

# Improving outcomes for children and young people in housing need

A benchmarking guide for joint working between services



# Shelter

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Cover photograph by Andrea Testoni

To protect the identity of Shelter clients, models  
have been used in photographs

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The policy and governance arrangements for Housing  
and Children's Services outlined in this guide were  
correct at the time of publication.

# Foreword



At the end of 2006 Shelter published two reports (*Chance of a lifetime*<sup>1</sup> and *Against the odds*<sup>2</sup>) that looked at the impact of bad housing and homelessness on children's lives. Their researches followed on from Shelter's Million Children Campaign launched in 2004, which drew public attention to the number of Britain's children living in bad housing. Shelter set up its own Children's Service to establish pilot projects across the regions and learn about what works well in meeting the needs of homeless and badly housed children. We have a number of Regional Children's Co-ordinators working with local and regional government across Britain to identify and highlight good practice in joint working while also promoting our advice services to the staff and clients of Children's Centres. While some progress has been made, it is disappointing that in 2009 more than one million children still live in overcrowded households and this number is rising.

Bad housing has a detrimental impact on children's health and behaviour. There is greater likelihood of children suffering injury while their school attendance and educational achievement may also be affected, making it harder for them to escape poverty in the long term and disadvantaging them in relation to their peers. Effective joint working between local authorities and agencies to provide high quality services for the families of homeless and badly housed children will give more children the chance to succeed. You will find some excellent examples of how dedicated services can make a difference to the lives of homeless and badly housed children in this guide.

Children are all too often the hidden victims of homelessness. With everyone working together, we know we can change this and bring about effective and lasting improvements and work towards eradicating child homelessness in Britain.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam Younger'.

**Sam Younger**  
Chief Executive, Shelter

1 Shelter, *Chance of a lifetime*, Lisa Harker, September 2006

2 Shelter, *Against the odds*, Becky Rice, November 2006

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# Glossary of acronyms

<b>ALMO</b>	Arm's-length management organisation
<b>CAA</b>	Comprehensive Area Assessment
<b>CAF</b>	Common Assessment Framework
<b>CLG</b>	Communities and Local Government (Government department)
<b>CTB</b>	Children's Trust Board
<b>CYPP</b>	Children and Young People's Plan
<b>DCSF</b>	Department for Children, Schools and Families
<b>ECM</b>	Every Child Matters (Government programme)
<b>JSNA</b>	Joint Strategy Needs Assessment
<b>LA</b>	Local authority
<b>LAA</b>	Local Area Agreements
<b>LPSA</b>	Local Public Service Agreement
<b>LSCB</b>	Local Safeguarding Children's Board
<b>LSP</b>	Local Strategic Partnership
<b>NCAS</b>	National Care Advisory Service
<b>NI</b>	National indicator
<b>RSL</b>	Registered social landlord
<b>TYS</b>	Targeted youth support
<b>YOT</b>	Youth Offending Team

# Summary and recommendations

Government legislation enshrined within the Children Act 2004, the Homelessness Act 2002, and the Child Poverty and Apprenticeship Skills, Learning and Children Bill (both to be enacted by the Government in 2010), have brought about a step change in the way services respond to and address the issue of child, family and youth homelessness. This legislation and its duties provide opportunities for services to work together more effectively. In May 2008, the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and the Government's department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) published *Joint working between Housing and Children's Services: Preventing homelessness and tackling its effects on children and young people* which sets out their commitment to work together to achieve key strategic objectives.

Shelter's model of working together in this guide demonstrates how you can achieve some of these objectives at governance, strategic and frontline delivery level within your local authority. We also explore existing processes that are in place and can be used to improve joint working.

Below are our key recommendations for effective joint working between Housing and Children's Services, and guidance on implementing these recommendations follows in later sections.

## Through governance

- Directors and lead members of local authority (LA) Housing and Children's Services demonstrate a commitment to meeting the needs of homeless children and young people.
- All related agencies – Children's Trust Boards (CTBs), Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCBs), Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) etc – include appropriate and effective representation from both Housing and Children's Services.
- Housing and Children's Services understand each other's roles and the legal framework and government directives for each of the services.
- Children's Trusts include a representative from the local housing authority on their boards, with clearly defined role and responsibilities.
- Housing Services are represented and actively involved in the LSCB.

## Through strategy

- Plans or strategies include targets concerning the welfare of homeless children and young people.
- Funding is aligned, and services for homeless children and young people (and those at risk of homelessness) are jointly planned and commissioned.
- Joint policies and protocols are in place for assessing the needs of homeless children and young people, and joint responsibility for meeting these needs is accepted and agreed.
- LAs consider the joint impact both Housing and Children's Services can have on achieving the 61 national indicators (NIs) identified as contributing to improving the outcomes of children and young people who are homeless and/or badly housed.
- Children and Young People's Plans (CYPPs) ensure that housing is given due importance across all of the ECM outcomes' areas.
- LAs use information on homelessness and its effects on children and young people to prioritise NIs in their Local Area Agreements (LAAs).

## Through processes

- LAs introduce joint-working strategies, policies, and processes to act as an effective safety net<sup>3</sup> for children, young people and families found to be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

## Through frontline delivery

- Housing and Children's Services are located together, share training and work jointly on prevention and support for homeless children and young people or those at risk of homelessness.
- Partnership working extends beyond the services traditionally considered as 'Children's Services', such as Education and Youth Services, to include Housing and Homelessness Services.
- Frontline housing staff are trained and supported to use the recognised Common Assessment Framework (CAF).
- Housing staff share all relevant information about children in housing need with Children's Services.

3 Safety net, preventing them from becoming homeless or meeting their homelessness needs.

# Introduction

Shelter supports the Government's commitment to 'Change for Children'.<sup>4</sup> However, we believe that change for homeless children has not gained sufficient prominence. An estimated 1.6 million children today live in bad housing.<sup>5</sup> A wide range of issues is covered by 'bad housing', including homelessness, overcrowding, insecurity, housing in a dilapidated state, and living in deprived neighbourhoods. We know that the impact bad housing or homelessness has on children and young people's lives can devastate their future life chances.

## The Need

The number of children in England who suffer due to a national shortage of decent and affordable homes is shocking. Children who live in housing that is overcrowded, temporary, run-down, damp or dangerous number 1.6. million.

- 'Children living in overcrowded housing are up to 10 times more likely to contract meningitis.'
- 'Children in deprived areas are three times more likely to be hit by a car.'
- 'Children in unfit and overcrowded homes miss school more frequently due to illnesses and infections.'
- 'Homeless children are more likely to show signs of behavioural problems such as aggression, hyperactivity and impulsivity.'
- 'The high costs of temporary accommodation can make it difficult to make working worthwhile financially, trapping homeless families in unemployment, which is strongly associated with poverty and reduced life chances.'

These are all research findings in the *Chance of a lifetime* report, commissioned by Shelter (2006). The research by child poverty expert Lisa Harker highlighted how bad housing and homelessness can seriously undermine the Every Child Matters outcomes for children.

More recently, Shelter and the charitable Trust Eaga Partnership jointly commissioned research<sup>6</sup> by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen)

– a longitudinal study looking at the impact of living persistently in bad housing. It found that:

- an increased duration of living in overcrowded accommodation is significantly associated with children feeling unhappy about their own health
- an increased duration of living in accommodation in poor condition is significantly associated with being bullied in or out of school, getting in trouble with the police and having a longstanding illness, disability or infirmity.

Shelter believes that a stable home and surroundings are fundamental to the wellbeing of children and young people. The Government says children and young people should 'Be healthy', 'Stay safe', 'Enjoy and achieve', 'Make a positive contribution' and 'Achieve economic wellbeing', yet our research shows the five Every Child Matters outcomes are seriously undermined if we fail to recognise and prioritise a child's need for a stable and decent home at the heart of any legislation or policy.

## The Support

We know those of you working in Children's Services and Housing departments don't want to see a child's right to a happy and fulfilled life undermined by the effects of bad housing and homelessness. We propose a continuous partnership whereby we can share forward-thinking practices and develop innovative new ways of joint working between Housing and Children's Services to secure significant changes in how we protect, support, and encourage the development and wellbeing of children and young people.

Recent policy initiatives from central government have started to raise the profile of housing and homelessness within the 'Change for Children' agenda. The Child Poverty Unit<sup>7</sup> and the good practice guidance about joint working published by DCSF and CLG are two positive examples of a commitment to put child homelessness on the political agenda. Now it's time for us to work together to influence and shape this agenda and bring about positive and lasting change for homeless children, young people and their families.

4 The *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* agenda is a shared programme of change to improve outcomes for all children and young people through the 'joining up' of services. More information can be found at <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/>

5 Shelter, *Chance of a lifetime*, Lisa Harker, September 2006

6 Barnes, M., Butt, S. and Tomaszewski, W. *What happens to children in persistently bad housing?*, NatCen, September 2008

7 This is a joint, Government unit comprising: the Department for Children, Schools and Families, Department for Work and Pensions and HM Treasury.

## Action

There's growing recognition that Housing and Children's Services need to work together to support and address issues associated with child and youth homelessness. Two recent House of Lords judgments (**R (M) v Hammersmith & Fulham LBC [2008]**<sup>8</sup> UKHL 14 and **R (G) v LB Southwark [2009]**<sup>9</sup> UKHL 26) clarified the interpretation of the priority need category for homeless 16- and 17-year-olds and highlighted the primacy of the Children Act 1989 in responding to young single homelessness, meaning that most 16- and 17-year-olds presenting as homeless should be deemed 'children in need'.<sup>10</sup>

The Government's Every Child Matters agenda and the Children Act 2004 have both been instrumental in creating opportunities for joint working between Children's and Young People's Services and Housing departments. There are already a number of local authorities (LAs) nationally that are responding to the needs of homeless and badly housed children and young people through the development of joint-working initiatives.

We have produced this guide to share, with you (our partners), some of the forward-thinking practices adopted by LAs in their efforts to alleviate the negative impact bad housing and

homelessness have on children. Practical case studies throughout will show you how effective joint-working practices are in significantly improving the outcomes for homeless children, young people and their families. Joint-working practices can be carried out at every level of managing and delivering service provision – through four essential layers that envelop a child-centred, outcome-led vision at the heart of the ECM 'onion' model:

- integrated frontline delivery
- integrated processes
- integrated strategy
- interagency governance.

This framework is elaborated upon in the next section on page 10.

Our guide is aimed at those of you who are professionals working in LA Children's Services and Housing departments, and is useful reference for your partners including registered social landlords (RSLs) and voluntary sector organisations working within the homelessness field. This guide with its bench mark indicators will support you to shape and develop first class services for homeless children and young people, and we hope you will share the progress you make with partner colleagues and with us here at Shelter.

- 8 The M case involved an application by a girl of 16 to the Housing department for assistance as homeless since she had been asked by her mother to leave their accommodation. The House of Lords challenge was that the Housing department, in processing the homelessness application, should have referred her to Children's Services for a 'child in need' assessment, and Children's Services should have accepted her as a child in need and accommodated her under s.20. The Housing department never made this referral to Children's Services.
- 9 The G case involved a 17-year-old who presented to the local Children's Services department as homeless once he'd been excluded from the family home by his mother. Children's Services concluded that his primary need was for accommodation and that G did not have any other additional needs (only needing help with accommodation). Children's Services recommended that he be housed by the council's Housing department under homelessness legislation, with referrals being made to support agencies. See briefing by NCAS on the Law Lords Judgment G v LB Southwark [May 2009] at <http://www.leavingcare.org/news/135/>
- 10 See *Shelter Children's Legal Service briefing*: 'Responding to youth homelessness following the G v LB Southwark judgment', November 2009, available as a printed copy or a download pdf from Shelter.



# Framework for achieving better outcomes

## The onion model

The 'onion' model<sup>11</sup> is a popular tool used throughout local authority Children's Services to highlight the strategic overview of Children's Trusts. We use this national 'Every Child Matters: Change for Children' framework for Children's Trusts to identify the levels of integration needed to improve joint working across Housing and Children's Services. We also illustrate, via examples, the joint-working opportunities available that will lead to improved outcomes for the children, young people and families you work with.

## Through the model's four layers, what influences joint working between Housing and Children's Services?

### Interagency governance:

- Strong interagency governance arrangements, in which shared ownership is coupled with clear accountability.
- Decision-making at director and senior management level across departments influences the level of priority that Children's Services give to housing matters, and vice versa.
- Director-level agreement and involvement ensure that top-level decisions to work together are made; that resources (both financial and in terms of individuals that need to be involved) are allocated to achieving better outcomes for homeless children, eg as would happen within a Children's Trust model.

### Integrated strategy:

A planning and commissioning framework which brings together agencies' planning, supported as appropriate by the pooling or alignment of resources, and ensures key priorities are identified and addressed.

- Policies and plans, targets and measures, all identify the needs of homeless children and work to ensure their needs are met, eg as within local authority Children and Young People's Plans.

### Integrated processes:

Common processes that are designed to create and underpin joint working.

- Approaches, systems, and protocols embedded in practice ensure that Housing authorities or departments are involved in and jointly working with professionals from Children's Services across education, youth, 'early years' and social work.

### Integrated frontline delivery:

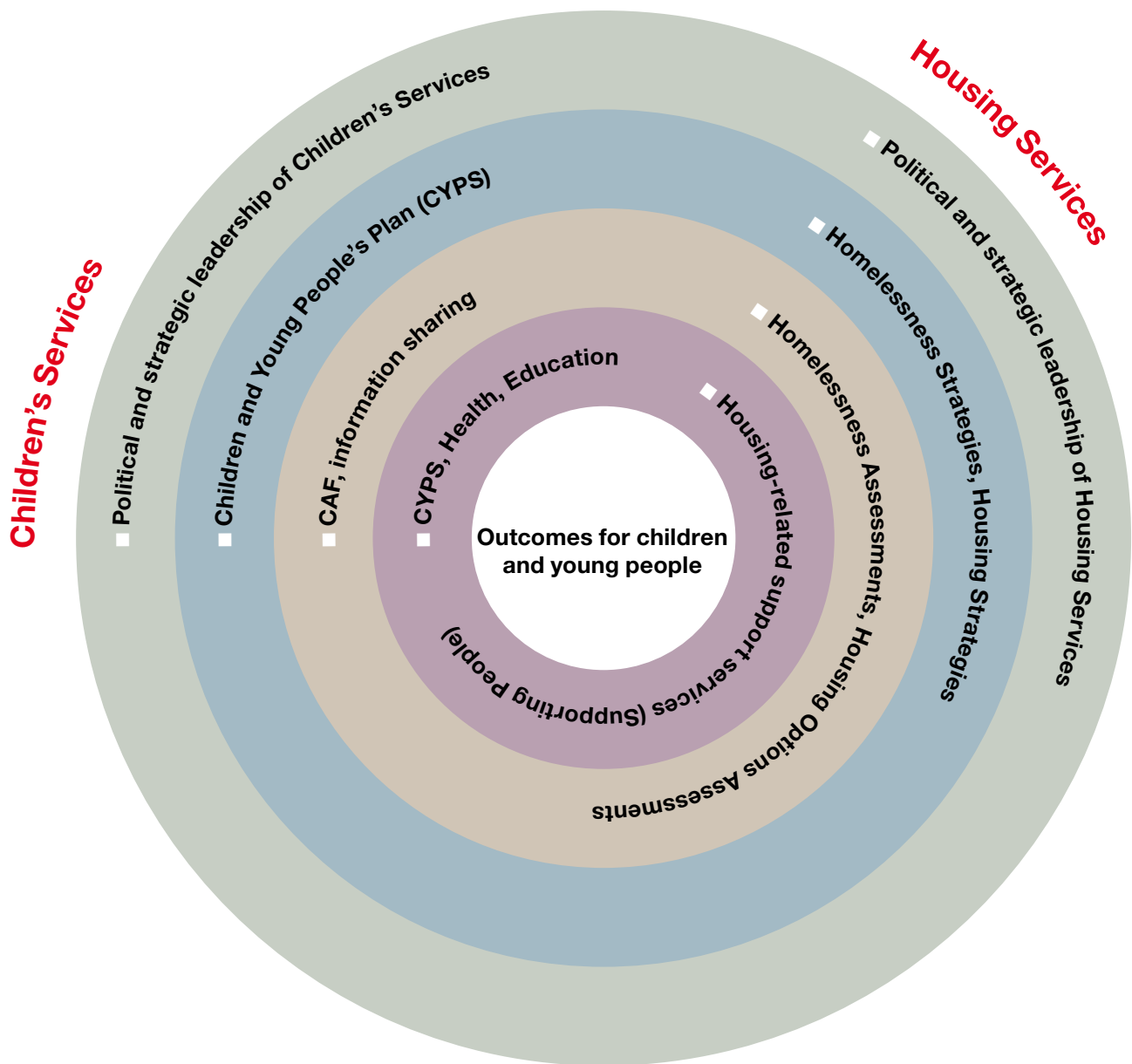
Professionals enabled and encouraged to work together in more integrated frontline services, built around the needs of children and young people.

- Housing and Children's Services' frontline professionals deliver services to children, young people and families that meet their needs, crossing boundaries previously existing between the two departments and working together instead.

These measures we suggest for Housing and Children's Services derive from general principles outlined in *Every Child Matters: Change for Children*, DfES 2004 (ref 3.3, page 12), aimed at leading to better outcomes for children and young people, parents, families and community.

<sup>11</sup> More information about the 'onion model' can be found at <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/about/aims/strategicoverview/strategicoverview/?asset=document&id=21444>

# Onion model



## 'Onion model' key

Governance
Strategy
Processes
Delivery

## Better outcomes – the benefits of joint working

Using the Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes framework to focus on children's housing needs below, we identify links you can make between the national indicator (NI) targets that make up your Local Area Agreements (LAAs) and the ECM outcomes we all work towards, validating the importance of Housing and Children's Services working together. Shelter research\* provides evidence of the extent to which bad housing and homelessness impact negatively on each of the ECM outcomes, making the connection with Children's Services. You will therefore be able to better identify opportunities for developing partnership working with your counterparts in Housing or Children's Services to improve the outcomes for homeless and badly housed children, young people and families in your locality.

ECM outcomes	Be healthy	Stay safe	Enjoy and achieve	Make a positive contribution	Achieve economic wellbeing
<b>National indicators (NIs) that impact upon children's outcomes when housing conditions are poor</b>	<p><b>NI50:</b> Emotional health of children.</p> <p><b>NI54:</b> Services for disabled children.</p> <p><b>NI115:</b> Substance misuse by young people.</p>	<p><b>NI48:</b> Children killed or seriously injured in a road traffic accident.</p> <p><b>NI49:</b> Number of primary fires and related fatalities and non-fatal casualties.</p> <p><b>NI59:</b> Initial assessment of children's social care carried out within 7 days of referral.</p> <p><b>NI60:</b> Care assessment for children's social care that was carried out within 35 days of commencement.</p> <p><b>NI70:</b> Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children and young people.</p> <p><b>NI71:</b> Children who have run away from home/care overnight.</p> <p><b>NI158:</b> Percentage of 'decent homes'.</p> <p><b>NI69:</b> Children who have experienced bullying.</p> <p><b>NI32:</b> Repeat incidents of domestic violence.</p> <p><b>NI165:</b> % of children becoming the subject of Child Protection Plans for the second or subsequent time.</p>	<p><b>NI72–NI84:</b> Education achievement targets.</p> <p><b>NI87:</b> Secondary school persistent absence rate.</p> <p><b>NI92:</b> Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.</p> <p><b>NI93–NI105:</b> Education achievement targets.</p> <p><b>NI106:</b> Young people from low-income backgrounds progressing to higher education.</p> <p><b>NI107:</b> Key Stage 2 attainment for black and minority ethnic groups.</p> <p><b>NI108:</b> Key Stage 4 attainment for black and minority ethnic groups.</p> <p><b>NI114:</b> Rate of permanent exclusions from school.</p>	<p><b>NI2:</b> % of people who feel they belong to their neighbourhood.</p> <p><b>NI19:</b> Rate of proven re-offending by young offenders.</p> <p><b>NI21:</b> Dealing with local concerns about antisocial behaviour and crime by the local council and police.</p> <p><b>NI46:</b> Young offenders' access to suitable accommodation.</p> <p><b>NI141:</b> Number of vulnerable people achieving independent living.</p> <p><b>NI142:</b> Number of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living.</p> <p><b>NI111:</b> First-time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10 to 17.</p> <p><b>NI117:</b> 16- to 18-year-olds who are not in education, training or employment (NEET).</p> <p><b>NI91:</b> Participation of 17-year-olds in education or training.</p>	<p><b>NI116:</b> Proportion of children living in child poverty.</p> <p><b>NI155:</b> Number of affordable homes delivered (gross).</p> <p><b>NI181:</b> Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events.</p> <p><b>NI156:</b> Number of households living in temporary accommodation.</p> <p><b>NI154:</b> Net additional homes provided.</p> <p><b>NI147:</b> Care leavers in suitable accommodation.</p> <p><b>NI148:</b> Care Leavers in employment, education or training.</p>

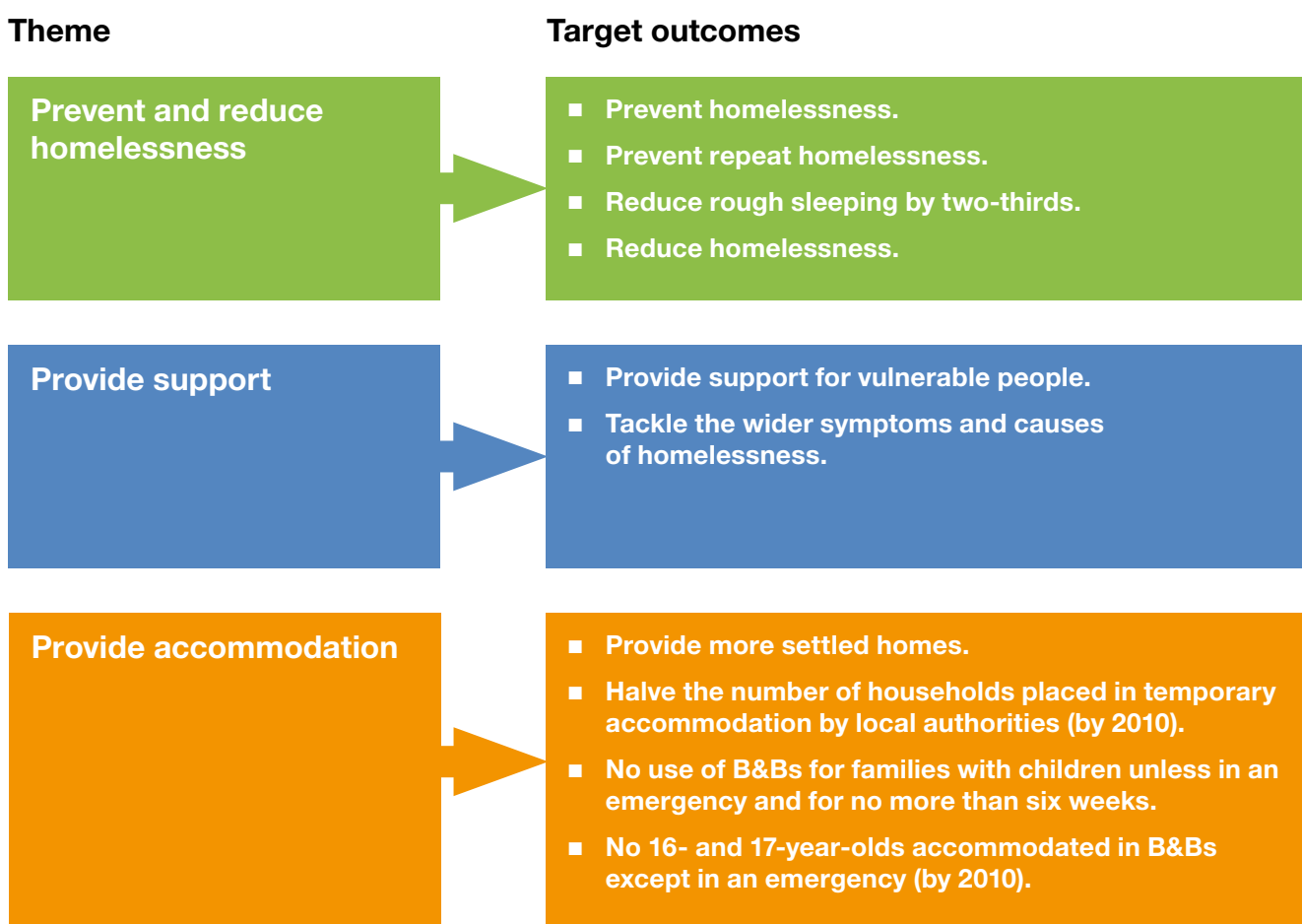
<b>Shelter's Chance of a lifetime and Against the odds reports highlight evidence to support the notion that homelessness and bad housing impacts negatively on children's outcomes</b>	<b>Be healthy</b>	<b>Stay safe</b>	<b>Enjoy and achieve</b>	<b>Make a positive contribution</b>	<b>Achieve economic wellbeing</b>
	<p>Poor housing conditions increase the risk of severe ill-health or disability by up to 25% during childhood and early adulthood.</p> <p>Nearly 310,000 children in bad housing in Britain are suffering a long-term illness or disability.</p> <p>Children living in bad housing are significantly more likely to suffer respiratory problems such as chest problems, breathing difficulties, asthma and bronchitis than other children (8% of children in bad housing, including 10% of those living in acutely bad housing, compared with 6% of other children).</p> <p>Children aged 11 to 15 who live in bad housing are more likely to be the victims of bullying than children not living in bad housing (40% of those living in bad housing and 43% of those in acutely bad housing, compared with 33% of other children).</p>	<p>Families living in a property that is in poor physical condition are more likely to experience a domestic fire and less likely to own a smoke alarm.</p> <p>Children living in acutely bad housing are more likely to attend Accident &amp; Emergency in a year than other children (24% in acutely bad housing and 21% in bad housing, compared with 20% of other children).</p> <p>Children living in bad housing are more likely to run away from home at least once during their lifetime than other children (9% compared with 6% among other 11- to 15-year-olds).</p>	<p>Homeless children are two to three times more likely to be absent from school. Higher levels of absence from school and increased mobility between schools seem to explain lower levels of academic achievement.</p> <p>One in four children living in bad housing gains no GCSEs compared with around one in 10 children not living in bad housing.</p> <p>Only half of children living in bad housing (53%) attain five or more A to C grades, compared with 71% of other children.</p> <p>Children and teenagers aged 11 to 15 who live in bad housing are twice as likely as other children to have been excluded from school – that is, be told not to attend school for a fixed period or permanently – over the period of a year (5% compared with 2% of other children).</p>	<p>Nearly half of young male offenders on remand and 42% of young female offenders sentenced have experienced homelessness.</p> <p>Parents of children living in acutely bad housing are three times more likely to be contacted by the police than the parents of other children.</p>	<p>Living in bad housing as a child results in a higher risk of low educational achievement. This, in turn, has long-term implications for economic wellbeing in adulthood because of the increased likelihood of unemployment or working in low-paid and insecure jobs.</p> <p>The high costs of temporary accommodation can make it difficult to make working worthwhile financially, trapping homeless families in unemployment, which is strongly associated with poverty and reduced life chances.</p>

For a full list of NIs, please see: *The New Performance Framework for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships: Single Set of National Indicators, 2007, CLG*

\* Harker, L. (2006) *Chance of a lifetime: the impact of bad housing on children's lives*, Shelter, London, and Rice, B. (2006) *Against the odds: an investigation comparing the lives of children on either side of Britain's housing divide*, Shelter, London

## Achieving Housing Services targets through joint working with Children's Services – making the link

The Government's homelessness strategy 'Sustainable Homes: settled homes; changing lives' (ODPM, London, 2005) sets out its plans for local authorities to continue to reduce homelessness, focusing specifically on preventing homelessness. It identifies 10 key outcomes that housing authorities must work towards as a priority to achieve their overall reduction in homelessness. Here's how these outcomes fall within the three strategic themes your authority (LA) must consider in its local area:



You can deliver these outcomes by implementing each of Shelter's good practice measures. See our recommendations on how to on the following pages.

## How to tick the boxes and achieve homelessness target outcomes through:

### Interagency governance

Director of Children's Services demonstrates clear commitment to meeting the needs of homeless children and young people.



Director of Housing Services demonstrates clear commitment to meeting the needs of homeless children and young people.



Lead Members for 'housing' and 'children and young people' portfolios demonstrate a clear commitment to homeless children and young people.



Children's Trust Boards make clear goals and objectives relating to housing and homelessness.



Housing Services are involved with, and have clear roles and responsibilities on, Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCBs).



Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) regularly review and monitor the need for homeless children and the housing needs of young people to be prioritised in the Local Area Agreement (LAA).



### Integrated strategy

Children's Services develop their Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) with appropriate targets relating to homeless children and young people across all five ECM outcomes.



Homeless children, young people and families are consulted and involved in the development of Homelessness Strategies and CYPPs.



Housing and Children's Services work together to collate data that will identify the scale and impact of homelessness and bad housing on children and young people's outcomes in the local authority area.



Housing Services develop their Homelessness Reviews and Strategies with appropriate targets that relate to homeless children and young people across all five ECM outcomes.



Housing and Children's Services pool or align funding to commission support services and prevention services for homeless children and young people.



Strategy Managers within Housing and Children's Services have a sound knowledge of each other's legislation and guidance frameworks.



## Integrated processes

Joint protocols are put in place for assessing and addressing the needs of children within intentionally homeless families.



When pursuing eviction proceedings, LAs take into account the children's need for a secure home and establish effective joint-working practices to ensure their support needs are met.



LAs develop and implement 'prevention' protocols to ensure families threatened with eviction are supported to maintain their tenancies.



LAs have joint protocols between Housing and Children's Services for 16- and 17-year-olds, to ensure adequate housing and support for them.



Children in families who present to Housing departments with housing needs are considered for a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) if additional needs are suspected.



Housing and Children's Services have joint policies and practices in place to ensure that the disruption to schooling for children from homeless families is minimised.



## Integrated frontline delivery

Children's Services ensure families can access specialist housing advice in Children's Centres.



Additional support for homeless children is available in schools, extended schools and Children's Centres.



Peer education methods are used in schools and other young people's settings, so all children learn of homelessness from peers with direct experience.



Staff from Housing and Children's Services are co-located<sup>12</sup> to support making joint assessments.



Housing and Children's Services identify shared training opportunities in their work to gain insight and clear understanding of each other's roles.



Through Supporting People, Housing and Children's Services jointly provide greater support for an intentionally homeless family to sustain a tenancy.



Needs of children from homeless families, and those found intentionally homeless, are assessed and met.



Housing and Children's Services develop 'outreach' support services delivered to homeless children in homeless settings, eg family hostels and B&Bs.



<sup>12</sup> Situated together. In this context, it is about making frontline services easily accessible for children, young people and families, so co-location will be both services having a presence at extended schools, libraries, Connexions, youth centres etc.

## Shelter's bench mark model – at a glance

If your LA implements this 'best practice' framework as standard, you can expect to see improved outcomes for homeless and badly housed children and young people and clearly evidence your commitment to joint working between services to satisfy the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) process while evolving additional innovative frontline practices.

<b>Interagency governance</b>	Director of Children's Services demonstrates clear commitment to meeting the housing needs of homeless children and young people.	Director of Housing Services demonstrates clear commitment to meeting the needs of homeless children and housing young people.	Children's Trust Boards have clear goals and objectives relating to housing and homelessness.	Lead Members for 'housing' and children and young people' portfolios demonstrate a clear commitment to homeless children and young people.	Housing Services are involved with, and have clear roles and responsibilities on, the LSCB.	LSPs regularly review and monitor the need for homeless children and young people to be prioritised in LAAs.
<b>Integrated strategy</b>	Children's Services develop their CYPP with appropriate targets that relate to homeless children and young people across all five ECM outcomes.	Housing and Children's Services work together to collate data to identify the scale and impact of homelessness on children and young people's outcomes in the local authority area.	Housing Services develop their Homelessness Reviews and Strategies with appropriate targets that relate to homeless children and young people across all five ECM outcomes.	Housing and Children's Services align funding to commission support and prevention services for children and young people concerning housing and homelessness, eg through Supporting People.	Housing and Children's Services' strategic management have, or work towards having, a sound knowledge base of each other's legislation and guidance frameworks.	Homeless children, young people and families are consulted and involved in the development of Homelessness Strategies and CYPPs.
<b>Integrated processes</b>	Housing and Children's Services have joint policies and practices in place to ensure that the disruption to schooling for children from homeless families is minimised.	LAs have joint protocols between Housing and Children's Services for 16- and 17-year olds to ensure they have adequate housing and support.	LAs develop and implement 'prevention' protocols to ensure families threatened with eviction are supported to maintain tenancies.	When pursuing eviction proceedings, LAs take into account the children's need for a secure home and establish effective joint-working practices to ensure the support needs of children are met.	Children in families who present to Housing departments with housing needs are considered for a CAF if additional needs are suspected.	There are joint protocols in place for intentionally homeless families.
<b>Integrated frontline delivery</b>	The needs of children from homeless families, including those deemed intentionally homeless, are assessed and met.	Children's Services practitioners are co-located within Housing and Homelessness Services to support joint assessments.	Children's Centres provide access to specialist housing advice for families.	Greater provision of support and tenancy sustainment for families deemed intentionally homeless.	Shared training opportunities are identified across Housing and Children's Services to ensure that professionals have insight and understanding of each other's roles.	Additional support targeted at homeless children is organised through schools, extended schools and Children's Centres.
						Adopt peer education methods in schools and other young people's settings, to prevent homelessness.



# Effective governance

**You will find this section useful if you are:**

- LA Chief Executives
- Directors of Children's Services
- Directors of Housing Services
- Lead Members for Housing and Children's Services
- RSL Directors or Board members.

Governance comprises procedures associated with the decision-making, performance and control of organisations. It provides structures to give overall direction to the organisation and to be accountable in satisfying the expectations of people outside it.

'Effective governance and strategic leadership at Local Authority level are fundamental to driving forward a joint working agenda.'<sup>13</sup>

## **Joint governance arrangements and improving outcomes – it's everybody's business**

We believe arrangements to improve joint working between Housing and Children's Services can take place at every level, and can be implemented by any professional who has the time, resources, commitment and passion to make it happen. However, for practices to be fully embedded, funded, resourced and acknowledged as 'critical' to the wellbeing and long-term positive outcomes for children, it is necessary for interagency governance to take the lead in developing the overall direction the authority must take towards meeting the needs of homeless children.

There are a number of clear structural and legislative arrangements already in place that provide Housing and Children's Services with opportunities to work more effectively together. Here we outline what they are, and exactly why they are instrumental to the joint-working agenda.

<sup>13</sup> Hodges R., Wright M. and Keasey K (1996) 'Corporate governance in the public services: concepts and issues', *Public Money & Management* 16(2), 7-13

## Legislation

Legislation <sup>14</sup>	Reason for joint working	Recommendations for further action / opportunities
<b>Children Act 1989</b>	The Children Act 1989 created a duty on local authorities to assess the needs of children and young people and provide appropriate services based on that assessment, including a care placement. The 1989 Act set the foundation for the legislation that followed and is a crucial part of understanding the duties that partners of Children's Trusts are now expected to jointly discharge under the 2004 legislation.	The Children Act 1989 promotes the concept of planning and delivering services for children and young people in a corporate manner. These principles of partnership also extend to working with children, parents, carers and extended families. Authorities must adhere to these principles when planning how to jointly deliver services for homeless and badly housed children and young people.
<b>Children Act 2004</b>	The Children Act 2004 created an interagency duty to co-operate to improve the wellbeing of children and young people. The aim of emphasis on partnership working within the legislation is to ensure that most vulnerable children and young people are identified early and do not 'slip through the net', which can happen when agencies work in silo (don't share information).  The creation of Children's Trusts, information-sharing systems and joint assessments are reinforced throughout this legislation.	Partnership working needs to extend beyond the traditional services considered as 'Children's Services'. In addition to Health, Social Services and Education working together, Housing and Homelessness Services should be included in strategic planning and service development.  (See case study on how Housing Services contribute to Children's Trusts on page 26).
<b>The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000</b>	The Act has two main aims: to ensure that young people do not leave care until they are ready, and to ensure they receive more effective support once they have left.  Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 guidance states:  '...because of the diverse needs of care leavers and the way in which these will change over time, local authorities are likely to require a range of accommodation options.'  These options include training flats, supported lodgings, supported housing, foyers, independent accommodation, and floating support. Accommodation is one of the areas covered by the Pathway Plan that should be prepared by Social Services for each young person on how their needs can be met until the age of 21.	Care leavers are especially vulnerable to homelessness. In England, 16- and 17-year-olds and care leavers aged 18 to 20 make up 8% of the total homelessness acceptances. However, they are only 3% of the total population. <sup>15</sup>  Better joint working underpinned by this legislative framework can begin to address the severe disadvantages care leavers face with respect to homelessness.  (Full list of recommendations in NCAS publication – see footnote below.)

<sup>14</sup> For further information about the policy and legislation presented, please follow up references at the back of this guide.

<sup>15</sup> Statistics from National Care Advisory Service, *Journeys to home – care leavers' successful transition to independent accommodation*, 2009

<p><b>Child Poverty Bill 2009</b></p>	<p>This will provide a statutory basis to the commitment made by the Government in 1999 to end child poverty by 2020. Part of this will define success in eradicating child poverty and provide a framework to measure progress at a national and local level.</p>	<p>Each LA will have duties to develop a strategy to tackle child poverty within its area. LAs will be able to address areas of child poverty that are most prevalent within the locality. Within the strategy, 'housing' and 'neighbourhoods' will feature heavily as considerations for LAs. The development of this strategy requires that all services work together.</p>
<p><b>Homelessness Act 2002</b></p>	<p>All LAs are required to undertake a review of homelessness in their districts and publish a Homelessness Strategy that must be reviewed every five years.</p> <p>The Act introduced the priority need category for all 16- and 17-year-old young people presenting as homeless. This requires that all authorities' Housing and Children's Services have a framework for joint assessment of this age group.</p> <p>In light of the G v LB Southwark result, most 16- and 17-year-olds should be housed by Social Services.</p>	<p>Involvement from Children's Services would ensure the needs of children, young people and families who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, are considered within the review and effective planning can follow to ensure these needs are met.</p> <p>Partnership working between Children's Services, Connexions, voluntary sector organisations and Housing departments ensures a joint protocol can be established to guarantee that vulnerable 16- and 17-year-olds receive the support they need when facing homelessness.</p>
<p><b>Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007</b></p>	<p>This Act introduced Local Area Agreements (LAAs).</p> <p>LAAs set out the priorities for a local area that are agreed between central government and the area's LA and Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) plus other key partners at the local level.</p> <p>LAs can choose from a selection of 198 national indicators (NIs), which enable them to set priorities depending on their local area and need. Local priorities are negotiated with the Government, and these will be either statutory or targeted priorities.</p>	<p>Of the 198 NIs, we have identified 61 of them that would be helped by Housing and Children's Services' improved or increased joint working.</p> <p>By working together, Housing and Children's Services can contribute to meeting their LAA targets across a wide range of themes.</p>
<p><b>Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill 2009 (the Government intends to enact the Bill during 2010)</b></p>	<p>This will aim to strengthen the accountability of Children's Services, achieved through giving Children's Trust Boards a statutory footing with the duty to prepare, publish and monitor a strategic Children and Young People's Plan for the local area. It will strengthen the role of Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCBs) and clarify their relationship with the Children's Trusts. It will also give Children's Centres a specific statutory basis by placing duties on the local authority to establish and maintain sufficient numbers to meet local needs.</p>	<p>Children's Trust Boards should have a housing representative in place. Their role should be clearly defined, and the person in this role should have an in-depth understanding of how housing needs should be integrated into Children's Services. This could be in the form of a checklist or guidance.</p>

## Guidance

Guidance	Reason for joint working	Action to be taken
<b>Homelessness Code of Guidance 2006</b>	The Homelessness Code of Guidance provides advice to LAs on discharging their statutory homelessness functions. It provides detailed guidance on interpreting the homelessness legislation set out in part VII of the Housing Act 1996. Chapter 5 'Working with others' provides the guidance on joint working, to ensure homeless people or those at risk of homelessness can access an integrated and seamless service.	LAs introduce effective joint-working strategies, policies and processes (protocols) to ensure that children, young people and families are provided with an effective safety net if they are found homeless, or are at risk of becoming homeless or intentionally homeless.
<b><i>Joint working between Housing and Children's Services: Preventing homelessness and tackling its effects on children and young people, CLG/DCSF Guidance 2008</i></b>	This guidance fulfils the commitment of Communities and Local Government (CLG) and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to work together to achieve key strategic objectives. It focuses on four groups of children and young people <sup>16</sup> who have been identified as being at particular risk of poor outcomes in the absence of effective joint working between Housing Services, Children's Services and their partners.	Housing and Children's Services are recommended to address the needs of the most vulnerable groups at risk of homelessness. LA services need to adopt this guidance and use it to meet local need.  The targets and recommendations in the guidance should be adopted in all levels of the local authority's services, from delivery through to strategy and governance.

<sup>16</sup> The four groups are: 16- and 17-year-olds who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, care leavers aged 18 to 21, children of families living in temporary accommodation, and children of families who have been or are at risk of being found intentionally homeless by a Housing authority.

## Governance structures that lead to more joint working

Structures	Reason for joint working	Action to be taken
<b>Children's Trusts</b>	<p>The Children Act 2004 enshrined in legislation the need for all LAs to establish an integrated Children's Trust framework as the means of embedding integrated systems of working across Education, Social Services, Health and all other agencies involved with children.</p> <p>The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill 2009 places Children's Trust Boards (CTBs) on a statutory footing. As an entity, the CTB will have a clear role in providing the governance and strategic direction for Children's Services within the locality. The strategy, as articulated by the Children and Young People's Plan, will be the responsibility of Trust partners to deliver through integrated working arrangements.</p>	<p>Children's Trusts and Children's Trust Boards include a representative from the local Housing authority, with a clearly defined role and responsibilities to ensure better outcomes for children, young people and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.</p>
<b>Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB)</b>	<p>Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children requires effective co-ordination. The LSCB is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in each local area co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in that locality, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do. Housing authorities have a vital role to play in their effectiveness.</p>	<p>Housing Services represented and actively involved in LSCBs have better lines of communication and opportunities to address safeguarding issues for homeless and badly housed children and young people.</p> <p>(See the Stockton Borough Council case study on page 26.)</p>
<b>Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAAs)</b>	<p>The effectiveness of local partnerships within LAs is measured through a CAA. Each CAA is carried out by an independent watchdog group that assesses the performance of local public services and their ability to meet local priorities. The CAA replaces all other assessments, such as the Children's Service Joint Area Review and Local Authority Annual Performance Assessments. And from December 2009, each CAA is to be made public.</p>	<p>Joint governance arrangements between Housing and Children's Services contribute towards the CAA. Housing and Children's Services have an opportunity to demonstrate how effective joint-working arrangements can be in improving services and offering value for money.</p>

## Shelter's bench mark indicators for opportunities

Shelter found many individual examples of Housing and Children's Services working effectively together at governance level. From this knowledge we have developed a set of bench mark indicators complete with practices (numbered and grouped below), which will aid successful implementation and help you monitor and map your progress.

### 1. Children's Trust Boards have clear objectives relating to homelessness.

- Housing and Homelessness Services are represented on Children's Trust Boards (CTBs) at executive and strategic level.
- Remit of the 'Housing' representative is to improve outcomes for homeless and badly housed children and young people.
- The CTB and its Executive demonstrate a commitment to improving outcomes for homeless and badly housed children.
- The CTB ensures the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) contains sufficient priorities and measures for improving outcomes for homeless and badly housed children.
- The CTB ensures that homelessness prevention is a key priority for Housing and Children's Services.
- The CTB has ultimate responsibility for ensuring Housing and Children's Services work together effectively to improve outcomes and develop a shared ethos, actively removing barriers to joint working.
- The CTB ensures effective mechanisms are in place to link the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) and council leadership to deliver better outcomes for homeless and badly housed children.
- In two-tier authorities, Housing and Children's Services have partnership arrangements in the locality to ensure effective engagement of district Housing authorities with county Children's Services.

### 2. Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) ensure their Local Area Agreements (LAAs) address the needs of homeless children and young people, reviewing and monitoring progress.

- LSPs are informed by Housing authorities of the extent of homelessness in the local areas and the impact it has on outcomes for children and young people.
- In unitary authorities, the Chief Executive takes responsibility to ensure the Homelessness Review and Strategy is a cross-departmental priority.
- LSPs ensure the LAA consists of appropriately selected national indicators (NIs) that address identified needs of homeless and badly housed children and young people and address the prevention of homelessness.
- LSPs are responsible for reviewing and monitoring LAA effectiveness, and for improving outcomes for homeless and badly housed children.
- LSPs ensure non-council agencies work together to support the improvement of outcomes for homeless children.

### 3. Housing Services are involved with and have clear roles and responsibilities on Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCBs)

- Non-statutory agencies that undertake advocacy on behalf of homeless and badly housed families are represented on the LSCB to provide an independent housing perspective and legal context.
- Strategic Housing Services from the local authority are represented on the LSCB.
- LSCBs carry out authority-wide reviews of the impact homelessness has on the wellbeing of homeless and badly housed children and young people.
- As part of their Serious Case Review function, LSCBs measure and report on the extent to which homelessness and bad housing impacts on safeguarding issues within their authority and how this can be improved.
- Serious Case Reviews undertaken by LSCBs are shared with Children's Trusts, Housing departments and Children's and Young People's Services to enable effective priority planning.

**4. Lead Members for 'housing' and 'children and young people' portfolios demonstrate a clear commitment to homeless and badly housed children and young people.**

- Lead Members for Housing and Children's Services are informed about the scale and impact of homelessness and bad housing on children and young people in their local authority area.
- Lead Members ensure there are appropriate priorities and measures in place to address problems and improve outcomes.
- All members of the Scrutiny Committee for housing and children and young people work together to measure the extent to which needs of homeless and badly housed children and young people are being met across the local authority area and how this can be improved.

**5. Director of Children's Services demonstrates clear commitment to meeting the needs of homeless and badly housed children and young people.**

- Director is informed of the extent of homelessness and bad housing of children and young people in the local authority area, and what impact this has on their outcomes.
- Director understands the legislative and policy framework in which housing and homelessness operate.
- Director works with their counterpart in Housing Services to prioritise services in the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) that meet the needs of homeless and badly housed children and young people.
- Director is responsible for ensuring there is an ethos of joint working with Housing Services to meet the needs of homeless and badly housed children and young people – ensuring there are appropriate resources and plans in place to achieve this as well as remove barriers.
- Director ensures clear lines of accountability to enable joint working between Housing and Children's Services.

**6. Director of Housing Services demonstrates clear commitment to meeting the needs of homeless children and young people.**

- Director is informed about what impacts on the wellbeing and outcomes of children and young people in the local authority area who are homeless or living in bad housing.
- Director understands the legislative and policy framework in which Children's and Young People's Services operate.
- Director works with their counterpart in Children's Services to identify service priorities in Homelessness and Housing Strategies, to meet the needs of homeless and badly housed children and young people.
- Director is responsible for ensuring an ethos of joint working with Children's Services to meet the needs of homeless and badly housed children and young people – making sure resources and plans are in place to ensure this as well as to remove any barriers.
- Director ensures clear lines of accountability to enable joint working between Housing and Children's Services.

## CASE STUDY

### Housing Steering Group within Devon Children's Trust

#### Purpose of the group:

The group operates as the Project Board to manage the commissioning of the Local Public Sector Agreement Reward to prevent youth homelessness through the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and delivery of the housing element within the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) for 2008–2011.

It aims to develop co-operation between agencies and authorities, to improve the wellbeing of children and young people and families who are in housing need. This involves work on:

- District Council Homelessness Strategies and revenue funding (as they relate to 16- and 17-year-olds and families)
- Supporting People joint commissioning
- Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA-2, reducing homelessness among 16- and 17-year-olds)
- the Local Area Agreement
- second-home Council Tax (as it relates to children, families and young people)
- care leavers, Youth Offending Team (YOT), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and Connexions strategies and revenue funding (as they relate to housing and homelessness needs).

#### Its accountability:

The Steering Group is accountable to the Children's Trust Board, Children and Young People's Senior Leadership Group and Devon's Strategic Housing Group.

#### Members:

Membership consists of representatives of key stakeholders, including:

- District Homelessness Managers
- Supporting People
- Housing providers
- Youth support and advice services
- Children's and Young People's Services (from the Care Leavers team, Assessment team, targeted youth support of the YOT, Social Services, Health, and Connexions)
- County Homelessness Co-ordinator (DHSG)
- County Young Persons Housing Strategy Co-ordinator (CYPS).

#### Methods:

To deliver its target outcomes, the Project Board will oversee:

- delivery of the LAA and the housing element within the CYPP
- alignment of needs analysis, monitoring and performance management
- development of joint commissioning based on the LAA and LPSA-2 'Freedom and Flexibilities'
- project management of consultation about an agreement of strategic priorities, oversight of implementation plans, and reporting processes.

## CASE STUDY

### Involvement of Housing Services in Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB), Stockton-on-Tees BC

Stockton Borough Council was keen to work across agencies to create a network of support for children and young people. This was reflected in their approach to youth homelessness as well as to safeguarding.

The council's 'Procedures for Working Together to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children in Stockton-on-Tees' contains a section on the roles and responsibilities of Housing Services, Housing authorities and RSLs. 'Housing' has always been

represented on the Board, and the Business Manager of Stockton's LSCB was a member of the group that led on a review of Stockton's youth homelessness policies and services.

Through coming together on the LSCB, the Housing and Children's Services work more closely now. They are better able to identify how and where they can work together and what training or awareness opportunities are useful. Raising awareness on child protection with Housing Officers has ensured quick referrals to Children's Services when necessary. Under the safeguarding agenda, referrals have been made both ways as safeguarding professionals have encountered people's housing problems. One outcome has been a reduction in the number of young people presenting as homeless.



# Effective strategy

## You will find this section useful if you are:

- Strategic Managers
- Commissioners (Housing, Health, Supporting People, Children’s Services).

Strategic arrangements and planning in LA Housing and Children Services are governed by a number of key plans and policies, and these provide opportunities for both services to align accountability and plan strategically to serve the interests of homeless and badly housed children and young people.

‘A commissioning framework which brings together agencies’ planning, supported as appropriate by the pooling of resources, and ensures key priorities are identified and addressed.’<sup>17</sup>

By identifying a number of opportunities at LA level through which both Housing and Children’s Services can interact, we highlight the ways in which they can develop joint strategies, policies and plans, targets, and measures that will address the specific needs of homeless or badly housed children, young people and their families. The opportunities to work effectively together at strategic level are outlined for you (below).

Strategic arrangements	Reason for joint working	Recommendations for further action / opportunities
<b>Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP)</b>	A strategic device intended to ensure that each LA has a forward-looking plan to identify the needs of children in its authority area against the ECM outcomes, and identify a means of meeting those needs, and mapping these against an action plan. Homeless children are identified at this point, and strategies for working with the Housing department are identified.	Significant scope in CYPPs to include details about how Children’s Services support homeless children under all five ECM outcomes, and how Children’s Services work with their Housing partners to improve the wellbeing of these children.
<b>Homelessness Strategy</b>	Introduced by the Housing Act 2002, Homelessness Strategies are a statutory obligation on Housing departments to set out the nature of homelessness in the local area, the causes, the extent of it, and the approaches for tackling it. Authorities therefore have a strong incentive to work with Children’s Services to identify ways to tackle the problem together and draw on shared opportunities to prevent or mitigate the impact on children.	Children’s Services can contribute intelligence on the extent of homelessness and its effects on children, young people and families. An opportunity to find solutions to address the problems together.
<b>Youth Homelessness Strategy</b>	Youth Homelessness Strategies are seen as good practice, seeking to address the specific needs of a vulnerable group. The Housing authority works with Children’s Services and other local partners to meet their needs.	Housing and Children’s Services need to work together to develop the strategy and plan effectively for the prevention of youth homelessness.  (See example on page 31 for more information.)

17 *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* 2004 at <http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DfES10812004.pdf>

<b>Local Area Agreements (LAAs)</b>	Arrangements introduced by the Government to set out priorities for a local area. This is an agreement made by central government, the LA, LSPs and other key partners at the local level. The LAA requires the LA to be creative and innovative in terms of addressing its key local priorities. Many of the targets and indicators cannot be addressed in isolation and therefore opportunities for effective joint commissioning, pooled funding and integrated working are crucial to their success.	LAs need to use information on homelessness and its effects on children and young people when prioritising national indicators (NIs) for the LAA. Both Housing and Children's Services need to ensure they are jointly influencing local priorities to address the needs of homeless and badly housed children and young people. All information will act as part of the wider Joint Strategic Needs Assessment of the local authority.
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## Shelter's joint-working indicators

The following set of indicators and action points can help benchmark progress you make towards developing and implementing joint strategies.

### 1. Housing and Children's Services work together to collate data that identifies the scale and impact of homelessness and bad housing on children and young people's outcomes in the local authority area.

- Record information on the number of young people who present as homeless and the number of children in families who present as homeless.
- Know how many children live in families who are on the housing register, and how many young people present as homeless who are on the housing register.
- Find out about young people and children in families whose tenancies or homes might be at risk, and those who have accessed tenancy relations services.
- Know about children in families who have been 'prevented' from becoming homeless by the Housing Options service, and have been supported to access accommodation in the private rented sector.
- Include the number of young people and families with children who present to voluntary agencies because of bad housing, homelessness or a risk of homelessness (collate through multi-agency monitoring). This information should feed into the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).
- Liaise with Health Services to identify the number of children attending primary or secondary health-care services due to accidents or illnesses resulting from their housing situation or circumstances. Feed into the JSNA.

- Gather information on the provision and support for these groups of young people and identify gaps in provision. Use Supporting People data and feed into the JSNA.

### 2. Children's Services develop Children and Young People's Plans (CYPPs) with appropriate targets relating to homeless children and young people across all five ECM outcomes.

- Take into account existing data on homeless children and young people in the development of CYPPs.
- Due recognition given in the CYPP to the impact housing and homelessness has across each of the five ECM outcome areas.
- Work jointly with Housing Services to monitor and review the impact on children and young people's outcomes.
- Identify cross-cutting targets (particularly those that link in with homelessness strategies) to ensure joint delivery processes are developed.
- Locality plans in two-tier authorities, eg to ensure effective engagement of district Housing authorities with county Children's Services.
- Share or co-own the CYPP with Housing Services.
- Chief Executive takes responsibility in unitary authorities, to ensure the CYPP is a cross-departmental priority.
- Include references in CYPP to four priority groups: 16- and 17-year-olds, care leavers, children of families in temporary accommodation, and those within intentionally homeless families.

### **3. Housing Services develop Homelessness Reviews and Strategies with appropriate targets relating to homeless children and young people across all five ECM outcomes.**

- Take account of existing data on homeless children and young people when developing the Homelessness Review and Strategy.
- Co-operate with Children's Services, including input from a representative to develop the Homelessness Review and Strategy.
- Recognise the impact that housing and homelessness has across each of the five ECM outcome areas.
- Work jointly with Children's Services to monitor and review impact on children and young people's outcomes.
- Identify cross-cutting targets (particularly those that link in with CYPPs) and ensure joint delivery processes are developed.
- Have locality plans in two-tier authorities to ensure effective engagement of district Housing authorities with county Children's Services.
- Share ownership of the Homelessness Reviews and Strategies with Children's Services.
- Chief Executive in unitary authorities takes responsibility to ensure Homelessness Review and Strategy is a cross-departmental priority.
- Include references in Homelessness Strategy and Housing Strategies to four priority groups: 16- and 17-year-olds, care leavers, children of families in temporary accommodation, and those within intentionally homeless families.

### **4. Housing and Children's Services pool funding to commission prevention and support services concerning the housing and homelessness of children and young people.**

- Identify where services can be delivered more effectively and efficiently by joint commissioning to address the 'prevention of homelessness' agenda.
- Develop targets that meet both departments' priorities.
- Ensure Supporting People budgets consider

children of homeless families and homeless young people, and align funding with Children's Services to provide holistic services. Supporting People should be jointly commissioning with Children's Services for these groups.

- Homelessness prevention funds are negotiated with Children's Services to develop innovative services jointly addressing needs of homeless and badly housed children and young people.

### **5. Housing and Children's Services' strategic management have, or work towards having, a sound knowledge base of each other's legislation and guidance frameworks.**

- Understand and recognise the impact of children's housing and its importance to their wellbeing and outcomes.
- Develop 'learning and development' strategies for key staff to gain contextual knowledge of housing policy and service delivery.
- Actively share information about each other's plans and priorities.
- Introduce cross-departmental systems and allow strategic-level staff to undertake: work shadowing, staff exchanges, secondments, joint training or seminars.

### **6. Homeless children, young people and families are consulted and involved in the development of Homelessness Strategies and CYPPs.**

- Develop and work with joint models of consultation to involve service users in strategic planning.
- Work with the voluntary and community sectors to facilitate consultation.
- Develop and extend service-user forums for homeless and badly housing children, young people and families.
- Involve homeless and badly housed children, young people and families at every level of reviewing and monitoring Homelessness Strategies, CYPPs and Housing Strategies.

## CASE STUDY

### North East Regional Youth Homelessness Network

The Regional Youth Homeless Network is a collective of housing advice and support providers, local authorities, young homeless people and other organisations committed to working together to find solutions to youth homelessness in the region. It has two forums, one for professionals (with more than 40 member organisations drawn from across the region) and the other comprising young homeless people from a number of regional participation groups.

In July 2008 the network partnered the Government Office for the North East and the North East Housing Board in organising a summit for more than 25 housing associations, elected members, strategic partnership chairs and support providers to agree upon five shared solutions that they would prioritise to tackle youth homelessness in the region, which would make up a regional youth homelessness strategy. A Regional Position Statement published their findings in September 2008. The following five shared solutions form the backbone of their strategy:

1. Places of change: standards and expectations.
2. Transparency and accountability.

3. Working together.
4. Transitions to adulthood.
5. Preventing youth homelessness.

Objectives are to ensure all young people at risk of homelessness in the North East have access to appropriate high-quality support at the right time, to prevent them from becoming homeless. Those that do become homeless are enabled to exit homelessness quickly and move on successfully to independent adult living.

The strategy aims to map and draw together current strengths in provision, examples of excellent and pioneering practice in working with young homeless people across commissioning, statutory service provision and the work done by service providers, where learning and expertise could be shared across the region on strategic and operational levels.

It provides a framework for turning priority solutions from principles into actual practice, and responsibility for implementing this strategy falls on all of those whose work impacts on young people – commissioners, policy and strategy makers and investors, operational service managers and providers, and young homeless people themselves.

## CASE STUDY

### Integrated response between Housing and Children's Services, Brighton & Hove CC

Brighton & Hove City Council recognised youth homelessness was about more than simply housing, and it needed to develop an integrated response between its Housing and Children's Services.

Today, the council's Housing and Social Services have well-established protocols to ensure adequate housing and support for 16- and 17-year-olds. Separate from its existing Homelessness Strategies or YPPs, the council consulted on and published a Youth Homelessness Strategy (2007–2010) in 2007 to put in place new systems for tackling homelessness among this younger age group. The Housing Options team was reconfigured into three new teams – Family and Young People, Vulnerable Adults and Crisis Intervention.

The Family and Young People's team works with families and 16- and 17-year-olds, as well as care leavers, young offenders and on the prevention of children going into care. Social Workers were also assigned within these assessment teams. Reconfiguration into specialist teams has improved the skills of their housing professionals and been successful in enabling them to focus on the issues their particular client group face, and build closer partnerships with professionals from other disciplines who can provide the wider range of support to the clients. Housing Options staff can achieve better outcomes for their clients through improved relationships with other professionals, finding joint solutions and having a better understanding of each other's roles. Pro-active work with clients is possible, rather than simply addressing needs reactively.



# Effective processes

## You will find this section useful if you are:

- Professionals
- Operational members of staff
- Managers

working within

- LA Housing Services
- LA Children's Services
- RSLs (registered social landlords)
- Voluntary sector organisations in the homelessness field.

Housing and Children Services each have their own procedural framework and standard tools for carrying out day-to-day tasks, eg processes to determine if individuals or families are eligible for assistance or the nature and level of assistance required. Identifying and meeting the needs of individuals and families can be achieved more affectively by using common processes and tools, and by sharing information between each other.

'Integrated processes: the procedural framework and standard tools used by Housing and Children's Services to work effectively together.'<sup>18</sup>

## The importance of shared processes

The 'Every Child Matters: Change for Children' agenda and recent homelessness guidance and legislation have identified joint processes that enable the delivery of more effective integrated frontline services. We are interested to promote a framework that encourages joint working between Housing and Children's Services, and you can use the indicators we provide (below) to benchmark your procedures.

Processes	Reason for joint working	Recommendations for further action / opportunities
<b>Common Assessment Framework (CAF)</b>	The CAF is a generic assessment for children with additional needs, which can be used by practitioners across all Children's Services in all local areas in England. It aims to help early identification of need, promote co-ordinated service provision and reduce the number of assessments that some children and young people go through.	Frontline Housing staff that come into contact with vulnerable children are trained and supported to use the CAF.  (See case study concerning use of CAF in Rochdale on page 36.)
<b>Information-sharing processes</b>	Information sharing helps agencies to collect and communicate relevant details about children and young people to enable early intervention and prevention work, for safeguarding and promoting welfare and for wider public protection.	Housing staff ensure that relevant information about children in housing need is shared with Children's Services.
<b>Joint protocols</b>	A joint protocol will agree on how all agencies work together to address the needs of service users who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.	Develop clear protocols that outline responsibilities of Housing and Children's Services in meeting the needs of homeless families and young people. These protocols will ensure homeless people do not go through multiple assessments and there is a more holistic approach in services meeting all their support needs.

<sup>18</sup> *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* 2004 at <http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DfES10812004.pdf>

## Shelter's bench mark indicators for joint working

### 1. Housing and Children's Services have joint policies and practices in place to ensure that disruption to schooling is minimised for children from homeless families.

- A national approach is adopted for Housing Services to share information with Education Welfare Officers concerning families with children who move into areas and a new school place needs to be arranged, or measures are needed to enable a child or young person to continue at their existing school place. Where a family attends the Homelessness Service, but the children are not in school, a CAF is used to identify their additional needs to support them getting back into school.
- Education Services staff check weekly with Housing Services to ensure they are aware of families moving into their area and the families that are considered to be intentionally homeless, making sure that additional support is provided for them to access schooling locally.

### 2. Housing and Children's Services have joint protocols to ensure adequate housing and support for 16- and 17-year-olds.

- Undertake a joint, initial assessment when a 16- or 17-year-old presents as homeless.
- Develop a protocol to identify how both services work together to meet the needs of this age group and clearly define the role of the CAF, Child in Need assessment, and Targeted Youth Support services.
- Come together to agree definitions and understand threshold of need with regards to 'Child in Need' assessment.
- Housing representatives attend and contribute to Multi-Agency Panel meetings regarding homeless and/or badly housed children and young people.
- In two-tier authorities, arrangements are made locally for Housing and Children Services' practitioners to work together.

### 3. LAs develop and implement 'prevention' protocols to ensure families threatened with eviction are supported to maintain tenancies.

- Families with children living in social housing or the private rented sector, when eviction is a risk, are offered tenancy-sustainment support to help them maintain their tenancy.
- Where antisocial behaviour by a young person in the household is a factor threatening the family tenancy, Housing and Children's Services collaborate to prevent eviction, eg using family interventions or Targeted Youth Support.
- Through Homelessness Strategies and CYPPs, LAs agree a protocol with all major landlords in their area that ensures families are not evicted without being given adequate support from housing-related support services to help prevent the eviction.

### 4. When pursuing eviction proceedings, take into account the children's need for a secure home and establish effective joint-working practices to ensure their support needs are met.

- Housing Services notify Children's Services when families are threatened with eviction, to ensure support is provided. This measure is written into joint protocols.
- All landlords and RSLs inform Housing and Children's Services well in advance of a crisis occurring with a tenant and when eviction is being considered.
- Where a family is being rehoused, due consideration is given to the suitability and quality of accommodation offered and accommodation is of a standard that meets the family's needs.

**5. Children in families who present to Housing departments with housing needs are considered for a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) if additional needs are suspected.**

- Where a family with children presents to the Housing Options or Homelessness departments, LAs arrange a housing needs assessment to determine additional needs.
- A CAF is used where additional needs are identified.
- LAs develop a Housing Lead Professional role within Housing Services (either internally or where commissioned externally), to co-ordinate action with other professionals, where additional support needs have been identified for children of homeless families.
- Nominated frontline practitioners from Housing and Homelessness departments are trained in how to be the Lead Professional and in the use of CAF.
- Housing authorities get involved and participate, within CAF structures, to address the housing needs of children in families who present to any other service including Children's Centres.

**6. Ensure there are joint protocols in place for 'intentionally homeless' families.**

- CAF is used when additional needs are identified.
- Ensure both accommodation and support needs are met. Where a family is being rehoused or placed in temporary accommodation, due consideration is given to the suitability and quality of accommodation offered and accommodation is of a standard that meets the whole family's needs.
- Commission a Housing Lead Professional role, to co-ordinate delivery of services to children within 'intentionally homeless' families.
- Housing departments refer all families deemed 'intentionally homeless' to Children's Services for an assessment. Children's Services to respond within an agreed time frame.
- Families are not split up or threatened with being split up, when there is no child protection issue.
- Children's Services report regularly to the Chief Executive of the council, Housing departments and Children's Trusts, informing on the number of referrals of 'intentionally homeless' families and the action taken to support them.

## CASE STUDY

### Using the Common Assessment Framework to address housing issues, Shelter's Family Intervention Project

Catherine was referred to Shelter's Family Intervention Project (FIP) in Rochdale because she had twice breached an injunction, taken out by the LA, instructing her to stay away from her neighbour. There were allegations of harassment, and a further breach could have led to a custodial sentence.

She was bringing up two teenage children, Connor and Shauna, on her own. Of Irish Travelling descent, she had poor literacy skills, and she also had a disability. Connor, who was of mixed race, took on a caring role for his mother and sister. He had previously achieved well at school, but had recently come to the notice of local police for some minor offences and was about to be issued with an Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC).

The FIP worker initiated an assessment using the CAF, which gave the two young people a chance to discuss their needs. Connor explained he was often taunted about his race and his mother's disability by the neighbours who had alleged harassment. He sometimes could not stop himself reacting to the taunts against his mother, and he was fearful these situations would escalate and cause a further breach. He was afraid, but also angry, which affected his behaviour within the community. To minimise risk, the family stayed in the house more and more, living with curtains closed and always using the back door to enter or leave the property. This was affecting the mother's mental health and the young people's attendance and achievement at school.

Following the CAF process, a range of agencies provided support to meet the identified needs:

- A Family Support Worker helped Catherine reintroduce routines the family had had before.
- A Connexions Personal Adviser helped Connor identify and enrol on a suitable college course, finding him a part-time job in the meantime.
- The police arranged a 'mechanics workshop' for Connor in return for improved behaviour.
- The school allocated Shauna a mentor, as she was becoming withdrawn.

The worker also encouraged the family to keep a diary of the harassment they were experiencing, and approached the Housing Manager with this and the information from the CAF. Before their current neighbours moved in, the family had maintained their tenancy for 10 years.

Impressed by the level and quality of the information that had been collected, and the multi-agency approach, the Housing Manager agreed to urgent rehousing of the family.

The strength of this approach came from partnership working and sharing information. Meeting the family's needs through Children's Services would have had limited success while the family remained in such stressful living conditions. Rehousing the family without addressing the practical and emotional needs that had arisen would have been similarly limited. By Housing and Children's Services sharing assessment and other information appropriately, a more lasting solution was achieved.

## CASE STUDY

### Web-based information sharing, tracking temporary accommodation movements, NOTIFY London

NOTIFY is a web-based information and notification system for London's councils. It is a system for recording all movements into temporary accommodation, in and out of each London borough, and this information can be communicated to relevant people in each borough such as Social Services, Education Services and the Primary Care Trust.

The system aims to improve households' access to services by notifying relevant services of the

placement or movement of statutorily homeless households living in temporary accommodation in London, so that these people can continue to be reached and access services. This is particularly important in relation to movement of families with children and it is vital professionals from Children's Services can access and read this data, and understand what it means for services.

It is necessary for professionals across both Housing and Children's Services to discuss how they will ensure the information is used effectively so that it is accessed and shared with relevant professionals and passed to teams working in 'Early Years', schools and Health services.



# Effective frontline delivery

## You will find this section useful if you are:

- Frontline practitioners in Housing Services
- Frontline practitioners in Children's Services
- Frontline practitioners from a voluntary sector organisation or RSL.

While effective governance, strategy and processes are all important factors in the joint working agenda, integrated delivery is paramount. Frontline practitioners foster the relationships with families, children and young people and are often the ones who make those judgements and fundamental decisions about the advice and support needs of homeless and badly housed children, young people and families.

'Improving outcomes for children and young people involves changing the behaviour of those working with children, young people and families... the development of multi-disciplinary teams and lead professionals and bringing together staff from different agencies.'<sup>19</sup>

Clear lines of accountability, information sharing and communication between Housing and Children's Services will help you better address the needs of homeless children in your area and lead to improved outcomes. The short case studies and practice indicators that follow provide examples of how joint working between the services at a frontline level proves successful, and you can use this information to benchmark what you do.

## Shelter's indicators for joint working

### 1. The needs of children from homeless families, including those deemed 'intentionally homeless', are assessed and met.

- When a CAF is carried out, Housing Services are involved in the process and due weight is given to consider:
  - overcrowding
  - issues with the landlord
  - rent arrears, and
  - eviction risk.
- Housing Officers from Housing Options teams are given basic awareness training of the impact of bad housing on children's outcomes during their induction training.
- The team involved in meetings invites Housing professionals to attend for the assessments where a housing issue is identified.
- In assessments made, consideration is given to the distance travelled to school.

### 2. Staff from Housing and Children's Services are co-located within the area to support joint assessments.

- LA Housing teams or independent housing advice services deliver regular outreach advice sessions in Children's Services' arenas, such as extended schools and Children's Centres.
- Family Support Workers at Children's Centres know where families recently placed in temporary accommodation live, and they make contact with them through Housing Officers.
- Housing Options teams and Children's Services are co-located and jointly deliver commissioned services linked to Supporting People (SP) to address the needs of children in homeless households.
- Housing Services and the Youth Offending Service or Connexions, plus other targeted youth support, all work together to create solutions to prevent homeless young people, or those at risk of homelessness, from offending.

<sup>19</sup> See <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/about/aims/strategicoverview/integratedfrontline/integratedfrontlinedelivery/> for full context of DCSF quote [2009].

### **3. Children's Centres will provide access to specialist housing advice for families.**

- Children's Centres have a nominated member of staff who is trained in housing matters and able to give substantive support and advice to families in housing need.
- Induction processes for newly hired family support professionals includes basic housing and homelessness training.
- Families moving home are given support to register with a new GP and dental health services.

### **4. Housing and Children's Services work together to provide greater provision of support and tenancy sustainment for families deemed intentionally homeless.**

- Both Children's Services and Housing departments nominate a member of staff to ensure early identification and prevention of families at risk of being found 'intentionally homeless', due to antisocial behaviour or rent arrears in particular.

### **5. Identify opportunities for shared training across Housing and Children's Services to ensure professionals have clear insight and understanding of each other's roles.**

- Representatives of housing providers locally (ALMO, council or RSL) are included in Children's Centre steering groups or area-based steering groups.
- Staff from Housing departments deliver basic 'housing information' workshops to family support professionals to improve their knowledge on local housing procedures and homelessness issues.
- Managers of Children's Centres brief Housing staff about how their centres work, and Housing Options and Homelessness staff are given training on the ECM 'Change for Children' agenda.

### **6. Additional support for homeless children is arranged through schools, extended schools and Children's Centres.**

- Children's Centres work with families living in temporary accommodation (hostels, B&Bs and hotels).
- Primary and secondary schools ensure any child known to be living in temporary accommodation, overcrowded conditions or bad housing can receive free or subsidised access to Breakfast Clubs, Homework Clubs and after-school activities.
- Housing staff have a good knowledge of local Children's Services and activities, and can promote these to families living in bad housing and/or temporary accommodation.

### **7. Peer education methods are employed in schools and other young people's settings, to prevent homelessness.**

- Arrangements are made to organise homelessness prevention workshops in schools.
- Housing Services work with schools and other youth settings to provide homelessness awareness and prevention information.

### **8. Housing and Children's Services go out to provide support for children in their homeless settings, eg family hostels and B&Bs.**

- A nominated person in Housing Services is responsible for developing and maintaining links with Children's Services.
- Free 'Early Years' provision for all two-year-olds living in temporary accommodation is available through Children's Centres.
- Children's Centres work with families living in hostels or B&Bs and temporary accommodation hotels.
- Housing departments update Family Support Workers monthly about where families with pre-school children recently placed into temporary accommodation live.
- Housing and Children's Services work together to ensure children are enrolled in school.
- Housing Services let educational welfare professionals know about any child that is not registered in school or is moving school.

## CASE STUDY

### **Children's Centre's Temporary Accommodation Outreach Worker, LB Newham**

Susan Lawrence Children's Centre, Newham, employs a Temporary Accommodation Outreach Worker with specific remit to make home visits to recently accommodated families in the Children's Centre's catchment area, inviting them to access the Children's Centre's services .

The outreach work is made possible through close communication and co-operation between the Housing Options team and Children's Services. The council's Temporary Accommodation team provides its Children's Services with a regular update on families recently placed in temporary accommodation. Families being temporarily housed

agree to their details being shared between council departments. Families on the pre-school list are then discussed at 'Every Child Matters' meetings consisting of the centre's multi-agency staff, including 'Early Start' programme lead professionals and Health Visitors, to identify agencies that are in contact with the family, what their support needs are, and draw up an action plan for making contact with the family.

Not every family takes up services provided at the Children's Centre following a home visit, but it is a way to ensure families are in touch with other local services, including their GP or Health Visitor, and that older children have access to a school place and families know where local amenities are, such as the library. The worker also helps the family with benefit applications, and signposts them to other advice services in the area.

## CASE STUDY

### **Intentional homelessness: sharing information to improve outcomes, Shelter Keys to the Future, Knowsley**

Mr Abbott and his 11-year-old son Bradley were referred to the service provided by Shelter Keys to the Future, Knowsley from the LA's Homelessness Prevention team. The service works with families who are deemed to be 'intentionally homeless', or are at risk of becoming so.

Bradley was put into voluntary care by his mother. When Mr Abbott discovered this, he applied for and obtained parental responsibility, and started to try to establish a safe family home for them. Unfortunately, the only place they had to stay was with his own parents who were alcoholics. He took this option as a short-term measure and applied to the LA as homeless.

The LA accepted that Mr Abbott was homeless and in priority need, but declined to rehouse him because of substantial rent arrears accrued many years before when he lived with Bradley's mother. Bradley was the subject of a Child Protection Plan for emotional abuse suffered in the past, but there had been frequent changes of Social Worker and

Mr Abbott felt let down and reluctant to engage with Children's Services. These factors jeopardised Bradley's chance of a settled family life.

The Shelter worker assigned to support Bradley attended multi-agency meetings at the school and with Social Services, liaising with representatives from Education, Children's Services and Health. This enabled her to inform Children's Services about the family's housing situation, giving them a fuller picture of Bradley's circumstances and needs.

After intervention from Shelter, the rent arrears were written off, and the worker represented Mr Abbott at Knowsley MBC's High Priority Resettlement Panel. She was able to submit the feedback she'd had and a supporting letter from Children's Services, as well as making it clear that Bradley needed to be rehoused within walking distance of the school and in the community where he was currently receiving support. The family was accepted as high priority and subsequently rehoused in their preferred area.

Without the worker acting as the link between services, there would have been a risk of the family remaining in unsuitable accommodation and Bradley returning to the care system.

## CASE STUDY

### Oldham Theatre Workshop and Peer Education 2007/08

Oldham Theatre Workshop was awarded £5,500 from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund to raise awareness of homelessness in schools across Oldham. The workshop wrote and staged a play called 'Sheltered', based on true events about a young person who found herself homeless at the age of 18. Part of the funding was also used to put together an innovative resource pack of playing cards that included homelessness advice contact numbers, recipes for basic meals, and homelessness statistics.

These were given out to the children and young people after the play to ensure that they went

away armed with information on homelessness. There were seven performances over three days to approximately 17 schools, reaching 900 young people aged 15 to 19 from all areas of the community.

Outcomes were positive. A number of agencies are continuing their links, including schools, colleges, Oldham's Housing Strategy team, First Choice Homes in Oldham, Connexions, the mediation service delivered by De Paul UK and housing support agencies.

More recently Oldham Theatre Workshop has been commissioned to produce a DVD on the homelessness prevention theme and this will be rolled out to local schools in September 2009.

## CASE STUDY

### Accommodation Manager in Leaving Care Services, Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire is a two-tier authority with around 110 young people leaving care every year. The council established an Accommodation Manager in 'leaving care' services, district and borough-wide, who is responsible for managing the move-on accommodation needs of young people leaving care. The manager who has a housing background is responsible for developing relationships with the 10 district Housing authorities. Hertfordshire's accommodation strategy ensures that Leaving Care Services understand housing legislation and terminology. The council identified that the following are critical to success in two-tier authorities:

- Communication of information.
- A point of contact in each district Housing authority.
- Joint training and attending each other's team meetings.
- Invest time and staff resources in 'housing'.
- Gaining 'sign up' from the appropriate level, both strategically and operationally, eg Head of Housing.

Please note: this case study is extracted from the National Care Advisory Service (NCAS) publication *Journeys to home: care leaver's successful transition to independent accommodation*, 2009.

## CASE STUDY

### Shelter Keys to the Future, Newham's Education Service

Shelter set up this service in June 2007 as part of Shelter's national 'Keys to the Future' services, providing a blueprint to end children living in bad housing. The Newham borough was selected because it is one of the country's poorest and most diverse boroughs. There are more than 7,500 children and young people living in temporary accommodation in Newham – more than in the three surrounding boroughs put together.

A team of three Support Workers and one Team Leader work in partnership with a range of statutory and voluntary education and housing organisations

to offer support to 5- to 16-years-olds, primarily to minimise the detrimental impact temporary housing has on their education and to equalise and extend educational opportunities available to them – supporting these children, young people and their families to find educational places, navigate the admissions system, sustain school attendance and progress to reach their educational targets. Provision is there to develop positive behaviours and build confidence and self-esteem, helping the children and young people they work with to feel more settled and happy both in and out of school. The service also works with the parents to support them with the admissions and appeal system, as well as referring or signposting them on for further specialist advice, eg to sort out any Housing Benefit problems.

## CASE STUDY

### Shelter Keys to the Future, Gloucestershire's Peer Education Service

Shelter Keys to the Future, Gloucestershire was set up in June 2007 to pilot a three-year peer education service. To date, the service has reached more than 5,000 children in over 32 different secondary schools and 12 other specialist support agencies. Peer education is delivered across all six districts in Gloucestershire and in a range of venues, including schools, Pupil Referral Units and the Leaving Care Unit. It was tasked with piloting ways that would attract an audience, using multi-media and drama as 'vehicles' to deliver the peer education message. Peer Educators telling their stories were filmed to produce a DVD, enabling a range of young people to share their experiences (eg teenage parents and asylum seekers), and Forum Theatre is currently using one young volunteer's experience of homelessness as the script for drama performance. The service's two Peer Education Support Workers have so far trained and supported 24 volunteer Peer Educators, working with a story teller to enable their confident delivery of individual stories that convey powerful messages of what it really means to be homeless in a way their audience in schools can relate to. Feedback and independent evaluation claims the Peer Education Service is successful in informing and changing young people's perceptions of what their housing options are while making them aware of the importance of making planned decisions.

The three-year pilot has received recognition locally and nationally as effective in partnering joint working to prevent youth homelessness. A positive outcome for the Peer Educators themselves is that 9 out of

10 of those submitting a portfolio for BTEC level 2 were successful, and all volunteers have had their work accredited under the 'V – Involve' certification system.

#### Reported outcomes:

- All six Gloucestershire district councils have included the Shelter Peer Education Service in their Homelessness Strategies.
- The Peer Educators have gained from their involvement with the service in ways such as: developing 'a sense of self'; and gaining respect, a sense of direction and loyalty 'to the cause'. The service is using 'V/Time' Bank to record the Peer Educators' contribution.
- According to a YHAS partner, the service 'would appear to be having an impact on the number of young people coming through the Tier 1 service'. The service itself noticed a drop in the number of 15-year-olds presenting to them as 'wanting to leave home', particularly those from the districts of Stroud and Cheltenham. They don't currently record the number of enquiries from under-16s but there is a possible opportunity to identify areas of high need and target Peer Educators into those areas.
- Peer Education feedback has been valuable to help shape core service standards for Housing Services in Gloucester City Council.
- There have been three positive mentions about Peer Education session learning plans in school Ofsted reports. There is also good feedback from recipients, work done last year is paying off, and schools have again requested Peer Education.

## CASE STUDY

### Children's Centre 0–5 Services and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee function, LB Hackney.

In late 2008 to early 2009, Hackney's Overview and Scrutiny team regarding children and young people reviewed the borough's services for infants from 0 to 5 years. During the course of interviews with parents in Children's Centre settings, members of the Scrutiny Commission heard frequent requests for more input and advice on housing-related matters. Although the commission identified some examples of interaction between 'Early Years' providers and Housing Services, its final report included a recommendation that housing advice services should deliver surgeries in Children's Centres in the areas of highest need in the borough.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee also encountered consistent messages about the importance of practical and frequent interaction between the services at the Children's Centre and the local housing provider, Hackney Homes. It recommended that a representative from the local ALMO be invited on to each of the six area steering groups for 'Early Years' services in order to foster mutually beneficial working relationships.

With support from Shelter's Regional Children's Co-ordinator in London, these recommendations have been discussed at further meetings between the Children's Centre's 'Extended Services' team in Hackney and its Housing Services, and an action plan has been developed to realise the recommendations by the commission's review date.

## CASE STUDY

### Cheshire Night Stop (co-location and co-funded services)

Cheshire Night Stop runs its project across the Cheshire area. Hosts are recruited to provide a few nights accommodation to young people who are homeless.

Cheshire Night Stop has appointed a Project Development Worker who is co-located and co-funded via a number of services concerned with youth homelessness. The main responsibilities of the worker are to recruit, assess, train and supervise volunteer hosts, carry out a risk assessment of all the young people referred to the scheme, match young people with host families, identify and apply for appropriate funding to sustain the project, promote the scheme to referral agencies, and carry out research on the extent of youth homelessness in Cheshire. The post was jointly funded by five of the six statutory Housing Services and the Youth Offending Service in July 2008 after recognition that there was a gap in provision for homeless 16- to 25-year-olds in Cheshire. All agencies involved agreed there was a lack of direct access, emergency accommodation. The post was created in order to have one dedicated person to drive the project forward with the support of many different statutory and voluntary agencies.

The post-holder is co-located within the offices of Social Services, who provide the Night Stop Project Development Worker with free office space and staff

cover for their holidays. Additionally, Cheshire YMCA offer line management and a 'Human Resources' provision for the post.

The co-location and joint funding of this post has been paramount to the success of the multi-agency partnerships coming out of the initiative. The way it has evolved, Night Stop hosts and providers for the Social Services' 'supported lodgings' scheme are jointly recruited to cover both schemes. Hosts for the Night Stop scheme are offered training by the local authority, covering 'dealing with self harm' and child protection issues – courses run by the Fostering team.

For all services, investing in joint working and multi-agency partnerships has resulted in coherent and responsive provision being offered to vulnerable young people. The flexibility of partnership arrangements – not tying things down, but letting them develop organically in response to levels of need – has also been a key feature in the success of the project.

Since the appointment of the Project Development Worker, both the 'supported lodgings' scheme and the Night Stop project have seen an increase in the number of available volunteer hosts for each project (19 households are now approved, with joint registration for both schemes). Since opening its doors in March 2009, Cheshire Night Stop has received 40 referrals for young people from various agencies and has provided a total of 56 'bed nights'.

## CASE STUDY

### Protocol for intentionally homeless families, Norwich City Council

Norwich City Council's Housing team and Norfolk County Council's Children's Services have developed an Intentionally Homeless Families protocol – an agreed procedure for dealing with 'intentionally homeless' households, including pregnant women and those with dependent children under 18. Joint-working procedures also cover single 16- and 17-year-olds who are thought to be at risk of being found 'intentionally homeless'.

The protocol greatly improved communication between the two agencies, and its 'early intervention' policy enables them to improve outcomes for intentionally homeless families.

#### The protocol in practice

If a family or young person presents at Norwich LHA, and a Housing Officer has reason to believe that the authority is likely to make an 'intentionally homeless' decision, the Housing Officer completes

an initial assessment form and sends it to Children's Services and contacts them to arrange a meeting to discuss the case with a Social Worker.

A joint assessment carried out with the client, that includes both the Housing Officer and Children's Services, is arranged within seven days of the first meeting, at which point a fuller assessment of need is conducted.

Information about the joint-working procedures is shared between management and staff at regular team meetings, and job shadowing by Housing and Children's Services' staff is arranged alongside their receiving a written copy of the updated guidance and working procedures.

Regular meetings are held with all parties concerned to discuss cases. At these meetings Children's Services will also bring up cases they are dealing with that involve housing problems, which might otherwise not be known to the Housing Options team, for advice and early intervention. Meetings are held monthly or sooner if required.

## CASE STUDY

### Joint protocol for 16- and 17-year-olds, County Durham

County Durham is now a unitary authority with a mix of urban and rural settlements. The County Durham Homelessness Action Partnership (HAP) is a countywide strategic group, a sub-group of which developed and oversees the operation of the joint protocol. This is supported by Centrepoin, which the HAP has commissioned through local authorities to facilitate the process.

#### The aims of the protocol are to ensure:

- homelessness among 16- and 17-year-olds is prevented
- 16- and 17-year-olds receive support they need
- 16- and 17-year-olds can access appropriate and suitable accommodation, where necessary.

#### This is to be achieved by:

- increasing joint working between agencies to meet the needs of homeless 16- and 17-year-olds and those threatened with homelessness
- improving communication between the respective agencies.

#### The joint protocol covers work carried out by the following service delivery partners:

- County Durham Children and Young People's Service
- the Housing authority

- Connexions
- County Durham Youth Engagement Service
- specifically commissioned voluntary sector organisations.

When a 16- or 17-year-old at risk of homelessness presents to any of these agencies, they make an assessment of their housing and support needs.

If the situation isn't immediately resolved and a multi-agency response is needed, the person carrying out the assessment will convene a meeting of the panel of service delivery partners. The young person, parents or carers (if safe and appropriate) and relevant agencies are invited, and a plan of action is agreed. Multi-agency implementation of the plan is led and monitored by a 'lead agency' that will be identified at the panel meeting, usually one of the voluntary sector providers unless a more appropriate lead is identified.

For further information about the County Durham joint protocol tools, and to see guidance, visit: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/youthhomelessness/strategy/beingstrategic/crossboundaryworking/casestudy8/>

Please note: case study extracted from CLG/DCSF, *Joint working between Housing and Children's Services: Preventing homelessness and tackling its effects on children*, 2008.

## CASE STUDY

### Temporary Accommodation Play Service, LB Camden

Camden's Temporary Accommodation Play Service has been running for more than 20 years. It is funded entirely by Camden's Play Service and serves the most marginalised children and families experiencing social exclusion.

There are five part-time workers who run the mobile service. They visit temporary accommodation hotels and family hostels, in and outside the borough, to ensure children are accessing local services for children and have the opportunity to play.

One family hostel in Camden hosts the Play Service team from 3.30pm to 6pm, Monday to Thursday during term time (10.30am to 5.30pm in holiday

times) when the whole downstairs communal area is converted into an after-school club for the children, providing opportunities to play games and do activities such as painting and drawing.

Some of Camden's Play Service team pick up other children from various schools and visit outside play areas, arranging out-of-doors activities such as themed walks on Hampstead Heath or in local parks.

Supporting around 40 school-age children per day, this service provides them with the opportunity to be among other school-age children living in the same circumstances as themselves. Families with younger children are referred to a dedicated Temporary Accommodation Support Worker who liaises closely with all Children's Centres in the borough.

## CASE STUDY

### Involving young people in the scrutiny process – ‘Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People’, Hartlepool

Members of the Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum in Hartlepool agreed to co-opt six young people to the Forum in 2007. Hartlepool Borough Council wanted to ensure that young people’s views fed directly into all aspects of its planning, policy and development as part of a wider participation strategy. The young people received a lot of support from the council, Barnardos and Hartlepool Young Voices in order to prepare them for the tasks and requirements of being a co-opted member of a Scrutiny Forum. They received media training and took part in team-building exercises with existing members and councillors of the forum and with other young people.

It was agreed that, during the 2008/09 municipal year, the young people would choose one topic for the Children’s Service’s Scrutiny Forum to investigate. ‘Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason’ was their choice. Councillor Jane Shaw, Chair of the Children’s Service’s Scrutiny Forum said:

‘As Chair of the Forum I was delighted when the topic of ‘Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason’ was presented to the Forum as the topic the young people wanted the Forum to look into. Throughout the investigation the

young people were instrumental in not only presenting the views of the young people of Hartlepool, but also shaping the recommendations that were presented to Cabinet, alongside an action plan that will deliver on those recommendations. I had the privilege of accompanying the young people down to the House of Commons for a meeting with our local MP Iain Wright, who was at the time Parliamentary under Secretary of State in the Department for Communities and Local Government, which covers homelessness. The young people asked Iain some very searching questions in relation to the scrutiny investigation and fed Iain’s responses back to the Forum.’

In July 2009, a final report entitled ‘Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason’ was presented to Hartlepool BC’s Cabinet who acknowledged the findings, key recommendations and agreed the implementation of an action plan of improvements.

This multi-agency initiative saw statutory Housing and Children’s Services, voluntary organisations, and young people all working effectively together to improve services across Hartlepool, and it will remain as a standing process within Hartlepool’s Children’s Services Scrutiny Forum.

## CASE STUDY

### Housing needs assessment – Shelter Keys to the Future, Bristol's Children's Service

This service at Shelter Keys to the Future, Bristol was set up in July 2007 as part of Shelter's national 'Keys to the Future' campaign to eradicate children living in bad housing and the negative effects it can have on their development. This children's service is piloting a new approach that encourages multi-agency working, and provides a safety net for Bristol's homeless and unsettled children up to the age of 18. It is staffed by four Children's Housing Lead Professionals and a Team Leader. Working primarily in partnership with the council's Family Homelessness team as well as other statutory and voluntary agencies, Shelter's service carries out a specially developed Housing Needs Assessment with children whose development and wellbeing is at risk because of their family's housing situation. If the Housing Needs Assessment identifies complex needs, a co-ordinated and tailored multi-agency package of support will be arranged, often facilitated through a Children's Housing Lead Professional completing a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) that puts the child and family at the centre. Multi-agency support plans will be monitored by the service to ensure continuity should the family move again. The service will also provide intensive support to the most vulnerable children and their families to help them overcome the emotional trauma and disruption of bad housing and to encourage their achievement as per all five Every Child Matters outcomes. Intense support delivered through 1-2-1s and in small groups includes access to new social and learning opportunities such as climbing, sailing and bowling. To widen the range of activities on offer, the service uses many volunteers who can deliver a diverse range, including 1-2-1 tutoring, football, art and drama sessions. Families are also helped to access essential and practical resources they can benefit from.

At the heart of this service is a commitment to involve service users as much as possible. Apart from support being service-user led, children, young people and their families are given a voice through pro-active consultation and participation groups. Following feedback the service had from the young people involved in these groups, saying they had had to say too many 'goodbyes' in life, the Shelter service set up an after-service 'self-help' support group run mainly by volunteers. This group's

management board of young people, with the support of volunteers, has successfully applied for local funding to continue the group. Young service-users involved in the participation group created a really useful resource titled 'Teachers Tips' to aid teachers' understanding and show them how best to support a badly housed child or young person to help them settle and sustain a school place. Through the groups, these children and young people have also taken part in local and national researches or consultations on issues such as gangs, or gun and knife crime.

The children's service at Shelter Keys to the Future, Bristol is being evaluated externally by Birmingham University. Their interim report of October 2008, complete with stakeholder quotes, indicates the service is very successful in meeting the needs of service users and in helping them to sustain secure and stable housing:

'Without Keys to the Future I would be under the ground! No I really... I would be dead by now! The support Bristol's Keys to the Future gave me and my family helped me to cope again. They helped me to see some light.'

Parent

'My mummy is happy now, and I have a space to play which is really good. I like my new house.'

8-year-old girl

'Shelter Keys to the Future, Bristol is a brilliant service. I am really impressed with the work that they do. Please pass the message on to everyone there. I didn't know much about Shelter until they attended one of our team meetings, but now I think of them whenever a housing issue arises with a family.'

CYPS team leader



# Conclusion

Current legislative developments within Children's and Young People's Services have brought about a number of opportunities for improved joint working across statutory services. Housing Services have an integral role to play in this agenda. The Homelessness Code of Guidance 2006 and the recent DSCF and CLG joint-working guidance of 2008 both point to a need for improved joint working between Housing and Children's Services to ensure that homeless and badly housed children and young people are able to lead happy and fulfilled lives.

The 'Every Child Matters' agenda is seriously undermined by the number of children growing up in poor housing conditions and overcrowded households. Our published research at Shelter – *Chance of a lifetime* and *Against the odds* (2006) – demonstrates how homelessness and bad housing impacts negatively regarding each of the five 'Every Child Matters' outcomes. More recent evidence in 2009 shows that more than one million children are living in overcrowded households and the number is rising. It has increased by 54,000 in the last two years.<sup>20</sup> Serious actions must be taken to address this issue, because a stable decent home is fundamental to a child's wellbeing.

In addition to achieving improved outcomes for children and young people, entering into joint working enables Housing and Children's Services to meet strategic outcomes and targets set by central government. Of the 198 national indicators (NIs) that make up LA Local Area Agreements to address local need, we have identified 61 NIs that you can impact upon by improved or increased joint working across the two services. Similarly, looking at the Government's homelessness strategy, 'Sustainable Homes: settled homes; changing lives' (published in 2005), we have been able to demonstrate that if Housing and Children's Services work together your LAs can achieve more, so you have a vested interest in working effectively together if you are both to meet the Government targets and duties.

<sup>20</sup> National statistics data source: CLG, *Survey of English Housing*, 2005/06–2007/08

# Appendix: 1.

## Opportunities for joint working between Housing and Children's Services checklist

Considerations and questioning in the following headed sections offer guidance to Children's Services and Housing professionals on the opportunities for improving joint working, and this can help you to benchmark your practices.

### Sure Start Children's Centres

There will be 3,500 Children's Centres by 2010, with strong emphasis on early intervention and prevention; outreach services and family support. These centres can be key to identifying and addressing the housing needs of families with very young children. Shelter does this where we can, and we also provide a free advice line for Children's Services professionals to access our specialist housing advice. Some Children's Centres can offer free 'Early Years' provision to some children as young as two years.

Does your Children's Centre have a member of staff with a particular interest in housing issues?

Could s/he be trained in housing matters, to be able to give substantive support and advice directly to families in housing need?

Can your Housing team or a local independent housing advice service deliver regular housing advice sessions in Children's Centres (or in 'extended schools')?

Can your Children's Centre allocate free 'Early Years' places to two-year-olds living in temporary accommodation?

Does your Children's Centre work with families who live in hostels/B&Bs and temporary accommodation hotels in the borough?

What more can be done to ensure that families in these places are reached?

Are local housing providers (ALMOs, council or RSL representatives) included in your Children's Centre or area-based steering groups?

What links has your Children's Centre to Housing Services, the local Housing department or office?

### Extended schools

Provision of activities and services to children and parents in the school building provides an opportunity to access information, advice and assistance on a wide range of issues from the school directly. Breakfast Clubs, Homework Clubs and after-school clubs/activities can provide a safe environment for children living in bad housing, temporary or overcrowded accommodation.

Can primary or secondary schools ensure that any child known by staff to be living in temporary accommodation (TA), overcrowded conditions or bad housing is particularly welcomed/targeted (with free or subsidised access) to Breakfast Clubs, Homework Clubs, after-school activities or weekend clubs?

Can Housing staff highlight these services to families moving into new TA?

### Family/Parent Support Workers

Huge investment has been allocated to the employment and development of Family Support Workers (FSWs), professionals who deal face-to-face with families every day and are in the best position to identify the housing needs of families with children. Where we have capacity, Shelter is delivering 'housing information' workshops to FSWs.

Can staff in the Housing department deliver basic 'housing information' workshops to FSWs to improve their knowledge and understanding of local housing rules and homelessness issues?

Can Children's Centre managers give briefings to Housing staff about Children's Centres and how they work?

When hiring new FSWs, consider the benefits of someone with a background in housing advice. Can you justify hiring a FSW with a specialism in 'housing', to work across Children's Centres and co-ordinate work with the Housing department?

What about an outreach worker with a specific 'temporary accommodation' remit?

Do Children's Centre FSWs know where families recently given temporary accommodation live?

Can the Housing department provide regular, fortnightly or monthly, updates about where families with pre-school children have been placed, to enable FSWs to do home visits and check the family is settling in and has information about local services, including the Children's Centre? (See also 'Information sharing' section.)

## Common Assessment Framework (CAF)

The CAF is an ideal way of identifying how a child's housing situation may be an issue among his/her wider family support needs. Solutions can only be achieved if the right questions are always asked in the first place.

Is the family living in temporary accommodation?

Is the family overcrowded (statutorily or generally)?

Does the family have issues with their landlord?

Is the family up to date with rent, or is there a risk or fear of eviction?

Are Housing Officers in the Housing Options team trained in and expected to use a CAF to identify families with additional needs to housing?

Are policies, procedures and practices in place for this to happen?

Are relationships between Children's Services and Housing departments, in unitary or two-tier authorities, established for contacts to be made to take forward issues identified in a CAF?

Are policies, procedures and practices in place for this to happen?

## Information sharing

Information sharing is key to delivering co-ordinated services around the needs of the individual family or child. It is vital in enabling early intervention and prevention work to safeguard and promote their welfare, improving outcomes for all children including those in temporary accommodation who move often.

In supporting families with a move into temporary accommodation, can Housing Officers signpost those with pre-school children to their new local Children's Centre?

Can 'Welcome Packs' be given to families moving into temporary accommodation, and a home visit from a FSW arranged once the family completes a referral form that is returned to the relevant Children's Centre (or central liaison person)?

Is 'extended school' provision also highlighted?

## Team Around the Child/Every Child Matters/MAT Meetings

Team Around the Child (TAC) or Every Child Matters (ECM) or Multi-Agency Team (MAT) meetings bring together multi-agency professionals to discuss issues relating to a child within a family, with a view to identifying a Lead Professional and to establish a range of support services to overcome any particular problems that child faces.

Where a housing issue is identified, is a Housing professional invited to attend the meeting?

Does the Housing professional always attend the meeting? It is useful for a person from Housing to provide 'the housing perspective' – an insight into the council's duties under housing law.

Are Housing professionals trained in 'Lead Professional' status?

Even if not taking on that role, do they know how to identify which children have a Lead Professional and how to contact them?

## ContactPoint

ContactPoint is the information-sharing index of Children in the UK recommended by Lord Laming in his report after the death of Victoria Climbié. It aims to improve the way information is shared between professionals across different departments.

Which Housing professionals in your authority have access to ContactPoint?

Which/how many staff are trained to use it?

If using your own information-sharing system, who of your Housing staff are trained to use it?

Are Housing professionals expected to update information on the system, eg when a child is moved into temporary accommodation?

Are you in touch with Children's Services well before a family is found 'intentionally homeless' (eg threatened with eviction due to rent arrears)?

Do you (Housing and Children's Services) convene a 'case conference' including the family, to promote positive action to prevent eviction?

Is support in place to ensure any disruption to a child's schooling is minimised?

## NOTIFY

NOTIFY is a web-based information and notification system for London's councils that aims to ensure all movements into temporary accommodation, in/out of the borough, are recorded and communicated to relevant people in each borough. Notifying relevant services of the placement or movement of statutorily homeless households in London should help to improve these households' access to services.

Have your Housing and Children's Services discussed how to use this information effectively?

Who in 'Early Years' or 'extended services' is responsible for retrieving data from NOTIFY and acting upon it with relevant professionals in Children's Centres, schools and Health teams?

Do you regularly, at least weekly, upload up-to-date data to it concerning households moved into temporary accommodation?

## Intentionally homeless families

Families the council deems 'intentionally homeless' can be among the most vulnerable, since they are not owed a housing duty nor benefit from additional support families in temporary accommodation get and must find housing in the private rented sector.

How do you ensure early identification of families at risk, and prevent them being found intentionally homeless, particularly due to antisocial behaviour or rent arrears?

Can you provide intensive support, eg a Family Intervention Project or debt/welfare services?

Are there established protocols between Housing and Children's Services to identify these families and provide support?

## Youth homelessness – 16- and 17-year-olds in priority need

Since 2002, all 16- and 17-year-olds are classified as in priority need when homeless if they do not meet the criteria to become a 'child in need'. As a result, youth homelessness has risen significantly. The CLG is committed to working with local authorities to help tackle youth homelessness and address its causes, while Housing and Children's Services work together.

Does your authority operate up-to-date protocols, to ensure seamless joint working between Housing Officers and Social Workers and prevent young people being passed between them?

Are arrangements in place to provide workshops in schools to do with homelessness prevention?

Are high-risk schools and higher-risk groups of young people targeted?

We have not covered every situation regarding children here, just some of the ways Housing and Children's Services can work more effectively together to hopefully help you improve outcomes for children and families in housing difficulty.

# Appendix 2

## Contact details for case studies featured

Case study	Area	Contact
<b>Interagency governance</b>		
Housing Steering Group within Devon Children's Trust	Devon	fleur.buechler@devon.gov.uk
Involvement of Housing Services in Local Safeguarding Children's Board	Stockton-on-Tees	pauline.beall@stockton.gov.uk
		caroline.wood@stockton.gov.uk
<b>Integrated strategy</b>		
North East Regional Youth Homelessness Network	North East Region	ben.dickenson@homelesslink.org.uk
Integrated response between Housing and Children's Services	Brighton & Hove	rachel.timms@brighton-hove.gov.uk
<b>Integrated processes</b>		
Using the Common Assessment Framework to address housing issues	Rochdale	anita_birchall@shelter.org.uk
Web-based information sharing, tracking temporary accommodation movements	London	david.lloyd@londoncouncils.gov.uk
		joseph.burnett@londoncouncils.gov.uk
<b>Integrated frontline delivery</b>		
Children's Centre's Temporary Accommodation Outreach Worker	LB Newham	janine.hunter@newham.gov.uk
Intentional homelessness: sharing information to improve outcomes, Shelter Keys to the Future	Knowsley	claire_white@shelter.org.uk
Theatre Workshop and Peer Education	Oldham	ann-marie.mcgin@oldham.gov.uk
Accommodation Manager in Leaving Care Services	Hertfordshire	abigail.cope@hertcc.gov.uk

Case study	Area	Contact
<b>Integrated frontline delivery</b>		
Shelter Keys to the Future – Education Service	LB Newham	michael_chandler@shelter.org.uk
Shelter Keys to the Future – Peer Education Service	Gloucestershire	ali_hendley@shelter.org.uk
Children’s Centre 0–5 Services and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee function	LB Hackney	gareth.wall@hackney.gov.uk
Night Stop (co-location and co-funded services)	Cheshire	claire.litherland@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk
Protocol for intentionally homeless families	Norwich	tinascoular@norwich.gov.uk
Joint protocol for 16- and 17-year-olds	County Durham	r.elton@centrepoin.org.uk
Temporary Accommodation Play Service	LB Camden	amanda.oba@camden.gov.uk
Housing needs assessment, Shelter Keys to the Future	Bristol	karen_macvean@shelter.org.uk
Involving young people in the scrutiny process – ‘Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People’	Hartlepool	james.walsh@hartlepool.gov.uk

# Appendix 3

## Resources and recommended reading

### Government reports, strategies and guidance

#### **Children Act 1989**

[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1989/Ukpga\\_19890041\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1989/Ukpga_19890041_en_1)

#### **Children Act 2004**

[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2004/ukpga\\_20040031\\_en\\_1.htm](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2004/ukpga_20040031_en_1.htm)

#### **Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000**

[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2000/ukpga\\_20000035\\_en\\_1.htm](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2000/ukpga_20000035_en_1.htm)

#### **Child Poverty Bill (in progress, 2008/09)**

<http://www.commonleader.gov.uk/output/Page2654.asp>

#### **Homelessness Act 2002**

[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020007\\_en\\_1.htm](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020007_en_1.htm)

#### **Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities (July 2006)**

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/homelessnesscode>

#### ***Joint working between Housing and Children's Services: Preventing homelessness and tackling its effects on children, 2008***

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/goodpracticeguide>

#### **Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007**

[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2007/ukpga\\_20070028\\_en\\_1.htm](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2007/ukpga_20070028_en_1.htm)

#### ***The New Performance Framework for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships: Single Set of National Indicators, 2007***

[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/nationalindicator](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/nationalindicator)

#### ***The Children's Plan: Building brighter futures, 2007***

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/childrensplan/>

#### ***Think Family: Improving the life chances of families at risk, 2008***

[http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/social\\_exclusion\\_task\\_force/assets/think\\_families/think\\_family\\_life\\_chances\\_report.pdf](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/social_exclusion_task_force/assets/think_families/think_family_life_chances_report.pdf)

## Non-government reports and guidance

**Harker, L. *Chance of a lifetime: The impact of bad housing on children's lives*, Shelter, London, 2006**

[http://england.shelter.org.uk/professional\\_resources/policy\\_library/policy\\_library\\_folder/chance\\_of\\_a\\_lifetime\\_-\\_the\\_impact\\_of\\_bad\\_housing\\_on\\_childrens\\_lives](http://england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/policy_library/policy_library_folder/chance_of_a_lifetime_-_the_impact_of_bad_housing_on_childrens_lives)

**Rice, B. *Against the odds: An investigation comparing the lives of children on either side of Britain's housing divide*, Shelter, London, 2006**

[http://england.shelter.org.uk/professional\\_resources/policy\\_library/policy\\_library\\_folder/against\\_the\\_odds](http://england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/policy_library/policy_library_folder/against_the_odds)

**NCAS (National Care Advisory Service) *Journeys to home: care leaver's successful transition to independent accommodation*, 2009**

**Shelter, *Good practice briefing: 'Engaging with homeless children: guidance for children's centres'*, 2008**

[http://england.shelter.org.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/68613/engaging\\_with\\_homeless\\_children\\_Good\\_practice\\_briefing.pdf](http://england.shelter.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/68613/engaging_with_homeless_children_Good_practice_briefing.pdf)

**Shelter Children's Legal Service briefing: 'Responding to youth homelessness following the *G v LB Southwark* judgment', November 2009**

(available as a download from [shelter.org.uk/childrensservice](http://shelter.org.uk/childrensservice) or contact Holly Padfield-Paine of the Shelter Children's Legal Service on 0344 515 2156 or email [holly\\_padfieldpaine@shelter.org.uk](mailto:holly_padfieldpaine@shelter.org.uk) for a printed copy)

**Shelter, *Good practice briefing: 'Engaging with homeless children: guidance for education professionals'*, 2008**

at [http://england.shelter.org.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/96810/Engaging\\_with\\_homeless\\_children\\_-\\_guidance\\_for\\_education\\_professionals.pdf](http://england.shelter.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/96810/Engaging_with_homeless_children_-_guidance_for_education_professionals.pdf)

**Shelter standards: *Peer education in housing and homelessness*, 2007**

(available to buy online at [shelter.org.uk](http://shelter.org.uk))

**Shelter *Back on track: A good practice guide to addressing antisocial behaviour*, 2006**

[http://england.shelter.org.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/38680/22305.pdf](http://england.shelter.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/38680/22305.pdf)

**Shelter *Youth housing strategies: A good practice guide*, 2004**

[http://england.shelter.org.uk/professional\\_resources/policy\\_library/policy\\_library\\_folder/youth\\_housing\\_strategies/youth\\_housing\\_strategies.pdf](http://england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/policy_library/policy_library_folder/youth_housing_strategies/youth_housing_strategies.pdf)

## Until there's a home for everyone

We are one of the richest countries in the world, and yet millions of people in Britain wake up every day in housing that is run-down, overcrowded, or dangerous. Many others have lost their home altogether. Bad housing robs us of security, health, and a fair chance in life.

Shelter helps more than 170,000 people a year fight for their rights, get back on their feet, and find and keep a home. We also tackle the root causes of bad housing by campaigning for new laws, policies, and solutions.

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We need your help to continue our work.  
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# Shelter