



Craven

Homelessness Review & Strategy 2015 - 2020

Our Vision

To prioritise the prevention of homelessness and to ensure that we have effective housing advice and homelessness services that are accessible to the residents of Craven

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Foreword



I am pleased to be launching a new Homelessness Strategy for Craven for the period 2015 -2020.

Our strategy is informed by a thorough review of homelessness in Craven – looking at back at what we have achieved in the last 5 years – at a local level and across North Yorkshire- and looking at what homelessness looks like in Craven now. With rising numbers of people seeking assistance from our housing and homelessness services there are challenges ahead to deliver improved and excellent services for our community.

Looking forward, our strategy sets out the main priorities and actions required to reduce homelessness, improve services and where homelessness can't be avoided – to provide a comprehensive response including temporary accommodation that meets the needs of the most vulnerable households in Craven.



Councillor Richard Foster
Leader of the Council and
Chair – York, North Yorkshire and East Riding
Housing Board

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Craven Homelessness Review and Strategy 2015 - 2020 is contained within this one document.

The Review was carried out 2014/15 and consisted of an evaluation of what we have achieved during the period of our previous strategy and an assessment of the current situation regarding homelessness based on statistical information and consultation.

Our Strategy covers a five year period from 2015 and brings together our priorities, the actions we will take and the resources we will need to deliver a housing advice and homelessness service to the most vulnerable people in our community.

Our Homelessness Strategy vision is:

“To prioritise the prevention of homelessness and to ensure that we have effective housing advice and homelessness services that are accessible to the residents of Craven”

Our Strategy

Our Strategy contains the priorities and actions identified following our Homelessness Review and is based within the context of our statutory duties and commitments arising from adoption of sub-regional strategies and partnering arrangements.

Our Strategy underpins the York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Housing Strategy (the ‘sub-regional strategy’) which was adopted by Craven in July 2015. The sub-regional strategy includes actions to address shared homelessness issues where sub-regional joint working can add value and access to additional funding:

York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Housing Strategy - 2015—2021								
Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4	Priority 5	Priority 6	Priority 7	Priority 8	Priority 9
Increase Affordable Housing	Housing stock meets Urban, rural & coastal housing needs	Housing stock meets needs at all stages of life	Ensure homes are of good design & environmental quality	Make best use and homes are of a decent quality	Homes have positive impact on health & wellbeing	Continue to reduce homelessness	Affordable housing is allocated fairly	Appropriate housing and support for those with specific needs



And our local strategy includes local priorities:

1. Reducing Homelessness
2. Improving the quality and accessibility of housing services
3. Increasing the range and quality of temporary and supported accommodation options

Craven Homelessness Strategy 2015—2021		
Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
Reducing Homelessness	Improving the quality and accessibility of housing services	Increase the range and quality of temporary and supported accommodation options

Delivery

Local delivery of our priorities is affected by key issues of reduced funding, an increase in demand for one-bed properties, increased levels of rough sleeping, higher levels of households who are vulnerable due to drug and alcohol dependency and the condition of Craven's temporary accommodation.

Actions to address these key issues have been included within our Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan using existing staffing resources and financial resources from the Council and Homelessness Grant funding included within the Council's Revenue Support Grant as approved by Policy Committee on 17th February 2015. Each action has a lead officer and partner to drive forward implementation and actions integrated into individual work plans.

We will clearly communicate our strategy and our progress through regular communication with partners via the Craven Housing & Homelessness Forum, with Members and Corporate Leadership team via the Council's Performance Monitoring process, with front line officers via team meetings and with the public via our website.

We value feedback to help us shape future delivery and welcome comments through contact by:

Email: npinder@cravendc.gov.uk

Telephone: 01756 706392

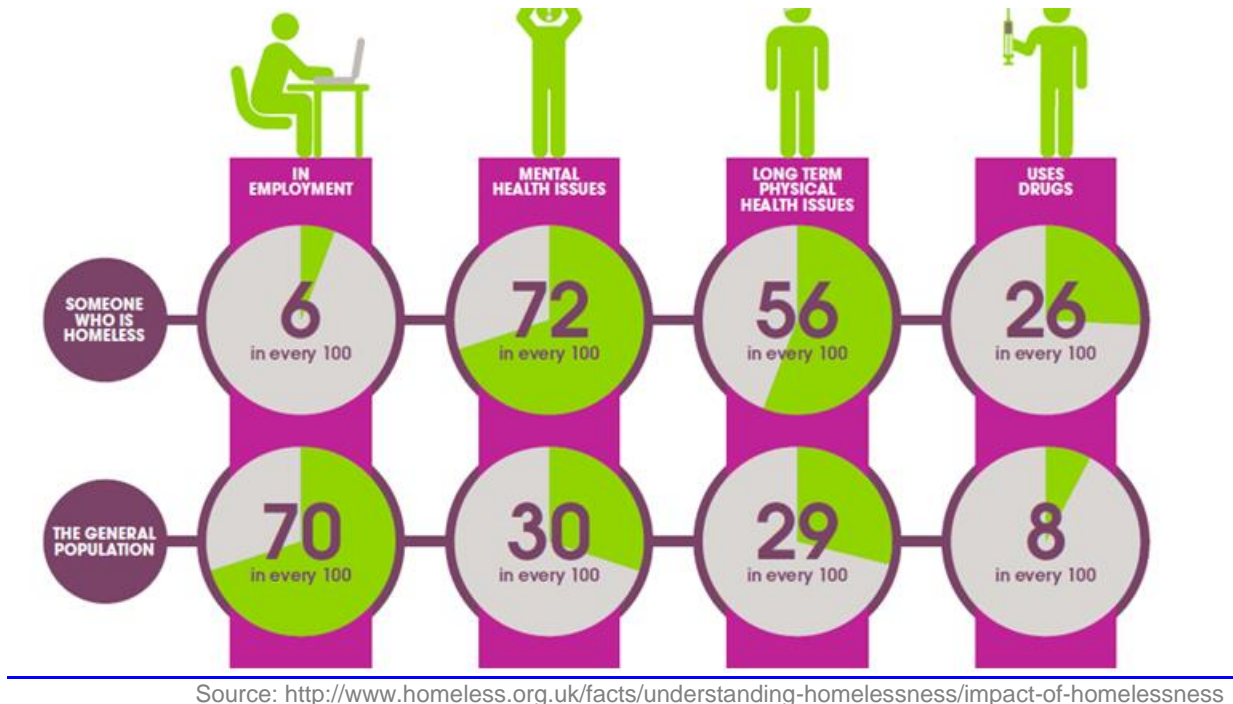
In writing/visit: Environmental Health & Housing Services, Craven District Council, Belle Vue Square, Broughton Road, SKIPTON, BD23 1FJ

Introduction to our Homelessness Strategy 2015 - 2020

Welcome to Craven's Homelessness Strategy which sets out how we will deliver housing advice and homelessness services in line with our vision "to be a prosperous place with strong, vibrant and diverse communities" providing services to our community where we treat everyone with respect and strive for improvement and excellence.

Homelessness can affect anyone. It is an issue that harms individuals, damages communities and yet in most cases can be prevented. Homeless Link (a national membership charity for organisations working directly with people who become homeless in England) assessed that the impact of homelessness on an individual increased the prevalence of health and work issues as illustrated below:

Figure 1: Experience of homeless people compared to the general population – Homeless Link



Our strategy covers a five year period from 2015 and brings together our priorities, the actions we will take and the resources we will need to deliver a housing advice and homelessness service to the most vulnerable people in our community. Our Homelessness Strategy vision is:

"To prioritise the prevention of homelessness and to ensure that we have effective housing advice and homelessness services that are accessible to the residents of Craven"

We can't do this in isolation. Our approach is to work with partners – both locally and across North Yorkshire and East Riding – to identify our local and shared priorities, develop and deliver interventions to help those that need it, learn from one another to provide excellent services.

This will be a challenge. The next five years will be a critical time. Further constraints on public spending affecting us as a local authority and our community directly are expected. Reduction in funding is a **key issue** for Craven. We will potentially also experience other pressures including demographic changes, government policy and legislative changes and rising levels of households seeking assistance.

This document sets out:

- Part 1 – what we **have** to do – our statutory duties, legislation, national policy and sub-regional strategies
- Part 2 – what else do we need to do? – our review of homelessness
- Part 3 – what are our main issues? – our homelessness **priorities**
- Part 4 – what are **we going to do** about it? – our Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan
- Part 5 – **how** are we going to do it? – the financial, staffing and partnership resources we need
- Part 6 – how we will know we've achieved what we set out to do? – how we will monitor progress and develop future actions needed

1 Part 1

Statutory duties, national policy and sub-regional strategies

1.1 Housing in Craven:

The profile of housing is:

Figure 2: Housing Profile of Craven



Source: Council Tax data 2014 – as cited in the Draft Strategic Market Assessment 2015: Arc 4

Craven District Council is no longer a landlord. We transferred our housing stock to Yorkshire Housing (previously Craven Housing) in March 2003; however, the Council is still the Local Housing Authority with statutory housing duties

This section summarises our wider strategic housing duties before focussing on the key homelessness duties, the legislation and sub-regional strategies related to homelessness.

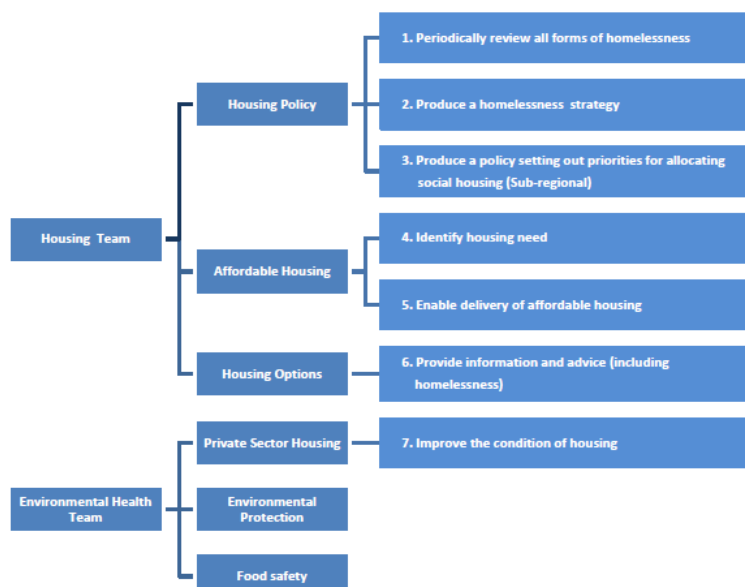
1.2 Strategic Housing Duties:

The Council's strategic housing duties are:

1. To periodically review all forms of homelessness
2. To produce a homelessness strategy
3. To identify housing need
4. To enable delivery of affordable housing
5. To provide housing information and advice (including statutory homeless duties)
6. To produce a policy setting out priorities for allocating social housing
7. To improve the condition of housing

The Council's Environmental Health & Housing Services are responsible for the delivery of our statutory housing duties with the Housing Options with primary responsibility for delivery of our homelessness duties.

Figure 3: Environmental Health & Housing Services Statutory Duty responsibilities



1.3 Strategic Homelessness Duties:

1.3.1 Carrying Out Periodic Review of Homelessness

The purpose of reviews are to establish the extent of homelessness within the district, assess its likely extent in the future and identify what is currently being done and by whom and what level of resources are available to prevent and tackle homelessness¹. As a minimum we are required to carry out a review every five years, however, it is open to a housing authority to carry out reviews more frequently if they wish to.

Our last review was carried out in 2012 to inform the development of the North Yorkshire Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2012 - 2015.

It is seen as good practice to annually review homelessness and it is our intention to carry out annual reviews in order to inform the Craven Housing and Homelessness Strategy Integrated Action Plan from 2016/17 onwards.

This document summarises the findings of our 2014 Review with more detail contained within:

Appendix A: Homelessness Review Statistical Information

Appendix B: Homelessness Review Consultation & Results

1.3.2 Craven's Homelessness Strategy 2015 - 2020

In 2012 it was agreed that all North Yorkshire local authorities would combine their homelessness strategies with the North Yorkshire Housing Strategy to produce the **North Yorkshire Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2012 – 2015**. This strategy ended July 2015 and in view of the increasing pressures of affordable housing delivery, new partnership commitments and boundaries it was decided that although an overarching priority to “**continue to reduce homelessness**” would be included within a sub-regional strategy, each local authority would develop and publish their own local Homelessness Strategy. Whilst we recognise the importance of sub-regional partnership working to deliver shared priorities, in order to meet our statutory strategic housing duties a *local* strategy was required to meet *local* needs identified by our Homelessness Review 2014.

Our five-year strategy sets out our proactive approach to preventing homelessness formulated into 3 main priorities and Homelessness Delivery Plan 2015 – 2020. Each year we will review and update our Homelessness Delivery Plan to ensure our services and actions remain responsive to emerging issues. (See Appendix B Annex A: Craven Homelessness Communication Plan 2015)

1.3.3 Provision of Information and Advice

This function is the primary responsibility of our Housing Options Team whereby we have seen increasing numbers of households accessing information and advice - rising from 201 in 2010/11 to 328 in 2014/15.

In 2011 the Housing Options service was “brought in house” which coincided with the move of council offices to Belle Vue Square, Skipton. This move has improved communication and partnership working with other council teams and North Yorkshire County Council services based within the building. Bringing the service “in house” has resulted in savings for the Council in terms of reduced management & monitoring requirements and increased efficiencies through the process of removing duplication and more streamlined “pathways” of service delivery.

During 2014/15 we implemented our Craven Housing Options Improvement Plan to further improve delivery. Examples of work undertaken include a review of all decision letters and regular casefile checks to inform improved advice and assistance.

In order to build on our local initiative we have accepted the “Gold Standard Challenge” supported by the Department of Communities and Local Government to improve more efficient and cost effective homelessness prevention services through a local authority led peer-review of services. This links to our corporate value to “strive for improvement and excellence” and is a cross cutting theme throughout our homelessness strategy. (See Table 1 Gold Standard Challenges)

¹ Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities – Department for Communities and Local Government July 2006

1.4 Legislation:

The following legislation provides the legal framework for the delivery of our housing and homelessness services:

- a) The **Housing Act 1996** (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) is the major piece of legislation informing local authorities' response to homelessness and requirement to formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on a review of homelessness in their district. Subsequent legislation and regulations have expanded the priority need categories, and placed a requirement on Councils to adopt a strategic approach to managing and preventing homelessness.
- b) The **Localism Act 2011** set out the Government's plans to shift power from central government back into the hands of communities and councils. In terms of housing, it gave local authorities the power to make changes to their allocations policies, changes that allow homeless families to be housed in the Private Rented Sector and the introduction of Fixed Term tenancies.

In response to this legislation we have:

- Amended the North Yorkshire Common Allocations Policy in 2013 allowing restricted access to the housing register to households who have a local connection to North Yorkshire
- Developed and adopted a North Yorkshire Tenancy Strategy 2013/15
- Adopted the power to discharge our housing duty into the Private Rented Sector as set out in the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012 and published our Discharge Duty Policy in 2013

- c) The **Children Act 1989 and 2004** contains Social Services duties in respect of households which include dependent children. The Acts require Social Services and Local Authorities to work in partnership to assist any child who is regarded as being in housing need.

In response we have:

- Developed Protocols between North Yorkshire Local Authorities (LAs) and North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) in respect of homeless 16/17 year olds and Intentionally Homeless Families. In 2011 the Young Persons Hub was set up which has brought together LAs and NYCC in the joint commissioning of services for Under 25s.

- d) The **Welfare Reform Act 2012** introduced Universal Credit, changes to Housing Benefit, Local Housing Allowance, Council Tax Benefit, child support and reforms to the Disability Living Allowance with effect from 1st April 2013 onwards as summarised below:

- **Benefit Cap** – restricted the total amount of benefits that working age people can receive to £500pw for couples/lone parents and £350pw for single adults
- **Localised Council Tax Support Schemes** replaced Council Tax Benefit
- **Under-occupancy ruling in social housing** bases the amount of Housing Benefit you can receive on the number of people in your household and where households are viewed as “under occupying” they are required to meet any shortfall in rent
- **Local Housing Allowance for Single people under 35s** renting in the private rented sector restrict the benefit they receive to the single room rate i.e. the rate of a room in a shared house – and single people under 35 are required to meet any shortfall in rent
- **Community care grants and crisis loans** were abolished and replaced by locally administered schemes.
- **Personal Independent Payment (PIP)** replaces Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for new claimants aged 16-64 year old. PIP is based on how a person's condition affects them, not the condition they have.
- **Universal Credit** introduced in Craven on 16th Feb 2015 for single non home-owners - combines and replaces a number of existing benefits for people who are out of work and tax credits for people in work and tailored to ensure that “work always pays and is seen to pay”². Applied for and paid “digitally” on a monthly basis people will be responsible for paying their own rent, council tax etc.

In response we have:

- Introduced a Craven Welfare Reform Task Group and action plan for delivery
- Completed a programme of contacting all households affected by the Under-occupancy ruling and Benefit Cap to offer/provide assistance in conjunction with their social landlords
- Amended the Discretionary Housing Payments Policy to include interventions to assist households adversely affected by Welfare Reform – such as the introduction of a Downsizing scheme

² https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/48897/universal-credit-full-document.pdf

1.5 National Policy

The following national policy documents provide the drivers for shaping the services we deliver:

Laying the Foundation: A Housing Strategy for England (2011) identified addressing homelessness as a key priority for the government to tackle, with greater focus on prevention as well as targeting action for dealing with rough sleeping.

Arising from this strategy are two main initiatives for homelessness which we have adopted:



No Second Night Out (2011) a vision to end rough sleeping – published by the Ministerial working group for Homelessness this document summarises the Government's commitment to support the roll out of the principles of No Second Night Out nationally to help people off the streets, to access healthcare, into work and empowering local authorities.

Making Every Contact Count: A Joint Approach to the Prevention of Homelessness (2012) – published by the Ministerial working group for Homelessness this document provides detailed guidance for how councils should work collaboratively with other local authority services to prevent homelessness through early intervention and avoid household reaching crisis point. The report sets out 10 local challenges:

Table 1: Gold Standard Challenges

Gold Standard Challenges		Craven District Council Position as at March 2015
1	Adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness	Adoption of Craven's Homelessness Strategy by Corporate Leadership Team/Members due July 2015
2	Actively work in partnership with voluntary sector /partners to address support, education, employment and training needs	Ongoing partnership working arrangements – enhanced and developed further. E.g. Department of Work & Pensions – Job Centre & Craven College representation on the Young Persons Pathway Group
3	Housing Options Prevention service including written advice to all clients	Prevention focussed service with written advice to all clients reviewed and implemented 2014
4	Adopt a No Second Night Out (NSNO) model	NSNO protocol signed Nov 2013
5	Housing Pathways for each client group developed	Pathways for Young People, People with a Learning Difficulty and Rough Sleepers developed
6	Suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups including advice and support for both clients and landlords	Private Rented Sector Offer under development
7	Actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions	Evictions and Repossessions Loan Scheme included within Homelessness toolkit
8	Homelessness Strategy which sets out proactive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually	Homelessness Strategy due for adoption July 2015 and annual review process in place
9	Not place any 16/17 year olds in Bed & Breakfast (B&B)	Last placed one 16/17 year old in B&B during 2014/15 – previously not done so since 2010/11
10	Not place families in Bed and Breakfast unless in an emergency and then for no longer than 6 weeks	Last placed a family in B&B during 2013/14 – previously not done so since 2010/11

In response to the introduction of these two initiatives we have:

- Adopted the North Yorkshire No Second Night Out Protocol
- Developed a Rough Sleeper Pathway
- Signed up to the “Gold Standard Challenge” – by doing so we are committed to a peer led continuous improvement programme whereby we will evidence achievement of the 10 challenges. Achievement of the “Gold Standard” as a key priority within our Craven Homelessness Strategy (CHHSAP 10) and is a cross cutting theme within this strategy.

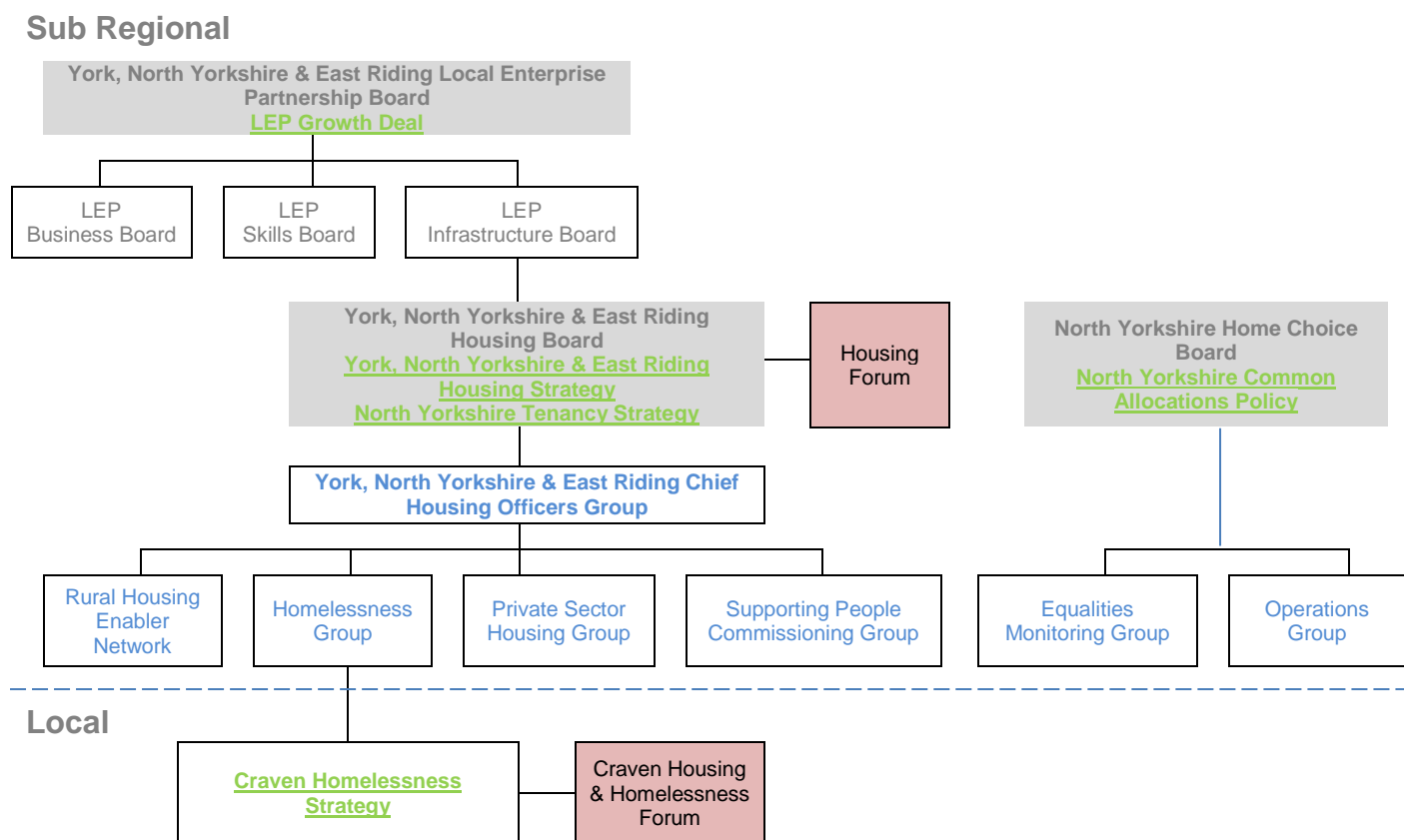
1.6 Sub-regional strategies

Craven District Council is committed to working with partners to deliver shared priorities. As the Local Housing Authority within a two tier local government structure it is important that we work with our local authority partners and the North Yorkshire County Council to deliver our shared priorities.

Our commitment to working sub-regionally is primarily governed through our membership of the York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Housing Board (Chaired by Craven's Lead Member for Housing), the Local Enterprise Partnership Board and the North Yorkshire Home Choice Board.

The **partnerships** responsible for delivery of **key strategies and policies** (informed by housing forums) are supported by **officer groups** as shown below:

Figure 4: Partnerships, Strategies and Groups



The overarching sub-regional strategy for homelessness is the:

1.6.1 York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Housing Strategy 2015 – 2021

This document sets out how as a sub-region we will meet our shared housing and homelessness priorities. It primarily focusses on the delivery of affordable housing but includes:

Priority 7 – Continue to reduce homelessness	
PROPOSALS	
1	Continue and improve partnership working to prevent homelessness
2	Improve access to prevention and housing services
3	Improve support for young people
4	Increase suitable housing options
5	Reduce the use of temporary accommodation and improve quality

This captures our homelessness related work at a sub-regional level with primary responsibility for delivery devolved to the York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Homelessness Group.

This group is able to take an area wide strategic approach and take advantage of sub-regional funding to develop and deliver services throughout the area.

Factsheet 1: North Yorkshire & York Single Homelessness Action Plan - No Second Night Out

North Yorkshire and York local authorities were successful in securing Department of Communities & Local Government funding to deliver sub-regional interventions that supported the No Second Night Out initiative – helping single homeless people off the street.

The *Single Homelessness Action Plan* was developed and included the following sub-regional interventions delivered locally:

- **Tackling Street Drinking:** Outreach support to tackle street drinking and associated anti-social behaviour and homelessness (not applicable to Craven)
- **Rural Spot Purchase:** Funding pot available to local authorities to “buy in” specialist support (e.g. health care, drug and alcohol support) as and when required for rough sleepers with complex needs presenting in their areas
- **Personalisation Fund:** Funding pot for local authorities to use for “innovative” solutions for single homeless people to help them into accommodation
- **Help to Access the Private Rented Sector:** Provision of additional funding allocated to local authorities to provide Bonds, Rent in Advance and tenancy training to single homeless people
- **Streetlink:** National Rough Sleeper phone line for members of the public to use to report sightings of Rough Sleepers
- **Specialist Homeless Hostels:** Access to specialist homeless hostels in York (subject to availability)
- **Migrant Reconnection:** Guidance available from Homelesslink (charitable homeless organisation)
- **Severe Weather Emergency Protocol:** Funding allocated to local authorities to cover costs of Emergency accommodation when the temperature drops to 0° or below for 3 consecutive nights.

North Yorkshire & York local authority Chief Executives signed up to the “North Yorkshire & York No Second Night Out Protocol” in 2013 which outlines their collective and individual response to new rough sleepers and details how we will work together to implement a coordinated approach and share good practice.

1.6.2 North Yorkshire Tenancy Strategy

Craven District Council as a non-stockholding authority adopted this strategy in January 2013. The overarching aim of this Strategy is:

“To enable Housing Providers in North Yorkshire to co-ordinate their policies and practices to produce tenancies for customers which meet local housing needs, provide support to those who need it, improve choice and contribute to sustainable communities and economic growth and recovery.”

The Strategy states that when considering the number of properties which will be re-let at an Affordable Rent Registered Providers have regard to the following;

- The pattern of re-lets by location, property size and type
- The need to ensure that under-occupiers wishing to downsize are not discouraged to do so
- The need to ensure a reasonable supply of family-sized accommodation at social rents
- The need to ensure that properties in rural areas can be let to those working locally on low incomes
- The shortage of wheelchair accessible accommodation

Where appropriate minimum Five Year Tenancies, Introductory Tenancies and Lifetime Tenancies may be used to sustain tenancies. Whilst registered providers within Craven are not “signed” up to the North Yorkshire Tenancy Strategy they are required to have due regard to our Strategy and it is used in tenancy negotiations with new developers.

1.6.3 North Yorkshire Common Allocations Policy

The document sets out the housing allocation policy for the North Yorkshire Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Partnership, known as North Yorkshire Home Choice. The partnership is committed to tackling homelessness across North Yorkshire and shares the following aims and objectives:

- to meet the legal requirements for the allocation of social housing as set out in the Housing Act (1996) and Homelessness Act (2002) and Localism Act (2011) ensuring that those with the greatest housing needs have those needs met more quickly;
- to empower applicants to make their own choices about where they want to live;
- to encourage and support, balanced and sustainable communities;
- to make the process simple, transparent, fair and easy to use;

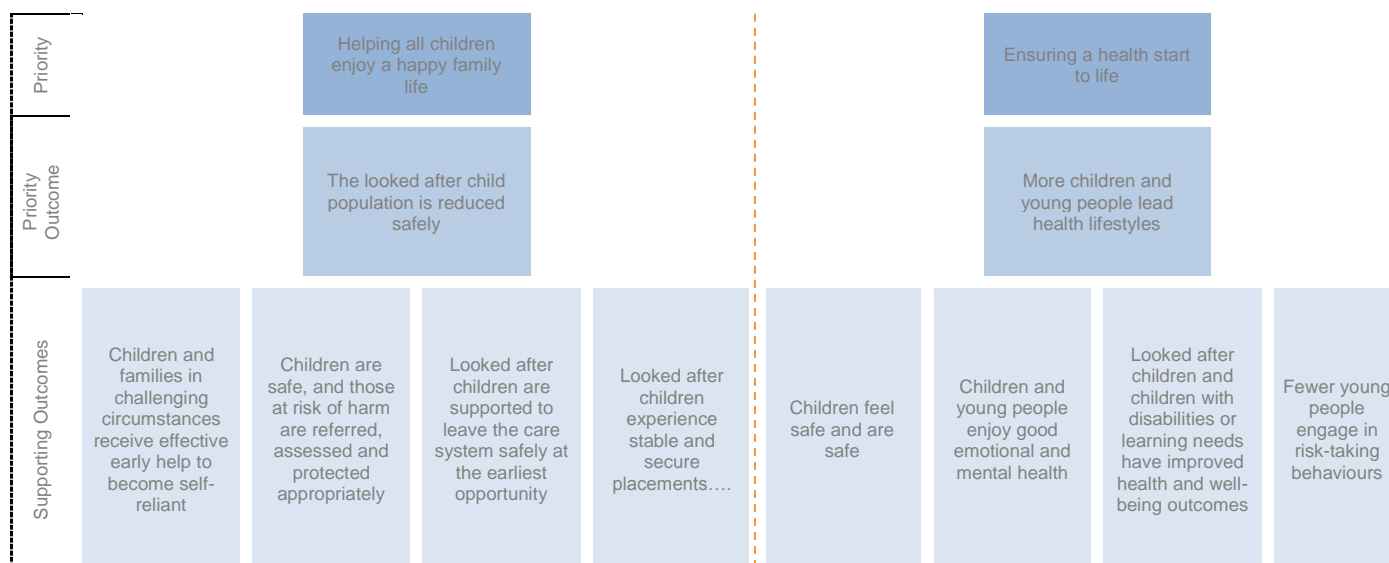
- to provide information about the availability of homes to enable applicants to make realistic choices about their housing options;
- to prevent homelessness and reduce placement in temporary accommodation;
- to ensure accessibility for all those in housing need, particularly the more vulnerable; and
- to make effective use of the affordable housing stock, extending choice and mobility across local authority boundaries.

The strategies/policies detailed above are the primary ones where a sub-regional approach effectively addresses common issues, deliver shared priorities and assists us to meet our statutory duties. However, other sub-regional strategies and plans that are relevant to delivery of our local Craven Homelessness Strategy are:

1.6.4 North Yorkshire County Council's Children's Trust – Young and Yorkshire 2014 -17

This strategy contains the shared strategic priorities as summarised below:

Figure 5: Young & Yorkshire 2014-17 Priorities and outcomes



Keeping young people at home (where it is safe to do so) and ensuring that they are healthy can have a positive impact on reducing homelessness. 25% of homeless cases in 2014/15 were “young people” aged 16-24 who were made homeless because Parents/others were no longer willing/able to accommodate them. We also have higher levels of priority need due to vulnerability as a result of drug/alcohol addiction than the sub-region. (See Appendix A: Homelessness Review Statistical Information).

By working together we can achieve our shared priorities. An example of our shared working is the development and joint commissioning of Young People's Housing Solutions @ The Hub where homelessness and advice services have been jointly commissioned and brought together under one roof.

Factsheet 2: Young People's Housing Solutions @ The Hub



In 2012 North Yorkshire local authorities and North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) Health & Adult Services and Children & Young People's (CYPs) services joined together to jointly commission housing related support services for 16-25 year olds.

Seven new Young People's accommodation advice and prevention Hubs were established. In Craven the Hub is located within the council's Housing Options service at Belle Vue Square, Skipton – and comprises of an integrated team co-ordinated by the Housing Options Manager. The team includes homelessness prevention workers from CYPs and the lead provider of housing related support for young people – Foundation (a charity that works with socially excluded people helping them to gain full independence in their local community).

They all work together to provide the best service for young people who need advice and support around housing issues. Alongside general advice and guidance, the Hubs offer a 'Pathway Approach' for young people who require further support and may be at risk of homelessness. This can include a dedicated Homelessness Prevention worker supporting the young person, family mediation and access to emergency accommodation usually with a host family. Where further young person is unable to return home or to an alternative suitable living arrangement, depending on a full risk and needs assessment, longer-term support and accommodation may be provided.

1.6.5 North Yorkshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013 - 2018

This strategy sets out the challenges, priorities and areas for focus to achieve the Health & Wellbeing Board's vision for "People in all communities in North Yorkshire [to] have equal opportunities to live long health lives". The priority is to improve the health of everyone set against the identified challenges of rurality, an ageing population, pockets of deprivation, financial pressures, killer diseases and emotional and mental wellbeing.

There are clear linkages with this strategy and reducing homelessness in Craven. The Strategy includes the following areas of focus relevant to homelessness:

- a) To identify and develop integrated solutions for vulnerable children and families
- b) To improve the availability of more affordable housing that is appropriate for people's needs
- c) To address the care and support needs of a higher number of very elderly people in the County

We have worked jointly to identify shared priorities for inclusion in the strategy 2013-18 and we will participate in the consultation on the revised strategy in June/July 2015. We support the Health & Wellbeing Board to deliver initiatives. For example, in 2014 we worked with Airedale, Wharfedale & Craven Clinical Commissioning Group and North Yorkshire County Council Health & Adult Services to add value to the Innovation Fund grant programme for projects to reduce fuel poverty, reduce admissions to hospital and winter deaths. It is our intention to continue to work with the board to deliver the shared priorities.

Summary:

Part 1 has outlined the key statutory responsibilities and the commitments we have made as members of sub-regional partnerships which shape the delivery of housing and homelessness services in Craven.

An important legal requirement is to carry out a review of homelessness to establish the extent of homelessness within our district which will identify **what else we need to do** in response to local issues. The findings of our review must be included within our Craven Homelessness Strategy.

The next section of our Strategy summarises the process for our review 2014/15 and key findings. More in-depth information can be found within the documents at:

**Appendix A: Homelessness Review Statistical Information and
Appendix B: Homelessness Review Consultation Process and Results**

2 Part 2

Review of Homelessness 2014 /15

Part 2 of Craven's Homelessness Strategy includes the findings of our Homelessness Review 2014/15.

The Review process includes looking back at what we achieved during the period of our previous Homelessness Strategy and then looking at what homelessness looks like now before we can shape the priorities for inclusion in our new Craven Homelessness Strategy 2015/21.

Our previous strategy was “contained” within the North Yorkshire & York Sub-regional Housing Strategy 2012/15 (See 1.3.2) with local actions included in our Craven Housing & Homelessness Strategy Action Plan. The following sections identify the key achievements of our previous strategy at a sub-regional and local level before looking at what homelessness looks like now – informed by a statistical analysis of homelessness information and consultation.

2.1 North Yorkshire & York Sub-regional Housing Strategy 2012-15

The North Yorkshire and York Sub-regional Housing Strategy 2012-15 identified the following key strategic priorities:

1. Enabling the provision of more affordable homes
2. Maintaining and improving the existing housing stock
3. **Delivering Community Renaissance (Incorporates economic resilience, growth and wellbeing)**
4. **Improving access to housing services**
5. **Reducing Homelessness**

Strategic Priorities 3, 4 and 5 links specifically to the homelessness related actions informing the development of Protocols and procedures to address key issues including street homelessness, support for young people and better use of the private rented sector. Some of the actions required a sub-regional **and** local approach providing the consistency of service delivery across the county with specific actions to maximise local impact.

The table below gives examples of the difference we have made during the period the strategy by working sub-regionally.

Table 2: Summary of Sub-regional Achievements - North Yorkshire & York sub-regional Housing Strategy 2012/15

3.	Delivering Community Renaissance
	<p>The North Yorkshire Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showmen's Steering Group has managed local neighbourhoods and promoted social cohesion through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising Cultural Awareness through training delivered to Housing Options teams across the county • Developing support services for the Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showmen communities by consulting with them at Forum events • Improved access to mainstream services for the Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showmen communities by information shared at Forum events • Completing Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments to identify housing needs across the county • Adopting an Unauthorised Encampment Protocol on North Yorkshire County Council land to consistently manage action taken including provision of Welfare Assessments. • Mapping all Gypsy and Traveller sites across North Yorkshire • Working with communities to increase the supply of Gypsy and Traveller pitches in Ryedale District Council area
4.	Improving access to housing services
	<p>North Yorkshire County Council and the York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Homelessness Group (previously known as the County Homelessness Group) have offered improved housing services through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and delivery of new Extra Care³ provision across the County • Additional training for housing options teams • A commitment to improve housing services as part of the Gold Standard Challenge (see 1.5)
	<p>The North Yorkshire Home Choice Board offers support to match people with homes to meet their needs through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying out a review of North Yorkshire Common Allocation Policy and consulting with partners, stakeholders and the public • Implementing the findings of the review and amending the Policy to include help to downsize and local connection restrictions

³ **Extra Care Housing** is housing designed with the needs of frail older people in mind and with varying levels of **care** and support available on site. People who live in **Extra Care Housing** have their own self-contained homes, their own front doors and a legal right to occupy the property.

	<p>The York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Homelessness Group (previously known as the County Homelessness Group) has increased access and improved services across the private rented sector through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying out research with Private Sector Landlords and lettings agents as to what makes a good “Private Rented Sector Offer” – to encourage landlords to take clients referred by Housing Options teams • Developing a sub-regional “Offer” as a benchmark for all local authorities to develop their local “offers”. • Allocating funding to local authorities (LAs) to pay for the delivery of their “offer” (to be match funded by the LAs)
5.	Reducing Homelessness
	<p>The York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Homelessness Group (previously known as the County Homelessness Group) has reduced homelessness by joint working through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing North Yorkshire Single Homeless Funding to develop and deliver a range of projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community Champions: Identification of “champions” within agencies, parish councils and voluntary groups as a network supporting work to help rough sleepers ○ Rural Spot Purchase: Funding for additional specialist support requirements for Rough Sleepers ○ Moving Forward – Pre-tenancy Training: Training resources and delivery of pre-tenancy training ○ Personalisation Fund: Funding for innovative solutions that help people into accommodation ○ Through the Gate: support for ex-offenders into accommodation upon release from prison (ceased 2014) ○ Access to the Private Rented Sector: Funding for Bonds & Rent in Advance and initiatives as part of a Private Rented Sector Offer helping single people into accommodation • Developing and adopting a sub-regional No Second Night Out Protocol detailing help available across the County for rough sleepers (See Factsheet 1) <p>We know that we have sustained and improved the prevention of homelessness because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of households who made a Homelessness application and were found to be eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need has reduced by 24% in 2014/15 (472) compared to 2011/12 (621) • The number of households we have worked with and prevented them from becoming homeless has increased by 19.5% in 2014/15 (3,966) compared to 2011/12 (3,315)
	<p>The York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Homelessness Group (previously known as the County Homelessness Group) has reduced the use and improved temporary accommodation through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of self-contained temporary accommodation (except Craven and Richmondshire) • A refurbishment programme for Selby temporary accommodation <p>We know that we have reduced the use of temporary accommodation because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of households in temporary accommodation as at 31st March 2015 (207) has reduced by 23% compared to 31st March 2012 (269).
	<p>The York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Homelessness Group (previously known as the County Homelessness Group) has tackled youth homelessness through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and joint commissioning of the Young Person’s Housing Solutions @ The Hub (See Factsheet 2) <p>We know that we have been successful in tackling youth homelessness because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of 16/17 year olds who made a Homelessness application and were found to be eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need has reduced by 81% in 2014/15 (3) compared to 2011/12 (16)⁴
	<p>The North Yorkshire Supporting People Commissioning Body has ensured that housing support for vulnerable and homeless people remains available through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking the management, monitoring and review of support services and ensuring all services provide value for money. <p>We know that Homelessness Prevention and Support Services are successful because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of planned moves (i.e. households exiting the service into permanent accommodation do so in a planned way - and are no longer at risk or have “moved on” into secured sustainable accommodation – which will be sustained for at least 6 months) has increased by 3% in 2014/15 (95%) compared to 2011/12 (92%)

At a local level we developed a Housing & Homelessness Strategy Action Plan which included actions required to support the sub-regional strategy and specific Craven actions arising from our review 2012. Each year we have subsequently reviewed and updated this action plan in light of emerging issues and priorities.

Full details of progress in relation to the delivery of the sub-regional Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2012-15 can be found at <http://www.nycyerhousing.co.uk/> and Craven actions in support of the sub-regional strategy can be found at Appendix C: Craven Housing & Homelessness Strategy – 2014/15 Monitoring Report.

The table overleaf gives examples of the difference we have made during the period the strategy by working locally:

⁴ North Yorkshire Local Authorities only – no 2011/12 figure available from City of York Council

Table 3: Summary of Craven Achievements - North Yorkshire & York sub-regional Housing Strategy 2012/15

3.	<p>Delivering Community Renaissance</p> <p>Craven has managed local neighbourhoods and promoted social cohesion through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a training package, customer leaflets and Guidance for Homelessness Officers in partnership with Horton Housing to raise awareness of Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showmen's culture, improve access to mainstream services and ensure consistent homelessness advice and support across the sub-region Identifying the housing need through carrying out a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment – our identified need in 2014 is for one pitch Working with the South Skipton project to address key issues leading to deprivation. Work included identification of households affected by Welfare Reform and offering financial support. Mapping Gypsy & Traveller sites on behalf of North Yorkshire local authorities <p>Craven has addressed issues of financial inclusion through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership working with the Welfare Reform Task Group (comprising of members from the Council's Revenues & Benefit team, Department of Work and Pensions and social landlords) to deliver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification, contacting and offering support to all households affected by Benefit Cap and Size Criteria in the Social Rented sector Delivering Money Management Courses in partnership with Citizens Against Poverty Developing and implementing policy changes to the Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) Policy to maximise spend of the DHP Budget. For example – introducing a "Downsizing" incentive scheme Piloting, evaluating and extending the introduction of a Welfare Reform Support Worker in partnership with the Council's Revenues & Benefit team and Horton Housing (registered provider which provides a range of housing and support services to people disadvantaged by housing circumstances or social need). The worker provides one to one support for households in financial stress and at risk of homelessness.
4.	<p>Improving access to housing services</p> <p>Craven has offered improved housing services through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of 31 units of Extra Care⁵ in Skipton and 40 units in Settle Improved quality of advice following Training for Housing Options Officers Commitment to improve services in line with the "Gold Standard" programme (See 1.5) – work has already started with delivery of the Craven Housing Options Improvement Plan including updating of webpages prior to the Peer Review of services to take place in October 2015 <p>Craven offers support to match people with homes to meet their needs through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of an Interim Approach to Negotiating Affordable Housing to maximise delivery Being the lead authority developing Easy Read information for North Yorkshire Home Choice Working with North Yorkshire County Council to deliver 7 units of accommodation for people with learning disabilities and older persons <p>Craven has increased access and improved services across the private rented sector through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bringing the Bond Guarantee Scheme "in house" resulting in increased efficiency and take up Developing, approving and implementing a Discharging Statutory Duties Policy and procedures which allows us to discharge our full housing duty into the Private Rented Sector in line with the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012 Developing a Private Sector Offer to landlords to improve working relationships and increase access. During 2015/16 we will promote this scheme to landlords and partners: <div style="background-color: #e6f2ff; padding: 10px;"> <p>Factsheet 3: Private Rented Sector Offer & Private Sector Partnership Project</p> <p>Private Rented Sector Offer: Helping households into private rented accommodation is a key challenge for Craven due to the high demand for accommodation by working households unable to afford to purchase and holiday lettings. Working at a sub-regional level we have secured funding (matched funded by our Homelessness Grant) and carried out our own local research with landlords and lettings agents to inform what was needed within our "Offer" to landlords. They were clear that what they needed most was someone to talk to who would support them with any problems relating to the tenancy. Our "offer" to landlords consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Options Officer with lead responsibility for Private Rented Sector Offer Fast Track Housing Benefit service Pre-tenancy training Landlord Information and advice Access to potential tenants seeking housing Tenancy Support (in partnership with Foundation's Homelessness Prevention Service) Bonds and rent in advance for new tenancies <p>In order to deliver this "offer" effectively in 2015/16 we need to further embed joint working with our Environmental Health team to carry out property checks and with Revenues and Benefit to carry out tenancy checks via Experian.</p> <p>Private Rented Sector Partnership Project Arising from our consultation with landlords and letting agents we have developed a pilot scheme for delivery in 2015/16. It consists of a partnership with a private sector landlord who has put forward a property consisting of 6 units of 1 bed accommodation in Skipton in return for a rent guarantee arrangement. The property will be managed on behalf of the Council by a local Lettings Agent.</p> <p>This project will provide much needed 1 bedroomed accommodation for households in housing need.</p> </div>

⁵ **Extra Care Housing** is housing designed with the needs of frailer older people in mind and with varying levels of **care** and support available on site. People who live in **Extra Care Housing** have their own self-contained homes, their own front doors and a legal right to occupy the property.

5. Reducing Homelessness

Craven has **reduced homelessness by joint working** through:

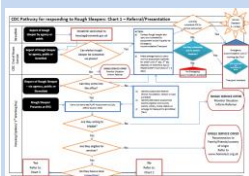
- Taking the lead at a sub-regional level to:
 - Develop and deliver Moving Forward – pre-tenancy training programme
 - Collating and presenting sub-regional performance monitoring information
- Reviewing our Bond & Rent in Advance scheme and improving promotional material
- Intensive work with our Revenues & Benefit team - developing the Discretionary Housing Payments Policy to include “prevention of homelessness” as a qualifying criteria for awards
- Developing a Rough Sleeper Pathway:

Factsheet 4: Rough Sleeper Pathway

In response to the No Second Night Protocol we have developed a Rough Sleeper Pathway which brings together the various elements of support and actions available to Housing Options to assist both entrenched and new Rough Sleepers presenting in Craven.

The Pathway includes flowcharts and procedures for Housing Options Officers to follow depending on the Rough Sleeper's particular circumstances. Whilst our ability to assist Rough Sleepers has increased due to the sub-regional schemes funded by the Single Homelessness fund (See Factsheet 1) Craven does not have a direct access hostel or supported accommodation for people with drug and alcohol addictions. Consequently we must work with partners both locally, sub-regionally and also outside of our sub-region to find housing solutions for this client group. Examples of this includes accessing Food Parcels from Skipton Baptist Church, additional specialist support purchased using sub-regional funding and access to Hostels outside of our district.

Every Rough Sleeper will receive a “Single Service Offer” of accommodation however this is dependent on the client's individual circumstances and the resources available to us. For example we may secure accommodation outside of the district and offer travel costs.



Because we have a Rough Sleeper Pathway we can guide both officers and rough sleepers towards what help is available in Craven, be clear about our legal duties and the rough sleeper's legal rights. For example: during the period 1st December – 31st March our Severe Weather Emergency Protocol is activated and we may provide emergency accommodation when the temperature drops below 0° for 3 consecutive nights.

In 2015/16 we will review our pathway in light of reducing resources from the sub-region in 2016/17.

We know that we have sustained and improved the prevention of homelessness because:

- The number of households we have worked with and prevented them from becoming homeless has increased by 53% in 2014/15 (243) compared to 2011/12 (158)
- However, the number of households who made a Homelessness application and were found to be eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need has increased by 33% in 2014/15 (16) compared to 2011/12 (12)

Craven's progress to **improve temporary accommodation** has been limited. A feasibility study on the potential re-provision of temporary accommodation has been completed; however, our developing partner withdrew causing a delay to the project. We are now in initial talks with a new development partner and during 2015/16 we intend to submit options for Members to consider and progress implementation.

Our use of temporary accommodation has increased:

- The number of households in temporary accommodation as at 31st March 2015 (8) has doubled compared to 31st March 2012 (4).

Craven has **tackled youth homelessness** through:

- Development and joint commissioning of the Young Person's Housing Solutions @ The Hub (See Factsheet 2)

We know that we have been successful in tackling youth homelessness because:

- The number of 16/17 year olds who made a Homelessness application and were found to be eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need has reduced in 2014/15 to NIL cases compared to 3 in 2011/12⁶

Craven has ensured that **housing support for vulnerable and homeless people remains available** through:

- Joint working with sub-regional partners on the re-procurement of Domestic Abuse Services and Handy Person Services

⁶ North Yorkshire Local Authorities only – 2011/12 figure not available from City of York Council

2.2 Statistical Analysis

Data has been gathered from a number of sources as part of the review and used to inform the strategic direction of the service for the next 5 years. The principal framework of our data collection and process for working through the data to identify any particular issues of trends was the Statistical Compiler from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The Statistical Compiler is a database contained within the “toolkit” of resources promoted to Local Authorities to enable them to make an assessment of their services as part of the Gold Standard. It draws down information from a variety of sources and provides comparison at local, regional and national levels; however, the information available as at March 2015 is only up to Q3 2013/14.

We have supplemented this information with sub-regional data collated by Craven District Council on behalf of the York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Homelessness Group (previously County Homelessness Group) which is available up to Q4 2014/15. An overview of additional data sources is available below:

Table 4: Data Sources

AREA	DATA SOURCE
Local housing needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Yorkshire Home Choice Strategic Housing Market Assessment
Demographic Overview	➤ DCLG/Office for National Statistics
Empty Homes	➤ DCLG
Local Court Activity	➤ Ministry of Justice
Homelessness Trends <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Homelessness Acceptances ➤ Reason for Homelessness ➤ Prevention Statistics ➤ Breakdown of homelessness decisions ➤ Number of households in temporary accommodation ➤ Bed & Breakfast use ➤ Length of stay in temporary accommodation ➤ Rough Sleeping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ DCLG P1e quarterly homelessness data ➤ North Yorkshire Home Choice ➤ Craven Quarterly Performance indicators ➤ North Yorkshire Quarterly Performance indicators
Wider local demographic data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Acceptances by Ethnic Origin 	a) Nomis b) Office of National Statistics c) STREAM (NYCC)

Full details of our Statistical Analysis can be found at Appendix A: Homelessness Review Statistical Information.

In summary the following key trends were identified and recommendations made:

Table 5: Key Points and recommendations of the Homeless Review Statistical Analysis

Section	Key Points	Recommendations
1 Demographics & Housing Register	1. 95.4% White British 2. 70% population over 44 yrs. 3. 82% of people accessing our Housing Options Services are aged 16-44 yrs. 4. Low levels NEET 5. Low levels of deprivation (exc. Skipton South) 6. Nos. of people registered with North Yorkshire Home Choice has decreased in 2012/13 and 2014/15 7. Increased demand for 1 bed properties (Key Issue)	a) To improve quality of data inputting in relation to ethnicity so that we can effectively monitor both the age and ethnic profile of our services. b) To implement findings of monitoring to respond and adapt our service offer to meet the housing needs of an ageing population and minority ethnic groups. c) To investigate levels of deprivation when data published 2015 d) To maximise access to one bedrooomed properties
2 Empty Homes	8. Reduction in long term empty properties (over 2 years) 9. Increases in short term empty properties (less than 2 years)	e) To investigate levels of Empty properties due to the impact of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Council Tax charging system (i.e. 0% discount for empty properties reducing incentive to report empty homes in the future) ii. Withdrawal of Empty Homes Grant f) To review the Local Taxation Officer role in respect of reducing the number of Empty Homes. g) To implement corrective action following investigation/review.

Section		Key Points	Recommendations
3	Court Possession Statistics	<p>10. Fewer households experience court possession than regionally or nationally</p> <p>11. Prevention measures important factor to reduce court action.</p>	<p>h) To ensure /retain the effectiveness of our Homelessness Prevention Toolkit including Eviction and Repossession Loan Scheme (EARLs) for mortgage repossession cases due to the national Mortgage Rescue Scheme no longer being available.</p> <p>i) To concentrate resources - only buying-in court support per case where Keyhouse (Legal Advice services funded by Legal Services Commission) are unable to provide the necessary support.</p>
4	Homelessness Acceptances	<p>12. Levels of acceptances are lower than sub-regional, regional and national levels. Only ¼ of decisions are acceptances compared to ½ nationally</p>	<p>j) To continue casefile checks to ensure that decisions are robust and appropriate.</p> <p>k) To continue to monitor requests for Review of Homelessness Application decisions.</p>
5	Reason for loss of last settled home	<p>13. The main reasons for loss of home are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Parents/Others no longer able/willing to accommodate b) Breakdown of relationship c) Termination of Assured Shorthold tenancy <p>This is in line with the sub-region & national reasons</p>	<p>l) To continue to support the Young Person's Pathway</p> <p>m) To continue to support prevention activity to help people access the private rented sector or remain in existing tenancies</p>
6	Prevention and relief of Homelessness	<p>14. Preventions have reduced due to more rigorous monitoring of partner cases</p> <p>15. Breakdown of Preventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 72.4% remain in their own home ▪ 25.1% assisted to find other accommodation. <p>16. 23% of non-priority/intentionally homeless households are assisted to find other accommodation.</p> <p>17. Our prevention record is good – we prevent homelessness early due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use of Bond, Rent In Advance ▪ Use of Discretionary Housing Payments ▪ Use of Young Persons Pathway 	<p>n) To investigate prevention measures used by other Local Authorities and understand the interventions categorised as “Other assistance enabling the household to remain in the Private Rented Sector” to inform future prioritisation and development of interventions</p> <p>o) To continue casefile checks to ensure we are not under/over reporting and increasing knowledge of the effectiveness of casework through “case tracking”.</p> <p>p) To ensure we accurately report relief cases; increase the percentage assisted; benchmark our performance when up to date national/regional data is known to set target</p> <p>q) To build on, sustain and improve the key strengths of our toolkit – Discretionary Housing Payments and the Bond/Rent in Advance payments.</p> <p>r) To build on, sustain, improve our relationships/partnership working with private sector landlords</p> <p>s) To build on, sustain, improve the Young Persons Pathway</p>
7	Acceptances by Ethnic Origin	<p>18. Our acceptances are proportionate to Craven's ethnic profile</p>	<p>t) As numbers are very low it is important that we regularly check our data to ensure that our services are inclusive.</p>
8	Homelessness Decisions	<p>19. Age Profile of our Full Duty decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 30% = 16/24 year olds ▪ 57% = 25/44 year olds <p>20. Priority Need profile of Full Duty Decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 61.7% Dependent Child/Pregnant ▪ 16.9% Mental Health ▪ 10.7% Drug/Alcohol <p>21. Craven has higher levels of vulnerability due to drugs/alcohol than the sub-region (Key Issue)</p>	<p>u) To look at reasons as to why our level of vulnerability due to alcohol/drugs is higher than the sub-region and what services/ accommodation based support is available for these client groups.</p>
9	Applicants in temporary accommodation (TA)	<p>22. Use of TA in the short term is decreasing in line with the sub-region but contrary to national levels</p> <p>23. Craven uses it's TA flexibly to provide accommodation for non-priority, intentionally homeless households, rough sleepers and young people</p> <p>24. The condition of the hostel is of concern (Key Issue)</p>	<p>v) The future provision of Temporary Accommodation going forward needs to be included within our new Homelessness Strategy 2015 onwards.</p>

Section		Key Points	Recommendations
10	B&B Use	25. Craven uses B&B as emergency accommodation out of hours 26. Families and 16/17 year olds are only accommodated as a last resort pending move to more appropriate temporary accommodation	
11	Nos. of households in TA	27. Numbers in TA fluctuates between 2 and 8 households which is within the hostel resource available to us	
12	Length of Stay in TA	28. The majority of households leave our temporary accommodation in under 6 months 29. Our performance is better than sub-regional, regional and national outturns	w) Further work would be useful to look at the housing outcomes for those that we accommodate so that we can fully assess the solutions for homeless households
13	TA acceptances and Prevention	30. In Craven you are more likely to be given assistance to remain in your own home than becoming homeless	
14	Rough Sleeping	31. Our level of rough sleeping has increased since 2013/14 (Key Issue) 32. Our Rough Sleeper Pathway enables us to provide a consistent response	x) To sustain the Rough Sleeper Pathway and No Second Night Out approach to rough sleeping

The recommendations from the Statistical analysis are included within the following actions plans as appropriate:

1. Craven Homelessness Delivery Plan (See Part 4 Homelessness Delivery Plan)
2. Craven Housing Options Improvement Plan (operational improvements only) (See Appendix B: Homelessness Review Consultation Process and Results – Annex D Craven Housing Options Improvement Plan)

Or included within the checklist of issues for further investigation during the 2016 Homelessness Review. (See Part 6 Monitoring Arrangements and Way forward)

2.3 Consultation Feedback

In order to ensure that our strategy and Homelessness Delivery Plan meets the need of our community we must consult with people who use our services and partners. We commenced our consultation in April 2014 with a Consultation Event for partners followed by consultation with the Housing Options Team.

2.3.1 Consultation event - Priorities

The Consultation Event has helped us to shape our priorities and focus our actions towards the top three areas identified as:

Table 6: Homelessness Priorities identified through Consultation

Craven Priority and Key Actions	
Priority Area 1: To Respond to the effects of Welfare Reform by:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering Welfare Reform Action Plan—working with the Housing Benefit Team to maximise DHP for those affected by Welfare Reform, provide specialist support and advice • Delivering Moving Forward (Pre-tenancy training) —delivered to those at risk of homelessness and/or new tenants • Delivering targeted initiatives to help people to prepare for Universal Credit—develop and deliver initiatives to support households to access computers, up-skill households and support them through the introduction of Universal Credit 	
Priority Area 2: Improve Housing services:	
a) Increasing the range and quality of temporary accommodation by:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring and taking forward provision of other types of Temporary accommodation and supported accommodation—provision of temporary accommodation in North/South Craven 	

- **Redeveloping or re-providing the Homeless Hostel**—improving provision of temporary accommodation in Skipton
- b) Improving local delivery of North Yorkshire Home Choice by:**
- **Analysing Bidding Behaviour**— to understand why people do not bid and help vulnerable groups to do so e.g. elderly, those with mental health issues etc.

Priority Area 3: Reduce Homelessness:

- a) To ensure Housing Support for homeless and vulnerable people by:**
- **Contributing towards the review of North Yorkshire Young People services**—contributing to decisions about what and how services for young people will be delivered locally
 - **Review and develop support services in partnership with Supporting People**—contributing to decisions about what and how services for other vulnerable groups will be delivered locally
- b) To sustain and improve the prevention of homelessness by:**
- **Review the Homelessness Prevention toolkit**—ensuring that we have the “tools” to help the homeless and secure funding for delivery—building on what works and what is needed locally

Attendees at the consultation asked us to focus on the provision of information and advice, one to one support and help for vulnerable and low paid households.

They also acknowledged that as partners they too had a responsibility to help us to deliver these priorities.

In response we have:

- a) set up a Welfare Reform Task Group of housing officers from social landlords in our district and housing benefit team to deliver actions to help households adversely affected by welfare reforms
- b) jointly funded a Welfare Reform Support Worker to provide one to one support

2.3.2 Housing Options Consultation – Delivery Themes

We consulted with our Housing Options team in an informal manner to ease open discussion and problem solving. We were able to identify how we should deliver our services:

Table 7: Homelessness Themes for delivery

Thematic Area	Craven Themes for delivery
Work in Partnership	1. Work in Partnership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the Private Rented Sector, Schools, Social Landlords etc.
Focus on Information and Advice	2. Focus on Information and Advice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clear and understandable information in a way that our customers want
Provide one to one support	3. Provide one to one support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of one to one support and comprehensive casework

In response we have:

- a) Made improvements to our website information
- b) Supported Skipton Baptist Church to deliver the Foodbank
- c) Jointly funded a Welfare Reform Support Worker to provide one to one support

2.3.3 Outcome of our Consultation

The consultation feedback 2014 was used to shape our Homelessness Delivery Plan for 2014/15. Prior to publication of our Homelessness Strategy in July 2015 a final consultation was carried out on our draft version and comments/recommendation included within the final document.

Examples of where consultation has influenced our Homelessness Strategy are:

- The three priority areas identified have been included within the Homelessness Strategy
- The theme of “working in partnership” is integral to the delivery of specific projects planned for or to be sustained in 2015/16 onwards such as the Private Rented Lettings Project – where we plan to set up a partnership between a local landlord and lettings agency to utilise one-bed accommodation for single persons nominated by our Housing Options Team.

Please see the Part 4 The Homelessness Delivery Plan where we have indicated our key partners in delivery of our actions.

- “Focus on information and advice” was a key theme identified by our Housing Options Team and is an area of focus to achieve the Gold Standard as an action in our Delivery Plan 2015/16.

Arising from our consultation we have learned that this is an area for improvement and the following key recommendations were made for inclusion in our Craven Communication Plan 2015/16. These recommendations included:

1. To explore other ways of consulting with target audiences, update Communication Plan and implement
2. Carry out service user surveys in partnership with:
 - Mental Health Service User group
 - North Yorkshire County Council – Children & Young Peoples Services
 - Foundation (support provider and service users)
3. To develop, upload and monitor on-line surveys

For full details of our Consultation and how this has been put into action please refer to Appendix B Homelessness Review Consultation Process and Result and supporting annexes.

Summary:

Part 2 has provided the evidence base for the priorities and actions identified through a desk-top analysis of key information and following consultation with partners and our Housing Options team. The key issues have been identified and we now know what is important to partners – that we work in partnership, focus on the information and advice we provide and that they value “one to one” support. We have identified our 3 main priorities:

1. Reducing Homelessness
2. Improving the quality and accessibility of Housing services
3. Increase the range and quality of temporary and supported accommodation

The next section of our Strategy sets out the key challenges we face in delivering our 3 main priorities and the steps we need to take to minimise the risk to achieving our objectives.

3 Part 3

Homelessness Priorities for Craven

This section sets out the key issues we face potentially affecting our deliver of our three main priorities:

Priority 1

Reducing Homelessness

Priority 2

Improving the quality and accessibility of housing services

Priority 3

Increase the range and quality of temporary and supported accommodation options

3.1 Priority 1: Reducing Homelessness

Key Issues:

3.1.1 Reduced Funding:

In 2015/16 the following grants reduced:

Name	Used for:	Reduction
Craven District Council's overall grant funding (Revenue Support Grant)	All Council services	27.9%
Homelessness Grant (included in Craven District Council's Revenue Support Grant)	Prevention interventions and services (see Page 32)	2%
Discretionary Housing Payments Allocation	Additional payments for households at risk of homelessness; adversely affected by welfare reform, rent arrears etc.	13%

Reduction in funding is a key issue affecting delivery of this strategy. Our ability to respond and deliver our actions is dependent upon resources being available. Craven District Council funds the present levels of staff within Housing Services (See Figure 6 Housing Services Structure) and the Homelessness Grant is used to fund the projects and homelessness prevention interventions available. The Discretionary Housing Payments fund has been the main funding to assist households adversely affected by welfare reform.

In response to addressing this issue we have:

- Carried out a review of Housing Services between February and May 2013 as part of the Council's continuous review of service areas. Savings were made through the reduction of one member of staff (Housing Options) officer. It was identified that if additional staffing resources be required the Council would "buy in" additional capacity and/or utilise Business Support Services. Further savings were made following the merger of Housing Services with Environmental Health in 2014.
- Formalised the transfer of "unspent" Homelessness Grant funding for specific projects (i.e. Eviction & Repossession Loan Scheme, Private Sector Lettings Project) into Reserve Accounts. These funds will be drawn down as required following approval from Policy Committee.
- Evaluated and extended the Service Level Agreement with Horton Housing to deliver the Welfare Reform Support Project (including Worker) until June 2016
- Worked in partnership with the Revenues & Benefit Manager (CDC) to develop a draft Local Support Services Action Plan and have been successful in securing Delivery Funding from the Department of Work and Pensions.
- Undertaken provisional review of our Homelessness Toolkit to ensure value for money and cost effectiveness of the interventions provided. Our toolkit comprises of:

Table 8: Homelessness Toolkit

Scheme:	Funded By:
Rent in Advance	Housing Benefit reimbursements
Bond Guarantee Scheme	Cashless Bonds where any landlord claims are funded from Guarantors who pledge funds each year
Bonds (Other)	Discretionary Housing Payments (grants) Homelessness Grant (Loans)
Homelessness Prevention Fund (applications made by households at risk of or are actually homeless) where payment will result in: a) Spend to Save i.e. the cost is less to the council than the alternative of not granting the award b) Prevention of homelessness	Homelessness Grant
Discretionary Housing Payments	Discretionary Housing Payments Grant
Downsizing Incentive Scheme	Discretionary Housing Payments Grant
Eviction and Repossession Loan Scheme	Additional Homelessness Grant funding 2012/13
Welfare Reform Support Worker	Homelessness Grant and Local Support Services Funding (DWP)
Private Rented Sector Offer	50% Homelessness Grant 50% North Yorkshire & York Single Homelessness Fund
Rough Sleepers/Single Homeless: ▪ Personalisation Fund ▪ Rural Spot Purchase of additional support ▪ Bonds (non priority singles)	North Yorkshire Single Homelessness Fund

Services provided and funding by other agencies within our Toolkit are:

Court Desk service	Legal Services Commission
Legal Help and Advice	Legal services Commission

Our future actions included within the Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan are to:

CHHSAP 13: Sustain levels of homelessness prevention activity & improve interventions available by:

a) Carrying out a Review of the Homelessness Toolkit

CHHSAP 7: Respond to the effects of welfare reform by:

- b) Pursue and support the introduction of Credit Union**
- c) Finalise and deliver the Local Support Services Agreement**
- d) Revise the Discretionary Housing Payment Policy**
- e) Secure funding for the Welfare Reform Support Project for 2016 onwards**

3.1.2 Increase demand for one-bed properties:

Meeting the increasing demand for one bed properties will be a challenge for Craven. Less than 25% of total social housing stock (excluding older persons properties = approx. 600 properties) are one bed properties. We therefore have a greater reliance upon accessing private rented sector housing and in particular shared accommodation for single people under 35 who are only eligible for shared room rate of Local Housing Allowance. Interventions to increase the stock of one-bed properties are a key issue for Craven.

In response to addressing this issue we have:

- Developed a Private Rented Sector Offer for Craven utilising sub-regional funding matched with Homelessness Grant. This scheme provides a range of services to landlords including:
 - Internal Reviews of Tenants suitability
 - Housing Options officer caseworker
 - Property Checks
 - Information Packs/ Newsletters (due 2015/16)
 - Pre-tenancy training
 - "Fast tracked" Housing benefit

- Included 20% requirement for one-bed properties within the Council's Interim Affordable Housing Position and require good-sized one-bed provision as part of affordable housing negotiations with developers on new sites

Our future actions included within our Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan are to:

CHHSAP 9: Improve Access to the Private Rented Sector (PRS) by:

- a) Formalise and promote the Private Rented Sector Offer**
- b) Commence Pilot Lettings Project and evaluate**

3.1.3 Increased levels of Rough Sleeping:

Since 2013 our levels of rough sleeping has increased. Predominantly our rough sleepers are entrenched and thus require a greater amount of work to find sustainable housing solutions which are often reliant on whether they engage with our service and importantly any other support services such as alcohol and drug rehabilitation services.

This issue will potentially be exacerbated when sub-regional funding for the projects assisting rough sleepers as part of the Single Homeless Action Plan ceases in March 2016.

In response to addressing this issue we have:

- introduced a Rough Sleeper Pathway to services in line with the Government's No Second Night Out initiative. We have an agreed North Yorkshire & York Protocol due for renewal in 2015/16.
- supported Skipton Baptist Church to research needs and responses for Rough Sleepers in the rural areas of Craven for inclusion in review of the Rough Sleeper Pathway in 2015/16.

Our future actions included within our Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan are to:

CHHSAP 13: Sustain levels of homelessness prevention activity and improve interventions available by:

- a) Deliver North Yorkshire and York Single Homelessness Action Plan (SHAP)**
- b) Develop exit strategy for North Yorkshire & York SHAP projects and No Second Night Out Protocol when funding ceases March 2016**

3.2 Priority 2: Improving the quality and accessibility of housing services

Key Issues:

3.2.1 Reducing Funding: (See 3.1.1. above)

The reduction in funding will have an effect upon the quality and accessibility of housing services. At a time where resources are scarce and savings have to be found to balance budgets – it is increasingly important that we ensure that we provide value for money – yet strive to provide quality services. This is a key challenge for all council teams.

In response to addressing this issue we have:

- Embarked upon the process towards Gold Standard housing advice and homelessness services (See Table 3 Gold Standard Challenges). Staff have undergone additional training and agreement has been reached sub-regionally to go forward with Peer Reviews in 2015/16
- Developed and implemented a Housing Options Service Improvement plan – including the introduction of Case File checks and implemented recommendations

Our future actions included within our Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan are to:

CHHSAP 10: Develop and improve homelessness and housing advice services by:

- a) Updating our webpages**
- b) Evaluate our Outreach response and implement recommendations**
- c) Developed, consulted and got policy Committee approval for our Craven Homelessness Strategy**
- d) Achieving Bronze Standard by December 2015**
- e) Incorporated recommendations of Homelessness Strategy and Peer Reviews into Housing Options improvement Plan.**
- f) Carrying out annual Homelessness Reviews to inform Homelessness Delivery Plans 2016 onwards**

3.2.2 Supporting People Funding 2020 Savings:

As part of the development of the overall Health & Adult Services savings plan, a £1.868m of savings from locally ring-fenced North Yorkshire Supporting People budget in 2015/16 was required. As a result the following services were identified as high priority and therefore, either no saving or minimal savings are being made to:

- All Young Peoples Pathway services
- Domestic Abuse Services
- Rehabilitating Offenders Service
- Mental Health Supported Housing
- Home Improvement Agency/Handyperson services

And the following were identified as areas for savings and a savings programme put together:

- Homeless Prevention Services
- Community Support with Telecare⁷
- Older Peoples Supported housing
- Floating support for people with mental health problems
- Gypsy and Traveller Support Service

This will have a direct impact on the capacity of services in Craven to support vulnerable groups. Domestic Abuse Services were re-procured in 2014 within the existing budget provision. However, they required budget re-profiling across North Yorkshire which resulted in a slight decrease in capacity in Craven. We will have to monitor the impact of this in Craven especially in light of a spike in domestic abuse referrals to our Housing Options Team in Q1 2015/16. The Homeless Prevention service reductions with effect from April 2015 have also impacted on service delivery in terms of eligibility and duration of service provision. With further cuts due, this is an area of concern and anticipated increase in demand for homelessness and housing advice services from households with complex issues.

In response to addressing this issue we have:

- Explored options to utilise private rented sector properties previously managed by Foundation (Homeless Prevention service provider). Options include a “Community Interest” social lettings project with Foundation (not for profit support provider for socially excluded groups) or Private Rented Lettings project with a Private Rented Sector Landlord and Lettings Agency.
- Participated in the re-procurement process of the North Yorkshire & York Domestic Abuse service

Our future actions included within our Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan are to:

CHHSAP 12: Continue to ensure that housing support is available for homeless & vulnerable people by:

- g) Delivering North Yorkshire and York Gypsy, Roma, Traveller & Showpeople (GRTS) Action Plan**
- h) Finalising draft GRTS planning policy as part of the Craven Local Plan**
- i) Adopt the North Yorkshire Domestic Abuse Strategy**
- j) Support and contribute towards review of Young People’s Services**

CHHSAP 8: Safeguard equal access to North Yorkshire Home Choice by:

- k) Completing Non-bidding survey and implement findings**

3.2.3 Vulnerability due to drug and alcohol dependence:

Craven has higher levels of individuals who are vulnerable due to drug and alcohol dependence than the sub-region. Predominantly this has been an issue for rough sleepers presenting in Craven which has prevented them from engaging positively with services and accessing suitable hostel accommodation outside of the district.

In response to addressing this issue we have:

⁷ **Telecare** combines equipment in your home with a 24/7 monitoring service. A **telecare** user may activate their own alarm if they use a pendant. For those individuals who need more specialist help to remain in their own home, passive monitoring equipment is available.

- Worked up a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Craven Organisation for Drug and Alcohol (CODA) to “Rural Spot Purchase” additional support for Rough Sleepers presenting with drug & alcohol dependency. However, following the re-procurement of Drug and Alcohol services a new SLA with the new provider – New Horizons - will be required in 2015/16.

Our future actions included within our Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan are to:

CHHSAP 12: Continue to ensure that housing support is available for homeless & vulnerable people by:

- Monitor the prevalence of households with drug and alcohol issues accessing Housing Options Services**
- Set up Rural Spot Purchase of support from new Drug & Alcohol services – New Horizons**

3.3 Priority 3: Increase the range and quality of temporary and supported accommodation options

Key Issues:

3.3.1 Condition of Craven’s temporary accommodation:

Craven has 11 units of temporary accommodation in Skipton. The condition of the units has deteriorated predominantly due to the age of the building resulting in the need for major investment to bring the property back up to a decent standard to address issues relating to damp and accessibility. During 2014/15 five units have had to be temporarily decommissioned pending works resulting in loss of provision and a potential loss of income for the Council. Options to re-provide temporary accommodation is a priority of this strategy.

In response to addressing this issue we have:

- Worked with a registered provider to put forward an option for re-provision.

Our future actions included within our Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan are to:

CHHSAP 11: Increase the range and quality of temporary and supported accommodation by:

- Evaluating the viability of Platform for Life bid**
- Putting forward a Homelessness Hostel Options report to Policy Committee and approval for option to be implemented 2016 onwards.**

Summary:

Part 3 has looked at the key issues we face. The major issue is the reduction in public funding – which will affect future delivery of services. Other issues were identified when we carried out our analysis of statistical information and include:

- Increasing demand for one bed properties
- Increase in the number of rough sleepers
- Higher levels of homeless applicants vulnerable due to alcohol or drug addiction in Craven compared to the sub-region
- Concerns regarding the condition of our temporary accommodation

The next section collates the actions required into our Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan

4 Part 4

The Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan

The following Homelessness Strategy Delivery Plan is a composite part of the Craven Housing and Homelessness Integrated Action plan – which contains **all** local actions to support delivery of the York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Housing Strategy and our Craven Homelessness Strategy. It shows the actions for 2015/16 only. Following annual homelessness reviews, revised and updated plans will be published for each year for the life-time of this strategy.

Housing Services are committed to working in partnership – we can't deliver these actions on our own. We need the co-operation and support of other service areas within Craven District Council, local agencies and organisations which provide support and/or advice, registered providers, private sector landlords, churches and voluntary/community groups. The main partners for each action have been indicated on the plan and lead officers identified as detailed below:

Lead Officers

CW	Claire Willoughby	Housing Options Manager	NP	Nina Pinder	Housing Policy & Contracts Officer
DS	David Smurthwaite	Strategic Manager (Neighbourhoods)	PS	Paul Shevlin	Chief Executive
EG	Emily Grogan	Rural Housing Enabler	SH	Stephanie Harling	Revenues and Benefits Team Leader
JW	Jenny Wood	Affordable Housing Development Officer	WA	Wyn Ashton	Environmental Health & Housing Services Manager
			MH	Michael Hewson	Neighbourhoods Manager (Yorkshire Housing)

The homelessness related actions are:

HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN						
Priority 1: Reducing Homelessness						
Actions	Milestones	Outcome	Lead	Partner	Measures of Success	Financial Resources* 2015/16
CHH 1 Improve Access to the Private Rented Sector (PRS)	Jun15 - Commence Private Rented Lettings project	Increase the availability of one-bed properties reducing homelessness within appropriate categories	CW	Private Rented Sector Landlord + Lettings Agent	Service Level Agreement signed	£ 24,000
	Mar16 - Evaluate Lettings Project		NP/CW		Evaluation Report	
	Dec15 - Formalise Private Rented Sector Offer (PRSO)		NP/CW	Environmental Health PRS Landlords	PRSO Finalised	
	Dec15 - Promote Private Rented Sector Offer		NP/CW	Environmental Health	PRSO Publicity presented	
CHH 2 Sustain levels of homelessness prevention activity and improve interventions available	Mar16 - Deliver North Yorkshire & York Single Homeless Action Plan (NY&Y SHAP) & Rough Sleeper Pathway (including the No Second Night Out (NSNO) Protocol)	Overall reduction in homelessness	NP	Sub-Regional – local Authorities	Performance Monitoring Reports on progress	Sub Regional funding
	Mar16 - Develop exit strategy for NY&Y SHAP Projects and NSNO Protocol when funding ceases March 2016		NP/CW	Sub-Regional – local Authorities Skipton Baptist Church Voluntary & Community Sector	Exit strategy developed and included in Homeless Prevention Toolkit	Sub-Regional Funding £10,000
	Dec15 - Review the Homelessness Prevention Toolkit		CW	ALL Partners	Homelessness Toolkit Publicity	£79,000
CHH 3 Respond to the effects of Welfare Reform	Dec15 - Support the introduction of a Credit Union	Any negative effects of welfare reform reduced through service intervention	PS	Skipton South Project Credit Union Support Provider	CHSAP 2 No. of cases where Housing Benefit problems have been resolved by intervention and homelessness has been prevented	£ 26,320
	Dec15 - Finalise Department of Work & Pensions Local Support Service Agreement (LSSA)		NP/SH WRTG	Revenues & Benefit Team Horton Housing	LSSA Finalised	
	Dec15 - Revise Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) Policy		NP/SH	Welfare Reform Task Group	DHP Spend	N/a
	Mar16 - Secure funding for Welfare Reform Support Worker (WRSW) 2016 onwards		NP/CW/ WA	Horton Housing and Welfare Reform Task Group	WRSW Service Level Agreement signed	N/a

Priority 2: Improving the quality and accessibility of housing services						
Actions	Milestones	Outcome	Lead	Partner	Measures of Success	Financial Resources* 2015/16
CHH 4 Develop and Improve homelessness and housing advice services	Dec15 - Update of webpages	Fit for purpose housing advice & homelessness service	NP		CHSAP 3 Number of Households accessing the Housing Options Service	£ 5,150
	Mar16 - Evaluate outreach provision and implement response (subject to capacity)		CW	Support Providers	CHSAP 4 Number of cases where homelessness has been prevented or relieved	
	Dec15 - Submit Homelessness Strategy to Policy Committee for decision		NP/WA		CHSAP 5 Number of homelessness applications where a decision has been made	
	Dec15 – Achieve Bronze status following Peer Review		CW	ALL Partners	SH 13 % of households accessing HOS who have been assisted in the prevention of Homelessness	
	Mar16 - Incorporate recommendations of Homelessness Strategy and Peer Review into Housing Options Improvement Plan and implement		CW/NP		CHSAP 6 Number of Rent in Advance and Bonds Awarded	
	Mar16 – Review levels and types of homelessness in Craven 2015/16			ALL Partners		N/a
CHH 5 Continue to ensure that housing support is available for homeless and vulnerable people	Ongoing - Deliver NY Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showpeople (GRTS) Action Plan	Improved housing support services for identified groups	NP	Horton Housing	Completion of Projects	N/a
	Dec15 – Present final draft of GRTS policy to Craven Spatial Planning Sub Committee prior to wider consultation		Planning Policy		Final GRTS Policy completed	N/a
	Dec15 – Research into prevalence of households with drug & alcohol issues across the district		NP	North Yorkshire (NY) Horizons	Drug & Alcohol research completed	£ 3,350
	Sept15 - Set up Rural Spot Purchase arrangement with North Yorkshire Horizons		NP	NY Horizons Sub-Regional Local Authorities	Service level Agreement in place	
	Mar16 - Support and contribute towards the Review of Young People's Services		CW/NP	North Yorkshire County Council – Children & Young People	Young People's Services Review completed	
	Ongoing - Review and develop support services in partnership with Supporting People		WA/NP	North Yorkshire County Council – Health & Adult services	Review (s) completed	
CHH 6 Safeguard Equal access to North Yorkshire Home Choice	Dec15 - Complete "non bidding" survey and Address issues raised	Improved service and increased availability	CW/MH (YH)	Yorkshire Housing	Survey report shared with stakeholders	N/a
Priority 3: Increase the range and quality of temporary and supported accommodation options						
Actions	Milestones	Outcome	Lead	Partner	Measures of Success	Financial Resources* 2015/16
CHH 7 Increase the range and quality of temporary and supported accommodation options available	Sept15 - Evaluate viability of a Platform for Life bid	Increased and improved supported & temporary accommodation	NP	Registered Provider	Evaluation completed	N/a
	Dec15 – Submit Homelessness Hostel Options Report to Policy Committee for a decision		JW	Registered Provider	HS11 % Occupancy rate at Homeless Hostel HS 12 Length of Stay for households in accommodation arranged by the LA	N/a

*Financial Resources in addition to Officer time

Summary:

Part 4 has set out our Delivery Plan for 2015/16, the actions required, milestones to be achieved and by when, lead officers and partners responsible for delivery.

The next section looks at the cost of homelessness – how we will fund our Homelessness Delivery Plan and the cost to the Council of housing advice and homelessness services.

5 Part 5

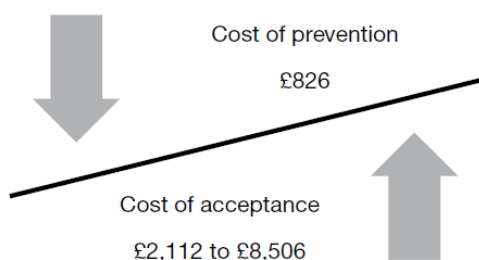
The Cost of Homelessness

The cost of homelessness is difficult to fully calculate as homelessness has far reaching effects upon the individual, the community and the tax payer in terms of financial impacts on other services including health, support services, Department of Work and Pensions, Police and the Ministry of Justice. At a local level we need to ensure that we provide value for money services and funds are available to deliver our Homelessness Delivery Plan.

5.1 The Wider Costs of Homelessness

In 2010 Shelter and Acclaim consultancy undertook a cost and performance benchmarking exercise based on data from 6 local authorities (Bristol, Medway, Exeter, Northampton, Swindon and Crawley) to identify the Local Authority unit cost of preventing homeless and accepting homelessness cases as illustrated below:

Figure 6: The Cost of Homelessness – Shelter & Acclaim Consulting 2010



Source: Value for Money in housing options and homelessness services⁸

The **potential saving for local authorities** preventing a case of homelessness over a full housing duty “acceptance” is **£1,286**. Based on the number of households where homelessness was prevented by the Housing Options & Young Persons Hub services alone in 2014/15 we could estimate a total saving of £ 75,874.

In August 2012 the Department of Local Government carried out an “Evidence review of the costs of homelessness”⁹ which included the multiple additional costs to health, support services, Police and the Ministry of Justice especially for the most vulnerable, those with complex needs and hardest to help. Estimates of the annual costs to government range from £24,000 - £30,000.

5.2 Craven Cost of Homelessness

Set within the context of reducing public sector costs, the challenge to deliver housing advice and homelessness services is a key issue for Craven.

Craven District Council's Priority – Financial Resilience seeks to “**Ensure the Council remains financially sustainable and has robust arrangements in place for securing value for money. We will continue to address the Council's financial pressures resulting from cuts in government funding**”.

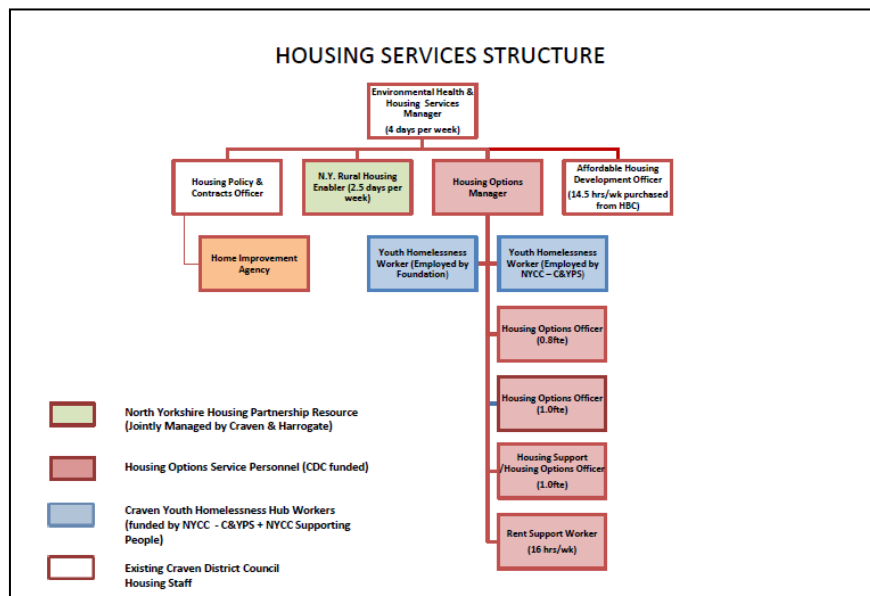
In 2015/16 Craven saw a reduction of 27.9% in the Government's Revenue Support Grant (a loss in cash terms of £443k) however, we have still been able to put forward a robust and balanced budget for 2015/16 with a small contribution from the General Fund and without an increase in Council Tax.

Our Housing Options Team is a composite part of Housing services under Environmental Health & Housing Services and comprises of:

⁸ http://england.shelter.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/297224/VFM_in_housing_options_and_homelessness_services_full_report_Oct_2010.pdf

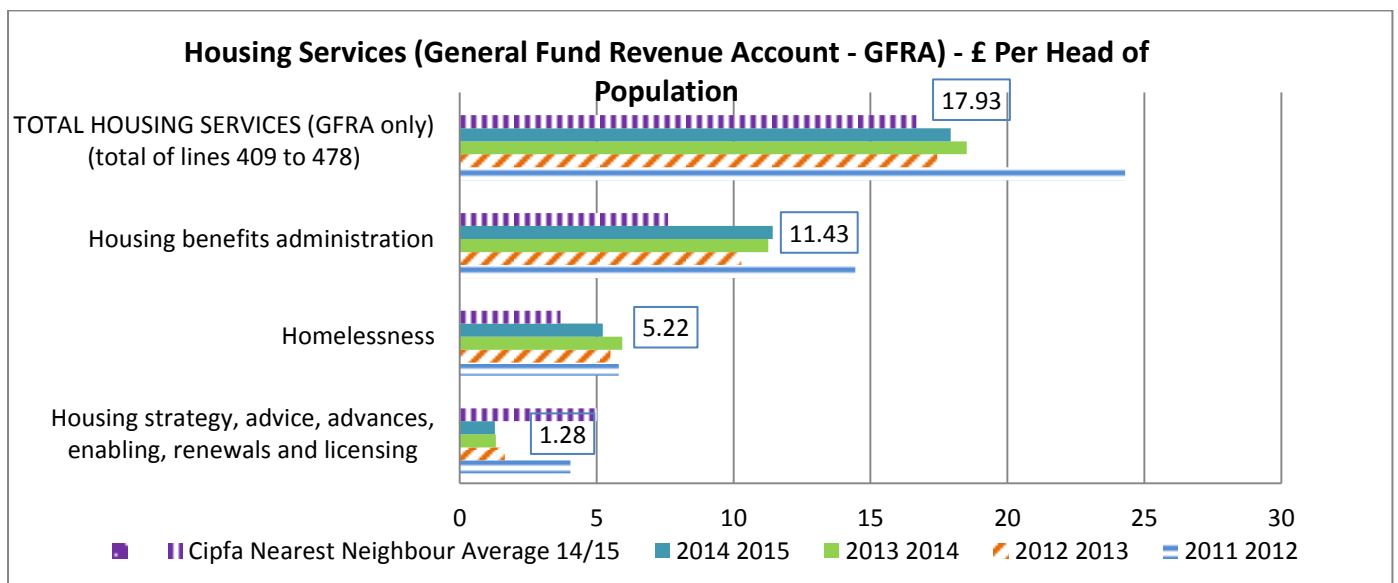
⁹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7596/2200485.pdf

Figure 7: Housing Services Structure



Ensuring that our Homelessness service provides value for money can be measured by looking at the cost per head of population which at £5.22 for 2014/15 is a 10% reduction on 2011/12 levels.

Figure 8: The Cost of Homelessness - £ per head of Craven Population

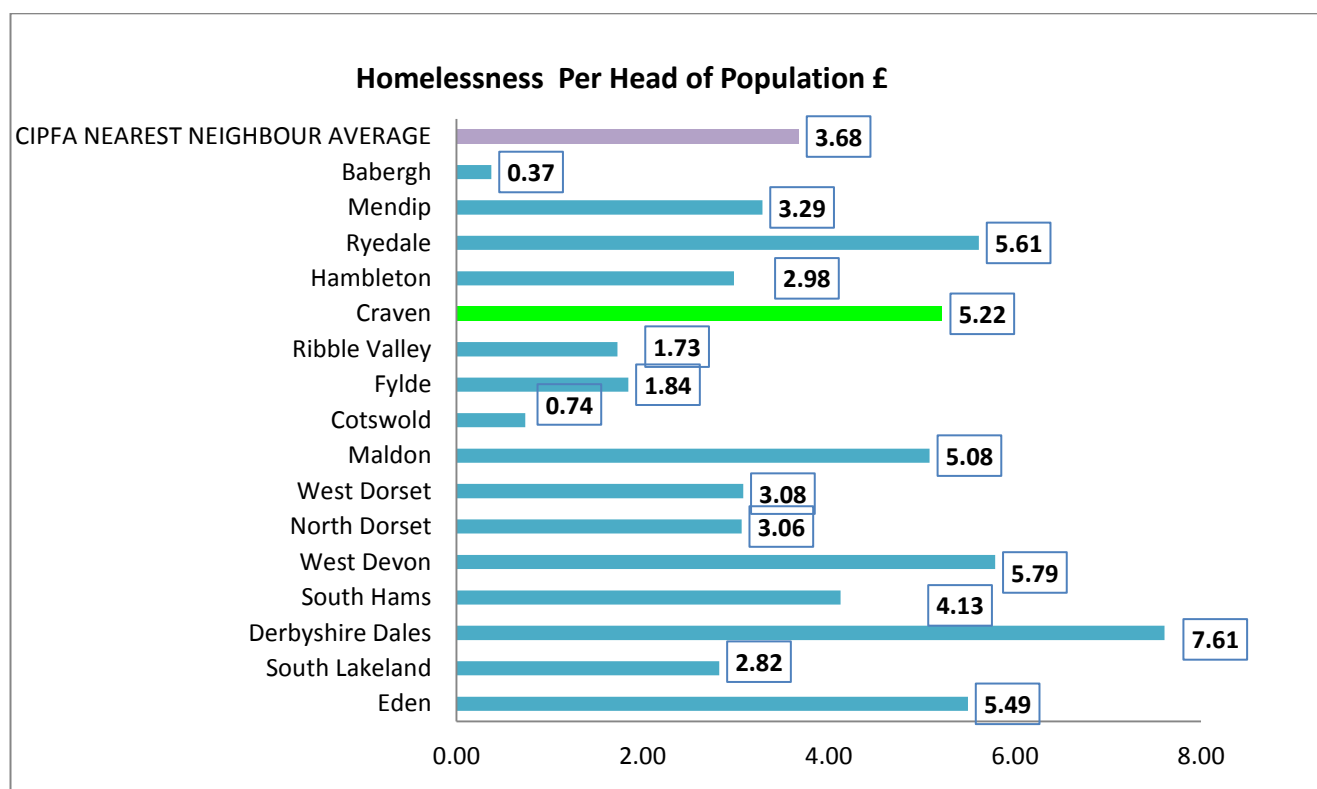


Source: Local Government Finance Revenue Budget returns 2014/15 - Craven

However, homelessness services costs are higher than the average cost when compared to local authorities of a similar size selected by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (Cipfa) and classified as being our “Nearest Neighbours”.

Figure 8 overleaf shows the cost of homelessness for each of our “nearest neighbours” – the nearest geographically being Ribble Valley District Council in Lancashire and Ryedale and Hambleton District Councils in North Yorkshire.

Figure 9: The Cost of Homelessness - £ per head of Population



Source: Local Government Finance Revenue Budget returns 2014/15 – Comparable Local Authorities

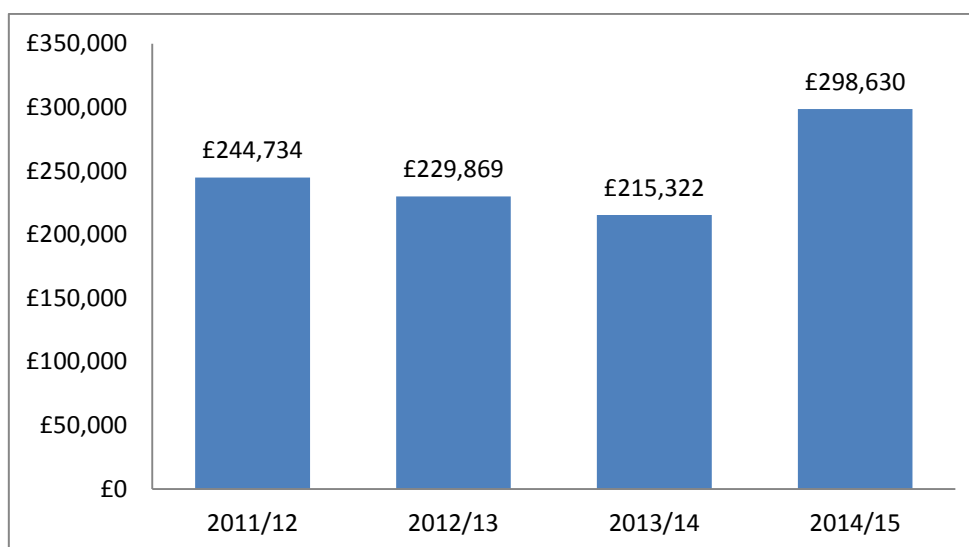
When comparing our performance against local authorities of a similar size we can see that although we are above the average of £ 3.68 we are ranked 5th out of 16 Local Authorities.

However, it must be noted that each Local Authority has own methods of financial recording, attributing costs or arranging budgets and teams in different ways which results in disparities for comparison purposes.

5.3 Craven District Council Funding:

The Council's investment in the provision of housing and homelessness service and staffing costs means that 100% of the Homelessness Grant is available as the key funding source to sustain successful homelessness prevention initiatives and develop new innovative projects. In 2014/15 we have seen a rise in funding as follows:

Figure 10: Housing Advice and Homelessness Service costs 2011/2015



Source: Agresso Cost Centre R343

Further work is required to fully understand the reasons for the increase in 2014/15 and this will form part of the Review of Homelessness in 2016.

5.4 Funding for Homelessness Initiatives

In 2011/12 we received a notable increase in our Homelessness Grant allocation; however, this has been reduced slightly for 2015/16 as detailed below:

Table 9: Homelessness Grant Allocations 2010 onwards – North Yorkshire

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Craven	£41,050	£85,000	£85,000	£84,988	£84,988	£83,394
Harrogate	£51,050	£100,000	£100,000	£81,040	£79,828	£79,520
Hambleton	£51,050	£71,000	£71,000	£71,067	£71,067	£69,980
Richmondshire	£35,050	£79,000	£79,000	£78,137	£78,137	£76,671
Ryedale	£41,050	£85,000	£85,000	£84,988	£84,988	£83,394
Scarborough	£47,050	£66,000	£66,000	£65,498	£65,498	£65,498
Selby	£61,050	£113,000	£113,000	£112,830	£112,830	£110,714
North Yorkshire	£327,350	£599,000	£599,000	£578,548	£578,548	£569,171

The Homelessness Grant is included within the Revenue Support Grant.

Combined Homelessness Grant and Craven District Council funding used for Homelessness Prevention activities in 2015/16 are as follows:

Table 10: Funding for Homelessness Initiatives 2015/16

Strategic Link	Name	Amount	Impact
CHHSAP 7 Respond to the effects of welfare reform	Housing Benefit Support Resource	£ 4,000	Homelessness Prevention: Clients referred by Housing Options team receive "Fast Track" claims from the Council's Revenues & Benefit Team and support as part of DWP/LA Local Support Services Agreement
	Welfare Reform Support Project	£ 16,320	Homelessness Prevention: Supporting voluntary organisation to provide support to households adversely affected by a reduction in income due to welfare reform
	New Initiatives/other	£ 6,000	Support to improve provision in Craven for vulnerable households e.g.: Credit Union in Craven to reduce risk of vulnerable households using "loan sharks" and increasing financial resilience/capacity
CHHSAP 13 Sustain levels of homelessness prevention activity and improve interventions available	Furniture Recycled Centre	£ 1,000	Tenancy Sustainment: Supporting local organisation + funding Vouchers for homeless households incentivising them to leave temporary accommodation without rent arrears and assisting them into permanent accommodation
	Eviction & Repossession Loan Scheme	(£ 33,500)	Homelessness Prevention: Loans for households facing eviction or repossession
	Rough Sleeper Pathway	£500	Accommodation: For Rough Sleepers as part of Severe Weather Emergency Procedure
	Homeless Prevention Fund	£5,000	Homelessness Prevention: Flexible fund for qualifying households
	Bonds & Rent In Advance	£15,000	Homelessness Prevention: Financial assistance enabling access to the private rented sector
	New Initiatives/other	£ 2,500	Support to improve provision in Craven for vulnerable households e.g. District-wide Foodbank services
CHHSAP 9 Improved access to the Private Rented Sector	Private Sector Lettings Project and Offer	£ 12,000 (£12,000)	Accommodation & Prevention: Single households assisted into 1 bed accommodation
CHHSAP 10 Develop and improve homelessness and housing advice	Subscriptions	£300	Service Improvement: web-based advice and support around welfare reform issues
	Conferences & Courses	£2,000	Service Improvement: fees for courses commissioned by the North Yorkshire Housing Training Group
	Miscellaneous	£2,350	Information & Support: fees for medical reports, independent Reviews of homeless decisions and other miscellaneous expenses
CHHSAP 12 Continue to ensure that housing support is available for homeless & vulnerable people	Making Safe (Domestic Abuse services)	£350	Accommodation: emergency accommodation removing perpetrator from family home
	Young Persons Pathway	£3,000	Accommodation & Support: Joint commissioning of services for young people
Contributions to Sub-regional posts & Other		£26,700	
Total		£142,520	
Funded by:	Homelessness Reserves	(£45,500)	
	Homelessness funding 14/15 (Inc. slippage 2013/14)	£ 97,020	

5.5 Other funding:

5.5.1 Additional Allocations:

In 2009/10 Mortgage reposessions were anticipated to rise due to the adverse economic climate. Central Government allocated monies to all LAs in England from the “Preventing Repossessions Fund”. The intention of this allocation was to provide pump-prime funding for each LA to develop a local scheme to help homeowners facing repossession with a view to the funds being recyclable. In response we developed our Eviction & Repossession Loan Scheme and have successfully assisted 5 households to remain in their own home. We have retained the original funding level of £33,500 in our financial reserves so that we can continue to assist both homeowners and tenants facing homelessness.

5.5.2 Sub-Regional Funding:

Other additional funding is made available nationally and/or sub-regionally. As a member of the York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Homelessness Group (previously known as the County Homelessness Group) we have been successful in securing an additional £370,000 for the sub-region since 2011. This funding has been utilised to support new initiatives for single homeless/rough sleepers who would not normally be eligible for the main homelessness duty. For Craven this has meant that we have been able to:

1. Assist 2 rough sleepers through access to funding for additional support (Rural Spot Purchase Scheme)
2. Provide “personalisation” funding for travel, clothing and heating for 3 rough sleepers to assist them into accommodation
3. Extend our Bond/Rent in Advance scheme to include “non priority” single homelessness people who would normally not qualify
4. Develop and implement a Rough Sleeper Pathway to access advice and support
5. Provide Accommodation to Rough Sleepers as part of our Severe Weather Emergency Procedure

This funding ceases in 2016 and we have included actions within our Homelessness Delivery Plan to look at options to extend the successful projects developed using this funding stream and explore all new funding opportunities to improve services within Craven.

Summary:

Part 5 has set out the cost of homelessness – including the wider costs compared to the cost of preventing homelessness. Preventing homelessness costs less than actual homelessness.

We have looked at the cost of homelessness in Craven and our ranking in terms of value for money per head of population and we are above average but discrepancies with regard to financial recording methods may be a contributory factor. We know that costs have risen during 2014/15 and we need to investigate reasons for this.

Within our Delivery Plan and our Homelessness Prevention Toolkit we have various projects and initiatives that are funded by Homelessness Grant and Craven District Council funding. We also have received additional funding in the past which have been to pilot initiatives; however, the challenge for this strategy will be to sustain the level of homelessness prevention activity with reducing budgets available.

The next section looks at how we will monitor our progress in delivering our Homelessness Strategy, how we will communicate this to our partners and what we need to include in our 2016 Review to inform our Homelessness Delivery plan for 2016/17.

6 Part 6

Monitoring Arrangements and the way forward

At a local level we review our action plans each year to ensure that our priorities are being met and that it remains relevant to address emerging needs. We also carry out the sub-regional monitoring of key homelessness indicators to assess whether there are any emerging trends across York and North Yorkshire and benchmark our performance against our local authority partners.

6.1 Local Monitoring Arrangements

6.1.1 Performance Monitoring Arrangements:

Our Homelessness Delivery Plan is included within the Housing & Homelessness Strategy Integrated Action Plan which is monitored by the Council's online performance management system called "Ten". Housing Services provide quarterly update reports which are presented for consideration by the Council's Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and made available to the public on our website.

The reports include progress towards achieving the overall objectives and specific milestones and track progress of the quantified indicators of performance. (See Appendix C: Q4 2014/15 Craven Housing & Homelessness Monitoring Report). Where there are significant variances to the proposed outputs the Service Manager must provide reasons for the variance and proposed actions to get performance back on track.

In addition, the actions for lead officers are included within their annual Work Plans and progress towards achieving these actions included within their Professional Development Reviews held bi-annually.

6.1.2 Equalities Monitoring Arrangements:

An Equalities Analysis has been undertaken on the Craven Homelessness Strategy (see Appendix E: Homelessness Strategy Equalities Analysis Form). The delivery of our housing and homelessness advice services is a statutory service under legislation which identifies categories of households as being in "priority need". Some of these households are the same households identified as having protected characteristics within the Equalities Act 2010 – such as the potential to cause negative impact or discrimination based on age, disability, pregnancy and maternity. The equalities monitoring in place includes the facility to analyse race, religion or belief, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, sex or sexual orientation. The Review of Homelessness looked at whether the delivery of our services was in line with our population profile and whether there were any outlying variances when compared to national, regional and sub-regional data.

We have included actions to improve our data recording and will be reviewing progress when we update our Equalities Analysis as part of our annual Homelessness Review in 2016.

6.1.3 Partnership Arrangements:

The Housing Forum is the responsible body which monitors our performance. They are the principle consultative body when carrying out reviews and consultation and as such have a vested interest in our progress towards achieving the agreed actions within our Homelessness Strategy.

The Quarterly Monitoring reports are presented to the Forum and are available on our website www.cravendc.gov.uk on the webpage "Housing Facts and Figures".

We seek feedback on "How are we doing" through our website and use any Service Complaints as a way to improve service delivery where appropriate.

6.2 Sub-regional Monitoring Arrangements

On a quarterly basis Craven District Council (on behalf of the York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Homelessness Group) collates and reports upon key homelessness indicators. This information is used to monitor our progress towards achieving sub-regional targets and for us to be able to benchmark our performance against our sub-regional local authority partners.

The Chair of the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Homelessness Group reports to the Housing Board via the Chief Housing Officers Group.

Annual reports are published on the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Strategic Housing Partnerships website www.nycyerhousing.co.uk

6.3 The way forward - Homelessness Review 2015/16 Checklist

Following implementation of the Year 1 of our Homelessness Strategy we are committed to annually review homelessness in Craven. The 2016 Review will consist of

- a) Updating the Statistical Information with the latest outturns and any trends identified – specifically this will include:

Demographics and Housing Register:

- To implement findings of improved ethnicity monitoring and age profile monitoring so that we can respond and adapt our service offer to meet the housing needs of an ageing population and minority ethnic groups.
- To investigate levels of deprivation when 2015 data published

Homelessness Decisions:

- To look at reasons as to why our levels of vulnerability due to Mental Health/Alcohol/Drugs is higher than the sub-region and what services/accommodation based support is available for this client group

Length of Stay in Temporary Accommodation:

- To look at the housing outcomes for those that we accommodate so that we can fully assess the solutions for homeless households

- b) **Cost of Homelessness:** An investigation into the reasons for increased Homelessness & Housing Advice service costs in 2014/15 compared to 2013/14

Summary:

Part 6, the last and final part of our Homelessness Strategy has evidenced how our Homelessness Delivery Plan for 2015/16 will be resourced. In view of the financial constraints that face us over the next five years we recognise that it will be increasingly difficult to maintain the present level of homelessness prevention interventions and we need to find savings and efficiencies where we can. By working in partnership we seek to deliver our services and by taking up the Gold Standard challenge we strive for improvement and excellence.

For further information about our Homelessness Strategy and Review 2015/16 please contact:

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To find out more about the progress made towards achieving our Homelessness Strategy please go to our Housing webpages at www.cravendc.gov.uk.