

# HOMELESSNESS IN PENDLE REVIEW 2017



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## Executive Summary

Every local authority must produce a homelessness strategy within each five year period. As the Council have produced strategies in 2003 and 2007 and 2012, the next strategy must be completed by 2017. The strategy must be informed by a review of homelessness in the local authority area. This is Pendle's fourth homelessness review and will inform the Council's new five year homelessness strategy.

A similar methodology to the first three reviews has been used with some refinements as suggested by evaluation and emerging good practice guidelines. The review uses statistical data along with consultation with agencies and service users to arrive at recommendations for the new homelessness strategy action plan.

Although the Review has been completed as fully as possible and aims to take into account possible future issues, there are a number of factors which may indirectly affect homelessness in Pendle. This includes the process of Brexit which may have broader unintended economic consequences and affect eligibility for homelessness services and Welfare Reform which continues.

Whilst the Review has considered all aspects of homelessness within Pendle, inevitably the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, which is expected to be commenced from April 2018, forms a major part of the review and will heavily influence future work in this area.

Despite these ongoing changes, the review has shown that there continues to be a multitude of services within Pendle available to those who are or may become homeless. This includes provision of emergency accommodation through to significant units of supported accommodation for young people. There is also substantial preventative work ongoing whether via the Council or many external partners across the borough.

Whilst the review recognises the challenges that may face the borough in terms of potential and actual homelessness, by successfully implementing the new Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and realising the recommendations reached within this review, it is intended that Pendle will continue to meet these challenges and continue to provide essential and valuable services to help people who are or may become homeless.



## Structure and Methodology of the Review

The review is divided into seven sections: section one provides background information; section two comprises a literature review of relevant national, regional and local documents; section three presents an overview of the current homelessness situation in Pendle and is followed by an overview of principle services related to housing options, rehousing and support services for people at risk of (or actually) homeless. Section five provides an examination of the current and likely future, housing needs of individual groups and the services available to them. Section six considers feedback from consultation exercises carried out and the review concludes with a final summary of findings and recommendations suggested to be taken forward to the strategy document.

Needs will be assessed by means of statistical data, agency consultation and, where possible, service user consultation. Services will be described under the headings of: prevention; multi agency working and providing a safety net.

The aim is to present a thorough review that will not only form the evidential underpinning for the homelessness strategy but will also help to inform other related strategies currently being developed in Pendle and Lancashire.



## Section 1 Background

The statutory duty to provide a housing advice and homelessness service is delivered by Pendle Borough Council's (PBC) Housing Needs section, based at Contact Pendle - Number One Market Street, which forms part of the Council's purpose-built contact centre for all general enquiries. PBC Housing Needs forms part of Housing, Health and Economic Development service area within the Council.

Every local authority must produce a homelessness strategy within a five year period. As the Council has produced strategies in 2003, 2007 and 2012, the next strategy must be completed by the end of 2017.

In delivering a homelessness service, PBC Housing Needs must adhere to homelessness legislation, consider guidance issued by Government and take into account caselaw as and when it develops.

### 1.1 Legislation

Homelessness legislation derives primarily from the 1996 Housing Act Part VII as amended by the 2002 Homelessness Act.

Since the last Pendle Homelessness Strategy was published in 2012, there has not been any new legislation although a new Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 has passed the Royal Assent stage and is anticipated to commence by April 2018. The Act will contain thirteen clauses that will introduce new duties, powers and functions in relation to homelessness, and changes to how local housing authorities exercise their current legal duties. The main changes, along with their potential impact on the Council's Housing Needs Service, contained within the clauses are detailed below:-

#### **Meaning of homeless and threatened with homelessness amended.**

This measure extends the period an applicant is "threatened with homelessness" from 28 to 56 days, and in addition ensures that anyone that has been served with a valid section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 eviction notice that expires in 56 days or less is classed as "threatened with homelessness".

Linked to this, section 195(6) of the Housing Act 1996 (inserted by clause 4(2)) ensures that, while an applicant remains in the same property with no other accommodation available to him following being classed as "threatened with homelessness" (as a result of receiving a valid section 21 eviction notice for this property that will expire within 56 days or has already expired), the prevention duty continues to be owed until the local housing authority brings it to an end for one of the reasons set out in the clause 4, even if 56 days have passed.

#### **Potential impact on Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs service**

Whilst homelessness prevention work is provided to people threatened with homelessness within 56 days, this new legislation will 'trigger' homelessness applications ie where the





Council has a duty to make enquiries, at an earlier stage. This may result in numbers of homelessness applications rising but not necessarily homelessness acceptances rising as the Council will still continue to seek to prevent homelessness where possible prior to actual eviction.

### **Duty to provide advisory services.**

This measure extends the existing duty to provide advisory services by placing a duty on local housing authorities (LHAs) in England to provide free information and advice to any person in the LHA's district on preventing and relieving homelessness, the rights of homeless people or those threatened with homelessness, as well as the help that is available from the LHA or others and how to access that help. The service should be designed with certain listed vulnerable groups in mind (e.g. care leavers, victims of domestic abuse). It also permits LHAs to outsource advisory services.

### ***Potential impact on Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs service***

The Council already provides advice services and free information to any person in its district on preventing and relieving homelessness. However, it makes sense to review all literature / advice already being given out and update information where required. *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan).* It also makes sense to review the service being provided to ensure it is designed with certain listed vulnerable groups in mind e.g. care leavers, victims of domestic abuse *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan).*

### **Duty to assess all eligible applicants' cases and agree a plan**

This measure (in Clause 3) will require local housing authorities (LHAs) to carry out an assessment in all cases where an eligible applicant is homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless. Following this assessment the LHA must work with the person who has applied for help, to agree the actions to be taken by both parties to ensure the person has and is able to retain suitable accommodation. Of these actions, there will be a small number of key steps the individual would be required to take. These steps would be tailored to their needs and be those most relevant to securing and keeping accommodation. These actions must be reasonable and achievable.

### ***Potential impact on Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs service***

At present, the Council already carries out assessments in all cases where the applicant is at risk of homelessness and where appropriate, agree an action plan to try to resolve their risk of homelessness. However, it makes sense to review the Housing options Interview process and associated forms to ensure that action plans meet the new legislative requirement *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan).*

### **Duty in cases threatened with homelessness (prevention).**

Homelessness prevention is about helping those at risk of homelessness to avoid their situation turning into a homelessness crisis. The Homelessness Reduction Bill (in clause 4) will require LHAs to take reasonable steps to help prevent any eligible person who is at risk of



homelessness from becoming homeless. This means either helping them to stay in their current accommodation or helping them to find a new place to live. The Bill extends the period for which people are considered threatened with homelessness from 28 days to 56 days before they are likely to become homeless, ensuring that LHAs can intervene earlier to avert a crisis.

***Potential impact on Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs service***

The Council undertakes homelessness prevention work with all households threatened with homelessness and, subject to a case by case basis approach, there may be work undertaken with those at risk of homelessness within 56 days or even a longer period. However, it makes sense to review 'prevention' work to ensure the Council complies with the new legislative requirement from 56 days *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan)*.

**Duty owed to those who are homeless (relief).**

Homelessness relief is action taken to help resolve homelessness. Where, for example, an eligible applicant has sought help from the LHA when they are already homeless or if homelessness prevention work has not been successful, they will be owed the relief duty. The relief duty requires LHAs to take reasonable steps to help secure accommodation for any eligible person who is homeless. This help could be, for example, the provision of a rent deposit or debt advice.

The duty lasts for up to 56 days, and would be available to all those who are homeless and eligible regardless of whether they have a priority need. Those who have a priority need (for example they have dependent children or are vulnerable in some way) will be provided with interim accommodation whilst the LHA carries out the reasonable steps.

***Potential impact on Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs service***

The Council aims to prevent homelessness where reasonably practical and able to do so. However, it makes sense to review 'relief' work to ensure the Council is taking all reasonable steps to help secure accommodation for any eligible person who is homeless *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan)*.

**Duty to help to secure accommodation.**

The new prevention and relief duties need sufficient flexibility to allow LHAs to help resolve people's housing issues but also allow people to find their own accommodation when possible. 'Help to secure' means that the LHA would be able to provide support and advice to households who would then be responsible for securing their own accommodation. Introducing the concept of 'help to secure', rather than secure in each case, will increase choice and control for applicants and allow the LHA to help to resolve a person's particular problems rather than direct resources at finding a place for everyone that seeks help. It still remains open to the LHA to secure accommodation for eligible applicants where appropriate.





### ***Potential impact on Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs service***

The Council aims to help resolve people's housing issues that include supporting people to find their own accommodation where possible. However, it makes sense to review the types of work undertaken to enable this to happen to ascertain whether any improvements can be made to services / information provided (*It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan*).

### **Deliberate and unreasonable refusal to co-operate**

Clause 7 sets out the actions a local housing authority may take if an applicant who is homeless or threatened with homelessness deliberately and unreasonably refuses to take any steps set out in the personalised plan. They also set out the procedure and duties which apply if an applicant who is homeless refuses, at the relief stage, a suitable final accommodation offer in the private rented sector or an allocation of social housing (a part 6 offer).

### ***Potential impact on Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs service***

Unfortunately from time to time, some people who approach the Council for assistance decide not to take forward actions identified. This is of course an individual's choice, although on occasion eg unreasonable refusal of a Part 6 offer (offer of accommodation under homelessness legislation), there can be consequences such as loss of the Council's duty to rehouse. This new legislation will need to be considered to understand how it differs with current working practices and how it can be implemented successfully.

### **Local connection for care leavers.**

This measure amends the definition of a 'local connection' for young people leaving care. Local connection affects which LHA offers assistance under parts of the homelessness legislation, including the existing main homelessness duty and the new duties to assist homeless applicants.

If an applicant is owed one of these duties by LHA, that LHA can consider whether the person has a local connection to their area, and, if they don't, whether they have a local connection to another area. If they do they may refer them there rather than providing the service themselves.

This measure will ensure that a young homeless care leaver has a local connection to the area of the local authority that looked after them or, if it is different, the area where they normally live and have lived for at least 2 years including some time before they reached 16. This will make it easier for them to get help in whichever of these areas they feel most at home.

### ***Potential impact on Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs service***

When considering the 'local connection' of a care leaver, the Council places considerable weight to the young person's wishes when leaving care. As such, 'local connection' has rarely, if ever become an issue and it is not expected that this new legislation will have any impact on current service provision



## Reviews

This measure means that new prevention and relief duties will be covered under the existing review legislation, so that applicants will be able to challenge decisions relating to these new stages of the homelessness support process.

### ***Potential impact on Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs service***

At present there is no official 'review' process in relation to preventative work being undertaken, although any person dissatisfied with any element of the Housing Needs service are able to make complaint via the Council's internal complaints procedure. It makes sense to develop a 'review' procedure related to the new stages of the homelessness support process (*It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan*).

### **Duty of Public Authority to refer cases to local housing authority.**

Commonly shortened to *Duty to Refer*, this part of the Bill:-

- Requires public authorities in England specified in regulations to notify a LHA of service users they think may be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- Requires the public authority to have consent from the individual before referring them, and allows the individual to choose which LHA they are referred to.

### ***Potential impact on Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs service***

It is believed that public services already contact the Council for assistance if they think their service users may be homeless or at risk of homelessness. As such, the impact of this may be minimal. However, its also possible that putting this issue into law may result in additional referrals to the Council and a subsequent rise in official homelessness. It is assumed that the public authority already seek consent from the individual prior to referral to the Council, thus again, the impact of this measure may be minimal. Allowing the individual to choose which LHA they are referred to is in essence, already in legislation ie a person may choose to apply to any LHA they wish. However, if they don't have a local connection to that area, they may be referred on to a LHA where they do have a local connection.

## Codes of Practice

This measure gives the Secretary of State a power to issue statutory codes of practice, providing further guidance on how local housing authorities (LHAs) should deliver and monitor their homelessness and homelessness prevention functions.

### ***Potential impact on Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs service***

The Council will adhere to statutory codes of practice and further guidance on how local housing authorities (LHAs) should deliver and monitor their homelessness and homelessness prevention functions.

## Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 – update of homelessness statistical collection

The Government has advised that the current data collection system needs to be changed so that local authorities and central government can monitor the operation and outcomes of the new duties brought in by the Act. As such, DCLG has embarked on a project to completely overhaul the P1E homelessness statistics collection. The new data collection will receive



household level rather than aggregated local authority level data. It will cover a broader range of households, including all those who receive homelessness assistance from their local authority rather than, as now, focusing primarily on those authorities are currently legally obliged to help under the statutory homeless definition.

It is anticipated that the Council's current homelessness and housing advice database will need to be redeveloped to capture the required data. *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan).*

## 1.2 Homelessness Code of Guidance

The Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities regulates the way in which homelessness must be administered by Councils.

The Code also contains a section on the development of new homelessness strategies; the strategy must be informed by a review and contain details of:

- a) The levels, and likely future levels, of homelessness in the district
- b) The activities which are carried out for any of the following purposes (or which contribute to achieving any of them):
  - i. Preventing homelessness
  - ii. Securing accommodation for people who are or may become homeless
  - iii. Providing support for people who are or may become homeless or who have been homeless and need support to prevent them from becoming homeless again
- c) The resources available for the activities in b above

The Government is currently reviewing the 2006 Homelessness Code of Guidance and plan to publish a draft for consultation in the autumn ahead of publication of the final Code in spring 2018.

## 1.3 Homelessness Caselaw

From time to time, caselaw develops within homelessness legislation which affects the way that local authorities provide their statutory homelessness service. Although a large number of cases in the last five years have emerged, which builds on the established law surrounding homelessness, perhaps the most important of these have been:-

### ***Priority Need***

Until 2015, Councils assessed a person's vulnerability with regards priority need in the context of the test as outlined in the leading court case on whether a person is priority need due to their vulnerability: ***R v Camden LBC ex p Pereira (1998) 31 HLR 317, CA*** - "When homeless, a person is less able to fend for himself than an ordinary homeless person so that injury or detriment to him will result, when a less vulnerable person would be able to cope without harmful effect."



However, in *Hotak and others (Appellants) v London Borough of Southwark and another (respondents)* 2015 UKSC 30 – on appeal from 2013 EWCA Civ 515 – ‘vulnerable’ in s189 9(1)(c) connotes that the applicant must be significantly more vulnerable than an ordinary person who happened to be in need of accommodation.

Although only a slight change in wording, the ruling in effect lowers the threshold when assessing the level of ‘vulnerability’ of a person required to satisfy the test that a person is in ‘Priority Need’ under homelessness legislation. As such, more applicants are likely to receive help under this legislation following this ruling.

### ***Temporary Accommodation provision - suitability***

[Nzolameso v Westminster City Council – Supreme Court Judgement – April 15](#) – has considered in more detail the issue of suitability in particular in relation to out of borough placements. The judgment also issues ‘Guidance which needs to be considered, broadly:-

- Ideally, each local authority should have, and keep up to date, a policy for procuring sufficient units of temporary accommodation to meet the anticipated demand during the coming year.
- Secondly, each local authority should have, and keep up to date, a policy for allocating those units to individual homeless household.

In response to this new caselaw, the Council has since developed a Homelessness Temporary Accommodation Policy 2015 (see page 20).

## **1.4 Other legislation potentially affecting homelessness in Pendle**

### **Retaliatory Eviction and the Deregulation Act 2015**

- Landlords must provide all new tenants with more information about their rights and responsibilities as tenants.
- Where a tenant makes a genuine complaint about the condition of their property that has not been addressed by their landlord, their complaint has been verified by a local authority inspection, and the local authority has served either an improvement notice or a notice of emergency remedial action, a landlord cannot evict that tenant for 6 months using the ‘no-fault’ eviction procedure (a section 21 eviction). The landlord is also required to ensure that the repairs are completed.
- Introduction of a new form that landlords must use when they are relying on a section 21 eviction.

Although no statistics are available, anecdotally, the provisions of this new Act have added to the protections afforded to people living in private rented accommodation and although it may not necessarily prevent an eviction in the longer-term, it has helped prevent evictions occurring much sooner on some occasions.



## 1.5 Changes to Benefit Entitlement

A number of changes to benefits entitlements have occurred since 2012. The main changes include:-

- Housing Benefit - removal of 'spare room subsidy' / 'under occupation charge' aka 'bedroom tax' for social housing tenants is introduced for working age people who have an extra bedroom under the new rules.
- Council Tax Benefit is replaced by localised Council Tax Reduction schemes. Each Council runs their own scheme. Broadly, pensioners are protected, but most other people who used to get full help are likely to have to pay something towards their Council Tax bill.
- Parts of the Social Fund were abolished, including Community Care grants and Crisis Loans. Local authorities are given money to spend on local schemes which could include things like food banks and schemes providing subsidised furniture and white goods.
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is a new benefit for people who are very ill or disabled and who have trouble getting around or need help with day-to-day living. It will eventually replace Disability Living Allowance.
- The Benefit Cap is introduced which means some people of working age will have a limit on the amount of benefit they can get.
- Universal Credit is a new single benefit which is beginning to replace most means-tested benefits paid to working age people in and out of work.
- Changes to benefits that an European Economic Area (EEA) national may be able to access

### ***Impact on homelessness in Pendle***

The 'under occupation charge' affected a large number of tenants of housing associations in Pendle. In order to help alleviate the impact of this policy:-

- the B-with-us Choice-based lettings scheme (page 41) was altered to help affected people move of from property they were under-occupying if they wished
- housing associations provided considerable resource in working with tenants to help them deal with the changes.
- tenants affected could apply for Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) which helped alleviate the impact of the changes in the short-term

A large number of tenants were affected significantly by this change, which included significant numbers of people seeking smaller accommodation elsewhere. However, the impact did not appear to result in a large rise in homelessness applications, primarily as a result of the interventions detailed above.

Anecdotally, changes to benefits that an EEA national may be able to access does appear to have had an impact on people who may have come to the country recently if they haven't managed to support themselves through work. Should the person find themselves having 'no recourse to public funds' including housing benefit / local housing allowance, which is the main benefit for paying rent, the Councils duty is extremely limited and the person will need to make





their own arrangements for accommodation, without any specific financial means to do so. Although the Council have seen some people in this position, there does not appear to have been corresponding rough sleeping occurring, therefore it is assumed that these people have found places to stay with friends / family other, rather than being actually 'roofless'.

Notwithstanding changes to benefits that an EEA national may be able to access, which may have affected a person's ability to secure alternative accommodation, it is not believed that any of the specified changes to benefit has resulted in direct homelessness in Pendle. However, the benefits changes may have led to debt for some people, which in turn may have indirectly led to their homelessness.

The outcome / implementation of Brexit also needs to be considered. Whilst at present, the impact is broadly unknown, it could potentially indirectly affect homelessness in terms of:-

- *The Economy* – should the overall economy worsen, there may be heightened risk of repossessions / more pressures on benefits payments, which may result in more homelessness cases.
- *Eligibility under homelessness legislation* – staff report anecdotally of more cases recently from households coming from the EU to Pendle and requesting help. Often they have not been in the country to satisfy 'habitual residence' and the Council has no legal duty towards them. As Brexit moves forward, this could encourage more people to come to the UK prior to any 'cut-off' point before border controls are changed. Following secession from the EU, some people may find themselves being ineligible for benefits which may affect their ability to find / secure accommodation.

At present, there appear to be too many unknowns to plan for Brexit. If however, there is a 'cliff-edge' Brexit, there could be significant issues in the short-term, but a more gradual 'Brexit' is likely to mitigate such impacts. As the strategy is for five years, which would likely encompass the Brexit process, it makes sense to review the likely impact of Brexit on homelessness in Pendle as this process is progressed (*It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan*).

## 1.6 Funding from Central Government

PBC Housing Needs is funded primarily from the Council itself but also receives some funding from DCLG in the form of an annual Preventing Homelessness Grant. However, from time to time, Government funding also becomes available for particular issues within homelessness.

At present, the Council along with Blackburn with Darwen BC (lead authority), Lancashire County Council (East Lancashire only), Burnley, Hyndburn, Ribble Valley and Rossendale submitted a successful joint bid for funding from the DCLG Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer program and was awarded £735,000 to develop innovative new approaches to prevent homelessness.

The Homelessness Trailblazer program aims to tackle youth homelessness by preventing family breakdown before things reach a crisis point. It will trial new approaches to effectively





identify young people at greatest risk of homelessness, improve parenting capacity to support teenagers in danger and share the experiences of young people who have been homeless so those at risk can learn from their peers. These include:

- **early intervention services for 14-25 year olds** at risk of eviction in east Lancashire to mediate with the young people and their parents / carers;
- **an interactive website** to provide information and advice to young people at risk of homelessness and their parents / carers, such as maps to emergency shelters, virtual tours of accommodation and support videos; and
- **'respite' services** - very short term safe places for young people to stay while ongoing work continues to enable them to return home and/or prepare them to leave home in a safe and planned way.

The Homelessness Trailblazer program is intended to be a pilot, which can be rolled out into a system of more integrated working across the whole of the Lancashire area and nationally. PBC Housing Needs will continue to work closely with all partners to implement the Homelessness Trailblazer in Pendle (*It is proposed that the implementation of this scheme becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan*).

## 1.7 Conclusions

Since the last homelessness review and strategy in 2012, there has not been any major legislation or caselaw which has fundamentally changed the way the service is delivered. However, the forthcoming Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 may result in significant changes to 'preventative' actions being taken. Implementation of the Act will hopefully lead to less homelessness in the borough, which will also be supplemented by implementation of the Homelessness Trailblazer program in Pendle.

Notwithstanding changes to benefits that an EEA national may be able to access, which may have affected a person's ability to secure alternative accommodation, it is not believed that any of the specified changes to benefit has resulted in direct homelessness in Pendle. However, the benefits changes may have led to debt for some people, which in turn may have indirectly led to their homelessness as a consequence of failure to pay rent / mortgage.

Overall, whilst there have not been major changes since 2012, it is anticipated that the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 will have major implications and as such the overall homelessness strategy needs to focus highly on homelessness preventative measures.



## 1.8 Recommendations

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations are being made:-

- Review all literature / advice already being given out and update information where required.
- Review the service being provided to ensure it is designed with certain listed vulnerable groups in mind e.g. care leavers, victims of domestic abuse
- Review the Housing options Interview process and associated forms to ensure that action plans meet the new legislative requirement
- Review 'prevention' work to ensure the Council complies with the new legislative requirement from 56 days
- Review 'relief' work to ensure the Council is taking all reasonable steps to help secure accommodation for any eligible person who is homeless
- Review the types of work undertaken to ascertain whether any improvements can be made to services / information provided
- Develop a 'review' procedure related to the new stages of the homelessness support process
- Update the Council's current homelessness and housing advice database to capture the required data by Government.
- Review the impact of Brexit on homelessness as this process is taken forward.
- To implement the Homelessness Trailblazer program in Pendle



## Section 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 National and regional reports & strategies

At the time of the last Pendle homelessness strategy being produced in 2012, a national homelessness strategy was due to be launched but since this time, no national homelessness strategy has been produced. However, the Government set up a Ministerial Working Group on preventing and tackling homelessness and published in 2012 - 'Making every contact count - A joint approach to preventing homelessness'

The ten local challenges the report poses to the sector were to:

- Adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local authority services
- Actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs
- Offer a Housing Options prevention service, including written advice, to all clients
- Adopt a *No Second Night Out* model or an effective local alternative
- Have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that includes appropriate accommodation and support
- Develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both clients and landlords
- Actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme
- Have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually so that it is responsive to emerging needs
- Not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed and Breakfast accommodation
- Not place any families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and then for no longer than 6 weeks

A 2015 report - [Addressing complex needs: improving services for vulnerable homeless people](#) summarised the work of the cross-government Ministerial Working Group on Homelessness since its inception in 2010.

The two reports show that, like the forthcoming Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, national developments in this area relate towards work which aims to prevent homelessness as early as possible.

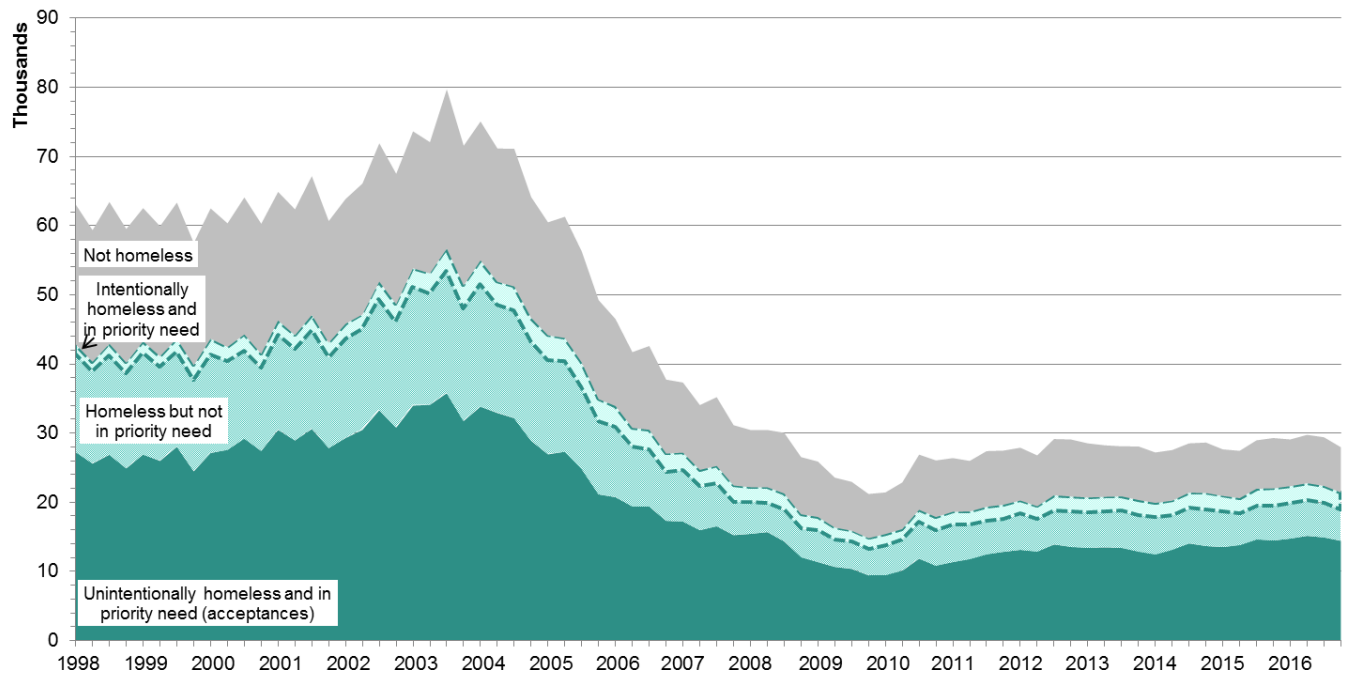
#### ***National homelessness statistics***

The DCLG compile homelessness statistics at a national level. The report [Statutory homelessness and prevention and relief, October to December 2016](#) details national trends in relation to homelessness for the specific quarter October to December 2016, but also historical trends since 1998.



Table 1 below shows homelessness applications and their outcomes between 1998 and 2016. Whilst there has been a slight rise in applications since 2010, levels are significantly lower than prior to 2004.

**Table 1 - Decisions taken by local authorities under the 1996 Housing Act on applications from eligible households.**



## 2.2 Sub-regional reports, strategies & partnerships

Sub-regional areas in this context include Lancashire-wide (not including the two unitary authorities of Blackpool and Blackburn) and Pennine Lancashire-wide (which includes Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Rossendale, Ribble Valley and Blackburn with Darwen)

### ***Lancashire Young People's Homelessness & Housing Strategy 2011-14***

This strategy is Lancashire's first Young People's Homelessness and Housing Strategy and has been developed to address the accommodation and support needs of young people in the county. The vision of the strategy is to prevent, reduce and aim to eradicate youth homelessness. The strategy covers young people under 16 identified as being at risk of homelessness; young people aged 16 and 17 who are homeless or at risk; care leavers aged 16 – 21 who are moving to independent living; and young people aged 16 – 18 who need accommodation and a high level of support due to complex needs. The aims of the strategy are to ensure the accommodation and support needs of young people are met through: early intervention and homelessness prevention; effective joint working; and provision of accommodation and support.



## **Lancashire Joint Protocol 2017- 2020 - Joint Working Arrangements for homeless 16/17 year olds**

This document has been refreshed to take account of a wide range of new legislation being issued in relation to young people as well as the need to respond to a changing environment regarding support and accommodation for vulnerable young people. The Protocol outlines the joint responsibilities of Children's Social Care and District Housing Authority partners concerning the assessment of need and provision of accommodation services to homeless 16/17 year olds. Functions defined in the Protocol inc:-

- Wherever possible to provide early help and prevention services to support young people to stay safely within their families or reunite them with their families.
- To better safeguard young people who are at risk of, or who are homeless.
- To ensure that by working together young people receive the right service at the right time.
- To establish a practical, easy to use system in order to place young people in suitable and safe accommodation appropriately.
- The protocol defines the jointly agreed pathways which young people can use to get housing and support should they be homeless or at risk of homelessness and in need of early help or prevention support.

### ***Lancashire Supporting People Partnership / Lancashire Prevention & Early Help Fund***

The Lancashire Supporting People Partnership (SP), which now provides funding for schemes via the Prevention & Early Help Fund (P&EHF) brought together Lancashire County Council, district councils (inc Pendle), probation, health, LDAAT, voluntary organisations, housing associations, support agencies and customers. SP commissioned housing-related support services for vulnerable adults in Lancashire to assist people to live as independently as possible.

Unfortunately due to reductions in funding from Government, some schemes inc generic floating support, has been discontinued and some other schemes have seen a reduction in funding, which may have affected the level of service delivered. At present, there are reviews being undertaken regarding the level of funding for schemes and also potential reconfiguration of some schemes.

It is important that once the reviews have taken place, the Council will need to understand the nature of what changes to service there may be and how this may affect service users. *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan).*

## **2.3 Pendle strategies**

### ***Pendle Homelessness Strategy - Action Plan 2012***

The vast majority of the actions contained within the 2012 Homelessness Strategy Action Plan in 2012 were completed and the only actions that were not completed were the following:-



**Table 2 - Actions not completed within the 2012 Homelessness Strategy Action Plan**

| Issue   | Action Identified   | Reason for non-completion of action  |
|---|---|--|
| Prevention from Eviction protocol has been agreed with some registered providers in Pendle.                             | Seek to expand prevention from eviction protocol to cover all partners within the B-with-us Choice-based lettings scheme. | Following discussion with neighbouring authorities, it was found that each borough had different policies and securing a common policy across the B-with-us footprint was not feasible. Although this was the case, the protocol remains in place with Housing Pendle, Accent, Harvest Housing and all supported housing schemes operating in and around Pendle, which encompass the vast majority of social housing providers in the borough. |
| Enhanced housing options module requires promotion to ensure greater take-up  | Promote enhanced housing options module within B-with-us  | Following discussion with B-with-us partners, it was decided to discontinue the service in light of the low use of the scheme and the need to make budgetary savings   |
| National £20m single homelessness Initiate fund awarded to Lancashire local authorities to provide appropriate services | Implement plans that are agreed for the Pendle area   | The action carried forward to Pendle Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2014 – 17. However, it was subsequently cancelled due to the contractor which was awarded this work went out of business.   |
| U18s Homelessness Prevention Fund awarded to East Lancashire local authorities to provide appropriate services          | Implement plans that are agreed for the Pendle area   | The action was carried forward to the Pendle Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2014 – 17. The action was subsequently completed by using the funding in the development of the HAPI scheme (page 42).  |
| It is recognised that on occasion, homeless households may be rehoused temporarily in bed & breakfast in an emergency   | Consider the feasibility of providing temporary accommodation for families which become homeless.                         | The action was carried forward to the Pendle Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2014 – 17. This action was considered in the development of the Pendle Homelessness Temporary Accommodation Policy (page 20). It was concluded that on balance, there was insufficient need to justify the significant expense in providing new temporary accommodation in the borough.   |





### ***Pendle Homelessness Strategy - Action Plan 2014 - 17***

Due to the early completion of many of the actions identified within the Pendle Homelessness Strategy 2012-17 by early 2014, a new Pendle Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2014-17 was developed. Again, most of the actions identified were completed and the only actions that were not completed were the following:-

**Table 3 - Actions not completed within the 2014-17 Homelessness Strategy Action Plan**

| Issue   | Action Identified  | Reason for non-completion of action                                |
|---|--|--|
| Homelessness preventative work in schools is only funded on a time limited basis  | Identify resources to keep homelessness preventative work in schools running | Cancelled: No further PBC funding available to continue the scheme |
| Pendle Women's Refuge requires additional staffing resource to improve support for residents and which would allow women fleeing violence who have complex needs, more access to this facility. | Bid for funding and implement any additional staffing changes as a result    | SP funding planned to be lost – future of refuge to be reviewed.   |

### **Pendle Homelessness Temporary Accommodation Policy 2015**

This policy was developed as a result of guidance issued in [Nzolameso v Westminster City Council – Supreme Court Judgement – April 15.](#)

- ***Ideally, each local authority should have, and keep up to date, a policy for procuring sufficient units of temporary accommodation to meet the anticipated demand during the coming year.***

The Policy concluded in 2015, that based on previous years utilisation of temporary accommodation, it was felt that the needs of those using temporary accommodation are being met. Whilst ideally, all temporary accommodation would be located within Pendle, unfortunately such accommodation is not available and the need does not appear to justify the significant expense of providing new accommodation in the borough. Many placements are for a very short period and are often within the neighbouring borough where there are excellent transport links into Pendle. However, should the opportunity become available to secure a wider source of temporary accommodation within Pendle, which is of suitable quality and which is affordable, the Council would seek to utilise such accommodation in order to improve its offer in meeting its duties under homelessness legislation.

It is proposed that the Pendle Homelessness Temporary Accommodation Policy is refreshed to coincide with the newly developed 2017 Homelessness Strategy (*It is proposed this becomes*



*an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan).*

- ***Secondly, each local authority should have, and keep up to date, a policy for allocating those units to individual homeless household.***

In Pendle's particular case, PBC Housing Needs only have input in terms of allocations at the 4 emergency units at Safespace for 16 – 25 year olds due to the underwrite agreement being in place. For all other forms of temporary accommodation, Housing Needs work with providers to see what is available and make referrals as and when placements become available. The establishments themselves decide whether to accept such referrals. Where households are aged 16/17 or have children/pregnant, such households are prioritised for move on into more suitable accommodation such as hostels as soon as possible. Although PBC Housing Needs, the Council's ability to influence the allocation of these different types of temporary accommodation is very limited, where possible, there is a fair system for allocating temporary accommodation based mainly on the Council's legal duties towards each household.

### **Pendle Sustainable Communities Strategy 2008-18**

The Sustainable Communities Strategy is an over arching document that within it set targets for preventing homelessness. This included

- increasing the number of No. of households who consider themselves as homeless, who approached the Housing Advice Service and for whom housing advice casework intervention resolved their situation
- Ensuring the number of households living in temporary accommodation did not exceed 50% of the total as per 31<sup>st</sup> December 2004.

In both cases, these targets were met.

A number of Pendle strategies are in the process of being updated including Pendle Supported Housing Strategy, Pendle Older Persons Strategy, Pendle Community Safety Strategy, Pendle Domestic Violence Strategy & Plan, Pendle Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy and Pendle Empty Homes Strategy. Each of these, though not specifically related to homelessness, do each have an indirect impact on homelessness within Pendle. The forthcoming 2017 Homelessness Strategy will link with these strategies to try to ensure that the aims of these documents are also realised.

## **2.4 Conclusions from Literature Review**

Whilst national homelessness levels are perhaps historically low, there have been recent increases in people being accepted as statutorily homeless by authorities as well as increasing use of temporary accommodation, bed & breakfast and a projected increase in repossessions. The imminent launch of a national homelessness strategy and the creation of a Ministerial Working Group suggests that homelessness is recognised within government as a concerning issue.



Although sub-regional work on a north-west level, appears to have ended, strategic work still continues at a Lancashire-wide level, whether through the Supporting People Partnership or through the Lancashire Young People's Homelessness and Housing Strategy. Additionally, a Lancashire-wide homelessness forum continues to exist and funding from central government appears to be made available on the proviso that Lancashire-wide responses are developed.

On a local authority level, a number of strategies exist which shows that homelessness impacts other areas of work such as reducing reoffending, older people, domestic violence to name but a few.

The last Pendle homelessness strategy was generally very successful in completing the vast majority of actions, with clear reasons why not all actions were completed.

## **2.5 Recommendations:**

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations are being made:-

- That, following review of Prevention and Early Help (P&EH) funded schemes, the Council will need to understand the nature of what changes to service there may be, how this may affect service users and whether there are any options to mitigate the impact of any loss of service.
- That the Pendle Homelessness Temporary Accommodation Policy is refreshed to coincide with the newly developed 2017 Homelessness Strategy.
- That the 2017 Homelessness Strategy Action Plan is updated on an at least quarterly basis and circulated to Burnley, Pendle & Rossendale Homelessness Forum.



## Section 3 Homelessness in Pendle – an Overview

### 3.1 How many people are homeless?

Many people believe anyone who is homeless is actually living on the streets. However, this is rarely the case. The legal definition of homelessness which local authorities work to is contained within Part VII, s175 of the Housing Act 1996. Broadly, when assessing whether a person is homeless or not, the Housing Act states that an applicant is not homeless if he/she has accommodation, which is available for the applicant's occupation, to which there are rights of occupation, entry or use to which is not restricted, and which it is reasonable for the applicant to continue to occupy. Consequently many people may be classed as homeless even if s/he is staying temporarily with friends / family and not specifically because s/he is living on the streets ie 'roofless' or 'street homeless'.

The precise level of homelessness is impossible to ascertain due to a number of factors:-

- a person could become homeless at any point or their homelessness be resolved at any point, thus numbers potentially homeless may change on a day to day basis.
- it is known that not all homeless people will present to the Council ie they approach a wide number of agencies, who may help to prevent their homelessness
- there may be 'hidden' homelessness ie where some people may decide not to approach local authorities or any other agencies for assistance.

It is however, possible to gain a broad overview of the situation by analysing data from the Council and other agencies.

### 3.2 Homelessness applications

All local authorities have a legal responsibility to help homeless people and their families, and to ensure their rights are upheld. This duty arises under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002. The law sets out clear guidelines on who is homeless and what duties may arise. PBC Housing Needs look at the following criteria when assessing a homeless application:-

- is a household eligible for assistance?
- homeless?
- in priority need?
- unintentionally homeless?
- a local connection to Pendle?

Depending on the applicant's circumstances, a number of duties may arise which range from no duty, providing advice and assistance, providing temporary accommodation pending further enquiries through to a full duty to provide secure, permanent accommodation.



Table 4 below shows the numbers of homeless applications and decisions made by Pendle Borough Council since April 2000

**Table 4 - Homeless applications and decisions April 2000 – March 2017**

| Year    | Homeless applications | Ineligible households | Not homeless | Homeless Non priority | intentionally homeless | Full duty |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------|
| 2000/01 | 554                   | 0                     | 419          | 81                    | 15                     | 39        |
| 2001/02 | 474                   | 0                     | 309          | 82                    | 14                     | 69        |
| 2002/03 | 487                   | 2                     | 309          | 95                    | 13                     | 68        |
| 2003/04 | 648                   | 6                     | 327          | 133                   | 28                     | 154       |
| 2004/05 | 529                   | 4                     | 252          | 97                    | 30                     | 148       |
| 2005/06 | 180                   | 1                     | 100          | 8                     | 10                     | 61        |
| 2006/07 | 125                   | 2                     | 51           | 24                    | 23                     | 25        |
| 2007/08 | 159                   | 1                     | 83           | 22                    | 22                     | 31        |
| 2008/09 | 117                   | 2                     | 70           | 18                    | 9                      | 18        |
| 2009/10 | 103                   | 0                     | 63           | 12                    | 7                      | 21        |
| 2010/11 | 85                    | 0                     | 40           | 9                     | 2                      | 34        |
| 2011/12 | 201                   | 2                     | 139          | 23                    | 4                      | 33        |
| 2012/13 | 205                   | 4                     | 156          | 16                    | 7                      | 22        |
| 2013/14 | 191                   | 9                     | 123          | 33                    | 8                      | 18        |
| 2014/15 | 157                   | 3                     | 131          | 12                    | 2                      | 9         |
| 2015/16 | 124                   | 4                     | 107          | 6                     | 1                      | 6         |
| 2016/17 | 101                   | 8                     | 70           | 7                     | 1                      | 15        |

*\* source: Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs Database*

Homelessness applications dropped sharply following the introduction of 'housing options interviews' in 2006 (see Table 8 – page 27). Therefore, whilst numbers of homelessness applications does to some extent, indicate homelessness in the borough, it is not the only measure and needs to be seen in context with other measures such as statistics related to housing options interviews and rough sleeping outturns (Table 7 – page 27).

Since the last homelessness strategy in 2012, homelessness applications have steadily reduced to a low of 101 in 2016/17. The reductions are likely to be as a result of homelessness preventative action including Housing Options interviews. This process involves a first step towards helping people by aiming to prevent homelessness where reasonable to do so, and seeking alternative accommodation. Consequently, many approaches for assistance do not result in an actual homelessness application or in many cases, they are determined as 'not homeless'. This is also helped by the support being provided to vulnerable people by the various specialist agencies working in partnership with the Council which are a contributory factor to the overall reduction in homeless applications.



Ineligible households have risen over the last few years and although small in number, are often highly complex cases. The process of Brexit may result in additional cases where households approaching the Council for assistance are deemed ineligible for assistance. It is not known how the new Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 may affect future statistical turn-out. Whilst there may be additional homelessness cases as a result of the change in definition to what constitutes homelessness, number of 'Full duties' may remain low as the intention of the Act is to reduce homelessness.

### 3.3 Homelessness and ethnicity

In 2013, the way Councils collate data on the P1E report which is submitted back to Government was altered in terms of how ethnicity was recorded. Table 5 shows the number of applications and decisions taken by ethnicity.

**Table 5 - Applicant households for which decisions were taken during the year**

| Year    | Decision               | White | Black | Asian | Mixed | Other | Not Stated | Total |
|---------|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------------|-------|
| 2013/14 | Full duty              | 18    | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0          | 18    |
|         | Intentionally homeless | 8     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0          | 8     |
|         | Not priority need      | 28    | 0     | 1     | 0     | 0     | 4          | 33    |
|         | Not homeless           | 108   | 0     | 11    | 2     | 1     | 7          | 129   |
|         | Ineligible             | 0     | 0     | 1     | 0     | 1     | 1          | 3     |
|         | Total                  | 162   | 0     | 13    | 2     | 2     | 12         | 191   |
| Year    | Decision               | White | Black | Asian | Mixed | Other | Not Stated | Total |
| 2014/15 | Full duty              | 8     | 0     | 0     | 1     | 0     | 0          | 9     |
|         | Intentionally homeless | 2     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0          | 2     |
|         | Not priority need      | 11    | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1          | 12    |
|         | Not homeless           | 104   | 0     | 15    | 2     | 2     | 8          | 131   |
|         | Ineligible             | 2     | 0     | 1     | 0     | 0     | 0          | 3     |
|         | Total                  | 127   | 0     | 16    | 3     | 2     | 9          | 157   |
| Year    | Decision               | White | Black | Asian | Mixed | Other | Not Stated | Total |
| 2015/16 | Full duty              | 5     | 0     | 1     | 0     | 0     | 0          | 6     |
|         | Intentionally homeless | 1     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0          | 1     |
|         | Not priority need      | 6     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0          | 6     |
|         | Not homeless           | 88    | 0     | 10    | 2     | 1     | 6          | 107   |
|         | Ineligible             | 3     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1     | 0          | 4     |
|         | Total                  | 103   | 0     | 11    | 2     | 2     | 6          | 124   |
| Year    | Decision               | White | Black | Asian | Mixed | Other | Not Stated | Total |
| 2016/17 | Full duty              | 13    | 0     | 1     | 1     | 0     | 0          | 15    |
|         | Intentionally homeless | 1     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0          | 1     |
|         | Not priority need      | 3     | 0     | 1     | 0     | 0     | 3          | 7     |
|         | Not homeless           | 61    | 0     | 4     | 0     | 0     | 5          | 70    |
|         | Ineligible             | 1     | 0     | 1     | 1     | 3     | 2          | 8     |
|         | Total                  | 79    | 0     | 7     | 2     | 3     | 10         | 101   |

\* source: Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs Database





In order to consider the trends in Table 5, it is useful to compare it to the general ethnic make-up of the population of Pendle – see Table 6 below. Whilst the census figures are from six years ago, it is assumed that there has not been such a change in population as to make the statistics meaningless.

**Table 6 - Population of Pendle by ethnic group – Census 2011 data**

| <b>Ethnicity</b>             | <b>Percentage of population (89,452 usual residents in 2011)</b> |
|------------------------------|--|
| All white                    | 79.8   |
| All black or minority ethnic | 20.1   |
| Mixed/multiple ethnic group  | 1.2  |
| Asian/Asian British          | 18.8   |
| Black/ Black British         | 0.1  |
| Other ethnic group           | 0.2  |

The figures from Tables 5 and 6 broadly suggests a correlation between applications for assistance under homelessness legislation and ethnicity, although not to such an extent as to mirror the ratio's exactly. The number of homelessness applications are relatively low and this probably help accentuate these percentages (whether above or below) in relation to the population ethnicity percentages. However, in order to maintain future awareness of the Councils service to all groups within the borough, a recommendation will be made to undertake future awareness exercise outlining the services of Housing Needs to ethnic minority populations within the borough. This may help to ensure that all groups are more likely to take-up services offered by Housing Needs, including homelessness applications *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan)*.

### 3.4 Rough sleeping

Pendle Borough Council last undertook a survey of rough sleeping on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2006 and on this occasion, no persons were found to be sleeping rough. Anecdotal evidence from all agencies suggest that from time to time people do sleep rough albeit for possibly a day or so, but after this they either contact the Council for assistance or find alternative accommodation.

Since 2006, rough sleeping levels have been monitored by seeking input from all Burnley & Pendle Homelessness Forum members on an annual basis regarding their views on levels of rough sleeping. Generally this has resulted in an estimate of between 0 and 2 persons potentially sleeping rough on any given night.

In 2010, the Government introduced new guidance on evaluating the extent of rough sleeping. Local authorities are required to provide either a single night count or estimate figure for the number of rough sleepers in their area between the 1st October and the 30th November. Following guidance, members of the Homelessness Forum are asked for their views in order to provide evidence towards an estimate. The Table below shows out-turns



**Table 7- Rough Sleeper Out-turns submitted to DCLG by year**

| Year | Rough Sleeper Out-turn – (number of people believed to be sleeping rough on the specific night chosen) |
|------|--|
| 2010 | 2  |
| 2011 | 1  |
| 2012 | 2  |
| 2013 | 1  |
| 2014 | 1  |
| 2015 | 2  |
| 2016 | 1  |

The table above suggests that rough sleeping does not appear to be a major issue in Pendle and in following Government guidance issued within the document 'Vision to end rough sleeping : No Second Night Out Nationwide', PBC Housing Needs do seek to secure accommodation for people who find themselves in this situation, thus reducing rough sleeping in the borough.

### 3.5 Main causes of homelessness

#### ***Advice enquiries to the Housing Needs Service***

Since January 2006 more detailed information on housing advice to prevent homelessness has been available. This data provides a picture of the total activity of the Housing Needs Service and the needs of those people who have approached the Council for help with housing. Enquiries are collated whether as a result of drop in, email, letter, telephone, other and therefore in some cases, there may be very little information given by a client other than a basic request for information / support. Conversely, Housing Needs officers may work with some households extensively, depending on their particular circumstances.

**Table 8- Housing enquiries dealt with by Housing Needs - April 2009 – March 2017**

| Year      | Housing Enquiries dealt with by Housing Needs |
|-----------|---|
| 2009 / 10 | 926   |
| 2010 / 11 | 1147  |
| 2011 / 12 | 1246  |
| 2012 / 13 | 1262  |
| 2013 / 14 | 1239  |
| 2014 / 15 | 1090  |
| 2015 / 16 | 1000  |
| 2016 / 17 | 968   |

*\* source: Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs Database*

The figures show an initial increase of housing enquiries up to 2012/13 and then a gradual decline to 2016/17 which almost mirrors figures for 2009/10. In many ways, 'housing enquiries' provide a more accurate gauge of the work of Housing Needs as all people who approach the service undertake a 'housing enquiry', prior to moving on to a homelessness application if



triggered. There does not appear to be a clear reason for the rise and general fall in 'enquiry-types'.

Following review in 2012, the way data was compiled was changed in order to reflect changing enquiries and outcomes. As such it is not possible to directly compare with data prior to 2012. Table 9 shows the different types of enquiry recorded.

**Table 9 - Enquiries made to Pendle Housing Needs Service April 2012 – March 2017**

| Type of enquiry                           | 2012 / 13<br>*** | 2013 / 14 | 2014 / 15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|---|------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Seeking accommodation                     | 543              | 431       | 370       | 371     | 334     |
| Parents unwilling to accommodate          | 148              | 138       | 108       | 115     | 103     |
| Friends / relatives unable to accommodate | 0                | 78        | 99        | 83      | 81      |
| Relationship breakdown                    | 117              | 120       | 98        | 87      | 93      |
| Domestic abuse / forced marriage          | 0                | 44        | 51        | 44      | 53      |
| Other violence / harassment               | 0                | 28        | 40        | 38      | 32      |
| Racial violence / harassment              | 0                | 6         | 2         | 2       | 2       |
| Notice to quit                            | 91               | 113       | 116       | 89      | 119     |
| Illegal eviction                          | 0                | 16        | 24        | 23      | 19      |
| Rent arrears                              | 39               | 58        | 62        | 44      | 50      |
| Mortgage arrears                          | 41               | 90        | 102       | 52      | 33      |
| NTQ due to anti-social behaviour          | 0                | 2         | 1         | 4       | 1       |
| Debt / affordability                      | 5                | 36        | 22        | 7       | 19      |
| Housing benefit / LHA issues              | 11               | 20        | 17        | 7       | 8       |
| Unsuitable / disrepair                    | 61               | 61        | 57        | 57      | 56      |
| Overcrowding – current property           | 0                | 11        | 9         | 12      | 7       |
| Health issues / leaving hospital          | 18               | 36        | 27        | 40      | 37      |
| Child protection issues – social services | 0                | 2         | 3         | 5       | 5       |
| Leaving care                              | 1                | 8         | 4         | 3       | 1       |
| Emergency fire / flood                    | 0                | 4         | 4         | 4       | 2       |
| Leaving HM forces                         | 0                | 1         | 0         | 0       | 0       |
| Leaving prison                            | 0                | 31        | 20        | 26      | 45      |

\* source: Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs Database

\*\* Cases opened which falls in the period. Some customers may have had more than one issue when requiring assistance.

\*\*\* as the database was updated during 2012-13, the out-turn will have inevitably been affected by this

Seeking accommodation is primarily the main reason for approaching PBC Housing Needs, although often there are a number of reasons behind why a household may be seeking accommodation. Many of the categories remain relatively static throughout the 5 year period



although mortgage arrears peaked and then fell significantly. Overall, there does not appear to be any specific issues which have recently peaked, rather it is hoped that continued homelessness preventative work will result in less instances of actual homelessness following such enquiries.

Table 10 shows the responses that were made to these enquiries. Broadly some categories have reduced such as homelessness enquiries, bond applications and referrals to supported housing schemes, whilst a number of other responses remain relatively static. The lowering of bond scheme (page 37) applications suggests that the scheme has lessened in popularity and as such, perhaps this scheme needs reviewing, particularly in light of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan)*.

Referrals to Supported housing may also reflect the work of HAPI (page ) which has been supporting young people with a number of issues including accessing supported housing.

**Table 10 - Pendle Housing Needs Service responses to enquiries April 2012 – March 2017**

| Responses to enquiry                        | 2012 / 13<br>** | 2013 / 14 | 2014 / 15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|---|-----------------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Homelessness enquiry started                | 135             | 142       | 128       | 98      | 81      |
| B-with-us application form issued           | 139             | 129       | 159       | 138     | 141     |
| Nomination to registered provider           | 0               | 2         | 6         | 2       | 3       |
| Bond scheme application made                | 173             | 123       | 90        | 98      | 92      |
| Landlord liaison                            | 0               | 10        | 14        | 16      | 13      |
| Housing benefit liaison                     | 16              | 20        | 13        | 11      | 12      |
| Referral to Welfare Rights / Job Centre+    | 0               | 6         | 7         | 5       | 0       |
| Referral to supported housing               | 52              | 48        | 52        | 29      | 26      |
| Referral to CAB                             | 13              | 19        | 12        | 6       | 2       |
| Referral to shelter                         | 10              | 2         | 0         | 1       | 1       |
| Referral to private sector leasing scheme   | 1               | 0         | 0         | 0       | 0       |
| Referral to housing standards               | 0               | 6         | 12        | 14      | 5       |
| Referral to floating support                | 0               | 3         | 9         | 1       | 6       |
| Referral to SMILE / help mediate            | 0               | 0         | 0         | 0       | 0       |
| Referral to social services                 | 0               | 0         | 2         | 1       | 0       |
| Mortgage rescue scheme/ Repossession scheme | 0               | 3         | 0         | 1       | 0       |
| Referral to shared ownership scheme         | 0               | 0         | 0         | 0       | 0       |

\* source: Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs Database

\*\* as the database was updated during 2012-13, the out-turn will have inevitably been affected by this

The table overleaf shows the outcomes from the enquiries and responses in Tables 9 and 10



**Table 11 - Outcomes from enquiries and responses April 2012 – March 2017**

| Outcome  | 2012 / 13<br>** | 2013 / 14 | 2014 / 15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|--|-----------------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Not threatened with homelessness                 | 0               | 94        | 92        | 70      | 87      |
| No further contact                               | 833             | 750       | 646       | 648     | 625     |
| Found own solution                               | 115             | 131       | 159       | 103     | 90      |
| Placed in temporary accommodation                | 1               | 3         | 0         | 2       | 1       |
| Re housed in private sector                      | 76              | 63        | 38        | 36      | 25      |
| Rehoused by housing association                  | 33              | 43        | 53        | 31      | 34      |
| Accepted onto Bond Guarantee scheme              | 0               | 6         | 9         | 15      | 9       |
| Returned to parents / family / friend            | 6               | 7         | 5         | 3       | 3       |
| Rehoused in supported accommodation              | 10              | 7         | 13        | 5       | 8       |
| Landlord's notice withdrawn                      | 10              | 16        | 11        | 4       | 13      |
| Prevention by domestic violence agency           | 1               | 3         | 4         | 0       | 1       |
| Mediation successful                             | 0               | 0         | 0         | 0       | 0       |
| Housing standards intervention successful        | 0               | 0         | 1         | 1       | 0       |
| CAB / shelter intervention successful            | 0               | 0         | 0         | 0       | 0       |
| Mortgage rescue / repossession scheme successful | 0               | 0         | 0         | 0       | 0       |
| Accepted as 'child in need' by Social services   | 0               | 1         | 0         | 0       | 0       |

\* source: Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs Database

\*\* as the database was updated during 2012-13, the out-turn will have inevitably been affected by this

Unfortunately, no further contact appears to be acting as a 'catch-all' ie at the end of support, this outcome is inevitable and may have affected the rest of the results.

A number of the results above are very much surprising considering the known work that has occurred in the prevention of homelessness over the past 5 years eg those accepted onto the Bond Scheme does not reflect the number of households who received an actual bond (table 15, page 37). Thus there is potentially an issue with data collection and perhaps with the categories themselves. It is therefore worth undertaking a review of the use of the database and its categories to improve accurate data collection for housing advice cases. *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan).*

### **Households accepted as homeless by the Council**

The P1E returns contains prescribed categories to show the cause of homelessness where a full duty was awarded. The table overleaf shows the causes of homelessness where full duty was awarded.



**Table 12 - Main causes of homelessness (where full duty accepted) April 2009 – March 2017**

| Main reason for homelessness                                     | 2009 / 10 | 2010 / 11 | 2011 / 12 | 2012 / 13 | 2013 / 14 | 2014 / 15 | 2015 / 16 | 2016 / 17 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Parents no longer willing to accommodate                         | 1         | 7         | 7         | 3         | 1         | 1         | 1         | 2         |
| Other relatives or friends unable to accommodate                 | 6         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 1         | 0         | 1         |
| Non-violent relationship breakdown with partner                  | 2         | 3         | 6         | 3         | 2         | 1         | 0         | 0         |
| Violent breakdown of relationship with partner                   | 3         | 6         | 7         | 1         | 1         | 0         | 1         | 2         |
| Violent breakdown of relationship involving associated person(s) | 0         | 0         | 1         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Racially motivated violence or harassment                        | 1         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Other forms of violence or harassment                            | 3         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Mortgage arrears   | 1         | 2         | 2         | 2         | 1         | 0         | 1         | 1         |
| <b>Rent arrears on:</b>  |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |
| Local authority or other public sector accommodation             | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Housing association accommodation                                | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Private sector accommodation                                     | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 1         | 1         | 0         | 0         |
| Termination of Assured Shorthold Tenancy                         | 4         | 10        | 8         | 9         | 7         | 5         | 3         | 7         |
| Other reason   | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Required to leave NASS accommodation (asylum seekers)            | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Left other institution or care                                   | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 2         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Left hospital  | 0         | 0         | 0         | 1         | 1         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Left prison / on remand  | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Left HM armed forces   | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         |
| Other reason   | 0         | 6         | 3         | 3         | 2         | 0         | 0         | 2         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>21</b> | <b>34</b> | <b>34</b> | <b>22</b> | <b>18</b> | <b>9</b>  | <b>6</b>  | <b>15</b> |

\* source: Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs Database

The table above shows total number of homelessness acceptances remain exceedingly low with the main categories being parents no longer willing to accommodate, non-violent and violent relationship breakdown and loss of AST.

### 3.8 Main groups affected by homelessness

As well as recording the reasons for homelessness, the Government also requires local housing authorities to record the reasons why a duty has been awarded. Table 13 overleaf





shows the number of people accepted as being in priority need by the Housing Needs Service between April 2009 and March 2017.

**Table 13 - Homeless acceptances by priority need category April 2009 – March 2017**

| Category of priority need          | 2009<br>/ 10 | 2010<br>/ 11 | 2011<br>/ 12 | 2012<br>/ 13 | 2013<br>/ 14 | 2014<br>/ 15 | 2015<br>/ 16 | 2016<br>/ 17 |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Emergency                          | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            |
| Family                             | 8            | 17           | 22           | 16           | 8            | 8            | 6            | 12           |
| Pregnant (no other children)       | 2            | 8            | 3            | 3            | 2            | 1            | 0            | 0            |
| Aged 16 or 17                      | 2            | 0            | 1            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            |
| Aged 18 – 20 formally in care      | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            |
| Vulnerable due to:                 |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |
| Old age                            | 0            | 1            | 1            | 0            | 2            | 0            | 0            | 2            |
| Physical disability                | 1            | 3            | 3            | 2            | 3            | 0            | 0            | 1            |
| Mental illness or handicap         | 4            | 1            | 1            | 1            | 2            | 0            | 0            | 0            |
| Drug dependency                    | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            |
| Alcohol dependency                 | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            |
| Being a former asylum seeker       | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            |
| Having been in care                | 1            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            |
| Leaving armed services             | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            |
| Having been in custody / on remand | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            |
| Fleeing domestic violence          | 0            | 2            | 1            | 0            | 1            | 0            | 0            | 0            |
| Fleeing other violence             | 2            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            |
| Other special reason               | 1            | 2            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                       | <b>21</b>    | <b>34</b>    | <b>34</b>    | <b>22</b>    | <b>18</b>    | <b>9</b>     | <b>6</b>     | <b>15</b>    |

\* source: Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs Database

The table above shows the main reason for being accepted by priority need category is due to having family ie dependent children. This is partly due to 'family' being a category that overrides others ie if a household is 'priority need' in more than one category, the 'family' category is selected. Some categories are an automatic priority need category eg family / pregnancy whilst others are possibly priority based on circumstances eg physical disability could be priority need depending on the actual physical disability.

### 3.9 Temporary accommodation in and around Pendle

\*See also Pendle Homelessness Temporary Accommodation Policy 2015 – page 20

Under homelessness legislation, if a household is eligible, homeless and in (or appears to be in) priority need, the Council must provide suitable accommodation pending further enquiries into their homelessness. Such accommodation could take the form of bed & breakfast, hostel, refuge or other type of temporary accommodation.



PBC Housing Needs currently use the following in order to discharge any duty to provide temporary accommodation to applicants.

### ***SafeSpace – Emergency Units***

This purpose-build scheme is based at Leeds Road, Nelson and managed by SafeSpace. The scheme offers emergency accommodation for homeless single, young people between the ages of 16—25 while providing support and skills needed to move on and live independently. Residents have their own bedroom including en-suite bathroom, along with access to a communal lounge, kitchen and IT facilities. The accommodation forms part of the larger 15-unit supported housing project and along with the neighbouring youth and community centre, forms part of the Bradley 'youth hub'.

PBC Housing Needs currently 'underwrite' for the four units to ensure that they remain available solely for its use and available to homelessness applicants. However, it is recognised that the 'underwrite' agreement needs to remain affordable otherwise this scheme could be lost. However, as the only temporary accommodation scheme for homeless people within Pendle, it is important that all efforts are made to ensure that the scheme remains viable.

### ***Elizabeth Street Project (ESP), Burnley***

This 20 bedroom hostel is based in Burnley town centre, which although outside the borough, is accessible to Pendle applicants by a regular bus service. Each resident has their own room and share a kitchen / dining area. There is also a laundry area available for use. ESP accepts both single people and families and is available to be used by PBC Housing Needs. Calico Homes Ltd, who own and manage ESP, are presently developing a new facility at Westgate, Burnley (called Gateway) which will support up to thirty single homeless people – possibly from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018. It is not known as yet whether the current facility at Elizabeth Street Project will continue and if so, what changes there may be. Loss of ESP however could mean that there is no 'hostel-type' accommodation provision for homeless families which is relatively accessible for Pendle homeless families as the new scheme is for single people only. The Council will be working closely with Calico Homes Ltd regarding the future of ESP and the new facility to try to ensure the best possible service for potential service users from the Pendle area. *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan).*

### ***Pendle Women's Refuge***

The refuge provides safe refuge accommodation for victims of domestic violence / abuse that is accessible for referrals between 9.00am and 4.00pm Monday to Friday. The scheme encompasses space for 9 households of which one bedroom is adapted to better meet the needs of women and children with disabilities. Some of the bedrooms are en-suite and all households share a kitchen / lounge / dining / laundry area.

### ***M3 Emergency Units***

The Prevention & Early Help scheme funds placements of emergency accommodation across East Lancashire which are open to young people from Pendle. The accommodation is relatively limited in number in Pendle due to difficulties in securing host families in the area.



### **Bed & Breakfast (B&B) placements**

Unfortunately, in an emergency or where no other alternatives exist, B&B accommodation is used. Sadly, availability in Pendle is very limited, therefore most placements are made in Burnley, which is the neighbouring local authority and which has excellent transport links into Pendle and many amenities.

**Table 14 - B&B placements (all applicants) April 2009 – March 2017**

| Year    | Number of nights | Number of placements | Average length of stay (days) |
|---------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2009/10 | 1063             | 137                  | 12.8                          |
| 2010/11 | 472              | 108                  | 4.37                          |
| 2011/12 | 619              | 126                  | 4.91                          |
| 2012/13 | 622              | 126                  | 4.94                          |
| 2013/14 | 281              | 72                   | 3.9                           |
| 2014/15 | 223              | 36                   | 6.19                          |
| 2015/16 | 405              | 70                   | 5.79                          |
| 2016/17 | 248              | 41                   | 6.05                          |

\* source: Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs

As can be seen from above, the usage of bed & breakfast has significantly reduced since 2009/10. The reason appears to be down to a number of factors which include, improved homelessness prevention options, use of alternative temporary accommodation eg ESP / Safespace Emergency units and also an increase in supported housing options for young people.

Whilst families are placed in B&B from time to time, many of these placements are usually as a result of an 'out of office hours' placement whereby it hasn't been possible to prevent homelessness or secure any alternative accommodation other than a B&B. Even so, such stays within B&B have been of a very short-term nature.

The Council continues to adhere to the [Homelessness \(Suitability of accommodation\) \(England\) Order 2003](#) by ensuring that no household with family commitments has stayed in B&B beyond 6 weeks.

### **Out of Hours – Emergency Placements**

PBC Housing Needs in accordance with good practice, provide an 'out of hours' emergency service to people who become homeless. Although there is access to SafeSpace Emergency Units and ESP out of office hours, often a placement is made within B&B as no other options are available.

## **3.10 Conclusions**

Over the previous five years, homelessness applications, housing options interviews and use of B&B have gradually reduced as homelessness prevention measures has helped resolve



cases before homelessness applications were triggered. Whilst this appears to be very good news, it arguably makes some of the data around specific homeless issues of relatively limited value as the figures are so low. It is anticipated that the new Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 will have a major impact on service provision, though it is not known whether this will raise homelessness applications, as homelessness applications may be 'triggered' earlier in the process, or that this would be limited due to the additional homelessness preventative work which would come via the new Act.

### **3.11 Recommendations:**

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations are being made:-

- An awareness-raising exercise is conducted to outline the services of PBC Housing Needs to ethnic minority populations within the borough.
- Review the PBC Bond Guarantee Scheme to ascertain its effectiveness
- Review the categories contained within the homelessness and housing advice database to improve the quality of data which can be extracted.
- Work with Calico Homes Ltd regarding the future of ESP and the new facility to try to ensure the best possible service for potential service users from the Pendle area.



## Section Four – Housing Options & Advice, Rehousing and Support Services

This section attempts to provide a description of the main services: Housing options, housing advice and homelessness prevention; temporary accommodation; permanent accommodation; and support services available in Pendle.

### 4.1 Housing options, advice and homelessness prevention services

#### ***Pendle Borough Council – Housing Needs (PBC Housing Needs)***

The Council no longer owns any housing stock but continues to take a strategic enabling role with regard to the provision of housing. The strategic role for housing is managed within the Housing, Health & Economic Development service area. PBC Housing Needs service is located at Contact Pendle - Number One Market Street, Nelson and forms part of the Council's purpose-built contact centre for all general enquiries. Housing Needs operate an appointment-based system for housing / homelessness enquiries but will guarantee to see people who become homeless in an emergency ie that day. Accessibility to offices is excellent as the contact centre is on the ground floor and located within the centre of Nelson which is the largest populated urban area of Pendle. However, some parts of the borough such as Barnoldswick and Earby may require two bus rides to reach Nelson.

The staff team currently comprises of a manager and three Housing Needs Officers. The team deliver a generic service rather than having specialist officers for prevention and homelessness applications: this is seen as being the most appropriate approach considering the numbers of enquiries and the staff capacity and means that in most cases the same officer will conduct the initial enquiry and, where necessary, the homelessness enquiry.

In response to previous Government guidance promoting homelessness prevention, the Housing Needs section underwent a fundamental change in 2004, from an essentially reactive service that concentrated on processing homelessness applications to a very proactive one with a major emphasis on housing advice, homelessness prevention and multi agency working.

In April 2005 the Housing Options interview was introduced which enabled Housing Needs Officers to consider the housing issues the customer faced, support needs of the customer, homelessness prevention measures and also to undertake homelessness enquiries when required.

The Housing Needs Service receives Homelessness Grant from central Government to help prevent homelessness and this will continue to be awarded until 2019-20 at present. This Grant is used to implement a suite of measures to prevent homelessness and helps fund external agencies such as:-



- Open Door – for homelessness prevention work
- B-With-Us Choice-Based Lettings – the Council's commitment to this multi-agency partnership which allocates housing across the sub-region of east Lancashire.
- Pennine Lancashire Mental Health & Housing Project (PLMHHP) – homelessness prevention work for customers suffering from mental ill-health and who require a planned discharge from hospital or help to maintain their tenancy.

The Grant also helps to fund other homelessness prevention measures and schemes which occur from time to time.

Arguably, the most successful initiative which has arisen from this Grant is Pendle Bond Guarantee Scheme. The scheme has basic criteria in comparison to other local authority funded bond schemes as it is intended to be as open as possible for local people to use. A bond guarantee of £200 (higher in exceptional circumstances) can be awarded if the customer is eligible.

The scheme provides a written guarantee to prospective private sector landlords. Use of the scheme has been as follows

**Table 15 - Bond Guarantee's Issued 2006/17**

| Year         | Bond Guarantee's Issued |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| 2006/07      | 36                      |
| 2007/08      | 81                      |
| 2008/09      | 97                      |
| 2009/10      | 75                      |
| 2010/11      | 60                      |
| 2011/12      | 53                      |
| 2012/13      | 62                      |
| 2013/14      | 43                      |
| 2014/15      | 27                      |
| 2015/16      | 27                      |
| 2016/17      | 26                      |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>482</b>              |

\* source: Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs

Pendle Bond Guarantee Scheme has helped rehouse almost 500 households since 2006/07 although statistics suggest that take-up is declining. One of the reasons for this is the raising of single room rent restriction to those aged below 35. This means that the bond itself is of limited use to those aged under 35 as they are unable to afford the rent. The bond scheme needs to be reviewed to ensure that it remains a viable product to prospective landlords.

The issuing of bond guarantees has undoubtedly helped to reduce actual homelessness and longer stays within temporary accommodation. It has also helped contribute significantly towards the number of homelessness prevention cases achieved by Housing Needs and associated partners as described in Table overleaf:-





**Table 16 - Homelessness prevention cases**

| Year         | Homelessness prevention cases |
|--------------|-------------------------------|
| 2006/07      | 126                           |
| 2007/08      | 114                           |
| 2008/09      | 178                           |
| 2009/10      | 188                           |
| 2010/11      | 206                           |
| 2011/12      | 209                           |
| 2012/13      | 245                           |
| 2013/14      | 196                           |
| 2014/15      | 225                           |
| 2015/16      | 177                           |
| 2016/17      | 192                           |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>2056</b>                   |

\* source: Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs Database

The cases above follow specific guidelines in terms of what can actually be counted as a homeless 'prevention'. Guidance was initially issued by government under Best Value Performance Indicator 213 but has been maintained as a local performance indicator. PBC Housing Needs are able to report cases undertaken by other external agencies as well provided they have been funded in part by the Council and that the cases meet particular criteria, broadly that a household was at risk of homelessness and that intervention by PBC-Housing Needs / external agency (not just signposting) has resulted in the household being able to remain where they are or rehoused for an expected six month period or more.

Although the vast majority of cases reported were prevented by PBC Housing Needs, there has also been significant contribution from Pendle Domestic Violence Initiative (page 43), particularly through work such as legal redress eg injunctions / non-molestation orders as well as sanctuary scheme work eg provision of alarms which help to allow victims of domestic violence / abuse remain safely within their own homes. Open Door (page 43), also help prevent homelessness particularly in supporting people to resolve issues with their landlord / bills which could lead to eviction as well as helping to rehouse people where it's too late for this type of preventative work.

Table 16 shows a broadly static number of homelessness prevention cases, although there has been a slight lowering of outcomes in the last two years. This could partly be attributed to loss of access to some Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in recent years which helped prevent homelessness of some service users. It should be recognised that the vast majority of preventions occur as a result of financial assistance whether via funding bonds or funding external agencies through service level agreements. Funding needs to remain to prevent homelessness which helps limit use of B&B accommodation which is not only expensive but very disruptive to households forced to stay in such accommodation.

PBC Housing Needs has updated its [webpages](#) since the last strategy to provide much more comprehensive advice on housing and homelessness issues. Table 17 below shows the number of times that people have visited particular webpages:-



**Table 17: Number of 'Hits' on the webpages in 2017 by month**

| Page Title                        | 2017 |     |     |       |     |      |      |
|-----------------------------------|------|-----|-----|-------|-----|------|------|
|                                   | Jan  | Feb | Mar | April | May | June | July |
| Housing needs, options and advice | 231  | 236 | 302 | 339   | 318 | 301  | 330  |
| Advice agencies in Pendle         | 87   | 75  | 143 | 93    | 151 | 130  | 117  |
| Representation in court           | 22   | 19  | 27  | 20    | 25  | 34   | 27   |
| Supported housing schemes         | 45   | 26  | 54  | 56    | 40  | 59   | 63   |
| Private sector rented housing     | 45   | 27  | 49  | 51    | 41  | 58   | 61   |
| Bond guarantee scheme             | 74   | 57  | 63  | 54    | 48  | 71   | 51   |
| Homelessness                      | 100  | 86  | 124 | 105   | 105 | 85   | 96   |

The number of 'hits' on the Housing Needs, options and advice webpage suggests the pages are utilised by the public regularly. Individual pages accessed suggests that there is higher interest in accessing information about 'advice agencies' and 'homelessness' than 'representation in court' which appears to now be less of an issue in Pendle than it once was.

To date, complaints / suggestions for improvement regarding the content of the Housing Needs webpages have also been extremely low, which suggests that the information being provided is helpful. However, it is always important to review content to ensure it is up to date and also monitor whether the webpages are being accessed by others and to what extent, therefore it is recommended that the webpages be reviewed, updated and number of 'hits' on the pages monitored. *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan).*

The Housing Options Booklet has also been consistently updated to reflect changes. Both these sources of advice however need to remain updated and the Housing Options Booklet regularly circulated to agencies, to ensure correct information is being given out to customers. *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan).*

### **Pendle Borough Council – Private Sector Housing Team**

The Council's private Sector Housing team, based at Elliot House, Nelson is responsible for maintaining standards in the private sector (including the regulation of temporary accommodation), aiming to reduce the number of empty properties in the Borough and dealing with Disabilities Facilities Grants (DFG's). In many cases, homelessness is prevented due to intervention between landlords and tenants with regards harassment, disrepair, ensuring correct notices are given and where possible preventing illegal evictions. Further, this team help to prevent homelessness, perhaps more indirectly by administration of DFG's. These grants may help some people, particularly the elderly and disabled, to remain within their own homes rather than being forced to move due to the property becoming unsuitable for them to live in.



## 4.2 Supported Housing Schemes in Pendle

### ***SafeSpace - Supported Housing Scheme***

The scheme is based at Leeds Road, Nelson and provides 24 hour a day staffed self-contained supported accommodation units replacing the original scheme at Carr Road, Nelson in August 2011. SafeSpace provides supported accommodation to young, single people who have become homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The project includes 15 self contained flats which includes kitchen, bathroom, lounge and bedroom. In addition there is also a communal lounge, training kitchen, communal dining area, activity rooms and outdoor spaces. The project also houses 4 emergency units of accommodation for short term stays. This accommodation consists of an en-suite bedroom with shared access to a lounge and kitchen. There is 24 hours 7 days a week support from staff to provide help, advice and support around independent living skills and personal development needs. SafeSpace also offer a package of resettlement supporting the period of move on from supported accommodation into their next stage of independence this is facilitated by their support team to provide consistency. There is a weekly charge and eligible applicants will get Housing Benefit.

### ***Stepping Stone Project (Dispersed Housing – Pendle)***

The project accommodates thirty 16-25 year olds, in fully furnished, shared houses (with lockable bedrooms) and single person accommodation within Pendle. The scheme aims to provide secure, supported accommodation to young people, and is ideal for anyone that would like to live independently but who would like support around developing the skills necessary to maintain a tenancy.

### ***East Lancashire YMCA Housing***

Provided by YMCA Blackburn, the East Lancashire Housing Scheme provides safe, comfortable, supported accommodation and assists 16 to 25 year olds in developing their household and tenancy management skills ready for independent living. There are also opportunities to be involved in YMCA youth activities. Most of the accommodation is based on two people sharing fully furnished properties in Pendle. At present there are seven units of accommodation.

### ***M3 Project Ltd – supported lodgings***

M3 provides accommodation in a home environment to homeless young people aged 16 to 25. The accommodation is in the homes of providers who offer a room, along with some level of support for the young person. People accepted as providers will have undergone Criminal Records Bureau checks, as will all members of their household. In addition, part of the induction process for providers includes training in homelessness issues, equal opportunities and confidentiality. The accommodation offered will have been inspected and Health and Safety checks conducted. M3 aims to assist young people to live independent lives, and to encourage, support, empower and develop them as they mature. They will be treated with respect and dignity and encouraged to make choices. They will be encouraged to develop day to day life skills, leading to greater independence and helping them to take control of their own lives.



### ***M3 Project Ltd – Teenage Family Move-On:***

Young parents or families are given their own fully furnished property with support, and assisted in moving on after a 12 month programme, to their own fully independent accommodation. Usually they access this through B-with-Us or private landlords, but occasionally the property is signed over to them so they can remain in it. Placements are funded across East Lancs (no area quotas) and the project currently supports 2 placements in properties in Pendle. Any young person from Lancashire can access any of the properties in any area.

### ***Stepping Stone Project's Growing Up, Moving On Dispersed Housing Scheme***

Stepping Stone Project's Growing Up, Moving On Dispersed Housing Project accommodates up to eight 16 and 17 year old looked after children, in fully furnished, shared houses (with lockable bedrooms) within Pendle. The scheme aims to provide secure, supported accommodation to young people, and is ideal for anyone that would like to live independently but who would like support around developing skills necessary to maintain a tenancy. Once accepted and housed on the project, the young person is given a named support worker. This worker will engage with the young person to provide a holistic package of support, including:

- Training and support to develop independent living skills;
- Assistance to maintain their tenancy;
- Help with accessing specialist services (if necessary);

## **4.3 Supported Housing Schemes outside Pendle**

There are a number of schemes which although located outside Pendle, which Pendle residents are able to apply for:-

### ***Stepping Stone Ltd - Spa Mill, Burnley***

This project consists of 12 fully furnished self-contained flats for 16-25 year old single people who are homeless or in housing need. There is a training and events room used by residents and staff. Each tenant has a Resettlement Worker who works with them on a one-to-one basis in order to develop their independent living skills and address individual support needs.

### ***Stepping Stone Ltd – Westgate, Burnley***

This project consists of 6 fully furnished self-contained flats for 16-25 year old single people. Each tenant has a Resettlement Worker who works with them on a one-to-one basis in order to develop their independent living skills and address individual support needs.

### ***Stepping Stone Ltd - Spenser Street, Padiham***

This project consists of 4 fully furnished self-contained studio flats for 16-25 year old single people who require a low level of support. The project is situated on a residential street in Padiham, close to the town centre and on a main bus route into Burnley. Each tenant has a Floating Support Worker who works with them on a one-to-one basis in order to develop their independent living skills and address individual support needs.



### **Emmaus - Old Hall Street, Burnley**

The scheme offers homeless people accommodation and meaningful work at their Social Enterprise. Emmaus House, our residential site on Old Hall Street (formerly Booth Court) has capacity to accommodate up to 24 companions at any one time.

## **4.4 Registered Provider (RPs) Accommodation in Pendle**

All social housing in Pendle is now provided by Registered Providers (housing associations) and the Council no longer holds any stock, following stock transfer to Housing Pendle which in turn is now Together Housing Association. The Council has joined with other local authorities and many RP's (not all RP's have joined the scheme though most in Pendle have) to work in partnership under the B-with-us Choice-based Lettings (CBL) Scheme in providing a single allocation policy across the east Lancashire sub-region (excluding Ribble Valley). By joining such a scheme, applicants from Pendle are able to bid for properties within Pendle, Burnley, Hyndburn, Rossendale and Blackburn with Darwen boroughs.

Those accepted as statutorily homeless under legislation receive the highest priority banding (band 1) under this scheme and are in a very good position to be successful in bidding for property which would discharge the Council's duty to rehouse such applicants. Applicants who are threatened with or actually homeless but are not accepted as statutorily homeless, ie do not pass the whole of the test, are awarded Band 3, which is a reasonable preference priority under the scheme.

At present, the allocations policy for B-with-us is being reviewed and may result in changes to the priority given to people who fall into particular group's including those who are at risk of, or who may be homeless. The Council is currently working with partners in undertaking the review. *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan).*

## **4.5 Private sector accommodation in Pendle**

In common with other east Lancashire boroughs, Pendle has a large amount of private sector rented accommodation with a considerable range in price and quality. As a generalisation, the urban areas of the borough tend to be less expensive than more rural locations.

In some areas, particularly parts of Nelson and Brierfield, there is an abundance of private sector accommodation which is available to rent. This is perhaps less so in Colne, Barnoldswick and Earby, although to some extent properties here remain affordable to people who are able to secure sufficient Local Housing Allowance (LHA). This has meant that many people who might otherwise be homeless are able to move around in private sector tenancies and may not therefore present to PBC Housing Needs for assistance. The availability of tenancies also means that the Pendle Bond Guarantee Scheme is a particularly effective tool in preventing homelessness in Pendle.





Since 2012, there have been a number of changes to LHA which can affect the ability of the recipient from accessing private rented accommodation. A major change has been the raising of single room rent restriction from 25 to 35. Whilst this has limited single people aged under 35 from accessing houses, there has been a rise in the development of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's) within the private sector, which those under 35 have been able to access.

## 4.6 Support Services in Pendle

Whilst all people at risk of homelessness or actually homeless, can access statutory services eg health social services etc, until recently, there was also a generic floating support service funded by SP / P&EH (Page 18) which was aimed at helping vulnerable people. This included support for people who were homeless, suffered mental ill health, learning disability, victims of domestic abuse, teenage parents, older people, young people at risk, people with drug and alcohol problems, physical or sensory disability, HIV or AIDS, asylum seekers and refugees, and gypsies and travellers. This service indirectly and directly helped to prevent homelessness and it is not known whether the impact of the loss of this service will result on more homelessness.

### ***Homelessness Awareness and Prevention Interventions (HAPI)***

HAPI, delivered by Positive Action in the Community (PAC), works with 16 to 25 year olds where there is a risk of homelessness, providing independent advice and support. This includes discussing all options and opportunities open to the young person in addressing their homelessness and all related holistic needs that they may have. The aim of the scheme is therefore to prevent homelessness or secure a return home to parents / carers if appropriate or alternatively to secure a planned move to supported housing / independent living where it is safe to do so, whilst also addressing any needs that a young person may have. Whilst statutory partners inc PBC Housing Needs deal with any legal rights that may arise, HAPI act as 'lead professional' in aiming to secure a successful outcome for the young person including co-ordinating joint work with all partners on a case by case basis to ensure individual's needs are met.

### ***Open Door Project***

The Open Door Project is a not-for-profit charitable trust. Established in 1998 by Colne Churches together, it responds to the needs of the people in Colne and surrounding areas. It does this primarily, but not exclusively, for the benefit of those who are marginalised and disadvantaged. The project works with individuals, voluntary and community groups and statutory organisations to help improve the quality of life in Colne. The project provides the local community with a community café, emergency food parcels, cyber café, information point & signposting, counselling facility, meetings room for hire, volunteer opportunities and support for individuals & local voluntary & community groups. The PBC Housing Needs service has, since April 2005 agreed a Service Level Agreement with Open Door, whereby funding has been provided for the centre's homelessness prevention work.





### ***Open Door Furniture Recycling***

Open Door Furniture Recycling is a Pendle wide charitable organisation that was started through an initiative by Colne Churches together. It operates primarily within Burnley and Pendle for the collection and delivery of furniture and for the recruitment of New Deal beneficiaries. The project offers basic furniture, household goods and domestic appliances for disadvantaged people living within Burnley and Pendle who have difficulties affording to buy these items through traditional outlets.

### ***Pendle Domestic Violence Initiative (PDVI)***

PDVI, as part of the parent charity Positive Action in the Community (PAC), provides a comprehensive low risk / early intervention service to those persons who are or have suffered from domestic abuse. This includes but not limited to prevention support, provision of a helpline, sanctuary scheme, emergency funds / provisions, awareness-raising work , safety planning, information, advice and guidance. PBC Housing Needs service has for many years, entered into a Service Level Agreement with PDVI, whereby as part of this, PDVI help to prevent homelessness through work being undertaken.

### ***Lancashire Victims Service***

This is a new service from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 that provides a new service for victims, on behalf of Lancashire's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The model brings together, for the first time, services for victims of hate crime, young victims, sexual abuse and domestic abuse as well victims of more general crime types and of repeat ASB. Service delivery, in particular for Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse services, will be provided either by home visits or 1-2-1 meetings in community venues. The services will also be supported by accredited volunteers based in the multi-crime teams who will offer additional "step-down" support for victims.

### ***The Lookout***

This project offers confidential therapeutic services to young people affected by domestic abuse aged between 11 and 25. The Lookout provides a personal plan of support to young people who are experiencing or are affected by domestic abuse. This is delivered through; The Lookout programme within schools which addresses issues surrounding domestic abuse including healthy relationships, self esteem, confidence, forced marriage issues etc., one to one support to individuals to address their needs including developing safety plans, accessing additional support where needs and seeking appropriate safe accommodation where needed, group work to develop peer support and resilience and also positive diversionary activities for young people to support and promote their holistic wellbeing.

### ***Pennine Lancashire Mental Health & Housing Project***

This project is a joint initiative between local Councils, Pennine Lancashire Teaching PCT, Lancashire Care Foundation Trust and Lancashire County Council. Its aim is to provide assessment advice and assistance to individuals who are homeless or currently experiencing difficulties in managing their tenancies or whose discharge from psychiatric in-patient units may be delayed by lack of appropriate housing. The project is for people accessing mental health services whose housing situation is seriously affecting their ability to engage with treatment. The PBC Housing Needs Manager line manages an officer who delivers the 'housing advice & options' aspect of the project.



### **Shelter - Lancashire**

Shelter provides an independent housing and homelessness advice service which includes providing legal representation for people receiving benefits or on low incomes. Shelter work in conjunction with Burnley & Pendle Citizen's Advice Bureau and undertake general housing advice casework along with repossession prevention work including managing a Court Desk at Burnley County Court, where the majority of people from Pendle who are subjected to court action, will have their cases heard.

### **Other advice & support services in Pendle**

There are a number of other agencies not already mentioned in and around Pendle that provide general advice and support to help people. Whilst the primary role of the agency may not be to specifically prevent homelessness, often this may occur by performing their role. The following list of agencies, though not exhaustive, may help to prevent homelessness through the work that they do:- Brierfield Cyber Café, Citizen's Advice Bureau, Grassroots, Inspire, Ithaad Advisory Service, Pendle Early Intervention and Prevention Project, Pendle Homecare & Repair, People's Enterprise and Empowerment Forum (PEEF), Pendle Women's Centre, Royal British Legion, Relate – Lancashire, Salvation Army, Surestart and Welfare Rights.

It is recognised that a large number of agencies are in a position to give out general advice and that not everyone who approaches these agencies, would automatically approach the Council. PBC Housing Needs therefore provide 'Housing Options' booklets to agencies on a periodic basis so that up to date information can be given out.

## **4.7 Prevention of Repossession**

Prevention of repossession formed a significant part of the 2012 Homelessness Review. At the time, there were a number of Government-led initiatives dedicated to trying to prevent repossessions, including the launch of a national Mortgage Rescue Scheme. However, as Table 18 shows, activity in relation to Pendle cases has reduced significantly. As such there does not appear to be any specific interventions which are currently required, although of course, should an upturn occur in terms of activity, this would be relooked at.

**Table 18- Court action in relation to cases from Pendle**

| Possession type      | Possession Action | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|----------------------|-------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Accelerated Landlord | Outright Orders   | 16   | 11   | 10   | 0    | 3    |
|                      | Claims            | 23   | 22   | 10   | 6    | 4    |
|                      | Possessions       | 3    | 0    | 3    | 0    | 2    |
|                      | Warrants          | 9    | 4    | 0    | 0    | 1    |
| Mortgage             | Outright Orders   | 65   | 59   | 42   | 16   | 3    |
|                      | Claims            | 127  | 106  | 111  | 46   | 9    |
|                      | Possessions       | 65   | 40   | 43   | 12   | 2    |
|                      | Suspended Orders  | 55   | 23   | 36   | 6    | 1    |
|                      | Warrants          | 170  | 148  | 118  | 69   | 13   |
| Private Landlord     | Outright Orders   | 12   | 12   | 12   | 0    | 6    |
|                      | Claims            | 20   | 21   | 26   | 22   | 6    |
|                      | Possessions       | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    |



|                 |                  |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------------|------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
|                 | Suspended Orders | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 1  |
|                 | Warrants         | 7  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 2  |
| Social Landlord | Outright Orders  | 19 | 24 | 24 | 0  | 6  |
|                 | Claims           | 52 | 85 | 69 | 36 | 14 |
|                 | Possessions      | 7  | 16 | 16 | 0  | 1  |
|                 | Suspended Orders | 16 | 34 | 45 | 16 | 7  |
|                 | Warrants         | 23 | 27 | 40 | 16 | 4  |

*\*Source: Ministry of Justice website*

## 4.8 Multi Agency Groups / dissemination of information

Pendle works with Burnley and, more recently Rossendale in administering the multi-agency Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Homelessness Forum that meets on a quarterly basis. The forum acts principally as an information exchange and provides a networking opportunity for members. Regular updates on the progress of homelessness strategy and action plans are provided and from time to time, guest speakers are invited to give presentations on subjects such as domestic violence and choice based lettings. Pendle also used to host a Young Persons Service Development Group – Pendle (YPSDG-P) which was a sub-group of the Homelessness forum. However, due to the pressures that agencies had in attending meetings, and that young person's issues are covered at the homelessness forum meant it made sense to end this Group. The Housing Needs Manager also regularly emails the forum / sub-group with relevant information which becomes available from time to time and also advertises vacancies within supported housing on a weekly basis.

Finally Pendle takes an active part in working with partners at the Lancashire Homelessness Forum which brings together representatives across Lancashire. This forum, like the Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Homelessness Forum acts as an information exchange and provides a networking opportunity for members.

## 4.9 Conclusions from Review of Advice, Housing and Support Services

The prevention of homelessness has remained the main aim of PBC Housing Needs Service and this is shown through the increasing numbers of households who have had homelessness prevented. However, its also recognised that prevention work need not come directly from the Council and therefore external agencies are also funded who through their own specialist work, help to prevent homelessness where able to do so. Although there are pressures on Council's funding, it is recognised that funding to external agencies can also prove effective and many of these external agencies offer added value through their own funded work.

Since the last Homelessness Strategy in 2012, the number of supported accommodation units has remained relatively static and which continues to meet the needs of young single people under 25. Although it is recognised that not all young people wish to apply for supported accommodation, alternative options for rehousing for under 25's can be limited in that flats advertised via the B-with-us CBL often attract significant numbers of bids. However, young



people are able to move on to housing association property through 'supported move on' which awards a 'band 2' once the young person is ready to move on from supported housing. Changes to LHA rates also mean that young people under 35 can often only access HMO accommodation ie rent a room, rather than secure their own 2-bed property.

Although the loss of generic floating support is potentially a major issue, advice and support for people is still relatively available, whether direct from PBC Housing Needs or via specific advice agencies / web-based information.

There is very good partnership work across Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale, where often an agency may work across all three boroughs. In many ways, it is too early to tell what impact all the changes will make to services and customer options / homelessness numbers. It is therefore vitally important that partnership work across agencies remains effective.

#### **4.10 Recommendations:**

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations are being made:-

- Review and update where required, the Council's Housing Needs webpages and monitor number of 'hits' on the webpages
- Review and update the Council's Housing Options Booklet
- Undertake an awareness-raising exercise to ensure that agencies have access to the latest information contained within the Council's Housing options Booklet
- Work with B-with-us partners in reviewing the allocations policy, ensuring that any changes made are implemented successfully.



## Section Five – Needs and Service Mapping

This section attempts to provide a breakdown of the needs of the various groups who may become homeless and the services available to them. Evidence of need is considered from a variety of sources, notably PBC Housing Advice database, P1e returns to government regarding homelessness applications and from external sources where available.

### 5.1 Families (including teenage parents)

#### ***Present and future needs***

Table 12 (page 31) shows that the vast majority of those found to be statutorily homeless by the Council are usually those who have dependent children or are pregnant. However, the figures themselves, are relatively low.

#### ***Present and planned services - Prevention***

Families are able to access private rented accommodation within some parts of the borough relatively easily as they are able to claim sufficient Local Housing Allowance to meet rental levels. The Pendle Bond Guarantee Scheme is also often used to prevent families from becoming homeless where appropriate.

#### ***Multi agency working***

PBC Housing Needs liaise with all relevant agencies that a family may be accessing in trying to prevent homelessness where at all possible. Any families found to be intentionally homeless are referred to the Children's Social Care for assessment of needs.

#### ***Providing a safety net***

The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003, states that no family should be placed in bed and breakfast accommodation except in an emergency and then for no longer than six weeks.

In an emergency, including out of hours placements, homeless families are often placed in B&B accommodation as alternative accommodation is not always available straightaway. PBC Housing Needs are able to access temporary accommodation at Elizabeth Street Project, although this provision may no longer be available once the new planned facility at Westgate, Burnley is open.

PBC Housing Needs work with families to help maximise rehousing options and seek 'move on' from B&B as quickly as possible. Table 14 (page 34) shows that whilst there are a large number of placements within B&B, the average length of stay for all applicants is very short and usually less than one week.

Households who have dependent children or a member who is pregnant are automatically in 'priority need' under homelessness legislation and as such there is a safety net through provision of temporary accommodation. Should the household lose this accommodation eg via



their own actions, there are provisions under the Children's Act to protect any children from being homeless.

## 5.2 Young People (aged 16 – 25)

### ***Present and future needs***

Table shows a significant reduction in request for assistance from those aged 16/17. This appears to coincide with the introduction of the HAPI scheme, initially designed to support those aged 16/17. This suggests this scheme has proved effective in helping young people before there is a need for statutory services such as PBC Housing Needs.

**Table 19 – Young People approaching the Council for assistance**

| Homelessness Applications |     |         |         |         | Housing Options Enquiries |         |         |         |
|---------------------------|-----|---------|---------|---------|---------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Year                      | All | 16 / 17 | 18 / 21 | 22 / 25 | All                       | 16 / 17 | 18 / 21 | 22 / 25 |
| 2010-11                   | 85  | 8       | 21      | 17      | 1147                      | 49      | 148     | 75      |
| 2011-12                   | 201 | 31      | 45      | 31      | 1246                      | 86      | 166     | 117     |
| 2012-13                   | 205 | 38      | 46      | 31      | 1262                      | 72      | 177     | 105     |
| 2013-14                   | 191 | 29      | 53      | 29      | 1238                      | 66      | 164     | 96      |
| 2014-15                   | 157 | 18      | 41      | 26      | 1086                      | 45      | 108     | 93      |
| 2015-16                   | 124 | 18      | 28      | 30      | 1000                      | 39      | 110     | 98      |
| 2016-17                   | 101 | 11      | 24      | 23      | 968                       | 22      | 96      | 97      |

Statistics for young people between 18-25 have reduced but more gradual. The numbers however clearly show that housing issues and potential homelessness remains a significant risk for young people in Pendle.

### ***Present and planned services - Prevention***

The HAPI scheme (page 42) clearly appears to have had an impact on approaches to the Council from 16/17year olds and the scheme has recently began supporting 18-24 year olds as well, therefore future years may also see a similar impact. The planned Homelessness Trailblazer project (page 14) will encompass activities which are also intended to prevent youth homelessness and includes a 'mediation' element. Unfortunately, funding for HAPI is only short-term and the Homelessness Trailblazer work is also time-limited.

Unfortunately, funding for HAPI is not secure in the long-term, although there is potential that the scheme may be developed to incorporate works required under the Homelessness Trailblazer Scheme. If funding is not secured by the Homelessness Trailblazer Scheme, the Council may need to consider other opportunities to try to fund this scheme. *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan).*





There is also homelessness preventative work due to be undertaken in local schools which is being delivered by SafeSpace and funded by PBC Housing Needs. Whilst preventative work is often difficult to gauge in terms of its effectiveness, this work has historically been well received within schools by teachers and children alike and that it is believed that this impacts positively on numbers of 16 and 17 year olds who approach the Council for assistance as a result of homelessness. Funding for preventative work in schools is also time-limited and the Council may need to consider other opportunities to try to fund this scheme *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan)*.

Unfortunately the Bond Guarantee Scheme is not available to young people aged under 18 due to their inability to legally hold a tenancy in law.

### ***Multi agency working***

Lancashire Joint Protocol 2017- 2020 - Joint Working Arrangements for homeless 16/17 year olds (page 18) is a protocol that has been agreed between the 12 Councils within the LCC area and Lancashire Children's Social Care. It sets out joint responsibilities for providing emergency accommodation, assessment and initial support for homeless young people aged sixteen and seventeen.

The Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Homelessness Forum continues to meet quarterly and brings together agencies concerned with young people's issues including supported accommodation providers.

### ***Providing a safety net***

Young people aged 16-17 are automatically 'priority need' under homelessness legislation and would be owed duties under the Children's Act should they wish to exercise this option. As such there is a considerable safety net for people aged 16/17. Further, PBC Housing Needs continue to underwrite to ensure access to 4 units of direct access emergency accommodation for young people at SafeSpace (up to age 25). The Units continue to have significant demand and this is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

There is less of a safety net for those aged above 18 although there continues to be a significant number of supported accommodation in the borough designed to meet the needs of this group. Further, young people are able to access a growing number of HMO's in the borough, although this is usually on the basis on renting a room and sharing facilities within the HMO.

## **5.3 Care Leavers**

### ***Present and future needs***

The PBC Housing Needs database recorded no homeless applications from care leavers between 2016 and 2017 which suggests that present needs are usually extremely low and being catered for. This statistic does not necessarily reveal the whole picture as 'care leavers'



are able to access alternative accommodation such as private rented and supported accommodation without need to approach Housing Needs.

### ***Present and planned services - Prevention***

Care leavers aged 16 and 17 are not eligible to apply as homeless, but do receive intensive support from Children's Social Care which includes provision of accommodation and are allocated a support worker. Those aged 18 – 21 are not subject to single room rent restrictions and are able to claim for local housing allowance to a level that would allow them to access the private rented sector.

### ***Multi agency working***

PBC Housing Needs and LCC Children's Social Care liaise on a case by case basis where housing has become an issue. PBC Housing Needs also work with LCC on relevant strategies as and when required.

### ***Providing a safety net***

Care leavers aged 16 – 17 are provided with accommodation by LCC Children's Social Care and those aged 18 – 20 are deemed priority need under homelessness legislation, thus are eligible for temporary accommodation. It is also possible that those aged above 21 are considered priority need, depending on circumstances. There is therefore a significant safety net for Care Leavers although less so for those aged 21 to 25.

## **5.4 Victims of Domestic Abuse**

### ***Present and future needs***

Table 20 below shows that there remains considerable numbers of enquiries each year from people who are fleeing domestic abuse.

**Table 20 - Enquiries made to Pendle Housing Needs Service April 2012 – March 2017**

| Type of enquiry                  | 2013 / 14 | 2014 / 15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Domestic abuse / forced marriage | 44        | 51        | 44      | 53      |

Victims of domestic abuse are able to receive specialist support from PDVI, Lancashire Victims Service and Pendle Women's Refuge. Victims are also recognised under the B-with-us Choice-based lettings scheme and may be awarded Band 2 'cumulative need priority' or even Band 1 'additional preference' if found to be statutorily homeless. Domestic abuse / violence remains one of the main reasons for being accepted as statutorily homeless. As a result of this recognition within the allocations policy, many victims are able to access more stable housing elsewhere relatively quickly.

### ***Present and planned services - Prevention***

Pendle Women's Refuge, managed by the Council and PDVI provide an integrated domestic abuse service for Pendle. PDVI are based within the Refuge building complex and provide a number of services to victims of domestic abuse / violence, many of which help to prevent homelessness. Particular works includes supporting victims to remain within their own home



where reasonable to do so and where the client requests it. This could include provision of alarms and legal redress such as injunctions and on-molestation orders against perpetrators.

Where appropriate, the Bond Guarantee Scheme is also used to enable speedy access to private sector housing where rehousing is required.

### ***Multi agency working***

Pendle Domestic Violence Forum meets quarterly to help improve services across Pendle. The Council, in conjunction with the forum has recently updated the current Pendle Domestic Violence Strategy 2016-19.

### ***Providing a safety net***

Pendle Women's Refuge offers good quality accommodation for up to nine women and their children. Although the refuge provides accommodation mainly for local women, referrals are accepted from other parts of the country. However, there is also a large refuge within the neighbouring borough of Burnley and also refuges elsewhere which Pendle residents could access.

It needs noting however that women who are employed face difficulties in that they may be unable to afford the support costs at the refuge due to their being unable to claim sufficient Housing Benefit. Whilst the woman would be accommodated in the short term and perhaps be subsidised, the high costs of the refuge means that the woman must either cease working in order to be eligible for Housing Benefit, pay the rent herself or contact PBC Housing Needs for alternative temporary accommodation. This issue is not exclusive to Pendle as other refuges and supported housing in general also encounter this problem.

Women deemed ineligible due to their immigration status who are without access to public funds also face extreme difficulty in that they are unable to afford to stay in the Refuge. In these circumstances, PBC Housing Needs service would seek an 'assisted place' at another refuge if available. Refuges with assisted places tend to be in the larger urban areas such as Burnley and Blackburn. An assisted place is a subsidised room for a woman who is unable to pay for or claim benefit for, a refuge place. LCC Children's Social Care may be able to assist under the Children's Act if the woman has a child with her, but if not her options are extremely limited.

## **5.5 People involved with the Criminal Justice System**

### ***Present and future needs***

People involved with the criminal justice system tend to be those who are:-

- In prison / about to leave prison
- Living in the community but involved with Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRC's) / probation / youth offending team (YOT)



**Table 21 - Enquiries made to Pendle Housing Needs Service April 2012 – March 2017**

| Type of enquiry | 2013 / 14 | 2014 / 15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Leaving prison  | 31        | 20        | 26      | 45      |

Table 21 shows there are considerable approaches to PBC Housing needs from those who have recently left prison. There are no specific statistics available on those who have an involvement with CRCs / probation / YOT.

### ***Present and planned services - Prevention***

Much of the work to prevent homelessness for this client group relies on multi-agency work between Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRC's) / probation / YOT work with PBC Housing Needs, as well as with other agencies whom the client group may work with such as Inspire and Early Break. This preventative work is also perhaps more intensified with cases where the client is subject to Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and Prolific, Priority & Other (PPO) offenders. The client group are able to access all housing schemes like other client groups, although there may be some restrictions on access depending on their particular risk due to the offences they have committed. The Bond Guarantee Scheme is used where possible to help secure private sector accommodation.

### ***Multi agency working***

As mentioned above, there is continual multi-agency work occurring in Pendle. There is also a multi-agency East Lancashire Reducing Reoffending meeting which discusses particular cases where people are leaving custody and considers what options are available to help avoid the offender becomes homeless on release. Further, there is also the Lancashire Reducing Re-offending Housing and Resettlement Protocol which is presently being reviewed. PBC Housing Needs would intend to implement the revised document in Pendle once completed. *(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan).*

### ***Providing a safety net***

Some people within this client group may be deemed in 'priority need' as a result of time spent in custody and whether this has made them vulnerable. If so, PBC Housing needs would have a duty to provide temporary accommodation under homelessness legislation pending further enquiries. However, even there are legal duties to provide temporary accommodation, it often proves extremely difficult to secure accommodation as providers often refuse to take on the risk of allowing these service users to stay at their establishment.

There is also the Revolution which is the brand name for Integrated Offender Management in Lancashire. It is an umbrella under which partner agencies work together to make best use of their resources to reduce re-offending. In Pendle, accommodation is provided to some service users to help reduce their re-offending.



## 5.6 People with Drug & Alcohol Problems

### ***Present and future needs***

There is only very limited data regarding this group in the PBC Housing Needs database regarding housing options enquiries and homelessness applications. A reason for this is often because whilst alcohol and / or drugs can often be a contributory factor, it is rarely the actual cause of housing problems / homelessness. Causes of homelessness as a result of such problems could include all the main causes of homelessness ie non-violent / violent relationship breakdown, parent / friends or relative unwilling to accommodate or possible loss of assured shorthold tenancy eg non-payment of rent, anti-social behaviour. It is recognised by PBC Housing Needs staff that a significant number of clients do present with alcohol and / or drugs mis-use problems, which although not directly, have probably impacted on their housing / homelessness problems.

Agencies which have been set up to specifically help meet the needs of this client group include:-

*Early Break* - This is a specialist service running across East Lancashire offering free counselling, advice and treatment for young people who have issues regarding drugs and alcohol.

*Inspire* - Inspire East Lancashire Integrated Substance Misuse Service is a fully integrated substance misuse service offering rapid and open access to assessment and treatment for people experiencing problems with drugs and/or alcohol, promoting recovery from addiction and dependence.

*Holgate House, Gisburn* - This scheme, although based outside Pendle, provides care for people aged under 65 with a problem with current alcohol / substance abuse or previous alcohol / substance abuse who need a secure environment and help with day to day living. Recently, the scheme has begun providing 'move on' accommodation within Colne and Barnoldswick.

These services clearly show that there is an ongoing need for people within this client group.

### ***Present and planned services - Prevention***

No specific homelessness prevention initiatives for this client group are in operation as all are able to access existing homelessness prevention measures. The Bond Guarantee Scheme which has proved particularly useful in accessing the private rented sector as it can be difficult for this client group to access housing through B-with-us if they have a poor tenancy history.

### ***Multi agency working***

PBC Housing Needs works with Early Break, Inspire and Holgate House to help prevent homelessness where reasonable to do so. Often this client group may also be involved with other services such as police, probation, youth offending, social services, open door and where applicable, case conferences are arranged.





### ***Providing a safety net***

Inward House has an accommodation unit in Accrington that provides supported accommodation in self contained units for thirteen people aged 16 and over. A structured programme of relapse prevention and diversionary activities is delivered that aims to help residents live a drug free life. Residents must be alcohol and drug free to access the accommodation and random testing is carried out to enforce this. Locally, there is no accommodation available specifically for this client group.

This client group are able to apply for all housing options like all other applicants although they may have restricted access depending on their particular case ie their problematic addiction may mean they are suspended until they can show that their risk to themselves / the project is manageable.

Some people within this client group may also be deemed in 'priority need' as a result of possible manifestation of their problems into mental illness and whether this has made them vulnerable. If so, PBC Housing needs would have a duty to provide temporary accommodation under homelessness legislation pending further enquiries.

## **5.7 People with a Physical Disability**

### ***Present and future needs***

There is only very limited data regarding this group in the PBC Housing Needs database regarding housing options enquiries and homelessness applications. In most cases homelessness due to physical disability is caused by illness or accident that makes it unreasonable for a person to continue to occupy their present accommodation or by discharge from hospital into unsuitable accommodation. PBC Housing Needs staff, report that such cases are relatively rare, although there can be significant difficulty in preventing homelessness and / or securing alternative accommodation which meets the clients need.

### ***Present and planned services - Prevention***

There are no specific prevention initiatives in place to prevent homelessness caused by physical disability but a hospital discharge policy is now in place to help prepare for such cases.

The bond scheme is used where appropriate to help secure private sector accommodation quickly if the client requests it. Clients in such circumstances are afforded greater priority under the B-with-us choice-based lettings scheme and in many cases owed a full homelessness duty.

### ***Multi agency working***

A hospital discharge policy has been agreed which sets out responsibilities of health and housing services in ensuring that accommodation is available for people being discharged from hospital. Due to the difficulties in rehousing clients with such particular needs, there is often close working between health and housing on a case by case basis to resolve any issues that arise.





### ***Providing a safety net***

There is no dedicated temporary accommodation for people facing homelessness as a result of physical disability. Elizabeth Street Project and Pendle Women's Refuge are able to provide a room capable of helping a person who is disabled but this would depend on the level of disablement and unfortunately, neither rooms are fully adapted. Safespace Emergency Units, which are located on the ground floor may also be able to cater for some people who are disabled, although again, the rooms are not specifically adapted to meet needs. PBC Housing Needs are able to arrange temporary accommodation via established hotels such as Travelodge, Premier Inn and Holiday Inn Express in an emergency if no other options are available, although it is hoped that in many cases, the clients is able to be rehoused quickly through the B-with-us allocations policy.

## **5.8 People with Mental Health Problems**

### ***Present and future needs***

There is only very limited data regarding this group in the PBC Housing Needs database regarding housing options enquiries and homelessness applications although 'mental health' can be a reason for a priority need homelessness acceptance.

### ***Present and planned services - Prevention***

The Pennine Lancashire Mental Health & Housing Project PLMHHP (page 44) has been set up as a joint initiative between mental health services and housing in order to provide assessment advice and assistance to individuals who are homeless or currently experiencing difficulties in managing their tenancies or whose discharge from psychiatric in-patient units may be delayed by lack of appropriate housing.

### ***Multi agency working***

There is substantial multi-agency working via the PLMHHP. PBC Housing Needs and the Community Mental Health Team continue to liaise on a case by case basis.

### ***Providing a safety net***

Whilst there is specialist accommodation available to those who have a particular level of mental ill health, for many clients with a lower level of mental ill-health, temporary accommodation may be provided under a homelessness duty if the client is seen as in 'priority need'. Clients are also able to access supported housing and rehousing via the B-with-us Choice-based lettings scheme.

## **5.9 People Leaving Hospital**

### ***Present and future needs***

There is no specific data regarding this group in the PBC Housing Needs database regarding housing options enquiries.



### ***Present and planned services - Prevention***

PBC Housing Needs along with other local Councils have agreed a 'Hospital admission and discharge protocol to prevent homelessness' with East Lancashire Hospitals Trust.

The protocol aims to help NHS staff and local authority staff to

- Reduce the number of delayed discharges due to housing need
- Reduce the number of patients discharged to no fixed address or inappropriate housing

The agreement has had the effect of meeting its aims as stated above.

### ***Multi agency working***

There is a protocol for hospital discharge as detailed above which is working effectively. The PLMHHP project also helps manage hospital discharge for those who suffer from mental ill-health.

### ***Providing a safety net***

There is no specific temporary accommodation for people being discharged from hospital but PBC Housing Needs endeavours to secure suitable accommodation when required. Clients are also able to access supported housing and rehousing via the B-with-us Choice-based lettings scheme.

## **5.10 Asylum Seekers / Refugees and people who have successfully applied for asylum**

### ***Present and future needs***

Asylum seekers are unable to access services from PBC Housing Needs and have their needs met by Serco, which includes provision of accommodation. At present, there are five houses utilised by Serco within Pendle, although this is expected to rise in the future. PBC Housing Needs would only become involved with such cases should an asylum seeker receive a positive decision on their application and decide they want assistance with securing accommodation in Pendle. At present, there is no specific need for this client group, although this could change in the future should Serco secure more accommodation in the borough.

As a response to the Syrian Refugee crisis, the Council welcomed twenty Syrian refugee households to the borough. All families have now arrived and under the scheme have received furnished accommodation, intensive caseworker support and have humanitarian protection leave / refugee status which allows them to stay for five years, after which families can decide whether to apply for asylum if they wish to stay. The families are able to claim benefits or work, broadly have the same rights as British citizens and are eligible for support via homelessness legislation if it is needed. Therefore should they become homeless, they would be dealt with in the same way as other British citizens



### ***Present and planned services - Prevention***

There are no present / planned services specifically related to homelessness issues for these client groups as there presently does not appear to be evidence of a need for this response.

### ***Multi agency working***

PBC Housing Needs and Serco both attend the Pendle – Displaced Persons Resettlement Steering Group which considers issues in relation to asylum seekers. Where requested PBC Housing Needs will work with Serco in helping their clients to move on from their accommodation, following a successful application for asylum.

### ***Providing a safety net***

There is no specific temporary accommodation provided for this group although successful asylum seekers would be assessed under homelessness legislation to determine whether a duty to provide accommodation is met. Clients are able to access supported housing and rehousing via the B-with-us Choice-based lettings scheme provided they are eligible.

## **5.11 Travellers and Gypsies**

### ***Present and future needs***

There is no specific data collated for this client group in the PBC Housing Needs database regarding housing options enquiries and / or homelessness applications. PBC Housing needs staff report that enquiries are extremely low.

The review conducted to inform the Lancashire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Strategy recorded no gypsy or traveller caravans in Pendle and stated that there were no unauthorised encampments. Bi-annual counts since July 2007, have not recorded any gypsy or traveller camp sites in Pendle. At present there is very little quantifiable evidence of homelessness amongst this group.

### ***Present and planned services - Prevention***

To date there is no present / planned services specifically related to homelessness issues for this client group as there does not appear to be evidence of a need for this response.

### ***Multi agency working***

There is no multi-agency work specifically related to homelessness issues for this client group as there does not appear to be evidence of a need for this response.

### ***Providing a safety net***

There are no official temporary accommodation sites for travellers and gypsy's in Pendle although caravan sites in the Borough may accept this client group on occasion. Clients would be assessed under homelessness legislation to determine whether a duty to provide accommodation is met. Clients are also able to access supported housing and rehousing via the B-with-us Choice-based lettings scheme provided they are eligible.



## 5.12 Older People

### ***Present and future needs***

The Table below shows housing enquires in relation to age.

**Table 22 - Housing Options Enquiries by age**

| Year      | Housing Options Enquiries |         |     |
|-----------|---------------------------|---------|-----|
|           | Age 55 - 64               | 65 - 74 | 75+ |
| 2012 / 13 | 34                        | 15      | 4   |
| 2013 / 14 | 45                        | 24      | 5   |
| 2014 / 15 | 48                        | 11      | 4   |
| 2015 / 16 | 22                        | 11      | 7   |
| 2016 / 17 | 47                        | 25      | 6   |

*\* source: Pendle Borough Council Housing Needs Database*

Enquiries tend to become lower depending on age but still represent considerable numbers for those aged 55 – 64.

### ***Present and planned services - Prevention***

There are no specific prevention initiatives aimed at older people as this client group are able to access services in the same way as all other client groups and there does not appear to be a specific need for a specialist service regarding homelessness.

### ***Multi agency working***

Pendle has an Older People's Strategy which is overseen by a multi agency group. In some cases, older people present with a number of issues, possibly due to their age and in such circumstances, case conferences may be called to help resolve rehousing issues.

### ***Providing a safety net***

There is no specific temporary accommodation provided for this group although clients would be assessed under homelessness legislation to determine whether a duty to provide accommodation is met. Clients are able to access supported housing and rehousing via the B-with-us Choice-based lettings scheme.

## 5.13 Ex-Services Personnel

### ***Present and future needs***

Under homelessness legislation, ex services personnel may be deemed to be in priority need if s/he is vulnerable as a result of their service. There is no specific data collated for this client group in the PBC Housing Needs database regarding housing options enquiries. PBC Housing needs staff report that homelessness enquiries are extremely low for this client group also.



### ***Present and planned services - Prevention***

There are no present / planned services specifically related to homelessness issues for this client group as there does not appear to be evidence of a need for this response.

### ***Multi agency working***

There is no multi-agency work specifically related to homelessness issues for this client group as there does not appear to be evidence of a need for this response.

### ***Providing a safety net***

There is no temporary accommodation specifically for ex service personnel.

### ***Providing a safety net***

There is no specific temporary accommodation provided for this group although clients would be assessed under homelessness legislation to determine whether a duty to provide accommodation is met. Clients are able to access supported housing and rehousing via the B-with-us Choice-based lettings scheme provided they are eligible. Clients also receive some preference in relation to other applicants if they are ex-services personnel.

## **5.14 Conclusions from Detailed Needs and Service Mapping**

There are a large number of different groups affected by homelessness and in some cases, each group demand specific responses to their needs. Broadly speaking, there appears to be significant correlation between the numbers of people within each group, numbers affected by homelessness and services provided towards these groups to alleviate homelessness.

As an example, households with families / young people which tend to be the largest client groups, tend to have the most people affected by homelessness and tend to have the most services aimed at preventing their homelessness as a result. Conversely those who are in such groupings as ex-services personnel and asylum seekers, which generally appear to be low in actual numbers, tend to have a small number of people affected by homelessness and tend to have less service directed at them. However, there are exceptions and a large proportion of the population could be classed as 'older people', although instances of homelessness are relatively small in this group compared to other groups such as those with physical disability or mental ill-health where homelessness has tended to be higher.

It is also recognised that some groups such as Young People Leaving Care, which may have relatively low numbers of homelessness perhaps see disproportionate services aimed at them. However, the particular vulnerability of these groups in comparison to other groups means that services are more comprehensive.

Finally it is also clear that some people may fall within more than one category or even a number of categories eg a person who is ex-services personnel may not necessarily receive as much support specifically due to this issue, but as they are also a young person / or have a family, may receive greater support due to their household demographic. Naturally, this issue can and does affect the overall statistics.



## 5.15 Recommendations:

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations are being made:-

- If funding is not secured by the Homelessness Trailblazer Scheme, the Council to consider other opportunities to try to fund this scheme.
- To consider options for the future funding of preventative work in schools
- Following review of Lancashire Reducing Re-offending Housing and Resettlement Protocol, implement this agreement in Pendle.





## Section Six – Consultation

The development of the Homelessness review has not been completed in isolation and consultation has occurred with various agencies concerned with homelessness across Pendle.

The following consultation has occurred

**1) May 2017 / July 2017** - all members of the homelessness forum were invited by email and at the Burnley & Pendle Homelessness Forum to provide comment / feedback on the following three general questions set:-

- What do you think are likely to be the biggest challenges over the next 5 years for homelessness services?
- What improvements / changes would agencies like to see in homelessness service provision?
- Any further ideas which you would like to put forward

Whilst it is recognised that a much more comprehensive consultation could have been implemented, it was felt the above questions were sufficiently broad and provided an easy to understand format to encourage a response from agencies and service users. Table 23 shows the variety of responses made.

**2) August 2017** - This Homelessness review document was circulated to the Homelessness forum to seek feedback in terms of the content and the recommendations.

### 6.1 Taking forward and responding to feedback

**Table 23 - Feedback received and how it will be acted upon**

|          | <i><b>What do you think are likely to be the biggest challenges over the next 5 years for homelessness services?</b></i>   | <b>How this feedback will be acted upon</b>  |
|----------|--|--|
| <b>1</b> | Continued uncertainty about the funding for homelessness services overall. A lack of adequate funding and political wrangling leading to continued uncertainty will hamper innovation and development in the short to medium term, at least. | <p>Funding for homelessness services, like most areas of public spend in the longer term remains unknown. However, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 will bring with it 'new burdens' funding from Government, which can be used to implement the new Act. However, it is not known whether this funding will prove sufficient.</p> <p>Whilst homelessness can be affected by a number of different issues including the economy</p> |



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|   |  | as a whole and issues such as welfare reform, in the short-term, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 provides clear guidance from Government in terms of what is required. It is hoped that this legislation will provide scope for innovative approaches where required to help prevent homelessness.  |
| 2 | <p>Introduction of Universal Credit Full Service which will be rolled out in Pendle in August 2018. This will require our claimants to manage a digital account to make and maintain their claim, and an expectation that claimants will manage their own finances. We acknowledge that some claimants, particularly vulnerable people with complex needs will need a lot of support. In preparation for the roll out of UCFS DWP is working with external partners to understand the needs of particular groups, including homeless people and work more closely with organisations who support these people to provide them with assistance alongside the help given by JCP staff. It will be crucial that services work together, provide a base for people to access digital services and help to do so. Money management, having a bank account and relevant ID will also be key.</p> | <p>It is recognised that the introduction of Universal credit Full Service will be a major piece of work and that it is essential that the needs of particular groups, including homeless people are supported through this process. PBC Housing Needs will liaise with Job Centre Plus / DWP and all relevant external agencies to help ensure that roll out is achieved successfully for people who are at risk of / or are homeless (<i>It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan</i>).</p> |
| 3 | UC / welfare reform  | <p>See response 2 re UC.</p> <p>Re welfare reform, it is recognised that there is potential for changes to have an adverse impact on homelessness. PBC Housing Needs will continue to monitor, where possible the effects of welfare reform and seek solutions to help prevent homelessness wherever possible.</p>  |



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| 4 | Budget cuts / universal credit                                 | <p>Re budget cuts, see response 1</p> <p>Re UC – see response 2</p>   |
| 5 | Homelessness Reduction Act                                     | <p>The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 is likely to be a major piece of legislation which will instruct how homelessness services are delivered by local authorities, particularly in relation to preventative work. Whilst some aspects are likely to result in additional homelessness applications, conversely, the legislation is aimed at preventing homelessness. PBC Housing Needs will implement these changes by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.</p>  |
| 6 | Homelessness Reduction Act                                     | See Response 5  |
| 7 | Not sure what will happen to 22 – 25 year olds later this year | <p>It is assumed this either relates to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <b>Potential changes to access to local housing allowance</b> ie that people aged 22 – 24 may have less access to this benefit. The details of any such policy would need to be known first before responses can be made ie there may be particular exceptions to the policy which would allow some people to still receive LHA.</li> <li>2) <b>Potential changes to access to supported housing for 22-24 year olds.</b> It is possible that access to supported housing in Pendle, like other supported housing in Lancashire, may only be available for those aged 16 -21. This means that an important housing option for those aged 22-24 will be lost. Whilst this age group will still be able to access housing association property and private rented HMO's, their options will have lessened and may result in more homelessness.</li> </ol> <p>PBC Housing Needs will monitor developments re options for 22 – 24 year olds and once it is known how they may be affected by changes,</p> |



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|    |  | options will be sought to mitigate the impact of these changes if possible.   |
| 8  | Finding temporary or permanent housing for 21+ year olds   | <p>This also relates to Response 7.</p> <p>Securing temporary accommodation for those aged 21+ depends on whether the Council has a legal duty under homelessness legislation to secure such accommodation. However, PBC Housing needs will always seek to assist anyone who finds themselves sleeping rough.</p> <p>Securing permanent housing for those aged 21+ will become more difficult should supported housing not be available and even more so, should further restrictions to local housing allowance occur. As per Response 7 - PBC Housing Needs will monitor developments in this area.</p> |
| 9  | Think one issue is the type/size of properties being built – need more adapted and not just for older people but ones for families where either parent or child has a disability - ie 3 bed houses | Whilst additional disabled adapted properties would no doubt significantly help improve the housing needs of some clients, unfortunately it is not easy to encourage developers to build such types of properties when there are often considerable pressures on the viability of new build schemes and disabled-adapted properties may prove more expensive to build / take up more of the footprint of the land available, than general needs housing.  |
| 10 | Rent contributions when working and a feeling this will only get worse with the increase in rent prices  | Unfortunately, all supported housing schemes have to set rents which are much higher than general needs housing, due to the additional costs which are incurred, particularly in terms of staffing. As such, unless a person is eligible to receive Local Housing Allowance (LHA), which usually cover most of not all of the rent, the whole of the rent falls on the person who is working and usually this is unaffordable. Sadly there is no way to get round this. However, for any person who finds themselves in this situation, the supported housing provider do help to move the person on      |

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|    |  | <p>successfully to more affordable accommodation.</p> <p>Supported housing providers do try to limit the level of 'service charge' which isn't covered through LHA, and this charge is usually less than what would be paid for utility bills, should the person live in general needs housing.</p>   |
| 11 | <p>It is felt there isn't many supported accommodation options in Pendle and there is need for more. There is also no supported accommodation in Barnoldswick and Earby.</p> | <p>As per pages 41 and 42, there are over 40 units of supported accommodation in the borough, principally provided by Safespace, Stepping Stone and east Lancashire YMCA. This is felt to be a reasonable level of supported accommodation and, broadly based on levels of vacancies which occur within these units, it is felt that this provision generally meets need.</p> <p>However, the location of the supported housing tend to be concentrated in larger urban areas eg Colne / Nelson / Brierfield where there is often more need / population but does mean that those living in more outlying / rural areas may receive less of a service. Pendle is no different in this respect from most other boroughs.</p> <p>The issue of lack of supported housing within Earby and Barnoldswick will be discussed with current supported housing providers to ascertain their views / options for potentially addressing this issue. <i>(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan).</i></p> |
| 12 | <p>A request for more information regarding the services of HAPI from those aged 18+ when approaching the Council's Housing Needs for assistance</p>                         | <p>PBC Housing Needs refer all cases from those aged 16 and 17 directly to HAPI and for those aged over 18, discusses with the person the benefits of the HAPI scheme. However, there is potential to provide additional information regarding the HAPI scheme / encourage greater take-up of the scheme. This will be taken forward by PBC Housing Needs.</p>  |



|           | <i><b>What improvements / changes would agencies like to see in homelessness service provision?</b></i>   | <i><b>How this feedback will be acted upon?</b></i>  |
|-----------|---|--|
| <b>13</b> | Loads of extra money  | This would be very helpful. As per Response 1, there is some additional funding for implementing the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 but whether this will suffice is not known.   |
| <b>14</b> | More choices in different areas from Pendle eg young people from Barnoldswick and Earby struggle to live in Nelson and its miles away from family and friends | See response 11<br><br>In terms of temporary accommodation, unfortunately there are no known providers which accept 'homeless' referrals in these areas.   |
| <b>15</b> | More temporary accommodation available 24/7 – more in the Pendle area.  | As per response 14 and the current Pendle Homelessness Temporary Accommodation Policy 2015, unfortunately to a large extent the market decides. Whilst PBC Housing Needs have sought establishments in Pendle for years, unfortunately some people who have been placed have caused serious problems and then the provider will no longer accept placements from PBC Housing Needs. A recommendation will be made to review the Pendle Homelessness Temporary Accommodation Policy which will consider this issue.                         |
| <b>16</b> | Suitable tenancy support  | Whilst tenancy support is certainly helpful, unfortunately there does not appear to be resources for this type of work. Generic floating support, which encompassed some of this type of work has now ended and this may result in more homelessness due to failed tenancies. There are plans to develop an 'independence training property' under the Homelessness Trailblazer scheme which may help assist in this area but otherwise, the only known support will come from housing officers for those in housing association property. |





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|    |  | PBC Housing Needs will monitor developments in this area and where possible, bid for funding / seek solutions to try to support vulnerable people in their tenancies.   |
| 17 | More affordable housing especially for under 35s. Tenancy support and more support services.   | <p><b>Re more affordable housing</b>, unfortunately to a large extent this is market-led. As such, there appears to have been more HMO's set up in Pendle recently, which in part appears to be meeting the needs of this age group, although on a room-only basis. Changes to local housing allowance may however make this issue more difficult to resolve.</p> <p><b>Re tenancy support and more support</b>– see Response 16</p>  |
| 18 | Having KPI's for housing options preventative / advice work. Better joint working.   | <p>Whilst there are no specific KPI's set on a national basis, the Council continues to comprehensively monitor housing / homelessness performance by local performance indicators.</p> <p>Re joint working – it is hoped that good joint working already exists although there is always room for improvement. Where PBC Housing Needs are able to encourage improved joint working, this will be done.</p>  |
| 19 | The affordability for people on benefit – landlords no longer want to rent to DSS tenants – especially in decent areas. Possible this may get harder –if changes re BWU scheme will this make a difference | <p>Unfortunately this is in many ways a market-led issue. Landlords are free to choose who they wish to become their tenants and therefore will often choose tenants who appear less likely to be problematic and are more likely to be able to afford the rents that they wish to charge. As such, landlords often prefer tenants who are working and have better references.</p> <p>In terms of the B-with-us scheme, which is presently being reviewed, properties advertised are predominantly classed as 'affordable rent; and thus affordable to most if not all, applicants.</p> |



|    |  |   |
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| 20 | Request for more housing options, further support through Councils after move on from supported accommodation to avoid falling into homelessness again | <p>As part of preparing for the commencement for the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, all housing options will be reviewed and where possible expanded upon (an Action has been recommended to do this).</p> <p>It is intended that when young people move on from supported accommodation, they have gained the necessary skills to move on independently and hopefully that they make a success of the accommodation they move on to. Whilst some support is initially available from supported housing providers towards the people who have left their accommodation, there is no long-term support available for people within their tenancies, particularly as generic floating support is no longer available, although for those who move to registered provider tenancies, they will have access to a housing officer.</p> <p>Whilst long-term generic tenancy support is not available, should a person feel they have become at risk of homelessness ie potentially losing their tenancy, PBC Housing Needs remain available to provide advice and support to help prevent homelessness where reasonably able to do so. It is therefore felt that whilst in an ideal world, there would be more tenancy support generally where required (p16), there is a 'safety net' available for people following 'move on' from supported housing.</p> |
|    | <b><i>Any further ideas which you would like to put forward?</i></b>   | <b><i>How this feedback will be acted upon?</i></b>   |
| 21 | Its going to be quite difficult, I think, to develop a Homelessness Strategy for the next 5 years given the uncertainty in the political arena.        | <p>There has been considerable uncertainty, particularly regarding the economic outlook, which may indirectly affect homelessness, for a number of years. The economic future looks no less uncertain, with the added issue of Brexit. That said, the strategy developed will remain a working document throughout its life and where changes are required, this will be done. The</p>  |



|    |   |   |
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|    |   | Action Plan will be regularly reviewed and additional actions can be added in if required   |
| 22 | More joint working between boroughs - economies of scale  | Councils tend to work relatively closely in terms of making joint bids and working with services who already work across boroughs. Recently the homelessness forum has been extended to include Rossendale. The main reasons being it avoided setting up a specific Rossendale forum which would have meant additional meetings for services in Rossendale when many of these services already work across Burnley and Pendle and already attend this meeting. This being said, there is always room to improve on joint working and where opportunities arise, this will be taken forward.   |
| 23 | More people with complex issues needing help but not accessing Services – either / not engaging / too high needs – ESP not been able to accept referrals due to the demand these type of clients make on staff - takes longer to find them suitable move on options - No local options for people ie Inspire office closing | Unfortunately, services such as the generic floating support service are no longer available and this may have an impact on those who are particularly vulnerable and may have required this support. It is also recognised that supported housing schemes aren't always able to accept some clients due to their presenting needs. Sadly, whilst housing providers and VCFS agencies do offer support to the people they see, some people do have presenting needs which are too high for their services, and as such either cannot access services or choose not to engage. At present there is a scheme called Transforming Lives which cases can be referred to and which, by way of a multi-agency response, it may be possible to bring agencies and resources together to try to tackle the issues that are precluding the client from services. |
| 24 | Would like to see more charities working alongside local authorities to support homelessness  | The Council has held a homelessness forum for over 10 years and over time this has expanded to cover both the Burnley area and Rossendale. The forum has in part acted as a way for the Council to engage with local charities and helped encourage excellent relationships. A number of charities are involved with the forum. However it  |



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|  |  | is not known whether there are charities within Pendle which ought to be involved and which presently are not. It therefore makes sense to review the 'mailing list' of Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale forum to ascertain whether there are any agencies within Pendle which perhaps ought to be involved with the forum and which presently are not. If so, to encourage these agencies to become members of the forum. <i>(It is proposed this becomes an Action within the subsequent Homelessness Strategy 2017 – which will encompass an Action Plan).</i> |
|--|--|---|

## 6.2 Conclusions from Consultation

As can be seen from Table 22, there has been significant feedback. Unfortunately in many cases the issue is beyond the remit of the forthcoming homelessness strategy often due to the issue relating to national policy or the issue is market-led. However, the review does seek to find ways to respond to such issues, particularly in terms of how such policies affect people locally. However, a number of feedback statements however can be responded to directly and hopefully the 'response to feedback' statement provides a suitable response.

The consultation exercise has shown that there are a number of issues which affect homelessness and which need to be considered as part of an overall strategy for tackling homelessness.

## 6.3 Recommendations

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations are being made:-

- To work with Job Centre Plus / DWP and other agencies to help ensure that roll out of Universal Credit is achieved successfully for people who are at risk of / or are homeless.
- To discuss with supported housing providers, the extent of supported housing within the Earby / Barnoldswick areas and where it is found that provision appears to be insufficient, to ascertain whether there is any feasibility for expanding into these areas.
- To review the 'mailing list' of Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale forum to ascertain whether there are any agencies within Pendle which perhaps ought to be involved with the forum and which presently are not. If so, to encourage these agencies to attend meetings / join the mailing list.



## Section Seven – Final Summary

This section attempts to bring together the main points of the review, already summarised in the previous sections, and to provide the basis for the homelessness strategy action plan.

In the previous homelessness review of 2012, the major issue at the time was the ongoing economic uncertainty / welfare reform. However, whilst economic uncertainty / Brexit may become major issues, the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and its successful implementation is the most important issue going forward and may be so for the life of the new strategy.

The new legislation along with a planned updated Code of Guidance, along with changes to what statistics will be required by Government, may result in considerable changes to how PBC Housing Needs operates. The legislation may also have considerable effect on the numbers of homelessness applications being triggered and homelessness preventative measures. Whilst it is not known specifically how statistics may react going forward, it is hoped that the legislation will result in what was intended by the legislation ie the reduction of homelessness.

Whilst some services since 2012 have disappeared and or reduced, fortunately there still remains a number of services whether via the Council, registered providers and substantially within the voluntary sector which exist in Pendle which provide services to those who are or may become homeless. Government funding for homelessness services remains in place at present and the new legislation appears to be a very positive step in helping to prevent homelessness. Whilst the review seeks to be aspirational in its recommendations, it is recognised that if it is possible to keep existing services, this ought to also be seen as a success considering the uncertainties at present and in the future.

The Review makes a number of recommendations in relation to the implementation of the new legislation and also prevention of homelessness in general. It is hoped that most of these recommendations will be taken forward by the forthcoming homelessness strategy. However, it is also recognised that not all of these recommendations can be taken forward to the action plan as they do not meet all of the 'SMART' criteria – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time based. It is also recognised that there may be 'overlap' with regards some of the actions as most relate towards homelessness preventative work.

### 7.1 Summary of Recommendations for Action Plan

The recommendations, summarised below have been derived from the research undertaken in the review and will form the basis of the action plan in the new Pendle Homelessness Strategy.

- Review all literature / advice already being given out and update information where required.



- Review the service being provided to ensure it is designed with certain listed vulnerable groups in mind e.g. care leavers, victims of domestic abuse
- Review the Housing options Interview process and associated forms to ensure that action plans meet the new legislative requirement
- Review 'prevention' work to ensure the Council complies with the new legislative requirement from 56 days
- Review 'relief' work to ensure the Council is taking all reasonable steps to help secure accommodation for any eligible person who is homeless
- Review the types of work undertaken to ascertain whether any improvements can be made to services / information provided
- Develop a 'review' procedure related to the new stages of the homelessness support process
- Update the Council's current homelessness and housing advice database to capture the required data by Government.
- Review the impact of Brexit on homelessness as this process is taken forward.
- To implement the Homelessness Trailblazer program in Pendle
- That, following review of Prevention and Early Help (P&EH) funded schemes, the Council will need to understand the nature of what changes to service there may be, how this may affect service users and whether there are any options to mitigate the impact of any loss of service.
- That the Pendle Homelessness Temporary Accommodation Policy is refreshed to coincide with the newly developed 2017 Homelessness Strategy.
- That the 2017 Homelessness Strategy Action Plan is updated on an at least quarterly basis and circulated to Burnley, Pendle & Rossendale Homelessness Forum.
- An awareness-raising exercise is conducted to outline the services of PBC Housing Needs to ethnic minority populations within the borough.
- Review the PBC Bond Guarantee Scheme to ascertain its effectiveness
- Review the categories contained within the homelessness and housing advice database to improve the quality of data which can be extracted.





- Work with Calico Homes Ltd regarding the future of ESP and the new facility to try to ensure the best possible service for potential service users from the Pendle area.
- Review and update where required, the Council's Housing Needs webpages
- Review and update the Council's Housing Options Booklet
- Undertake an awareness-raising exercise to ensure that agencies have access to the latest information contained within the Council's Housing options Booklet
- Work with B-with-us partners in reviewing the allocations policy, ensuring that any changes made are implemented successfully.
- If funding is not secured by the Homelessness Trailblazer Scheme for the HAPI scheme, the Council to consider other opportunities to try to fund this scheme.
- To consider options for the future funding of preventative work in schools
- Following review of Lancashire Reducing Re-offending Housing and Resettlement Protocol (HARP), implement this agreement in Pendle.
- To work with Job Centre Plus / DWP and other agencies to help ensure that roll out of Universal Credit is achieved successfully for people who are at risk of / or are homeless.
- To discuss with supported housing providers, the extent of supported housing within the Earby / Barnoldswick areas and where it is found that provision appears to be insufficient, to ascertain whether there is any feasibility for expanding into these areas.
- To review the 'mailing list' of Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale forum to ascertain whether there are any agencies within Pendle which perhaps ought to be involved with the forum and which presently are not. If so, to encourage these agencies to become members of the forum.

## 7.2 Resources

The recommendation made above and eventual aims of the homelessness strategy cannot be realised without resources both in terms of time and finance.

Whilst the Council retains a statutory duty to provide a housing advice and homelessness service, the Government grant is time limited and may not be available after 2019-20. Consideration must therefore be given to the identification of resources that will enable the actions in the action plan to be completed after this date.

