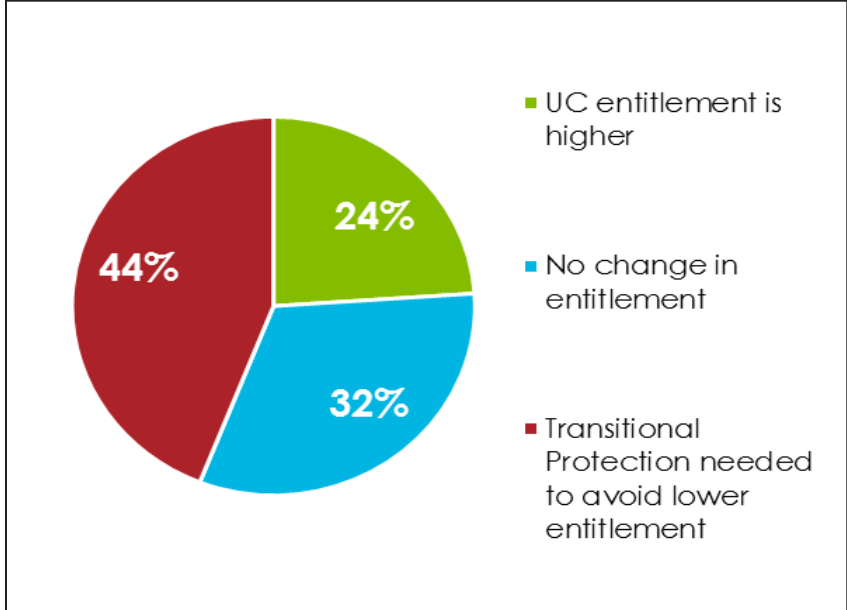
The analysis takes into account welfare reforms that come into effect from April 2016. This includes changes to the benefit cap and the reduction of work allowances in Universal Credit.

The analysis is based on the current caseload of HB and CTRS claimants on the understanding there are no changes in circumstances except for earnings increasing in line

with minimum wage levels for claimants in work. Differences in entitlement are identified as those that are greater than £5 per month.

Chart 15 overleaf shows that under Universal Credit, 23.94% of households will have a higher income than under the current system. 44.03% will have a lower income and need transitional protection and 32.03% will see no change in income if their circumstances remained the same. This analysis does not take into account any changes in behaviour (e.g. moving into or out of work) as a result of Universal Credit.

Chart 15: The impact of Universal Credit for Tewkesbury Borough cohort on household income in 2016

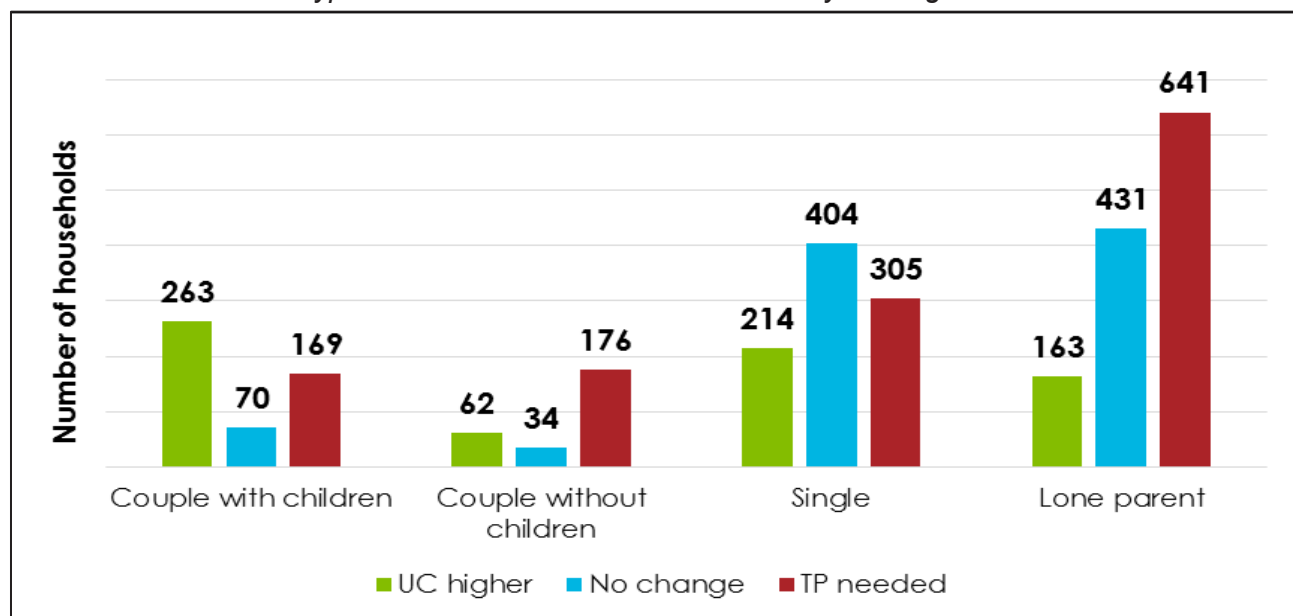


Source: Policy in Practice

5.5.2 Impact of Universal Credit on different household types

Chart 16 shows that there are 'winners' and 'losers' within each household type. All household types are more likely to be worse off than better off, except for couples with children, who are the most likely group to see an increase in their income. Couples without children and lone parents are most likely to be worse off, and singles are the most likely to see no change in income.

Chart 16: Number and type of households affected: Tewkesbury Borough



Source: Policy in Practice

Following the implementation of Universal Credit, tenants are more likely to see incomes reduced and therefore need transitional protection. Owner-occupiers and those in temporary accommodation have a slightly greater likelihood of not being affected, but are the least likely to see their income increase. Social and private renters are most likely to lose income under Universal Credit.

Almost half of households that will need transitional protection are in work. This is due to the reduction in work allowances under Universal Credit. The result of these cuts to work allowances is to make Universal Credit less generous to those in work than the current tax credits system.

Households in receipt of a disability-related benefit are also significantly more likely to see their income fall under the new system than other economic groups.

The numbers used in this report are based on assumptions around employment and support allowance (ESA)¹⁰ categories and may differ under further investigation.

In general, those not in-work are less likely to see a change in their income following migration to Universal Credit.

5.6 In-work conditionality

For the first time, Universal Credit will introduce conditionality for recipients who are in work but have earnings below a certain level. This conditionality threshold will be set as the number of hours the householder is expected to work (similar to the current hour requirement in tax credits), multiplied by the minimum wage. Certain groups, such as disabled people and lone parents with children under five, will still not be subject to full conditionality under Universal Credit.

¹⁰ Employment and support allowance is a benefit for people who are unable to work due to illness or disability

26.64% of working-age households in the cohort will be subject to conditionality under Universal Credit. Of these, 371 households are in work and will be subject to conditionality because earnings are below the required threshold. These households do not have any conditionality in the current system and could be subject to sanctions for not fulfilling their conditionality requirements under Universal Credit.

5.7 The minimum income floor

Universal Credit will introduce a ‘minimum income floor’ that will apply to self-employed people. Similar to the in-work conditionality threshold, this will be set at the number of hours the individual is expected to work multiplied by the minimum wage.

For self-employed households earning below this threshold, Universal Credit will be awarded based on an assumed level of income rather than actual earnings. Many of these households will see a fall in their Universal Credit entitlement as a result.

In Tewkesbury Borough, there are 171 households with at least one partner who is self-employed. 49.71% of these households are earning below their applicable ‘minimum income floor’ and are at risk of seeing their income fall under Universal Credit.

5.8 Moving out of Universal Credit

On average, households in Tewkesbury Borough will have to earn at least £22,343.69 per year to move beyond an entitlement to Universal Credit. However, this varies by household type and tenure, as shown in Table 5.

5.9 Table 5: Earnings required to move out of entitlement to Universal Credit

| By Household Type | |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Single | £15,432.48 |
| Lone parent | £25,174.41 |
| Couple without children | £16,730.96 |
| Couple with children | £31,128.10 |
| By Tenure | |
| Private Rent | £24,421.45 |
| Social Rent | £23,061.58 |
| Owner Occupier | £13,619.18 |

Source: Policy in Practice

6 Changes to benefits for young people

There are 2 core changes to benefits for young people were announced in the Summer Budget 2015:

- 18 to 21 year olds will no longer have an automatic entitlement to the housing element of Universal Credit if they are out of work. In Tewkesbury Borough, there are 45 such households at risk of losing their housing support under Universal Credit.
- 18-21 year olds will be expected to 'earn or learn' and will have to participate in an intensive regime of support under Universal Credit. There are 75 young people in the Tewkesbury Borough cohort (including non-dependants) that could be affected if they make a claim for Universal Credit. It is not yet clear how much, if any, of this support will be provided by Local Authorities.

In addition there are significant implications for people under the age of 35 in terms of LHA entitlement. Since they are only eligible for the lower shared accommodation rate of the Local Housing Allowance they would be unable to afford a 1-bed social/affordable rented property through a Registered Provider. Chart 17 on page 30 shows how the actual median rent levels compare to LHA rate.

7 The National Living Wage and increased personal living allowance

The Summer Budget 2015 announced an increase in the minimum wage for people over 25, called the 'National Living Wage'. It has been set at £7.20 per hour from April 2016 (compared to £6.70 before). From 1 April 2017, the National Living Wage will increase from £7.20 to £7.50 and will rise to £9.00 per hour by 2020.

This does not apply to 70 under-25s in work in Tewkesbury Borough, or to 171 self-employed people, but it could affect the income of the latter under Universal Credit.

The impact of the National Living Wage combined with the increased personal allowance will help 791 households in work, by an average £22.96 per week.

It is worth pointing out that this will only happen if all employers respond to the higher National Living Wage by increasing their workers' wages accordingly rather than reducing hours or hiring younger people who are not affected by the reform.

From April 2016, the new minimum wage (£7.20) will increase the earnings of 886 low-income families in Tewkesbury Borough. 764 of households in receipt of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support aged 25 or over, in work (not self-employed) earn below £9 per hour. Source: Policy and Practice analysis

8 Rents

8.1 Median rents

Over the period all social sector rents have increased by 35% and private sector rents by 15%. The gap between the two sectors is lessening; this is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Median rent (before Housing Benefit) by type of accommodation, full household sample

| Median £ per week | Year | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 |
| All social sector renters | £68 | £72 | £74 | £79 | £83 | £88 | £92 |
| All private sector renters | £130 | £133 | £137 | £138 | £138 | £144 | £150 |
| <i>Difference</i> | <i>1.91x</i> | <i>1.84x</i> | <i>1.85x</i> | <i>1.75x</i> | <i>1.66x</i> | <i>1.64x</i> | <i>1.63x</i> |

Source: English Housing Survey

Table 7 shows that with the introduction of affordable rents from 2011 the percentage change over a 3 year period has been quite significant for the social/affordable rented sector, while the same period for the private sector there has actually been a decrease.

Table 7: Impact of Localism Act 2011

| Median £ per week | 3 years prior to Act 2008/09 to 2010/11 | | 3 years post-Act 2011/12 to 2013/14 | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| | Change (£) | % change | Change (£) | % change |
| All social sector renters | 6 | 8% | 9 | 11% |
| All private sector renters | 7 | 5% | 6 | 4% |

Source: English Housing Survey

8.2 Social housing 'Rent in Advance'

A key concern for housing professionals over the last 18 months has been that many housing associations are enforcing the rent in advance condition ranging from 1 weeks rent to 1 months rent.

New tenants on low incomes often struggle to afford this in a lump sum, particularly those who may have been rehoused in crisis (following relationship breakdown or homelessness) and local authorities have been concerned that vulnerable people may be financially excluded from social housing.

In practice, our housing association partners within Tewkesbury Borough who apply this policy have been sensitive to financial hardship and have agreed small weekly payments over the first few months of tenancies to enable new tenants to meet the rent in advance criteria. We will continue to work with our partners to ensure that when the rent in advance condition is applied to new tenancies; there will be a generalised sensitivity to financial hardship which does not exclude new tenants.

8.3 Affordable Rents

Affordable rents were encouraged by the DCLG through the HCA who provided grant funding through the Affordable Homes Programme 2011-2015 and are defined as part of the affordable housing definition in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012¹¹.

Tewkesbury Borough is an area where there is significant new-build housing development and the introduction of affordable rents¹² has become the preferred rental tenure in Affordable Housing on these new developments.

Higher rent levels mean more income for housing associations to build capacity within and to develop new affordable housing. Affordable rent also meant the increased viability of new sites particularly market-led development where the affordable housing provision is more likely to be met with increased value of the homes.

The introduction of the LHA rates as a maximum housing benefit rate for social/affordable housing is likely to cause significant affordability issues for our residents in affordable rented properties. This is because the market value of a rental property takes into account the desirability of a local location and the property type. The LHA rate, however, applies to: flats, maisonettes, houses and bungalows irrespective of where they are located. This has caused significant affordability issues for our residents.

Whilst affordable rents may be less expensive for a similar property in the same location in the private sector, they can considerably exceed the social rental values and the LHA rates. This is demonstrated in the following example:

In Tewkesbury Borough, a flat rate of £122.36 per week housing benefit is payable in the Gloucester broad rental market area.

A recent completion of a 2-bed new build bungalow in Longford is rented at an affordable rent of £165 per week.

This leaves a shortfall of £42.64 per week or £184.77 per calendar month.

A significant issue at present has arisen with the LHA rates where a single person, with no children, under the age of 35 will only be granted a set amount known as the single room rate regardless of the accommodation type. This amount is not sufficient to cover the rent for a 1-bed property (as shown in Chart 13 on page 30) and so single people are left with few options to meet their housing needs.

It has been confirmed that the LHA rate will apply to supported and sheltered accommodation for tenancies commencing after April 2017 with take effect in the next 2 years. The cohort likely to be most affected will be those in supported accommodation under the age of 35 (as they will be affected by the single room rate).

¹¹ National Planning Policy Framework 2012

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

¹² Affordable rents are to be set at a maximum of 80% of the market rent (inclusive of service charges) of an area (based on mean rental levels).

Tewkesbury Borough has just one supported housing project based in Tewkesbury Town for vulnerable homeless young people (aged 16-22). Rents in this sector are considerably higher than the LHA to reflect the amount of housing management costs associated with supported accommodation. Supported housing providers in Gloucestershire have confirmed they are concerned regarding the future of their projects following these reforms.

An example of the financial impact on young people is below:

The LHA shared accommodation rate for Tewkesbury Town (Cheltenham area broad market rental area) is £67.08 per week or £290.68 per calendar month
Whereas the rent at the supported scheme in Tewkesbury Borough is £114.03 per week or £494.13 per calendar month
This represents a shortfall of £46.95 per week.

8.4 Housing Benefit capped at LHA rates for social rents

There are 375 households in social/affordable rented housing in Tewkesbury Borough paying rent above the applicable LHA rate. 94.21% of these tenants live in a 1-bedroom property and the average age of these tenants is 69 years. In Tewkesbury Borough the average difference between the weekly rent of affected properties and their applicable LHA rate is £16.42.

Source: Policy and Practice analysis

In November 2015, the Chancellor announced the extension of the LHA cap to the social/affordable rented sector. This measure will apply to new tenancies started after April 2016 and it will become effective in April 2018.

8.5 Pay to Stay

In a House of Commons Library briefing paper¹³, the detail of the now discretionary 'pay to stay' scheme is published. The full report details the issues where higher income earners are paying low rents and therefore needing fairer rents in social housing. In November 2016 it was announced that mandatory pay to stay would not be introduced and so Councils and housing associations have discretion over whether or not they wish to implement higher rents for higher earning tenants:

*"On 21 November 2016 the Housing Minister, Gavin Barwell, announced that the Government had decided **not to proceed with a compulsory approach** and that local authorities and housing associations "will continue to have local discretion."*

Source: Parliament; House of Commons Research Briefing 06804

<http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06804#fullreport>

¹³ House of Commons Briefing Paper Number 06804, 22 November 2016 Social housing: 'pay to stay' at market rents <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06804/SN06804.pdf>

8.6 Rent comparisons across the sectors

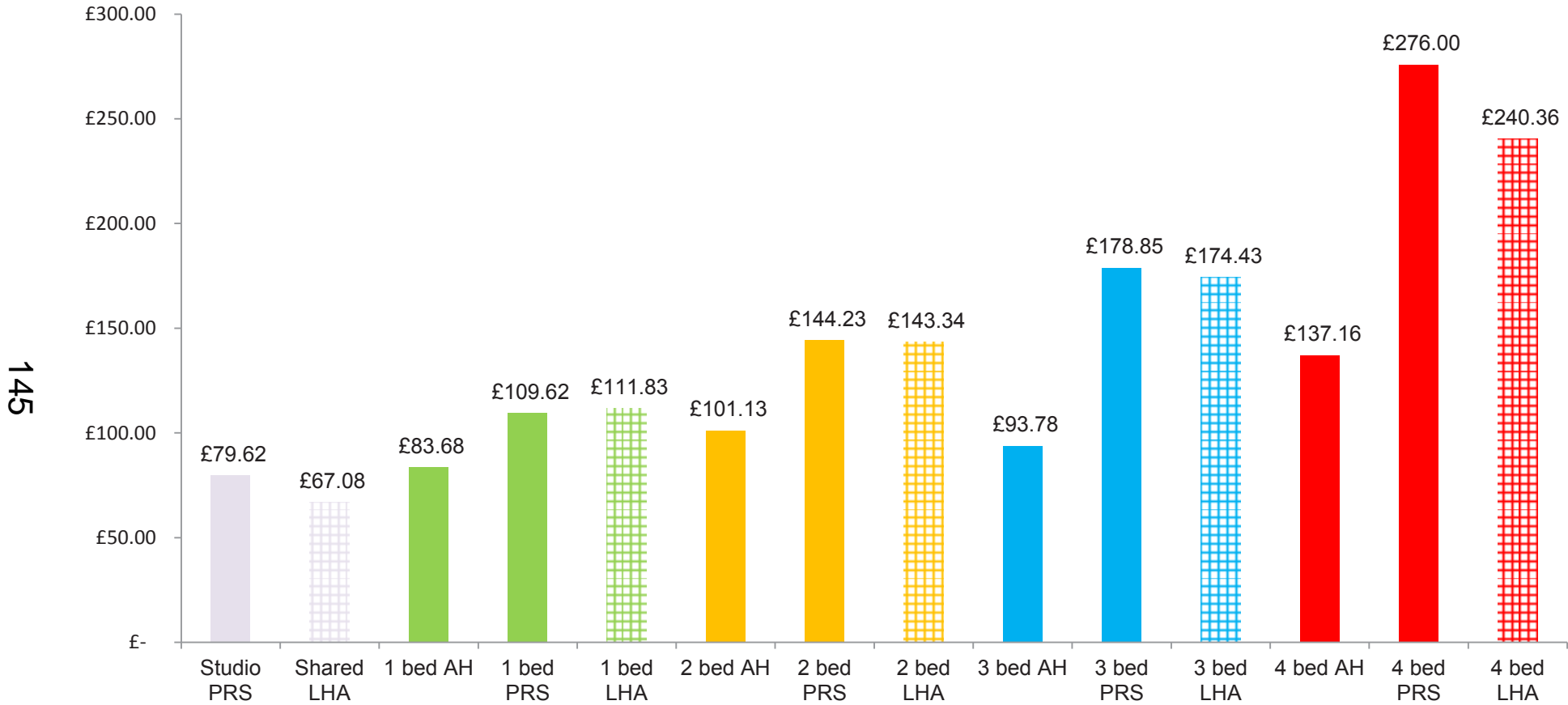
Chart 17 overleaf shows the median rents in Tewkesbury Borough in the private rented sector (PRS), the affordable rented sector (AH), and the LHA rates in the Cheltenham Broad Rental Market Area¹⁴ for 2015/16.

The hatched columns in Chart 17 show the LHA and so comparisons can be made between the rental sectors and against the LHA rate. Analysis shows that:

- 1-bedroom accommodation in all sectors is unaffordable to the under 35s on housing benefit who receive the shared accommodation rate.
- 1-bedroom accommodation for those over 35 - the median rent would be affordable for all households on housing benefit in all sectors.
- 2-bedroom and 3-bedroom properties are affordable providing properties are let to the correct sized households; the median rent is affordable on housing benefit in all sectors.
- 4-bedroom properties - the median private sector rent would be difficult to afford to households on housing benefit.

¹⁴ A broad rental market area is where a person could reasonably be expected to live taking into account access to facilities and services <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/understanding-local-housing-allowances-rates-broad-rental-market-areas>

Chart 17: Median rents in private rented housing, social housing and the Housing Benefit rates, by bedroom size and cost (in pounds) in Tewkesbury Borough, 2016¹⁵



Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council dataset

¹⁵ Chart notes:

There is no shared/studio social rented housing in the borough at this time and so no 'AH' amount can be shown.
 There is no information on the PRS rents for in 5 bedrooms and above and so the 4 bedroom LHA rate would apply.

At home in Tewkesbury Borough

A housing strategy for our borough 2017-2021

Appendix 1c: Our Local Evidence – Specific Housing Needs



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1 Introduction

This document outlines the evidence gathered by Tewkesbury Borough Council showing the housing and homelessness context in which the council is working.

We have used this evidence to identify 4 priorities for housing and homelessness along with key objectives for the next 5 years.

The strategy will link with the priorities outlined in the Council Plan 2016-2020, set out the council's priorities and objectives for housing, and appropriate activities that will help us to meet our statutory housing duty under the Housing Act 1996.

Housing is a priority in the Tewkesbury Borough Council Corporate Plan because:

"We recognise how important it is for residents to be able to access good quality housing and housing related services that make a real difference to their lives.

"Not only is housing important for the health and well-being of residents it is also an important part of building and maintaining strong communities and supporting the economic prosperity of the borough."

Tewkesbury Borough Council recognises that access to quality affordable housing underpins the success of our area and all of the overarching corporate priorities.

2 Deprivation

Tewkesbury borough as a whole is generally an affluent area; however this can mask pockets of significant inequality.

Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD¹) provides data on relative deprivation in small areas in England and the borough includes two lower super output areas (LSOAs) in the top 10% most deprived. These LSOAs are Tewkesbury Priors Park 2 and Tewkesbury Priors Park 3. Both perform poorly on employment, education, skills and training, and income deprivation affecting children. Priors Park 3 also performs poorly on income deprivation affecting older people.

The effects of changing government legislation and housing and homelessness policies impact greatly on households with low incomes in our Borough. The detail regarding affordability and specific groups is analysed more intensively in the appendix 1b homelessness evidence and appendix 2 homelessness and homelessness prevention strategy.

The need to assess the housing needs of specific groups who are unable to access mainstream housing options and are not homeless or rough sleeping is essential in understanding how residents in our borough cope in housing crisis.

3 Ex-military Personnel

Tewkesbury Borough Council is part of the Community Covenant between the local authority services in Gloucestershire and The Armed Forces Community in Gloucestershire. Joint protocols and preventative advice and assistance for those leaving the armed forces have been successful in meeting the needs of those leaving the services that approach in the prevention of homelessness. We work closely however with support services available for ex-military personnel such as the Royal British Legion, Alabare supported accommodation, and SAFFA to assist more vulnerable ex-military personnel.

¹ Source: <https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/viewpage.aspx?c=page&page=-Deprivation>

4 Older people

The most vulnerable client groups as determined by the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) shows that the most significant are the frail elderly and older people with mental health needs and support needs aged over 65 years old:

Table 1: Estimated number of vulnerable people in need of support, 2011 to 2021

| Client group | 2011 (no.) | 2021 (no.) | Change 2011-21 (no.) | Change 2011-21 (%) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Teenage parents - 15-17 year old females in need | 135 | 130 | -5 | -3.7 |
| Young people - 16-17 year olds in need | 11 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| Alcohol misuse - 18-64 year olds in need | 251 | 262 | 11 | 4.4 |
| Learning disabilities-18-64 year olds in need | 130 | 137 | 7 | 5.4 |
| Mental health problems-18-64 year olds in need | 172 | 181 | 9 | 5.2 |
| Offenders - 18-64 year olds in need | 103 | 108 | 5 | 4.9 |
| Physical or sensory disability - all -18-64 year olds in need | 127 | 135 | 8 | 6.3 |
| Refugees- 18-64 year olds in need | 5 | 6 | 1 | 20 |
| Rough sleepers- 18-64 year olds in need | 1 | 2 | 1 | 100 |
| Single homeless with support needs-18-64 year olds in need | 131 | 138 | 7 | 5.3 |
| Frail elderly-65+ year olds in need | 383 | 496 | 113 | 29.5 |
| Older people with mental health needs-65+ year olds in need | 633 | 820 | 187 | 29.5 |
| Older people with support needs-65+ year olds in need | 2083 | 2698 | 615 | 29.5 |

Source: Homes & Communities Agency dataset

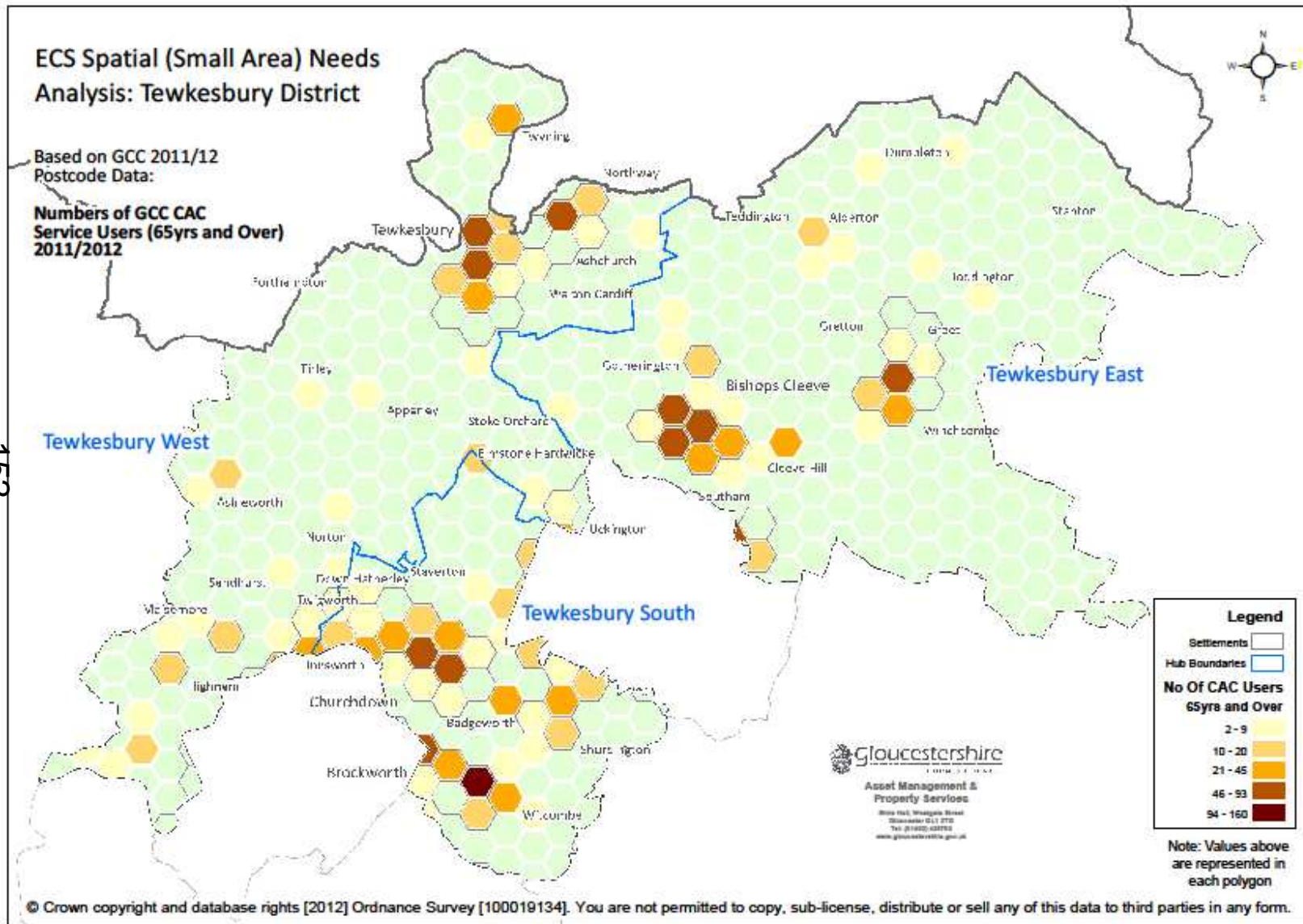
The table shows the main client group areas that will be in need of support. It is estimated that the increasing demand from over 65's as we live longer but needs are acute for many reliant on public services.

Also, the increasing demand on services for vulnerable groups where at present provision in the borough will not be able to support even these small increases in clients.

Research undertaken by Gloucestershire County Council in 2012 shows the areas within Tewkesbury Borough where households aged 65 and over are receiving community adult care services (see Chart 1 below).

It is no surprise that in the areas of the borough where population is highest (Tewkesbury Town and surrounding area, Bishop's Cleeve, Winchcombe, Brockworth and Churchdown) there is the greatest need. However it is clear there that for some rural areas the need is relatively high such as Twyning, Alderton, Woodmancote, Southam, Coombe Hill, Shurdington, Ashleworth, Sandhurst, Highnam and Minsterworth. This detail can be seen overleaf in Chart 1.

Chart 1: Gloucestershire County Council community adult care services by area for those aged 65+



Source: Planning Resource Pack Tewkesbury District 2012, Gloucestershire County Council and Ridgeway Associates Consulting Ltd

Tewkesbury Borough has 40 retirement homes, sheltered housing and extra care housing made up of 1,004 dwellings. There are also 25 care homes of 798 units of accommodation. Of the care homes, 12 are specific for older people (aged 55 and over), with the remaining accommodating any person with care needs and for people with specific disabilities.

Tewkesbury Borough will see significant growth in its older population and accommodation needs for this group are likely to change (as shown in Chart 1, page 6 of this document). 36.42% of households registered on Homeseeker Plus state that their medical issue is worsened by the housing circumstance. Of this, a quarter (around 180 households) is over 60 years old. Table 2 shows these issues by age group of the main household member.

Table 2: Number of households registered stating that a medical issue is worsened by their housing circumstance by age group

| Age Group | 16-17 | 18-24 | 25-59 | 60-64 | 65-74 | 75+ | Total |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Drug / Alcohol problems | 0 | 1 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 16 |
| Learning Disability | 0 | 7 | 21 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 29 |
| Medical Condition | 0 | 19 | 142 | 17 | 42 | 34 | 254 |
| Mental Health problems | 1 | 31 | 179 | 6 | 10 | 2 | 229 |
| Physical Disability | 0 | 6 | 44 | 10 | 23 | 16 | 99 |
| Social / Welfare problems | 0 | 5 | 38 | 1 | 7 | 7 | 58 |
| Total | 1 | 69 | 439 | 34 | 83 | 59 | 685 |

Source: Gloucestershire Homeseeker dataset: Tewkesbury Borough

25.7% of these households are aged over 60 with a medical condition outside of the main categories; this may be a mobility issue or care need.

The majority of 25-59 year olds have mental health problems (40.7%) with a third stating a medical condition which upon further investigation appears to mostly be anxiety and depression. This is a worrying statistic and becoming more prevalent in the issues of our applicants. Particularly reported is low-level anti-social behaviour and neighbour disputes causing applicants distress and although adequately and appropriately housed, they register to move to escape such issues.

5 Adapted and adapting properties

Table 1 on page 6 shows the estimated number of vulnerable that will be in need of support in 2021 and the change from 2011.

There are 309 applicants (16.4%) on the housing register who have stated they are in need of ground floor accommodation, with 63 of these households requiring wheelchair adapted properties. Of this, 48 households will require specific adaptations for their needs. The HCA estimates that the need for support for vulnerable groups including those with physical disabilities and mobility issues will increase in almost every area.

No Place Like Home, research published in 2014² estimates that 300,000 disabled people are on housing waiting lists in Great Britain and that “*one in ten British adults (11%) - over 5 million people in Great Britain - say that they have a mobility problem*”. Only 5% of homes can be visited by someone in a wheelchair. The research states:

“Every year, more than 800,000 people become disabled – this could be from a car or sports accident, an illness like multiple sclerosis or a stroke, an injury on the battlefield, or simply due to old age. The total number of disabled people is also rising. Many disabled people – with a broad range of impairments – are living longer due to advances in medical treatment and social support.

For example, over the past 30 years, the life expectancy of people with Down’s Syndrome has more than doubled (from 25 in 1983 to 55 today), and for people with cystic fibrosis it has tripled (from 14 in 1980 to 41 today). Stroke mortality rates have also halved over the last 20 years”

Government statistics³ show that people with disabilities have a poorer quality of life with a “*substantially higher proportion of individuals who live in families with disabled members live in poverty, compared to individuals who live in families where no one is disabled.*” Barriers to employment and education are improving but remain significant as there is “*a 30.1 percentage point gap between disabled and non-disabled people, representing over 2 million people*” and that disabled people “*are around 3 times as likely not to hold any qualifications compared to non-disabled people, and around half as likely to hold a degree-level qualification*”.

In terms of housing these statistics say that “*Although the gap in non-decent accommodation has closed over recent years, 1 in 3 households with a disabled person still live in non-decent accommodation. 1 in 5 disabled people requiring adaptations to their home believe that their accommodation is not suitable*”.

With 2.5% of the housing waiting list requiring a ground floor, wheelchair property with specific adaptations, we must work with partners across the housing, health and social care

² No Place Like Home, 2014, Leonard Cheshire Disability <https://www.leonardcheshire.org/sites/default/files/no-place-like-home-leonard-cheshire-disability.pdf>

³ Figures published in 2014 by the Office for Disability Issues Department for Work and Pensions <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/disability-facts-and-figures>

sectors to consider how these homes will be built. We must also consider the challenges faced when working with the house-building sector, particularly larger house-builders, when Affordable Housing that is outside of the norm is requested as part of Section 106 agreements. Tewkesbury Borough Council often has to negotiate reduced overall Affordable Housing contributions in order to build specialist housing due to the costs associated.

Of all household in our Homeseeker dataset at July 2016, 16.4% (309) require ground floor accommodation of which 109 (or 35%) state they require special adaptations to meet their needs. 78 (or 4%) of households, require wheelchair accommodation and nearly 70% of these will require additional special adaptations for their needs.

6 Rural housing development

Seventeen, or 42.5%, of the 40 most rural parishes in Tewkesbury Borough have zero affordable homes at the time of writing. This is over a third (34%) of all the parishes (50) in Tewkesbury Borough.

The majority of rural affordable homes in Tewkesbury Borough are rented; typically these are at social rent levels but it is likely that we will see a change to an increasing number of affordable rents as more new homes are built. Affordable rents and rents across the borough and their impact are discussed in depth in appendices 1a and 1b.

The aspirations of households seeking to move to or move back to rural communities is to purchase a home. More often the Council is being approached to facilitate more home ownership opportunities in rural areas:

Table 3: List of the most rural parishes in Tewkesbury and the affordable housing stock they have as percentage of all affordable housing stock in Tewkesbury Borough, as at July 2016

| Parish Council | As % of all Affordable Housing stock | Parish Council | As % of all Affordable Housing stock |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Alderton | 0.70% | Maisemore | 0.40% |
| Ashchurch Rural | 0.20% | Minsterworth | 0.00% |
| Ashleworth | 0.60% | Norton | 0.10% |
| Badgeworth | 2.60% | Oxenton | 0.00% |
| Boddington | 0.00% | Prescott Parish Meeting | 0.00% |
| Buckland | 0.00% | Sandhurst | 0.30% |
| Chaceley | 0.00% | Snowhill Parish Meeting | 0.10% |
| Deerhurst | 1.00% | Southam | 0.00% |
| Down Hatherley | 0.00% | Stanton | 0.10% |
| Dumbleton | 0.10% | Stanway | 0.10% |
| Elmstone Hardwicke | 0.10% | Staverton | 0.10% |
| Forthampton | 0.00% | Stoke Orchard & Tredington | 1.00% |
| Gotherington | 0.00% | Sudeley Parish Meeting | 0.00% |
| Great Witcombe | 0.00% | Teddington & Alstone | 0.10% |
| Gretton | 0.10% | Tirley | 0.80% |
| Hasfield Parish Meeting | 0.00% | Toddington | 0.00% |
| Hawling Parish Meeting | 0.00% | Twigworth | 0.00% |
| Highnam | 0.00% | Twynning | 0.70% |
| Leigh | 0.10% | Uckington | 1.30% |
| Longford | 0.90% | Woodmancote | 0.40% |

Source: Registered Providers

At the time of writing, the council's housing services team are working with the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council's Rural Housing Enabler in 11 Tewkesbury Borough parishes on specific affordable housing development opportunities.

7 Gypsies, travellers and travelling show people

As a rural borough, our proximity to larger towns and cities and to the M5 corridor has provided for a vibrant Travelling community and it is no surprise that we have significant accommodation needs for gypsies, travellers and travelling show people. The current provision in Tewkesbury Borough is as follows:

Table 4: Total amount of authorised provision in Tewkesbury (March 2016)

| | Sites/Yards | Pitches/Plots |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Private with permanent planning permission | 16 | 94 |
| Private sites with temporary planning permission | 2 | 8 |
| Public Sites (Council and Registered Providers) | 3 | 72 |
| Public Transit Provision | 0 | 0 |
| Private Transit Provision | 1 | 8 |
| Travelling Showpeople Provision | 2 | 21 |
| Total | 24 | 203 |

Source: Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2016 Update

7.1 Planning policy for Traveller sites

The planning policy for traveller sites⁴ is one that supports provision such as rural exception sites to meet need, but changes the definition of gypsies, travellers and travelling show people.

Through the JCS examination an updated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment⁵ (GTAA) was undertaken in 2016 to take into account this latest Government guidance. This reduced the council's requirement for Gypsy and Travellers from 2016-2031 owing to many gypsies and travellers Tewkesbury Borough not meeting the new definition.

We continue to have an accommodation need for the residents who are now to be considered under the SHMA as a general accommodation need. Those residents who do meet the definition will continue to have their accommodation needs assessed through the GTAA.

The 2016 GTAA also provided an assessment of 'non-travelling' households who no longer meet the Government definition.

There is also a further element of 'unknown' households who through the GTAA could not be contacted to confirm whether they meet the Government definition. The Government guidance indicates that households that no longer meet the definition should be picked up as part of wider housing need through the SHMA. Full figures are shown in Table 5 overleaf:

⁴ Planning policy for traveller sites 2015 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-policy-for-traveller-sites>

⁵ GCT-JCS Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2016) <http://www.gct-jcs.org/Documents/Examination-Documents-Library-6/EXAM-223B---Gloucestershire-GTAA-Update-Summary---210416.pdf>

Table 5: 2016 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment outcomes

| | 'Travelling' Households No. | 'Travelling' Showpeople Households No. | 'Unknown' Households No. | 'Unknown' Showpeople Households No. | 'Non- Travelling' Households No. |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Total Supply | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Current Need | 0 | 12 | 12 | 0 | 1 |
| Total Future Needs | 5 | 10 | 36 | 2 | 24 |
| Net Need | 5 | 22 | 48 | 2 | 25 |

Source: Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2016 Update

Table 5 note: Net Need = Current plus Future Need minus Total Supply

7.2 Rental liabilities on Traveller sites

With regards to rental liabilities of the traveller sites within Tewkesbury Borough, the amounts vary from the lowest being £37.00 per week to the highest being £140.00 per week⁶.

The tenant has the option of applying for a Discretionary Housing Payment to help make up the difference in the shortfall if they are not able to afford the difference themselves.

At present the rental value on private sites could be restricted by Local Housing Allowance or the Rent Officer meaning that any housing benefit the Council pays may not meet the full amount of rental liability. More and more travellers are becoming reliant on housing benefit to subsidise their rental costs.

8 Refugees and asylum seekers

Not only are local people in need but wider groups. The Council must adhere to the policies of central government in working with groups such as refugees and asylum seekers and provide suitable housing.

Accommodation is sought not only from the social rented sector but also private rented. Tewkesbury Borough Council is a partner within the Gloucestershire Syrian Resettlement Programme and has worked with our partners Severn Vale Housing and Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers to provide accommodation for vulnerable families in our borough.

⁶ Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council Housing Benefits Team

At home in Tewkesbury Borough

A housing strategy for our borough 2017-2021

Appendix 1d: Our Local Evidence – Improving the health and well-being of local people



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1 Introduction

This document outlines the evidence gathered by Tewkesbury Borough Council showing the housing and homelessness context in which the council is working.

We have used this evidence to identify 4 priorities for housing and homelessness along with key objectives for the next 5 years.

The strategy will link with the priorities outlined in the Council Plan 2016-2020, set out the council's priorities and objectives for housing, and appropriate activities that will help us to meet our statutory housing duty under the Housing Act 1996.

Housing is a priority in the Tewkesbury Borough Council Corporate Plan because:

“We recognise how important it is for residents to be able to access good quality housing and housing related services that make a real difference to their lives.

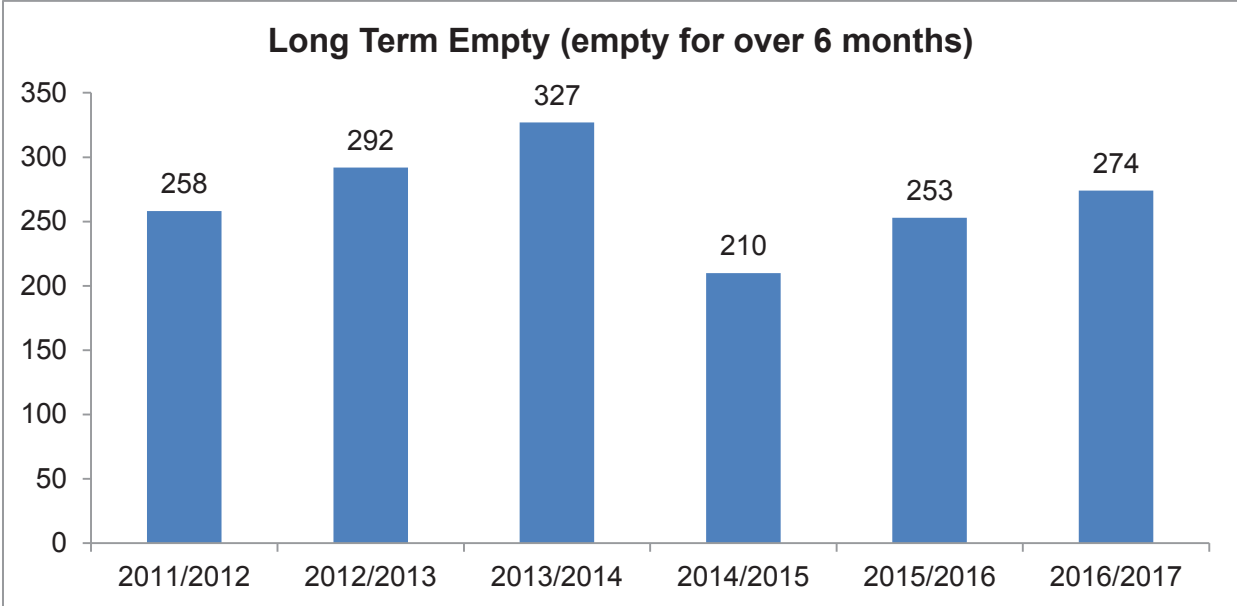
“Not only is housing important for the health and well-being of residents it is also an important part of building and maintaining strong communities and supporting the economic prosperity of the borough.”

Tewkesbury Borough Council recognises that access to quality affordable housing underpins the success of our area and all of the overarching corporate priorities.

2 Long term empty homes

The Environmental Health team works closely with partners on initiatives handling operational (enforcement) actions to bring empty homes back into use. Most empty homes brought back into use will become private sector homes. Chart 1 shows the number of long term empty properties since 2011/12.

Chart 1: Number of long term empty properties: Tewkesbury Borough 2011/12



Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council dataset

The Council’s Environmental Health team aims to ensure that each property achieves the highest standard. Enforcement options will include the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) under the Housing Act 2004, Empty Dwelling Management Orders, enforced sale and compulsory purchase orders.

The Council recognises that the private rented sector is growing and will need to continue to do so to help meet housing needs in the district. The Council takes its statutory enforcement role seriously and where landlords are not meeting the standards required will deliver a robust service. This is particular important that the Council can now discharge its homelessness duty into the private rented sector. Ensuring such homes are available and appropriate and that the tenancy can be sustained is, therefore, increasingly important.

However, whilst a large proportion of the Environmental Health team's time is spent on enforcement this is only to deal with a small proportion of the worst private rented housing. Enforcement should only need to be a last resort. We wish to place a larger emphasis on the proactive role the Council will play in helping landlords in the early stages. This is in particular for owners where being a landlord is not their core business, or reluctant landlords such as those who inherit a property but do not wish to sell it. The Council will promote sources of advice that are available to landlords, existing private tenants and residents considering private renting.

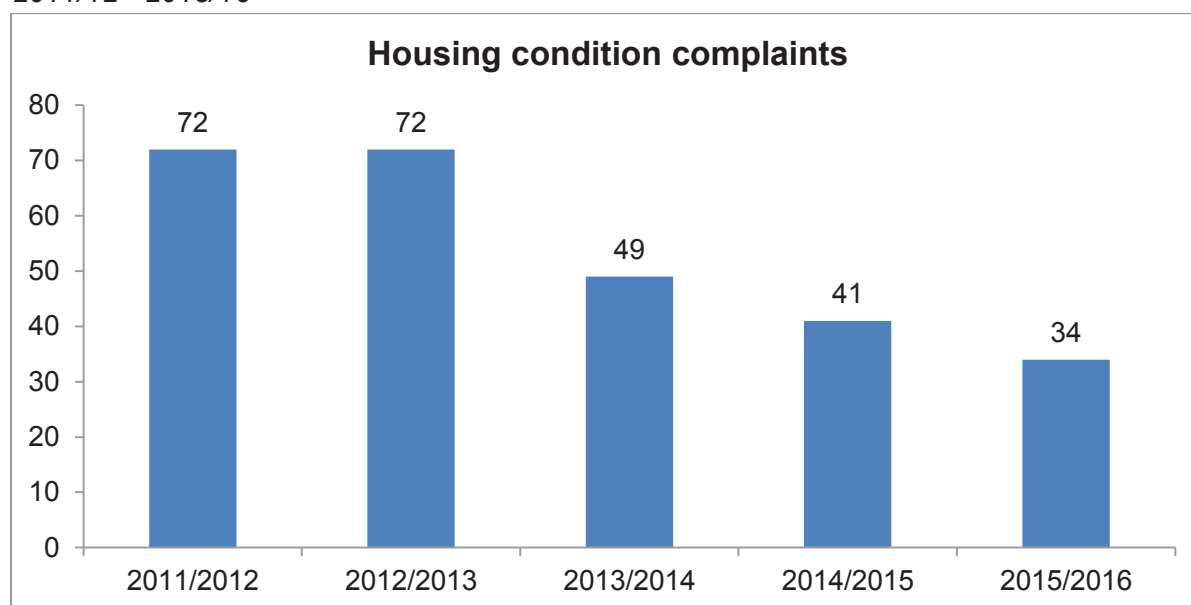
3 Housing Standards

Tewkesbury Borough Council has duties under the Housing Act 2004 to keep standards in homes under review and to take action on poor housing conditions.

The condition of the existing housing stock is important to ensure that residents are living in decent, safe accommodation which is suited to their needs. The condition of the housing stock is important to ensure that the increase in net housing stock through growth is not offset by a reduction in the number of existing homes which are habitable. Equally it is necessary to mitigate against the potential unintended consequence of growth that poor quality private sector housing leads to migration from existing communities into more attractive new housing developments leading to low demand neighbourhoods.

Living in poor condition, cold, damp homes that are not suitable for a household's needs have a detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of the occupiers. When accidents and illness occur because homes are not fit, it has an impact on a person's ability to participate in work, education, social and other activities and consequently impacts on social care services and the NHS. Chart 2 shows the number of housing condition complaints to Tewkesbury Borough Council since 2011/12.

Chart 2: Number of housing condition complaints made to Tewkesbury Borough Council 2011/12 - 2015/16



Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council dataset

The majority of home owners will, therefore, be offered no more than self-help to secure home improvements. Nevertheless, the Council recognises that there will be situations where support is necessary and appropriate for vulnerable home owners.

The Environmental Health Team offers advice that aims to demonstrating to a private landlord the works that are needed to avoid enforcement action being taken against them, for landlord accreditation and or for the property to be accepted onto a Local Letting Agency; they also provide an owner of an empty home with details of the works necessary to put the property in a state suitable for letting or that are likely to affect the sale price of the property.

The Council will take appropriate action against landlords and home owners as appropriate in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Concordat, Enforcement Policy and Scheme of Officer Delegation. This includes a period of informal action to encourage a landlord to take action voluntarily.

There are thought to be exceptionally few Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) requiring mandatory licensing in Tewkesbury Borough. Progressing licenses has, therefore, not been a priority to date. Nevertheless, the Council now recognises it should pursue owners operating a licensable HMO illegally. Where a HMO requiring a license comes to the attention of the Council, the Environmental Health team shall send a standard application pack to the owner.

Discussions with our local Registered Providers have indicated that following the 1% rent reduction and assessments of their financial position, they are seeking alternatives to their current ways of working. This is particularly important when the council has become increasingly more reliant on them to provide Affordable Housing. Some are looking to reduce non-essential elements of the business such as community work, levying service charges to counteract the impact of these reductions and also bringing in stricter affordability levels to house only those tenants with good payment histories to guarantee rent is paid.

3.1 Improving Housing Conditions in the Private Rented Sector

Tewkesbury Borough Council along with the other district councils in Gloucestershire run and encourage landlords to join the "Fit to Rent" property accreditation scheme to inspect and approve houses let out to tenants. It is a voluntary and free service for landlords in the county which recognises good quality, well managed private lettings. The scheme aims to encourage good practice in the private rented market by giving approval to landlords and lettings that meet property standards and a management code of practice.

Certain minimum standards are required before a Fit to Rent certificate is issued to a landlord. The inspection is by the Environmental Health Department and covers such issues as fire safety, kitchen and bathroom facilities and room sizes. Annually, a landlord event is hosted by the six local authorities in Gloucestershire. This, together with an annual newsletter, helps to disseminate information from central government on legislative requirements and changes that will affect landlords.

Currently, there is a countywide website hosted by Cotswold District Council¹ We have also produced a landlord handbook which is free to all Fit to Rent landlords. Over 180 properties have already been accredited in Gloucestershire. At Tewkesbury Borough Council there are 6 landlords with 9 properties awarded 'Fit to Rent' status.

3.2 Houses in Multiple Occupation

In addition to the Fit to rent Scheme some properties are required to pass more stringent legal requirements for a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licence.

¹ www.cotswold.gov.uk/go/landlord

There are only 6 houses in multiple occupation licensed in the borough. Nevertheless we will continue to regulate these and other houses in multiple occupation and work to identify others who may need a licence.

3.3 Private sector leasing scheme

The Gloucestershire Private Sector Leasing Scheme is a project to lease properties from private landlords to provide housing for local people from all sectors of the community. Private sector landlords who want to rent their property out, but do not wish to manage it, can lease the property to a partner housing association for up to five years. The housing association will manage the property on behalf of the landlord, housing tenants from the council's waiting list. When the lease period comes to an end the housing association guarantees to return the property to the landlord in the same condition as at the start of lease. Throughout the lease period the landlord receives a guaranteed monthly rent, even during void periods.

Mears Plexus who operate the scheme is dedicated to managing residential property in partnership with landlords, investors and local authorities. At the time of publication, 9 properties are managed by the service in Tewkesbury Borough.

4 Housing Conditions

Tewkesbury Borough Council gives advice on, and can take enforcement action to deal with problems arising in rented properties. Examples include housing conditions, drainage, nuisance, vermin and accumulations.

The housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS) is the means by which a home is judged for suitability to be lived in. It applies to all homes be they owner-occupied or tenanted. Tewkesbury Borough Council officers are trained to use the HHSRS. Enforcement action to remedy any hazards found in a property can be in many forms. It can range from a legal notice to make sure the owner is aware of a problem or hazard, right through to immediate closure of a property considered to be too dangerous to live in.

Between 1st April 2015 and 31st March 2016 Tewkesbury Borough Council dealt with 36 complaints regarding property conditions and served one housing conditions improvement notice.

Tewkesbury Borough Council has built relationships and contacts with organisations such as the National Landlords Association and Gloucestershire Landlords Association. This has helped to spread the message of encouraging landlords to make their properties available. For example, officers meet regularly with both organisations and share information.

4.1 Disabled Facilities Grants

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) were introduced by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act (HGCRA) 1996. There are also annual regulations called the Housing Renewal Grants Regulations which govern how Local Authorities administer Disabled Facilities Grants and there is a good practice guidance which Local Authorities are encouraged to follow when administering DFG's².

DFG's provide households with any number of aids and adaptations to ensure their home is suitable to live in. From 2010/11 to 2015/16, 674 households have benefited from a DFG in Tewkesbury Borough as shown in Table 1. Households come from all tenures and the number of application vary year on year. The table also shows the total spend per year.

Table 1: Number of completed DFGs and the total spend per year by Tewkesbury Borough Council 2011/12-2015/16

| | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 |
|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Number of DFG's | 111 | 109 | 108 | 118 | 129 | 99 |
| Total Spend | £621,627 | £689,192 | £618,521 | £676,577 | £772,409 | £543,351 |

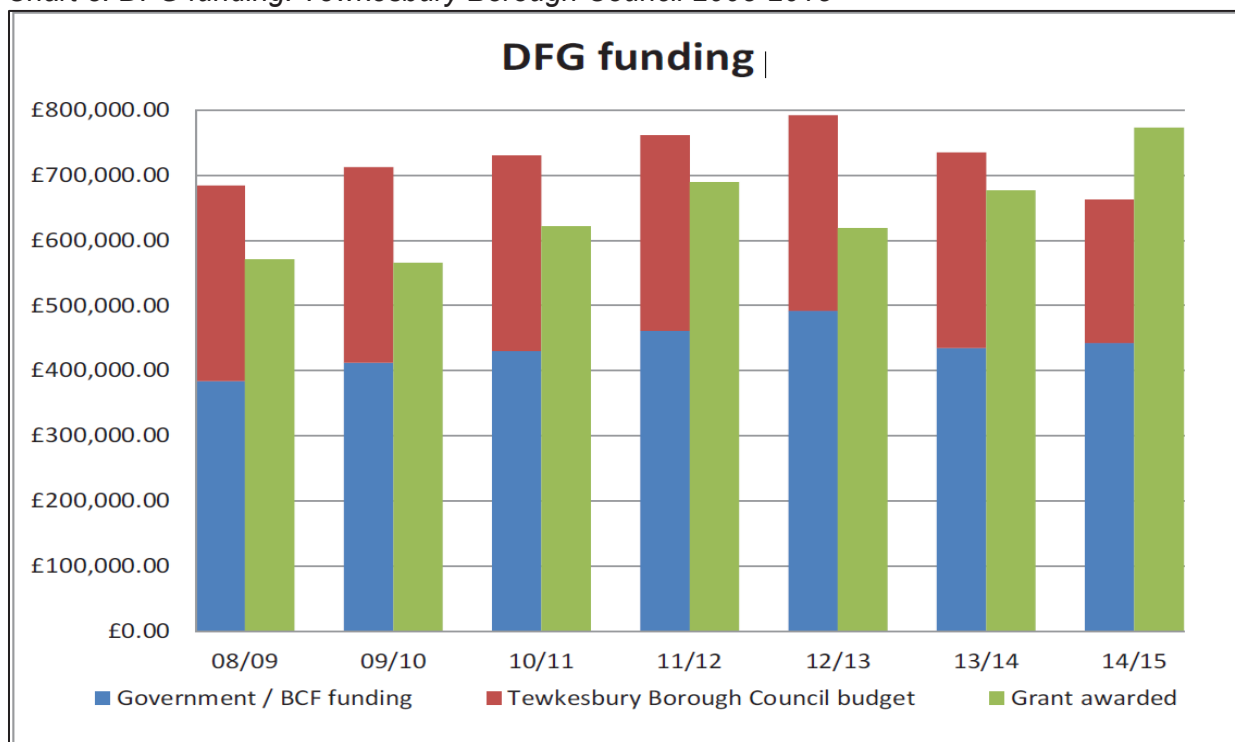
Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council dataset

Although central government funding has gradually risen over the past 15 years it has only kept pace with inflation. Consequently the central government subsidy only accounts for a proportion of the resources local authorities put into DFG's. Tewkesbury Borough Council's

² Home adaptations for disabled people: a detailed guide to related legislation, guidance and good practice <http://careandrepair-england.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/DFG-Good-Practice-Guide-30th-Sept-13.pdf>

medium term financial plan offers £220,000 of capital funding over the next five years to meet the local demand. Chart 3 shows the funding for DFGs.

Chart 3: DFG funding: Tewkesbury Borough Council 2008-2015



| | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Government/BCF | £384,000 | £412,000 | £430,000 | £460,923 | £491,847 | £434,717 | £442,446 |
| Tewkesbury Borough Council | £300,000 | £300,000 | £300,000 | £300,000 | £300,000 | £300,000 | £220,000 |
| Grant awarded | £570,984 | £565,192 | £624,627 | £636,404 | £674,509 | £676,577 | £772,409 |

Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council dataset

As part of the June 2013 Spending Review the government announced the creation of a pooled fund to enable the NHS and local authorities to jointly commission health and social care services. The 2015-16 allocations to the Better Care Fund (BCF) for Gloucestershire have been confirmed by the Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board. This year the funding allocation to all districts for DFGs has been ring-fenced at the capital levels from 2014/15, however, this ring-fence ceases next financial year, i.e. the administrators of the fund are not obliged to specifically provide funding for DFG's.

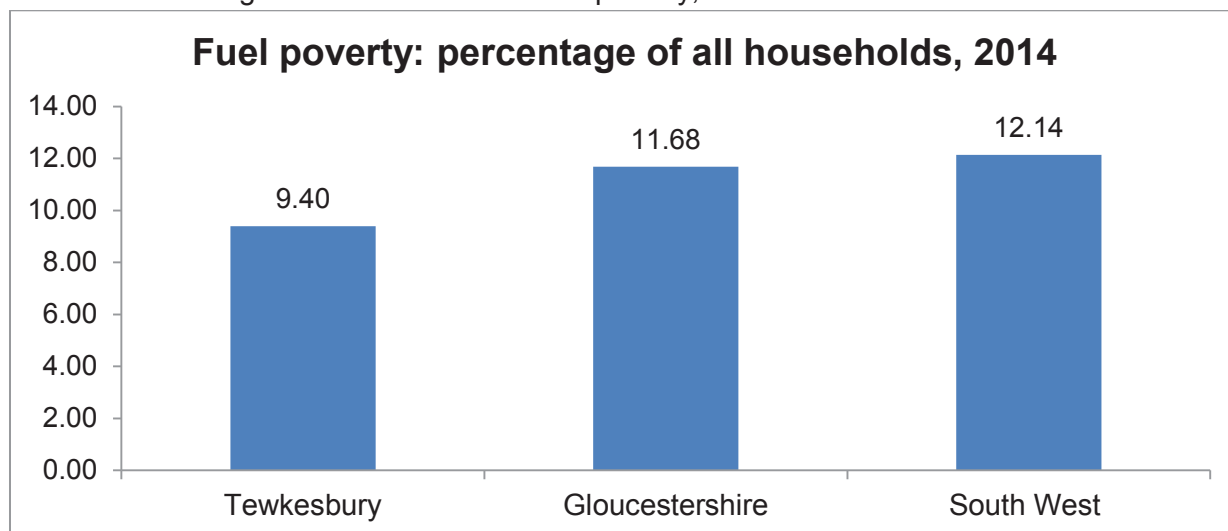
Nevertheless the direction of travel is a move to more planned care and to avoid unplanned admissions to hospitals and care homes where care can be provided more effectively in people's homes or the community.

It is ultimately the health service rather than local authorities that benefit financially from the preventative measures of DFGs and funding mechanisms need to reflect this reality. A number of studies have recognised that there is a financial benefit to the government as a whole in providing DFGs that enable applicants to remain in their own homes. When weighed up against the cost of a place in a residential home, the cost of a DFG which allows an applicant to remain in their own home makes financial sense.

5 Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty is defined as where a household spends more than 10% of its income on providing adequate heating 9.4% of households are living in fuel poverty in the borough; this is lower than the figure for Gloucestershire at 11.7% and 12.1% for the South West (2014), see Chart 4.

Chart 4: Percentage of all households in fuel poverty, 2014



The energy efficiency of a property is a contributing factor to excess cold and damp and mould hazards and therefore to cold related illness. Excess cold can be caused by poor housing conditions or simply because an occupier cannot afford to adequately heat their home (fuel poverty). The indoor temperature of a home can affect an occupant's physical, mental and social health and wellbeing. The Environmental Health team have powers to tackle such issues, especially when the property is tenanted. The Borough Council expects all providers with stock in its area, to respond to the needs of those in fuel poverty, either by way of property improvements or through the involvement of external advice agencies.

Free advice on energy efficiency promotion and fuel poverty is available from the Warm and Well Advice Line.

5.1 Affordable warmth – Warm & Well

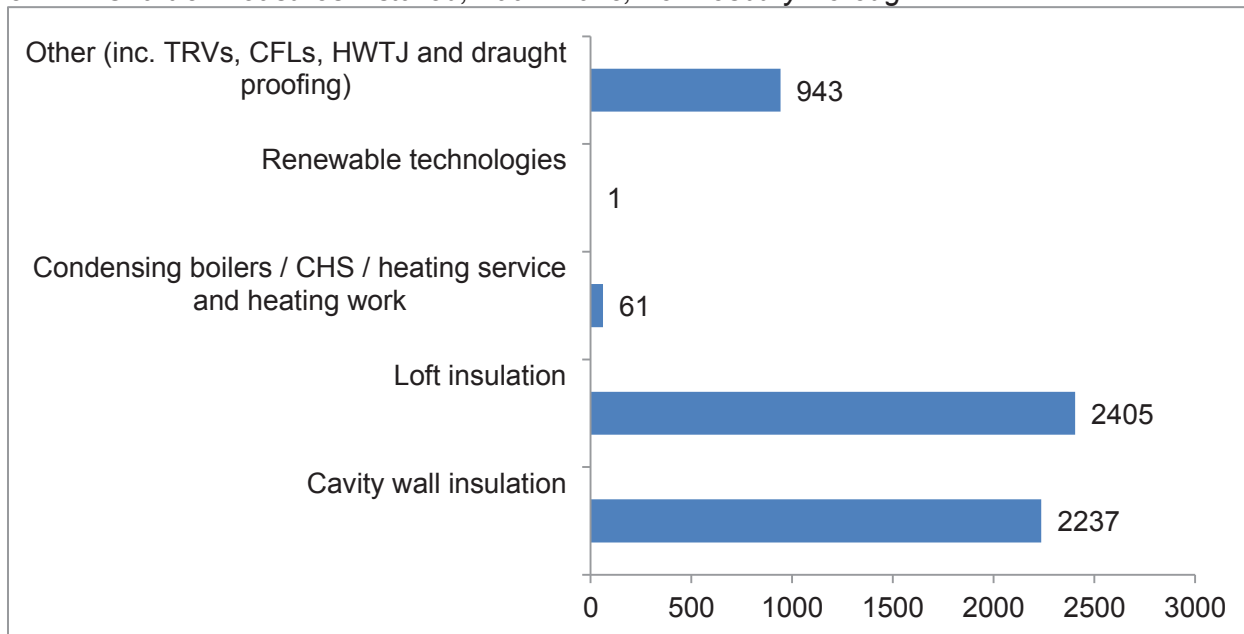
The countywide home improvement agency, Safe at Home, is funded by the six Gloucestershire district authorities, Gloucestershire County Council and the Gloucestershire NHS Trust, to assist clients with major works to their properties, focussing on providing services and assistance to elderly and vulnerable clients. Whilst this is the contracted countywide home improvement agency, Tewkesbury Borough Council provides information on other agencies and surveyors in the local area that can help.

The current contract has been extended until 2017 and at the time of writing, partners are considering priorities for future delivery. Providing adaptations is seen as particularly important given the possible health implications, care and support costs of residents not obtaining essential disabled adaptations in a timely fashion. However, it is essential that delivery of this aspect of the private sector housing service is integrated with all other aspects.

We therefore work across services to assess housing need and whether a move to more appropriate accommodation is required.

Chart 5 details the measures installed in Tewkesbury Borough via Warm & Well from 2001-2015.

5.2 Chart 5: Measures installed, 2001–2015, Tewkesbury Borough



Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council dataset

For detail about the affordable warmth strategy in Gloucestershire please see the Action for Affordable Warmth; A strategy for Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire, 2013-2018³ and Gloucestershire Affordable Warmth Action Plan 2013-2016⁴

³ Action for Affordable Warmth; A strategy for Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire, 2013-2018

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4KyFQA43JaOWTFxd18zUVZWZ2M/view>

⁴ Gloucestershire Affordable Warmth Action Plan 2013-2016

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4KyFQA43JaOeE81YnA0UjBGSVU/view>

6 Vacant Properties

Tewkesbury Borough does not have a problem with vacant dwellings but nevertheless will work to bring properties back into use.

Total vacant dwellings in 2014/15 averaged:

- 1,157 for council areas in the South West
- 1,242 for councils in Gloucestershire
- 797 in Tewkesbury borough

Source: Communities and Local Government.

The properties that are of most concern are a smaller proportion of the 727 in Tewkesbury Borough, being those vacant for 6 months or more.

The environmental health team work with housing services and council tax teams to assess empty homes in Tewkesbury Borough to ensure that those that can be brought into use are encouraged.

At home in Tewkesbury Borough

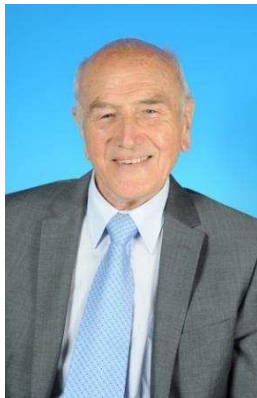
A housing strategy for our borough

Appendix 2: Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2017-2021



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Foreword



I am pleased to introduce Tewkesbury Borough Council's 'Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2017-2021'. As Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing, I know how important it is for borough residents to have access to excellent advice and assistance when facing housing difficulties – or even the loss of their homes.

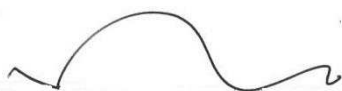
Under the Housing Act 2002, the Council is required to publish a strategy setting out how it will address homelessness in its administrative area. We have developed our Homelessness Strategy in conjunction with our overall Housing Strategy to produce a clear direction for a comprehensive customer-focused housing service which will meet the needs of all our borough's residents. This will make it easier for our customers and partner organisations to understand how we intend to address housing issues and deal with homelessness, and when we hope to do it.

Tewkesbury Borough Council is committed to providing early help to those experiencing difficulty with housing. We will ensure that homelessness-prevention options are available to borough residents, to sustain their accommodation and make repossession a last resort. We are also committed to providing excellent and cost-effective homelessness services to all our residents.

Our borough's population is widely dispersed, with relatively low levels of homelessness, and we recognise the need to maximise the availability of solutions for those who experience housing difficulties in our area, by joint commissioning of services with neighbouring authorities and other statutory agencies. This will become particularly important as financial pressures on local authority services continue to drive the necessity of cost-effective solutions for people in need.

We appreciate that housing solutions in isolation for vulnerable people are often unsustainable without support from other agencies, and we will therefore work closely with partners to deliver comprehensive packages of assistance to provide sustainable solutions. These principles are fundamental to meeting the challenges associated with changes to benefit entitlement.

I am confident that Tewkesbury Borough Council's comprehensive Housing and Homelessness Strategy will deliver high quality support and housing advice to Borough residents when they need it, using both existing and newly innovative approaches. Our strategy will also enable the Council to operate effectively, and to work with a range of partner organisations to provide customers with the assistance they need, with a choice of good-quality, affordable and private-market housing in an area where they want to live and work, now and into the future.



Councillor Ron Allen
Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing
Tewkesbury Borough Council

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1 Introduction

1.1 Homelessness – an overview

The common perception of homelessness tends to be individuals rough sleeping, but homelessness is a complex issue which affects both individuals and families who lose or face losing their homes as a result of numerous causes.

Homelessness can happen to anyone, is detrimental to every aspect of the lives of those affected and can have a negative impact on others living in the community. It also creates additional costs to public services.

The impact of homelessness and housing disruption on the well-being and life chances of affected children are well recognised as extremely detrimental. The prevention of homelessness and rapid resolution of homeless crisis therefore should be prioritised wherever possible when assisting those facing housing difficulties.

Nationally¹ the most common causes of homelessness for accepted applications have been identified as:

- The end of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy (private sector tenancies) equating to 31% of all homeless cases, and
- Parents or friends no longer willing to accommodate equating to 27% of all homeless cases.

Locally² within Tewkesbury Borough the primary causes of homelessness for accepted applications in 2015/16 were:

- Loss of Assured Shorthold tenancy (private sector tenancies) - 20%
- Relationship Breakdown involving domestic abuse - 19%
- Parents or family no longer willing to accommodate - 17%

Underlying vulnerabilities often contribute to the immediate causes of homelessness outlined above. These vulnerabilities include poor education, poor physical and mental health, involvement in crime, unemployment and poor life skills. The government³ have set out overarching priorities to meet these:

- tackling troubled childhoods and adolescence
- improving health
- reducing involvement in crime
- improving skills, employment and the availability of financial advice

The importance of partnership working is imperative to tackling homelessness, particularly the underlying vulnerabilities and priorities. Tackling the underlying causes and the

¹ Government (DCLG) Live tables on homelessness <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness>

² Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1b, page 7

³ Making Every Contact Count https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7597/2200459.pdf

prevention of homelessness is better for those affected and more cost effective than seeking to assist households through statutory homelessness provisions or bringing them inside from rough sleeping.

Ongoing welfare reform changes⁴ has, and will continue to, present challenges for those on lower incomes within Tewkesbury Borough. Those most affected are single people aged 18-21 who are out of work, those single on low incomes aged under 35, and larger families on low incomes with 3 or more children.

Assisting those affected to sustain their tenancies will require ongoing bespoke and effective joint working with our partners in the Tewkesbury Borough Financial Inclusion Partnership. Our working relationships with local partners and our neighbouring local authorities are fundamental in delivering successful outcomes for residents facing housing crisis as we are a rural borough with limited resources, and sustainable solutions involve tackling underlying causes of homelessness.

Tewkesbury Borough benefits from the co-location of services at the Public Services Centre on the edge of Tewkesbury Town with:

- Jobcentre Plus
- Tewkesbury Borough Police Station
- Gloucestershire County Council's Children's Services
- Gloucestershire Care Services incorporating Adult Social Services and Health services
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Severn Vale Housing Society
- The Fire and Rescue Service
- Gloucestershire Rural Community Council, and
- Tewkesbury Borough Council services – including housing services, revenues and benefits, environmental health and planning.

The Public Services Centre enables the housing services team to collaborate closely with our partner agencies and clients to initiative early and sustainable solutions. Our collaboration includes joint training, commissioning, shared intelligence on services and issues challenging residents within our borough.

Tewkesbury Borough Council receives a homelessness prevention grant from the Government (DCLG) which is currently £48,000 per annum. This funding is to be focussed on homelessness prevention within the Tewkesbury Borough local authority area. These monies are spent on:

- Multi agency initiatives to prevent homelessness
- Small grants to partners undertaking prevention activities
- Financial assistance to individual households through deposits, tenancy rescue packages, rent in advance and so on.

⁴ Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1b, page 18

We are committed to ensuring homelessness prevention and support services are available to all residents to sustain accommodation and make repossession the last resort.

1.2 Statutory requirements, evidence base and consultation

Local authorities are required to produce a homelessness review and strategy under the Homelessness Act 2002 taking into account:

- Levels of homelessness within the borough
- Services provided to prevent homelessness and to provide accommodation and suitable support and
- The level of resources available to the authority including social services, voluntary organisations and the public agencies to provide these services.

Local authorities are required to keep the Strategy under review, to consult on it, and update it at intervals and to publish a new strategy within 5 years. Tewkesbury Borough Council's previous homeless strategy formed part of the overall housing strategy for 2012-2016, was subject to annual reviews, and informed our current strategic focus.

This Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2017-2021 has been developed as part of the overall Housing Strategy 2017-2021 with full review of services and performance, in conjunction with our Member housing working group, and involved public consultation. The two strategies deliver a comprehensive ongoing review, vision and focus for our housing and homeless activities for the next 5 years. The full national and local data that is used to inform the development of the Housing Strategy and this Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Strategy and the overall legislative background can be found in the Housing Strategy 2017-2021 appendices 1a, 1b, 1c and 1d.

The demands on the homelessness service in Tewkesbury Borough and the council's housing services performance data can be found in Appendix 1b.

The consultation document and response document can be found on the housing strategy webpages on the council's website⁵.

1.3 Strategy Review

This Strategy will be monitored and reviewed as part of the overarching Housing Strategy 2017-2021.

The action plan will be updated regularly to ensure that we are able to maintain a current and pro-active stance towards new challenges in preventing homelessness in our borough.

Forthcoming changes associated with new legislation, changes in funding streams and further welfare reform will be closely monitored and addressed via the action plan throughout the lifetime of the Strategy. This will ensure we are able to strategically identify and meet new challenges.

⁵ Tewkesbury Borough Council housing strategy webpages www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/housing-strategy

2 The Prevention of Homelessness

As detailed in the overarching Housing Strategy 2017-2021, Tewkesbury Borough is a rural district which with high levels of employment and relatively low numbers of households in housing difficulty. Our area also includes areas of social deprivation, however, and those in housing difficulty on low incomes struggle to find solutions as there is a high demand on social housing, high property value and expensive private rents⁶. The dispersed population across the borough also adds additional difficulties for homeless households to source accommodation in a locality near to existing support networks i.e. family, schools, GP's and so on.

Over the last five years there has been a rise in homelessness nationally which has also been evidenced in homeless approaches within Tewkesbury Borough. The impact of ongoing welfare reform on those on a low income is also likely to increase homeless demand in our area from those on lower incomes. This will be particularly from very young single people 18-21, single people aged under 35, and those in families with 3 or more children. A recent study by Policy in Practice (2016) commissioned by the Financial Inclusion Partnership within Tewkesbury Borough using multi public agency data evidences the projected impact of welfare reform within the borough, and an overview of welfare reform in our borough is examined in the Housing Strategy and evidenced in our local evidence, see Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 2b.

The prevention of homelessness is receiving increasing recognition as fundamental in services to those facing housing crisis within government and the formalisation of homeless prevention duties are currently under debate in the Homelessness Reduction Bill⁷. In 2015/16 Tewkesbury Borough Council reviewed homeless prevention activity and introduced the present proactive approach to homelessness prevention on a 'spend to save' basis. Our approach includes financial housing options to those threatened with homelessness in financial crisis. This approach significantly reduced both emergency accommodation placements and homeless acceptances during the last financial year⁸.

Duties associated with the draft Homelessness Reduction Bill involve early homeless prevention intervention to all households facing housing crisis, irrespective of whether there would be a statutory obligation to them as 'vulnerable' if they became roofless. We currently provide early intervention to all those in housing difficulty in our area, offering bespoke written advice and financial housing options to those who need financial help to resolve their difficulties. This enables all residents threatened with homelessness to avoid homeless crisis by staying in their existing home if reasonable, suitable and sustainable. This work is likely to be increasingly important for households in social housing facing housing difficulties as a result of welfare reform, as many will currently be in the most affordable suitable accommodation and more suitable alternatives will not be available.

If staying in their current home is not sustainable over the long term, we will offer advice and assistance to enable residents to move to a more suitable home, in an area of their choice,

⁶ Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1b page 29

⁷ Homelessness Reduction Bill 2016-17 <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/homelessnessreduction.html>

⁸ Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1b pages 9 and 10

close to support networks before they reach homeless crisis; without the need for the disruption or the cost of emergency accommodation.

We are also committed to developing multi agency solutions for our applicants with our partner agencies and we work closely with Families First, Gloucestershire County Council Adult Social Care team, the Anti-Social Behaviour group, Greensquare, the Citizen's Advice Bureau, the council's benefits team and the Job Centre Plus to draw together comprehensive outcomes.

The government has set out a vision for social justice that is based on two fundamental principles:

1. Prevention and early intervention throughout a person's life, encouraging carefully designed interventions to stop people falling off track and into difficult circumstances.
2. A 'second chance society' ensuring that no one is 'written off' and that anybody who needs another chance gets access to the support and tools they need to transform their lives.⁹

Early intervention facilitates better choice and control for applicants, more sustainable outcomes, less disruptive solutions than statutory homelessness responses. This is particularly important within rural dispersed boroughs such as ours where there is a high demand for social housing, and large distances between and towns and villages, and statutory offers of accommodation may not be near to households' support.

The DCLG has offered guidance to local authorities on the criteria for a Gold Standard¹⁰ to deliver cost effective excellence in homeless prevention and homelessness services. Tewkesbury Borough Council has engaged with the Gold Standard best practice with a view to meeting the best practice model in our area during the lifetime of this strategy

As well as the advice and financial assistance available to all, including those who have caused their own homelessness, we work with partners to establish pathways for those who need specialist support. We are committed to delivering against the ten challenges set out in 'Making Every Contact Count'¹¹ to benefit our clients and will continue to work with partners to develop our prevention and homeless pathways to benefit those in housing difficulty within our borough.

Tewkesbury Borough Council's housing services assisted 1,360 people with housing advice or homelessness interviews in the borough in the 2015-16 financial year.

⁹ Social Justice: transforming lives, Department for Work and Pensions, March 2012
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/49515/social-justice-transforming-lives.pdf

¹⁰ For more information on the Gold Standard and the requirements of Tewkesbury Borough Council you can visit <http://home.practitionersupport.org/>

¹¹ Making every contact count: A joint approach to preventing homelessness, DCLG, 2012
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-every-contact-count-a-joint-approach-to-preventing-homelessness>

2.1 Homelessness Prevention Pathways

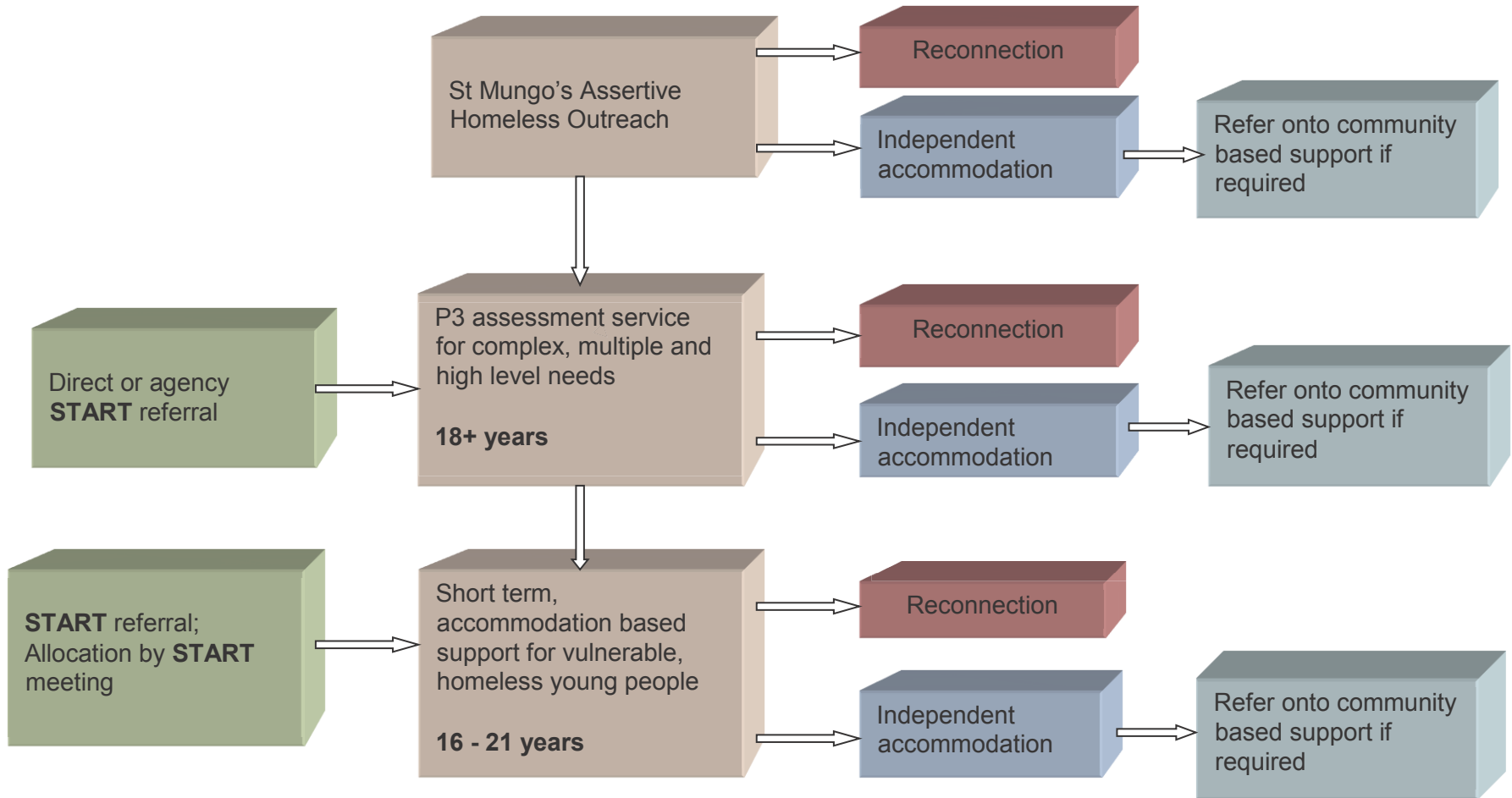
Our support strands and prevention pathways are key to meeting these needs. Pathways for all groups are outlined in this section.

Chart 1 overleaf shows the Homelessness Prevention Pathways process map. START is the process which manages the assessment & access to accommodation based support for those people whose support needs are known and who don't need to go through the assessment service first.

2.1.1 Homelessness Prevention Pathways Process

Chart 1: Homelessness Prevention Pathways Process

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2.1.2 Community Based Support

One of the principal causes of homelessness is residents losing their tenancies. Households in housing difficulty may be able to sustain their existing tenancies with assistance from Tewkesbury Borough Council, for example to resolve housing benefit difficulties, and continue to benefit from ongoing housing related support.

Similarly, many other households who have become homeless will maintain tenancies in alternative accommodation with the assistance available from community based support.

We have worked closely with Gloucestershire County Council Supporting People commissioners to frame the community based support in our area, and with the support providers Greensquare to support individual cases in maintaining their tenancies and prevent homelessness. This support is critical in engaging with individuals or families when things start to go wrong and looking for solutions to prevent decline and any loss of their home. Greensquare hold regular surgeries in our Public Services Centre and work closely with us to resolve individual challenging cases.

2.1.3 Sanctuary/target hardening scheme

Domestic abuse remains one of the main causes of homelessness within our borough and we are committed to supporting those who experience domestic abuse and enable them to remain in their current accommodation if they are safe to remain. The six District Councils in Gloucestershire and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) pilot sanctuary scheme to offer target hardening and sanctuary room measures to residents wanting to remain in their homes and at risk of domestic violence has been very successful and been extended.

During 2015/16, 13 households from Tewkesbury Borough accessed assistance through this scheme and all continue to remain in their homes. All residents in our area received target hardening measures (lock changes and minor adaptations). No households required sanctuary measures and all those who benefited within our borough were female households.

Those who experience domestic abuse within our borough are also able to receive support through a specialist community based support via Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Services (GDASS).

2.1.4 Young People

Parental eviction is also a major cause of homelessness within our borough. Research by Shelter suggests that the causes of homelessness in young people are associated with adverse housing, economic and family trends, that young people are disproportionately affected by homelessness, and often don't know where to go for help. Local Authorities have duties towards homeless young people and care leavers, under Homelessness legislation and the Children's Act 1989 and Children (Leaving Care) Act 2002. This means young people may be eligible for assistance from the local housing authority or social

services. Any duty owed to homeless 16 and 17 year olds under the Children's Act 1989 takes precedence over the duties under homelessness legislation. As the local housing authority, however, we are still under a statutory duty to assess and assist all 16 and 17 year olds, in addition to any referral we might make to social services.

We work closely with our colleagues in the Gloucestershire Youth Support Team to prevent homelessness in young people and deliver the best outcomes for this vulnerable group and have a 'Southwark' protocol in place that sets out our shared arrangements. We also provide Equitable Tenancies in partnership with G3 for the young people's accommodation available within our borough, in order that Assured Shorthold Tenancies can be offered to those under 18 in supported accommodation in our borough.

2.1.5 Those leaving care

We also work with the Gloucestershire Youth Support Team to support Care Leavers as they approach 18 to establish a planned move on from care into the most appropriate accommodation to provide sustainable solutions so that they do not become homeless at the end of their period in care. This may include supported accommodation, or independent living in the social sector or private rented sector.

2.1.6 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Youth Support worker

Tewkesbury Borough Council benefits from an ASB Youth Support worker within Housing Services to prevent the homelessness of young people through family evictions and reduce nuisance. Our youth support worker engages with young people aged 11-19, families first, social care, schools, and the police to ensure that young people with challenging behaviour are able to stay with their families (if appropriate), and increase their life chances as adults.

2.1.7 Supported Accommodation – younger people and 18+

(18+ accommodation based support and the Young Person's Accommodation based support)

Many households become homeless or threatened with homelessness and need support to develop the skills to maintain their tenancies. Supported housing helps people with a range of needs to find it difficult to maintain tenancies and ranges from rooms to flats, some with 24 hour support, others with support brought in when needed (floating support).

The homelessness prevention pathway as shown on page X is linked to changes identified with the Supporting People Strategy 2011¹², the revised budget, and the 'pathway' of accommodation-based support. Providers offer first stage accommodation and assessment centres where individuals can begin to engage with support staff and start the process of identifying and addressing any needs. At this stage they plan their route back to independence, with support options available to fulfil their plans. Second stage accommodation-based support provides an effective county network, able to meet need,

¹² Supporting People Strategy 2011, Gloucestershire County Council

1.1 <http://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/documents/s3324/Supporting%20People%20Strategy%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>

whilst also offering the flexibility for individuals to move temporarily to receive support and reconnect back with their home area afterwards.

Most of the accommodation-based support projects within the county are located outside of Tewkesbury Borough and residents needing assistance are able to secure the county-wide supported housing projects. The council's housing services has worked closely with the local authorities in Gloucestershire, Supporting People, and our partners providing accommodation-based support to ensure that there is fair and equitable access to and move on from supported accommodation provision. We are committed to working with residents when they are ready to move back to Tewkesbury Borough through the countywide reconnection policy and offer financial assistance through rent in advance and deposits for those accessing the private sector.

Within the borough we have a young person's supported housing project in Tewkesbury Town. This provision has been recently improved by G3/Rooftop; the housing association have replaced their outdated provision at Tolley House with a redevelopment of accommodation on Tewkesbury High Street to provide high quality self-contained accommodation for young vulnerable adults on a single site alongside the existing services at Jubilee House in the town centre.

Several dispersed units of accommodation have also become available in the borough through Aspire as part of the Fair Chance¹³ programme which supports young people to find independence through training and employment.

Projected ongoing welfare reform may result in a reduction in housing benefit levels for those in supported housing in the future. We will monitor how ongoing reductions will impact and work closely with partners to mitigate wherever possible the effects of possible future cuts on the services to our vulnerable homeless households.

2.1.8 Ex-military personnel

Tewkesbury Borough has a military base within it at Innsworth and is part of the Community Covenant between the local authority services in Gloucestershire and The Armed Forces Community in Gloucestershire (2012). Joint protocols and preventative advice and assistance for those leaving the armed forces have been successful in meeting the needs when they approach and prevent homelessness.

We also work closely with support services available for ex-military personnel such as the Royal British Legion, Alabare supported accommodation, and SAFFA to assist more vulnerable ex-military personnel.

2.1.9 Drug and Alcohol Support

We recognise people may turn to drugs or alcohol and that this frequently leads to homelessness. We have therefore worked with the County Council to commission a

¹³ The Young Engagement Fund and the Fair Chance Fund
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/30-million-boost-to-improve-the-lives-of-britains-most-vulnerable-young-people>

specialist service currently delivered by Change Grow Live to support individuals and their families to reduce their consumption of substances to safer levels or to abstain. The service specification was designed with the involvement of former and current service users, and understanding the most important features of receiving support to fulfil a person's recovery plans.

Recovery workers offer sessions at a series of hubs or supported housing locations to provide support in a way that works for the individual, linked to support from GPs and specialist nurses.

Successful reduction in substance misuse is expected to lead to improved health improvements, and in some cases reduced levels of crime or antisocial behaviour. The service will be monitored to ensure the best possible outcomes and minimise those losing their accommodation as a result.

2.1.10 Mental Health Accommodation

Accommodation is available in the county to provide short term, intensive housing related support focussing on adults with serious mental illness. Tewkesbury Borough Council works closely with the providers of this accommodation to ensure that our residents can access and exit accommodation back into Tewkesbury Borough when ready to move on.

2.1.11 Older people and people with disabilities

Within Tewkesbury Borough we work closely with Adult Social Care, Occupational Therapists, and our Environmental Health team to deliver solutions for older people/those previously living independently who are no longer able to live within their homes as a result of their disability. Working together with the resident, and our partners in occupational therapy, and social care, we deliver solutions which include: disabled facilities grants, rehousing into more appropriate accommodation including sheltered or extra care properties to prevent homelessness in this vulnerable group.

We also work closely with the community based support in the area to ensure that residents have the most appropriate support for their needs to maintain their lives in their current homes.

Our overall Housing Strategy addresses the projected increase of older smaller households within the borough over the next 30 years.

2.1.12 Ex-Offenders

An Accommodation and Brokerage/Personalisation service is active within the County which links closely with Probation and the Police as well as the other accommodation based support schemes.

2.1.13 Social Rented Properties – Choice Based Lettings

We continue to work closely with our housing association partners within the area to meet housing need including to those who are threatened with homelessness. We promote choice based lettings to those facing homelessness and assist residents to make applications. All those threatened with homelessness and those who are non-statutory homeless receive additional priority banding 'silver' to assist them in their efforts to find alternative accommodation.

3 Areas of challenge in preventing homelessness

3.1 Welfare Reform, the affordability of tenancies, exemptions and assistance

As outlined in the main housing strategy and through the jointly commissioned local Tewkesbury Borough analysis by Policy in Practice, welfare reform changes are and will continue to affect the affordability of tenancies for many residents on a low income. Existing reforms affecting those under occupying properties in the social rented sector are continuing to cause many households arrears in their current properties.

3.1.1 Single person households

Our housing register demonstrates that 50% of those who have applied for social housing have a one bedroom need, and that there is a shortage of smaller properties becoming available. The high demand and low levels of stock indicate a limited ability of the local authority to meet the need of those affected by welfare reforms with a one bedroom need through the existing social housing stock.

Welfare reform following the Localism Act 2011, however, increased the demand for one bedroom accommodation rose following the under occupation reduction in housing benefits for those under occupying social housing. The demand has also increased because the amount of housing benefit to which those under 35 and on a low income were entitled was restricted in private sector rented properties to the 30th percentile of median rents for a room in a shared house. Those under 35 were no longer able to afford self-contained private rented accommodation in our area and there is limited shared private rented accommodation.

Forthcoming reforms in 2019 will also affect smaller households as they impact on single people aged under 35 on a low income in social housing. These reforms will introduce the shared accommodation rate for housing payments to the social sector. These changes are likely to result in significant shortfalls in rent for many younger single tenants within the social rented sector on low incomes as social housing rents are higher than the shared accommodation rate for housing benefit.

There is some uncertainty about the impact of these changes on supported accommodation and we will need to monitor how the reform is introduced for this group. Certain exemptions, however, were put in place which categories of ex-offenders (where there may be risks to others in shared accommodation), and also some provision for individuals who have formerly resided in specialist accommodation.

Care leavers will be one of the most vulnerable younger groups likely to be affected as whilst they are exempt from the single room rate until their 22nd birthday, they will be subject to the shared accommodation rate in social housing if on a low income until they reach 35 years of age.

Forthcoming reforms will impact further on very young single adults aged 18-21 who are not in training or work who will not be eligible for housing payments towards their rent. This is likely to result in both financial hardship and homelessness.

3.1.2 Family households

Welfare reform will also impact on larger households with the reduction of the benefit cap to £20,000 with effect from November 2016. Research undertaken by Policy in Practice indicates these reforms will affect families on a low income with 3 or more children within the borough – but that those most affected are likely to be lone parents in social housing.

3.1.3 Welfare reform work already undertaken with partners

We are committed to preventing homelessness within our borough in those households affected by welfare reform and by informing them of the changes to their income, enable them to either remain in their homes if sustainable, work with them to make their homes sustainable if possible, provide a period of affordable adjustment using transitional discretionary housing payment funds where residents are affected to enable them to make changes, or help them move to affordable accommodation without reaching homeless crisis. We are able to expedite interim solutions through our close working relationship with colleagues in Revenues and Benefits for affected households.

We will also engage closely with residents and our partners in the Tewkesbury Borough Financial Inclusion partnership to mitigate the effects of these reforms on those affected. This work will include identifying exemptions to ensure the most vulnerable receive the assistance to which they are entitled, and multi agency work which includes access to discretionary housing payments and transitional funds to enable residents to meet their rental obligations whilst seeking employment, or move to alternative affordable accommodation if appropriate.

These activities will be fundamental as many of the affected households will be in suitable social housing and cheaper alternatives will not be available. If residents lose their homes as a result of welfare reform, it will be difficult for Tewkesbury Borough Council to find suitable solutions. This joint partnership work with residents will also contribute to our overall Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Priority 4 Objective 4.3.

We will continue to monitor ongoing changes to benefit entitlements affecting our residents throughout the life time of this strategy with a view to preventing homelessness in those affected.

3.1.4 Increasing the numbers of smaller properties

We will encourage Housing associations and voluntary sector partners to focus on supply of affordable suitable smaller accommodation, including good quality shared provision. We will review existing supported accommodation to ensure there is sufficient capacity for those young people needing to gain the necessary skills before being able to live independently.

3.1.5 Working with the Private Housing Sector

13% of the housing stock within the borough is in the private sector rented accommodation, and the private housing sector is an important part of the council's strategic approach to meeting the diverse range of housing needs within the borough as demands on the social housing within the area increases.

Within Tewkesbury Borough rents tend to be higher than in the urban areas of Gloucestershire and those on low incomes often struggle to find landlords willing to rent to tenants on benefits.

Our evidence¹⁴ suggests that the median LHA rates for private rented accommodation in smaller accommodation types are affordable in parts of the borough at the rates of the local housing allowance for those over 35 years. In 2015/16 we extended our financial housing options for those threatened with homelessness, to all residents irrespective of priority need or whether they became homeless intentionally to enable those who were threatened with homelessness to find alternative accommodation within the private rented sector. Our existing schemes such as rental deposits and rent in advance have proven to be successful in preventing homeless crisis to many households.

Further work needs to be undertaken to build a list of landlords willing to work with low income tenants. This work may include: further incentives for landlords taking on clients threatened with homelessness, advice for landlords to build relationships and trust with local landlords in our area. Building relationships within the private rented sector will be a priority throughout the life time of this strategy particularly with a view to providing smaller and shared accommodation.

Tewkesbury Borough Council operates a Landlord Accreditation Scheme which aims to increase the supply of good quality private rented accommodation available for those looking for accommodation. The scheme is called Fit to Rent and has been developed countywide by a consortium of Gloucestershire Councils in cooperation with local landlords.

We are also exploring working in partnership with Housing associations who operate Private Sector Leasing Schemes designed to house vulnerable people in the private sector. These schemes are likely to be of interest to small portfolio/single property owners who would prefer to take a risk free income from properties and do not want to actively manage tenancies. We will develop and promote such schemes within the borough to maximise the available homes for those threatened with homelessness.

3.1.6 Home owners

Tewkesbury Borough has benefited from the Government's Mortgage Rescue Scheme (MRS) in the past although this has been phased out.

The number of presentations from home owners facing a crisis situation with their finances is very low within the Borough. We are not complacent, however, and will continue to offer and develop housing options to homeowners facing repossession, and offer specialist

¹⁴ Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1b pages 29, 31 and 32

housing advice and assistance in partnership with the Citizen's Advice Bureau. This will be particularly important for vulnerable or disabled homeowners in mortgage difficulty where their property is adapted and suitable for their needs.

Challenges

- Intervention at the earliest possible stage for households in crisis and ensuring they access our services
- Achieving the GOLD Standard in homeless prevention to give a cost effective and excellent service to those facing housing difficulties
- Working with residents and partners to mitigate the effects of Welfare Reform on tenancy affordability
- Improving choice for residents facing homelessness by improving access to the private rented sector
- Addressing the needs of home owners following the removal of the Mortgage Rescue Scheme.

4 Homelessness Assistance and Emergency Accommodation

If vulnerable households are roofless or become roofless during homeless enquiries, local authorities have a duty to provide accommodation, often in an emergency, while homeless enquiries are ongoing. Tewkesbury Borough Council offers a 24 hour emergency accommodation service to vulnerable households through our housing service during office hours as well as out of hours through the jointly commissioned service with Orbis who make placements on behalf of the council overnight.

The review of our housing and homelessness statistics indicate that the local demand for emergency and temporary accommodation is likely to continue, and may increase due to the impact of ongoing welfare reform.

Emergency and temporary accommodation is an important resource used to house urgent homelessness cases quickly and locally. Many local authorities, including Tewkesbury Borough Council, rely heavily on privately owned bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation. It is widely recognised, however, that bed and breakfast accommodation can be of variable quality, expensive, and damaging to family life as households often don't have the opportunity to kitchen facilities and have access to only one room.

We are committed to limit the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for all groups. This is especially important for our applicants as there is limited private bed and breakfast style accommodation available within our Borough. We are reducing the use of bed and breakfast in many client groups through use of prevention initiatives and other more suitable temporary accommodation provision, but need to source alternative accommodation for those we cannot prevent.

4.1 Family households

The council has access to five three bedroom houses managed by our partners Stonham across the borough which are used to house homeless family households on an interim basis and have been invaluable to largely avoid the use of bed and breakfast for this group in our area. In times of high demand, however, homeless family households may be placed into bed and breakfast, and we will seek further alternative accommodation provision for this group.

4.2 Young people

We work closely with our partner agencies to avoid using bed and breakfast for young single people. This is because young people are inexperienced and particularly vulnerable in emergency accommodation. Tewkesbury Borough Council part funds Gloucestershire Nightstop who coordinate host families offering short term accommodation solutions for young people under 26. The scheme ensures that young homeless people have a safe environment with an evening meal whilst reconciliation work is ongoing or alternative accommodation is sourced.

Our supported housing providers for young people in the county also offer 'crashpads' as emergency accommodation for very young people in our area. However many, including the one in

Tewkesbury Town, are no longer in use and there are only 2 units remaining in Gloucestershire. The revenue funding (the support staffing element) for these units has been removed and with no further investment it is unlikely that the units will be brought back into use for this purpose. We also work closely with the Gloucestershire youth support team to ensure that very young people can access all appropriate solutions and support. This is possibly going to be through fostering solutions.

4.3 Those experiencing domestic abuse

Our review of homelessness indicates that violent relationship breakdown continues to be one of the main causes of homelessness locally. This is in part due to our co-location with the urban areas in the county, and approaches to Tewkesbury Borough from applicants fleeing perpetrators in these areas. We have worked hard to develop solutions and alternatives to emergency accommodation for those who are experiencing violence in their home.

Following the recent closure of refuges in the county, a joint bid from the six District Councils in Gloucestershire to the DCLG was successful in securing funding for 'Places of Safety' to provide safe self-contained emergency accommodation for those fleeing Domestic Abuse in April 2015. 12 properties will be made available across the county for this purpose in partnership with Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Services (GDASS) and local housing associations. Four properties are currently available across Gloucestershire, and in Tewkesbury Borough our partner Severn Vale Housing Society is currently identifying two properties which will be available within our area. These will be used as emergency homeless accommodation for all household types, including men, and households with older boys, with bespoke support from GDASS. We will continue to work with this group and our partners to ensure that a high quality alternative to bed and breakfast continues to be available for those who become homeless as a result of violence.

We also work closely with GDASS to ensure that community based support is available to those who need it within the borough. This facilitates efficient triage and assessment of risk associated with domestic abuse, and links to IDVAS, MARAC, MAPPA, social care, and the police to facilitate protective action for victims.

4.4 Single households

We continue to regularly use bed and breakfast for single households, particularly single men with complex issues, and have difficulty sourcing alternative emergency accommodation within the borough for this group. Most bed and breakfast accommodation sourced by Tewkesbury Borough Council tends to be within the urban areas of Gloucestershire. This results in homeless clients having to move out of district. Furthermore, the demand and cost of emergency accommodation across the county has risen, placing extra pressure on the service, and further disruption for homeless households.

Further work needs to be undertaken within the borough to source appropriate emergency accommodation for single homeless people locally. This is important to enable them to maintain their support networks and prevent isolation.

As well as being less suitable for our applicants than local solutions, the cost of private bed and breakfast continues to be problematic for the service. Whilst we have been successful in reducing the number of placements and the length of stay in bed and breakfast during 2015/16, the average cost of emergency bed and breakfast has remained similar to previous years¹⁵.

¹⁵ Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1b, Chart 9 page 13

Locally we need to source suitable alternative emergency accommodation which also minimises housing benefit subsidy losses and costs to the council's housing services budgets through unsuccessful claims.

4.5 Duration of emergency accommodation

The length of stay within emergency accommodation is also problematic for households who are difficult to move on because of previous rental arrears or behavioural issues. Failure to find more secure accommodation can further isolate homeless households and delays the household's ability to establish longer term support within their locality to resolve underlying issues which have contributed to their homelessness. Furthermore, available emergency accommodation also becomes silted by harder to place households, forcing placements of other households into emergency accommodation further afield.

Consequently, it is important that we work with our partners to secure solutions for our homeless households who have failed to maintain tenancies in the past and support our clients to make the changes to their lifestyles and manageable arrears agreements to prove they are able to cope independently in the future. These solutions could include short term tenancies either in private leasing arrangements or social housing with community based support in which our residents could demonstrate their ability to maintain an arrears agreement and tenancy fitness.

Such temporary accommodation solutions are likely to be both beneficial for applicants and Tewkesbury Borough Council. This is because temporary accommodation will thin the borough will enable them to maintain normal lifestyles not possible in bed and breakfast, and to maintain support networks within the borough. Temporary accommodation is also likely to be less expensive for Tewkesbury Borough Council as the borough council will receive higher subsidies on rents than the capped amount within bed and breakfast.

Discussions are ongoing with housing providers in the area to develop a cost effective alternative to bed and breakfast within Tewkesbury Borough and also longer term tenancies for more challenging households. At the time of writing this strategy, we are awaiting further information regarding the temporary accommodation management fee grant allocation to the borough for April 2017 onwards in order to inform our ongoing negotiations with providers.

We are also active partners in the county-wide homelessness partnerships with the local authorities in Gloucestershire and county council and work with them to find solutions to homeless issues affecting all our authorities including the use of private sector emergency and temporary accommodation.

4.6 Rough Sleeping and 'No Second Night Out'

The most recent snapshot rough sleepers count in 2016 indicated there were no people sleeping rough in Tewkesbury Borough. Whilst the prevalence of rough sleeping within the borough is low, there are instances of rough sleeping throughout the year¹⁶ and we are committed to ensuring that rough sleepers in our area have the assistance they need to find and maintain accommodation.

Tewkesbury Borough Council part fund an Assertive Outreach Service currently provided through St Mungo's Broadway for rough sleepers in partnership with the other authorities in

¹⁶ Housing Strategy 2017-2021 Appendix 1b pages 15-17

Gloucestershire, the County, the PCC and the PCT. This provides a local service which meets the Government's 'No Second Night Out' approach¹⁷.

Any person identified by services or the public through Streetlink as sleeping rough is visited by St Mungo's Broadway to link them into local services, support, housing services, and accommodation in the county. We will continue to monitor rough sleeping levels regularly and work with the supported accommodation commissioners to ensure that suitable accommodation can be accessed quickly by those in need.

4.7 Severe Weather Protocol

In order to provide a humanitarian response in times of severe weather Tewkesbury Borough participates in a protocol with all other districts within the County. The protocol ensures that in periods of severe cold or other extreme weather conditions, no rough sleeper has to remain on the streets. Where necessary we will secure emergency placements in partnership with St Mungo's Broadway. We will continue to review the protocol and consider the involvement of voluntary sector organisations in responding in such circumstances.

There continue to be difficulties finding solutions for single chaotic households with multiple needs (i.e. substance misuse, learning difficulties/mental health problems, with chaotic or high risk offending behaviours) across the county. These residents often fail to maintain accommodation because of challenging behaviour and risk to others, and are vulnerable to street homelessness. Whilst numbers of chaotic households in each district is relatively low, it is difficult to coordinate resources to find timely and appropriate solutions. We will continue to work with our neighbouring local authorities through the county wide strategic homeless group, supporting people, and other statutory agencies to find multi agency opportunities for this group.

Challenges

- Lack of local alternatives to Bed & Breakfast (B&B)
- Limited number of accommodation spaces available for households
- Expense of emergency accommodation/ short term accommodation
- Supporting specific groups to access suitable emergency accommodation
- Supporting households with poor tenancy history to find a sustainable solution
- Lack of temporary accommodation within the borough
- Solutions for single households with dual diagnosis/multiple needs

¹⁷ Vision to end rough sleeping, DCLG, 2011 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vision-to-end-rough-sleeping--2>

5 Full Homelessness Duty

If, following homelessness enquiries, we establish that households are eligible, homeless, and vulnerable, who have not caused their own homelessness, and have a connection to Tewkesbury, the local authority has a full homeless duty to find them suitable accommodation¹⁸.

Temporary suitable accommodation offered by the Borough Council can be in the private rented sector, in supported accommodation through the county network, or within temporary social housing.

Until recently, the homeless duty to provide suitable accommodation could not be ended unless a permanent offer of a tenancy in social housing or if a household left suitable temporary accommodation. This inevitably resulted in homeless households having higher preference for social housing than other applicants with a high degree of housing need which was often considered unfair.

Following the changes introduced by The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012¹⁹ and the Localism Act 2011²⁰ local authorities now have the power to end the main homelessness duty with a 12 month private rented sector offer. This new power has an additional safeguard for the household through a 're-application duty' if the household becomes homeless again within two years. Tewkesbury Borough Council has not been using this power to discharge homeless duties to date because additional resources are required to meet the criteria of the legislation. This will be considered during the lifetime of this Strategy.

To assist accepted homeless households find permanent accommodation, our accepted applicants are awarded additional priority through the higher Gold banding on Homeseeker Plus, the council's Choice Based Lettings system, to access permanent social housing within our area.

5.1 Challenges associated with Homeless Duties and welfare reform

The overall impact of the current and forthcoming welfare reforms on financially vulnerable households within Tewkesbury Borough has been detailed in the main Housing Strategy and evidenced in the evidence base. Welfare reform, however, has introduced a number of uncertainties and difficulties for local authorities both assisting those threatened with homelessness, and also those to whom a homeless duty is owed.

Some of the forthcoming reforms remain under consideration, but the current programme of welfare reform will pose difficulties for all local authorities including Tewkesbury Borough Council in meeting their statutory duties to house vulnerable homeless households on low incomes who are single and under 35 years or those in large family households (as outlined earlier). This is because the local authority cannot end its homeless duty to accommodate unless homeless households are offered suitable and affordable accommodation – either within social housing, or an offer of a private sector tenancy of no less than 12 months. It is likely that both these groups will be unable to afford either type of accommodation unless they find employment which either raises their income, or exempts them from the benefit cap.

¹⁸ Housing Act 1996 part VII (as amended) and Homelessness Act 2002

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-data-notes-and-definitions>

¹⁹ The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012

www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2601/contents/made

²⁰ Localism Act 2011 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents>

Tewkesbury Borough Council is an active partner in the Financial Inclusion Partnership that includes the DWP, housing associations, the CAB, and other local agencies. We will continue to monitor the effects of welfare reform and work in partnership with affected households to:

- Identify exemptions from the benefit restrictions.
- Support those affected with interim support from Discretionary Housing Payments if possible.
- Introduce robust referrals for those affected to receive money advice.
- Introduce strong working relationships with the job centre to enable those affected to find employment locally.

5.2 Forthcoming changes in homelessness legislation

At the time of writing, the Homelessness Reduction Bill is progressing through parliament. This legislation will place statutory responsibilities on local housing authorities to prevent homelessness in all client groups irrespective of whether there is a statutory homeless duty to accommodate.

Whilst we currently assist all client groups, changes in our statutory duties will need to be monitored closely to ensure that we offer our residents the best service possible.

Challenges

- Continued use of the social housing sector for discharging homelessness duty
- Sourcing sustainable housing solutions for care leavers and young people under 35.
- Discharging Homeless duties to those affected by welfare reform
- Implement changes associated with the forthcoming Homelessness Reduction Bill

6 Strategy Objectives

The challenges identified in the previous sections of this document have created our 5 objectives for homelessness and prevention and improve our services to homeless residents.

Following consultation homelessness and homelessness prevention was agreed to be a key priority for Tewkesbury Borough Council. We believe we are in a good position to address these challenges the housing services faces over the next 5 years. Homelessness and homelessness prevention is in the overarching Housing Strategy 2017-2021 as Priority 2.

The objectives will be monitored through the wider Housing Strategy action plan; please see the main Housing Strategy 2017-2021 document for the homelessness action plan, page 28.

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7 Glossary of terms

This glossary aims to consolidate all homelessness terms that are associated with this strategy document. It is also to compliment the over-arching the Housing Strategy 2017-2021 and the evidence base appendix 1b.

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Affordable Homes Programme | A funding programme from the DCLG that aims to increase the supply of affordable homes in England |
| Affordable Housing / affordable homes | As defined by the NPPF, 2012 Annex 2 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf |
| Affordable rents | Rented housing provided by a housing association subject to a rent of up to 80% of local market rents (inclusive of any Service Charge where applicable) |
| Assertive Outreach Service | A specialist service commissioned by local housing authorities to support rough sleepers. In Gloucestershire this is St Mungo's Broadway |
| Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST) | The most common form of tenancy is an AST. Most new tenancies are automatically this type. A tenancy can be an AST if all of the following apply if you're a private landlord or housing association, the tenancy started on or after 15 January 1989, the property is your tenants' main accommodation, you don't live in the property. A guide to tenancy types can be found here https://www.gov.uk/tenancy-agreements-a-guide-for-landlords/tenancy-types |
| Bed & Breakfast accommodation (B&B) | A small lodging establishment that offers overnight accommodation only with breakfast often included. |
| Bedroom Tax | The commonly used term for the Under-Occupation Charge (see below) |
| Benefit Cap | The limit on the total amount of benefit that most people aged 16 to 64 can receive. More information can be found here https://www.gov.uk/benefit-cap/overview |
| Choice Based Lettings (CBL) | A scheme that gives housing applicants the choice and ability to 'bid' (express an interest) in council and housing association properties that it advertised via the local housing authority. |
| Council Tax Reduction | Households on a low income may be entitled to assistance in paying their Council Tax. Council Tax Reduction replaced Council Tax Benefit in April 2013. |
| Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) | This government department defines itself as " <i>The Department for Communities and Local Government's job is to create great places to live and work, and to give more power to local people to shape what happens in their area.</i> " https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government |
| Emergency Accommodation | The local housing authority has a legal to duty to provide emergency accommodation to help a homeless person. This is when a person is homeless or threatened with homelessness, eligible for assistance and in priority need. |

| | |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Homelessness / Homeless | Shelter defines homelessness where a person is living in unsuitable housing, don't have rights to stay where they are or are sleeping rough. http://england.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/homelessness/homelessness - an introduction/what is homelessness |
| Homelessness Acceptances | Households accepted by the local housing authority as being statutory Homelessness. |
| Homelessness Approaches | The number of households that approaches the local housing authority as Homeless. |
| Homelessness Prevention | The number of households that approach the local housing authority as Homeless, accepted as Homeless and have had their Homelessness prevented through measures such as mediation with family/relatives to remaining living at home, being moved in supported accommodation or support lodgings, financial assistance such as rent deposit schemes to move into a secure home, installing security measures within the home for people experiencing domestic abuse. |
| Homeseeker Plus | The Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire Choice Based Lettings scheme to allocate social housing |
| Housing association | Also known as Housing associations (RP) or Registered Social Landlords (RSL) a housing association offers homes for rent and sale at below market values in accordance with meeting the definition in Section 1(1a) of the Housing Associations Act 1985 or Section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, or is a body approved or accredited by the Homes and Communities Agency or equivalent successor body whose terms of approval or accreditation have been evidenced to the satisfaction of the Council. |
| Housing Benefit | Financial support from the local authority to assist low income households to pay their rent |
| Local Housing Allowance | Used to work out Housing Benefit for tenants who are in private rented housing |
| National Planning Policy Framework | <i>"The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied"</i> https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf |
| Private rented housing / private rents | Tenants who rent from a private individual or company that is not a housing association. |
| Roofless | Used to describe a person who is rough sleeping or does not have a 'roof' in terms of bricks and mortar i.e. people living in a vehicle could be defined as "roofless". |
| Rough Sleeping/ Rough Sleeper | Defined by the DCLG as <i>"People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or "bashes")."</i> |
| Social housing | Used to describe housing rented by housing associations and council housing. |
| Social rents | Rents that are set by the housing association in accordance with the formula set by the Homes and |

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Communities Agency (or its successor body) |
| Streetlink | "A website that enables the public to alert local authorities in England and Wales about people sleeping rough in their area" http://www.streetlink.org.uk/node/1659 |
| Temporary Accommodation | Accommodation provided by councils to Homeless applicants |
| Under-Occupation Charge | Brought in as part of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 that affects council or housing association tenants of working age with a spare room. Housing benefit is cut to the amount matching the household size. This brings social housing tenants in line with private rented housing tenants. |
| Universal Credit (UC) | "A new type of benefit designed to support people who are on a low income or out of work. It will replace six existing benefits and is currently being rolled out across the UK. The new system is based on a single monthly payment, transferred directly into a bank account." https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/universal-credit-an-introduction |
| Welfare Reform | Changes to benefits that started in 2013, brought in by the Welfare Reform Act 2012. |

At home in Tewkesbury Borough

A housing strategy for our borough

Appendix 3: Tenancy Strategy 2017-2021



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1 Background

It is a requirement of the Localism Act 2011 that all local housing authorities in England are to prepare and publish a tenancy strategy that sets out “*the matters to which the registered providers of social housing for its district are to have regard in formulating policies relating to—*

- (a) *the kinds of tenancies they grant,*
- (b) *the circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy of a particular kind,*
- (c) *where they grant tenancies for a term certain, the lengths of the terms, and*
- (d) *the circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy on the coming to an end of an existing tenancy”¹*

It is the aim of Tewkesbury Borough Council to ensure that we are able to increase provision of affordable homes in the future and make the best use of all new and existing affordable homes located in all areas across Tewkesbury Borough. This Strategy considers the overarching Housing Strategy 2017-21 and informs the council’s current position.

2 Housing need

There is a demonstrated need for more affordable housing locally and this is supported by a number of sources such as the Strategy Housing Market Assessment 2014 (SHMA) and Parish Housing Need Surveys where these have been undertaken in the Borough.

Our April 2016 DCLG statistical return² showed 1,928 households registered with Homeseeker Plus³ and actively seeking affordable rented housing in the Tewkesbury Borough. The majority of our housing need is for 1 and 2 bedroomed housing. See the Housing Strategy 2017-2021 appendix 2a pages 7 and 8 detailing these households and their needs.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Final 2014⁴ identifies the annual shortfall of affordable homes with the highest need being for smaller dwellings reiterating the picture shown by Homeseeker Plus. The SHMA also identifies a small but acute need for larger affordable family homes. This is because the larger family homes within the existing Affordable Housing stock do not often become available for re-let, and generally, larger families have to wait longer for a suitable home to become available.

In terms of affordable housing tenure, the SHMA also identified that the highest need is for rented affordable housing.

¹ Localism Act 2011, Part 7 Chapter 2 Tenancy Strategy

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/part7/chapter2/crossheading/tenancy-strategies/enacted>

² Local Authority Housing Statistics <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authority-housing-data>

³ Homeseeker Plus is Tewkesbury Borough Council’s choice based lettings scheme for the allocation of social rented housing.

⁴ Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Final 2014 <http://www.gct-jcs.org/EvidenceBase/Strategic-Housing-Market-Assessment-2014.aspx>

3 Affordable rent

As previously discussed affordable rent is now a major tenure in the borough's affordable housing provision. The number of new affordable housing dwellings has been increasing year on year since 2012 mainly due to the number of large sites across Bishop's Cleeve, Winchcombe and Longford.

Affordable rents can be set at up to 80% (inclusive of service charge) of market rents at the point of letting, compared to the cost of social rents which are up to 65% of market rents. Social rented housing therefore remains the most affordable and preferred type of tenure for many tenants, particularly those with low incomes. The increased cost associated with affordable rent raises concerns in relation to general affordability, the sustainability of areas and the potential for increased homelessness due to rent arrears.

At affordable rent levels in our Borough, households are likely to struggle to meet their housing costs of the new higher rent levels and may particularly affect:

- Those seeking to return to work but who are dependent upon benefits to make up any shortfall between income and rent charge;
- Those households living in areas with higher market rents; or
- Households living in properties with four or more bedrooms where the housing benefit entitlement may be capped at a rate lower than the rent being charged.

Tewkesbury Borough affordable rent levels vary across the Borough but have a major impact on affordability. Our Borough has seen significant growth and new-build affordable housing delivery with 34% of new affordable housing being affordable rents.

This means that those on higher incomes are more likely to be housed, leaving those on low incomes or reliant on housing benefit waiting for social rented housing which will be few and far between in the future as housing associations seek to maximise income and convert social rented homes to affordable rents where possible. In addition, new-build development is in need of affordable rent housing to ensure the viability of the development and guarantee delivery of new homes.

The council needs to support a wide variety of households to live in our rural areas to support the rural economy and promote mixed and sustainable communities. In our rural areas, market rents are typically higher, the supply of affordable housing is more limited and local pay is often low. The effect of higher market rents will mean that people living in similar affordable rented housing will have to pay a premium to live in our rural areas. Therefore we expect that housing associations will have regard to this when setting affordable rents in rural areas and where appropriate charge less than 80% of market rents to ensure that the homes remain affordable locally

There are specific issues in the use of affordable rent for one-bedroom properties and larger family-size houses. The higher affordable rent charge (compared to that of social rent) for larger homes, in addition to the welfare reform changes including the application of the local housing allowance (LHA) rates for social housing, benefit caps for single people under 35 and families, will also mean that there will be a greater financial impact for those client

groups. These issues will need to be taken into consideration when considering the use of affordable rents on new and re-let 1-bed homes and homes of 4-beds and larger.

3.1 Our expectations on affordable rent

Affordable rent is supported but where the market demands for higher rents that are unaffordable and exceed LHA the housing association should seek to set rents at a suitable rate.

We expect housing associations to set affordable rents that do not unfairly disadvantage rural communities. This may include setting rents lower than 80% open market value where market rents are high and on some homes within specialist schemes or with local occupancy criteria.

We expect housing associations to be proactive in setting and re-evaluating their affordable rent levels so that tenants in receipt of housing benefit or Universal Credit can afford to reside in a property which is suitable for their needs.

We expect housing associations to advertise affordable rent vacancies in accordance with the Homeseeker Plus Allocations Policy (as revised from time to time) to ensure fairness and transparency.

We expect tenure conversions from social rent to affordable rent, at the point of re-let, to be based on the agreed contract with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and that those agreed numbers be shared with the Council in order for effective monitoring to take place.

We expect that conversions will only take place in areas where there is a sufficient supply of stock.

We will not ordinarily support the conversion of social rented properties that are subject to Section 106 agreements to affordable rent unless there is evidence of exceptional circumstances, and a commitment to investment within the borough.

We will seek social rented homes on new developments where rent levels are significantly higher than other areas, in line with identified needs, subject to the viability and the specific nature of the development.

4 Tenancies

Historically social housing tenants have been offered an assured or secure tenancy, which granted them a home for life. Fixed term tenancies were introduced as part of the Localism Act 2011 with the aim of helping housing associations to offer more flexible tenancies that would enable them to make the best use of their housing stock and to better meet local housing needs.

Housing associations will still be able to offer the types of tenancies they currently use, for example secure, assured, introductory and demoted tenancies. The new fixed term tenancies are in addition to those currently available and housing associations do not have to use them. Existing secure and assured tenants cannot have their tenancies converted to a fixed term tenancy and many are offered special protections if they transfer to another home

The potential for fixed term tenancies to make better use of the stock locally relates mainly to under occupation in family housing e.g. where the household has two or more 'spare' bedrooms.

There are limited benefits for use of fixed term tenancies in older persons designated or supported housing where the majority of tenants remain on average, more than 5 years and often for the rest of their lives. There are disadvantages to housing associations in terms of management and administrative costs and to these, often vulnerable tenants, in terms of uncertainty and perceived reduced security.

Every household is individual and a 'one size fits all' tenancy is not likely to work for everyone. We expect those receiving long-term support that is related to their housing, and those with disabilities, to receive special consideration by housing associations in respect of the individual household's needs in terms of deciding the appropriate length of tenancy and renewal.

Automatic renewal of tenancies (unless a major change had occurred in the household's circumstances) is the preferred approach of the Council and its partners; it is also likely to reduce tenants' concerns and feelings of insecurity.

Where a tenancy is not going to be renewed we would expect the provider to consider the implications of their decision on the Council's homelessness duties and work closely with the tenant to explore real alternative housing options. Housing associations should take responsibility for providing advice and assistance to such tenants themselves and not excessively burden partners including housing advice and assistance agencies.

Mutual exchange is a useful tool which can help to make the best use of affordable housing stock. We do not want the introduction of fixed term tenancies to impact upon the effectiveness of mutual exchange and/or tenant mobility. Although there are protections for existing tenants in certain circumstances, these are not universal.

We encourage housing associations to set out within their tenancy policies, what will happen to a tenant's security of tenure if they choose to mutually exchange their home. We

also encourage the promotion and continued use of mutual exchange as a housing option for all tenants.

4.1 Our expectations on Tenancies

We support the use of introductory and probationary tenancies where appropriate.

We expect housing associations to offer lifetime tenancies for vulnerable people and other households in designated or specialist housing. We support the use of fixed term tenancies for other types of accommodation, particularly family housing.

We expect housing associations to use five years as the minimum term for all fixed term tenancies. In exceptional circumstances housing associations may set out shorter fixed term tenancies of a minimum of two years. Such exceptional circumstances should be set out and justified in the provider's tenancy policy.

We expect housing associations to reference their mutual exchange policy within their tenancy policy, clearly highlighting any impacts that exchanging may have on a tenant's security of tenure.

We expect housing associations to assess the housing options and appropriate type of tenancy for households which include a disabled member, to best meet the needs of the household as well as ensure the best use of our limited accessible stock and aid and adaptation budgets.

We expect housing associations to encourage tenants to downsize their home when needed, through the inclusion of safeguards within their tenancy policy.

4.2 Our expectations on Tenancy Renewal

We expect housing associations to clearly set the exact circumstances when a tenancy will and will not be renewed in their tenancy policy and clearly communicate this with the tenant prior to them signing their tenancy agreement.

We expect housing associations to have a presumption of renewal for all fixed term tenancies, except where the tenant(s):

- **Financial circumstances are significantly improved** to the point that they are able to afford and access a different tenure of housing that meets their needs locally. This may include purchasing their current home.
- **Have breached the terms of their tenancy** such that the Registered Provider has to consider taking possession proceedings under the terms of the tenancy agreement (such as rent arrears).
- **Under/over occupy their home.** In cases of under/over occupation, the tenant should normally be offered an alternative home with a Registered Provider. Incentive schemes are also supported to assist such households move.
- **Property has been extensively adapted** but for someone with a disability who no longer requires the adaptations or no longer lives with the tenant. In such cases, the tenant should normally be offered an alternative home with a Registered Provider.

Registered Provider Incentive Schemes are supported to assist such households move.

We expect housing associations to take into consideration the individual circumstances of household members before making a decision not to renew a tenancy and consider circumstances such as ill health, disability or terminal illness, the need for support, impacts on children, including their education, availability of suitable alternative accommodation locally.

We expect notification if Housing associations are minded to end the tenancy, and that adequate reasons for the decision to end the that tenants will be given at least six months' notice if the provider is tenancy are given along with information on the right to appeal the decision.

We expect housing associations to:

- Provide excellent advice, information and assistance to assist such tenants' access alternative accommodation.
- Frame the appeals process in such a way to allow tenants to make an informed decision as to whether to submit an appeal, including how to seek independent advice and where necessary representation.
- Have particular regard to their duty to cooperate with the local housing authority to prevent homelessness.

5 Disposal of Affordable Housing

Given the need for additional affordable housing in the borough, generally we would not wish to see the disposal of affordable housing stock. However, it is recognised that in certain circumstances, this may be justifiable, providing that it allows for future investment within the borough and generally provides an increase in housing that is affordable locally.

There is a very limited amount of supported housing for vulnerable people in the borough. Therefore where possible, it is preferable that such accommodation is retained within the affordable housing stock. If schemes become unviable to run, the Council will need to be assured that adequate, alternative provision has been made for potential residents who are affected by their home being disposed of. Any housing association will need to explore with the Council any opportunities to use these properties or retain the land for the purpose of delivering additional affordable housing in the future. Consideration should also be given to the aims of the countywide Supporting People Strategy⁵ and the availability of Supporting People funding for housing related support.

We aim to create and maintain mixed, balanced and sustainable communities. To make sure that rural areas and areas of high affordable housing need continue to have a supply of affordable accommodation, housing associations will need to carefully consider and limit the number of disposals of affordable housing in those areas. In addition, as there is an acute need for larger affordable family homes, housing associations should not dispose of accommodation that has four or more bedrooms unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.

⁵ Supporting People Strategy 2011-2016, Gloucestershire County Council
<http://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/documents/s3324/Supporting%20People%20Strategy%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>

6 Discharging the homelessness duty through the private rented sector

Local authorities are now able to discharge their duty to homeless households with an offer of suitable accommodation in the private rented sector, provided that the tenancy offered is for a minimum of 12 months. This change is intended to respond to the shortage in affordable housing.

We intend only to use private tenancies in this way where alternatives are not available or where households have had an opportunity to bid for suitable social/affordable housing. We will ensure that we only use suitable accommodation and that we do not encourage repeat homelessness by placing households in housing need into short-term private rented accommodation.

We also need to be aware of the changes due to welfare reform the timescales in which each of these changes is likely to be made. This is to make sure that we do not place anyone to whom we owe the homelessness duty, into a private rented property that they will no longer be able to afford when changes are made to the LHA and other benefits.

7 Our considerations when using the private rented sector

When considering the use of private rented accommodation to discharge our duty to homeless households, where possible, we will consider suitable accommodation to be that provided by private landlords who have been approved through the countywide 'Fit to Rent' property accreditation (or similar Council approved) scheme⁶. This will help to ensure that the accommodation is appropriate and that the tenancy is available for a period of 12 months or more. Where such accommodation is not available, we will work with other reputable landlords to secure suitable safe and well-managed alternative accommodation.

8 Monitoring the strategy

This Strategy will be updated according to the requirements of the Localism Act 2011.

There are no direct actions for the council to take at this time as the Tenancy Strategy is for our housing association partners to have regard to it in forming their own tenancy policies.

Any future actions will be addressed as part of the overarching Housing Strategy 2017-2021 action plan.

⁶ See the Housing Strategy 2017-2021 appendix 1d page 7 for more information.

9 Glossary of terms

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Affordable Housing / affordable homes | As defined by the NPPF, 2012 Annex 2 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf |
| Affordable rents | Rented housing provided by a housing association subject to a rent of up to 80% of local market rents (inclusive of any Service Charge where applicable) |
| Benefit Cap | The limit on the total amount of benefit that most people aged 16 to 64 can receive. More information can be found here https://www.gov.uk/benefit-cap/overview |
| Choice Based Lettings (CBL) | A scheme that gives housing applicants the choice and ability to 'bid' (express an interest) in council and housing association properties that it advertised via the local housing authority. |
| Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) | This government department defines itself as " <i>The Department for Communities and Local Government's job is to create great places to live and work, and to give more power to local people to shape what happens in their area.</i> " https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government |
| Homeseeker Plus | The Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire Choice Based Lettings scheme to allocate social housing |
| Housing association | Also known as Registered Providers (RP) or Registered Social Landlords (RSL) a housing association offers homes for rent and sale at below market values in accordance with meeting the definition in Section 1(1a) of the Housing Associations Act 1985 or Section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, or is a body approved or accredited by the Homes and Communities Agency or equivalent successor body whose terms of approval or accreditation have been evidenced to the satisfaction of the Council. |
| Housing Benefit | Financial support from the local authority to assist low income households to pay their rent |
| Local Housing Allowance | Used to work out Housing Benefit for tenants who are in private rented housing |
| Private rented housing | Tenants who rent from a private individual or company that is not a housing association. |
| Roofless | Used to describe a person who is rough sleeping or does not have a 'roof' in terms of bricks and mortar i.e. people living in a vehicle could be defined as "roofless". |
| Social housing/ social rented housing | Used to describe housing rented by housing associations and council housing. |
| Social rents | Rents that are set by the housing association in accordance with the formula set by the Homes and Communities Agency (or its successor body) |
| Universal Credit (UC) | "A new type of benefit designed to support people who are on a low income or out of work. It will replace six existing benefits and is currently being rolled out across the UK. The new system is based on a single monthly payment, transferred directly into a bank account." https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/universal-credit-an-introduction |
| Welfare Reform | Changes to benefits that started in 2013, brought in by the Welfare Reform Act 2012. |

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Report to: | Overview and Scrutiny Committee |
| Date of Meeting: | 10 January 2017 |
| Subject: | Review of Effectiveness of Overview and Scrutiny Committee |
| Report of: | Graeme Simpson, Head of Corporate Services |
| Corporate Lead: | Mike Dawson, Chief Executive |
| Lead Member: | Councillor Mrs E J Elaine MacTiernan, Lead Member for Organisational Development |
| Number of Appendices: | One |

Executive Summary:

The Corporate Peer Challenge completed in November 2014, facilitated by the Local Government Association, recognised how the Overview and Scrutiny Committee makes an impact and contributes well to policy development. The final Peer Challenge report encouraged that the Committee's contribution be maximised to provide even greater value. In February 2015, the views and experiences of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were obtained to identify any areas where the Committee could add more value and an action plan was developed to aid this effectiveness.

There were changes to the membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee following the Borough Council elections in May 2015 and a similar workshop was held on 9 February 2016 to obtain the views of the new Committee which led to the development of a new action plan. As part of the training and development action, Members agreed to be 'critiqued' by an independent assessor. This assessment was carried out by Ann Reeder from Frontline Consulting who attended and observed the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 14 June 2016. Initial observations were fed back to the Committee directly following the meeting with a formal report to be issued in due course; this report can be found at Appendix 1.

RECOMMENDATION

To CONSIDER the report on the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and APPROVE the recommendations identified by Officers in Paragraph 2.5.

Reasons for Recommendation:

It makes good business practice to ensure the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is adding as much value as possible. The good work of the Committee was recognised by the Corporate Peer Challenge which encouraged that the Committee's contribution is maximised.

Resource Implications:

There will be a cost for additional training. This is a minimal cost as equates to only one day training which can be met from existing budget.

Legal Implications:

None directly arising from this report.

Risk Management Implications:

If the Committee does not add value to the operations of the Council then there is a risk it will not wholly fulfil its Terms of Reference

Performance Management Follow-up:

The effectiveness of the Committee is reviewed annually and actions arising can be monitored through this review.

Environmental Implications:

None.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The Corporate Peer Challenge completed in November 2014, facilitated by the Local Government Association, recognised how the Overview and Scrutiny Committee makes an impact and contributes to policy development. The final Peer Challenge report encouraged that the Committee's contribution be maximised to provide even greater value.
- 1.2** At a workshop held on 9 February 2016, Overview and Scrutiny Members agreed to be 'critiqued' by an independent assessor. This assessment was carried out by Ann Reeder from Frontline Consulting who attended and observed the Committee meeting held on 14 June 2016. Initial observations were fed back to the Committee directly following the meeting with a formal report to be issued in due course; this report can be found at Appendix 1.

2.0 OBSERVATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON 14 JUNE 2016

- 2.1** The attached report highlights the positive area of activity and makes suggestions as to where further development might be possible.
- 2.2** Pages 1-2 of the report highlights numerous examples of positive practice including:
- publication of an annual Overview and Scrutiny report;
 - commitment of the Committee and robust Chairmanship;
 - strong Officer support;
 - relevant and significant issues being included within the Work Programme; and
 - the Committee's understanding of 'what matters' e.g. policy development and issues relating to the Borough.

2.3 The suggested areas for improvement focus on those which were identified by Members at the review of effectiveness workshop on 9 February 2016. The recommendations are quite detailed and several are statements of fact about what is already taking place rather than actually being a new recommendation. For example:

- Page No. 5 - the Committee might usefully focus on RAG ratings and direction of travel indicators first;
- Page No. 6 - Members could be reminded that they can make suggestions for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda and Work Programme;
- Page No. 7 - the pre-meeting could usefully help the Committee as a whole identify the overall areas for focus;
- Page No. 12 - it would be useful to sustain the regular updates from County wide scrutiny activity.

As the areas for improvement are interlinked, some of the observations and recommendations are repeated.

2.4 Following discussion between relevant Officers, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Lead Member, it was felt that there would be no added value arising from certain recommendation. Furthermore, in some cases the benefits would be disproportionate to the resources available to effectively implement the recommendation, for example:

- Pages No. 4 & 5 - Members sharing out responsibility for specific areas of performance.
- Pages No. 7 & 8 – Conducting preparation for Pre-Briefings of the Committee Preparation via email in advance.
- Page No. 9 - Introduction of a ‘Select Committee’ style seating arrangement.

2.5 Three key recommendations have been identified which it is believed will add value to the effectiveness of the Committee:

1. Page No. 3 - The identification of key partners which contribute to the delivery of the Council’s priorities and programming in their attendance at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
2. Page No. 4 - Consistency of approach across all monitoring reports e.g. the use of RAG or direction of travel indicators.
3. Pages No. 5, 6, 7, 8 & 11 - Ongoing training and development, particularly in respect of effective questioning and the relationship between the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

2.6 When the report was written, the Committee was still receiving financial information as part of the quarterly performance management report which is now no longer the case as this is reported directly to the Executive Committee only. Members may wish to consider whether this is an appropriate arrangement or whether they should continue to have an input in monitoring the Council’s financial position.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 None.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 Chair and Vice-Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Lead and Support Members for Organisational Development.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

5.1 None.

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

6.1 None.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

7.1 Training and development costs.

8.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

8.1 None.

9.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

9.1 None.

10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

10.1 None.

Background Papers: None

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Appendices: Appendix 1 – Frontline Consulting Report

Tewkesbury Borough Council

Reflections on Overview and Scrutiny

Background

Tewkesbury Borough Council undertook a review of the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in early 2015, following a Corporate Peer Challenge in November 2014. The Peer Challenge had recognised how the OSC was making an impact and was contributing to policy development, but it suggested how the OSC's contribution could be maximised to provide even greater value.

TBC's review of the OSC gathered the views and experiences of the then Committee in February 2015 to identify areas where it might add more value to the council and its borough. An action plan was developed. A workshop on 9 February 2016 refreshed the action plan and gathered views of the OSC, particularly around the work programme, use of performance management information, topic selection for review, the committee's challenge role, its community engagement and training and development. Issues raised also included the value of scrutinising and hearing from external partners and suggested that the use of pre-briefings should be trialled before the OSC meetings.

In welcoming ongoing training and development for OSC members, it was suggested that there was the potential for an independent person to watch and critique the workings of the Committee. Having delivered O&S training for TBC, Ann Reeder of Frontline Consulting was invited to observe the pre-meeting and Committee meeting on 14 June 2016.

The following report highlights the positive areas of activity and suggestions where further development of the function might be possible. The findings and recommendations are set against the outcomes of the O&S review of February 2016 that are reported in Appendix 1 of the report to the OSC (agenda item 14) of 23 February 2016.

Highlights of positive practice are:

- The publication of an annual report of Overview and Scrutiny, which clearly set out the many strengths of the function in Tewkesbury, including specific reviews through task and finish groups, pre-scrutiny, performance monitoring, evidence gathering presentations and effective procedures

- The OSC demonstrated clear commitment to the role with many of the Members attending both the pre-meeting and the Committee
- At the observed meeting, the Chairman was well-prepared and showed good understanding of the issues on the agenda, had a sense of appropriate timings and managed the business well
- There was extremely high level officer attendance with strong support from the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Finance and Asset Management Group Manager, Corporate Services Group Manager and the Democratic Services Group Manager. Input from other officers and partners was committed and informed; it might be useful to brief all contributors at the OSC so that they are aware of the time available for their input, the approach they should take to introducing an item and the outcomes the OSC is likely to seek from their item
- The agenda was realistic, being restricted to four regular items (the Forward Plan, Work Programme, Updates from County scrutiny functions and performance management), one presentation from an external partner and four other items (which were mainly to consider progress, though item 11, Corporate Policies and Strategies, more usefully could have fed into the work programming item as evidence for consideration in setting priorities and timescales)
- Members had identified relevant and significant issues for the Work Programme and the particular Committee meeting

219 Every item had effective Member participation through focused questioning and follow up

- The Executive Forward Plan was made available to the OSC to inform its Work Programme
- The Committee understood its responsibilities both to provide challenge and to support policy development
- The Committee was focused on issues of concern to the residents of the Borough
- The Committee was constructive, seeking to improve services and ways of working, and to develop its engagement with partners and seek evidence that it could use to inform its work
- The Committee continues to hold pre-briefings in order to prepare well for the meeting (though Members could also use this time to share with each other their anticipated areas for focus, intended key lines of enquiry, prepared questions and likely outcomes; they might also consider holding this one week or so in advance of the OSC in order to engage with presenters and witnesses at an earlier stage to enable them to prepare to respond to particular challenges and concerns)

Given the commitment to improvement shown by the Borough Council, this report from observing the pre-meeting and Committee meeting on 14 June 2016 focuses on possible areas where the Committee might develop its work to become even more effective.

The following chart therefore focuses on the areas listed in the 'Review of effectiveness of Overview and Scrutiny Committee February 2016', reflects on observations from the pre-meeting and Committee meeting of 14 June and makes recommendations for making O&S even more effective for and relevant to Tewkesbury Borough Council, its residents and partners.

| Review topic | Findings and recommendations of the external observer in June 2016 | Recommendations by the external observer |
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| 1. Committee Work Programme | | |
| <p>More challenge/review of external partners</p> <p>220</p> | <p>On a positive note, this clearly is developing with more partners being invited to the OSC. Arrangements are being made to invite Severn Vale Homes, Healthwatch Gloucestershire and the Fire and Rescue Service</p> <p>At the meeting, the CAB gave an informative presentation, but the session focused more on information gathering than challenge. TBC is a major funder of the CAB, but questioning did not focus on value for money secured through the Council's grant nor sustainability of the service</p> | <p>At the beginning of each Municipal Year, the OSC might identify the key external partners, their relevance to and role in delivering against TBC corporate priorities and meeting residents' needs and programme in their attendance at an OSC</p> <p>Having identified the key partners, the OSC might set out clear objectives for their attendance at an OSC and develop key lines of enquiry for the session in advance, sharing them with the partner in order for them to be prepared to engage with scrutiny and policy development and to focus on significant areas for challenge</p> |
| <p>Updates from the PCP and County HOSC</p> | <p>Both councillors who are members of the County wide scrutiny functions regularly report back to the OSC, either in writing or in person at the meeting; this is important and to be welcomed</p> | <p>Information items are essential sources of evidence for the OSC and are welcome, but to save time at the meeting, written reports could be circulated in advance so that time is spent on questions to the representatives and the development of comments, concerns and proposals to feed back to the PCP and HOSC through its representatives</p> |

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| Task and Finish Groups | The Committee recognises that it adds significant value through specific reviews and has capacity for two or three per year | The OSC could consider the balance of activity across Committee meetings and other ways of working, and undertake more O&S outside of the meeting. In considering its work programme and receiving agenda items, it could consider, 'should /could we explore this further in a specific review?' |
| 221 | | Having previously undertaken a specific review to help to develop the current Housing, Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-2016, it could have been a proposal within the report for the OSC to set up a TFG to help with the refresh of the Strategy and to assist with the review of outcomes against the current Strategy. This emerged from the discussion, but had it been agreed in advance, this would have been a shorter item at the meeting, officer time waiting until the item was called would have been reduced and the nature of officer input at the OSC clarified eg the item would be referred to a TFG to undertake a project scope for the OSC to consider at its next meeting, working with the officer |
| 2. Performance management information | | |
| Quarterly reporting | This is essential for O&S activity and it is good that the OSC receives these reports on a regular basis | The OSC might explore the areas to focus on from the PM information, especially at a pre-meeting. The RAG ratings and direction of travel indicators could usefully be consistent across all reports and provide the areas for the OSC to focus on first. To ensure that there is full scrutiny of areas of concern eg underperformance or overspending, it might be useful to ensure that Members share out responsibility for specific areas of performance |

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| | | Known questions might usefully be shared in advance with the lead member and officer so that any straightforward answers can be supplied before the meeting, leaving more time for those areas that need debate and possible recommendations |
| Lead Members | Local Government Act 2000 in introducing the Leader and Cabinet model of governance with the Executive Scrutiny split suggests clear political accountability | It would be appropriate for the OSC to be able to challenge the political as well as managerial leadership on policies, strategies and performance |
| Financial position | This is a significant performance area and was covered well in item 9 and by the Finance and Asset Management Group Manager | Financial reporting should continue as provided Areas of concern with regard to financial information might usefully be raised with the Leader and relevant portfolio holders to ensure political accountability of these matters |
| PM Sub-group 222 | The OSC was able to challenge performance management information as a Committee; this was effective | The OSC might explore the areas to focus on from the PM information at a pre-meeting or group email in advance of the meeting to save time at the meeting and to ensure that all necessary areas are covered in depth at the Committee The Committee might usefully focus on RAG ratings and direction of travel indicators first To ensure that there is full scrutiny of areas of concern eg underperformance or overspending, it might be useful for Members to share out responsibility for specific areas of performance Known questions might usefully be shared in advance with the lead member and officer so that any straightforward answers can be supplied before the meeting, leaving more time for those areas that need debate and possible recommendations |

| 3. Choosing areas for review | | |
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| Methodology of topic selection | A suggestion form is on the Council's website. There is provision for Members to make suggestions on each OSC agenda in setting and refreshing the Committee Work Programme | The OSC might consider reviewing any existing template, form and criteria for developing, reviewing and refreshing the Work Programme, and specifically for identifying areas for review through other ways of working outside of the Committee eg Task and Finish Groups |
| Horizon scanning | The list of corporate policies and strategies in item 11 enabled Members to see what is planned for the future, and especially items that might be of interest to and relevance for O&S, and where it could make a difference | <p>The list selectively could feed into the OSC Work Programme</p> <p>Members could be reminded that they can make suggestions for the OSC agenda and Work Programme, whether they are on the OSC or not</p> <p>Trends in complaints and casework of which Members are aware could be fed into work programming by referral to the Chairman and officer for consideration by the OSC</p> <p>There could be an annual work programming event for the Council, all Members and relevant partners to help the OSC to anticipate and prepare for items on which it could make a difference in the short, medium and long term</p> |
| 4. The challenge role | | |
| Lead Members | The OSC received presentations from and scrutinised officers and one partner only. There was no senior political input | <p>Overview and Scrutiny is Member led. It also is a means to hold decision makers such as council executives to account</p> <p>It therefore would be appropriate for the Leader and portfolio holders to be invited to attend the OSC on specific items in order to be held to account for decisions and performance in their portfolio area</p> |

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| | | Senior officers then would provide the necessary technical back-up rather than being the people who are held to account, except where they are exercising delegated powers |
| Pre-briefing | Members and officers seemed to find this useful; it enabled the Committee to identify areas for focus. The senior officer provided an overview of the agenda items and indicated who would be presenting. It was a useful officer briefing of Members immediately in advance of the OSC | <p>Pre-meetings are invaluable for ensuring Committee meetings are effective and achieve outcomes. They often an integral part of Member preparation for O&S. Recognising that Members have full diaries and distances to travel, it might be possible to conduct some of the preparation through email groups</p> <p>However, to enable the development of key lines of enquiry, robust questioning and clarity of outcomes, it would be useful to develop the approach to the pre-meeting and build it into the OSC calendar and the expectation of Members for their participation in O&S and their preparation for Committee meetings.</p> <p>Pre-meetings should help the Council to secure an even better return on investment from the O&S function and more effective use of Member and officer time at the OSC meeting. It would eliminate the need to ask questions of clarification at the meeting, ensure the Members can be given the additional information or answers they require before the meeting and enable more debate and challenge to take place at the Committee</p> |
| Member challenge | The majority of the OSC had prepared questions and/or were able to follow up answers with supplementary questions. Many were willing to persevere with lines of questioning in order to secure the information they felt they required in order to carry out their O&S role | The pre-meeting could usefully help the Committee as a whole to identify the overall areas for focus from each agenda item and report, the key lines of enquiry that flow from that, the particular questions and likely follow up questions that would need to be asked, and most importantly the outcomes that O&S activity is likely to secure that would make a difference to the Council and its borough |

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| 225 | | <p>Questions of clarification might usefully be asked via the Chairman by email to the report author so that time in the meeting is not used on matters that are not central to the challenge and policy development functions of O&S</p> <p>A questioning strategy is essential for specific reviews, but also helpful at OSCs to structure questions around sections of reports or to focus on key areas such as red areas in RAG ratings or direction of travel indicators that cause concern or to enable the Committee to identify proposals for policy development</p> <p>Use of Member champions could enable a sharing out of questioning or further preparation of questioning in advance of a meeting, where Members agree to focus on key areas in order to ensure questions are prepared across a topic or agenda item</p> |
| Performance Management dynamics | <p>Performance monitoring appeared to be effective at the OSC with excellent information provided for Members.</p> <p>OSC Members asked challenging questions and picked up on some of the areas of concern</p> | <p>A Council Executive is responsible for the performance of Council; the non-executive function is to monitor and comment, raising appropriate concerns and possibly making recommendations for improvement. PM needs to be undertaken therefore at both the Council Cabinet and the OSC, but with timings that enable effective scrutiny and response. The current arrangements seemed to be effective and do not suggest a need for change</p> |

5. Role as a 'community' Committee

Take the Committee out into the community

The OSC met in the Council Offices in a committee room for its formal business. This worked well for the holding to account function of senior officers (though to a member of the public, it might not have been clear who was a member of the OSC and who were attending for other reasons eg to present reports, to help to answer questions, to provide other information as required)

The challenge and support function of the OSC is to hold executive decision makers to account. It therefore is appropriate for it to meet at the Council Offices in its formal committee role (though perhaps in a 'select committee' style seating arrangement so that it is clear who the OSC Members are and so that those who are there to be held to account are present for those items only and in the opening of a horseshoe for clarity of accountability)

From time to time the overview and scrutiny function might require the OSC to test the information it receives in officer reports. The OSC might usefully therefore gain insights from others who commission, provide or use services. This evidence gathering and 'triangulation' (testing of evidence with others) occasionally might usefully take place in other settings, including the places where services are provided and in other ways eg Member surveys of customer insight where there is council service provision eg leisure centre users, car park users

From time to time the OSC might decide to invite expert witnesses, residents, service users, external commissioners or providers to provide evidence for its overview and scrutiny activity. It might, on such occasions, be more appropriate for the 'hearings' to take place in venues that are more convenient or conducive to those from outside the Council setting. This could enable them to feel more comfortable in addressing the OSC Members or to providing more sensitive information that will inform the O&S activity

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| | | <p>Use of other venues might involve logistical challenges or demand more officer set up time or incur additional costs; the decision needs to be taken with regard to the effectiveness of the scrutiny that is likely to result and the return on investment for the Council from such activity, which could be a considerable benefit to better informed decisions, savings for the Council or improved service</p> <p>Objectives, target participants and likely benefits would need to be clear for the OSC activity to be moved from the Council Offices from time to time</p> |
| <p>Working Groups into the community</p> <p>227</p> | <p>Tewkesbury Borough Council conducts a number of Task and Finish Groups, some of which relate to services that are provided by partners and services that are used by the public</p> | <p>From time to time the overview and scrutiny function is undertaken in Task and Finish Groups. These are specific reviews of particular services. This form of Overview and Scrutiny particularly benefits from customer insights and could usefully involve O&S activity taking place in the community. A scoping template for specific reviews and other ways of undertaking scrutiny could usefully include questions to help the TFG to identify the objective, ways of working, potential witnesses and locations of any evidence gathering</p> <p>These specific reviews could gain insights from those who commission, provide or use services. This evidence gathering could take place in places where services are provided and in other ways eg Member surveys of customer insight where there is council service provision eg leisure centre users, car park users to feed into a review of a service or policy. Expert witnesses, residents, service users, external commissioners and providers are potential sources of evidence for overview and scrutiny activity, and in locations appropriate to them</p> |

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| | | <p>It might therefore for particular reviews and on such occasions be more appropriate for 'hearings' to take place in venues that are more convenient or conducive to those from outside the Council setting. This could enable them to feel more comfortable in addressing the OSC Members or to providing more sensitive information that will inform the O&S activity</p> <p>Use of other venues might involve logistical challenges or demand more officer set up time or incur additional costs; the decision needs to be taken with regard to the effectiveness of the scrutiny that is likely to result and the return on investment for the Council from such activity, which could be a considerable benefit to better informed decisions, savings for the Council or improved service</p> <p>Objectives, target participants and likely benefits would need to be clear for the OSC activity to be moved from the Council Offices from time to time</p> |
| 6. Training and development | | |
| Training | Tewkesbury Borough Council has been providing training for its councillors, including its OSC members, on a regular basis, including induction programmes. This has been welcomed by Members | Induction and continuing learning and development are invaluable for councillors as roles develop and change over time, including new requirements and expectations. Learning and development usefully can draw on Members' experience and insights, offer external good practice and build on the positives that already exist in the Council |
| Ongoing training | TBC provides ongoing training through ad hoc activity | This usefully could continue from time to time when memberships change or structures and responsibilities develop and change |
| Quarterly bulletin | TBC has produced a quarterly bulletin on O&S | This is useful and could be sustained in order to provide updates of good practice and reviews |

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| CfPS link | Members have been advised of the Centre for Public Scrutiny website and its email bulletin | The CfPS publishes guidance and shares good practice, and is an essential reference point for O&S Members. It is useful to receive their regular alerts and participate in the Knowledge Hub Scrutiny Practitioners Group www.cfps.org.uk |
| Learning from others | <p>The Tewkesbury Borough Council O&S Chairman and Officer participated in a Gloucestershire wide Action Learning Set on Overview and Scrutiny that was facilitated by the CfPS a few years ago.</p> <p>There are regular updates provided from the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel and the Health Scrutiny Committee</p> | <p>It will be useful to sustain the regular updates from County wide scrutiny activity</p> <p>The CfPS runs seminars and conferences from time to time that enable Members to talk with other O&S members in other councils</p> <p>The Scrutiny Practitioners Group and the CfPS website enable a sharing of good practice, including the feeding in of effective O&S activity from Tewkesbury</p> |

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