

**BASSETLAW DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**A HOME FOR ALL**

**A Strategy Addressing Homelessness Issues in the**

**Bassetlaw District Council Area**

**2008-2012**



## **CONTENTS**

### **Section One: Introduction**

- 1.1 Why this strategy?
- 1.2 Methodology
- 1.3 Consultation
- 1.4 Review of objectives from second Homelessness Strategy
- 1.5 Additional Affordable Housing
- 1.6 Loss of Rented Stock

### **Section Two: Review of Homelessness in Bassetlaw**

- 2.1 Overview
- 2.2 Levels of Homelessness in Bassetlaw
- 2.3 Priority Groups
- 2.4 Agencies Offering Advice and Services
- 2.5 Resources
- 2.6 Supporting People
- 2.7 Linkages
- 2.8 Bassetlaw District Council Restructuring

### **Section Three: Homelessness Strategy**

- 3.1 Directions
- 3.2 Links with other Agencies
- 3.3 Increasing Housing Supply
- 3.4 Advisory Services
- 3.5 Accountability for Delivery
- 3.6 Future Actions
- 3.7 Future Review of the Strategy

**Appendix A: Homelessness Strategy: Action Plan 2008-2013**

**Appendix B: Performance Indicator Targets**

**Appendix C: Actions Against Domestic Violence**

**Appendix D: Homeless Watch Survey 2007**

**Appendix E: Abstract from Housing Needs Study (People with Complex Needs)**



## **SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Why this Strategy?**

The Homelessness Act 2002 sets out new duties for Local Housing Authorities to review homelessness, then develop and publish a strategy to address homelessness issues.

The Council elected to publish the Review and the Homelessness Strategy, as one document. This was published in July 2003 in compliance with the 2002 Homelessness Act.

Responsibility for monitoring and delivery of the Homelessness Strategy was undertaken by a Monitoring Group comprising of the representatives of both statutory and voluntary agencies working with homeless people. As many of the objectives within the first strategy were delivered in a relatively short time scale it became apparent the strategy would need refreshing. The Monitoring Group therefore agreed to commence a further review of homelessness resulting in a second Homelessness Strategy with new Action Plans being published in 2006.

2007 saw significant changes in the way in which the Council's Homelessness Service was structured. The service changed its operational emphasis from prevention to assessment and was re-named as the Housing Needs Service. Following discussions with the Regional Homelessness Advisor it was agreed the launch of this new approach was a suitable opportunity to undertake a further review of homelessness in the District and update the strategy. This also neatly fitted with the Department of Local Government and Communities' (DCLG) aspiration that Homelessness Reviews and Strategies should now be reviewed on a 5 year cycle with all authorities updating their Homelessness Strategies in 2007-08.

The Homelessness Strategy aims to:-

- Review the homelessness situation in Bassetlaw and as far as possible quantify it
- Identify gaps in current provision of Housing and Housing Services to Homeless People
- Identify possible service developments
- Make recommendations in respect of future service development
- Where possible, encourage the formulation of action plans to improve and develop service delivery by the District Council and its partners

The principles underpinning the Homelessness Strategy are:-

- To focus on the prevention of homelessness
- To aim for the integration of services
- To promote equality of access to services
- To involve users in a meaningful way

- To reflect the diversity of homeless people and people at risk of becoming homeless
- To foster ongoing consultation on homelessness issues, both with partners and with service users
- To ensure services are 'needs led'

It is intended to continue monitoring the delivery of the Homelessness Strategy as it develops, and as time progresses continue to update the document and the strategy in response to changing needs.

## **1.2 Methodology**

The Council would like to thank members of the Bassetlaw Homelessness Umbrella Group who have all made significant contributions in preparing this strategy. Work on the strategy has been undertaken by a Steering Group comprising of key stakeholders from this Umbrella Group, who have also acted as a monitoring group to progress the delivery of the two earlier Homelessness Strategies.

When work on the original strategy commenced in Autumn 2002, a Steering Group was established to help guide the work. On publication of the strategy the group evolved into a monitoring group driving delivery of the strategy. As the first strategy neared the end of its natural life the group reverted to its original function in order to ensure a full review and a new strategy. This process has been repeated as the third Homelessness Strategy has been produced.

Steering Group membership has been refreshed on an ongoing basis to reflect changing needs and priorities and changing personnel in partner organisations. Individuals nominated by the Steering Group have once more helped in preparation of various sections of this document and provided pertinent statistical information. Drafts of the document have been considered by members of the Steering Group and also by members of the Homelessness Umbrella Group itself. Interviews have been held with individuals with expertise in particular areas and consultation has taken place with these parties.

Working within this regime the final document has been written and edited by Council Officers and approved by Elected members as well as by the Steering Group.

## **1.3 Consultation**

With the help of the Bassetlaw Homelessness Umbrella Group we believe as far as is practicably possible we have consulted with all agencies working with homeless or potentially homeless people in the district as this review and strategy has been prepared.

Organisations consulted include.

Centre Place  
 Nottinghamshire Supporting People Partnership  
 Shelter  
 New Roots  
 Benefits Agency  
 Connexions  
 Nottinghamshire County Council Social Services Department

Bassetlaw Landlords Association  
 Primary Care Trust  
 Nottinghamshire County Council Area Youth Services  
 HOPE  
 Nottinghamshire Constabulary  
 Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospital's NHS Foundation  
 Drug and Alcohol Action Team  
 BCVS  
 NACRO  
 Nottinghamshire Rural Community Council  
 Nottinghamshire Women's Aid  
 Chevin Housing Association  
 Derwent Housing Association  
 East Midlands Housing Association  
 Framework Housing Association  
 Jephson Housing Association  
 Johnnie Johnson Housing Association  
 Leicester Housing Association  
 Longhurst Housing Association  
 Northern Counties Housing Association  
 Nottingham Community Housing Association  
 South Yorkshire Housing Association

Consultation exercises have included.

Presentation to Bassetlaw Homelessness Umbrella Group  
 Presentation to Joint Housing Advisory Group.

We would like to thank all individuals involved in the consultation process.

#### **1.4 Review of Objective from the Second Homelessness Strategy**

This section briefly outlines progress made in achieving objectives identified in the second Homelessness Strategy. Significant progress has been made with many of the set objectives complete. In some cases it has not been possible to deliver the objectives originally set. Undeliverable objectives have been reviewed in the revised strategy and amended as appropriate to reflect the current situation in the District.

##### **Assessing Need**

To participate in the annual countywide Homelessness Snapshot Survey	Achieved each year
To participate in programmed surveys undertaken by the Bassetlaw Homelessness Umbrella Group	Surveys superseded by countywide Snapshot survey (see above)

##### **Increasing Stock (General Need)**

To work in partnership with Registered Social Landlords to provide additional stock for rent through the Housing Corporations Approved Development Programme, through direct grant aid	Out-turns recorded on Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix submitted annually to DCLG. See also Appendix A
--	---

and through the use of Section 106 planning agreements.	
To encourage private landlords to provide additional accommodation for homeless people	Landlords data base set up in partnership with HOPE

### Increasing Stock (Special Needs)

To provide 14 extra units of move on accommodation for homeless people in Worksop	Achieved by Framework Housing Association
To identify opportunities to increase the supply of supported housing for pregnant teenagers and young mothers.	Funding provided to New Roots Housing Project to extend provision of supported move on accommodation thus freeing supply
To provide one additional unit of accommodation for the Notts Drug Intervention Programme in 2005 and seek further opportunities to expand provision	Scheme completed in partnership with NACRO

### Increasing Stock (Private Sector)

To explore opportunities for attracting Housing Corporation Grant for private sector provision	No grant allocation achieved in Bassetlaw to Private Sector
To encourage the development of shared ownership housing through the planning framework in appropriate locations	See Appendix A
To encourage the release of properties to be made available for rent by private owners through the Private Sector Housing Strategy (including Empty Homes and Grant Strategies)	
To develop Home Improvement Agency in North Nottinghamshire.	Discussions ongoing. Funding not identified

### Major Capital Projects

Emergency Access Accommodation	Opened by HOPE: October 2007
To relocate Women's Refuge	Preferred partners identified

## Planning Issues

To complete Local Development Framework	The Core Strategy Options Document was published in 2006. This includes a range of options including proposals relating to Housing Provision. Further progression in respect of its Local Development Framework is currently on hold due to the preparation of a new Regional Plan. This is currently undergoing public examination
---	---

## Tenancy Sustainment

To provide a network of floating support available to Council tenants, Registered Social Landlords, private sector tenants and owner occupiers	Bassetlaw has a wide range of Floating Support Schemes funded through the Supporting People Partnership
--	---

## Customer Feedback

To ensure that customer feedback is used to ensure the way the service is delivered	Complaints monitoring procedures in place.
To improve communications with clients	Letters revised to standard format Leaflets in preparation Website operative

## Older Persons

To review the provision of services for older homeless people and identify shortfalls	Older Persons Housing Strategy approved by Councils Cabinet Sept 2007
---	---

## Persons with a Learning Disability

To ensure persons with a learning disability have equal access to homelessness services	Equalities Impact Assessment incorporated into Annual Service Delivery Plans
---	--

### **Persons with a Mental Health Issue**

To ensure persons with a mental health issue have equal access to advice services and accommodation	Equalities Impact Assessment incorporated into Annual Service Delivery Plans
---	--

### **Persons with a Physical Disability**

To ensure persons with a physical disability have equal access to advice services and accommodation	Equalities Impact Assessment incorporated into Annual Service Delivery Plans
---	--

### **Gypsies and Travellers**

To undertake regular assessment of the needs of 'gypsies and travellers' either living in or residing in the Bassetlaw Area, under the Local Housing Needs Assessment process as set out in Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985	Needs Assessment Complete. Site provision to be addressed in Local Development Framework
---	--

### **Health Issues**

To identify shortfalls in health service provision and develop an action plan to address identified shortfalls	Report compiled by the Primary Care Trust and circulated to HUG members
--	---

### **Information Services**

To provide a directory of local services	Directory on Bassetlaw Council for Voluntary Services website
--	---

### **Domestic Violence**

To improve the overall provision and effectiveness of local authority services designed to help victims of domestic violence as measured by Best Value Performance Indicator No. 225 (see Appendix C)	Domestic Violence Co-ordinator appointed in partnership with Newark and Sherwood District Council.
---	--

#### 1.4 Additional affordable Housing

The table below is abstracted from the Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix submitted to DCLG in July 2007. It identifies all new affordable housing completions or acquisitions. The authority has not attracted Housing Corporation Grant to any new schemes over the past year and the majority of new provision has been delivered by developers through Section 106 planning obligations.

##### **Provision of affordable housing**

##### **All additional affordable housing completions/acquisitions**

	<b>2003/04 outturn</b>	<b>2004/05 outturn</b>	<b>2005/06 outturn</b>	<b>2006/07 outturn</b>	<b>2007/08 planned</b>
1. Number of additional local authority dwellings – social rented	0	0	0	0	0
2. Number of additional local authority dwellings – shared ownership	0	0	0	0	0
3. Number of additional RSL – social rented	10	18	42	21	44
4. Number of additional RSI – immediate rent	N/A	0	0	23	0
5. Number of additional RSL – shared ownership/shared equity	0	10	32	9	22
6. Number of additional non-LA/RSL – social rented	N/A	0	0	0	0
7. Number of additional non-LA/RSL – immediate rent	0	0	0	0	0
8. Number of additional non-LA/RSL – shared ownership/shared equity	0	0	0	0	0
<b>9. Total additional affordable dwellings</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>66</b>

#### 1.5 Loss of rented stock

The overall stock of social housing available for rent has declined year on year through the decommissioning of stock 'not fit for purpose' and right to buy sales. This stock has not been replaced by new development commissioned through Registered Social Landlords. A large proportion of right to buy sales have been family units. High house prices inflation well in excess of increased earnings has priced many low-income families out of the housing market putting increased pressure on the rented stock. As there is a reduced turnover of family units it becomes increasingly difficult to find suitable accommodation for homeless families when a statutory duty is owed and reduces the opportunities available to other low-income households.

The decline in the numbers of housing units available for rent in the district over a twelve-year period is profiled in the table below.

### Housing Stock: Social Rented Sector

<b>Date</b>	<b>Council</b>	<b>RSL</b>	<b>Total</b>
1.4.07	7079	920	<b>7999</b>
1.4.06	7159	909	<b>8068</b>
1.4.05	7302	927	<b>8229</b>
1.4.04	7578	852	<b>8430</b>
1.4.03	7925	869	<b>8794</b>
1.4.02	8181	775	<b>8956</b>
1.4.01	8360	770	<b>9130</b>
1.4.00	8520	737	<b>9257</b>
1.4.99	8638	678	<b>9316</b>
1.4.98	8740	679	<b>9419</b>
1.4.97	8831	611	<b>9442</b>
1.4.96	8930	541	<b>9471</b>
1.4.95	8996	478	<b>9474</b>

Source: Housing Investment Programme Returns

## SECTION TWO: REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS IN BASSETLAW

### 2.1 Overview

The purpose of this section is to review the levels and needs of homeless people within Bassetlaw. The main sources of statistical information in this review are:-

- a) P1E Statistics held by Bassetlaw District Council
- b) Nottinghamshire Homelessness Watch Survey

It is important at this stage to note the range of factors that increase the risk of and events that precipitate homelessness.

<b>Causes of Homelessness</b>	
<b>FACTORS THAT INCREASE THE RISK OF HOMELESSNESS</b>	<b>EVENTS THAT CAN PRECIPITATE HOMELESSNESS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disputes with parents or step parents</li> <li>• Experience of physical, emotional or sexual abuse</li> <li>• Time in local authority care</li> <li>• Lack of qualifications</li> <li>• School exclusion</li> <li>• Unemployment</li> <li>• Alcohol and drug misuse</li> <li>• Mental health problems</li> <li>• A combination of mental health, drug and alcohol misuse</li> <li>• Contact with the criminal justice system</li> <li>• Leaving the armed services</li> <li>• Marital or relationship breakdown</li> <li>• Previous experience of homelessness</li> <li>• Lack of a social support network</li> <li>• Debts (especially rent or mortgage arrears)</li> <li>• Anti-social behaviour, including harassment and illegal eviction</li> <li>• Lack of permanent long term accommodation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaving the parental home after arguments</li> <li>• Leaving care without adequate support</li> <li>• Leaving prison</li> <li>• Discharge from the armed services</li> <li>• Marital or relationship breakdown</li> <li>• Domestic Violence and abuse</li> <li>• A financial crisis or mounting debts</li> <li>• Eviction</li> <li>• A sharp deterioration in mental health</li> <li>• An increase in substance misuse</li> <li>• Living in unfit or unsuitable accommodation</li> <li>• Fire, flood or other emergency</li> <li>• Request for asylum</li> </ul>

## 2.2 Levels of Homelessness in Bassetlaw

### 2.2.1 Statistical Information: Homeless Applications to Bassetlaw District Council

The primary statistics compiled by Bassetlaw District Council are quarterly returns produced for DLGC (Form P1E). These are based around decisions and priority need. Though related to the Council's statutory obligations, they do give insight into issues that are affecting local people and causing them to be homeless.

Statistical data about single homeless people is more limited here. The data the Council is required to provide on Form P1E does not record in detail information about people not usually in priority need (i.e single people / childless couples).

<b>Homeless Applications to Bassetlaw District Council April 2004 – March 2007</b>			
	<b>2005/2006</b>	<b>2006/2007</b>	<b>2007/2008</b>
<b>Decision Made</b>			
Eligible, unintentionally homeless and in propriety need	136	57	75
Eligible, homeless and in priority need but intentionally so	52	39	23
Eligible, homeless but not in priority need	1	7	10
Eligible but not homeless	55	65	59
Ineligible households	0	0	3
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b>244</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>170</b>

<b>Applicants found to be eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need by categories of need (primary category)</b>			
	<b>2005/2006</b>	<b>2006/2007</b>	<b>2007/2008</b>
Emergency (Fire, Flood etc)	0	0	1
With dependent children	95	30	43
Pregnant	9	4	10
16-17 years of age	4	1	5
Care leaver aged 18-20	3	0	0
Vulnerable old age	1	4	0
Vulnerable – physical disability	8	5	5
Vulnerable – mental illness / disability	6	8	5
Special reason – drug dependency	0	0	0
Special reason – alcohol dependency	0	0	0
Special reason – other	1	0	0
Vulnerable – ex care leaver	1	0	1
Vulnerable – ex forces	0	0	0
Vulnerable – ex custody or remand	0	1	0
Fleeing Domestic Violence	6	2	3
Fleeing Violence (non domestic)	2	2	2
<b><u>TOTAL:</u></b>	<b>136</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>75</b>

<b>Main reason for loss of last settled home or applicant found to be eligible, unintentionally by categories of need (primary category)</b>			
	<b>2005/2006</b>	<b>2006/2007</b>	<b>2007/2008</b>
Parents unwilling to accommodate	26	11	19
Others unwilling to accommodate	13	6	5
Non violent relationship breakdown	9	8	6
Violence / partners or associated persons	28	9	7
Violence – other	1	2	2
Harassment, threat of intimidation	1	3	1
Mortgage arrears	2	1	11
Rent Arrears – Council	0	2	1
Rent Arrears – RSL	3	0	0
Rent Arrears – Private Sector	1	0	6
Termination of Assured Shorthold Tenancy	30	6	8
Other loss of rented accommodation	5	0	2
Leaving Asylum Support Accommodation	0	0	0
Leaving Institution (Hospital, Prison, Forces etc)	7	4	6
Other	10	5	1
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b>136</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>75</b>

### **2.2.2 Homelessness Among B.M.E. (Black, Minority and Ethnic) Groups**

2001 Census Figures indicates Bassetlaw's M.B.E. population is 1.46% of the total. Monitoring of B.M.E. applications is undertaken by the Housing Needs Section. There was one recorded case of a non British household presenting themselves as homeless to the Council between April 2007 and March 2008. On the Council's Housing Waiting List 1.22% of applicants indicate they are of B.M.E. origins (Mar 2008).

This includes a small number of people who have migrated to the district from the European Community as follows (Eire 1, Latvia 5, Lithuania 7, Netherlands 1, Poland 33).

In the Nottinghamshire Homewatch Survey (18/09/06 – 01/10/06) only one of the clients seen by Agencies taking part in the Survey in Bassetlaw was of non-white origin.

### **2.2.3 Housing Market Assessment**

A Housing Market Assessment was completed by Fordham Research Services in 2007 .

The summary report for Bassetlaw indicates that there is an adequate supply of market housing to meet current needs and demands, and building targets identified in the Regional Survey will be met. However, there are significant shortfalls in the amount of social rented housing required with over 400 additional lets required annually to meet current demands.

The survey was completed in partnership with the other 'second tier' Nottinghamshire local authorities and three Derbyshire authorities (Bolsover, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire.)

The Government Office for the East Midlands have indicated that Bassetlaw should be looking to meet Housing Needs on a sub-regional basis working closely within the Northern Housing Market Area of the East Midlands, this area covering the Local Authorities of Bassetlaw, Bolsover, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire ; and importantly being regarded as part of the Sheffield City Region.

The four authorities have commissioned Housing Needs Surveys on

- Older People
- Black & Minority Ethnic Communities
- Younger People
- People with Complex Needs

The surveys were completed in April 2008 and reports arising from them are being considered by the four Local Authorities. Recommendations will be reflected in a sub-regional Housing Strategy scheduled for completion by December 2008 and will also be taken in to account as our own strategies and plans develop.

The report on People with Complex Needs is particularly pertinent to this Strategy and an abstract from the report relating specifically to the Bassetlaw area is included at Appendix E.

#### **2.2.4 Homeless Watch Report**

The Fourth Annual Nottinghamshire Homeless Watch Survey took place between 24th September and 7th October 2007.

The full survey as well as summary reports for each of the Local Authorities can be found on the Hostels Liaison Group Website [www.hlg.org.uk](http://www.hlg.org.uk). The summary report for Bassetlaw can be found at Appendix D

### **2.3 Priority Groups**

#### **2.3.1 Changes in the 2002 Homelessness Act**

Prior to the 2002 Homelessness Act, Local Authorities were obliged to give the following groups priority status in relevant circumstances.

- Someone who was pregnant
- Someone with dependent children
- Someone who was vulnerable as a result of old age, mental illness or handicap, physical disability or other special reason.
- People who were homeless as a result of a disaster, such as flood or fire.

The priority need categories have now been extended to include the following groups of people who become homeless:-

- 16 and 17 years olds – excluding ‘relevant children’ under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, and ‘children in need’ who are owed a duty under section 20 of the Children’s Act 1989 by Social Services.
- Care-leavers aged 18, 19 or 20 years old who were looked after, accommodated or fostered when aged 16 or 17, and who are not ‘relevant students’.
- People aged 21 or over who are vulnerable as a result of being looked after, accommodated or fostered by the local authority, and who are not ‘relevant students’.
- People who are vulnerable as a result of fleeing violence (or threats of violence).
- People who are vulnerable as a result of spending time in the armed forces or having been in prison or remanded in custody.

Priority need is automatic for the first of these new groups. For the others, ‘priority need’ will be determined on each individual case using the test of ‘vulnerability’ according definitions established by case law and the Homelessness Code of Guidance.

### **2.3.2 Priority Need – Pregnancy**

The Council’s Homelessness Unit accepted 10 eligible cases in 2007/08. Options made available included re-housing either by the Council, a Registered Social Landlord or with a private landlord. Younger applicants are often encouraged to return to the parental home where this is appropriate. The New Roots Housing Project provides residential accommodation for pregnant teenagers and young mothers (see para 2.5.4).

### **2.3.3 Priority Need – Dependent Children**

This was far the largest client group dealt with by the Council’s Homeless Unit in 2007/08 with 43 eligible applicants accepted. Re-housing arrangements were again in Council, Registered Social Landlord and Private Sector Landlord accommodation.

### **2.3.4 Priority Need – Old Age**

During 2007/08 the Council accepted no applications from persons deemed to be in priority need due to old age. The Council has a good supply of sheltered accommodation, as well as senior citizen designated flats and bungalows within its stock as well as additional flats designated for people over the age of 45. The availability of accommodation to this age group is not seen as a difficulty.

### **2.3.5 Priority Need – Mental Illness or Disability**

Five eligible cases were dealt with in 2007/08. There are supported housing schemes in Bassetlaw provided by Advance and New Era, but occupancy levels are high. Re-housing options include Council Stock with a reliance on general support

from either Social Services, the Health Authority, or through the Supporting People Programme.

### **2.3.6 Priority Need – Physical Disability**

Five eligible cases were dealt with in 2007/08. Within the Council's own stock are a range of adapted properties for this client group, though turnover is unpredictable. In appropriate circumstances budgetary provision is available to adapt both Council and Private Sector properties to meet an individuals needs. The Council in partnership with A1 Housing have increased the financial resources available for adaptations for new tenants including homeless applicants with disabilities.

### **2.3.7 Priority Need – Other Special Reasons**

Nottinghamshire County Council have indicated there are a number of people with learning disabilities living with elderly carers in the district. Some of these are at risk of becoming homeless should the carer pass away or no longer be able to provide care.

### **2.3.8 Priority Need – Vulnerable 16/17 Year Olds**

A Housing Issues Group consisting of representatives from the District Council, the County Council's Children and Young People's Services Department, Centre Place and Connexions has been set up to improve the housing outcomes of this vulnerable group of young people. The group is using the CLG Youth Homelessness Toolkit to identify gaps in service provision and work collaboratively to improve service delivery. A 16/17 year olds protocol is in place which is the subject of regular review.

### **2.3.9 Other Cases**

As will be appreciated the Council only has a duty to secure accommodation for homeless people as defined in the legislative framework. The Council's Allocation's Policy offers an enhancement to other homeless people who have approached the Housing Needs Team and where it has been found a duty to secure accommodation is not owed. There were 22 'live' applicants qualifying for this enhancement in January 2008.

## **2.4 Agencies Offering Advice and Services**

### **2.4.1 Bassetlaw District Council**

Following the approval of the Council's Cabinet in October 2007 the Council's Homelessness Team have been reconfigured and is now called the Housing Needs Team.

The team has two distinct roles. Firstly it must ensure that the Council's statutory obligations to persons found to be homeless and in priority need are met, and to provide appropriate advice and assistance to other clients.

However, with equal importance, the team aims to undertake a pro-active role in preventing homelessness.

During 2007/08 financial resources were made available from the Governments Homelessness Prevention Grant to set up a Homelessness Prevention Fund and support a bond / tenancy deposit scheme.

Initial enquiries may be made in person at Queens Buildings, Worksop or by telephone. Formal homeless interviews are carried out by appointment at Council offices at Worksop, Retford and Harworth and a home visiting service is available in exceptional circumstances.

The Housing Needs Team provides a 24-hour emergency service 7 days a week. Clients requiring assistance out of hours should contact the Council Central Control Unit.

#### CONTACT

Office Hours 01909 533490, 01909 533712 or 01909 533401

Emergency Out Of Hours: 01909 501999

### **2.4.2 Nottinghamshire County Council**

Nottinghamshire County Council offer a range of services through different department which are relevant to this strategy.

Working in partnership with the District Council a County Contact Point has been established at Retford. This offers a frontline service for homeless people of all ages; the facility to contact and make appointment on behalf of clients with other relevant departments, organisation and housing providers. Private facilities with telephones are made available. Health advice is also provided.

An Officer within the Social Services Department is responsible for liaison with the District Council in respect of Homelessness issues.

Social Services have a contract with NACRO to provide support services to Care Leavers in the district and mediation services are also provided.

The Welfare Rights Service operates advice surgeries at Worksop and Retford on a fortnightly basis and also has an advice line operating in office hours.

Both the education and Youth Service employ Officers undertaking homeless prevention work in schools with youth groups and with other young people.

A document outlining the Social Services Department approach to partnership working is included as Appendix C in this publication.

CONTACT: 01900-533713 (Worksop) or 01777 713800 (Retford)

### **2.4.3 Citizens Advice Bureau**

CAB offers general advice on all subjects including welfare benefits, debt, employment, housing, tax and legal matters. CAB can arrange specialist casework advice and representation on debt matters including court work for repossession cases for rent and mortgage arrears, and also welfare matters including revisions and tribunal appeals. Referral forms for specialist casework services are available from Bassetlaw CAB, Central Avenue, Worksop, S80 1EJ and on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the 'One Stop Shop' at 17b, The Square, Retford, DN22 6DB.

CONTACT: 01909 476049 or  
01909 476049 (24 hour answer phone service)

#### **2.4.4 Centre Place**

Centre Place is a drop in advice / information / activity centre for young people aged 16-25. The project provides laundry, shower and cooking facilities for homeless people and for those in shared accommodation. Workers offer advice on accommodation, healthcare, benefits, careers, access to youth agencies, aftercare, resettlement services, and counsellors. Internet access and study areas are available. There is a lesbian/ gay/ bi-sexual support group that provides telephone, one to one and group support. Centre Place also provides the 'talk-zone' counselling service for young people and the 'Rugrats' young parents support group.

CONTACT: 01909 479191

#### **2.4.5 Nottinghamshire Women's Aid**

Nottinghamshire Women's Aid Ltd offers a confidential service to women, young people and children who have experienced any form of domestic abuse. It endeavours to empower its clients by sustaining a high level of support within its service in order to build confidence, offer informed choices, promote self help and determination to encourage clients to take back control of their lives and determine their own futures.

Services consist of:-

- Emergency Refuge – 8 bedroom house providing practical and emotional support for women with or without children fleeing domestic abuse.
- Supported Housing Scheme – 12 properties that offer practical and emotional support with housing management to women who have experienced domestic abuse until the woman determines she no longer requires this support and then the property is handed over to NCHA and a new property is allocated to the scheme. 1 property has been identified to support women with dual issues of domestic abuse and substance misuse.
- Floating support, Outreach and Resettlement Services to women, young people and children.
- Children's services providing one to one sessions, children's, young people and young women's groups, events and activities.
- The Farr Centre offering drop in sessions, telephone help line and access to support services, events, activities and training opportunities for women.

CONTACT: 01909 533610

REFUGE: 01909 478065

#### **2.4.6 HOPE (Hope for the Homeless)**

HOPE provides a variety of services aimed at preventing homelessness, assisting people to secure appropriate accommodation and supporting people to maintain their tenancy. Our services include Independent Housing Advice, Debt Advice, Resettlement and the provision of Move -on flats and Emergency Accommodation. In addition we provide a Day service to promote the well being and housing status of homeless people by

offering practical and emotional support for a variety of issues and providing a range of facilities to meet individual needs. These include a modern Internet suite with access to computers for educational purposes, the provision of hot meals and washing facilities and also access to a wide range of Workshops, which are facilitated by our staff. The Day Service also operates as a base for health service staff to run clinics, including a Hepatitis nurse, Dual Diagnosis Mental Health Nurse and Alcohol and Drugs Workers. To promote sexual health, clients can also gain advice, information and access to condoms from HOPE which is a registration point for the C. Card. Further initiatives include a Crisis Service, which offers assistance with the provision of food, clothes, toiletries, furniture and other household items for people who have no other means of purchasing these essential items.

HOPE also provides a 13 bed-space Emergency Accommodation unit at Queen Street, Worksop.

CONTACT: 01909 531294.

#### **2.4.7 NACRO**

NACRO has several initiatives in Bassetlaw, including accommodation for single people, a support service to homeless and vulnerable 16/17 year old helping them access and maintain accommodation, personal advisor services to care leavers enabling them to live independently, and a floating support scheme offering advice and assistance to Bassetlaw tenants in their own homes.

CONTACT: 01623 863699

#### **2.4.8 New Roots Housing Project**

New Roots provides a package of support and accommodation to homeless or vulnerably housed parents, couples or single young people between the age of 16-25 years. Provision includes shared houses for tenants with higher support needs who have their own furnished room with shared kitchen and bathroom facilities.(19 units), 'move on' units which are self contained flats or houses for tenants or couples with reducing support needs(12 units), and accommodation for young parents which comprises of self contained houses dispersed across the area.(21 units).In addition to accommodation based services, New Roots has a floating support scheme and utilises nine tenancies in the private sector.

CONTACT: 01777 711059

#### **2.4.9 Nottinghamshire Probation Service**

Advice and assistance to offenders being released from prison.

CONTACT: 01909 473424

#### **2.4.10 Progress 2 work**

The Department of Work and Pensions are investing around £40 million nationally over the next three years through Job Centre Plus to develop the Progress 2 Work programme. This aims to improve employment options by providing a targeted

employment and training service to those who have been put at a disadvantage in the labour market because of substance misuse. It is envisaged that in many cases clients will be referred to the programme from a wide variety of sources especially criminal justice agencies, and that in many cases clients that benefit from Progress 2 Work will often be homeless or vulnerable to homelessness.

CONTACT: 01623 586176

#### **2.4.11 Independent Housing Advice Service**

This independent agency offers free advice, advocacy and mediation services to anyone experiencing housing difficulties, including rent arrears, mortgage arrears, disrepair and landlord or neighbour harassment.

CONTACT: 01909 486762

#### **2.4.12 Framework Bassetlaw Tenancy Support Team**

Framework Tenancy Support offers support to people who are experiencing difficulties managing and sustaining their own home. We work with people living in private, local authority or housing association accommodation. We also help people who are homeless, living in an insecure tenancy, temporary accommodation or people who are about to move into a new home. We offer service users 'drop in surgery' appointments through out Bassetlaw, these inc Worksop, Retford, Harworth and Carlton in Lindrick.

Framework TST provide a court help desk at The County Court, Slack Walk, Worksop. The aim of the service is to prevent homelessness by offering immediate access to the tenancy support service. The service is free to anyone in receipt of state benefits; referrals can be made directly at the court where a Framework staff member will provide court representation.

Contact: 01909 513 830

#### **2.4.13 Framework Household**

Framework Household offer housing related support to people, living in their own homes who are experiencing mental health difficulties. Frameworks High Support and Mental Health services work with people to establish and maintain stable housing, and promote choice, opportunity and independence.

To get support from Household you must be 18 years old or over, and have a statutory mental health worker. Framework also employ a Crisis Link Worker who works closely with the Statutory Mental Health Services and the Household Tenancy Support Team.

Contact: 01909 530 829

#### **2.4.14 Framework One Stop Shop**

Framework One Stop Shop is an open access, drop-in advice centre offering services to clients needing support with issues around past or current drug/alcohol use and homelessness.

The service provides access to services for people affected by substance misuse. Treatment agencies can be accessed through the One Stop Shop as well as appropriate guidance towards specialist support service, and harm reduction advice. One Stop Shop provides access to a needle and syringe exchange 3 times a week.

Contact: 01909 513 830

#### **2.4.15 Registered Social Landlords**

Advisory services are offered to homeless people from residential projects at Potter Street, Worksop (Framework Housing Association) and Cobwell Road, Retford (Nottingham Community Housing Association).

#### **2.4.16 Other Agencies Offering Advice**

Bassetlaw Mind  
Bassetlaw Community Alcohol Team  
Bassetlaw Self Help Link  
Child Line  
Connexions  
Community Mental Health Service  
Community Support Team  
The Maltings (specialist drug related advice)  
National Youth Agency  
Worksop Samaritans  
Young Adult Service  
National Schizophrenic Fellowship  
Acorn Initiative  
Bassetlaw Community Development Team  
Bassetlaw Disability Link  
Bassetlaw Gay Advice  
Bassetlaw Home Start  
Nottinghamshire Police (Victim Support)  
Hetty's (Advice for drug users)  
Retford Action Centre  
Benefits Agency  
Commission for Racial Equality  
Gingerbread  
National Aid's Help Line

Further details of agencies offering advice appear on the Bassetlaw Council for Voluntary Services Website [www.bcvs.org.uk](http://www.bcvs.org.uk)

## **2.5 Resources**

### **2.5.1 Council Housing Stock**

On 1 September 2007 the Council had a stock of 7028 properties available for rent. The stock is broken down as follows:-

**Bassetlaw District Council Housing Stock – September 2007**

<b>Property Type</b>	<b>Bedsit</b>	<b>1 Bed</b>	<b>2 Bed</b>	<b>3 Bed</b>	<b>4 Bed</b>	<b>Total</b>
Bungalow	45	943	1449	1	0	2438
Bungalow – Paraplegic	0	0	0	12	0	12
Flat: Non Senior Citizen – Ground Floor	9	174	125	10	0	318
Flat: Non Senior Citizen – Upper Floor	7	220	215	3	0	445
Flat: Over 40's – Ground Floor	0	36	7	0	0	43
Flat: Over 40's – Upper Floor	0	45	22	0	0	67
Flat: Senior Citizen – Ground Floor	0	155	72	0	0	227
Flat: Senior Citizen – Upper Floor	0	55	23	0	0	78
Sheltered Flat – Ground Floor	49	56	16	0	0	121
Sheltered Flat – Upper Floor	32	51	17	0	0	100
House	0	0	608	2223	120	2951
Maisonette – Ground Floor	0	0	48	16	0	64
Maisonette – Upper Floor	0	4	122	38	0	164
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>1739</b>	<b>2724</b>	<b>2303</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>7028</b>

Generally the Council has properties available for homeless applicants where the Council has a duty to provide accommodation under homelessness legislation, though these would not necessarily be in locations where the applicant would prefer to live. The Council also takes account of the needs of homeless applicants where a duty is not owed to provide accommodation and gives a degree of priority over other general applicants within the lettings policy.

There are particular shortages in the Retford area and the supply of houses for families available to the Council for let continues to significantly reduce through Right To Buy sales as illustrated in the table below.

	<b>BDC Stock (Houses)</b>	
	<b>1 April 2004</b>	<b>1 Sept 2007</b>
2 Bed	698	608
3 Bed	2527	2223
4 Bed	138	120
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3363</b>	<b>2951</b>

## 2.5.2 Registered Social Landlords (RSL's)

The Council does not hold a comprehensive database of property types for all Registered Social Landlords with stock in the district. Most of the RSL's listed have general needs properties available. Some also cater for special needs, particularly the elderly through projects providing supported accommodation for homeless people have increased in recent years.

A breakdown of RSL stocks as of 1 April 2007 is as follows:-

<b>RSL</b>	<b>Stock</b>	<b>Provision</b>
Advance	1	Learning Disabilities
Anchor	96	Elderly
Chevin	45	
Dimensions	1	Learning Disabilities
East Midlands	19	
Eastern Shires	31	
Framework	20	
Jephson	18	
J Johnson	11	
Leicester	17	
Longhurst	192	
NACRO	6	Ex Offenders
North British	1	
N Counties	72	
Notts Com	311	
Sloswicks	27	Elderly
S. Yorkshire	17	
Spirita	35	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>920</b>	

## 2.5.3 Private Sector Accommodation

In Bassetlaw there are approximately 4130 private sector properties available to rent out of a total housing stock in the region of 47,500. It is clear from discussions held at the Council's Landlords Forum that some landlords provide much needed accommodation for homeless people and in many cases provide (unpaid) support in addition to the normal landlord function.

## 2.5.4 Supported Accommodation

- **New Roots Housing Project**

New Roots Housing Project has 2 shared houses in Worksop and 2 similar properties in Retford. These provide supported accommodation for 19 single young people aged 16-25. New Roots also manage 29 units of move-on accommodation, which are self-contained houses and flats dispersed throughout Bassetlaw.

Within the 'move-on' service the Teenage Parent Scheme provides supported accommodation for 16 young parents. A floating support service is also available to

teenage parents outside the accommodation-based service, which currently supports 6 tenants.

- **Retford Young Person's Housing Scheme (Nottingham Community Housing Association)**

Cobwell Road project is a 10 bedded unit offering 8 self contained fully furnished flats and 2 self contained fully furnished bedsits. The project supports young people aged 16-25 with high to medium needs who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or inappropriately/vulnerably housed.

Wright Wilson Street project offers 12 self contained, fully furnished flats built within a General Needs complex. The project supports young people aged 16-25 who have medium and reducing support needs in order for them to successfully sustain tenancies independently. The project acts as move-on from Cobwell Road and other local housing providers, and also accepts referrals from young people meeting the criteria of being homeless, at risk of homelessness or inappropriately/vulnerably housed with lower support needs.

- **Potter Street Project and Gateford Chambers, Worksop (Framework Housing Association)**

Potter Street Project is a 15-bedroomed quick access, short stay supported housing project for homeless men, women and couples. Residents have their own furnished room and use of a shared kitchen and bathroom. There is also a communal lounge and IT facilities.

The Project also has 3-bedroomed move on houses operating on the same quick access, short stay basis, offering a supported introduction to a more independent lifestyle.

Gateford Chambers is a new acquisition, which will offer 15 units of move on accommodation with intensive housing management for clients moving from supported housing projects. Where housing related support is identified as a need clients will be referred to a floating support provider.

- **NACRO**

NACRO has 5 houses in and around Worksop providing accommodation and an individually tailored support package to 10 people who have an offending background or who are at risk of offending. The age range for the service is 18-65 and is available to both men and women.

NACRO also have accommodation in other parts of the County for the same client group aged 16+.

- **Nottinghamshire Women's Aid Ltd**

Nottinghamshire Women's Aid Ltd offers a confidential service to women, young people and children who have experienced any form of domestic abuse. It endeavours to empower its clients by sustaining a high level of support within its services. Services consist of an Emergency Refuge, Supported Housing scheme, Floating Support service, Outreach & Resettlement service and a

Women's Resource Centre. The Resource Centre offers drop in sessions, telephone help-line, training opportunities and access to Counselling services.

- **Emergency Access Accommodation**

HOPE own a thirteen bed emergency access unit on Queen Street, Worksop providing accommodation for single people on a night by night basis. Support services to the unit are contracted through the Nottinghamshire Supporting People Partnership to Framework. There is a Service Level Agreement in place with the District Council .

## 2.5.5 Financial

- **Bassetlaw District Council**

Bassetlaw District Council is empowered to make capital grants to Registered Social Landlords for the provision of additional housing accommodation. However due to the escalating cost of properties, the withdrawal of subsidy for Local Authority Social Housing Grants programmes and taking in to account the limited Capital Resources available to the Council it is now no longer viable to make grants of this nature. The Council however still may be in a position to assist with Capital Funding for projects though this will be subject to an annual Capital Development Bid funding process.

- **Nottinghamshire County Council**

The County Council provide grant aid to a number of voluntary agencies operating in the District. Financial support in Nottinghamshire provided by the County Council amounts to over £1 million.

- **Health Authority/Primary Care Trust**

Funding is provided for voluntary agencies giving advice on health matters.

- **Housing Corporation**

Prior to 2003 when Supporting People was introduced the Housing Corporation was in a position to provide revenue funding through Supported Housing Management Grant (SHMG) to facilitate capital schemes financed through the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme.

The Housing Corporation still has the facility to provide capital funding for residential homelessness and other special needs projects. However, this is dependent on the Nottinghamshire Supporting People Partnership providing revenue funding or revenue funding being guaranteed through an alternative source.

- **Bassetlaw Community and Voluntary Service (BCVS)**

Bassetlaw Community and Voluntary Service encourages community initiatives and involvement, community information and networking as well as offering practical

help to local organisations working in partnership to maximise potential. It has the facility to identify funding opportunities for organisations in the voluntary sector.

- **Other Possible Sources of Funding**

East Midlands Development Agency

Countryside Agency

## **2.6 Supporting People**

### **2.6.1 What is Supporting People?**

Supporting People is a National programme which offers vulnerable people the opportunity to improve their quality of life by enabling them to live more independently in the community.

The programme started in April 2003 and introduced a new system of planning, monitoring and funding for housing related support services, which is linked to local need.

Supporting People is a working partnership of Local Government, Service Users, Health, Probation and Support Agencies.

It commissions and funds services which provide housing related support to people who live in supported housing such as sheltered accommodation, homeless hostels etc. or in their own tenancies (via floating support) including:-

- Older people
- People with learning difficulties
- People with mental health problems
- Women fleeing domestic violence
- Young people who may be homeless, pregnant or care leavers.
- Tenancy support services for people moving on from more supported accommodation or struggling to maintain their independence
- Offenders and people who have drug or alcohol related problems
- People with physical or sensory impairments
- Gypsies and Travellers and Refugees

### **2.6.2 Supporting People in Nottinghamshire**

Supporting People is administered by a team attached to but separate from the Adult Social care and Health department within Nottinghamshire County Council. They are responsible for the administration and development of the programme and the Supporting People strategy for the whole of Nottinghamshire which is updated every year.

In Nottinghamshire, the Supporting People programme currently funds around £26m of housing related support services – with 216 services providing support to around over 20,000 people.

### **2.6.3 Supporting People and Homelessness Services**

Supporting People provides revenue funding for all housing related support services. These services can either be accommodation based or 'floating support' and are classed as long term or short term.

Service users of long term support are likely to need support for more than two years and in many cases for life and are mostly older people, people with learning difficulties and people with enduring mental health problems.

Short term support services are those providing support for under two years and in some cases as little as a few weeks and are more likely to be accessed by homeless people, people threatened with homelessness and people who have been homeless previously, which includes women fleeing domestic violence, ex offenders and young vulnerable people. They are:

- Free to all service users regardless of income.
- Provided to people living in supported accommodation and to tenants living more independently in their own homes. The latter is referred to as 'Floating Support'.
- Can be of a specialist nature for a particular client group eg women fleeing domestic violence or may be more generally targeted at vulnerable people who have difficulty in sustaining their tenancies.
- Available for a period up to 2 years with the intention that the service user will have achieved independent living within that time.

The main aim of Floating Support services is to assist vulnerable tenants in sustaining their homes or tenancies. This can be crucial in the prevention of homelessness.

Floating Support Services include:

- Tenancy support or sustainment services for people struggling to manage their current accommodation includes specialist support to people with specific issues such as mental health or substance misuse issues
- Resettlement support for those leaving hostels, refuges, hospitals or prisons
- Support for young homeless people who may never have had a tenancy

Agencies offering short term Floating Support Services in Bassetlaw at October 2007 are:

- Nottinghamshire Women's Aid
- Building Blocks Solution
- Framework Housing Association
- Nacro Services
- Nottingham Community Housing Association
- New Roots Housing Project
- Rethink

#### **2.6.4 New SP services**

New services which have been or are due to be tendered include:

- A new county wide floating support service for vulnerable adults
- New low level supported move on accommodation in the south of the county
- A joint city and county floating support service for gypsy and travellers
- A new county wide floating support service for deaf people
- Accommodation and floating support services for offenders across the county

- Accommodation and floating support services for people with drug and alcohol issues across the county – includes an increased number of floating support places.

New services set up in the last year – many of which are pilot services include:

- Drug Intervention Programme accommodation services in Bassetlaw by NACRO
- A floating support service across the county for people with dual sensory impairments run by Adult Social Care and Health ASCH
- Signposting services jointly funded with ASCH using Link Age plus funding. Five different providers are delivering this service county wide – linking ‘hard to reach’ older people into all kinds of services run by the voluntary and statutory sector.
- Mental Health Link worker services across the county run by Building Blocks and Framework
- Prison link service to work with those convicted in the city and county run by the Probation service

## **2.6.5 Supporting People Strategy and the Homelessness Strategy**

The Nottinghamshire Supporting People team has prepared a five-year strategy, which provides a framework for the delivery of the Supporting people programme until 2010. It is updated annually

The Strategy sets out the key objectives for the Supporting People programme over the next five years, underpinning the vision. These are based on evidence of need for support services, the priorities of partner agencies, service user and carer participation, equal access to services, high quality and value for money services and managing change to ensure developments are implemented smoothly and within realistic time frames. These objectives will be used to examine existing housing related support services and shape future commissioning.

The Nottinghamshire Supporting People Strategy has been developed on the basis of an ongoing reduction in funding from central government and a framework for prioritising service development has been agreed by all partners.

The Bassetlaw Homelessness Strategy will link in with the Nottinghamshire Supporting People Strategy. It will identify the present and future need for supported housing in Bassetlaw and the need for floating support/tenancy sustainment schemes, which contributes to the preventative agenda for homelessness.

## **2.6.5 Supporting People and the Local Area Agreement**

Local Area Agreements (LAA's) are intended to deliver key priorities across each partnership. In Nottinghamshire Supporting People Grant will no longer be ring fenced from April 2009, but will be allocated to the Supporting People Partnership taking wider key spending priorities identified by the LAA in to account. Homelessness Prevention Grant (currently paid to individual second tier councils in Nottinghamshire) is also likely to be pooled to the LAA from April 2011.

## **2.7 Linkages**

### **2.7.1 Health**

There are clear links between homelessness and ill health.

For example rates of mental illnesses such as depression or anxiety are estimated to be eight times higher than in the general population. Mental illness can be either a cause of or a result of homelessness. Physical illnesses such as respiratory problems are also higher than in the general population. Alcohol and drug misuse are particularly high. Many clients have multiple needs.

Access to health services has been identified as a key issue. Homeless people may experience difficulties in registering with a doctor. They are often registered as temporary residents affecting the continuity of their care, as medical notes may not be passed on. Access to routine health screening, health promotion initiatives, vaccination and cervical screening is more problematic for homeless people as is access to other community services such as dental services and chiropody.

### **2.7.2 Education and Youth Services**

There is a distinct role for teachers and youth workers to undertake work relating to the prevention of homelessness. This includes household management projects within the schools' personal and social skills curriculum, as well as outreach work by youth service workers.

### **2.7.3 Social Services**

Social Services work with many vulnerable people who may be at risk of becoming homeless. The provision of support and advice to clients who may lead disorganised or dysfunctional life styles may be crucial to them sustaining a secure home.

## **2.8 Bassetlaw District Council Restructuring**

**2.8.1** On 9 October 2007 the Council's Cabinet approved restructuring of the Council's Homelessness Service. The Service is now known as the Housing Needs Service. It's focus is now firmly on homelessness prevention work where previously it had been more focused on statutory assessment. This restructuring fully supports the government's view that Housing Authorities should take steps to prevent homelessness wherever possible, offering a broad range of advice and assistance for those in housing need.

**2.8.2** On 4 October 2004 the management of the Council's Housing Stock was transferred to an Arms Length Management Organisation (A1 Housing). As a statutory service the Council's Homelessness Team remained under direct control within the Environment and Housing Department.

There are a number of issues that have been identified which may need addressing. These include:-

- Protocols have been established between A1 Housing and the Council's Housing Needs Team in respect of Homelessness Issues. Service objectives are to be reviewed by A1 Housing. Consideration is to be given as to how the housing and support needs of homeless people may be met by the provision and use of Council stock.
- The further development of Service Level Agreements between A1 Housing and the Housing Needs Team.
- The review of advisory services provided by A1 Housing and the Homelessness Team to ensure a quality 'seamless' service. This will include ongoing review and

monitoring of contractual payments in respect of both 'general fund' and 'housing revenue account' activities undertaken by A1 Housing

## **SECTION THREE: HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY**

### **3.1 Directions**

- 3.1.1** As the Strategic Housing Authority for the Bassetlaw area the District Council aims to ensure all of our community has access to decent, safe and affordable housing. In particular we aim to ensure that homeless people, and people at risk of becoming homeless, have access to accommodation appropriate to their needs. As a Council we aim to achieve a quality public service, offering as far as possible our clients choices in securing accommodation, as well as providing comprehensive advisory services that will be easily accessible throughout the district.
- 3.1.2** The Council's approach to partnership working has been recognised as 'exemplary' by the IDEA's Local Government Improvement Programme Review Team. The Homelessness Strategy seeks to develop linkages with Registered Social Landlords and the Voluntary Sector to ensure housing accommodation is provided where it is needed, that services are in place to assist vulnerable people in sustaining occupation of the accommodation in which they live, and to ensure quality advisory and other support services are developed in a planned manner in order to meet the identified needs of our community.
- 3.1.3** The Homelessness Strategy aims to ensure the Council complies with the requirements of 1996 Housing Act relating to homelessness, the 2002 Homelessness Act and the Homelessness Code of Guidance.
- 3.1.4** The Homeless Strategy aims to ensure the Council complies with Human Rights legislation, Equal Opportunities legislation and Anti-discrimination legislation in its dealings with homeless applicants.

### **3.2 Links to Other Strategies**

- 3.2.1** The Councils most recent Area Housing Strategy was completed in 2006 and has achieved 'fit for purpose' status. The issue of homelessness is covered in some depth within the Housing Strategy.

Following consultation with the Government Office for the East Midlands and partner local authorities within the Northern Housing Market area of the East Midlands (covering Bassetlaw, Bolsover, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire) it has been agreed to produce a Joint Housing Strategy covering this part of the region in 2008. Bassetlaw will review its own Area Housing Strategy when this work is complete. The Joint Housing Strategy will inevitably take into account the influence of the Sheffield City Region as this has a significant effect on parts of our District.

- 3.2.2** In conjunction with the Housing Strategy the Council has at various times published the following:

- Private Sector Housing Strategy
- Empty Homes Strategy
- Grants Strategy

These strategies are now in need of updating and review. As a starting point the Council are undertaking a review of Private Sector Grant policy taking into account PSA 7 targets to ensure that as a minimum 70% of vulnerable private sector

households will live in accommodation that meets the Governments Decent Homes Standard by 2010, with this level increasing to 75% by 2020.

It is then intended to agree on all embracing Private Sector Strategy encompassing Empty Homes and Private Sector Grants, which will support the existing Housing Strategy.

This will be a particularly important piece of work as the availability of accommodation in the private sector for homeless householders is a crucial element in addressing homeless issues, we wish to ensure homeless households accessing accommodation in the private sector are able to access accommodation that is of a decent standard meeting Housing Health & Safety Rating requirements, and more than this means that many homeless households contain someone who is classed as vulnerable

**3.2.3** The Homelessness Strategy supports overarching objectives identified in the Councils Strategic Plan which was reviewed by the Council Cabinet in 2007.

The Councils priorities as identified in the Strategic Plan are:-

- Clean and Green (we want everyone to enjoy a clean environment and have access to green open spaces).
- Safe And Strong (we want our residents, businesses and visitors to the area to feel safe and not be the victims of crime). We also want to promote a strong sense of pride and belonging to our community.
- Jobs and enterprise (we want businesses to thrive in Bassetlaw and for a variety of jobs and careers to be available).

There is little doubt that the provision of housing (with housing support services where appropriate) helps build a Safe and Strong community. The successful resettlement of homeless people (including offenders being released from prison) helps people regain their pride and self respect and goes a long way in encouraging them to take an active and positive role in our society.

Our Supported Housing Projects all have close links with training and employment initiatives encouraging people to become economically active and supporting a 'Jobs and Enterprise' culture as a lifestyle that can be achieved.

The Councils improvement plan is titled 'Efficient and Effective'. Our service aims to achieve the objectives set out in this strategy while offering value for money to our funders, the taxpayers of our community.

The Councils Corporate Plan identified housing as one of our Flagship Projects. Delivery of the Area Housing is one of the key objectives within the Corporate Plan. This clearly demonstrates the Council's wholehearted commitment to dealing with Housing Issues.

**3.2.4** Homelessness and drug use are closely linked. Home Office guidance indicates that between 50% and 76% of homeless single people have in the past been problematic drug users and some are difficult to engage. Many have a wide range of other support needs that re-enforce each other and heighten the risk of drug use and homelessness. The Council is working with the Primary Care Trust and DAAT to

develop and co-ordinate services to met the needs of all drug users. In particular the Council is supporting the Drugs Intervention Programme by providing accommodation in partnership with NACRO for people leaving institutions such as prisons.

### **3.3 Increasing the Housing Supply**

#### **3.3.1 Assessing Need**

During 2007 Fordham Research completed a Housing Market Assessment covering the Authorities of Bolsover, Bassetlaw, Chesterfield, N.E. Derbyshire, Newark & Sherwood, Ashfield and Mansfield. The survey quantified the amount of housing that needs to be built in the sub region. As indicated in para 3.2.1 the Government Office for the East Midlands have indicated Bassetlaw should work in partnership with Bolsover, N.E. Derbyshire and Chesterfield in respect of future housing needs assessment with a view to providing a joint Housing Strategy. Specific research has been commissioned in respect of the housing needs of BME Communities, Older People, Young People and People with Chaotic Lifestyles to support this work.

#### **3.3.2 Council Housing**

The Council transferred its housing stock to an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO – A1 Housing) on 4 October 2004. A1 Housing's prime objective is to ensure all Council properties meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2013. At the present time A1 Housing is unable to build additional stock itself but should Government regulations change as is indicated in the Housing Green Paper 'Homes for the Future' published on 23 July 2007 this could become an option.

#### **3.3.3 Private Housing for Rent**

There are an estimated 4130 private sector properties available for rent in Bassetlaw. Through the Private Sector Housing Strategy, the Housing Grants Strategy and the Empty Homes Strategy the Council will seek to target available finance with a view to encouraging private landlords to bring empty homes back in to use. In appropriate circumstances investment may be targeted to ensure the sustainability and regeneration of specific areas of (older) housing in the district.

Current government guidance encourages local authorities to provide financial assistance through a third party such as a home improvement agency, specialist financial intermediary or other special purpose vehicle. In order to address both poor housing conditions in the private sector, and also empty homes, the Council will be seeking to develop partnership arrangements with lenders. Schemes could include:-

- Low interest loans
- Equity release
- The government have recently announced the extension of the provision of Social Housing Grant to private houses for rent. This will only apply to schemes of over 400 units. It is unlikely there is the potential for such schemes in Bassetlaw.

### 3.3.4 Registered Social Landlords (RSL's)

Three main sources of funding are available to Registered Social Landlords to provide low cost housing for rent, and also shared ownership housing. These are:-

- Direct grant from the Local Authority.
- Social Housing Grant
- Private Sector Finance (borrowing)

Social Housing grant is paid by the Housing Corporation to Registered Social Landlords to help finance new projects. The investment priorities of the Housing Corporation have been agreed by the East Midlands Housing Board in consultation with stakeholders and are outlined in the East Midlands Housing Strategy. Priority policy areas where investment could be targeted are as follows:-

Policy One	Increase the quality and improving delivery of appropriate high quality affordable housing for all communities.
Priority Two	Secure quality and choice for Housing Development
Priority Three	Recognising and responding to areas affected by low demand.
Priority Four	Providing options for unpopular or unsuitable sheltered housing stock.
Priority Five	Removing and revitalising the private sector
Priority Six	Decent homes in the social sector
Policy Seven	Ensuring sustainable growth for the Milton Keynes South Midlands area is delivered.
Policy Eight	Ensuring that the skills in the construction sector can be harnessed to increase output in the region
Policy Nine	Tackling the causes of homelessness
Policy Ten	Assisting people to maintain their independence for as long as they wish.
Policy Eleven	Promoting health, safe and efficient homes
Policy Twelve	Ensure that in rural areas and market town there is both an appropriate provision of quality housing to meet the range of housing needs and access to services for vulnerable people of all ages.
Policy Thirteen	Ensuring that all sub regions understand and address the needs and aspirations of diverse sections of their community.
Policy Fourteen	Developing the role of the sub regions
Policy Fifteen	Developing and integrating a common information base.
Policy Sixteen	Supporting economic growth in partnership

The Regional Housing Strategy is now under review. Though, under the present Strategy Central Government have indicated that the provision of funding for affordable housing in London and the South East is of paramount importance and therefore a large proportion of funding available to the East Midlands has been directed to address Policy Seven the Housing Green Paper 'Homes for the future' addresses shortfalls in affordable housing and access to low cost housing caused by unprecedented levels of house price inflation in recent years. It is apparent that the potential for Social Housing Grant investment in Bassetlaw will now be less restricted. The Housing Corporation is also encouraged through Policy Nine to address homelessness issues, Though there are potential for cuts to Supporting People budgets making revenue support for additional supported housing for homeless people difficult, potential efficiency savings through competitive tendering for Supporting People contracts does not make the potential for expansion impossible..

### **3.3.5 Planning Issues**

The Council is charged with delivering a Local Planning Framework and it is anticipated this process will be completed in 2012. The Planning Framework will seek to ensure sufficient housing development is achieved in the District to meet its housing needs, including the need for affordable housing, taking account of the Nottinghamshire Structure plan requirements. An overall objective of the Local Development Framework will be to bring local housing markets into balance. In January 2008 the Council agreed to use the Strategic Housing Market Assessment completed by Fordham Research in 2007 as an evidence base to support the delivery of affordable housing on new development sites. Fordham's report indicates that it would be justified for Bassetlaw to adopt affordable housing targets of up to 45% of new development of which up to 30% would be social rented and 15% intermediate housing. However Fordham's report questions the value of intermediate housing in meeting housing need. Our strategy will therefore be to maximise the provision affordable housing for rent on new developments. Targets in the Local Development Framework will coincide with those Regional Spatial Strategy as these pieces of work are completed.

## **3.4 Advisory Services**

### **3.4.1 Bassetlaw District Council and A1 Housing**

There is a need to continuously improve advisory services offered to Homeless People, both in the Area Housing Teams and in the Housing Needs Team. The development of a Housing Advice Centre by A1 Housing as part of a 'One Stop Shop' at Queens Buildings, Worksop offers opportunities for both Registered Social Landlords and Private Landlords to advertise available accommodation and thus widen housing options that might be considered by clients.

The Housing Needs Team now have a duty to provide a greater level of advice and assistance to applicants focussed on prevention of homelessness.

In order to further enhance services provided the following actions have been identified:-

- Joint training / team meeting with other Key Agencies including Social Services for front line staff.

- Development of inter agency protocols
- Development of assessment procedure for non priority cases
- Agreement of Service Standards for Homeless Clients
- To examine publicity of the service to ensure people at risk are aware of it
- To encourage the development of preventing works and examine ways of becoming more proactive.
- To identify gaps in advisory services in particular in relation to BME groups including immigrants from EEC countries.

#### **3.4.2 Other Agencies**

There are numerous other agencies offering advice to Homeless people. What is crucial is that these agencies operate in a co-ordinated and structured manner. The Bassetlaw Homelessness Umbrella Group brings all relevant agencies together, provide opportunities for the sign posting of services to clients by participating agencies, and seeking to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and provision.

#### **3.5 Accountability for delivery**

It is intended that the District Council will deliver the objectives of this strategy in partnership with the Bassetlaw Homelessness Umbrella Group. The Steering Group that assisted in the production of this Strategy has agreed a Monitoring Group is to be chaired by the Council's Cabinet Member for Housing and Leisure with named Officers being held accountable for the delivery of individual objectives.

#### **3.6 Future Actions**

A comprehensive Action Plan is included at Appendix A

#### **3.7 Future Review of the Strategy**

The Homelessness Strategy Monitoring Group has proved to be a successful catalyst in ensuring the Strategy has been delivered. Regular meetings of the group have led to successful partnership working and a sense of joint ownership. Sub Regional partnership working within our Housing Market Assessment Area within the context of the Sheffield City Region may lead to the joint development of services across county boundaries and this will pose new challenges for Local Authorities and our respective Supporting People Teams. Particular account will be taken of the four Housing Needs Surveys commissioned by the sub regional partnership as we develop this strategy and our future service provision (see also para 2.2.3).



**HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2008 – 2013: ACTION PLAN**

WHAT WILL WE DO	WHY WE WANT TO DO IT	HOW YOU KNOW WE HAVE DONE IT	RESOURCES & PARTNERS	MILESTONES & TARGET DATES
<b>ASSEESING NEED</b>				
Participate in the annual countywide Homelessness Snapshot Survey	To keep our strategy up to date and ensure our services meet current and future needs	Survey is published annually	All Nottinghamshire Local Authorities provide revenue support for survey. Lead Contractor appointed annually. Participation by all Homeless Umbrella Group members.	Annually  Survey each September
<b>INCREASING STOCK (GENERAL NEEDS)</b>				
To work in partnership with Registered Social Landlords to provide additional stock for rent through the Housing Corporations Approved Development Programme, through direct grant aid and through the use of Section 106 Planning Agreement.	To address shortfalls in affordable housing provision ( Particularly rented sock) and provide homes for homeless people.	We will publish our outcomes in our annual report	Housing Corporation Development Programme  Capital Programme  Private Finance	Bidding rounds for the National Housing Programme are announced periodically.  In year bidding by arrangement with Housing Corporation

<p>To encourage private landlords and Registered Social Landlords to provide additional accommodation for homeless people</p>	<p>To provide homes for homeless people</p>	<p>To be monitored by Homelessness Strategy Monitoring Group</p>	<p>Decent Housing Grants Homelessness Prevention Initiatives (Housing Needs) Voluntary Sector Partners</p>	<p>Ongoing Appointment of officer to be funded from Homelessness Prevention Grant (Sept 2008)</p>
<p>To complete Local Development Framework (LDF)</p>	<p>Statutory requirement to complete LDF. We aim to provide a robust framework that fosters the development of a balanced supply of affordable housing.</p>	<p>LDF to be published</p>	<p>Planning Team – interim planning targets agreed January 2008 Housing Market Assessment adopted by Council January 2008</p>	<p>Consultation ongoing. Submission Draft Core Strategy Completed in 2009 LDF Adopted 2012</p>
<p><b>INCREASING STOCK (SPECIAL NEEDS)</b></p>				
<p>To identify opportunities to increase the supply of accommodation for homeless people over the age of 25</p>	<p>The Housing Needs Study for People with Complex Needs addresses a particular shortfall in provision for people in this age range</p>	<p>To be monitored by Homelessness Strategy Monitoring Group</p>	<p>Not identified at this stage</p>	

To identify opportunities to increase the supply of supported housing for pregnant teenagers and young mothers.	To support Government Strategies in respect of teenage pregnancy's.	We will publish outcomes in our annual report	Supporting People Homelessness Grant Private Sector Stock	Ongoing
To identify and support opportunities to increase the supply of accommodation for substance and alcohol users who wish to lead substance drug free lifestyle.	Reduces homelessness Reduces re-offending Housing Needs Study for people with Complex Needs identifies Alcohol misuse as an increasingly prevalent issue.	We will publish outcomes in our annual report	Supporting People SMASH Project DAAT	Ongoing
<b>INCREASING AVAILABILITY OF STOCK (PRIVATE SECTOR)</b>				
To explore opportunities for attracting Housing Corporation grant for private sector provision	To increase the supply of affordable housing	To be included in our annual report	Private Sector Funding	In year bidding rounds for Housing Corporation Funding.
To encourage landlords to let properties to homeless people	Increase options for homeless people and reduce pressure on private stock	To be included in our annual report	Bond schemes Tenancy Deposit Schemes Housing Benefit	Ongoing

To encourage the release of properties to be made available for rent by private owners through the Private Sector Housing Strategy (including Empty Homes and Grants Strategies)	To increase the supply of affordable housing	Publication of Private Sector Housing Strategy	Decent Homes Grants	Updated Private Sector Strategy in place 2008.
To consider the development of the Home Improvement Agency in North Nottinghamshire	To attract additional funding for Decent Homes and associated grants which will be targeted to improve housing conditions in the Private Sector.	Consultation with Stakeholders	Decent Homes Grant Supporting People Local Authority contribution	Ongoing
<b>TENANCY SUSTAINMENT</b>				
To provide a network of floating support services available to Council tenants, Registered Social Landlords, Private Sector Tenants and Owner Occupiers.	Reduces levels of homelessness	Monitoring reports from support service providers are required by the Nottinghamshire Supporting People Partnership	Supporting People Programme Volunteer Sector Providers	Ongoing

<b>CUSTOMER FEEDBACK</b>				
To ensure that customer feedback is used to improve services through the development and monitoring of Service Delivery Plans	To ensure our customers receive the services they require.	Will be included in Service Delivery Plans (SDP) published on website.	Housing Needs Team Customer Complaints Procedure	SDP published annually (Ongoing)
To engage with the Homelessness Umbrella Group to ensure service users needs are met	To foster partnership working with all stakeholders	Minutes of Homelessness Umbrella Group	Housing Needs Team	Ongoing
To improve communication with clients	To improve service delivery	Leaflets Training Programme	Housing Needs Teams	Ongoing
To ensure difficult to reach groups have access to services	To ensure our services are accessible to all members of our community	Equalities Impact Assessments included in Service Delivery Plans and placed on website.	Housing Needs Team	Ongoing

<b>MOVE ON ACCOMMODATION</b>				
To increase the availability of move on accommodation	To prevent projects 'silting up'	Through revision of our Allocations Policy and implementation of Choice Based Lettings.	BDC/ A1 Housing	Jan 2009
		Development of 'Move-on' protocol covering all supported housing providers	BDC/ A1 Housing Framework HA	Sept 2008
		Development of new accommodation  To be monitored by Homelessness Strategy Monitoring Group	Housing Corporation Grant	
<b>YOUNG PEOPLE</b>				
Take forward recommendations arising from a sub regional Younger persons Housing Needs Survey	As part of the development of a sub regional Housing Strategy	Publication of sub regional Housing Strategy	Revenue support from Bassetlaw District Council, Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, N.E. Derbyshire District Council and Government Office for the East Midlands	Housing Needs Study completed April 2008.  Sub-regional Housing Strategy published November 2008.

<b>OLDER PEOPLE</b>				
Take forward recommendations arising from a sub regional Older Persons Housing Needs Survey	As part of the development of a sub Regional Housing Strategy.	Publication of sub regional Housing Strategy	Revenue support from Bassetlaw District Council, Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, N.E. Derbyshire District Council and Government Office for the East Midlands.	Housing Needs Study completed April 2008  Sub regional Housing Strategy published November 2008.
<b>B.M.E COMMUNITIES</b>				
Take forward recommendations arising from a sub regional Housing Needs Survey covering B.M.E Communities including migrant workers.	As part of the development of a sub regional housing strategy.  To promote racial equality.	Publication of sub regional Housing Strategy	Revenue support from Bassetlaw District Council, Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, N.E. Derbyshire District Council and Government Office for the East Midlands.	Housing Needs Study completed April 2008  Sub regional Housing Strategy published November 2008.

<b>PEOPLE WITH CHAOTIC LIFESTYLES</b>				
Take forward recommendations arising from a sub regional Housing Needs Survey covering people with chaotic lifestyles ( also see appendix E).	As part of the development of a sub regional Housing Strategy	Publication of sub regional Housing Strategy	Revenue support from Bassetlaw District Council, Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, N.E. Derbyshire District Council and Government Office for the East Midlands.	Housing Needs Study completed April 2008  Sub regional Housing Strategy published November 2008.
<b>PERSONS WITH A LEARNING DIFFICULTY</b>				
To ensure persons with a learning disability have equal access to housing and homelessness services	To ensure our services are accessible to all members of our community	Equalities Impact Assessments included in Service Delivery Plans and placed on website	Learning Disability Partnership board  Support Services	Ongoing
<b>PERSONS WITH A MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE</b>				
To ensure persons with a mental health issue have equal access to housing and homelessness services	To ensure our services are accessible to all members of our community	Equalities Impact Assessments included in Service Delivery Plans and placed on Website	Supported Housing Projects  Supports Services	Ongoing

<b>PERSONS WITH A PHYSICAL DISABILITY</b>				
To ensure persons with a physical disability have equal access to housing and homelessness services	To ensure our services are accessible to all members of our community	Equalities Impact Assessments included in Service Delivery Plans and placed on Website	Adaptations Programme for A1 Stock includes budgetary provision and protocols.	Ongoing
<b>RURAL COMMUNITIES</b>				
To ensure people living in a rural community have equal access to housing and homelessness survey	To ensure homeless people living in rural communities are not disadvantaged	Outcomes will be published in our annual report	Home Visiting Services (A1 Housing and Homelessness Team)  MASH Project	Ongoing
<b>GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS</b>				
To identify suitable locations to meet shortfalls in the site provision	To meet requirements of 2002 Housing Act	Planning Applications available for public scrutiny  To be included in Local Development Framework.	Housing Team  Planning Team  Estates Unit	Site identification  Publication of Local Development Framework

<b>DOMESTIC VIOLENCE</b>				
To improve the overall provision and effectiveness of local authority services designed to help victims of domestic violence as measured by Best Value Performance Indicator No 225 (See Appendix C)	Check if statutory	Published annually in Councils Best Value Performance Plan	Nottinghamshire Women's Aid  Nottinghamshire Police  Domestic Violence Coordinator jointly funded by Bassetlaw District Council and Newark & Sherwood District Council	BV225 to achieve target of 90.1% by 2009/10.
<b>EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENTS</b>				
Produce a Service Delivery Plan each year which will include Equalities Impact Assessments	To ensure all of our communities have equal access to services	Service Delivery Plan will be published on our website	Strategic Housing Team  Housing Needs Team  Housing Grants Team	Annually produced

<b>MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS</b>				
To relocate Women's Refuge	Current refuge does not meet modern standards	To be published in our annual report	Nottinghamshire Women's Aid NCHA Housing Corporation Funding	Ongoing
To upgrade the Potter Street Supported Housing Project in Worksop and provide additional accommodation (2 units)	To provide additional training and education facilities addressing homelessness/ worklessness issues.  To provide a better standard of amenity for client	Project Group reports to CLG.  To be included in Annual Report	Places for Change Funding Confirmed.  Housing Corporation Funding requested.	Start on Site (Dec 2008)  Works Complete (Jan 2010)
<b>MONITORING THE STRATEGY</b>				
To ensure the Homelessness Strategy is monitored and delivered and further objectives are set up as appropriate.	To ensure the strategy is delivered	To be reported to the monitoring group	Bassetlaw Homelessness Umbrella Group	Bi-annual meeting of Monitoring Group.

## APPENDIX B

### PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TARGETS

Both statutory and local performance indicators are included in the Councils Best Value Review Performance Plan, which relate to services provided by the Councils Homelessness Department.

	Outturn 2006/2007	Outturn 2007/2008	Target 2008/2009	Target 2009/2010	Target 2010/2011
% of homelessness decisions made in 33 days	92.86%	94.28%	95.00%	96.00%	97.00%
Average stay in B & B accommodation	5.62 weeks	2.17 weeks	No targets set. No longer included in Council's Best Value Performance Plan		
Average stay in hostel accommodation (families with children and pregnant women)	This indicated relates to families or pregnant women placed by the Council in hostel accommodation. The Council does not use hostel accommodation for this client group.				
No of rough sleepers	0	2	2	2	2
Change in number of families in temporary accommodation *	-50%	N/a	No longer included in Council's Best Value Performance Plan		
No of applicants whom housing advice case work intervention resolved situation (per 1000)	0	1	2	2	3
% of cases accepted as homeless who have previously been accepted in last two years	0	0	No longer included in Council's Best Value Performance Plan		
No of cases of homeless acceptances in last two years	0	0	0	0	0



### **ACTIONS AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

#### **Introduction**

In April 2005 the Government introduced a new Best Value Performance Indicator (BVI 225) as part of the national strategy to reduce the incidence of domestic violence.

The purpose of BVPI 225 is to assess the overall provision and effectiveness of local authority services designed to help victims of domestic violence and prevent further domestic violence. As with all Performance Indicators the Council aims for continuous and sustained improvement.

#### **Description of BVPI 225**

The percentage of the following questions to which a local authority can answer 'yes'. *(To answer 'yes' the authority must have fully achieved the goal as described; it is not enough that the authority is working towards the goal).*

1. Has the local authority produced a directory of local services that can help victims of domestic violence?
2. Is there within the local authority area a minimum of 1 refuge place per ten thousand population?
3. Does the local authority employ directly or fund a voluntary sector-based domestic violence co-ordinator? *(For District Councils of fewer than 35,000 households, the responsibility for co-ordinating domestic violence can be designated within the job description of an existing senior officer. For District Councils that contribute to a county-wide co-ordinator, see definition).*
4. Has the local authority produced and adopted a multi-agency strategy to tackle domestic violence developed in partnership with other agencies?
5. Does the local authority support and facilitate a local multi-agency domestic violence forum that meets at least 4 times a year?
6. Has the local authority developed an information sharing protocol and had it agreed between key statutory partners?
7. Has the local authority developed, launched and promoted a 'sanctuary' type scheme to enable victims and their children to remain in their own home, where they choose to do so and where safety can be guaranteed? *(For smaller district authorities, of fewer than 35,000 households this can be arranged in partnership with neighbouring authorities).*
8. Has there been a reduction in the percentage of cases accepted as homeless due to domestic violence that had previously been re-housed in that last two years by that local authority as a result of domestic violence?

9. Does the Council's tenancy agreement have a specific clause stating that perpetration of domestic violence by a tenant can be considered ground for eviction? *(For local authorities that have transferred their housing stock, the clause should be contained in the LSVT organisation's tenancy agreement).*
10. Has the local authority funded and developed a domestic violence education pack in consultation with the wider domestic violence forum?
11. Has the authority carried out a programme of multi-agency training in the last twelve months covering front line and managerial staff in at least two of the following groups; housing staff, social services staff providing services in the local authority area; health staff, and front line police officers?

### **Performance Management**

The Authority in partnership with Newark and Sherwood District Council, have been appointed a Domestic Violence Co-Ordinator to improve performance in respect of this indicator.

Performance against compliance in respect of the above checklist as published in the Councils Best Value Performance Plan 2007/08 is as follows:

<b>Compliance with BV 225 Checklist</b>	
2006/2007	27.3%
2007/2008	63.6%
2008/2009 (Target)	81.8%
2009/2010 (Target)	90.9%
2010/2011 (Target)	90.9%

# Homeless Watch 2007

A Snapshot Survey of Homelessness in  
Nottinghamshire

24<sup>th</sup> September to 7<sup>th</sup> October 2007

**Bassetlaw District Council Mini Report**

HLG Resource Service

March 2008

Copies of this report are available on the Internet at

[www.hlg.org.uk/homelesswatch.htm](http://www.hlg.org.uk/homelesswatch.htm)

## **Background:**

The Nottinghamshire Homeless Watch Survey 2007 is a snapshot survey that records details of everyone who presented as homeless to participating agencies in the County during the two week period from 24th September to 7th October 2007.

For the purposes of the survey and report, homeless people are defined as those people presenting to agencies who were:

- living in something not normally considered to be housing (such as derelict buildings, sheds, vehicles – i.e. sleeping rough)
- living with the insecurity of not knowing where they would sleep tomorrow or over the next 28 days e.g. sleeping on a friends floor for a few days or staying temporarily with relatives
- living in a state of dispossession (i.e. not being able to have their belongings in the same place that they are sleeping).

The main report is complemented by a set of district reports which summarise survey findings for each of the boroughs and districts within the county, including Nottingham City.

This report provides an analysis of survey findings concerning homelessness in the **Bassetlaw** district.

For the purpose of the district reports, figures on the number of presentations and homeless people are calculated using a different methodology than has been used for the area analysis in the main Nottinghamshire-wide Homeless Watch report. Figures in this report for Bassetlaw District Council are based on presentations by people who were either recorded by the Homeless Watch Survey 2007 as receiving advice about their homelessness whilst in the Bassetlaw area **or** recorded as seeking advice whilst in another Nottinghamshire authority area but as having a local connection to Bassetlaw.

A local connection was defined as:

- family connection
- residence in area for 6 of the last 12 months or 3 of the last 5 years
- employment in the area.

This methodology is consistent with that used in some of the district based homelessness snapshot surveys that have taken place in previous years, notably the regular annual surveys conducted in Ashfield.

This is the fourth survey of its kind carried out across Nottinghamshire and this report on Bassetlaw district takes the opportunity presented by the availability of four years of data to draw comparisons with survey findings from previous years and where possible identify trends in local homelessness.

[NB: For the purposes of brevity this report generally refers to all presentations by homeless people in or with a connection to Bassetlaw as those 'presenting in Bassetlaw'.]

**Table One: Homeless People in Bassetlaw, or with a Local Connection to the area**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Number</b> Adjusted Figure to Take Account of Repeat Presentations
<b>Adults</b>	83
<b>Children</b>	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>

There were a 94 presentations by homeless adults in Bassetlaw including 11 repeat presentations and not including dependent children. Repeat presentations are where individuals presented to more than one agency during the survey fortnight – identified by comparing initials, gender and date of birth information. Most of the data tables set out below have been adjusted to remove repeats except where it is useful to show the picture for all presentations and helpful to indicate potential changes in the circumstances of those presenting during the survey period.

After removing repeats and adding in dependent children, **Table One** shows a total of 126 presentations consisting of 83 adults and 43 dependent children.

These figures compare with a total of 173 presentations by homeless people including 109 adults and 64 dependent children in 2006 and 216 in 2005, including 144 adults and 72 dependent children; indicating a continuing and welcome decrease in levels of homelessness in Bassetlaw - numbers recorded for 2007 are less than 60% of those recorded in 2005.

### **Presentations and Local Connection**

**Table One (a):**

<b>Slept Rough Type</b>	<b>All in Bassetlaw</b>	<b>Bassetlaw - Rough Sleepers Only</b>
<b>Actual Presentations in Bassetlaw</b>	88	10
<b>Actual Presentations outside Bassetlaw</b>	6	3
<b>Presented in or with a local connection to Bassetlaw</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>13</b>

Table One (a) shows that of the 94 total adult presentations made in Bassetlaw or by those with a connection to the district including repeats, 88 were made in Bassetlaw itself and 6 outside the district. The table also provides a breakdown for rough sleepers showing that of the 13 presentations made by rough sleepers, ten were sleeping rough in Bassetlaw and three outside the district.

**Table Two: Area where advice received**

Local Authority Area	Male		Female		Not Stated		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
<b>Bassetlaw</b>	50	93	36	97	2	67	88	94
<b>Ashfield</b>	1	2	0	0	1	33	2	2
<b>Mansfield</b>	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	1
<b>Nottingham City</b>	2	4	0	0	0	0	2	2
<b>Rushcliffe</b>	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>100</b>

Table Two provides a more detailed breakdown of where those presenting as homeless in Bassetlaw or with a local connection to the district actually presented for advice during the survey fortnight. It shows that the vast majority (94%) presented in Bassetlaw itself with small numbers in other districts.

Please note that the following tables have been adjusted to remove any duplicate presentations, using the number of actual individuals rather than presentations unless otherwise stated.

**Table Three: Age by gender**

Age Range	Male	Female	Gender Not Stated	Total
<b>16 &amp;17 Years Old</b>	5	3	0	8
<b>18-24 Years Old</b>	18	11	1	30
<b>25-40 Years Old</b>	13	11	2	26
<b>41-59 Years Old</b>	7	5	0	12
<b>60 years old and over</b>	1	0	0	1
<b>No Date of Birth Supplied</b>	3	3	0	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>83</b>

Table Three shows the age of people who presented as homeless during the survey period (not including dependent children). 38 of those presenting were under 25 compared with 41 in 2006, suggesting a small increase in homelessness amongst under twenty fives in Bassetlaw. The percentage of under twenty fives in Bassetlaw at almost 46% is slightly higher than the 41% for Nottinghamshire as a whole as is the figure for 16 and 17 year olds at over 9% compared to the 8% figure across the county.

**Table Four: Gender**

<u>Gender</u>	Number	%
<b>Male</b>	47	57
<b>Female</b>	33	40
<b>Not Stated</b>	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100</b>

Table Four shows a roughly 60:40 gender split amongst homeless adults in Bassetlaw. This is very similar to figures for the county as a whole. This is different

to last year when the figures were 46% women and 51% men with three percent where gender was not recorded.

**Table Five: Ethnic Origin**

<b>Ethnic Origin</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>White: British</b>	81	98
<b>White: Other</b>	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100</b>

Table Five indicates that very low numbers of people from Black and Minority ethnic communities are recorded as homeless in Bassetlaw or with a local connection to the district; with only just over 2% giving their ethnic origin as other than White British. This is the same as data recorded in 2006. The UK 2001 Census profile gives a figure of 2.7% of the general population of Bassetlaw of an ethnic origin other than White British.

**Table Six: Household Type**

<b>Household Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage - Bassetlaw</b>	<b>Percentage - Nottinghamshire</b>
<b>Single Person (No Children)</b>	52	63	69
<b>Single Parent With Children</b>	23	28	17
<b>Couple With Children</b>	4	5	7
<b>Childless Couple</b>	3	4	5
<b>Not Stated</b>	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The data within Table Six shows that 63% of presentations were made by single people and 28% by single parents with children compared to figures of 69% and 17% for the county as a whole. The proportion of single parents with children at 28% is notably higher than for the county and compares with a figure of 29% for Bassetlaw in 2006 and 20% in 2005.

**Table Seven: Age and number of dependent children**

<b>Age of Children</b>	<b>Number of Children in this Age Range</b>
<b>0 - 4 Years Old</b>	19
<b>5 – 10 Years Old</b>	9
<b>11 – 15 Years Old</b>	5
<b>16 &amp; 17 Years Old</b>	9
<b>18 Years Old and Over</b>	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>

Table Seven shows the number of children recorded according to the age of the child. A total of 43 dependent children were recorded within the data for Bassetlaw compared with 64 in 2006 and 72 in 2005. The 2007 figure is less than 60% of the figure for 2005. The majority of children were under eleven and the largest number under four years old (19 or 44% of the total).

## Homeless Care leavers in Bassetlaw

**Table Eight: Care Leavers by age**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Number of This Age With Care History</b>
<b>16 &amp; 17 Years Old</b>	0
<b>18 – 21 Years Old</b>	5
<b>22 Years Old and Over</b>	3
<b>Not stated</b>	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>

**Table Nine: Where people were in care**

	<b>Number</b>
<b>Nottinghamshire</b>	4
<b>Outside Notts</b>	2
<b>Not Stated</b>	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>

Tables Eight and Nine provide information on homeless care leavers in Bassetlaw or with a connection to the district. Table Eight shows that a total of eight care leavers or just over 9% of total individuals presented as homeless in Bassetlaw or with a local connection to the district - this compares with 19% for Nottinghamshire. The 2007 figure is the same as that recorded for last year and compares with 25 people recorded in 2005 as having been in the care of the local authority – indicating a notable decrease this year.

**Table Ten: Support Needs**

<b>Support Needs</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage of Presentations- Bassetlaw</b>	<b>Percentage - Nottinghamshire</b>
<b>Drug Abuse</b>	13	14	29
<b>Ex-Offender</b>	13	14	27
<b>Domestic Violence</b>	7	7	10
<b>Mental Health</b>	7	7	15
<b>Learning Difficulties</b>	5	5	6
<b>Alcohol Abuse</b>	4	4	15
<b>Physically Disabled</b>	2	2	3
<b>Other</b>	14	15	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>

Table Ten sets out the support needs of people who presented during the survey period. As different data is recorded by agencies for different presentations by the same person, these figures are based on all presentations rather than the number of individuals. Please note that people could record more than one support need and that 33 (35%) presentations reported no support needs.

The data indicates that the support needs of those in or connected to Bassetlaw are generally lower than those for the whole of Nottinghamshire. For example, the percentage of people requesting support due to drug abuse is less than half that for the county as a whole and for alcohol abuse almost a quarter of the level recorded for the county. The number (13) and proportion (14%) show a continued decrease in the prevalence of drug use amongst homeless people in Bassetlaw when compared to figures of 21 and 20% in 2006 and 38 and 23% in 2005.

The proportion of people requesting support due to domestic violence at 7% continues the downward trend reported last year when 9% indicated a similar support need and compared with the 19% recorded for Bassetlaw in 2005.

**Table Eleven: Previous Night's Accommodation**

<b>Where Person Spent the Previous Night</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage - Bassetlaw</b>	<b>Percentage - Nottinghamshire</b>
<b>Friend's Home</b>	28	30	26
<b>Own Home</b>	14	15	11
<b>Slept Rough</b>	13	14	24
<b>Parents' Home</b>	12	13	12
<b>Other</b>	6	6	4
<b>Other Relative's Home</b>	6	6	6
<b>Partner's Home</b>	4	4	2
<b>B&amp;B Lodgings</b>	3	3	1
<b>Custody</b>	2	2	2
<b>Emergency Bed</b>	2	2	1
<b>Hostel</b>	2	2	6
<b>Grandparents' Home</b>	1	1	2
<b>Hospital</b>	0	0	2
<b>Social Services</b>	0	0	0
<b>Not Stated</b>	1	1	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table Eleven provides a breakdown of where those presenting as homeless in Bassetlaw or with a local connection to the district spent the previous night. As the place where a person was staying the previous night could change during the course of the survey period, the figures shown are for all presentations (excluding dependent children) rather than the 83 individuals who were homeless.

The percentage of rough sleepers is lower at 14% than the 24% recorded across Nottinghamshire. The proportion of rough sleepers is the same as the figure last year and very close to the 13% figure for 2005. The percentage that spent the previous night at a friend's home is higher at 30% than the 26% recorded for the County. Three presentations reported spending the previous night in Bed and Breakfast accommodation.

## Rough Sleeping in Bassetlaw

**Table Twelve: Type of Rough Sleeping**

Slept Rough Type	Number	Percentage - Bassetlaw	Percentage - Nottinghamshire
Building/Structure Not For Habitation	7	54	24
Sleeping In Open Air	2	15	53
Squat	0	0	9
Don't Know	4	31	11
Not Stated	0	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table Thirteen: Time Spent Rough Sleeping**

Time Rough Sleeping	Number in This Category	Percentage - Bassetlaw	Percentage - Nottinghamshire
1 Night		0	5
More than 1 Night up to 1 Week	2	15	18
More than 1 Week up to 1 Month	2	15	17
More than 1 Month up to 3 Months	3	23	19
More than 3 Months up to 6 Months	1	8	11
More than 6 Months up to 12 Months	1	8	14
More than 12 Months	0	0	10
Don't Know	0	0	4
Not Stated	4	31	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Tables Twelve and Thirteen provide more detailed information on the levels and nature of rough sleeping in Bassetlaw. The total number of presentations by rough sleepers at 13 compares with 16 last year and 21 in 2005; indicating a small decrease on last year and a welcome and continuing downward trend.

Table Twelve indicates that rough sleepers in (or with a connection to) Bassetlaw are much less likely to sleep in the open air than for Nottinghamshire as a whole. Table Thirteen indicates that only one rough sleeper was recorded as having slept rough for between three to six months compared to a figure of 24 or 11% for the county as a whole and 25% for Bassetlaw in 2006.

**Table Fourteen: Comparison of Previous & Coming Nights Accommodation**

		Where Person Is Sleeping the Night Following Contact With An Agency															
		B & B Lodgings	Custody	Emergency Bed	Friend's Home	Grandparents	Hospital	Hostel	Other Relative's	Own Home	Parents Home	Partner's Home	Sleeping Rough	Social Services	Other	No Data Supplied	Totals
Where Person Slept The Night Prior To Seeing Agency For Advice	B&B Lodgings			1	2												3
	Custody		2														2
	Emergency Bed			2													2
	Friend's Home			1	20	1									1	5	28
	Grandparent's					1											1
	Hospital																
	Hostel				1				1								2
	Other Relative's				1				5								6
	Own Home				1					13							14
	Parent's Home								1		11						12
	Partner's Home				1							2				1	4
	Sleeping Rough			1	2								6			4	13
	Social Services																0
	Other				1										4	1	6
	No Data Supplied															1	1
Totals	0	2	5	29	2	0	1	6	13	11	2	6	0	5	12	94	

Table Fourteen provides a comparison of where a person spent the night prior to reporting to the survey with data about their expected housing circumstances the coming night. Please note that these figures are for all presentations (excluding dependent children), rather than individuals.

The most interesting point that can be drawn from the data is that 13 people slept rough the night before completing the survey and only 6 expected to sleep rough the coming night.

**ABSTRACT FROM HOUSING NEEDS STUDY: PEOPLE WITH COMPLEX NEEDS**

(Completed by SHELTER: April 2008)

Bassetlaw has a reasonable amount of provision for people with complex needs, particularly in and around Worksop. There are two hostels; one available for emergency needs whilst the other is used for move on and self contained accommodation with floating support.

Multi-agency working and day services are reasonably good. Support with drug and mental health needs is generally available and at least two schemes can be described as innovative. These are the employment of a dual diagnosis worker by the PCT and DAAT, and the development of the Gateford Chamber scheme. The latter scheme provides twenty-four hour support but is not Supporting People funded.

Overall, the level of provision for a town the size of Worksop (40,000) is greater than in many larger communities. However, despite this our research did reveal some gaps in provision.

Perhaps the biggest gap in services is in the East and North of the district. There is some floating support available across the district, but floating support may not be suitable for the needs of people at the more complex end of the scale. The only specialist accommodation based provision is for young people and this is based in Retford. To meet this need, accommodation-based provision across the district and for over 25's should be developed. The development of projects should be based on small-scale units, similar to that which we have recommended for Bolsover and North East Derbyshire. Although evidence is limited, Retford appears to have the highest level of need. It is likely that such a project would need to operate on a drug-managed basis, as practised by Framework and Nacro.

In Worksop, consideration should be given to switching the emergency provision to a harm minimisation approach, as the project currently works with drug users. Alongside this, however, there is a need to create a drug free project for former or non-drug users.

There is concern about a rise in problematic alcohol consumption. The main need is to increase access to treatment and support. Resources for this will come mainly from the health sector. However, from a housing perspective, good links are needed between both alcohol services and housing to ensure homelessness is prevented in those cases where alcohol consumption is a problem.

The employment of the dual diagnosis worker allows for engagement with some of the most complex cases. This is a relatively small group of people but their needs can extend beyond the services currently provided by supported housing providers. Consideration should, therefore, be given to developing a specialist dual diagnosis project. It is important that such a project is able to work with people with a dual diagnosis as well as those with a formal mental health diagnosis.