



Safer Policy and Performance Board

**Tuesday, 12 March 2013 at 6.30 p.m.
Karalius Suite, Stobart Stadium, Widnes**

PLEASE NOTE: CHANGE OF VENUE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Walsh'.

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Shaun Osborne (Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Norman Plumpton Walsh (Vice-Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Susan Edge	Labour
Councillor John Gerrard	Labour
Councillor Robert Gilligan	Labour
Councillor Valerie Hill	Labour
Councillor Darren Lea	Labour
Councillor Martha Lloyd Jones	Labour
Councillor Margaret Ratcliffe	Liberal Democrat
Councillor Paul Nolan	Labour
Councillor Pauline Sinnott	Labour
Vacancy	Co-Optee

Please contact Lynn Derbyshire on 0151 511 7975 or e-mail lynn.derbyshire@halton.gov.uk for further information.

The next meeting of the Board is on Tuesday, 11 June 2013

**ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Part I

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1. MINUTES	
2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item.	
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In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

REPORT TO: Safer Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 12 March 2013

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Corporate and Resources

SUBJECT: Public Question Time

WARD(s): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 34(9).

1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That any questions received be dealt with.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Standing Order 34(9) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows:-

- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for dealing with questions from members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.
- (ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.
- (iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be given by 4.00 pm on the working day prior to the date of the meeting to the Committee Services Manager. At any one meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
- (iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner, which may or may not be answered at the meeting.
- (v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-
 - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
 - Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;
 - Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or
 - Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

- (vi) In the interests of natural justice, public questions cannot relate to a planning or licensing application or to any matter which is not dealt with in the public part of a meeting.
- (vii) The Chairperson will ask for people to indicate that they wish to ask a question.
- (viii) **PLEASE NOTE** that the maximum amount of time each questioner will be allowed is 3 minutes.
- (ix) If you do not receive a response at the meeting, a Council Officer will ask for your name and address and make sure that you receive a written response.

Please bear in mind that public question time lasts for a maximum of 30 minutes. To help in making the most of this opportunity to speak:-

- Please keep your questions as concise as possible.
- Please do not repeat or make statements on earlier questions as this reduces the time available for other issues to be raised.
- Please note public question time is not intended for debate – issues raised will be responded to either at the meeting or in writing at a later date.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton** - none.

6.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton** - none.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton** – none.

6.4 **A Safer Halton** – none.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal** – none.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

**8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO: Safer Policy and Performance Board
DATE: 12 March 2013
REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive
SUBJECT: Specialist Strategic Partnership minutes
WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The Minutes from the last Safer Halton Partnership meeting, which are subject to approval at the next meeting of the Safer Halton Partnership, are attached for consideration.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the minutes be noted.

3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

3.1 None.

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None.

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None.

5.3 A Healthy Halton

None.

5.4 A Safer Halton

None.

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

SAFER HALTON PARTNERSHIP

At a meeting of the Safer Halton Partnership Tuesday, 20 November 2012 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present	M. Andrews	Community Safety
	S. Ashcroft	Halton Borough Council
	S. Boycott	Cheshire Police
	D. Cargill	Police Authority
	H. Coen	Performance & Improvement, HBC
	L. Crane	Children's Organisation & Provision
	J. Davidson	Cheshire Probation Service
	D. Johnson	Communities, HBC
	G. Jones	Youth Offending Team
	P. McWade	Commissioning & Complex Care
	D. Parr	Chief Executive
	A. Scott	Democratic Services
	L. Smallthwaite	Warrington & Halton Trading Standards
	A. Waller	Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service

Action

SHP46 WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

David Parr welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made around the table.

He also welcomed Sarah Boycott, who had been appointed as the new Area Commander, and placed on record his thanks to her predecessor, Richard Strachan, for his work and dedication to the Partnership.

SHP47 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from John Williams, Colette Walsh, David Gordon and Anna Collins.

SHP48 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

SHP49 INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN - FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Alex Waller, from Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, presented the consultation document '*Cheshire Fire Authority Making Cheshire Safer – Integrated Risk*

Management Plan 2013-14, and informed partners of the possible implication for Halton that may arise from this.

The Partnership was advised that Cheshire Fire Service had developed a Strategy – Planning for a Safer Cheshire, which set out the approach and the direction it intended to take from 2011-2015. The Strategy was supported by a series of annual Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMP). These publications included up to date risk information and outlined how resources would be used cost effectively to reduce the potential risk to life in local communities.

Cheshire Fire Service had now published a draft document IRMP, which outlined the proposals for 2013-14 and beyond. It was reported that budget cuts of up to £5 million were expected over the next four years, so Cheshire Fire Service had carried out a fundamental review into how its frontline emergency response service could be delivered most effectively in the future. A comprehensive package of options had been developed which would enable the Fire Service to hit its savings targets, including estimated salary savings of between £3-5 million over the next four years. The key principles behind the proposals were presented to the group and listed in the report.

Information on costs and funding of the Cheshire area was provided in the report, together with information on the risks and activities in recent years, response standards, the current position across Cheshire and the current position in Halton. The proposals for Halton as part of the Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan were listed in the report and were discussed by the Partnership.

It was noted that there was a consultation process taking place on the proposals for Cheshire and Halton which would run until 17 December 2012.

Partners discussed the following related issues:

- The trend for the reduction of the number of incidents which had seen a 41.3% reduction since 2004, and whether this was expected to continue;
- The proposed options for savings at the Runcorn station;
- The potential impact on the Services' ability to contribute to important community safety, fire prevention and Partnership work if staffing levels were reduced.

RESOLVED:

1. that the report be noted; and
2. Partners would respond to the consultation by 17 December 2012.

SHP50 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY MID-YEAR PROGRESS REPORT & ANNUAL REVIEW OF MEASURES AND TARGETS 2013-16

A report was presented to the Partnership which provided information on the progress in achieving targets contained within the 2011-2016 Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for Halton, and highlighted the annual 'light touch' review of targets and measures.

It was stated that the SCS, a central document for the Council and its partners, provided evidence based framework through which actions and shared performance targets could be developed and communicated.

A new SCS had been developed since central Government announced the ending of government performance management of local authorities through Local Area Agreements (LAAs). It was still necessary however to maintain some form of effective performance management framework in order to meet the Government's expectation that the Council would publish performance information, and to measure progress towards our own objectives for the improvement of the quality of life in Halton. The new SCS (2011-16) was approved by the Council on 20 April 2011.

Appended to the report were two appendices, Appendix 1: a six month progress report which summarised all indicators for Safer Halton within the SCS; and additional information for those specific indicators and targets that fell within the remit of the Partnership; also Appendix 2: a report that included all previously approved target setting rationale updated with 2011-12 performance information and regional and national and statistical neighbours to provide a contextual backdrop where available and showing trends over time.

The Partnership was asked to review targets for 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16, and where appropriate update targets in light of actual/anticipated performance, also submitting supporting commentary to explain the rationale for changes to targets set. Additionally they were asked to consider the inclusion of any additional measures

to the above set to narrow gaps in performance where appropriate or respond to legislative/policy changes thereby ensuring that all measures remained fit for purpose.

RESOLVED: That

1. the report be noted;
2. the Partnership considered whether it required any further information concerning actions taken to achieve the performance targets contained within Halton's 2011-16 Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS); and
3. the Partnership reviewed the previously approved set of key measures and annual targets for the period to 2016 in line with the SCS Delivery Plan, and a final proposal would be recommended for adoption at the next meeting on 18 February 2013.

SHP51 TASK GROUP UPDATES

The following Task Group updates were presented to the Partnership:

Alcohol Harm Reduction Group – This group (formerly known as the Alcohol Enforcement Group) had developed its wider partnership activity in recognition of the wider role that health had to play in this area. It had developed activities around harm prevention and making greater use of referrals on order to deal with root cause issues. The focus of alcohol related enforcement activity was aimed at the night time economy, targeting multi agency activity towards limiting the supply of alcohol to young and vulnerable children. Of note was the recent grant of a licence to 5.00am at the Establishment in Widnes, which the Police had objected to, and the possible knock-on effect for other licensed premises in the area to follow suit.

Quarterly Alcohol Update – Following consultation with key stakeholders, a revised Halton Local Alcohol Strategy would be published in March 2013. It was noted that from next year, Amanda Lewis would be the Lead Officer for the Strategy. A series of events had been planned for Alcohol Awareness Week, details of which were circulated with the minutes.

Anti-Social Behaviour – It was reported that there had been a 1% reduction in the past quarter, compared to the same quarter in 2011/12. However, the areas of Birchfield,

Farnworth and Hough Green in Widnes had seen a slight increase during August. Discussions with Sarah Boycott had taken place to see what targeted resources could be put in place to help restore public confidence in Widnes. Members commented on the successful arrangements that had been in place for Bonfire night.

Domestic Abuse – It was reported that an action plan had been developed to support children and young people affected by domestic abuse in Halton, with short, medium and longer terms actions. It was noted that the definition of domestic violence would now include young people under 18, and was the latest action by Government to tackle violence against women and girls.

Drugs – Treatment and Prevention – Work on this would be aligned with the public health arena and it was reported that GP's were keen to engage in the process.

Navigate Offender Management – an update on this would be reported to the next meeting.

Hate Crimes – It was noted that Halton Borough Council were developing a new Anti-bullying Policy and Charter Mark for School, along with a new reporting system. There had been a seasonal increase in the number of unauthorised encampments by the travelling community in the Northern Division.

Partnership – Tasking and Coordination – The group reported that it continued to target the emerging trends and seasonal patterns to address hot spots in the area. Of particular concern this quarter had been Bechers and Upton Green, Widnes, Gathurst Court, Widnes and Rock Park, Runcorn. In addition, Operation Staysafe continued in July and August to tackle vulnerable young people in the Borough to identify youth drinking through a partnership operation in Halton.

Adult Safeguarding Board – The Annual Report described how organisations and individuals across all sectors were working together to safeguard vulnerable people. It was noted that the report explained the national context in which Halton was operating and listed the Board's priorities for the coming year.

SHP52 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER ELECTION RESULTS

David Parr reported on the results from the recent

Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Elections.

Mr John Dwyer, Conservative candidate, was elected as the first PCC for Cheshire at the central count held on Friday 16 November, in Northgate Arena, Chester. The election process used the supplementary voting system, where a voter could indicate first and second preferences. As no one candidate achieved an overall majority, the count proceeded to the second preference count. Votes for the two candidates that went forward - Councillor John Stockton (Labour candidate) and Mr John Dwyer (Conservative candidate) to the second round were counted and Mr John Dwyer was elected. The turnout for Cheshire was 14.08%

The Partnership was asked to consider suggestions for work within the Halton area, which the new PCC could undertake; ideas should be sent by email to David Parr.

It was noted that Mr Dwyer would formally accept his appointment as Cheshire PCC (to May 2016), at a ceremony at Police HQ on 21 November 2012.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

SHP53 COUNCILLOR DAVE CARGILL - POLICE AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVE

David Parr placed on record his thanks, on behalf of the Partnership, to Councillor Dave Cargill for his support and commitment to the work of the Partnership over a number of years.

Councillor Cargill had attended meetings as the Cheshire Police Authority representative. With the demise of the Police Authority, it was noted that this would be his final meeting attending in that capacity.

Councillor Cargill thanked the Partnership, and outlined the role of the new Police and Crime Panel (PCP), which was part of the new governance and accountability arrangements, that would maintain a regular check and balance on the performance of the recently appointed Police and Crime Commissioner. It was noted that the PCP would be formed from twelve Elected Members representing the four Cheshire authorities and that a recruitment process was underway for the appointment of two Independent Members to sit alongside them on the Panel. It was further noted that the chairmanship of the new PCP would be determined at the first formal meeting of the Panel on 14 December 2012.

RESOLVED: That the update on the Cheshire Police and Crime Panel be noted.

SHP54 NATIONAL WHITE RIBBON CAMPAIGN

The Partnership was advised of the National White Ribbon Campaign. White badges, which could be worn to show support for the campaign, were available free of charge from Sarah Ashcroft.

SHP55 YOUTH GRAFFITI SOLUTIONS

Gareth Jones from the Youth Offending Team (YOT) raised awareness of the short promotional video that they had made about Youth Graffiti Solutions which can be found via the attached link:-

www.youthgraffitisolutions.co.uk

(If you click on the link then 'About' the drop down menu has a link to the promotional video).

Partners were asked for their support in developing the project to offer two apprenticeships for young people. YOT needed to have the apprenticeship programme up and running before Christmas if they were to guarantee access to Government grants.

SHP56 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The following documents were provided to the Partnership for information:

- a) Safer Halton Policy Bulletin – November
- b) Blue Lamp Report – Runcorn
- c) Blue Lamp Report - Widnes

SHP57 ALCOHOL AWARENESS WEEK

The activities being delivered by Young Addaction during Alcohol awareness Week commencing on 19 November 2012 were announced and are attached to the minutes.

REPORT TO: Safer Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 12 March 2013

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Communities

PORTFOLIO: Communities

SUBJECT: Halton Credit Union

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform members of the work of Halton Credit Union and the role that it plays in supporting the people who live and work in the borough. Their work is particularly relevant in the current economic climate and with the imminent benefit reforms.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Board note the report.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Credit Unions are small not for profit financial organisations, set up by members with something in common to benefit their community.

3.2 Credit Unions provide a financial community, where its members mutually benefit as there's no profit for third party shareholders. This can mean helping those who can't get access to ordinary bank products; a lifeline in less well-off communities for people grappling with their finances.

3.3 The Credit Union is also a more affordable and more attractive alternative to payday loans or doorstep lending.

3.4 However they are not just for those struggling financially, they also appeal to those who want to bank ethically and benefit their community.

4.0 HALTON CREDIT UNION OVERVIEW

4.1 Halton Credit Union was formed in 2002, after an amalgamation of 3 separate Credit Unions from Runcorn and Widnes.

4.2 Halton Credit Union is a "Live or Work" Credit Union based in the borough of Halton. This means that anyone who lives or works in Halton is eligible to apply to become a member.

- 4.3 Since 2002, Halton Credit Union has loaned over £7 million to its members. These loans have been for lots of reasons, including Christmas and Holidays, as well as smaller loans to help with things like school uniforms.
- 4.4 Every member who has savings, is also a shareholder of Halton Credit Union, and is eligible to vote at their annual general meeting, where the board reports to its' members and presents their annual accounts.

5.0 HALTON CREDIT UNION SERVICES

- 5.1 Halton Credit Union is a savings and loan cooperative. The main services are **savings and savings based loans**, which are loans allocated based upon regular savings and savings amount. Once a member has joined, they will need to start saving in order to take out savings based loans.
- 5.2 **Savings Based Loans**, are the main type of loan offered by Halton Credit Union. In order to receive a loan, an individual will need to be a member and saving on a regular basis. The loans are based upon the Halton Credit Union loans policy, which states the amount that can be borrowed and the period of pay back. Members are able to borrow double the amount they have saved, based upon saving regularly and the limits within the loans policy. Members may apply for loans after 13 weeks of membership, and after every 13 weeks of payments thereafter.
- 5.3 Other loan services include **Capacity Based Loans**, which is a small pot of money to help some members obtain a loan when starting off with the Credit Union. The Credit Union also has a partnership deal with Co-op electrical for white goods.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

- 6.1.1 A Credit Union will impact positively on children and young people in the borough, as it will give families access to affordable loans and prevent them from going to loan sharks or other high interest rate lenders.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

- 6.2.1 The Credit Union will support residents by helping them to budget and manage their money more efficiently.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

- 6.3.1 For members of the Credit Union, knowing they can have access to affordable loans and a way of saving will help reduce stress and improve their emotional wellbeing.

6.4 A Safer Halton

- 6.4.1 The Credit Union offers affordable and accessible savings and loan services and their presence in the borough should reduce business for loan sharks, who often

charge unaffordable interest rates and have been known to intimidate and threaten their clients.

6.5 Environment and Regeneration in Halton

6.5.1 There are no direct policy implications for Environment and Regeneration

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 There would be a risk of people taking out more costly payday and doorstep loans if the Credit Union were not active in Halton.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Halton Credit Union is open to all residents of Halton and those who work here and it does not discriminate against any individual.

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no financial implications

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1072

10.1 None under the Meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Safer Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	12 March 2013
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, Communities
PORTOLIO:	Community Safety
SUBJECT:	Alcohol Harm Reduction Progress Report
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report contains details of progress to date in relation to reducing alcohol related harm and a multi-agency action plan detailing future proposed activity.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Members of the Board note the report.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Alcohol misuse is a major source of harm in our local communities and the range of harm includes alcohol related violence (including domestic violence), deliberate self harm, suicide, crime and anti-social behavior, short and long-term damage to physical and mental health, harm to unborn babies, child abuse including neglect and early mortality, as well as increased risk taking in sexual behaviour. Many accidental injuries and road traffic accidents are attributable to alcohol misuse and it is linked to negative effects on the economy and incalculable misery for individuals and families.
- 3.2 Alcohol misuse is associated with a wide range of health harms. The government recommends that men should not regularly drink more than 3-4 units of alcohol per day and women should not regularly drink more than 2-3 units of alcohol per day (1 unit =8g or 10ml of alcohol). Drinking above these limits increases the risk of contracting 13 conditions which are wholly attributable to alcohol consumption, for example alcoholic liver disease and chronic pancreatitis (alcohol induced), along with 34 conditions which are partially attributable to alcohol consumption such as some cancers, hypertensive diseases and cardiac arrhythmias.
- 3.3 Drug and alcohol misuse is a factor in a significant number of children in need and safeguarding cases. Research suggests that in safeguarding cases, alcohol is a factor in at least 33% of cases, and in care proceedings, drug and alcohol misuse is a factor in up to 70% of cases (Harwin and Forrester, 2003). In the Biannual Analysis of Serious Case Reviews 2005- 2007 (DCSF, 2009), of the 189 cases reviewed, 47 (25%) featured parental substance misuse. Many of these families were not known to children's social care.
- 3.4 Halton has been identified as the 15th worst affected Local Authority Area (out of 326) in England for alcohol related harm and the 8th worst Local Authority Area in England (out of 326) for under 18 alcohol specific hospital admissions¹.

¹ LAPE Data 2012

- 3.5 Estimates are that in 2011/12, there were 11,874 alcohol related admissions to hospital for Halton residents.
- 3.6 The main reasons for alcohol-attributable admissions are hypertensive diseases, (52% of alcohol admissions), cardiac arrhythmias (16%) and mental and behavioural disorders due to alcohol (7%).
- 3.7 Estimates are that that around 1 in 4 adults would benefit from reducing their alcohol intake to within DH recommended levels (this does not include dependent drinkers).
- 3.8 Nationally, there was a 25% increase in liver disease between 2001 and 2009. Alcohol-related liver disease accounts for around 37% of all liver disease deaths and the North West of England has some of the highest rates of both liver disease and alcohol related liver disease in England.
- 3.9 The average age of patients with liver disease is 59 and falling.
- 3.10 The cost of alcohol related harm per head for Halton Borough Council was £450.00. The national average was £387.00.

4.0 SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS

- 4.1 In March 2012, the new National Alcohol Strategy was published and can be found at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk>
- 4.2 From April 1st 2013, Public Health will have responsibility for the commissioning of alcohol misuse services for both prevention and treatment. Guidance states that CCGs will have responsibility for commissioning 'Alcohol Health Workers' in a variety of settings, and the NHS Commissioning Board will have responsibility for commissioning brief interventions in primary care.
- 4.3 At the end of November 2012, Alcohol Attributable Admissions were fewer than expected (1762.6) and significantly less than both the target (2018) and the number of admissions at the same time the previous year 11-12 (1922).
- 4.4 At the end of November 2012, Wholly Alcohol Attributable Admissions were fewer than expected (573.9) and significantly less than the number of admissions at the same time the previous year 11-12 (701).
- 4.5 Many positive developments have taken place in Halton during the previous two years in relation to alcohol misuse. These include:
 - Innovative Outreach Bus and Street Based Teams, taking support to young people in identified hotspots at identified times and days.
 - Development of safe, creative spaces and diversionary activities for young people available at weekends.
 - Stay Safe which targets specific evenings throughout the year where Police and partners proactively work with young people.
 - Lifestyles survey conducted for Year 8 and 10 pupils in all 8 secondary schools in the Borough.
 - The 6 week Skills for Change programme aimed at children and young people affected by parental alcohol misuse, available in Halton high schools.
 - Modern, free, confidential service Young Addaction which offers

advice and support to young people with drug and alcohol concerns and takes into account other risk taking behaviours, available in Halton schools and community venues

- Increased number of frontline professionals receiving training in how to identify alcohol problems and assist young people to access support.
- Effective partnership working between Adult and Children's Services is taking place and parents with substance misuse problems receive help to reduce the impact of parental drug & alcohol misuse on their children, break cycles of inter-generational misuse and improve the life chances of their children.
- Local awareness raising campaigns have been undertaken during identified times, to raise awareness of alcohol related harm and recommended drinking limits.
- Halton Borough Council and Public Health Department has a proactive, positive presence in regional forums which seek to bring about change in access to cheap alcohol, as this impacts on availability for young people.
- Halton & Warrington Trading Standards and Halton Borough Council staff carried out nine intelligence-led test purchase operations to see if off licences and retailers are serving to under-age people. These checks and inspections include serious enforceable penalties and fines and underpin the Challenge 21 initiative.
- More people are being screened for drinking at levels of increasing and higher risk and receive an intervention or onward referral to specialist services where necessary.
- Introduction of Alcohol Treatment Requirements and liaison with Problem Solving Courts
- Detailed data is now collated in relation to alcohol related hospital admissions (down to ward level) which is utilised by commissioners to inform service improvements.

- 4.6 However the most significant developments in terms of healthcare are the newly commissioned alcohol treatment service run by CRI and the Whiston Hospital Alcohol Nursing Scheme which went live on 17 September 2012.
- 4.7 CRI provide a modern, integrated, recovery orientated, substance misuse treatment service for adults in Halton who need support to recover fully from alcohol (and substance misuse) and get their lives back on track. The individuals that present to drug and alcohol services are often experiencing a range of challenges, with varying degrees of need, for example some individuals may be holding down a job despite their substance misuse, whilst others may be living extremely chaotic lifestyles with little structure or positive benefits. The purpose of the specialised treatment service is primarily to support people to break the cycle of dependence on drugs and alcohol and enable them to contribute fully to society. However, this cannot be achieved without a personalised approach which addresses holistically the underlying causes of substance misuse and has the flexibility to respond to the client's individual needs. The service undertakes community detoxification and assesses people for inpatient/detoxification (at the Windsor Clinic) and residential rehabilitation treatment.
- 4.8 The service has been live from 1st February 2012 and has ensured that there are no longer waiting lists for alcohol treatment.

- 4.9 On 17th September 2012, the Alcohol Liaison Nursing Service went live at Whiston Hospital. This service operates seven days a week and ensures that high quality interventions, alcohol screening and treatment interventions are carried out with people attending hospital with alcohol related harm. It will also ensure that people who require long term support are linked into the community services and that people who are frequently admitted to hospital for alcohol related harm are proactively managed by both the hospital and the community. Both services will be subject to rigorous performance monitoring.

Despite good progress in relation to alcohol related harm, Halton experiences an unacceptable level of alcohol related harm with significant impact on individuals, families, communities and health and social care services.

The multi-faceted, complex nature of alcohol related harm requires a comprehensive, co-ordinated approach and collaborative, partnership working is essential to avoid duplication, encourage innovation and to maximise the use of available resources.

5.0 NEXT STEPS AND PROPOSED ACTIONS

- 5.1 Now that there is a robust infrastructure and treatment offer in Halton for people who require support to tackle alcohol related problems, our strategic approach now has a prevention and early intervention focus.

6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 All proposed actions are aligned with the National Alcohol Strategy 2012.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Funding requirements will be met from within current budget allocations.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

8.1 Children & Young People in Halton

These are identified within the report.

8.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

These are identified within the report.

8.3 A Healthy Halton

These are identified within the report.

8.4 A Safer Halton

These are identified within the report.

8.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

These are identified within the report.

9.0 RISK ANALYSIS

9.1 Reducing Alcohol Related Harm has been named as a key priority by Halton's Health & Wellbeing Board.

9.2 To mitigate this risk, plans have been developed with Adult, Children's Commissioners and the Police and Community Safety Leads to ensure that any actions are essential core business and that key individuals are identified to take actions forward.

10.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

10.1 Alcohol misuse can lead to significant health and family problems and it is imperative that adequate support and advice is available to all members of the community.

11.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

11.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO: Safer Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 12 March 2013

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Policy & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: Performance Management Reports for Quarter 3 of 2012/13

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To consider and raise any questions or points of clarification in respect of performance management for the third quarter to December 2012.

1.2 The report details progress against service objectives/ milestones and performance targets, and describes factors affecting the service for the below service areas within the remit of the Safer Policy & Performance Board:

- Communities Directorate – Community Safety, Drug & Alcohol Action Teams, Domestic Violence and Environmental Health
- Area Partner indicators from the Police, Fire and Probation Services are stated where available.

Structured by key priorities as stated in section 3.2 below.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Policy and Performance Board

- 1) Receive the third quarter performance management reports;**
- 2) Consider the progress and performance information and raise any questions or points for clarification; and**
- 3) Highlight any areas of interest and/or concern where further information is to be reported at a future meeting of the Policy and Performance Board.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Departmental objectives provide a clear statement on what the services are planning to achieve and to show how they contribute to the Council's strategic priorities. Such information is central to the Council's performance management arrangements and the Policy and Performance Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

3.2 In line with the revised Council's Performance Framework for 2012/13 (approved by Executive Board in 2012/13), the Policy and Performance Board has been provided with a Safer Priority Based report; which identifies the key issues arising from the performance in Quarter 2. This has been structured using the below priorities and key areas of focus, as stated in the Directorate Plan for 2012-15:

- Community Safety
- Safeguarding & Dignity (including Consumer Protection and Substance Misuse)
- Domestic Violence

3.3 The full Departmental quarterly reports are available on the Members' Information Bulletin to allow Members access to the reports as soon as they have become available within six weeks of the quarter end. This also provides Members with an opportunity to give advance notice of any questions, points or requests for further information that will be raised to ensure the appropriate Officers are available at the PPB meeting. The Departmental quarterly monitoring reports are also available via the following link

<http://hbc/teams/PERFIMP/Com%20Quarterly%20Monitoring%20Reports/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no other implications associated with this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Departmental service objectives and performance measures, both local and national are linked to the delivery of the Council's priorities. The introduction of a Priority Based Report and the identification of business critical objectives/ milestones and performance indicators will further support organisational improvement.

6.2 Although some objectives link specifically to one priority area, the nature of the cross - cutting activities being reported, means that to a greater or lesser extent a contribution is made to one or more of the Council priorities.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Not applicable.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTIONS 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

9.1 There are no background papers relevant to this report.

Safer Policy & Performance Board Priority Based Report

Reporting Period: Quarter 3 – Period 1st October 2012 to 31st December 2012

1.0 Introduction

This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service area objectives and milestones and performance targets during the third quarter of 2012/13; for service areas within the remit of the Safer Policy and Performance Board.

The report has been structured by the following key priorities for Safer PPB, as identified in the Directorate and Corporate Plans:

- Community Safety
- Safeguarding and Dignity (including Consumer Protection and Substance Misuse)
- Domestic Violence

The way in which the Red, Amber and Green, (RAG), symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained at the end of this report.

2.0 Key Developments

There have been a number of developments within the Directorate during the third quarter which include:-

Mental Health Services

The service reconfiguration within the 5Boroughs has continued during this Quarter, and the new service structure is in place. This means that there is now a single Recovery Team (which closely resembles the former Community Mental Health Teams, and in which the social works are placed) and a Home Treatment Team, both based at the Brooker Unit. An assessment team is based in Warrington but covers Halton as well. During this Quarter, the social services staff have all moved in together to the single team in Runcorn, where they continue to work alongside their colleagues in the 5Boroughs. The effectiveness and impact of the changes will begin to be apparent from now, and will be reported on a regular basis to the Mental Health Strategic Partnership Board. The Partnership Agreement and Information Sharing agreement between the 5Boroughs and the Council are in the process of being refreshed.

The Mental Health Strategic Commissioning Board continues to develop, with a strong input from the CCG, the Public Health service and the Borough Council. Draft Terms of Reference have been developed for an Executive Subgroup which will support the Board in the delivery of its aims.

Section 136 Mental Health Act 1983: the work on developing an appropriate process for the use of Section 136 – which relates to the police powers to detain a person who is in a public place and may have a mental health problem – continues. A high level strategic

meeting has taken place with the police, other Local Authorities and health services, and this is being continued into the next year.

Other developments within the Commissioning and Complex Care Directorate

Emergency Duty Team:

There has been an approach from another Local Authority to join the current partnership between Halton Borough Council and St Helens Borough Council. Initial meetings have taken place and it has been agreed that a more formal scoping exercise can take place.

Children's Services:

The Directorate is working closely with Children's Services to deliver some of the key national agendas for children. In particular work is going on to ensure that vulnerable families are supported through both the Team Around the Family approach, and the programme to support Troubled Families (known locally as the Inspiring Families programme). The Directorate is represented at senior level, both operationally and through commissioning services, on a range of steering groups. Work has also taken place to improve the interface between the Children's and Adults Safeguarding Boards, and the Directorate is strongly engaged in supporting children's services in its preparation for a new-style inspection, which is expected to be later in the year.

Social Work Reform Board:

This important development is requiring considerable input from the Directorate. Nationally the Social Work Reform Board was set up to modernise and professionalise social work services, and there are major implications for staff development, training, career processes and professional registration. A Divisional Manager from the Directorate is working closely with Children's services to ensure that all key issues are incorporated into the Directorate's operations.

Integrated Care Homes Support Team

Within Halton, plans are underway to develop a multi-disciplinary 'Care Home Support Team' to provide additional support to residential and nursing homes, initially as a 12 month pilot project. The team will act as a bridge to support care homes to access existing health services, such as G.P's Community nurses, Geriatricians etc. It will work closely with the local authority Quality Assurance and Contract monitoring Services and the newly developed Safeguarding Unit. The service will have an educational role and provide enhanced support/training to care homes to improve overall standards of care and competencies within the care home sector. We are now finalising recruitment of nursing and social work staff.

3.0 Emerging Issues

Mental Health Services

For some time work has been going on to examine the role and function of the Mental Health Outreach Team. This service, which is jointly funded with the CCG, is looking to extend its remit to support more people in the community, and particularly to engage with people at an earlier stage to prevent a harmful deterioration in their mental health. A report is being taken in Quarter 4 to the Mental Health Strategic Commissioning Board to consider whether a project can be put in place with local GP surgeries.

Environmental & Public Health and Protection

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) are consulting local authorities on proposals which specify which industry sectors should be subject to pro-active health & safety inspections. These sectors include: high volume warehousing, motor vehicle repair, industrial retail/wholesale (e.g. steel stockholders and builders merchants). These sectors involve high risk activities.

Whilst the overall objective of the HSE's proposals are to ensure better targeting of local authority activity and reduce national level of pro-active inspections, Halton has a higher proportion of premises that will fall into the high risk sectors and the Health & Safety Team will be required to maintain levels of pro-active inspections.

4.0 Risk Control Measures

Risk control forms an integral part of the Council's Business Planning and performance monitoring arrangements. During the development of the 2012/13 Business Plan, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all key service objectives with high risks included in the Directorate Risk Register.

As a result, monitoring of all relevant 'high' risks will be undertaken and progress reported against the application of the risk treatment measures in Quarters 2 and 4.

5.0 Progress against high priority equality actions

There have been no high priority equality actions identified in the quarter.

6.0 Performance Overview

The following information provides a synopsis of progress for both milestones and performance indicators across the key priorities that have been identified for Safer PPB, as stated in the Directorate and Corporate Plans.

1 COMMUNITY SAFETY (P McW)

Key Objectives / Milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q3 Progress
CCC1	Review Community Safety Team in line with reductions in funding arrangements Mar 2013 (AOF9 & 11)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Supporting Commentary

The review is complete and the service is now engaging with the newly appointed Police Crime Commissioner to ensure that HBC priorities (e.g. Anti-Social Behaviour) will continue to be delivered locally.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	11/12 Actual	12/13 Target	Q3	Current Progress	Direction of travel
CCC 24 SCS / HH1a & SH10	Reduce Alcohol related hospital Admissions (Previously NI 39) (per 100,000 population)	2651.7	3027	1982.9		
CCC 25 (SCS / SH1)	Reduce the Actual Number of ASB incidents recorded by Cheshire Police broken down in youth and adult incidents (Previously NI 17)	7434	8463	5569		
CCC 26 SCS / SH2	Arson incidents (Previously NI 33 - Total deliberate fires per 10,000 population)	46.77	41.72	27.52		
CCC 33 SCS / SH11	Reduce the re-offending rates of repeat offenders (RO's in the Navigate IOM Scheme – NEW) (Formerly NI 30) PPO – Priority offenders RO – Repeat offenders	PPO: 77.13% reduction RO: 36.73% reduction Shift in offence type	To maintain & reduce offending rates for PPO:40% reduction and RO's:4% reduction	PPO 83.47% reduction RO 44.24% reduction		N/A
CCC 34 SCS / SH13	Reduce the use of custody (Ministry of Justice proposal) (New measure)	11	To maintain or improve on 2011/12 outturn 11	3		
CCC 35 SCS / SH14	Reduce the proportion of individuals within the navigate cohort whose offending is substance misuse related. (New measure)	New measure	Target to be set once baseline established	Refer to comment	Refer to comment	N/A
CCC 36 SCS / SH16	Reduce Serious acquisitive crime rate (per 1000 population) (Previously NI 16) from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Burglary • Theft of motor vehicle • Theft from motor vehicle • Robbery (personal and business) 	1548 (rate 13.10 per 1,000)	1652	1061 (Rate 8.98 per 1000)		
CCC 37 SCS / SH17	New Revised Measure: Assault with injury crime rate (per 1000 population) (Previously NI 20)	804 (6.8 rate per 1,000)	1074	565 (Rate 4.78 per 1000)		

Supporting Commentary

CCC24 – At the end of Dec 2012, Alcohol Attributable Admissions were fewer than expected (1982.9) and significantly less than both the target (3027) and the number of admissions at the same time, the previous year 11-12 (2192.4).

CCC25 – The actual number of ASB incidents reported to Cheshire Police during this quarter is 1859; it is a slight decrease from 1886 reported during Q2 but a slight increase compared to the same period last year of 1754 recorded incidents.

CCC26 – Direction of Travel for deliberate fires in Halton is positive, with projected year-end figures suggesting outturn positively below target by at least 10%. This trend continues across the whole of Cheshire and can, in part, be contributed to poor weather conditions recently. Local initiatives do, however, help to reduce these incidents.

CCC33 – Data available one quarter in arrears from the Cheshire Constabulary Data Delivery team, thus position at 1st Jan is stated. There is no comparable data for last year as the measure has changed and is new this year.

CCC34 – The Youth Offending Service (YOS) has seen 3 young people sentenced to a custodial disposal during Q3. We have close working relationships with court agencies and also ensure the following internal practices are followed to reduce the rate of custody.

- All Pre-Sentence Reports/Breach Reports (PSR/BRs) are gate-kept by an Operational Manager or Senior Practitioner.
- The YOS will not recommend a custodial sentence to the Court in a PSR/BR but will always propose a Community Order, including requesting an Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS) Requirement as a direct alternative to custody.
- An Operational Manager will review all cases where a young person receives a custodial outcome to ensure all options have been considered to avoid incarceration.
- The YOS introduced their 'Compliance Procedures' in November 2011 which has introduced a number of measures (including a Pre-Breach Meeting chaired by a Manager) to try ensure that the young person does not breach their Order/Licence.
- The standard of PSR/BRs is monitored to ensure a minimum standard and therefore reduce the risk of a custodial outcome from a poor report.
- No young person receiving a custodial sentence will have done so without the opportunity to have a community sentence considered by the Court.
- Any patterns of custodial outcome are identified and reviews of outcome inform learning for the team.

The YOS has noted a downturn in the number of young people being returned to court for being in breach of their order/licence; ensuring that it is reserved only for 'persistent and wilful' non-compliance.

CCC35 – This is a new measure. The data to support the measurement of this outcome is in the process of being identified.

CCC36 – The cumulative figure per 1,000 population for Halton is 8.98 for the period April 2012 to December 2012 which equates to 1061 incidents of which; 638 incidents were in Widnes and 423 incidents in Runcorn. During Q3 (Oct 12 to Dec 12) there have been 476 incidents of Serious acquisitive crime recorded, of which 187 incidents were in Runcorn and 289 incidents were in Widnes. The serious crime rate has increased slightly

compared to Q3 last year whereby there were 428 incidents recorded for the same period.

CCC37 – The cumulative figure for the period April 2012 to December 2012 is 565 incidents of assault with injury. This is a reduction compared to the same period last year of 617 incidents. During Q3 (Oct 12 to Dec 12) there have been 181 incidents of assault with injury recorded, of which 103 incidents were in Runcorn and 78 incidents were in Widnes.

2 SAFEGUARDING AND DIGNITY (SWB, PMcW)

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	11/12 Actual	12/13 Target	Q3	Current Progress	Direction of travel
PA 5	Percentage of VAA Assessments completed within 28 days (Previously PA 8)	85.78%	82%	86.43%		
PA 6	Percentage of VAA initial assessments commencing within 48 hours of referral(Previously PA 9)	84.80%	64%	76.77%		
PA 8	Percentage of existing Halton BC Adult Social Care staff that have received Adult Safeguarding Training, including e-learning, in the last 3-years. (Previously PA 11)	46%	48%	40%		
PA 9	Number of Halton BC Adult Social Care staff that have received Adult Safeguarding Training, including e-learning (Previously PA 12)	127	130	86		
PA 10	Number of external Adult Social Care Staff that have received Adult Safeguarding Training, including e-learning (Previously PA 13)	581	250	338		
PA 22	The Proportion of People who use services who feel safe – Adult Social Care Survey (ASCOF 4A) (Previously PA 35)	66.2%*	54%	Reported annually (2011/12 outturn)*	N/A	
PA 23	The Proportion of People who use services who say that those services have made them feel safe and secure – Adult Social Care Survey (ASCOF 4B Previously PA 36)	79.1%	79.1%	Reported annually (2011/12 outturn)	N/A	

Ref	Measure	11/12 Actual	12/13 Target	Q3	Current Progress	Direction of travel
PA 25	a) % of scheduled Local Air Pollution Control audits carried out	81%	93%	58%		
	b) % of Local Air Pollution Control Audits being broadly compliant. (Previously PA 18)	85%	78%	94%		
PA 27	a) % of high risk Health & Safety inspections undertaken	100%	100%	30%		
	b) Number of unrated premises (and premises not currently high risk) subject to targeted interventions and risk rated under new statutory risk rating system (Previously PA 20)	268	200	90		
PA 28	Placeholder: Overarching Trading Standards Measure (TBC)	New measure	New measure	Refer to comment	N/A	N/A
CCC 29 SCS / SH7a & HH 12	Increase the % successful completions (Drugs) as a proportion of all in treatment 18+ (New measure)	13%	14.9% (Above NW Average)	16%		
CCC 30 SCS / SH7b & HH12	Increase the % successful completions (Alcohol) as a proportion of all in treatment 18+ (New measure)	New measure	Target to be set once baseline established in 2012/13	Refer to comment	Refer to comment	N/A
CCC 31 SCS / SH8a	Reduce the number of individuals re-presenting within 6 months of discharge (Drugs) (New measure)	11%	13.1%	7.7%		
CCC 32 SCS / SH8b	Reduce the number of individuals re-presenting within 6 months of discharge (Alcohol) (New measure)	New measure	Target to be set once baseline established	Refer to comment	Refer to comment	N/A

Supporting Commentary

PA 5 – This Target has been achieved. Newly revised systems and processes are having a beneficial impact on the throughput of this segment of work. Teams also ensuring targets met through effective and efficient signposting across teams.

PA 6 - Exceeded target continues to be maintained. Dedicated work with revised systems and processes are having a beneficial impact on this area of work..

PA 8 - The percentage has reduced slight due to staff not updating their training within the 3-year period.

PA 9 - There has been some improvement- overall aim is to achieve target by the end of the year.

PA10 - On track to achieve target.

PA 22 – Performance increased from 2010/11 to 2011/12, 66.2% of those who responded to the Adult Social Care survey in 2011/12 reported ‘I feel as safe as I want’.

PA 23 - 79.1% of those who responded to the Adult Social Care survey for the first time in 2011/12 reported that support services helped them to feel safe. This indicator reflects directly whether the support services that Halton Borough Council provides has an impact on an individual’s safety. This is in comparison to PA21 which is a general measure of whether an individual feels safe – which could be as a result of a multitude of factors. A higher figure is better.

PA 25 – The figure for percentage inspected will be reviewed February 2013 to assess progress. Should there be any likelihood of shortfall, additional resources will be targeted if possible.

The % of premises being broadly compliant is exceeding the target.

PA26 - Reported annually to Food Standards Agency.

PA27 - Although performance is currently at 30%, the majority of high risk premises are not due for inspection until the final quarter. Target of 100% is expected to be achieved. Unlikely to achieve the inspections target of 200 due to demand for investigation of accidents, complaints and requests for advice & guidance.

PA28 - Measure under discussion with the Department.

CCC29 – Latest data is rolling 12 months to November 2012. In spite of the low number of discharges in the last quarter of 2011/12 (handover to new Service Provider), the percentage is on target. The number of successful completions is 103/642. This compares to November 2011 where the rate was 14.1% (82/583)

CCC30 – Data not available in this format, however, work is underway to develop datasets in line with local and national treatment agency requirements. No comparative data available for 11/12 as this is a new measure.

CCC31 - Latest data is rolling 12 months to November 2012. 0/12 Problem Drug User opiates (PDU) and only 3/27 non PDU represented during this period, making 3/39 (7.7%) in total. Due to the low numbers involved, an decrease of one in the overall total would result in the percentage figure decreasing from 7.7% to 5.1%.

CCC32 – Data not available in this format, however, work is underway to develop datasets in line with local and national treatment agency requirements. No comparative data available for 11/12 as this is a new measure.

3 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (PMcW)

Key Objectives / Milestones

Ref	Milestones	Q3 Progress
CCC1	Introduce specialist support provision for victims of a serious sexual offence Mar 2013 (AOF11)	

Supporting Commentary

Sexual Assault Referral Centre

The Cheshire SARC service is being jointly delivered by the St Mary's SARC in Manchester together with Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (RASASC) in Cheshire.

St Mary's SARC provides forensic examinations for clients of all ages while RASASC provides aftercare services for those aged 13 and over including counselling, support and access to an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) who provides support through the criminal justice system.

Children under the age of 13 and their families receive support from the SARC Child Advocate and the NSPCC in Cheshire.

RASASC provide ISVA services to those over the age of 13 with effective referral pathways and communication between the SARC and RASASC ISVAs.

RASASC have received 36 new referrals have been made this Quarter. Of these, 32 were for adult clients and 4 were under the age of 17. All SARC clients continue to be contacted within 24 hours of the referral being received and have been given access to follow-up sexual health advice and support as part of the RASASC aftercare service. All other clients have been contacted within 72 hours of the referral. This Quarter, 30 Initial meetings have been arranged. 2 of these meetings resulted in cancellations and 7 clients did not attend this first appointment. ISVA hours for this quarter were 90 and counselling hours totalled 195.

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Measure	11/12 Actual	12/13 Target	Q3	Current Progress	Direction of travel
CCC 28 SCS / SH6	Reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse within the MARAC Cohort (Formerly NI 32)	27.6%	27%	34%		

Supporting Commentary

CCC28 – 85 cases were discussed in quarter 3 compared to the same period last year (68) with 29 repeats seen this quarter compared to 12 in quarter 3 last year. 29 repeat cases were discussed this quarter compared to 30 in quarter 2 and 31 in quarter 1. The number of children involved is 123 this quarter, this equates to a 189% increase compared to (65) the same period of the previous year.

7.0 Financial Statements

Commissioning and Complex Care

Revenue Budget as at 31st December 2012

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	7,600	5,569	5,521	48
Other Premises	410	277	258	19
Supplies & Services	2,390	1563	1,570	(7)
Contracts & SLA's	429	164	89	75
Transport	170	128	133	(5)
Emergency Duty Team	103	51	50	1
Community Care:				
Residential & Nursing Care	697	482	465	17
Domiciliary Care	339	269	292	(23)
Direct Payments	131	131	88	43
Block Contracts	178	98	86	12
Day Care	15	12	9	3
Carers Breaks	203	165	164	1
Other Agency Costs	1,451	614	608	6
Payments To Providers	4,053	2,794	2,794	0
Grants To Voluntary Organisations	258	228	228	0
Total Expenditure	18,427	12,545	12,355	190
<u>Income</u>				
Residential & Nursing Fees	-78	-58	-60	2
Community Care Income	-23	-13	1	(14)
Direct Payments Income	-1	-1	-1	0
PCT Contribution To Care	-257	-136	-136	0
Sales & Rents Income	-209	-170	-172	2
Fees & Charges	-488	-300	-302	2
PCT Contribution To Service	-2,368	-1,583	-1,584	1
Reimbursements	-470	-223	-228	5
Government Grant Income	-324	-144	-142	(2)
Transfer From Reserves	-700	-700	-700	0
Total Income	-4,918	-3,328	-3,324	(4)
Net Operational Expenditure	13,509	9,217	9,031	186
<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises Support	439	333	333	0
Central Support Services	2,845	1,826	1,826	0
Asset Charges	462	6	6	0
Internal Recharge Income	-88	0	0	0
Net Total Recharges	3,658	2,165	2,165	0
Net Departmental Total	17,167	11,382	11,196	186

Comments on the above figures:

Net operational expenditure is £186,000 below budget profile at the end of the third quarter of the financial year.

Employee costs are projected to be £65,000 below budget at the year-end. This results from savings made on vacant posts. The staff turnover savings target incorporated in the budget for this Department is £394,000, the £65,000 represents the value by which this target is projected to be over-achieved.

The Community Care element of Mental Health Services for this financial year is forecast to be £56,000 below budget based on current data held for all known care packages. This figure is subject to fluctuation, dependent on the number and value of new packages approved, and the termination or variation of existing packages. At the end of quarter 3 the net position is £41,000 below budget profile.

Expenditure on Contracts and Service Level Agreements is projected to be £100,000 below budget at the year-end. This relates to savings in respect of payments to bed & breakfast providers for homelessness support. There has historically been significant variations in demand for this service, although current expenditure patterns are stable, and the projected underspend seems realistic.

Income is currently marginally below the target to date. Community Centres income is particularly vulnerable to economic pressures, consisting of a large volume of discretionary public spend relating to social activities. However, action has been taken to maximise income from room lettings, and it is currently anticipated that the target will be achieved.

At this stage, net expenditure for the Complex & Commissioning Care Division is anticipated to be £250,000 below budget at the end of the financial year, of this figure £56,000 relates to Community Care.

Capital Projects as at 31st December 2012

	2012/13 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation To Date £'000	Actual Spend To Date £'000	Allocation Remaining £'000
Disabled Facilities Grant	735	425	282	453
Stairlifts	250	187	228	22
Energy Promotion	6	0	0	6
RSL Adaptations	550	381	153	397
Choice Based Lettings	29	22	22	7
Extra Care Housing	463	463	463	0
Bungalows At Halton Lodge	464	0	0	464
Bredon Respite Unit	10	0	0	10
Unallocated Provision	128	0	0	128
Total Spending	2,635	1,478	1,148	1,487

Prevention and Assessment Services

Revenue Budget as at 31st December 2012

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	7,972	5,447	5,426	21
Other Premises	72	43	32	11
Supplies & Services	673	326	334	(8)
Consumer Protection Contract	386	310	310	0
Transport	119	78	78	0
Food Provision	28	13	19	(6)
Aids & Adaptations	113	72	72	0
Contribution to JES	231	0	0	0
Community Care:				
Residential & Nursing Care	10,721	6,148	6,248	(100)
Domiciliary & Supported Living	7,174	4,822	4,877	(55)
Direct Payments	2,319	1,888	1,891	(3)
Day Care	236	160	211	(51)
Other Agency	88	62	62	0
Contribution to Intermediate Care Pool	2,191	1,363	1,329	34
Total Expenditure	32,323	20,732	20,889	(157)
<u>Income</u>				
Residential & Nursing Income	-3,789	-2,690	-2,698	8
Community Care Income	-1,165	-845	-848	3
Other Community Care Income	-186	-159	-165	6
Direct Payments Income	-124	-123	-130	7
PCT Contribution to Care	-1,002	-538	-538	0
Other Fees & Charges	-93	-33	-27	(6)
Sales Income	-26	-26	-28	2
Reimbursements	-274	-108	-108	0
Transfer from Reserves	-340	0	0	0
LD & Health Reform Allocation	-4,489	-4,489	-4,489	0
Capital Salaries	-84	0	0	0
PCT Contribution to Service	-1,506	-890	-890	0
Total Income	-13,078	-9,901	-9,921	20
Net Operational Expenditure	19,245	10,831	10,968	(137)
<u>Recharges</u>				
Premises Support	429	326	326	0
Asset Charges	197	14	14	0
Central Support Services	3,382	2,463	2,463	0
Internal Recharge Income	-419	0	0	0
Net Total Recharges	3,589	2,803	2,803	0
Net Departmental Total	22,834	13,634	13,771	(137)

Comments on the above figures:

In overall terms the Net Operational Expenditure for Quarter 3 is £171,000 over budget profile excluding the Intermediate Care Pool.

Staffing is currently showing £21,000 under budget profile. This is due to savings being made on vacancies within the Department, which are yet to be filled.

The figures above include the income and expenditure relating to Community Care, which is currently showing £185,000 over budget profile, net of income. Community Care includes expenditure on clients with Learning Disabilities, Physical & Sensory Disabilities and Older People. This budget, by nature, is volatile and fluctuates throughout the year depending on the number and value of new packages being approved and existing packages ceasing. The position reported at Quarter 2 was £231,000 over budget profile, this has reduced by £46,000 during the third quarter.

Due to the vulnerability of service user's health, the current winter conditions may however result in expenditure increasing in the next quarter. The Community Care budget was significantly overspent in 2011/12, however action was taken to restrict as far as possible the scale of the over spend. This action and close monitoring will continue through the remaining part of the year, however this budget is anticipated to be over profile circa £250,000, which will be contained within the overall Directorate budget.

Other fees and charges income is currently showing £6,000 below budget profile. This is due to domestic pest control fees income underachieving. The income target has already been reduced, as it was highlighted to be unachievable. However, sales income is slightly higher than anticipated, which is in the main due to pollution prevention control and charges income overachieving.

Contribution to Intermediate Care Pooled Budget**Revenue Budget as at 31st December 2012**

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance To Date (overspend) £'000
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Employees	1,050	1,039	1,019	20
Supplies & Services	447	30	22	8
Transport	10	7	9	(2)
Other Agency Costs	246	125	117	8
Total Expenditure	1,753	1,201	1,167	34
<u>Income</u>				
Total Income	-50	-50	-50	0
Net Operational Expenditure	1,703	1,151	1,117	34
<u>Recharges</u>				
Central Support Charges	445	180	180	0
Premises Support	43	32	32	0
Total Recharges	488	212	212	0
Net Departmental Total	2,191	1,363	1,329	34

The above figures relate to the HBC contribution to the pool only.

Comments on the above figures:

In overall terms revenue spending at the end of quarter 3 is £34,000 below budget profile. Areas of budget pressure due to winter conditions have been identified and the under spend within the Intermediate Care Pool has been used to fund some of these additional expenses.

Capital Projects as at 31st December 2012

	2012/13 Capital Allocation £000	Allocation To Date £000	Actual Spend To Date £000	Allocation Remaining £000
<u>Social Care & Health</u>				
Oakmeadow	50	4	4	46
Total Spending	50	0	0	50

8.0 Explanation of Symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress	Objective	Performance Indicator
Green	 Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the annual target <u>is on course to be achieved</u>.</i>
Amber	 Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> , whether the milestone/objective will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> whether the annual target is on course to be achieved.</i>
Red	 Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain</u> that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the target <u>will not be achieved</u> unless there is an <u>intervention or remedial action</u> taken.</i>

Direction of Travel Indicator

Where possible performance measures will also identify a direction of travel using the following convention

Green	 Indicates that performance is better as compared to the same period last year.
Amber	 Indicates that performance is the same as compared to the same period last year.
Red	 Indicates that performance is worse as compared to the same period last year.
N/A	Indicates that the measure cannot be compared to the same period last year.

Operational Director Initials

PMcW - Paul McWade – Operational Director Commissioning & Complex Care
SWB - Sue Wallace Bonner – Operational Director Prevention and Assessment

REPORT TO:	Safer Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	12 March 2013
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director - Communities
PORTFOLIO:	Health & Adults
SUBJECT:	Manual Handling (People) Policy
WARDS:	Council-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To report to the Safer Policy & Performance Board regarding the introduction of the Manual Handling (People) Policy.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the policy is noted and if deemed necessary recommendations on any amendments.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended 2002) require a full risk assessment of lifting and handling activities including that of people. Due to a rise in employee accidents and injuries around the manual handling of persons in 2010 and 2011 a recommendation was made for the introduction of a policy. At present there is no corporate policy covering this. The purpose of the policy is to bring a co-ordinated procedural and documentary approach to the lifting and handling of all people irrelevant of their ages and physical abilities.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The provision of a safe working environment and reduction in accidents is important in order to provide efficient and effective delivery of services (the sixth priority in the Corporate Plan).

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Accidents which lead to lost time have financial implications for the authority (although these are always secondary to our concern for the well-being of employees and service users.

No other financial implications have been identified.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None identified.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None identified.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

A reduction in accidents and injuries suffered by staff will, in turn, reduce sickness levels allowing teams to work at full capacity therefore providing, where possible a full service.

6.4 A Safer Halton

See above.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

Without a corporate policy it could lead to inconsistent practices and the Authority exposed to future legal action.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

There are no direct implications for equality and diversity.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None under the meaning of the Act.

HEALTH & SAFETY

MANUAL HANDLING (PEOPLE) POLICY



1. Introduction

Date Created: Oct 2012	Date of Amendment:	Date Next Review: Oct 2014
Approved by	Health & Safety Team	
Custodian title & e-mail address	Lynn Pennington-Ramsden, Health & Safety Adviser lynn.pennington-ramsdend@halton.gov.uk	
Author	Health & Safety Team	
Responsible Directorate/Division	Risk and Emergency Planning Division Policy & Resources Directorate	
References & Legislation	Health & Safety at Work Act etc 1974 Management of Health, Safety & Welfare at Work Regulations 1999 The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare Regulations) 1992 The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 The Provision and Use of Workplace Equipment Regulations 1998 The Lifting Operation and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 The Human Rights Act 1998 (implemented 2000) Disability Discrimination Act 1998 The Mental Health Act 1983 The Mental Capacity Act 2005 Manual Handling Objects Policy (H & S Library, Staff Intranet) The Handling of People (6)	
Audience	Staff Intranet	
Consultation	See Appendix 6	
Managers checklist	Ensure all applicable staff are trained in manual handling techniques and have relevant risk assessments in place	
Expiry date of Policy	N/A	

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1 Introduction

Each year an estimated 642 000 people in Great Britain suffer from a musculoskeletal disorder which affects their back and is caused by work. Poor posture whilst moving and handling loads can cause sprains and strains, often resulting in severe pain for the injured person. There are no reliable figures for the numbers injured each year for providing services for people but it is thought to be substantial.

Prolonged periods of excessive repetition can result in chronic musculoskeletal problems from which full recovery may not be always be possible. The purpose of this policy is to provide employees with a brief summary of the safe lifting and moving procedures of persons, for the Authority to ensure compliance with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 and this policy also aims to reduce as far as is reasonably practicable the risk of injury to employees and service users arising from manual handling tasks and operations.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Halton Borough Council, including contracted staff, Agency staff, students and voluntary workers and covers all working environments. Managers and employees, students and volunteers are responsible for complying with the requirements of the above legislation, and subsequently of this policy.

Halton Borough Council operates a Safer Manual Handling Policy in respect of the handling of people and loads. This policy aims to protect service users and staff against the risk of injury to any part of the body during moving and handling operations.

This policy recognises:

- A duty of care to promote the health and safety of service users and employees whilst embracing the principles and philosophy of human rights.
- An intention to implement an effective manual handling policy incorporating risk management, risk assessment, training and support.
- A responsibility to ensure that all reasonable precautions are taken to provide safe systems of working.
- Use of current good practice surrounding manual handling and emerging national guidance and learning from accident/incidents, near misses and complaints.

3 Definitions

‘Manual handling operations’ –

Any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or by bodily force.

4 Dignity Charter

All Manual Handling of people must take into account Halton Borough Council's Dignity Charter

Dignity Challenge - High quality services that respect people's dignity should:	Key Priorities
1: Have a zero tolerance of all forms of abuse 2: Support people with the same respect that you would want for yourself or a member of your family 3: Treat each person as an individual by offering a personalised service 4: Enable people to maintain the maximum possible level of independence, choice and control 5: Listen and support people to express their wants and needs 6: Respect people's right to privacy 7: Ensure people feel able to comment on services or complain without fear of retribution 8: Engage with family members and carers as care partners 9: Assist people to maintain confidence and positive self-esteem 10: Act to alleviate people's loneliness and isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness Raising and Culture Change • Quality and Improving Practice • Monitoring • Contracting & Commissioning of Services

5 Responsibilities

Managers

Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring suitable and sufficient assessments of manual handling of persons are conducted;
- Ensuring that relevant staff required to carry out manual handling of persons receive appropriate training in order to do so safely;
- As far as reasonably practicable, provide appropriate resources to assist in the safe lifting and/or handling of persons;
- Ensuring the development of a safe system of work and ensuring compliance with those systems through information, instruction, and supervision.
- Ensure any occupational risks around lifting and handling are entered onto the corporate risk assessment system.

<F:\Health&Safety\Project Management\Online Risk Assessment\Assessors' user guide.pdf>

Employees

All employees have a responsibility to assess hazards around providing a service to people with health and social care needs and in children's settings, to identify the likelihood of risks occurring and to inform others.

- All employees must observe/establish safe systems of work as detailed in the risk assessment and ensure that the assessment remains up to date.
- All employees must take steps within their control to reduce risk of injury to themselves, service users, carers and other colleagues.
- All employees must participate in training and use the principles of good back care in their day-to-day work practice.
- If employees feel unable to perform a task without risk of injury they have a responsibility to inform their line manager and a responsibility to report any moving and handling difficulties and/or hazards to their line manager.

6 Risk Assessments

Effective risk control is based on good risk assessment. A generic risk assessment of mobility and other manual handling assistance can help to provide useful information on options for control measures. The particular circumstances of a client's home environment for example, will have a considerable influence on this assessment and will need to be followed up with a more detailed individual assessment of each safer handling and moving of person's task.

Regulation 4 of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended) requires employers to:

1. **AVOID** the need for staff to perform hazardous manual handling as far as reasonably practicable.
2. **ASSESS** the risk of injury from any manual handling operation or task that cannot be avoided.
3. **REDUCE** the risk of injury from hazardous manual handling as far as reasonably practicable for all concerned.
4. **REVIEW** the risk assessments at regular intervals and as and when any changes occur.

The most useful assessments are set out simply, so that it is possible to quickly identify what equipment, techniques and numbers of staff are appropriate for the service user's needs. A suitable and sufficient assessment will include information for both daytime and night time care and will include the following;

- individual details including identification, height and weight,
- the individual's ability to 'weight bear' and any other relevant factors, for example pain, disability, spasm, fatigue, tendency to fall and apprehension,

- problems with comprehension and/or co-operational behaviour,
- recommended methods of movement for the relevant tasks such as sitting, going to the toilet, bathing, transfers and movement in bed, details of equipment needed,
- the minimum numbers of staff required to help,
- the environment,
- and any other relevant risk factors.

There should never be generic solutions that are routinely applied to all staff and service users.

Types of Risk Assessment

- **Moving and Handling Initial Assessment (Appendix 4)**
- **Detailed Manual Handling Risk Assessment (Appendix 5)**

These assessments are usually undertaken by senior home carers/agency workers /residential care staff/occupational therapists and all professional staff who have completed a basic risk assessment course and HICES (Halton Integrated Community Equipment Store) short course training on equipment and prescribers training. Completion of the detailed assessment must include any general procedures that are appropriate to the service user – see appendix 4.

Some risks are identified that can be reduced or minimised by using alternative methods of transfer or simple pieces of equipment e.g. chair/bed raise, bed lever, transfer board. Training is given to senior staff in the use of the equipment. This is then cascaded back to staff via the seniors.

- **Further Specialist Manual Handling Risk Assessment**

This assessment is usually undertaken by professional staff i.e. a consultant that has received additional more complex risk assessment training, HICES training on equipment and prescribers training.

Risks are identified that can be reduced or minimised by using advanced alternative transfer techniques or more complex pieces of equipment e.g. Samhill turner, slide sheets, handling belts, mobile hoists. As with the standard assessment, training is given to senior staff in the use of the new equipment. This will then be cascaded back to other staff.

Please note;

It may be necessary to arrange care services at very short notice. In these emergency situations, the information made available to staff must be sufficiently detailed to allow for arrangements to be made to ensure staff and clients are not put at risk. The basic information provided must include the client's mobility status including their ability to 'weight bear'. Where full information is not immediately available, additional precautions may need to be put into place before a full detailed handling assessment can be carried out, for example having more staff available to carry out moving techniques or to limit the nature of care provided. These arrangements are only suitable for emergency situations and must only be used in the short term.

A copy of each risk assessment must be left in the service user's environment.

If a risk assessment identifies hazardous techniques, a balanced decision making approach will be used ensuring that:

- The service user, their family and carers are fully involved in any decision making with an emphasis on their comfort and safety
- The service user has **capacity** to make informed decisions or an advocate/spokesperson. People are assumed to have capacity unless there are clear indications otherwise. For guidance on assessing capacity and what to do if an individual does not have capacity, refer to the Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Employees are not required to perform tasks that put them and service users at risk of injury unreasonably.
- A service user's personal wishes on mobility assistance are respected wherever possible.
- A service user's independence and autonomy is supported as fully as possible.

If a safe system of work cannot be agreed on, the manager of the service should be involved to try to reach a compromise position. Failure to reach a compromise may lead to a limiting of the service provided.

Reviews

All risk assessments and equipment prescribed will be reviewed as circumstances change or every six months.

Where hoists and slings have been prescribed, a visual check of the equipment should be carried out prior to its use, and the equipment replaced if defects are found. Safe alternative care methods should be used until replacements are provided. All hoists and slings shall be inspected by a competent person every six months.

7 Bariatric Risk Assessments

All organisations providing care and support are aware of the rising trend in obesity and the manual handling of the very obese person is essential.

The term 'bariatric' is used to describe someone whose weight impedes their independent mobility and may seriously affect their health however; weight alone cannot be used to identify bariatric people. Someone may only weigh approx. 20 stone but due to their small height, their weight may impede their mobility. The height, weight and body shape of the person will need to be considered when completing the assessment.

Providing care and support to bariatric people will require definitions of manual handling risk, clear pathways of responsibility and the strategies to manage and reduce identified risks. Any processes that are considered for this group of individuals will need to include the following:

- Risk assessments need to specify how many staff is required for each moving technique in order to reduce risks to both staff and service user.

- Provision of specialist equipment, the assessment and ordering of equipment should start as soon as the person is identified as needing health and social care services.
- Access to the most appropriate assessments and equipment in a timely manner,
- Ability to obtain this equipment speedily especially out of hours.
- Access to expert specialist moving and handling assessments and advice might be obtained from external consultants.

In the provision of care and support of the bariatric person it is important to always consider the facilitation of their journey throughout their need for the provision of services and/or to plan their discharge from services.

8 Treatment handling in Rehabilitation and Reablement

For individual accessing health and social care services from an enabling approach or from therapeutic rehabilitation there always needs to be a balance struck between risk avoidance and rehabilitation interventions. Health and social care professionals owe a duty of care for their work or delegated work in the area of manual handling for service users, staff from their own or other organisations and families.

The reference to manual handling as part of a rehabilitation programme should acknowledge the accompanying risks involved in this type of work and include strategies for risk reduction. Reducing risks to service users, their families and staff may include: additional equipment; additional personnel; training; joint working; integrated documentation and communication systems; management commitment to enable and support rehabilitation to occur. It is essential to identify the manual handling risks, ensure clear pathways of responsibility are in place, implement detailed plans to manage or reduce identified risks and disseminate manual handling information to all parties involved in the rehabilitation programme.

Those staff working in the rehabilitation and involved in the delegation of therapy programmes need to be guided by assessing the required competencies to carry them out. The therapist having identified the skills required for the task should then ensure that these skills are possessed by the appropriate individuals who might include staff from their own or other organisations and/or families. The individual employers of this staff group must be aware of and responsible for the health and safety of both their own staff and individuals in their care.

9 Provision of Equipment

Assistive devices can be provided to aid everyday living in a care situation and could include the following;

- Manual and powered mobile hoists
- Powered ceiling track hoists
- Bathing and toileting equipment
- Small handling aids (such as slide sheets and transfer boards)
- Beds and bed equipment

- Chairs, wheelchairs and chair equipment
- Walking and standing aids

Standard equipment and items listed above are not always suitable as a general provision for all service users. To ensure appropriateness there may be occasions when it may be necessary to adapt or make special alterations to equipment. Such adaptations should only be undertaken in conjunction with manufacturer's advice and handling equipment must never be used outside its recommended weight limits.

If the equipment has been provided by the authority there is a duty to ensure it is properly and suitably maintained and that it is kept in good working order. The LOLER Regulations (Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998) require that, where appropriate, before lifting equipment, including slings is used for the first time that it is thoroughly examined in use and at periods specified in the regulations – six monthly for hoists, slings and accessories at a minimum and annually for all other equipment. Maintenance should be annual as specified by the manufacturer. Following a thorough examination or inspection of any lifting equipment, a report is submitted by the competent person. A simple guide to LOLER can be found at;

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg290.pdf

All care workers must be aware of and understand the appropriate application and limitations of the different pieces of equipment they are expected to use. They must be suitably trained in the use of the equipment to reduce the risk of injury to themselves and to the service user.

Equipment provided by the Client

Clients have no duties under health & safety legislation to maintain their own equipment even if care workers use it while providing care assistance. Equally service providers have no powers to compel clients to have their equipment maintained. As an employer, however, the service provider is still responsible for ensuring their employees safety. It is up to the service provider, therefore, to assess the suitability of the equipment for their employees use and to discuss with the client any changes that are required.

Instructions

To avoid confusion it is useful to produce written instructions around using the equipment especially hoists and slings and to incorporate these into the care plan for reference by care workers.

10 Working with Babies and Children

Staff working with babies and children also need to be covered by manual handling risk assessments. Careful selection of nursery equipment and furniture helps to avoid manual handling and postural problems. Staff training needs to be tailored to the job.

Safe Handling of Spirited Children

Children with any form of disability or learning difficulty require a holistic approach to the formulation of a risk assessment with involvement from Health, Education and Carers.

If any lifting & handling is required and a specific manual handling form is not completed, as a minimum, staff should receive general safe lifting and handling techniques training and it should form part of the occupational risk assessment. Any training must be refreshed every 3 years.

11 Training and Instruction

As the employer Halton Borough Council (HBC) must provide adequate arrangements for training in the safe use of any equipment. This also includes training work placements and young persons. For agency staff there is an expectation under the terms of their contract that they will have already completed manual handling of persons training and the Council are responsible for ensuring that staff that use lifting devices and perform any sort of manual handling task have appropriate training. Equally staff have a personal responsibility and accountability to ensure that they are trained in the safe use of the equipment they need to use and safe lifting techniques. The manufacturer is responsible for supplying appropriate instructions for any equipment, taking into account the knowledge and training of the intended user.

At HBC there is an expectation that all Council staff involved in the sustained and repeated manual handling of persons will attend specific training on a 1 day course and then annual update training for a ½ day. For Risk Assessors an initial 3 day course is required with annual updates of a 1 day session. Managerial roles will require initially attendance to both courses.

12 Accident/Incident Reporting

All accidents to employees, service users, and members of the public must be recorded on a Halton Borough Council electronic accident report.

[http://srvintstag/IncidentReporting/\(S\(f0zwe33yx5pkim45ofifgsz5\)\)/Systems/AccidentReporting/AccidentReportingMenu.aspx](http://srvintstag/IncidentReporting/(S(f0zwe33yx5pkim45ofifgsz5))/Systems/AccidentReporting/AccidentReportingMenu.aspx)

Under RIDDOR 1995 (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, 1995) there is a statutory requirement that certain categories of accidents/injuries are reported to the HSE (Health & Safety Executive). Reportable accidents to the HSE will be determined by the Council's Health & Safety Team.

The categories of accidents are:

- a) Minor
- b) Significant
- c) Over 7 Day
- d) Major

- e) Public attending at Hospital
- f) Road Traffic Collision
- g) Diseases / Ill Health
- h) Dangerous Occurrences
- i) Near Misses

Action Required

Both the circumstances of the accident and the severity of the injury will determine what further reporting is necessary.

For further guidance please contact extension 167967 or 168563.

13 Review and Evaluation

In order to ensure that this policy continues to be effective and applicable to the Council, the program will be reviewed biennially by The Health & Safety Team and relevant stakeholders. Conditions which might warrant a review of the policy on a more frequent basis would include:

- Changes to legislation;
- Injury trends;
- Employee concern.

Following completion of any review, the program will be revised and/or updated in order to correct any deficiencies. Any changes to the program will be consulted through the relevant stakeholders.

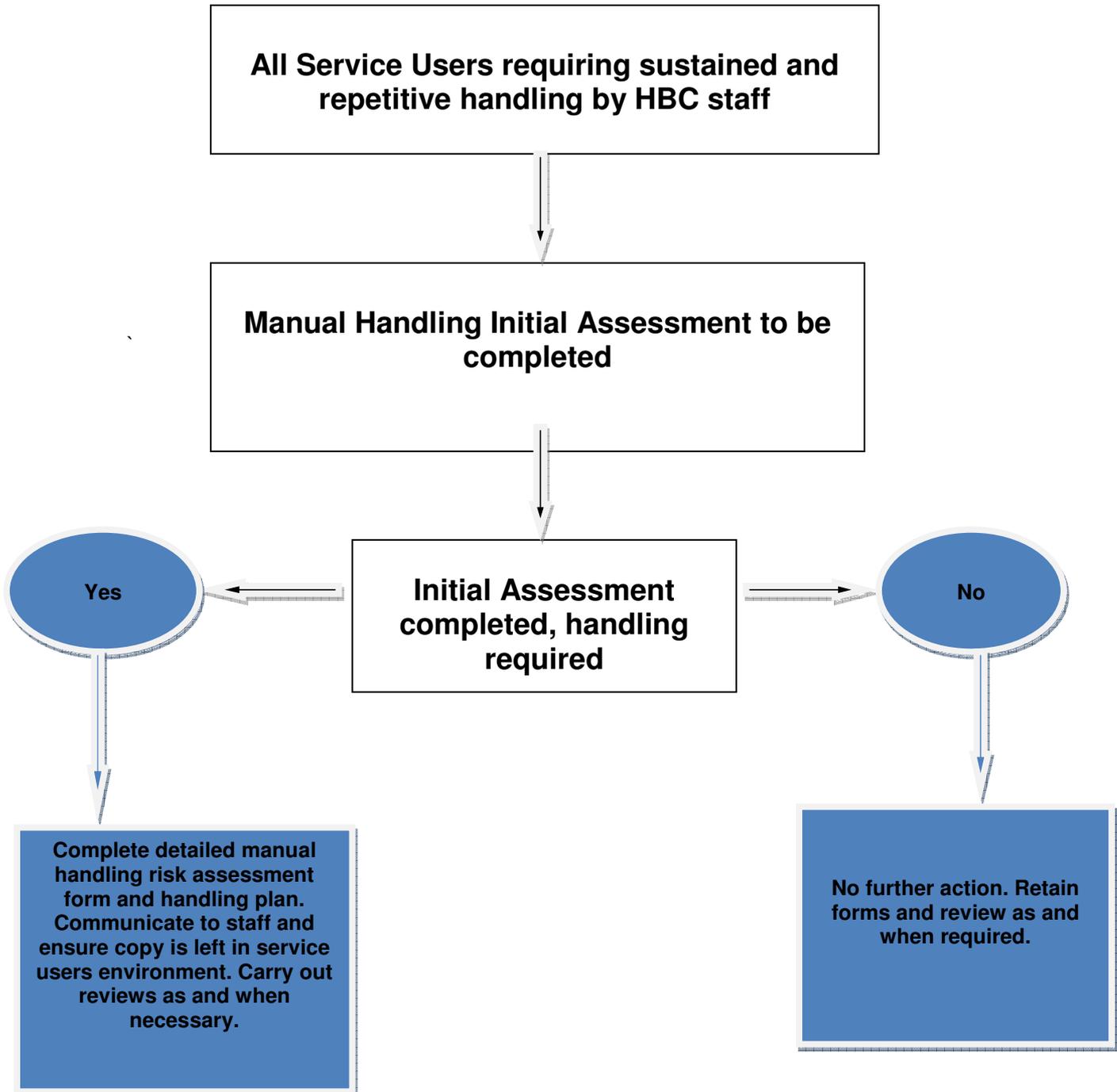
14 Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Released	Date Effective	Consultation	Amendment
1	Oct 2012	April 2013	Health & Safety Team, Unions, Care Services, External HBC Manual Handling Trainer, Safeguarding Unit's and Policy & Strategy, Safer Policy & Performance Board	Document Created

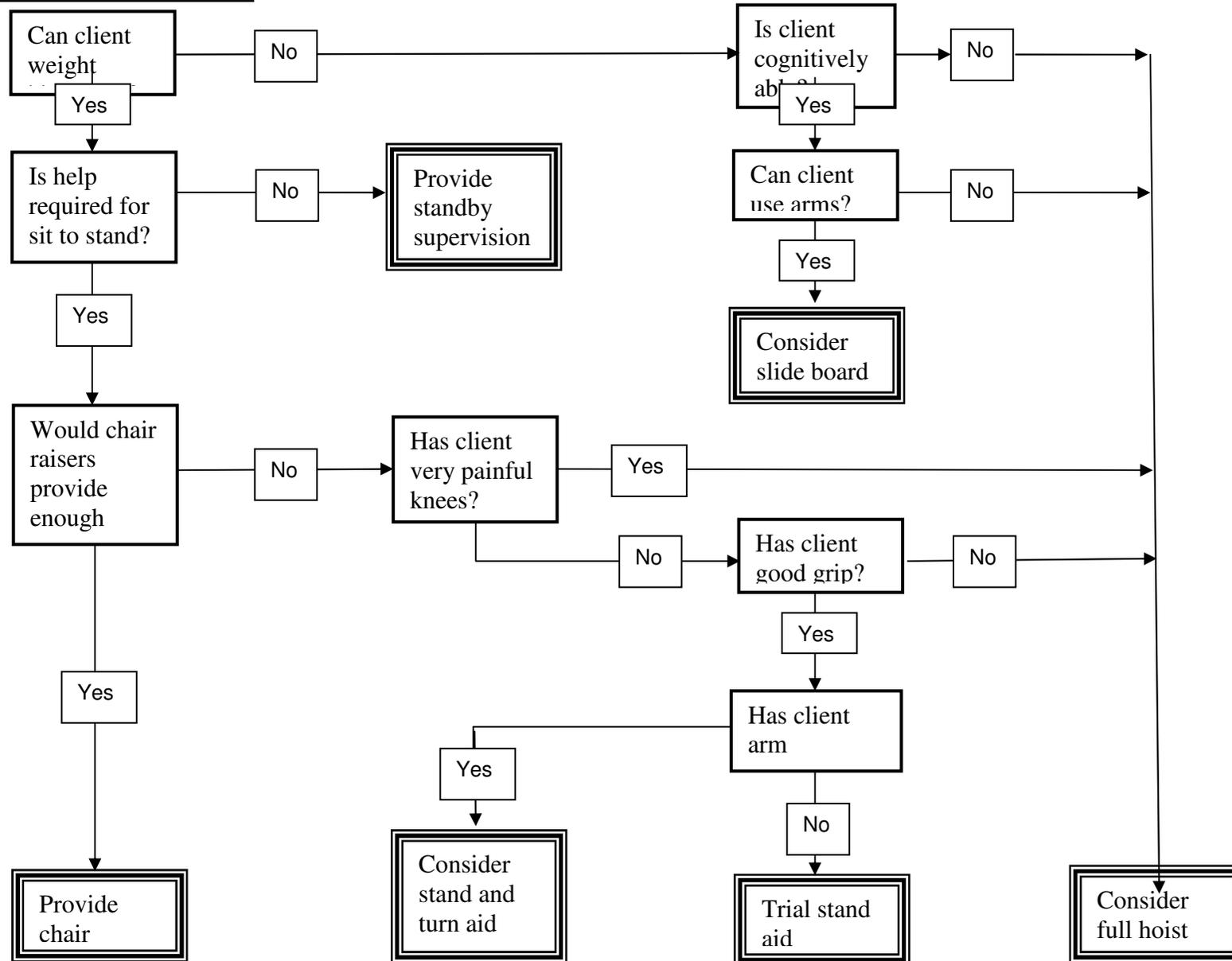
15 Appendices

Appendix 1

Trigger for Assessment of Handling of Persons



Sit To Stand Guidance



Appendix 3

Guidance - Assisting People Sit to stand to walk

TASK	Criteria for independent movement Person must be able to:	Assistance
Sitting to standing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move from back of chair to the edge • Maintain sitting balance • Place and maintain his/her feet on the floor • Achieve sitting to standing, having the ability to take his/her weight through his her legs • Maintain a midline position in standing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One handler is required if the person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can only partially achieve the independent criteria - Cannot maintain standing balance without support • A second handler is usually required if the person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has unpredictable physical ability or behaviour - Needs support from both sides to maintain standing balance - Needs additional support to move from the sitting position
Moving forward in the chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lean forward in the chair • Lean over to one side, placing his/her weight on one buttock • Lift the other buttock clear of the seat and hitch the hip forward • Repeat with the alternate hip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One handler is required if the person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can give only some assistance in the movement, e.g. lean to one side but not hitch his/her hip forward - Has poor cognition and cannot complete the move without verbal or touch prompt

Standing to sitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain standing balance • Move from standing to sitting, having the ability to take his/her weight through his/her legs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One handler is required if the person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - can only partially achieve the independent criteria - cannot maintain standing balance without support -
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A second handler is usually required if the person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has unpredictable physical ability or behaviour - Requires support from both sides for stability -
TASK	Criteria for independent movement Person must be able to:	Assistance

Standing transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have functional sitting balance • Place his/her feet on the floor • Move from sitting to standing with verbal and/or light tactile prompting • Maintain standing balance with verbal and/or light tactile prompting • Transfer weight through both legs while standing • Transfer weight to either leg and to release and step with either leg 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One handler is required if the person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has functional sitting balance - Can place his/her feet on the floor - Requires assistance to move from sit to stand - Requires some assistance to maintain standing balance - Can initiate stepping and transfer weight laterally in standing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A second handler is usually required if the person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has poor sitting and/or standing balance - Requires assistance to move from sit to stand - Can initiate stepping and transfer weight laterally in standing - Has unpredictable physical or behavioural attributes - Needs furniture to be repositioned - Requires support and a second activity at the same time, e.g. pad change
TASK	Criteria for independent movement Person must be able to:	Assistance
Walking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move from sitting to standing • Weight bear in standing • Maintain standing independently • Transfer weight to either leg and to release and step for a period of time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One handler is required if the person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires assistance to achieve the independent criteria - Requires tactile and/or verbal prompting to weight bear in standing - Requires assistance to transfer weight and step

NOTE: A height difference between handler and person will increase the risks and should be assessed		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A second handler is usually required if the person:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Requires support from both sides- Has unpredictable physical or behavioural attributes



Appendix 4

Moving and Handling Initial Assessment

Person detail					Assessor details	
Name					Name	
Height		Weight		DoB	Designation	
Address/location assessed					Signature	
					Assessment date	
					Review date	
Checklist of handling tasks						
Task	Is the person fully independent? *					
	Yes	No	Variable	Comments		
Bed						
Getting into						
Getting out of						
Rolling						
Repositioning up/down						
Lying to sitting						
Toilet/Commode						
On						
Off						
Bath/shower						
In						
Out						
Mobility						
Sitting to standing						
Standing to sitting						
Standing still						
Walking						
Wheelchair						
Into						
Out of						
Armchair						
In						
Out						
Floor						
Down to						
Up from						
Car/Transport						
Into						
Out of						
Other						
Is the person fully independent for all tasks? If yes – end the assessment If no – complete detailed assessment						
*Fully independent means that the person needs no manual assistance						



Appendix 5

Detailed Manual Handling Risk Assessment Form

Service User Name..... I.D No.....

If a service user needs assistance to move, a risk assessment and handling plan must be completed.

Section 1

General information

Name		ID No.			
Address		Age/D.O.B			
		Height			
		Weight		Date	
		Weight		Date	
Tel No.		Weight		Date	
Assessor		Date of assessment			
Job Title		Base		Tel No	

Agencies involved with the service user

G. P. Name		Tel No	
Social Worker		Tel No	
Therapist		Tel No	
District Nurse		Tel No	
Family Carer		Tel No	
Agency		Tel No	
Other		Tel No	

Reason for assessment

Diagnosis if known

--

Other people agencies present at assessment (*Print Names*)

District Nurse		Social Worker	
Family Carer		Therapist	
Other			

Section 2

Service user profile/condition

Factor	Points to consider	Comments and/or Hazards Identified	Risk – L/M/H
Does the method chosen encourage independence?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the longer term, will the method of assistance encourage the person to be as independent as possible? • Is it important to the person to be independent? • Is the physiotherapist and occupational therapist or any other professional involved? • Does the handling plan need to be integrated with the therapy plan? 		
Able to weight bear?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the person stand and do so without the need for support or assistance? • Does the person rely on standing to be able to transfer and move within their environment? • Does the state of the person's feet affect weight bearing ability? • Are walking aids required? 		
How much help does the person need?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the person able to perform all the tasks even without supervision? • If the person needs help, how much help? • Does he/she need equipment? Do you know what equipment is available? • Do you know the benefits and dangers of the equipment or process you are recommending? 		
Persons expectations/ wishes/ concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the person's requests or wishes that will affect the moving and handling been discussed and considered? • Is the person worried about the moving and handling task? • Are there any indications of previous negative experiences? 		

Factor	Points to consider	Comments and/or Hazards Identified	Risk – L/M/H
Ability to communicate with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the person explain their situation to you and follow requests? • Is the person's hearing impaired? 		
Predictability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the person always the same or are there times when he/she is better than others? • Does the person easily tire or have difficulty providing sustained effort? • Does the variance mean that more than one action plan is needed? 		
Is the person a child or a vulnerable adult?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For example, do there need to be considerations because the person has issues regarding his/her capacity to make decisions or may have been abused in the past and need extra care? 		
Pain medication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the person in pain? • Has the pain been diagnosed and a suitable system of pain relief established? • Does the person need referral to his/her GP or a pain specialist? • Does the person take any medication that affects his/her mobility? • Does timing of drug administration need to be changed to ensure best effect occur during moving and handling tasks? 		
Tissue viability/infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the person need any special considerations related to his/her skin or need disposable equipment such as slings because of infection? 		
Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the person likely to be anxious, passive, show inappropriate responses or be violent or aggressive? • Are there any triggers to the behaviour? • Is there a behaviour management plan? 		

Factor	Points to consider	Comments and/or Hazards Identified	Risk – L/M/H
Cultural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have these issues been considered e.g. possible differing expectations regarding gender of handlers, authority and acceptance, methods of handling personal hygiene? 		
Physical abilities/operations or interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the person a disability or health problem that affects how much he/she can help? • Are there any special considerations that need to be included? • Is there a health problem that may intermittently affect his/her ability (e.g. epileptic seizures)? Does the person have any problems with muscle tone, spasm, tremor, contractures, and/or stiffness? • Has the person undergone surgery or had a recent heart attack? • Can the person balance himself/herself in lying, sitting/standing? • Does he/she have any muscle weakness? Does the person have any breathing difficulties? Does he/she have impaired sight? 		
Comfort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the method used comfortable and not causing any difficulties, e.g. skin damage, pain or undue stress on a part of the body? 		
Height, weight and Body shape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How tall and heavy is the person? • Will special equipment be needed to support him/her? • Can that equipment support the combined weight of the person being assisted and the staff? • Does the person need specialist equipment because of his/her body shape, such as individual made hoist slings or postural equipment? 		

Factor	Points to consider	Comments and/or Hazards Identified	Risk – L/M/H
Attachments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there any attachments? E.g. Catheter, Peg feed, Stoma, Splints etc. Would choice of sling be affected by these? 		
Falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the person have a history of falls? Is there a falls assessment tool that should be completed? 		
Continence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E.g. pads, catheters, urgency, stoma etc. 		

Section 3

Environment

Are there issues relating to Environment?	
Adequate space to carry out lifting & handling	
Adequate lighting	
Floor: even/uneven/slopes/thresholds/clutter	
Floor condition: Tripping/slipping hazards	
Floor covering: i.e. carpets, linoleum	
Stairs	
Extremes of Temperature	
Other	

Section 4

Handling Plan

Task	Details of method considering daytime and night time needs	Change alert Sign and date
Bed		
Getting into bed	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Getting out of bed	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Rolling in bed	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Repositioning up/down bed	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Lying to sitting on bed	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Toilet/Commode		
On	No. Staff Equipment Method	

Task	Details of method considering daytime and night time needs	Change alert <i>Sign and date</i>
Off	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Clothing and Personal Care	Equipment Method No. Staff	
Bath/shower		
In	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Out	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Dressing and Personal Care	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Mobility		
Sitting to standing	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Standing to sitting	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Standing still	No. Staff Equipment Method	

Task	Details of method considering daytime and night time needs	Change alert <i>Sign and date</i>
Turning	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Walking with/without walking aid	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Armchair		
Into armchair	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Out of armchair	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Wheelchair		
Into the wheelchair	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Out of the wheelchair	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Pushing wheelchair	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Floor		
Down to floor	No. Staff Equipment Method	

Task	Details of method considering daytime and night time needs	Change alert <i>Sign and date</i>
Up from floor	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Car/Transport		
Into	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Out of	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Emergency situations		
Falls	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Seizures	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Other		
	No. Staff Equipment Method	
	No. Staff Equipment Method	
	No. Staff Equipment Method	

	No. Staff Equipment Method	
	No. Staff Equipment Method	
Are there any remaining risks?		
<i>*Fully independent means that the person needs no manual assistance</i>		
<i>Review 6 monthly or as changes occur</i>		

Section 5

Update Sheet

Task	Handling Plan	<i>Sign and date</i>

Section 6

Review

NB If no change is observed then this form should be signed and dated.

Due date of review	Name of reviewer	Signature	Date reviewed

NB After three reviews a new plan must be completed.

Signature of Service User and Carer	
Signature of Assessor	
Attachment List (number and name of procedure)	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

Any further action

Specialist Moving & Handling Assessment Required

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Date referred	
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Appendix 6

Consultation

Prevention & Assessment – Sue Wallace-Bonner
Care Management – Marie Lynch
Intermediate Care – Damien Nolan
Unison – Ian Munro
Manual Handling Adviser – Karen Burrows
Policy & Strategy, Development, Building Control & Contaminated Land – Tim Gibbs
Independent Living – Helen Moir
Oakmeadow & Reablement – Lynne Moss, Yvonne O'Reilly, Jane English
Team around the Family – Emma Taylor
Children's Safeguarding Unit – Paula St Aubyn
Adults Safeguarding Unit – Paula Gandy
Health & Safety Team

REPORT TO: Safer Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 12 March 2013

REPORTING OFFICER: Community Development Manager,
Communities

PORTFOLIO: Leader

SUBJECT: Armed Forces Community Covenant

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To inform the Policy and Performance Boards of the Armed Forces Community Covenant (appendix one).

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That the Board note the contents of the report.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 In referring to Armed Forces this encompasses the Army, Royal Navy & Air Force.

Halton is part of a pan Cheshire Covenant covering the Local Authorities of Cheshire East, Cheshire West & Cheshire, Warrington and Halton. In addition to local authorities, health, probation and job centre plus are involved in supporting the covenant.

The Armed Forces Community Covenant was signed by dignatories representing each of the authorities on the 30th June 2012, Armed Forces Day.

Each Local Authority is required to have a nominated Armed Forces Champion, the Community Development Manager has been designated this role in Halton. The Armed Forces Champion provides representation on a Community Covenant working group that covers the Cheshire area and provides a point of liaison for the forces.

4.0 **ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT**

4.1 The Armed Forces Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between the civilian community and its local armed forces community. It aims to provide awareness of the role of the armed forces, the sacrifices that in service and ex service personnel and their families make, encourage activities that integrate armed

forces and local communities together and continue to foster civic pride in our armed forces.

4.2 The Armed Forces Community Covenant sets out pledges, twenty in total around five key themes:-

- Housing
- Employment & Benefit
- Education
- Health
- Wellbeing

4.2.1 **Housing**

There is evidence that securing accommodation can be difficult, in particular for those leaving the forces. The pledges request priority is given to armed forces personnel with high priority for veterans injured or disabled or their spouse and dependants for widow (ers). Halton's policy supports this approach, this has been tested through support given to an army widow earlier this year and is cited as an example of good practice by the Armed Forces.

4.2.2 **Employment & Benefits**

These pledges identify it can be difficult for service leavers to secure employment and for those with spouses in service, it can be difficult to seek employment as they often have sole responsibility for childcare. Organisations and services that provide employment and benefit support need to identify service leavers and veterans and ensure additional support is offered.

4.2.3 **Education**

Accessing education provision for service families can be outside of routine school admission timetables, sometimes this is linked to whole regiments moving about or could be individual families. Policies should ensure service families are not disadvantaged in accessing schools of their choice by being resident elsewhere. Schools need to also be vigilant in ensuring support for forces children in integrating to a new environment. Where a child has additional needs appropriate support should also be put in place by the relevant council departments in a reasonable timescale.

4.2.4 **Health**

Access and engaging in health support services for veterans is a priority. There are five pledges which set out (regardless of changes in structures for health provision) access to services will be made easier for armed forces and their families to support good physical health, positive mental health and wellbeing. Health records should indicate if a patient is a current or former service member, places on waiting lists for clinical procedures should be maintained where relocation occurs and the provision of prosthetic limbs will match the standard provided by the Defence Medical Services. Access to

mental health services is a key issue and since the Community Covenant was adopted “Live At Ease” has been launched. This is an initiative commissioned by health aimed at veterans and provides wrap around support to issues which are impacting on the mental health and wellbeing of the veteran i.e debt advice, addiction support, counselling, etc. It aims to be a one stop to provide the required support however complex.

4.2.5 **Wellbeing**

Wellbeing cuts across the other four themes however the pledges here are about supporting access to services in communities and support for those who become involved in the criminal justice system. Areas are urged to consider discounts to leisure facilities and other services if possible for the armed forces community. These pledges reinforce the need for partners to work together to ensure signposting and referrals arrangements with appropriate priorities are in place.

4.2.6 **Community Covenant Working Group**

The working group consists of the Armed Forces Champions from the four authorities, the Lieutenant Colonel of 75 Engineer Regiment, a representative from Wirral NHS (currently has strategic lead responsibility for Health Provision for Military Veterans, transferring to York & Humber shortly), Cheshire Probation Service and input from Job Centre Plus. The group is required to undertake annual reviews of the covenant.

There is a national pot of money to support initiatives endorsed through the Community Covenant Working Groups, there is £30 million unallocated at this stage. Any proposals have to be endorsed from the local covenant working group and from there are submitted to the Ministry of Defence. Projects that have been successful vary from small scale community based projects to replacing a scout hut with a community building, the underpinning theme is integration between the forces and civilian communities. £3.7 million has been allocated so far, 200 applications have been submitted with 86 being successful. The deadline for the next round of proposals is 12th November 2012.

5.0 **WIDER CONTEXT OF ARMED FORCES FOR HALTON**

5.1 It is difficult to know exactly how many in service personnel are from Halton and exactly how many veterans reside here, some work is progressing to provide more accurate figures. Support organisations for veterans have indicative figures from their membership however, one factor for Halton is there is no garrison located here, hence forces members and their families are intrinsic in our regular communities and not always easy to identify. It is a balance not to contradict the concept of integration for forces members and their families in civilian communities whilst ensuring appropriate support and priority is given.

- 5.2 The armed forces are reducing their personnel, 10,532 will be leaving the forces between September 2012 to June 2013, 63% of these have sought service leaver advice and 237 are from the north west and 520 have stated they wish to resettle in the north west, a total of 820. It is anticipated a further breakdown by local authority areas will be available shortly and will be shared with Chief Executives.
- 5.3 It is anticipated from January 2013 there will be a further 6000 service leavers. As one in five in the forces originate from the north west it is reasonable to estimate 1200 returning to the region.
- 5.4 A service leaver event is being held in Liverpool in November 2012, it is an information event for service leavers wishing to return to the area, the Community Covenant Working Group will be represented there including Halton.
- 5.5 There are a number of support organisations that exist to support veterans, some have a presence established in Halton and others deliver services in the area. A web based directory is due to be launched by December 2012 to provide a comprehensive list of organisations and what support they can offer.
- 5.6 The Council will work with partners to assist and support our armed forces and their families in line with the pledges set out in the covenant.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

Ensuring the school admissions process allocates the appropriate priority for serving families and additional support for special needs children in armed forces families is provided in a reasonable timescale.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

Approximately 5000 early service leavers depart the forces each year with 61% being employed at six months following discharge. Over a third of service leavers are unemployed and require additional support when entering the job market.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Priority for the health & wellbeing of armed forces and veterans is present in health services in Halton. Traditionally, access to mental health support has been low across the forces however a bespoke service "Live At Ease" has been commissioned to provide additional services to clients and is available to Halton residents.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

Some service leavers and veterans find it difficult to adjust to civilian life and become involved in the criminal justice system. Additional

support from custody staff and the probation service are pledges identified in the Community Covenant.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None to report at this stage.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 N/A

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 It is incumbent on the authority to ensure Armed Forces Families and Veterans are not disadvantaged and appropriate priorities are awarded in accessing services.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

9.1 None under the Meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO: Safer Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 12 March 2013

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Communities

PORTFOLIO: Community Safety

SUBJECT: Community Engagement Strategy – Action Plan Update

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To inform the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board of progress to date with the Community Engagement Strategy action plan.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the Safer Policy and Performance Board:-

- note the content of the report;
- note the contents of the updated action plan; and
- note the format and timescales of the community engagement health check.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1** The Community Engagement Strategy was approved by the Halton Strategic Partnership Board in June 2011 and reported to the Safer PPB in September 2011. Since then a Community Engagement Operational Group has been set up to oversee the delivery of the action plan. This group consists of engagement managers and professionals from across the strategic partnership.

4.0 CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1** We are starting to see an increase in partnership working under the strategy. It has been agreed in principal to share resources and training to increase the number and use of mystery shoppers across the strategic partnership to increase resident engagement in the evaluation of services. Overall completion by 2015 remains on course.
- 4.2** A Community Engagement Health Check is being carried out to evaluate how

well we as a partnership engage with the community. The Community Engagement Operational Group has agreed the approach to be taken, which is set out in Appendix B.

4.3 The final paperwork for the community engagement health check will be sent out by March 2013. The deadline for submitting completed forms will be the end of April/early May 2013.

4.4 The Community Engagement Action Plan has been updated and a “progress” column has been added. The document is attached to this report in Appendix A and outlines where each action is up to. Some of the timescales have been amended to reflect current progress.

4.5 The Community Engagement Operational Group will take the lead on overseeing delivery of the action plan.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The Community Engagement action plan is now underway and is on course for completion by 2015. Each action has a progress note attached to it which explains its current status.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The strategy should enable the partnership to create more opportunities for children and young people in Halton to engage with service providers and play a more active role in designing and evaluating the services they receive.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

The strategy should enable the partnership to create more opportunities for residents to engage with service providers and play a more active role in designing services they receive. It will enable residents to give genuine feedback about the types of services they feel they need to improve their knowledge, skills and experience to gain employment.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The strategy should enable the partnership to create more opportunities for residents to engage with health service providers and play a more active role in designing the health services they receive.

6.4 A Safer Halton

The strategy should enable residents to engage more with the partnership around issues of community safety and influence how these issues are

addressed.

6.5 Environment and Regeneration in Halton

The strategy should enable residents to engage more with the partnership around environment and regeneration issues and influence how these issues are addressed by the partnership.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 There are few risks associated with delivering the strategy. The main risk lies in not delivering it successfully. This could lead to a worsening of the relationship between residents and member organisations of the strategic partnership and a lack of residential engagement in public service design and delivery.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The strategy aims to ensure that all residents have the opportunity to engage with the partnership. Where possible equality and diversity monitoring of consultation and engagement, will be carried out to monitor our success. The action plan was equality impact assessed before the strategy was adopted by the Halton Strategic Partnership Board.

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct financial implications to delivering this work as it will be delivered using existing staff resources from the council and partners.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1072

10.1 None under the Meaning of the Act.

11.0 ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Halton Strategic Partnership Community Engagement Action Plan.
Appendix B: Community Engagement Self-Assessment healthcheck .

Appendix A: HSP Community Engagement Strategy Action Plan– Updated November 2012

Note: Greyed-out actions are no longer part of the strategy.

Objective 1: Citizen focused local decision making					
<i>“We are committed to ensuring community and individual input in to the local decision making process. We will ensure that all decisions taken are focused on the needs of individuals and the local community, and that those affected are given meaningful opportunities to help make those decisions.”</i>					
What?	Who?	When?	How?	Measure	Progress
Support Councillors to play a leading role in community engagement	HBC Community Development Community Practitioners Forum Members’ Services	Continuous	Monthly Member briefing Member training Engagement with neighbourhood workers Links to Area Panels and funding streams	Increased resident participation at local area forums.	On going work across area forums, engaging them in the health agenda, and future work around the development of a register of community assets. Looking to develop community activity mapping exercise at an area forum level with Partners. Possibility to use this information to help form neighbourhood plans. SS to speak to Community Development Manager

Continue to produce area profiles and share this information across the partnership.	HBC Research and Intelligence	Continuous	Available across the partnership electronically	Regular area profiles published and available to partners	Area profiles now done and on HBC website. Need to notify Partners and share across partnership.
Develop a set of guidelines for the usage of mystery shoppers/youth inspectors for partnership services	HBC Community Development Team/HBC Corporate and Organisational Policy Team/YOT	April 2013	Incorporated into revised Community Engagement toolkit	New toolkit published and in use	<p>Toolkit updated and revised. Needs to be shared across Partnership and put on new website. Work ongoing with various</p> <p>HHT have a pool of mystery shoppers in place. They are willing to share these across the partnership and discussions have begun to consider shared training and recruitment of mystery shoppers.</p>
Increase awareness of existing engagement mechanisms across the partnerships	HBC Community Development Team/HBC	April 2012	Incorporated into revised toolkit Consultation finder	New toolkit published and in use	It's been agreed that the Strategy and Action Plan need to be touted across the

	Corporate and Organisational Policy Team		or similar database rolled out across partnership		Partnership's various groups and networks, as part of an awareness raising process. This item will be picked up as part of that process.
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Objective 2: Accessible and inclusive engagement					
<i>"We are committed to ensuring that each and every citizen in Halton has equal opportunity to make their voice heard and influence decisions that affect them. We will ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place to ensure everybody's access needs are identified and accounted for."</i>					
What?	Who?	When?	How?	Measure	Progress
Monitor all participation in engagement activity by protected characteristics Identify groups who are unengaged	Community Engagement Strategy Steering Group/Community Engagement champions	Annually in April	Audit each agency to ensure they are monitoring – include as part of Community Engagement Health check	All engagement events to show equality monitoring statistics	This will be monitored via annual health checks.
Regularly report monitoring information against area demographics to analyse representation	Nominated officers within organisations/Community Engagement Strategy Steering Group	Annually in April	Community Engagement Health check	Health check self-assessment	This will be monitored via annual health checks.
Create and maintain database of community and representative	Community Engagement Representatives/Community	April 2013	Hosted on partnership website, updated by officers across the	Database set up and up to date	Need to liaise with HSTVCA to ensure a comprehensive list is available to

groups in Halton	Engagement Steering Group		partnership		all.
Provide evidence-based guidance on how to identify and reach hard-to-reach groups	HBC Community Development Team/Corporate and Organisational Policy	December 2011	To form part of the revised Community Engagement Toolkit	Increased engagement with hard to reach groups – evidenced through Community Engagement Health check	Completed
Develop guidance to improve effective engagement with unengaged groups in partnership with residents' groups	HBC Community Development Team/HBC Corporate and Organisational Policy Team	April 2012	To form part of the revised Community Engagement Toolkit Include resident's groups in the developments of these guidelines	New toolkit published and in use	Completed but still need to share with specific groups

Objective 3: Open, efficient and effective engagement					
<i>"We are committed to ensuring that all of our engagement activities make a tangible and positive impact on the community and represent best value for money at all times".</i>					
What?	Who?	When?	How?	Measure	Progress
Produce a Community Engagement self-assessment "health check" and conduct on an annual basis to monitor success of the strategy	All partners/Corporate and Organisational Policy Team (HBC)	Annually in April	Health checks submitted to HBC Corporate & Organisational Policy Team/Performance & Improvement	All partners submitting health check	Options for the healthcheck have been reviewed by the operational group and a decision reached. The forms will be sent out in February 2013 for

					completion and return in April 2013.
Promote the use of the Consultation Finder across the partnership	HBC Research & Intelligence	December 2013	Market Consultation Finder through partnership newsletters	Increased partnership use of the Consultation Finder	This is part of the awareness raising work for the strategy and action plan – touting across Partners.
Provide training to partnership officers on the use of the consultation finder	HBC Research & Intelligence	December 2012	Organised training with engagement officers across the partnership	Increased partnership use of the Consultation Finder	Completed
Conduct joint consultations/engagement whenever possible	HBC Community Development/Corporate & Organisational Policy Team	On going	Joint planning and use of the consultation finder Guidelines to be incorporated into new toolkit	Increased number of joined up consultations	Resident's survey 2012 was a joint consultation – this is to be used as an example to follow.
Promote the principles of “ask once use many times” with engagement practitioners across the partnership	Community Engagement Champions	April 2013	Marketing campaign	Increased joined-up working and information sharing across the partnership	This is part of the awareness raising work for the strategy and action plan – touting across Partners.
Review and revise the current	HBC Community Development	April 2012	Item on toolkit included in	New toolkit published and in	Toolkit revised, but this review is

Community Engagement Toolkit and promote its use across the partnership	team/HBC Corporate & Organisational Policy Team		newsletters and on intranet Available on partnership website	use	an on-going process and will be included as part of the awareness raising work. Will be included on the partnership website once website is completed.
Re-establish the Community Engagement Network	HBC Community Development	April 2012	Contact all engagement officers across the partnership, organise quarterly meetings. Senior management to acknowledge nomination of champion	Community Engagement Network meeting regularly	This has been replaced by the Community Practitioners Forum which includes anyone who works within Halton's communities. Need to discuss the issue of training. Item for December 2012 meeting?
Feed information from Consultation Finder into Area Forums and members' briefings	HBC Research & Intelligence	April 2013	Information sent to organisers	Regular information included on Area Forums and member briefings	This will be picked up by Neil McSweeney, Nikki Goodwin and Members Services.

Objective 4: Innovative engagement					
<i>“We are committed to exploring new and creative ways of engaging with the communities we serve and maximising the potential of new technologies”.</i>					
What?	Who?	When?	How?	Measure	Progress
Develop agreed standards for conducting surveys via electronic means	HBC Research & Intelligence/Corporate & Organisational Policy Team	December 2012	Publishing standards	Published standards	On going
Develop the partnership website to allow interaction with users	HBC Marketing	December 2014	Partnership website to be brought “in-house” and developed	Partnership website used interactively by partners and residents	On going
Develop a social media strategy and protocol to promote and co-ordinate the use of social media across the partnership	HBC Corporate & Organisational Policy Team/HBC Marketing	December 2014	Social media strategy sub-group to be set up to coordinate the use of social media and develop the strategy	Strategy published	On going

Objective 5: Using and responding to customer initiated engagement					
<i>“We are committed to maximising the impact of all contact we have with residents, including those which are initiated by the individual”.</i>					
What?	Who?	When?	How?	Measure	Progress
All organisations to	All partners	Annually	To be decided by	Number of	This will be

<p>monitor and analyse comments, compliments and complaints.</p>			<p>each partner</p>	<p>complaints reported to Community Engagement Strategy steering group on an annual basis</p> <p>Health check item</p>	<p>monitored via annual health checks.</p>
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Appendix B: Community Engagement Strategy

Self Assessment Healthcheck

Using the definitions below, please identify two examples of engagement activity that you have undertaken in the past 12 months under each category.

Information Giving - simple, direct, one way communication. **Either** from partnership agency to public or individual to agency. Keeping people informed of activities, decisions and events. This could be via a mailshot, information on the website, information via email, facebook, twitter or text, or an exhibition. It also includes direct contact from individuals, for example complaints, compliments and other information.

- 1.
- 2.

Consultation –involves a dialogue between parties who listen to each other. For example, options or proposals may be presented to the public who are given the chance to comment on them and ask questions about them. This could also take the form of a survey, delivered online, over the telephone, face-to-face or through the post. Consultation means the right to be heard, not the right to influence or decide.

- 1.
- 2.

Deciding Together – the local community are involved in making decisions with the partnership on what will be done, with the partnership taking these forward. For example, involving local residents on planning new road layouts.

- 1.
- 2.

Acting Together – decisions are made together between local people and agencies of the strategic partnership. The people involved in making the decisions also take part in carrying them out.

- 1.
- 2.

Please complete the table below, assigning a self-assessment score for each type of engagement activity that your organisation undertakes with reference to the guidance notes below.

	Level of planning 1. Poor Performing to 4. High Performing	Working in partnership 1. Poor Performing to 4. High Performing	Breadth of engagement 1. Poor Performing to 4. High Performing	Depth of engagement 1. Poor Performing to 4. High Performing	Taking action 1. Poor Performing to 4. High Performing
Information Giving					
Consultation					
Deciding Together					
Acting Together					

Guidance notes

Engagement Category	Level of planning	Working in partnership	Breadth of engagement	Depth of engagement	Taking Action
<p>Information Giving – simple, direct, one way communication. Either from partnership agency to public or individual to agency. Keeping people informed of activities, decisions and events. This could be via a mailshot, information on the website, information via email, facebook, twitter or text, or an exhibition. It also includes direct contact from individuals, for example complaints, compliments and other information.</p>	<p>1. Engagement activity is ad hoc and developed at a service level with no quality control. 2. There is some evidence of planning above the service level, focused on departments and specific projects. The organisation provides guidance but does not monitor quality or consistency. 3. Departments collaborate well and know individually who they are trying to engage. Stakeholders’ views of community needs are fed into the process but not consistently. There is limited quality control in individual teams and departments, but no consistent approach. 4. Engagement is planned at the top. The partnership knows who it needs to engage with and at what level and ensures this is carried out in a high quality manner.</p>	<p>1. Any engagement is planned without integration, leading to duplication. 2. There are some examples of services collaborating to consult common customers, but substantial duplication remains. 3. Consultation needs and plans are aggregated as part of the partnership’s business plans, but key partners are insufficiently involved. 4. Engagement activities are co-ordinated within the organisation and with partners.</p>	<p>1. There is no systematic analysis of who needs to be engaged. 2. There is some recognition of groups classified as ‘hard to reach’, but no detailed demographics. 3. The partnership knows which sections of the population need to be engaged but insufficient action is taken. 4. The partnership knows the detailed demographics of the area and use appropriate methods to ensure the whole community’s participation.</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>1. Results of engagement activity are recorded and considered, but little action occurs as a result. 2. Results are fed back beyond the service level and some actions incorporated in to forward planning. 3. Results are fed back at a departmental level and incorporated in to business plans. This information is fed back to stakeholders. 4. Results of engagement are recorded and fed directly in to business planning. Results are fed back to the involved stakeholders and an ongoing engagement is established to monitor progress.</p>
<p>Consultation – this involves a dialogue between parties who listen to each other. For example, options or proposals may be presented to the public who are given the chance to comment on them and ask questions about them. This could also take the form of a survey, delivered online,</p>	<p>1. Engagement activity is ad hoc and developed at a service level with no quality control. 2. There is some evidence of planning above the service level, focused on departments and specific projects. The organisation provides guidance but does not monitor quality or consistency. 3. Departments collaborate well and know individually who they are trying to engage. Stakeholders’ views of community needs are fed into the process but not consistently. There is limited quality control in individual teams and departments, but no consistent approach. 4. Engagement is planned at the top. The partnership knows who it needs to engage with and at what level and ensures</p>	<p>1. Any engagement is planned without integration, leading to duplication. 2. There are some examples of services collaborating to consult common customers, but substantial duplication remains. 3. Consultation needs and plans are aggregated as part of</p>	<p>1. There is no systematic analysis of who needs to be engaged. 2. There is some recognition of groups classified as ‘hard to reach’, but no detailed demographics. 3. The partnership knows which sections of the population need to be engaged but</p>	<p>1. Engagement is limited to information-giving and quantitative feedback. 2. Engagement is largely quantitative, with isolated examples of more qualitative dialogue. 3. Some departments use creative techniques to gather feedback and engage sections of the community in ongoing</p>	<p>1. Results of engagement activity are recorded and considered, but little action occurs as a result. 2. Results are fed back beyond the service level and some actions incorporated in to forward planning. 3. Results are fed back at a departmental level and incorporated in to</p>

<p>over the telephone, face-to-face or through the post. Consultation means the right to be heard, not the right to influence or decide.</p>	<p>this is carried out in a high quality manner.</p>	<p>the partnership's business plans, but key partners are insufficiently involved. 4. Engagement activities are co-ordinated within the organisation and with partners.</p>	<p>insufficient action is taken. 4. The partnership knows the detailed demographics of the area and use appropriate methods to ensure the whole community's participation.</p>	<p>dialogue, but the approach is not consistent across the organisation. 4. The partnership uses qualitative as well as quantitative engagement where appropriate. Communities can influence the 'big picture' as well as taking part in detailed collaborative work dialogue.</p>	<p>business plans. This information is fed back to stakeholders. 4. Results of engagement are recorded and fed directly in to business planning. Results are fed back to the involved stakeholders and an ongoing engagement is established to monitor progress.</p>
<p>Deciding Together – The local community are involved in making decisions with the partnership on what will be done, with the partnership taking these forward. For example, involving local residents on planning new road layouts.</p>	<p>1. Engagement activity is ad hoc and developed at a service level with no quality control. 2. There is some evidence of planning above the service level, focused on departments and specific projects. The organisation provides guidance but does not monitor quality or consistency. 3. Departments collaborate well and know individually who they are trying to engage. Stakeholders' views of community needs are fed into the process but not consistently. There is limited quality control in individual teams and departments, but no consistent approach. 4. Engagement is planned at the top. The partnership knows who it needs to engage with and at what level and ensures this is carried out in a high quality manner.</p>	<p>1. Any engagement is planned without integration, leading to duplication. 2. There are some examples of services collaborating to consult common customers, but substantial duplication remains. 3. Consultation needs and plans are aggregated as part of the partnership's business plans, but key partners are insufficiently involved. 4. Engagement activities are co-ordinated within the organisation and with partners.</p>	<p>1. There is no systematic analysis of who needs to be engaged. 2. There is some recognition of groups classified as 'hard to reach', but no detailed demographics. 3. The partnership knows which sections of the population need to be engaged but insufficient action is taken. 4. The partnership knows the detailed demographics of the area and use appropriate methods to ensure the whole community's participation.</p>	<p>1. Engagement is limited to information-giving and quantitative feedback. 2. Engagement is largely quantitative. 3. Some departments use creative techniques to gather feedback and engage sections of the community in ongoing dialogue, but the approach is not consistent across the organisation, with isolated examples of more qualitative dialogue. 4. The partnership uses qualitative as well as quantitative engagement. Communities can influence the 'big picture' as well as taking part in detailed collaborative</p>	<p>1. Results of engagement activity are recorded and considered, but little action occurs as a result. 2. Results are fed back beyond the service level and some actions incorporated in to forward planning. 3. Results are fed back at a departmental level and incorporated in to business plans. This information is fed back to stakeholders. 4. Results of engagement are recorded and fed directly in to business planning. Results are fed back to the involved stakeholders and an ongoing engagement is</p>

				work dialogue.	established to monitor progress.
<p>Acting Together – Decisions are made together between local people and agencies of the strategic partnership. The people involved in making the decisions also take part in carrying them out.</p>	<p>1. Engagement activity is ad hoc and developed at a service level with no quality control. 2. There is some evidence of planning above the service level, focused on departments and specific projects. The organisation provides guidance but does not monitor quality or consistency. 3. Departments collaborate well and know individually who they are trying to engage. Stakeholders' views of community needs are fed into the process but not consistently. There is limited quality control in individual teams and departments, but no consistent approach. 4. Engagement is planned at the top. The partnership knows who it needs to engage with and at what level and ensures this is carried out in a high quality manner.</p>	<p>1. Any engagement is planned without integration, leading to duplication. 2. There are some examples of services collaborating to consult common customers, but substantial duplication remains. 3. Consultation needs and plans are aggregated as part of the partnership's business plans, but key partners are insufficiently involved. 4. Engagement activities are co-ordinated within the organisation and with partners.</p>	<p>1. There is no systematic analysis of who needs to be engaged. 2. There is some recognition of groups classified as 'hard to reach', but no detailed demographics. 3. The partnership knows which sections of the population need to be engaged but insufficient action is taken. 4. The partnership knows the detailed demographics of the area and use appropriate methods to ensure the whole community's participation.</p>	<p>1. Engagement is limited to information-giving and quantitative feedback. 2. Engagement is largely quantitative, with isolated examples of more qualitative dialogue. 3. Some departments use creative techniques to gather feedback and engage sections of the community in ongoing dialogue, but the approach is not consistent across the organisation. 4. The partnership uses qualitative as well as quantitative engagement. Communities can influence the 'big picture' as well as taking part in detailed collaborative work dialogue.</p>	<p>1. Results of engagement activity are recorded and considered, but little action occurs as a result. 2. Results are fed back beyond the service level and some actions incorporated in to forward planning. 3. Results are fed back at a departmental level and incorporated in to business plans. This information is fed back to stakeholders. 4. Results of engagement are recorded and fed directly in to business planning. Results are fed back to the involved stakeholders and an ongoing engagement is established to monitor progress.</p>

REPORT TO:	Safer Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	12 March 2013
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, Communities
PORTFOLIO:	Neighbourhood, Leisure and Sport
SUBJECT:	Draft Halton Housing Strategy 2013-2018
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present Halton's Housing Strategy 2013-18 as a draft for public consultation.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That PPB note and comment on the content of the draft Housing Strategy and evidence paper**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 **Background**

3.1.1 Under Part 7 of the Local Government Act 2003 local authorities are expected to produce a Housing Strategy which gives an overview of housing in their district and sets out priorities for action.

3.1.2 The 2003 Act states that:

"A local housing strategy is the local housing authority's vision for housing in its area. It sets out objectives and targets and policies on how the authority intends to manage and deliver its strategic housing role and provides an overarching framework against which the authority considers and formulates other policies on more specific housing issues."

3.1.3 That strategic housing role is defined, in the Department for Communities and Local Government's 2007 document Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable, as providing "vision, leadership, planning and delivery to:

- assess and plan for current and future housing needs of the local population,
- make the best use of existing housing stock,
- plan and facilitate new supply,

- plan and commission housing support services which link homes to support and other services that people need to live in them, and
- have working partnerships that secure effective housing and neighbourhood management."

3.1.4 The statutory guidance "Creating Strong and Prosperous Communities" published in July 2008 reaffirmed this expectation and placed greater emphasis on housing's contribution to the authority's vision for sustainable communities as set out in its Sustainable Communities Strategy.

3.1.5 The guidance states that local authority housing strategies must:

- fully reflect the wider vision of the authority and its partners;
- reflect a clear and evidenced approach and
- provide a strong focus on how partners will deliver their commitments.

3.1.6 There have been significant achievements since the last Housing Strategy was published in 2008 including:

- Successful delivery of phase 2 of the Castlefields regeneration programme, this has so far resulted in £30 million of new development replacing the last deck access dwellings remaining in the Northwest.
- A further £5 to £10 million of development is being sought for Castlefields in the proposed draft strategy.
- Halton Housing Trust delivered on its commitment to bring all former council housing stock up to the Decent Homes Standard 12 months ahead of the Government's 2010 target date.
- Since that time the Trust has developed a comprehensive neighbourhood investment programme which will see £262 million investment in the former Council stock between 2009 and 2015 and has built its first new affordable homes in the Borough.
- Development of an additional 256 new affordable homes bringing approximately £30 million of external investment into the Borough. This includes the development of an additional extra care scheme in Halton. The outcome of further pending investment bids to the HCA are due to be reported by February, 2013.
- Crisis intervention in the form of emergency support has helped prevent homelessness for over 600 families over the last three years.
- Clearance of all backlogs in adaptations in 200 socially rented homes.;
- Development and implementation of a new Homelessness

Strategy with increased emphasis on prevention which has drastically reduced levels of statutory homelessness to an all time low.

- In the last financial year, 187 appeals on benefit decisions were attended by the Council's welfare rights team with an 84% success rate. These have resulted from referrals through the improved tenancy sustainability service offered by the Housing Solutions team.
- Since January 2010, The Housing Solutions dedicated Mortgage Rescue Adviser has provided advice to 187 households and as a result 94 cases were prevented from repossession.
- Through the Castlefields Regeneration programme approximately 15 apprenticeships/ traineeships has been secured through construction of new build homes and external makeover of retained projects. As the Programme has been 'on the ground' for over 10 years several phases of apprentices have graduated into permanent employment. The creation of the Village Square has created further local job opportunities. Additional the involvement of HPIJ within the Programme has created/safeguarded a further 139 jobs.

3.2 Draft Halton Housing Strategy 2013 - 2018

3.2.1 The draft Strategy takes a slightly different approach from previous years in that two documents have been produced. The Strategy itself (Appendix A) is a short, easy to read document which focuses on the strategic objectives, priorities and planned activities for the next three years which are detailed in an action plan. This is supported by an evidence paper (Appendix B) which sets out the context in which the Strategy has been developed and brings together key data and information on housing issues and services which have helped to shape the strategic objectives and priorities.

3.2.2 It is important to note that the draft Strategy has been developed in a time of rapidly declining resources for public services generally and for housing, in particular, due to the discontinuation of the Regional Housing Pot which previously was the main funding stream for the housing capital programme. Consequently the strategy reflects a realistic assessment of what can be achieved within existing and likely future resources. However the strategy means we can provide an evidence base when potential funding streams become available in the future and we will continue to explore all sources of funding on an ongoing basis to ensure we deliver the Strategy.

3.3 Housing vision, objectives and priorities

3.3.1 The Strategy contains three overarching strategic objectives with priorities within each as set out in the paragraphs below. The objectives are designed to contribute to the vision for housing:

Housing vision

Halton offers a broad range of good quality housing which meets the needs of existing communities, helps attract new residents to the Borough and contributes to the creation of sustainable communities.

3.3.2 Strategic objective 1 – To plan for and facilitate housing growth and support economic growth

Priority 1A: To increase the supply of market and affordable housing through partnership working and support to developers and Registered Providers;

Priority 1B: To support the implementation of the Liverpool City Region Local Investment Plan.

3.3.3 Strategic objective 2 – To meet the housing and support needs of Halton's communities and promote choice

Priority 2A: To increase the supply of housing for vulnerable people;

Priority 2B: To review Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision;

Priority 2C: To prevent homelessness;

Priority 2D: To improve access to social housing and home ownership and promote choice;

Priority 2E: To target housing support to those who need it most

3.3.4 Strategic objective 3 – To improve housing conditions and make the best use of the housing stock

Priority 3A: To complete the regeneration of Castlefields estate;

Priority 3B: To explore the implications of private rented sector growth;

Priority 3C: To improve the energy efficiency of housing and tackle fuel poverty;

Priority 3D: To make the best possible use of the existing housing stock.

3.4 Next steps

3.4.1 The draft Strategy is the subject of a seven week consultation period with partners, stakeholders and residents between 4th February and 22nd March 2013. This has been achieved through distribution to various partnerships, including the appropriate Policy and Performance Board and stakeholder groups, other local authorities and a copy will be placed in Halton Direct Links, main Council libraries and on the Council's website.

3.4.2 The Strategy has also been publicised via the usual media outlets including the Civic magazine which is distributed to every household in the Borough. A questionnaire attached as Appendix C to this report has been developed to collate feedback from the consultation

process.

- 3.4.3 Barring the need for any major changes to the document as a result of the consultation, it is intended that the Strategy will be presented to Executive Board for consideration before May 2013.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Housing Strategy will set the context for future policy development relating to housing and will have a significant influence on related policies and strategies e.g. Homelessness Strategy and Tenancy Strategy

5.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The financial implications of delivering the Strategy are outlined in the Action Plan contained in the draft Strategy. In particular the delivery of affordable housing is dependent on future levels of resources from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). At the time of writing Government announcements regarding future funding levels for the HCA are awaited although it is not clear when such announcements will be made.

- 5.2 The draft Strategy is deliverable within staffing resources prevailing at the time of writing, however, any change in staffing levels as a result of the need to make efficiency savings could impact upon successful delivery of the Strategy.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

The Housing Strategy aims to increase the supply of affordable housing and improve housing conditions which will have a beneficial impact on families with children among other household groups.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None directly although programmes to increase the supply and energy efficiency of housing could result in additional jobs and skills for the Borough.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

A number of priorities contained within the Strategy e.g. around fuel poverty, provision of supported housing and improving conditions in the private sector will have positive health benefits for some of Halton's most vulnerable residents.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

A number of priorities contained in the Strategy e.g. prevention of homelessness and regeneration of Castlefields will contribute to the creation of safer and stronger communities.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

The draft Strategy aims to promote housing growth and support economic growth in the Borough which will have a positive impact on the built environment.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 As described in 5.2 above the draft Strategy is capable of delivery within existing staffing resources, however, a reduction in staffing levels of relevant staff as a result of the need to make efficiencies could impact upon delivery of the Strategy.

7.2 Delivery of some of the Strategy is dependent on the continued availability of resources from external funding streams e.g. from the Homes and Communities Agency. Future reductions in funding levels could impact upon the ability to deliver some of the targets contained in the Action Plan.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The Strategy specifically aims to meet the housing needs of vulnerable people due to age or disability and will therefore have positive impacts for these groups.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Housing Strategy 2013-18	Runcorn Town Hall (second floor)	Joanne Sutton
Housing Strategy evidence paper	Runcorn Town Hall (second floor)	Joanne Sutton



A Housing Strategy for Halton

2013 to 2018

Consultation Draft

February 2013

Contents

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Our vision, objectives and priorities	6 - 12
Action plan	13-18

Foreword

Halton's Draft Housing Strategy 2013-18 has been prepared following a time of rapid change for all forms of housing.

Halton's previous Housing Strategy (2008-2011) pre-dated the economic downturn and subsequent housing market decline. It achieved and exceeded many of the targets set for it, including:



- Successful delivery of phase 2 of the Castlefields regeneration programme, this has so far resulted in £30 million of new development replacing the last deck access dwellings remaining in the Northwest;
- Development of an additional 256 new affordable homes bringing approximately £30 million of external investment into the Borough. This includes the development of an additional extra care scheme in Halton. The outcome of further pending investment bids to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) are due to be reported by February, 2013;
- Since the Bond Guarantee System was introduced in 2009, 67% are ongoing, 15% ended without a claim and 18% ended with the bond being claimed;
- Crisis intervention support in the form of emergency support over the last three years has helped prevent homelessness for over 600 families;
- Clearance of all backlogs in adaptations in 200 socially rented homes;
- Development and implementation of a new Homelessness Strategy with increased emphasis on prevention which has drastically reduced levels of statutory homelessness to an all-time low;
- Since January 2010, the Housing Solutions dedicated Mortgage Rescue Adviser has provided advice to 187 households and as a result 94 cases were prevented from repossession;
- Halton Housing Trust delivered on its commitment to bring all former council housing stock up to the Decent Homes Standard 12 months ahead of the Government's 2010 target date. Since that time the Trust has developed a comprehensive neighbourhood investment programme which will see £262 million investment in the former Council stock between 2009 and 2015 and has built its first new affordable homes in the Borough.

The next strategy seeks to take account of the changed economic climate, reduced public investment and legislative challenges such as Welfare Reform, the Localism Bill and changes to planning law.

Some of the housing issues in Halton include:

- Securing investment to build new homes or improve existing ones.
- Rebalancing the housing market to meet people's needs and aspirations.
- An ageing population.

To address the issues we face, we will need to continue to prioritise and innovate. The new strategy has to encourage growth if we are to realise the vision for housing in Halton.

We would welcome your comments on the strategy outlined in this document and the supporting evidence paper.

Yours sincerely,

CLlr Phil Harris

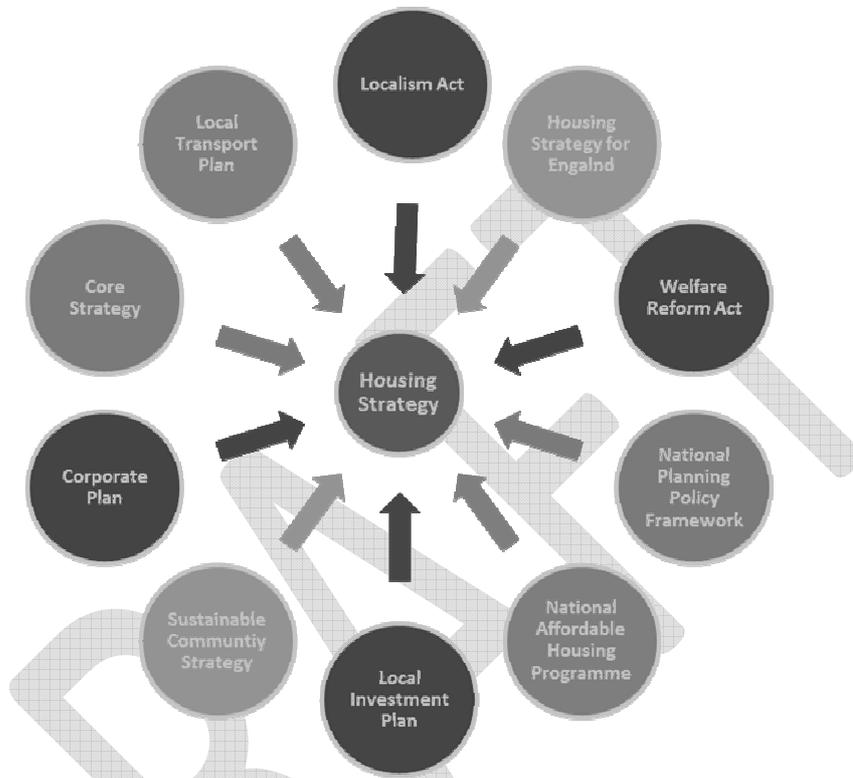
Executive Board Member for Housing Strategy.

Should you have any questions or comments relating to the document, please send these to Joanne Sutton, Principal Policy Officer, Halton Borough Council, Runcorn Town Hall, Heath Road, Cheshire, WA7 5TD. E-mail: joanne.sutton@halton.gov.uk. Please submit any comments by no later than noon on Friday 22nd March, 2013.

DRAFT

Context

Halton’s Housing Strategy has been developed in the context of a wide range of national, regional and local policies, strategies and plans as summarised in the diagram below. Further details of how these influence the Strategy can be found in the Housing Strategy evidence paper.

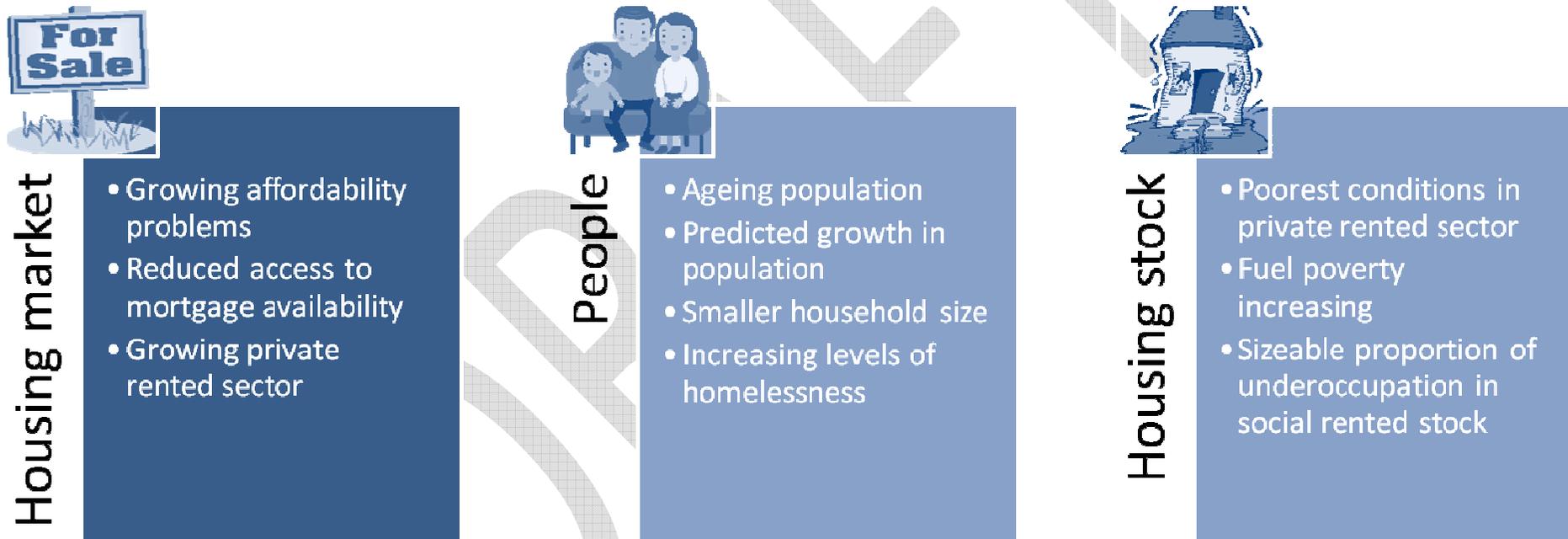


Housing services play a cross cutting role in meeting Halton’s priorities set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy, as demonstrated in the table below.

A Healthy Halton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Improving housing conditions and energy efficiency •Maintaining independence through adapting property
Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Introducing new technologies in energy efficiency projects •Apprenticeships and local labour in housing contracts
A Safer Halton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Removing category 1 hazards within the home •Tackling anti social behaviour on estates
Children & Young People in Halton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Reducing overcrowding •Preventing homelessness
Environment and Regeneration in Halton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Tackling obsolete housing •Provision of new affordable housing

Housing issues

The key housing issues which influence this Strategy are examined in detail in the Housing Strategy evidence paper. They can be summarised under three main themes as illustrated below. These themes have influenced the development of our three overarching strategic objectives and the priorities within each of these, as described in more detail in the next section.



Our vision, objectives and priorities

Our vision for housing in Halton

Halton offers a broad range of good quality housing which meets the needs of existing communities, helps attract new residents to the Borough and contributes to the creation of sustainable communities.

To help achieve the vision, we have adopted three strategic objectives each containing a set of priorities as detailed below. The Strategy goes on to explain why each of the priorities has been selected, what we hope to achieve and how we plan to achieve it.

Strategic objective 1:

To plan for and facilitate housing growth and support economic growth

- Priority 1A: To increase the supply of market and affordable housing through partnership working and support to developers and Registered Providers
- Priority 1B: To support the implementation of the Liverpool City Region Local Investment Plan

Strategic objective 2:

To meet the housing and support needs of Halton's communities and promote choice

- Priority 2A: To increase the supply of housing for vulnerable people
- Priority 2B: To review future Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision
- Priority 2C: To prevent homelessness
- Priority 2D: To improve access to social housing and home ownership and promote choice
- Priority 2E: To target housing support to those who need it most

Strategic objective 3:

To improve housing conditions and make the best use of the housing stock

- Priority 3A: To complete the regeneration of Castlefields estate
- Priority 3B: To explore the implications of private rented sector growth
- Priority 3C: To improve the energy efficiency of housing and tackle fuel poverty
- Priority 3D: To make the best possible use of the existing housing stock

Priority 1A: To increase the supply of market and affordable housing through partnership working and support to developers and Registered Providers

Why is this a priority?	What do we want to achieve?	How do we plan to achieve it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipated population and household growth • Need to encourage immigration to support economic development projects • Core Strategy target of an average of 552 additional homes per annum • Level of need identified in Strategic Housing Market Assessment and as set out in evidence paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average of 552 additional homes built per annum • A realistic target of 100 additional net affordable homes per annum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the Core Strategy • Identification of development sites through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment • Update Site Allocations Supplementary Planning Document • Implementation of Affordable Housing Policy • Partnership working and support in securing funding

Priority 1B: To support the implementation of the Liverpool City Region Local Investment Plan

Why is this a priority?	What do we want to achieve?	How do we plan to achieve it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to achieve economies of scale and consistency of approach • Effective targeting to areas most in need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet targets in Liverpool City Region Local Investment Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active participation in LCR structure and programmes

Priority 2A: To increase the supply of housing for vulnerable people		
Why is this a priority?	What do we want to achieve?	How do we plan to achieve it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 43% projected population growth in people aged 65 and over between 2008 and 2023 • Need for older people to maintain independence • Need for more adapted and adaptable housing • Shortage of suitable housing for other groups needing specialist provision e.g. Adults with Learning Difficulties, people with Physical and Sensory Disabilities • Need to rebalance temporary accommodation for young, single people so that there is provision on both sides of the Borough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise number of extra care units over the Strategy period (minimum of 100 by 2015) • Increase in the number of wheelchair accessible dwellings and homes built to Lifetime Homes Standard • Provide supported housing in Widnes for the single homeless in Widnes. • Provide additional accommodation for adults with learning difficulties and physical disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify suitable sites for older persons housing and provide support for funding bids • Implement aspiration in Design of New Residential SPD for new developments of 10 dwellings or more to provide 10% wheelchair standard dwellings • Encourage development of homes that meet Lifetime Homes standard in line with the Core Strategy • Commission supported housing for single homeless people in Widnes • Commission 10 bungalows for adults with physical and learning difficulties • Partnership working and support to developers in securing funding

Priority 2B: To review future Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision		
Why is this a priority?	What do we want to achieve?	How do we plan to achieve it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Planning Policy Framework places a duty on local authorities to identify sites for five years worth of Gypsy and Traveller provision Under the Housing Act 2004 local authorities are expected to periodically assess the need for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation in their area Last assessment was completed in 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to date assessment of need Identify sufficient site provision to meet assessed need for next five years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in Cheshire wide Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Incorporate Gypsy and Traveller provision in development of Site Allocations Development Plan Document

Priority 2C: To prevent homelessness		
Why is this a priority?	What do we want to achieve?	How do we plan to achieve it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to minimise impacts of Welfare Reform Act 2012 To avoid social impacts of homelessness To reduce the cost and impact of placing families in temporary accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To at least reduce levels of statutory homelessness to 2010/11 levels (78 presentations, 37 of which owed the full statutory duty) over the Strategy period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake strategic review of homelessness Update Homelessness Strategy Engage with stakeholders and partners via the Homelessness Forum to minimise the impact of Welfare Reform Act 2012

Priority 2D: To improve access to social housing and home ownership and promote choice

Why is this a priority?	What do we want to achieve?	How do we plan to achieve it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve transparency of the allocations system To improve neighbourhood sustainability Due to difficulties getting a foot on the housing ladder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A fair and transparent allocations system that promotes choice Increase the range and awareness of intermediate housing products to assist more first time buyers access the market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and develop sub regional Choice Based Lettings system Implement the Affordable Housing Policy which includes a proportion of intermediate housing Develop a Marketing Strategy to promote the various forms of home ownership available

Priority 2E: To target housing support to those who need it most

Why is this a priority?	What do we want to achieve?	How do we plan to achieve it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to ensure value for money in housing support services Scrutiny of supported accommodation suggests that some residents may not need support services offered Need to ensure fair access to accommodation based support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the quality and fitness for purpose of temporary accommodation for single, homeless people Supported housing is offered to those in greatest need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reconfigure existing provision of housing for single homeless people Improve accommodation for people fleeing Domestic Violence Introduce a Housing Support Gateway system and undertake effective monitoring of the system

Priority 3A: To complete the regeneration of the Castlefields estate		
Why is this a priority?	What do we want to achieve?	How do we plan to achieve it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to build on success of 10 year Masterplan • Continue the momentum of delivery of new mixed tenure homes • Some deck access flats remain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of at least 350 new (predominantly private) homes by 2023 • Provision of a further 150 new affordable homes by 2015/16 (included within targets above) • Physical enhancement and energy efficiency improvements to 500 retained two storey system built homes by 2016 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and implementation of action plan for next 10 years • Neighbourhood extension of Lakeside and Canalside • Continue to take strategic leadership role within the Castlefields Regeneration Partnership

Priority 3B: To explore the implications of private rented sector growth		
Why is this a priority?	What do we want to achieve?	How do we plan to achieve it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced mortgage availability • Reduced availability of social housing • Conditions in private rented sector generally worse • New power to discharge statutory homelessness duty through an offer of private rented accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the number of accredited landlords from 39 to 50 by end of Strategy period • Increase the number of accredited properties from 141 to 200 by end of Strategy period • Policy position on use of PRS to discharge statutory homelessness duty agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of Private Rented Sector project plan • Consider implementing new flexibilities to discharge statutory homelessness duty through private rented sector (including carrying out suitability assessment)

Priority 3C: To improve the energy efficiency of housing and tackle fuel poverty		
Why is this a priority?	What do we want to achieve?	How do we plan to achieve it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on health • Fuel poverty increasing • Positive impact on climate change • Need to maximise household incomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve SAP ratings in private sector stock • Minimise levels of fuel poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued development of Healthy Homes Network • Develop new Affordable Warmth Strategy • Promote Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation • Develop and implement HECA further report and progress reports

Priority 3D: To make the best possible use of the existing housing stock		
Why is this a priority?	What do we want to achieve?	How do we plan to achieve it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of welfare reform • Impact of empty homes • Potential to maximise New Homes Bonus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise the opportunities for underoccupying social tenants to find accommodation best suited to their needs • Bring 25 long term empty homes back into use over the Strategy period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support RPs in their implementation of the National Homeswap schemes • Review the Halton Tenancy Strategy • Work with RPs to identify empty properties suitable for lease/acquisition using HCA empty homes funding • Undertake survey of owners of empty homes to establish what support can be provided • Develop a more proactive approach to bringing empty

		homes back into use
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Housing Strategy for Halton 2013 to 2018: Action Plan

Objective 1: To plan for and facilitate housing growth and support economic growth

Priority	Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes
To increase the supply of market and affordable housing through partnership working and support to developers and Registered Providers	Implement Core Strategy	From 2013	HBC Planning Department	Staff time	Average of 552 additional homes built per annum
	Update Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment annually	Annual assessment	HBC Planning Department	Staff time	
	Update Site Allocations Supplementary Planning Document	2014/15	HBC Planning Department	Staff time	
	Implement Affordable Housing Policy	2013 onwards	HBC Planning and Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	Staff time	Average of 100 additional affordable homes built per annum
	Support Registered Providers in securing funding for the delivery of the Affordable Housing Programme	As and when support required	Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	Staff time HCA resources	25% of new developed built as affordable housing subject to site viability assessments
To support the implementation of the Liverpool City Region Local Investment Plan	Participate in and support sub regional projects originating from LCR Housing and Spatial Planning Group	As and when required	Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	Staff time	Meet targets in Liverpool City Region Local Investment Plan

Objective 2: To meet the housing and support needs of Halton's communities and promote choice

Priority	Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes
To increase the supply of housing for vulnerable people	Increase the supply of housing for older people through identification of sites, supporting Registered Provider funding bids and procure support and care services	Throughout period of the Strategy	Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	HCA funding (capital) Revenue implications for housing support and care services (amount dependent on bids)	100 units of additional older persons housing over the Strategy period
	Implement aspiration in Design for New Residential SPD for new developments of 10 dwellings or more to provide 10% wheelchair standard dwellings	As and when planning applications received	HBC Planning	Staff time	Aspirational target of 30 wheelchair accessible dwellings built per year (subject to site viability)
	Encourage development of homes that meet Lifetime Homes standard in line with Halton's Core Strategy	As and when planning applications received	HBC Planning	Staff time	Aspirational target of 25% increase in the number of homes built to Lifetime Homes standard (subject to site viability)
	Commission supported housing scheme for single homeless in Widnes	2013/14	Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	Staff time Revenue implications for housing support service	Development completed by 2014
	Commission 10 bungalows for rent for adults with physical disabilities and learning difficulties	2013/14	Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	Staff time Council or HCA grant	Development completed by 2014

Priority	Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes
To review future Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision	Participate in Cheshire wide Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment	2013/14	Divisional Manager (Planning and Development Services)	Staff time Approx £8,000 contribution to be identified	Identify sufficient site provision to meet assessed need for next five years
	Incorporate Gypsy and Traveller provision in Site Allocations Development Plan	2013/14	Divisional Manager (Planning and Development Services)	Staff time	
	Deliver an additional 12 permanent pitches adjacent to existing transit site	2013/14	Divisional Manager (Planning and Development Services)	Staff time HCA funding (£800k)	New 12 pitch site completed
To prevent homelessness	Undertake strategic review of homelessness	2013/14	Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	Staff time	To maintain the number of statutory homeless acceptances to no more than a 10% increase per year of 2011/12 levels (64 acceptances)
	Update Homelessness Strategy	2013/14	Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	Staff time	
	Engage with stakeholders and partners via the Homelessness Forum to minimise the impact of the Welfare Reform Act 2012	2013/14	Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	Staff time	
To improve access to social housing and home ownership and promote choice	Monitor and develop sub regional Choice Based Lettings scheme	Throughout period of Strategy	Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	Staff time Running costs (£125k pa)	Provision of a cost effective, fair and transparent allocations system that promotes choice Percentage of bids within each banding Number of private homes let through system
	Implement the Affordable Housing Policy which includes a proportion of intermediate housing	2013	HBC Planning Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	Staff time	50% of units delivered through affordable housing policy to be intermediate housing (subject to demand and viability)
	Develop a Marketing Strategy to promote the various types of low	2013	Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	Staff time	Develop a Marketing Strategy to promote the various types of low

Priority	Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes
	cost home ownership products and support Government initiatives such as New Buy				cost home ownership products and support Government initiatives such as New Buy
To target housing support to those who need it most	Reconfigure existing provision of housing for single homeless people	2013/14	Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	Staff time	Improve the quality and fitness for purpose of temporary accommodation for single, homeless people.
	Review existing provision of supported accommodation for households fleeing domestic violence	2013/14	Operational Director (Prevention and Assessment)	Staff time Possible capital and/or revenue funding	Dependent on outcome of review
	Introduce Housing Gateway Support system and undertake effective monitoring of the new system	2013/14	Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	Staff time Staff costs Annual IT costs	Supported housing services are provided to those in greatest need

Objective 3: To improve housing conditions and make the best use of the housing stock

Priority	Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes
To complete the regeneration of the Castlefields estate	Implement 10 year action plan	Throughout period of Strategy	HBC Major Projects	Staff time	Delivery of at least 350 new (predominantly private) homes by 2023 Provision of a further 150 new affordable homes by 2015/16 Physical enhancement and energy efficiency improvements to 500 retained two storey system built homes by 2016
	Neighbourhood extension of Lakeside and Canalside	2015/16	HBC Major Projects	Staff time Other (?)	
	Continue to take strategic leadership role within the Castlefields Regeneration Partnership	Ongoing	HBC Major Projects	Staff time	
To explore the implications of private rented sector growth	Implement Private Rented Sector project plan	2013/14	HBC Environmental Protection	Staff time Promotional budget (£5k from Homelessness Prevention fund)	Increase in the number of accredited landlords from 39 to 50 by end of Strategy period Increase the number of accredited properties from 141 to 200 by end of Strategy period Policy position on use of PRS to discharge statutory homelessness duty agreed
	Consider implementing new flexibilities to discharge statutory homelessness duty through private rented sector	2013	Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	Staff time	
To improve the energy efficiency of housing and tackle fuel poverty	Continued development of Halton Healthy Homes Network	Ongoing	HBC Environmental Protection	Staff time	Improved SAP ratings in private sector stock from 56 to 60 by time of next Private Sector Stock Condition survey
	Develop new Affordable Warmth Strategy	Ongoing	HBC Environmental Protection	Staff time	
	Promote Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation	October 2013 – ongoing thereafter	HBC Environmental Protection	Staff time	
	Develop and implement HECA further report and progress	March 2013 – progress reports every two years	HBC Environmental Protection	Staff time	

Priority	Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources	Success measures and outcomes
	reports	thereafter			
To make the best possible use of the existing housing stock	Support Registered Providers in their implementation of the National Homeswap schemes through promotion on HBC website and CBL systems	2012/13 and ongoing	Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	Staff time	Maximise opportunities for underoccupying social tenants to find accommodation more suited to their needs
	Review the Halton Tenancy Strategy	September 2013	Divisional Manager (Commissioning)	Staff time	
	Work with RPs to identify empty properties suitable for lease/acquisition using HCA empty homes funding	2012/13/14	HBC Environmental Protection	Staff time	Bring 25 long term empty properties back into use through direct intervention over the Strategy period
	Undertake survey of empty homes to establish what support can be provided by the Council	2013/14	HBC Environmental Protection	Staff time Postage costs (contribution from Homelessness Prevention Fund)	
	Develop a more pro-active approach to bringing empty homes back into use	2013/14	HBC Environmental Protection	Staff time Budget to carry out works in default (?)	



**A Housing Strategy for Halton
2013 - 18**

Evidence Paper

**Consultation draft
February 2013**

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Glossary

Affordable Housing	Housing at a price below private market prices, which includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing.
Affordable Rented	Housing let by Registered Providers of social housing at a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent.
Assured Tenancy	Introduced by the Housing Act 1988, assured tenancies are a form of residential tenancy that give a degree of security so that the tenant cannot be evicted without a reason. At the time of writing, they are the main form of tenancy used by Registered Providers of social housing.
Assured Tenancy	Shorthold Assured Shorthold Tenancies are the most common form of tenancy offered by private landlords. The tenancy is granted for a fixed period of time (usually 6 months) following which the tenancy usually converts to a Periodic tenancy which is automatically renewed every 2 months. The landlord can terminate the tenancy at any point by issuing a section 21 notice, which effectively gives the tenant two months notice to leave, however a court will not enforce the notice unless at least six months have elapsed from when the initial tenancy was granted.
The Bedroom Standard	The Bedroom Standard is the most commonly used measure of overcrowding and underoccupation. A standard number of bedrooms is allocated to each household in accordance with its age/sex/marital status composition and the relationship of the members to one another. A separate bedroom is allocated to each married or cohabiting couple, any other person aged 21 or over, each pair of adolescents aged 10 - 20 of the same sex, and each pair of children under 10. Any unpaired person aged 10 - 20 is paired, if possible with a child under 10 of the same sex, or, if that is not possible, he or she is given a separate bedroom, as is any unpaired child under 10.
Choice Based Lettings	Choice Based Lettings is a method of allocating social housing which involves available properties being advertised locally and interested applicants expressing an interest or “bidding” on advertised properties. The property is then offered to the bidder with the highest level of assessed need.
CORE	The Continuous Recording of Lettings and Sales in Social Housing in England (known as CORE) is a national data collection system which records a wide range of information on social housing lettings and sales and the households they are let or sold to. The system provides valuable information for the development of national and local housing policies.
Concealed household	The Halton Strategic Housing Market Assessment defines concealed households as those that need or are likely to form within the next two years. Typically they are currently housed with family or friends and are an important element in considering future need for affordable housing.
Decent Homes Standard	The previous Government set a target that all social housing must meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2010. To meet the standard homes must meet the statutory minimum standard for housing (i.e. free from category 1 hazards under the HHSRS – see below), must be warm and weatherproof and have reasonable modern facilities.

Extra care housing	Extra care housing is a form of specialised housing scheme, usually for older people, which provides a range of care and support services on site. It differs from sheltered housing in that it provides a higher level of on site support and includes care services.
Homebuy	Homebuy is the term used by the Government to describe the various different types of shared ownership and shared equity products available to help people buy their own home.
Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)	The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is the national housing and regeneration agency for England. It provides investment for new and improved affordable homes and regeneration projects. It is also the main regulatory body for Registered Providers of social housing.
Household reference person	The Strategic Housing Market Assessment uses the term Household Reference Person to describe the person completing the SHMA survey form on behalf of the household.
Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)	The Housing, Health and Safety Rating System replaced the fitness standard as the Principal means of assessing housing conditions in 2004. It uses a risk based scoring approach to assess hazards within the home. The presence of “category 1” hazards indicates that the home is below the statutory minimum standard.
Housing Market Area	A geographical area which is relatively self contained in terms of reflecting peoples choice of location for a new home.
Indices of Multiple Deprivation	The English Indices of Deprivation measures relative levels of deprivation in small areas of England called Lower Layer Super Output Areas. It combines a number of indicators, chosen to cover a range of economic, social and housing issues, into a single deprivation score for each small area in England. This allows each area to be ranked relative to one another according to their level of deprivation. The data is produced at Lower Super Output Area level, of which there are 32,482 in the country.
Intermediate housing	Intermediate housing is housing provided at prices and rents above those of social rent but below market rents and prices. Examples include shared ownership, affordable rents and shared equity products.
Landlord Accreditation	Landlord Accreditation schemes are voluntary schemes, often run by local authorities, which encourage good standards in the private rented sector by allowing owners to apply for accredited status to demonstrate that they are a responsible landlord.
Local Development Framework (LDF)	The Local Development Framework (LDF) is the collective name for the local authority’s Core Strategy and related planning policies. The National Planning Policy Framework published in 2012 replaces Local Development Frameworks with local plans.
Local Housing Allowance (LHA)	The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) arrangements are a way of working out Housing Benefit for people who rent from a private landlord. LHA rates are based on the size of household and the area in which a person lives to work out the amount of rent which can be met with HB. HB paid under the LHA arrangements is normally paid to the tenant, who will then pay the landlord.
Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)	A Partnership that brings together representatives from local statutory, voluntary, community and private sectors to address local problems, allocate funding and discuss local strategies and initiatives. In Halton the LSP is often referred to as the Halton Strategic

Partnership.

New Town Estates	Runcorn’s New Town estates sprang up in the late 1960s following the designation of Runcorn as a New Town area in 1964. They were developed as overspill estates to tackle a housing shortage in Liverpool. Initially managed by the Runcorn Development Corporation, the housing was transferred to a variety of housing associations in 1974 , following the disbanding of the Corporation.
Older People	In general for the purposes of this document the term “older people” refers to any person aged 65 or over unless otherwise stated. However some housing schemes for older people will accept people over the age of 55.
Private Sector Stock Condition Survey	Local authorities have a statutory duty to keep housing conditions in the area under review. Stock Condition Surveys are the principle means of assessing those conditions. They provide vital evidence to support the development of housing strategies and housing assistance policies. Government guidance recommends that local authorities undertake stock condition surveys every 3 to 5 years.
Regional Spatial Strategy	Regional Spatial Strategies were introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as a means of providing a spatial vision and strategy specific to each region in the country. They set housebuilding targets for each local authority area which were expected to be reflected in local planning policies. Regional Spatial Strategies were abolished by the Coalition Government in July 2010 so that top down targets for house building no longer exist.
Registered Provider	Registered Provider is the new term for providers of social or affordable housing who are registered with the Homes and Communities Agency. They were previously referred to as Registered Social Landlords. They are almost always non profit making Housing Associations or Trusts, although in recent years some private developers have started to build and manage affordable housing and so have also registered with the HCA.
Shared Ownership	Shared Ownership schemes are used to help people to get a foot on the housing ladder by allowing them to buy a proportion of a home with a mortgage while the other proportion is rented, usually from a Registered Provider.
Sheltered housing	Sheltered housing refers to specialist housing schemes, usually for older people, that either have a warden living on site or have access to 24 hour emergency assistance through an alarm system.
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA) are a key component of the evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing to meet the community’s need for more homes. The aim of a SHLAA is to identify enough developable land in the area on which to deliver new housing for at least the next five years.
Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA)	Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA) is a study of the operation of a Housing Market Area (HMA) and of housing need within the area. Since HMAs cover more than one local authority area SHMAs are usually carried out in conjunction with other local authority areas. Government recommends that all local authorities undertake SHMAs on a periodic basis to inform development of their planning and housing policies and has produced guidance for their use.

Supported accommodation/housing Supported accommodation is a catch all phrase that refers to any type of accommodation that offers on site support to enable occupants to live independently. Examples include young persons hostels, extra care housing and sheltered housing.

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) The Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) is prepared by local strategic partnerships (LSPs) as a set of goals and actions which they, in representing the residential, business, statutory and voluntary interests of an area, wish to promote. The SCS should inform the Local Development Framework (LDF) and act as an umbrella for all other strategies devised for the area.

Vulnerable people There is no one definition of vulnerable people which covers all contexts. For safeguarding purposes a vulnerable adult is described as a person:

“ Who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.”

However a broader definition is sometimes used by Government for the purposes of allocating resources which can include anyone aged 65 or over, disabled people, claiming benefits and/or families with children under 5.

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Foreword

This document sets out a comprehensive overview of housing in Halton in 2012/13. It is intended to provide the evidence base to Halton's Housing Strategy 2013 to 2018 which describes the Council's housing priorities for the coming five years. The findings from the evidence paper have been used as a basis on which to consult with stakeholders and the wider public with a view to developing these future priorities.

The evidence paper sets housing in its policy context and takes account of the wide range of housing reforms introduced by the Coalition Government since 2010 including the Government's Housing Strategy for England; the Localism Act 2011 and Welfare Reform Act 2012.

It uses a range of information sources to build a comprehensive picture of housing including Halton's Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Private Sector Stock Condition Survey and local statistical returns as well as national datasets such as the Indices of Multiple Deprivation and the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.

I have pleasure in commending the document to you.

Councillor Phil Harris

Executive Board Member for Housing Strategy



Further information on this paper and the separate Housing Strategy 2013-18 can be obtained by contacting Joanne Sutton, Halton Borough Council on 0151 511 8750 or emailing: joanne.sutton@halton.gov.uk. This evidence paper is available in different formats upon request.

Part One – Resources

Introduction

In common with many public service areas, Housing budgets have seen substantial reductions over the last 12 to 18 months as a result of the Government policy of deficit reduction. This will, inevitably, impact on our ability to deliver the same level of service that residents have come to expect. The current position with regard to financing the Housing service is set out in this part of the document.

Funding for Council Housing services

Regional Housing Pot

Until April 2011 the Regional Housing Pot was the main source of funding for the Housing Capital Programme, for the most part, funding assistance for housing renewal (grants and loans) and energy efficiency. The Regional Housing Pot funding stream came to an end in April 2011 along with the disestablishment of regional governing bodies. Consequently, the Council's ability to deliver a housing capital programme which adequately meets the needs identified in this evidence paper has been severely compromised. This will be reflected in the Council's Housing Strategy Delivery Plan which will set out our priorities and ambitions for housing in the context of a realistic level of future resources.

New Homes Bonus (NHB)

The New Homes Bonus replaced the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant in April 2011. The intention of NHB is to act as an incentive for local authorities to deliver housing growth by match funding six years worth of Council Tax for each new home built. An additional £350 is paid annually for each affordable home that is built and the grant applies to empty properties that have been brought back into use.

For 2012/13, the authority was awarded £856,871 in New Homes Bonus. While this funding is of course welcome, it is top sliced from the Local Authority Grant Settlement so in effect is not really new money. The funding is not ring fenced for housing use.

Supported housing funding

There have been changes to the way that supported housing is funded. In 2011 the ring fence was removed for Supporting People services nationally and the funding was subsumed into Council's Area Based Grant allocation. In Halton, this has resulted in a 7.6% decrease in the funding available for supported housing services on 2010/11 levels. The allocation for 2012/13 is shown in the figure 1.1 below.

Housing funding 2012/13

Delivery of the housing service in 2012/13 will be supported through a variety of different funding pots as illustrated in figure 1.1 below which shows monetary allocations for housing where these are known. The nature of the funding sources available illustrates an emphasis on services designed to

support vulnerable people while there is little funding available for other elements of the strategic housing service e.g. improving housing conditions, bringing empty homes back into use and commissioning research for future strategic development.

Figure 1.1 – Funding sources for strategic housing delivery 2012/13



The table below shows the allocation of capital resources for housing related activity for 2012/13.

	2012/13 Capital Programme
Disabled Facilities Grants (incl. capitalised salaries)	735,000
Energy Promotion	6,000
Stair lifts	250,000
Registered Providers Adaptations (Joint Funding)	550,000
Choice Based Lettings	28,946
Extra Care Naughton Fields	463,186
Bungalows at Halton Lodge	464,000
Sensory Hub	15,000
TOTAL	2,512,132

The Council will also seek to maximise resources from ad hoc grant opportunities as and when they arise. For example, the Department of Health’s Warm Homes, Healthy People funding stream provided funding for emergency heating and advice schemes to support vulnerable people to keep their homes warm during the winter months of 2012/13.

Other Housing funding

National Affordable Housing Programme

Registered Providers have agreed four year programmes with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to deliver 320 affordable homes in Halton over the next four years. Unfortunately, the way the new funding model is structured means that it is not possible to provide a monetary value at local authority level.

Get Britain Building

The Get Britain Building scheme was announced in the Government's Housing Strategy as a £400 million investment fund designed to kickstart pipeline developments which have stalled but are otherwise ready to start or progress. The fund which provides commercial loans is mostly aimed at small and medium sized builders whose developments have come to a halt due to the uncertain market conditions. A prospectus providing further details was published in December 2011. Two schemes in Halton were originally shortlisted but now look unlikely to proceed.

Homelessness Grant

Halton provides support for homeless people through an annual grant from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), which for 2011/12 was £50,000. Specific funding of £65,000 has also been allocated in the form of a one off grant for the Mortgage Rescue Scheme to provide support for households in danger of losing their home due to mortgage arrears. In addition, the Cheshire wide Partnership Group has been successful in securing £30,000 from DCLG to assist with the development of prevention initiatives. Halton is also involved with the Merseyside sub regional group which was awarded £470,000 by CLG to develop prevention initiatives such as the No Second Night Out scheme.

Future resources

It is anticipated that future investment will be limited to funding Disabled Facilities Grants and support for other vulnerable groups and that the local authority role in housing may increasingly be more about facilitating and co-ordinating rather than direct investment of resources.

Consultation question 1: Does this section of the Strategy give a realistic view of the likely level of future resources? Has anything been excluded that should be included?

Part Two - Context

National Policy

Laying the Foundations: The Housing Strategy for England

The Housing Strategy for England was launched on 21st November 2011. It sets out, in one overarching document, the Government's plans to address problems in the country's housing market through increasing the supply of homes, reforming social housing, supporting growth in the private rented sector, encouraging local authorities to bring empty homes back into use and improving choice and housing support. Much of the Strategy restated policies that had already been announced, however, there were some new initiatives designed to breathe life into the country's stagnant housing market. Among the most significant announcements were:

- A new £400 million "Get Britain Building" fund for small and medium sized developers whose developments have come to a halt due to uncertain market conditions;
- Introduction of a mortgage indemnity scheme to provide 95% mortgages on new build homes for first time buyers struggling to secure mortgage finance through conventional means;
- A competitive bidding process to encourage large scale, locally planned and community driven development;
- Plans to release enough public sector land to build 100,000 new houses through a "buy now, pay later" deal with developers;
- Consultation on reducing the length of time that must elapse before developers can seek to renegotiate section 106 agreements with local planning authorities;
- £100 million match funding to help bring empty homes back into use, with a further £50 million for those areas worst affected by empty properties;
- Consultation on increasing Right to Buy discounts with plans for every home sold to be replaced by a new home;
- Proposals to reform stamp duty to support large scale investment in the buy to let market;
- An allocation of £400 million for homelessness prevention and the launch of a ministerial working group to address the causes of homelessness;
- A new deal for older peoples housing and encouraging local authorities to make provision for a wide range of housing types including specialised housing for older people.

Localism Act 2011

The Localism Act received Royal Assent on 16th November 2011. The Act sets out plans to give communities and local authorities greater powers and freedoms and introduces new Community Rights such as the Community Right to Challenge the delivery of local authority run services; the Community Right to Bid for assets of community value and the Community Right to Build small developments in their area without the need for planning permission. The Act also introduces a General Power of Competence for local authorities to do anything not specifically forbidden by law and paves the way for neighbourhood planning and directly elected mayors.

The Act also contains a number of Housing reforms which will impact directly on the Council's local authority strategic housing role, including:

- Giving local authorities greater freedom to decide who is eligible to apply for social housing. More recently, the Government has issued new guidance for allocation schemes which, amongst other provisions, gives greater priority for housing to ex servicemen and women. The Property Pool Plus allocations policy is in the process of being reviewed in light of the new guidance.
- Introduction of new fixed term tenancies for social housing tenants and requirement for the local authority to produce a Tenancy Strategy to guide Registered Providers in their use. This is considered in more detail later in this evidence paper.
- The power for local authorities to discharge their statutory homelessness duty through an offer of accommodation in the private rented sector without the applicant's consent.

The Act also changes the regulatory framework for Registered Providers by abolishing the Tenant Services Authority and placing greater emphasis on tenant involvement in regulation with remaining regulatory functions transferring to the Homes and Communities Agency.

Welfare Reform Act 2012

The Welfare Reform Act received Royal Assent on 8th March 2012. The Act has been described as the biggest shake up of the benefits system in 60 years. It aims to simplify the system and create the right incentives to get people into work by ensuring that no individual is better off by not working. Key features of the Act that will have the most significant impact on Halton's residents are:

- Introduction of Universal Credit. The level of Universal Credit is to be capped at £26,000. While it is estimated that only a small number of Halton residents will see their income reduce as a result of the cap, some will be very significantly affected (up to £500 per week). In addition, Housing Benefit is to be included in Universal Credit and will consequently be paid directly to tenants of social housing. There are fears that this will lead to an increase in rent arrears which, in turn, could lead to a rise in homelessness and could impact upon the ability of Registered Providers to secure private investment at competitive rates to maximise their capacity to deliver additional affordable housing.
- Replacement of Disability Living Allowance with a Personal Independent Payment (PIP) for those of working age. Halton, which has been selected as a pilot area for the scheme, has a disproportionate amount of disabled residents and the change to PIP will involve a reduction in the numbers of those receiving financial assistance.
- Changes to Housing Benefit including the introduction of an under occupancy penalty for households whose homes are deemed to be too large for their needs. Described as the "Bedroom Tax", this change will have a very significant impact in Halton, where it is estimated that as many as 3,000 social housing tenants could lose benefits. The situation is compounded by a shortage of smaller properties in the Borough to facilitate downsizing. Changes to Local Housing Allowance (LHA), most significantly the extension of the age threshold for the shared accommodation rate from 25 to 35. This will affect around 234 claimants in Halton, whose benefit entitlement will reduce from £91.15 to £53.54 per week. Private tenants will also be affected by plans to uprate LHA by the Consumer Price Index rather than the Retail Price Index currently used.

It is too early to assess the impact of other reforms such as the ongoing reassessment of Incapacity Benefit claimants against the stricter criteria of the Employment Support Allowance, changes to Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans and forthcoming reforms to Council Tax benefit which will include a 10% cut in scheme funding and “localised” benefit schemes.

National Planning Policy Framework

The new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012. It sets out, in a more condensed version of previous guidance, the Government’s planning policies and how it expects these to be applied and aims to simplify the country’s planning system to achieve sustainable development.

The NPPF replaces the need for Local Development Frameworks with Local Plans which local authorities must develop to meet objectively assessed needs and which must have sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change. For housing development, it reaffirms the requirement to assess need through a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (preferably developed in conjunction with other authorities in the Housing Market Area) and to identify opportunities to meet that need through the development of a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

The framework has a clear emphasis on growth and on accelerating the planning process. A key challenge for the development and delivery of Local Plans will be how to balance the need for rapid housing and economic growth with the need to protect Green Belt and to promote the highest possible standards of sustainable development.

Affordable Rents

Affordable rent is the new rent model which the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) expect that Registered Providers will adopt for new build housing and for an agreed proportion of existing stock as it becomes vacant. Affordable rents are set at up to 80% of market rents in the area. The additional income raised through affordable rents is to be invested in new housing development and it is anticipated will help fund the shortfall as a result of significant cuts to the HCA National Affordable Housing Programme. While this could lead to an increase in rent levels for some tenants and could result in a two tier system whereby tenants in similar properties are paying different rents, it is likely that the impact in Halton will not be as great as in higher value areas due to relatively low private rents in the Borough.

Sub Regional context

Liverpool City Region Housing and Spatial Planning Forum

Halton Borough Council is represented on the Liverpool City Region Housing and Spatial Planning Forum, which acts as an advisory group to the Liverpool City Region Cabinet on housing and planning issues. The Forum provides the mechanism for the co-ordination of activity between the participating local authority areas and is a key delivery agent in developing and implementing the priorities contained within the Local Investment Plan described below.

Examples of sub regional projects overseen by the Forum include:

- Development and implementation of the sub regional Choice Based Letting Scheme Property Pool Plus (described in more detail later in this evidence paper);
- A co-ordinated approach to delivery of the successful bids to HCA to bring empty homes back into use, including development of a standardised lease agreement and inspection report;
- Co-ordination of affordable housing delivery and stalled/pipeline sites with a view to maximising funding opportunities to kickstart development.

The Group provides an opportunity to pool knowledge, experience, skills and resources from participating local authority areas with a view to maximising housing investment, choice and provision for the city region area and support the economic potential of the sub region.

Liverpool City Region Local Investment Plan 2

The Liverpool City Region Local Investment Plan (LIP) 2011-15 builds on the success of the interim plan for 2010/11 which has helped to secure over £80m of housing and regeneration investment in the City Region. The LIP has three primary roles:

- As a prospectus for housing and regeneration investment in the Liverpool City Region;
- To clarify the City Region's priorities to support economic growth whilst maintaining the momentum of regeneration;
- Inform HCA's business plan by setting clear priorities for future investment in the City Region.

The Plan identifies the challenges facing the City Region and the priorities for action, including:

- Raising the quality of and diversification of the housing offer as a means to harness economic potential;
- Bringing long term empty properties back into use as a means of increasing the supply of affordable housing;
- Addressing housing market failure in the core conurbations of Liverpool, Wirral and Sefton and also prioritise investment in the areas with greatest economic potential and market strength;
- Working with Registered Providers to ensure an appropriate mix of development based on evidence from Strategic Housing Market Assessments;
- Making best use of the existing stock, including developing measures to address under occupation;
- Developing opportunities for institutional investment in the private rented sector;
- Meeting the needs of an ageing population and supporting vulnerable people;
- Maximising the development opportunities presented by public landholdings in the City Region.

Local Context

Halton's Sustainable Community Strategy 2011-2026

Halton's Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the vision for the Halton that the Council and its partners, under the umbrella of the Halton Strategic Partnership, would like to see emerge by 2026. The Strategy's five priority themes are:

- A Healthy Halton
- Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton
- A Safer Halton
- Halton's Children and Young People
- Halton's Environment and Regeneration

Housing has a significant contribution to make to each of the five priority themes as illustrated in figure 2.1

Figure 2.1 – Housing's contribution to Halton's priorities



Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan presents the Council's response to how it will help implement the Community Strategy. This is achieved through a framework consisting of a hierarchy of Directorate, Divisional and Team Service Plans known as "the Golden Thread" that are directly aligned to ensure that the strategic priorities are cascaded down through the organisation through outcome focused targets.

The five strategic priorities are also mirrored in the make up of the Council's Policy and Performance Boards which, together with the Executive Board, provide political leadership of the Council.

Progress in achieving the objectives contained in the Service Plans is reviewed regularly as part of the Council's performance management culture, and further scrutiny is exercised by Members through the Policy and Performance Boards.

Halton's Core Strategy

Halton's Core Strategy was adopted in November 2012 having been through Examination in Public and having been subject to examination by the Planning Inspectorate. The Strategy sets a minimum housing requirement of 9,930 net additional homes between 2010 and 2028, equating to 552 dwellings per annum. It is anticipated that almost 60% of the dwellings over the Strategy period are to be built in Runcorn. An average of at least 40% of new residential development should be developed on previously developed (brownfield) land over the period.

New homes will be delivered from a variety of sources including from sites currently available for housing development where work is either underway, planning permission has been granted or the site has been allocated for residential development and from sites which have the potential to contribute to housing land supply e.g. identified housing opportunities within Key Areas of Change (i.e. 3MG site at Ditton, South Widnes, East Runcorn and West Runcorn), new housing or mixed use allocations in subsequent Development Plans and appropriate windfall development. In accordance with Government guidance the Council will seek to maintain a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land. The Strategy identifies opportunities to develop 1,400 homes in Daresbury and 1,400 homes in Sandymoor in Runcorn East and 1,500 homes in Runcorn West, mainly on the Runcorn Waterfront site.

The Core Strategy contains an affordable housing requirement of 25% of the total residential units proposed on schemes comprising 10 or more dwellings (net gain) or 0.33 hectares or greater for residential purposes. The Council will seek to secure an equal split between social/affordable rent tenures and intermediate housing tenures across the Borough. Provision of affordable housing must meet the identified housing needs as set out in the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment and is to be provided in perpetuity. The affordable housing contribution may only be reduced where robust and credible evidence is provided to demonstrate that the affordable housing target would make the scheme unviable.

An Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document has been adopted to support the policy which provides additional guidance for all parties involved in the delivery of affordable housing through the planning system.

Tenancy Strategy

In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, Halton has developed a Tenancy Strategy which sets out what types of tenancies the Council recommends that Registered Providers should offer locally, the length of those tenancies and the circumstances in which they should be offered and renewed. The Strategy, which was formally adopted by the Council in September 2012, recommends that Providers continue to offer Lifetime tenancies but recognises that Providers may wish to make use of the new fixed term tenancies introduced by the Localism Act to make the best use of their housing stock. Where this is the case, the Strategy advises that fixed term tenancies should be for a minimum of five years and are not suitable for:

- Existing social housing tenants who became assured tenants prior to 1st April 2012 and who are transferring to another property;
- Where the property is part of a supported housing development that provides specialist accommodation for particular client groups, including sheltered housing.
- Where the tenant is someone over the prevailing state retirement age.
- Where the property is located in an area of very low demand and/or high multiple deprivation where the local authority has serious concerns about the long term sustainability of the area. In these circumstances, the local authority will initiate discussions with the relevant Provider(s) to request that they temporarily suspend the use of fixed term tenancies in that area.
- Where a tenant with a secure or assured tenancy is required by a Provider to move due to redevelopment e.g. they are being required to move, not seeking to do so.

The Strategy also recommends that in most cases fixed term tenancies are renewed upon review, particularly where the household contains children or has been offered in response to particular set of vulnerabilities and the household is still assessed as being vulnerable or the property has been adapted to meet the needs of a disabled person and that person still resides in the property and needs the adaptations. The circumstances in which it is recognised that Providers may not wish to renew the tenancy are where:

- There has been a substantial improvement in the household's financial circumstances to the extent that continued occupation of the property by the household would present a conflict with the charitable objectives or primary purpose of Providers to provide housing for those in necessitous circumstances.
- There has been a change in the composition of the household which has resulted in the household under occupying the accommodation.
- An adapted property is no longer suitable for the tenant's needs e.g. where adaptations have been provided for a disabled person who is no longer resident in the property, the adaptations are no longer required, and there are other families needing this type of adapted accommodation.

In the latter two circumstances the Strategy advises that Providers should seek to offer suitable alternative accommodation in their own or another Provider's stock. The Council does not expect fixed term tenancies to be used as a means of enforcing tenancy conditions but recognises that there may be cases where enforcement action is so far advanced that it may not be appropriate to renew the tenancy.

Consultation question 2: Does this part of the evidence paper give an adequate overview of the national, sub regional and local context? Are there any other issues that have not been covered?

DRAFT

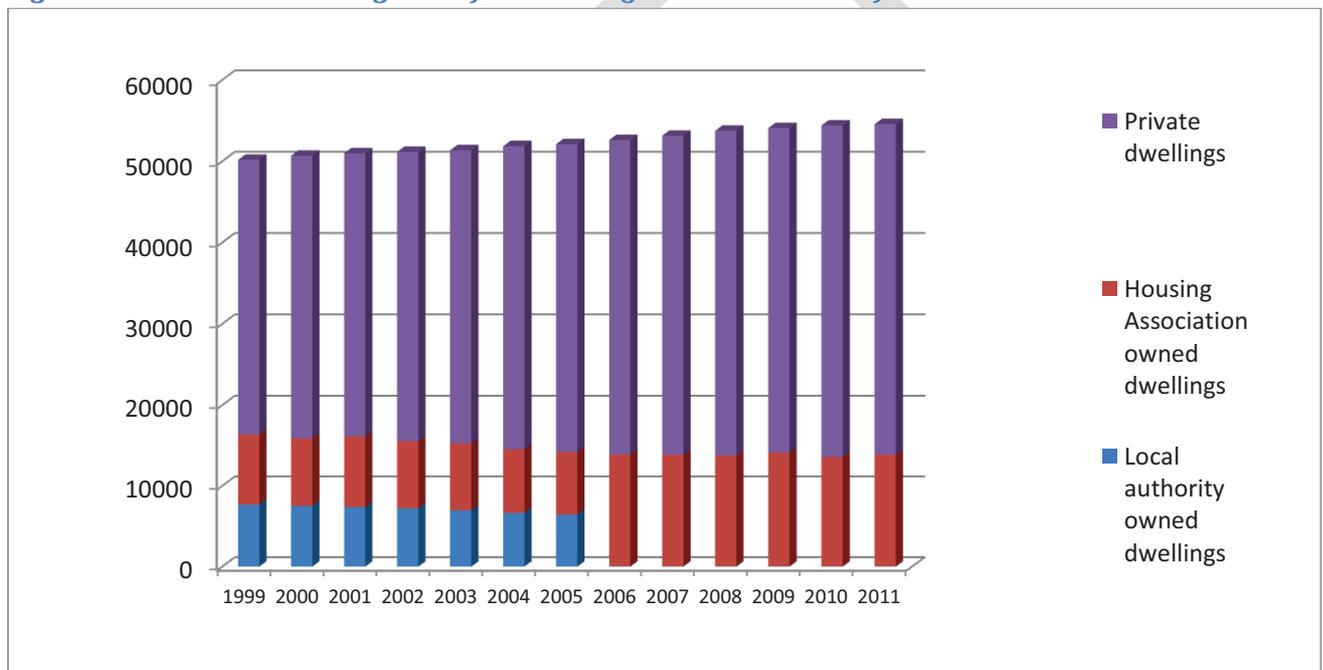
Part Three – Halton’s Housing

Overview

Tenure

Halton’s housing stock can be characterised by a relatively high proportion of social rented properties (around 25%), resulting from the development and subsequent transfer of housing in Runcorn’s New Town estates, and a private sector skewed towards lower value, semi detached and terraced homes. Figure 3.1 illustrates the growth in the private sector (20% in the 12 years from 1999 to 2011) and the steady decline in the total social housing stock of around 15%. As illustrated in the chart, the Council transferred its housing stock to a newly created Housing Association, Halton Housing Trust, in December 2005.

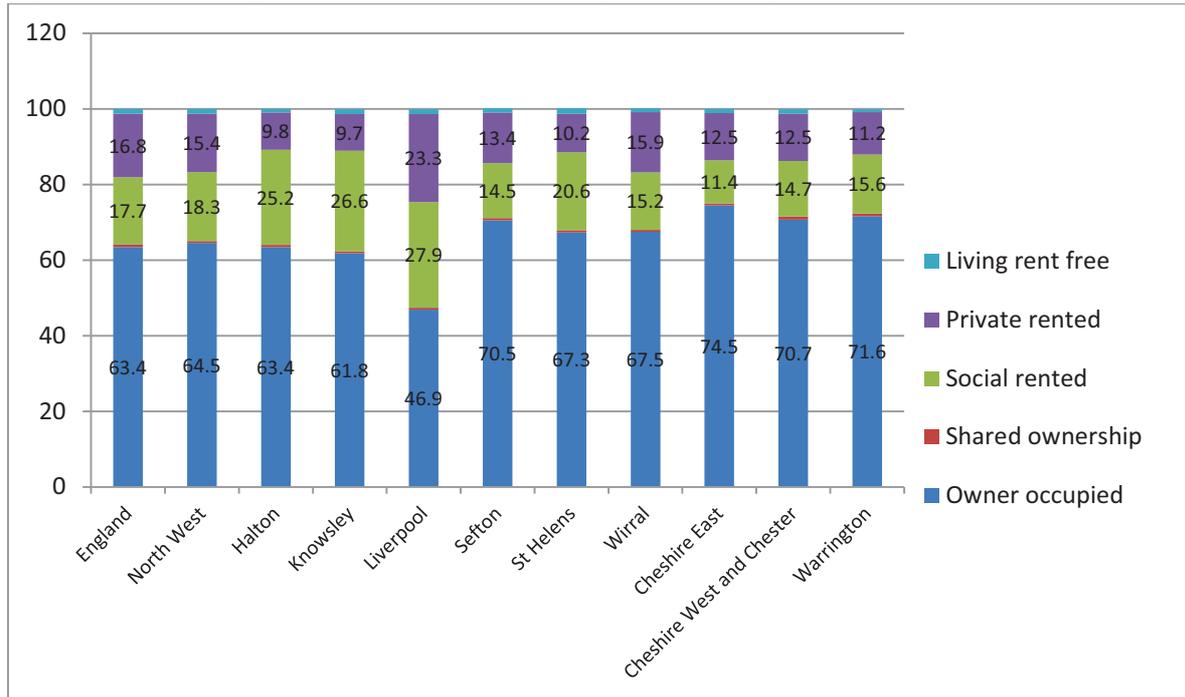
Figure 3.1 – Halton’s housing stock from 1999 (from HSSA returns)



More recently the Borough has witnessed a dramatic growth in the private rented sector, from only 4% of the total housing stock at the time of the 2001 Census to 10%. It is thought that this is due to limited mortgage availability and long waiting lists for social housing fuelling demand for the sector, and the availability of Buy to Let mortgages and concept of housing as a long term investment fuelling supply. This growth has included the Council examining its approach to the sector as part of a Member led scrutiny review, which is described later in this document.

Census data from 2011 allows us to compare Halton’s stock profile with that of national and regional housing profiles and with neighbouring local authorities as shown in figure 3.2 below. As illustrated, Halton has a larger than average social rented sector and a relatively small private rented sector.

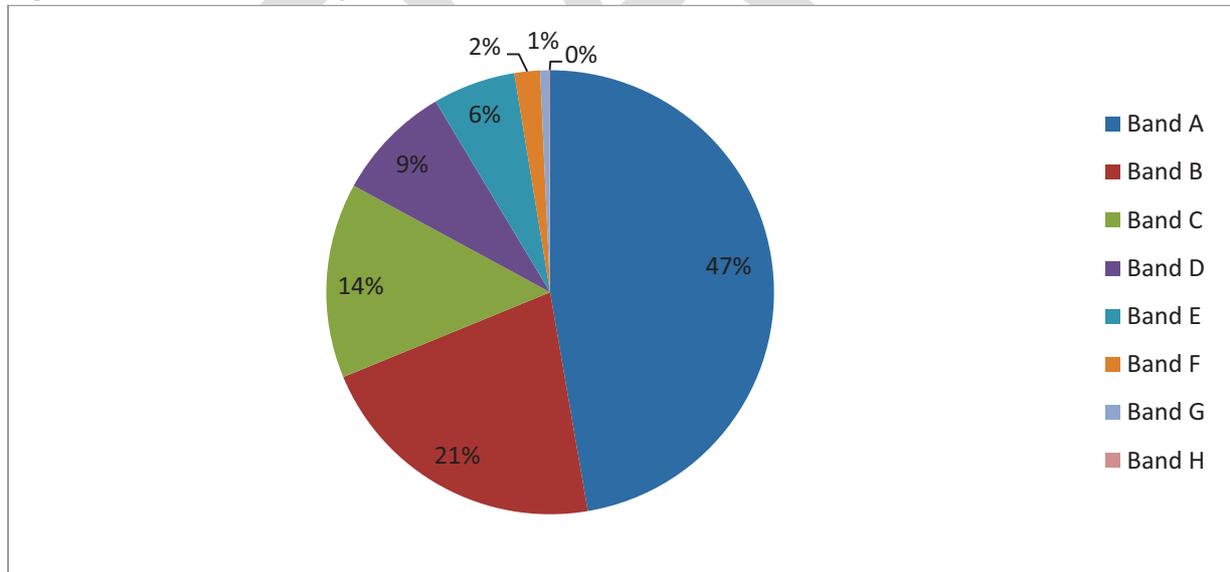
Figure 3.2 - Sub regional tenure comparison (Census 2011)



Property values

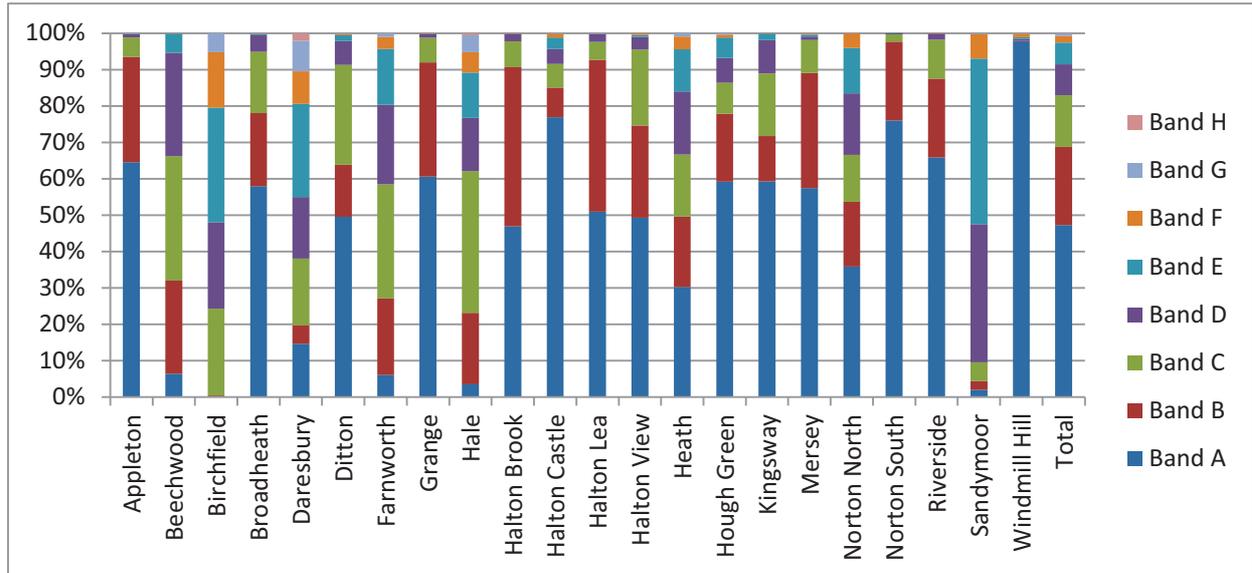
The stock profile in Halton is skewed towards lower value properties, with 68% of dwellings in Council Tax Bands A or B, as illustrated in figure 3.3 below.

Figure 3.3 - Breakdown of Council Tax Bands in Halton



Analysis of Council Tax Band by ward, as illustrated below, reveals that the lowest value stock is concentrated unsurprisingly in the wards containing the highest proportions of social housing. Higher value properties are concentrated in Birchfield, Daresbury and Hale wards.

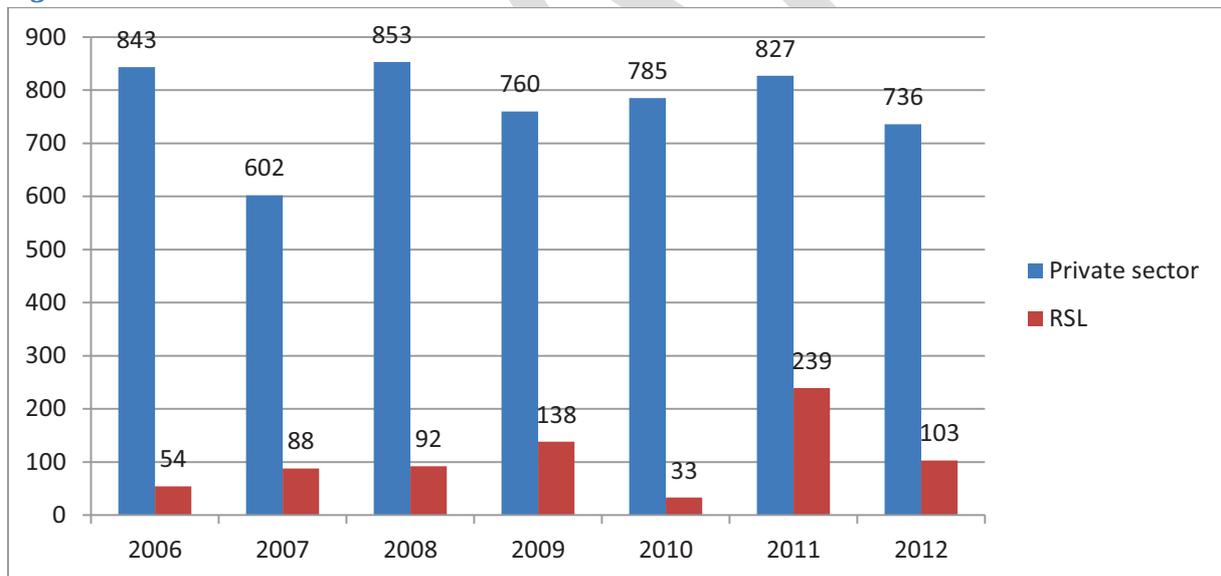
Figure 3.4 – Council Tax bands by wards



Empty Homes

The proportion of long term empty private homes in Halton at around 1.5% to 2.2% is consistent with Regional figures and those of neighbouring local authorities. Figure 3.5 below shows the number of vacancies over 6 months in both the private and social rented sectors.

Figure 3.5 – Vacancies over 6 months



Analysis of the geographical spread of all empty homes reveals no neighbourhood or street level “hotspots”, however, the three wards with the highest proportions: Mersey (6.61%), Riverside (5.63%) and Appleton (4.49%) are those containing more properties in Council Tax Bands A and Band private rented properties suggesting a connection between these factors. The Council takes action to remedy empty homes where a complaint is received and is supportive of initiatives to reduce the number of empty homes as and when funding is available. For example the Council has recently worked with Halton Housing Trust to secure HCA funding to bring 8 empty homes back into use through acquisition. Additional resources would be needed to take a more pro active approach.

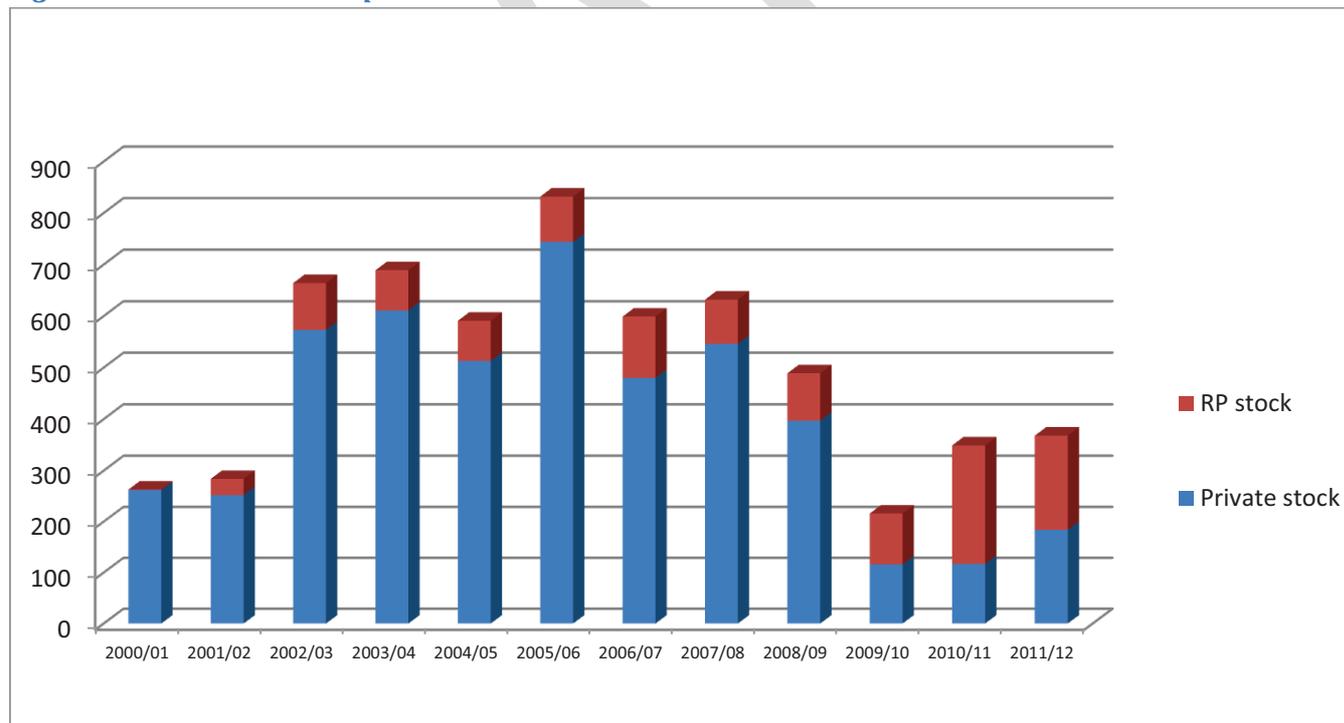
A survey of owners of long term empty private sector homes undertaken in 2009 revealed that around 41% required investment to bring them back into use, although in the majority of cases improvement or modernisation work was already underway. The majority of respondents indicated that they anticipated that the property would be occupied within a 12 month period, only 10% thought it would still be empty due to either the level of work required or current market conditions.

The number of long term vacant properties in the social housing stock varies greatly from year to year as illustrated above. However, the numbers are heavily influenced by the current state of play with regard to regeneration programmes. For example, the increase in 2011 is due largely to the number of properties awaiting demolition in Castlefields as part of the ten year Masterplan. Consequently, the number of social housing properties empty for more than 6 months, which under normal circumstances represents less than 1% of the total social housing stock, is not a cause for concern.

New housing

Figure 3.6 illustrates the number of newly built properties in the Borough as reported in Housing Flows Reconciliation returns. The chart demonstrates the impact of the recent economic downturn on new build completions, which have fallen by over 500% on peak levels in 2005/06 and fall way below the former target of 500 per annum set out in the now defunct North West Regional Spatial Strategy.

Figure 3.6 – New build completions 2000 onwards



Source: DCLG Housing Flows Reconciliation returns

The chart also demonstrates growth in social housing developments over recent years, part funded by the Homes and Communities Agency’s (HCA) National Affordable Development Programme. Registered Providers in Halton have agreed their development programmes with the HCA for the four year period 2011 to 2015, resulting in the following planned new developments.

	1 Bed Flat	2 Bed Flat	2 Bed Bungalow	2 Bed House	3 Bed House	Total
Runcorn	0	38	7	26	48	119
Widnes	39	116	5	11	30	201
Total	39	154	12	37	78	320

In addition to the above, a new 47 unit extra care scheme at Naughton Fields, Liverpool Road, Widnes funded from 2008/11 National Affordable Housing Programme has recently been developed.

Halton's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment allows us to forecast the number of total expected completions for Runcorn and Widnes for the four years to 2016/17. Note that at this stage tenure is unknown so these figures include both market and affordable anticipated housing development.

	Approx Completed Units 2013/14	Approx Completed Units 2014/15	Approx Completed Units 2015/16	Approx Completed Units 2016/17
Runcorn	232	502	688	560
Widnes	338	328	441	165

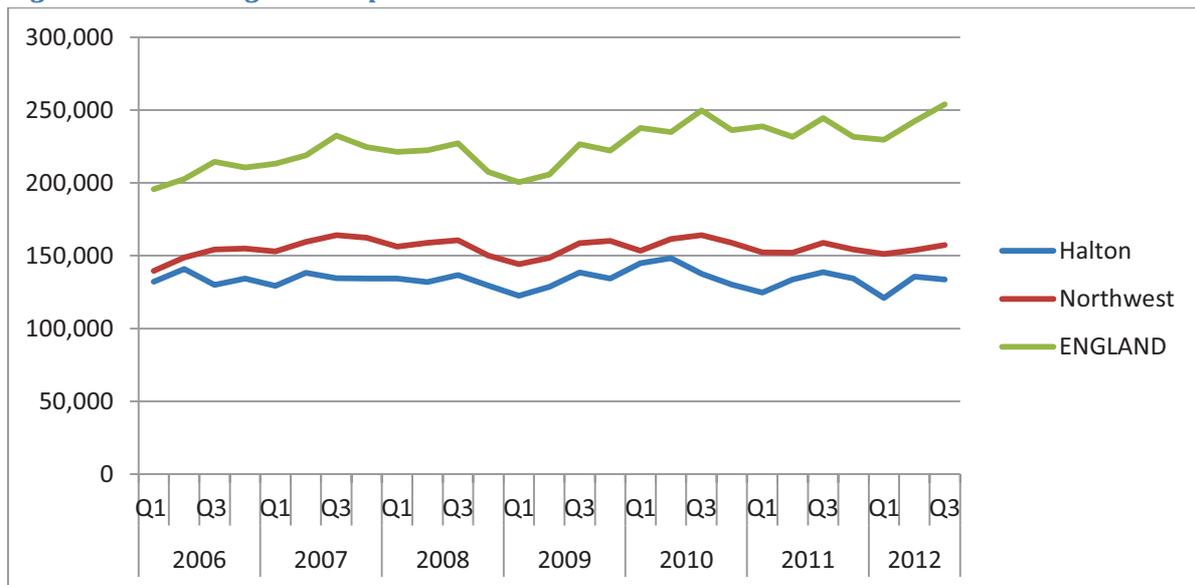
The Council is keen to fulfil its role in facilitating new housing development through the Local Development Framework and has prepared a comprehensive list of potential housing development sites that are likely to come forward over the next 15 years. These are contained in a document called the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, which is updated annually. This can be viewed at <http://www3.halton.gov.uk/environmentandplanning/planning/294413/>.

The Housing Market

House prices

Average house prices in Halton are lower than regional averages and significantly lower than national averages as illustrated in figure 3.7. Based on provisional estimates at quarter 3 2012 the average house price in Halton was £133,550 which was £23,693 lower than the North West average.

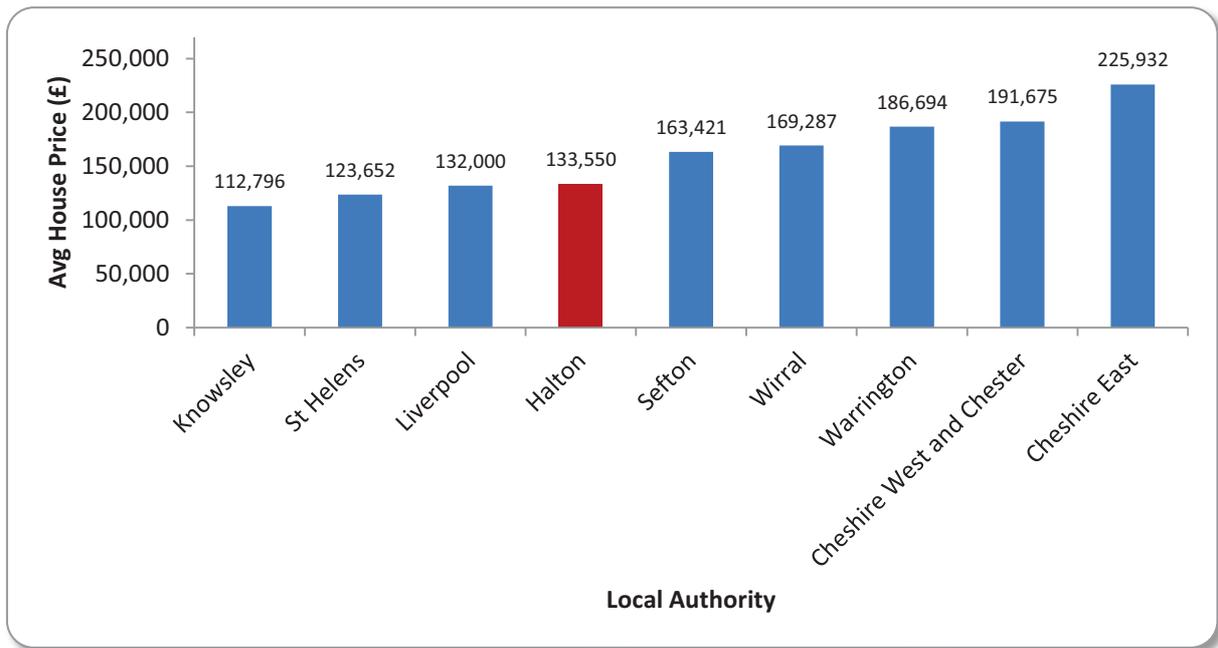
Figure 3.7 – Average house prices



Source: Land Registry

Historically house prices in Halton along with those in Knowsley have tended to be the lowest in the Liverpool City Region. However latest figures (quarter 3 2012) suggest that local average house prices have overtaken Knowsley and St Helens and are more on a par with Liverpool as shown in Figure 3.8.

Figure 3.8 – Sub regional comparison of average house prices (Quarter 3 2012)



In common with the regional and national position, the economic downturn and consequential housing market conditions has led to a dramatic decrease in the number of sales as demonstrated by figure 3.9, declining by almost 60% between the peak at quarter 3 2007 and the corresponding quarter in 2011.

Figure 3.9 – Average sales

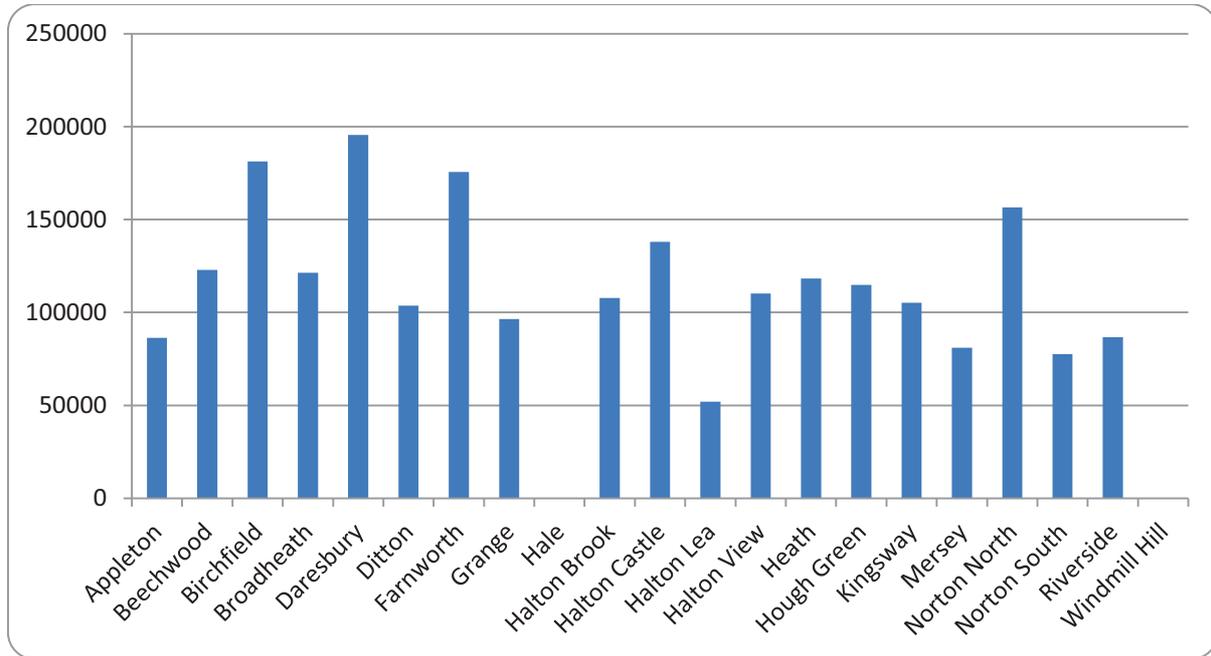


Source: Land Registry

Analysis at ward level at figure 3.10 reveals the disparity in house prices across the Borough. Average house prices in Daresbury and Birchfield which have a high proportion of new build, executive style homes are almost four times as much as those in the area with the lowest average house price in quarter 3 2011 (Halton Lea). Average house prices in wards containing New Town

estates and those with a high proportion of smaller terraces and private rented stock (e.g. Appleton and Mersey) are unsurprisingly lower.

Figure 3.10 – Average House Prices Quarter 3 2011

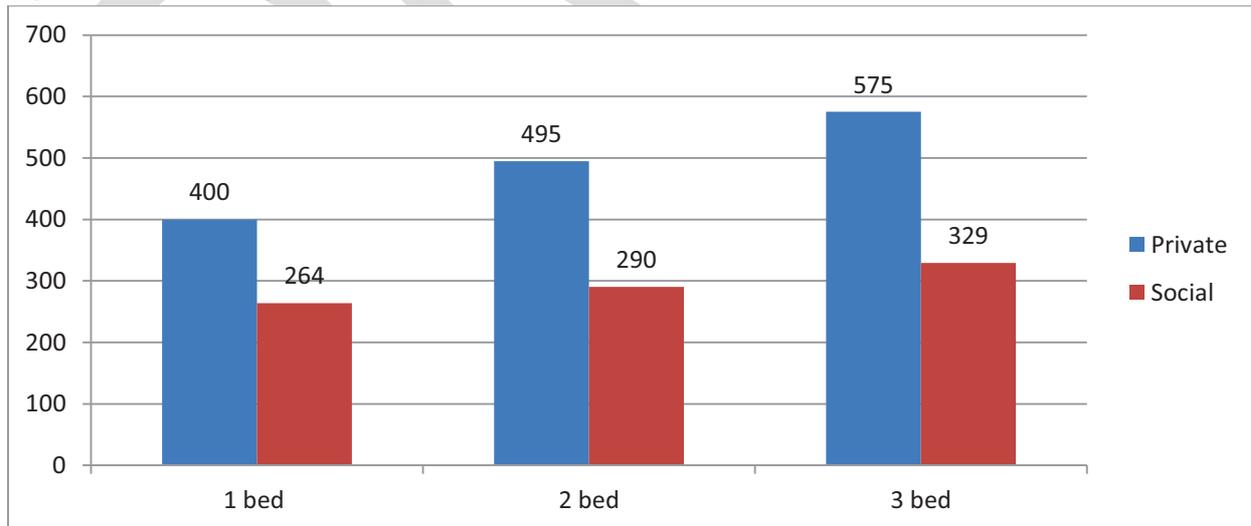


Source: Land Registry

Rent levels

The Halton Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) used CORE data on new social lettings and Valuation Office Data to compare the relative rent levels in the social and private rented stock. Figure 3.11 illustrates this differential.

Figure 3.11 – Average monthly private and social rent levels 2009/10



As shown, social rents were found to equate to around 58% of prevailing market rents, indicating the potential impact of the new affordable rent regime which, if rents are raised to the full 80% threshold, would see the average monthly rent for a 3 bedroom social rented property rise to around £460 per month. The SHMA also found that rent levels in the social housing sector were

increasing at a much faster rate (up by around 27% on 2004/05 levels) than private rents, which had remained relatively static over the same period.

Affordability

The Halton Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2011 collected a range of information regarding household financial circumstances relevant to their ability to afford market housing in order to assess the level of annual affordable housing need. In summary, the findings were that:

- Average gross household income was £25,662 with a much lower median income level of £18,954.
- Average household savings were £3,756 (taking into account non mortgage debts) but again the median was much lower at £290.
- Around a third of households were in debt and a further quarter had no savings.
- Average equity was £95,138 and 1,588 households were in negative equity.
- An estimated 4,307 new households were likely to form in the next two years.
- Around 40% of these had an income of less than £10,000 and 81% less than £20,000.

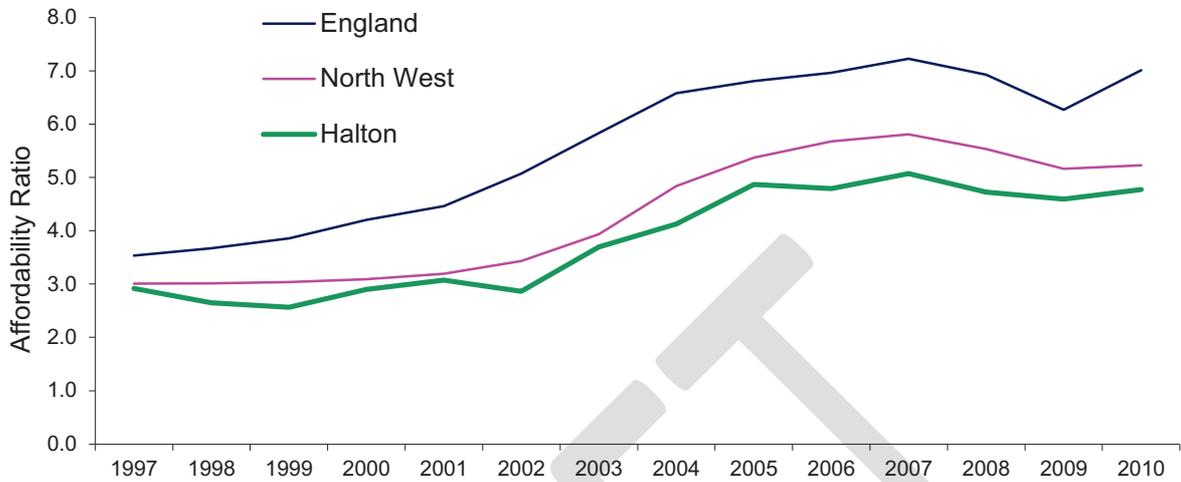
Using the affordability criteria below, the survey found that around 32% of households were unable to afford home ownership. When taking into account the need for a 20% deposit requirement this figure increased to 46.5%.

“Assessing whether a household can afford home ownership - A household is considered able to afford to buy a home if the residual cost is no more than 3.5 times the gross household income. The residual cost is calculated by deducting any capital that is available for use towards home ownership (e.g. savings or equity) from the overall cost of the home.”

Using the Government recommended model which takes into account backlog and newly arising need and likely future supply, the survey assessed a need for 891 affordable homes per annum for the next five years, 65% for social/affordable rent and the remaining 35% split between intermediate rent, shared ownership and low cost home ownership. This figure represents a significant increase on the 2006 Housing Needs Survey which estimated a need at that time for 176 affordable homes per annum, clearly demonstrating the impact that the economic downturn has had on the housing market. However, given an overall average target of 552 new homes within Halton’s Core Strategy delivery of 891 affordable homes per annum appears unrealistic.

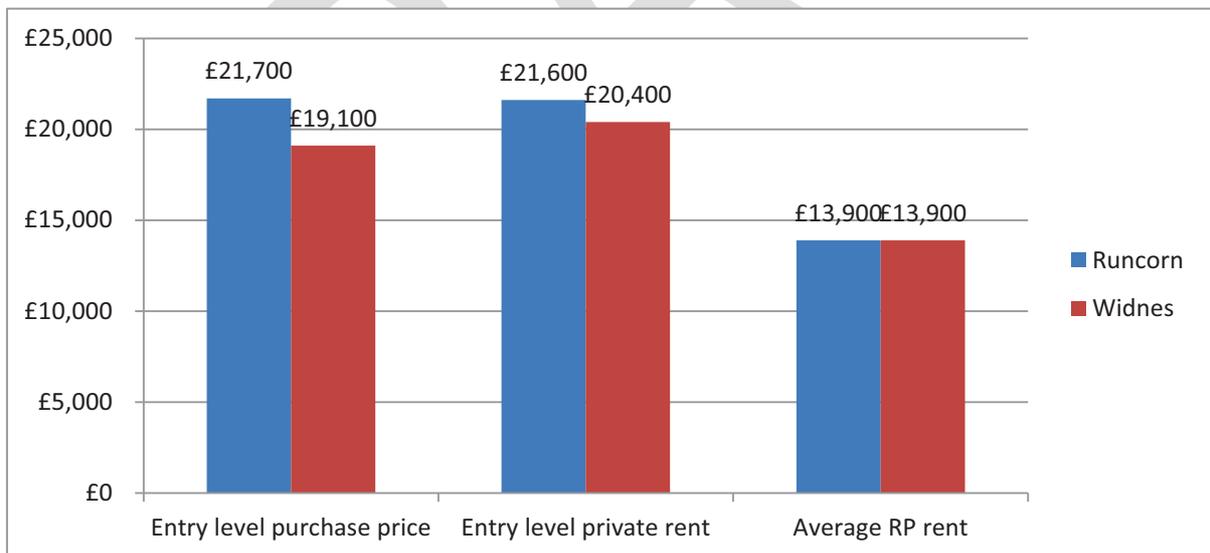
Analysis of median house prices compared to average incomes reveals that Halton has an affordability ratio of 4.8, lower than the regional ratio of 5.2 and significantly lower than the national affordability ratio of 7.0. Figure 3.12 below illustrates how the affordability ratio has increased since the house price boom at the turn of the century.

Figure 3.12 – House price to income affordability ratio



The SHMA also estimated the income levels required to access two bedroomed accommodation in the owner occupied, private rented and social rented sectors without subsidy in Runcorn and Widnes, with the results shown in figure 3.13.

Figure 3.13 – Indicative income required to purchase/rent without subsidy

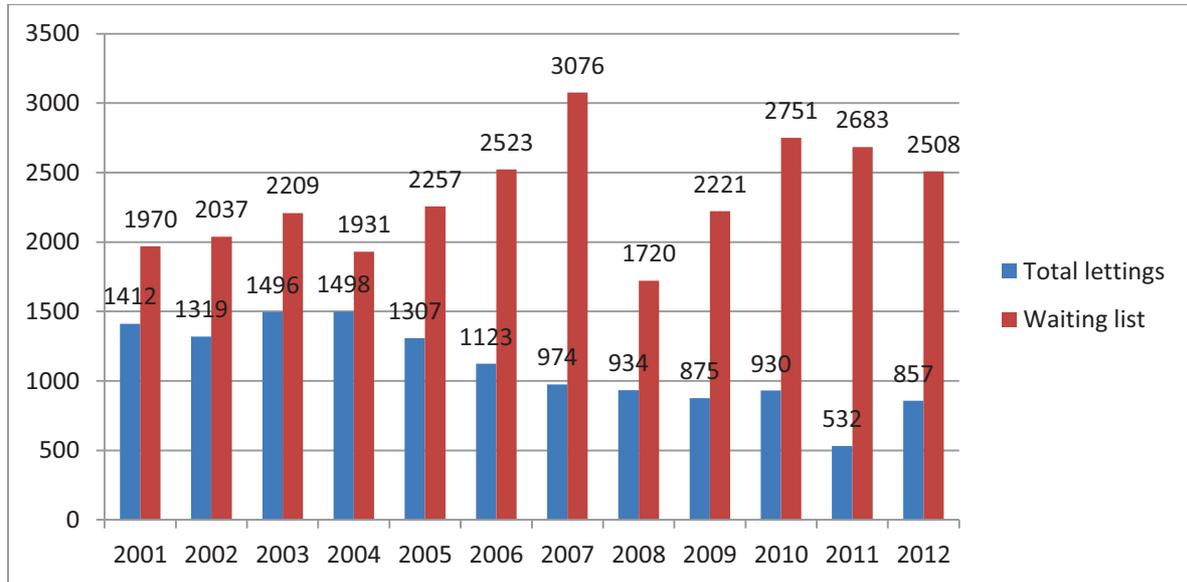


Supply and Demand for housing

Information on the supply and demand for social housing can be obtained from the annual English Local Authority Statistics on Housing (formerly Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix) which collects data on the number of people on the Council’s waiting list and the number of homes available for letting during the year. Figure 3.14 below illustrates the widening gap between the number of

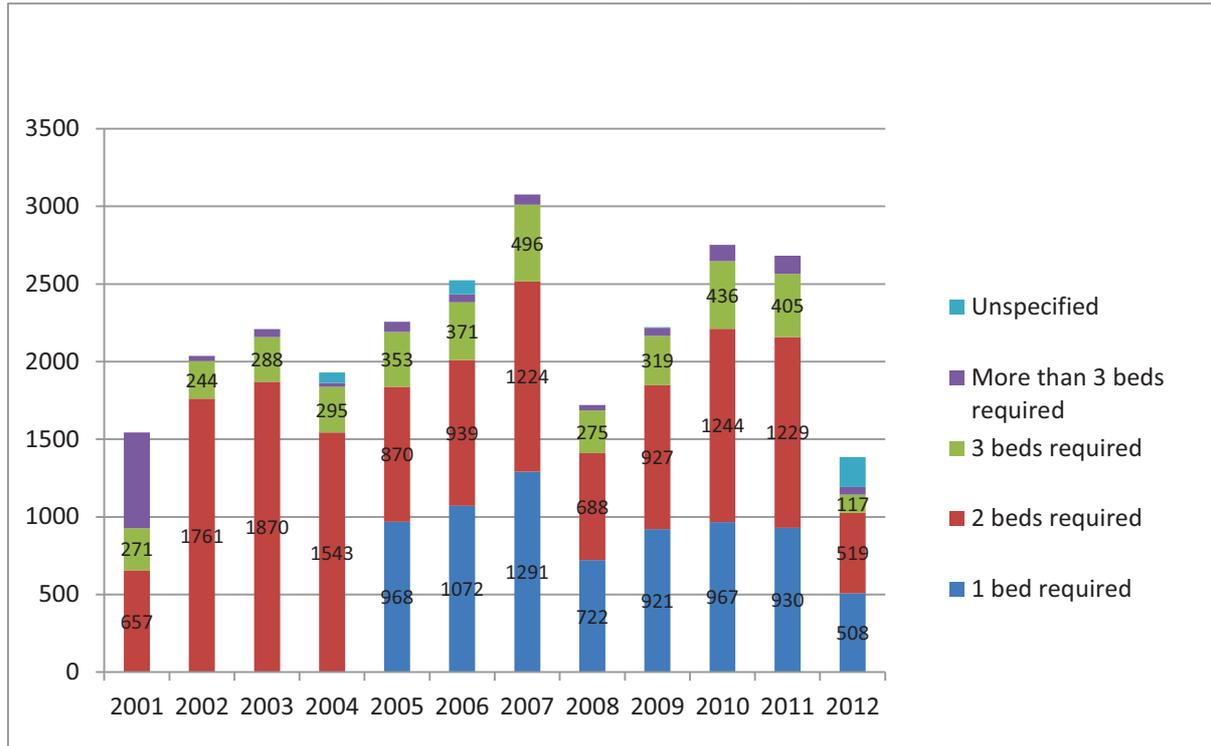
people registered for social housing and the total available lettings during the year, indicating the impact of recent housing market conditions on mobility within the sector.

Figure 3.14 – Supply and demand for social housing



Further analysis of the waiting list reveals the need for smaller one and two bedroom accommodation, as illustrated in figure 3.15 below. This is reflective of smaller household sizes and the number of single and couple households on the waiting list. The drop in the number of applications in 2012 as shown in the graph below reflects the fact that at the time the data was collected Halton Housing Trust was midway through a re-registration exercise in preparation for the move to Choice Based Lettings.

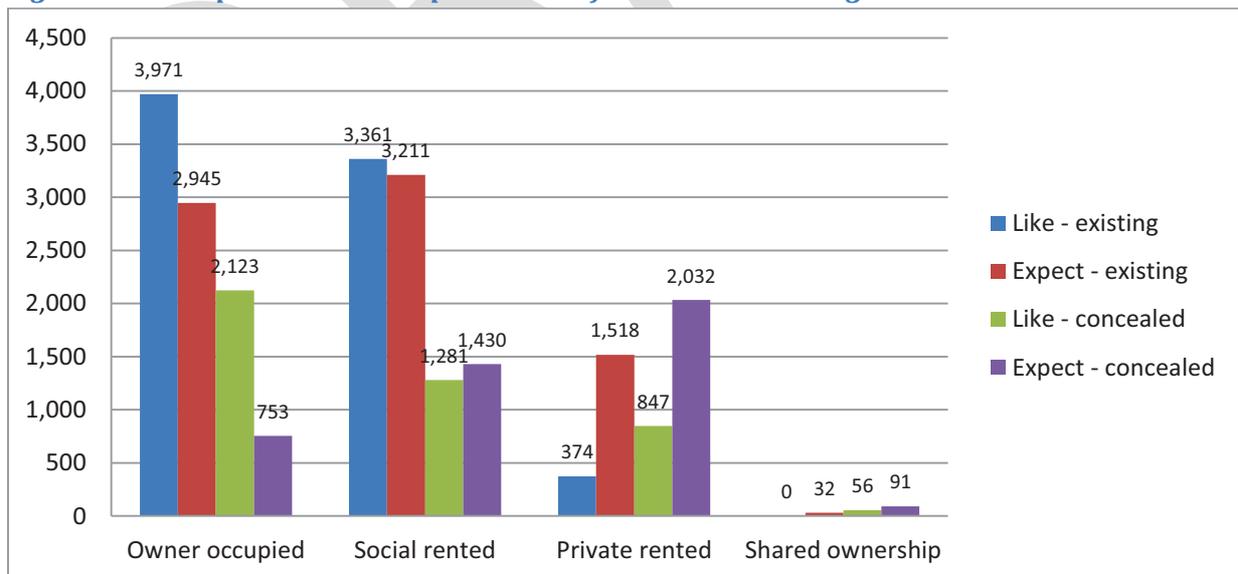
Figure 3.15 – Housing waiting list – number of bedrooms required



Source: ELASH/HSSA returns - NB Prior to 2005 data for 1 and 2 beds was combined.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment collected information on tenure aspirations and expectations of existing and concealed households who indicated that they needed or were likely to move within the next two years.

Figure 3.16 – Aspirations and expectations of households looking to move



The results, illustrated in figure 3.16, reveal the strength of demand for home ownership but the much lower expectation that this would be attained, particularly from concealed households. Social housing was also in demand but households felt that this was more attainable. There was relatively low demand for private rented housing although the responses to the question of expectation reveal

the extent to which the private rented sector is seen as attainable and is to some extent “plugging the gap” in meeting housing need. The survey revealed little demand for shared ownership, however, the relative scarcity of intermediate housing in Halton could have had a bearing on this.

Perhaps unsurprisingly there was a high level of demand for three or four bedroomed detached or semi detached housing amongst existing households. Three quarters of existing households expected to move within Halton with the Birchfield/Farnworth/Halton View area reported as the most popular location.

Only 55% of concealed households expected to move within Halton and while demand was also high for a detached or semi detached house, 56% expected that they would move to a flat or maisonette with similar proportions willing to accept one bedroom accommodation.

Housing Conditions

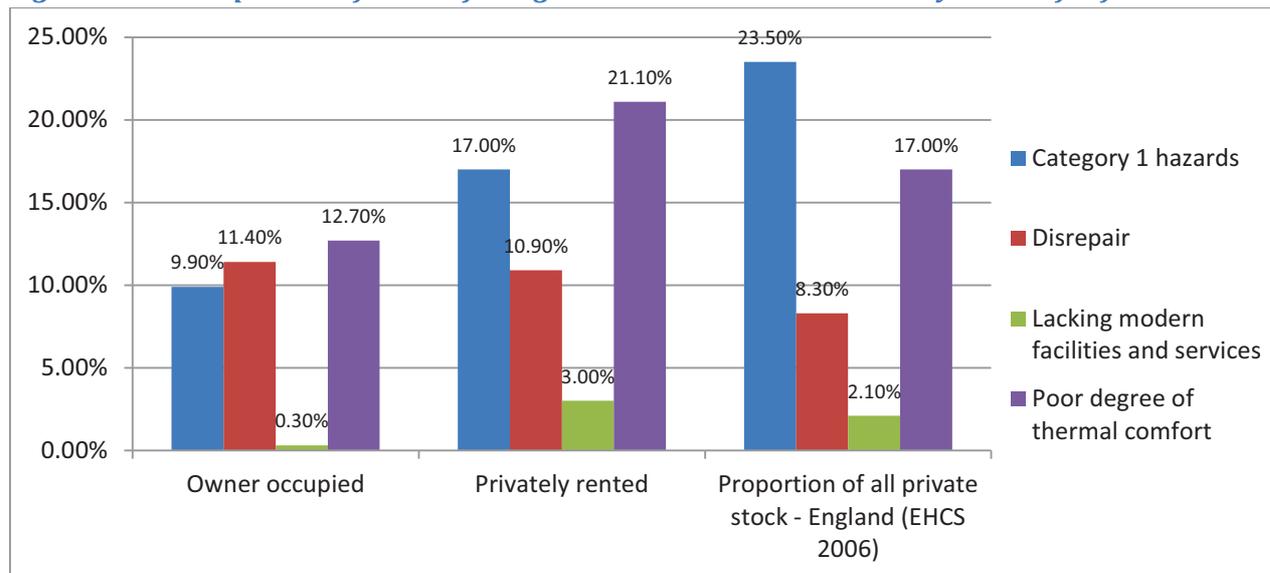
Decent Homes

The Decent Homes Standard uses four broad criteria to assess housing conditions, that is that housing should:

- A - be above the legal minimum standard for housing (measured by the presence of category 1 hazards under the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System), and
- B - be in a reasonable state of repair, and
- C - have reasonably modern facilities (such as kitchens and bathrooms) and services, and
- D - provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort (effective insulation and efficient heating).

Just over a quarter (26.2%) of private sector dwellings in Halton failed the Decency Standard at the time of the latest Private Sector Stock Condition Survey, equating to 10,500 dwellings. This was significantly lower than the national rate of 36.3% (English House Condition Survey 2006) and the North West rate of 37% (“Establishing a Decency Baseline for the Private Sector in the North West”).

The most common reason for failing the Standard was due to a poor degree of thermal comfort affecting over half of non decent properties followed by the need for repair and the presence of a Category 1 hazard. Only 300 properties failed due to a lack of modern facilities. This is illustrated in figure 3.17 which gives a comparison of the proportions failing the standard for each reason in the owner occupied and private rented stock and with national figures from the English House Condition Survey 2006.

Figure 3.17 – Proportion of homes failing the decent homes standard by reason for failure

The total cost to remedy each criteria is as follows:

Category 1 hazards - £21 million

In need of repair - £18 million

Lacking modern facilities - £3 million

Thermal comfort - £9 million

Higher rates of non decency are found in Runcorn than Widnes (27.8% compared to 24.5%) with pre 1919 terraced stock more likely to be affected.

Around 29% of vulnerable households living in the private rented sector were found to live in non decent homes, equating to 4,420 households, with vulnerable households living in Runcorn more likely to be living in non decent homes than those in Widnes. Other households that were more likely to live in non decent homes include households with an income of under £10,000 (35%) and those where the head of household is under 25 (41%).

Halton Borough Council collects annual data from Registered Providers related to the condition of their stock. Data for 2011 reveals that all social housing stock in Halton met the Decent Homes Standard and none contained category 1 hazards under the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System. It can, therefore, be concluded that the social housing stock in Halton is in good condition.

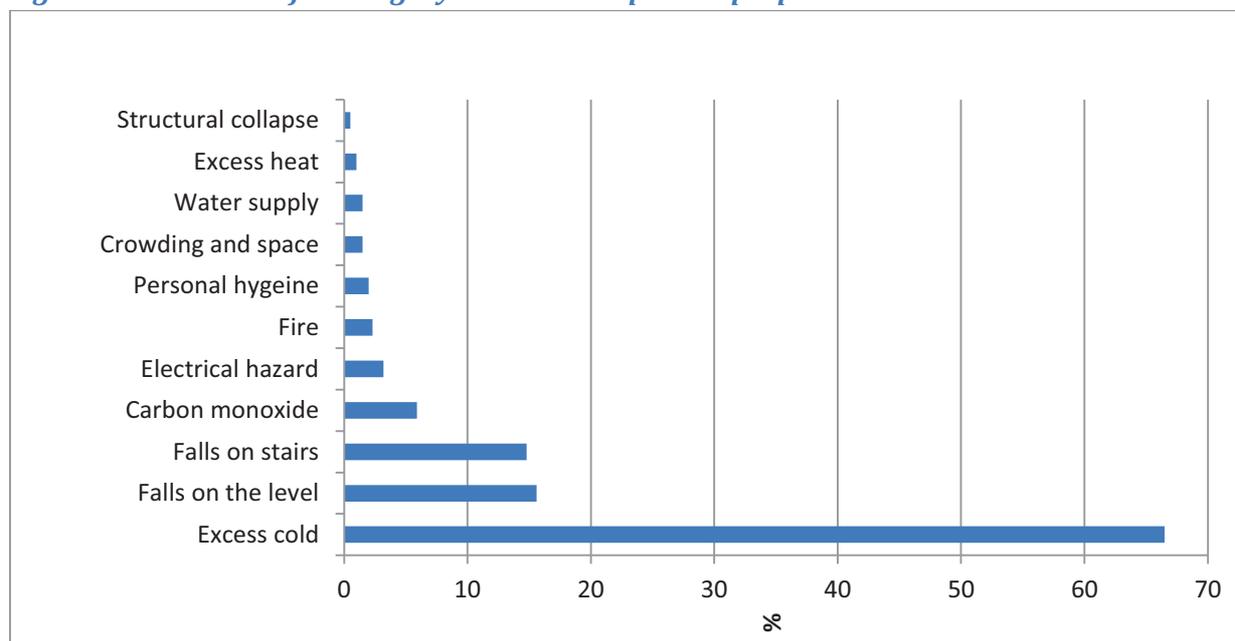
Category 1 hazards

The Housing, Health and Safety Rating System replaced the Fitness Standard in 2004, as the principal method of assessing housing standards for local authorities. It adopts a risk based scoring approach which measures the likelihood and severity of certain hazards occurring within the home, with those properties scoring above a certain threshold deemed to contain Category 1 hazards.

The Halton Stock Condition Survey found that 4,400 dwellings contained Category 1 hazards with 3,900 being houses and an estimated 500 flats. This represents 11% of the private sector stock which is significantly lower than the national and regional figure (23.5% and 44% respectively).

Almost two thirds of all category 1 hazards identified by the survey were attributable to excess cold with falls on the level and falls on stairs being the second and third most common hazard. Figure 3.18 shows the results of the survey in relation to all Category 1 hazards.

Figure 3.18 – Reason for category 1 hazards in private properties

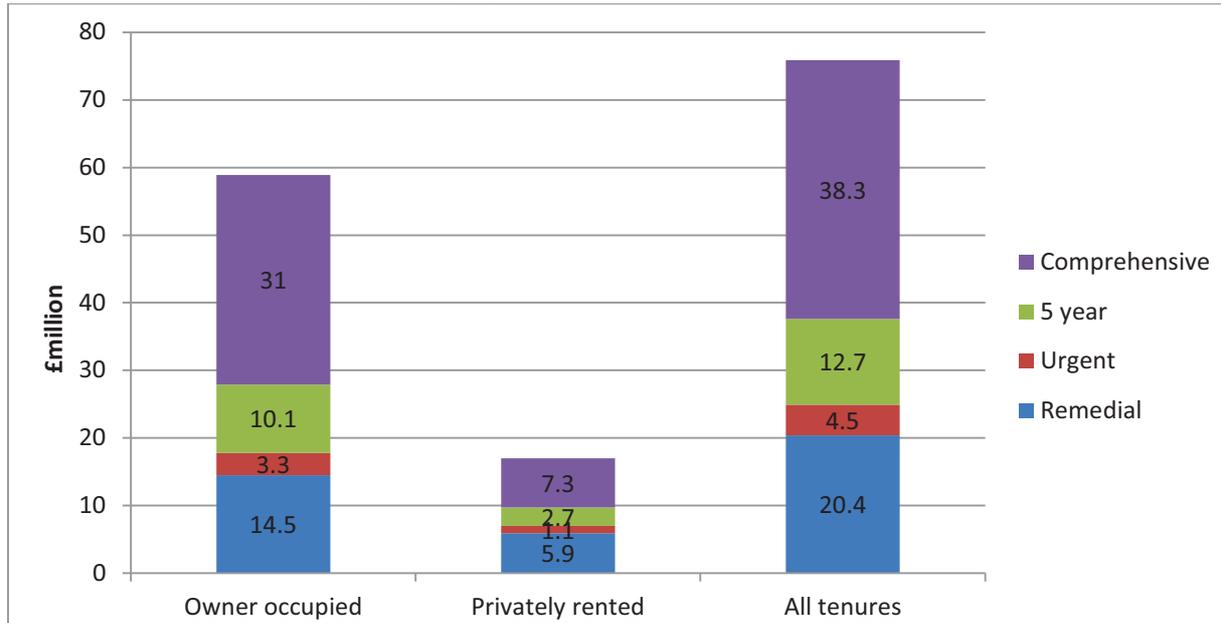


The survey found that Category 1 hazards are more prevalent in terraced houses (47% of terraced stock) and flats (32% of flats) and that the proportion of properties containing Category 1 hazards increases according to the age band of the dwelling, with 26% of pre 1919 dwellings containing Category 1 hazards compared to 3% of dwellings built post 1990.

A higher rate of Category 1 hazards was found in Runcorn than Widnes (12% compared to 10%). Higher rates were also found in dwellings occupied by households with an income under £10,000 (15%), on benefit (14%), where the head of household is under 25 (23.5%) or over 65 (12%) and for households containing someone with a disability (13%).

Figure 3.19 illustrates the cost of remedying Category 1 hazards, ranging from a total cost of £20 million, averaging £4,800 per dwelling, just to remedy the hazards to £80 million for comprehensive repair to all dwellings containing Category 1 hazards, at an average of £17,900 per dwelling. Although total costs to remedy hazards in the private rented sector are lower, the average cost per dwelling just to remedy category 1 hazards at £6,200 is higher than for owner occupied properties at £4,400 per dwelling.

Figure 3.19 – Cost to remedy category 1 hazards

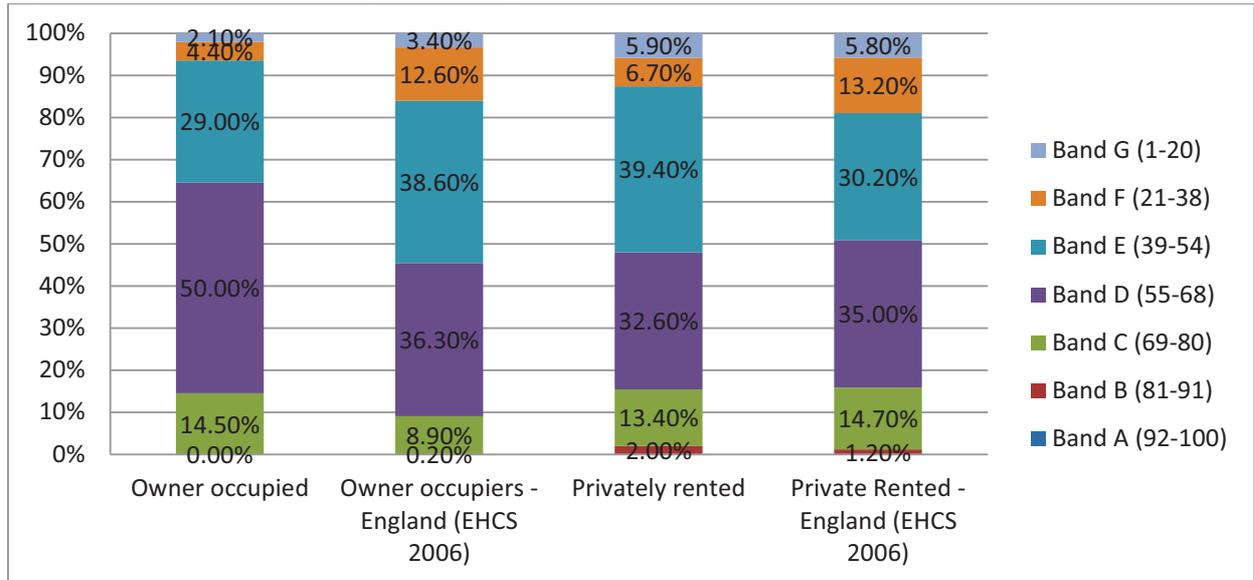


Energy efficiency

The Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) uses a scale of 1 to 100 to assess the relative energy efficiency of dwellings with higher ratings indicating higher levels of energy efficiency. The Private Sector Stock Condition Survey undertaken in 2009 found that on average energy efficiency levels in the private stock (owner occupied and rented) were higher than the national and regional averages (Average SAP rating of 56 in Halton compared to 49 and 51 respectively). It found that there had been a significant improvement on the average SAP rating of 48 recorded by the previous Stock Condition Survey undertaken in 2003, indicating substantial improvements in the energy efficiency of the stock in the intervening period.

Figure 3.20 shows the distribution of SAP ratings for each tenure and compares these with the national distribution using data from the English House Condition Survey 2009.

Figure 3.20 – Distribution of SAP ratings in the private sector

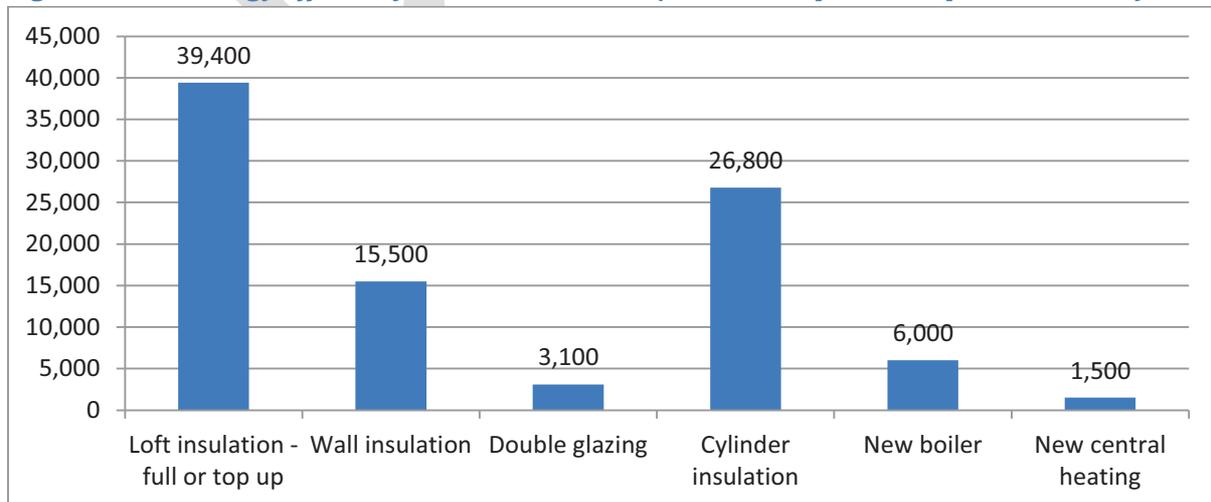


The least energy efficient dwellings are, unsurprisingly, pre 1919 terraces and the most energy efficient dwellings are post 1990 purpose built flats. There was no difference between SAP ratings for Runcorn than those for Widnes.

National Indicator 187 measured the proportion of households on an income related benefit living in dwellings with SAP ratings below 35 and 65 and above. The last survey completed found that 6.8% of households in receipt of an income related benefit live in a dwelling with a SAP rating below 35 and that 24.2% live in a dwelling with a SAP rating of 65 and over.

Figure 3.21 illustrates the improvements that would be necessary to bring all private sector homes up to standard. As shown, virtually all 40,100 properties in the sector would benefit from some type of improvement with loft insulation (whether full or top up) required to around 97% of dwellings to bring up to current recommended levels of 270mm. Obviously, not all of these dwellings would need or qualify for financial support to carry out these improvements but, as an indication, the total cost of installing all these measures is £54.3 million, equating to an average of £1,350 per dwelling.

Figure 3.21 – Energy efficiency measures needed (owner occupiers and private rented)



Castlefields Regeneration

The Castlefields Regeneration Partnership was established in 2002 to tackle serious decline and deprivation on the Castlefields New Town estate in Runcorn. Founding partners include local residents, Halton Borough Council, the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), Liverpool Housing Trust (LHT) and Plus Dane Group. As it has embraced new opportunities the partnership has grown to include NHS Halton & St Helens, partner contractors Cruden Construction and Seddon, John McCall architects, Sutcliffe engineers, Bradley Demolition, developer Keepmoat, local artists and the business community.

Over its ten year lifespan, 1,203 deck access units have been demolished, with a further 80 units programmed for demolition in 2012. These have been replaced by 747 new build homes, with 80 new homes currently under construction and a further 400 homes planned over coming years. In December 2011 the 1st phase of the Village Square opened with completion of new shops and flats, this was followed in March 2012 with the opening of a new Community Centre and extensive public realm. A new health centre was opened in May 2012, with a formal grand opening in the summer 2012. Other environmental improvements continue to be delivered within the neighbourhood. A first phase of intervention covering a proportion of the 500 two-storey system built houses was announced in March 2012, this will include external wall and roof cladding to improve the energy efficiency of the properties and the visual amenity of the neighbourhood.

This year, residents will determine priorities for the next ten years and create a continuing action plan. The partnership is committed to the long-term future of Castlefields and in 2012 will deliver a significant public art commission, develop the first private housing for outright sale and introduce innovative energy efficiency technologies to existing homes.

The Partnership is naturally proud of its achievements in transforming the once low demand area of Castlefields to an area of choice for homeseekers and its efforts have been rewarded with a Housing Excellence Award for Best Partnership of 2012. In addition, Castlefields was shortlisted for the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors North West Award for the Village Square development and the UK Housing Award for Partnership of the Year.

The Private Rented Sector

As mentioned earlier in this document, the private rented sector is the fastest growing housing sector in Halton and in the current economic climate is to an extent filling the gap in meeting housing needs as a result of limited mortgage availability and reduced mobility in the social housing sector. This is borne out by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, which found that a much higher proportion of households expected that their next move would be to privately rented accommodation than expressed the sector as their tenure of choice.

Despite this growth it must be remembered that private rented housing still forms only a small proportion of the housing stock when compared to other areas as demonstrated in figure 3.2 earlier in this document with an estimated 5,000 properties in Halton owned by private landlords.

The vast majority of landlords are responsible and the Council will continue to develop pro active working relationships with those landlords who wish to improve the standard of their properties and management approaches through voluntary accreditation (described below).

However, other than for certain categories of Houses in Multiple Occupation (of which there are very few in Halton) the sector is largely unregulated. Evidence from the Private Sector Stock Condition Survey reveals that private tenants are more likely to live in a property containing a Category 1 hazard than owner occupiers (17% of private rented compared to 10% of owner occupied housing) and that a third of private tenants live in homes which do not meet the Decency Standard compared to a quarter of owner occupiers.

Levels of energy efficiency are also lower in the sector with average SAP ratings of 53 compared to 57 for owner occupied housing. The Energy Act 2011 states that by April 2016 private landlords cannot unreasonably refuse requests from their tenants for consent to have energy efficiency improvements carried out where financial support is available for example through the Green Deal or Energy Company Obligation. The Act further requires that by April 2018 all privately rented properties should be brought up to minimum standards of energy efficiency (likely to be set at Energy Performance Certificate rating E).

In addition, the termination of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy was the second highest reason for homelessness in the Borough in 2011/12, the numbers having trebled on the previous year, which is in part likely to be as a result of changes to the Local Housing Allowance introduced as part of the current agenda of welfare reform.

The Localism Act 2011 gave local authorities the power to discharge their statutory homelessness duty through an offer of private rented accommodation. At the time of writing the Council has yet to consider its position on this, however, if this policy is adopted locally the accommodation offered will, in accordance with Government Guidance, at least meet suitability standards.

In common with many other local authorities, the Council takes a dual approach to the private rented sector with, on the one hand, the accreditation scheme rewarding “responsible” landlords while on the other the Council uses its enforcement powers to take action against less scrupulous landlords whose properties do not meet a satisfactory standard. These two approaches are described in more detail below.

Landlord Accreditation Scheme

Halton’s Landlord Accreditation Scheme has been running for approximately seven years. It is a free and voluntary scheme which offers a range of benefits to qualifying landlords including fast tracking of benefit applications, insurance discounts, seminar invitations and general guidance and support. Landlords must meet required minimum standards to be eligible for accreditation covering the condition of their properties and management standards.

56 landlords have applied for accreditation covering 308 properties out of a total of around 5,000 in the sector. Out of these 34 landlords have reached the required standards to be accredited. A database of known private landlords with properties in Halton has been compiled and these are written to periodically to encourage them to seek accreditation. The scheme is also publicised in newsletters and the Council’s website.

All known landlords are invited to a quarterly Landlords' Forum which provides opportunity for formal discussion on a wide range of relevant issues and for landlords to network and informally discuss issues of common interest. Forum meetings are generally well attended and provoke lively discussion and interesting debate.

Enforcement

Local authorities have a range of powers at their disposal to deal with poor conditions and nuisance in the private rented sector. Halton's Environmental Services team deal with a wide range of enforcement issues, not just housing, including noise nuisance and air and environmental quality. On receiving a complaint from a private tenant, the team will carry out an inspection of the property and if it is found to be below the minimum standard will contact the landlord to request that the remedial works are carried out. In most cases this informal approach works as the landlord quickly responds to the request. However, in some isolated cases, enforcement action, usually involving issuing statutory compliance notices under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, is necessary.

Scrutiny Review into the Private Rented Sector

In 2011 elected members from the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board undertook a scrutiny review into the Private Rented Sector. The review was prompted by a number of complaints of anti social behaviour from private sector tenants and what was felt to be an inadequate response from absentee private landlords.

Members made a number of recommendations including piloting a more pro active approach to the sector, promoting Council services to tenants and landlords in those areas, encouraging landlords to register contact details and apply to join the accreditation scheme and tenants to report any issues with their property to the Council so that they can be taken up with the landlord and, where necessary, enforcement action taken.

An officer working group has been set up to take forward the recommendations.

Consultation question 3: Does this part of the evidence paper give an adequate and accurate overview of housing in Halton? Are there any other issues that should be included?

Part Four – Halton’s People

Overview

Population

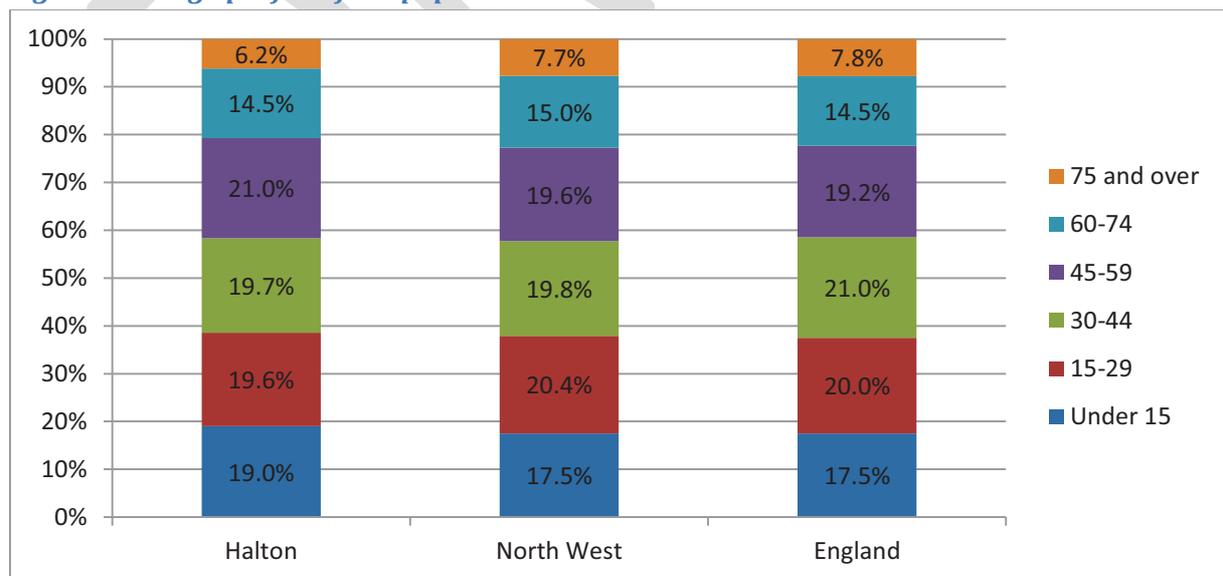
The latest ONS mid year population estimates (2010) indicate that there are 119,300 people resident in the Borough. Halton has experienced population growth since 2006 as a result of a combination of higher levels of natural change (more births than deaths) which have outweighed lower (albeit sustained) levels of net out migration. Another factor in this may have been the delivery of larger, more aspirational housing at Upton Rocks in Widnes and Sandymoor in Runcorn which has helped to enhance the housing offer at the upper end of the scale and attracted new residents who may not otherwise have moved to the area.

The overall population is projected to grow to 121,400 by 2018 and 122,900 by 2023 (4% on the latest estimates from 2008) although this growth is lower than the regional and national growth projections of 5% and 11% respectively.

Age

Comparison of the age profile of Halton residents with regional and national figures shows a population skewed towards younger people as illustrated in figure 4.1. For example, an estimated 19% of Halton’s residents are under the age of 15 compared to 17.5% regionally and nationally and there are lower proportions of people aged 75 and over. This relatively young population structure is partly as a consequence of the movement of young families to the Runcorn New Town estates. However, these first generation New Town residents are getting older and are expected to reach retirement age in the period to 2026.

Figure 4.1 – Age profile of the population



Data from the Office of National Statistics shows the projected change in the population by age band to 2023, as below:

- Younger people (0 - 14 year olds) - population projected to grow by 7% (2008 - 2023)
- Working age (16 - 64 year olds) - population projected to decline by 6% (2008 - 2023)
- Older people (65+) - population projected to grow by 43% from 16,900 in 2008 to 24,200 in 2023

Of particular significance to housing provision is the projected growth in the older population. The housing needs of older people will be explored in more detail later in this evidence paper.

Ethnicity

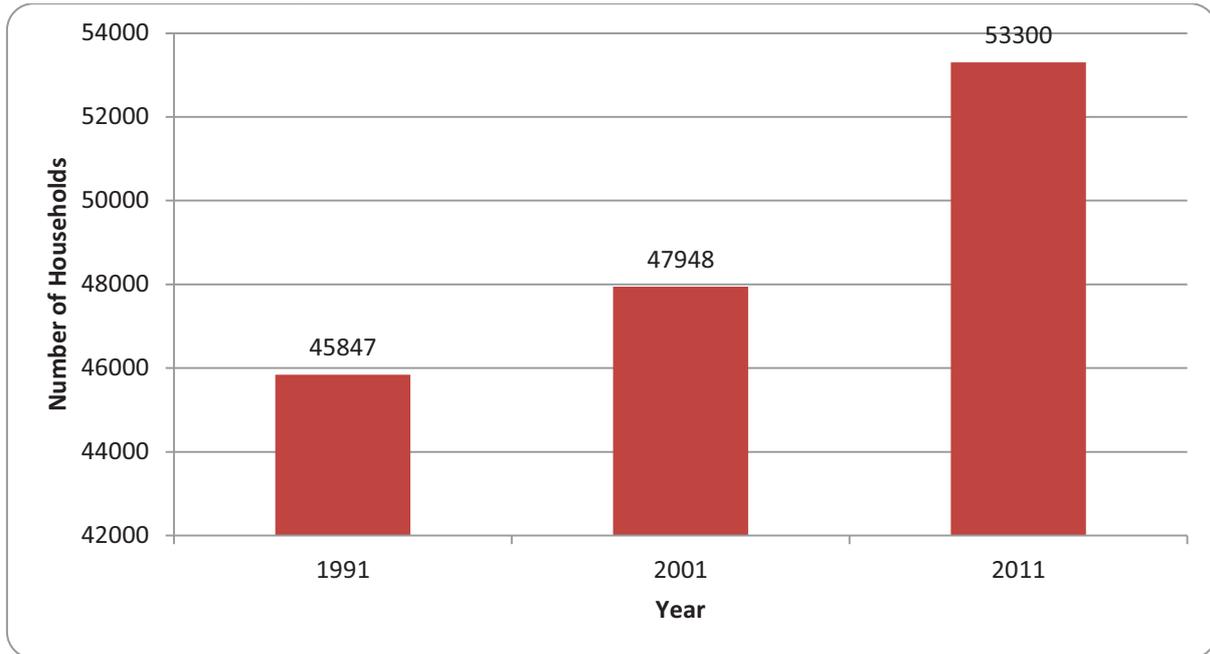
The 2010 Strategic Housing Market Assessment confirmed that Halton has a very small black and minority ethnic (BME) population with 97.6% of households describing themselves as White British. Although the number of respondents was too small to produce wholly reliable results the survey does suggest a small growth in the White Other population, which might be expected as a result of the accession of new member states into the European Union over recent years and also of Mixed Race populations. The survey also found that as a whole BME households are:

- typically larger than households headed by a White British/Irish person (an average of 2.74 people compared to 2.37 within the White population);
- less likely to rent accommodation (both social and private) and are far more likely than average to be owner occupiers with a mortgage (59% compared to 39% for White households);
- notably less likely than White households to contain a household member with a support need;
- record an average household income of £33,480 which is higher than the comparative figure for White households of £25,512. However, it should be noted that there are a greater proportion of working age BME households in Halton than there are White working age households.

It is important to note that the response to the survey from BME households was small (46 responses) and so the above findings should be treated with a degree of caution, however, the last Housing Needs Survey in 2006 also recorded similar findings.

Households

At 2011 there were 53,300 households living in Halton, representing a 11% increase since the 2001 Census and an 16% increase since the 1991 Census. Figure 4.2 below illustrates the dramatic increase. While recent population growth will be a factor in this increase, the main reason is a fall in household size.

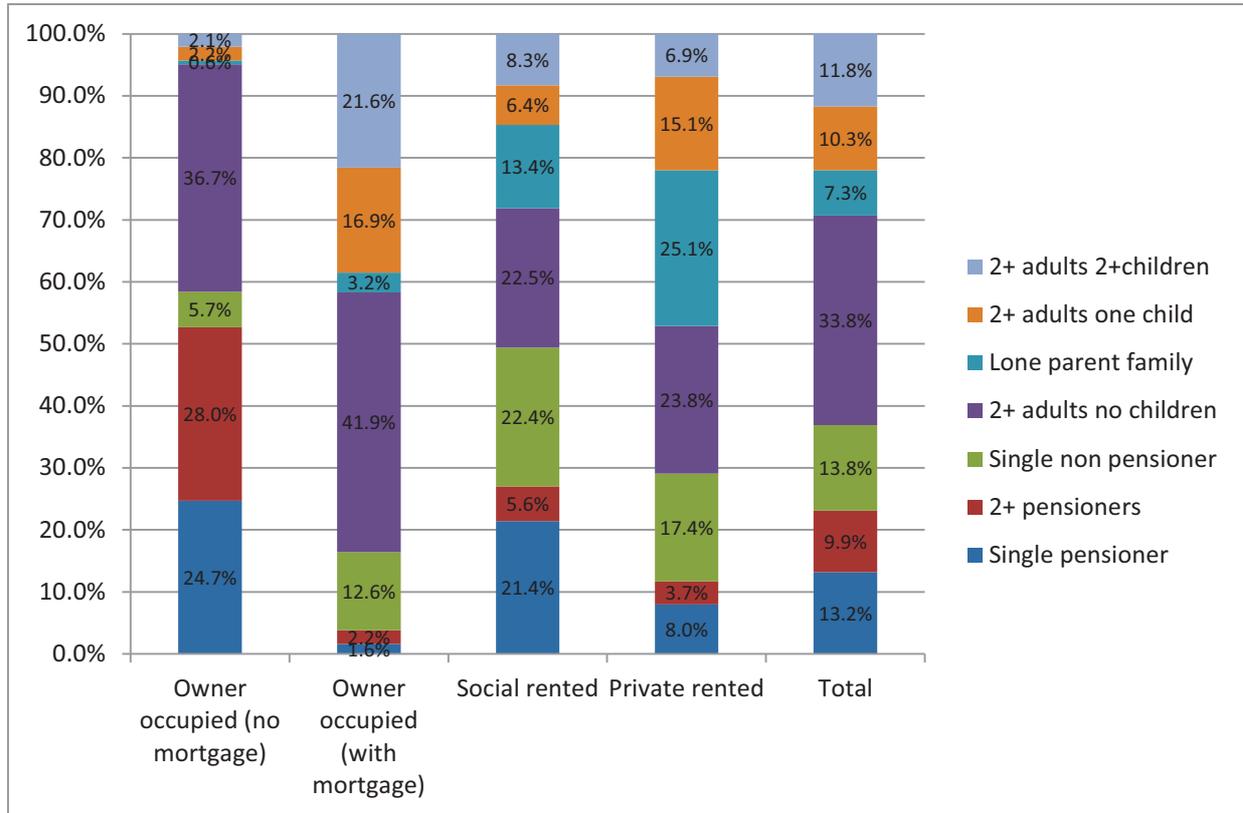
Figure 4.2 – Number of households in Halton

The SHMA found that the overall average household size in the Borough was 2.4 persons but that there were differences according to tenure as illustrated in figure 4.3 below.

Figure 4.3 – Average number of people in household by tenure

Analysis of household composition as illustrated in figure 4.4 emphasises the differences between each tenure. Of particular interest is the fact that 45% of households living in social housing are non pensioner single or couple households who, if living in accommodation with two or more bedrooms and claiming Housing Benefit, are likely to be affected by the underoccupation penalty as part of the forthcoming welfare reforms. It is also interesting to note the disproportionate amount of families with children, particularly lone parent households, living in the private rented sector where, as we have already seen, housing conditions tend to be the poorest.

Figure 4.4 – Household composition by tenure



Economic analysis

Deprivation

Halton is ranked 27th most deprived area out of 326 local authority areas according to the 2010 Indices of Multiple Deprivation. This has worsened slightly from a rank of 29th from the IMD 2007 although there has been little change in the deprivation score.

The most deprived ward in Halton is Windmill Hill, while the least deprived ward in Halton is Birchfield. 26% of Halton’s population live in areas that fall in the top 10% most deprived nationally, this is more than the national figure (10%) but lower than the Liverpool City Region figure (31%).

The ward with the most improved average IMD score between 2007 and 2010 in Halton (therefore the largest decrease in deprivation) is Halton Lea. Halton Castle, Windmill Hill and Halton Lea have seen the largest improvements in the Barriers to Housing and Income domain. The wards with the highest ranking for Barriers to Housing domain are Beechwood, Daresbury and Heath which is presumably indicative of a lack of affordable housing, particularly in the first two areas.

Unemployment

Halton continues to have high levels of unemployment compared to regional and national rates. Latest figures show that 18.7% of the resident working age population claim out of work benefits, compared to 15% for the North West and 11.9% nationally (Feb 2012). Employment Support

Allowance and Incapacity Benefit make up the largest proportion of these (10.3% of the working age population) followed by Job Seekers Allowance (5.8%).

12.2% of 18-24 year olds claim Job Seekers Allowance, a third of whom have been claiming for over 6 months.

Figure 4.5 below uses data from the SHMA to illustrate the economic status of the household reference person living within each tenure. As might be expected, the majority of housing owned without a mortgage is occupied by retired people and a third of social housing tenants are retired. The chart also shows the high proportions of unemployed people living in rented accommodation.

Figure 4.5 – Economic status of household reference person by tenure



Income

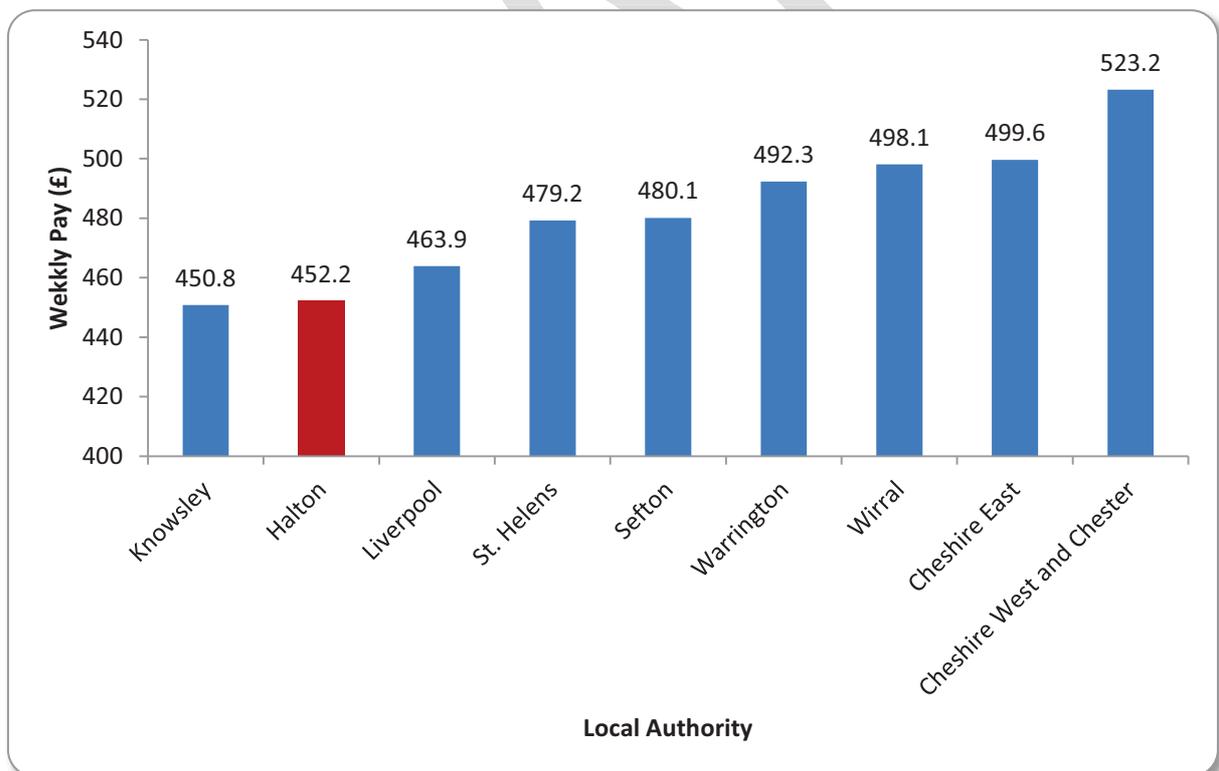
The SHMA used data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings for 2004 and 2009 to assess the median income of residents in full time employment. The results, illustrated in figure 4.6 below, show the gap between annual earnings of Halton residents and those living in the North West and Great Britain.

Figure 4.6 – Annual gross income of full time employed residents 2004 and 2009 – median income (SHMA)



More recent data from the Office for National Statistics allows us to compare the median weekly gross pay for full time workers in 2012 with neighbouring local authorities. The results, illustrated in figure 4.7 reveals the extent to which the Borough lags behind surrounding areas.

Figure 4.7 – Median weekly gross income 2012 (full time workers) (ONS)



Health and Housing

The links between health and housing are wide ranging and well documented. Improving housing conditions and the energy efficiency of housing can bring numerous health benefits as highlighted in the 2010 Marmot Review of Health Inequalities “Fair Society, Healthy Lives”. This study found that countries with more energy efficient housing have fewer excess winter deaths and that there is a strong relationship between cold housing and cardio vascular and respiratory disease. For example, it found that children living in cold homes are more than twice as likely to suffer from a variety of respiratory problems than children living in warm homes and that cold housing negatively affects children’s educational attainment, emotional well being and resilience to illnesses.

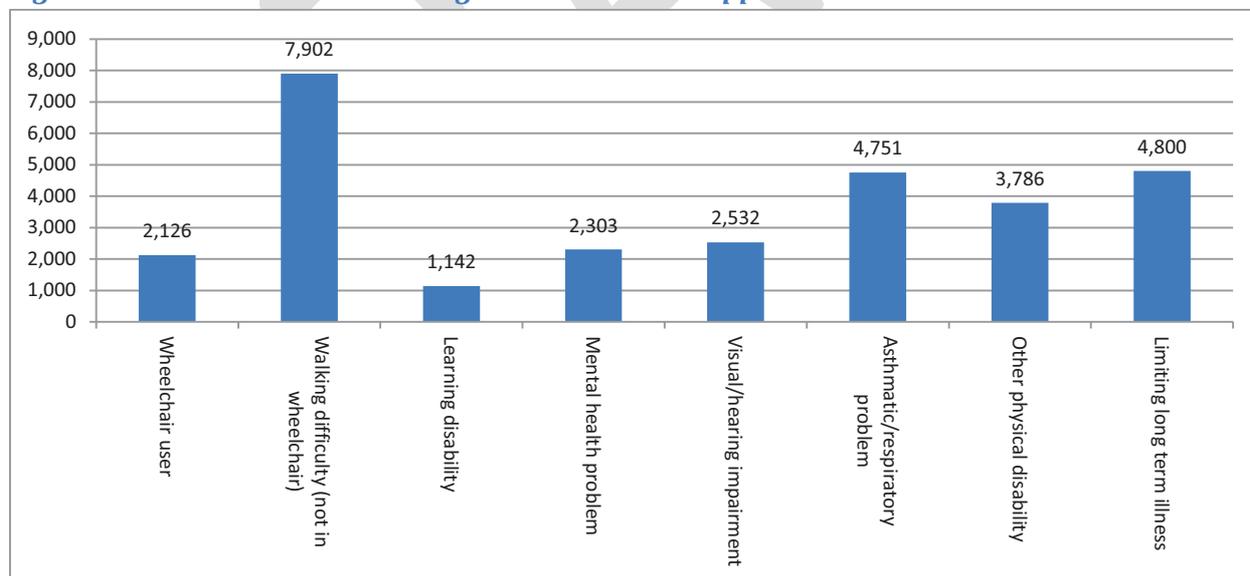
The relationship between health and housing is not just confined to the energy efficiency of housing. The removal of hazards in a property can help to reduce the number of accidents in the home, in turn removing the need for unnecessary hospital admissions and surgery and maintaining the independence of the occupier.

There are also links between housing and mental health. For example, fuel poverty, poor quality housing and overcrowding are associated with stress, anxiety, depression and poor mental health and studies have shown a relationship between insecurity of tenure and poor mental health.

Need for adaptations

The SHMA found that an estimated 15,104 households in Halton contained someone with a support need, representing 29% of all households in the Borough. People with a walking difficulty were the most predominant group, affecting 7,902 households (15% of all households) as shown in figure 4.8.

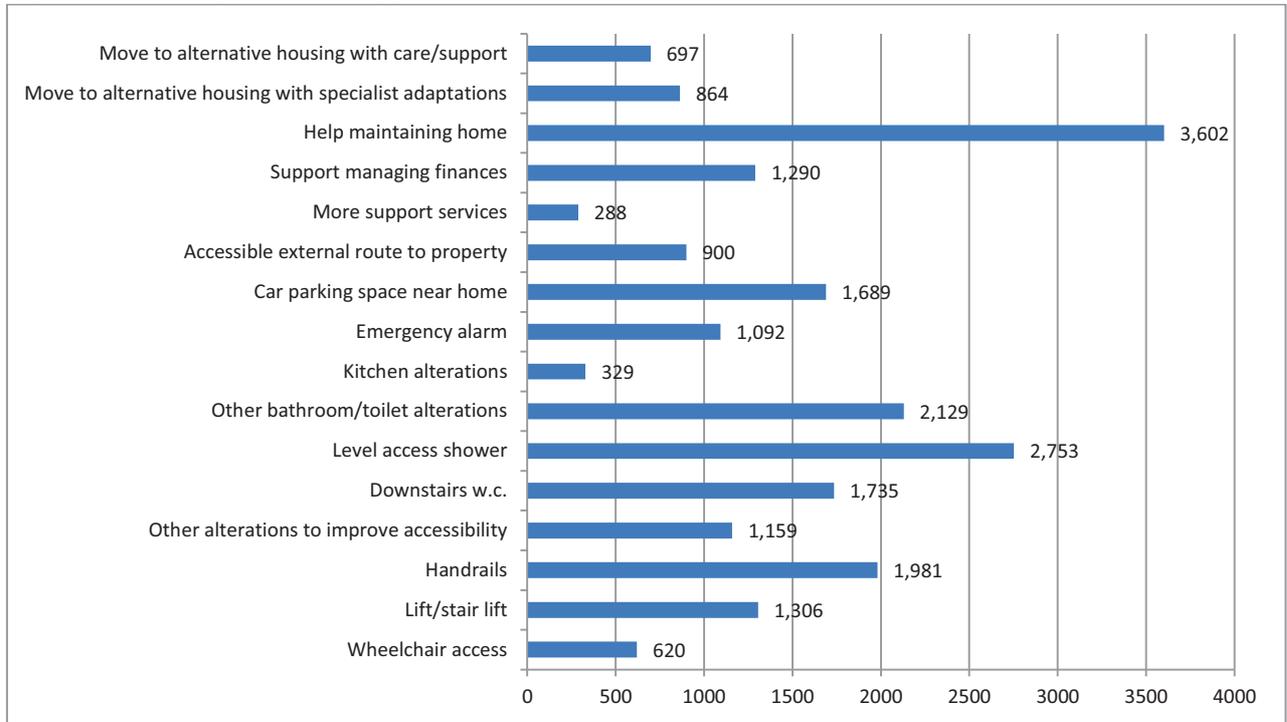
Figure 4.8 – Households containing someone with a support need



Respondents were asked to indicate whether there was a need for adaptations to their existing accommodation or a need for additional support services, with the results illustrated in figure 4.9 below. The results show requirements for a wide range of adaptations or support with help maintaining the home, provision of a level access shower and other bathroom/toilet alterations being the most common. In the social rented sector the Council, working in partnership with Registered Providers, has been successful in clearing the backlog of requests for adaptations that

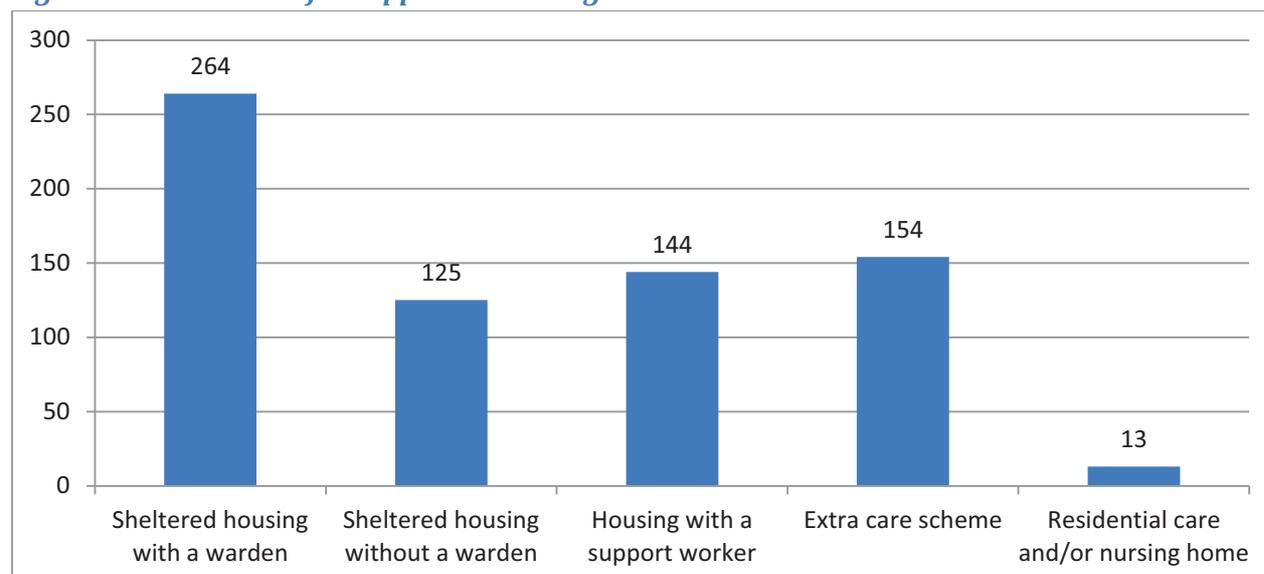
had built up over a number of years. However there remains a level of need in the owner occupied and private rented stock although the figures shown in 4.8 below need to be treated with a degree of caution since they are based on survey respondents' assessment of need rather than an assessment by a qualified Occupational Therapist.

Figure 4.9 – Adaptations/support services needed



Demand for supported housing

The SHMA collected information about the moving intentions of households and, in particular, asked respondents who were seeking a move whether they would be seeking supported housing. The vast majority (over 90%) indicated that they would not, however, those that did anticipate moving to supported housing expressed a preference for sheltered housing with a warden, as indicated in figure 4.10.

Figure 4.10 – Demand for supported housing

These figures must be viewed with some caution as whilst the postal survey did provide definitions of the different types of housing, the subtle differences may not have been fully understood. It is interesting to note, however, that demand for extra care accommodation evidenced through the SHMA, at 154, is significantly higher than that found by the last Housing Needs Survey undertaken in 2006, perhaps reflecting a growing awareness of this type of supported housing. This is not dissimilar to the estimate produced in 2008 by Tribal Consulting which looked at the potential demand for extra care based on care homes admissions and those in receipt of significant community care packages.

The Tribal study estimated an immediate demand for 137 additional units of extra care, rising to 196 in 2017. The study was based on 2008 based population projections which have turned out to underestimate the numbers of older people in Halton compared to the 2011 based population forecasts.

Updating the population assumptions in the Tribal study produces a revised demand estimate of 199 units in 2011, rising to 272 in 2021, which reduce to 112 and 185 when existing extra care provision is netted off. Fuel Poverty

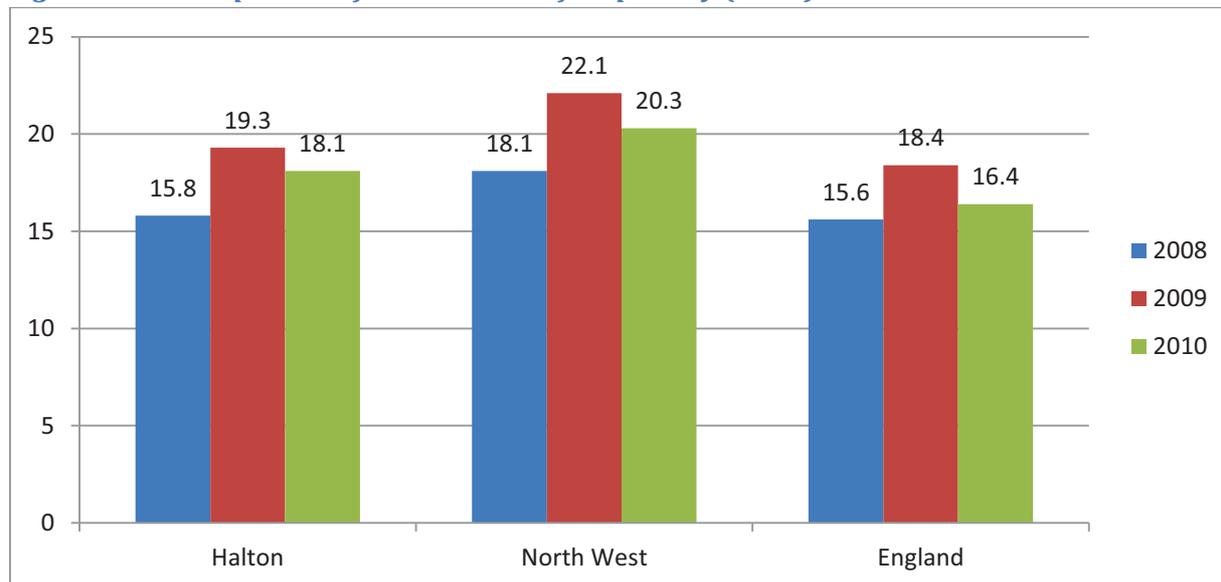
The current definition of fuel poverty deems that a household is in fuel poverty if it must spend more than 10% of its income on maintaining a satisfactory heating regime. Whether a household is in fuel poverty or not is determined by the interaction of a number of factors, notably:

- The energy efficiency of the property;
- The cost of energy;
- Household income;
- The size of the property relative to the number of adults in the household.

Latest figures from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (2010) suggest that approximately 18.1% of households in Halton are in fuel poverty, equating to 9,420 households. This proportion is lower than the regional figure but higher than national levels, as illustrated in figure 4.11, which also shows the steep rise in the proportions of households in fuel poverty from 2008 to 2009, equating to

over 1,800 households. This is likely to be due to the impact of rising fuel costs at a time when income levels have remained static, or in some cases fallen. Current levels are likely to be higher still due to significant increases in fuel costs since 2009.

Figure 4.11 – Proportion of households in fuel poverty (DECC)



The geographical distribution of fuel poverty reveals that low value areas containing high proportions of private sector housing (e.g. Appleton, Ditton and parts of Heath, Kingsway and Mersey wards) have higher levels of fuel poverty (between 25% and 35% of households). It is interesting to note that despite relatively lower income levels, levels of fuel poverty in the Runcorn New Town estates are not as high as might be expected. This is likely to be due to the relative age of the housing stock and the impact of improvement programmes to bring homes up to the Decent Homes Standard.

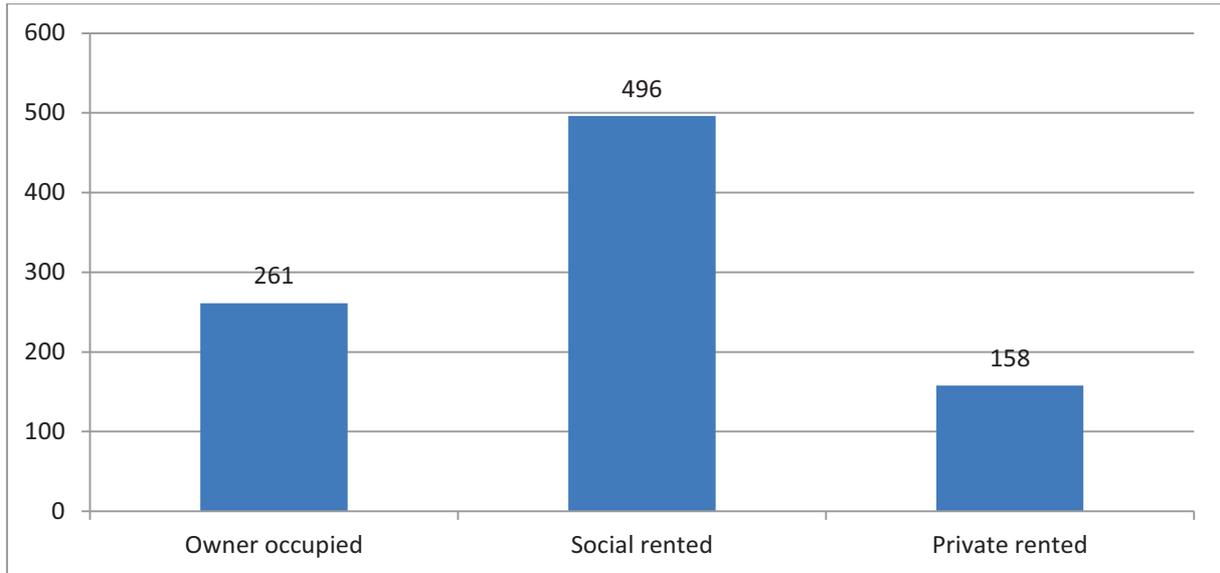
Space issues

Overcrowding

Findings from the Halton SHMA indicate that around 915 households (1.7% of all households) are classed as overcrowded using the bedroom standard (the most commonly accepted method of assessing overcrowding). Data from the Survey of English Housing (SEH) suggests that nationally levels of overcrowding stand at 3.0%.

There are a disproportionate number of households classed as overcrowded living in rented accommodation as shown in figure 4.12 below, where proportions exceed 3% of households in both social rented and private rented sectors compared to less than 1% of owner occupied accommodation.

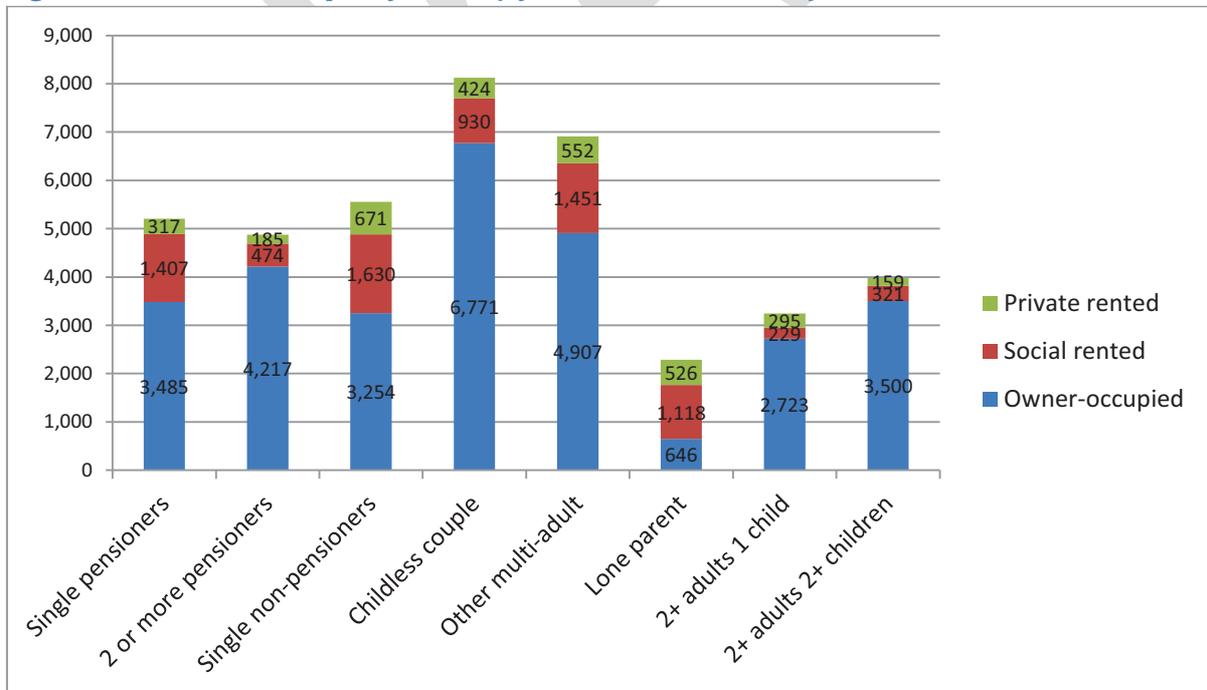
Figure 4.12 – Number of households living in overcrowded accommodation



Underoccupation

Figure 4.13 illustrates the number of people underoccupying their accommodation by at least one bedroom (using the bedroom standard) by tenure and by type of household. Underoccupancy levels are around 54% for owner occupied and social rented stock but are higher (62%) for households living in the private rented sector.

Figure 4.13 – Underoccupancy levels (by 1 or more bedrooms)



As might be expected, single person and couple households are more likely to underoccupy their accommodation, however, it is interesting to note that 5,679 non pensioner households underoccupy social rented accommodation. It is likely that a sizeable proportion of these

households claim Housing Benefit and will, therefore, lose some of this benefit as a result of the underoccupancy penalty to be introduced in April 2013 as part of the Welfare Reform Act.

Impact of welfare reform

Part two of this evidence paper described the changes to Housing Benefit and Local Housing Allowance as a result of the Welfare Reform Act. Using information from the Council's Housing Benefit department and the SHMA it is possible to estimate the number of households who will be affected by the changes, as follows:

Change	Estimated number of households affected	Extent of impact
Introduction of Universal Credit	104 cases identified by HB as to be potentially "capped"	Total payments capped at £26,000 – loss of income for some households very significant (as much as £500 per week) Housing Benefit is first to be capped Payments made direct to claimant – possible increase in rent arrears and homelessness. Monthly payments could cause budgeting issues for households
Replacement of Disability Living Allowance with Personal Independence Payment (PIP)	It is estimated that 10,600 Halton residents claim DLA	The change to PIP will involve a reduction in the numbers of those receiving financial assistance. Claimants could be put off by face to face interview. Those receiving low rate care element unlikely to qualify. Losing DLA will result in loss of disability premiums awarded as part of other benefits.
Replacement of Incapacity Benefit with Employment Support Allowance	Exact numbers are unknown but Halton has a disproportionate amount of people claiming Incapacity Benefit	ESA is designed to reduce the number of people who are classified as unable to work. A large proportion of appeals to date have been successful, however, there is a very long wait for appeals (up to 12 months)
Extension of the Single Room Rent Allowance to 35	234	£37.61 reduction in weekly LHA entitlement
Underoccupancy penalty	SHMA suggests this may affect: 2,311 under occupying by one bedroom, 725 under occupying by 2 bedrooms 92 under occupying by 3 bedrooms	Those under-occupying their social housing property by one-bedroom to lose 14% of their HB and those under-occupying by two or more bedrooms to lose 25%.

The figures above show the extent to which Halton's households are likely to be impacted by welfare reforms. The implications of these changes for some of Halton's households and for the organisations who support them are likely to be significant. The expected impacts include an increase in rent arrears as households struggle to balance household budgets which could, in turn, put pressure on landlords to take action in order to minimise a build up of arrears. Registered Providers in Halton have been pro active in engaging with tenants who are likely to be affected and in many cases have expanded their in house financial support services available to ensure that their tenants are fully prepared for the changes.

There are also potential impacts for Council services resulting from a potential increase in homelessness applications and need for temporary accommodation including Bed and Breakfast (the costs of which are considered on the next page) and in demand for welfare benefits advice.

The impacts are likely to be further compounded by the localisation of Council Tax from April 2013 which will require some households who previously received 100% Council Tax benefit to make a contribution to accommodate a 10% reduction in Government funding and the transfer of the Social Fund from Department for Work and Pensions to local Councils which will also reduce the amount of funding available for Crisis Loans and Community Care Grants. The scheme will also replace cash payments to claimants with alternative forms of payment e.g. vouchers.

Homelessness

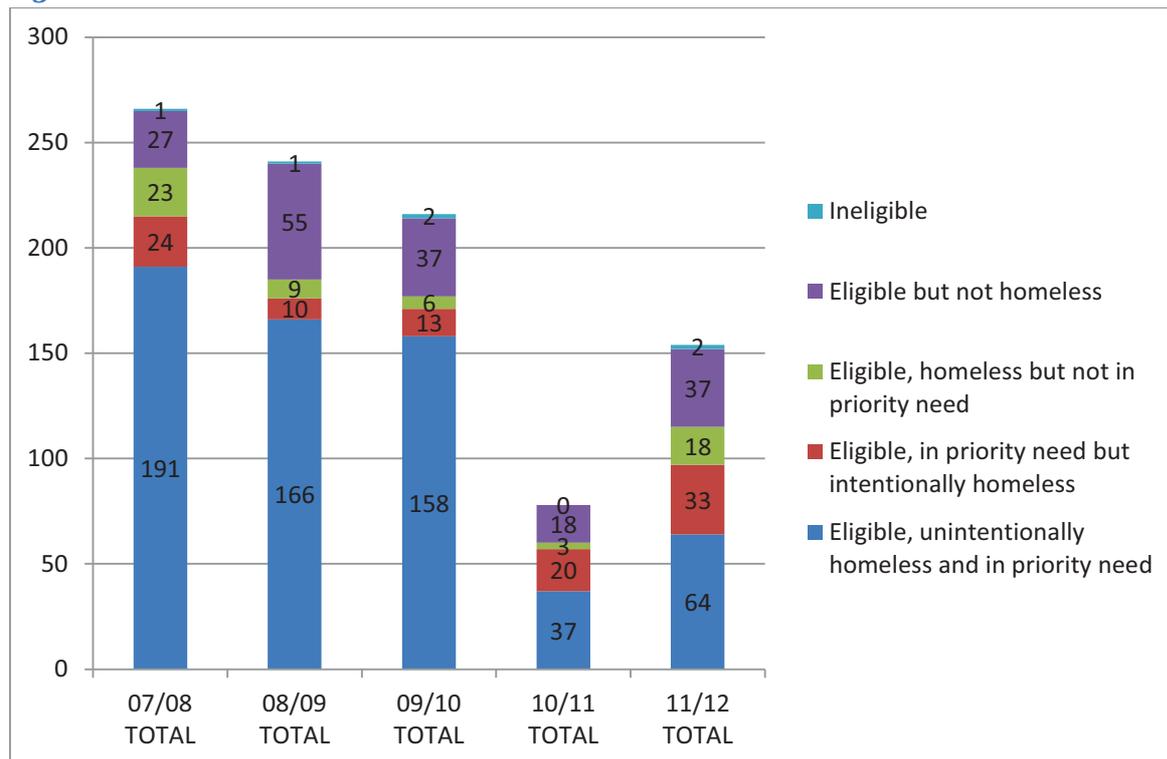
Levels of homelessness

In common with other local authority areas, homelessness in Halton is on the increase. In 2011/12, 154 households applied to the authority as homeless compared to 78 for the whole of 2010/11. Of these 154 households, 64 were found to be unintentionally homeless and in priority need compared to 37 in 2010/11. Almost half of those accepted as statutorily homeless in 2011/12 were single women with at least one child and 35% in this period were between the ages of 16 and 24. Generally only a small number of ethnic minority households apply as homeless (4 in 2011/12), however, this is in keeping with the low proportions of ethnic minorities living in Halton.

Trends

Figure 4.14 illustrates changes in levels of homelessness over the last 5 years. It shows how homelessness has increased in 2011/12 compared with the previous year but also how 2010/11 had seen a very significant decrease on the three years before that. Total applications in 2007/08 were over three times as high as the number of applications in 2010/11. This is almost entirely due to the success of the authority's preventative approach to homelessness which is described in more detail below.

Figure 4.14 - Homelessness trends

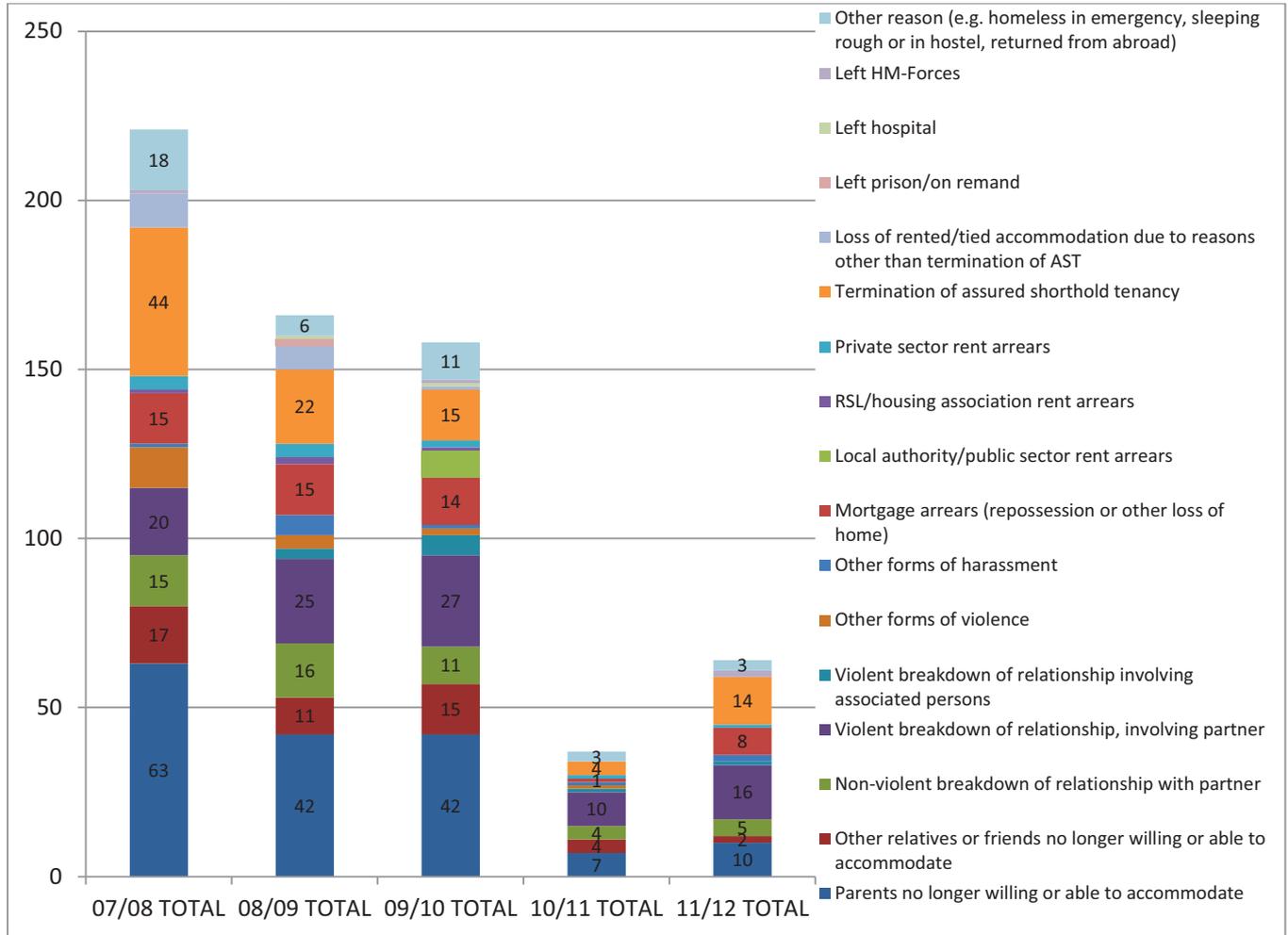


Reasons

Figure 4.15 below illustrates the reasons behind homelessness and how these have changed over time, largely as a result of the preventative work referred to above. In particular, the number of households made homeless as a result of parents or others no longer willing or able to accommodate has reduced by 87%. While there have also been decreases in homelessness for other reasons, it is worrying to note that the main reason for statutory homelessness is domestic violence affecting 15 households so far in 2011/12, however this could reflect the increased need for crisis intervention and less opportunity for preventative work.

The termination of assured shorthold tenancies is the second biggest reason for homelessness in 2011/12, the numbers having trebled on the previous year. These trends are perhaps indicative of the current economic climate and, possibly, the impact of impending welfare reform which could encourage private landlords to evict tenants who are claiming Housing Benefit in favour of those who are working.

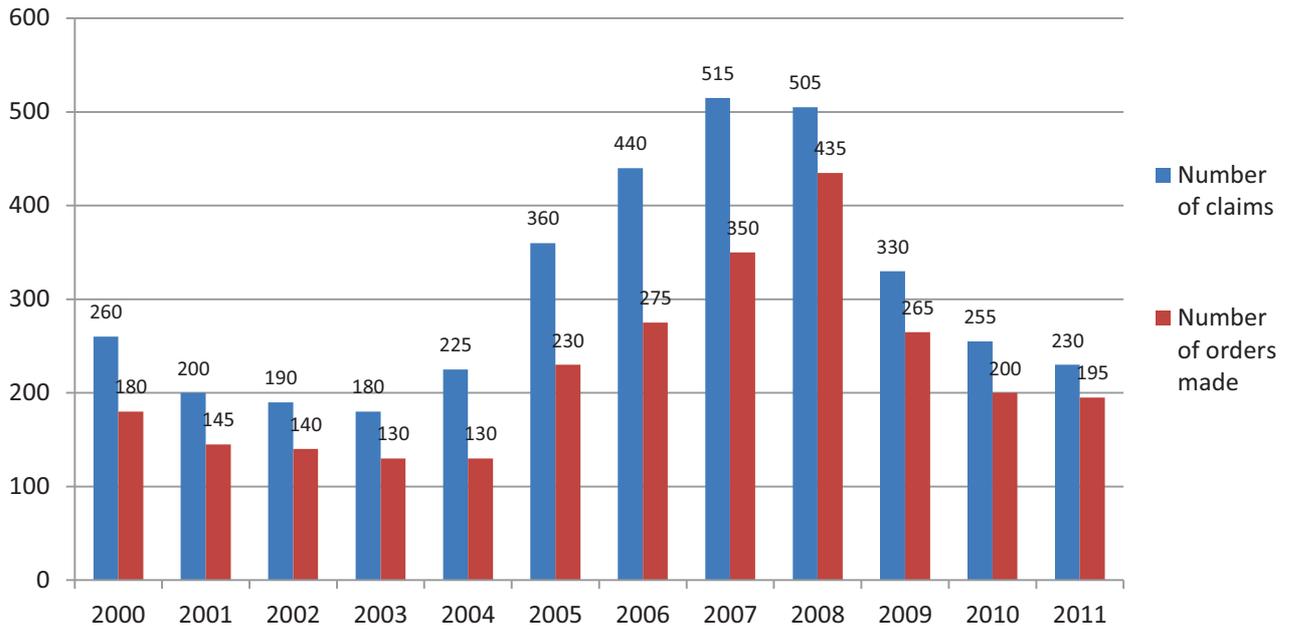
Figure 4.15 – Reasons for homelessness



Repossessions

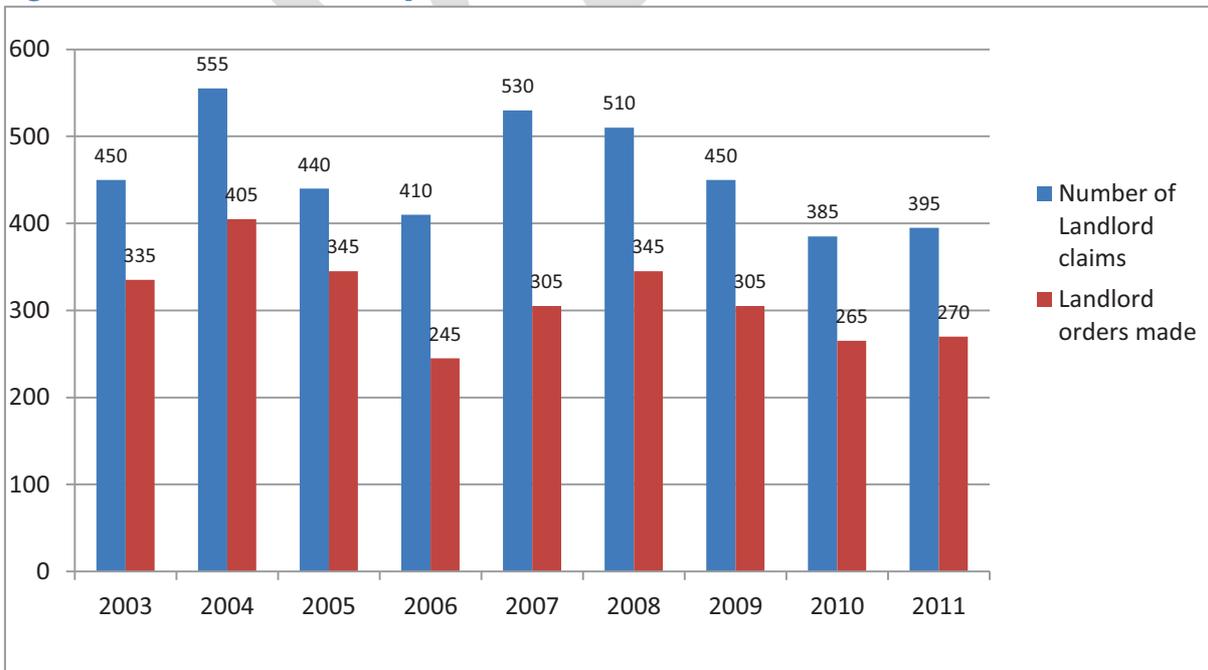
Much work has been done over recent years to stem the rise in repossessions and the number of orders granted has decreased by 55% from a peak in 2008, as illustrated by figure 4.16. The number of repossession claims and orders in 2011 was lower than they were in the years leading up to economic downturn.

Figure 4.16 – Annual mortgage possession claims and orders made



The number of landlord possessions has also been in decline, as illustrated in figure 4.17 below. However, figures for 2011, reveal that the number of claims submitted and orders made has started to creep back up, which is consistent with the increase in homelessness caused by termination of Assured Shorthold Tenancies for the same period.

Figure 4.17 – Annual landlord possession claims and orders made



Costs of homelessness

According to figures released by the Department for Communities and Local Government the average cost to the local authority of statutory homelessness is £5,500 per household. This compares to an estimated cost of preventing homelessness of £500 per household as illustrated in the table below.

	What's involved	Approximate costs
Statutory homelessness	Single person presenting as homeless on the day would warrant a full homeless assessment consisting of; Housing Solutions Adviser time Temporary Accommodation Provision Homeless investigation – contacting relevant agencies etc. to clarify information submitted Homeless Decision If accepted, securing suitable accommodation to discharge homeless duty	£5,500
Prevention	Single person threatened with homelessness (ordered to leave within period of time) Prevention assessment Prevention options offered to client – BGS, Prevention fund, Negotiation with parents / landlord to sustain tenancy.	£500

The Council started to develop its preventative approach (examined in more detail below) in 2007/8. At that time the Council regularly temporarily placed homeless households in bed and breakfast accommodation to fulfil its interim duty to accommodate households while investigations were taking place. This practice has virtually ceased due to the wide range of prevention measures the authority now uses. As an example in April 2008 to August 2008 bed and breakfast costs to the authority were £133,252. Costs for the same period in 2012 were nil.

The costs associated with the various prevention options available are as follows:

Prevention option	Average cost
Bond Guarantee Fund	£500
Prevention fund (assists with deposits, minor repairs, rent arrears etc)	Up to £500
G.I.F.T (Furniture incentive scheme for 18-25 year olds)	£100
Discretionary Housing Benefit – HB payment to assist clients experiencing financial difficulties etc.	£10 to £25 per week for an agreed period of time
Mortgage Rescue Scheme – Assist tenants and homeowners to remain within their homes	Up to £3,000
No second night Out – Halton is one of the six sub regional authorities to sign up to the service to tackle rough sleeping.	Externally funded

Prevention

Figure 4.18 illustrates the authority’s success at preventing homelessness and enabling potentially homeless people to remain in their current home as reported to the CLG as part of the local authority’s P1E return. As shown the main measure used is crisis intervention in the form of emergency support which over the last three years has helped prevent homelessness for over 600 families.

Figure 4.18 - Homelessness prevention measures – household able to remain in current home

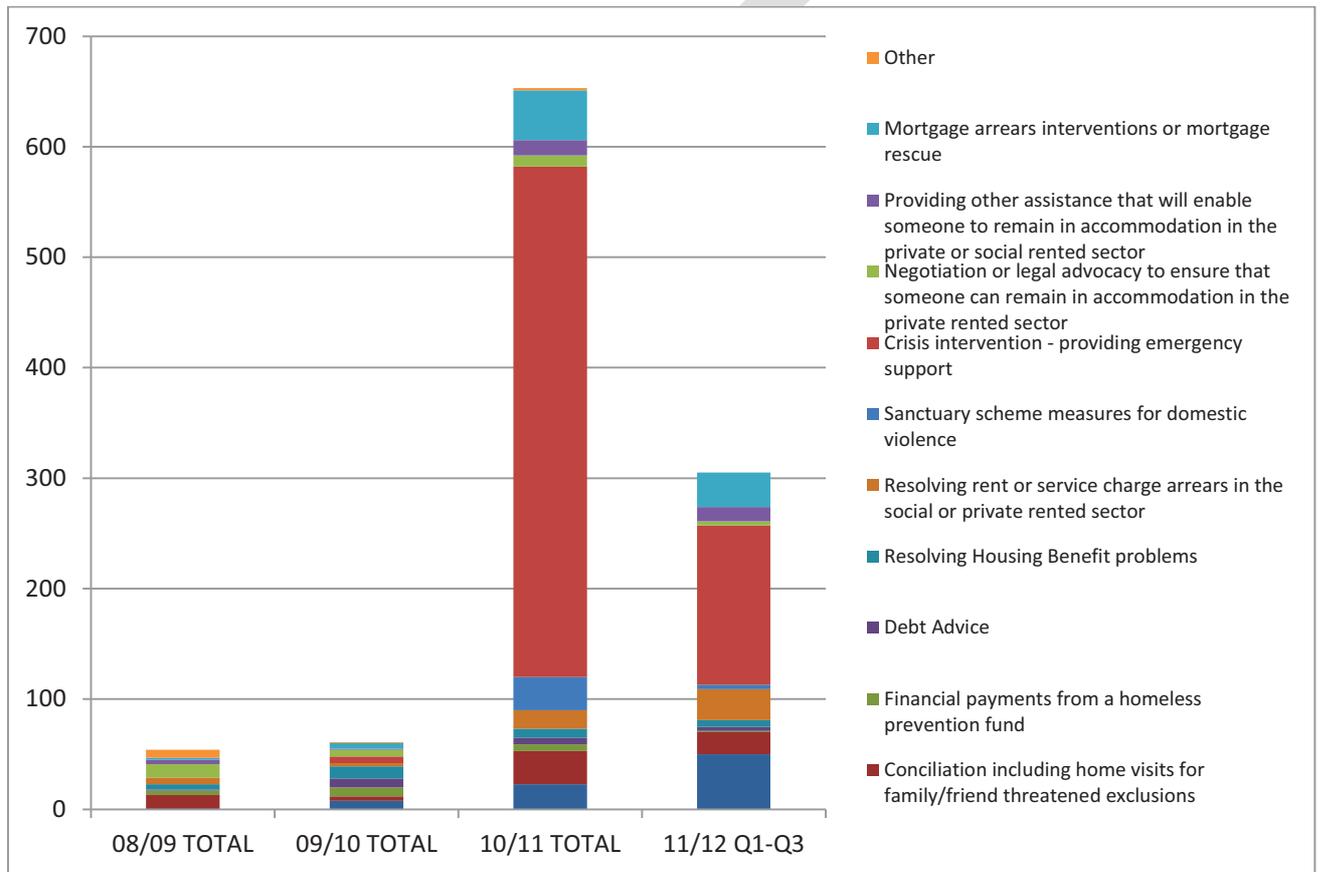
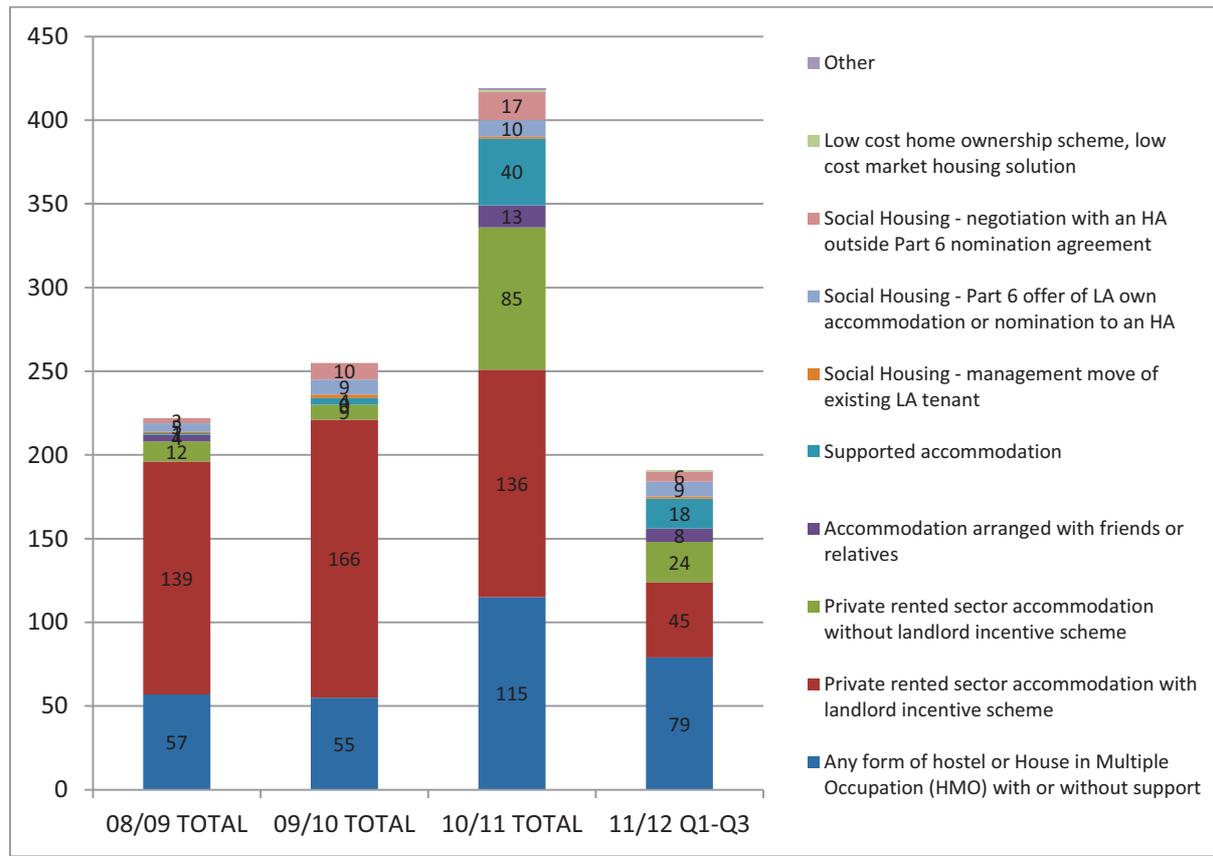


Figure 4.19 below details the prevention measures that have necessitated a move to alternative accommodation. It illustrates the success of the Bond Guarantee Scheme and the relationship the authority has developed with accredited private landlords in providing alternative accommodation for potentially homeless people. It also demonstrates the role that providers of supported housing schemes play in alleviating homelessness.

Figure 4.19 – Homelessness prevention measures – household assisted to obtain alternative accommodation



Rough sleeping

Halton participates in the annual Cheshire rough sleepers count. Despite rigorous searches of likely sleeping places, to date, no actual rough sleepers have been encountered on the night of the counts. This is not to say that rough sleeping does not occur in the Borough, merely that the annual snapshot has not uncovered a problem to date.

The Housing Needs of specific groups

Introduction

A model to assess the housing needs of specific client groups was developed by the now disestablished regional assembly (known latterly as 4NW). The specific accommodation based needs for each client group are illustrated in figure 4.20 below. The model points clearly to a substantial need for specialist accommodation for older people, particularly the frail elderly. However, the model should be treated as indicative only and not as a definitive statement of need. For example the Council's Accessible Homes Register provides detailed information on the number of disabled awaiting suitably adapted housing and the type of housing they need. This is shown at figure 4.21 below. The Council has responded to this identified need and at the time of writing plans to develop a 100 units of extra care housing in Halton are well advanced.

Other vulnerable groups identified as having unmet accommodation needs are single homeless people, people with mental health issues and those with drug and alcohol problems. There is also a

need to review accommodation provision for adults with learning disabilities in terms of the suitability and accessibility of current provision and a need to develop a planned approach to moving to independent, supported accommodation for those living with ageing parents or in unsuitable housing.

Figure 4.20 – Accommodation based support needs

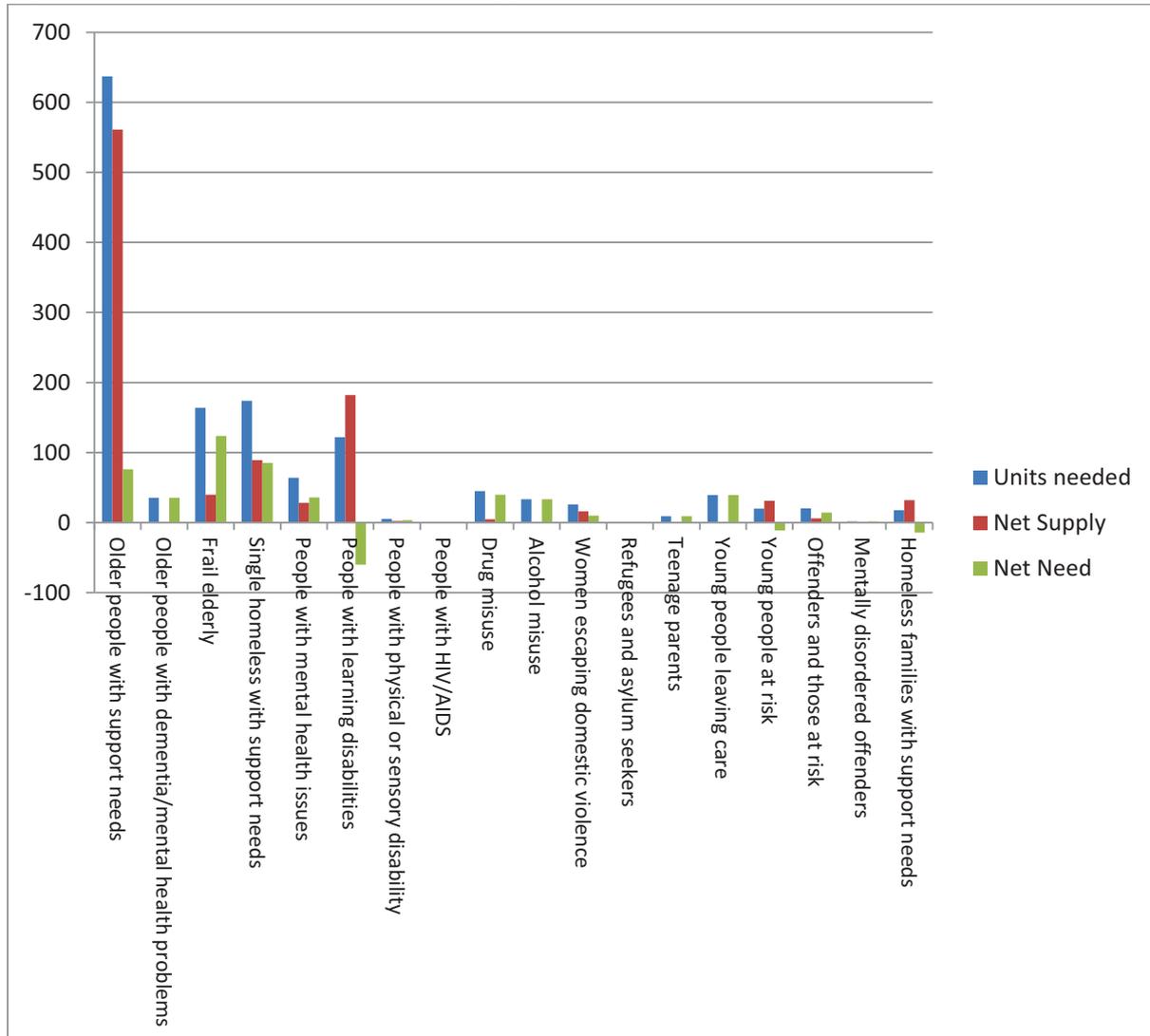
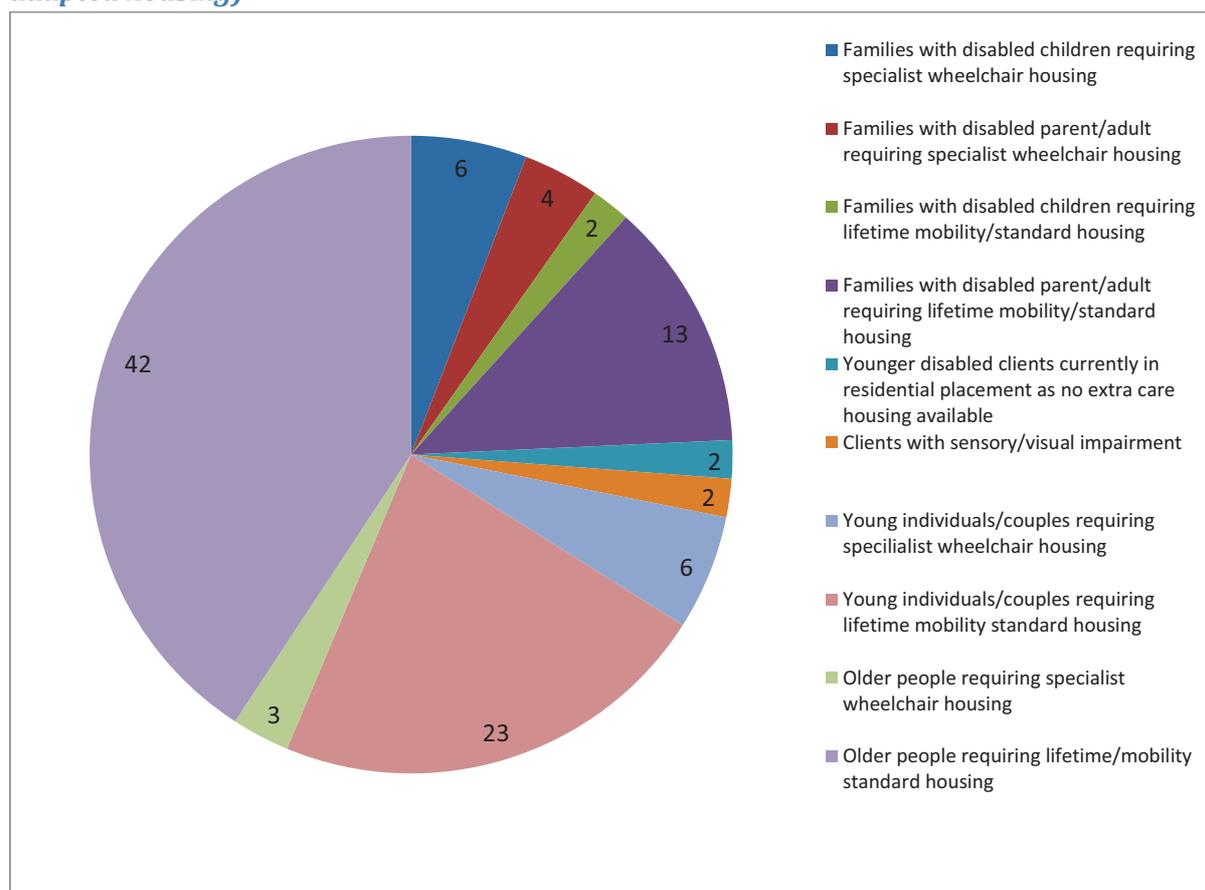


Figure 4.21 – Halton BC Accessible Homes Register (number of clients awaiting suitably adapted housing)



Gypsies and Travellers

Halton has two Council owned Gypsy and Traveller sites. The well-established Riverview site at Widnes has 23 permanent pitches, including a pitch for the resident warden. The site underwent substantial refurbishment in 2008. In 2009, the authority’s first transit site was opened in Runcorn offering 14 pitches. There are also two authorised privately run sites, and a third site operating under a temporary planning permission. This gives a current total of approximately 56 pitches in Halton.

Under the Housing Act 2004 all Councils have a statutory duty to undertake periodic assessments of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show People in their area. The last assessment, which was undertaken by University of Salford’s Housing and Urban Studies Unit (SHUSU) in 2007, was a sub regional assessment involving all Cheshire authorities and St Helens. It found a need for between 28 and 32 additional pitches in Halton, which equates to a third of the total need identified for the Cheshire Partnership area. The authority has gone some way to meet this need through the subsequent development of a transit site.

As well as the statutory duty to undertake periodic needs assessments, new Government Guidance in “Planning Policy for Traveller Sites” (DCLG: March 2012) requires local authorities to maintain a five year deliverable supply of residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers sufficient to meet the identified need within their development plan documents. In preparation for this, the Cheshire

Partnership plans to update its need assessment in 2013. The assessment will include travelling showperson sites.

The Homes and Communities Agency had recently awarded £850k to the Council to develop a further 12 pitch site which will make a significant contribution to meeting existing identified needs.

Older People

The SHMA provides further details on people over the state retirement age prevailing at the time the survey was completed. In particular, the study used demographic modelling to predict changes in the population of older people. It estimated an increase of 6,000 households made up solely of people of pensionable age between 2010 and 2026, increasing the proportion of older person households from 23% to 30% as illustrated in figure 4.22.

Figure 4.22 - Growth in older person households 2010 - 2026



Clearly, this increase will have significant implications for housing provision and related care and support services. The SHMA recommends that the local authority ensure that housing strategies and policies meet the needs of older people by:

- Ensuring that an appropriate percentage of new housing supply will meet the needs of older people and their carers in terms of size, location and design;
- Improving the condition of existing properties so that older people have homes which are warm and secure;
- Working with others to ensure flexible and tailored support for those who need it.

These issues will be addressed through the development of an Older Persons Commissioning Strategy planned for 2013. This will include services to older persons in Halton – including an older persons housing strategy.

Consultation question 4: Does this part of the evidence paper give an adequate overview of households living in Halton? Are there any other relevant issues which have not been covered?

Part Four – Halton’s Services

Homelessness Services

Homelessness Prevention

The Council’s Housing Solutions Team deals with cases of statutory homelessness but the focus of its work is on preventing homelessness from occurring. A wide range of preventative services are offered, including:

Mediation

As already described family breakdown is a primary cause of homelessness, often arising from problems between parents and adult children. Therefore, Housing Solutions work closely with families to re-establish relationships and enable the young person to continue living in the family home where this is appropriate. In April 2011, Housing Solutions received Government funding to recruit a dedicated Young Persons Officer to deal specifically with 16 and 17 year olds and enable a more focussed effort on this kind of work. In 2010/11 the Officer dealt with 97 advice cases, preventing homelessness in 58 cases and in 2011/12 the Officer prevented 55 young people from becoming homeless from a total caseload of 75.

Supported Lodgings (Nightstop)

The Nightstop service has developed a supported lodgings scheme providing very short-term accommodation for young people together with a mediation service which aims to resolve issues which have led to the breakdown in family relationships. The accommodation is provided by a volunteer host family – a network of volunteer hosts have been recruited to ensure appropriate placements are available for young people, whilst more suitable short-term housing is found or until mediation leads to the young person returning to the family home.

Domestic Abuse Sanctuary Scheme

This scheme enables victims of domestic abuse to remain in their home by fitting enhanced security measures where it is safe to do so, is the victim’s choice and the perpetrator does not live in the accommodation. The sanctuary measures required are based on individual needs and include repaired, reinforced or replacement doors, hinges and windows, door and window lock and alarms and security lighting. The Council is currently working with partner agencies to develop a Halton Sanctuary Scheme with Registered Providers taking responsibility for the installation of sanctuary measures within their properties and the Council funding sanctuary measures within private sector properties. Halton also has a refuge for women fleeing domestic violence managed by Women’s Aid.

Bond Guarantee Scheme

In an effort to increase prevention of homelessness, a Rent Deposit Scheme was launched in 2007. The scheme was developed to assist homeless individuals and families to access private rented sector (PRS) accommodation by providing the deposit required by landlords. The scheme was very successful but costly so was changed in 2009 to become a Bond Guarantee Scheme (BGS). The

scheme now provides the written promise of the deposit amount should it be required at the end of the tenancy. BGS allows the Council to assist more households into the PRS as no funds are released unless the landlord has reason to claim on the bond for rent arrears or property damage.

For each bond that is provided, there is a written agreement in place, which the tenant, landlord and Council all sign up to. It sets out what the bond can/cannot be used for and makes clients aware that they are responsible for the bond and will be invoiced for any reasonable claim, which ensures they are accountable for their own conduct during the tenancy. The agreement also details the importance of the client saving for their own deposit to eventually replace the need for the bond guarantee.

Of the 328 tenancies created since the introduction of the BGS in 2009, 67% are ongoing, 15% ended without a claim and 18% ended with the bond being claimed (either in part or in full). In the early days of the BGS the criteria was very loosely applied and nearly 100% of those who applied for a bond were granted one. Since this time the criteria has been tightened and therefore, the number of bonds granted has decreased. The decrease in Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates has also affected the scheme as it is now more difficult for households to find affordable accommodation in the private rented sector.

In 2010/11, 75% of claims on bonds were either partly or wholly due to rent arrears. In an effort to reduce this, changes to the scheme's processes were made. Applications for direct payment of housing benefit to the landlord were increased (since April 2011 72% of all BGS tenancies had direct payments secured) and greater restrictions were placed on the amount of shortfall clients were permitted.

Mortgage support

The current economic climate has led to an increased number of people finding themselves in mortgage difficulty. In response to this, Halton established a Repossessions Action Plan and Working Group to bring together the work of various agencies in the borough in preventing repossessions. Housing Solutions also has a dedicated Mortgage Rescue Adviser who since January 2010, has provided tailored advice to 187 households and as a result 94 cases were prevented from repossession.

Home Essentials Fund

The lack of furniture and essential equipment can make people reluctant to move from temporary accommodation and can contribute to abandonment of new tenancies. In Halton, this is particularly the case for younger people. In an effort to help towards the cost of setting up a new home, the Council has established a Home Essentials Fund, which those aged 16-25 can access if they have become unintentionally homeless and have been provided temporary accommodation in one of the borough's hostels. The Council will purchase items (up to a total value of £300) from a set list on behalf of the customer to help towards the costs of fully furnishing their new home when they move on.

Since June 2011, 10 young people moving on from hostel accommodation have been provided with essential home items, including microwaves, toasters, bedding and cookery items up to a total value of £300.

Housing Solutions advise or refer customers to other organisations for advice on a range of tenancy sustainment issues to ensure early intervention in the homelessness risk process. In the midst of the current economic climate, one of the key services is that of advice and assistance on debt, welfare rights and money management issues (which are provided in the most part by the Council's own Welfare Rights Service and the Citizens' Advice Bureau. In addition, individual Housing Associations offer services to their own tenants).

The Council's Welfare Rights Service acts as a buffer to homelessness presentations by providing both a preventive and reactive service. The team provides both welfare benefits and debt advice to a specialist level. In terms of debt provision, advice is given from basic debt negotiation through to attending court possession hearings. With regard to income maximisation, the team will carry out simple benefit checks, some form completion and, if people are wrongly refused benefits, assistance with reconsiderations and appeals is offered. Particularly with regard to disability benefits, benefit decisions are often incorrect and in the last financial year, 187 appeals were attended with an 84% success rate. The team also provides a specialist service, funded through MacMillan Cancer Support, to people suffering from Cancers and their immediate families and carers.

Service developments

Following an internal review of the Housing Solutions service undertaken late in 2011, the authority is currently changing the way it delivers homelessness services so that customers can now receive appropriate advice and assistance at the point of initial contact rather than having to wait for an appointment with a Housing Solutions Advisor.

No Second Night Out

Halton is participating in the Liverpool City Region No Second Night Out project. Utilising funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government, the project aims to ensure that by the end of 2012 no one will live on the streets of Liverpool City Region and no individual arriving on the streets for the first time will sleep out for more than one night. It plans to do this by providing a single contact point for reporting rough sleepers and developing a comprehensive menu of services for each local authority area so that tailored support can be offered to rough sleepers to assist them to come indoors. The service works directly with the Housing Solutions Service and external agencies to tackle and address rough sleeping.

Scrutiny review

Elected Members undertook a scrutiny review of Homelessness services in early 2012. The purpose of the review was to examine the provision of temporary accommodation in the Borough and review the extent to which it met housing need and provided value for money. There were a number of conclusions and recommendations arising from the review, the most significant of which was the need to rebalance provision of temporary accommodation for young, single homeless people across both sides of the Borough. This has resulted in the closure of the Runcorn based scheme Halton Goals. Plans to develop a 37 bedroom hostel on the Widnes side of the Borough by 2014 are underway.

Allocations

Choice Based Lettings (CBL)

Choice Based Lettings is a relatively new approach to allocating property, which gives homeseekers greater control over the property they are offered as it requires them to express an interest in homes which are advertised locally.

Halton is a partner in Liverpool City Region's sub regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme, Property Pool Plus. The scheme, which went live in Summer 2012, includes five local authority areas and 22 Registered Providers across the City Region. A common allocations policy has been agreed which uses a banding system to prioritise applications for rehousing. Each local authority partner has selected a delivery agent who will manage allocations and maintain the CBL waiting list on their behalf. Halton Housing Trust has been selected as the delivery agent locally and transitional arrangements to move applicants for rehousing from the waiting lists of local Providers to the new IT system are well underway.

It is hoped that Choice Based Lettings will offer a more transparent and streamlined service to households seeking social housing. Support arrangements are in place for households who may experience difficulty in adapting to the new system and "bids" and allocations will be closely monitored to ensure that no one group of people is unfairly disadvantaged.

Private Sector Housing

Housing Renewal

Historically the Council has allocated significant resources to housing renewal in the form of grants and loans for vulnerable homeowners. Since the last Strategy was published in 2008 784 households have received financial assistance from the Council to help improve their homes at a total investment of £2.441 million. However in the current financial climate regrettably there are no longer funds available to finance this work although funding for Disabled Facilities Grants continues to be available.

Energy Efficiency

Introduction

For a number of years the Council has worked in partnership with Energy Projects Plus, a local environmental charity, to deliver energy advice and assistance to Halton residents. Until recently, this has included the management of two locally developed initiatives: the Energy Zone scheme, which provided discounts for insulation works and HEARTH, which provided emergency heating for people with heart and respiratory conditions and which complemented the Health through Warmth Scheme described below. Unfortunately, due to the loss of the Regional Housing Pot which funded these schemes, they were discontinued in April 2011. However, the authority continues to work with Energy Projects Plus to maximise the benefits of national and regional schemes for Halton residents and to capitalize on funding opportunities, as described below.

Warm Front

The Government's Warm Front scheme provides heating and insulation measures for vulnerable households living in energy inefficient dwellings. The scheme comes to an end later this year and will be replaced with the Green Deal described below. Through the Halton Healthy Homes Network, the Council is promoting the scheme to residents to ensure that those who are eligible benefit from the scheme before it comes to an end.

Green Deal

The Green Deal is essentially a framework which allows private companies to offer households energy efficiency improvements with no upfront costs, with the cost of the work recouped through savings in energy bills. The scheme, which is expected to be introduced in October 2012, could see firms such as B and Q or Marks and Spencer becoming Green Deal providers. Their role would be to offer a finance plan to the householder to pay the initial costs of the work which would be recommended by an accredited adviser and carried out by an accredited installer. The householder's contractual relationship, however, would be with the Green Deal Provider.

An essential element to Green Deal is that the expected financial savings are equal to or greater than the cost of the plan (this is known as The Golden Thread). It is, therefore, not suitable for all types of work or properties and, since, the plan is interest bearing, it may not be suitable for those on very low incomes.

However, the Council recognises the potential benefits of Green Deal for households who may not have qualified for means tested assistance and will work with Green Deal Providers and other organisations involved to promote the scheme. As an example, Halton has recently been awarded funding through the Government's City Deal programme to undertake energy efficiency improvements to two properties to act as Green Deal demonstrator projects through regular monitoring of energy savings resulting from the work.

Energy Company Obligation

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) will replace the existing Community Energy Savings Programme (CESP) and Carbon Emission Reduction Target (CERT) managed by energy companies in 2013.

Unlike the Green Deal, which requires households to pay for the measures over time, ECO places an obligation on gas and electricity suppliers to achieve energy savings through a smaller range of measures and expects them to subsidise or fully meet the cost of these measures. There are three elements to ECO which have different eligibility criteria as outlined below.

ECO Carbon Saving

This element of ECO is a grant available to any household requiring solid wall insulation or cavity wall insulation that requires additional work to allow the insulation to be installed ("hard to treat cavity wall insulation"). The grant amount will vary across different suppliers but is expected to be mixed together with Green Deal finance to meet the total cost of the work. Other measures such as glazing, draughtproofing or replacement external doors can be added to the improvement package and may attract additional grant from the supplier.

ECO Affordable Warmth

This element of ECO is a grant available to private sector households in receipt of qualifying benefits. Measures eligible for the grant include loft and cavity wall insulation, insulation for solid walls and rooms in the roof, replacement glazing, new and replacement heating systems and renewable energy heating measures. The government plans to extend the current data sharing agreement between benefits agencies and utilities to enable eligible households to be targeted directly to encourage take up.

ECO Carbon Saving Communities (CSCO)

This element of ECO is a grant, aimed at reducing fuel poverty, that is available to any household within designated low income areas (those lower layer super output areas, LSOAs, identified as the lowest ranked 15% within the Indices of Multiple Deprivation). Halton has 33 such areas within its boundaries. To tackle rural fuel poverty CSCO can also be offered to households in receipt of qualifying benefits who live in rural communities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants. Measures included in CSCO include loft and cavity wall insulation, insulation for solid walls and rooms in the roof, replacement glazing, new and replacement heating systems and draughtproofing.

Health through Warmth

The Health Through Warmth (HTW) scheme was set up by npower in 2000 in partnership with the NHS and National Energy Action (NEA). HTW operates through a locally based referral partnership which seeks to help vulnerable people whose health is adversely affected by cold, damp living conditions. This is achieved by facilitating the installation of appropriate energy efficiency and heating measures, along with the provision of related advice and information.

Clients are referred by health and other key community workers who have attended locally based awareness sessions offered by HTW. HTW Merseyside (including Halton), delivered by Energy Projects Plus, commenced in late 2003 and to date has received over 4,800 referrals and secured over £4m in third party funding in addition to over £0.5m from npower's crisis fund. Key partners are the health sector, local authorities, and community support frontline staff who attend an awareness session and refer into the HTW scheme. Over 1,000 frontline staff have attended awareness sessions, though not all have made referrals into the referral system.

Warm Homes, Healthy People

Halton Borough Council was awarded funding under the Department of Health's Warmer Homes, Healthy People programme to support vulnerable residents through the winter of 2011/12. The funding enabled two energy efficiency programmes to be offered to residents. The Emergency Heat Scheme provided emergency heating systems and repairs for residents and the Heat Aware scheme enabled tailored advice on reading meters and understanding heating controls and energy bills to be delivered within resident's homes. The funding was also used to establish and launch the Halton Healthy Homes Network described below.

Halton Healthy Homes Network

The Halton Healthy Homes Network was officially launched at an event held on Wednesday 22nd February 2012 at Stobart Stadium, Widnes. The event was a great success and the Network now boasts 80 members from a number of different organisations including the council and many of its

partners in the statutory and voluntary sectors and community groups. The aim of the Network is to increase awareness of the health implications of poor housing and fuel poverty so that front line staff from the council and partner organisations and community advocates are able to identify those at risk and signpost them to organisations who can offer appropriate assistance.

Membership is open to anyone with an interest in tackling poor housing conditions and reducing levels of fuel poverty in Halton – frontline staff, managers, elected members and community representatives are all encouraged to join. The network is virtual and communication is mostly sustained via email. It is intended that the Network will continue to develop and in time become the main communication source and delivery vehicle for partnership working relating to housing conditions and fuel poverty. Initially it will have a key role to play in ensuring that relevant front line staff and community advocates are fully aware of the Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation.

Affordable Warmth Strategy

Halton's Affordable Warmth Strategy was developed in 2010 with the assistance of National Energy Action and Energy Projects Plus. A wide range of statutory and voluntary organisations were also involved in the development of the Strategy. The Strategy has five main aims:

- To raise awareness and understanding of fuel poverty;
- Establish effective referral systems amongst agencies in Halton;
- Improve the housing stock so that it is affordably warm;
- Maximise incomes and improve access to affordable fuel;
- Ensure co-ordination and monitoring of the Strategy.

Steady progress has been made in implementing the Strategy's Action Plan including providing fuel poverty training to front line staff, developing an e-learning training programme and introduction of web based information for householders. The development of the Halton Healthy Homes Network will, it is hoped, enable further progress to be made, particularly in relation to establishing referral systems, however, other aims e.g. improving the housing stock remain more of a challenge due to funding constraints.

Merseyside REECH scheme

Halton has been allocated European Regional Development Funding as part of the Merseyside REECH (Renewables and Energy Efficiency in Community Housing). This will enable external insulation/cladding to be installed at over 60 socially rented properties on the Castlefields estate in Runcorn. A key focus of the scheme is to develop the skills of local people to undertake such retrofit work.

In addition to the REECH scheme Registered Providers have accessed funding under the Community Energy Savings Project to deliver energy efficiency improvements to housing stock in Halton Brook, Grangeway and Ditton and Halton Housing Trust has developed renewable heating schemes in some of their properties in Runcorn. The Council is working with Providers to explore and maximise opportunities presented by the Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation.

Adaptations

Home Improvement Agency

The Halton Home Improvement Agency assists households whose homes are being adapted with the help of a Disabled Facilities Grant with a wide range of services, including:

- Providing a list of reputable local builders;
- Giving advice about housing options and conditions;
- Drawing up plans for the adaptation work;
- Liaising with contractors and others involved in carrying out and inspecting the work;
- Help to obtain other support services.

Registered Provider protocol

Historically tenants of social housing have had to wait longer for major housing adaptations from their landlord due to funding constraints. Recognising this inequality, the Council and Registered Providers reached an agreement in 2008 whereby the Council would provide additional financial help Providers to increase the number of tenants benefitting, and to reduce waiting times. A match funding approach was agreed with the Council paying 50% of the cost of the eligible adaptation work.

To encourage ease of participation by Providers the scheme has some flexibility and in particular the agreement offers two routes of organising and delivering the adaptations, either through the Provider or through the Council's Home Improvement Service. In the first two years the scheme has been running, over 200 properties have been adapted, and the Council plans to maintain this progress for the foreseeable future, albeit with reduced funding levels. In 2011/12, the fourth year of operation, twelve Providers had signed up to the joint funding agreement and those that have declined to date hold very little housing stock within the Borough meaning that the majority of social housing tenants in Halton requiring major adaptations should benefit from this funding. The agreements with Providers are due for renewal in April 2012 and it is the intention of the Council to renew these agreements, subject to the availability of resources.

Accessible Housing Service

The Accessible Housing Service aims to provide a link between the Council's Home Improvement & Independent Living Services and housing providers. It works in partnership with all Providers with stock in Halton to enable a better match for disabled applicants to accessible and adapted homes when they become available in the borough. This means that individuals do not have the disruption of adaptations being completed and at a time of increasing financial pressures nationally it is a better use of Council and Registered Provider resources. Disabled applicants of any age from all property tenures are assessed when they have applied for housing to any of the providers, and available void adapted properties are also assessed to try and match applicants to the accommodation best suited to their needs. It is intended that the service will eventually be integrated with the IT system for the sub regional Choice Based Lettings scheme.

Anti Social Behaviour

Halton's Community Safety Team responds to complaints of anti social behaviour and takes action against perpetrators where appropriate. They also work closely with Registered Providers of social housing to take an estate based approach to the issue. This approach as well as the introduction of a number of support services for young people has led to significant reductions in the number of incidents in recent years, particularly those perpetrated by young people. For example, in 2011/12 the total number of incidents fell by 12.43% on the previous year's figure while youth anti social behaviour fell by 19.6% in the same period. There has been a corresponding reduction in residents' perceptions that anti social behaviour is a problem as evidenced by a residents survey undertaken in October 2011. Whilst partnership working with Registered Providers and agencies like the Police have reduced anti social behaviour, the Council is not complacent and continues to work to reduce anti social behaviour across Halton.

Supported Housing

In recent years the Council has undergone a process of rationalising services to create efficiencies. This has involved ongoing reviews of service provision in line with the available budget to ensure that resources are focused on those most in need. Current priorities within Halton are the provision of appropriate supported housing for older people, people with physical disabilities and learning difficulties.

Partnership working

The Council has a strong track record of partnership working, both at a multi disciplinary level (through the Halton Strategic Partnership Board) and at a single issue, multi agency level. Examples of successful partnership working on housing issues include the following.

Halton Housing Partnership

Halton's Housing Partnership meets on a bi monthly basis and discusses a wide range of housing and related issues. The meetings are regularly attended by representatives of Providers with the largest stockholdings in Halton as well as a range of Council Officers with an interest in housing and the relevant Executive Board Members. The group is represented on the Halton Strategic Partnership Board to ensure a two way flow of information between the two groups. Recent and current issues being taken forward by the group include financial inclusion, the impact of welfare reform, particularly as a result of the underoccupation penalty and development of the Tenancy Strategy.

Strategic Housing Visioning Group

A review of the Halton Housing Partnership in Summer 2012 resulted in the formation of a new partnership between Halton Borough Council and Registered Providers to focus on high level, strategic issues, known as the Strategic Housing Visioning Group. The group has initially adopted three key themes to focus on:

- Housing and Economic Development
- Welfare Reform and Employment
- Health and Well Being

It is intended that the group will have a long term focus on contemporary and forthcoming developments affecting housing and will oversee the work of the more operationally focused Halton Housing Partnership.

Liverpool City Region (LCR) Housing and Spatial Planning Forum

As previously mentioned the LCR Housing and Spatial Planning Forum is a sub group of the Liverpool City Region Cabinet and advises the Cabinet on housing and spatial planning issues. The Forum, which is attended by the Portfolio Holder for Housing Strategy, meets on a bi monthly basis and was instrumental in the development of the Local Implementation Plan which will guide housing investment in the sub region and has also successfully delivered on joint projects related to empty homes, kickstarting stalled housing developments, energy efficiency for hard to treat properties and Choice Based Lettings.

Consultation question 5: Does this part of the Strategy give an adequate overview of housing and related services in Halton? Are there any other services that should be included?

DRAFT

Appendix One – related documents

Document	Contact
Affordable Housing SPD	Alasdair Cross alasdair.cross@halton.gov.uk 0151 511 7657
Affordable Warmth Strategy 2011-2015	Joanne Sutton joanne.sutton@halton.gov.uk 0151 511 8750
Choice Based Lettings (Property Pool Plus) Allocation Policy	Steve Williams steve.williams@halton.gov.uk 0151 511 8859
Core Strategy	Alasdair Cross alasdair.cross@halton.gov.uk 0151 511 7657
Corporate Plan 2011-2016	Lisa Driscoll Lisa.driscoll@halton.gov.uk 0151 511 8012
Design of Residential Development SPD	Alasdair Cross alasdair.cross@halton.gov.uk 0151 511 7657
Housing and Support Strategy for Adults with Learning Difficulties	Liz Gladwyn liz.gladwyn@halton.gov.uk 0151 511 8120
Homelessness Strategy 2009-2013 and Strategic Review of Homelessness in Halton 2008	Patricia Preston patricia.preston@halton.gov.uk 0151 511 8581
Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy	Available from www.gov.uk

for England 2011	
Mid-Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2011 Local Authority Report for Halton Borough Council	Joanne Sutton joanne.sutton@halton.gov.uk 0151 511 8750
Private Sector House Condition Survey 2009 Report	Joanne Sutton joanne.sutton@halton.gov.uk 0151 511 8750
Scrutiny Review of Homelessness Services 2011/12 Report	Patricia Preston patricia.preston@halton.gov.uk 0151 511 8581
Scrutiny Review of the Private Rented Sector 2012	Joanne Sutton joanne.sutton@halton.gov.uk 0151 511 8750
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	Alasdair Cross alasdair.cross@halton.gov.uk 0151 511 7657
Sustainable Community Strategy 2011-2026	Lisa Driscoll Lisa.driscoll@halton.gov.uk 0151 511 8012
Tenancy Strategy	Joanne Sutton joanne.sutton@halton.gov.uk 0151 511 8750

REPORT TO: Safer Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 12 March 2013

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Communities

PORTFOLIO: Community Safety

SUBJECT: Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)
Update

WARDS: Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update members of the Safer Policy and Performance Board on the newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report be received and noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Policing & Social Responsibility Act 2011 contained legislation which shifts the decision-making on the strategic management of policing to elected Police and Crime Commissioners in England
- 3.2 The first elections of Police and Crime Commissioners took place on the 15 November 2012. The new PCC officially took office on the 22nd November 2012.
- 3.3 The conservative candidate John Dwyer was duly elected as the Police Crime Commissioner for Cheshire. He received a total of 48,591 votes. The turnout of voters in Cheshire was 14.08%, which equated to 111,335 papers counted.
- 3.4 The PCC will commission policing services from the chief constable (**or other providers** - in consultation with the chief constable). These services will be set out in the plan where their objectives and funding will be publicly disclosed. The plan must be published and remain a public document including any updates or amendments made during the five year period
- 3.5 At the end of the financial year the PCC will publish an annual report, which will set out progress made by the PCC against the objectives set out in the plan. Alongside the annual report the PCC will publish annual financial accounts, including showing how resources were consumed in respect of priorities and how value for money was secured.

3.6 PCCs will also exercise regional power and influence over the development and work of local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) via powers and duties. These are:

- the reciprocal duty for PCCs and CSP responsible authorities to cooperate with each other for the purposes of reducing crime and disorder;
- the power to bring a representative of any or all CSPs in the PCC's area together to discuss priority issues;
- the power to require reports from CSPs about issues of concern;
- the power to approve mergers of CSPs (on application of the CSPs concerned);
- the power to commission community safety work from a range of local partners including (such commissioning of crime and disorder reduction work is not limited to CSPs but can include community, voluntary sector or commercial providers); and
- Please see attached Appendix 1.

3.7 In 2013/14 there will be a new and un-ringfenced Community Safety Fund (CSF) which will be paid to PCCs. The exact size and basis for allocation of this fund have yet to be determined, however an announcement was expected to be made on the 5th of December 2012. The CSF will replace the vast majority of existing drugs and crime funding provided by the Home Office.

3.8 It has now been agreed by the Police and Crime Commissioner to passport this funding stream back to the Community Safety Teams under a strict Service Level Agreement (SLA). The primary aim of the SLA will be to focus the funding on tackling and reducing anti social behaviour.

3.9 From 2014/15 onwards the Home Office intend to roll CSF funding into Police Main Grant. Again the amount of funding has yet to be decided. In his letter, Nick Herbert makes it clear that that the Home Office has no intention of ring-fencing Police Main Grant, nor the setting of a minimum or maximum amount that PCCs must or should spend on community safety activity. It will be up to the PCCs to decide how to use all of the resources at their disposal in pursuit of local priorities.

4.0 PREPARATIONS FOR THE PCC NATIONALLY

4.1 **Home Office** - The PCC pages of the Home Office website (<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/police/police-crime-commissioners/>) has distinct areas for the public, partners and candidates. The partners

section includes info for health and care agencies and other criminal justice partners, making the links to Health and Well Being Boards, Children's Services, Safeguarding children and adult services. The candidates section includes national level candidate briefings on a number of areas including national policy and strategy and communications.

- 4.2 **HMIC** had developed a **web-portal** where prospective PCC candidates can access performance information and download force specific and national HMIC reports. The site also includes Frequently Asked Questions and links to key partner and police force and authority websites. Visit the website: www.hmic.gov.uk for more information.
- 4.3 The newly elected Police and Crime Commissioners now have their own dedicated website hosted by the Association of police and Crime Commissioners. It's aim is to provide essential national support functions for elected PCCs and all policing governance bodies in England and Wales. It also contains useful information around the new role and the manifesto of the individual commissioners as well as recent news updates. The website can be accessed via the following link [Association of Police and Crime Commissioners](#)

5.0 PREPARATIONS FOR THE PCC IN CHESHIRE AND HALTON

- 5.1 **Halton and St Helens VCA**, working with Warrington VA, CVS Cheshire East and Chester Voluntary Action is the local broker for the Cheshire Safer Future Communities Network. The network aims to support frontline VCSE (Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise) organisations in working with the new PCCs from November 2012, through more effective working between the Sector, Community Safety Partnerships, PCCs and other statutory agencies that impact upon community safety. By engaging with a diverse range of partners, this project aims to ensure that the breadth of Home Office community safety issues (crime, anti-social behaviour, re-offending, substance misuse, violence against women and girls, youth crime) are properly represented in the new local commissioning landscape. Following three events held across Cheshire for interested groups, the Cheshire Network is now established with a membership of over 70 groups. The Network is represented on the Transition Board Partnership and Commissioning Sub Group. A mapping exercise is underway to identify the relevant services that the voluntary sector currently delivers across Cheshire.
- 5.2 **Safer Halton Partnership** had developed a "Welcome Pack" for the PCC. The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive met with John Dwyer (PCC) on the 26th November 2012 and discussed the content of the "Welcome Pack". A copy of the information is enclosed as appendix 2 for information.

This provided useful background for the PCC and will identify:

- The current operating arrangement in Halton.
- The community safety architecture in Halton.
- The key players and partners involved directly and indirectly in crime and community safety in Halton.
- The current crime and community safety priorities for Halton based on the JSNA, research and data.

It has been produced to provide the new PCC with a quick and comprehensive guide to Halton. This will enable the PCC to quickly understand Halton's needs and aspirations in respect of crime and community safety. In so doing this should encourage the PCC to invest in Halton, thereby maintaining and building on the progress made by the Police and SHP to prevent crime, tackle crime, punish offenders and rehabilitate.

- 5.3 The CST is also developing separate and distinct Business Plans for each of Halton's priority community safety activities. Once again this should provide the PCC with clear evidence of the community safety benefits of investing in what we are doing in Halton.

6.0 POLICE AND CRIME PANEL UPDATE

- 6.1 The Cheshire Police and Crime Panel will cover the area served by Warrington; Cheshire East (Alsager, Congleton, Crewe, Knutsford, Macclesfield, Middlewich, Nantwich, Poynton, Sandbach, Wilmslow); Cheshire West and Chester (Chester City, Winsford, Northwich, Ellesmere Port, Sandbach); and Halton (Widnes and Runcorn). Warrington Borough Council has taken the lead on this work area. Financial arrangements, protocols, equality impact assessment and an induction pack for members of the Panel has been developed. A web site for the new panel arrangements and associated information is live and is currently hosted on Warrington Borough Council's website http://www.warrington.gov.uk/info/200727/crime_support_and_prevention/893/police_commissioners_and_crime_panels/2).
- 6.2 The panel has been made up of ten local councillors, representing the four borough councils in Cheshire, and represent, as far as practicable, the political make up of the four councils. The Cheshire Police and Crime Panel has asked for two people from Cheshire to serve as co-opted independent members for a four year term. The panel may co-opt additional members including extra councillors provided the panel does not exceed 20 members and the Home Secretary agrees to the increased size of the panel. A Shadow inaugural meeting of the Cheshire Police and Crime Panel was held on 17th July 2012 and the next scheduled meeting has taken place on 11th September. Cllr Shaun Osborne and Cllr Dave Cargill were at the inaugural meeting representing Halton.

- 6.3 Cllr Cargill has now been elected as Chair of the Police and Crime Scrutiny Panel.

7.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The policy implications of the review relate primarily to the Safer Halton priority as set out below, however this is a cross cutting work area which has wider implications on other areas of council business.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 8.1 The future funding implications for non mainstreamed services may seriously impact on the Local Authorities delivery of community safety services and safeguarding issues. Further Briefings will be provided as we receive notification of the final changes to legislation.

9.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

9.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The work of the Community Safety Team links very closely with that of the council's Children's' and Enterprise Directorate and the Youth Offending Team. They provide a valuable role in addressing anti social behaviour and promoting positive behaviour by young people.

9.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

The Community Safety Team work closely with the Probation service and YOT, supporting offenders to change their behaviour and to access training and employment opportunities.

9.3 A Healthy Halton

Addressing anti-social behaviour and crime is the key function of the Community Safety Team and without this work it is likely that both will increase having a significant impact on resident's health.

9.4 A Safer Halton

Should funding for community safety no longer be available, there will be an impact on crime and anti-social behaviour with both likely to rise, having a negative impact on residents quality of life.

9.5 Environment and Regeneration

If anti-social behaviour and crime are not fully addressed in Halton this is likely to lead to a deterioration in the quality of the environment and a corresponding reduction in confidence of the public and business in the borough.

10.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None.

11.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

11.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

Appendix 1

TITLE: Reciprocal Duties and the Impact on Crime & Disorder

SUBJECT: Section 10 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

REFERENCE TYPE: Legislation

AT A GLANCE

Reciprocal duties

Introduced under Section 10 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, reciprocal duties set out in statute new reinforced partnership working arrangements.

These new duties relate to Community Safety Partners and Criminal Justice Partners and now the PCC (Police & Crime Commissioners).

This means that all responsible authorities, including agencies and partnerships now have a statutory obligation which means that they must:

- have regard to the relevant priorities of each responsible authority when exercising its functions
- this applies to all functions an agency carries out, not just when setting priorities
- act in co-operation with each other in exercising its functions, and as a responsible authority, exercise its functions under section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Partnership working to reduce and crime and disorder has been extremely successful and delivered positive results over many years.

The main driver, bringing agencies to work together over that period, was the Crime and Disorder Act of 1998.

Particularly relevant were Sections 115, which encouraged agencies to exchange data for the purposes of reducing crime and disorder and Section 17, which outlined an obligation for agencies to work together to achieve the same objective.

Section 17

Section 17 of the Crime & Disorder Act states:

“Without prejudice to any other obligations imposed upon it, it shall be the duty of each authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area.”

There was however a weakness within Section 17, and that was that practitioners found that it had ‘no teeth’, in that agencies that failed to engage as fully as they should have done could not be compelled to do so.

Section 10 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

Section 10 addresses this weakness by reinforcing Section 17

It places duties on statutory agencies and now the police and crime commissioners, to have regard to the reduction of crime and disorder and co-operation in carrying out their functions, to the relevant priorities each of the bodies in the police area that are members of community safety partnerships formed under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

This requires the members of community safety partnerships to co-operate with each other in the exercise of their respective functions, (except devolved functions in Wales).

PCC's

The Police and Crime Commissioners or the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (where applicable) are, in effect, required under section 10 to make arrangements so that their respective functions are exercised so as to provide an efficient and effective criminal justice system for the police area.

This includes cooperation to achieve those objectives from all the statutory agencies. Namely the police, probation services, local authorities, fire and rescue authorities, NHS Primary Care Trusts, and certain criminal justice bodies including the Crown Prosecution Service, Her Majesty's Court Service, the National Offender Management Service, or other providers in relation to Prisons or Probation, and Youth Offending Teams.

This will involve the agreement of protocol or memorandum of understanding to be put in place between the various bodies.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS

Not all agencies have grasped the significance and potential impact of the new reciprocal duties or the part the PCC's will play at a local level.

The PCC's will:

- provide a strong and powerful voice for communities and represent views about how crime is prevented and its consequences are tackled
- have a statutory duty to set a police and crime plan for their force area and a budget that focuses on working in partnership to cut crime, as well as maintaining an efficient and effective police force
- be able to commission services from outside of the police force
- work with Chief Constables and Local Partners such as Probation, Health, Education and Local Voluntary Organisations to fulfil their commitments to not only fight crime and antisocial behaviour, but to prevent it, in order to deliver safer streets for their community
- be required to work with community safety and criminal justice partners - reciprocal duties in this area are deliberately broad and flexible, to allow working arrangements to develop in a way that is most meaningful locally, leaving room for innovation

PCCs will need to work with community safety partners, criminal justice agencies and the voluntary sector to help deliver what's important, locally. Where partnerships work well they can prevent duplication, reduce costs and tackle issues by using a joined-up approach.

To be effective partnerships need to be based on action.

Police Crime Commissioner Welcome Pack



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Follow us on www.twitter.com/myhalton



Safer Halton **PARTNERSHIP**

a member of the Halton Strategic Partnership

*Safer Halton Partnership is made up of a number of service providers including:
Halton Borough Council, Cheshire Police, Cheshire Fire & Rescue, Cheshire Probation Service, Halton & Warrington Youth Offending Teams, Halton Voluntary Action,
Halton Housing Trust & other social landlords, Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and NHS Halton & St Helens.

WELCOME PACK



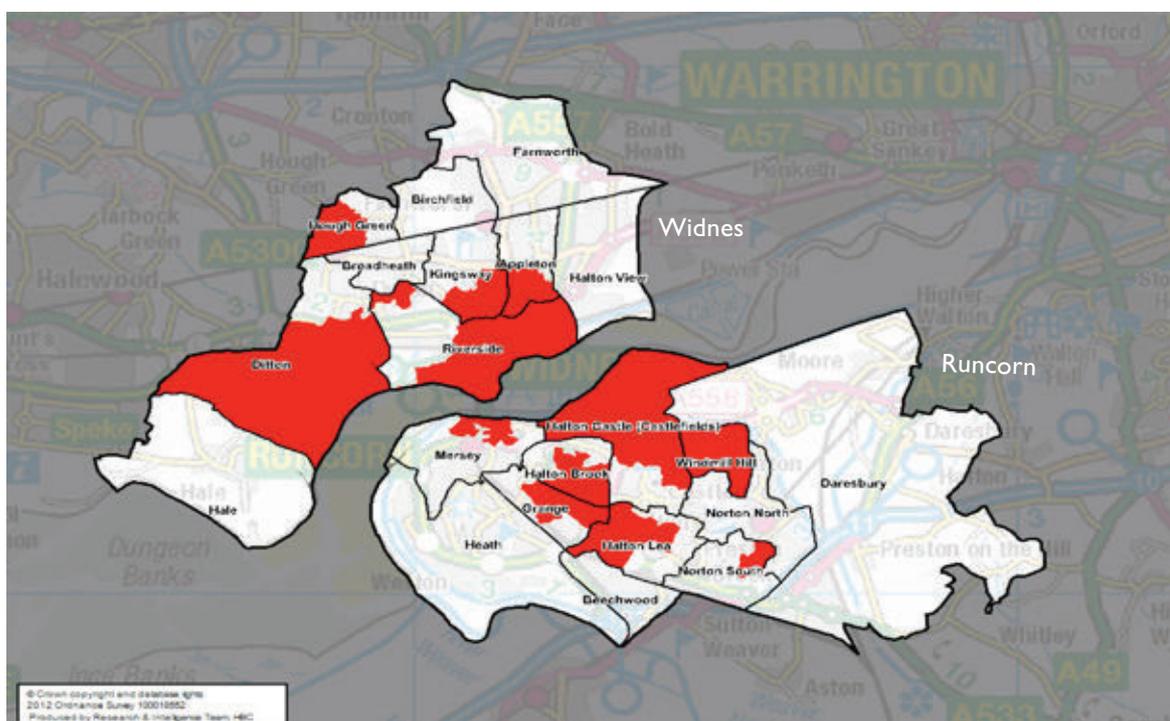
One Halton – One Vision

This welcome pack has been prepared by the Safer Halton Partnership for the first Cheshire Constabulary Crime Commissioner. The pack tells you about Halton and gives a short introduction to Halton's communities. The pack also describes the current activity and successful projects that are currently helping to:- **Make residents and visitors of Runcorn and Widnes safe and feel safe.**

Two Towns – Six Parishes

Halton is a largely urban area when compared to other areas of Cheshire. Its two biggest settlements are Widnes and Runcorn that face each other across the River Mersey, 10 miles upstream from Liverpool.

Unlike Warrington, Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester, Halton shares many of the social, economic and crime/ASB issues more associated with its urban neighbours in Merseyside.



■ 11 Local Super Output Areas which fall in the top 3% most deprived nationally. (Index Multiple Deprivation IMD 2010).

Halton has 11 communities that feature in the top 1000 out of 32,482 communities most deprived communities. This compares 5 in total across Cheshire East, West and Warrington.

Today, Halton is considered to be a world class provider and location for scientific development, innovation, logistics and multi-modal transportation. This is evidenced through its major regeneration activity and successful private and public partnership programmes.

Developments include Sci Tech, Daresbury Enterprise Zone, The Mersey Gateway Bridge, 3MG and the Hive Leisure Park. Stobarts, Tesco, Diagio, O2, Mexichem and INEOS are also major players in Halton. Despite the levels of deprivation, new and exciting programmes of opportunity are helping to tackle social exclusion, worklessness, health inequalities and the community safety problems of the past.

WELCOME PACK

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Our Population

Halton Borough Council serves a **population** of 125,800 (Census 2011) and 53,300 households.

Age 0 - 14 = 23,400

15 - 64 = 83,900

65+ = 18,400

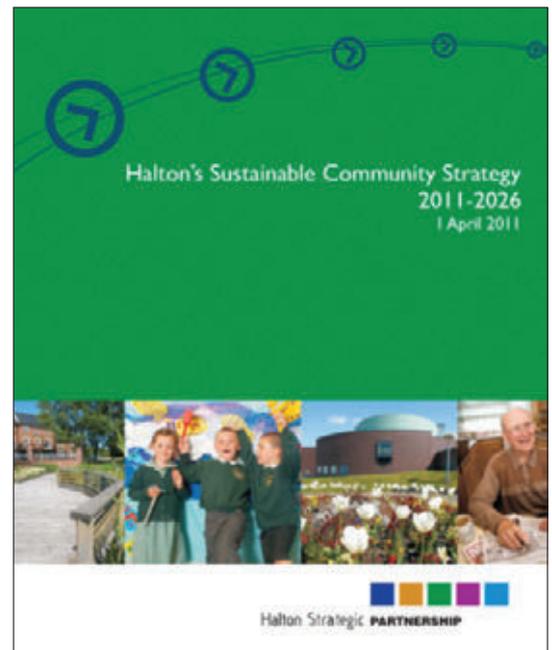
If you want to know more about Halton, go to our Sustainable Community Strategy at www.halton.gov.uk/scs

Our Strategic Priorities

The five strategic priorities for Halton are:

- Safer Halton
- Healthy Halton
- Environment and Regeneration in Halton
- Halton's Children and Young People
- Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

The 5 Specialist Strategic Partnerships groups work to ensure these priorities are effectively delivered by a whole range of groups and organisations and are properly 'joined up' to make a real difference to the lives of local people.



The Safer Halton Partnership

Safer Halton Partnership is made up of Halton Borough Council, NHS Merseyside/ Halton/St Helens, Runcorn and Widnes Neighbourhood Policing Units (Cheshire Constabulary), Cheshire Fire and Rescue, Cheshire Probation Service, Halton Youth Offending Team, Registered Social Landlords (6 main providers of housing) and community groups.

The Safer Halton Partnership is supported by the Halton Community Safety Team (CST). The schematic Diagram on page 4 shows how the CST works across the Halton partnership architecture (5 strategic priorities) to ensure community safety and crime reduction are at the heart of the partnership activities throughout Halton.





WELCOME PACK



The Data

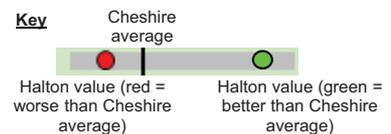
The two tables below show some of the social, economic, health (alcohol) and crime factors in Halton when compared against the other 3 Unitary Authorities. This information will hopefully give a flavour of some of the challenges and obstacles that Halton faces but more importantly it shows the importance of all partners working together to achieve a Halton that succeeds socially, economically, environmentally and one that is free from crime and free from the fear of crime.

Table 1 – Alcohol and Deprivation Statistics

National rank out of 326 Local Authorities (1 is good and 326 is worst)	Halton	Warrington	East	West
ALCOHOL DATA				
A&E Admissions Under 18	319	246	282	236
A&E Harm (all ages)	312	280	196	223
Recorded Crime	231	184	120	131
Violent Crime	232	187	130	140
Sexual Offences	183	210	93	56
DEPRIVATION DATA				
Index Multiple Deprivation	299	173	100	155
Unemployment	297	215	135	191
Number of Deprived Communities in the top 1000 (Out of 326,200)	11	1	0	4

This data is taken from the 2012 North West Public Health Observatory – Liverpool John Moores University and the Communities and Local Government English Indices of Deprivation 2010.

Table 2 – Social (Wider determinants)



Domain	Indicator	Halton	Cheshire average	Cheshire worst	Cheshire range	Cheshire best
Population	1 Population Growth 2001-11	6.4%	4.5%	2.4%		6.4%
	2 0-14 age group	18.6%	17.0%	16.4%		18.6%
	3 15-64 age group	66.7%	65.1%	64.1%		66.7%
	4 65+ age group	14.6%	17.8%	14.6%		19.3%
Economy	5 Jobs in public admin, education & health	31.2%	28.5%	22.3%		31.2%
	6 Average weekly earnings (£)	£432	£486	£432		£513
	7 Unemployment (JSA claimants)	5.7%	3.8%	5.7%		2.5%
	8 Youth unemployment (JSA claimants aged 18-24)	12.6%	7.6%	12.6%		6.1%
	9 Worklessness (claiming out-of-work benefits)	19.0%	12.6%	19.0%		8.6%
	10 No qualifications	11.5%	8.7%	11.5%		8.4%
	11 Qualified to NVQ3 and above	42.5%	52.0%	42.5%		56.7%
	12 GCSE attainment	56.3%	61.1%	56.3%		64.4%
Housing	13 House prices (£000)	134	177	134		209
	14 Long-term vacant dwellings (%)	1.4%	1.3%	1.5%		0.9%
	15 Earnings to house price ratio	4.4	5.7	6.8		4.4
Quality of life	16 Life expectancy - females (years)	79.6	81.6	79.6		82.9
	17 Life expectancy - males (years)	75.5	78.1	75.5		79.5
	18 Deprivation (IMD score)	32.5	20.3	32.5		13.3
	19 Crime (per 1,000 residents)	42.8	33.6	42.8		27.6

WELCOME PACK



A Strategic Approach - Intelligence Led

The **Community Safety Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)** and **community profiles** provides much more detailed analysis about Halton communities, their hopes, priorities and expectations, the challenges, the evidence and the data to support our activities and priorities.

A copy of the JSNA can be provided from the Halton Community Safety Team or Northern BCU Crime and Intelligence Unit.

More About The Halton Community Safety Team

The Halton Community Safety Team is a multi-agency team of specialists committed to promoting community safety and harm reduction so that Halton is a safe place to live, work and visit. Their purpose is to support partners and communities to identify and analyse local problems and to develop short and long term strategies and interventions.

The Community Safety Partnership Team is not a virtual group. In Halton the team are based in co-located buildings which enable all of the respective organisations listed below to share personal information in a quick, secure and effective manner. In turn this enables smart and effective joined up initiatives, operations and orders to be delivered in a timely manner.

The role of Halton Community Safety Partnership is to make sure that partners are co-ordinated in their approach to:-

1. Targeting Offenders
2. Making public spaces and communities safe.
3. Supporting victims and delivering timely, effective and appropriate solutions to local problems.



7 Services – One Community Safety Team

1. ASB
2. Alcohol Harm and Licensing
3. Safeguarding Young people – Safer Schools Partnership / Education
4. Integrated Offender Management
5. Crime Reduction – Prevention and Education.
6. Supporting BME groups (Gypsy Traveller, Hate Crime)
7. Domestic Abuse



7 Outcome Measures

1. A reduction in reported ASB and the public's level of fear and insecurity from ASB
2. A reduction in the levels of alcohol related harm and disorder
3. A reduction in the offending rates of those adversely affecting the community the most.
4. A reduction in reported violent and acquisitive crime and the public's level of fear and insecurity from crime
5. An improvement in the public's perception of safety and security in public spaces
6. An improvement in the safety of our most vulnerable families, children and individuals
7. A reduction in the reports of domestic abuse and the vulnerability of becoming a victim of domestic abuse

Table 3 - Police Data (Runcorn and Widnes Neighbourhood Policing Unit)

CRIMETYPE	2010 / 11	2011 / 12	FYTD 1st April - 31 August
Total Crime	10173	9819	3699
Serious Acquisitive	1641	1547	463
Household Burglary	529	515	152
Vehicle Crime	1002	953	282
Theft Of Vehicle	276	280	79
Theft From Vehicle	726	673	203
Robbery	110	79	29
Personal Robbery	84	58	19
Business Robbery	26	21	10
Serious Violence	90	73	28
Assault Less Serious	982	814	290
Violence With Injury	1066	883	319
Rape	30	34	13
Serious Sexual	85	86	24
Criminal Damage	1992	1827	722
Shoplifting	896	933	390
Other Burglary	745	922	317
ASB	8473	7424	3129
ASB Alcohol	1243	1123	413

Identification Of Vulnerable Communities (Victims)

This section puts in context the vulnerability of the victims and communities in Halton when you piece together the social and economic data (Page 5) together with the crime and ASB data. Community Profiles for ward data are attached to this Welcome Pack.

13 Halton Wards – HIGH RISK
 (Over 74 crimes and ASB incidents per 1000 population)

X

4 HARM FACTORS

Repeat victims
 Illness and disability
 People who are at home for lengthy periods
 Areas of deprivation.

= HIGH VULNERABILITY and SAFER HALTON PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITY

The 2011 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) ASB review called "Stop The Rot" used 4 crime and ASB rates to identify residents and communities that could be considered at high risk (74 - 113 incidents per 1000) of being victims. The HMIC Review shows Cheshire Constabulary as moderate risk overall. Using the same table for Halton it would show 13 wards in the Higher risk category.

Risk Table 4 – How to identify vulnerable Wards / communities in Halton

Highest Risk	Area Forum	High Risk Wards	Total Crime Per 1000	Total ASB Per 1000
1	2	Riverside	157	172
2	6	Halton Lea	141	157
3	2	Appleton	136	130
4	4	Mersey	115	138
5	2	Kingsway	100	115
6	5	Halton Castle	100	95
7	5	Windmill Hill	89	96
8	4	Halton Brook	75	89
9	1	Ditton	70	92
10	4	Grange	69	95
11	5	Norton South	60	97
12	1	Broadheath	75	75
13	1	Hough Green	68	75

WELCOME PACK



Halton Activities and Results - What Do We Actually Do?

The list below is a 12 month snapshot of some of the successful activities. A full list of activities is documented in the Community Safety Team Review in 2012.

63 victims / clients- 10 service users receiving intensive support.

Over 60 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts signed, 2 CRASBO's and 7 ASBO's.

RESPECT weeks of action (School Summer holidays / Mischief night / Xmas)

Launch of Neighbourhood Resolution Panels. Only 1 of only 8 areas across the UK.

13 funded PCSO's including 2 dedicated ASB PCSO's (Blue Lamp project).

2 Deployable CCTV units that are 24 hour monitored and recorded by Halton borough Council CCTV Control Room.

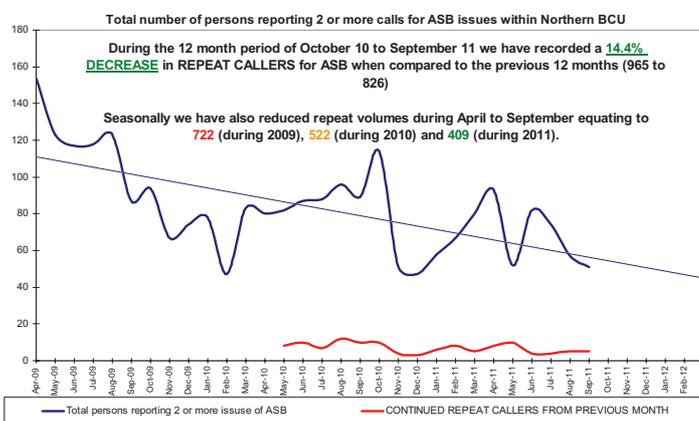
Effective training of Police Call Handling to identify repeat and vulnerable victims early.

Effective use of data and information sharing through police beat management meetings, systems and performance dashboards

Weekly police and partnership beat meetings supported by monthly Partnership Tasking and Co-ordination (T&C) and Multi-Agency Meetings (MAM). These weekly and monthly task and finish groups enable the identification of problem locations, communities, victims and offenders and joined up partnership working to tackling the problems. Copies of the minutes, process maps and problem profiles can be provided.

Tables 5 and 6 show that the partners and the communities of Halton are working effectively to achieve some real positive results to make Halton a safer place.

Table 5 – Repeat Victims for ASB

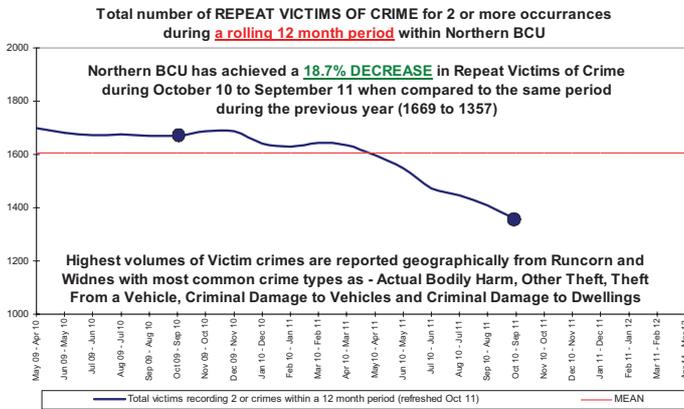


Repeat callers (Harm indicator) for ASB incidents during:-

1. April - June 2010 was 130
2. April - June 2011 was 113
3. April - June 2012 was 83

The community of Halton show no meaningful distinction between crime and ASB and this is why Halton CST is serious about tackling ASB at all levels.

Table 6 – Repeat Victims of Crime



A reduction in the levels of alcohol related harm and disorder

The Halton Licensing Team monitor daily incidents (assaults etc) occurring in and around the two night time economies (town centres) in Halton. All of the 230+ licensed premises are visited over a 12month basis to check compliance with licensing conditions and any premises that incurs any incidents will follow the 3 stage process below.

Widnes has 74 On Licensed Premises, 43 Off Licensed Premises and 14 Club Premises whilst Runcorn has 50 On Licensed Premises, 41 Off Licensed Premises and 8 Club Premises. The licensing team operate a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) system to identify problem premises in accordance with the 3 stage approach illustrated below.

- Stage 1** Investigate and issue warning
- Stage 2** Monitoring and enforcement of action plan (3 months)
- Stage 3** Collation of evidence and presentation of information to Licensing Officer for premises review.



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Operation Stay Safe

Operation Stay Safe is delivered on a monthly basis with the purpose of identifying vulnerable young persons who are under the influence of alcohol. The operation is run by the police with the support of the partnership ASB Unit, the Team Around the Family and Missing From Home Officer. The initiative enables the specialist professionals to challenge the behaviour of the drinking and hold the parents or guardians accountable.

During the last 12 operations we have seen 52 young people taken to the place of safety, over 200 alcohol vessels seized and nearly 3000 young people spoken to.

Since April 2011, 54 test purchases have been carried out in Halton and it has resulted in three failures. Proxy purchasing is also identified in Halton as a problem and intelligence led operations and surveillance are being undertaken.



Crime Reduction

12 Burglary days of action have been delivered over a 12month period in 6 burglary high-risk communities (2 days in each community). The days of action were carried out in the Ditton, Hough Green, Kingsway, Castlefields, Riverside and Halton Brook wards. Problem profiles and data analysis were carried out by the CSP analyst so that high risk areas, burglary victims and streets were targeted. - 68% reduction in crime across the 6 areas.

RESPECT weeks

The programme brings together a wide variety of agencies and organisations who, with the help of local residents, tackle a host of crime and ASB issues. They also look at ways to bring the community closer together with sporting and healthier lifestyle activities for both young and older people alike.

The Respect programme has focused on seasonal ASB periods including term time school holidays (GCSE results week), Halloween (Mischief night and Bonfire) and the lead up to Christmas when we see a rise in acquisitive crime.



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Case Study: ASB Victim Support

A referral was made in 2011 by the YOT to the ASB Victim Support service to support the mother who was suffering Domestic Abuse from her own son. Her 17 year old son is a well known prolific and repeat offender of ASB and crime and was also known to the local community.

The boy first came to the attention of the Community Safety Team (CST) back in 2008 / 2009 when he was 13 years of age. He was causing repeat ASB offences in the Sunningdale Drive area of Widnes.

At that time, the Community Safety Team carried out an Acceptable Behaviour Contract and the family (Dad and partner) was offered the support of Youth Inclusion Support programme (YISP) and the Family Intervention Programme (FIP), however due to his failure to engage with the services the support was later withdrawn. He was served with a 2 yr ASBO in 2009.

During the Order his Dad was concerned about losing his tenancy with Halton Housing Trust and he eventually took the difficult decision to request that his son leaves the house. His son moved in with his mother in Runcorn. Subsequently, ASB increased in the Halton Brook area in Runcorn and the services mentioned above were once again engaged. This time the community of Runcorn were suffering and sadly so was his mother and his two sisters.

See below the pattern of activities that followed.



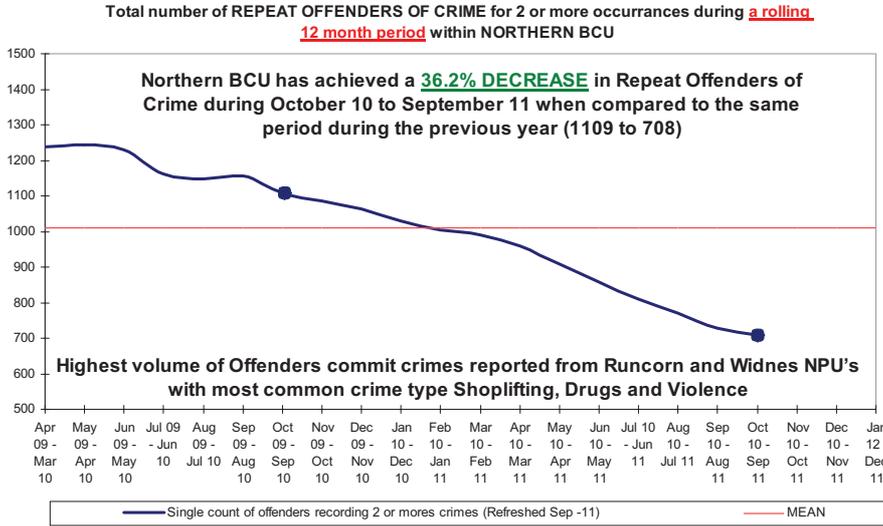
Victim (Mother and sisters)	Offender (Aged 17)	Location (Victims)
<p>Individual Support Plan was completed (May 2011) for his mother and sisters.</p> <p>Personal and home security (Sanctuary scheme) measures provided.</p> <p>Support plan updated every 6 weeks. Victim contacted at least weekly and regular PCSO presence.</p> <p>Full ASBO February 2012.</p> <p>Supporting applications to be re-housed with other siblings; prompted by the adverse reaction to the press coverage by the community.</p> <p>Victim moves into new property on 30th July 2012, transitional support provided.</p>	<p>Linked to the Youth Offending Team for several years. Offender told not to visit the family address.</p> <p>Part of police IOM 'cohort following a period spent in young offenders institution July 2011 (Detention and Training Order).</p> <p>Other partner agencies involved; ASB Enforcement Officer, Halton Housing Trust agencies attending monthly Multi Agency Meetings intelligence shared.</p> <p>Offender does not remain hostel accommodation staying a various locations in Halton.</p> <p>Offender sentenced to 4 month Detention and Training Order due to breaches of supervision</p>	<p>Halton Brook Runcorn focus of the Anti Social Behaviour</p> <p>Housing Provider Riverside convenes community meeting following article in local press February 2012.</p> <p>Police run an engagement event and a monitored CCTV deployable camera fixed to street lamppost.</p>

Halton Domestic Abuse Service

This is a local support service for medium and high risk victims of Domestic Abuse. It comprises an Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA), 2 Floating support staff and the Sanctuary Scheme. These staff offer safety planning and crisis intervention support for clients to assist them to reduce risk.



Table 7 - Repeat Offenders of Crime



Most crime in a community is carried out by a small number of prolific offenders. Integrated Offender Management (IOM) brings together those organisations from the public, private and voluntary and community sector to tackle a cohort of prolific offenders and repeat offenders through intensive pathways, programmes combining rehabilitation and enforcement i.e 83% have Drugs as a pathway, 67% have education, training and employment, 58% have attitudes, Thinking and behaviour and 54% have Accommodation.

The Cohort comprises of approx 55 offenders. There are 24 Prolific Priority Offenders (PPO) and 31 Repeat Offenders on the IOM scheme.

IOM Cohort PPO Rates for Q1 2013 (April -June)

Baseline number of convictions	Actual convictions during nomination	Difference between baseline and actual	% impact
55.25	8	47.25	85.52% ↓

IOM Cohort Repeat Offenders for Q1 2013 (April -June)

Baseline number of convictions	Actual convictions during nomination	Difference between baseline and actual	% impact
53	21	32	60.38% ↓

Current Investment

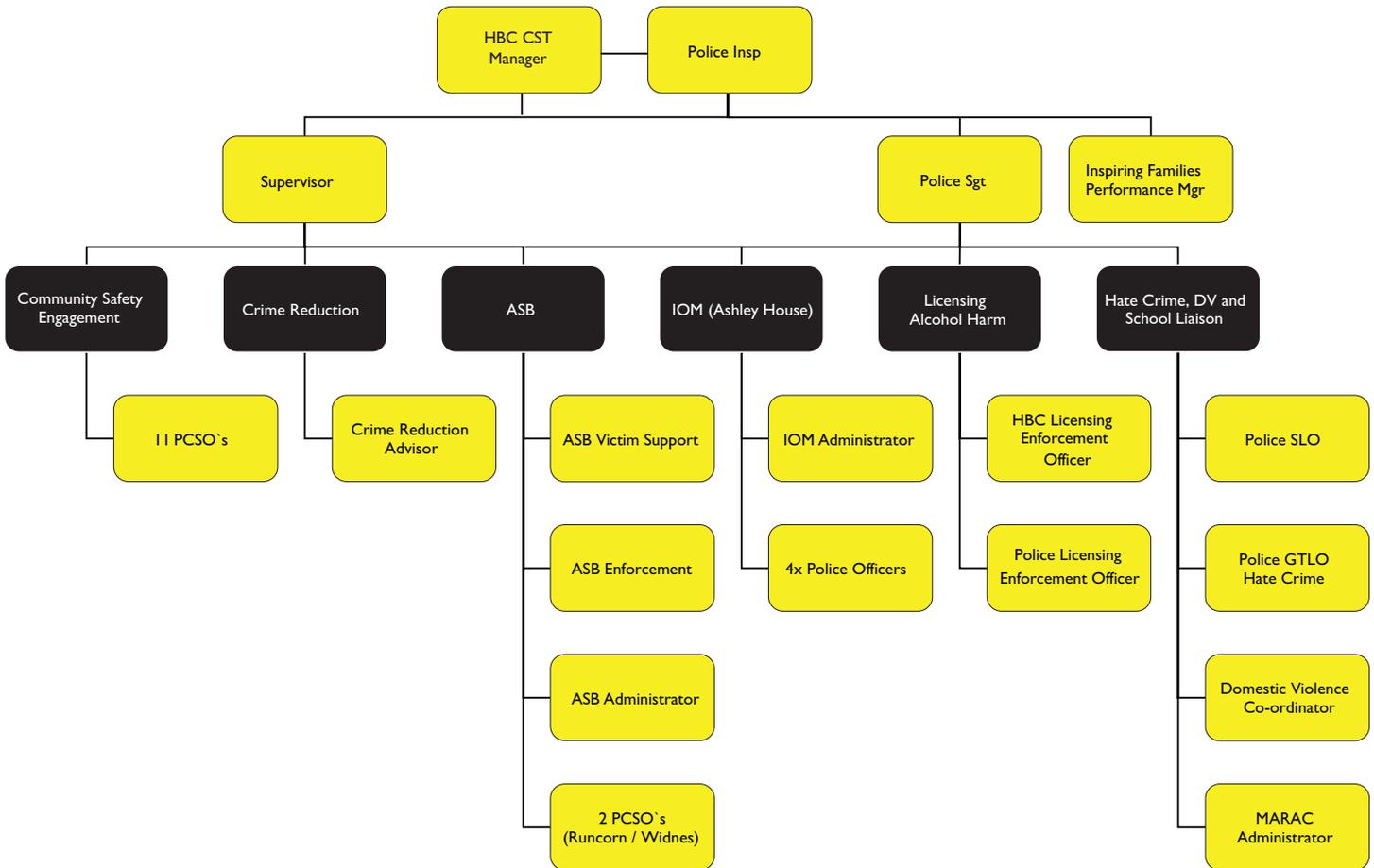
Community Safety and Harm Reduction is a responsibility of ALL public sector staff. The below organogram shows the investment by Halton Borough Council and Cheshire Constabulary towards a co-located team of specialist professionals.

Blue Lamp

Each quarter the Widnes and the Runcorn Neighbourhood Policing Units in conjunction with the CST produce an information bulletin. The latest bulletins are attached to this Welcome Pack. They provide real examples of how the Police, CST, the SHP together with the community are tackling crime in Halton.

Staffing Investment

The team comprises of 19 staff and 13 funded PCSO's (Blue Lamp). A full breakdown of staffing costs, inc salaries is available within the CST team review of 2011.



Funding and Project Investment

Budget	Staff 2013/14	PCC Ask / Contribution
HBC PCSO (13) Contribution (Blue Lamp)	£153,000	
Police PCSO (13) Contribution (Blue Lamp)	£ 260,000	
HBC / WNF CST (5 1/3+1/2 shared funding HBC/Police)	£269,000	
Navigate IOM (5) Sgt + 4 officers	£309,300	
Police Staff CST (2 / 1/3+1/3+1/2)	£97,500	
Insp / Licensing (4) Officer / GTLO / SLO	£228,100	£25,000 (Alcohol Harm Reduction)
Probation Funding (1/3rd)	£8,000	
Total Staffing Costs (19 + 13 Blue Lamp PCSO's)	£1,324,900	
SHP FUNDING (Projects) ASB - £45,000 Licensing - £85,000 Domestic Abuse - £55,000 IOM - £10,000 Total Funding Costs	£195,000	£75,000 (Inspiring Families / ASB Victim and Witness / YOT / Domestic Abuse)
SHP Investment	£1,519,900	PCC £100,000



Safer Halton **PARTNERSHIP**

a member of the Halton Strategic Partnership

