

Leicester City Council

Review of Homelessness Services

September 2012

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***Unless specified otherwise, the data source is from 'LCC Housing 2012'**

Chapter One

The Leicester Context

1.1 Introduction

The Homelessness Act (2002) places a legal duty on the Council to carry out a review of all forms of homelessness, within Leicester, and to develop a Homelessness Strategy every five years. Leicester City Council produced its first Homelessness Strategy in 1999 and has periodically reviewed and updated these to reflect the changing face of homelessness and the wider environment in which we work.

The last Homelessness Strategy was published in 2008 and it originally covered the period from 2008 to 2013. Since its launch, there have been a number of successes as result of the strategic approach taken by the Council however, there are still areas for improvement, and these, along with contextual changes, make it an appropriate time to review homelessness and to develop a revised strategy.

1.2 Scope of the review

The scope of this review was to develop a clear picture of homelessness in Leicester, including current levels of provision, against existing and future levels of homelessness. Also, to establish whether the current homelessness provision is meeting the needs of homeless people and those at risk of homelessness and to identify any gaps or duplication in the services provided. Housing Options and a majority of homelessness services were scoped into this review.

Gypsy and traveller services were not scoped into the review. A Leicestershire Gypsies and Travellers Accommodation Needs Assessment (2006-2016) has been undertaken to establish need over the next ten years and this will be progressed outside of homelessness services. Domestic violence services were also not scoped into the review, as these services are now the responsibility of the Community Safety Division, since the disaggregation of the Supporting People budget. (2012)

The review was undertaken during a rapid period of change, including significant reductions in local government funding and major welfare and social housing reform. We know that these changes will impact on the most vulnerable people in our community and this will bring additional pressures on services for people who are facing homelessness.

During the review we looked at all homeless accommodation, support, advice, day centre and drop-in centres across the city which included statutory, voluntary and community sector services.

We also analysed total provision against utilisation, cost comparisons and the actual outcomes achieved for Leicester's homeless people. Against this, we looked at homelessness numbers and the needs of the people both currently in these services and also those that will access the service in the future.

Homeless people from the following primary client groups were scoped into the homelessness review.

- People with alcohol and substance problems
- Generic support
- Homeless families with support needs
- People with mental health problems

- Offenders / people at risk of offending
- Refugees
- Single homeless people with support needs
- Teenage parents
- Young people at risk
- Young people leaving care

1.3 How the review was undertaken

The review was undertaken between March and September 2012 and involved undertaking research, collecting data and evidence, and also involved talking to many people who deliver and receive homeless services. 64 interviews were undertaken, resulting in 140 hours of discussion with statutory, voluntary and community providers, which included visits to many of the projects they manage. Discussions took place with senior managers, to enable us to understand their vision and also with front-line staff to understand the challenges they face. We also undertook a survey of all front-line staff to ensure everyone had the opportunity to feed into the review process.

Staff, undertaking the review, also met with the Helping Hands Group, which consists of people who have received or are currently receiving housing related support. Planning and Commissioning consult with this group on various issues to help inform future decision making. During the meeting, the group highlighted issues relating to homelessness which they felt should feed into the review.

In accordance with the principles of the Leicester Compact we have worked in partnership with Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations in the development of the Homelessness Review and Strategy. A Homelessness Strategy Reference Group (Appendix A) was established following the Homelessness Workshop in March 2012. The group consists of approximately 20 partners from statutory, voluntary, community and faith providers and agencies. There is also a representative from Homeless Link, who has acted as a critical friend to the review process. We have worked with the Reference Group to identify the main issues that need addressing and to develop joint solutions. These will form the basis of the new Homelessness Strategy.

To build on previous consultations, several one to one informal discussions took place with people on various stages of their homeless journey. This included talking to families, single people, those in hostels, supported accommodation or sleeping rough. Many people had complex needs, were isolated and lonely, while others just needed a home. Their stories cannot be captured as 'data' but they do highlight the real cost of homelessness. Their insights have contributed to this review and the development of the strategy.

Research was undertaken to establish what other local authorities are doing in relation to addressing homelessness in their areas and also to identify good practice that could be adopted by Leicester City Council.

1.4 National context

The Government has embarked on a number of reforms to social housing and welfare policy, including the development of its first national housing strategy, *Laying the*

Foundations, A Housing Strategy for England (2011). This strategy outlines the Government's approach to homelessness prevention, meeting the needs of vulnerable people, managing the consequences of those made homeless and addressing rough sleeping. As a result, we have seen the development of the Vision to End Rough Sleeping: 'No Second Night Out'. (2011) The Strategy also enables local authorities to give extra priority to working households, those making a community contribution and housing for ex-service personnel.

The Ministerial Working Group on Homelessness recently published its homelessness strategy which looks at how to tackle the complex underlying causes of homelessness, prevent homelessness at an earlier stage and deliver integrated services that support an individual's recovery.

The recently published Making every contact count - A joint approach to preventing homelessness (Aug 2012) includes ten challenges for local authorities:

1. To adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local authority services
2. To actively work in partnership with the voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs
3. To offer a Housing Options prevention service to all clients, including written advice
4. To adopt a No Second Night Out model or an effective local alternative
5. To have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that include appropriate accommodation and support
6. To develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both client and landlord
7. To actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the use of the Mortgage Rescue Scheme
8. To have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually to be responsive to emerging needs
9. To not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in bed and breakfast accommodation
10. To not place any families in bed and breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and for no longer than 6 weeks

The Government has funded a local authority Self Diagnostic Toolkit to help housing services to respond to these challenges.

The Localism Act (2011) introduced a raft of local government reforms across finance, planning, governance and housing.

The proposals with direct relevance to homelessness include:

- the right to grant fixed-term tenancies (with limited security of tenure)
- local authorities must produce a Tenancy Strategy

- greater flexibility in the allocation of social housing
- setting housing waiting list policies, appropriate to their area
- discharging homelessness duties using private rented accommodation

The Government's *Decentralisation, Big Society and Open Public Services* initiatives promote people taking more responsibility for their life choices, rather than being passive recipients of state services. It sees services being opened out to providers from the third sector, social enterprises and the private sector who already play a vital role in addressing homelessness. Although these policies arrive at a time of economic challenges, with reductions in the traditional sources of funding for the community and voluntary sectors, it provides an opportunity to make the best use of current provision and to reshape our current service delivery models.

The *Welfare Reform Bill* is a key part of the Government's approach to social and economic policy and includes the following:

- introduction of the Universal Credit to provide a single stream-lined benefit
- reforms to the Disability Living Allowance
- changes to Housing Benefit, Local Housing Allowance and Child Support
- changes to Council Tax Benefit

Government policy is also focussing on making the most efficient and best use of the social housing sector. *Housing Benefit reform* will mean social housing tenants will only receive payment for the number of bedrooms they require and under 35's will now only be eligible for benefit to cover a room in shared accommodation. Also, with *reduced public spending*, including the ending of *Supporting People*, services will see cuts to their budgets.

The Homelessness Grant has now been confirmed until March 2013 and Leicester City Council will receive £0.539m in 2013/14 and 2014/15. The Government has launched the *Homelessness Transition Fund* (£20m) to address rough sleeping and to prevent single homelessness. The Voluntary and Community Sector in Leicester, in partnership with Leicester City Council, have recently submitted a bid to this fund are currently awaiting the results.

National homelessness acceptances, between January and March 2012, have increased by 16% since the same quarter last year and the number of households in temporary accommodation has also increased by 5% during the same period. (Source: DCLG-14/6/12)

While some of these measures open up some areas of local flexibility in decision-making, the overall impact is a reduction in funding to help individuals with housing costs. In addition to this the reduction in local government funding makes preparing the new Homelessness Strategy the most challenging to date.

1.5 Good practice from other organisations

During the review we undertook research to establish what other local authorities were doing to prevent and tackle homelessness in their areas. This included identifying good practice.

We looked at our main comparator organisations and also a range of Homelessness Reviews and Strategies, across the country. We also researched good practice guidance produced by the Government and other organisations, including Homeless Link.

The good practice we identified included:

- Most local authorities do not provide high levels of hostel accommodation
- There is an emphasis on prevention work
- Local authorities and partners have adopted the No Second Night Out principles
- A shared database, for use by the local authority and other providers, is used to monitor the location, progress and outcomes of homeless cases
- Multi agency case panels are in place to discuss the most complex cases
- Outreach workers have direct access to hostel beds for rough sleepers
- Winter hostel beds are available for rough sleepers, who would not normally qualify for these, during extreme cold weather
- There is clear and effective management of EU rough sleepers, who have no recourse to public funds
- There is good partnership working between the local authority and voluntary sector
- Following the assessment of need, homeless people are given a single service offer tailored to individual need
- There is one common referral form used by all service providers
- Personalised budgets – this is a new concept for addressing the needs of complex entrenched rough sleepers
- A clear pathway is in place showing how homeless people can access services
- Support follows an individual, irrespective of the housing accommodation they are residing in
- There is a clear threshold for homelessness acceptances
- There is a local homelessness champion who drives forward the homelessness agenda (originally established by the Mayor of London)
- Some local authorities are using the private sector to discharge their statutory homeless duty, a power given in the Localism Act 2011
- CLG are promoting peer authority reviews to assess services and identify areas for improvement
- Good governance is in place to monitor and drive forward homelessness strategies

1.6 About Leicester

1.6.1 Corporate Priorities

The review of the Homelessness Services and the development of the new Homelessness Strategy is directly linked to three of Leicester City Council's Corporate Priorities.

a) Our children and young people

We need to ensure children live in secure, decent and safe accommodation and have access to mainstream services such as education and health

b) The built and natural environment

Sufficient and appropriate accommodation needs to be provided for households facing homelessness

c) A healthy and active city

Homelessness, rough sleeping and poor housing conditions can adversely affect people's health and well-being. Homeless people can be socially isolated and must be able to access the services they require, in a manner which reflects their own circumstances.

1.6.2 Local Policy Context

Allocations Policy

The Allocations Policy explains the rules that determine how Leicester City Council allocates social housing properties. It guides the principles of how properties will be allocated in a fair and transparent manner, taking account of both the Council's duty to take account of housing need and its wish to offer as much choice as possible.

We have made changes to the way we prioritise people on the Housing Register in Leicester. We have changed from a points based scheme, to a banding scheme, effective from August 2011. This means applicants circumstances are assessed and they are placed in one of five bands for allocation purposes. Those households placed into Band 1 have the most urgent housing need, others are placed in Bands 2-5, depending on their circumstances. Within a Band, priority is determined by the date the application was placed in that Band, with the person who has been waiting the longest, having the highest priority. A summary of the banding system appears in Appendix B.

The changes to Housing Benefit will mean that social tenants who receive financial assistance, will only receive entitlement in accordance with the current rules on bedroom criteria. The Council's Allocations Policy is more generous in the allocation of bedrooms and if this practice continues, some tenants will not be able to afford the shortfall in their income, which could lead to rent arrears. In response to the changes to Housing Benefit rules, the Council has proposed changes to the Allocations Policy. Consultation on these changes has recently been completed and the results are currently being analysed.

Leicester City Council's Single Hostels Access Policy (2010)

The aim of the access policy is to ensure that all bed spaces are allocated in a consistent manner and ensures that all clients are provided with an appropriate pathway plan that

meets their needs for temporary accommodation and housing related support.

The policy relates to the Council's own homeless services for single men and women and childless couples who are facing homelessness, from the point at which they first contact housing services to them finding suitable settled accommodation.

Leicester City Council's Single Hostels Eligibility Criteria

The eligibility criteria provide details on who will be eligible to access short term / temporary single homeless accommodation. The Housing Options Service will refer the following groups of people for LCC hostel spaces, where available:

- Statutory homeless cases
- Offending / at risk of offending
- Substance use
- Rough sleeping / rough sleeping for the first time
- Old age
- Cases referred by other departments

This takes place on a daily basis and is subject to a risk assessment.

The eligibility criteria have recently been reviewed and the draft is located in Appendix C.

Proposed Action

We are seeking comments on the proposed eligibility criteria as part of the Homelessness Review consultation.

Ceasing our homelessness duty into the private rented sector

The Council faces the challenge of ensuring that people who are either facing or experiencing homelessness, are able to access good quality services, which meet their needs in a climate of reduced financial resources.

One of our proposals to meet this challenge is to cease the main homelessness duty through the use of private sector rented accommodation. This means that some clients could only be given an offer of appropriate accommodation in the private rented sector.

The advantages of doing this are that it reduces the amount of time a family could spend in temporary accommodation as they are likely to be provided with a settled home, in the private sector more quickly.

Other local policies relating to homelessness service provision

- Re-housing with Rent Arrears (Within the Allocations Policy)
- Re-connection Policy
- Severe Weather Bed Policy
- LCC Hostels – Current Rent Arrears Policy

- LCC Sanctions Policy
- LCC Re-entry Sanctions Policy

Profile of the population

Leicester is a highly urbanised and culturally diverse city with a population of 329,900 (2011 Census) which represents a 16.6% increase on the 2001 Census figures.

Leicester has a relatively young population and has a high percentage of black and minority ethnic residents, currently estimated at 40%. (*Diversity of Leicester: A Demographic Profile - 2008*) The population also includes migrants from the European Union, asylum seekers and refugees.

Leicester has a reputation of being a culturally diverse and safe city.

1.6.3 Housing supply

There are approximately 126,200 dwellings in the city, 74% are privately owned and 26% are social housing. More than a quarter of these properties were built before 1919.

Approximately 70,700 properties are owner occupied, 22,400 are private rented (an 8% increase in the last 20 years), 10,700 are Registered Social Landlord properties, and the Council owns 22,300 properties.

56% of private rented properties meet the Decent Homes Standard and there are 5605 empty private rented properties in Leicester, with 25% being empty for at least 18 months. 1,478 properties were brought back into use by Leicester City Council, last year.
Source: LCC Housing 2012

1.6.4 Homelessness provision

There are a total of 629 units of temporary accommodation across all providers and floating support for 842 households, at a total contract value of over £6m. 70% of LCC's floating support is funded by the Housing Revenue Account.

Leicester City Council provides 176 units of supported accommodation.

The Supporting People budget is currently being disaggregated and as a result, non-housing related support and accommodation will move to other Council divisions.

1.6.5 Housing need

Housing Supply

Leicester City Council undertakes housing needs assessments to provide information on the overall levels of existing and future need in the city. The 2008 Strategic Housing Market Assessment showed 25,600 new homes would be needed between 2006 - 2026. 790 annual affordable housing units would be required between 2008 – 2015, however due to reductions in housing development funding, it is unlikely this amount will be met. 601 have been achieved and it is estimated that no more than 300 houses will be completed between 2012 - 2015.
Source: LCC Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2011

Housing Register

There were 9,223 applicants on the housing register as at 1 April 2012. 19.2% of these were currently in insecure accommodation. 57% of those on the waiting list had applied for family accommodation (2 or more bedrooms) and 43% for a 1 bedroom property.

This table shows the number of applicants on the housing register on 12th September 2012. 51% are aged between 25 – 44 and nearly 16% were under 25 years of age.

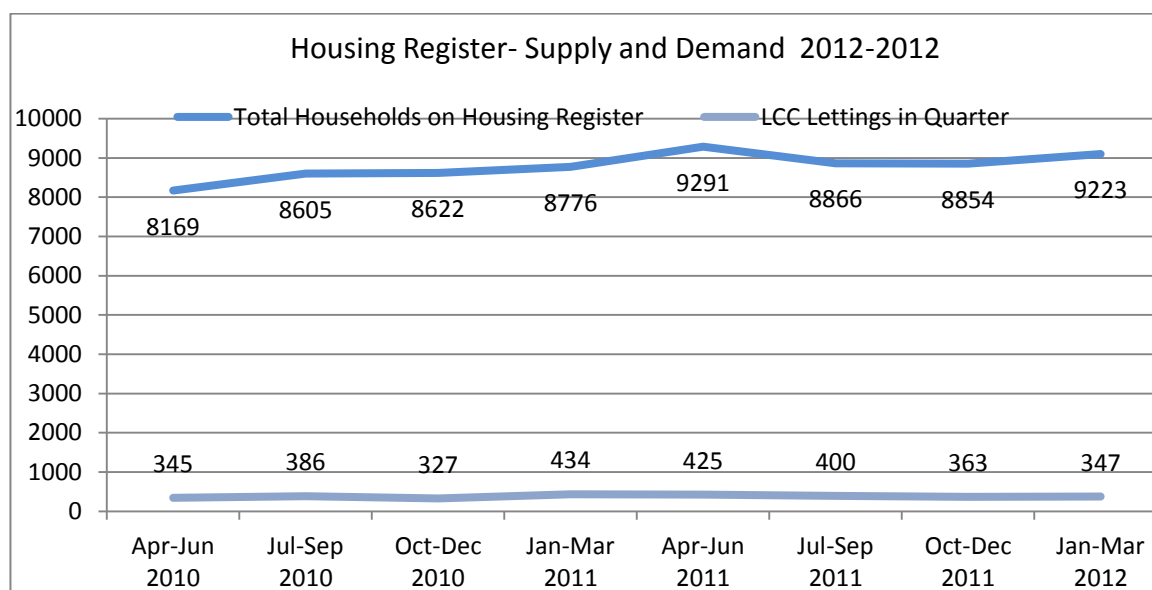
	Total	%
Under 18 (main) applicants:	5	0.10%
19 to 24 (main) applicants:	1,554	15.80%
25 to 44 (main) applicants:	5,111	51.90%
45 to 54 (main) applicants:	1,510	15.30%
55 to 74 (main) applicants:	1,368	13.90%
75+ (main) applicants:	302	3.10%
TOTAL	9850	100%

Source: LCC Housing 2012

Leicester HomeChoice

Leicester HomeChoice (Leicester City Council's choice based lettings scheme) was launched in 2010 to provide applicants with greater choice, flexibility and transparency over obtaining a property, in an area of their choice. All Council and HomeCome lets are made through Leicester HomeChoice and nearly all Registered Social Landlord lets.

There were 1,535 lets made through Leicester HomeChoice, during 2011/12, with 3% (62) made to homeless households. There has been a gradual decrease in the number of lets and also the gap between those applying for council accommodation and those receiving it, is increasing.

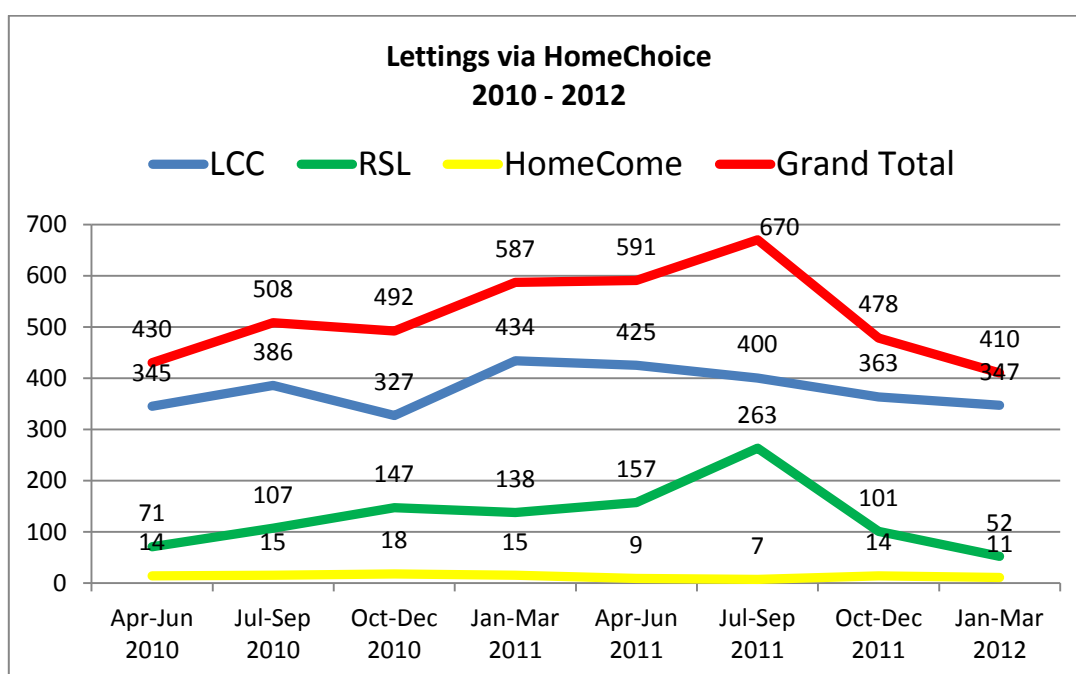


A total of 6,803 properties were advertised through the Leicester HomeChoice scheme. 84,077 bids were from families, with children, and 36,392 from households with no children.

Property type	Number advertised
Flats	2 523
Houses	1 799
Sheltered	1 116
Bungalows	620
Bedsits	297
Maisonettes	244
Other	204

Properties by bedroom size	Number advertised
1 bed	3 738
2 bed	1 624
3 bed	982
4 bed	214
5 or more bed	54
Bed size N/A	191

There were 3,738 x 1 bedroom properties advertised which contributes to a steady supply of single person accommodation in the city



The total number of lettings has decreased by 31% since April 2011. The number of lets to LCC properties, including HomeCome, has remained stable however the number of lets to Housing Association properties has decreased by 67% since April 2011.

During 2011/12, the average void rate was calculated at 43.2 days, compared to 37.3 for the previous year. As the rate for quarter one of 2012 was 26.7 days, a sample of the previous yearly figures was re-examined and found to be incorrect. *Source :LCC Housing 2012*

It would be a huge task to recalculate the void figures for last year and it was decided to quote the figure of 43.2 days, even though we know the actual figure is lower than this. However, the correct calculation method is now in place.

Evictions

During 2011/12, there were 53 evictions across LCC properties. (Including HomeCome) 5 of which were anti-social behaviour related. Of these 53, there were 33 single people, 17 families and 3 childless couples. This is similar to previous years.

We are planning for welfare reform by ensuring that all tenants are given useful and timely

information to enable them to make affordable accommodation choices. This will reduce the risk of an increase in the eviction rate. We are also consulting on changes to the Allocations Policy to increase the priority of those people needing to downsize, due to affordability issues.

1.6.6 Economic activity

Leicester has a high level of deprivation, with household income, rates of pay and skills levels, all below the regional and national averages. Three quarters of the people living in the city, live in deprived areas, with 5% of city wards being amongst the most deprived in England. Leicester is the fifth most deprived local authority in England, with 29% of the population being economically inactive. There is an unemployment rate of 12.5%. There are 12,879 JSA claimants in the city, with 55% of claimants being aged between 35-49. These are the highest rates in the East Midlands and also higher than the national average. (Source: Nomis, 2012) These are of particular concern, as many of the Government measures, listed in section 1.4, are directed at people of working age.

The Housing Benefit case-load in Leicester increased by 1.5% between April 2011 and April 2012 but this is expected to increase due to the impact of welfare reform.

1.6.7 Affordability

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and Rent Levels

Local Housing Allowance is a flat rate allowance based on the size of the household and the area lived in. The amount received depends on household income and savings and any non-dependents living in the same property.

The average rent in the private rented sector in Leicester, is higher than the allowable LHA level. This means that if there is a shortfall, this would need to be paid by the tenant.

The maximum a household can claim, in Leicester, for 4 bedrooms is £160.38 per week.

Local Housing Allowance (August 2012) limits for Leicester are as follows:

	Shared	1 Bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed+
LHA Limit	58.00	86.54	109.62	126.62	160.38

The average rent per week for a 3 bedroom property in 2011 ranged from between £71.15 and £136.54.

2010/11	3 beds £
LCC	71.15
RSL	100.05
HomeCome	108.82
Private rent	136.54

Source: LCC Housing 2012

1.6.8 House Prices

House prices have grown above the rate of increases in income levels. The average house price in Leicester is shown below.

Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flat
£189,000	£118,000	£91,000	£111,000

Source:property.com

The average price of a semi-detached house in Leicester is nearly 7 times the average annual wage in Leicester, of £17,601.

Source:relocateleicester.org.uk

As Leicester has a high level of deprivation, with household income, rates of pay and skills levels, all below the regional and national averages, many people are unable to afford to buy their own home.

1.6.9 Health and well-being

Leicester's health needs are high. Mortality rates are significantly higher than the national average, as are premature deaths.

- Infant mortality (under 1s) is significantly in excess of the national average
- Coronary heart disease is a major contributor to early mortality, in Leicester
- Prevalence of diabetes is twice as high as expected from national estimates
- Alcohol and drugs related hospital admissions are high
- 26% of adult drug and alcohol users, in treatment, have children living with them
- Mental health affects 20% of the population
- Suicide rates are high
- Teenage pregnancy rates are higher than the national average

Source: LCC – Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2008) / Drugs and Alcohol Team 2012

1.6.10 The impact of welfare reform

- Income for working age benefit claimants will be restricted to £500 per week for families and lone parents and £350 for singles
- Any benefit income above £500 will not be paid. Housing Benefit is included in this, but not Council Tax Benefit, although separate council tax benefits are being proposed

- Exemptions apply to households who are in receipt of Disabled Living Allowance, War Widows Benefit and Employment Support Allowance.

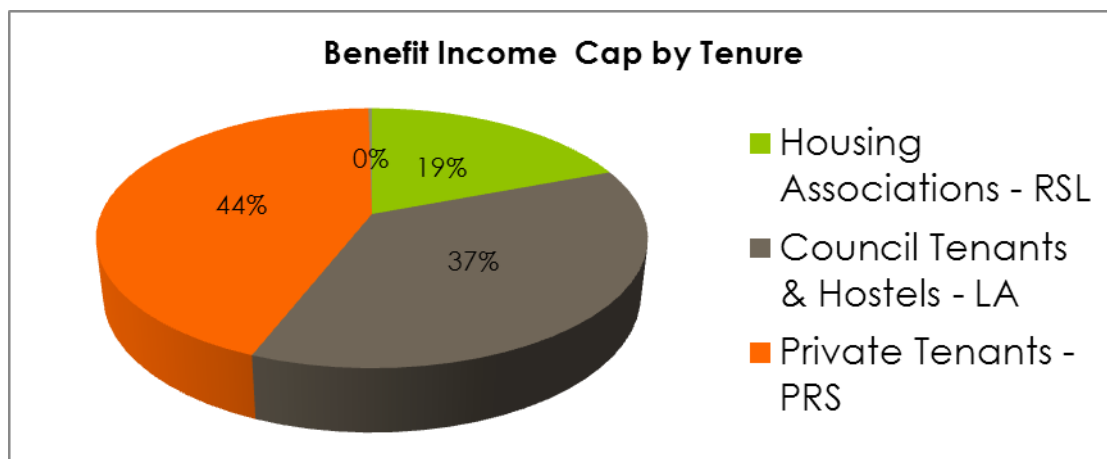
Welfare reform will impact on young people who will struggle to contribute towards their household rent. Deductions from benefit are made for non-dependent members of the household, such as grown up children.

Currently households with people under 25 are exempt from deductions. The new system brings in a flat rate deduction of £65 month, for everyone over 21 years of age, regardless of their employment status. Young people on benefit will especially be hit by this.

With the introduction of welfare reform, 411 families in Leicester will be affected by the £25,000 benefit cap. Also 2,182 households will be affected by the bedroom tax. The Universal Credit, which will see all means-tested benefits rolled into one benefit, will be paid directly to the client and they will now be responsible for paying their rent and council tax, many for the first time in their lives. An indication of the numbers affected by the loss in each band:

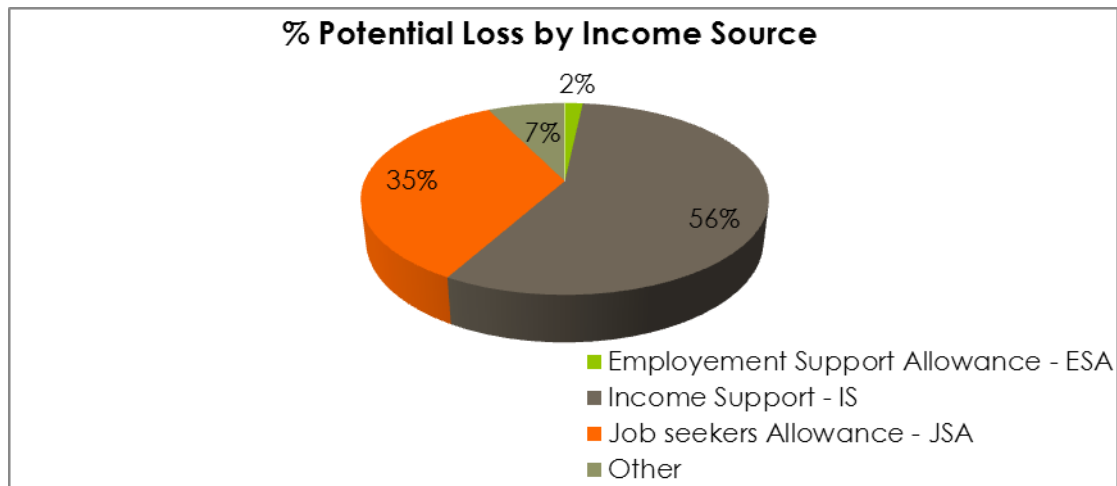
Amount of loss	Number affected	% affected
Under £25	90	21.9
£25 - £50	80	19.5
£50 - £75	63	15.3
£75 - £100	36	8.8
£100 - £150	60	14.6
£150 - £200	36	8.8
£200 - £250	20	4.9
Over £250	26	6.3

The loss of income as a result of the benefit cap will impact most on private tenants (44%) and Council tenants (37%)



Source: LCC Revenue and Benefits 2012

The largest potential loss of income will be through income support (56%), followed by Job Seekers Allowance (35%).



1.7 Factors affecting future levels of homelessness and service provision

Since the Homelessness Act (2002) was implemented, there have been significant changes, both nationally and locally, in the way homelessness is addressed. Prevention is seen as the key driver in reducing homelessness and is expected to compliment other wider aims such as improving opportunities to access work or training. Proactive work helps reduce reactive and crisis driven responses.

It can be difficult to predict future needs, but the current socio-economic and demographic context suggests that there will be further difficulties for many households trying to access good quality affordable housing, which may lead to increased homelessness. Other contributing factors include:

- Population growth
- New immigration
- Housing demand
- Available housing
- Affordability issues
- Increasing numbers of singles and family homeless
- Emerging Government Policy and Practice
- Welfare reform
- Reduced public sector funding
- Employment opportunities

Preventing and addressing homelessness is complex and requires a myriad of tools to ensure positive outcomes are achieved. Therefore, it is essential that Leicester's homelessness services move to a culture of enablement which supports people to move from crisis to independent living.

1.8 What has been achieved since the last Homelessness Strategy? (2008-13)

Whilst further improvements are needed to homeless services, a lot of good work is being undertaken across the city. Homeless Service Providers were asked to give examples of good practice and the following were submitted:

- ✓ The Workclub was established at the Dawn Centre and recently secured 3 placements for EU clients
- ✓ The Revolving Door Service was developed to work with entrenched homeless people to reduce repeat homelessness and repeat stays in temporary accommodation
- ✓ YMCA was recognised as a 'Place of Change' and as a regional centre of excellence for its work with young people
- ✓ Adullum and Stonham Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme placed 8 ex-offenders in private sector rented accommodation
- ✓ The Council's STAR Floating Support Service supported 2700 people during 2011-12
- ✓ The Leicestershire Partnership Trust Mental Health Service was nationally recognised as a service model of excellence (2008)
- ✓ Introduction of Leicester HomeChoice (2010) to provide more choice to people applying for social housing
- ✓ Establishment of the Leicester Homeless Voluntary Forum
- ✓ Action Homeless launched the Down Not Out magazine which is produced by homeless people
- ✓ The Drug and Alcohol Team introduced their project to address street drinking
- ✓ NIEBO, the Central and Eastern European Support Service, secured accommodation for 15 former EU rough sleepers
- ✓ The Leicestershire Cares Service placed 62% of clients in education, training or employment within 3 months of them joining the scheme
- ✓ The Move-on Board was established to address barriers to move-on from temporary accommodation
- ✓ 'Next Step Planning' was introduced for use in Council hostels to help clients to plan for their next move from hostels
- ✓ Housing Options prevented 1,602 households from becoming homeless and housed 192 households into the private rented sector
- ✓ The Y-POD project (YMCA) has been developed to work with young offenders and care leavers to improve access to housing, health, education, employment and training.
- ✓ STAR realised £3m in additional income for clients

- ✓ Evesham House runs a meaningful occupation programme which includes clients volunteering with LOROS
- ✓ The Outreach Team achieved one of the highest planned EU reconnection rates and was recently recognised by partner organisations for its contribution to the community
- ✓ The Community of Grace finds solutions for some of the most vulnerable and entrenched homeless people, without the receipt of housing related support funding
- ✓ Park Lodge provides move on properties and re-settlement packages for young people
- ✓ Inclusion Healthcare Social Enterprise provides primary healthcare for homeless people
- ✓ The Bethany Project, Kirton Lodge and Border House help to achieve a high rate of removals from the Child Protection Register for their clients
- ✓ The YMCA undertook a £4m capital refurbishment of their East Street premises
- ✓ The Action Trust employment and volunteering project works with homeless people to enable them to break the cycle of homelessness through employment and training
- ✓ Faith Groups provide food, clothes, furniture, advice and emotional support to some of the most vulnerable people in Leicester
- ✓ There has been a renewed and proactive approach to partnership working amongst Homeless Service Providers
- ✓ The establishment of the Rough Sleepers Task Panel has resulted in a reduction in the number of rough sleepers in Leicester
- ✓ A partnership approach has been used to inform the development of the Homelessness Review and Strategy

Chapter Two

Homelessness Review 2012

Summary Findings

2. Brief summary findings (Covering 2010-11 to 2011-12)

These are the key headline findings from the Homelessness Review categorised into themes.

2.1 Statutory findings

- There was a 13.5% increase in people accessing Housing Options
- There is an increased number of people on the Housing Register
- There was a 14% increase in total Homeless Declarations
- Homeless decisions are up by 15%
- There is a positive decision rate of 9.7%
- Statutory approved family homelessness increased by 42 cases (78%)
- Statutory approved single homeless increased by 8 cases to 10 cases
- Families represent 90% of approvals
- Families occupy 21% of homeless temporary accommodation
- There were 198 unique rough sleepers in 2011
- 2,912 clients accessed Housing Options for aid and advice (12% increase)
- 1,602 households were prevented from becoming homeless
- 193 households were housed in the private rented sector (20% increase)

2.2 Housing related support findings

- There is a 37% repeat homelessness rate
- The average void rate in hostels and supported housing is 5.1%
- 67% of clients stay in hostels between 28 days and 1 year
- There were 306 unplanned moves from hostels
- Hostels evicted 103 clients
- 34% of planned moves were transfers to other hostels

2.3 Other

- Day centres and drop in services for food, clothing and furniture are experiencing more people accessing their services

2.4 Resources

As a result of reductions in Government funding, the Council budget, approved in February 2012, includes savings of £43m by 2014/15, of which £33m is a direct reduction in the net budget.

The Councils' Homeless Services Budget for 2012/13 is £6.61m. The Council's 2012/13 budget reduced this by £1.16m from 2013/14. Additional further savings are now proposed of £0.36m during 2013/14, and a further £0.68m in 2014/15. This is an overall reduction of 33%. The position in future years is not known at this stage and further reductions may be required.

The Homelessness Grant has now been confirmed until March 2013 and Leicester City Council will receive £0.539m in 2013/14 and 2014/15. This represents a reduction of £0.158m (23%) compared to 2012/13 and funding for future years is uncertain.

The Council currently spend £6.611m on homelessness services and this is summarised in the following table:

2012/13 Estimates	In-House	Independent Sector (#)	Total
	£000	£000	£000
Temporary Accommodation			
Homeless Families	375	688	1,063
Single People Hostels	947	1,794	2,741
Move On Accommodation	-8	300	292
Other Support:			
Floating Support	467	358	825
Rough Sleepers Outreach Team	91	-	91
Housing Options (*)	1,087	-	1,087
Day Centres & Other Services	79	433	512
	3,038	3,573	6,611

(*) Housing Options undertake the following tasks - advice, housing registrations, preventing homelessness and dealing with homeless declarations.

(#) The Voluntary Sector also contributes their own resources to these services.

Findings from the review have established that the current funding arrangements are based on hostels being full which can create a perverse incentive to keep beds full, irrespective of clients' needs.

2.5 Culture

- To some extent we fund a crisis and rescue service instead of an enablement model of homelessness
- Hostels often do not achieve positive changes for clients
- Many clients in hostels are de-motivated and have low expectations
- People are institutionalised in some single hostels
- All providers say they accommodate the most complex clients, when others won't
- The role of day centres is unclear
- The policy of maximising income for clients is not always in the interests of some clients, for example entrenched drinkers
- The Voluntary and Community Sector feel their role is not recognised or valued
- There is a lack of awareness about the impact on other services, when clients are evicted
- We need to understand the human cost of homelessness
- We need to accept that some people, who do not meet Adult Social Care thresholds of vulnerability, will never be able to live independently.

2.6 Housing Options

- The service is dealing with increased numbers of people, many with complex needs
- Housing Options has a poor reputation with some other services, providers and clients, particularly in terms of customer care
- There is a perception that Options does not recognise its wider corporate responsibilities
- The Housing Options reception area is not 'user friendly' with no access to toilets or drinking water.

2.7 Accommodation

- There is limited choice of the type of accommodation available to homeless people when they first become homeless
- There is an over-supply of generic singles hostel accommodation
- There are varying standards of appropriate temporary accommodation
- There is a lack of move-on accommodation
- There is a lack of affordable housing
- There are a high number of children in hostels across the city
- Some people are often made to bid for properties through Leicester HomeChoice before they are ready to leave temporary accommodation.

2.8 Access

- During the review, it became clear that some people viewed the Leicester Requirement as being too high, due to the residency criteria of using a residential address within the city as a permanent home for 12 consecutive months, immediately prior to making a housing application. Many other authorities require a period of 6 out of the last twelve months.
- Access to services appears confusing and there is a lack of understanding amongst some referral agencies and clients themselves. There are also many different access policies amongst providers with various exclusions which could result in more complex clients being refused.
- As there is not a fully operational Single Access and Referral Service in place, it is not possible to know who is in the Voluntary Sector direct access hostels or if there would have been a duty to these people, had they come through the SAR Service.
- Many VCS hostels arrange interviews for a few days into the future and so are often unable to respond to need immediately, which can have a negative impact on more chaotic clients who need help 'now'
- The Outreach Team need more tools to address rough sleeping – e.g. access to direct referral beds
- Although there is an appeals process in place, clients who are banned often find it difficult to access accommodation. Also, these bans often remain in place for a long time, making it impossible to overcome this barrier.
- A robust policy is required to direct how EU rough sleepers should be assisted
- We need to improve access to health, mental health and substance use services
- People are becoming 'stuck in the hostel service due to barriers to move on, such as rent arrears
- Referrals are often more about filling a void bed space than being about making an intelligent and appropriate placement
- Information sharing is uncoordinated, particularly in terms of risk, and there is a lack of a common database to help track clients' homeless journeys
- There is a lack of a common assessment process across the sector.

2.9 Support

- More specialist floating support is needed, in particular alcohol and substance use
- More meaningful and fun activities in hostels need to be provided and clients need to be encouraged to take part in these
- More support is needed for ex-offenders who are not on licence
- Staff skills need developing particularly to deal with clients with complex needs

- Many hostel clients are not being proactively supported to access training, education and employment opportunities
- Support needs to follow the client to enable them to achieve independent living
- Employed people, with support needs, often find it difficult to access floating support
- Many clients are receiving support from several sources due to the operating hours of the service
- Many clients are being assessed more than once
- More people are accessing the STAR service for low level general advice, through the estate based offices

2.10 Repeat Homelessness

- A common database, open to all providers, needs to be developed to help track clients' journeys
- Client outcomes are unclear and difficult to establish
- A planned 'move-on' is often a move to another hostel. However, in some circumstances, positive transfers are made to better meet the needs of the client
- Revolving Door is only funded to work with 50 cases at present. Lessons need to be learnt from the successes that Revolving Door has achieved and these need to be mainstreamed across all homeless services.

2.11 Governance

- One of the roles of the Housing Advice and Support Programme Board (HASP) is to oversee the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy and Implementation Plan. Evidence suggests that this does not work as effectively as it could
- There is an uncoordinated performance management framework in place
- Issues highlighted in the Supporting People Review (2008) are still relevant now
- Communication and information provision needs improving
- There is a lack of cost and value for money analysis of homeless services

2.12 Partnership Working

- There is a poor relationship between Housing Options and some Service Providers
- The role of the faith and community groups in addressing homelessness needs to be recognised and valued
- We need to improve partnership working across the city
- We need to improve cross-boundary working.

2.13 Benchmarking

The level of approved decisions in Leicester is low when compared to other organisations.

Leicester has a higher level of households who are found to be eligible, homeless but not in priority need. This is substantially higher than other organisations.

Leicester's performance in preventing homelessness, when compared to our main comparator authorities, is about average for the group.

Leicester has a high provision of hostel accommodation when compared to other organisations, including a high level of in-house provision. Some organisations now have no in-house provision and the limited hostel accommodation available is contracted out to other providers.

Other organisations are looking to reduce their level of provision as result of the reduction in local authority funding.

2.2 Defining homelessness

Defining homelessness is not straight forward. The most literal approach is to deal with those who do not have a roof over the heads. However, street homelessness or being roofless does not constitute the full extent of homelessness.

"Homelessness means not having a home – most people who are homeless don't sleep on the street. Even if you have a roof over your head, you can still be homeless. This is because you may not have any rights to stay where you live or your home might be unsuitable for you due to severe overcrowding or other reasons"

(Shelter 2011)

The Council has legal duties towards certain homeless households if they:

- are likely to be evicted within the next 28 days
- can only stay where they are temporarily
- have to move because of violence or threats
- are living in overcrowded conditions
- are not allowed back into their home
- live in a caravan or houseboat but have nowhere to put it
- have a home in such a bad state of repair that it is damaging their health
- the household is forced to live apart because the accommodation isn't suitable for them to all live together

Statutory homeless people are entitled to housing if they satisfy the following:

- they are eligible for public services
- they have a local connection to the area covered by the local authority, unless presenting due to domestic violence

- they are unintentionally homeless
- they are in priority need

The Council also has legal duties to provide housing advice to all citizens.

2.3 Housing Related Support Services

2.3.1 Financial Context

Reductions in public funding will have a major impact not only on the services provided, but also the way they are delivered. Linked to the budget process, we have undertaken an analysis of contract values, unit costs and utilisation of all services.

We found that there is a wide variation in unit costs across providers and it is difficult to make value for money assessments of those services as the current monitoring system does not produce robust information on outcomes achieved.

Although, the current financial environment is driving the review of public sector services, we need to recognise this as a positive opportunity to modernise our homeless services.

The budget is dictating that staying as we are is not an option. More importantly, as 37% of single hostel clients experience many episodes of homelessness and also the high rough sleeper numbers are clear indicators that something is not working and that our approach to addressing homelessness in Leicester, needs to change.

The homelessness financial envelope is yet to be determined.

2.3.2 Homelessness Context

In 2010/11, 1,981 families and single people came to our Housing Options Service saying that they were facing homelessness. During 2011/12, this rose to 2249 and numbers have continued to rise, though less steeply. This is a 13.5% rise. We predict by the end of 2012/13 we will have seen over 2,350 households, who face homelessness.

During 2011/12, there were 96 positive homeless decisions for families which is an increase of 78% on the previous year. (42) There were 10 positive decisions for single people and childless couples whereas there were 2 decisions the year before.

Our ability to prevent these people from actually becoming homeless is rising, from 86% of cases in 2010/11 to a predicted 91% this year. However, we still expect that during 2012/13, 148 families and 258 single people will have to be referred into one of our hostels and 60 families may, as a last resort, have to spend a short time in bed and breakfast because they face crisis.

In addition, 732 families and single people went into the council funded voluntary sector homeless hostels and other temporary accommodation. Because these hostels have direct access we do not know how many of these people also came to Housing Options. However, we suspect that most are additional cases to the numbers given above.

The Council finds it much more difficult to prevent homelessness for single people and it is more difficult to track the eventual outcome, whereas families stay in touch until they are in settled accommodation.

Where we do not know the outcome, we record this as a failure, in line with government reporting requirements. In 2011, we tracked whether any of the single people, who asked for a hostel space but who we could not help, went on to rough sleep, as a result. We found no-one had done this. We have a similar issue in our hostels, where 53% leave without letting us know if their housing problem has been solved. We also know that 37% of single people, who came into our hostels, had been in previously within the last two years.

The Council faces the challenge of ensuring that people, who are either facing or experiencing homelessness, are able to access good quality services, which meet their needs, in a climate of reduced financial resources.

At present, singles only account for 9.5% of statutory positive decisions but account for 79% of hostel accommodation. The Council recognises that there are single people who need help however, as there are numerous admissions policies across the city, it is unclear how many single people have been accepted into hostels, where there was no statutory homeless duty.

Leicester City Council, while meeting its duties, also needs to develop service offers for those homeless people, who are not owed a duty.

2.3.3 Housing related accommodation

a. Hostels

Providing accommodation and support to homeless people can be difficult as many have chaotic lives and display difficult and challenging behaviour. Staff, working in these hostels, face daily challenges and many do a good job, in often difficult circumstances. We do not want to undermine their dedication and hard work or to make them feel undervalued. However, we did experience areas which need improving and so we need to view this as an opportunity to address this.

During our many visits to supported projects, both LCC and Voluntary Sector, we saw many types of accommodation, ranging from large hostel provision to smaller cluster projects and shared houses. We saw some very high quality accommodation but also an over-provision of large, institutional-like accommodation, with long corridors, some with shared bedrooms. Some projects had clearly tried to make the accommodation welcoming, bright and homely, while others seemed dark and depressing, and in need of decoration.

While recognising restrictions linked to the physical lay-out of buildings, and the difficulty in maintaining the physical appearance of some projects, it was felt more could be done, in places, to make the accommodation more appealing and stimulating for clients.

During our visits, staff were generally in their offices and we saw very few organised activities taking place with residents. We saw examples of locked games and activity rooms, due to staff absences, and access to computers in rooms, that were no larger than a cupboard. However, other projects were bright and colourful with homely items such as curtains, prints, rugs, books and DVDs.

In 2012, it is not desirable to have an over-provision of large hostel accommodation. People should not have to share a bedroom and ideally, all rooms should be en-suite. The best example of a project lay-out was shared flats, containing a small number of individual bedrooms. This not only provides privacy for the resident but also promotes independence through having to look after their flat and cook for themselves. Residents are able to interact

with other residents and staff work hard to create a balance in each flat. Residents can also access support and advice from staff.

b. Support

It is difficult to comment on the quality or effectiveness of the support given as we did not see many organised activities or support sessions in operation. Although we witnessed very few activities taking place we cannot say they do not take place at other times. The residents we spoke to seemed unclear about what support they were receiving and many said they were bored and had nothing to do. We also need to consider the role of effective support in reducing repeat homelessness. (37%)

c. Catering

There were mixed views amongst staff and residents about the need for catered hostels. There was agreement that most people will need some level of food provided during the first few days in the hostel and especially those with medical conditions. However, it was generally felt that this further institutionalised some people and did not help to develop life skills. Residents also raised the issue that they had no choice in whether they opted into the catering service, which increased the cost of their accommodation and the probability of developing arrears.

In contrast, there was a view that catering met the nutritional needs of some residents that perhaps they would not necessarily manage to do themselves, particularly for those with substance use issues.

d. Shared and Supported Housing

There are 133 shared and supported housing units across the city, which aim to provide vulnerable people with accommodation and support. This accommodation is considered to be a more conducive environment for achieving steps towards independent living.

There is a high void rate due to the lack of move-on accommodation for hostel residents, it is important that we make the best use of these properties in the future. We need to review the way these properties are managed and the level and type of support required for residents living in these properties.

2.4 Floating Support

Floating support, tailored to an individual's needs, is the least expensive and most effective intervention for people, with low level support needs. Leicester has a number of floating support providers that are supporting people towards independent living.

The lack of effective specialist support, particularly for those clients with the most complex needs, can result in them being unable to break the cycle of homelessness and therefore results in them revolving around the hostel system.

A number of clients in hostels are receiving support from hostel staff and from the floating support service. A small number also receive additional support from the Revolving Door Service. In future, people in hostels should not receive floating support, except in the most complex cases, as they should be receiving their support from their accommodation provider.

2.5 Staffing Issues

Without exception, we were welcomed to all projects and staff were very candid in our discussions about homelessness and their own role, on the front-line. Most staff were passionate and cared about what happened to people and were frustrated by the procedures in which they have to work and a lack of resources to do more.

For example, one Manger told us how one of the rooms needed to be re-decorated, as the walls had been painted with graffiti. However, there was no funding available to do this and residents were not able to do it themselves due to health and safety issues.

Another staff member told us of her frustration at having to ask a young person to leave a severe weather bed, after one night, when he had nowhere to go and the beds would remain empty until the next bout of inclement weather.

We witnessed staff engaging positively with residents and there was a good feeling in most projects. Unfortunately, we also saw staff speaking to or about people, as if they were children which will not encourage positive engagement.

The issue of staff skills was raised throughout the review process in terms of gaps in staff skills and knowledge.

2.6 Residents' views

Staff in all projects left us to speak with residents. We heard many devastating life stories and some accounts of their homelessness journeys were filled with rejection and bureaucracy.

Some of these younger residents told us the staff were their family and they worried about their next move and what would happen to them.

They had mixed views about their current situation with many unhappy with the quality of the accommodation and they complained there was nothing to do. Despite some complaints of staff treating residents like children, most said the staff were 'sound'.

2.7 Customer Involvement

There was evidence of customer involvement in the hostels, across the city, with house meetings, consultations and other events. We need to ensure that the results of these consultations actively feed into service improvements. Again, there was evidence of this through the use of 'you said...we did' displays.

2.8 Housing Options - SAR Service and common assessment

The Housing Options Service is seeing an increased number of people, particularly those with complex needs. Staff work in a high pressure environment, dealing with people in crisis situations, when they are at their most vulnerable.

The lack of a fully operation Single Access and Referral Point and one common assessment process, has meant that Options has not had access to a large amount of temporary accommodation across the city. This has also impeded data collection for the review as it has been impossible to determine the circumstances of those people who directly accessed

hostels, who may have been owed a statutory duty had they gone through Housing Options.

However, Housing Options has a poor reputation amongst providers, and other agencies that work with homeless people, and there is a general perception of a lack of customer focus and customer care.

2.9 Governance and performance management

Under the Supporting People regime, performance management and strategy was split between two Council Departments, and later Divisions. The Housing Service focused on the performance management of its own homeless services and voluntary sector contracts were managed by the Supporting People Team.

Improvements have been made to the governance of homeless services through the development of the Housing Advice and Support Programme Board, which includes representatives from a range of organisations and providers. However, information is not being cascaded as it should, and this has caused issues amongst providers that do not attend these meetings.

The development of the Move-On Board has resulted in more detailed performance information for LCC provision, however this does not extend to the voluntary sector. The VCS is currently monitored using the Supporting People Workbooks. These collect a large amount of information, but this is used for contract management of the providers and does not contribute to wider reporting mechanisms.

A large amount of data is collected across all organisations, but it is difficult to show how this contributes to service improvement.

Chapter Three

Review Data, Findings and Recommendations

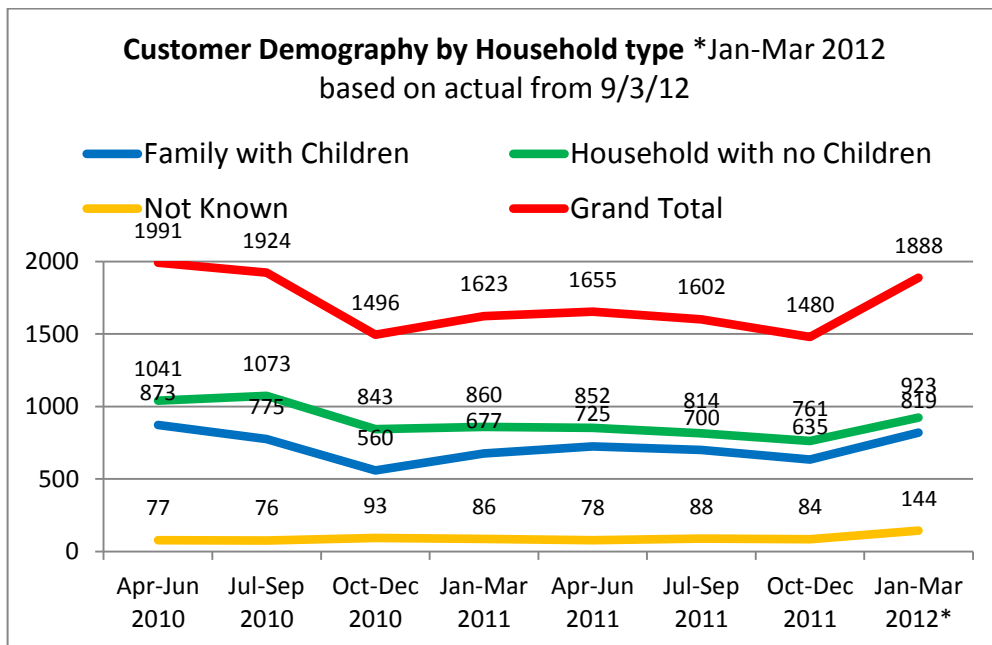
Statutory Services

3. Statutory Homelessness

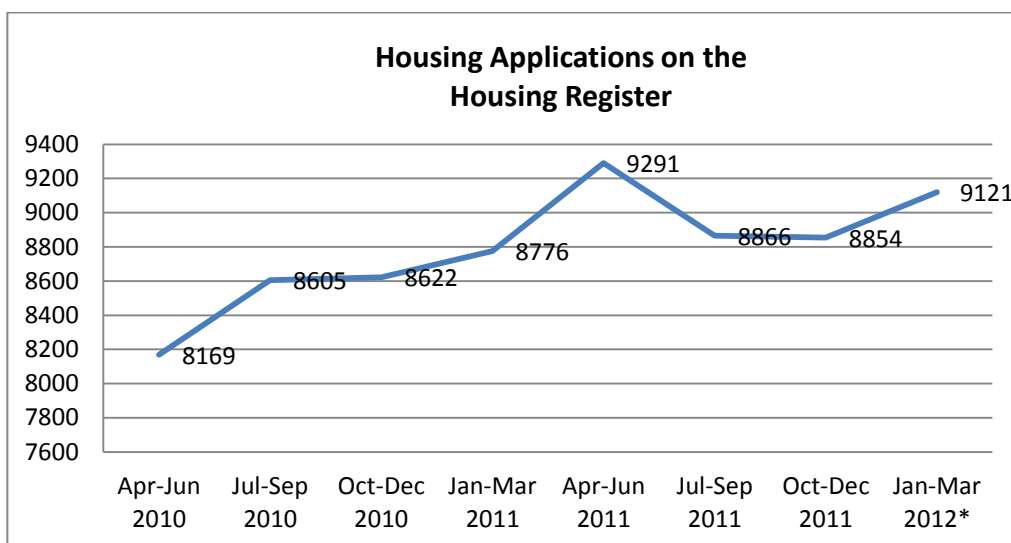
3.1 Housing applications, homelessness declarations and decisions

A review of statutory homeless data has been undertaken and in particular focuses on the trends emerging between January - March 2011 and January - March 2012.

During this period, Housing Options has seen a 13.5% increase in the number of people accessing their services. More people, without children, are visiting options than families. 1319 people contacted the 'out of hours' service in the LCC Hostels' Service however these may not have been unique individual contacts.



The number of housing applications on the Housing Register is steadily increasing, after 4.5% decrease in July 2011.



Homelessness declarations

There were 1091 homelessness declarations in 2011/12 compared to 957 declarations in 2010/11 which represents a 14% increase.

There has been an upwards trend in the number of declarations since July 2011 and a 46% increase between January 2011 and January 2012.

There was a 69% increase in the number of homeless declarations from families (346) in 2011/12 in comparison to 204 the previous year.

Homelessness declarations from households with no children have remained constant, with 745 this year, compared to 753 the previous year.

Household Type	Apr-Jun 10	Jul-Sep 10	Oct-Dec 10	Jan-Mar 11	Apr-Jun 11	Jul-Sep 11	Oct-Dec 11	Jan-Mar 12
Family with Children	56	55	48	45	51	72	105	118
Household with no Children	162	211	182	198	189	137	180	239
Total	218	266	230	243	240	209	285	357

The largest proportion of homeless declarations were from those clients aged 18-24. The largest increase in declarations, compared to the previous year, was from those clients aged 45-54 years.

There has also been a 21% increase in the number of declarations made by young people aged 18-24 years.

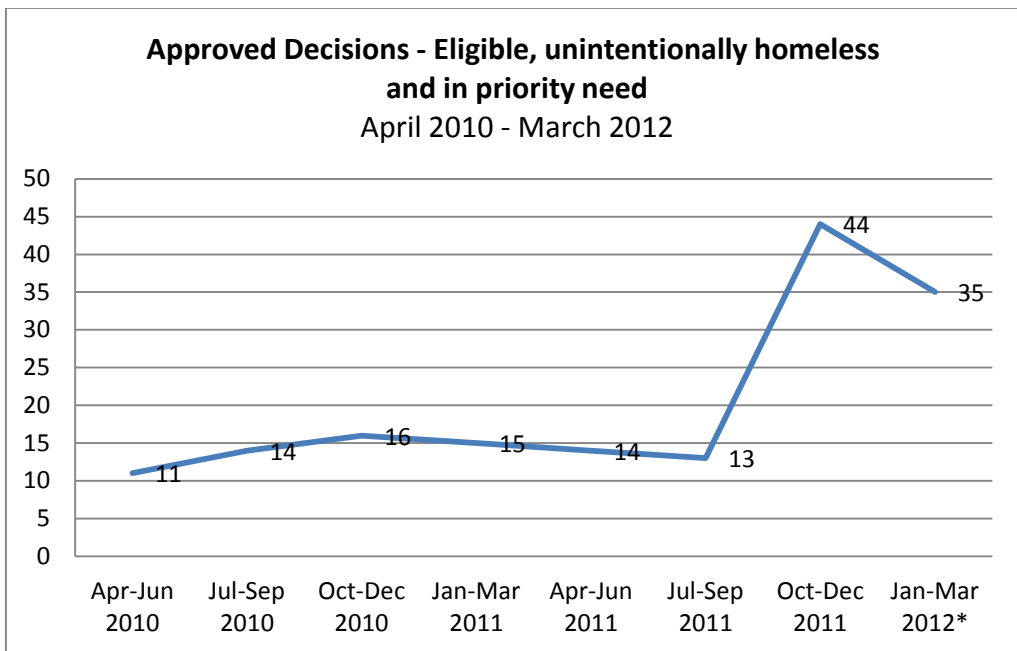
Age Group	Apr-Jun 10	Jul-Sep 10	Oct-Dec 10	Jan-Mar 11	Apr-Jun 11	Jul-Sep 11	Oct-Dec 11	Jan-Mar 12
Under 18			1	1	4	1	2	8
18-24	67	69	60	73	66	63	86	110
25-34	66	89	75	77	68	63	75	110
35-44	52	72	60	56	54	43	80	83
45-54	22	26	22	25	37	31	35	34
55-64	9	8	9	6	7	8	4	8
65-74	2	1	3	3	2		1	2
75 and Over		1		2	2		2	2
Total	218	266	230	243	240	209	285	357

Homeless Decisions

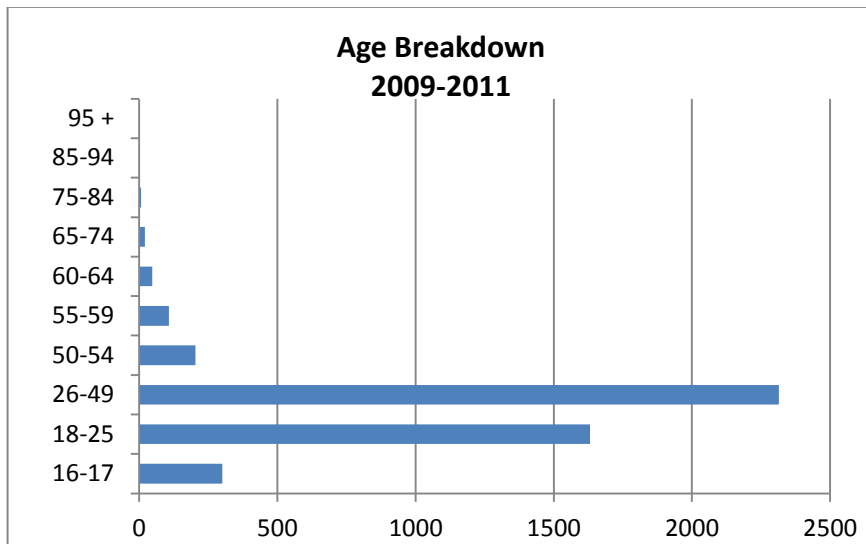
The number of homeless decisions increased by 15%, which included 106 approved homeless decisions. The rate of approval has remained constant but peaked when banding was introduced through the Allocations Policy, in October 2011, which placed homeless people in the highest band.



Although approvals increased by 90%, over the twelve month period, this only represents a positive decision rate of 9.7%. However, the small number of challenges to these homeless decisions would suggest that the Council is making the correct decisions, in most cases. (See table on page 49)

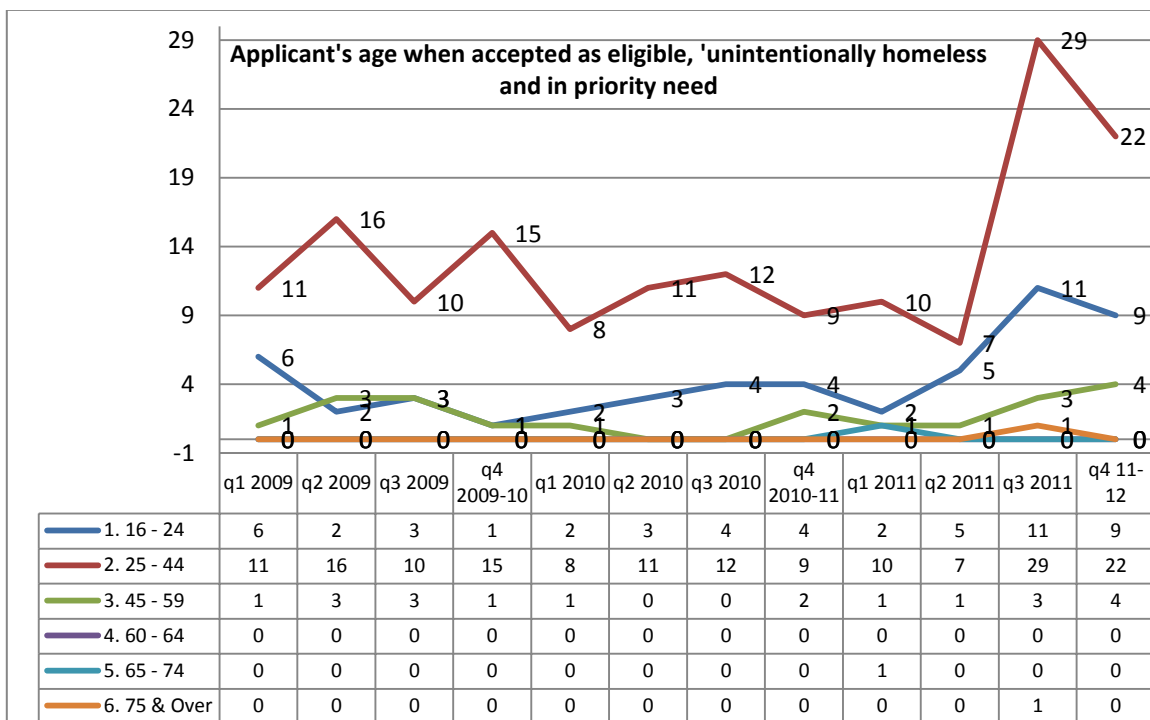


The majority of people receiving a positive homeless decision were aged between 29 – 49 and 18 – 25 years of age.

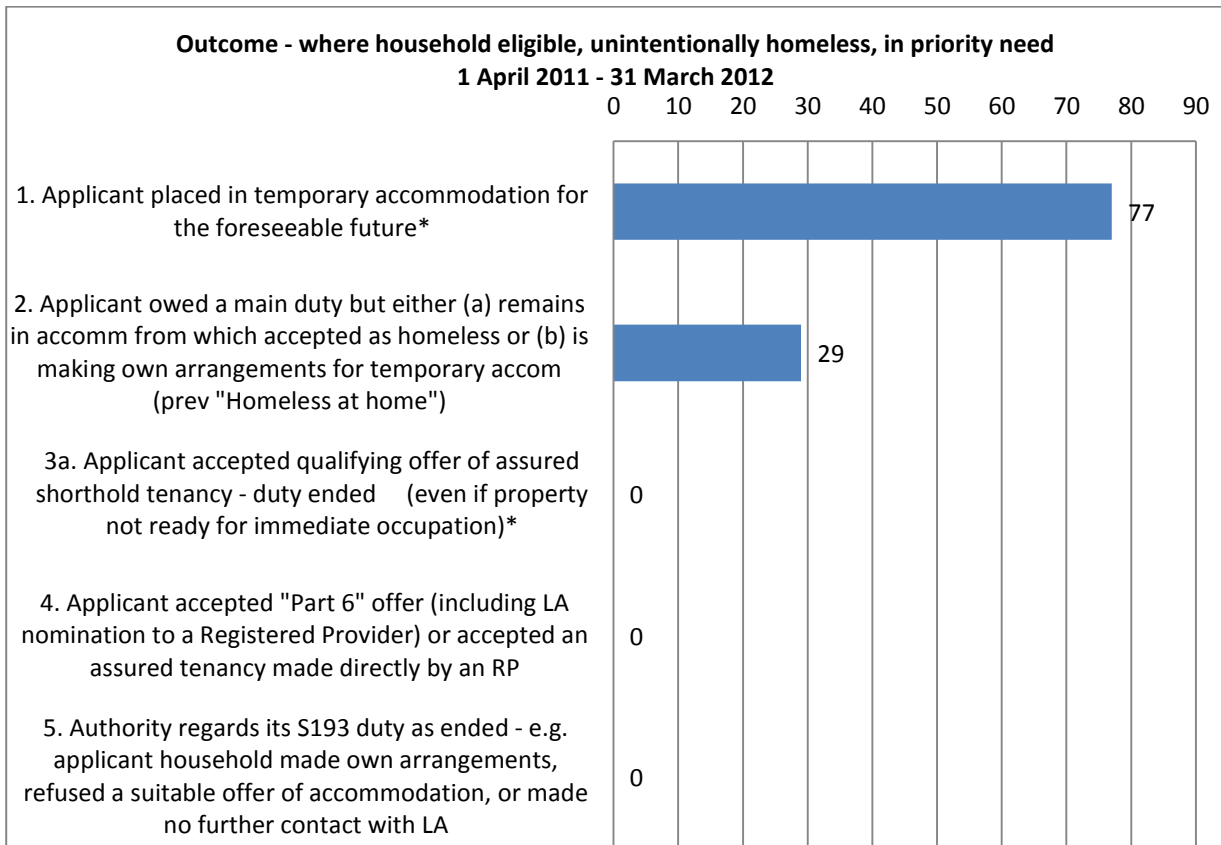


Although there is a downward trend in both the 25 – 44 and 16 – 24 age groups, these are the most frequent acceptances.

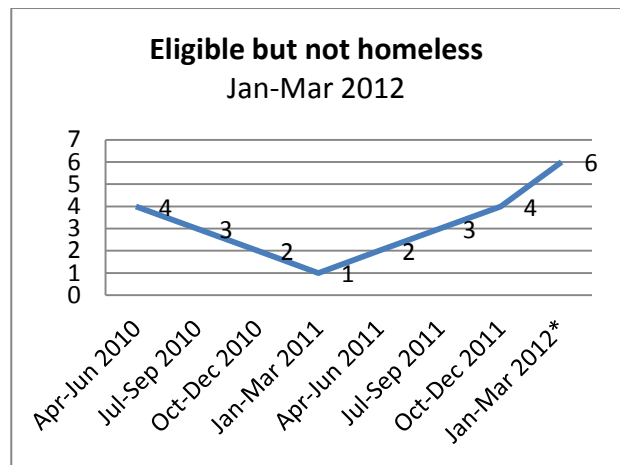
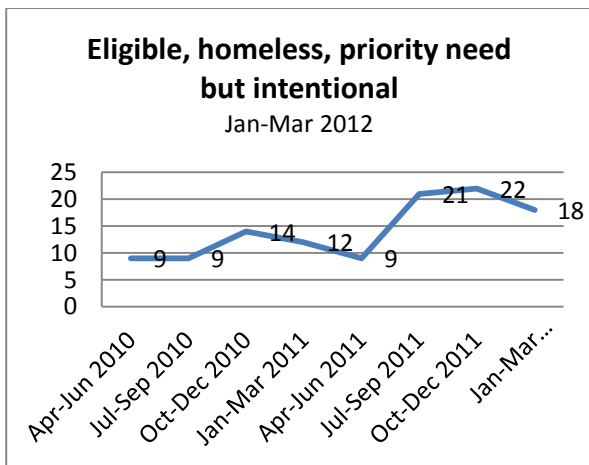
The 25 - 44 age group is the most frequently accepted and is twice as high in number as the next largest group. (16 – 24).



73% of those homeless people who received a positive decision were placed in temporary accommodation.



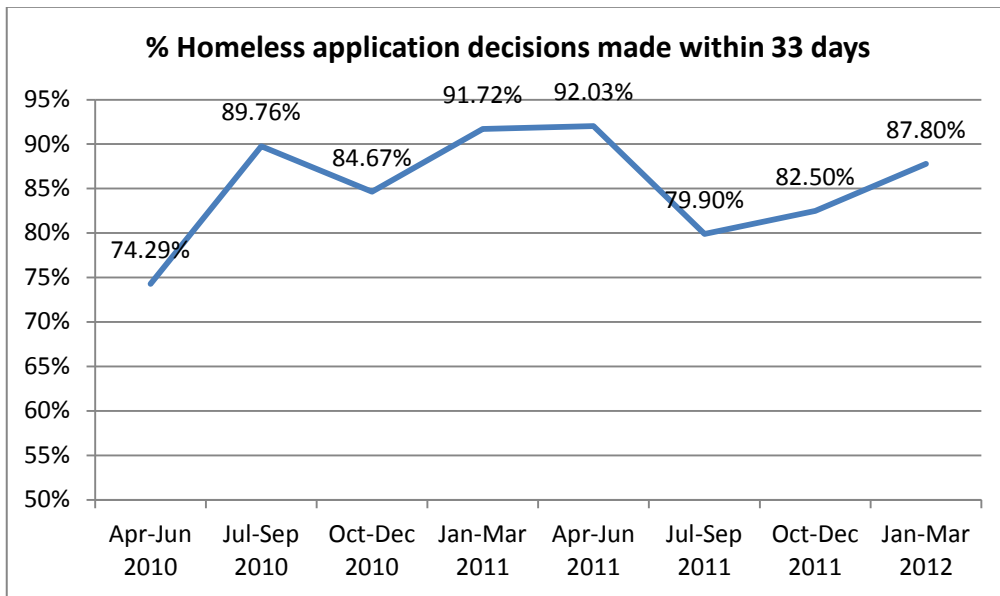
There has been a 59% increase in the number of households who were eligible, homeless and in priority need but were found to be intentionally homeless.



The number of eligible households who were found not to be homeless increased from 10 to 15 during the last year. The number of households who were found to be ineligible increased from 24 to 69.

Although these people are owed no homeless duty for accommodation we need to develop a strategy for dealing with them, as they could contribute to rough sleeping numbers in the future. Due to reduced funding, there will be less resources available to meet the needs of homeless people and this will have a more significant impact on single homeless people, who are more likely to be found 'not' in priority need.

During the 2011/12, 85.5% of homeless decisions were made within 33 days. This has remained at the same level since the previous year. (85%)



Benchmarking

Although there are increased positive outcomes from preventative activities undertaken by Housing Options, the level of approved decisions in Leicester is low. (9%) Other comparator organisations have a higher positive decision rate of between 52% – 83%.

Also, in Leicester, 82% of households are found to be eligible, homeless but not in priority need which is substantially higher than other organisations. (Between 1% - 38%)

Proposed Action

We need to identify why our decision rates vary so greatly from our benchmarking partners.

Ethnicity

The percentage of applications, from white households, accepted as being homeless, and in priority need, has decreased from 32% to 16%. The percentage of black or black British households has remained constant at 44% however, this represents the largest ethnic group accepted as homeless and in priority need. The percentage of Asian or Asian British households has remained constant at 14%, as have mixed and other ethnic origin households. There has been a 575% increase in households not stating their ethnicity.

Proposed Action

To ensure we collect client profiling information to ensure this information is used to inform future service planning.

**Table 784: Local authorities' action under the homelessness provisions of the Housing Acts
Financial year 2010-11**

Decisions made during the year April 2010 - March 2011

Region	County and Local Authority area	Number of quarters covered	Number of households (2008 mid-year estimate)	Eligible homeless and in priority need but intentionally	Eligible homeless and in priority need but intentionally	Eligible homeless but not in priority need	Eligible homeless but not in priority need	Eligible but not homeless	Eligible but not homeless	Total decisions	% of Decisions where the applicant has been accepted as being homeless and in priority need (main homelessness duty owed)
ENGLAND			21,731	7,130		20,230		30,680		102,200	
	Kingston upon Hull, City of UA	4	115	37	4%	350	38%	21	2%	910	55%
	Derby UA	4	102	32	6%	162	32%	42	8%	506	53%
	Leicester UA	4	121	44	7%	500	82%	10	2%	610	9%
	Nottingham UA	4	129	72	10%	15	2%	35	5%	700	83%
	Brighton and Hove UA	4	115	142	17%	79	10%	165	20%	812	52%
	Milton Keynes UA	4	96	19	6%	9	3%	90	30%	298	60%
	Southampton UA	4	98	27	13%	2	1%	12	6%	213	81%
	Bristol, City of UA	4	184	21	8%	14	5%	16	6%	265	81%

Notes Totals may not equal the sum of components because of rounding.

Table 784: Local authorities' action under the homelessness provisions of the Housing Acts: Financial year 2010-11

		Decisions made during the year April 2010 - March 2011									
		Numbers Accepted as being homeless and in priority need									
Region	County and Local Authority area	Number of quarters covered	Number of households (2008 mid-year estimate)	White	Black or Black British	Asian or Asian British	Mixed	Other Ethnic Origin	Ethnic Group Not Stated	Total	No. per 1,000 h/holds
ENGLAND			21,731	29,540	6,360	2,800	1,330	1,890	2,240	44,160	2.03
	Kingston upon Hull, City of UA	4	115	445	21	7	4	23	2	502	4.37
	Derby UA	4	102	181	42	26	15	6	0	270	2.65
	Leicester UA	4	121	9	24	8	1	1	13	56	0.46
	Nottingham UA	4	129	311	118	44	36	28	41	578	4.48
	Brighton and Hove UA	4	115	314	48	24	19	8	13	426	3.70
	Milton Keynes UA	4	96	127	30	4	3	4	12	180	1.88
	Southampton UA	4	98	153	10	6	2	1	0	172	1.76
	Bristol, City of UA	4	184	138	49	5	9	4	9	214	1.16
Notes	Totals may not equal the sum of components because of rounding.										

3.2 Family and Single / Childless Couples – Homelessness Trends

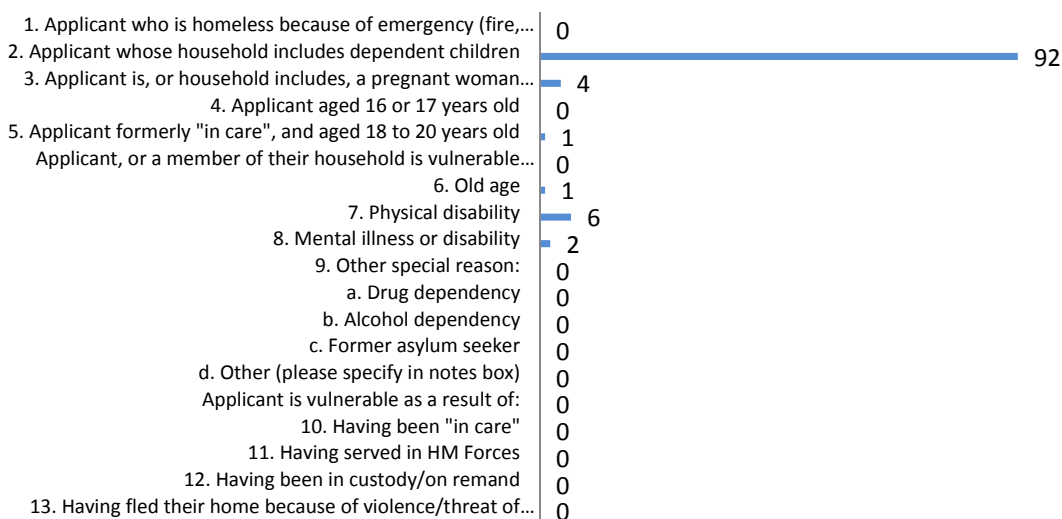
The 1996 Housing Act (Part VII) sets out the legal duties and responsibilities of local authorities, in relation to homelessness. This includes providing information and advice, undertaking investigations to determine eligibility for assistance and, if eligible, what duty is owed, under the Act? If a person is found to be eligible, homeless and in priority need, the local authority has an immediate duty to ensure accommodation is made available to them.

E2: Applicant households found to be eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need during the quarter (between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2012), by priority need category					
	Breakdown of households with Children	Total April 2011- March 12	Breakdown of households with Children	Total April 2010-March 11	Breakdown of households with Children
					Total April 2009- March 10
1. Applicant who is homeless because of emergency (fire, flood, storms, disaster, etc.)		0		0	0
2. Applicant whose household includes dependent children		92		50	65
1 child	39		32		42
2 children	31		7		14
3 or more children	22		11		9
3. Applicant is, or household includes, a pregnant woman and there are no other dependent children		4		4	3
4. Applicant aged 16 or 17 years old		0		0	0
5. Applicant formerly "in care", and aged 18 to 20 years old		1		0	0
Applicant, or a member of their household is vulnerable as a result of:		0			
6. Old age		1		0	0
7. Physical disability		6		0	1
8. Mental illness or disability		2		2	2
9. Other special reason:		0			
a. Drug dependency		0		0	0
b. Alcohol dependency		0		0	0
c. Former asylum seeker		0		0	0
d. Other (please specify in notes box)		0		0	0
Applicant is vulnerable as a result of:		0			
10. Having been "in care"		0		0	1
11. Having served in HM Forces		0		0	0
12. Having been in custody/on remand		0		0	0
13. Having fled their home because of violence/threat of violence		0		0	0
<i>Of which:</i>		0			
a. domestic violence		0		0	0
14. Total applicant households accepted	92	106	55	56	64
				72	

Families currently account for 90.5% of approvals and this is the main priority need. A very small number of applicants were placed due to being either pregnant, formerly in care, elderly or having mental illness or disability.

Households eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need

1 April 2011 and 31 March 2012



59% of approved homeless families were lone parents with dependent children.

	Couple with dependent children	Lone parent household with dependent children	Lone parent household with dependent children	One person household	One person household	All other Household groups	Total
		Male	Female	Male	Female		
Total 11-12	33	6	57	5	4	1	106
Total 10-11	17	3	34	2	0	0	56
Total 09-10	21	4	43	1	1	2	72

3.2.1 Family homelessness

Housing Options made 96 positive decisions for homeless families which is a 78% increase on the previous year. (54)

The majority of acceptances by household type included couples with children (34%) and lone parents, both male and female. (66%)

A further 121 families were housed in Voluntary Sector direct access hostels. As these families were not referred to temporary accommodation through the SAR Service, we are unable to determine how many of these families would have been owed a statutory homeless duty.

An additional 29 teenage parent families were accommodated in Voluntary Sector hostels. There were 6 positive homeless decisions made by Housing Options.

45 families were placed in bed and breakfast and 96 families were found accommodation in the private rented sector through the Leicester Let Scheme.

There was no repeat homelessness for families.

The main reasons families become homeless in Leicester are:

1. Required to leave NASS accommodation by the Home Office
2. Family and friends are no longer able to accommodate
3. The loss of Assured Short-hold Tenancy in Private sector

3.2.2 Single and childless couples homelessness (2011-12)

Single and childless couples made up 9.4% of the positive homeless decisions. Housing Options made 10 positive decisions for this client group which is an increase of 8, when compared to the previous year.

666 single clients were placed in LCC temporary hostel accommodation and a further 222 were accommodated by the Voluntary Sector.

Single people are more likely to present with complex needs, including mental health and substance use issues. However, this group is less likely to be found in priority need.

4 single and childless couples were placed in bed and breakfast and 97 were found accommodation in the private rented sector through the Rent Guarantee Scheme. This is a 56% increase on the previous year.

37% of single homeless people have experienced two or more episodes of homelessness.

There were 198 rough sleepers during 2011/12.

The main reasons single people become homeless in Leicester are:

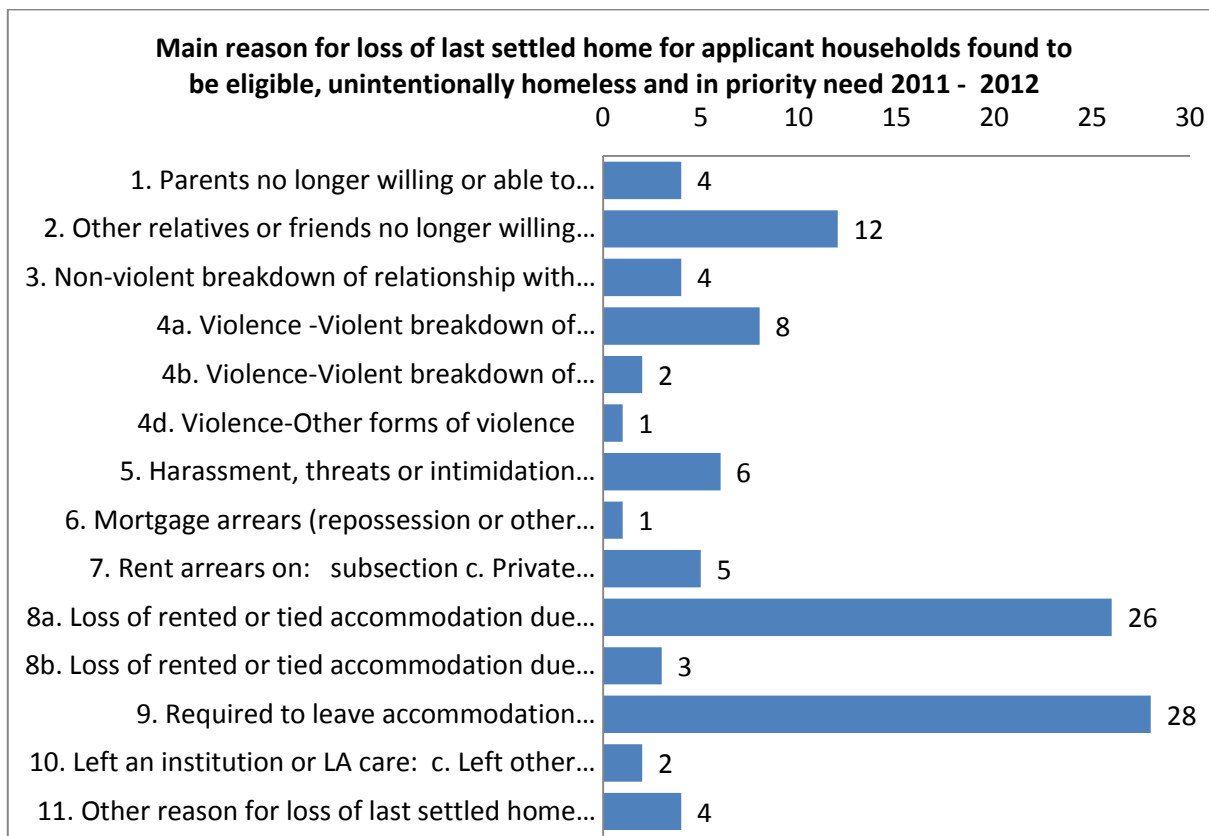
1. Family and friends are no longer able to accommodate
2. No fixed abode (including sofa surfers)
3. Repeat homelessness where the last accommodation was a 'hostel'

3.3 Overall main reasons for loss of last settled home

The main reasons for homelessness include the following.

1. loss of NASS accommodation
2. loss of assured short-hold tenancies (increase of 188%)
3. family or friends are no longer able to accommodate (increase of 100%)
4. violent breakdown of relationship, involving partner (increase of 100%)

Although these refer to a relatively small number of people there is an upward trend in the last three reasons.



The loss of NASS accommodation is the main reason for loss of last settled accommodation; however, this is due to a back-log of decisions currently being cleared. On current trends, the number of people to be re-housed is likely to remain stable for the foreseeable future. Demand may increase due to political situations in other countries, for example, we may see an increase in people seeking refugee status from Syria. However, at the moment possible numbers are unknown.

The loss of private rented accommodation is the second highest reason. Although a lot of work has been undertaken by Housing Options with private landlords to try to avoid evictions, there were still 26 households who became homeless because they had to leave their private rented home. This has an impact on local services and more importantly is detrimental to the family. The children's education can be affected, as can access to healthcare and other services. Links to family and other social networks are made more difficult to maintain.

Section E3: Main reason for loss of last settled home for applicant households found to be eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need during the quarter (between 1 October and 31 December 2011)	TOTAL 11 -12	TOTAL 10-11	TOTAL 09-10
1. Parents no longer willing or able to accommodate	4	2	4
2. Other relatives or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate	12	6	6
3. Non-violent breakdown of relationship with partner	4	2	1
4. Violence			
a. Violent breakdown of relationship, involving partner	8	4	10
b. Violent breakdown of relationship involving associated persons	2	0	1
c. Racially motivated violence	0	0	0
d. Other forms of violence	1	0	1
5. Harassment, threats or intimidation			
a. Racially motivated harassment	0	0	1
b. Other forms of harassment	6	0	0
6. Mortgage arrears (repossession or other loss of home)	1	1	0
7. Rent arrears on:			
a. Local authority or other public sector dwellings	0	0	0
b. Registered Provider dwellings	0	0	1
c. Private sector dwellings	5	0	2
8. Loss of rented or tied accommodation due to:			
a. Termination of assured shorthold tenancy	26	9	7
b. Reasons other than termination of assured shorthold tenancy	3	0	1
9. Required to leave accommodation provided by Home Office as asylum support	28	30	36
10. Left an institution or LA care:			
a. Left prison/on remand	0	0	0
b. Left hospital	0	0	0
c. Left other institution or LA care	2	0	1
11. Other reason for loss of last settled home			
a. Left HM-Forces	0	0	0
b. Other reason (e.g. homeless in emergency, sleeping rough or in hostel, returned from abroad)	4	2	0
12. Total applicant households (sum of 1 to 11) above, which should also equal section E1 cell 1w)	106	56	72

Domestic violence continues to be in the top four causes of homelessness. Although the number of cases is relatively small, it is showing an upward trend.

The disaggregation of the Supporting People budgets has resulted in responsibility for the domestic violence services to the Community Safety Team. Housing will work in partnership with them to ensure safe and appropriate accommodation is available.

Partnership working between Leicester City Council and the voluntary sector has increased the positive outcomes for the survivors of domestic violence. This had been achieved through the use of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences and through the work of the Domestic Violence Forum Partnership.

3.4 Housing Register

The law on housing allocations in England has been significantly altered through the Localism Act. As a result, local authorities now have greater flexibility about who can and can't make an application for housing from the Housing Register.

A review of the Allocations Policy introduced a banding system and homelessness was given a band 2 priority.

There were 9,223 applications on the Housing Register at 31st March 2012, which represents an upward trend, 42% of which were placed in Band 5. Apart from the sheltered housing applicants, people in this band are unlikely to be offered a social housing tenancy.

Homeless applicants are placed in Band 2.

Band	% of Register
1	2.3
2	18
3	26.6
4	11.1
5	42

3.5 Single Access and Referral

An LCC Single Access and Referral Service was introduced in January 2010, for families and in May 2010, for singles. This removed direct access to all Leicester City Council hostel provision and also to a small number of voluntary sector providers, who joined the SAR.

During the first 18 weeks of ending direct access to LCC hostels, 327 unique single people / childless couples presented to Housing Options, on a total of 653 occasions. There was an average of 37 requests for accommodation each week and an average of 13 of these, were offered placements.

The Council has duties to accommodate vulnerable, homeless people while enquiries are made and during this period 101 (31%) reached this threshold. A large proportion of single and childless couples, who are homeless and not in priority need,

will however be in need of housing related support. During this period, a further 83 clients (25%) met this threshold. We could only offer accommodation to 68% of these people and no accommodation to the 143 homeless who we considered not to have support needs. However, all were given housing advice.

No new rough sleeping occurred amongst those clients who we were not able to offer temporary accommodation to.

Of those people who were placed in temporary accommodation, 154 (76%) were male, 45 (22%) were female and 4 (2%) were couples. 46% were of a White ethnic origin, 20% were of a Black ethnic origin and 10% were from an Asian ethnic origin.

Of those people not placed, 94 (89%) were male and there was 1 couple. 37 (34%) were of a White ethnic origin, 23 (22%) were of a Black Ethnic Origin and 15 (14%) were of an Asian background.

The age breakdown of those placed and not placed was identical. 36 (34%) were aged between 26-35, 31 (29%) were aged between 18-25 and 25 (24%) were aged between 36-45. 12 (11%) were between 46-55 and 2 (2%) were aged above 56 years.

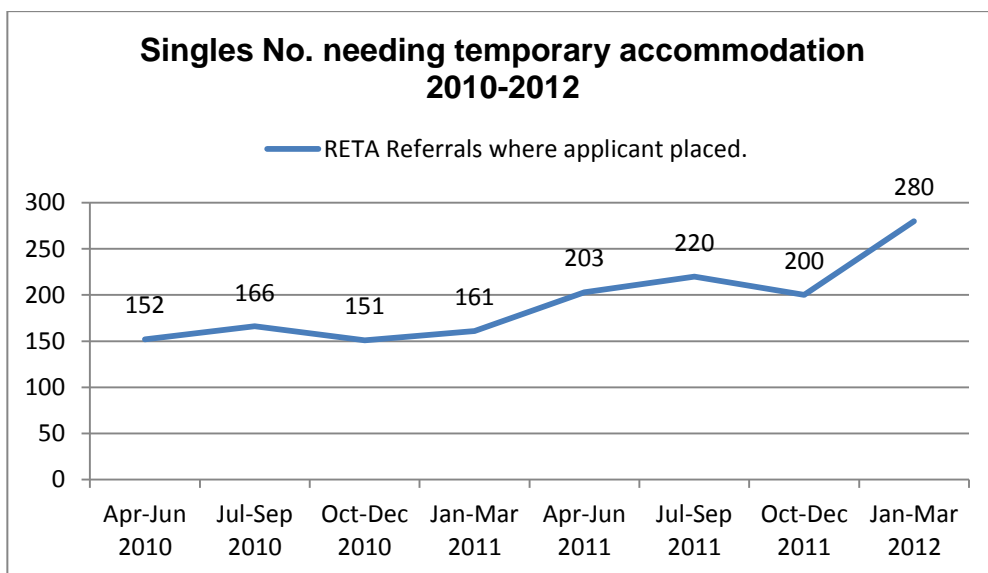
During this period, the most frequent cause for homelessness was the loss of National Asylum Support Service accommodation, followed by being asked to leave by family or partner.

Source: LCC Report on Single People and Housing in Leicester – Initial Data from Ending Direct Access to LCC Hostels (December 2010)

3.6 Households placed in temporary accommodation

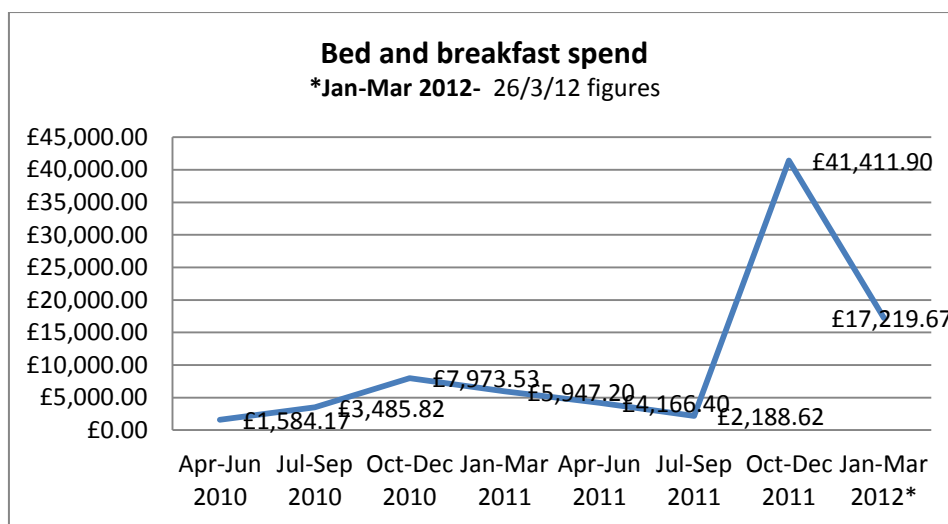
The number of households in temporary accommodation has increased by 13%, but has been decreasing since October 2011. This figure peaked with the introduction of the banding system, where homeless applicants were placed in Band 1.

The number of single or childless couples needing temporary accommodation increased by 43% from 630 to 901 between April 2010 and March 2012. However, these clients do not reflect individual unique clients and there is an element of double counting as clients present on more than one occasion.



3.6 Bed and Breakfast

45 households were placed in bed and breakfast, during 2011/12, at a cost £64, 986.59. 91% were families and 9% were households without children. Although the number of households in temporary accommodation has fallen, this figure peaked with the introduction of the banding system.



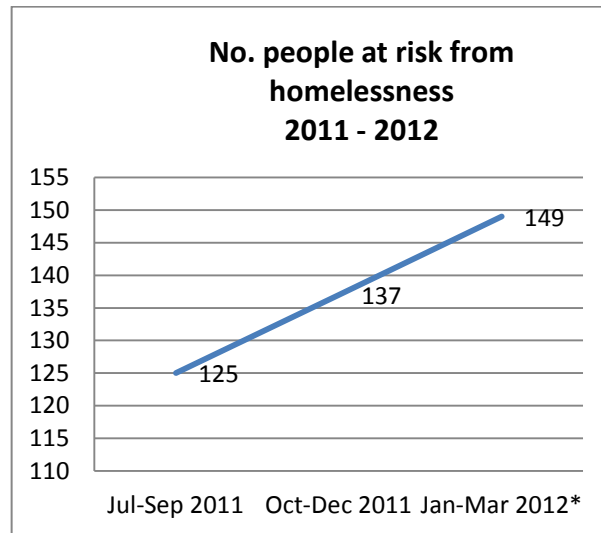
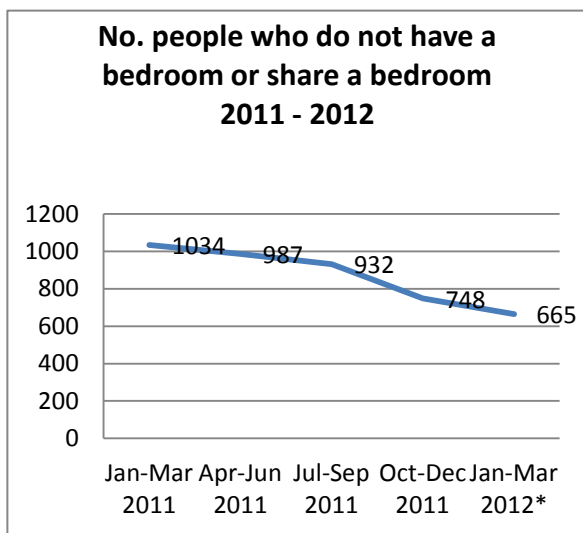
The average length of stay was 8 days, with a maximum of 47 days. This represents a reduction since 2010 / 11 when 141 households were placed as a result of the introduction of the banding system.

Household Type	Total Households	Average Days	Maximum Days
Family with Children	41	8	47
Household with no Children	4	2	3
Grand Total	45	8	47

However, the use of bed and breakfast shows an upward trend, even if we ignore the large increase in October 2010. Bed and breakfast is only used when no other accommodation is available and the Council works hard to minimise the time families spend here. Bed and breakfast is also used as a temporary measure while other preventative initiatives are put into place, for example negotiating with private sector landlords to allow the family to return back to their home. It is important to note the use of bed and breakfast is not indicative of a homeless duty being owed.

3.7 Those at risk of homelessness

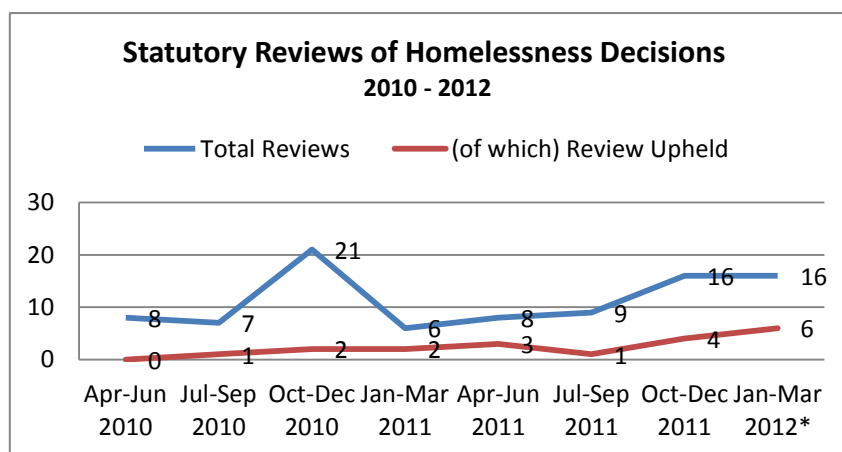
The number of people who do not have their own bedroom has decreased by 36% since January 2011.



Those at risk of homelessness has increased by 19% since July 2011. It is likely that this figure will increase when the impact of welfare reform is realised.

3.8 Statutory decision reviews

There were 49 statutory reviews of homelessness decisions in 2011/12, which is a 17% increase on the previous year. Of these 49, 29% of LCC's decisions were incorrect, also an increase of 17% on the year before.



Proposed Action

We need to look at the upheld cases to highlight where mistakes were made, to help improve future service delivery in this area.

3.9 Rough sleeping in Leicester

At the Homelessness Summit, in November 2011, it was announced that there were just over 50 rough sleepers in Leicester, the highest figure outside of London. The City Mayor pledged to make this a priority and promised a review of homelessness services and the development of a new Homelessness Strategy.

Nationally, 80% of rough sleepers have a history of problematic alcohol and / or drug use and suffer from higher levels of mental health issues. They are also 35 times more likely to commit suicide than the general population. (Source: Homeless Link 2012) They often have health care needs that have not been addressed and often present with a multitude of complex needs.

For this reason, it is not realistic to expect rough sleepers to start engaging with services as soon as they come in from the streets. They need their basic needs attending to first and then should be given some time to adjust to their new surroundings and environment. During the review, some rough sleepers told us that they didn't come in from the streets to hostels as they were usually put into the larger, more chaotic projects, and they found the number of people and noise too much to cope with. One person said they felt unsafe in a hostel environment and would prefer to stay on the streets.

Entrenched rough sleepers, of all nationalities, do not engage easily with services and we need to be more proactive in the way we work with them.

Proposed Action

A robust policy is needed to address rough sleeping amongst those people with and without recourse to public funding. This should be developed in partnership with the Rough Sleepers' Task Panel, who have developed mechanisms to address these issues during the pilot scheme launched in June 2012.

Leicester Context

According to monitoring records, there were 198 unique rough sleepers in 2011. Between January 2011 and January 2012, there was a 157% increase in rough sleeping. However, there was a 35% decrease between March 2011 and March 2012 and the rough sleeper count reduced to 25 by June 2012. Of these 25, 10 were from the European Union. Although they were in receipt of benefits, many were not able to access temporary housing. This makes it difficult to address this client group, particularly as many now have high alcohol dependency issues and rough sleeping only magnifies this problem. *Source: LCC Housing 2012*

Although there is a Rough Sleepers Policy in place (January 2011), numbers have remained high. Previously, the Outreach Team were able to make direct referrals to hostels and this enabled them to engage with rough sleepers at an earlier stage. With the introduction of the SAR, all referrals were to be made using the 'Referral for Emergency Temporary Accommodation' procedure. (RETA)

If accommodation is required, the Outreach Team must submit a RETA form to Housing Options who will allocate available beds to those most in need. As decisions are made towards the end of the day, it is difficult for Outreach to keep the rough sleeper engaged for that period of time. As their lifestyles are so chaotic, they will often leave before a decision has been made, which only contributes to them becoming further entrenched. In recognition of this, bed space allocations are kept open for 48 hours.

During the review process a Rough Sleeper Task Panel was established to address the high number of rough sleepers, particularly EU nationals. The group consists of VCS and Faith providers, the LCC Hostels Head of Service and a Homeless Link representative. The panel asked for a temporary relaxation of the access rules for rough sleepers and the Council and other providers contributed direct access beds via the Outreach Team.

The project resulted in the removal of 28 rough sleepers from the streets and either re-housed them in temporary accommodation or reconnected them back to their own country, with dignity. The success of the trial is particularly down to the development of effective case conferencing about each of these rough sleepers, to develop solutions for them and also the partnership approach about what interventions can be brought to the table, and by whom.

For example, accommodation, floating support, driving people to the airport to support their trip home and providing essentials like clothes and onward travel costs.

The methods used by the project need to be mainstreamed into our everyday working practices as much as possible and the barriers they have identified along the way need real solutions developing to overcome these. This trial has mirrored the principles of No Second Night Out and the project has shown that this can work to reduce rough sleeping and needs developing to ensure successes are sustained.

Proposed Action

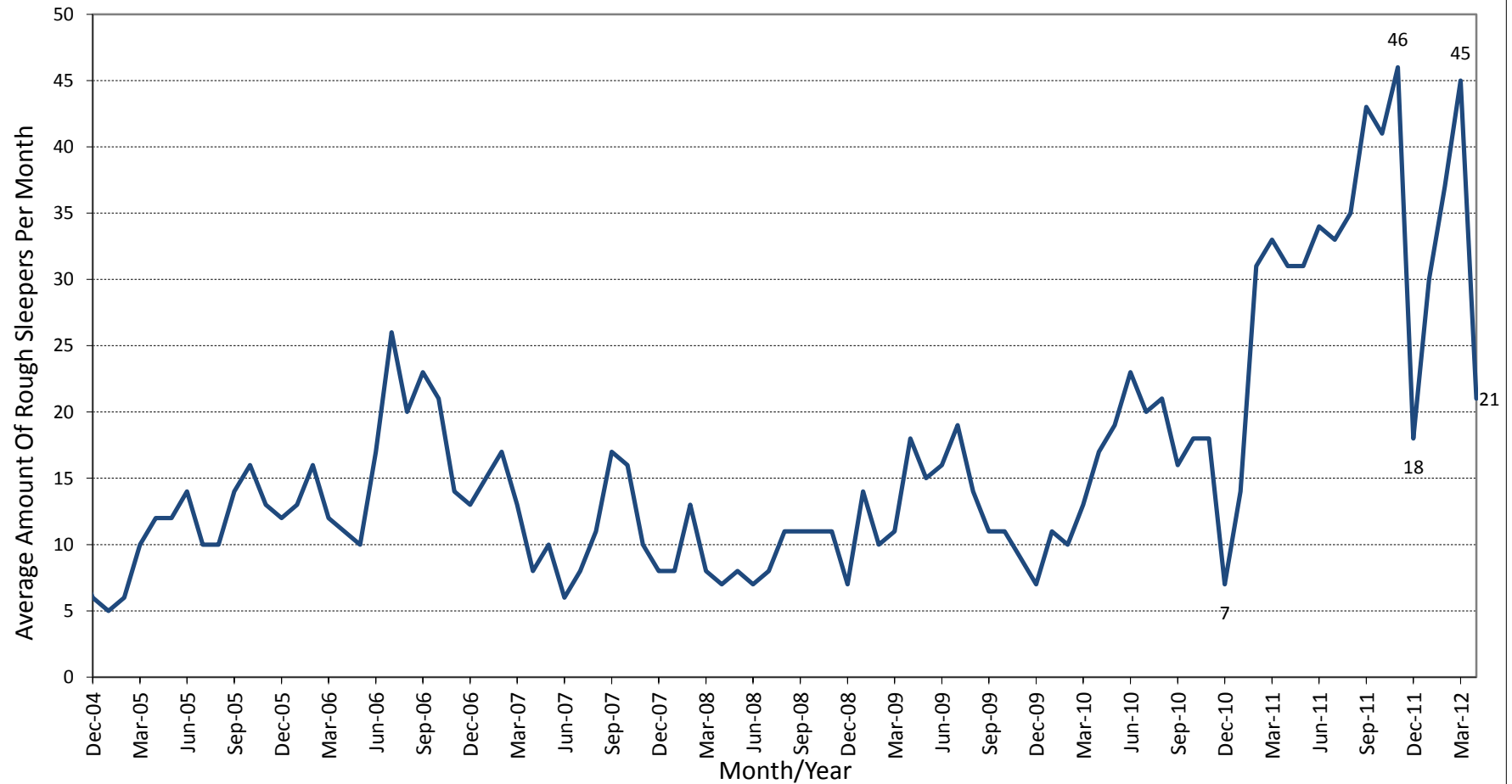
To develop a Leicester 'No Second Night Out' scheme in partnership with the Rough Sleepers Task Force.

As there are high numbers of EU nationals amongst the rough sleeping population it is essential that we have workers in place, who not only speak the main languages, but also understand the culture of this client group.

Proposed Action

The way the current Multi-Disciplinary Team works needs to be re-assessed in light of the work of the Panel to incorporate the lessons learnt.

Average Monthly Number Of Weekly Recorded Rough Sleepers
 Nov 2004 - Present (As per the 'rough sleeper update')



Severe weather beds

The Council and other providers currently have 15 severe weather beds in place for times when the weather is extreme. Some rough sleepers refuse to make use of these beds as there is usually nowhere to store their possessions and they also say it is not worth coming in for one night. This table shows the number of beds used from December – April 2012 and this reflects the unseasonable cold and wet weather experienced during this time.

2011 / 12	Number of admissions Severe Weather Beds
December	50
January	34
February	38
March	17
April	61

Source: LCC Housing 2012

3.10 People more at risk of homelessness

1. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)

Issues related to sexuality and sexual identity can play a key role in the onset of homelessness due to intolerance and homophobia. This is particularly the case with gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender young people.

The government estimates that 5-7% of the general population identify as LGBT. Approximately 7% of clients in an average project, for homeless people, identify as being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. (*Source: Homeless Link – SNAP survey 2011*) At present, Leicester City Council does not have full profiling information in relation to LGBT groups which makes it difficult to plan for services to meet their needs.

Proposed Action

We need to improve the profiling information for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people to ensure we have a full picture of their needs and the issues they face and develop solutions to address these issues.

Leicester's previous Homelessness Strategy identified the need for improved support at Housing Options and also for safe accommodation to meet the needs of LGBT communities. This has not been progressed and needs to be looked at again to establish if this is still required and if so, how this can be achieved.

2. Young People

Young people are often forced to leave the family home during a crisis and have few life skills to effectively deal with this. They are unaware of the support that is available to them and they need to be sign-posted to appropriate services, who have a specialist understanding of their needs.

There needs to be a clear pathway for young people including those who have gained a 'bad' reputation or have received bans. These follow them throughout their homeless journey. Young people are more likely to move between hostels and are more likely to accrue rent arrears, increasing the probability of becoming institutionalised as they face barriers to achieving independent living.

There is also an increasing financial cost of youth homelessness the longer they remain homeless which can include extra policing and increased health and social services provision.

Like all hostel residents, young people require a range of good quality accommodation with appropriate support that will enable them to access education, training, employment and also drug and alcohol support. At present there is a wide variance in the design and quality of young people's accommodation and support in Leicester.

The *Homeless Watch Report from Homelesslink (2011)* makes a number of recommendations to help prevent youth homelessness and reduce the impact that it has and the Council is working with its partners to achieve these.

- ensure changes to the welfare system do not cause higher youth homelessness
- maintain cost effective advice and prevention services

- maintain housing related support
- ensure there is effective partnership working between Housing and Children's and Young People's Services to meet their legal duties to 16 and 17 year olds
- improve access for young people to the private rented sector and provide support to enable them to maintain these tenancies
- provide better access to education, training and employment for young people

The Government is also "encouraging local authorities to offer support to schools to identify young people (or whole families) that may be at risk of homelessness and ensure that they know where to go to access support for housing and other needs. This may include referral to family mediation services, local housing options services or to local services for troubled families."

Making every contact count - A joint approach to preventing homelessness (Aug 2012)

Leicester context

During 2011/12, 1 homeless declaration was made by a young person and received a positive decision.

131 young people were placed in LCC hostels and also Voluntary Sector direct access hostels. As the young people accessing services directly, were not assessed by the Housing Options Service, it is not possible to identify the number that would have been owed a homeless duty.

16 young people were also placed in private sector properties as part of LCC's preventative initiatives.

There is a common assessment framework across all hostel agencies and joint key working in place between Hostels, the Youth Offending Service and the Children and Young People' Service.

Housing Options works closely with the Youth Offending Service and the Voluntary Sector to ensure joint working and referral procedures.

Proposed Action

To continue to work closely with Children's Services to prevent young people becoming homeless.

To develop a minimum accommodation standard for young people's accommodation.

3. Care Leavers

Care leavers have lower educational achievements and lower levels of participation in higher education. They also experience high levels of unemployment and welfare dependency. 20% of young people will use drugs after becoming homeless. *Source: Homeless Link 2012*

Leicester Context

In Leicester, there are normally 35 young people in long-term care, in any age group, with around 90% of these being in foster care and the remaining 10% in residential care. There

are also additional young people coming in and out of care.

Source: CYPS 2012

The Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) fund bed spaces for 16/17 year old looked after children and care leavers with a range of providers to support the transition from care to adulthood and independence.

There are also three supported lodgings places for care leavers, where a room is offered within a home setting to provide a safe and supportive environment. Housing related support is provided for up to two years to help with the transition to independence.

CYPS require 50 bed spaces, each year, for care leavers in order to fulfil their statutory requirements. At any one time, there are 25 young people aged 16/17 years in supported accommodation who are classed as eligible or relevant under the Children Leaving Care Act. Also, a further 25 bed spaces are required for young people aged 18 years and above, who are classed as former relevant young people, under the Act.

In 2011/12, 33 young people, leaving care, were placed in hostel accommodation, across the city.

Source: Supporting People 2012

Proposed Action

To work with Children's Services to ensure there is an adequate supply of good quality and appropriate accommodation for care leavers.

4. Teenage Parents

Young parents often leave home at a very young age, having had an unsettled family background and multiple moves. They tend to have poor life skills and educational attainment and can present with a range of complex needs.

They are caused considerable stress through uncertainty about housing and also often have difficulty accessing mainstream health, social care and support services. The role of the Health Visitor is vital as they will be able to determine if referrals to other services are required.

It is essential that these young parents are placed in suitable accommodation with support, preferably before their child is born, to provide a period of sustained stability.

Leicester Context

In Leicester, teenage pregnancy rates are higher than the national average but have reduced by 30%. (Source: Leicester City Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood Partnership 2012) While it is hoped these rates will continue to decrease it is impossible to make predictions on future levels of teenage pregnancy.

In 2011/12, 29 teenage parent families were placed in temporary hostel accommodation in the Voluntary Sector.

There were 6 positive decisions for teenage parents, compared to 3 for the previous year. However, as many teenage parents entered direct access hostels, and were not assessed by the Housing Options Service, it is not possible to identify the number that would have been owed a homeless duty.

Staff have highlighted that they are seeing an increase in the number of unplanned pregnancies in hostels and we spoke to residents who had experienced more than 1 stay in a hostel. We need to ensure that all staff are trained in sexual health promotion.

Staff also raised the issue of the number of children that are in hostels and the need to protect these children. Many young children are on the child protection register and staff work with parents to achieve removal from this list. There are concerns that current monitoring arrangements focus on the progress of the mother, instead of monitoring progress of the child, and father, also.

Teenage parents often have difficulty maintaining a tenancy and as a result face barriers to move-on, usually due to rent arrears. However being in a hostel environment can be detrimental to a child's well-being and these barriers need to be addressed and overcome.

The question was posed, during the review, about whether 16 and 17 year old teenage parents should be in foster care to help support them during this period?

The Leicester City Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood Partnership aims to raise young people's aspirations and support young people to make informed and positive choices regarding their relationships and sexual health. They aim to see a reduction in the number of unplanned teenage pregnancies and improve outcomes for young parents and their children.

Proposed Action

We need to ensure support planning focuses on developing life skills to enable young parents to raise their child in a stable environment and to address any barriers to move-on they may be facing.

5. Offenders and ex-offenders

The placement of offenders into settled and suitable housing can be a foundation for rehabilitation, re-settlement and managing risk and can be a springboard for other important steps, such as gaining employment, registering with a doctor and accessing other support, such as drugs and alcohol services.

Without stable accommodation, offenders are more at risk of re-offending, thereby creating more victims and causing more damage to local communities. Nationally, approximately 30% of offenders have been found to have offence related accommodation issues and this rises to 50%, if the person also has mental health issues.

(Source: Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Trust 2012)

Offenders also find it difficult to access housing due to a number of barriers:

- release from custody
- financial status / former tenancy arrears
- lack of single person accommodation
- shortage of affordable and supported housing for offenders, particularly those with low-level needs
- local connection
- relationship / family breakdown
- substance use

(Source: Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Trust 2012)

Leicester Context

50% of Leicestershire offenders, entering prison, have been assessed as having housing problems, prior to sentencing, and 30% of those leaving prison, had no fixed address to return to. This translates into an 80% probability of re-offending. One third of offenders lose their housing while in custody, with also many losing their local connection to their local area. (Source: Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Trust 2012)

Prolific and other priority offenders have higher accommodation needs than the general offender group. Intense work is undertaken to address these issues, within existing resources, however each year, around 200 Leicester offenders complete their supervision without having achieved settled accommodation. According to the Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Trust (LRPT), a number of these offenders are known to pose a high risk of harm to the public, a risk more likely to be aggravated by their unsettled and unsupervised circumstances.

In 2011/12, 149 Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Trust referrals were made, with Leicester City Council being the eligible authority. From April to June 2012, there have been 59 referrals and 38 of these required specialist offender accommodation on a full-time basis. (24/7) An analysis of referrals has shown that 60% of referrals relate to City clients and 40% to County. (Source: Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Trust 2012)

In the case of high risk or high profile MAPPA offenders, there is a duty for housing authorities to co-operate with probation, under the MAPPA legislation, to provide appropriate housing. Certain offenders may be directed to live at Approved Premises, as part of their licence conditions, but this is linked to risk management rather than addressing ex-offender homelessness.

Probation is receiving more referrals for medium risk offenders who are not being directed to live there, as part of their licence conditions, but as a result of no other housing options being available. (Source: Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Trust 2012)

Although there are two probation approved premises in Leicester, their role is to manage high risk offenders and therefore do not provide general hostel accommodation. At present, the only hostel accommodation for medium to high risk offenders is through Stonham and Addulum. In response to funding reductions, these specialist providers have reduced their level of evening support to a concierge service. Low risk offenders are referred to more generic providers.

Planned housing for offenders also enables police and probation services to monitor and manage and work with these offenders. The table below shows the number of offenders, under supervision, living in settled and suitable accommodation, at the end of their order or licence. There was no information available from September 2011 to March 2012.

NI 143 Target	Year	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
85%	2011/12	88	88	87	88	88							
	2010/11	91	89	87	84	89	87	87	86	88	88	85	90
	2009 / 10	82	87	89	89	82	88	87	86	83	89	88	87

(Source: Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Trust 2012)

Housing Options has developed a good working relationship with Probation and Her Majesty's Prison Leicester to ensure the accommodation needs of offenders are addressed prior to their discharge.

Joint working arrangements are in place with HMP Leicester to plan for prisoner discharge, 6 weeks prior to release. Cases are identified by the Prison's Resettlement Team and referred to Housing Options, who will visit the person in prison and plan the housing solutions upon discharge. This is to prevent the risk of re-offending and being released to 'no fixed address'. Work is co-ordinated with the Integrated Offender Management Hub, based at Mansfield House Police Station, to look at needs and to identify any risk factors.

Single Points of Contact have been designated within the Prison, Probation and Housing Options, to ensure that there is effective management of cases.

Housing Options Offender Enquiries 01/03/11 to 31/03/2012

Outcome	Type of Enquiry		
	Prison Link - Interview	Probation Interview	Grand Total
Prison Link: Advice given & actioned	29		29
Referral	5	2	7
Options Maximised	3		3
Private Rented Advice		1	1
Temporary Accommodation Advice/Referral	1		1
Homeless Prevention: Hostel or HMO		1	1
Homeless Prevention: Alternative or new accommodation solution	1		1
Grand Total	39	4	43

Offenders tend to be released on a Friday, when access to accommodation and other services is difficult.

Proposed Action

To ensure offenders can access designated beds upon release and to work with HMP Leicester to avoid release on a Friday afternoon if the offender has no accommodation to be released to.

6. Young offenders

Young offenders, or those at risk of offending, need access to suitable and sustainable accommodation.

The Youth Offending Team sees a high level of housing need experienced by its clients, particularly 16 – 18 year olds as a result of:

- family relationships breaking down irretrievably
- it is not safe for a young person to live at home

- the Court has decided that the young person should not return to live with parents / carers as their home environment or locality contributes significantly to their offending behaviour

There are also accommodation needs when young people leave custody.

The YMCA youth offending and bail project provides supported accommodation for young people who have offended or are at risk of offending, to re-integrate them into society and obtain the skills necessary to address their offending behaviour.

The YMCA developed this area of work with specialist staff in response to national research, that demonstrated a link between the provision of stable supported accommodation and a young person's chances of offending and re-offending. Their model had been recognised by the Youth Justice Board and will be rolled out nationally.

However, it is still often difficult to find suitable accommodation for young offenders due to the nature of their offence, substance misuse, complex needs or due to age restrictions.

Proposed Action

To overcome access criteria barriers to ensure all young offenders are able to access suitable accommodation to avoid them becoming homeless. There needs to be a range of options available to reflect the situation that 16-18 year olds cannot hold tenancies.

7. Ex-Military Personnel

Local Authorities now have a responsibility to ensure military personnel do not become homeless and are given the advice and assistance they need. They may have no appropriate accommodation, upon release from the armed forces, and may also struggle to secure employment.

This client group also often have complex needs, including mental health issues that they are unaware of themselves. They also often find it difficult to access the appropriate services for their needs.

Leicester Context

Leicester has extremely low numbers of ex-military personnel declaring themselves homeless. There have been no positive homeless decisions relating to ex-military personnel during the last three years.

8. Primary Health Care needs

People who sleep rough are more likely to have poorer health than the wider community, including lower life expectancy and increased risk of physical and mental health problems. They often present when health problems are at an advanced stage as health is not considered a priority when you are trying to survive on the streets.

Many people arrive on the streets with existing health issues and the longer they stay out, the more their problems multiply and the harder they are to overcome. Helping someone who is homeless is not just about providing shelter, it also involves the right support to help them regain their health.

- 80% of homeless people have one or more physical health need
- Rough sleepers experience TB at 200 times that of the general population
- The average age of death is estimated to be 43 – 47 years
- 40% of homeless people will have used A and E in the past six months
- 1/3 will have been admitted to hospital as an inpatient
- 10% have been refused access to a GP

Source: Homelesslink 2012

It is nationally recognised that homeless people find it difficult to access services and when they do services are often unable to deal with complex needs. NHS staff often lack awareness about how homelessness affects an individual's health, particularly they release homeless people from hospital, when they have nowhere to go.

Leicester Context

Leicester City Council has a Hospital Discharge Policy to ensure homeless patients have somewhere safe to go when they are released. Housing Options provide an interview at the hospital to give advice and assistance and will liaise with relevant agencies.

In Leicester, most homeless patients are registered with the Inclusion Healthcare Service at the Dawn Centre, which is nationally recognised as a unique and effective service for homeless people. Inclusion Healthcare is a social enterprise which works to improve the health and well-being of homeless and other marginalised people through the delivery of responsive and high quality healthcare services including:

- Registration
- Complementary Therapist
- Ophthalmic Optician
- Access to a midwife
- Foot care Service
- Practice Therapist for common Mental Health problems
- Health Checks e.g. blood pressure, asthma, diabetes, weight management

In addition to primary care, they also provide specialist support for people with alcohol related problems.

Inclusion Healthcare currently have 942 patients on their list many of which are either sofa surfing or rough sleeping. A small number are in their own tenancies.

Patient List	Male	Female	Age 65+
942	802	140	9

Source: Inclusion Healthcare 2012

The service has been successful in responding to the needs of homeless people by providing a rapid response and an integrated continuum of care afterwards. They have recently opened another facility at Charles Berry House (East Bond Street) and it is hoped sex workers will access the centre for healthcare as they currently won't attend the Dawn Centre.

Homeless healthcare is very different to mainstream services. GPs often make assumptions that all patients have access to warm accommodation, with clean water and someone to help look after them. Some patients will need to be accommodated while they receive treatment. Inclusion Healthcare works closely with local hospitals, Housing Options and the Dawn Centre to ensure that if a homeless person is being discharged from hospital, and requires extra healthcare, that they are given a 'health bed' at the Dawn Centre. This enables services to meet the health needs of clients, in a stable environment, if they have either been discharged from hospital or have been referred from another hostel as a medical transfer.

Inclusion Healthcare have identified that homeless families also find it difficult to access Primary healthcare services.

Proposed Action

To continue to work closely with Inclusion Healthcare, within the Council's new public health responsibilities, to ensure the needs of homeless single people and families are recognised and addressed, including dental care.

10. Mental health issues

Nationally, approximately 70% of people accessing homelessness services have a mental health problem, often combined with alcohol and / or drug dependency issues. The person can often not be aware of their problems and if they are, may be reluctant to admit to this. *(Source: Homeless Link 2012)*

An accurate assessment cannot be undertaken quickly as it takes time to get to the bottom of the situation and for the person to build up the trust and confidence to share their story.

Rough sleepers or those living in temporary accommodation often display greater rates of mental health than the general population and illnesses are often more severe or complex. Homelessness may be both a cause and a consequence of mental disorder and this can become worse the longer the homelessness continues.

However, homeless people experience problems accessing healthcare often due to bureaucracy, but also as a result of their own chaotic lifestyles.

The Homeless Mental Health Service in Leicester provides assessment and engagement services to people who are homeless. They will visit hostels on an outreach basis and also by providing a daily drop-in service at the Dawn Centre. (Monday to Friday)

Services need to be able to respond to needs as they arise and when people are ready to engage. Due to the chaotic lifestyles of homeless people, they tend not to show up for appointments, set too far into the future, and if they have to travel to appointments.

The aim of the service is to assess and engage people who would have difficulties accessing traditional mental health services due to being homeless. They do this by:

- Providing appropriate, personalised assessments and access to treatment services

- Assist clients to access appropriate housing
- Facilitating access to mainstream services
- Sharing models of care
- Providing information, advice and training to other professionals
- Liaising between hostel providers and mainstream mental health services

Leicester Context

Hospital discharges can be delayed due to a lack of accommodation to be released to and the Hospital Discharge Protocol has been developed with Housing Options.

During 2011/12, there were 368 referrals to the service, with 67% being male and 79.6% of White British background.

7% were rough sleepers, an increase on the previous 2 years, and 9% were sofa surfing. 76% of referrals were from hostels and 3.5% had their own tenancy. Inclusion Healthcare made 56% of these referrals and 44% were made by GPs.

There was a 32% reduction in planned contacts from the previous year due to one staff member being on maternity leave. Attendance rates rose to 70%. *Source: Homeless Mental Health Service*

Location seen	Number of planned contacts		% Seen	
	10 / 11	11 / 12	10 / 11	11 / 12
Dawn Centre	709	489	62	64
LCC Hostels	279	308	66	73
VCS Hostels	157	109	70	82
In Tenancy	119	65	72	80

Mental health needs to be assessed in accommodation and clients need a therapeutic environment for this to be undertaken. The new Public Health Outcomes Framework indicator on 'people with mental illness and disability in settled accommodation' makes the link between mental health and housing explicit. *The Mental Health Strategy for England, No Health Without Mental Health* recognises that secure and stable housing is essential for good mental health and that homeless people experience a range of mental health problems, often in conjunction with drug and alcohol problems. The forthcoming *Mental Health Strategy implementation framework* will support local organisations in ensuring that the mental health needs of homeless people, and those at risk, are properly taken into account by local services.

Proposed Action

To continue to work closely with the Mental Health Outreach Service.

To work in partnership with the appropriate agencies to identify and address the mental health needs of homeless people.

11. Alcohol and drugs

Appropriate and sustainable housing is a foundation for successful rehabilitation of drug and alcohol users. Stable housing provision and housing support are crucial to sustaining employment, treatment, finances and family support and is a major resettlement need for those leaving prison, treatment and residential rehabilitation. Nationally,

- 75% of single homeless have a history of problematic drug misuse
- 80% for rough sleepers
- 40% of single homeless people cite drug use as the main reason for their homelessness
- 66% report increasing problematic substance use after becoming homeless

Source: Drugs and Alcohol Team 2012

Effective resettlement of any individual requires the development of a holistic package of support, including housing, which can only be achieved through partnership joint working. Problematic substance users present with a wide range of needs including mental/physical health issues, financial issues, criminal justice system involvement, social isolation and family breakdown.

Individuals also often face exclusion from housing due to past offending behaviour, past history of rent arrears, not being identified as in priority need, placed in short term unstable accommodation or due to difficulty in complying with conditions .

Some providers are often reluctant to house this client group due to perceptions around neglect and / or damage to properties, risks around hypodermic syringes sharps or substances found in properties and potential anti-social / abusive behaviour.

We need to strike a balance between offering a supportive approach to service users' substance use whilst ensuring a robust approach when addressing certain behaviours that cannot be tolerated within the current legal framework.

It is crucial that aftercare support is fully integrated within treatment services as any fragmentation will lead to poor engagement, attrition and poor outcomes.

Leicester Context

The multi-agency street drinking project led by the Drug and Alcohol Team found that of the 218 street drinkers identified in 2011, 36% of these were known to have slept rough and 47% had accessed the hostel system.

87% were identified with multiple support needs, including alcohol and substance misuse, housing issues, anti-social behaviour, offending, mental health needs and increased A&E attendance.

- 5 out of the 24 were rough sleepers
- 15 out of the 24 had a long term history of homelessness
- 19 out of the 24 had accessed hostels

Source: Drugs and Alcohol Team 2012

Individuals present with complex support needs and will be at different stages in their treatment journeys. Substance misuse problems are often long term/chronic and not easily remedied by short term fixes. They are issues that require sustained long term engagement in helping individuals stabilise their lives and to live independently within the community. Support needs to be tailored to individual need, determined within the context of a multi-disciplinary care plan and can flit between intensive and enhanced support to ad hoc support.

Proposed Action

Ensure staff receive training to undertake effective assessments, identify areas of risk and develop appropriate responses, in consultation with relevant services.

Develop a co-ordinated pathway which includes specialist outreach workers, hostel provision, floating support and on-going short / long term resettlement.

Support packages need to include a clear 'exit strategy' in order to ensure that clients are not supported for overly long periods of time, with little progress being made. There needs to be increased focus on meeting outcomes.

We need to commission more specialist floating support to bridge the gap between the drug treatment services and generic housing support services.

Proposed Action

We need to develop the use of mediation aimed at reconciling individuals into the family and alleviating pressure on housing services.

12. Complex needs

"People's needs are said to be complex when they occur in a number of areas including poor housing, homelessness, substance mis-use, mental health, poor health, poor education or long-term unemployment. Learning disability can also be a factor, as can emotional health through isolation or low self-esteem. The full range of someone's need may not be immediately apparent and may emerge only after a period of time."

(Source: Response Consulting 2007)

We have found that people with complex needs have at least two of the following issues:

- Alcohol or drug dependency
- Has recently received or is receiving treatment for acute anxiety or depression
- Has attended special education in the past
- Has a history of self-harm
- Has a history of offending
- Has a history of rough sleeping
- A history of mental health problems
- Experience of fleeing abuse / domestic violence
- Experience of being culturally disadvantaged
- Experience of multiple exclusions, such as poverty, poor housing and education

During the review, it became clear that existing services are set up to address one issue at a time and find it is difficult to identify the main primary need of someone with multiple issues. Many of the generic providers find it difficult to address complex needs clients in a hostel environment which can lead to the person being evicted or abandoning their accommodation.

There appears to be a lack of co-ordination of services for people with complex needs and we need to build on the MDT case-conferencing to overcome this.

The *National Health Service Future Forum* has acknowledged that people often find care systems difficult to navigate, and that having a person to help co-ordinate their care made a significant difference to both their experience and the effectiveness of their care. The Government wants everyone with a care plan to be allocated a named professional who has an overview of their case and is responsible for answering any questions they, or their family, might have.

Proposed Action

The existing Service Directory should be updated so information is available to providers and clients on the services which are available and how to access these services.

Review the role of Multi-Disciplinary Team to further develop case conferencing for complex needs clients.

To work in partnership with the appropriate agencies to identify and address the complex needs of homeless people.

13. Ethnic minority households

National homelessness statistics indicate that ethnic minority households are approximately three times more likely than the general population to be accepted as owed a main homelessness duty. Also, people from Black African and Black Caribbean origins are twice as likely to be accepted as homeless as Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi origins.

National research shows that there are a number of factors that make black people more susceptible to homelessness than white people. These include larger family sizes, unemployment, discrimination, racial harassment and lower than average incomes. Black people are also over-represented in the criminal justice system which is a risk factor for homelessness.

According to *Voice for Change group* (2012) "BME communities are amongst those with the lowest incomes, often living in poor housing and with high unemployment rates. These communities tend to have households with more children, particularly the Bangladeshi, Pakistani and African families and restriction on the amount of housing benefit paid to large bedroom homes is likely to have a negative impact." This will result in some families moving away from high rent areas which could lead to increased homelessness.

The Race Equality Foundation has raised concerns about the limitations of mainstream housing services to meet the cultural needs of ethnic minority groups. "Evidence has found that mainstream organisations take fewer referrals from BME organisations, despite the high number of homeless BME individuals."

Leicester Context

In Leicester, black people are over-represented in statutory homeless acceptances, when compared to people from White, Asian and Asian British ethnic backgrounds. They are six times more likely to live in over-crowded conditions than White households. *Source: Shelter*

It is thought the rise in the number of black people being accepted as statutorily homeless is linked to migration and asylum in Leicester.

Leicester was a National Asylum Support Service (NASS) dispersal zone and there is a backlog of decisions. Loss of NASS accommodation remains the biggest reason for loss of settled accommodation; however this is now on a downward trend.

Leicester has a small number of well-established BME providers in the city either directly providing accommodation or as managing agents or support providers for larger social landlords. However, there is lack of specialised, culturally sensitive provision, which meets the needs of this client group including:

- Culture
- Religion
- Literacy
- Language
- Lack of knowledge of services and how to access them

Proposed Action

We need to further develop partnership working between mainstream and BME organisations, to raise awareness of the issues facing minority ethnic homeless households and to learn from their working practices.

We also need to raise awareness of homelessness services within BME communities.

Any barriers, which limit access to early intervention, support and accommodation, need to be identified and actions developed to overcome these.

We need to develop a clear response to people who arrive from other countries, who are destitute.

14. Asylum seekers, refugees and migrants

Asylum seekers, refugees, and other migrants can be especially vulnerable to homelessness. They may lack support networks, have limited knowledge of the British system and language, and their entitlements to support can be confusing.

Most asylum seekers are accommodated in the UK by the Home Office while their claims for asylum are processed. Refugees are generally eligible for social housing and benefits on the same basis as UK nationals. On 1 May 2004, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia - the A8 accession countries - joined the EU. The transitional arrangements that were put into place have now come to an end.

Source: Homeless Link 2012

Homeless Link has published guidance notes on working with all EEA Nationals to clarify what this means for local authorities and their partners in working with A8 nationals and other EEA Nationals who are rough sleeping. This includes:

- Local authorities should offer reconnection to new rough sleepers from EEA countries
- An EEA national who is a jobseeker, worker, student, self-employed or a self-sufficient person is permitted to stay in the UK, beyond an initial three month period
- All EEA nationals are required to show that they are habitually resident, and have a settled intention to remain in the UK, in order to claim out of work income related benefits. Each case must be determined on an individual basis
- Access to hostels, or other supported accommodation, is not automatic, even if an applicant satisfies the Habitual Residence Test and has an entitlement to welfare benefits. However, every effort should be made to support individuals away from rough sleeping

Homeless Link

The Leicester Context

Decisions made under Part 7 of the 1996 Housing Act by Housing Options show a reduction in the number of people with permission to remain indefinitely. The number of EEA workers has increased as has the number of people accepted due to humanitarian reasons, such as protection, discretionary leave and exceptional leave to remain.

Source: P1E Data Returns

Reason	2010/11	2011/12
Indefinite leave to remain	22	7
EEA Worker	2	5
Humanitarian reasons	4	7
Accession National	0	1

Proposed Action

To ensure all people from abroad are given culturally sensitive service offers, appropriate to their circumstances.

Decisions made under Part 7 of the 1996 Housing Act

	UK national (returning to UK or arriving in UK for the first time)	EEA National - Nationality										Non-EEA National	Total	UK national habitually resident in uk	GRAND TOTAL	
		Czech Republic	Estonia	Hungary	Latvia	Lithuania	Poland	Slovakia	Slovenia	Bulgaria	Romania					Other EEA National
Apr-Jun 10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	6	11
Jul-Sept 10	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	12	13	1	14
Oct-Dec 10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	8	8	16
Jan-Mar 11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	6	9	15
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	30	32	24	56
Apr-June 11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	12	14
Jul-Sept 11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	11	13
Oct-Dec 11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	7	37	44
Jan-Mar 12	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	3	5	12	23	35
Total	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	4	14	23	83	106

Chapter Four

Prevention of Homelessness

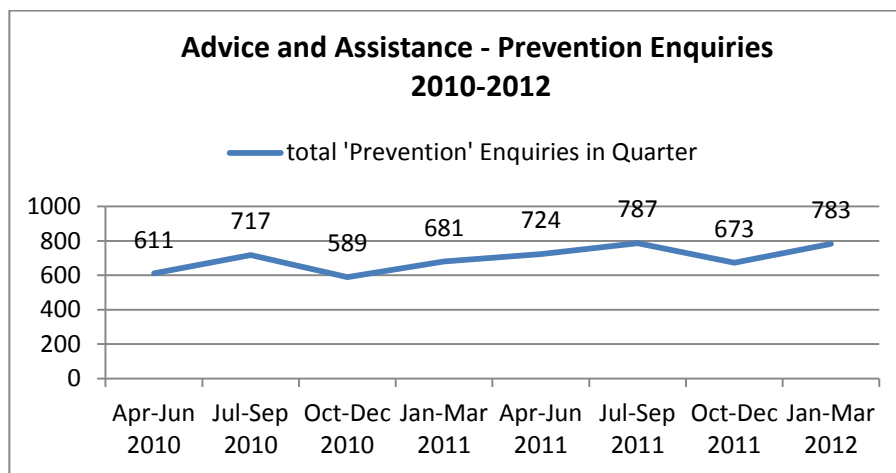
4. Prevention

Homelessness can have significant negative consequences on a person or family including health, education and employment. Enabling people to stay in their existing accommodation and avoiding the need for a formal homelessness assessment is beneficial both to those threatened with homelessness and those agencies which will potentially support them. Preventing someone from becoming homeless is not just about helping them to remain in their home but it is also about family support, mediation, education, debt advice and substance use support.

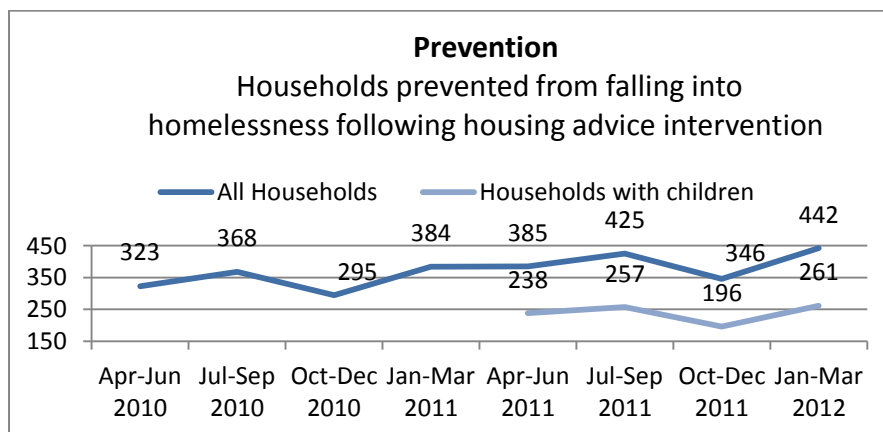
Greater emphasis has been placed on early intervention and prevention initiatives to tackle Homelessness by the Council, in partnership with RSLs, voluntary, community and private sector services.

4.1 Advice and Assistance – Housing Options

The current footfall into the Housing Options Service is averaging 1500 people per week. These may not be unique individuals. The number of people receiving aid and advice from Housing Options increased by 14% during 21011/12.

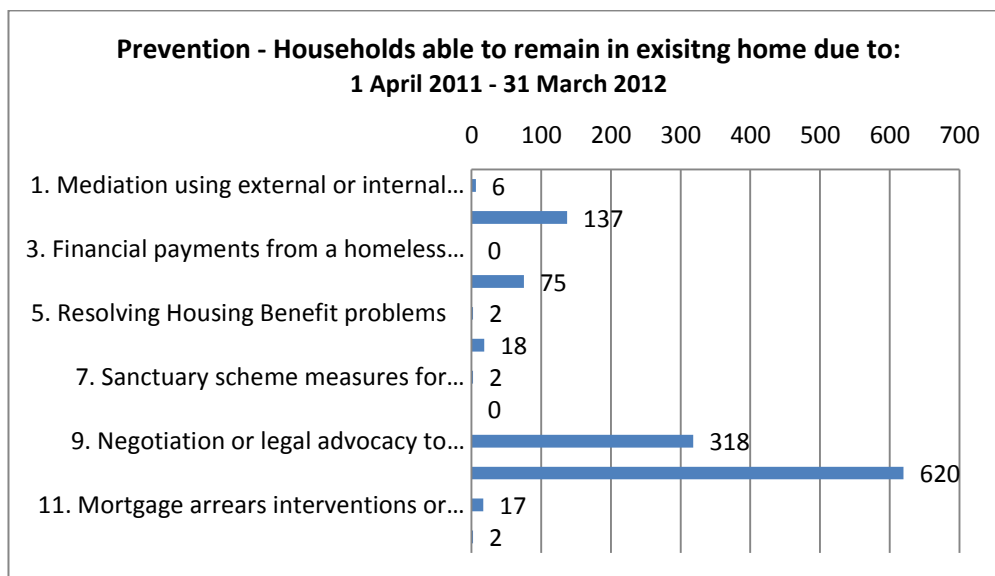


During 2011/12, 1,602 households were prevented from falling into homelessness following receipt of housing advice. This is a 16% increase on the previous year. Of these, 60% of successful preventions related to families.

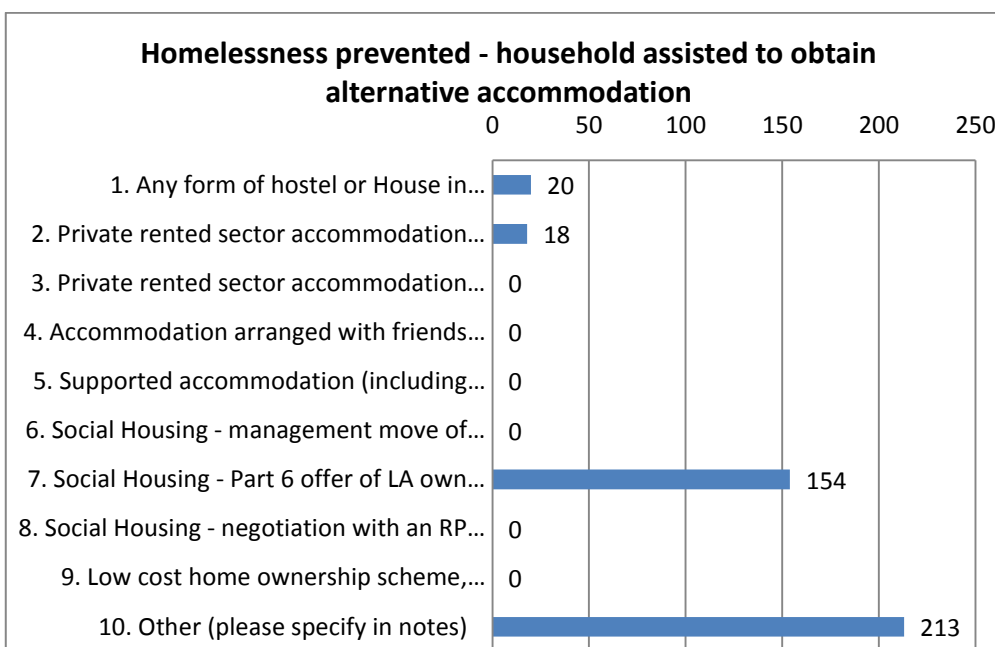


Housing Options staff are trained to recognise clients at risk of homelessness and to

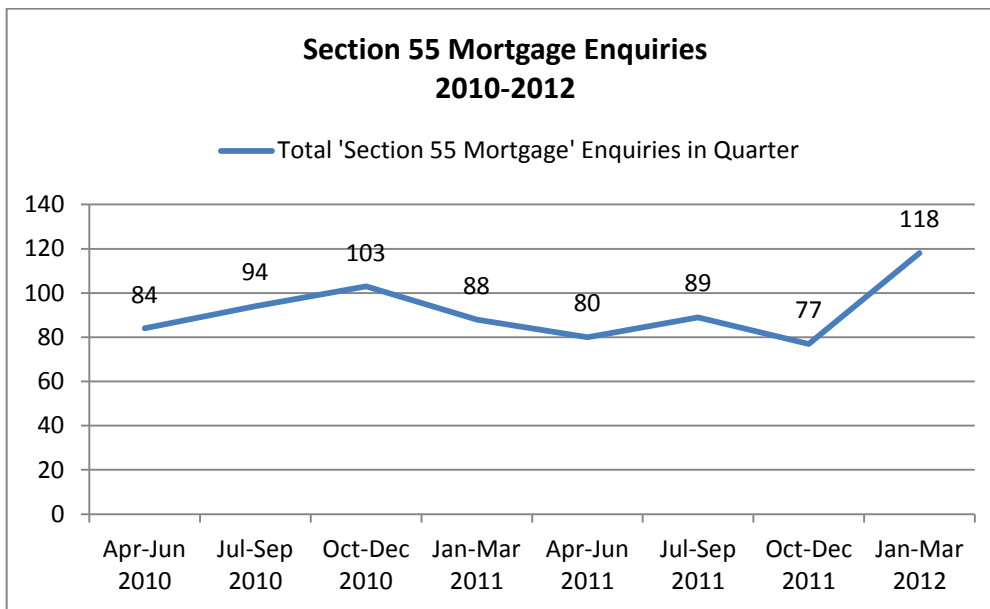
help identify solutions for them. During the last year, Housing Options enabled 1197 households to remain in their home using a variety of interventions including conciliation (11%), negotiation and legal advocacy (27%) and debt advice (6%). The service also undertakes home visits, where necessary; to discuss reasons why households have been asked to leave and, if appropriate, negotiate a delay to the date of leaving.



405 households were supported to obtain alternative accommodation primarily located in Council, RSL or private sector housing.



The number of enquiries relating to mortgage arrears and possessions remained constant between 2010/11 (369) and 2011/12 (365). However, there was a 53% increase between October- December 2011 and January – March 2012.

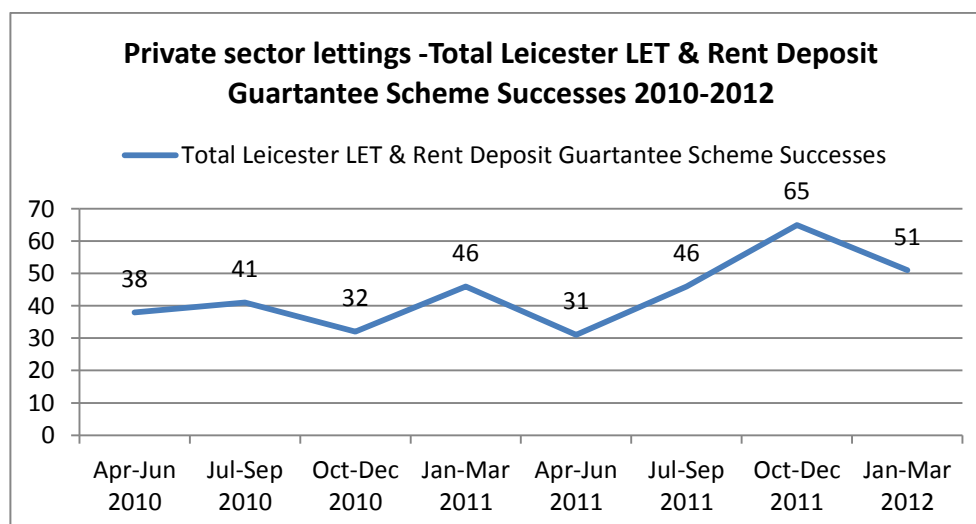


Leicester City Council operates the Leicester Let and Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme. These schemes enable people on low incomes, or who are threatened with homelessness, to access private rented sector accommodation. This can enable people to obtain private rented accommodation in the area of their choice, close to schools, employment and family support.

Housing Options has developed a strong relationship with private sector landlords to secure accommodation for both homeless people and those at risk of homelessness. However, the Shared House Guarantee Scheme has been unable to attract any private sector landlords to the scheme as they are concerned about the perceived risks involved. This is disappointing because people under 35 will only be able to get shared room rent, paid for by Housing Benefit. This means people under 35 have a greater need for council and registered social landlord lets, if they cannot find their own peer group to share with.

There are currently 19 accredited private sector landlords in Leicester.

Since the schemes were introduced in 2007, 588 families and 313 single people / childless couples have been re-housed into the private rented sector.



The number of private sector lettings (193) during 2011/12 increased by 23% on the previous year, however there was a decrease during the final three months of 2011/12.

The Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme achieved 87 private sector lets using 33 shared rooms, 39 bedsits and 25 flats. The Leicester Let Scheme achieved 99 lets, using 58 x 2 bedroom properties, 32 x 3 bedroom properties and 6 x 4 bedroom properties.

Although Housing Options staff are trained to negotiate between parties to overcome barriers to moving home, there is no use of a formal mediation service. This has been used in the past however further work is needed to develop this form of prevention.

Proposed Action

To develop the use of formal mediation as an intervention to prevent homelessness.

4.2 Allocations Policy

The Allocations Policy, is formulated to help applicants to access housing, without having to experience homelessness. Rent arrears remains one of the main barriers to re-housing. However, the normal requirements of re-housing applicants with rent arrears may be relaxed in exceptional circumstances.

Applicants who are ineligible due to former anti-social behaviour may lodge a new application, if they can demonstrate that their behaviour has changed and support is in place.

Changes to the Allocations Policy have recently been consulted on as a result of the welfare reforms.

4.3 Other services not scoped into the review

Although, the following services were not scoped into the review it is important to recognise the role these services play in assisting to help prevent and address homelessness in the City.

Leicester New Start Families Project

This was established in 2005 and is now funded by the Children and Young People's Service. It works with up to 16 families who have been evicted or are at risk of eviction due to their anti-social behaviour, at any one time. The project specialises in tackling anti-social behaviour by identifying the root cause of the problem and then helping families to resolve these issues. Support is intensive and is carried out in partnership with other agencies who are working with the family.

Leicester New Start houses five families, who have been evicted for their anti-social behaviour, in five dispersed properties, and are supported on an outreach basis.

Leicester Community Legal Advice Centre (CLAC)

The Centre provides Leicester residents with information, advice and representation on a range of issues which include debt, benefits, housing, community care, employment and family law.

During 2010/11, 3,000 clients received specialist legal advice and 88% of cases resulted in a positive outcome for clients. Outcomes include:

- 850 clients had their debt reduced or made more manageable
- 500 clients retained their home or were rehoused, following eviction or possession proceedings

- 500 clients received improved benefits or can now manage their benefits more effectively.

Source: CLAC 2012

Shelter Housing Aid and Research Project (SHARP)

This was established in 1974 by the Leicester Shelter Group and provides a Housing Aid Centre that covers Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

It is essential that homeless people, and those at risk of homelessness, are able to access independent advice and advocacy. Every year, SHARP advises around 1000 single and family households who have a range of housing problems, including homelessness, rent or mortgage arrears, housing benefit, relationship breakdown, domestic violence, harassment, disrepair and unsuitable housing.

Source: SHARP 2012

4.4 Benchmarking in prevention

Leicester's performance in preventing homelessness, when compared to our main comparator authorities, is about average for the group.

Proposed Action

We need to identify why our prevention rates vary from our benchmarking partners.

LIVE TABLE 792 - Outcome of homelessness prevention and relief by Local Authority, England, 2010/11

Region or Local Authority area	Number of households (2008 mid-year estimate) (000s)	Number of cases where positive action was successful in <u>preventing</u> homelessness of which household			
		able to remain in existing home	assisted to ob- tain alternative accommodation	Total	rate per 1,000 households
England	21,731	81,800	82,300	164,100	7.6
00FA Kingston upon Hull, City of	115	4,799	440	5,239	45.6
00FK Derby	102	563	967	1,530	15.0
00FN Leicester	121	1,092	322	1,414	11.7
00FY Nottingham	129	2,119	2,441	4,560	35.3
00ML Brighton and Hove	115	692	1,906	2,598	22.6
00MG Milton Keynes	96	33	419	452	4.7
00MS Southampton	98	637	380	1,017	10.4
00HB Bristol, City of	184	741	1,047	1,788	9.7

LIVE TABLE 792 - Outcome of homelessness prevention and relief by Local Authority, England, 2010/11

Region or Local Authority area		Number of cases where positive action was suc- cessful in <u>relieving home- lessness</u>	<i>rate per 1,000 households</i>	<u>Total cases of prevention and relief</u>	<i>rate per 1,000 households</i>
England		24,800	1.1	188,800	8.7
00FA	Kingston upon Hull, City of	523	4.5	5,762	50.1
00FK	Derby	73	0.7	1,603	15.7
00FN	Leicester	282	2.3	1,696	14.0
00FY	Nottingham	60	0.5	4,620	35.8
00ML	Brighton and Hove	143	1.2	2,741	23.8
00M G	Milton Keynes	385	4.0	837	8.7
00MS	Southampton	7	0.1	1,024	10.4
00HB	Bristol, City of	964	5.2	2,752	15.0

Chapter Five

Review Data, Findings and Recommendations

Housing Related Support Services

5. Capacity

5.1 Temporary Accommodation

As of 1 April 2012, there were 629 City Council funded units of supported accommodation, of which 450 units are for single people and childless couples, 132 for families and 47 for women at risk from domestic violence. Leicester City Council provides 28% of this provision. All figures used in this review do not include Upper Tichbourne Street hostel (41), as this is scheduled for closure in 2013.

There are 842 units of floating support, 69% (580) of this is provided through the LCC in-house STAR service. Of these 580 units, 50 have been allocated to the Revolving Door Project. 70% of LCC floating support is funded by the Housing Revenue Account.

The table below details service capacity by accommodation and support and by client group.

Complete Service Capacity as at 01/04/2012				
Support Duration	Service Type	Primary Client Group	Capacity	
Permanent housing	Floating support service	Drug problems	75	
		Generic	292	
		Homeless families with support needs	7	
		Offenders / People at risk of offending	42	
		Refugees	60	
		Single homeless with support	197	
		Travellers	12	
		Women at risk from domestic violence	81	
		Young People at risk	43	
		Young people leaving care	33	
Permanent housing Total	Floating support service Total		842	
Planned duration of service: less than 2 years	Supported housing	Alcohol Problems	6	
		Drug problems	24	
		Homeless families with support needs	51	
		Offenders / People at risk of offending	46	
		Single homeless with support	156	
		Young People at risk	117	
			400	
Planned duration of service: less than 2 years Total	Supported housing Total		400	
Planned duration of service: more than 2 years	Supported housing	Mental Health Problems	3	
		Single homeless with support	14	
			17	
Planned duration of service: more than 2 years Total	Supported housing Total		17	
Short term/time limited	Accommodation for teenage parents	Teenage parents	29	
	Accommodation for teenage parents Total		29	
	Direct access	Homeless families with support needs	52	
		Single homeless with support	62	
		Young People at risk	22	
		Direct access Total		136
	Women's refuge	Women at risk from domestic violence	47	
Women's refuge Total		47		
Short term/time limited Total			212	
Grand Total			1471	

5.2 Current provision for the primary client groups

Client Group	Service
Generic	Floating Support Service General Prevention Tenancy Support Service
Homeless Families with Support Needs	Leicester New Start Families Project Foundation's Women's Hostel Bethany Border House Hostel Kirton Lodge
Offenders or People at risk of Offending	OASYS (LCC & Probation) Housing Support and Resettlement (SHARP) Beacon Hill House Bradgate House Move on Service Norman House Project
People with Alcohol Problems	Evesham House
People with Drug Problems	Heathfield House Substance Use Team
People with Mental Health Problems	Floating Support Housing & Support Elstree Avenue
Refugees	Refugee Floating Support Service
Single Homeless with Support Needs	Mayfield House Avondale Oakfield House Tatlow House The Dawn Centre Upper Tichbourne Hostel Action Homeless Resettlement Loughborough Road Hostel Single Homeless and Homeless Families The Hollies Jarvis House Wordsworth Road Supported Housing The Haven Tichborne House Vaughan Street Daneshill House Iona Close - Supported Housing Foundation's Men's Hostels Oronsay Road Park Lodge and St Michaels
Teenage Parents	Elmfield House Gap Project Liberty House
Traveller	Gypsies & Travellers
Women at Risk of Domestic Violence	SAFE

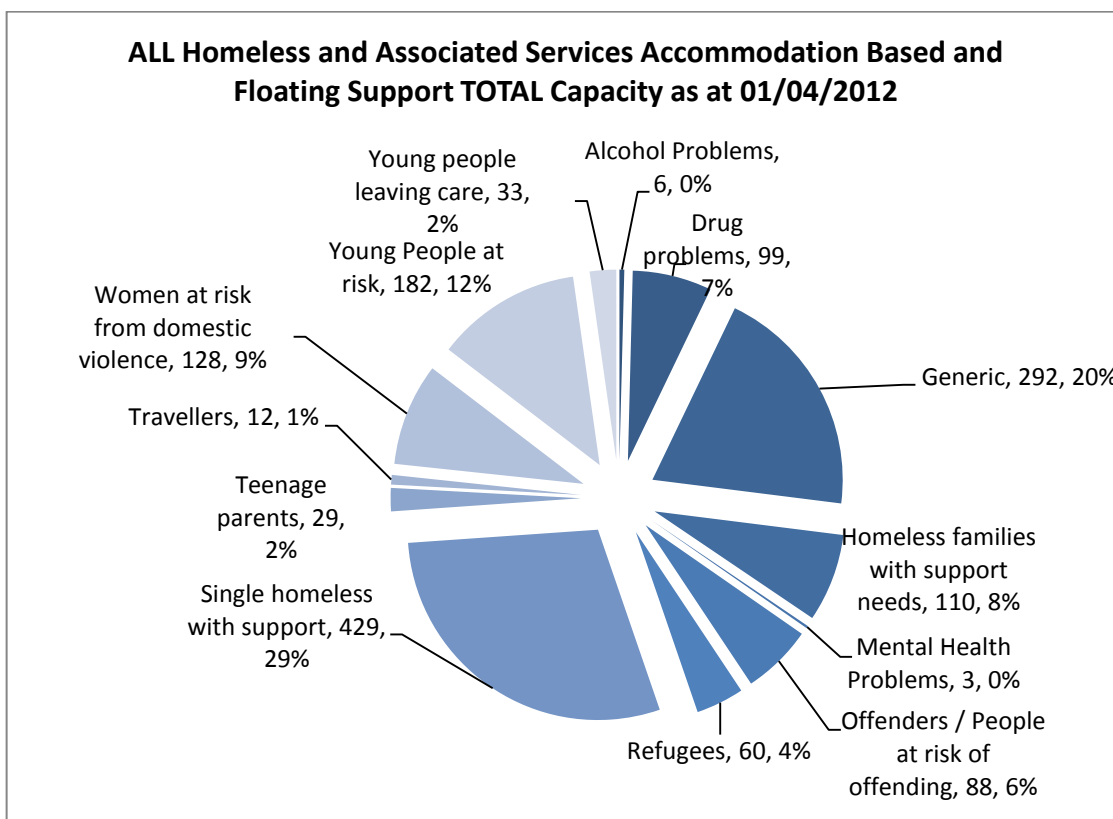
Client Group	Service
	Bridge House Leicester BME Abuse Domestic Floating Support Service Women's Aid Leicestershire Ltd
Young People at Risk	Hits Homes Trust - Evington Road Hits Homes Trust - Maidstone Road Young People Jason Court Hostel East Street
	Aylestone Project Lower Hastings Street Hostel
Young People Leaving Care	Leaving Care Team
	16 plus Looked After Children Service

Primary Client Group		
Primary Client Group	Service Type	2011/12
Alcohol Problems	Supported housing	6
Drug problems	Floating support service	75
	Supported housing	24
Generic	Floating support service	292
Homeless families with support needs	Direct access	52
	Floating support service	7
	Supported housing	51
Mental Health Problems	Supported housing	3
Offenders / People at risk of offending	Floating support service	42
	Supported housing	46
Refugees	Floating support service	60
Single homeless with support	Direct access	62
	Floating support service	197
	Supported housing	170
Teenage parents	Accommodation for teenage parents	29
Travellers	Floating support service	12
Women at risk from domestic violence	Floating support service	81
	Women's refuge	47
Young People at risk	Direct access	22
	Floating support service	43
	Supported housing	117
Young people leaving care	Floating support service	33

Although homeless families currently account for 90% of statutory homeless approvals, families only account for 20% of the total accommodation provision. In relation to the total capacity of all services, families only account for 10%, which suggests there is a mismatch of provision.

Singles currently occupy 80% of accommodation provision and account for 29% of total provision (floating support and accommodation), against 10% of total approvals. This is because services are available to homeless single people who are not accommodated under homelessness duties. However this is difficult to determine as there are several voluntary

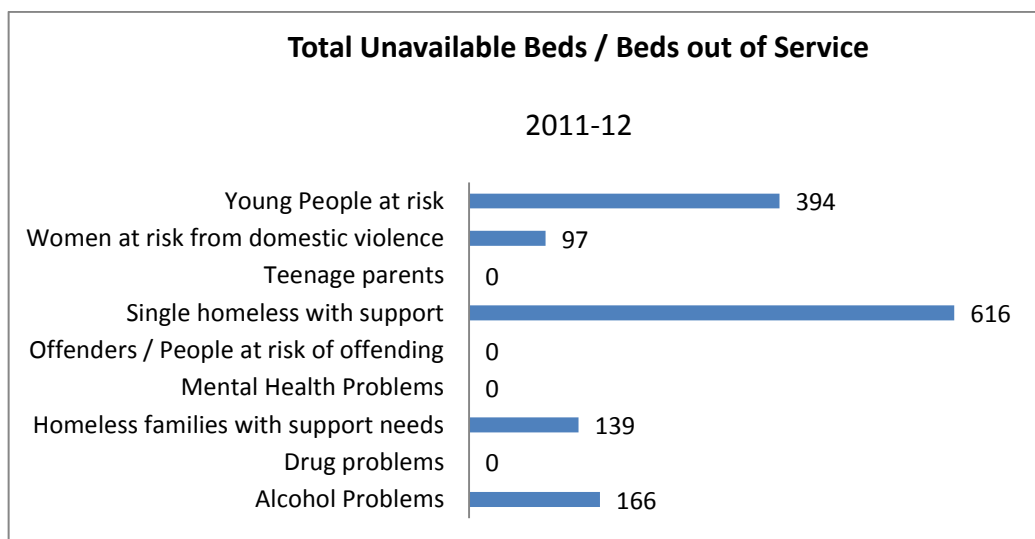
sector direct access hostels, in the city, which do not form part of the Single Access and Referral Point. (SAR) In turn, this makes it difficult to establish who is actually in these hostels and whether they are owed a duty or meet the Council's other criteria for assistance. This makes it difficult to plan the services which are actually needed.



5.3 Utilisation

Rooms and flats are periodically taken out of service for refurbishment or decoration and therefore are unavailable. Due to the complex needs of some clients, rooms are often damaged and need repairing or decorating before the next person can occupy them.

A total of 1412 bed spaces were unavailable, equating to 27 spaces per week. 44% of these were in the singles accommodation and 28% were beds for young people at risk.



The following graphs show the proportion of available beds, against the number of beds utilised, both by accommodation type and also by client group.

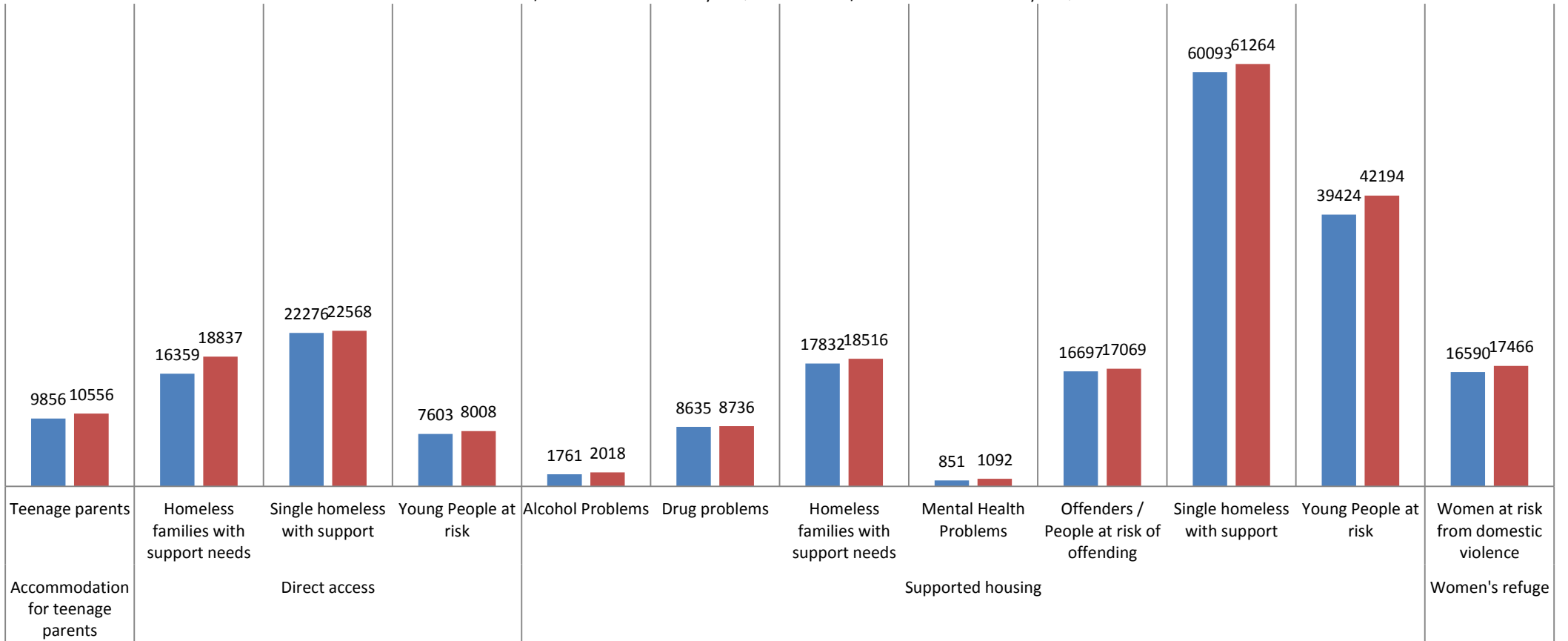
It also shows the proportion of generic supported accommodation provided for singles, with general support needs, in comparison to the level of specialist accommodation.

Utilisation against availability is higher amongst the specialist providers and clients with high support needs, such as mental health, drugs and alcohol issues.

There were 225, 815 available bed spaces, across all providers last year. Of these, 10, 274 (4.6%) were available but were unoccupied. This figure, combined with unavailable bed space, equates to a total void rate of 5.1%.

All providers - Beds Available and Beds Used by Accomodation Type 2011-12

■ 2011/12 - Sum of OccUnitDaysInQtr ■ 2011/12 - Sum of AvailUnitDaysInQtr



**Homeless and Associated (Supported Accommodation by Primary Client Group) Services Availability and Utilisation April
2011-March 2012**

Showing Capacity Paid for (Sum of Capacity), and Beds/units out of service (unavailability) + Beds Unoccupied

Service Type (Multiple Items)
Service Name (Multiple Items)

Primary Client Group	Year		Values		UNAVAILABLE BEDS	2011/12	TOTAL BEDS NOT USED- UNAVAILABLE + UNOCCUPIED	TOTAL BEDS NOT USED- as % of Total Unit Days(TOTAL CAPACITY)
	2011/12	2011/12	2011/12	2011/12				
	Sum of StartCapacity	Sum of EndCapacity	Sum of UnitDaysInQtr	Sum of AvailUnitDaysInQtr		Sum of Occupied Unit/Days (Bed/Nights etc.) InQtr		
Alcohol Problems	24	24	2184	2018	166	1761	423	19.37
Drug problems	96	96	8736	8736	0	8635	101	1.16
Homeless families with support needs	412	412	37492	37353	139	34191	3301	8.80
Mental Health Problems	12	12	1092	1092	0	851	241	22.07
Offenders / People at risk of offending ¹	160	160	14560	14560	0	14261	299	2.05
Single homeless with support	928	928	84448	83832	616	82369	2079	2.46
Teenage parents	116	116	10556	10556	0	9856	700	6.63
Women at risk from domestic violence	198	193	17563	17466	97	16590	973	5.54
Young People at risk	556	556	50596	50202	394	47027	3569	7.05
TOTAL			227227	225815	1412		11686	5.14

¹offenders accommodation-adjusted to omit consistent over-availability provision

Proposed Action

To develop a SAR for all contracted services, including the development of shared database, open to all partners. This will provide us with a clear picture of service capacity and utilisation and will help to avoid duplication.

5.4 Move-on and length of stay (All providers, including LCC)

We need to consider the role of the various hostels across the city. Hostels should not be used as a long-term accommodation option, as they can create dependency and institutionalisation. Instead, hostels should be seen as the first step on the homelessness journey and people should be moved-on into other appropriate accommodation, as soon as possible. Many of our hostels operate a culture of 'crisis and rescue', rather than enablement, with people staying up to a year and beyond.

As there are in excess of 600 temporary accommodation spaces in Leicester, this has helped created a bottle-neck in moving people on to independent living. This is due to a lack of appropriate accommodation to move to, after leaving a hostel and also many clients experience barriers to move-on, such as rent arrears.

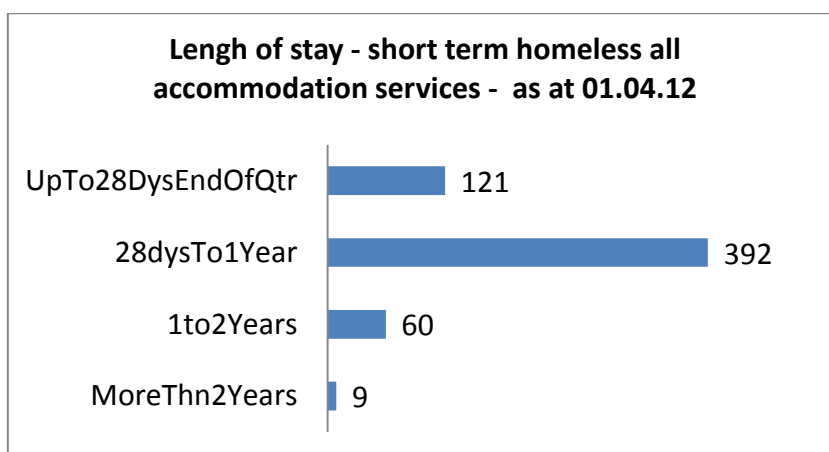
The way supported accommodation is funded has also inadvertently created a perverse incentive to keep hostels full. Hostel finances are modelled on hostels being full and during visits to various hostels, both LCC and voluntary sector, success was measured by a low void rate.

There are more hostel places in Leicester, than in many other parts of the country and also an annual housing related support budget of over £6m (11/12). However, there are still extremely high numbers of repeat homelessness and rough sleepers, which suggests services need to be delivered in a different way.

A snapshot as at 1st April 2012, there were 582 clients in temporary accommodation. Of these, 21% left within 28 days.

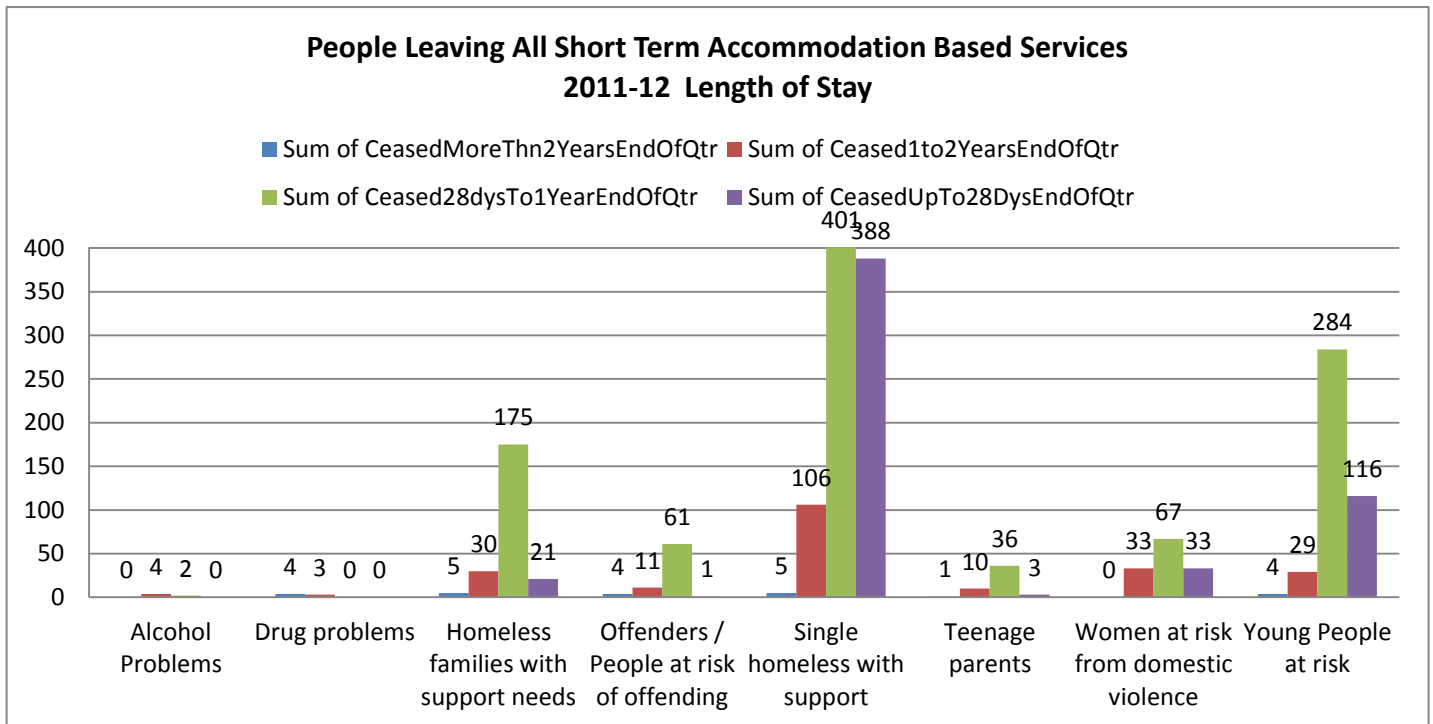
67% had been in the service for a period of between 28 days to 1 year however, the way data is collected does not enable us to determine a more specific length of stay.

1.5% of clients had been in the service for over two years.



The following graph shows the length of stay by client group for the whole of 2011/12. Most people stayed for up to a year, with people needing more specialist support remaining longer. However, 106 people, with non-specialist support needs, remained in the service for over a

year. We need to be working more proactively to move people on to more appropriate accommodation.



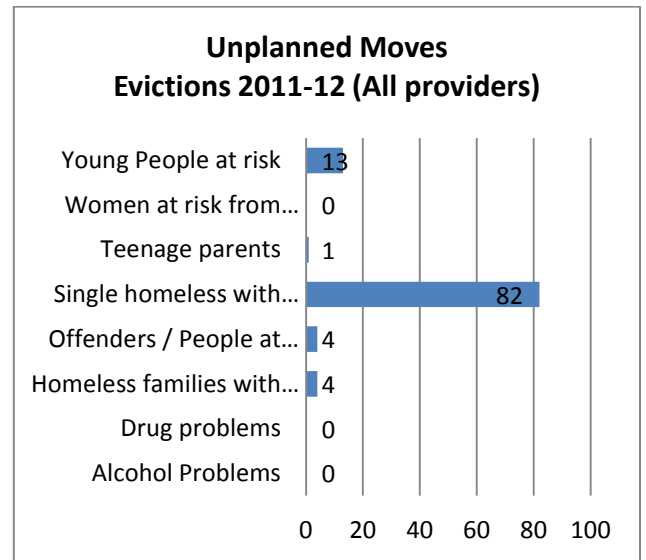
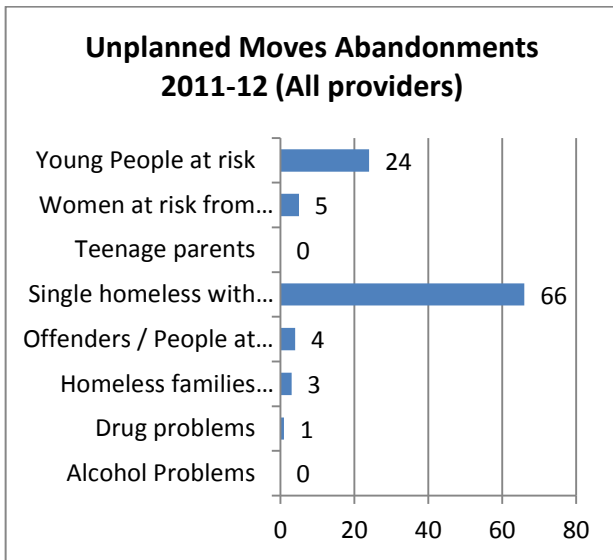
Although the Council monitors the performance of its own hostels it does not effectively monitor the performance of voluntary sector providers. However, during this review we have collated data from all providers, in an attempt to gain a citywide understanding of homelessness in Leicester.

Proposed Action

We need to develop a robust monitoring framework which includes all providers. This will ensure we are better able to access the information we need to plan and deliver services that will achieve positive outcomes for homeless people.

Unplanned moves – all providers

According to the supporting people records, there were 306 unplanned moves from supported accommodation across Leicester, last year. Of these, 103 were evicted and 104 abandoned their dwelling. We are not able to track what happened to these people after they moved on in this way. This highlights the need for a shared database to help track people's journeys within the homeless system and to identify and address repeat homelessness.



The majority of unplanned moves involved young people and single homeless people. We need to improve their journey from the point of assessment to the provision of accommodation and support.

Proposed Action

We need to ensure that we work proactively with all clients, through the support planning process, to identify and overcome potential barriers to sustaining their present and future accommodation.

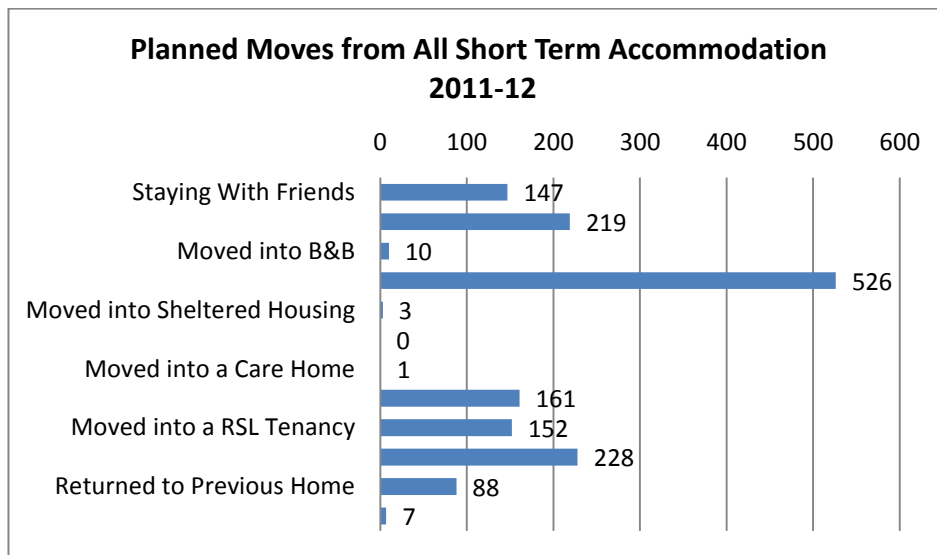
Develop a city-wide multi-agency approach to reducing evictions and abandonments.

Support plans need to be more robust in giving people the skills to sustain their accommodation. This needs to form part of the monitoring framework.

Planned moves – all provision

34% of planned moves were into other supported accommodation, which includes people moving from one hostel to another. However, some of these moves are positive transfers to better meet the needs of clients.

25% of clients moved into either LCC or RSL accommodation and 10% moved into private sector accommodation.



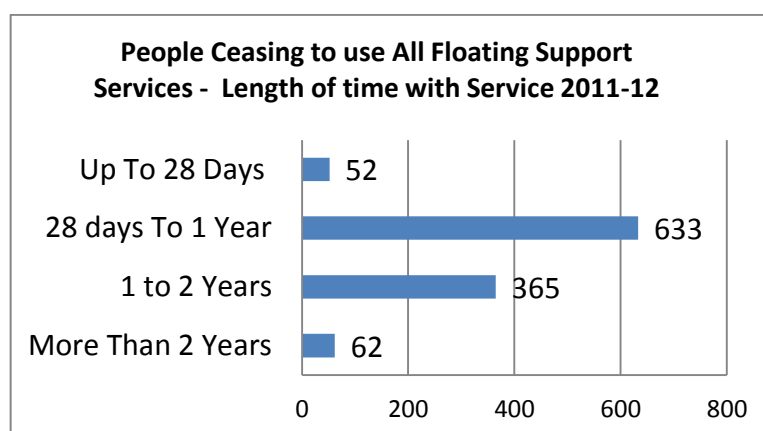
Homeless people need a clear pathway, to ensure they are able to move on from a hostel environment, as soon as they are ready to. Also, that support follows them, throughout their journey, should they need it. However, we must also recognise that there will always be a small number of people, who are dependent on homelessness services, and who may never be able to live independently without support.

Proposed Action

We need to develop a planned and 'costed' pathway, to ensure people are able to move on from hostels, as quickly as possible. This would entail identifying current and future need against existing services, and also gaps and duplication in provision. This should include a small amount of provision for the 'entrenched' homeless, who may never live independently.

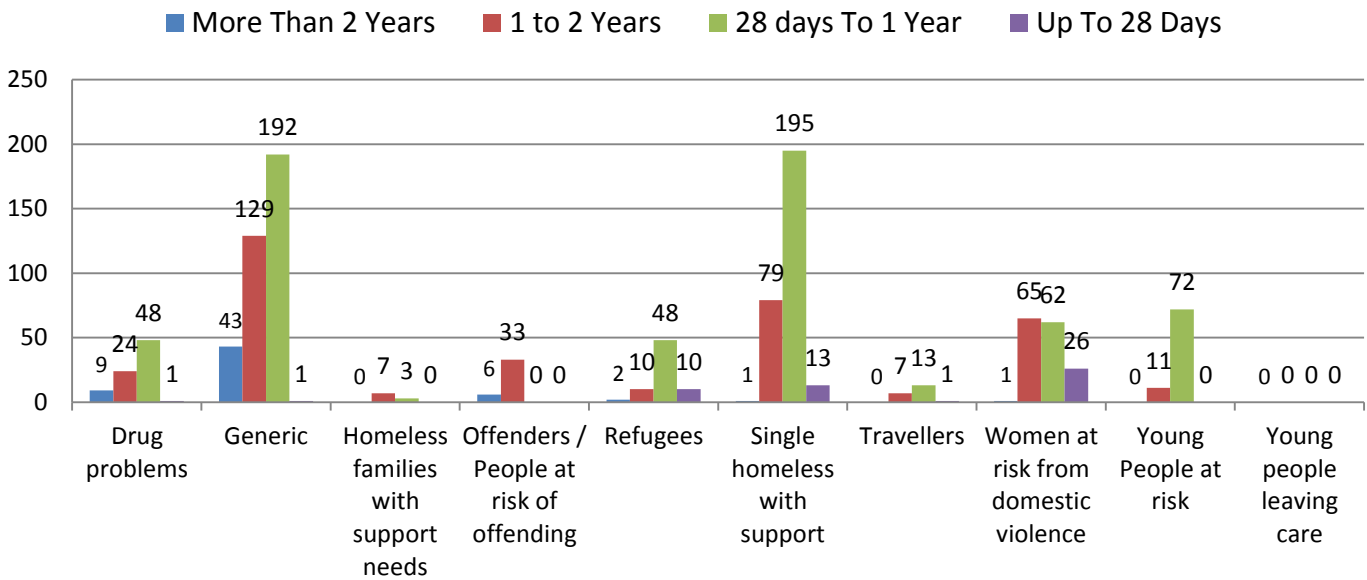
Length of stay in floating support - (All providers, including LCC)

The majority of people receive floating support for a longer period of time due to the nature of their needs. 57% received support for up to 1 year and 32% for a period of between 1 and 2 years. 6% of clients received the service for longer than 2 years.



Most people had floating support for up to a year. People needing more specialist support received support for a longer period of time, this includes women at risk of violence, homeless families and offenders. However, 195 single people remained in the service for over a year. This is not necessarily a negative outcome, as long as people are maintaining their tenancy in appropriate accommodation.

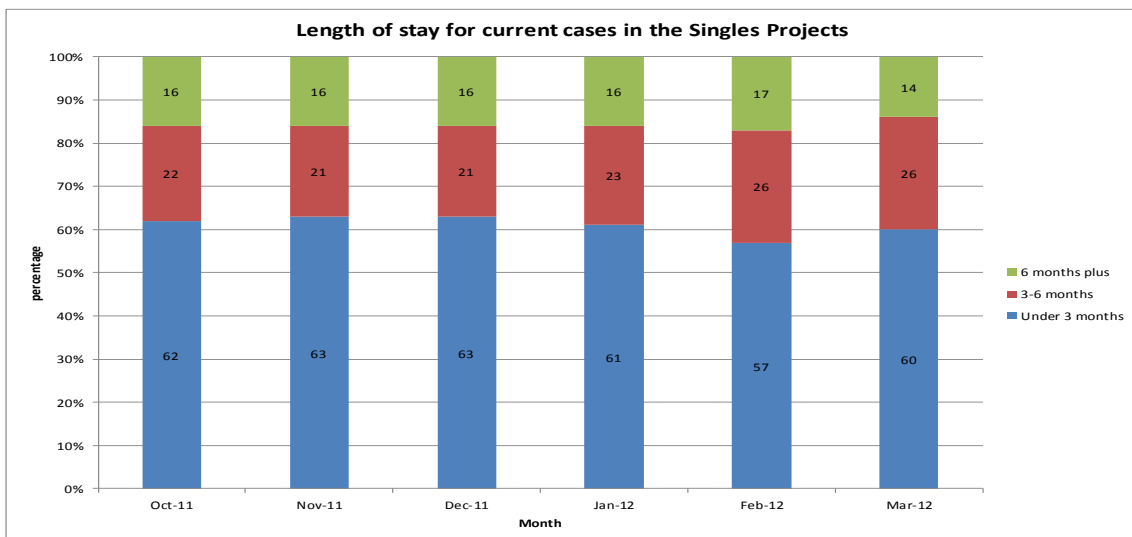
People ceasing to use All Floating Support-length of stay by client group 2011-12



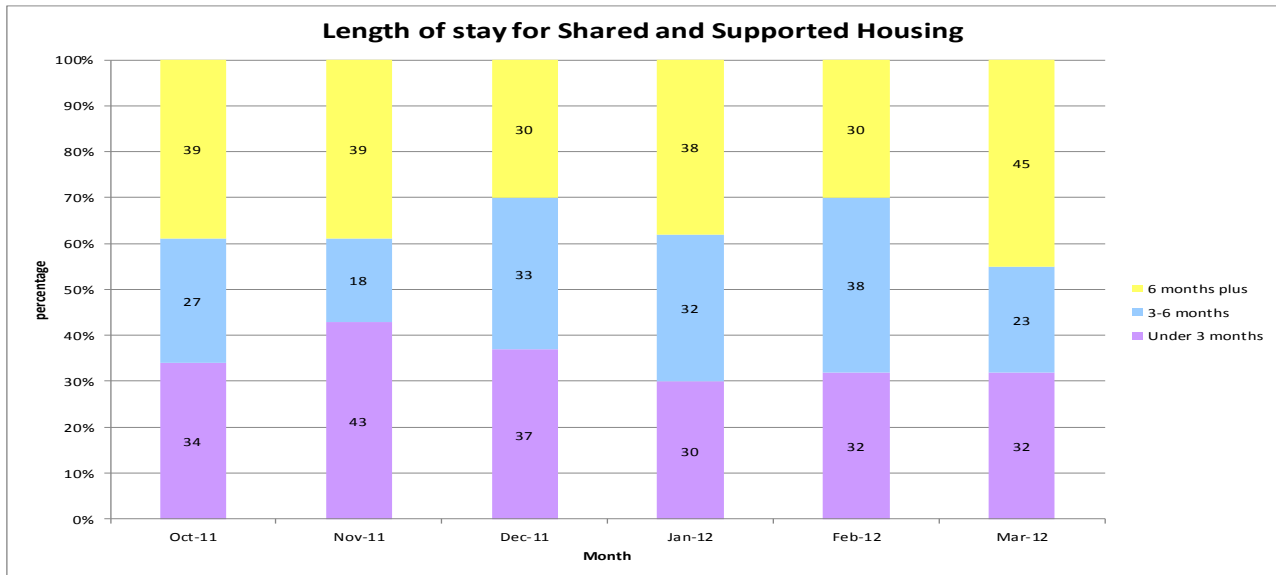
Length of stay – Leicester City Council Provision

The LCC hostel service collects a range of data to monitor the performance of its in-house Service. This monitoring led to the establishment of the Move-On Board and the Revolving Door project. These projects have greatly improved the information available to identify the issues affecting homeless people, particularly in terms of repeat homelessness. The lessons learnt from the Move-On Board and the Revolving Door will be built upon and mainstreamed into all services in the future. The collection and analysis of data across the city, across all services, however remains disjointed.

During the six months from October 2011 to March 2012, there were 823 admissions to single hostels and 290 into shared and supported housing. 61% of homeless people, in LCC hostels, stayed for less than 3 months (blue), 23% stayed between 3-6 months (red) and 16% stayed longer than 6 months (green). The graph shows that the percentage of people remaining LCC projects, in each time period, has remained constant.



37% of people in LCC shared and supported housing stayed for more than 6 months (yellow) which is what would be expected in this service area. 29% stayed between 3-6 months (blue) and 35% stayed less than 3 months (purple).



The average length of stay for those leaving LCC hostels was 47 days. The maximum length of stay was 429 days.

The average length of stay for those leaving LCC supported and shared housing was 175 days. The maximum length of stay was 928 days. Length of stay, when leaving supported and shared housing, refers to the total time spent in the whole pathway.

Hostels			Supported / Shared Housing		
Month 2011/ 12	Average length of stay for month-days	Maximum length of stay-days	Month 2011 / 12	Average length of stay for month-days	Maximum length of stay-days
September	37	150	September	124	269
October	45	276	October	159	256
November	53	285	November	243	635
December	52	429	December	181	420
January	40	254	January	109	189
February	57	406	February	232	928

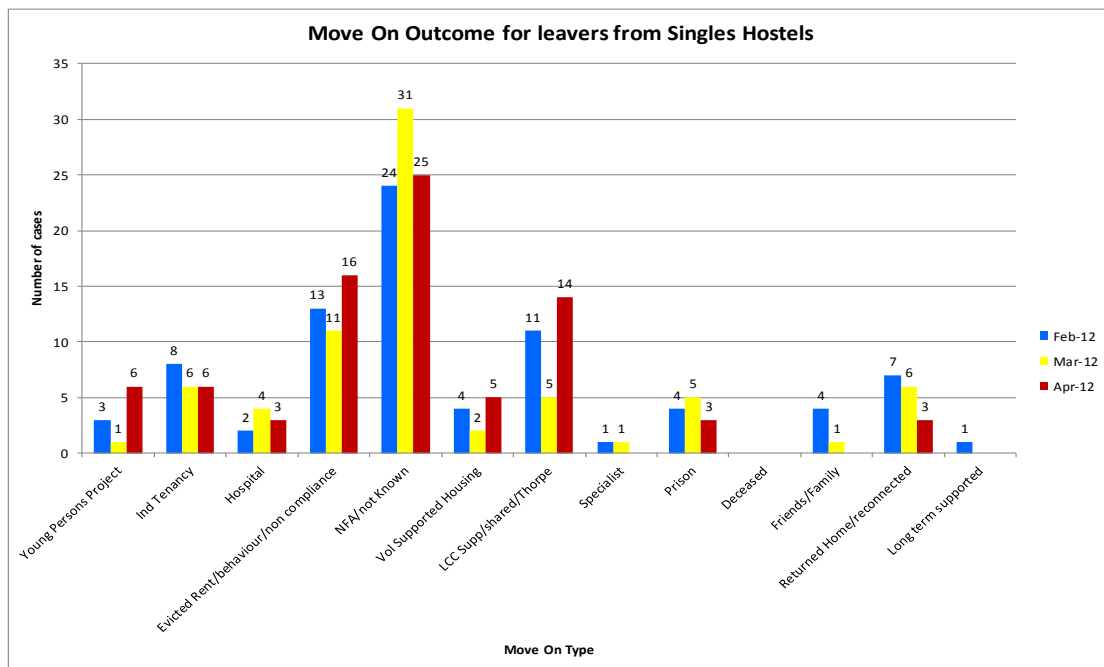
The average length of stay should reflect the needs of the individual and therefore a longer length of stay is not necessarily negative as long as the person is not 'trapped' in homelessness accommodation, due to rent arrears or other barriers to move-on.

Proposed Action

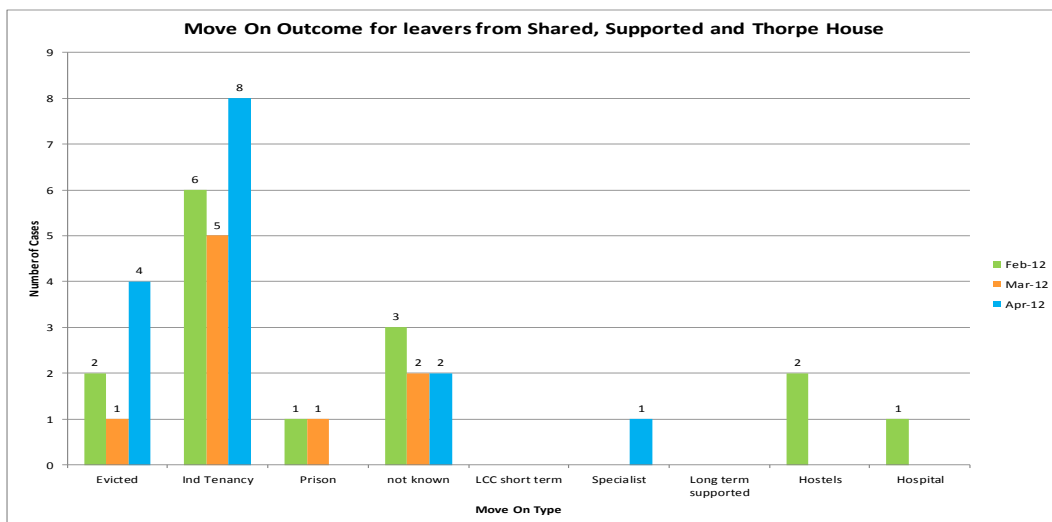
Ensure proactive move-on plans form an integral element of support planning.

Move – On (Leicester City Council Provision)

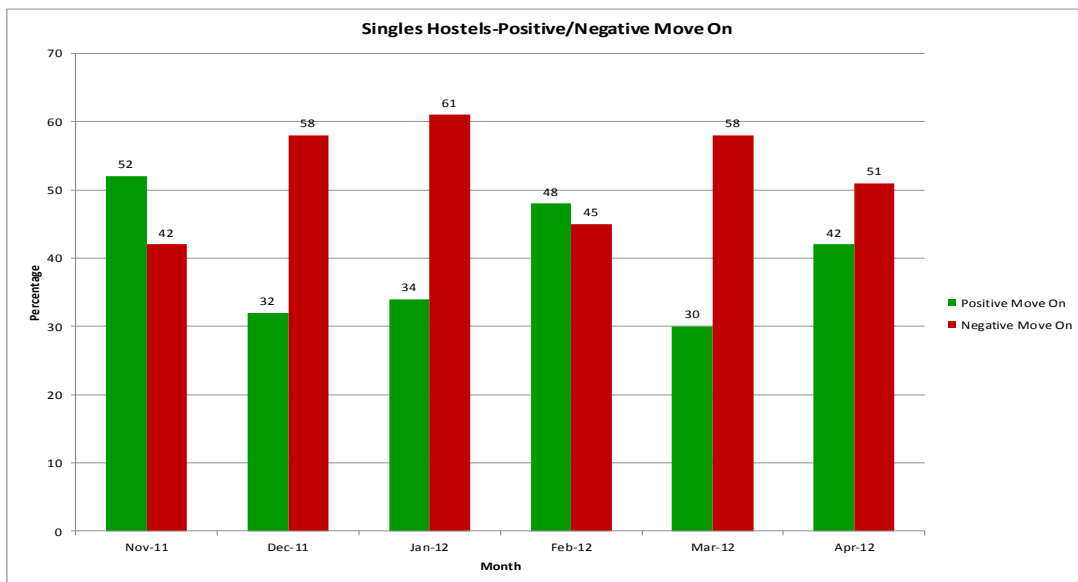
236 clients moved on from LCC temporary accommodation between February and March 2012. Of these, 8.5% gained their own tenancy, 17% were evicted and we do not know what happened to 34% of these people.



Of the 39 people who moved-on from LCC supported and shared housing, 49% moved into their own tenancy. We do not know where 18% of these people moved to.



For our monitoring purposes, a positive move-on includes a move into independent, settled, supported or specialised accommodation. A negative move is where the leaver has left with no forwarding address or has been evicted. Leavers that have not been included are those that are considered neutral, when other factors influenced a negative outcome. (e.g. remand or hospitalisation).



Although 238 clients moved on in a positive way, 57% (315) did not achieve this. This is clearly too high.

Proposed Action

Next step planning needs to form an integral part of support planning.

Barriers to Move-On

The LCC Move-On Board has been working to develop improved person-centred move-on for all clients residing in hostel accommodation. This has included identifying barriers to achieving a positive move-on. This information has been used to inform us about how we work with hostel residents.

Barriers which remain unresolved are rent arrears, availability of private rented sector housing, access and the availability of specialist accommodation. There are also issues surrounding the behaviour and attitude of some clients while others either lack the skills or motivation to achieve a positive move-on.

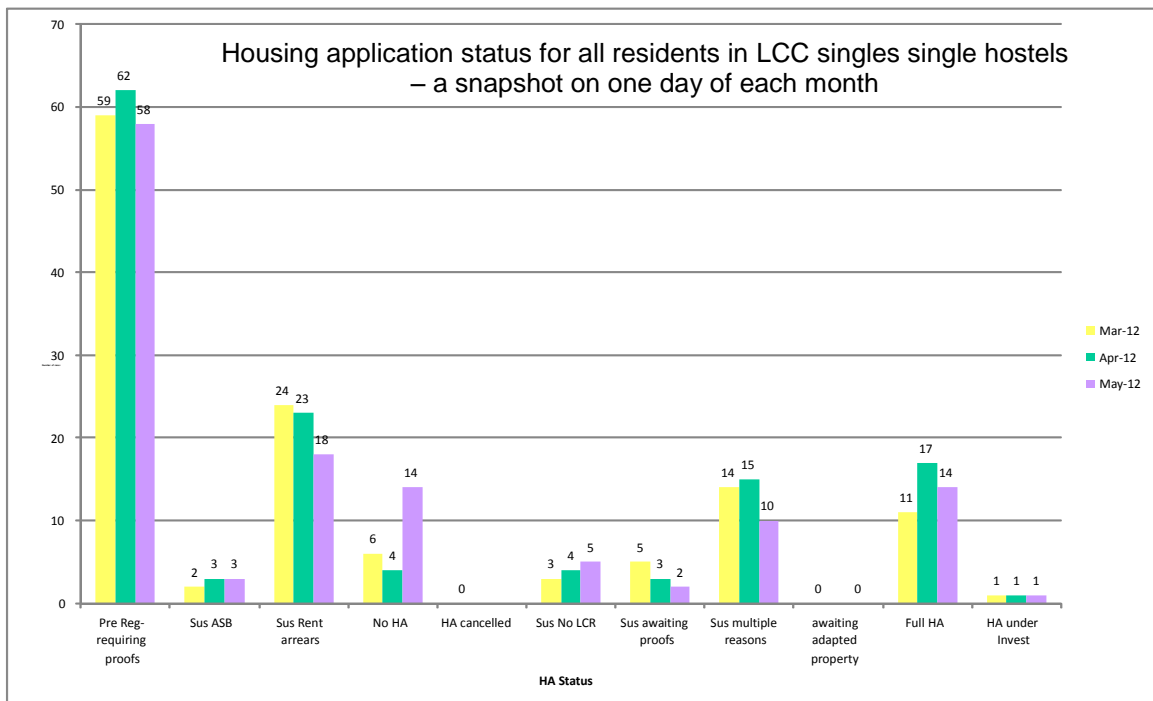
There has been an increase in evictions for behaviour related incidents and we know that a significant number of people struggle to make changes in their lives. There have been behavioural changes amongst those receiving intense support through the Revolving Door scheme so we do know change can happen, when support is delivered differently.

(Source: LCC Move-On Board – July 2012)

Proposed Action

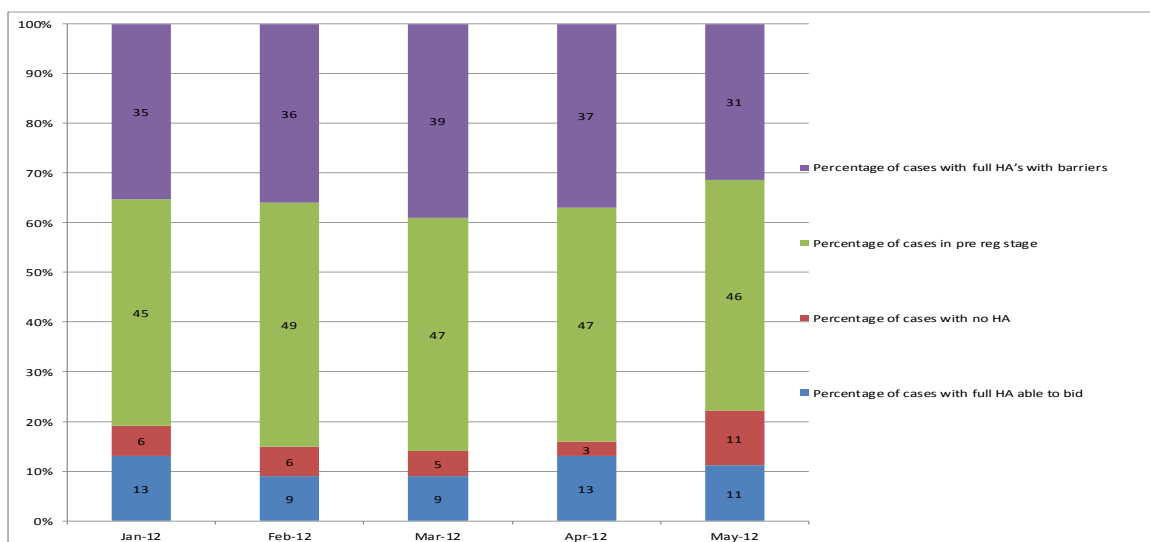
The development and adoption of the principles of delivering psychologically informed services, for homeless people, would better equip staff and organisations to deliver effective services and support change in people's lives.

The lack of a full housing application is also a major barrier to move-on. The graph below shows that, on a monthly basis, there are a significant number of clients who do not have a fully registered housing application. Rent arrears are also a major barrier to achieving a fully registered housing application.



An average of 11% of clients in the hostel population, between January and May 2012, had a fully registered housing application and so were able to bid for properties on Leicester HomeChoice.

Approximately 47% were in the pre-registration stage, which often means the client has not or is unable to provide information for their proofs to be sorted out. 6% did not have a housing application in place.



35% of clients had a full application but were prohibited from bidding due to various barriers. This means they cannot move on from the hostel, until their own individual barriers are overcome. They may give up waiting and abandon their accommodation. The lack of having a clear, achievable move-on plan is recognised as a significant factor leading to abandonments.

Proposed Action

All clients must achieve a fully registered housing application, where possible, as part of the support planning process. Actions need to be developed to overcome any barriers to this.

LCC has identified several barriers to move-on and has developed responses to these.

(Appendix D).

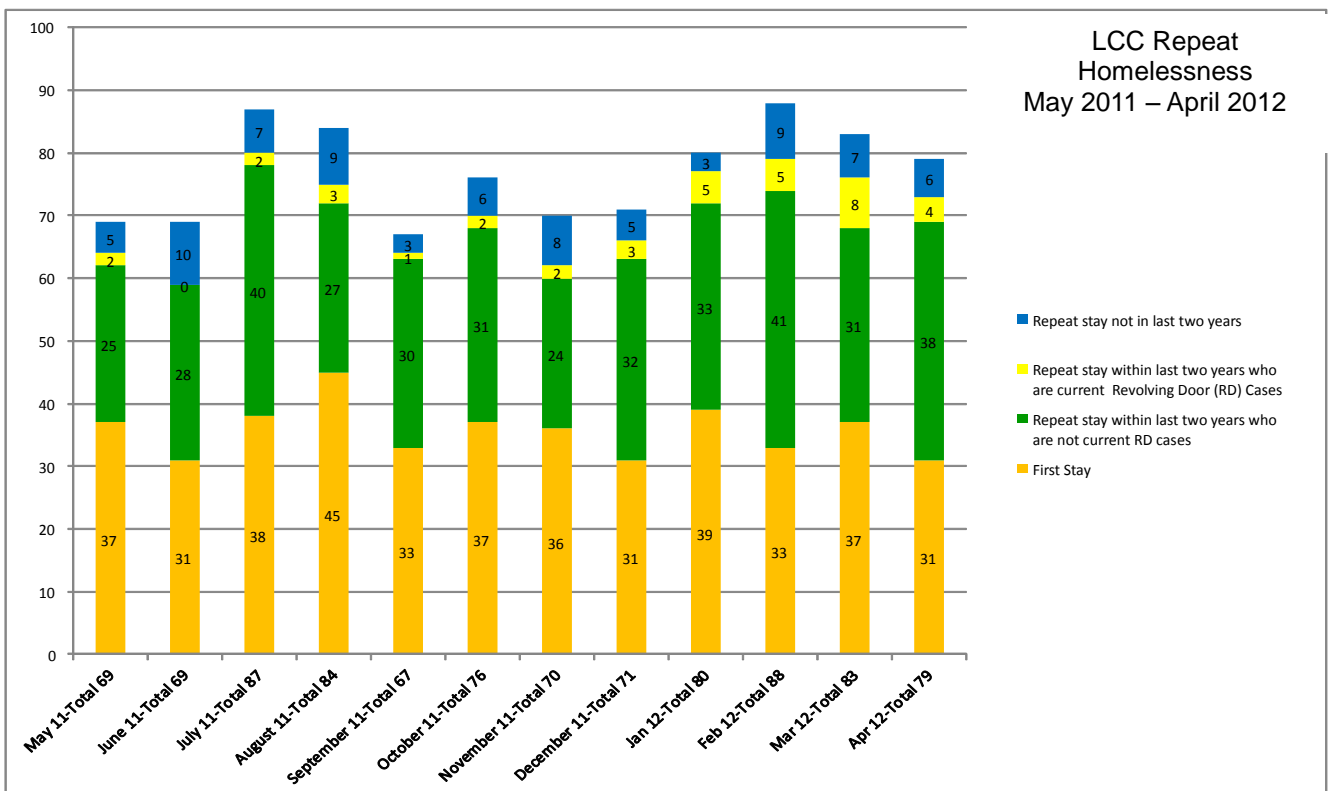
The Leicester City Requirement (Appendix E) has been changed to include address history for the last five years from the last settled address, rather than from the application date. Temporary accommodation points are now awarded after one month's residency, instead of three months. The purchase of birth certificates is now funded through the Welfare Fund and existing shared and supported housing has been re-configured to create shared housing models.

The 'Exceptional Circumstances for Re-Housing with Rent Arrears Policy' assists to re-house some people with former arrears, however many more remain trapped by their rent arrears.

A Sanctions Policy has been developed to address breaches of licence agreements through a supportive rather than punitive manner. This allows for similar or associated behaviours and issues to be addressed, on a sequential basis, rather than in isolation. These breaches include rent arrears, drug-related incidents, behaviour related incidents, and failing to attend support sessions.

5.5 Repeat Homelessness

The graph below provides a breakdown of the type of admission, as a proportion of total admissions, for each month. There were a total of 923 admissions between May 2011 and April 2012, of which 46% (428) were a first time admission.



489 (54%) were repeat admissions, with only 4% (37) receiving Revolving Door support. 9% (78) were repeat admissions but not during the last two years.

The graph presents a very clear picture of the scale of repeat homelessness being experienced in Leicester and this only relates to LCC provision, as at present we are unable to track this trend amongst other providers. Everything above 'first stay' represents people caught in the homelessness system and we need to work proactively to reduce this.

The aim of 'next step planning' is to enable clients to have a clear focus on where they want to live and how to achieve this. It facilitates appropriate planning to address barriers and achieve move-on from hostels. This process can improve a client's motivation, as it makes move-on a realistic possibility, rather than an unachievable aspiration. Unfortunately, the complex needs of some clients will result in them not engaging to overcome their barriers to move-on and these clients will need additional support.

Revolving Door

The Revolving Door project was developed in response to the high number of repeat homeless admissions and forms part of the STAR service. The aim was to develop an intensive support service for individuals, with complex needs, who were experiencing repeat homelessness. The most common support needs for these clients relate to drug and alcohol dependency, mental health and offending behaviour.

This support includes identifying an individual's current homelessness and support needs and also developing mechanisms to prevent continued and future homelessness. Co-ordinated multi-agency support packages are central to effectively supporting these cases. Support workers meet regularly with clients, and staff from other services, to agree joint support planning and case management approaches.

At present, Revolving Door, is primarily open to 'revolving' homeless clients from LCC homelessness services or voluntary sector services, who are represented at the Homeless Multi-Disciplinary Team.

As at July 2012, STAR had a caseload of 50 revolving door clients, 70% were male and 78% were aged over 26 years.

- 44% had been known to LCC hostels for more than 5 years
- 48% had between 6 and 10 hostel admissions
- 16% had 16+ admissions

There has been 100% take up of the service as staff have been able to develop an effective working relationship built on trust and understanding.

- 40% achieved a positive change in their housing situation by moving into supported semi-independent and independent accommodation
- 8 cases are living in independent accommodation and 4 have reached the six month milestone

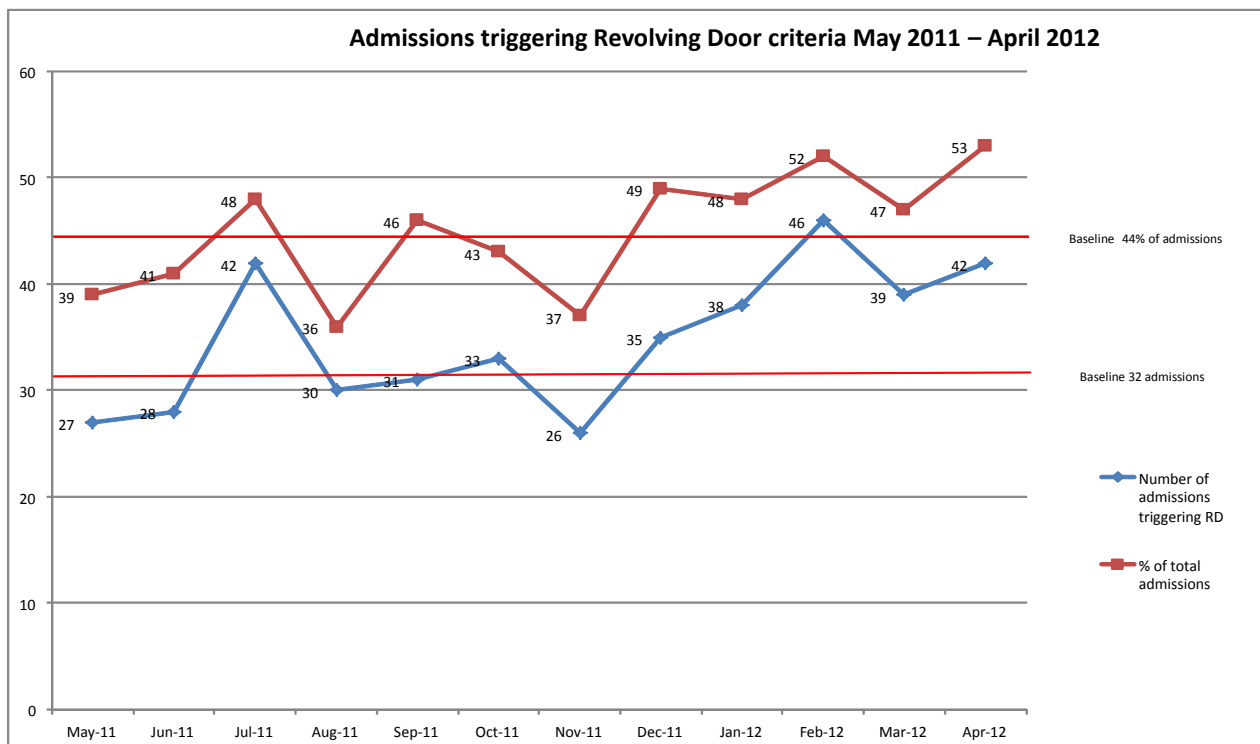
Five cases have been closed, with the following outcomes:

- 1 x long-term imprisonment
- 2 x moved away from Leicester
- 2 x moved into private tenancies with partner

Source: LCC Housing 2012

At present there does not seem to be any correlation between achieving positive move-on and the length of time being supported by the service. Each case is unique.

Of the total admissions to LCC temporary accommodation, between May 2011 and April 2012, 77% would have triggered the revolving door criteria.



During the period May 2011 – April 2011, 100 people had at least 2 admissions. 44 had 2, 28 had 3 and 20 had 4 admissions. 32 people had between 6 – 11 stays. Although many of these clients have chaotic lives, with complex needs, this level of repeat homelessness must also be attributed to the way services are delivered.

Revolving Door is an expensive intervention and we need to monitor progress made to establish whether this provides value for money, in terms of the outcomes achieved for individuals.

Proposed Action

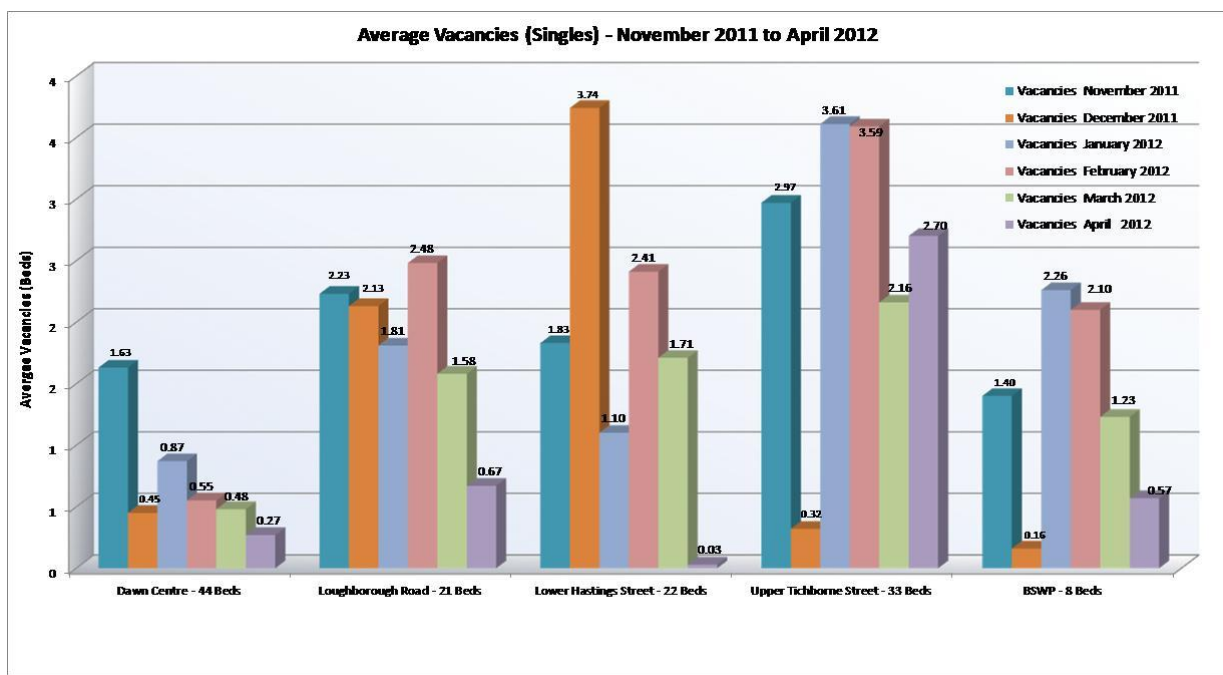
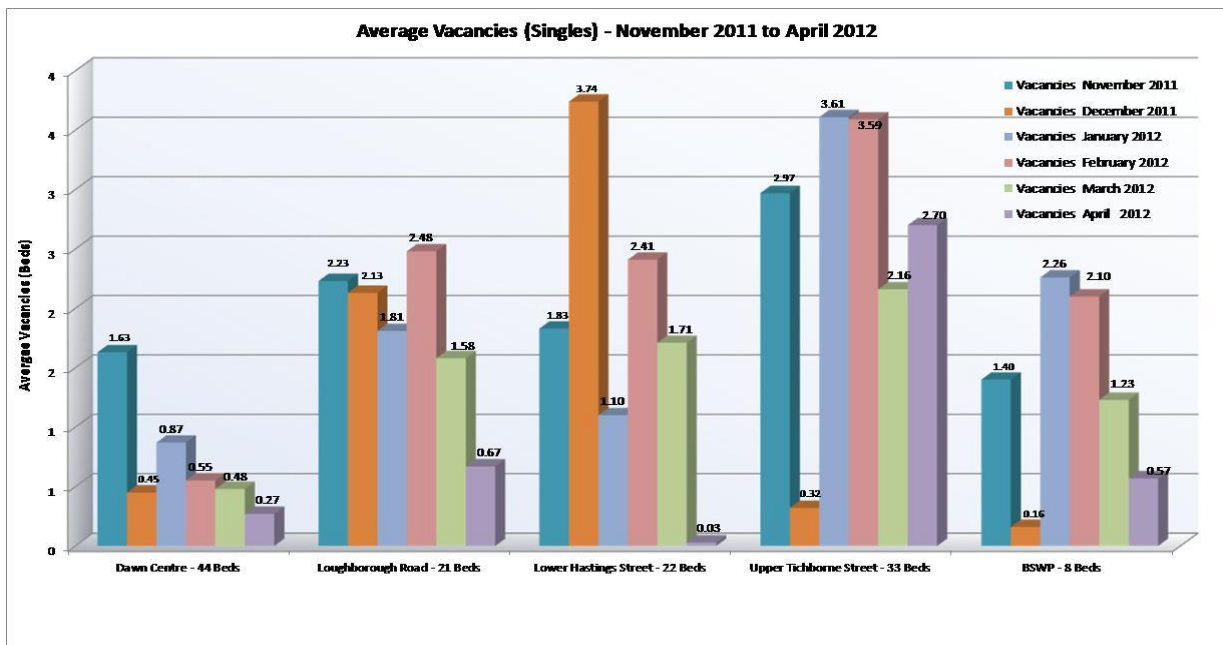
Although Revolving Door is only funded to work with 50 entrenched homeless clients, we need to identify their good practice and mainstream this across all homelessness services.

The success of Revolving Door needs to be reviewed to establish if the service provides value for money, against the outcomes achieved.

7.6 LCC Vacancy Rates

The average monthly vacancy rates for LCC hostel and supported / shared houses (Nov – April 2012) was relatively low and ranged from 0.3% to 3.74%.

The average monthly vacancy rates for all shared and supported housing is approximately 3%, however rates across the individual schemes ranged from 0.21 to 6.23%.



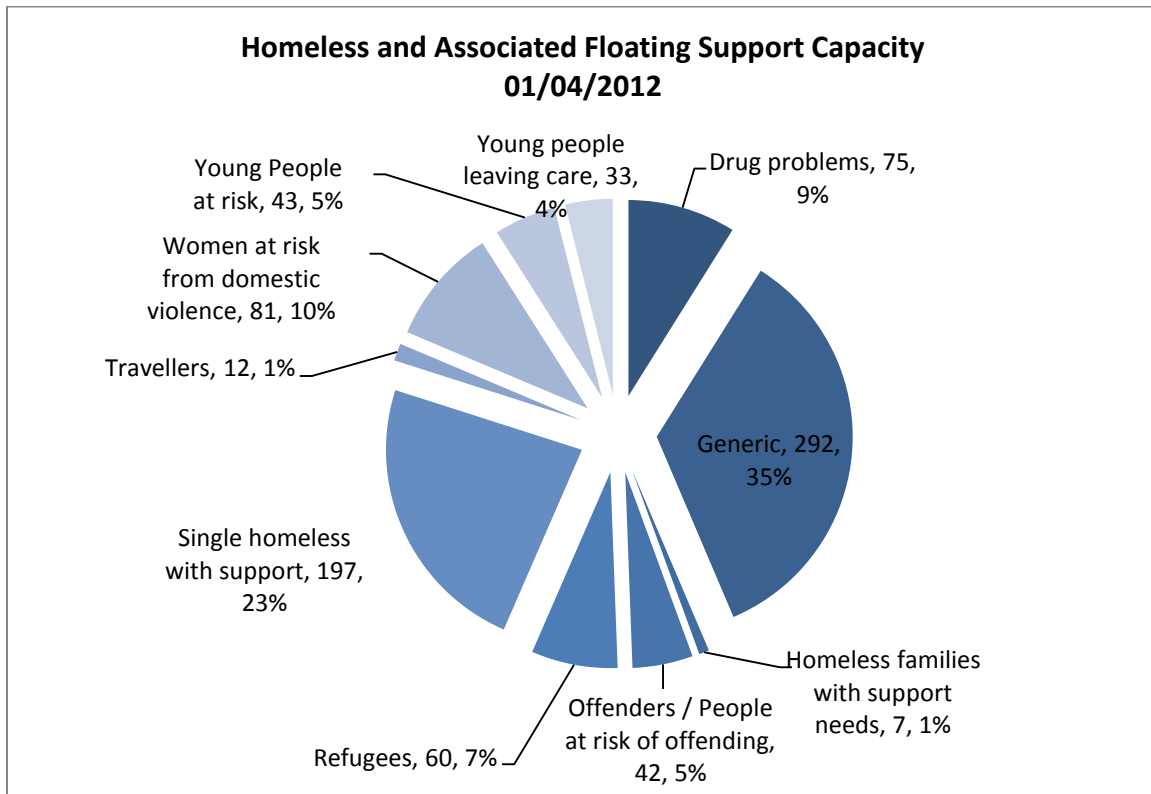
5.7 Floating Support – all provision

Floating Support Services provide housing related support to vulnerable people who have a history of homelessness or who are at risk of becoming homeless, if they do not receive support. The support is attached to the person and is not tied to their accommodation. The aim of floating support is to enable and empower vulnerable people to sustain their tenancies, thrive in their community and to break the cycle of homelessness.

There were 842 units of floating support available across a number of providers. However, since the disaggregation of the Supporting People budget, there is now capacity to provide housing related support to 721 households. The remaining units have passed to other Council service areas. 70% of LCC floating support is funded by the Housing Revenue Account for Council tenants.

Homelessness and Associated Floating Support Services - 01/04/2012

Provider Name	Primary Client Group	Service Name	No. Units
Action for Children	Homeless families with support needs	Leicester New Start Families Project	7
Action Homeless (Leicester) Limited	Single homeless with support	Action Homeless Resettlement	15
Catch22 Charity Ltd	Refugees	Refugee Floating Support Service	60
East Midlands Housing Association Limited	Women at risk from domestic violence	SAFE	48
Foundation Housing Association Limited	Generic	Tenancy Support Service	24
Leicester City Council STAR	Drug problems	Substance Use Team	75
	Generic	General Prevention	268
	Single homeless with support	Single Homeless and Homeless Families	182
	Travellers	Gypsies & Travellers	12
	Young People at risk	Young People	43
LAC Fieldwork	Young people leaving care	16 plus Looked After Children Service	30
Leaving Care		Leaving Care Team	3
Leicestershire & Rutland Probation Board	Offenders / People at risk of offending	OASYS (LCC & Probation)	23
	Women at risk from domestic violence	Leicester BME Abuse Domestic Floating Support Service	33
Sanctuary Housing Association			
Shelter Housing Aid & Research Project (SHARP)	Offenders / People at risk of offending	Housing Support and Resettlement (SHARP)	19
Grand Total			842



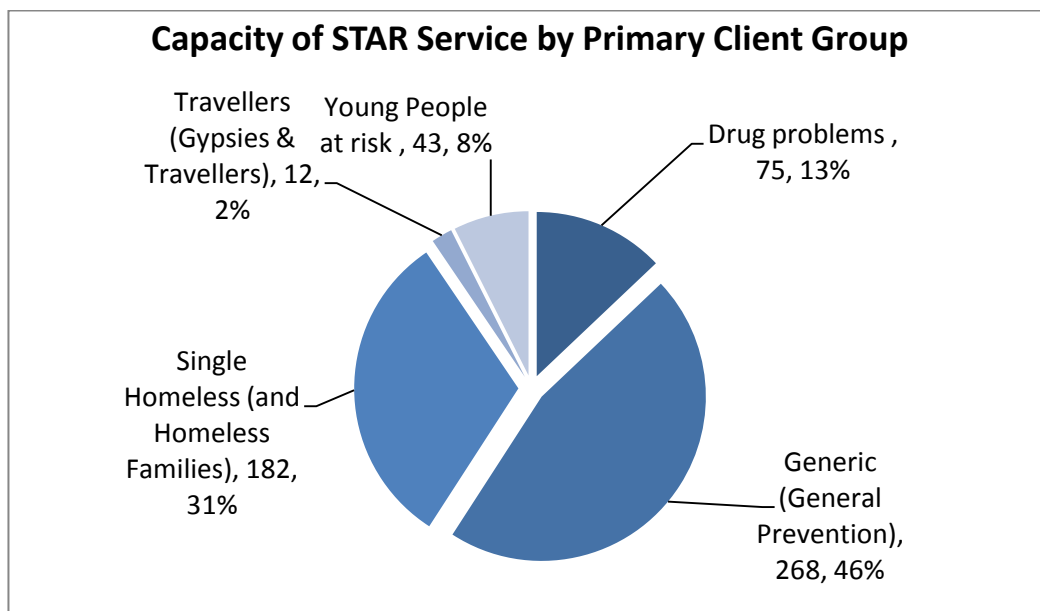
Floating support, tailored to an individual's needs, can be the least expensive and most effective intervention for people, with support needs. At present, 23% of floating support is directed at single people with support needs, many of which are already in various hostels across the city and should be receiving support there. In very complex cases however, it is recognised that other support may be required.

Only 9% of floating support is provided to single people with mental health, alcohol and drug issues and only 1% to homeless families. 5% of floating support is provided to ex-offenders or those at risk of offending. 35% of all floating support is generic support.

Staff, from several providers, suggested that more support needs to be available for families, who often have complex needs, which often go unidentified and unaddressed. Also, that some families were only considered vulnerable, due to their homelessness, and not due to other under-lying issues that may have contributed to their homelessness.

5.7.11 LCC Floating Support Provision - Supporting Tenants and Residents (STAR)

STAR is a community-based service, for people who live in Leicester and have a housing related support need. It works with people for up to two years and focuses on preventing people from becoming homeless. It also helps people to settle into their home after a period of crisis or homelessness. STAR works with tenants and owner occupiers and delivers support to young people, homeless singles and families, older people, gypsies and travellers and substance use clients.



The aim of the service is to empower clients to build on and develop independent living skills. This is achieved through the Housing Related Support Worker and client jointly completing a holistic, person centred self-assessment. This allows for a prioritisation of needs and allows the client to see 'distance travelled' through the outcomes achieved.

STAR had 1200 clients during 2011-12 and also advised 1553 people who called into local offices for low level or sign-posting advice. The service received referrals from a range of sources which included:

- LCC hostels 145
- Housing Options 30
- Social Care and Health 65
- LCC Income Management Team 35
- LCC Neighbourhood Housing Offices 89

The STAR service has developed pre-tenancy training, support with job search and education and have achieved £3m through income maximisation for vulnerable people. The service has achieved a 98% success rate for assisting vulnerable people to maintain their tenancies. It has encouraged clients to get involved in improving services and they have written their own magazine, the Service User Strategy and the service satisfaction survey.

Currently, there are 400 people on the waiting list to access the STAR floating support service and it is anticipated that there will be an increase in pressure on all floating support services when the welfare reforms begin to impact. It is also estimated that 700 of the 1553 clients who called into the local offices would be taken on as cases, if resources were available.

Support needs of clients on the waiting list:

- New tenancy

- No furniture
- Benefits/financial/budgeting
- Private sector housing issues
- Mental health
- Alcohol/drugs
- Poor property condition / overcrowding
- Rent arrears

5.8 LCC Family Support Service

The Family Support Service provides a range of support services to families and children while they stay in Border House. Their Annual Report for 2011 has identified that the need for their services from Border House residents has reduced over recent years. There was a reduction of 42% in 2011 (91 families) on the previous year. (157 families) They have developed services for the community including those surviving domestic violence.

The Corner Club, a sessional childcare facility for hostel children, has also offered its Services to the community in recent years, as use declined.

Although this provides a valuable service to many families, we need to consider the future role of this service.

5.9 Day Centres

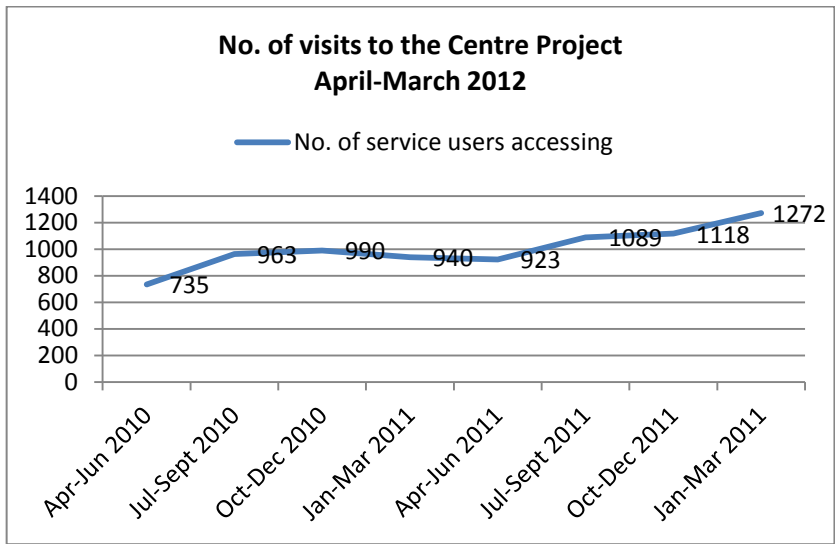
5.9.1 Centre Project

The Centre Project is a drop-in service for vulnerably housed people and those prone to tenancy breakdown, mainly due to loneliness and isolation. The Centre provides a meeting place where those people at risk of isolation can come and go freely, meet people and make friends. The Centre aims to improve social skills, self-esteem and self-confidence.

The project provides the following services:

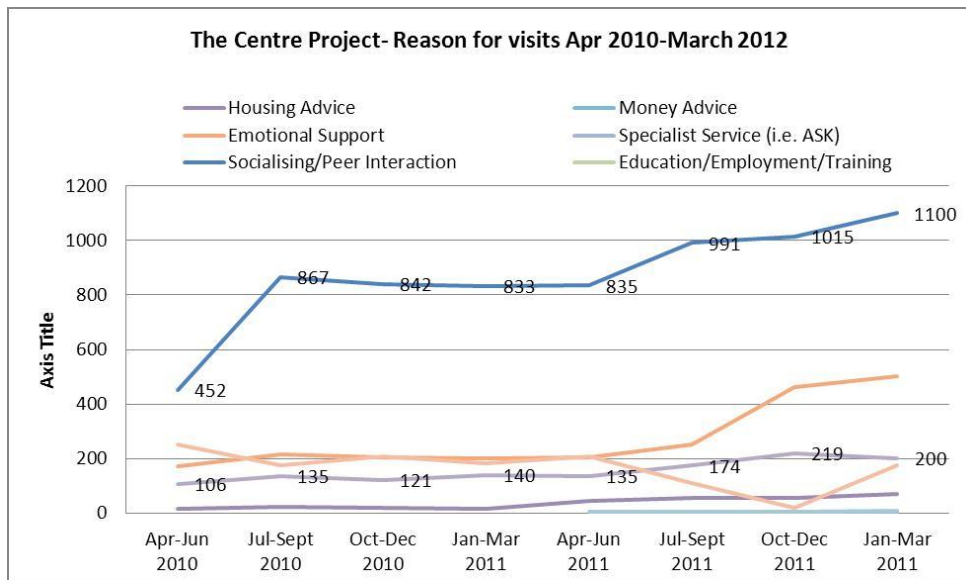
- Housing advice
- Emotional support
- Socialising / peer interaction
- Money advice
- Specialist service
- Education / employment / training

The project is seeing an increase in the number of people accessing the service however these do not represent the number of unique individuals.



More males attend the service than females and the largest proportion of clients are aged above 55 years. All age groups are increasing apart from those aged 35-44 years which suggests clients of this age are attending other services, such as YASC, where this is the largest age group.

The majority of people attending the Centre Project are either in hostel or supported housing accommodation or have their own tenancy. It is questionable why these people need to access this service, when they should be receiving this support in their hostel.



Source: Supporting People 2012

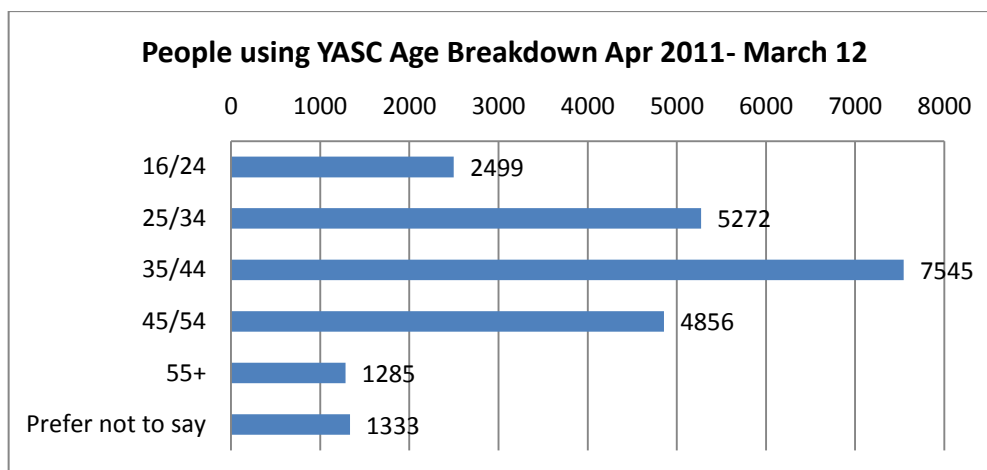
The main reason clients visit the project is to socialise and receive emotional support. This trend has particularly increased over the last nine months of 2011/12.

Access to housing advice has essentially remained stable but there has been a small upward trend since April 2011. However, this only accounts for a small proportion of the services accessed by clients.

It is apparent that people are accessing this service due to feelings of isolation. While this is a valid issue which needs addressing, it is questionable whether this should be funded through homelessness resources.

5.9.2 Y Advice and Support Service (YASC)

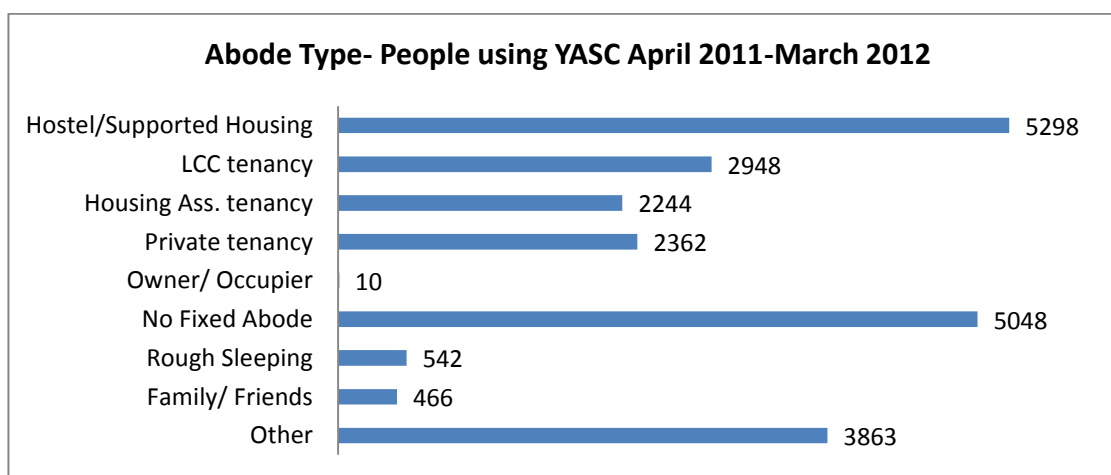
YASC is a drop-in day centre, based at the Dawn Centre, which provides advice, support, food, drinks, showers and laundry facilities. The service is seeing an increase in the number of visits however figures are collected by visit and do not represent unique individuals. The majority of people self- refer to the service.



More males attend the service than females and the largest proportion of clients are aged between 35 - 44 years.

During the review, the role of YASC has been questioned as it was felt that it had now become a service that people use as somewhere to go during the day. Also, there are issues about people spilling out onto the street.

26% of clients attending YASC live in a hostel and 37% have their own tenancy. 25% have no fixed abode and 2.6% are rough sleepers. *Source: Supporting People 2012*



Source: Supporting People 2012

It is questionable why people in supported accommodation need to access this service as they should be receiving this support in their hostel. It is also surprising that clients, with their own tenancies, would access this service in such high numbers, especially those with an LCC or Housing Association tenancy. It would appear that one of the main reasons for accessing this service is to overcome social isolation.

5.9.3 Anchor Centre

The Anchor Wet Day Centre is jointly funded by a range of agencies including the Leicestershire Community Projects Trust, the Leicester Safer Partnership, Health, the Police, DAAT and the Housing Service.

The service provides entrenched drinkers with an alternative to drinking on the streets and access to on-site information, advice on de-tox services, as well as access to tenancy and housing advice.

The aim of the service is to reduce crime and disorder by taking drinkers off the streets, assisting homeless people into accommodation or sustaining existing tenancies. Also,

- Improve access to health services, including alcohol services
- Reduce costs for accident and emergency admissions
- Facilitate engagement with specialist and community based primary care treatment
- Address housing issues impeding the rehabilitation of people using alcohol

There has been an increase of 43% in the number of registered service users in the last year which includes a 146% increase in the number of EU nationals.

Registered Users	2011/12	2010/11
Existing Users	61	56
New service users	75	39
TOTAL REGISTERED USERS	136	95

Source: Anchor Centre 2012

Age Band	No	Ethnic origin	No
18-25	6	Polish	44
26-40	31	Lithuanian	14
41-55	24	Latvian	5
55+	6	Slovakian	2
TOTAL	67	Other	2

The biggest age groups visiting the centre are 26-40 and 41 – 55 years.

Category	No	Category	No
Rough Sleepers	53	Supported Housing	8
NFA	18	Family/partner	6
Hostels	9	Tenancy	42

The trend in rough sleeping EU nationals accessing the centre has continued and 56% of current clients are from this group.

Apart from the EU nationals, the main group using the centre are older entrenched drinkers, with high support needs.

43% of centre users in the last year were rough sleepers at the point of access.

Of the brief interventions, 28% related to dependency issues, 22% were housing related and 19% related to financial issues.

The project has assisted with the following issues.

Assisted with getting documentation	22	Assistance with accommodation	27
Helped with JSA / HB Application	39	Access to secure accommodation	15
Referral to Housing Options	21	Access to ESOL classes	15

Issues have been raised about the need for a wet centre in Leicester and whether it is desirable for people to be able to attend the Centre, to drink alcohol throughout the day, particularly when they have their own accommodation. There are also issues about people spilling out onto the street, when the service closes at 4pm.

5.9.4 East European Support - Niebo Resource Centre

Niebo means 'sky' in many east European languages and the Niebo Resource Centre is a new Leicestershire Community Projects Trust service providing advocacy, help and support to Eastern European nationals who need help with a variety of needs, including accommodation and employment.

The need for this service was identified due to the number of Eastern European nationals in the City, who were homeless and in need of assistance, following the down turn in the economy resulting in the subsequent loss of work. The project received funding from the Big Lottery 'Reaching Communities' fund towards the end of 2011 and was launched in 2012. The service is based in the Anchor Centre and includes an Eastern European worker, who can communicate in Polish and Russian.

The aim of the service is to achieve the following outcomes for Eastern Europeans:

- Increased prospects of employment
- Improved access to health services
- Reduced homelessness through access to housing
- Reduce social isolation

Since 1st April 2012, 8 clients have been engaging in ESOL classes, 4 clients were invited to LCC apprenticeship interviews, 3 clients obtained replacement passports, 2 clients obtained National Insurance numbers and 10 clients ceased rough sleeping.

Source: NEIBO Project 2012

The NEIBO service has also been heavily involved in the Rough Sleepers Task Panel and works with a range of agencies and providers across the city. The Eastern European Worker has contributed to the Homelessness Review and is a member of the Homelessness Strategy Reference Group.

Proposed Action

We will continue to work with the NEIBO project.

5.10 Faith and Community Groups

Support for homeless and vulnerably housed people is offered by faith and voluntary groups as a free provision based on need, regardless of income, employment, status, religious background, ethnicity or culture. These groups do not receive funding from the Housing Service.

Current provision includes:

- Food, hospitality and befriending – this service is coordinated to avoid duplication
- Christmas and Winter Shelters in December and January
- Debt advice, advocacy and continuity of support when making referrals to housing, health and social services
- Accommodation
- A safe place for people to meet with professionals
- A person centred approach, with on-going assessment and support
- Physical resources and emotional support to people setting up a home.

Following the Homelessness Summit there was a realisation that all providers needed to work together and representatives of the **Leicester Homeless Voluntary Forum** have been heavily involved in the homelessness review and development of the new strategic priorities. The Forum is made up of the following organisations.

- Triangle Project
- The Bridge
- Open Hands
- Community of Grace
- Eat and Meet
- Storehouse

The Forum provides a range of valuable services for homelessness people the most important providing friendship, developed with people over time, to help overcome feelings of isolation. As the welfare reforms begin to impact, it is believed that more people will turn to this sector for support.

The Forum is hoping to develop an Independent Well Being Centre and also an emergency accommodation facility for people who are not in priority need and have no recourse to public funds.

Proposed Action

To work in partnership with the voluntary, community and faith groups to identify and implement actions to address the social isolation of homeless and vulnerably housed people.

To recognise the valuable role voluntary, community and faith groups play in providing key support services to homeless people in Leicester.

5.11 Employment, Education and Training

'No job, no home - no home, no job'

"Most homeless people do want to make the transition from pavement to pay packet. They want to lead full and meaningful lives, and pay their way, like everyone else. But because of the traumas caused by homelessness, they need dedicated help and support to make this possible."

Mungos.org.uk

Source: www.St

Employment is a key risk factor in homelessness and research shows this can be reduced by half through employment. Those engaged with supporting the homeless, particularly hostel based support workers, will need to play a more proactive role in signposting their clients to those specialist organisations who provide an employability service. This will include people who are ready for work, but lack confidence or have been out of work for a long period of time.

This will require a shift in culture from homelessness services focussing on providing 'shelter', to one of being proactive enablers, where the expectation should be that clients will move on to independent living, and employment is a key part of this transition.

Homeless people require access to work, training placements and meaningful activities to help rebuild their confidence and to overcome feelings of isolation and boredom.

Leicestershire Cares supports homeless people living in hostels or involved in 'sofa surfing' to break the cycle of 'no job, no home - no home, no job' in a variety of work placements, but if they are not ready for this, they will help clients get the education or training they need to move on.

Leicestershire Cares provides volunteering opportunities for companies looking to get involved with communities in Leicestershire & Rutland.

62% of clients are placed in education, training or employment within three months of joining the Leicestershire Cares scheme.

Source: *Leicestershire Cares 2012*

LCC's **Housing Neighbourhood Improvement - Leicester to Work initiative** project is working closely with Leicestershire Cares, to enable hostel clients to access work placements, within the Housing Division.

STRIDE is a social enterprise which provides work placements and accredited training opportunities to a variety of people, including long term unemployed, vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals and young people leaving school. Furniture is also produced at their warehouse by people on work placements with STRIDE.

These work placements, through both organisations, provide opportunities for homeless people, to work in a real working environment. This also gives them vital training which will help towards future employability.

Action Homeless

The Action Trust is an innovative partnership of organisations that provide vocational training, life and employment skills development, housing support and business management. Their aim is to support homeless people, ex-offenders and armed forces

veterans, transform their lives by providing employment opportunities through the Action social enterprises. Through this, Action Trust aims to break the cycle of offending and homelessness, by taking individuals on a journey from worklessness to sustainable employment.

These organisations have been heavily involved in the homelessness review and in the development of the new Homelessness Strategy.

Proposed Action

There should be clear routes into education, training and employment for homeless people. Support planning should focus on accessing education, training or employment or other meaningful activities to help rebuild the confidence of residents and to develop their skills to eventually live independently.

We should continue to build on the partnership working with the employability organisations to ensure homeless people can break the cycle of no job, no home – no home, no job.

Chapter Six

Consultation and Mystery Shopping Results

6. Consultation

6.1 Hostel Staff Survey (March – July 2012)

A survey of LCC and VCS hostels was undertaken during the review period. There were 53 responses. The table below highlights the main issues raised.

Topic	Issues Raised / Comments
Main issues affecting homelessness	<p>Housing Options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More people going into Options Eligibility criteria are too high - local connection Lack of customer care SAR Ignore low needs Lack of assessment skills Communication Difficult to get homeless declarations Lack of advice and support <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of suitable PRS accommodation Disreputable PRS landlords Shortage of social housing EU Nationals Increased rough sleepers Welfare Reform Lack of move-on accommodation Increased people with complex needs Affordability issues
Gaps and duplication in service provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many agencies offering same service Duplication of work in Housing Options and STAR Specialist accommodation Better Housing Options Service Not enough support for men (DV) Move-on accommodation Information sharing Partnership working
Challenges / difficulties in your role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult to access temporary accommodation Lack of support outside 9.00 – 5.00 Shared facilities for families Lack of time to deal with cases properly No long-term planning Budget cuts Complex needs cases Hard to work with Housing Options Welfare Reform Partnership working Lack of knowledge / information / training / how to access services

Topic	Issues Raised / Comments
New priorities in the Strategy	Better information sharing Adopt No Second Night Out More work with the private sector Specialist accommodation Prioritising move-on Drop the tendering process Improved partnership working More floating support Education and skills for homeless people Less emphasis on local connection Staff training and development

6.2 Prompt Survey (2011)

The Prompt Survey was undertaken by the VCS providers who consulted people who had experience of street drinking.

There were 75 respondents, 80% were male. There was a mixed age range.

51% were White British, 23% Other White and 12% of black ethnic origin.

59% were from Leicester and 39% from elsewhere, including 23% EEA.

Findings

- the main reason for homelessness was linked to relationship breakdown
- last home was in the private rented sector
- they received no advice or support before they left
- they wanted advice but didn't know where to get it
- 49% were rough sleeping
- 32% were sofa surfing
- 53% had been rough sleeping for more than a year
- 25% had experienced more than 10 episodes of rough sleeping

6.3 Supporting People Service User Consultation (2011)

Supporting People consulted with current and ex users of homelessness services.

There were 39 respondents, of which 77% lived in a hostel, 15% in supported housing, 15% were in their own tenancy and 18% were sleeping rough.

Findings

- 46% had been in more than 1 hostel
- 47% were satisfied with services

- 61% had completed more than 1 assessment
- 47% felt their needs were not being met
- 84% discussed move-on within the first few support sessions
- Rough sleepers accessed YASC, Outreach and Anchor for advice

6.4 Homeless clients' comments during the review (Informal discussions 2012)

- This is the first family I've had
- Hostel staff are sound
- There are too many drugs in the hostel
- I don't feel safe in the hostel
- My child is in care
- I have been in hostels, with my child, for 5 years, on and off
- There is nothing to do in hostels
- Hostel staff speak to you like you're a kid
- I don't know where I am going to go when I leave the hostel
- If you are not on drugs when you get there, you will be when you leave the hostel
- I want to go home to my family
- They (hostel staff) saved my life

All the issues identified during these consultations have been incorporated into the Review findings.

6.5 Mystery Shopping

During May 2012 a small sample Mystery Shopping exercise was undertaken to establish levels of customer service provided by Leicester City Council's Housing Options and hostels and also hostels within the voluntary sector.

The exercise involved 7 contacts with Housing Options and telephone calls were also made to eight Voluntary Sector providers.

6.5.1 Housing Options

The overall feedback from mystery shoppers about the service provided by Housing Options is that there are areas in need of improvement. This is mainly due to the perceived behaviour and attitude of the staff that were mystery shopped. Feedback from 5 of the contacts was that there was a general lack of understanding and empathy for the situation homeless people were in and there was also a lack of information and advice. 2 of the contacts felt staff were friendly and helpful and were sympathetic to their circumstances. These positive working practices need to be adopted by all staff working in Housing Options.

Main areas for improvement identified through the mystery shopping exercises

- Officers should always introduce themselves
- Ask more detailed questions to gain a good understanding of the client
- Provide more detailed advice that meets client's needs
- Staff need to be more polite and understanding
- Ensure client understands what they are being told and what will happen next

Housing Options undertakes regular customer satisfaction surveys. During May to October 2011, a survey of 56 customers that attended Housing Options interviews were asked about their experience. 43 (77%) said their enquiry was dealt with to their satisfaction. 49 (88%) people said the quality of service, provided by the officer who dealt with their query, was either good or excellent. 52 people said the officer was either good or excellent in terms of their helpfulness or attitude. (93%)

6.5.2 LCC and Voluntary Sector Hostels

The mystery shopping exercise included 2 contacts to LCC hostels and 8 to VCS hostels. The service provided by the hostels was customer focused and appeared to be caring. The mystery shoppers felt hostel staff understood the situation the homeless person was in and listened to them.

Staff provided useful information and signposted the mystery shoppers to other services, including website and accommodation addresses. Explanations were given about what would happen when the person visited Housing Options and staff ensured the client understood the information they were being given.

Housing Options and hostel providers clearly undertake a different role and the outcomes achieved by both services will influence satisfaction with the service.

Proposed Action

The individual mystery shopping reports will be made available to the service providers to enable them to examine the results and implement any necessary improvements. It will also provide an opportunity to see which parts of the service were praised.

6.6 Future Consultation

Leicester's eligibility criteria will also be consulted on during the review process.

There will be a statutory consultation on the Homelessness Review and Draft Homelessness Strategy during November 2012 – January 2013.

Formal consultation will be undertaken with clients across all providers during this period.

Chapter Seven

Governance of the Homelessness Strategy

7.1 Housing Advice and Support Programme Board (HASP)

The HASP Board was established in 2010 to provide a multi-agency structure to monitor the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy. outcomes for housing advice, homelessness, supported housing accommodation and floating support.

The objectives of this Board include:

- over-seeing the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan
- liaising with the Health and Well-Being Partnerships
- reporting on National and Local performance indicators
- advising on new actions to improve performance against indicators
- considering issues raised by sub-groups and agree how these should be addressed
- raising issues with the appropriate Commissioning Groups
- working with strategic programmes on worklessness for PSA16 groups

There are three sub-groups within the HASP board which focus on specific client groups, including young people, homeless families and children and vulnerable adults. These groups are chaired by members of partner organisations and their role is to inform the work of HASP and to provide feedback to voluntary sector and community providers.

The Move-On Board was established in February 2010 within the Housing Division. The aim was to develop improved person-centred move-on for all clients, residing in hostel accommodation, by creating new and clear pathways to match people's needs. This work has included identifying barriers to achieving move on, reviewing existing processes and developing new working practises and policies. A report was developed for HASP outlining the identified barriers to move-on and the Council's response to each.

The Revolving Door Service was also developed (November 2010) following identification of a core group of individuals revolving through temporary accommodation services. The service analyses the monthly admissions into Leicester City Council's singles hostels and reviews the number of admissions for each case in the two years preceding the current admission. The team then approaches those that have had the highest number of admissions in that two year period.

7.2 Performance Monitoring

The Move-On Board has developed monitoring mechanisms for Council supported accommodation and floating support provision and received the following reports on a quarterly basis.

- Admissions
- Next accommodation steps
- Length of stay
- Long-stay reports for current clients
- Barriers

- Housing application status
- Leavers' outcomes
- Vacancy reports

However, this monitoring does not include the VCS providers which makes it difficult to gain an holistic picture of homelessness, across the city.

Although, these reports provide a wealth of useful data, they lack an overall analysis to prompt further discussion. While these reports are discussed in HASP, it would be more effective to consider them as part of a wider report on homeless trends across all services, including cost and value for money analysis. Individual reports should form part of a wider report that presents an 'as is' picture of homelessness, identifying issues and developing solutions to address these.

The role of HASP needs to be revised to ensure it effectively monitors both the Homelessness Strategy and responds to trends across homeless services, in the future. HASP needs to determine what information it will collect and reduce the level of bureaucracy currently in place through Supporting People monitoring. Currently, a lot of data is collected by Supporting People that does not contribute to service improvements.

Proposed Action

To review the role and membership of HASP, in partnership with current members, to ensure it has mechanisms in place to monitor the performance of homeless services and progress made against the Homelessness Strategy. This will include identifying data to be collected, setting city-wide targets and monitoring outcomes achieved for both homeless people and those at risk of homelessness.

To develop an effective performance management and monitoring framework for homelessness services, including targets for the future, this will be monitored by the HASP Board.

To develop an annual Homelessness Report, based on the quarterly reports, which will be presented at an annual Homelessness Summit, open to all providers and other key agencies.

7.3 Information and communication

During the review, it became clear that information was not being routinely shared across the homelessness sector and those providers not involved in HASP felt isolated and out of touch with what was happening in relation to homelessness from a strategic perspective.

The sub-groups have not been effective in communicating with the wider homelessness sector.

The review also highlighted that agencies and supported housing staff were unclear about what services were available and how to refer or signpost clients to these services.

Proposed Action

To develop a communication plan to ensure all stakeholders have access to the information they require. This will include developing a new dedicated homelessness

resource on the internet and updating the Homelessness Service Directory.

7.4 Contract management

With the disaggregation of the Supporting People budget the Housing Service will need to identify who will monitor homelessness service contracts.

Proposed Action

To develop a contract management monitoring function within the Housing Division.

7.5 Strategic Lead for Homelessness and a Homelessness Champion

During the review process many agencies identified the need for a strategic lead to manage all aspects of homelessness across the city. This would ensure we would develop a citywide understanding of homelessness and citywide responses. They would also implement and monitor the new Homelessness Strategy.

Proposed Action

An LCC strategic lead for homelessness will be identified through the internal LCC Senior Management Review.

The VCS providers have highlighted the need for a Homelessness Champion for the City, ideally the Assistant Mayor for Adults, Social Care and Housing.

Proposed Action

To identify and appoint a Homelessness Champion for Leicester City.

7.6 For more information

If you would like any further information on the Homelessness Review and Draft Homelessness Strategy please contact Marie.Galton@leicester.gov.uk

Appendices

- A. Homelessness Strategy Reference Group Members
- B. Leicester City Council Allocations Policy Banding System
- C. Leicester City Council Draft Eligibility Criteria
- D. Barriers to Move-on
- E. Leicester Requirement

Homelessness Strategy Reference Group

Action Homeless

Adullam Homes Housing Association

ASRA Housing Group

Community of Grace

Eat and Meet – Islamic Society of Britain

Foundation Housing Association

Homeless Link

Inclusion Healthcare Social Enterprise

Leicester City Council – Children’s’ and Young Peoples’ Services

Leicester City Council – Drugs and Alcohol Team

Leicester City Council – Hostels Service

Leicester City Council – Housing Options Service

Leicester City Council – Service Improvement Unit

Leicester City Council – Outreach Team

Leicester Partnership NHS

Leicester Quaker Housing Association

Leicester YMCA

Leicestershire Cares

Leicestershire Community and Projects Trust – The Anchor Centre

Leicestershire Community and Projects Trust – The NEIBO Project

Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Trust

National Health Service - Leicester City

NHS Leicestershire Partnership – Homelessness Mental Health Service

Park Lodge Project

SHARP / STRIDE

Banding Scheme Summary

Taken from the Leicester City Council Allocations Policy

Band One

People in need of urgent re-housing and referred by Adult Social Care or Children's Services

People in need of urgent re-housing whose properties are directly affected by public redevelopment programmes

Council and housing association tenants who are currently under-occupying a large property (four bedroom or more) and who wish to move to a property with fewer bedrooms (three bedrooms or less)

Council and housing association tenants occupying a purpose built wheelchair adapted property who no longer require it

People suffering from any form of harassment

Council and housing association tenants who need to move for management reasons

People whose current housing conditions are having a seriously adverse effect on the physical or mental health of either the applicant or a member of their household

Children leaving the care of Leicester City Council's Children and Young People's Service (CYPS)

Band Two

People who are statutory homeless and are owed the full housing duty under Section 193 of the Housing Act 1996

People whose homes are deemed to be severely overcrowded (two bedrooms or more short of their assessed need)

Families living in designated temporary accommodation in the city

Families who are overcrowded and living in one bedroom accommodation

People identified as needing urgent re-housing to prevent homelessness

Single people living in designated temporary or supported accommodation

People ready to leave residential care supported by Leicester City Council and/or NHS

People with a care package where Adult Social Care (LCC) assess that a move will assist independent living

People whose current housing conditions are having a negative affect on the physical or mental health of the applicant or a member of their household

People leaving the armed forces who previously lived in Leicester but do not have a home to return to and do not qualify as statutory homeless

Band Three

People identified by Adult Social Care as ready to leave the care of family or carer

Single people who have no settled accommodation and are of 'no fixed abode'

Families needing to move to a particular area of Leicester where hardship would be caused if they do not move

Families who are living in overcrowded conditions under Leicester City Council's overcrowding standard (one bedroom short of their assessed need)

Council and housing association tenants who are currently under-occupying a two or three bedroom property

Band Four

People who share facilities with other households but have their own bedroom

People who need to move to, or remain in, a particular area of Leicester to give or receive emotional support from family, friends or others in the community

Band Five

People who do not have any of the housing circumstances listed in bands 1, 2, 3 and 4

Proposed eligibility criteria for offer of emergency or temporary accommodation

1st criteria: are homeless or threatened with homelessness and eligible for public assistance (unless found rough sleeping).

2nd criteria: fall into one of the following categories.

No changes to previous criteria.

Category	Duty arises from
a. Family, pregnant woman (no change to previous criteria)	Housing Act 1996
b. Vulnerable Adult (no change to previous criteria)	Housing Act 1996
c. Children leaving care (no change to previous criteria)	Children's Act 1989 Referrals from Children's Division and Housing Act 1986.
d. High risk offenders (no change to previous criteria)	Criminal Justice Act 2003 Duty to co-operate with Police, Probation and Prison Services under Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)
e. Ex-offenders leaving approved premises. (no change to previous criteria)	Criminal Justice Act 2003 Referrals from Probation Service.
f. Vulnerable adults and families (no change to previous criteria)	National Assistance Act 1948 Referrals from Adult Social Care Division.
g. Young offenders and ex-offenders (no change to previous criteria)	Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 referrals from Youth Offending Service.
h. Council tenants in an emergency (no change to previous criteria)	Identified within Housing Division (payment made by HRA, most council tenants would be rehoused within council house stock).
i. People over 60. (no change to previous criteria)	Who do not fall within above categories, identified by Housing Division.
j. People found rough sleeping or considered to be of immediate and high risk of rough sleeping.	Who do not fall within above categories, identified by Housing Division and in support of No Second Night Out principles. Dormitory accommodation may be offered to people who are in this category, particularly in an emergency or where the person is not connected to Leicester(see note 3)

Proposed changes in criteria.

<p>k. Other ex-offenders: under current eligibility criteria offences from many years ago taken into account. This new threshold will reduce numbers of people offered temporary accommodation and focus on those most likely to be facing problems.</p>	<p>Crime and Disorder Act 1998</p> <p>General duty to prevent Crime and Disorder. Usually people approaching us within one year of leaving custodial sentence who do not fall within above categories. Identified by Housing Division with Probation Service</p>
<p>l. People on identified drug and alcohol programmes or eligible for them and on waiting list. Under current eligibility criteria a client saying they use drugs or alcohol is taken into account. This new threshold will reduce numbers of people offered temporary accommodation, and focus on those with most problems.</p>	<p>Who do not fall within above categories.</p> <p>Referrals from agencies identified by ASC Drug and Alcohol Services.</p>

Notes

1. There no changes to current criteria in these notes
2. Categories a: and b: are homelessness duties.

Categories c: to g: may be regarded as arising directly from other Council statutory duties.

Categories h: to l: support other high Council priorities.
3. Access to emergency or temporary single homeless accommodation is primarily for those applicants that have had a settled address in the City of Leicester for the last 6 out of 12 months immediately prior to presentation (rough sleeping will not count towards this connection) or if the applicant has always been connected to Leicester but has been in prison/institution away from the City and is now homeless immediately post release/discharge.(exceptions to this policy will apply where there is a statutory homeless duty.)
4. The Council may refuse to provide a bed space when there are no vacancies and there is no statutory duty to do so. Advice will be given. Where there is a duty and there are no suitable hostel bed spaces, other temporary accommodation will be offered.
5. The Council imposes sanctions on homelessness service users who fail to comply with accommodation and other agreements (e.g. failure to comply with rent payments or arrears agreements, threatening behaviour etc.) These sanctions can include the need to meet specified requirements to gain re-entry to hostels.

Move-On Board 30 July 2012

Identified barriers to move-on from LCC hostels and responses

	Identified Barrier	Response
1.	Does not meet Leicester City Requirement (LCR)	Change in Leicester City Requirement (LCR) implemented on 1 st August 2011 to include address history for last five year period from last settled address rather than the last five years from application date
2.	Awaiting the allocation of temporary accommodation points-delay in being able to access independent accommodation	Temporary Accommodation Points now allocated after one month's residency in designated temporary accommodation (formerly 3 months)
3.	Rent Deposit Guarantee (RDGS) Scheme - access required a fully registered Y listed housing application	RDGS criteria revised removing the barriers of rent arrears and LCR, thus enabling clients, with those barriers, to access private sector housing. Applicants must be up to date with current accommodation charges and have lived in the City for 6 of the last 12 months -(Temporary accommodation counts towards this) Availability of private sector housing remains an issue.
4.	RDGS - cost of private sector and local housing allowance	New scheme developed for RDGS for shared houses
5.	Not having a housing application form registered and/or awaiting proofs	To resolve initial issues, the Housing Options Service provided a Check and Register Surgery. Daily reports available on Housing Application status for hostel residents and monitoring of Housing Applications status within the hostels
6.	Requirement to provide birth certificate - low income impacting on clients being able to afford to purchase birth certificates	Procedure written and the purchase of birth certificates is funded from client welfare fund, if in line with procedure
7.	Applicants with fully registered housing apps who are not bidding	Development of Sanctions Policy includes staged response to not bidding. Amended license agreement to include 'not bidding' clause, should sanctions not change behaviour, eviction may follow
8.	Having a clear pathway and support plan when living in hostel accommodation	New computer based client interactive pathway planning process. Development of a daily case management report, across the service, including the identified next accommodation step and identified barrier to this step. This enables a clear focus on what needs to be achieved to move on. Monitoring of next accommodation step and barriers.
9.	Long stay cases	Monthly monitoring of long stay cases at senior management level.
10.	Suitable move on accommodation for clients with complex needs	Complex cases discussed in management meetings and multi- agency forums. Information on 'gaps in provision' provided to review team for the city's homeless strategy.

	Identified Barrier	Response
11.	Access to Adult Social Care Services for clients with complex needs	Development of the 'Complex and Enduring Cases' process across all divisions of the local authority has been designed to provide a co-ordinated approach to cases accepted by the panel. Senior Managers across the authority attend these meetings. On a case by case basis, hostels and revolving door have had success with advocating on behalf of clients.
12.	Ex tenant arrears and any debt that is defined as monies as per the Allocation Policy (Includes former hostel arrears)	Exceptional circumstances for Re-housing with Rent Arrears Policy remains a route for those with arrears. Revised rent collection procedures in hostels to maximise payment and prevent arrears being accrued. Re-entry sanctions policy implemented in April 2012, which means those leaving the service with arrears will need to make a nominal payment prior to re-entry.
13.	Move on accommodation for those with long term barriers such as high rent arrears and ASB exclusion but who have reduced their support needs	Reconfiguration of existing resources to create Model A Shared Houses x 12 units. Shared houses for those with significant barriers to achieving independent accommodation but whose support needs have reduced / stabilised enough to live in a semi-independent environment, whilst they address barriers.
14.	Affordable Move on accommodation or temporary accommodation for those in, or seeking, employment	Reconfiguration of existing resources to create Model B Shared Houses x 13 units. Shared houses with a reduced rental cost creating affordable semi-independent accommodation for those who are homeless but seeking training and employment.
15.	Self-catering hostel accommodation for males aged over 25 years	Reconfiguration of Loughborough Road Women's Hostel into male and female provision.
16.	Waiting lists for Leicester City Council's Supported housing accommodation.	Revised access policy, removing the need for duplicate assessment. Clients are nominated directly from hostels. The development of 2 bed properties at Oronsay Road into shared flats creating more bed spaces in semi-independent accommodation.
17.	Waiting lists and access to Voluntary Sector Supported and Specialist provision	Access to bed spaces within certain organisations has been agreed with the Housing Options Service and some providers have shown flexibility on entry criteria on a case by case basis in order to offer accommodation. However, this is a limited few and until a Single Access and Referral Point exists in the City this issue is likely to remain unresolved.
18.	Lack of handover /preparation for independent living between hostels and STAR when moving into independent accommodation	Development of a link / process between hostels and STAR where cases are known to be moving shortly. This is to develop a working relationship with the client and aid the transition from temporary to independent accommodation.
19.	Clients who revolve around services and have a significant number of admissions into temporary accommodation.	Development of the Revolving Door Service in November 2010. The Team has expanded since November 2011 from 2 to 5 support workers.
20.	Non-compliance with support planning and achieving move-	Introduction of a new Sanctions Policy to address this issue. Change in license agreement to include addressing non-

	Identified Barrier	Response
	on within temporary accommodation services.	compliance. New client friendly pathway planning process Introduction of the Revolving Door Service.

Taken from the Leicester City Council Allocations Policy

2.27 Applicants to the Housing Register must meet the Leicester City Requirement (local connection) by satisfying at least one of the following criteria:

Applicants living within the city of Leicester must be able to produce documentary evidence that they have used a residential address within the City as their permanent home for the 12 consecutive months immediately prior to their housing application *. Applicants that have previously lived in permanent accommodation in Leicester City for 2 consecutive years or more out of the last 5 years *. Applicants employed within the city of Leicester who have a contract or a firm offer of employment within the city for a minimum of 12 months.

People who are aged over 18 and approved as a homeless person under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996. Asylum seekers who have been dispersed to the City by the National Asylum Support service (NASS) and whose status changes to that of refugee, or who are awarded exceptional or indefinite leave to remain whilst living in the city. Persons returning from service in the armed forces or prisoners released from prison who meet one of the above criteria prior to them entering service or prison.

Applicants currently living in unsettled accommodation (e.g. a hostel) within Leicester City who can demonstrate they had previously lived in permanent/settled accommodation in Leicester City for 2 consecutive years or more out of the last 5 years from the last date of their last settled accommodation.

* Hostels, Nightshelters, 'Care of Addresses' & No Fixed Abode do not meet the requirement, as they are not classified as permanent accommodation.