

# Active Inclusion Newcastle

## Newcastle Homelessness Prevention Briefing 2017-18 Q3

We want preventing homelessness in the city to be everyone's business. Our quarterly briefings aim to build consensus and a cooperative approach by providing information on:

- **data and narrative that tell us about the causes of homelessness**
- **the perceptions of clients, partners, and workers**
- **the outcomes and what works for people supported by homelessness services**
- **new initiatives, policy and legislative changes**

This will help us to work together to consider how to:

- **make the most of our resources to prevent homelessness and respond to crisis**
- **build on what is working well to identify and meet our challenges**
- **create opportunities to intervene earlier, build resilience and prevent homelessness**
- **revise the city's statutory Homelessness Strategy [action plan](#)**

The emphasis of our Homelessness Strategy is to maximise the value of our resources to prevent homelessness. To aid analysis we have created five groupings of homelessness:

- **people owed the full homelessness duty**
- **people at risk of homelessness**
- **people living with housing support**
- **young people at risk of homelessness**
- **people facing multiple exclusion and rough sleepers**

We recognise that these groupings have limitations and that people may not exactly fit the definitions, but differentiating between the risks of homelessness helps us to develop realistic options that include the wider aspects of social and financial inclusion, wellbeing, and health. We have found that homelessness is best prevented through coordinated support that provides consistent information, advice, and support to develop the foundations for a stable life:

- **somewhere to live**
- **financial inclusion**
- **an income**
- **employment opportunities**

Our primary challenge is to maintain our high levels of homelessness prevention in the face of the largest public sector and welfare cuts in 60 years. We work with partners to innovate, reduce duplication, increase prevention and provide more effective responses for vulnerable people. More information is provided in [Newcastle's Homelessness Strategy 2014-19](#).

This review will provide an overview of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (the Act), and an update on Newcastle's responses to the Act's challenges and opportunities by building on our Active Inclusion Newcastle partnership approach to making the prevention of homelessness everyone's business and a culture of supporting all residents to have a stable life: somewhere to live, an income, financial inclusion and employment opportunities.

Newcastle welcomes this Act which will improve the advice available to all residents at risk of homelessness & the opportunities it creates to better understand the causes of homelessness and the effect of our interventions to prevent and relieve those causes.

We would rather Government had retained the original aim of the Private Member's Bill to prevent homelessness and to have met the Prime Minister's aim to create "a fresh government approach to tackling homelessness by focusing on the underlying issues which can lead to somebody losing their home".

Since 2013 we have been consolidating our Active Inclusion Newcastle partnership approach to making it everyone's business to prevent homelessness and we will maintain our long term aim to develop a whole city systemic approach to proactively identifying and responding to prevent the risk of homelessness by working with partners in the voluntary, business, church and public sector to maximise the value of our collective investment to better resolve our common aim to end homelessness

## 1. An overview of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

[The Act](#) started as a Private Members' Bill, with all-party support, and is the most significant homelessness legislation for 40 years. Most of the Act will be enacted in April 2018 and is accompanied by a new [code of guidance](#) and monitoring system (Homelessness Case Level Information Collection (H-CLIC)) for councils.

The Act creates the following main changes:

- councils must assess and agree a personalised plan for all eligible applicants who are at risk of homelessness within 56 days that covers the:
  - circumstances that caused the risk of homelessness
  - the housing needs of the applicant, and
  - what support would be necessary for the applicant to be able to have and retain suitable accommodation
- councils must provide tailored information and advice for groups they consider more likely to be at risk of homelessness
- councils must take reasonable steps to relieve homelessness
- applicants will be expected to cooperate with the council
- [councils must establish a system for the acceptance of referrals from public agencies](#) to work with those at risk of homelessness (delayed until October 2018)
- the "full homelessness duty" comes in where relief fails

This review will outline our current performance in responding to homelessness but we will also seek to highlight the changes the Act will bring to bear and the interventions we are proposing to support its implementation in Newcastle.

Whilst this review continues to present the information in terms of the five groupings of homelessness that we have always used in our review we acknowledge that in Newcastle most people that we come into contact with will fall in to two broad 'groups' who are at risk of homelessness:

- a) thousands of residents who are at risk of a crisis in their lives, mainly due to poverty exacerbated by the welfare reforms; and
- b) a much smaller group who live a life in crisis, who have had a life of severe and multiple disadvantage that leads to repeated social exclusion. For example the needs of the most at-risk residents who sleep rough are complex and solving their housing issue is only a small part of the response.

For both groups, we have seen homelessness more as a symptom of the underlying issues that cause homelessness.

Our approach is based on developing coordinated advice and support for residents to have the foundations for a stable life: somewhere to live, an income, financial inclusion and employment opportunities. Given the context of austerity and the complexity of individuals' needs, this cannot be done by the council alone; it requires building on our partnership approach.

The information below reflects the current homelessness legal framework, this will change as we transition to responding under the Act.

## 2. People who are owed the full homelessness duty

### 2a. Table 1 – Household types and social needs

<b>Total households</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>17-18 Q1</b>	<b>17-18 Q2</b>	<b>17-18 Q3</b>	<b>17-18 Q4</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
Households owed the full duty	182	42	66	46		154
<b>Household type (top 3)</b>						
Lone parent with dependent child	91	27	33	28		88
Couple with dependent children	43	10	14	9		33
Single person household aged 18+	32	4	15	7		26
<b>Social needs (confirmed)</b>						
Mental health	49	10	19	11		38
Physical health	51	10	20	8		17
Persons from abroad	10	7	6	4		40

Table 1 (above) shows a fall this quarter on the previous in the numbers of households for whom the full homelessness duty was owed. 2017-18 is though on course to see a rise in the numbers accepted when compared with 2016-17.

### 2b. Table 2 – Causes of homelessness and outcomes

<b>Causes of homelessness</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>17-18 Q1</b>	<b>17-18 Q2</b>	<b>17-18 Q3</b>	<b>17-18 Q4</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
Loss of private rented	70	22	19	13		54
Parents asked to leave	20	3	8	3		14
Violent relationship breakdown	21	5	8	7		20
Required to leave Home Office (asylum support) accommodation	10	2	3	2		7
Relatives / friends asked to leave	16	4	6	8		18
<b>Outcomes</b>						
Rehoused by YHN	120	45	21	42		108
Rehoused by housing association	14	1	0	3		4
Rehoused by private rented	4	0	0	3		3
Refused offer	1	0	1	3		4

Table 2 (above) shows the loss of private rented continues to be the biggest-cause of homelessness for those households accepted under the full duty, though the parents and friends and family asking to leave is also rising highlighting the insecure arrangements that some households are currently living in. This increases the need for us to be able to identify at an earlier stage where people are living with tenuous arrangements and get the

advice and support to them before the need for a crisis presentation. Part of our approach to meeting this need can be seen in the work to align Discretionary Housing Payments with advice and support and to target those households at risk of homelessness. Other examples of upstream preventions can be seen later in this briefing

The Act changes the emphasis of councils' role from determining a duty to accommodate vulnerable applicants in "priority need" (being homeless alone does not qualify) to having a duty to "take reasonable steps" to prevent and relieve the homelessness of all eligible applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. This is likely to affect single residents who would not have previously qualified and this 'full homeless duty' will only come in to effect for those household where our interventions to prevent and/or relieve homelessness have failed. We are not expecting the Act to lead a major change in the numbers of people who we accept a full duty for. Much of the support for the Act related to perceptions that it will make it more difficult for councils to operate gatekeeping approaches to homelessness. Newcastle has a positive approach to responding to residents at risk of homelessness made possible by our relatively balanced housing market with accessible council and supported housing, therefore we expect the Act will probably have less of a radical impact here.

Table 3 (below) shows the number of people for whom we owed a statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation and the provision used to discharge that duty. The use of our commissioned accommodation outside of Cherry Tree View has continued to rise and the use of these placements was for single person households.

Examples of other CTV placements outside of the statutory duty to provide accommodation include temporary moves requested by YHN and placements in an emergency by social care. In most cases these placements were of a short term nature and 30 placements were for less than 7 days.

## 2c. Table 3 – Use of temporary accommodation

<b>Statutory use of temporary accommodation</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>17-18 Q1</b>	<b>17-18 Q2</b>	<b>17-18 Q3</b>	<b>17-18 Q4</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
Cherry Tree View (CTV)	109	28	34	21		83
Other accommodation	154	42	32	54		128
Domestic violence refuges	5	1	1	0		2
Total	268	71	67	75		213
Other CTV placements	131	35	46	41		122

We will continue for Q4 of this year to record these placements in this way but from 2018-19 we will be recording these placements not just in terms of where someone was placed but also on getting the definition of the need for temporary accommodation attached to the placement and which duty they were placed

The role of Cherry Tree View in wider homelessness prevention work can be seen in table 4 (below) which shows us the admits to the Preventative Outreach Service. There has been a fall this quarter and there will have been fewer admits to this service in 2017-18 compared to the previous year. This is as the service has adapted to the demands placed on it and adjusted to find the natural level of admits that could be maintained by the staff to deliver an effective service.

Providing this service to households at risk of homelessness is just one example of a number of upstream interventions that we have introduced, others such as the targeted

proactive preventative support this quarter for the 368 households (1,313 children) affected by the lower benefit to help mitigate the impact of reduced income through income maximisation, debt and budgeting advice and support, and housing advice and employment support

Table 4 shows that the highest number of referrals this year so far have come under the Sustaining Tenancies Guidance, and relates to YHN tenants of who are at risk of losing their tenancy and where action has begun to evict them. A high number of referrals to this service are for households who have been placements in Cherry Tree View and need some additional help when moving on to tenancy that is suitable and sustainable

**2d Table 4 - Admits to Cherry Tree View preventative outreach**

<b>CTV preventative outreach clients – admits and reason for admit</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>17-18 Q1</b>	<b>17-18 Q2</b>	<b>17-18 Q3</b>	<b>17-18 Q4</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
Total admits to service	270	46	39	28		113
• CTV move on cases	71	16	14	14		44
• Homelessness prevention	40	6	2	4		12
• Sustaining tenancies referrals	159	24	23	10		57

Table 5 (below) covers discharges from preventative outreach and there has been a fall in the numbers discharged this quarter. Of all the discharges this year 74% were successful outcomes with support ending with the client sustaining their tenancy. The outcome recording for this service is to be used to better understand the interventions which are successful and which will support the development of the service to reach more at risk households.

**2e Table 5 - Discharges from Cherry Tree View preventative outreach**

<b>CTV preventative outreach clients – Discharges</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>17-18 Q1</b>	<b>17-18 Q2</b>	<b>17-18 Q3</b>	<b>17-18 Q4</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
Total discharges from service	151	47	74	12		133
• Client sustaining tenancy	99	35	53	11		99
• Client failed to engage	27	7	19	1		27
• Rehoused to supported accommodation	2	0	0	0		0
• Evicted – no further contact	8	4	2	0		6

### 3. People at risk of homelessness

Table 6 (below) shows that whilst there has been a fall in the general number of calls received by the Housing Advice Centre presentations there has been no real change in the numbers of people being dealt with.

**3a. Table 6 – People at risk of homelessness contacting the Housing Advice Centre**

<b>People at risk of homelessness</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>17-18 Q1</b>	<b>17-18 Q2</b>	<b>17-18 Q3</b>	<b>17-18 Q4</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
Emergency out of hours calls	700	157	165	168		348
General HAC calls	2,365	635	655	430		1,720
Firstpoint advice	1,051	328	388	327		1,043
HAC casework	1,815	496	534	479		1,509

<b>Household type – Casework clients (top 3)</b>						
Single male aged 18+	900	227	246	234		707
Household with dependent children	391	108	119	107		334
Single female aged 18+	279	86	99	71		256

We know that that The change of emphasis of councils' role from determining a duty solely to accommodate vulnerable applicants in "priority need" to having a duty to "take reasonable steps" to prevent and relieve the homelessness of all eligible applicants who are homeless is likely to affect single residents who would not have previously qualified it is difficult to predict the impact of the Act; the government's modelling is based on data from previous legislation and is, therefore, of limited use. Our own analysis in these briefings has always been based on our wider database, which has limitations as long as it basing its data collection on the current legislation as a result we will take a staged approach to responding to the Act as we see how it affects demand in practice. Our modelling was based on the numbers of prevention and relief cases but these relate to households and not individuals so we have been unable to use this data to extrapolate a projected number of individuals likely to be affected. The initial focus of the Act is on councils' duty to respond to crisis, albeit extended from 28 to 56 days, the practice in Newcastle has always been to seek to prevent homelessness and we will continue to do so outside of the 56 days that the Act prescribes.

When consultation was open on the Code of Guidance that accompanies the Act we made representations that our model of homelessness prevention is based on the earliest possible intervention and that the prevention of homelessness should be everyone's business and not just a crisis response. We asked that the statutory guidance provide clarification on where pre-56-day homelessness prevention fits to capture this and by tying the 56 days to the recording (i.e. not being able to record prevention work done outside the 56 days) it seems like a missed opportunity to properly encourage and incentivise true homelessness prevention. H-CLIC will only allow us to report nationally on those within the 56 days and therefore doesn't record those who go beyond the minimum expected standard which we will do in Newcastle.

### **3b. Table 7 – Causes of homelessness and outcomes for people at risk of homelessness receiving casework interventions at the Housing Advice Centre**

<b>Reasons for presenting (top 3)</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>17-18 Q1</b>	<b>17-18 Q2</b>	<b>17-18 Q3</b>	<b>17-18 Q4</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
Loss or fear of loss of private rented	235	45	47	41		133
Relatives / friends asked to leave	222	45	73	56		174
Parents asked to leave	172	44	38	41		123
<b>Outcomes</b>						
Advice – remain in accommodation	502	111	121	100		332
Rehoused to supported housing	294	100	80	80		260
Rehoused to independent tenancy	286	93	111	114		318

Table 7 (above) shows that the main reasons for people at risk of homelessness presenting is that friends or relatives have asked to leave.

The Act doesn't address the lack of legal protection for private sector tenants and instead, it requires councils to "take reasonable steps" to prevent homelessness when a tenant has been served with a valid section 21 notice. The Active Inclusion Service is working with partners in the Private Rented Service to develop an enhanced offer for landlords that supports them in maintaining tenancies and offering routes in to additional support where needed for their tenants. This includes fast-tracking access to our Money Matters debt advice team to support tenants and direct referral routes into our Welfare Rights and employment support partners.

### 3c. Table 8 Homelessness Preventions

<b>Homelessness prevention</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>17-18</b>	<b>17-18</b>	<b>17-18</b>	<b>17-18</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
		<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	
<b>Total homelessness preventions</b>	<b>4,164</b>	<b>1,374</b>	<b>1,298</b>	<b>1,063</b>		<b>3,735</b>
Homelessness prevented	3,975	1,342	1,254	1,019		3,615
Homelessness relieved	189	32	44	44		120
<b>Prevention activities (top 3)</b>						
Rehoused to supported accommodation	1,169	293	334	251		878
Resolving rent / service charge arrears	1,057	382	312	300		994
Resolving Housing Benefit problems	759	195	230	176		601
<b>Use of DHP</b>						
DHP awards	28	18	6	5		29
<b>Social housing evictions</b>						
YHN evictions	58	19	19	19		57
<b>Partner homeless preventions</b>						
Crisis		50	86	114		250
Shelter		40	50	48		138

Table 8 (above) shows that there has been a fall in the number of preventions this quarter. It also shows that there has been no change in evictions from YHN this quarter.

As with previous quarter briefings we are continuing to build on the information we collect from partners such as Shelter and Crisis on homeless prevention. Whilst their numbers can't be included in the official homelessness prevention return they continue to reflect important partnership work to prevent homelessness. In preparation for the introduction of the Act many of the approaches that we are taking are being done in partnership with Shelter and Crisis in the desire to have a 'whole city' approach to the prevention of homelessness.

An example of this is the development of the Inclusion Plan which will meet the requirement in the Act for all residents who present to have an agreed plan for how their homelessness (or risk of) will be addressed.

The assessment focuses on two key areas. Firstly, the factors that have led a household to be threatened with homelessness, or become homeless. Secondly, the housing and support needs of the household. The assessment is then used to develop a personalised plan, developed in collaboration with the resident and reviewed on a regular basis.

The plan will identify actions to prevent or relieve homelessness, meet housing and support needs, and ultimately support the resident to develop the foundations for a stable **life**. If you are working with a resident this plan is likely to be something that you are asked to contribute to.

Our approach to preventing homelessness is to intervene early to try and stop problems like debt from becoming a crisis like homelessness. This means building on the value of a stable home being a foundation for a stable life, aligning our systems to further improve the identification of the risks of homelessness and the effectiveness of our responses, and consolidating our upstream interventions. In doing we contribute to mitigating the risk of the Act creating more crisis demand. A further example of this approach can be seen in the work done in identifying the risk of homelessness in partnership with Jobcentre Plus (JCP).

The pilot to date (5 June 2017 and 31 December 2017) has received 250 referrals from JCP staff where a risk of homelessness has been identified and support is needed to prevent or relieve homelessness. The case studies below give an indication of the range of issues that have been referred to either to the Housing Advice Centre or our partners in the pilot, YHN and Crisis.

- A resident disclosed to a work coach that he was sleeping in his car after leaving his private rented tenancy due to concerns around affordability. He was referred to the Housing Advice Centre who secured him crisis accommodation. He moved into his own supported tenancy within 10 days
- A refugee was referred by a work coach due to concerns about affordability of a private rented tenancy. She had been due to share with a friend but the friend opted to move to London leaving her liable for the full rent. She was given assistance to leave the tenancy and moved to supported accommodation with the North of England Refugee Service
- A YHN tenant who was struggling financially was referred by a work coach and subsequently provided with budgeting advice and helped to claim a Discretionary Housing Payment. The resident was also assisted in restructuring their deductions from Universal Credit to maximise their available income

The pilot's success has been in developing positive relationships between JCP staff and partners and in creating a partnership framework to better understand and improve our responses to residents with complexity in their lives who face obstacles to a stable life.

The pilot has not as yet responded to all of the challenges set by the MWG or resolved all of the issues that residents face. It has, however, helped a significant number of residents to reduce the risk of homelessness, demonstrated the value of a partnership approach and of the more effective use of public and charitable resources through working together as part of a more coherent systemic response than would have been achieved by partners working in isolation. The pilot is also helping Newcastle to prepare for the Act and build on our aim of using our collective resources to make preventing homelessness everyone's business by identifying the potential causes of homelessness at the earliest opportunity and to improve the alignment of our services to respond to these causes. This is also informing the DWP's approach to the duty for public agencies to identify and refer clients at risk of homelessness to the local housing authority



### 3d. Prison and hospital discharges

Table 9 (below) shows no noticeable change in the number of clients presenting to HAC from custody. As ever these figures come with the caveat that they relate to those where leaving prison is the direct reason for their presentation.

#### 3f. Table 9 – Prison release referrals

Prison release referrals	2016-17	17-18 Q1	17-18 Q2	17-18 Q3	17-18 Q4	2017-18
Number of referrals to HAC	44	11	10	13		34
<b>Outcomes</b>						
Accommodation secured	36	9	6	10		25
Out of area case – referred back	2	2	2	1		5
Refused accommodation offer	4	0	1	2		3
Recalled to prison	1	0	0	0		0
Returned to previous accommodation	1	0	1	0		1
Homeless presentation – no notice	0	0	0	0		0

Outside of presentations to HAC from those in custody, there were an additional 21 placements into supported accommodation via Gateway for clients leaving custody where their referral was made by probation or Shelter resettlement teams within the prison

Table 10 (below) shows a small rise in the numbers of referrals received from the hospitals, with the advance notice received from the hospitals

#### 3g. Table 10 – Hospital discharge referrals (direct from hospital)

Hospital discharge referrals	2016-17	17-18 Q1	17-18 Q2	17-18 Q3	17-18 Q4	2017-18
Total number of referrals	65	22	18	21		61
General (RVI and Freeman)	39	12	10	12		34
Mental health	26	10	8	9		27
<b>Outcomes</b>						
Accommodation secured	27	15	7	10		32
Returned to friends and family	1	1	0	0		1
Returned to own tenancy	7	2	1	2		5
Admitted to CTV	4	0	0	0		0
Homelessness presentation – no notice	1	0	0	0		0
Out of area case – referred back	16	2	7	4		13
Advance notice – not yet ready for discharge	8	2	4	5		11

We continue to liaise on a weekly basis with the Emergency Care Facilitator for Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and the Discharge Facilitators within the Bed Management Service for Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust.

This will form the basis of the approach we will use to support the hospitals with the duty to refer introduced with the Act and which will be effective from October 2018.

As part of the Act a number of public authorities are specified as being required to notify the Council of service users they consider may be homeless or threatened with homelessness, in addition to hospitals the public services included in this duty are;

- Prisons, youth offender institutions and secure training centres;
- Youth offending teams and probation services
- Jobcentre Plus;
- Social service authorities;

We will be making provision to support referral routes for these agencies and as part of the workforce development of the Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer the training on welfare rights, housing, budgeting and debt will be a mandatory requirement for all staff identified as supporting residents affected by poverty and at risk of homelessness.

As part of the changes brought about by the Act the local authority must design advice and information services to meet the needs of people seeking advice and provide specific and tailored advice for a number of prescribed groups, two of those groups being people leaving prison and hospital. We are updating our website and our information resources to respond to this and the information will be available for the implementation of the Act. The other prescribed groups for whom specific advice must be made available are

- Care leavers
- Former members of the regular armed forces
- Victims of domestic abuse
- People suffering from a mental illness or impairment

Outside of those groups listed local authorities have the option to extend to other groups that they prioritise within their own area, In Newcastle we will consult on the groups we will extend to but the suggestion is to include information on affordability, refugees and addictions

The mandatory training referred to above will also contribute to this requirement for information for at risk groups and the staff who support them.

#### **4. People living with housing support**

Table 11 (below) shows us that there has been a slight rise in both the number of admits to supported accommodation and in the number of individuals that this relates to. There was a rise in admits to all forms of accommodation including crisis provision and the 5 emergency beds. It also shows that for both crisis and supported accommodation the highest reason for admission was a move from other supported accommodation provision.

On the advice of Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and in order to meet our duty to relieve homelessness we will be updating Gateway to ensure the use of our commissioned services is by those that they identify as being homeless or with a housing need. This will result in the Housing Advice Centre agreeing the use of all homeless beds Table 11 also shows a rise in the number of admits where the reason given for admission was not recorded / not known. Q3 was the first quarter where the Active Inclusion Unit didn't run a second stage data cleansing process on this figure and this may explain the rise. This is something that we would require providers to be reporting accurately and we are working with them on reporting definitions.

**4a. Table 11 – Supported accommodation admits, reason for admission and social needs**

<b>Supported accommodation admissions</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>17-18 Q1</b>	<b>17-18 Q2</b>	<b>17-18 Q3</b>	<b>17-18 Q4</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
<b>Total number of admits</b>	<b>1,307</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>290</b>		<b>823</b>
• Crisis accommodation	497	101	86	100		287
• Supported accommodation	621	154	127	147		428
• Emergency beds	160	37	28	43		108
<b>Total number of individuals</b>	<b>829</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>235</b>		
<b>Reason for admission (crisis)</b>						
Not recorded / not known	18	2	9	24		35
Move from another hostel	168	33	48	41		122
Relationship breakdown	159	23	13	5		41
Discharge from institution	125	23	13	11		47
<b>Reason for admission (supported)</b>						
Not recorded / not known	13	6	7	28		41
Moved from another hostel (planned)	200	54	38	44		136
Relationship breakdown	137	46	31	38		115
Discharge from institutions	63	15	14	19		48

As part of our response to the Act and in order to prepare for a possible increase in the numbers of people for whom we will need to seek to relieve homelessness for we will also be increasing the number of emergency beds available in the city from the current 5 to 12. The work of the Service Improvement Lead (as below) will support the development of this and developing the framework for increased move on that will be needed to maintain the emergency beds.

A temporary Service Improvement Lead (SIL) has been appointed in the City Council’s Inclusion Commissioning Team, funded by the Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer, to implement an adaptive management approach that is outcome focussed, with a priority on improving and increasing moves from supported accommodation to suitable and sustainable tenancies, and strengthening the end to end approach to preventing homelessness with Your Homes Newcastle. The current funding model for supported accommodation is based on 100% occupancy, which makes responding to crisis challenging. The SIL is also working with Social Finance and supported housing providers to ensure that an optimum amount of supported accommodation is available from April 2018, to respond to the Act’s requirement to relieve crisis homelessness. The importance of this is reflected in the figures we can see in table 12 (below)

Table 12 shows that more people moved to an independent tenancy this quarter but more people moved to another supported accommodation placement, but additionally there are more people who the providers have assessed as being “green” and being ready to move from supported accommodation this quarter than have actually moved out. As part of the adaptive management approach outlined above we will be looking to revise the Supported Housing Move on Protocol and in particular taking a fresh look at the move on panel meetings and revising its purpose and terms of reference.

#### 4b. Table 12 – Supported Housing Move on Protocol

Move on assessments completed in the quarter	2016-17	16-17 Q4	17-18 Q1	17-18 Q2	17-18 Q3	17-18 Q4
<b>Total assessments added</b>		459	632	531	508	
• Number of 'red' (likely to require long-term support)		117	158	141	135	
• Number of 'amber' (further support required)		275	356	295	279	
• Number of 'green' (ready to move to independent living)		67	118	95	94	
<b>Tyne and Wear Homes applications submitted in the quarter</b>						
<b>Total applications submitted</b>		26	37	41	28	106
• Number of 'qualifying'		5	8	8	6	22
• Number of 'non qualifying'		1	0	1	1	2
• Awaiting decision		16	26	30	15	71
• Information not given		4	3	1	6	10
<b>Move on destination</b>						
<b>Total number of discharges</b>	1,315	319	275	293	288	856
• Supported accommodation	454	135	91	62	70	223
• Friends and family	208	40	31	39	32	102
• Independent tenancy	224	63	44	49	54	147

Table 13 (below) shows that evictions this quarter were up 44% on the previous quarter, with 63% of the evictions being from crisis accommodation and as with previous quarters, evictions for violence or disruptive behaviours being the biggest reason accounting for 45% of evictions.

#### 4c. Table 13– Prevention of Eviction from Supported Housing Protocol

	2016-17	17-18 Q1	17-18 Q2	17-18 Q3	17-18 Q4	2017-18
<b>Total number of evictions</b>	191	44	39	56		139
• Evictions from crisis accommodation	119	23	21	35		79
• Evictions from supported accommodation	43	16	13	19		48
• Evictions from accommodation for young people	29	5	5	2		12
<b>Total number of Notice to Quits (NTQ) issued</b>	266	53	59	42		154
• NTQs resulting in eviction	63	9	18	21		38
• Evictions without NTQ	128	35	41	35		111
• NTQs issued and client still in accommodation	203	44	23	21		88

<b>Reason for eviction (served NTQ)</b>						
• Violence to staff or other residents	62	19	13	14		46
• Disruptive behaviour	54	11	13	11		35
• Drug / alcohol abuse	13	1	4	8		13
• Rent arrears	28	4	4	10		18
• Theft	13	1	0	1		2
• Other	21	3	5	12		20
<b>Move on destination</b>						
• Crisis or supported accommodation	13	3	2	5		10
• No forwarding address	132	30	29	44		103
• Friends and family	30	3	4	1		8

This quarter saw a rise in the number of evictions where the reason given was ‘other.’ Looking at the records of those evicted it seems that the reason could be classified under one of the headings given and the high number of ‘other’ relates to the point made earlier that some recording errors have not been picked up following the removal of the second stage data cleansing check that the Active Inclusion Newcastle Unit had previously carried out. At the March Homelessness Prevention Forum a suggestion was made that we look more closely at the evictions each quarter in order to see if there are any commonalities across them which would give us a clearer idea of where and how things go wrong for clients and jeopardise placements. This is something that the Service Improvement Lead will progress.

Table 13 shows us that there are still a significant number of people being evicted from accommodation without being served with a “notice to quit”, in this quarter 62% of those evicted were recorded as not having been served with any notice that their placement was at risk. [The Prevention of Eviction from Supported Housing protocol](#) is very clear that other than in instances of violence or a serious threat to staff or other residents clients should not be asked to leave the provision without a notice being served and be given an opportunity to adapt behaviour accordingly.

## 5. Young people at risk of homelessness

Table 14 (below) shows there has been a slight fall this quarter in the numbers of 16 and 17 year olds presenting in housing need, and it would seem likely that will be fall in the total for 2017-18 when compared to the previous year.

### 5a. Table 14 – 16 and 17 year olds in housing need (YHN’s Young People’s Service)

<b>Young people in housing need</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>17-18</b>	<b>17-18</b>	<b>17-18</b>	<b>17-18</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
		<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	
Total referrals to service	191	42	42	36		120
Total admits to service	178	38	36	32		106
<b>Presentation source</b>						
Application to Tyne and Wear Homes	56	19	12	14		42
Housing Advice Centre	68	14	14	6		37
Referrals from 16+ team	58	5	10	12		27

<b>Outcomes (case closed in the quarter)</b>						
Remained in existing accommodation	48	14	15	8		37
Referred to supported accommodation	30	8	5	4		17
Non-engagement – no further contact	17	4	6	6		16
Floating support	23	4	8	4		16
Statutory homelessness	0	0	0	0		0

Previous analysis from YHN Young Peoples Service (YPS) who provide this service is that welfare reform has led to a decrease in the numbers of 16 and 17 year olds who are asked to leave the family home. They also suggested that publicity around the welfare reform changes aimed at 18-21 year olds has also had an impact in deterring young people from seeking accommodation outside the family home

#### 5b. Table 15 – Admits to supported housing (16 to 24 year olds)

<b>Admits to supported housing (16 to 24 year olds)</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>17-18 Q1</b>	<b>17-18 Q2</b>	<b>17-18 Q3</b>	<b>17-18 Q4</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
Total number of admits	225	54	45	48		147
<b>Reasons for admit (top 3)</b>						
Relationship breakdown (parents / family)	108	28	17	25		70
Moving from another support setting	42	10	10	12		32
Crisis	27	7	9	5		21

Table 15 (above) shows that whilst the admits to supported housing commissioned specifically for 16 to 24 year olds has remained relatively consistent, it again looks likely that overall for the year we will see a fall when compared to admits in 2016-17 Table 16 (below) shows us that discharges from supported housing for 16-24 years (from provision commissioned exclusively for them) have remained relatively consistent over the year so far.

#### 5c. Table 16 – Discharges and outcomes from supported housing (16 to 24 year olds)

<b>Outcomes from supported housing (16 to 24 year olds)</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>17-18 Q1</b>	<b>17-18 Q2</b>	<b>17-18 Q3</b>	<b>17-18 Q4</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
Total number of discharges	226	51	50	49		150
<b>Move on destination</b>						
No forwarding address	37	13	17	11		41
Family or friends	64	12	10	10		32
Other supported accommodation	76	17	10	17		44
Independent tenancy:	26	5	11	6		22
• YHN	14	3	5	6		14
• Private rented	5	2	2	0		4
• Housing association	6	0	4	0		4

Of concern is the higher than normal levels of clients seemingly leaving to no forwarding address. The suspicion is this is linked to the issue raised earlier about the lack of the

second stage data cleanse being carried out by the Active Inclusion Unit and we will be addressing this with providers through their regular contract meetings.

## 6. Multiple exclusion and rough sleeping

Table 17 (below) shows an increase in the average number of individuals found sleeping rough and the average per night, and the official number reported to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government as part of their annual count has risen from 5 in 2016-17 to 10 for 2017-18.

### 6a. Table 17 – People sleeping rough

	2016-17	17-18 Q1	17-18 Q2	17-18 Q3	17-18 Q4	2017-18
Average found per night	5	7	6	7		
<b>Individuals:</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>77</b>		
• Stock	121	47	21	33		
• Flow	110	34	16	26		
• Return	28	14	10	18		

Rough sleeping is a consequence of complex issues which people are struggling to address, e.g. 80% have drug addictions, 55% mental health problems and 95% an offending history and that the provision of accommodation is only part of the solution. We will use the development of the Inclusion Plans (as described earlier) in conjunction with the weekly Multiple Exclusion Common Case Management Group to encourage a holistic approach to supporting the resident from sleeping rough, in to accommodation and to maintaining that accommodation. This final part being particularly important when we look at Table 18 (below) and see the numbers of people who are found sleeping rough after being evicted or abandoning accommodation

Whilst the numbers of people found sleeping rough following a discharge from an institution has remained low this year, we will use the duty to refer under the Act to particularly encourage criminal justice agencies to work with us to ensure that people don't leave custody at risk of sleeping rough.

### 6c. Table 18 – Reasons for rough sleeping and outcomes

Reasons for rough sleeping	2016-17	17-18 Q1	17-18 Q2	17-18 Q3	17-18 Q4	2017-18
Evicted / abandoned accommodation	91	33	23	18		74
Unknown	90	22	12	23		57
Relationship breakdown	55	13	3	13		29
Discharge from institutions	18	5	3	1		9
<b>Outcomes</b>						
Accommodation secured	50	15	7	14		36
No further contact / disappeared	131	38	23	10		71
Returned to existing accommodation	18	15	7	4		26
Reconnection	9	1	1	25		27

The Entrenched Rough Sleeping Social Impact Bond (SIB) team have begun their work with a cohort of selected clients,

185 client have been identified in Newcastle as potentially falling within the remit with and as of last month initial interventions have begun with 13 clients. The SIB team includes a co-located Mental Health Social Worker and an Addictions Nurse Specialist who will provide direct support and help facilitate access into specialist services. The outcomes that the SIB service will be seeking to achieve for their clients are;

- entry into & sustained accommodation
- better managed needs & improved health & wellbeing through engagement with treatment providers
- improved entry into education, training & access to employment opportunities

We will include more detailed reporting information on the SIB in future briefings and as the service develops.

The SIB supports our long term aim to develop a whole city systemic approach to proactively identifying and responding to prevent the risk of homelessness by working with partners in the voluntary, business, church and public sector to maximise the value of our collective investment to better resolve our common aim to end homelessness and this includes this includes the proposed Newcastle Homelessness Commission Street Zero 2022

## **7. What we are doing – building on our Active Inclusion Newcastle Partnership**

We will build on the Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer work that we have detailed in previous reviews and which forms the basis for our response to the Act This programme is a development of our Active Inclusion Newcastle approach and we have detailed a number of its elements earlier in the briefing but they are summarised below and will enable Newcastle to not only meet the new statutory duties created by the Act but has given us the opportunity to build and strengthen our approach to make the prevention of homelessness everyone's business.

The Act creates opportunities to further our ambition to be a city without homelessness and provides opportunities to build on our existing work by transforming good practice into business as usual by formally aligning our "touch points" for vulnerable residents with our responses for mitigating the risks of homelessness. We have seen some of these examples in the review above. However continuing to do this without increasing expenditure means strengthening our systems for collaborative working by aligning assessments, data, reviews, monitoring, commissioning and governance. At the core of this is a common evidence-based approach to identifying and responding to crisis. This will require comprehensive and proactive approaches to preventing homelessness.

### **The introduction of Inclusion Plans and pathways**

These will meet the requirement in the Act for all residents who present to have an agreed plan for how their homelessness (or risk of) will be addressed. Our ambition is for there to be continuity of support planning that follows the resident as part of a system that seeks to identify risk at the earliest opportunity and aligns this through pathways to the advice, accommodation and support that can prevent or relieve homelessness.

Both the Inclusion Plans, pathways and associated IT changes required to support them are being developed in partnership with Crisis and Shelter and in consultation with both residents and practitioners to ensure the process works from the perspective of both the resident and any professional working with them. This will be extended to YHN's Advice and Support team and supported housing providers. In the longer term, we aim to adapt all support planning to more proactively identify and respond to the risk of homelessness



Three additional temporary homelessness officers will be appointed, funded by the new burdens money accompanying the Act and from the Trailblazer. This returns staffing to 2012 levels, although the demand on staff time is perceived will be greater because it is anticipated that the requirements of the Act will, initially, double homelessness assessment time.

### **Outcome focussed commissioning**

The overall aim is to increase access to supported accommodation to ensure we are able to respond to the anticipated pressures of the Act by better using our resources to give us greater capacity to respond to crisis and prevent homelessness. The aim will be to

- understand what the optimum level of accommodation is to enable us to respond to crisis and offer appropriate accommodation
- increase positive move on into suitable and sustainable accommodation;
- prevent crisis occurring through an increased understanding of the journeys into homelessness; and
- ensure the interventions and support offered prevent repeat episodes of crisis and representation to the homelessness system

### **Upstream interventions**

Our approach to preventing homelessness and, therefore, to reducing costs, misery and legal challenges is seeking to prevent homelessness by intervening early to try and stop a problem like debt becoming a crisis like homelessness. This means building on the value of a secure council house as a foundation for a stable life, aligning our systems to further improve the identification of the risk of homelessness and the effectiveness of our responses, and consolidating our upstream interventions. This should mitigate the risk of the unintended consequence of the Act of creating more crisis demand.

The value of this approach is shown in the reduction of evictions from council housing. In 2007 we developed [sustaining tenancies guidance](#) with YHN to reduce evictions by intervening with advice and support when tenants are at risk of eviction rather than relying on a legal-based threats process. This approach has been the main factor in reducing evictions by 72%.

### **Workforce development**

To support implementing the Inclusion Plans and the identification of the risk of homelessness and the pathways to services. Over the last two years we have trained 1,554 multi-agency staff and volunteers on welfare rights, housing, budgeting and debt. This training will be a mandatory requirement for all Council staff identified as supporting residents affected by poverty and at risk of homelessness. As previously advised this will also contribute to the Act's requirements for information for at risk groups and the staff who support them.

### **Analytics, cost benefit analysis and exception reporting**

To strengthen evidence and feedback loops to enable us to identify opportunities for prevention, and to develop consensual monitoring and our understanding of what works and the costs of prevention against crisis interventions. This will strengthen our ability to maximise prevention through "touch" and "trigger points" and to review demand and provide evidence if changes are needed. We will also be working with Heriot-Watt University, funded by the Trailblazer, to conduct research on the systemic causes and prevention of homelessness

## **Multi-disciplinary team**

In addition to the elements above, and as part of the Trailblazer a multi-disciplinary team has begun work as part of our ambition to embed integrated casework on housing, financial and employment issues. This team aligned to the Active Inclusion Newcastle partnership aspiration of supporting residents to have a stable **life** and includes disciplines that provide specialist information, advice and support to contribute to delivering this aspiration.

The three primary aims of this team are:

- To deliver integrated casework on housing, financial and employment issues for residents facing certain issues or changes in circumstances, or where existing services aren't designed to meet the intensity of support required
- To provide infrastructure support to help services and organisations to adapt to meet the challenges of a reduced welfare state and to strengthen our local system
- To capture the learning from the team's ways of working and to contribute to evidence on the issues that residents are experiencing and the challenges they face to inform local and national policy and practice

Their focus is on case finding to improve our understanding of upstream interventions to prevent homelessness which will support us in delivering prevention at an early stage.

## **8. Consultation at Newcastle Homelessness Prevention Forum**

The issues raised in this briefing were discussed with partners at the Homelessness Prevention Forum on 13 March 2018. We asked people to focus on the following questions and we have included their feedback below.

### **1. Do you understand our responses to the Homelessness Reduction Act?**

- Participants all agreed that they generally understood our responses to the Homelessness Reduction Act and these seemed sensible and were described as robust.
- Some participants did note that following a resident's journey through to prevention or relief would be difficult when the Inclusion Plan is only used in HAC and CTV. The facilitator explained that we would be seeking to extend the Inclusion Plan out to other providers. Interestingly, all participants were in agreement that a single assessment and planning framework which could be used across the city would be preferable. However, there were some concerns that Gateway was not particularly user friendly until staff became familiar with it, extending this software across the city could be a challenge.
- Some participants noted that it would be a challenge for Homelessness Prevention Officer's and all staff in the sector to transition to this new way of working, where cases are followed for longer and the focus is on case coordination, as well as investigation.
- All tables were pleased to see the importance of homeless prevention work and were keen to hear about the upstream prevention activities and the learning from the multi-disciplinary team.

### **2. Do you agree with our responses?**

- Participants from Shelter expressed concerns about our plan to use the private rented sector to prevent or relieve homelessness. They noted that the end of an assured shorthold tenancy is the main cause of homelessness nationally, placing people back into this form of accommodation may be a risky approach. The facilitator explained the provisions we were putting in place to ensure that any PRS tenancies would have to meet the criteria of being 'suitable and sustainable'

### **3. Have you any suggestions for improvements?**

- Some participants noted that if we were looking to extend Gateway and Inclusion Plans further then we would need to invest in workforce development in this area.

### **4. What should we do now to improve our hostels?**

- Some participants promoted the importance of developing psychologically informed environments. They appreciated that this takes time and money, but felt that in the first place, some consideration could be made about how the space in hostels is used.
- One participant noted that we should have a 'zero tolerance' approach to those individuals who disrupt and threaten others. However, others noted that ultimately these individuals were residents too and also required housing. A suggestion was made that we look more closely at the evictions each quarter in order to see if there are any commonalities across them which would give us a clearer idea of where and how things go wrong for clients and jeopardise placements. This is something that the Service Improvement Lead will progress.
- More of a 'housing first' style approach was promoted and all agreed that appropriate levels of support were essential. This support should be tiered according to need to ensure that residents are supported appropriately.
- A number of participants thought more work needed to be done to look at why people might decline accommodation, with the example given of someone who had said they would rather sleep rough than in one of the hostels. There was an acknowledgement from the facilitator that part of the next step of work from Commissioning would involve looking at how our hostels were set up and how they could best support vulnerable clients
- Have we got the balance between advocacy/signposting & support? In short, participants felt that our system was too focused on advocacy and signposting, rather than directly providing support.
- The discussion focused on the barriers to accessing mental health, an example that emphasises the limitations of a signposting and advocacy based approach.
- All agreed that directly provided multidisciplinary support would be more effective in enabling access to forms of support such as mental health. However, all recognised that this service model was more costly in the first instance. Some participants also noted that challenges of demand on services residents were signposted to. Not all have the capacity to receive and filter all referrals while also providing support.

## **9. How to get involved**

Please discuss the issues raised in this briefing with residents and service users. Staff from the Active Inclusion Newcastle Unit are happy to attend team meetings / service user groups if there are any specific issues that people would like to raise or discuss in more detail. You can also comment on the Homelessness Strategy action plan and our progress towards the actions and on the protocols and procedures we have developed with partners to tackle homelessness. Copies of the action plan, the protocols and our governance arrangements are available online here.

Please contact Sarah Blakey (Active Inclusion Officer) on 0191 277 1733 or email [activeinclusion@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:activeinclusion@newcastle.gov.uk) if you have any comments or would like to get more involved.

