



Lancashire Joint Protocol - Joint Working Arrangements for Meeting the Needs of Homeless Young People

Additional Guidance

Prevention of Homelessness

May 2018

PREVENTION OF HOMELESSNESS

Guidance issued in May 2018 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department of Education on "The Prevention of homelessness and provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year old young people who may be homeless and/or require accommodation" states the following in chapter 2 "Supporting families to stay together"

- The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Secretary of State for Education consider that, generally, it will be in the best interests of most young people to live in the family home, or, where this is not safe or appropriate, with responsible adults in their wider family and friends' network. When a 16 or 17 year old is seeking support because they are homeless or threatened with homelessness, housing services and children's services responses should explicitly recognise this and work proactively with young people and their families to identify and resolve the issues which have led to the homelessness crisis. This could involve family support such as family mediation or family group conferences.
- It may be possible to prevent a 16 or 17 year old from having to leave home at all, or it may take much longer to work through significant family tensions and problems. It is therefore important that services are designed to enable this family focus to begin on day one and continue throughout the processes of assessment and, where necessary, the provision of accommodation. Joint working between housing and children's services will support this process.
- Work undertaken by children's services and housing services to prevent a 16 or 17 year old from becoming homeless may be undertaken under both section 17 of the 1989 Act and section 195 of the 1996 Act. Any preventative work should be undertaken alongside the assessment processes outlined in this guidance, and should not delay the provision of accommodation or performance of other statutory duties where these are owed.
- If key issues affecting the young person's welfare and/or the sustainability of their living at home remain unresolved, but they are able to remain or return there, support should be provided to the family through children's services. The needs of the young person should be assessed and, if following assessment determined to be a child in need, set out in their child in need plan.

Lancashire's Joint Protocol stresses the importance of seeking to prevent homelessness, or where homelessness occurs to reunite families as soon as possible where it is safe to do so. A range of agencies and voluntary sector organisations are currently involved in preventing homelessness.

Information describing the work being undertaken by the following organisations is outlined below:

- District Councils
- LCC Children and Families Wellbeing Service
- East Lancashire Trailblazer Service

DISTRICT COUNCILS

District Councils provide advice for homeless 16/17 year olds presenting as homeless. This can be delivered by the Housing Options Team or by referral to a specialist voluntary sector organisation. The local arrangements are outlined in the table below.

Where homelessness can't be prevented, then the district council will follow the Joint Protocol Guidance.

Central Districts	Action Taken
Chorley	Refer to voluntary sector organisation (Key) In a crisis situation where Key are not available the Housing Solutions Team will liaise with parents to try and facilitate a return home prior to any placement being made
Preston	Housing Advice Team seek to prevent homelessness and will liaise with parents/carers to return the YP home if safe to do so. Mediation is also offered A referral will be made to CSC for a joint assessment.
South Ribble	Refer to specialist voluntary sector organisation (Key). In a crisis situation where Key are not available the Housing Options Team will liaise with parents to try and facilitate a return home prior to any placement being made
West Lancashire	West Lancashire Council provides advice for homeless 16/17 year olds presenting as homeless. A full assessment is undertaken and a personalised housing plan developed. Housing Options liaise with parents to look at getting the YP back home if it is safe to do so. If this is not possible, we refer to CSC for joint assessment.

East	
Burnley	Refer to voluntary sector organisation (Positive Action in the Community – Safespace/HAPI) (Trailblazer)
Hyndburn	Refer to voluntary sector organisation (YNOT Aspire) (Trailblazer)
Ribble Valley	Refer to voluntary sector organisation (YNOT Aspire) (Trailblazer)
Pendle	Refer to voluntary sector organisation (Positive Action in the Community – Safespace/HAPI) (Trailblazer)
Rossendale	Housing Options seek to prevent homelessness. If unable to prevent homelessness we refer to Children Social Care and complete joint assessments, then work with voluntary sector organisation (Positive Action in the Community – Safespace/HAPI (Trailblazer) to access accommodation or other support.
North	
Fylde	Housing Options seek to prevent homelessness by liaising with family. Referral will be made to CSC to assist with prevention Refer to SMILE for mediation
Wyre	Housing Options seek to prevent homelessness by liaising with family Referral will be made to CSC to assist with prevention
Lancaster	Lancaster City Council provide advice for homeless 16/17 year olds presenting as homeless. A full Housing Options Assessment is undertaken and a personalised housing plan developed. Housing Options liaise with parents to look at getting the YP back home if it is safe to do so. Family mediation is also offered.

LCC CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WELLBEING SERVICE

The CFW Service works in partnership with range of organisations to support young people at risk of homelessness and their families, including District Borough Councils, VCFS organisations that provide supported accommodation, emergency accommodation and social housing, Children's Social Care, Social Housing providers and Floating Support: Information and Advice Services.

The Children & Family Wellbeing workers support children, young people and families who are at risk of homelessness / housing. Preventing homelessness is a key priority for Lancashire County Council and nationally there is recognition that the following groups are most at risk;

- Care leavers
- Young people leaving custody
- Victims of domestic abuse
- Young people experiencing relationship difficulties with parents
- Families on short term tenancies
- Families experiencing financial difficulties

Below is a summary of the methodology that the CFW will deliver with targeted groups of children, young people and families, which by virtue includes those listed above as most at risk of homelessness. This work is underpinned by the Lancashire Continuum of Need and CAF process.

Targeted Youth Support with young people through 1:1 key worker support to address their needs, looking primarily at issues such as family and relationships, personal safety, emotional health and wellbeing, rights and responsibilities and structure. Workers will provide intensive support over a period of time and will be focus on building resilience and self-help strategies.

Group based programmes operating from neighbourhood centres

One to One and group based outreach and detached work on the streets enabling relationships in particular with those young people least likely to be accessing services, having a presence in the community and building knowledge of young people's issues / experiences.

Talk Zone information, advice and guidance service via telephone, web chat or texting, available 2pm – 10pm 365 days per year. This provides support for young people on any issue including homeless/ housing related questions, support, concerns.

Commissioned Services evidence based support and intervention programmes addressing the following areas;

- Emotional health & wellbeing
- Domestic Abuse
- Family Support



CFW Homless 16-17
yrs .doc

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS TRAILBLAZER

The East Lancashire project is focused on preventing homelessness by enabling more integrated working. The project is currently operating in East Lancashire, but the intention is to roll out the learning from the pilot across the whole of Lancashire.

Established service providers are delivering new improved early intervention services for young people aged 14-25 years at risk of homelessness in order:

- to improve the resilience of their parent/carers
- to enable greater reach by all agencies working with young people at risk i.e. to work with young people who previously had not been known to services or did not access support

Providers are also delivering outreach sessions in pupil referral units and specialist schools, where they are working with those identified as at risk. In addition, these sessions are also being delivered in mainstream schools and colleges throughout the Pennine Lancashire area to inform and signpost others into services, should they need it.

Services

Details of the following services are outlined below:

- Trailblazer mediation / prevention of parental eviction offer in
 - Burnley, Pendle Rossendale. Delivered by – Positive Action in the Community – SafeSpace HAPI
 - Hyndburn and Ribble Valley. Delivered by Ynot Aspire
- Stepping Stones Trainer House
- Nightsafe Emergency Respite Bed

Trailblazer Mediation / Prevention of Parental Eviction Offer

- Stage 1 – commenced 1st November 2017: ***A prevention and mediation service for young people aged 14-25yrs at risk of homelessness or in urgent housing need.***
- Available Monday to Friday: 9am – 8pm
- One 30hr post working across Burnley, Pendle and Rosendale, plus access to staffing / response via SafeSpace Pendle and SafeSpace Rossendale and one full time Youth Homeless Worker covering Hyndburn and Ribble Valley plus access to staffing/response from Ynot Team.

- Those at 'risk' of homelessness – offered support and key working model with the aim of preventing crisis homelessness. Delivered via telephone, face to face support, family mediation (where appropriate), advocating and educating options available. May also involve preparing to move to independent or supported living to prevent crisis homelessness. The service can include:
 - Providing information and guidance,
 - Helping sort out things with parents / family members/ carers (if it is safe and appropriate),
 - Exploring housing options (short and longer term),
 - Referring and speaking to other agencies that may be able to help,
 - Contacting and making referrals to accommodation projects, including support in attending assessments if required,
 - Support and assistance with moving into accommodation, including welfare benefits support
 - Building independent living skills and personal development opportunities

What you can expect

A member of the HAPI/Ynot Aspire team to take your call, and all relevant details.

Initial solutions will be explored via telephone, and an offer of a face to face appointment if required, same day or next available time (for YP or HAPI/Ynot Aspire team).

- **In Urgent Housing Need**

Where there is urgent housing need, arrangements will be made to meet with the young person same day with the intention of securing temporary accommodation. Whilst we will try all options, there may be some limitation to access / availability of emergency accommodation, including high risk factors such as violence / sexual offending / arson.

In emergency situations the HAPI/Ynot Aspire team will engage statutory services where appropriate. For under 18yrs this will be Children's Social Care, for over 18yrs this is likely to be Housing Needs or Adult Social Care if there are significant vulnerabilities / health needs.

Emergency accommodation – where emergency accommodation is required the HAPI/Ynot Aspire team will endeavour to secure this the same day as referral, exploring all options available with the YP (including family, friends, B&B and supported accommodation).

Where accommodation is secured, the HAPI/Ynot Aspire team will continue to support the YP to stabilise the accommodation where required and available. Where accommodation has not been able to be sourced, and statutory services are not able to help, the HAPI team will advocate and continue to advocate the following day as matter of urgency.

- **Where there is a risk of homelessness in future**

Prevention / planned accommodation finding. The support available from the HAPI/Ynot Aspire team is not time limited, and they will continue to work with

the young people to resolve the housing concerns / risks and also look at additional social factors that are being affected by their housing. This may include family mediation where all parties are agreeable and appropriate, or planned accommodation finding to prevent crisis homelessness.

Additional support is also offered to all young people accessing the HAPI/Ynot Aspire service on an ongoing basis. This could include: education, training, employment, youth offending, drugs and alcohol use, exploitation, health needs including mental health. Referrals and facilitation in accessing these services will be provided by the HAPI/Ynot Aspire team.

As part of the trailblazer we will also have access to additional provision delivered by Stepping Stones in Burnley as follows;

- Practice flat / temporary accommodation (over 16yrs only)
- Life wise programme (centrepont) to educate young people in tenancy and life skills

• **What the HAPI/Ynot Aspire team can't do:**

- Guarantee accommodation – we will endeavour to find accommodation as required and this will involve engaging statutory services where there is a duty).
- Transport **high risk** young people to accommodation
- Carry out **lone working with high risk young people / families**

How to refer

Pendle Burnley and Rossendale

1) Contact Safespace/HAPI on either of the following numbers;

01282 619192 (Pendle and Burnley)

01706 212894 (Rossendale)

2) Ask for the HAPI team

Hyndburn and Clitheroe

1) 01254 352592/07841019432

2) Ask for Youth Homeless Support Worker

Manager contact details

BURNLEY, PENDLE & ROSSENDALE

Claire Bennett at PAC (Positive Action in the Community).

Hills House, Leeds Rd, Nelson, BB9 8EL or Queen St, Rawtenstall, BB4 6AD, MAIN

Office Number 01282 619192, Direct Line 01282 877213, Mobile 07809503761,
email claire.bennett@p-a-c.org.uk

HYNDBURN & CLITHEROE

Sharon Burch at YNOT Aspire

St James' Old School, Cannon Street, Accrington, BB5 2ER, Telephone 01254

352592, Mobile 07525846213, Email sharon@ynotaspire.org.uk

Stage 2 - Upstream community education to increase awareness of and prevent homelessness and parental eviction - To be available from Early 2018

Available Mon – Fri 9am – 8pm

This will include a variety of upstream community based activities including: education and awareness raising with the aim of educating at the earliest opportunity (before there is an issue where possible), and to increase understanding of the impact and services available.

YP are being consulted on how such activities will be best targeted and reach young people appropriately. Young people will also be involved in the review of such activities but initial indications are;

Schools / colleges workshops – 20min assembly up to 1 hrs PSHE lessons that raise young people's awareness of what homelessness is, sofa surfing, why young people become homeless, bust myths, how it can affect anyone, and also how to prevent it or get help to address issues EARLY. A package has been developed to deliver this and has been used successfully in Pendle for a number of years. This is to be rolled out to include Burnley and Rossendale, and resources (film) is being developed to reflect this.

Other activities;

- Social media campaign
- Posters / leaflet / messages distribution
- Possible parenting sessions around housing
- Youth Bus tours
- Community based marketplace presence and promotion
- Exploring opportunity for community volunteer mentors – where family life is strained, and some support required for individuals or all family.

Stepping Stones Trainer House

Stepping Stones are delivering a trainer house in Padiham, which will give young people an opportunity to experience living alone. Whilst living in the property the young person will be given an independence allowance and shown how to budget; manage utility meters/council tax, they will be supported with cooking skills and Lifewise sessions will be delivered on a 1:1 basis if the young person is not in education or training. Anyone living in the Pennine Lancashire area can be referred into this project. It is a short term respite provision and not designed for long term use.

The contact for referrals into the Trainer House or Lifewise Sessions is sarah.shorrock@stepping-stone.org.uk, 07583804208 or 01282 222300.

Nightsafe Emergency Respite Bed

Nightsafe will be delivering an emergency respite bed at the Witton Project in Blackburn. Referrals into this project will be through Nightsafe directly and can be from any district across Pennine Lancashire. The young person and their family will receive 1:1 intensive mediation and counselling support with a view to getting that person back into the family home. This is not a long term solution but an opportunity for a young person to have respite from the family home for a short period. This bed will be available from April 2018 for a 1 year trial. **The contact for referrals is Nicola Roscoe/Jan Larkin at Nightsafe on 01254 503067 or email nicola.roscoe@night-safe.org.uk or jan.larkin@night-safe.org.uk.**