

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee to be held in Meeting Room C - Flook House on 16 October 2018 at 6.15 pm.

---

## **Agenda**

- 1 Apologies.
- 2 Minutes of the previous meeting of the Scrutiny Committee. (Pages 5 - 10)
- 3 Public Question Time.
- 4 Declarations of Interest.  

To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or personal or prejudicial interests, in accordance with the Code of Conduct, in relation to items on the agenda. Such interests need to be declared even if they have already been recorded in the Register of Interests. The personal interests of Councillors who are County Councillors or Town or Parish Councillors will automatically be recorded in the minutes.
- 5 Update on Crime and Policing in Taunton Deane. Report of the Inspector for Avon and Somerset Constabulary - Verbal Update.
- 6 Homelessness Strategy. Report of the Homelessness Manager - Attached. (Pages 11 - 142)
- 7 Formation of a Task and Finish Review to investigate Crime and Disorder and Anti Social Behaviour Issues within The Deane. Report of the Specialist for Governance and Democracy - Documents To Follow.
- 8 Scrutiny Work Programme - Attached. (Pages 143 - 144)

Bruce Lang  
Assistant Chief Executive

8 October 2018

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussions.

There is time set aside at the beginning of most meetings to allow the public to ask questions.

Speaking under "Public Question Time" is limited to 4 minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes. The Committee Administrator will keep a close watch on the time and the Chairman will be responsible for ensuring the time permitted does not overrun. The speaker will be allowed to address the Committee once only and will not be allowed to participate further in any debate.

Except at meetings of Full Council, where public participation will be restricted to Public Question Time only, if a member of the public wishes to address the Committee on any matter appearing on the agenda, the Chairman will normally permit this to occur when that item is reached and before the Councillors begin to debate the item.

This is more usual at meetings of the Council's Planning Committee and details of the "rules" which apply at these meetings can be found in the leaflet "Having Your Say on Planning Applications". A copy can be obtained free of charge from the Planning Reception Desk at The Deane House or by contacting the telephone number or e-mail address below.

If an item on the agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

These arrangements do not apply to exempt (confidential) items on the agenda where any members of the press or public present will be asked to leave the Committee Room.

Full Council, Executive, Committees and Task and Finish Review agendas, reports and minutes are available on our website: [www.tauntondeane.gov.uk](http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk)



The meeting rooms at both Brittons Ash Community Centre and West Monkton Primary School are on the ground floor and are fully accessible. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are available.

Lift access to the Council Chamber on the first floor of Shire Hall, is available from the main ground floor entrance. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are available through the door to the right hand side of the dais.



An induction loop operates at Shire Hall to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter.

**For further information about the meeting, please contact the Democratic Services on 01823 219736 or email [democraticservices@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@tauntondeane.gov.uk)**

If you would like an agenda, a report or the minutes of a meeting translated into another language or into Braille, large print, audio tape or CD, please telephone us on 01823 356356 or email: [enquiries@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@tauntondeane.gov.uk)

**Scrutiny Committee Members:**

Councillor S Coles (Chairman)  
Councillor F Smith-Roberts (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor J Blatchford  
Councillor N Cavill  
Councillor W Coombes  
Councillor T Davies  
Councillor E Gaines  
Councillor A Gunner  
Councillor T Hall  
Councillor R Henley  
Councillor R Lees  
Councillor L Lisgo  
Councillor S Martin-Scott  
Councillor N Townsend  
Councillor D Webber



## Scrutiny Committee - 18 September 2018

Present: Councillor S Coles (Chairman)

Councillors F Smith-Roberts, N Cavill, A Gunner, T Hall, S Martin-Scott, N Townsend, J Hunt (In place of J Blatchford), R Bowrah (In place of T Davies) and C Herbert (In place of D Webber)

Officers: Tim Burton, Paul Fitzgerald, Natalie Green, Chris Hall, Steve Hughes and Kate Murdoch

Also Present: Councillors P Berry, A Sully, J Warmington, Mrs Anne Elder, Mr James Curry, Mr Mark Washington and Mr Andy Ridgewell

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm)

### 10. **Apologies.**

Apologies were received from Councillors J Blatchford, B Coombes, T Davies, E Gaines, R Henley, R Lees, L Lisgo and D Webber.

### 11. **Minutes of the Community Scrutiny Committee held on 1 May and Corporate Scrutiny Committee held on 21 June and Scrutiny Committee held on 24 July (attached).**

The minutes of the meetings of the Community Scrutiny Committee held on 1 May 2018 and the Corporate Scrutiny Committee held 21 June 2018 were taken as read and were signed.

### 12. **Public Question Time.**

#### **Agenda Item 5 GLL Performance Update**

Mr P Boyle spoke about the contract for the proposed leisure provisions within Taunton Deane from August 2019 onwards. He thanked the Committee for the opportunity to speak on the item and advised that there were other members of the public that wanted to speak but who were unable to attend and had sent in letters which had been distributed to the Committee. The users of the leisure centres aimed to work closely with the Council to achieve the best leisure service. He asked the following questions for clarification:-

1. Was there a Service Specification for the forthcoming (2019) Contract and if so please could it be made available?
2. If there was a (2019) Specification how had Council Tax Payers, who were also users of the service, been involved in putting it together?
3. Please could there be User groups in the Centres with local Councillors having the right of attendance if so desired?
4. Were the finances of the provision independently audited?
5. How did Taunton Deane independently monitor and evaluate the provision?

6. How would the user voice be built into the monitoring of the future contract. (a service specification that would enable both the provider and TDBC be clear what must be delivered for the money)

A written response would also be issued out to the public.

### **Agenda Item 7 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Allocations for 2019/20 – 2022/23**

Mr A Debenham spoke about the CIL allocations and asked how the allocations related to particular projects.

Mr T Burton responded and advised that the funding streams originated from the original CIL arrangement and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which identified all the infrastructure projects that were required along with their costings. Further details were given within the report and the IDP could be found on the website under: <https://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/planning-policy/community-infrastructure-levy>

Mrs J Calcroft spoke about the CIL payments and queried the statement on the website that 'the money generated from CIL was used to fund improvements and new infrastructure which development put pressure on'. She asked the following questions:-

- 1) When would the CIL financial report covering the period April 1 2017 – 31 March 2018 be published?
- 2) Why had no improvements or infrastructure measures been put into place over this period of time?
- 3) As known, the permitted 3 years' administrative costs had already been taken out by The Council. Apart from administering the Parish and District Council's allocations surely the majority of administration costs would come when allocating and overseeing actual relevant projects. Could The Council please produce a breakdown of actual administrative costs over this period and what had been done with any surplus?
- 4) Table 1 in the report showed 3 areas for CIL allocation for the period **2019/20** – cycle and pedestrian improvements were allocated £1million, education provision were allocated £4million and public transport improvements a further £1million. A total of **£6million** in a period where the Council's forecast was to realise just been arrived at given a possible £2million shortfall?
- 5) Table 1 allocations only showed an overall budget allowance. There was no indication as to how and where this money was to be spent. Where could one access the actual breakdown costs of the details of these improvements?

A letter from Mike O'Dowd-Jones, Strategic Commissioning Manger, Somerset County Council was read out to the Committee and asked the following questions:-

- 1) Were the CIL charges set at an appropriate level to provide sufficient infrastructure to support the proposed development in the area?
- 2) Was the geographic coverage sufficient to enable infrastructure provision across the whole District, particularly considering the current exclusion of Wellington from the charging regime?

- 3) Did the inclusion of education infrastructure within the regulation 123 list actually make it more difficult for development to fund the associated schools that were required in new development areas; and was there a case to exclude education from the CIL process to enable site specific agreements?
- 4) Did your proposed principles place unnecessary restrictions on the ability of CIL to fund essential infrastructure, particularly in relation to the principle of a maximum allocation of £3.5m to any one project and no more than 50% of the total cost. As an example, a school required to support a large development might cost in the region of £17m and your proposed restrictions precluded any opportunity for CIL to make a reasonable contribution to such a project.
- 5) Was the inclusion of major development areas or urban extensions in the CIL charging regime still the right thing to do when it was increasingly apparent across the Country that this type of development was better suited to specific funding agreements such as section 106 agreements to ensure essential infrastructure needed for such developments could be secured.

A written response would also be issued out to the public.

13. **Declaration of Interests.**

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a County, Parish or Town Council:

Name	Item	Member of	Action Taken
Councillor S Coles	All	SCC	Spoke and voted
Councillor N Cavill	All	Parish	Spoke and voted
Councillor N Townsend	All	Parish	Spoke and voted
Councillor J Hunt	All	SCC and Town	Spoke and voted
Councillor B Bowrah	All	Town	Spoke and voted
Councillor J Warmington	All	Parish	Spoke

14. **GLL Performance Update. Report of the Assistant Director - Operational Delivery**

Considered report previously circulated, that set out the operational and financial performance that GLL provided for Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC). GLL raised concerns in terms of usage numbers and income noting that they were adrift of their income budgeted position, however, they had mitigated this through reduced expenditure. The current agreement did not pass any of the risk onto TDBC.

During the discussion of this item, Members made comments and statements and asked questions which included:-

- Members queried whether the bad weather from earlier in 2018 had impacted on the GLL service.

*There had been an impact, especially at Vivary Golf Course which had been highlighted within the report. The flooding at the start of the year and the snow in March had meant that they had lost 34 days of use at the golf course. The rest of the leisure facilities had lost a couple of day's trade due to the snow.*

- Members highlighted a concern raised by a member of the public that when he had visited Taunton Pool he struggled to access the pool due to clubs and other organised activities taking place.  
*When St James pool closed in 2016, the pool programme was spread between the remaining two pools in Taunton and therefore the public swimming time was reduced in Taunton Pool. However, since then, the public swimming time has been made available but it has been spread over all the pools within Taunton Deane and not just in one location.*
- Members praised the work carried out on two of the four pillars, Better People and Better Community. However, concern was raised over Better Business. Members had been made aware of several issues at Blackbrook Leisure Centre, one of which were the gates and that they were not in use again, they queried how could GLL monitor visitors and payments for use of the facilities. This was not useful for financial monitoring. Concern was also raised over the low standard of customer service being provided, cancellation of classes at short notice and the standard of cleanliness at the pool.  
*The Senior Manager accepted that the gates had been out of order for too long and explained that they had been having issues with the supplier, but this would be chased. He reassured Members that the protection of income was being monitored. Cleanliness was being worked on and the 'no shoe' policy seemed to have helped. He was aware that customer service needed to improve but there had been challenges with vacancies and sickness levels. These issues would be reported back to the general manager at Blackbrook to ensure improvements were made.*
- Members queried the first two paragraphs within the report that detailed the results for Better Service. The net promoter score showed customer satisfaction was under 50% in July 2018 then in the next paragraph it stated the results of a survey showed the satisfaction level was up to 85%. How was that achieved?  
*The survey was based on a snapshot of visitors to the pool and asked a multitude of questions about the facility, where the net promoter score was based on one question in a survey that was sent to all members that had a valid email address.*
- Concern was raised on the decrease in service levels at Wellington Sports Centre. Members queried what had caused the decline. They also queried whether any information had been sent out to the new housing developments in Wellington to advertise the facilities.  
*The Senior Manager was aware that a couple of other sports centres had opened within the town which could have led to the decline due to the competitive market. The numbers for the swim school had increased but general sports membership had declined. There was more that could be done with the marketing in the new developments, but they had attended a couple of community events and school fetes to promote the facilities. The*



*officers identified that the positive draw to the Wellington Sports Centre compared to the other centres in the town was the pool.*

- Members praised the instructors and their high level of customer service, however, the same could not be said of the service provided at reception which needed to be improved.
- Members requested more information on the service levels compared to the financial details in future.
- Members of the public raised further concerns about problems with the hot water supply, disabled users of the facilities and the challenges they faced, problems with phone calls not being answered and changes in classes.  
*The Senior Manager addressed their concerns.*

**Resolved** that the Committee noted the content of the report.

15. **Somerset West Lottery, Year 1 Update. Report of the Housing and Community Project Lead (attached).**

Considered report previously circulated, which provided an update on the Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) and West Somerset Council (WSC) joint online community lottery, Somerset West Lottery, that was formed in July 2017. In less than a year, the lottery managed to raise nearly £50,000 for local good causes across the two areas.

During the discussion of this item, Members made comments and statements and asked questions which included:-

- Members praised the implementation of the lottery fund and the money and support it had raised for local causes.
- Members queried the figures and percentages used within the report.  
*Clarification was given.*

**Resolved** that the Committee:-

- 1) Noted the first year's performance of the Somerset West Lottery; and
- 2) Supported the continuation of the present management arrangements of the Somerset West Lottery Local Community Fund.

16. **Community Infrastructure Levy allocations for 2019/20 - 2022/23. Report of the Principal Policy Officer. (attached).**

Considered report previously circulated, that detailed the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allocations of £15,500,000 for the period 2019/20 to 2022/23 for member consideration. The proposed CIL allocations were for infrastructure categories associated with the delivery of infrastructure projects for the Taunton Garden Town and were in addition to the £16,600,000 New Homes Bonus already committed to delivering the Council's growth agenda.

During the discussion of this item, Members made comments and statements and asked questions which included:-

- Members queried the Regulation 123 list and that it stated from 12 April 2016 it would be reviewed annually, however, the list had remained the same.  
*Officers confirmed that there had been no changes.*
- Members queried whether officers had used the standard Central Government prescribed list for regulation 123 and had adopted it for Taunton Deane.  
*The list was determined by TDBC and not Central Government. The Regulation 123 was a list of projects that the Council would not collect Section 106 funds for, there was no guarantee that the money would be spent on the projects listed. Viability would most likely be different in the future.*
- Members suggested that when a new development or scheme had been built with funds from the CIL, a plaque or sign could be placed in the area so that residents were aware of where the money had come from and what the CIL funds were being spent on.
- Members recommended that the list was kept in the current format and the broad descriptions meant that many projects could benefit from the funds.
- Members queried whether the figures used within the CIL were similar to what other Councils used and had been set as a benchmark.  
*The officers had investigated what other Authorities had used before they set the TDBC CIL figures.*

**Resolved** that the Committee supported recommendations to:-

- a) The Shadow Executive of Somerset West and Taunton Council and to TDBC to support a commitment of Community Infrastructure Levy funding of £15,500,000 for the period 2019/20 to 2022/23, by infrastructure type as set out in Table 1 and recommend the same to TDBC Full Council;
- b) The Shadow Executive of Somerset West and Taunton Council and to TDBC to support the CIL Allocation Principles as set out in Paragraph 4.9;
- c) The Shadow Executive and Shadow Council of Somerset West and Taunton Council to include the proposed investment of CIL Allocations within its recommended Capital Programme for 2019/20; and
- d) The Shadow Executive and Shadow Council of Somerset West and Taunton Council to incorporate delegation powers within the new constitution. The delegation powers would require the approval of the Head of Strategy and relevant Portfolio Holder (in consultation with the S151 Officer) to enable the profile of CIL spending to fall outside the indicative years shown in Table 1 but within the overall sum allocated by infrastructure type and subject to sufficient CIL funding being available.

17. **Confidential Verbal Update relating to the leisure Procurement Project. Report of the Assistant Director - Operational Delivery**

This item had been deferred.

(The Meeting ended at 8.15 pm)

## **Taunton Deane Borough Council Scrutiny Committee – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

### **Somerset Homelessness Review & Strategy 2017 – consultation draft (Dec 2017)**

**This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Terry Beale**

**Report Author: Heather Stewart (Advice & Homelessness Manager)**

#### **1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The Somerset Homelessness Review & Strategy 2017 (SHRS) is a legal requirement in accordance to the Homelessness Act 2002.
- 1.2 It provides a detailed account of the results of the Homelessness Review undertaken across the five District and proposes an Action Plan that covers 4 priorities, such as:
  - Supporting the transition in services required by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017,
  - Supporting clients to remain in their existing accommodation,
  - Supporting clients to access suitable and affordable accommodation; and
  - Building and maintaining strong working relationships across partnerships.
- 1.3 Homelessness Reviews has been carried out in 2003, 2008 and 2013 by the five Somerset District Authorities- Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, South Somerset District Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset Council.
- 1.4 Although the current Strategy was due for review in 2016, it was extended to Dec 2017 to enable a response to the impact of implementing the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 on current services and our partners. The Homeless Reduction Act became live in April 2018.
- 1.5 The Strategy is currently a draft document at the moment however all authorities are working to the document and have started looking at consultation for the review of the strategy in April 2019.
- 1.6 The Review & Strategy will be published as a Consultation Draft in October 2018 with all authorities are working towards the action plan contained in the strategy. However, it will cover only the next eighteen months (as opposed to three years) to enable a continuous review of the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

## 2 Recommendations

2.1 Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

- A. Provide 'in principle' support to the draft Somerset Homelessness Review & Strategy
- B. To challenge/scrutinise the detail and identify content that may require further clarity or amendment. To provide a view on whether Scrutiny consider some aims / priorities are more important than others
- C. To challenge the content of the draft Equalities Impact Assessment and to suggest any further additions / amendments

## 3 Risk Assessment

3.1 The development of the draft Somerset Homelessness Review & Strategy is supported by a comprehensive Risk and Issues register. Some of the key risks are described below:

### Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
Staffing levels may need to be increased due to the increased demand. This has to be balanced with recent Somerset County Council cuts	5	4	20
Mitigation: To continue regular monitoring and horizon scanning to ensure adequate staffing levels	3	3	9
Key partners do not engage with the consultation process, therefore jeopardising the robustness of the final content and our ability to deliver the Action Plan	3	4	12
Mitigation: A comprehensive engagement plan has been developed by SSHP. This highlights the key forums and partnerships that must be engaged	2	3	6
The Action Plan is too aspirational, with too much content that will not be delivered with limited and diminishing resources	3	3	9
Mitigation: This will be tested through consultation, and aims/ priorities may be prioritised	2	3	6
Insufficient support for transition in services causing an escalation of B&B costs	4	4	16
Mitigation: Training of staff, updating of IT and increasing partnership options have been implemented	3	3	9
Increase of ASB and crime on the streets due to the inability to reduce and prevent homelessness	4	4	16
Mitigation: Training of staff, updating of IT and increasing partnership options have been implemented	3	3	9
The needs of those with Protected Characteristics (i.e. those who may be vulnerable) are overlooked	3	4	12

Mitigation: A comprehensive EIA has been developed which is also subject to the current consultation process	2	2	4
The loss of reputation of the Council due to the inability to reduce and prevent homelessness	4	4	16
Mitigation: Training of staff, updating of IT and increasing partnership options have been implemented. Help from HAST has also been explored	3	4	12

<b>Likelihood</b>	5	Almost Certain	Low (5)	Medium (10)	High (15)	Very High (20)	Very High (25)
	4	Likely	Low (4)	Medium (8)	Medium (12)	High (16)	Very High (20)
	3	Possible	Low (3)	Low (6)	Medium (9)	Medium (12)	High (15)
	2	Unlikely	Low (2)	Low (4)	Low (6)	Medium (8)	Medium (10)
	1	Rare	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)	Low (5)
			1	2	3	4	5
			Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
<b>Impact</b>							

Likelihood of risk occurring	Indicator	Description (chance of occurrence)
1. Very Unlikely	May occur in exceptional circumstances	< 10%
2. Slight	Is unlikely to, but could occur at some time	10 – 25%
3. Feasible	Fairly likely to occur at same time	25 – 50%
4. Likely	Likely to occur within the next 1-2 years, or occurs occasionally	50 – 75%
5. Very Likely	Regular occurrence (daily / weekly / monthly)	> 75%

## 4 Background and Full details of the Report

4.1 The current Somerset Homelessness Review & Strategy (SHRS) was prepared in 2013 and had an end-date of 2016 but agreed extension to Dec 2017. It contained Goals such as:

- Reduction and prevention of homelessness
- Provision of appropriate advice, accommodation and support if a crisis occurs
- Maximising effective partnership working to provide cost effective and responsive services

- 4.2 The process of review began in 2016 but was extended to 2017 due to the introduction and impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 on the partners. To date, there has been a 62% uplift since April in both TD & WS in approaches that consists of both singles (expected) and families (unexpected), especially in families who are intentionally homeless.
- 4.3 The Review has considered the way homelessness services are delivered across the area and has established current levels of homelessness, who is becoming homeless locally and why, and examined the trends in homelessness. It has also considered available accommodation and support services to identify gaps in provision.
- 4.4 Most importantly, it also expounds on the problems encountered in the delivery of the outgoing Action Plan and homelessness issues affecting the region such as:
- Dual diagnosis clients that may fall between mental health teams and drug/ alcohol teams
  - Provision of adequate accommodation options for single homeless clients, especially as the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a greater emphasis on Local Authorities to cater for non-priority need clients
  - Housing options for the 25- 34 year age group as they are expected to live in shared accommodation and is restricted to the shared accommodation housing elements of Universal Credit, which in turns creates a problem of moving clients on from programmes and freeing up spaces when they reach the age of 25
  - Difficulties experienced in working with partners such as the County Council, hospital discharge and mental health schemes
  - Rising occurrence of repeat homelessness due to cutbacks in funding for floating support services for families in crisis
  - Preventing homelessness for 16/ 17 year olds by engaging with schools and the County Council
  - Lack of access to social housing due to scrutiny of client's housing and personal history
  - Universal Credit due to primarily the delays in new claimants receiving payments up to 6 to 8 weeks which causes debt and discourages risk averse landlords. Clients are also struggling to make the online application and to continue to make appointments with the Job Centre thereafter
  - Increase in the number of older persons over 85 year age bracket that might require assistance
  - Skills gap in the skillset and attributes required for a Housing Options Officer such as negotiation skills
  - Large parts of the private rented sector remains unaffordable due to the Local Housing Allowance cap
  - Rural homelessness and its challenges
  - Increase in rough sleepers and the need to develop and improve cross region links to

ensure that when a rough sleeper moves from one District to another after exhausting services in an area, they are recognised and supported

4.5 It is also intended that the SHRS will be a partnership approach between the District and its partners in the delivery of the Action Plan.

4.6 The intention is for the SHRS to be a living document in the 18 months and this will be achieved through the:

- Monthly review and discussion of the Action Plan
- Monthly sharing of Best Practices

4.7 The SHRS will be published as a Consultation Draft in October to be ready for January 2019 and will be active for 18 months.

4.8 The draft SHRS is attached at Appendix A. A supporting Equalities Impact Assessment is provided at Appendix B. the updated action plan to date is Appendix C.

## **5 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities**

5.1 The draft SHRS will enable us to address many of the themes and issues within our Corporate Strategy:

5.2 TD Key Theme 1: People – The draft SHRS seeks to develop a range of additional housing types suitable in particular for single person households, young people in rural communities and elderly people. It would also seek to work with others to support the wellbeing of our most vulnerable residents.

5.3 Key Theme 4: An Efficient and Modern Council - The draft SHRS challenges us to think creatively and radically review how our homelessness services are delivered, by whom and to what standard in order to best allocate our resources.

5.4 WS Key Theme 1: Our Communities - The draft SHRS seeks to increase the availability and affordability of homes for local people to rent.

5.5 Key Theme 3: Our Place & Infrastructure – The draft SHRS makes it a priority to work in partnership to mitigate negative impacts on the community from the construction phase of Hinkley Point C.

5.6 Key Theme 4: An Efficient and Modern Council - The draft SHRS challenges us to think creatively and radically review how our homelessness services are delivered, by whom and to what standard in order to best allocate our resources.

## **6 Finance / Resource Implications**

6.1 Should the transition in services required fail and we are subsequently unable to support clients to remain in their existing accommodation or access suitable and affordable alternative accommodation, this would cause B&B costs to escalate.

6.2 There could also be the potential costs of legal challenges should internal protocols fail due to the onerous set of review rights imposed by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

6.3

## **7 Legal Implications**

- 7.1 It is a legal requirement in accordance to the Homelessness Act 2002 that Housing Authorities have in place a Homelessness Strategy based on a Homelessness Review within their Boroughs. This exercise should be carried out and the strategic documents reviewed at least every five years.
- 7.2 As per 6.2, there could also be the potential costs of legal challenges should internal protocols fail.

## **8 Environmental Impact Implications**

- 8.1 None directly, although the draft SHRS does seek to improve (through reducing rough sleeping) the town environment by reducing litter, including dangerous litter such as needles.

## **9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications**

- 9.1 The draft SHRS will seek to improve safeguarding arrangements and improve community safety by the up skilling of staff, sharing of best practice, development of protocols to refer clients, review of the Countywide Pre Eviction Protocol, review of banding, policy and processes around domestic violence to ensure consistency and to improve outcomes for dual diagnosis clients and ensure clients are not discharged/ released without suitable accommodation by improving partnership working between Community Mental Health Teams and Drug/ Alcohol Dependency Support.

## **10 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 10.1 There are significant equality and diversity implications. Understanding homelessness issues and the effect on those with protected characteristics, helps us to respond with interventions. The draft SHRS is supported by a comprehensive EIA (see Appendix B). The EIA is subject to consultation and we welcome feedback. The EIA (as it continues to develop) will help inform the content of the SHRS. Members are encouraged to read the draft EIA and provide comment.

## **11 Social Value Implications**

- 11.1 In our contractual arrangements with the Voluntary and Community Sector such as YMCA and CAB, we shall endeavour to ensure that social value is delivered and a social return on investment is obtained.

## **12 Partnership Implications**

- 12.1 The draft SHRS proposes Aims/ Priorities that seeks to integrate complex systems – communities, housing, social care, health services and town and country planning to ensure that the right quality of support is provided.
- 12.2 The draft SHRS has also been prepared by a partnership comprising all five Somerset district councils in consultation with its partners.

## **13 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

- 13.1 The draft SHRS supports the Health & Wellbeing Strategy by firstly seeking healthy planning and policy together with focussing greater attention on prevention. The SHRS also seeks to support families and people with low resilience to ensure smooth access



to relevant and tailored services. It also seeks the joining-up of support services to ensure people are able to regain and maintain their independence for as long as possible.

13.2 The development of the SHRS is also a priority for the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board.

#### 14 Asset Management Implications

14.1 No direct implications, but the development of the SHRS should challenge our thinking on how we may best utilise our assets for the benefit of our communities especially in exploring options to increase the number of single units available to single homeless clients, particularly for the 25-34 year age group.

#### 15 Consultation Implications

15.1 Consultation and engagement is critical to the development and success of the SHRS. We need to create a product that has support and buy-in from a range of key partners and the local community. We will begin Consultations in October 2018 and should have the result by January 2019. The SHRS is supported by a comprehensive consultation plan that coordinates and guides our approach to engagement. We have a timetable of targeted consultation activity during the next few months.

#### Democratic Path:

- **Scrutiny / Corporate Governance or Audit Committees – Yes / No** (delete as appropriate)
- **Cabinet/Executive – Yes / No** (delete as appropriate)
- **Full Council – Yes / No** (delete as appropriate)

Reporting Frequency:  Once only     Ad-hoc     Quarterly  
 Twice-yearly     Annually

#### List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)

Appendix A	Draft Somerset Homelessness Review & Strategy
Appendix B	Equalities Impact Assessment
Appendix C	Update Action Plan to September 2018

#### Contact Officers

Name	Heather Stewart	Name	
Direct Dial	07887 854797	Direct Dial	
Email	h.stewart@tauntondeane.gov.uk	Email	





# Somerset Homelessness Review & Strategy 2017

Mendip District Council  
Sedgemoor District Council  
South Somerset District Council  
Taunton Deane Borough Council  
West Somerset Council

December 2017

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Foreword by Cabinet Member for Housing Mendip District Council.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Foreword by Cabinet Member for Housing Sedgemoor District Council .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Foreword by Cabinet Member for Housing South Somerset District Council .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Foreword by Cabinet Member for Housing Taunton Deane Borough Council .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Foreword by Cabinet Member for West Somerset Council .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>2.0 NATIONAL AGENDA &amp; POLICY LINKS.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3.0 SOMERSET STRATEGY LINKS .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>4.0 DISTRICT STRATEGY LINKS .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5.0 THE SOMERSET DISTRICTS .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Table 1: Size of each District .....	13
Table 2: District Population.....	13
Table 3: Population Projections .....	14
Table 4: Population by Gender .....	14
Graph 1: Mendip Ethnicity.....	14
Graph 2: Sedgemoor Ethnicity .....	15
Graph 3: South Somerset Ethnicity.....	15
Graph 4: Taunton Deane Ethnicity.....	16
Graph 5: West Somerset Ethnicity.....	16
Table 5: Economic Activity by District.....	17
<b>6.0 HOUSING MARKET, DEMAND, SUPPLY AND POSSESSION ACTION .....</b>	<b>17</b>
Table 6: Household Income Multiplier .....	17
Graph 6: House Prices to Earnings.....	18
Table 7: Average House Price .....	18
Graph 7: Average House Price .....	19
Table 8: Median Private Rents .....	19
Graph 8: Median Private Rents.....	20
Table 9: Mean Private Rents .....	20
Graph 9: Mean Private Rents.....	21
Table 10: No of Households Registered to Homefinder Somerset.....	22
Graph 10: Local Housing Allowance rates .....	21
Graph 11 No of Households Registered to Homefinder Somerset.....	22
Table 11: No Registered in Each Band on Homefinder Somerset .....	23
Table 12: Banding Criteria for Homefinder Somerset .....	24
Table 13: No of Affordable Homes Delivered .....	24
Graph 12: No of Affordable Homes Delivered .....	25
Table 14: Estimated Annual Affordable Housing Need .....	25
Table 15: Estimated Size of Dwellings Needed 2014-2039.....	25
Table 16: Older Population by District.....	26
Table 17: Projected Population Change – Older Persons 2014-2039.....	26
Table 18: No of Vacant Dwellings .....	26
Graph 13: No of Vacant Dwellings by District.....	27
Table 19: No of Units of Residential Accommodation Created by Change of Use .....	27

	Graph 14: No of Units of Residential Accommodation Created by Change of Use .....	28
	Table 20: Possession Claims taken by Landlords .....	28
	Graph 15: Possession Claims taken by Landlords .....	29
	Table 21: Possession Claims Issued by Mortgage Lenders .....	29
	Graph 16: Possession Claims Issued by Mortgage Lenders .....	30
<b>7.0</b>	<b>HOMELESSNESS IN MENDIP, SEDGEMOOR, SOUTH SOMERSET, TAUNTON DEANE &amp; WEST SOMERSET .....</b>	<b>32</b>
	Table 22: Homeless Prevention & Relief Cases .....	32
	Graph 17: Homeless Prevention & Relief Cases .....	32
	Table 23: Breakdown of Homeless Prevention & Relief Cases .....	33
	Graph 18: Breakdown of Homeless Prevention & Relief Cases .....	33
	Table 24: Homeless Acceptances .....	33
	Graph 19: Homeless Acceptances .....	34
	Table 25: Homeless Applications Outcomes .....	34
	Graph 20: Homeless Applications Outcomes .....	35
	Table 26: Homeless Acceptances Ethnicity Breakdown .....	35
	Graph 21: Reason for Priority Need .....	36
	Graph 22: Reason for Loss of Last Settled Home .....	36
	Table 27: No of Households in Temporary Accommodation .....	37
	Graph 23: No of Households in Temporary Accommodation .....	37
	Table 28: No of Households with Dependent Children in Temporary Accommodation .....	38
	Graph 24: No of Households with Dependent Children in Temporary Accommodation .....	38
	Table 29: Households Found Intentionally Homeless .....	39
	Graph 25: Households Found Intentionally Homeless .....	39
	Table 30: Extent of Rough Sleeping .....	40
	Graph 26: Extent of Rough Sleeping .....	40
<b>8.0</b>	<b>CREATING THE NEW STRATEGY – CONSULTATION .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>9.0</b>	<b>OUTGOING HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY .....</b>	<b>43</b>
	Graph 27: Previous Goals .....	44
<b>10.0</b>	<b>PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE DELIVERY OF THE OUTGOING ACTION PLAN &amp; HOMELESSNESS ISSUES AFFECTING THE REGION .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>11.0</b>	<b>ACHIEVEMENTS &amp; EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE ACROSS THE DISTRICTS .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>12.0</b>	<b>HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2017-2019 .....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>13.0</b>	<b>ACTION PLAN .....</b>	<b>56</b>

## Foreword by Cabinet Member for Housing Mendip District Council



Welcome to the new Somerset Homelessness Review and Strategy which sets out a vision and plan for tackling homelessness across the five districts.

In times of challenging need with limited funding, the Homelessness Strategy sets out the framework for our work and the action plan that will help us deliver specific objectives. We are aligning our practices with the new statutory framework of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 which we believe brings significant positive and empowering change to help us to increase our homelessness prevention work through early intervention and new duties.

Our district residents and businesses are central to everything we do. We care about our people and we know that a home is an essential foundation for good health and wellbeing supporting individual capacity to positively contribute in their local community. Consequently, we are focused on finding the best solutions to prevent and alleviate homelessness and have been successful in reducing the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation despite rising numbers nationally.

We are committed to continuous improvement and quality service provision for our community. One of only a handful of authorities in England to have achieved silver status, we are working to achieve the Gold standard in Housing and Homelessness Prevention by the National Practitioner Support Service.

We invest time, energy and resources into services that make a real difference to the lives of individuals and families who face homelessness. In response to reductions in funding, changes in government policy and new legislation, we continue to find fresh and innovative ways of working. Our voluntary sector and statutory partners help us to deliver these critical services locally where they are most needed and in ways and places that are accessible to our most vulnerable residents.

Our collaborative projects help us to deliver better outcomes for our households at risk of homelessness and increase value for money. Together with our partners we have made a significant number of achievements since the last Homelessness Strategy; however, with continuing challenges and increasing needs and vulnerabilities, more remains to be done.

I would like to extend my thanks on behalf of the Council to everyone who has contributed to the development of this strategy and crucially, the ongoing work and partnerships which will help us improve the way in which we tackle future homelessness.

**Councillor Nigel Woolcombe-Adams**

**Portfolio Holder for Planning, Growth and Housing Services and Vice Chairman of the Planning Board**

## Foreword by Cabinet Member for Housing Sedgemoor District Council



Sedgemoor District Council welcomes this Homelessness Strategy for Somerset and also acknowledges the tremendous challenges we face in ensuring all of our residents have access to a safe and secure place to live. Homelessness nationally is on the increase and in Sedgemoor, our residents have additional pressures including the issues arising from the introduction of Universal Credit, the pressures on the private rented stock given the influx of workers at the Hinkley Point C development and the on-going shortage of 1 bedroomed accommodation.

Nevertheless, Sedgemoor DC has a proud record in assisting households facing potential homelessness and has been in the top quartile of councils in the prevention of homelessness over several years. In addition, we also have a proud record of working in partnership with social landlords to provide good quality, affordable housing for our residents.

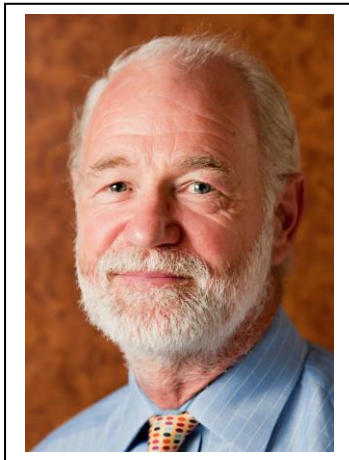
We support the 4 priority areas as identified by this Strategy:

- We will support the transition in services required by the Homelessness Reduction Bill 2017 - the process of restructuring the Housing Advice service in preparation for the introduction of the Act is well underway.
- We will support clients to remain in their existing accommodation where appropriate by ensuring our staff are fully trained with sufficient resources to react quickly to resolve issues which could lead to homelessness.
- We will continue to support clients to access suitable and affordable alternative accommodation where appropriate. We will do this by utilising a wide range of homeless prevention initiatives developed over several years and by working with our clients on robust Personal Housing Plans.
- We will continue to build and maintain strong working partnerships to deliver cost effective and responsive services. Partnership working in Sedgemoor over many years has played a crucial role in the provision of good quality housing and homelessness services and we intend to strengthen and expand those partnerships.

The Homelessness Reduction Act is considered to be the most important piece of homelessness legislation in 40 years. It is essential therefore, that all councils in Somerset support this Strategy and give the front line teams who will implement the action plan all the support they need.

**Councillor Andrew Gilling**  
**Portfolio Holder – Housing**

## Foreword by Cabinet Member for Housing South Somerset District Council



Aligning thinking across 5 District Councils will always be a challenge but in 2003 we recognised the benefits of working seamlessly across Somerset on the issue of Homelessness and that created a logical alliance that dovetailed with our joint decision to use one ICT platform for Housing and create “Homefinder Somerset”. Much has changed in the intervening years and across the country Homelessness and Rough Sleeping is inexorably rising month by month. Whilst Somerset is not immune from the changes, across the five Districts we are not matching the National picture. Our figures have consistently been at the lower end of the graph from which it is clear that Homeless Prevention is delivering better outcomes in Somerset. We need to stay in that enviable position. Using the combined resource and experience that has been created through joint working we are undoubtedly making a real difference to the lives of those who find themselves in the situation of facing Homelessness in our County.

Over the past few years a perfect storm has been created through the cumulative impact of central Government measures primarily designed to reduce the financial burden of Welfare Benefits. Individually, each measure has an impact and a commensurate saving and on their own each may be absorbed or managed by individuals or families but taken as a cocktail of measures it is creating a new and potentially very serious situation. On one side we have individual debt continuing to rise and we have rent on private sector properties also rising whilst on the opposite side of the scales we have capping or restrictions across a whole range of benefits that should make housing affordable to those in need but doesn't. Facing us is the impact and implications of the Homelessness Reduction Act which will increase Local Authority responsibilities and duties. Learning, evaluating, supporting and delivering solutions together in a holistic way across the County has to offer better chances of meeting and reacting to the changes than doing it individually and hence the importance of that work being underpinned by a Homelessness Strategy informed by an up to date review.

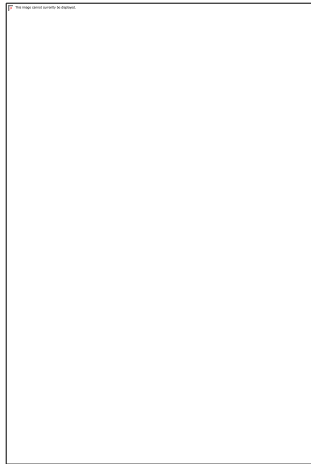
I am conscious of the hard work that has gone into delivering this document and specialist staff across Somerset have all gone the extra mile for our residents.

Finally, whilst an important starting point, a Strategy is only words on a page and thus the really important part is what is contained in the detailed Action Plan that sets out what we are going to do about the issues facing us. It is right that we review again in 18 months to measure how effective our Plan is in this fast changing world but I believe this document is the core contributor that we need now if we are to minimise the impact of the changes.

**Ric Pallister OBE**  
**Leader & Executive Member for Strategic Housing**  
**South Somerset District Council**



## Foreword by Cabinet Member for Housing Taunton Deane Borough Council



Taunton has an ambitious programme for growth and we recognise the need for a range of new housing of mixed tenure, particularly affordable housing.

Taunton is seeing a steady rise in the number of rough sleepers since 2013. In response to the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, there is a need to further embed prevention into the core of our delivery of homelessness services- a holistic approach to enable individuals, young people and families to achieve their aspirations.

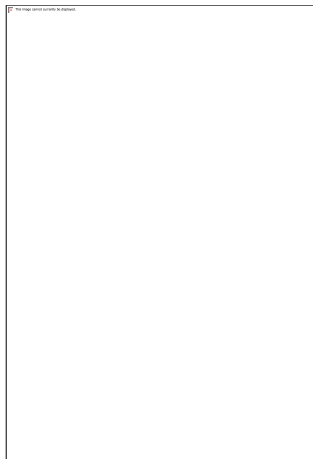
Accordingly, we welcome the new Somerset Homelessness Review and Strategy. The provision of the right support is pivotal and is the focus of the Strategy as we seek to work on maintaining existing tenancies and increasing access to affordable accommodation.

We want to be ambitious and engaging with all partners and stakeholders to create innovative solutions that will provide for the wide ranging needs that described in the Strategy. We also want to be forward thinking and respond creatively to challenges such as Hinkley Point C.

Finally, we want to continue the strong working relationship with our partners such as the Taunton Association for the Homeless, Open Door and the range of Housing Providers we work with.

**Councillor Terry Beale**  
**Portfolio Holder - Housing**

## Foreword by Cabinet Member for West Somerset Council



West Somerset is a beautiful place to live, but has its own unique housing challenge, particularly around its demography and rurality. Social mobility for young people is also a pertinent issue and West Somerset has successfully obtained £6mil to remedy this. House prices are increasingly unaffordable as market entry levels are 10 times the average earnings.

With the advent of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, we must prepare for the rise in numbers and welcome the new Somerset Homelessness Review and Strategy for its holistic approach to ensuring the right support and working partnerships are available and effective.

For the future, it is essential to build on the successes to date with a clear focus on prevention and early intervention especially with the Hinkley Point C funding, ensuring it provides a lasting legacy. We will also continue to explore options to provide affordable shared housing solutions within West Somerset.

**Councillor Keith Turner**  
**Portfolio Holder - Housing**

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In accordance with the Homelessness Act 2002, it is a legal requirement that Housing Authorities have in place a homelessness strategy based on a homelessness review within their Boroughs. This exercise should be carried out and the strategic documents reviewed at least every five years.
- 1.2 The five Somerset District Authorities, Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, South Somerset District Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset Council decided in 2003 that they would work in partnership to carry out a homelessness review and create a homelessness strategy jointly in order to recognise the opportunities to pool resources and highlight best practise across the larger area.
- 1.3 A homelessness review has been carried out in 2003, 2008 and 2013. A homelessness strategy representing all five Districts was created after each review.
- 1.4 The homelessness strategy to be created following this homelessness review will cover the next 18 months, after which it will be reviewed. The decision to review after 18 months has been made by the five Local Authorities due to the amount of change within the area forthcoming as a direct result of the perceived impact of the Homeless Reduction Act and the Hinkley Point Development.
- 1.5 EDF Energy is building a brand new nuclear power station called Hinkley Point C on the Somerset Coast, North West of Bridgwater. Construction has started and it is envisaged that the new plant will be operational in 2025. Once it is operational it is estimated that the plant will support 700 operational and 200 contractor jobs. However, the construction of the plant itself will create circa 25,000 full time equivalent construction jobs over the lifetime of the build. At its peak workforce, there is estimated to be around 5,600 full time equivalent jobs on the site. This is having and will continue to have an impact on the local housing market for the region.
- 1.6 There are strategies covering provision of Hinkley Point C Housing Funding for Sedgemoor and West Somerset Councils through the Site Preparations Works section 106 agreement and the allocation of new funds made available to Sedgemoor, West Somerset Council and Taunton Deane Council through the Hinkley Point C DCO section 106 agreement. The aim of the funding is to mitigate any potential adverse effects on the local private rented and low cost housing market, and particularly the ability of those on lower incomes to access local housing, that might arise as a result of the Hinkley Point C development.  
  
The £4m of funding secured through the Site Preparation section 106 agreement became available to West Somerset Council and Sedgemoor District Council in May 2014. A further £3.5m of funding became available in June 2016 when EDF Energy transitioned from the Site Preparation Works planning permission to the Development Consent Order (DCO). This additional funding was secured to deliver additional housing capacity in West Somerset, Taunton Deane, Sedgemoor and North Somerset.
- 1.7 This document provides a detailed account of the results of the Homelessness Review undertaken across the five Districts. This evidence will inform the new Homelessness Strategy.
- 1.8 This review has considered the way homelessness services are delivered across the area. It has established current levels of homelessness, who is becoming homeless locally and why

and examined trends in homelessness. It has considered available accommodation and support services to identify gaps in provision.

- 1.9 It is intended that the Homelessness Strategy will be a partnership approach between the Local Authorities and their partners. As such extensive consultation with partners has been carried out in order to include their views and opinions on homelessness priorities for the area. This consultation has taken a variety of formats including, online surveys, consultation events/focus groups and one to one interviews.
- 1.10 The findings from this strategic review have been used to inform the priorities that will underpin the Homelessness Strategy for the area for the next 18 months.

## 2.0 NATIONAL AGENDA & POLICY LINKS

- 2.1 In conducting this review, the Local Authorities have complied with legal duties set out in the Housing Act 1996 Part 7, the Homelessness Act 2002, the Localism Act 2011 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- 2.2. The review has considered all statutory orders relating to the suitability of accommodation in England.
- 2.3 It has further considered all relevant statutory guidance on allocations and homelessness, along with best practice in the delivery of housing options and homelessness services.
- 2.4 The Councils have had regard to both Ministerial Working Group reports on homelessness:
- *“Vision to End Rough Sleeping: No Second Night Out”* and;
  - *“Making Every Contact Count: A Joint Approach to Preventing Homelessness”*
- 2.5 The toolkit created by the DCLG funded National Practitioner Support Service *“Developing Homelessness Strategies”* has been carefully considered.
- 2.6 The national Gold Standard challenge outlined in the second Ministerial Working Group report has formed a key aspect of this review and the five District Local Authorities aspire to achieving the 10 Local Challenges set by Government for Local Authorities. The 10 challenges are:
- To adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all Local Authority services.
  - To actively work in partnership with the voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs.
  - To offer a Housing Options prevention service to all clients including written advice.
  - To adopt a No Second Night Out model or an effective alternative.
  - To have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that include appropriate accommodation and support.
  - To develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both client and landlord.
  - To actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme.
  - To have a homelessness strategy that sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually to be responsive to emerging needs.
  - To not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed & Breakfast accommodation.
  - To not place any families in Bed & Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and for no longer than 6 weeks.

- 2.7 This review has also considered the likely impact and forthcoming changes in the delivery of housing options services to be introduced by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, effective from 1 April 2018.
- 2.8 The key measures within this Act and affecting the delivery of housing options services include:
- An extension of the period during which an Authority should treat someone as threatened with homelessness from 28 days to 56 days.
  - The introduction of personalised plans for clients to outline the circumstances of homelessness, the housing needs of the client, any support required to secure and sustain accommodation, steps that the client is required to take along with the steps the Local Authority is required to take to assist the client.
  - A new duty to prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness, regardless of priority need.
  - A new duty to relieve homelessness for all eligible homeless applicants, regardless of priority need.
  - A new duty on other public services to notify a Local Housing Authority if they come into contact with someone they think may be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- 2.9 Similar legislation was introduced in Wales in 2015 and the following outcomes were experienced by Local Authorities:
- A rise in applications and caseload for Housing Options Officers.
  - A rise in the percentage of cases owed prevention and relief duties.
  - A high dropout rate as a result of client withdrawal or client contact lost.
  - A reduction in full duty acceptances.
  - A reduction in temporary accommodation use.
  - A rise in the number of successful homeless prevention cases.

## 3.0 SOMERSET STRATEGY LINKS

- 3.1 A draft Somerset Strategic Housing Framework will be ready by the end of January 2018 focusing on the priorities and ambitions for Somerset. These will be reflected on in the District based action plans that will pick up on the challenges within each locality.

The Somerset Strategic Housing Framework includes information from a number of sources including the Somerset Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Strategic Housing Market Assessments and Youth Housing Strategy and Action Plan.

## 4.0 DISTRICT STRATEGY LINKS

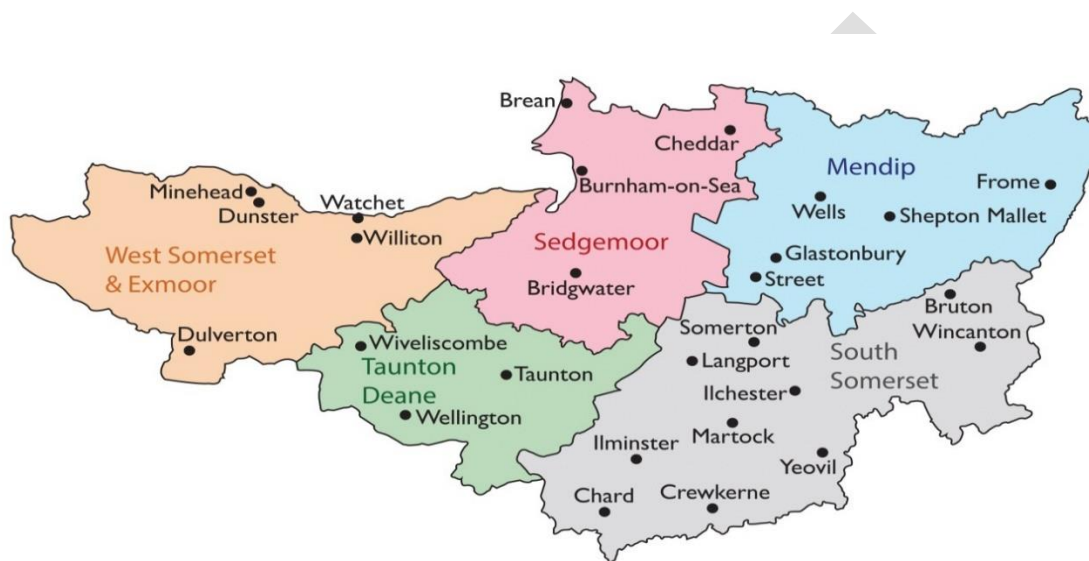
- 4.1 This review has regard for the Mendip District Council Corporate Strategy 2017 – 2020 “*Shape the District*”. This strategy has two core priorities:
- Transformation – finding better ways of working together, and making better use of assets, resources and skills to deliver the best possible outcomes for local communities.
  - Inclusive Growth – Mendip District Council would like to see positive growth in the District. They would like to see businesses develop, grow and enjoy greater success.
- 4.2 This review has regard for the Sedgemoor District Council Corporate Strategy 2016-2024. The strategy has three priority themes:
- Customers & efficiency
  - Growth & infrastructure
  - Housing, health & well-being
- 4.3 This review has regard for the South Somerset Council Plan 2016 – 2021. The Plan has five aims:
- Protect core services to the public by reducing costs and seeking income generation
  - Increase the focus on jobs and economic development
  - Protect and enhance the quality of our environment
  - Enable housing to meet all needs
  - Improve health and reduce health inequalities
- 4.4 This review has regard for the Taunton Deane Corporate Strategy 2016 – 2020. The strategy has four overarching themes:
- People
  - Business & enterprise
  - Our place
  - An efficient and modern Council
- 4.5 This review has regard for the West Somerset Corporate Strategy 2016 – 2020. The strategy has four overarching themes:
- Our Communities
  - Business & Enterprise
  - Our places & Infrastructure
  - An efficient and modern Council
- 4.6 This review has regard for the South Somerset Rural Housing Action Plan 2016-2018 which outlines the Council’s approach to the provision of affordable housing in rural locations (parishes with a population of less than 3,000), and the South Somerset District Council Housing Strategy Implementation Plan 2014.
- 4.7 This review has regard for the Somerset West Unlawful Evictions Policy, Somerset West Housing Enforcement Policy, Somerset West Civil Penalty Policy and the Somerset West Empty Homes Strategy which focuses on housing homeless families in empty properties which have been brought back into use through grants and loans from the Local Authority.

## 5.0 THE SOMERSET DISTRICTS

5.1 There are five Somerset Districts and they are located in the South West region of England:

- Mendip District Council
- Sedgemoor District Council
- South Somerset District Council
- Taunton Deane Borough Council
- West Somerset District Council

5.2 These are represented in the map below:



5.3 The size of each individual District is shown below (*Source: Wikipedia*)

Table 1: Size of each District

Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset
738km <sup>2</sup>	564km <sup>2</sup>	959km <sup>2</sup>	463km <sup>2</sup>	726km <sup>2</sup>

5.4 The population of each District in 2016 is shown in the table below (*Source: Nomis*)

Table 2: District Population

Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset
112,500	121,400	165,600	115,500	34,300

5.5 The total population for all five Districts is 549,300.

5.6 Population projections for each District are shown below. These are based on 2014 figures and it appears based on the figures shown in 5.4 above that the population of Taunton Deane has grown faster than originally anticipated. (Source: 2014 based, ONS, nearest thousand)

Table 3: Population Projections

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Mendip	112,000	113,000	113,000	114,000
Sedgemoor	121,000	123,000	124,000	125,000
South Somerset	166,000	167,000	168,000	169,000
Taunton Deane	114,000	115,000	116,000	117,000
West Somerset	34,000	34,000	34,000	34,000

5.7 The population split between males and females for each District is shown below (Source: 2016 Nomis). These compare to 49.2% males / 50.8% females for the South West region and 49.3% males / 50.7% females for Great Britain.

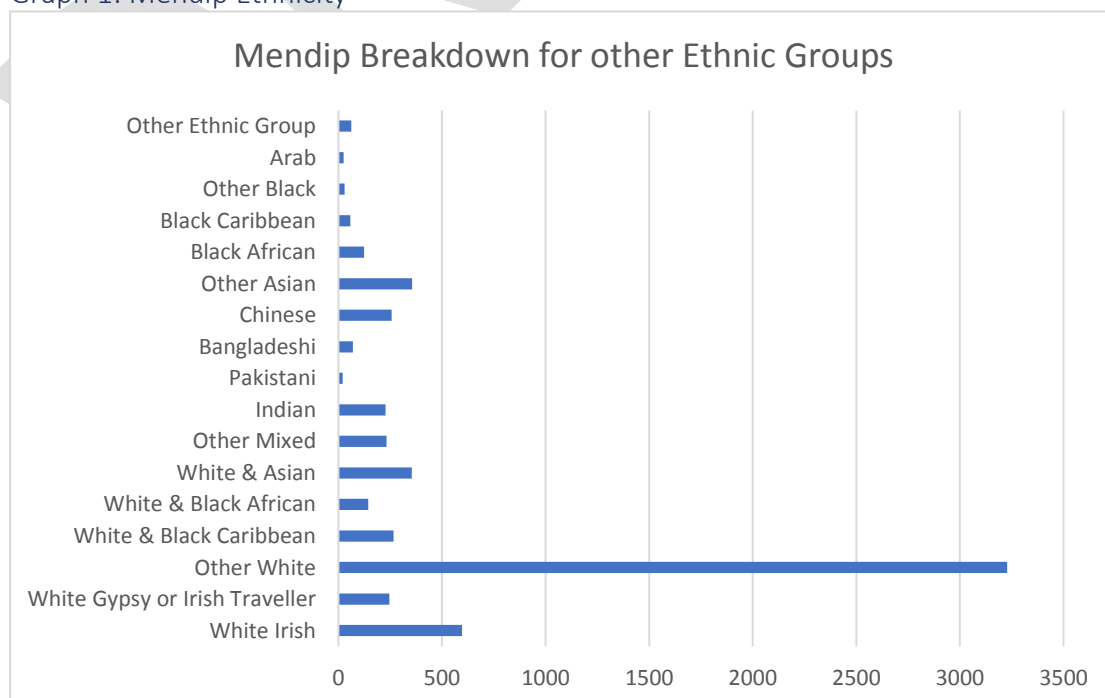
Table 4: Population by Gender

	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset	South West	Great Britain
Males	48.7%	49.1%	49.1%	48.6%	48.1%	49.2%	49.3%
Females	51.3%	50.9%	50.1%	51.4%	51.9%	50.8%	50.7%

5.8 The largest ethnic population group in each of the Somerset District is “White British”. These form percentage populations as follows; Mendip (94.24%), Sedgemoor (95.30%), South Somerset (94.96%), Taunton Deane (93.50%) and West Somerset (95.83%). These compare to 93.67% in England and Wales and 91.80% for the South West region. (Source: Census 2011)

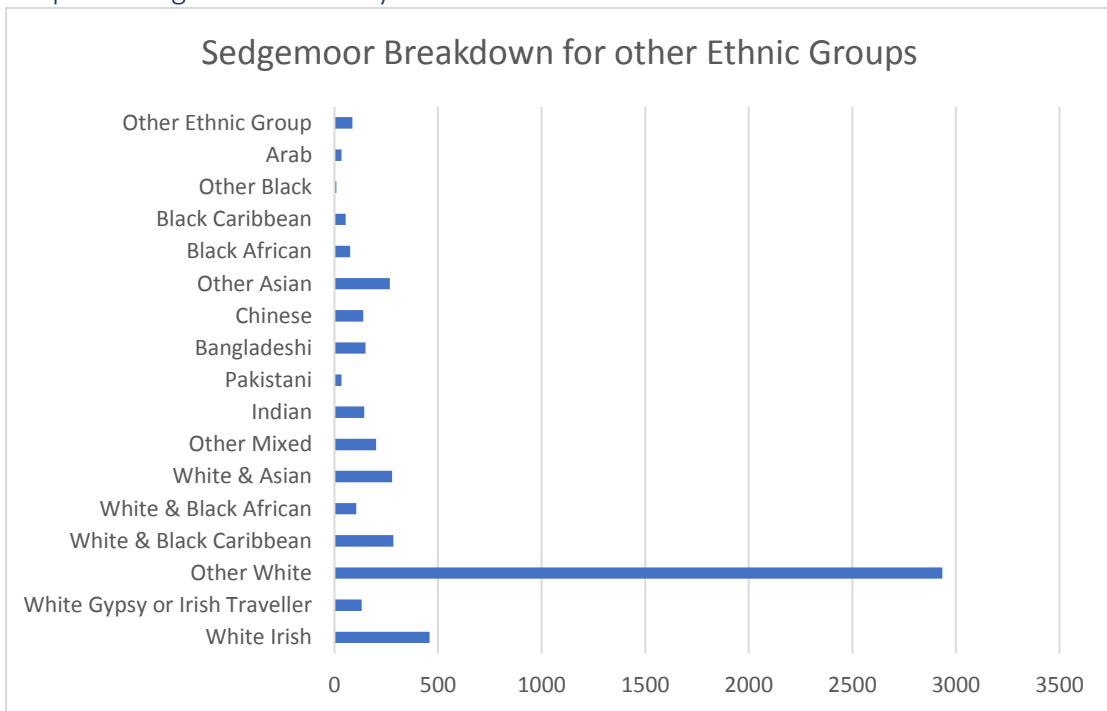
The distribution of other ethnic groups for each District is shown in the bar graphs below.

Graph 1: Mendip Ethnicity

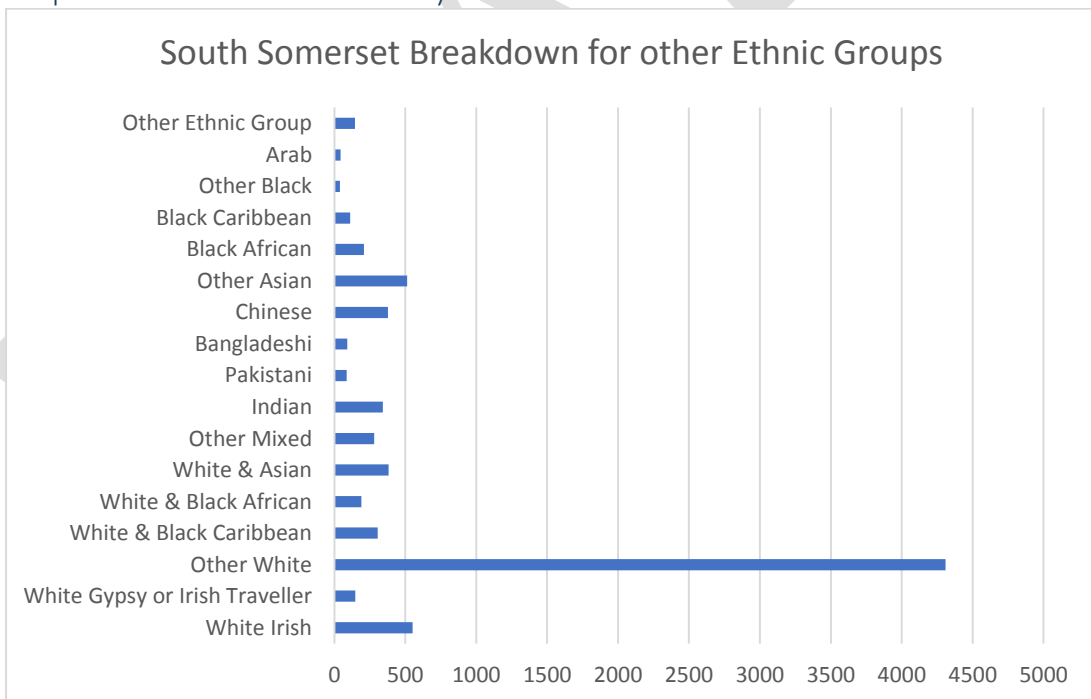




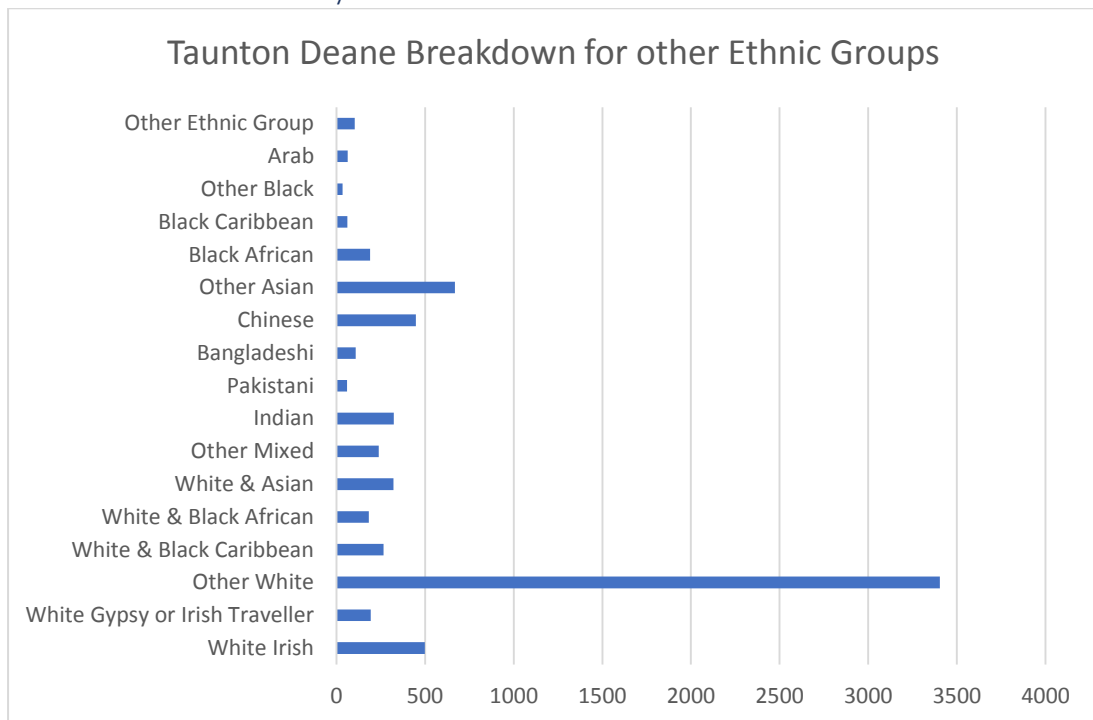
Graph 2: Sedgemoor Ethnicity



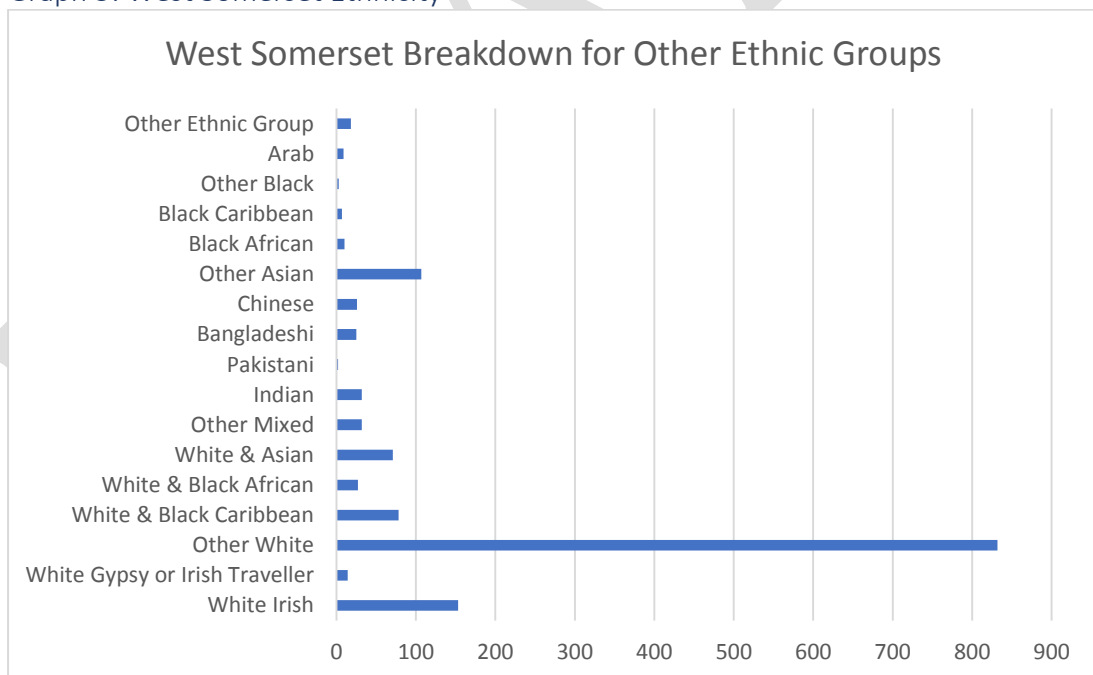
Graph 3: South Somerset Ethnicity



Graph 4: Taunton Deane Ethnicity



Graph 5: West Somerset Ethnicity



- 5.9 Economic activity for each District is shown below along with unemployment figures. (Source: Nomis, Jul 2016 – Jun 2017). The percentage economically active of the working age population for the South West region is 81.0% and for Great Britain this figure is 78.0%. The unemployment rate for the South West region is 3.7% and for Great Britain it is 4.6%.

Table 5: Economic Activity by District

	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset	South West	Great Britain
Economically active (% of working age population)	79.3%	79.3%	78.4%	79.6%	84.4%	81.0%	78.0%
Unemployment	4.8%	4.8%	3.5%	4.3%	3.6%	3.7%	4.6%

## 6.0 HOUSING MARKET, DEMAND, SUPPLY AND POSSESSION ACTION

- 6.1 The table below describes what multiple of the lower quartile income in the area the lower quartile house price in the area is since 2012 (Source: Shelter Databank).

A household is considered to be able to afford to buy a home if it costs less than four times the gross household income. It has also been assumed that a household would have a 10% deposit.

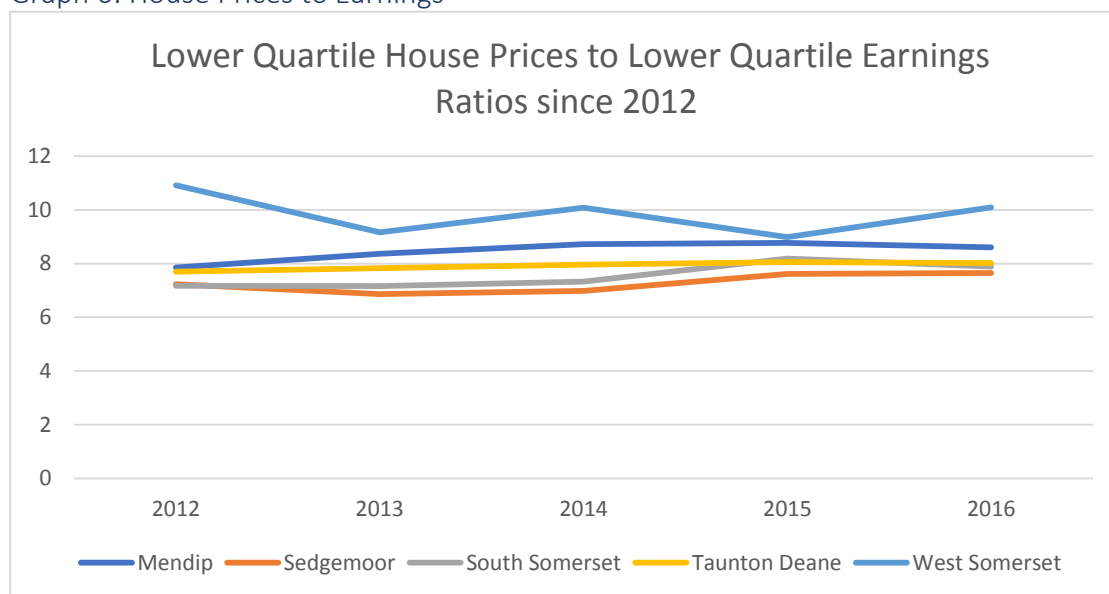
Table 6: Household Income Multiplier

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Mendip	7.85	8.37	8.73	8.77	8.61
Sedgemoor	7.23	6.87	6.98	7.62	7.65
South Somerset	7.17	7.16	7.33	8.19	7.89
Taunton Deane	7.7	7.83	7.96	8.06	8.02
West Somerset	10.92	9.17	10.09	8.99	10.1

In the South West region, the multiple in 2016 was 8.45 and in England it was 7.16. From the table above it can be seen that there is a large disparity in affordability by lower quartile incomes for lower quartile house prices across the Somerset Districts with West Somerset having the highest ratio in comparison to Sedgemoor and South Somerset Districts.

The graph below shows how the lower quartile income in the area compares to the lower quartile house price over time since 2012.

Graph 6: House Prices to Earnings



6.2 The table below shows the average selling house price in each area at the end of each quarter in the years since 2012. (Source: Shelter Databank)

Table 7: Average House Price

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Mendip	189,691	195,158	207,514	220,231	237,430
Sedgemoor	163,533	169,668	174,449	190,036	207,223
South Somerset	179,888	184,969	190,543	199,299	215,989
Taunton Deane	182,775	190,414	198,769	205,846	221,186
West Somerset	184,600	186,749	193,029	212,075	209,696

The following percentage changes demonstrate how these prices have changed over the last five years:

Mendip: 25.2% increase

Sedgemoor: 26.7% increase

South Somerset: 20.1% increase

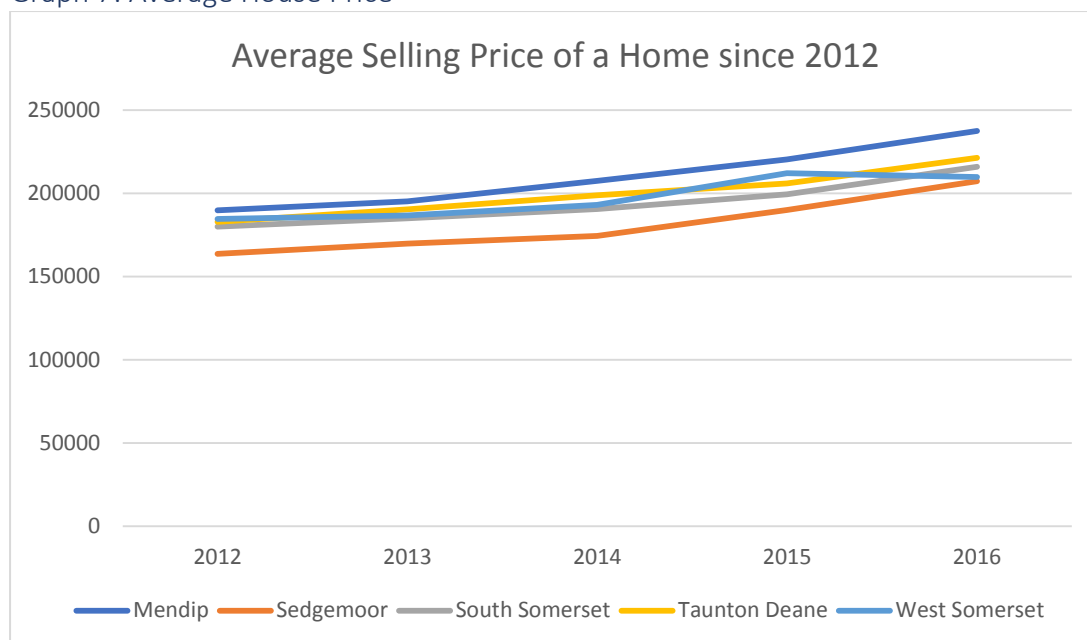
Taunton Deane: 21.0% increase

West Somerset: 13.6% increase

The average selling house price in 2016 for the South West region was £242,808 (higher than all of the five Districts in 2016) and £236,424 for England (also higher than all of the Districts other than Mendip).

The graph below shows how the average selling price of a house has varied over the last five years in each District.

Graph 7: Average House Price



6.3 The table below shows the median private rents by District since 2012. (Source: Shelter Databank). These figures compare to £675 in 2016 for the South West region and £650 for England.

Table 8: Median Private Rents

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	% Change
Mendip	575	600	603	625	625	+8.7%
Sedgemoor	550	560	570	575	575	+4.5%
South Somerset	575	575	575	595	600	+4.3%
Taunton Deane	575	595	595	595	600	+4.3%
West Somerset	595	595	595	600	600	+0.8%

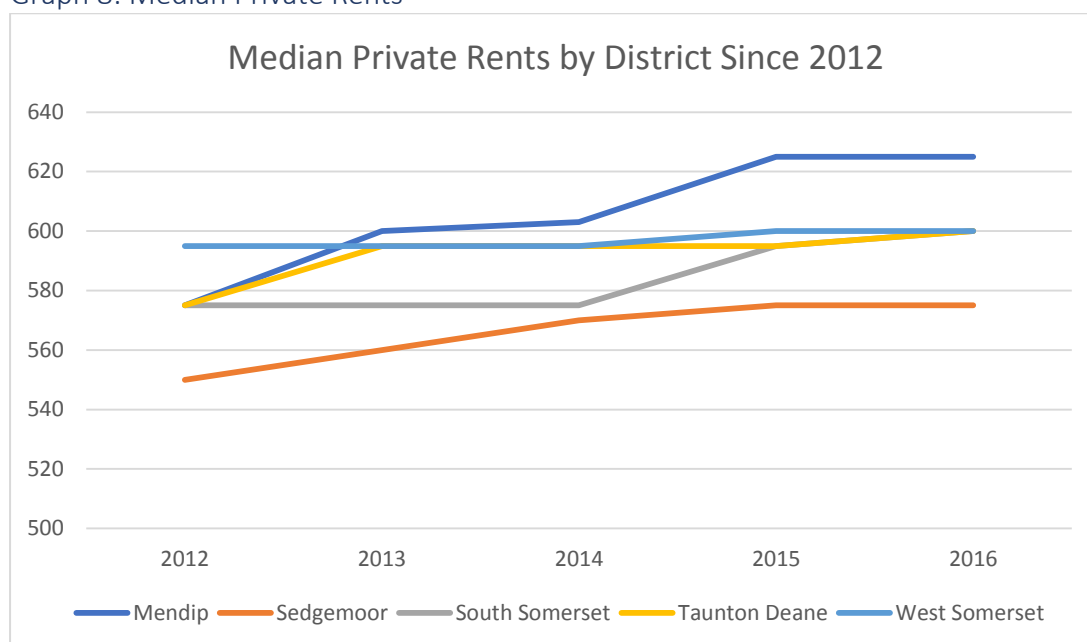
Over the last five years, median private rents have gradually increased the percentage increases are shown below for each District:

- Mendip: 8.7% increase
- Sedgemoor: 4.5% increase
- South Somerset: 4.3% increase
- Taunton Deane: 4.3% increase
- West Somerset: 0.8% increase

In the South West, median rents have increased by 12.5% and in England they have increased by 17.4% over the past five years.

The graph below shows the trends in the median private rent by District since 2012.

Graph 8: Median Private Rents



6.4 The table below shows the mean private rents by District since 2012. (Source: Shelter Databank). These figures compare to £748 in 2016 for the South West region and £839 for England.

Table 9: Mean Private Rents

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	% Change
Mendip	600	656	655	678	685	+14.2%
Sedgemoor	572	594	603	600	618	+8.0%
South Somerset	598	597	602	625	630	+5.4%
Taunton Deane	601	609	628	620	642	+6.8%
West Somerset	603	607	631	622	637	+5.6%

Over the last five years, mean private rents have gradually increased, the percentage increases are shown below for each District:

Mendip: 14.2% increase

Sedgemoor: 8.0% increase

South Somerset: 5.4% increase

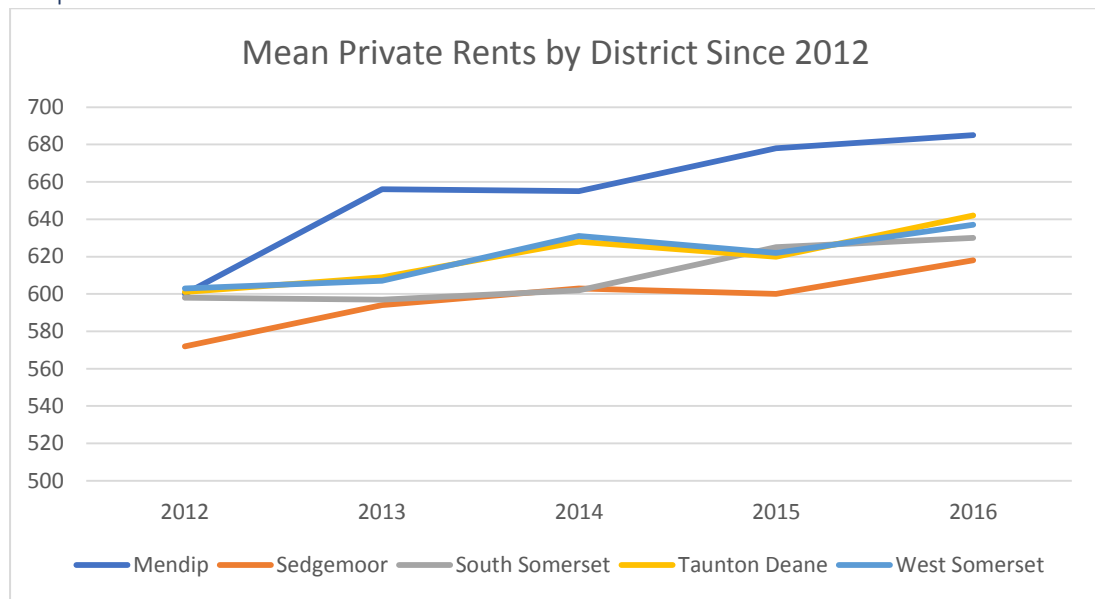
Taunton Deane: 6.8% increase

West Somerset: 5.6% increase

In the South West, mean rents have increased by 13.3% and in England they have increased by 19.0% over the past five years.

The graph below shows the trends in the mean private rents by District since 2012.

Graph 9: Mean Private Rents



6.5 The graph below shows the Local Housing Allowance rate in each district.

Graph 10: Local Housing Allowance



6.6 The table below shows the number of households on Homefinder Somerset since 2012.

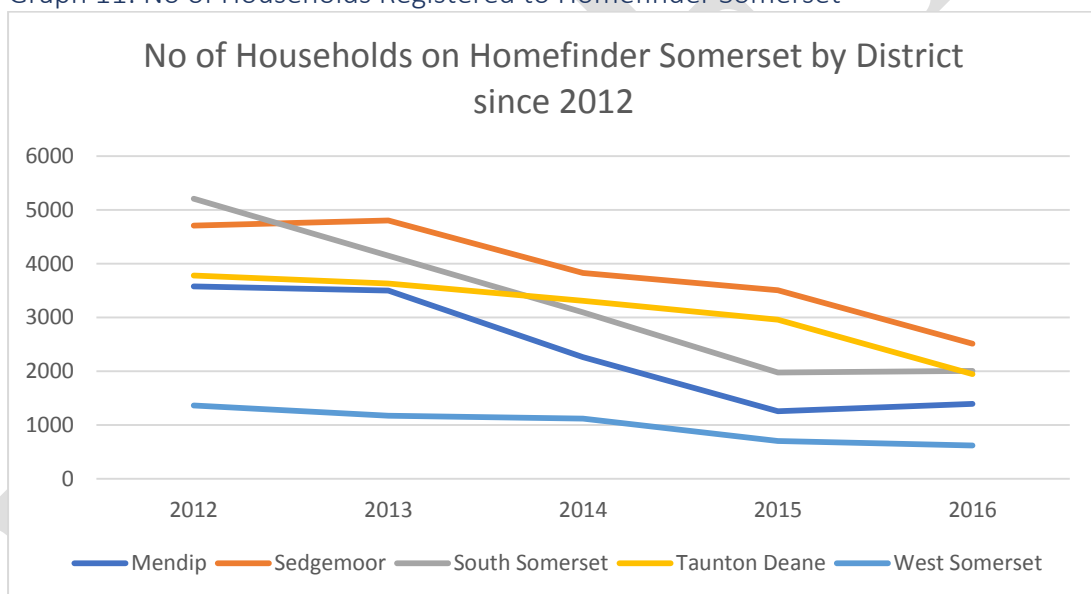
Table 10: No of Households Registered to Homefinder Somerset

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Mendip	3580	3500	2261	1258	1391
Sedgemoor	4706	4807	3830	3505	2511
South Somerset	5211	4150	3097	1975	2006
Taunton Deane	3783	3633	3310	2956	1949
West Somerset	1363	1173	1122	700	622
Total	19,643	17,263	13,620	10,394	8479

In total the number of households on Homefinder Somerset has decreased since 2012 by 56.8% across all the Districts.

The graph below shows the trend in the number of households on Homefinder Somerset since 2012.

Graph 11: No of Households Registered to Homefinder Somerset



6.7 The table below shows the current banding and property need per District for all households currently registered on Homefinder Somerset (December 2017).






Table 11: No Registered in Each Band on Homefinder Somerset

Local Authority	Band	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	5 Bed	6 Bed	Total
Mendip	Bronze	371	241	61	6			679
	Emergency	2			1			3
	Gold	62	23	8	6	7		106
	Silver	260	221	109	24	2		616
		695	485	178	37	9		<b>1404</b>
Sedgemoor	Bronze	590	402	132	19	1	1	1145
	Emergency	3	1			1		5
	Gold	38	36	12	5	4	1	96
	Silver	187	180	119	47	2		535
		818	619	263	71	8	2	<b>1781</b>
South Somerset	Bronze	618	342	115	10	1		1086
	Emergency	2	2					4
	Gold	74	49	19	6	8		156
	Silver	261	214	131	50	3	1	660
		955	607	265	66	12	1	<b>1906</b>
Taunton Deane	Bronze	667	434	114	8	1		1224
	Emergency	3						3
	Gold	109	42	24	5	5		185
	Silver	204	180	151	52	2		589
		983	656	289	65	8		<b>2001</b>
West Somerset	Bronze	249	114	41	5	1		410
	Emergency		1					1
	Gold	23	3	7	5	2	1	41
	Silver	84	52	29	16	3		184
		356	170	77	26	6	1	<b>636</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3807</b>	<b>2537</b>	<b>1072</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7728</b>

The banding criteria for each band is shown in the diagram below. The Emergency Band is for those applicants that require an 'urgent' move to ensure their safety and welfare. As you can see from the table above, the highest accommodation need for applicants within each District is for 1 bedroom accommodation.

Table 12: Banding Criteria for Homefinder Somerset

Gold Band – High need 	Silver Band – Medium Need 	Bronze Band – Low Need 
Homeless households who are owed a main homeless duty by a Homefinder Somerset partner authority.	Where the applicant lacks 1 bedroom in their current home.	Where an applicant is adequately housed.
Applicants who lack 2 or more bedrooms or have been confirmed as overcrowded by a Local Authority officer.	Applicants who can demonstrate a need to move for employment reasons or to give or receive support where significant harm would result if this was not provided.	Where applicants own their own property but whose home is not suitable for their needs but they have sufficient equity to address their housing needs.
Current supported housing residents or care leaving applicants who are assessed as ready to move on to independent living.	Where there is a medium medical need. Medium welfare need	Applicants with a low medical need. Applicants with a low welfare need.
High disrepair for people living in the private sector.	Medium disrepair for people living in the private sector.	Applicants living in short term supported housing, or are care leavers prior to being ready to move at which stage they will move up to the gold band.
High medical need High welfare need	Applicants with dependent children and are lodging with friends or family or in accommodation with shared living facilities.	Applicants with no dependent children and are lodging with friends or family or in accommodation with shared living facilities.
Applicants awarded a 'medium' medical priority, combined with 'medium' disrepair award from the silver band.	Other homeless (where Homefinder Somerset partners do not owe an applicant a full homeless duty).	Applicants are assessed as having adequate financial resources to address their housing needs.
Victim of harassment or violence at their current property within the Homefinder Somerset area.	Applicants of split families who not by choice are living separately.	Applicant has no housing need.
Applicant awarded 4 or more silver band housing needs with the exception of applicants found to be intentionally homeless.		Applicant has deliberately worsened their circumstances or made use of the under occupation band before, or has accepted an offer that doesn't meet their needs previously.
Social housing tenants whose homes are subject to major works for rebuilding/renovation or re-designation.		Applicants with low disrepair needs living in private sector rented property.
Where the Local Authority receives written support from a Homefinder Somerset landlord that an applicant has no legal right to succession and the landlord will pursue possession.		Applicants that have no local connection applying for extra care or sheltered properties.

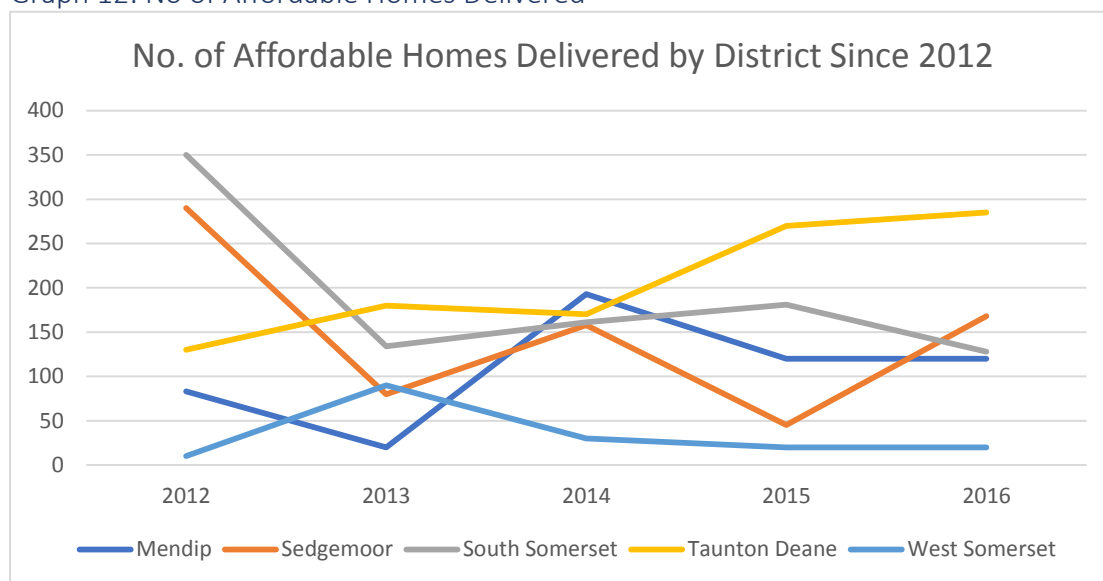
6.8 The table below shows the number of affordable homes delivered by each District since 2012. This includes the number of social rented, intermediate rented and low cost home ownership homes delivered through new build, acquisition or refurbishment during that time period.

Table 13: No of Affordable Homes Delivered

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Mendip	83	20	193	120	120
Sedgemoor	290	80	158	45	168
South Somerset	350	134	161	181	128
Taunton Deane	130	180	170	270	285
West Somerset	10	90	30	20	20

The graph below shows how the number of affordable homes delivered has varied by District since 2012.

Graph 12: No of Affordable Homes Delivered



6.9 The table below and included within the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2016 demonstrates the estimated annual need for affordable housing by location.

Table 14: Estimated Annual Affordable Housing Need

	Current need* (annualised)	Newly forming households	Existing households falling into need	Total need	Relet supply	Net need
Mendip	17	351	191	559	319	240
Sedgemoor	15	408	232	655	354	301
South Somerset	20	466	379	865	659	206
Taunton Deane	17	363	393	774	613	161
SOMERSET	74	1665	1274	3013	2058	955

\* Current need reflects the annual number of households already in need of affordable housing and includes households without housing (concealed households).

The table below shows the estimated size of dwellings needed for affordable housing 2014 to 2039 by Local Authority area. This table is sourced from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2016.

Table 15: Estimated Size of Dwellings Needed 2014-2039

	One bedroom	Two bedrooms	Three + bedrooms
Mendip	48.2%	31.5%	20.2%
Sedgemoor	43.3%	28.4%	28.3%
South Somerset	44.6%	37.3%	18.2%
Taunton Deane	47.5%	32.3%	20.2%

6.10 The table below shows the older person population by District in 2015. This information has been taken from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2016.

Table 16: Older Population by District

		Under 65	65-74	75-84	85+	Total	Total 65+
Mendip	Pop	87,102	13,552	7,674	3,396	11,724	24,622
	% pop	78.0%	12.1%	6.9%	3.0%	100.0%	22.0%
Sedgemoor	Pop	93,251	14,924	8,408	3,677	120,260	27,009
	% pop	77.5%	12.4%	7.0%	3.1%	100.0%	22.5%
South Somerset	Pop	125,125	21,661	12,499	5,697	164,982	39,857
	% pop	75.8%	13.1%	7.6%	3.5%	100.0%	24.2%
Taunton Deane	Pop	88,820	13,154	7,957	4,090	114,021	25,201
	% pop	77.9%	11.5%	7.0%	3.6%	100.0%	22.1%
Somerset	Pop	417,458	69,350	40,109	18,473	545,390	127,932
	% pop	76.5%	12.7%	7.4%	3.4%	100.0%	23.5%
South West	% pop	78.6%	11.6%	6.8%	3.0%	100.0%	21.4%
England	% pop	82.3%	9.6%	5.7%	2.4%	100.0%	17.7%

The table below shows the projected change in population of older persons (2014 to 2039) by District. This table has been sourced from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2016.

Table 17: Projected Population Change – Older Persons 2014-2039

	Under 65	65-74	75-84	85+	Total	Total 65+
Mendip	-0.7%	32.8%	85.6%	159.4%	14.0%	67.3%
Sedgemoor	9.0%	33.4%	85.2%	151.0%	21.6%	65.8%
South Somerset	-1.9%	22.6%	74.8%	150.8%	12.2%	57.5%
Taunton Deane	2.8%	31.3%	80.8%	154.3%	16.8%	66.9%
Somerset	1.3%	27.6%	78.0%	137.4%	16.4%	57.4%
South West	5.4%	27.3%	72.1%	137.4%	16.4%	57.4%
England	7.4%	33.3%	70.1%	137.5%	16.5%	59.2%

This table suggests that by 2039, Mendip will have experienced the largest percentage growth in population over the age of 65 with South Somerset experiencing the smallest percentage growth.

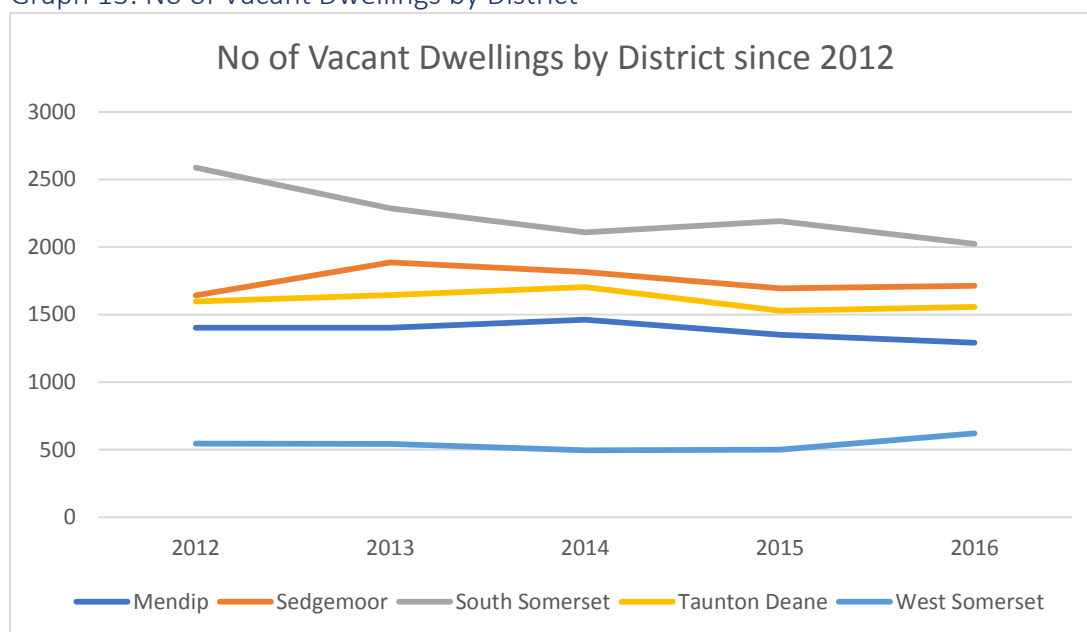
6.11 The table below shows the number of vacant dwellings per District since 2012. (Source: Shelter Databank)

Table 18: No of Vacant Dwellings

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Mendip	1403	1402	1461	1351	1292 (2.54%)
Sedgemoor	1643	1886	1815	1694	1714 (3.19%)
South Somerset	2588	2286	2108	2191	2023 (2.65%)
Taunton Deane	1596	1644	1703	1529	1557 (2.97%)
West Somerset	545	544	495	501	622 (3.45%)

The graph below shows how the number of vacant dwellings have changed by District since 2012.

Graph 13: No of Vacant Dwellings by District



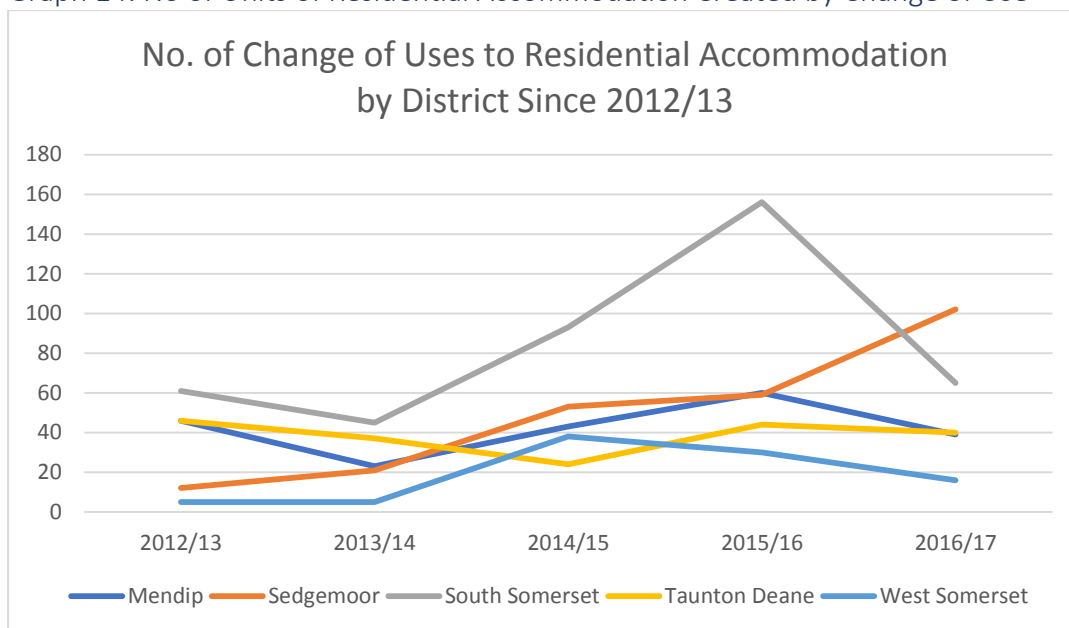
- 6.12 The table below shows the number of properties in each District where a change of use has been exercised in order to create residential accommodation since 2012/13 (*Source: Government Live Tables*).

Table 19: No of Units of Residential Accommodation Created by Change of Use

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Mendip	46	23	43	60	39
Sedgemoor	12	21	53	59	102
South Somerset	61	45	93	156	65
Taunton Deane	46	37	24	44	40
West Somerset	5	5	38	30	16

The graph below shows the number of new residential accommodation units created from change of use since 2012/13. The Sedgemoor District shows a spike in numbers for the 2016/17 period which could well be attributed to the start of the Hinkley Point development.

Graph 14: No of Units of Residential Accommodation Created by Change of Use



6.13 The table below shows the possession claims taken by landlords within each District since 2012. (Source: Shelter Databank)

Table 20: Possession Claims taken by Landlords

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Mendip	131	144	198	119	134
Sedgemoor	164	171	165	161	193
South Somerset	212	239	213	189	184
Taunton Deane	163	211	203	235	189
West Somerset	26	12	7	13	30

The change over the last five years in each District is shown as a percentage below:

Mendip: 3.1% increase

Sedgemoor: 17.7% increase

South Somerset: 13.2% decrease

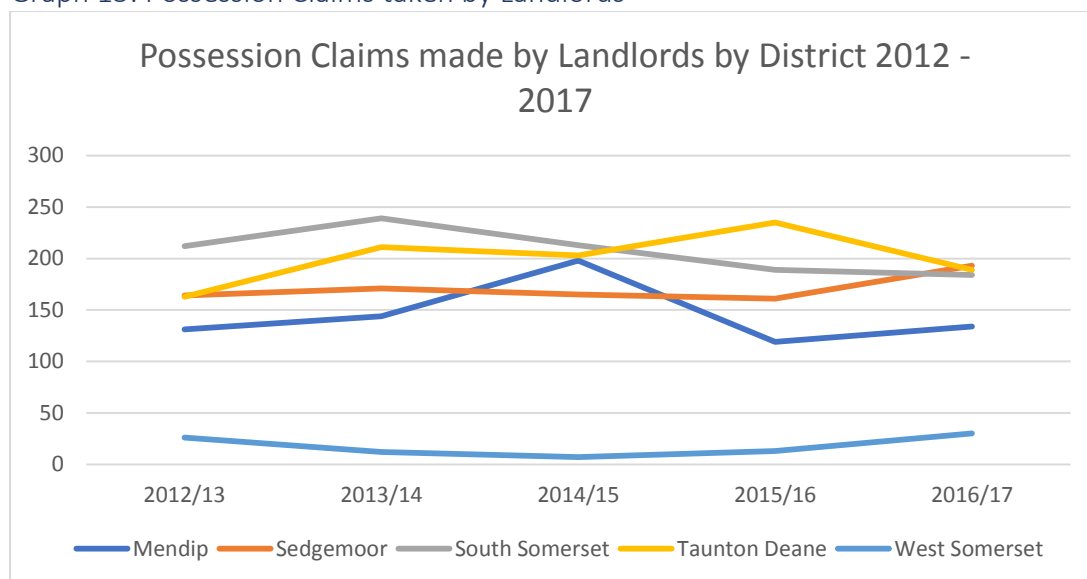
Taunton Deane: 16.0% increase

West Somerset: 15.4% increase

This compares to a 7.1% increase in the South West region and an 8.9% decrease in England.

The graph below demonstrates the trends by District in possession claims by landlords since 2012.

Graph 15: Possession Claims taken by Landlords



6.14 The table below shows the number of possession claims issued by mortgage lenders by District since 2012. (Source: Shelter Databank)

Table 21: Possession Claims Issued by Mortgage Lenders

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Mendip	77	87	66	15	25
Sedgemoor	116	102	65	31	30
South Somerset	120	97	71	32	42
Taunton Deane	67	51	41	21	18
West Somerset	0	31	6	0	1

The change over the last five years in each District is shown as a percentage below:

Mendip: 67.5% decrease

Sedgemoor: 74.1% decrease

South Somerset: 65% decrease

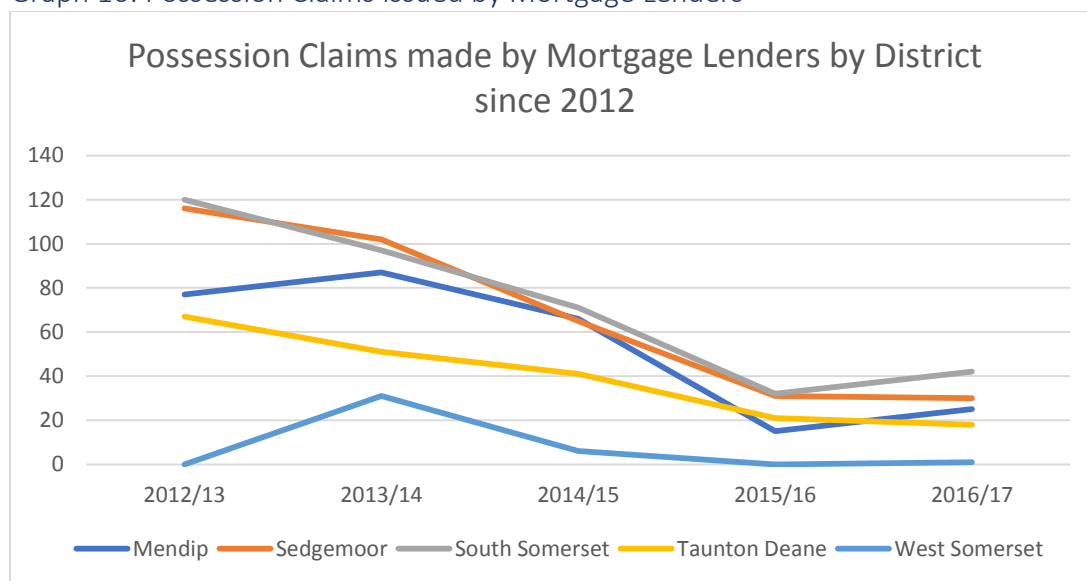
Taunton Deane: 73.1% decrease

West Somerset: 100% increase

This compares to a 69.9% decrease in the South West region and a 69.4% decrease in England.

The graph below demonstrates the trends by District in the number of possession claims made by mortgage lenders since 2012.

Graph 16: Possession Claims Issued by Mortgage Lenders



#### 6.15 SUMMARY OF DATA

Average house prices are continuing to rise across the Somerset Districts. The increases seen over the last five years range from 13.6% in West Somerset to 26.7% in Sedgemoor. However, the average house price in the five Districts is still lower than that of the South West region, and with the exception of Mendip, also lower than the average for England.

Low wage levels within the five Districts coupled with house prices make it impossible for first time buyers to purchase on the open market without substantial deposit sums.

The multiple of the lower quartile income to lower quartile property price ranges from 7.65 in Sedgemoor to 10.1 in West Somerset. All Districts have a higher multiple than the comparative for England. Sedgemoor, South Somerset and Taunton Deane have a lower multiple compared to the South West region whereas Mendip and West Somerset are higher. A household is generally assumed to be able to afford a property at less than four times multiple.

Median private rents have increased in all Districts over the last 5 years. The largest increase was seen in Mendip (8.7% increase) and the smallest increase was seen in West Somerset (0.8% increase). All Districts have seen much smaller increases in median private rents than the comparative increases for the South West region and England.

Mean private rents have also increased in all Districts over the last 5 years. The largest increase was seen in Mendip (14.2% increase) and the smallest increase was seen in West Somerset (5.4% increase). All Districts have seen smaller increases in mean private rents than the comparative increases for the South West region and England with the exception of Mendip which had a higher increase in mean rent than the South West region average.

Local Housing Allowance rates have not been uprated for the past two years and prior to that they were only uprated at a maximum of 1% per annum. Therefore, comparing these marginal increases to the increases the Districts have seen over the last five years in both median and



mean rents, it can be concluded that the private rented sector in the Districts is becoming less affordable for low income households.

All the District Councils in Somerset use Homefinder Somerset to allocate affordable housing. The number of households on Homefinder Somerset has decreased since 2012 by 56.8% across all the Districts. There are currently 7,728 households registered with Homefinder Somerset across four different bands – Emergency, Gold, Silver and Bronze and ranging in need from 1 bed to 6 bed need. The highest need in all Districts is for 1 bedroom accommodation.

Population estimates suggest that by 2039, the Districts will experience a big shift in ageing population. Mendip will experience the largest percentage growth in population over the age of 65 years with a 67.3% increase with the number of over 85 year olds projected to increase by 159.4%. South Somerset will experience the smallest growth in the over 65 year age group with a 57.5% increase of which the over 85 year old group will have an increase of 150.8%. Therefore, any homeless strategy must prepare to provide housing options to an aging population.

The number of vacant dwellings has remained fairly constant across the Districts over the last five years. The highest number of vacant properties can be found in South Somerset where there are 2,023 vacant dwellings. The smallest number is found in West Somerset where there are 622 vacant dwellings. However, as a percentage of the total dwelling stock within the Borough, West Somerset has the highest percentage of vacant dwellings at 3.45% of all dwellings.

The change in possession claims initiated by landlords over the past five years has varied by District. All Districts have shown an increase in claims with the exception of South Somerset where there has been a decrease in claims by 13.2%.

All Districts have shown a substantial decrease in the number of possession claims issued by mortgage lenders. These range from a 65.0% decrease in South Somerset to a 100% increase in West Somerset, albeit from an extremely low starting point. These decreases are comparative to those experienced across the South West region and England.

## 7.0 HOMELESSNESS IN MENDIP, SEDGEMOOR, SOUTH SOMERSET, TAUNTON DEANE & WEST SOMERSET

7.1 Since the first joint homelessness strategy between the Districts in 2008, there has been a focus on the prevention and relief of homelessness. The number of homeless prevention and relief cases recorded by each Local Authority is shown in the table below (*Source: Shelter databank*):

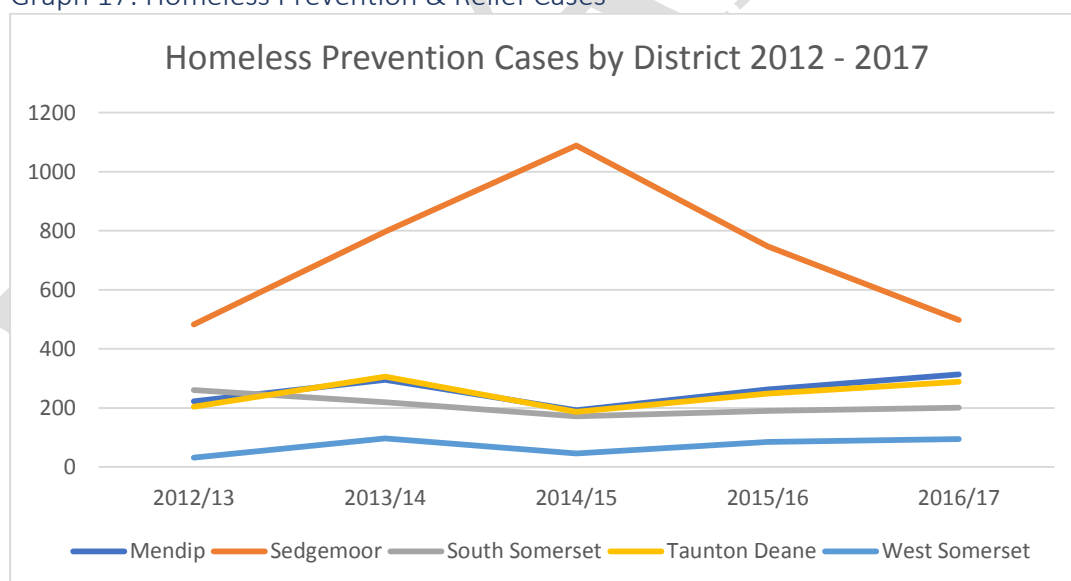
Table 22: Homeless Prevention & Relief Cases

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	% Change
Mendip	222	295	192	263	313	+41.0%
Sedgemoor	483	797	1089	747	498	+3.1%
South Somerset	260	219	172	190	201	-22.7%
Taunton Deane	204	306	187	248	289	+41.7%
West Somerset	32	97	46	85	94	+193.8%

In England, there has been an increase of 6.1% of homeless prevention and relief cases.

The graph below demonstrates the trends in each Local Authority area of homeless prevention cases.

Graph 17: Homeless Prevention & Relief Cases



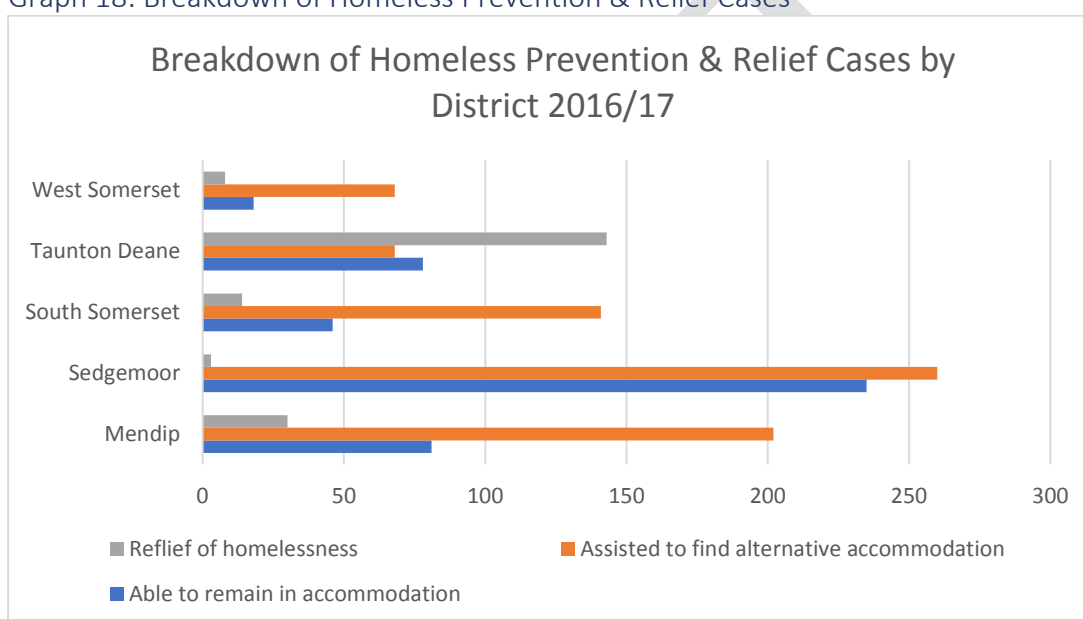
The number of homeless prevention and relief cases can be further broken down in order to analyse how many households were assisted to remain in their accommodation, how many households were assisted to move to alternative accommodation and in how many cases homelessness was effectively relieved. The breakdown of these figures for 2016/17 is shown in the table below by District.

Table 23: Breakdown of Homeless Prevention & Relief Cases

	Assisted to remain in accommodation	Assisted into alternative accommodation	Successful homelessness relief	Total
Mendip	81	202	30	313
Sedgemoor	235	260	3	498
South Somerset	46	141	14	201
Taunton Deane	78	68	143	289
West Somerset	18	68	8	94

The bar graph below demonstrates the breakdown of homeless prevention and relief cases by District in 2016/17.

Graph 18: Breakdown of Homeless Prevention & Relief Cases



7.2 The number of homeless acceptances made by each District since 2012 is shown in the table below. (Source: Shelter Databank)

Table 24: Homeless Acceptances

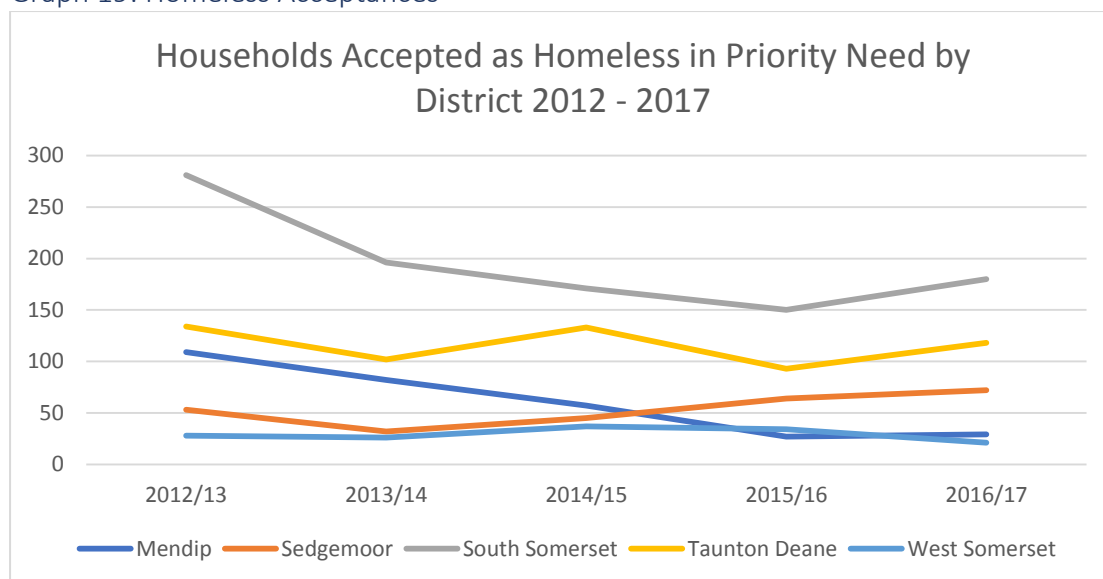
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	% Change
Mendip	126	92	61	24	34	-73.0%
Sedgemoor	53	32	45	64	72	+35.8%
South Somerset	255	221	177	150	165	-35.3%
Taunton Deane	139	106	133	90	97	-30.2%
West Somerset	33	16	34	36	22	-33.3%

The change experienced by each District over the last five years is shown as a percentage above.

In the South West, there was a 16.4% increase in the same period and in England there was a 10.8% increase.

The graph below demonstrates the trends in each Local Authority area of homeless cases accepted.

Graph 19: Homeless Acceptances



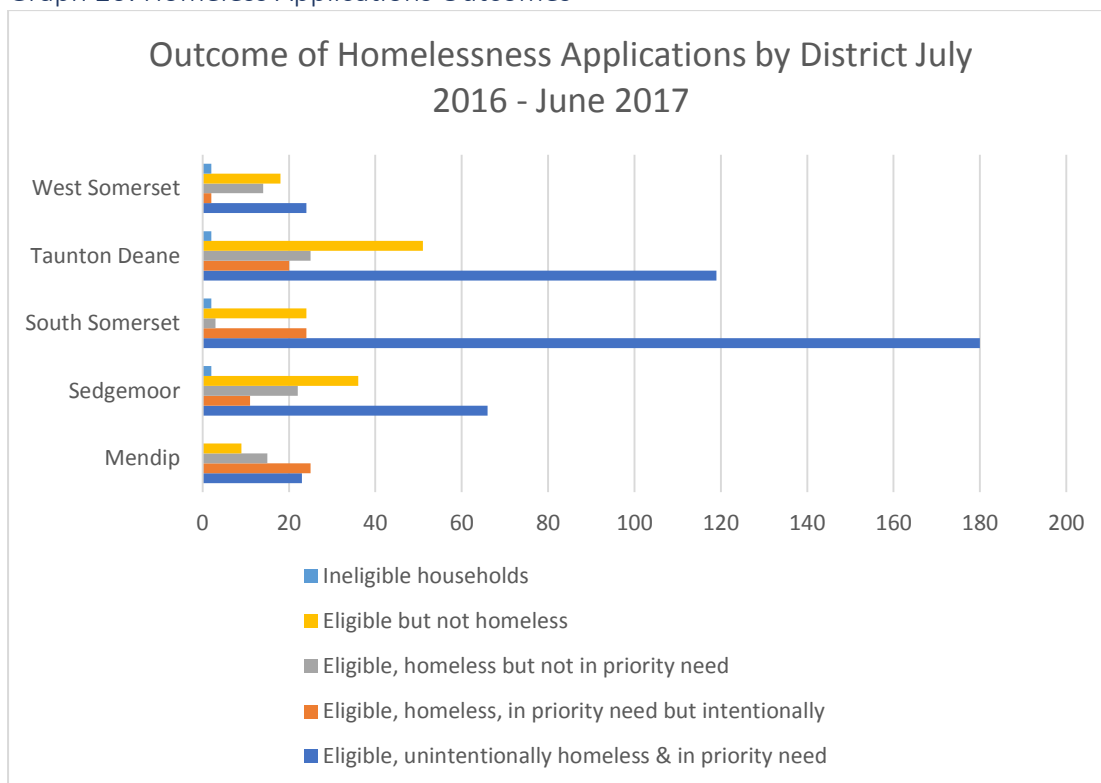
7.3 The table below shows the outcome of homelessness applications by District in the period July 2016 to June 2017. (Source: Government Live Tables)

Table 25: Homeless Applications Outcomes

	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset
Eligible, unintentionally homeless & in priority need	23	66	180	119	24
Eligible, homeless, in priority need but intentionally	25	11	24	20	2
Eligible, homeless but not in priority need	15	22	3	25	14
Eligible but not homeless	9	36	24	51	18
Ineligible households	0	2	2	2	2

The graph below shows the outcome of homeless decisions by District during the period July 2016 to June 2017.

Graph 20: Homeless Applications Outcomes



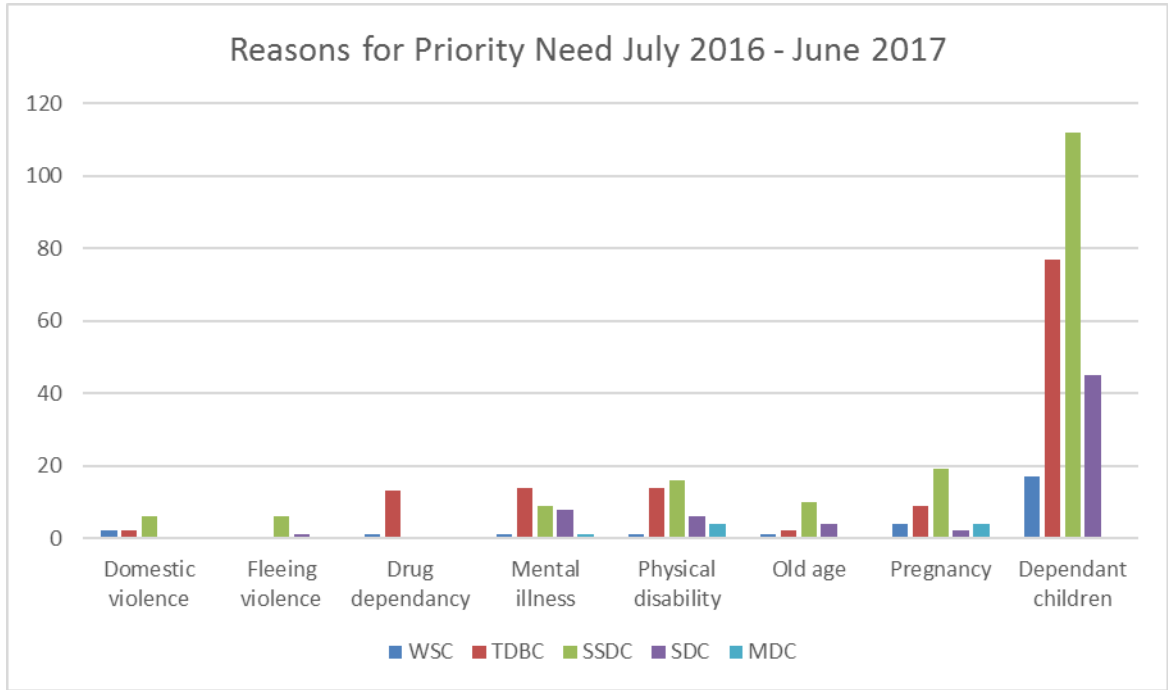
7.4 The table below shows the ethnicity of eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need households by District over the last four quarters of data available (July 2016 to June 2017). (Source: Government Live Tables)

Table 26: Homeless Acceptances Ethnicity Breakdown

	White	Black	Asian	Mixed	Ethnicity not stated	Other
Mendip	19	0	0	0	3	2
Sedgemoor	61	0	0	0	0	0
South Somerset	155	0	0	1	21	3
Taunton Deane	115	1	1	3	1	0
West Somerset	24	0	0	0	0	0

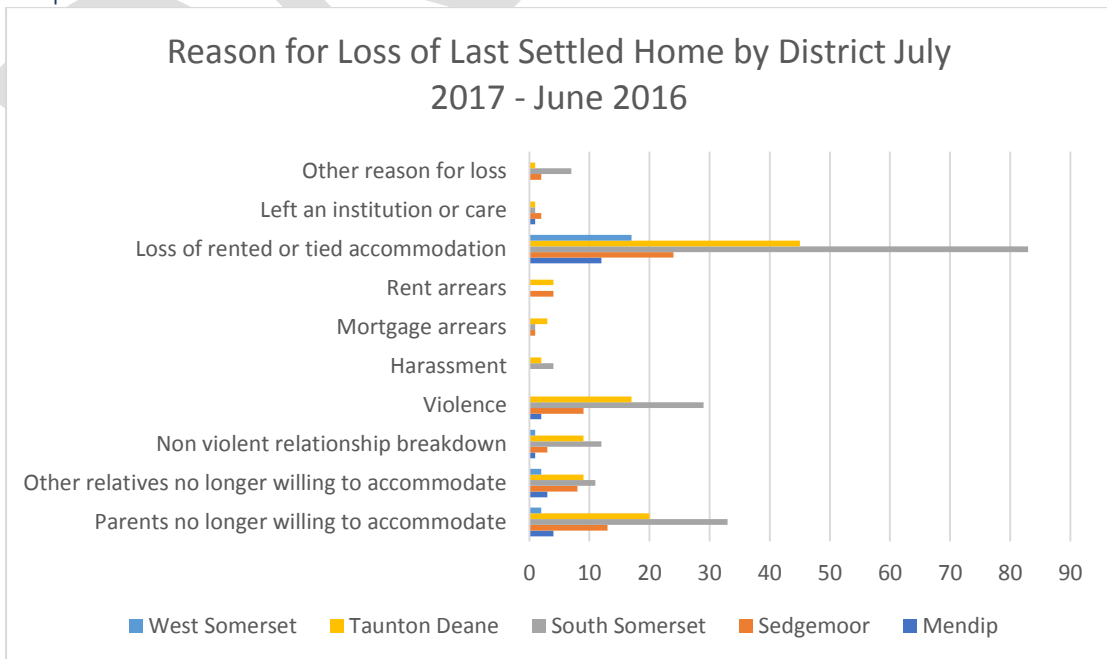
7.5 The bar graph below shows the reason for priority need for applicant households found to be unintentionally homeless, eligible for assistance and in priority need for July 2016 to June 2017. (Source: Government Live Tables)

Graph 21: Reason for Priority Need



7.6 The bar graph below shows the reason for the loss of last settled home for applicant households found to be unintentionally homeless, eligible for assistance and in priority need for July 2016 to June 2017. (Source: Government Live Tables)

Graph 22: Reason for Loss of Last Settled Home



7.7 The table below shows the number of households in temporary accommodation within each District since 2012 at the end of quarter 3. (Source: Shelter Databank)

Table 27: No of Households in Temporary Accommodation

	2012 Q3	2013 Q3	2014 Q3	2015 Q3	2016 Q3
Mendip	30	19	4	4	4
Sedgemoor	15	21	19	17	24
South Somerset	50	37	32	34	31
Taunton Deane	37	39	35	29	26
West Somerset	5	0	0	6	0

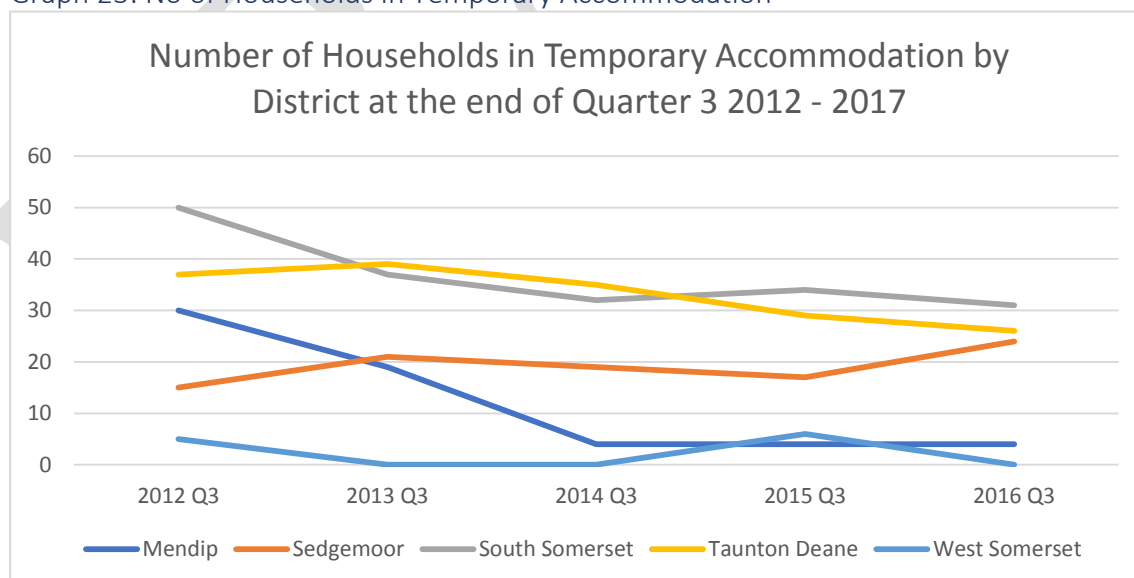
The change in use of temporary accommodation over the last five years by each District is shown below:

- Mendip: 86.7% decrease
- Sedgemoor: 60.0% increase
- South Somerset: 38.0% decrease
- Taunton Deane: 29.7% decrease
- West Somerset: 100.0% decrease

The South West region recorded a 17.7% increase in the same period and England recorded a 40.9% increase in the use of temporary accommodation.

The graph below demonstrates the trends for each Local Authority in its use of temporary accommodation over the last few years.

Graph 23: No of Households in Temporary Accommodation



7.8 The table below shows the number of households with dependent children in temporary accommodation by District since 2012 at the end of quarter 3.

Table 28: No of Households with Dependent Children in Temporary Accommodation

	2012 Q3	2013 Q3	2014 Q3	2015 Q3	2016 Q3
Mendip	28	16	11	0	7
Sedgemoor	8	11	11	10	13
South Somerset	27	19	8	10	7
Taunton Deane	26	26	23	15	19
West Somerset	5	0	0	6	0

The change over the last five years in percentages is shown below for each District:

Mendip: 75.0% decrease

Sedgemoor: 62.5% increase

South Somerset: 74.0% decrease

Taunton Deane: 26.9% decrease

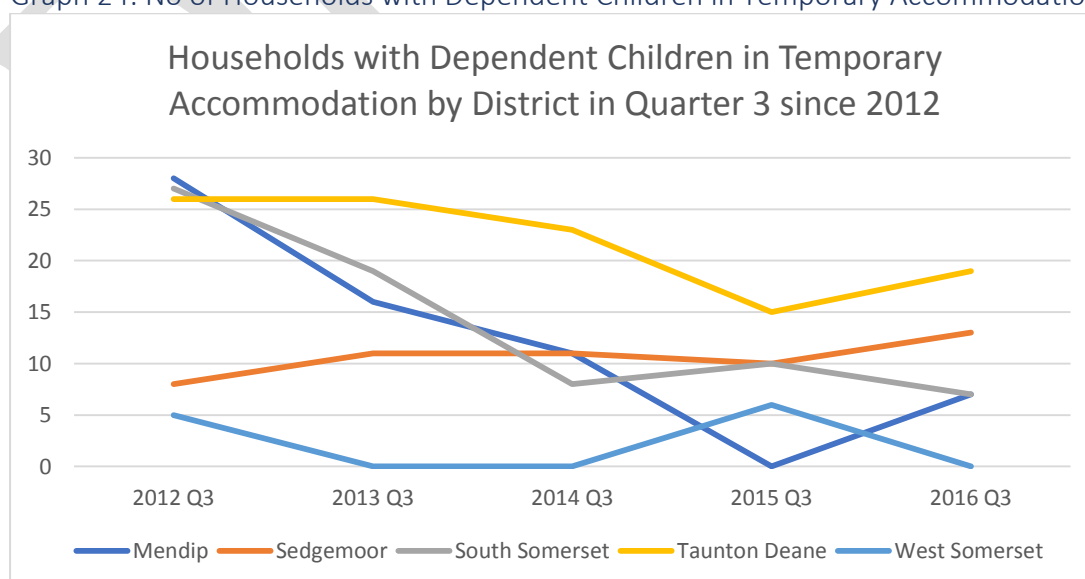
West Somerset: 100.0% decrease

Over the same period, the comparative percentages for the South West region and England were 35.7% increase and 47.8% increase respectively.

It should be noted that these statistics are a snap shot of the situation at the end of each quarter and do not necessarily reflect long term trends in all cases. It is clear however that the use of temporary accommodation for applicants with dependant children has been consistently low in Somerset over the past few years.

The graph below demonstrates the trends for each Local Authority in the number of households with dependent children in temporary accommodation since 2012.

Graph 24: No of Households with Dependent Children in Temporary Accommodation





7.9 The table below shows the number of households found to be intentionally homeless since 2012 by District.

Table 29: Households Found Intentionally Homeless

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Mendip	16	12	23	31	30
Sedgemoor	7	8	6	12	10
South Somerset	26	22	10	22	18
Taunton Deane	3	6	11	11	19
West Somerset	10	11	7	4	0

The percentage change over the past five years for each District are shown below:

Mendip: 87.5% increase

Sedgemoor: 42.9% increase

South Somerset: 30.8% decrease

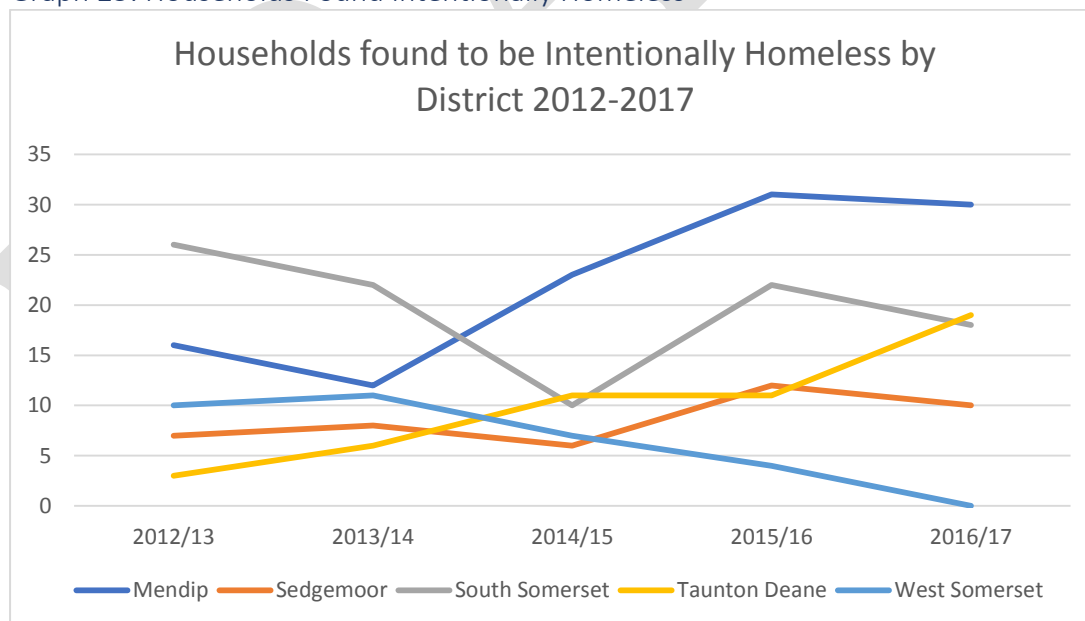
Taunton Deane: 533% increase

West Somerset: 100.0% decrease

In the South West region there was 30.3% increase over the same time period and in England, a 20.3% increase.

The graph below demonstrates the trends for each Local Authority in the number of households found to be intentionally homeless.

Graph 25: Households Found Intentionally Homeless



7.10 The table below shows the extent of rough sleeping by District since 2012. This information is based on a single night snapshot carried out in autumn every year using street counts and intelligence driven estimates.

Table 30: Extent of Rough Sleeping

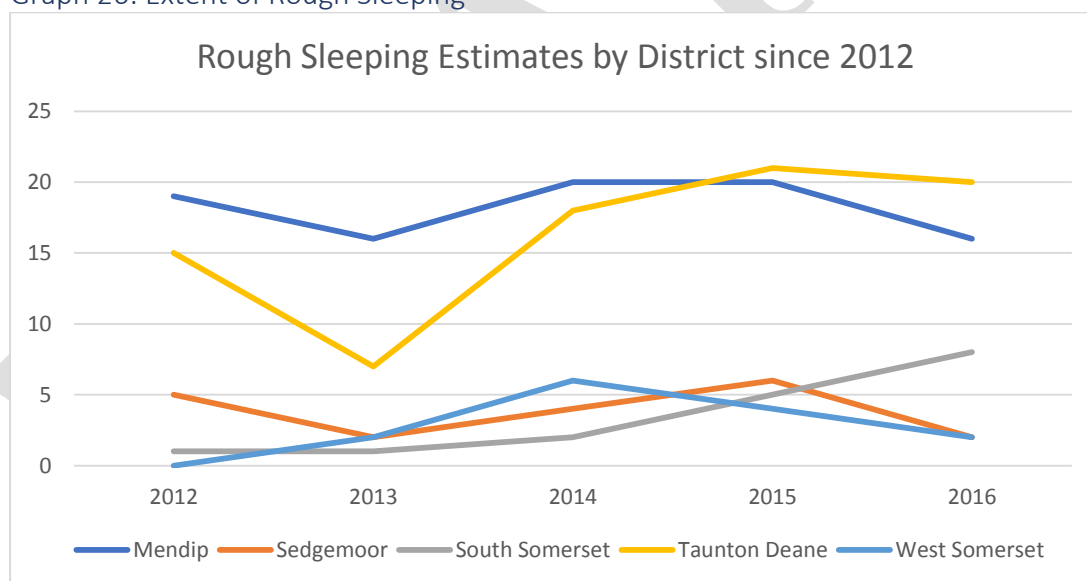
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Mendip	19	16	20	20	16	19
Sedgemoor	5	2	4	6	2	7
South Somerset	1	1	2	5	8	4
Taunton Deane	15	7	18	21	20	23
West Somerset	0	2	6	4	2	4

The change over the last five years in terms of percentages is shown below:

- Mendip: 15.8% decrease
- Sedgemoor: 60.0% decrease
- South Somerset: 700.0% increase
- Taunton Deane: 33.3% increase
- West Somerset: 200.0% increase

The graph below demonstrates the trends in rough sleeping estimates by District since 2012.

Graph 26: Extent of Rough Sleeping



## 7.11 SUMMARY OF DATA

The change in number of homeless prevention and relief cases has been very varied across the Districts over the last five years. South Somerset has experienced a decrease of 22.7% whereas West Somerset has experienced an increase of 193.8%. This compares to a 6.1% increase across England.

When further broken down, all Districts prevented more homelessness by assisting households into alternative accommodation than assisting clients to remain in their homes with the exception of Taunton Deane. Taunton Deane had much higher rates of homelessness relief and households assisted to remain in existing accommodation.

All districts saw a decrease in homeless households accepted over the last five years except Sedgemoor which saw a 35.8% increase. The largest decrease was seen in Mendip where the percentage decrease in homeless household acceptances was 73.0%. Both the South West region and England saw increases in homeless households accepted. This was 16.4% in the South West and 10.8% in England.

The main reasons for priority need of homeless applicants across all the Districts during the period July 2016 to June 2017 were households with dependent children, pregnancy, disability, old age, fleeing violence, mental illness and drug dependency.

The main reasons for becoming homeless across all the Districts for the period July 2016 to June 2017 were loss of tied or rented accommodation, parents or relatives no longer willing to accommodate and violence.

Use of temporary accommodation in the Districts over the monitored period for the last five years has mostly decreased across the Districts. Sedgemoor was the only District to experience an increase of 60.0%. Both the South West and England experienced percentage increases over the same period of 17.7% and 40.9% respectively.

The change in use of temporary accommodation for households with dependent children over the monitored period for the last five years is also similar. West Somerset achieved a 100.0% reduction whereas Sedgemoor had a 62.5% increase. Both the South West and England experienced percentage increases over the same period of 35.7% and 47.8% respectively.

The number of households becoming homeless intentionally has decreased in two Districts over the last five years – South Somerset and West Somerset. The other Districts all experienced an increase. Both the South West and England experienced increases of 30.3% and 20.3% each.

The extent of rough sleeping by the official autumn street counts each year has varied considerably by District over the last five years. South Somerset has seen a 700% increase, West Somerset a 200% increase and Taunton Deane an increase of 33.3%. Mendip and Sedgemoor both registered decreases over the last five years. The disparity in data could well be explained by rough sleepers moving through areas and presenting in other Districts.

## 8.0 CREATING THE NEW STRATEGY – CONSULTATION

- 8.1 In order to assess the effectiveness of the outgoing homelessness strategy and to examine the ongoing homelessness issues in the area, extensive consultation was undertaken with the five Districts as well as their partners.
- 8.2 The homelessness managers from each Local Authority were invited to submit their views via an online survey. This survey asked them to specify what actions from the previous homelessness strategy had been difficult to achieve, what the ongoing homelessness issues were for their areas and any examples of best practise they wished to highlight. They were also asked to provide a list of partners who should also be consulted as part of the exercise. A response was received from each of the five Somerset Local Authority Districts.

- 8.3 The named partners were then also encouraged to complete an online survey in order to gauge their views on the outgoing homelessness strategy and give feedback on the ongoing homelessness issues affecting their geographical area, their partners and their areas of work. In total, 51 responses were received. 143 partners were invited to submit feedback via the online survey giving a response rate of 35.7%.
- 8.4 Two consultation events were held on Thursday 2 November 2017 to which all named partners were invited to attend. A lunchtime session was held at the Sedgemoor District Council offices and a further session was held in Street later in the afternoon. 143 partners were invited to attend these sessions and across both sessions there were 45 attendees, giving a response rate of 31.5% for this consultation method.
- 8.5 Twelve key stakeholders of the 143 named partners were consulted with on a more direct basis, either by phone or email interview.

DRAFT

## 9.0 OUTGOING HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

The outgoing homelessness strategy covering Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset, Taunton Deane and West Somerset for the period 2013 to 2016 had three main goals;

- 1) Reduction and prevention of homelessness
- 2) Provision of appropriate advice, accommodation and support if a crisis occurs
- 3) Maximising effective partnership working to provide cost effective and responsive services

### 9.1 REDUCTION AND PREVENTION OF HOMELESSNESS

Actions suggested under this goal heading included:

- Continued use of the Homeless Prevention Fund- proactive use of funds to reduce homelessness using innovative solutions
- Bond/Deposits schemes and rent in advance - helps homeless households secure privately rented accommodation
- No Second Night Out - All five authorities have signed up to deliver the Governments 'no second night out vision'. We are also part of the Avon and Somerset Rough Sleepers Group, which aims to prevent rough sleeping and improve the advice given to single non-priority homeless.
- Provide support and incentives to private sector landlords to encourage them to let their properties to homeless or threatened with homelessness households.
- Ensure households threatened with homelessness are given the right advice as soon as it is needed
- Work with registered providers to maximise the number of properties let through Homefinder Somerset
- Mediation especially when relationships have broken down at home and young people are asked to leave their accommodation
- Provide good quality advice to landlords, people threatened with homelessness and the general public

### 9.2 PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE ADVICE, ACCOMMODATION AND SUPPORT IF A CRISIS OCCURS

Actions suggested under this goal heading included:

- Ensuring staff have up to date training to give the correct advice and information to applicants
- To facilitate grants to bring empty properties back into occupation
- To facilitate grants to improve the standard of private sector accommodation
- Continue to work with Somerset County Council and the providers to deliver P21 which includes providing education work at schools and colleges
- Continue to work with Somerset County Council to deliver P4A
- To support where appropriate the Family Focus Programme
- To provide a Tenant Accreditation Scheme so households are equipped with the right skills to maintain their tenancy.

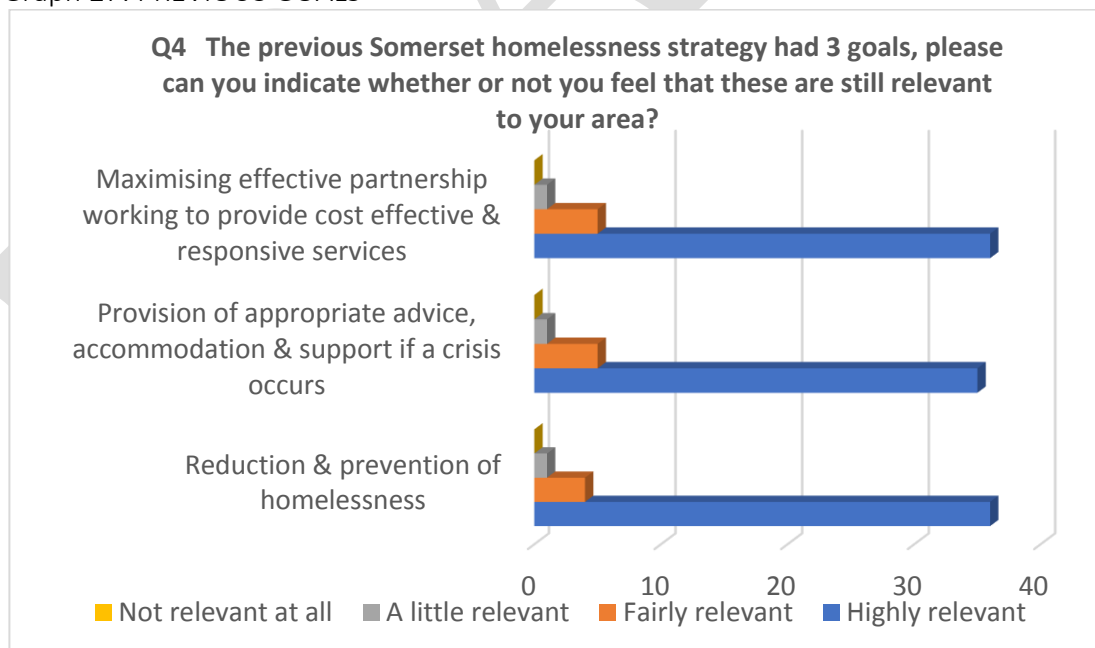
9.3 MAXIMISE EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP WORKING TO PROVIDE COST EFFECTIVE AND RESPONSIVE SERVICES

Actions suggested under this goal heading included:

- Create a protocol with the Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs) and hospitals to ensure patients are not discharged from hospital without suitable accommodation.
- Create a protocol with the local Prisons and Police to ensure people are not released from prison/custody without suitable accommodation.
- Work with Registered Providers to maximise the creation of appropriate new properties.
- Work with Partners to give advice e.g. debt advice, mortgage repossession to households threatened with homelessness to ensure their long-term stability.
- Work with Avon and Somerset Rough Sleepers Steering Group to ensure there is adequate provision for single homeless and rough sleepers in each District.
- Work collaboratively with partners to deliver value for money services and maximise funding opportunities.
- Work with Housing Benefits to maximise the use of Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) to prevent homelessness.
- Continue to work together to administer Homefinder Somerset
- To ensure District Planning authorities are made aware of the appropriate size and type of accommodation that is required using evidence from Homefinder Somerset.

9.4 Survey respondents were asked how relevant they felt the outgoing homelessness strategy goals were and the results are shown below:

Graph 27: PREVIOUS GOALS



9.5 As can be seen from the results above, the majority of respondents felt that all three goals were still relevant. However, the outgoing goals also received some criticism. Some respondents felt that the goals were too broad in nature and that the new homelessness strategy should be more specific in relation to its goals.

## 10.0 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE DELIVERY OF THE OUTGOING ACTION PLAN & HOMELESSNESS ISSUES AFFECTING THE REGION

- 10.1 Key stakeholders and partners within each Somerset District Authority were asked by survey and group consultation to highlight areas of the outgoing action plan they had found difficult to implement. They were also asked to highlight current areas of weakness/barriers experienced in delivering homelessness objectives in the region. They were also asked about achievements from the outgoing action plan and examples of good practice for which responses will be covered in the next section.

Their responses have been grouped into themes.

### 10.2 DUAL DIAGNOSIS CLIENTS

Concern was expressed with regard to how dual diagnosis clients that may fall between mental health teams and drug/alcohol teams were catered for. There was group consensus that this client group may be passed from one team to another without collaborative assistance for the client. There are also widespread concerns about the under-resourcing of mental health services and drug and alcohol services, which can be a significant factor in causing and sustaining homelessness. It was suggested that a better partnership approach was required for this group of clients in order to better support their prevention of homelessness.

### 10.3 SINGLE HOMELESS CLIENTS

Providing adequate accommodation options for single households was cited as a particular challenge. It was also felt that this problem has been exacerbated by the Hinkley Point development with private landlords now developing and letting single units of accommodation with Hinkley Point workers in mind as preferred tenants. Anecdotal evidence from the consultation exercise suggested that private landlords may also be actively serving notice on existing private tenants in order to re market and achieve increased rental returns by letting to Hinkley Point workers. There appears to be a reluctance by private landlords to enter the houses in multiple occupation (HMO) market. There also appears to be a lack of ongoing support for single homeless clients with some support needs in managing to avoid repeat homelessness.

The new Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places greater emphasis on Local Authorities to cater for non-priority need clients and as such more work needs to be done around supporting single homeless client groups.

### 10.4 HOUSING OPTIONS FOR THE 25-34 YEAR AGE GROUP

Closely linked to the issue highlighted above is that of the housing options available for clients within the 25-34 year old age group. This group of clients is generally expected to live in shared accommodation and is restricted to the shared accommodation housing element of universal credit. The consultation exercise suggested that whilst there are a comparatively high number of options and services catering for young people, the options diminish at the time an individual reaches the age of 25. This is creating problems in moving clients on from programmes and freeing up spaces when they reach the age of 25. There is also a lack of ongoing support for the client group so when they do manage to secure accommodation they are at high risk of repeat homelessness.

#### 10.5 DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED IN WORKING WITH PARTNERS

Whilst consultation on the partnership approach between local authority homelessness functions and third parties was generally positive and mutually respectful, there were a couple of examples cited of where further focus and work was required to meet satisfactory outcomes for homeless clients. It was suggested that there needed to be more resource dedicated to engaging with the County Council. It was also suggested that there had been difficulties experienced in establishing a protocol for patients being discharged from hospital and mental health schemes.

#### 10.6 OCCURRENCE OF REPEAT HOMELESSNESS

The consultation exercise suggested that numbers of repeat homelessness could be high and rising. One of the reasons suggested for this were the cutbacks in funding for floating support services for families in crisis. It was generally felt that if more floating support services were available, repeat homelessness may reduce and private sector landlords may be more willing to accept homeless households in private rented sector properties.

#### 10.7 PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS FOR 16/17 YEAR OLDS

The consultation exercise revealed that there was desire to work with local schools in raising awareness around homelessness for this age group, however there had been difficulties experienced with buy in from the schools and fitting in with the current curriculum. It was generally felt that there needed commitment at County Council level to push the project forward.

#### 10.8 ACCESS TO SOCIAL HOUSING

There were concerns raised around the level of information and scrutiny being applied to households being selected by social housing providers with the result being that households that may previously have been accepted into social housing now being declined due to scrutiny of their housing/personal history. Universal Credit was generally blamed for this shift due to the loss of direct payments to landlords with social landlords becoming far more risk adverse.

#### 10.9 UNIVERSAL CREDIT

Universal credit has now been rolled out across all the Districts and has been cited as causing a number of problems in relation to homelessness and sustainment of accommodation:

- Nationally, delays in new claimants receiving Universal Credit payments have been cited as 6 to 8 weeks but consultees suggested that in their areas, delays of 13-14 weeks are not unheard of.
- These delays are causing clients to experience high levels of debt that can become unsurmountable by the time payment is eventually received.
- Clients are being refused private rented accommodation because private landlords don't want to take the risk of Universal Credit and possible rent arrears.
- Clients are struggling to make the online application for Universal Credit and experience difficulty in finding places to get online.
- Clients with support needs are struggling to complete the application without assistance.
- Social landlords are reportedly being more selective with social housing applicants.
- Once completing a Universal Credit online application, clients are expected to make their own appointment with the Job Centre. When clients don't do this, their claims get cancelled and they have to re start the process.
- Tenants are losing accommodation because they are getting into high rent arrears.



- Tenants are living in poverty because delays in receiving payments mean that they have no income for food or essential items.
- Chaotic clients do not prioritise their rent money and so when huge sums of backdated monies are received, other choices may be made on how it is spent.
- A lot of work with young people in the area is trying to teach them how to be responsible in preparation for a tenancy however, with the delays in payments being experienced, clients are very often in high levels of debt and it was felt that this is counterproductive to the lessons trying to be taught.
- Some consultees suggested that the delays being experienced in receiving Universal Credit are having a detrimental effect on client health and mental well-being.

#### 10.10 OPTIONS FOR OLDER PERSONS

The region is expected to experience an increase in the number of older persons, particularly in the number of people to be in the over 85 year age bracket. It was highlighted that more housing options needed to be developed to meet the future demands of this client group moving forward.

#### 10.11 SKILLS GAP IN HOMELESSNESS

Managers responsible for homelessness within the Local Authorities suggested that the skillset and attributes required within Housing Options Officers has changed over the last few years as the emphasis around homelessness has shifted to that of prevention and relief. New skills such as negotiation skills are now required to deliver positive outcomes and as such there may be a need to upskill existing members of staff and re define officer key attributes when recruiting for vacancies.

#### 10.12 PRIVATE RENTAL MARKET

It was suggested that due to the local housing allowance rates applied, large parts of the county were unaffordable to clients, making it very difficult for clients to maintain links with local communities and families if required to move to cheaper areas of the Districts. The private rented sector was cited as becoming increasingly difficult to access due to the unwillingness of landlords to accept households on low incomes and in receipt of Universal Credit. It was suggested that increasing numbers of landlords are choosing professional households particularly in light of the development occurring at Hinkley Point. The demand for accommodation near Hinkley Point has pushed up private rents in the area making them even less affordable for local households threatened with homelessness.

#### 10.13 RURAL HOUSING AND OPTIONS

Large parts of the Districts represented by this homelessness review are rural in nature and as such it presents a continued challenge providing rural housing options for local households. Affordable housing for local families is difficult to achieve Transport links between areas can also present a challenge in how easy it is for a client to access and engage with support services that are made available to them and can directly affect or hinder their effectiveness.

#### 10.14 ROUGH SLEEPING

The numbers of rough sleepers remains fairly constant across the Districts with higher numbers statistically present in the Districts of Mendip and Taunton Deane. Organisations that regularly support rough sleepers claim the actual numbers of rough sleepers to be higher due to the “unseen” cases of homelessness. This includes those that are sofa surfing as well as sleeping in vehicles. Rough sleeper support workers also claim that as it is a very rural area, there are rough sleepers who seek to sleep away from society in wooded areas. Practitioners state that cross region links need to be improved to ensure that when a rough sleeper moves from one District to another after exhausting services in an area, they are recognised and supported.

### 11.0 ACHIEVEMENTS & EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE ACROSS THE DISTRICTS

11.1 The consultation exercise highlighted a number of examples of good practice across the Districts, some just being piloted in one District, other examples spanning several of the Districts. These are highlighted below.

#### 11.2 SOCIAL LETTING AGENCIES

Nationally there has been a general shift away from Local Authority backed deposit bond schemes to the delivery of social lettings agencies. A social lettings agency is a private sector access scheme that is run on a commercial basis for the purpose of helping households homeless or threatened with homelessness access affordable accommodation in the private rented sector.

There are two social lettings agencies operating in the Somerset Districts – Keyring Lettings in Mendip and Somerset West Letting Agency (part of Taunton Association for the Homeless and joint funded by Sedgemoor and West Somerset Local Authorities).

Keyring Lettings is an independent social enterprise operating predominantly in the Mendip area. It offers full management and tenant introduction services for private landlords and accepts all types of properties. Any properties that are not affordable for low income households are let on the open private rental market, thus creating opportunities for income to be put back into the work it does with households threatened with homelessness.

Keyring have directly helped 71 tenants to find affordable and decent accommodation since its beginning in October 2013.

Somerset West Letting Agency operates across the Sedgemoor and West Somerset Districts. It offers full management and let only options for private landlords and charges fees for its services. It finds that many of its landlords use its service because of its ‘not for profit’ status and tends to attract landlords with a philanthropic outlook.

In the first two years of operation the Somerset West Lettings Agency secured 89 bed spaces in Sedgemoor and 5 bed spaces in West Somerset.

#### 11.3 YMCA TENANCY TRAINING & ACCREDITATION

The YMCA Somerset Coast offers a Tenant Accreditation Scheme to anyone over the age of 16 which includes six modules covering where to look for accommodation, what a tenancy agreement is, what landlords expect, budgeting, looking after a home and themselves and what they should do when things go wrong. It was initially offered as a group session but due to

the demand for the service it is now offered in one to one sessions as well. All clients successfully completing the course receive a certificate. Whilst it is recognised by some letting agents and landlords in the area, more work could be on the recognition of this qualification. There are aspirations to expand this scheme to include an online option.

Tenant Accreditation can be accessed across all districts although, only the YMCA schemes have been audited by the South West Audit Partnership and are also signed up to the Somerset Tenant Accreditation Group (STAG). The Scheme is delivered by Mendip YMCA to supported housing schemes in South Somerset. The Home Group are also delivering a tenant accreditation model in South Somerset but not under STAG or audited by SWAP. An agreement for all schemes to work to the same standards and to be verified by the same independent auditors would be of benefit to residents and landlords across Somerset.

YMCA Somerset Coast deliver Tenant Accreditation across Sedgemoor, West Somerset and Taunton Deane Districts whilst Mendip YMCA delivers the scheme in Mendip.

In 2016/17, 75 clients enrolled on the scheme; 40 from Sedgemoor, 23 across Taunton Deane and a further 12 across West Somerset. 27 clients successfully completed the course; 18 from Sedgemoor, 4 from Taunton Deane and 5 from the West Somerset District.

In Mendip, 49 individuals engaged in the scheme in the first two quarters of 2017/18 achieving 252 completed modules and 21 fully completed the course.

The Tenant Accreditation Scheme is widely used as a homeless prevention tool amongst the Somerset Housing Authorities. Referrals are sent through on behalf of clients who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and in need of support and skills to sustain their tenancy.

#### 11.4 LOAN SCHEMES

Sedgemoor District Council has been trialling several loan schemes within their District in partnership with the Credit Union. Funding for these new schemes came from Hinkley Point C section 106 funds and a grant from the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner's Community Safety Grant. Details of the schemes are as follows:

- Repossession prevention loan scheme – loans provided to households threatened with repossession action of up to £5,000. A financial assessment is completed by the Citizens Advice Bureau and the finances administered by the Credit Union.
- Sedgemoor Loan Guarantee Scheme – to alleviate or prevent homelessness. Up to £350.00 per application and administered by the Credit Union.
- Universal Credit Rent in Advance Loan Scheme – scheme designed to help assist households in receipt of universal credit access the private rented sector. Up to two months' rent in advance is available and borrowed from the Credit Union. It is paid directly to the landlord and recouped from Universal Credit payment.
- Loan a phone – clients can borrow a phone so that they can keep track of their Universal Credit application.
- Furniture package – credit union loan for essential furniture.

#### 11.5 MENDIP HELP TO RENT SCHEME

Mendip District Council works closely with Mendip Community Credit Union to assist clients into the private rented sector where they have limited finance and meet the necessary eligibility criteria. The Help to Rent scheme allows the applicant to take out an affordable loan with the Credit Union at 0% interest for a suitable period in order to secure a suitable property within the private rented sector.

#### 11.6 DEPOSIT GUARANTEE SCHEME

Mendip District Council works in partnership with Mendip YMCA to provide a Deposit Guarantee Scheme (DGS) to help clients into private sector housing. The DGS is in effect a non-cash deposit where the landlord of the property being rented, agrees that in the event that a tenant causes damage or requires reimbursement for costs normally taken out of a cash deposit, the YMCA would pay the landlord the agreed amount and the tenant would then be liable to pay that money back to the YMCA.

#### 11.7 SEDGEMOOR LODGINGS SCHEME

This is a partnership scheme with Somerset Coast YMCA to establish lodgings so that people can remain in their homes and provide much needed accommodation. A £1000 grant is available to make property suitable for lodgings. The Lodgings Scheme was set up using mitigation funding from the Hinkley C Development (planning gain money for site preparation) and this funding was restricted to Sedgemoor and West Somerset Districts. In the first two years of operation it delivered 180 bed spaces in Sedgemoor and 38 in West Somerset.

#### 11.8 YMCA ADULT EMERGENCY HOST FAMILY ACCOMMODATION (EHFA)

Adult EHFA is the provision of Host Family Accommodation for up to seven nights for someone aged 25 and over. The scheme is operated by Mendip YMCA

#### 11.9 HELPING ROUGH SLEEPERS

The Avon & Somerset Rough Sleeper Group was formed by the 9 Avon & Somerset local authorities. The group were awarded £450k by DCLG in 2011 to improve services and access to housing provision for this group experiencing the most acute form of homelessness. Over the last 7 years, the funding has been spent on initiatives to reduce rough sleeping in the Avon and Somerset area and to improve services and access to accommodation. The group still meets to share good practice, making joint applications for funds, monitoring rough sleeping and its implications, organising training events and working together to implement changes required by the Homelessness Reduction Act.

The Elim Connect Centre in Wells is a good local example of excellent service provision for this particular client group. Mendip District Council commission them to deliver an outreach service to work with rough sleepers on a one to one basis. Due to the sometimes transient nature of rough sleeping, people can navigate away from their home and support networks to the Mendip area. As with all of the Avon and Somerset Authorities, the outreach service will work closely with Mendip Housing Options Team to reconnect those without a local connection to Mendip to their home authority.

#### 11.10 REPRESENTATION OF CLIENTS FACING HOMELESSNESS IN COURT

Housing Officers in South Somerset attend Court on request to prevent homelessness which has proved very successful. While the numbers of people attending possession hearings have decreased, figures for warrant suspension cases has increased, indicating that clients are leaving things until crisis stage. The proximity of the housing office to the courts is useful and we are often called over at very short notice to attend a hearing, sometimes at the Judge's request if they feel the Tenant needs assistance. This remains an essential tool for preventing homelessness.

In Sedgemoor, the Council provides the Citizens Advice Bureau with £10,000 per annum to prepare referred clients' files and represent them in Court to prevent homelessness.

#### 11.11 SOMERSET HOMELET WEBSITE

This is a new initiative that allows private landlords and agents to advertise their vacant properties to let for free. The service only currently covers Sedgemoor, West Somerset, Taunton Deane and North Somerset and has been funded in partnership with the Hinkley Point development. At the time of writing this strategy, there are currently the following properties registered on this site.



#### 11.12 PATHWAY TO INDEPENDENCE (P2i)

Somerset County Council and the five District Councils across Somerset commissioned Pathways to Independence (P2i) during 2012/2013 as a response to the escalating issues around youth housing in Somerset. P2i was launched in May 2013 and is a multi-agency homelessness prevention service for young people aged 16-25 who reside in, or have a local connection to the Somerset area. It was recommissioned in 2016 and a new contract began on 1st January 2017.

First and foremost the service is designed to prevent homelessness by providing targeted prevention measures. If prevention is not possible the service allows young people with housing related support needs to progress along a pathway of outcome focused needs led provision, until they are able to sustain independent living without the need for support.

The service is jointly funded by Somerset County Council and the five District Councils within Somerset and is currently commissioned to be delivered by two providers taking responsibility for a designated geographical area.

P2i is an outcome based homelessness prevention service which aims to provide a service for all vulnerable young people aged 16 to 25 inclusive who have a relevant need. There are however some young people who are unsuitable for P2i because:

- Their needs are so complex that they require a specialist, or statutory based service, which providers are not regulated to provide;
- Their requirement is only that of accommodation and not support;
- They are not eligible as they do not reside in, or have a local connection to Somerset.

In these circumstances P2i will aim to work in a multi-agency way to find the best immediate solution.

The following have been identified as having a primary need for P2i support:

- 16 and 17 years olds towards whom children's social care have a responsibility;
- Care Leavers aged 18 to 21 (or 25 if in full time education)
- 16 and 17 year old homeless young people;

- Vulnerable 18 to 25 year olds in priority need (as defined under homelessness legislation).

Under the P2i Initiative there are a total of 168 beds available across the county; 48 in Taunton and West Somerset, 40 in Sedgemoor, 38 in Mendip and 42 in South Somerset.

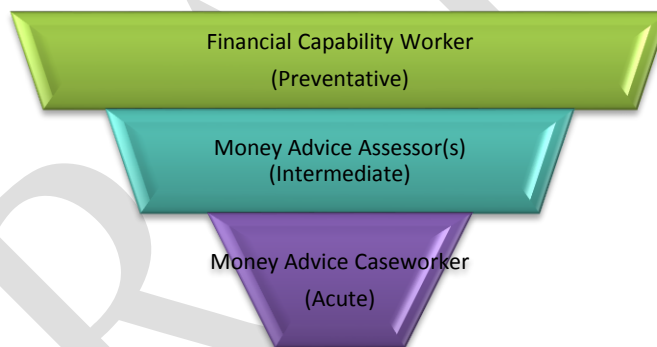
Young people request a service under P2i through the area access hubs in each area. A total of 770 contacts were made at these hubs Jan 17-Jan 18. 413 in Taunton, 141 in South Somerset, 149 in Sedgemoor and 67 in Mendip. These contacts include repeat customers, telephone calls and emails.

After their initial presentation the young people are discussed at a weekly allocations panel. In 2017 672 young people were discussed at these panels, 138 (21%) were care leavers and 140 (21%) were 16/17 year olds.

#### 11.13 MONEY ADVICE IN SEDGEMOOR

Citizens Advice Sedgemoor delivers a model of Money Advice on behalf of Sedgemoor District Council as set out below in order to address the challenges faced by Universal Credit and in order to offer a comprehensive money advice service to the people of Sedgemoor.

The model takes into account the whole spectrum of money advice needs and the abilities of clients to progress matters themselves.



##### **Preventative level**

Improving financial capability gives people the power to make the most of their money and improve their lives to enable them to have the best possible financial wellbeing, both now and in the future.

Universal Credit clients can access financial capability sessions through Personal Budgeting Support in order to help them to manage their Universal Credit payments.

##### **Intermediate level**

This enables those clients who have an increased need for support to have a more in-depth conversation with a money advice assessor, on an appointment basis. The money advice assessor can produce a financial statement on behalf of the client, look at ways to maximise the client's income, or refer on to a money advice caseworker.

##### **Acute level**

A referral to a money advice caseworker where a client is vulnerable, has complex needs or issues or requires input in order to achieve long term money advice solutions. This may

include preparing a client for insolvency proceedings, submitting a Debt Relief Order for a client, representation at court and ongoing negotiation with creditors.

### **Key Outcomes**

- reduction and eradication of debt ;
- improved emotional well-being ;
- improved mental health ;
- preventing homelessness ;
- maintaining jobs/wages ;
- increased income ;
- avoiding criminality ;

### **CITIZENS ADVICE WARRANT, DEBT AND BUDGETING SCHEME**

Mendip District Council works closely with Citizens Advice to provide applicants with Warrant, Debt and Budgeting schemes.

The Warrant scheme can be used where the applicant is at risk of homelessness due to their landlord having obtained a bailiff's warrant. The scheme ensures urgent professional advice and assistance is available to see if the warrant can be stopped. Providing the Warrant has not already been executed, a referral can be made to Citizens Advice.

The Debt scheme provides applicants whose debts may mean they are at risk of homelessness, with specialist debt advice by pre-arranged appointment.

The Budgeting scheme is for applicants who may be at risk of falling into arrears due to their budgeting to provide them with advice to maximise their income. This scheme aims to help people that need assistance with budgeting and living within their means. It would also include help budgeting following transition to Universal Credit.

#### **11.14 FLOATING SUPPORT SERVICE**

Since 2016, South Somerset District Council has funded Yeovil4Family, a church based organisation, to provide a floating support service to people at risk of homelessness. Clients work directly with a Link Worker and a trained volunteer mentor for up to 1 year. The approach is proving very successful; 56 referrals have been received, 26 individuals have been supported and 18 mentors trained. Positive outcomes already being identified include sustained tenancies, training, employment, improved self-esteem and accessing support for drug and alcohol issues.

YMCA Mendip offer a Private Rented Sector Worker for those 25 and over to work with people to source and sustain affordable accommodation in the private rented sector. This support can be tailored for the individual and be for any length of time. This floating support may also offer assistance with a deposit bond and put clients in touch with landlords who will accept those on a low income.

#### **11.15 SOUTH SOMERSET IN HOUSE WELFARE BENEFITS TEAM**

South Somerset District Council has an in-house welfare benefits team with 2.1 Full Time Equivalent posts (FTE) undertaking casework for clients across South Somerset. The team provides free, confidential and impartial information, advice and advocacy on Welfare Benefits. They carry out specialised case work; preparing claims, representing clients at Appeals, up to and including First-Tier and Upper Tier Tribunals.

In 2016/17, they supported 482 clients across South Somerset, achieve an annual increased income of £1,025,202 and lump sum payments in total of £175,940.

#### 11.16 HOMEFINDER SOMERSET

All five councils in Somerset are part of the Homefinder Somerset partnership. The Homefinder Somerset Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Scheme and Common Lettings Policy is administered by the five Somerset Local Authorities (LA's) in partnership with the majority of the registered housing providers operating within Somerset. The single policy takes account of Somerset's strategic housing framework, homelessness strategy and tenancy strategy.

Homefinder Somerset is considered a major success in terms of partnership working across the county, providing social housing applicants with a wide choice of properties and creating freedom of movement across a wide geographical area.

#### 11.17 POSITIVE LIVES

Positive Lives is a county-wide initiative designed to support vulnerable homeless adults with complex needs. Following an £880,000 cut in housing support and with reduced funding of £309,000, statutory and voluntary agencies and local housing providers are working together to tackle challenging needs. Each agency has piloted and found local creative solutions. After listening to Service User's aspirations and views, services were redesigned to be empowering and flexibly meet their individual needs through smaller bespoke services. New initiatives are piloted to build a successful evidence based approach to engaging individuals who find traditional services unhelpful. Services incorporate peer support and mentoring, accommodation with support, floating support, creative use of budgets to engage individuals in their own solutions, emergency access accommodation, family hosting and therapeutic models. Removing interagency barriers and collaborative working between local statutory and voluntary partners, local providers and service users has been critical to the success of Positive Lives.

## 12.0 HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2017-2019

12.1 Using the evidence from the homelessness review and information obtained from the consultation in preparation for this strategy, four new priorities have been developed to focus the Homelessness Strategy for the Districts over the next 18 month period. These are described below. Each Local Authority will adopt the Action Plan locally to ensure that it is relevant to their District and the priorities for each Local Authority area have been highlighted in the forewords of this document.

#### 12.2 PRIORITY 1

Support the transition in services required by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 to reduce and prevent homelessness.

The Act will become effective from 3rd April 2018 and presents a new way of working and expansion of existing homeless services. It will present a number of challenges due to the level of change required and as such it has been given its own priority category for the short term. It is expected that upon review of the strategy in 18 months' time it will no longer need to be considered a priority in its own right.



12.3 PRIORITY 2

Support clients to remain in their existing accommodation where appropriate.

This priority involves looking at and improving the range of options, support and tools that can assist an individual in remaining in their existing accommodation. Needing to move accommodation can be hugely disruptive and costly for individuals and families. Being able to sustain current accommodation can deliver cost savings for Local Authorities and their partner agencies.

12.4 PRIORITY 3

Support clients to access suitable and affordable accommodation where appropriate.

It may not always be possible for a client to remain in their current accommodation so where a move cannot be avoided, this priority will ensure that they can access suitable accommodation that is affordable to them in a timely manner. This priority looks at the options available to clients and addresses accommodation options such as the private rented sector and move on options.

12.5 PRIORITY 4

Build and maintain strong working relationships across partnerships.

This homelessness strategy for the next 18 months is a partnership approach between five Local Authorities as well as their partners. It cannot be delivered in isolation and this priority recognises the need for existing working relationships to be maintained and built upon. Effective partnership working brings a number of benefits including the sharing of best practice and effective use of resources to deliver cost savings to all working partners and for this reason it remains a priority for this homelessness strategy.

12.6 It is expected that the Homeless Managers Group (HMG) will be responsible for the delivery of this strategy and action plan and responsible for monitoring progress against actions and targets.

## 13.0 ACTION PLAN

### PRIORITY 1: Support the transition in services required by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 to reduce and prevent homelessness

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
1.1	Address any staffing skill gaps by recruiting/retraining individuals to effectively deliver what is required by the Act including increased ability to provide good quality advice and information	April 2018 and on-going	HMG	Within existing resources and New Burdens funding from Government.	Assess current staffing skillsets Identify gaps in skillsets Identify training programmes Recruit new skills required	Achieve and deliver the requirements as set out by the Act	<p>Increase in support available to clients</p> <p>Improvement in the quality of advice offered to clients</p> <p>Increase in the number of cases where homelessness is successfully prevented and relieved</p>
1.2	Share best practice in delivering the Act amongst Somerset Homelessness Managers & Officers	Ongoing	HMG	Within existing resources	<p>Ensure that each Local Authority is represented at HMG meetings</p> <p>Improved use of IT to share information</p>	<p>Share best practice across Districts</p> <p>Brainstorm challenges</p> <p>Share information</p> <p>Share resources</p>	Evidence of new ideas, practices & initiatives that will contribute to improved homeless prevention

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
					Explore options for sharing best practise		
1.3	Develop protocols for Public Services, Housing Providers & all other Agencies to refer clients they believe to be homeless or at risk of homelessness	October 2018 and on-going	HMG  Public Services to be defined by Government	Within existing resources	Create procedure  Create associated forms  Monitor effectiveness of new protocol  Raise awareness of new protocol and duties on Public Services	Achieve and deliver the requirements as set out by the Act	Increase in the number of referrals from third parties of clients believed to be homeless or at risk of homelessness
1.4	Maximise partnerships with all existing service providers to ensure the quality of support provided to clients	Ongoing	HMG  All Partners	Within existing resources	Raise awareness of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 amongst partners	Achieve and deliver the requirements as set out by the Act	Increase in support provided to clients  Improvement in the quality of advice offered to clients  Increase in the number of referrals to and from third parties of clients believed to be homeless or at risk of homelessness

**PRIORITY 2: Support clients to remain in their existing accommodation where appropriate**

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
2.1	Review options and availability of tenancy support services both for families and single homeless clients	June 2018	HMG  Solutions to be identified on a District basis Floating support providers	Within existing  Use of new burdens funding.	Identify gaps in provision of floating support & barriers to effective use	Increase in the number of tenancies sustained	Increase in the number of homeless prevention & relief cases
2.2	Review the countywide Pre Eviction Protocol to take account of the Homelessness Reduction Act	September 2018	HMG	Within existing resources	Create awareness and campaign using social media, radio and Local Authority publications  Appoint a landlord liaison officer in each District	Increase in landlords contacting the Council  Increase in early interventions  Reduction in number of eviction notices served  Reduction in officer caseload created by Homeless Reduction Act  Improvement in landlord relations	Fewer homeless approaches as a result of loss of last settled home  Fewer homeless presentations to Local Authority

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
2.3	Review the initiatives currently in place to prevent the ending of Assured Shorthold Tenancies (AST's) in the Private Rented Sector	December 2018	HMG / Partners	Within existing	Brainstorm within the Partnership  Develop pilot projects, procedures, plans for any new initiatives	Reduction in the number of evictions caused by private landlords serving notice	Fewer homelessness approaches as a result of loss of last settled home
2.4	Continue to monitor the effectiveness of the P2i initiative in supporting 16-24 year olds to remain in their homes	Ongoing	P2i Monitoring Board	Within existing	Develop any new services, initiatives or pilot projects within this framework to meet a specific need	Increase in the number of 16-24 year olds remaining at home	Fewer homelessness approaches by clients aged 16-24  Fewer homelessness approaches as a result of parents or relatives no longer willing to accommodate
2.5	Ensure housing/homelessness awareness sessions are promoted in schools & colleges in each District	December 2018	HMG  Somerset County Council  YMCA  TAH	Within existing	Meet with Somerset County Council to improve school "buy in" and attach to curriculum  Expand on work already initiated	Increase in the number of 16-24 year olds remaining at home	Fewer homelessness approaches by clients aged 16-24  Fewer homelessness approaches as a result of parents or relatives no

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
					by YMCA and TAH  Develop a programme		longer willing to accommodate
2.6	Evaluate the “stay safe” at home options available for victims of domestic violence where this choice is suitable  Where ‘stay safe” at home is not an option, review banding, policy and processes around domestic violence to ensure consistency	January 2019	HMG  Avon & Somerset Police  Somerset County Council  Homefinder Somerset	Within existing	Evaluate existing “stay safe” at home options  Identify gaps and weaknesses of current schemes  Develop any new services  Review banding, processes & Procedures	Ensuring victims of domestic violence remain safe	Increase in the number domestic violence victims able to remain in their home where it is practical to do so  Consistent banding policy for victims of domestic violence
2.7	Explore the options to provide mediation services to different age groups/client groups	January 2019	HMG  Mediation Providers	Within existing	Identify and create new relationships with mediation providers	Increase in the number of clients supported to remain in their homes	Increase in the number of cases where homelessness is successfully prevented

**PRIORITY 3: Support clients to access suitable and affordable alternative accommodation where appropriate**

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
3.1	Review available options for the use of Social Lettings Agencies and the services offered by existing Social Lettings Agencies to improve access to affordable private rented sector accommodation	May 2019	HMG	Additional funding required / re allocation of existing budget	Evaluate the effectiveness of Keyring Lettings and Somerset West Lettings  Explore additional services that could be offered to landlords by both organisations  Carry out feasibility studies for social lettings agencies in Taunton Deane and South Somerset	Increase in the number of households able to access good quality and affordable private rented sector accommodation  Expansion of existing social lettings agencies or creation of new social lettings agencies	Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention & relief cases
3.2	Reduce the impact that Universal Credit is having on private landlords and agents shying away from households in receipt	Ongoing	Each District Authority	Existing resources	Promote awareness of loan schemes available to households amongst landlords and agents  Promote awareness of support services available to	Increase in the number of households able to access good quality and affordable private rented sector accommodation	Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention & relief cases

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
					<p>households amongst landlords and agents</p> <p>Explore guaranteed rent options within social lettings agencies</p> <p>Explore additional pre-tenancy training or support for clients in successfully making UC claim</p>		
3.3	Continue the development of the Tenant Accreditation Schemes and ensure consistency provision and availability throughout the County	December 2018	<p>HMG</p> <p>Local providers</p> <p>Somerset Tenant Accreditation Group</p>	Additional funding required for expansion	<p>Explore options to extend pre-tenancy training across more Districts and all client groups</p> <p>Explore option to deliver programme online</p> <p>Increase awareness of scheme with private landlords &amp; agents</p>	Increase in the number of households able to access good quality and affordable accommodation	<p>Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention &amp; relief cases</p> <p>Fewer homeless approaches</p>



No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
3.4	Monitor the success of the Lodgings Scheme in Sedgemoor, Taunton Deane & W Somerset and consider roll out to other Somerset Districts	Ongoing	HMG	Within existing resources. Additional funding may be required for any grant adaptations	Review pilot Identify deliver partners  Develop eligibility criteria  Develop procedures & raise awareness	Increase in the number of single units of accommodation available in the private rented sector  Increase in the number of residents able to afford to remain in their own homes	Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention & relief cases  Fewer homeless approaches
3.5	Explore options to increase the number of single units available to single homeless clients, particularly the 25-34 year age group	November 2018	HMG	Within existing resources to explore options  Additional funding may be needed if grants to landlords considered viable	Carry out feasibility study to assess type, numbers and areas in which units are needed  Consider options to meet this need  Consider grant funding to property owners to increase number of single units available in exchange for referral rights to properties	Increase in the number of single units of accommodation available in the private rented sector  Increase in availability of move on accommodation from 16-24 year housing projects	Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention & relief cases  Fewer homeless approaches by those aged under 35

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
3.6	Work with social housing providers to ensure that there are transparent and fair tenant selection practices. Monitor skipping reasons more closely.	Ongoing	HMG  Social housing providers  Homefinder Somerset Board	Within existing resources	Written and transparent selection criteria Review processes for refusals or review boards Explore risk mitigation options	Reduction in the number of households refused by social landlords Improved access to social housing for clients with difficult housing histories	Improved housing options for clients
3.7	Develop Somerset wide Rough Sleepers Strategy	April 2019	HMG	Within existing resources	Carry out consultation with partners  Develop strategy and action plan	Improved communication between partners in relation to rough sleeping  Improved options & outcomes for rough sleepers  Improved access to services for rough sleepers	Fewer rough sleepers
3.8	Raise awareness amongst Planners and Enabling Teams on the need and demand for particular units of accommodation	Ongoing	HMG	Within existing resources	Create & distribute fact sheets  Meet Development Teams  Attend Development Committees	Address the need within each District for 1 bedroom accommodation	Fewer households waiting for 1 bedroom accommodation on Homefinder Somerset

**PRIORITY 4: Continue to build and maintain strong working partnerships to deliver cost effective and responsive services**

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
4.1	Improve partnership working between Community Mental Health Teams and Drug/Alcohol dependency support to improve outcomes for dual diagnosis clients	Ongoing	Somerset County Council  Rethink  Connect  Drug alcohol teams  HMG	Within existing resources	Identify where cases are falling between services  Develop protocols to prevent clients falling between services	Personalised and planned positive outcome for client	Reduction in the number of clients falling between services  Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention & relief cases  Fewer repeat homeless cases  Increase in the number of successful move on cases
4.2	Continue to work with Community Mental Health Teams, Hospitals, Prisons and Probation to develop a protocol to ensure that clients are not discharged/released without suitable accommodation	Ongoing	HMG  Hospitals  Community Mental Health Team  Prisons  Probation	Within existing resources	Effective protocol in place  Protocol launched  Awareness raised Protocol monitored  Review Dangerous Offender Protocol	Personalised and planned positive outcome for client	Reduction in the number of discharge patients presenting in homeless departments without warning

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
4.3	Work with Registered Providers to maximise the creation of new properties using creative design solutions in the right locations	Ongoing	HMG Homefinder Somerset Registered Providers Planners	Within existing resources	Work in partnership and provide data/evidence to ensure that new developments meet desired local housing need	Suitable units of affordable housing provided	Increase in the number of affordable units of social housing provided  Fewer clients registered on Homefinder Somerset
4.4	Continue to share best practice within the HMG	Ongoing	HMG	Within existing resources	Share knowledge on challenges and achievements within the homelessness sector  Identify best practice  Implement pilot projects	Partnership working  Increased knowledge  Cross District services linked more closely	Reduce costs  Improved use of resources
4.5	Provide briefings for elected Members periodically on the work of HMG	Ongoing	HMG	Within existing resources	Produce briefing every 6 month and circulate	Better awareness amongst Members on homelessness issues	Fully informed elected Members on homelessness achievements and challenges

<b>Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table</b> (Expand the boxes as appropriate, please see guidance to assist with completion)	
<b>Team/Service Area</b>	Housing Services
<b>Name of what is being assessed</b>	Somerset Homelessness Strategy 2017
<b>Risk Rating</b>	6 - Green
<b>Section 1 – Description</b> of what is being impact assessed – this could be the Policy Aims and Objectives or what is being changed.	
<p>The Homelessness Act 2002 requires all housing authorities to have in place a homelessness strategy based on a review of homelessness.</p> <p>The Somerset Homelessness Strategy 2017 has been undertaken in partnership with the five Somerset district authorities, Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, South Somerset District Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset Council. It is based on a review of homelessness in Somerset in 2017. It provides a framework to drive forward the five Councils homelessness activities in accordance with the requirements of the Homelessness Act 2002 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the shared aspiration to continuously improve our services and increase successful prevention and relief. The strategy focuses on prevention of homelessness and includes our existing services, which prevent and alleviate homelessness.</p> <p>The new strategy recognises and builds on existing achievements. It addresses the new legislative challenges under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 with new duties to help more individuals and families regardless of whether they are priority homeless. The action plan addresses the following key priorities identified by the strategy:</p> <p><b>Priority 1</b> Support the transition in services required by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 to reduce and prevent homelessness.</p> <p><b>Priority 2</b> Support clients to remain in their existing accommodation where appropriate. This priority involves improving the range of options, support and tools that can assist an individual in remaining in their existing accommodation. Needing to move accommodation can be disruptive and costly for individuals and families.</p> <p><b>Priority 3</b> Support clients to access suitable and affordable accommodation where appropriate. It may not always be possible for a client to remain in their current accommodation so where a move cannot be avoided, this priority will ensure that they can access suitable accommodation that is affordable to them in a timely manner. This priority looks at the options available to clients and addresses accommodation options such as the private rented sector and move on options.</p>	

#### Priority 4

Build and maintain strong working relationships across partnerships. Effective partnership working brings a number of benefits including the sharing of best practice and effective use of resources to deliver cost savings to all working partners and for this reason, it remains a priority for this homelessness strategy.

Building on existing services and exploring new opportunities, Housing Options teams of the 5 Districts, in line with the new strategy action plan, will maximise homeless prevention opportunities, increasing homeless preventions, reducing the numbers of homelessness acceptances and the use of temporary accommodation. Examples of the additional homelessness support, advice and accommodation services provided across the county with positive impact on protected characteristics are listed at appendix 1.

#### Section 2A – People or communities that are **targeted or could be affected** (for Equalities - taking particular note of the Protected Characteristic listed in action table)

Residents of the district who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and eligible in relation to their UK residency. The law defines who is and is not eligible, in terms of immigration status and habitual residence. The law is different for people from within the European Economic Area (EEA) and the UK and those from elsewhere.

Any applicant may fall within a protected characteristic. In line with homelessness legislation and the strategy, those who are most vulnerable will be afforded priority status. The strategy is in keeping with the Homeless Reduction Act 2017, which widens the prevention and relief duties to include all individuals and families threatened with homelessness or experiencing homelessness regardless of their priority status.

We do not currently record statistical data on the protected characteristics of all homeless applicants. We currently capture through P1E statistics on age, high level ethnicity and gender breakdowns for those accepted as in priority need and unintentionally homeless. P1E is the homelessness statistics reported to government by all housing authorities.

Future capture of data under the new legislation will provide a more detailed breakdown for all applicants not just those in priority need and unintentionally homeless. Ethnicity will be recorded at a more detailed level than previously in line with harmonised ONS England-specific ethnic groups. The new government data base, H-CLIC (Homelessness Case Level Information Collection) will enable equalities data along with other key statistics to be collected for all applicants with outcomes for the following areas:

- **Main** - information on the main applicant and details of the homelessness application for the household.
- **People** – the characteristics of each household member.
- **Support** - any support needs in the household.
- **Prevention** - activity if the Prevention Duty is owed.
- **Relief** - activity if the Relief Duty is owed.
- **Decision** – activity if the case proceeds to an assessment for a final homelessness duty, (the section 193(2) duty, the section 193C (4) duty, or the section 195A (1) duty).
- **Final duties** - activity if the case was assessed as owed a final homelessness duty.
- **Assistance** - assistance with support needs received by the household.
- **Temporary accommodation** – provision of temporary accommodation and/or if a temporary accommodation duty is owed.
- **Reviews** - any reviews requested of decisions made by the local authority.

Local systems will be adjusted to accommodate the new requirements.

The main reasons for priority need of homeless applicants during the period July 2016 to June 2017 were households with dependent children, pregnancy, disability, old age, fleeing violence, mental illness and drug dependency.

The main reasons for becoming homeless for the same period were loss of tied or rented accommodation, parents or relatives no longer willing to accommodate and violence.

The equalities profile of eligible homelessness Somerset applicants in priority need and unintentionally homeless for the period reviewed of July 2016 – June 2017 tells us:

- It is difficult to compare the ethnicity of those who have received homeless application decisions to Census data due to differing categories; the Government's P1E returns record ethnicity at a high level. However, we are able to see that the ethnicity of homeless applicants is broadly similar to the ethnicity of resident population
- In the period reviewed there was a significantly greater proportion of women accepted as in priority need (over two thirds); this is a reflection of the priority need status for housing if women are pregnant or have children
- There are significantly more acceptances of applicants 16-24 and 25-44 and a lesser proportion of older applicants reflecting that they are more likely to have a settled home
- The incidence of eligible homeless applicants in priority need and unintentionally homeless with a disability in the 12 month period reviewed is broadly in line with the general level of disability in Somerset and greater than that of people who consider their daytime activities are 'limited a lot'.
- Data on the other protected characteristics of homeless applicants is currently not collected statistically.

Issues for Districts include:

#### Age

- Rural West Somerset has a notably high proportion of residents aged 65 and older, and in parts of Minehead almost half of people are aged 65+.
- Population estimates suggest that by 2039, Mendip will experience a significant growth in population over the age of 65 of 67.3% and 159.4% increase of over 85 year olds.

#### Disability

- Bridgwater's Sydenham and Hamp areas contain notable concentrations of households with disability
- At 14.7 per 1000 usual residents, Taunton Deane had one of the highest proportions in the country of people living in a medical or care communal establishment.
- Residents in West Somerset are more likely than anywhere else in the county to consider their health bad or very bad, or to have a limiting disability or condition, even amongst the 16-64 age group. This is unsurprising overall given the district's high proportion of elderly people.
- The particular rural challenges of West Somerset are heightened in relation to the larger percentage of older and disabled residents and those experiencing poor health

#### Race

- The main population centres of Gypsies and Irish Travellers are areas with established Gypsy and Irish Traveller sites, e.g. In Mendip at Berkley (near Frome) and Frome town and South Somerset at Tintinhull (near Ilminster).

- There are Significant pockets of white European residents in parts of Shepton Mallet, Yeovil, Bridgwater, Taunton, Minehead and Chard. The age profile is younger than the Somerset average, with a high proportion aged 25-34, linked to young migrant workers.
- In Somerset, 'other Asian' is the largest sub-group (39%), followed by Chinese (26%) and Indian (22%). People born in the Philippines form a key part of the 'Other Asian' category. The population is concentrated in urban communities, most notably in areas of Taunton and Yeovil.
- Frome, Glastonbury and Taunton are some of the main population centres for those of mixed ethnicity, although the populace is widely dispersed.

#### Rurality

- With an older population and higher proportion of disability, West Somerset has particular rural challenges with poor transport creating isolated areas and communities.

#### **Section 2B – People who are **delivering** the policy or service**

- Housing Options Teams
- The five district councils' partners and wider agencies within the district who provide support, housing and advice providers

#### **Section 3 – Evidence and data** used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)

In creating the homelessness strategy data, a full review of homelessness was undertaken in the district in 2017 taking into account statistics on housing need, housing provision, homeless applications and outcomes. These are evidenced within the strategy document itself as well as in appendices 2 and 3.

Data was drawn from the following sources:

- Somerset Joint Strategic Needs Assessment  
<http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/jsna>
- Somerset Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2016  
<http://www.mendip.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=14834&p=0>
- <http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/shma.html>  
<https://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/Planning---Building/Planning-Policy/Evidence-Base-Information/Housing---Community-Evidence/Strategic-Housing-Market-Assessment>
- ONS Census and Nomis data  
<http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011>
- Somerset Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Update  
<http://mendip.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=5531&p=0>
- Somerset Health & Wellbeing Strategy  
[www.somerset.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=45804](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=45804)
- Somerset Youth Housing Strategy & Action Plan  
<https://www.bing.com/search?q=somerset+youth+housing+strategy+and+action+plan&src=IE-SearchBox&FORM=IESR3N>
- Avon & Somerset Rough Sleepers Steering Group Action Plan  
[https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/677668/ap\\_homeless\\_strategy\\_2013.xlsx](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/677668/ap_homeless_strategy_2013.xlsx)
- Housing, Communities and Local Government (CLG) Statistics - Live Tables  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>
- Shelter Databank  
[http://england.shelter.org.uk/professional\\_resources/housing\\_databank](http://england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/housing_databank)



- Homefinder Somerset Housing Register report (*included in the Homelessness Strategy s.6.6 and 6.7*)
- English Housing Survey  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2016-to-2017-headline-report>
- Mendip net affordable dwellings completed report  
<http://www.mendip.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=4834&p=0>

The review of homelessness incorporated extensive consultation undertaken with the five Districts and their partners. Consultation included homelessness managers and their teams, and the council's partners and key stakeholders through on-line surveys, 2 consultation events and responses to direct communication. Service users were not consulted directly. A list of organisations consulted can be found at appendix 4.

Equalities analysis statistics can be found at appendices 2 and 3 and *Somerset Intelligence* (<http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk>)

**Section 4 – Conclusions** drawn about the impact of the proposed change or new service/policy (Please use prompt sheet for help with what to consider):

**Key issues to be fed into relevant Action Table**

The strategy is relevant to all customer groups, as accommodation is a fundamental requirement for everyone. The strategy and action plan, in line with new legislation, provide a framework for the Districts to help all eligible individuals and families who find themselves at risk of or facing homelessness for an increased period of 56 days regardless of their priority needs or reasons for homelessness.

It positively addresses the housing needs of those who are more vulnerable through continued provision of services along with actions to improve partnership working and find new solutions to increased prevention and relief. These groups include pregnant women and those with dependants, people with disabilities, for example, mental ill health and complex needs, and people whose age may make them more vulnerable. Therefore, the strategy should have an overall positive impact for all homeless applicants. However, there is insufficient evidence to decide if some groups, whilst not being discriminated against or disadvantaged by the strategy, would receive a positive benefit (scored neutral).

The action plan in the new 2017 strategy details a number of actions and services that support better homelessness prevention and relief, which will directly or indirectly have a positive impact on all groups.

The overall impact of the strategy will be to improve the outcomes for residents facing homelessness in the context of diminishing resources. There is no evidence to suggest that the strategy would have a negative impact on any group.

The following table highlights the impact of the strategy on the protected groups:

Protected Group	Comments	Impact
Age	<p>The Housing Options services currently capture data on age of all homeless and housing need customers.</p> <p>We have no evidence that those in any age group are disadvantaged in their access to the service or in the housing assistance they need. Housing legislation provides specific protection and priority for young applicants (16 -17 year olds) and homeless applicants who are vulnerable because of age and applicants for social housing. To support the most vulnerable young people, a range of services are currently available within the district to provide additional signposting, advice, information, support, mediation and supported housing.</p>	Positive

<p><b>- Age</b></p>	<p>P1E statistics show the majority of homeless acceptances come from the 25 to 44 age group and the strategy is focused on helping this group through strengthening P2i preventative activities and opportunities for progression towards independence for young people, and by the provision of more private sector rented accommodation given the availability in the social rented sector.</p> <p>The age group 17-44 has the highest number of homeless acceptances. The Somerset Homeless Strategy 2017 sets out the actions we propose to mitigate the impact of welfare reform changes for young people as well as single homeless people over 25 years including rough sleepers.</p> <p>Being on a low wage or unemployed or in and out of work could increase the risk of homelessness if it leads to difficulties in money management including payment of rent or mortgage. Younger people are more likely to be unemployed and struggle to budget contributing to tenancy failure.</p> <p>Young people may be incentivised to remain at home by the Local Housing Allowance for the private rented sector entitlement for under 35s (single room rate) coupled with increasing accommodation costs. It is also possible that this also could contribute to homelessness.</p> <p>Low numbers in homelessness acceptances for older people could indicate that current sheltered and extra care services available alongside non-age restricted accommodation adequately meets the current housing needs of our older population.</p> <p>All Somerset districts have a higher proportion of the population aged 65 or over than the national average. Each district can expect to see a significant increase in the numbers of people over 65 by 2037. The number of people aged 75 or older is projected to double by 2039. We will need to ensure with our partners that existing and planned services can meet the projected increase in demand over time.</p>	
<p><b>Disability</b></p>	<p>Households containing a person with a disability are more likely to live in social rented housing than households with no disabled occupant. (<u>English Housing Survey, 2011/12</u>). Statistics and research show us that disabled people are significantly less likely to be in employment than non-disabled people. This in turn can affect ability to pay rent or rent arrears leading to increased risk of homelessness.</p> <p>Lack of resources can lead to disabled people living in unsuitable housing. However, we offer aids and adaptations grants and disabled facilities grants to adapt existing properties where this is appropriate. Depending on specific needs, there may be a shortage of accessible housing for some disabled people, resulting in a lack of choice and inappropriate housing for applicants.</p>	<p><b>Positive</b></p>

<b>-Disability</b>	<p>There are also challenges in matching the correct adaptations on properties to applicant's disabilities. These issues have been addressed through improved property advert labelling and advertising. The Homefinder Somerset Monitoring Board that oversees the operation of the Homefinder Somerset Allocations policy will continue to look for ways to improve accessibility to vulnerable applicants with needs.</p> <p>The need for carers to live in or couples requiring separate bedrooms because of medical conditions and equipment can be an issue, which needs to be taken into account in the allocation, provision and development of housing. This can particularly affect sheltered and extra care housing requirements as well as other housing.</p> <p>The strategy seeks to address the issues faced by people with disabilities by improving partnership working with mental health teams, Adult Social Care and hospital discharge teams. Closer working with the housing occupational therapists is also helping with physical adaptation needs.</p> <p>Districts have protocols with the community mental health teams to ensure that Housing Options are aware of those being discharged from mental health care teams before discharge so that adequate accommodation can be found for them.</p> <p>Any information provided will need to be in accessible formats wherever feasible to aid access for people with disabilities.</p>	
<b>Marriage /civil partnership</b>	Applicants are not disadvantaged by either being married/ in a civil partnership or not when accessing affordable housing in terms of the housing register, mutual exchange or homelessness /homeless prevention services. Registered civil partners have the same rights as married heterosexual spouses in relation to property and tenancy rights.	<b>Neutral</b>
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Since 1 April 2004, it has been unlawful for local authorities to house families with children and pregnant women in bed and breakfast accommodation for more than six weeks, which has put increased pressure on the housing system. Pregnant applicants are prioritised depending on their housing needs and circumstances within current policies/strategies	<b>Positive</b>
<b>Religion or belief</b>	We have no evidence to suggest that applicants from this group are disadvantaged in any way by the Housing Options services or the strategy. Assessment of need and Personal Housing Plans should take account of specific beliefs and religion helping to avoid any disadvantage and target the services to the extent it is reasonably possible.	<b>Neutral</b>

<p><b>- Religion or belief</b></p>	<p>Setting the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) at 30% of the rate of private rents in the area, not having LHA for more than 4 bedrooms, and the overall benefits cap for families may affect larger families and, therefore, disproportionately on certain religious groups who may have multi-generational families/ larger family groups living in one property.</p> <p>People of Hindu and Muslim religions are more likely to live in overcrowded housing than other groups. 8% of Hindu householders and 7% of Muslim householders have a bedroom 'occupancy rating' of '-1', compared to between 2% and 3% for all other main religious groups. <u>(Census, 2011)</u></p>	
<p><b>Race</b></p>	<p>Assessments and Personal Housing Plans should ensure needs are sensitively met in relation to the Housing Options service and housing where reasonable and feasible.</p> <p>A very small proportion (0.5%) of Somerset residents cannot speak English well (or at all). However, in the 25 to 34 age group this proportion increases to 1.5%; largely related to recent migrant workers from 'New EU' countries. <u>(Census 2011)</u>. Languages can be translated where possible and reasonably by using external language translation facilities.</p> <p>People of Asian ethnicity are 'under-represented' on the Homefinder Somerset social housing register relative to the size of the population: Asian people comprise 0.4% of Homefinder registrants but 0.9% of the county's population whilst people of White Other ethnicity are marginally over-represented.</p> <p>BME groups often represent a higher proportion of rough sleepers and our work with the Avon &amp; Somerset Rough Sleepers group will help to address this issue. Being on a low wage or unemployed or in and out of work could increase the risk of homelessness if it leads to difficulties in money management including payment of rent or mortgage. Unemployment is higher for people of Black and Mixed ethnicities.</p> <p>For Gypsies and Travellers, illegal pitches can have problems around health hazards (such as contamination by vermin), decayed sewage and water fittings, poor-quality utility rooms, and failings in fire safety, impacting adversely on health and access to employment opportunities. Racism towards Gypsies and Travellers can have a detrimental effect on mental health.</p> <p>Gypsy and Traveller Communities across Somerset are of different ethnicities and have their own culture and therefore careful consideration must be made when allocating sites as well as being mindful of their accommodation needs. Our Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) updated in 2013 sets out detail on the needs of this community and the pitch requirements.</p>	<p><b>Neutral</b></p>

<b>-race</b>	Refugees and asylum seekers have many additional challenges and needs including potentially language barriers, along with differing housing needs and a range of dwelling sizes (due to multi-generational households). Many face challenges relating to low or lack of income; lack of capital for a deposit; few household possessions and high forced mobility (in terms of where they are offered accommodation) which makes it difficult to establish a 'local connection'. The Syrian Vulnerable Persons Scheme seeks to address these needs.	
<b>Sex (Gender)</b>	<p>The strategy will have an overall positive effect on women who are over represented among homeless households through preventing homelessness and meeting housing need.</p> <p>Providing comprehensive advice services across all tenures will also benefit women at risk of domestic violence, and those at most risk through the impact of welfare reform changes. The majority of homeless and temporary accommodation households are headed by, or include, women. Since 1 April 2004, it has been unlawful for local authorities to house families with children and pregnant women in bed and breakfast accommodation for more than six weeks, which has put increased pressure on the housing system.</p> <p>Single men are overrepresented in the rough sleeper and non-priority homeless categories both nationally and locally. The reasons for this are varied but may be linked to the fact that 32% of rough sleepers are prison leavers and 6% have been in the armed forces at some point in their lives.</p> <p>Support is provided through Positive Lives services and we need to continue and support further work to reduce single non-priority homelessness, which should have a positive impact on single men in the rough sleeper and non-priority homeless categories, together with bolstering existing support for priority homeless applicants.</p> <p>Single men with children are presenting more often as homeless and there have been issues with landlords not accepting that single males would have such sole access to children. Further work is needed to ensure that landlords understand applicant circumstances and accommodate accordingly, with no reference to the gender of the applicant.</p>	<b>Positive</b>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	<p>We have no evidence to suggest that applicants from this group are disadvantaged in any way by the service or strategy. However, we know that transgendered people may be at risk of homelessness arising from transphobic reactions, Hate Crime and harassment by family, neighbours and members of their local community.</p> <p>Staff training is critical to awareness of needs and issues.</p>	<b>Neutral</b>

	Further work may be needed to ensure that private interview facilities are available in all partners to ensure that privacy can be assured for gender reassigned applicants. In addition, Personal Housing Plans should pick up and address issues and needs relevant to the service	
<b>Sexuality</b>	<p>Assessments of need and Personal Housing Plans (under the new legislation) may be the most suitable way to determine what types of dwellings are required. Staff training is critical for awareness of needs and issues in delivering our services effectively for LGBT applicants. Specialist accommodation may be considered for LGBT communities, especially people at risk of also being discriminated against due to age or race.</p> <p>Advice can be sought from organisations that support LGBT people such as Stonewall Housing or the Albert Kennedy Trust, the Diversity Trust and 2BU. Information and guidance are available at <a href="#">2BU website</a>.</p> <p>In a survey undertaken with LGBT young people in Somerset, Impact of Coming Out on Mental Health, the results reveal that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 85% of respondents indicated that they had either been bullied, witnessed bullying or both.</li> <li>• Only 1 in 3 had reported the bullying</li> <li>• 86% had experienced verbal abuse</li> <li>• 3 in 4 reported deliberate self-harm</li> <li>• Almost half had attempted suicide</li> </ul> <p>These pressures on mental health could lead to additional difficulties for young LGBT people in getting and sustaining housing successfully (equally, poor, inappropriate or unstable housing could compound poor mental health and wellbeing).</p> <p>In the Somerset Gay and Bisexual Men's Research Report (2015), gay and bisexual men in Somerset report experiencing homophobia and hate crime. This could lead to housing difficulties and risk of homelessness. The full report is available from the <a href="#">Diversity Trust website</a></p> <p>Data on these groups is not collated as part of the Government's P1E data return and cannot be reported on at this stage. This makes it difficult to obtain accurate information about the housing needs of LGBT people who are at risk of or faced with homelessness.</p> <p>To date there has been no evidence of negative impact.</p>	<b>Neutral</b>

<b>Rurality</b>	<p>Somerset is a rural county and presents some challenges in terms of reaching rough sleepers in the rural locations. Homelessness Services are located in towns across the district, outreach workers go out daily to look for and support rough sleepers in known rural haunts.</p> <p>The strategy identifies a need to develop a county wide rough sleeper strategy and this will seek to address the rural challenges and disadvantages.</p> <p>Travel and Access: Transport is limited and costly in rural areas and can lead to isolation of our more vulnerable residents, also challenging access to some services and facilities located in towns. Reaching and helping people in the communities in which they live or rough sleep presents challenge. This is true for all districts and especially so for West Somerset.</p> <p>Around 10% of White British householders in Somerset <u>do not</u> have access to a car/van, compared to 15-16% for all other ethnic groups. (<u>Census, 2011</u>)</p> <p>People of Hindu and Muslim religions in Somerset are less likely than the general population to have transport: 23% of Hindu and 21% of Muslim householders do not have access to a car (or van) (<u>Census 2011</u>).</p> <p>Only 33% of adults aged 75 years or over have ever used the Internet. (<u>Internet Access Quarterly Update, Q2 2013</u>).</p> <p>Disabled people are less likely to live in households with access to the internet than non-disabled people. Over half (53%) of adults who have never used the Internet have a disability.</p> <p>Assessments and Personal Housing Plans should include relevant issues relating to rurality.</p>	<b>Neutral</b>
-----------------	---	----------------



**Section 5** – After consideration please state your final recommendations based on the findings from the impact assessment. Also, include any examples of good practice and positive steps taken.

The draft strategy was developed in consultation with internal and external partners. No comments were received concerning equalities impact. The overall impact of the strategy is to improve the outcomes for residents facing homelessness against a backdrop of diminishing resources. It is recommended that the strategy be adopted.

**Section 6** - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment

The impact assessment will be reviewed in line with the next homelessness review and new strategy currently proposed after 18 months.

The homelessness review and consultations outcomes are contained within the main strategy document and will be published thorough the council's website.

<b>Completed by:</b>	Jan Errington		
<b>Date</b>	02.03.18		
<b>Signed off by:</b>	Homelessness Managers Group		
<b>Date</b>	09.03.18		
<b>Compliance sign off</b>	Tom Rutland		
<b>To be reviewed by:</b> (officer name)			
<b>Review date:</b>	In line with strategy review September 2019		
<b>Version</b>	V0.1.3	<b>Date</b>	09.03.18

**Equality Impact Assessment Issues and Action Table**

Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions?	When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored?	What is the expected outcome from the action?
<b>Age</b>					
Data not collected statistically for all homeless applications therefore not able to monitor effectively full homelessness need and demand.	Collect and monitor data on this characteristic for all homeless applicants	Housing Options Teams Housing Managers	April 2018	H-CLIC submissions and reports  Quarterly management reports and returns	Improved ability to analyse the impact of the strategy and to target services accordingly to avoid any disadvantage
We need to ensure awareness of all services available to homeless individuals where communication could be a barrier	Ensure that commissioned services are able to provide easy to understand service information accessible to young people (media and language)	Housing Managers	December 2018	Councils and commissioned services provide appropriate accessible service information	Fair access to homelessness prevention services ensuring those who need help know how to access it.
Limited homelessness risks awareness and need for a ‘reality check’ for young people so that they can be better informed about the risks of homelessness, where to get help and advice to avoid becoming homeless.	<i>Taken from the strategy action plan:</i> Ensure housing/ homelessness awareness sessions are promoted in schools & colleges	HMG (Housing Managers’ Group) Housing Managers  (YMCA)	December 2018	Possible snap shot surveys from class attendees  Evidence number of sessions undertaken in schools  H-CLIC submissions and reports	More young people staying at home  Awareness raising literature available  Fewer homelessness approaches by clients aged 16-24

**Equality Impact Assessment Issues and Action Table**

<b>Identified issue drawn from your conclusions</b>	<b>Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?</b>	<b>Who is responsible for the actions?</b>	<b>When will the action be completed?</b>	<b>How will it be monitored?</b>	<b>What is the expected outcome from the action?</b>
<p>The strategy identifies an increased demand for over 65's and over 75's within the next 20 years.</p>	<p>Review the housing aspirations of older social housing tenants to enable safe and independent living</p>	<p>HMG Housing Managers</p>	<p>April 2019</p>	<p>Minutes/reports via HMG  Positive Customer Satisfaction feedback</p>	<p>Housing providers and enablers are aware of requirements to meet future older persons' housing needs appropriately</p>
	<p>The councils and housing providers must take account of projected demand for older persons' accommodation in decision making about resource allocation, asset management review and housing development.</p>	<p>Housing Managers  (Enabling Teams, Registered Providers)</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>Discussions with Housing Development, Enabling and housing providers engaged in development</p>	<p>Choice and supply to meet/anticipate demand as it grows</p>
	<p>Review the housing needs of older rough sleepers and improve their accommodation pathways and options, working within the Positive Lives programme</p>	<p>HMG Housing Managers</p>	<p>April 2019</p>	<p>Minutes/reports via HMG Positive customer satisfaction feedback</p>	<p>Clear pathways to services in place</p>

**Equality Impact Assessment Issues and Action Table**

Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions?	When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored?	What is the expected outcome from the action?
Limited supply of 1 bed units	<p><i>From the strategy action plan:</i> Explore options to increase the number of single units available to single homeless clients, particularly the 25-34 year age group.</p> <p>Consideration should also be given to any need for shared and alternative accommodation options</p>	HMG Housing Managers	Nov 2018 and annual	Fewer households waiting for 1-bedroom accommodation on Homefinder Somerset	Fewer households waiting for 1 bedroom accommodation, more accessible move on for supported housing residents
Mediation is currently available to young people but no other age groups	<p><i>From the strategy action plan:</i> Explore the options to provide mediation services to different age groups/client groups</p>	HMG Housing Managers	January 2019	H-CLIC statistics	Increase in the number of clients supported to remain in their homes
<b>Disability</b>					
Data not collected statistically for all applicants, therefore not able to monitor effectively in terms of district's full homelessness need and demand.	Collect and monitor information on this characteristic for all homeless applicants	Housing Options Teams – Housing Managers	April 2018	Statistical data collection built into software with reports via H-CLIC	Data available for analysis of strategy impacts, emerging trends and issues

**Equality Impact Assessment Issues and Action Table**

Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions?	When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored?	What is the expected outcome from the action?
We need to ensure awareness of all services available to homeless individuals where communication could be a barrier	Ensure that commissioned services are able to provide easy to understand service information that can be provided in alternative formats and easy read versions	Housing Managers	December 2018	Commissioned services are able to provide accessible service information in easy read and alternative formats	Enable awareness and fair access to services to prevent homelessness and ensure those who need help know how to access it.
There may be a shortage of accessible housing for some disabled people leading to a lack of choice and inappropriate housing when applicants present as homeless or for advice on their housing options. There are also issues in matching the correct adaptations on properties to applicant's disabilities.	Work further with the Housing Occupational Therapists, through the Homefinder Somerset Monitoring Board that oversees the operation of the Homefinder Somerset Allocations policy, to improve labelling and marketing of adapted property and correct allocation of adapted property	HMG Somerset CBL Scheme Coordinator	Ongoing	.Homefinder Somerset monitoring and reports  Aids and adaptations team and Housing OT feedback and reports Customer satisfaction surveys  Affordable housing plans and delivery reports	Clear efficient and effective pathways to suitable adapted housing. Optimised use of available adapted properties, ensuring applicants are offered appropriate housing to meet their needs.  Reduced waiting time for suitable housing  Ensure wheelchair accessible units included in new builds to basic accessible standard

**Equality Impact Assessment Issues and Action Table**

Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions?	When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored?	What is the expected outcome from the action?
-continued					Improved timescales for minor adaptations
A clear referral pathway for agencies is required, particularly at point of discharge from hospital, prison and other institutions.	<i>From the strategy action plan:</i> Develop protocols for Public Services, Housing Providers & all other Agencies to refer clients they believe to be homeless or at risk of homelessness	HMG Housing Managers	October 2018	Protocols in place Referrals made from variety of agencies	Increased number of referrals
Ensure that no individuals fall through the net becoming homeless or at risk of homelessness where earlier intervention, communication and partnership working could have prevented this, especially for those with complex needs	<i>From the strategy action plan:</i> Improve partnership working between Community Mental Health Teams and Drug/Alcohol dependency support to improve outcomes for dual diagnosis clients	HMG Housing Managers (Service Providers)	ongoing	Protocols in place Evidence of negotiations and meeting minutes	Personalised and planned positive outcome for client
	<i>From the strategy action plan:</i> Continue to work with Community Mental Health Teams, Hospitals, Prisons and Probation to develop a protocol to ensure that clients are not discharged/released without suitable accommodation	HMG Housing Managers (hospitals, prisons, CMHTs)	ongoing	Protocols in place	Personalised and planned positive outcome for client

**Equality Impact Assessment Issues and Action Table**

Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions?	When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored?	What is the expected outcome from the action?
-continued	<i>From the strategy action plan:</i> Work with social housing providers to ensure that there are transparent and fair tenant selection practices. Monitor skipping reasons more closely.	HMG Housing Managers	ongoing	Homefinder Somerset reports	Reduction in the number of households refused by social landlords Improved access to social housing for clients with difficult housing histories
	Continue to explore and improve ways to ensure service reaches those in rural settings e.g. outreach and drop ins in range of locations*  *Also rurality issue	HMG Housing Managers	ongoing	Reflected in satisfaction questionnaires  Rough sleeper statistics	Service developments for better rural access  Positive outcomes for applicants in rural settings
Ensure adequate supply of suitable accommodation for those with specific needs to enable access to housing	<i>From the strategy action plan:</i> Raise awareness amongst Planners and Enabling Teams on the need and demand for particular units of accommodation	HMG Housing Managers	ongoing	Evidence – e.g. fact sheets, minutes of meetings, 1 bed units delivered within affordable housing programme and published reports	Address the need 1-bedroom accommodation

Equality Impact Assessment Issues and Action Table					
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions?	When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored?	What is the expected outcome from the action?
Some individuals with complex needs may be rough sleeping and find it difficult to consider or access appropriate decent housing. Many may be 'under the radar', especially newer rough sleepers, and not able to readily engage with help available or be aware of their options	<i>From the strategy action plan:</i> Develop [and deliver] Somerset-wide Rough Sleepers Strategy	HMG Housing Managers	April 2019	Minutes of meetings recording strategy development  Draft strategy consultation  Approved strategy published	Improved communication between partners in relation to rough sleeping  Improved options & outcomes for rough sleepers  Improved access to services for rough sleepers
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>					
Data not collected statistically, therefore not able to monitor effectively in terms of district's full homelessness need and demand.	Collect and monitor information on this characteristic for all homeless applicants.  Monitor hate crime and action in relation to housing allocation and Housing Options response	Housing Options Teams Housing Managers	April 2018	H-CLIC quarterly submissions and reports and returns  Housing Options teams' monthly monitoring of Homefinder statistics	Data available for analysis of strategy impacts, emerging trends and issues enabling more effective targeting of services.



<b>Equality Impact Assessment Issues and Action Table</b>					
<b>Identified issue drawn from your conclusions</b>	<b>Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?</b>	<b>Who is responsible for the actions?</b>	<b>When will the action be completed?</b>	<b>How will it be monitored?</b>	<b>What is the expected outcome from the action?</b>
Need for staff awareness to enable better understanding and service	Provide regular staff training to ensure adequate awareness and understanding of needs	Housing Managers Housing Options Teams	December 2019 and ongoing	Customer satisfaction surveys Training plan and records	Better understanding of needs and impacts of services on this group
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>					
There are no actions					
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>					
Data not tracked statistically for all applicants	Collect and monitor data on this characteristic for all homeless applicants	Housing Options Teams Housing Managers	April 2018	H-CLIC Quarterly reports and returns	Data available for analysis of strategy and service impacts as well as emerging trends and issues enabling more effective targeting of services.
<b>Race (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)</b>					
Collected for statistically homeless acceptances at a high level only therefore not able to monitor effectively in terms of district's full homelessness need.	Collect and monitor information in more detail on this characteristic for all homeless applicants.  Options response	Housing Options Teams Housing Managers	April 2018	H-CLIC quarterly submissions and reports and returns  Quarterly reports and returns	Data available for analysis of strategy and service impacts as well as emerging trends and issues enabling more effective targeting of services.

**Equality Impact Assessment Issues and Action Table**

Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions?	When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored?	What is the expected outcome from the action?
People from a different race or culture may be vulnerable to hate crime	Monitor hate crime and action in relation to housing allocation and Housing	Housing Options Teams HMG	ongoing	H-CLIC quarterly submissions and reports and returns  Housing Options teams' monthly monitoring of Homefinder statistics	Data available for analysis of strategy impacts, emerging trends and issues enabling more effective targeting of services.
We need to ensure awareness of all services available to homeless individuals where language could be a barrier  Ensure accessibility of services	Ensure that all Housing Options and commissioned services can provide service literature that is easy to understand and can be provided in alternative formats and translations.  Ensure that language barriers are considered and mitigations found – e.g. interpretation when needed	Housing Managers	December 2018	Literature and access to interpretation /translation in place	Enable awareness and fair access to services to prevent homelessness and ensure those who need help know how to access it.

**Equality Impact Assessment Issues and Action Table**

<b>Identified issue drawn from your conclusions</b>	<b>Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?</b>	<b>Who is responsible for the actions?</b>	<b>When will the action be completed?</b>	<b>How will it be monitored?</b>	<b>What is the expected outcome from the action?</b>
Current availability of accommodation options for Gypsies and Travellers does not include permanent and transit pitches, only housing, which may not be appropriate to the needs of all.	In line with the updated GTAA (Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment) work towards implementation within resources and when feasible of GTAA recommendations including the delivery of identified annual pitch requirements	Council planners	ongoing	Monitoring and review of GTAA	Measurable steps taken towards implementation of increased permanent and transit pitch availability
Current support available is not targeted specifically to the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and therefore may not be as accessible or appropriate as possible	Support progress and implementation of application by Julian House for funding for pilot specialist outreach and engagement worker for Gypsies and Travellers in Somerset	HMG Housing Managers	If bid successful April 2018 -19	Quarterly reports and in line with funding	Improved access to practical support, information and advice services for Gypsies and Travellers. Increased cultural awareness amongst Health and Social Care professionals

Equality Impact Assessment Issues and Action Table					
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions?	When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored?	What is the expected outcome from the action?
<b>Religion and Belief</b>					
Certain religious groups may have multi-generational families/ larger family groups living in one property leading to potential need for larger property. There may be other relevant cultural needs affecting service delivery and access	<p>Personal Housing Plans should pick up any cultural or religious needs in terms of service provision.</p> <p>Regular Staff training is needed to raise awareness of issues and needs.</p>	Housing Options Teams	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>March 2019 and ongoing</p>	<p>Customer satisfaction surveys</p> <p>Training plan and records</p>	<p>Service ensures accessibility and that there is no disadvantage as a consequence of religion or belief</p> <p>Better understanding of needs and impacts of services on this group</p>
Ensure adequate supply of suitable accommodation for those with specific needs to enable access to housing, for example larger properties for multi-generational households	Work with Enabling and development teams to ensure housing are reflected in development programmes	HMG Housing Managers	ongoing	Evidence – e.g. fact sheets, minutes of meetings, 1 bed units delivered within affordable housing programme and published reports	Address the need larger accommodation

**Equality Impact Assessment Issues and Action Table**

Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions?	When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored?	What is the expected outcome from the action?
<b>Sex (Gender)</b>					
Data collected statistically for homeless acceptances therefore limiting information available for analysis not able to monitor effectively in terms of district's full homelessness need and demand.	Collect and monitor information in more detail on this characteristic for all homeless applicants	Housing Options Teams Housing Managers	April 2018	H-CLIC quarterly submissions and reports and returns  Quarterly reports and returns	Data available for analysis of strategy and service impacts as well as emerging trends and issues enabling more effective targeting of services.
Optimise the range of provision for women and children fleeing domestic abuse	<p><i>From the strategy action plan:</i> Evaluate the “stay safe” at home options available for victims of domestic violence where this choice is suitable</p> <p>Where ‘stay safe” at home is not an option, review banding, policy and processes around domestic violence to ensure consistency</p>	<p>HMG Housing Managers  (Avon &amp; Somerset Police  Somerset County Council  Homefinder Somerset)</p>	April 2019	<p>Increase in the number domestic violence victims able to remain in their home where it is practical to do so</p> <p>Consistent banding policy for victims of domestic violence</p>	Ensuring victims of domestic violence remain safe

**Equality Impact Assessment Issues and Action Table**

Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions?	When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored?	What is the expected outcome from the action?
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>					
Data not collected statistically limiting information available for analysis therefore not able to monitor effectively in terms of district's full homelessness need and demand.	Collect and monitor information on this characteristic for all homeless applicants	Housing Options Teams Housing Managers	April 2018	H-CLIC quarterly submissions and reports and returns  Quarterly reports and returns	Data available for analysis of strategy and service impacts as well as emerging trends and issues enabling more effective targeting of services.
Need to ensure staff awareness to enable better understanding and service	Provide regular staff training to ensure adequate awareness and understanding of needs	Housing Managers Housing Options Teams	March 2019 and ongoing	Training plan and record	Better understanding of needs and impacts of services on this group  Service ensures accessibility and that there is no disadvantage as a consequence of this groups needs and issues

**Equality Impact Assessment Issues and Action Table**

Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions?	When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored?	What is the expected outcome from the action?
<b>Other</b> (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc.)					
<p>Rurality - issues relating to rurality can lead to additional isolation from social and support networks and service access issues. This can be compounded by:- low income; lack of access to transport; older people and disabled people may be less likely to be able to access internet</p>	<p>An ongoing challenge to ensure that those in rural locations are aware of services that services reach out to rural areas and can be accessed in as many ways as possible to overcome distance and isolation.</p> <p>Assessments and Personal Housing Plans should include and address these issues and needs</p>	<p>Housing Options Teams</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Services can demonstrate actions, initiatives, communication methods and facilities which support those in rural locations with service accessibility</p> <p>Customer satisfaction surveys</p>	<p>Improved awareness of services of rural residents and rough sleepers</p> <p>Reduction and removal of barriers and disadvantage created by rurality issues</p>

## Appendix 1

Examples of the homelessness support, advice and accommodation services provided across the county with positive impact for protected characteristics:

Advice and Support Service	District	Who benefits?
Services providing housing and homelessness advice, information and access to mediation such as Citizen's Advice (CAB), P2i, Positive Lives and District Councils' Housing Options Teams with positive impact	All	Homeless individuals (or those at risk of homelessness) who are vulnerable due to their homelessness and other needs, some of whom may fall into any category of protected characteristic
Keyring have directly has helped 71 tenants in Mendip to find affordable and decent accommodation Somerset West Letting Agency secured 89 bed spaces in Sedgemoor and 5 bed spaces in West Somerset	MDC SDC	
Credit Union provide loans to support homelessness prevention and enable access to alternative private rented sector housing through the Help to Rent, Sedgemoor Loan and Universal Credit In Advance Loan schemes	MDC SDC	
Citizens Advice Money Advice, Warrant, Debt and Budgeting scheme provides specialist advice and assistance e.g. rent arrears and transition to Universal Credit. South Somerset in house Welfare Benefits Team and Taunton Deane Debt and Benefit Advisors support tenants with money advice.	All	
YMCA Deposit Guarantee Scheme is provided with the Council to help clients into private sector housing.	MDC	
Somerset Homelet Website - allows private landlords and agents to advertise their vacant properties to let for free	SDC TDBC WS	
YMCA Private Rented Support Scheme delivers a support service to over 25's focussing on prevention of homelessness helping single homeless and couples without dependants.	All	
YMCA Adult Emergency Host Family Accommodation (EHFA) is the provision of Host Family Accommodation for up to seven nights for someone aged 25 and over.	All	
Yeovil4Family provide floating support and mentors to people at risk of homelessness in South Somerset	SSDC	
YMCA provide Sedgemoor Lodgings Scheme which aims to establish lodgings so that people can remain in their homes and provide much needed accommodation in Sedgemoor and West Somerset, achieving 218 bed-spaces in the first 2 years	SDC WS	



Advice and Support Service	District	Who benefits?
YMCA Emergency Host Family Accommodation (EHFA) for young people for up to seven nights	MDC	Age – young people 16-25
YMCA tenancy accreditation scheme to build up tenancy management skills and provide evidence to landlords to help young people access move-on accommodation	All	
P2i is an outcome based homelessness prevention service, which aims to provide a service for all vulnerable young people aged 16 to 25 inclusive who have a relevant need. 168 beds are available across the county (some services provided by YMCA as above).	All	
Homefinder Somerset Policy has an exemption from local connection rules for victims of domestic abuse and gives priority status (Gold Band) to women fleeing domestic abuse.	All	Gender
Taunton Women's Aid and Knightstone's SIDAS (Somerset Integrated Domestic Abuse Service) provide a range of services including a refuge, 6 safe houses, drop in, outreach and other support and advice services for male and female victims of domestic abuse		
The Positive People initiative for single homeless adults with complex needs was co-designed with service users and providers with services tailored to individual needs. It links together and drives forward development of a range of services to meet local need. (some services are provided through TAH (Taunton Association for the Homeless))	All	Homeless individuals who are vulnerable due to their homelessness and other needs who may fall into any category of protected characteristic These include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability e.g. mental health, dual diagnosis, complex needs.</li> <li>• Those where rurality is an additional challenge</li> </ul>
<p>Rough Sleepers are supported through Outreach services across the county.</p> <p>There is a range of accommodation for homelessness, for example:</p> <p>Elim's Connect Centre, drop in sessions across Mendip's main towns, outreach service with assistance to reconnect those without a local connection. Elim's Direct Access Community provides supported housing for rough sleepers on a working farm with client able to get involved in helping out on the farm.</p> <p>TAH provide accommodation and outreach in Taunton Deane</p>	MDC	
Cold weather provision aims to engage individuals who are rough sleeping and provide some form of accommodation to reduce the risk of ill health or death due to rough sleeping in severe weather	All	
Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme – alleviates homelessness for Syrian refugees	All	Race

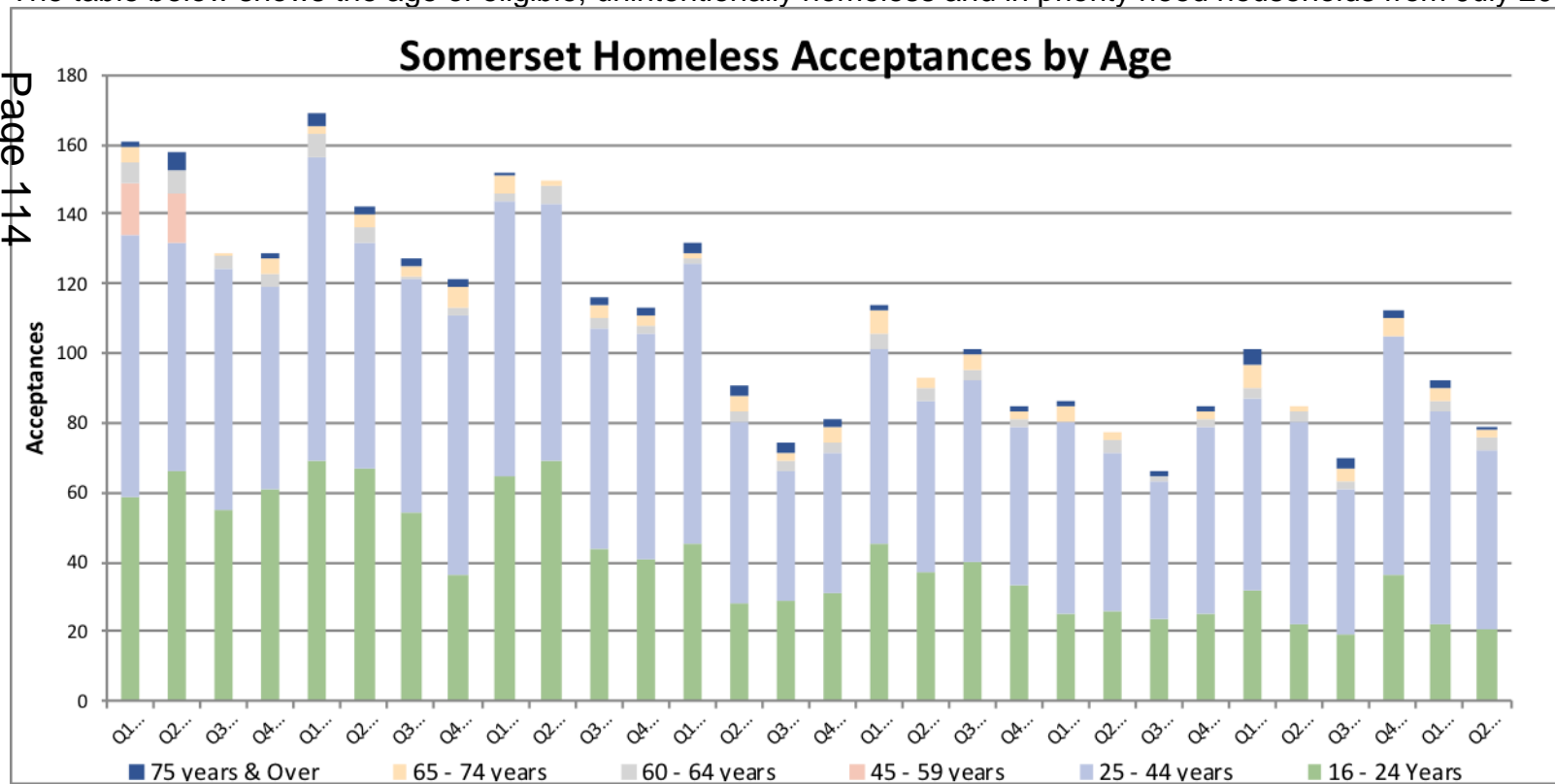
## Appendix 2

Equalities data analysis in this section is taken from Somerset Intelligence (<http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk>)

### Age

	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset	South West	Great Britain
Males	48.7%	49.1%	49.1%	48.6%	48.1%	49.2%	49.3%
Females	51.3%	50.9%	50.1%	51.4%	51.9%	50.8%	50.7%

The table below shows the age of eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need households from July 2016 to June 2017 was:



Amongst the 65-74 age group, the annual rate of growth was an estimated 3.4%, five times the average rate. This partly reflects the attraction of Somerset as a retirement destination, and the post-war baby-boom generation reaching retirement age. Comparison of the population in 2013, and local projections, show how each district can expect to see a significant increase in the numbers of people over 65 by 2037. The number of people aged 75 or older is projected to double by 2039. Most of Somerset, including almost all rural areas, is likely to have at least 25% of the population over 65 by 2033. (see maps at appendix 3 below and at section 6.10 of the Strategy and at <http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/population-estimates-and-projections/>)

*Economy and Jobs:* Younger people are more likely to be unemployed and claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) than older people: The claimant rate for people aged 16-24 in Somerset is 3.3%, compared to 2.0% for those aged 25-49, and 1.0%

*Housing:* Younger people are much less likely and able to own their own home: 37% of Somerset householders aged 16 to 34 are owner occupiers, compared to 79% of those aged 65 or over. (Census, 2011) As a result, 44% of householders aged 16 to 34 in Somerset privately rent their home, compared to just 7% of those aged 65 or over. Private renters typically spend more on their rental payments than owner occupiers spend on their mortgage payments (Census, 2011 / English Housing Survey, 2011/12)

Younger people are much more likely to be homeless: Around one third (31%) of people accepted as homeless and in priority need by Somerset local authorities were aged between 16 and 24. (Department for Communities and Local Government, Live Tables on Homelessness, 2012/13)

## **Disability**

At the time of the 2011 Census, 99,664 people in Somerset identified themselves as having a long-term health problem or disability which limited their day-to-day activity. This equates to around 1 in 5.5 of the population.

- 43,988 people's lives were limited 'a lot' and 55,676 people limited 'a little'.
- A higher proportion of women than men report having a long term health problem or disability.
- Overall, over half of people aged 65 or over have a long-term health problem or disability, rising to 83% of those aged 85 or over.
- There are nearly 9,000 households (3.9% of all households in Somerset) containing at least one adult with a long-term disability or health condition and dependent children.
- Prevalence is most common in areas with older populations: in parts of Minehead and Burnham-on-Sea around 1 in 3 residents have a limiting condition.

The map attached at appendix 3 shows distribution of disabled households in Somerset. <http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/census-health.html>

The following table shows the disability breakdown of eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need households for the same period from July 2016 to June 2017:

### Homeless Acceptances - Disability

Category	Number	% of Total Acceptances
Physical Disability	41	10.00%
Mental Illness	33	8.05%
Total Disability	74	18.05%

*Health and Well-being:* The proportion of people with a long-term illness or disability that restricts their daily activities increases steadily with age: Around 4% of people aged under 25 in Somerset have a long-term health problem or disability, increasing to 83% of people aged 85 and over. (Census, 2011)

Around a fifth of people aged 16 or over are estimated to have some indication of anxiety or depression, with a higher proportion of those aged between 40 and 59 and aged 80 and over. (Annual Population Survey, 2012/13)

*Economy and Jobs:* Nationally, 47% of working-age disabled people are in employment compared to 76% of working-age non-disabled people. (Labour Force Survey, 2012).

Half of people aged 16+ with a long-term health problem or disability in Somerset have never worked or are long-term unemployed. Overall, only around 4% of Somerset residents have never worked or are long-term unemployed. (Census, 2011)

### Religion and Belief

Somerset's main religious groups, as identified in the 2011 Census:

- Christian (339,211 residents)
- Buddhist (1,612 residents)
- Muslim (1,470 residents)
- Pagan (1,147 residents)
- Hindu. (506 residents)
- Of the other major world religions, there were a total of 337 Jewish residents and 100 Sikh residents recorded in the Census. In addition there were 34 'other' religious affiliations, the most common being Mixed Religion (750), Spiritualist (369), Spiritual (200) and Wicca (158)

**Race**

The largest ethnic population group is “White British”: Mendip (94.24%), Sedgemoor (95.30%), South Somerset (94.96%), Taunton Deane (93.50%) and West Somerset (95.83%). These compare to 93.67% in England and Wales and 91.80% for the South West region. (Source: Census 2011)

**Ethnic group or background of Somerset residents**

Ethnic group or background		Census 2011
White	British/English/Welsh/ Scottish/Northern Irish	501,558
	Irish	2,257
	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	733
	Other White	14,707
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	White and Black Caribbean	1,200
	White and Black African	650
	White and Asian	1,407
	Other Mixed	984
Asian / Asian British	Indian	1,069
	Pakistani	203
	Bangladeshi	442
	Chinese	1,247
	Other Asian	1,912
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	African	607
	Caribbean	291
	Other Black	115
Other ethnic group	Arab	175
	Other ethnic group	415

- An estimated 20,912 Somerset residents do not identify themselves as British (or English, Welsh, Scottish or Northern Irish). 20,329 Somerset residents hold a non-UK passport.
- In over 97% of Somerset households, English is the main language of all adult residents. However, there are an estimated 3,404 households in which no one has English as a main language.
- Around 4 out of 5 residents whose main language is not English can speak English 'well' or 'very well'. An estimated 2,382 residents cannot speak English well, and a further 410 cannot speak English at all.

The table below shows the ethnicity of eligible, unintentionally homeless and priority need households in the last four quarters of data available during the homelessness review (July 2016 to June 2017). (Source: P1E statistics - Government homelessness statistical reporting)

#### Homeless Acceptances Ethnicity Breakdown

	White	Black	Asian	Mixed	Ethnicity not stated	Other
Mendip	19	0	0	0	3	2
Sedgemoor	61	0	0	0	0	0
South Somerset	155	0	0	1	21	3
Taunton Deane	115	1	1	3	1	0
West Somerset	24	0	0	0	0	0

*Economy and Jobs:* Being on a low wage or unemployed or in and out of work could increase the risk of homelessness if it leads to difficulties in money management including payment of rent or mortgage. Unemployment is higher for people of Black and Mixed ethnicities: Around 4.8% of economically active Somerset residents are unemployed, rising to 7.6% for Black and 8.2% for people of Mixed ethnicity. (Census, 2011)

*Housing:* The proportion of people who own their own home varies significantly across ethnic groups, from 71% for White British to 37% for White Other. Only 15% of White British householders privately rent their home, compared to 54% for White Other, 43% for Asian and 37% for Black ethnicities. (Census, 2011)

Around 2.4% of households in Somerset rate as overcrowded in terms of the number of available bedrooms in the home. For several ethnic groups the proportion is significantly higher: White Other (9.9%), Asian (11.1%) and Gypsy or Irish Traveller (16.9%). (Census, 2011)

People of Asian ethnicity are 'under-represented' on the Somerset Homefinder social housing register relative to the size of the population: Asian people comprise 0.4% of Homefinder registrants but 0.9% of the county's population. Conversely, people of White Other ethnicity are marginally over-represented.

### **White Other ethnicity**

Areas with highest concentrations of 'White: Other' residents:

- Most were born in Europe, the majority in Eastern Europe.
  - 94.6% of Somerset's population are 'White British'. This proportion is typical of that seen in Somerset's neighbouring local authorities but much higher than the England and Wales average (80.5%). Somerset's non-'White British' residents tend to be concentrated in and around the county's principal towns.
  - Somerset has seen a large increase in Polish-born residents since the accession of the A8 East European countries to the EU in 2004. Of the 8,171 East European-born residents recorded in the 2011 Census, around two-thirds were from Poland.
  - Polish is the most common 'non-UK' ethnicity in all Somerset's districts, and Polish-born residents now account for 1% of Somerset's overall population. There are significant pockets of residents in parts of Shepton Mallet, Yeovil, Minehead, Taunton and Bridgwater.
  - The size of the Portuguese population in Somerset has also increased markedly in the last ten years, from 53 residents at the time of the 2001 Census to 965 residents in 2011. There are now notable groupings of Portuguese residents in areas of Chard and Shepton Mallet.
  - At a broader (district) level, there are also noteworthy, albeit small, concentrations of Italian people in Mendip; Chinese in Taunton Deane; and people from the Baltic States in Sedgemoor. West Somerset has a small representation of 'Other Eastern European' ethnicity.
- There are established German, Irish and South African-born populations in Somerset, each accounting for between 0.3% and 0.5% of the county's overall population. The numbers have not changed significantly since the 2001 Census. These residents are generally found throughout the county, with no particular local concentrations.

### **Mixed / multiple ethnic group**

Mixed ethnicity comprises 'White and Black Caribbean', 'White and Black African', 'White and Asian' and 'Other'

In Somerset, there were 4,241 residents at the time of the 2011 Census, representing 0.8% of the population. The largest sub-group is 'White and Black Asian' (33%), followed by White and Black Caribbean (28%). India and the Philippines account for the highest numbers of Asian-born residents. Information about the Philippines was not published in the last Census but Somerset has seen an eightfold increase in residents of 'Other Asian' ethnicity since 2001, of which new residents from the Philippines are likely to be a key factor. Wellington, Minehead and Taunton have small pockets of Filipino residents.

- The age profile is young compared to the Somerset average, with more than half of people under 20

## **Black / African / Caribbean / Black British**

Around 7 out of 10 were born outside the UK. The BME (Black and Ethnic Minority) population of Somerset was estimated at 10,717 in 2011. The BME population now comprises 2.0% of Somerset's overall population, which is well below the national average of 14.0%. Half arrived as children or young adults. The majority (60%) are Black Caribbean. 29% are Black African.

- The population is widely dispersed, although predominately in and around town centres.
- People of student and working age form the main population demographic.
- There are relatively few people aged over 65.
- More than three-quarters (77%) are Christian, with Muslim the next most common religion (5%).

*Economy and Jobs:* Unemployment is higher for people of Black and Mixed ethnicities: Around 4.8% of economically active Somerset residents are unemployed, rising to 7.6% for Black and 8.2% for people of Mixed ethnicity. (Census, 2011)

*Housing:* The proportion of people who own their own home varies significantly across ethnic groups, from 71% for White British to 37% for White Other. Only 15% of White British householders privately rent their home, compared to 54% for Other White, 43% for Asian and 37% for Black ethnicities. (Census, 2011)

Around 2.4% of households in Somerset rate as overcrowded in terms of the number of available bedrooms in the home (defined as having an 'occupancy rating' of -1). For several ethnic groups the proportion is significantly higher: Other White (9.9%), Asian (11.1%) and Gypsy or Irish Traveller (16.9%). (Census, 2011)

## **Gypsies and Travellers**

There are an estimated 733 Gypsy or Irish Travellers in Somerset.

- The age profile is younger than the county average, with comparatively few people aged over 45.
- The main population centres are areas with established Gypsy and Irish Traveller sites, e.g., Berkley (near Frome), Frome, Tintinhull (near Ilminster), and Shepton Mallet.
- Life expectancy for Gypsy and Traveller men and women is 10 years lower than the national average.
- Gypsy and Traveller mothers are 20 times more likely than the rest of the population to have experienced the death of a child.
- There can be health issues associated with illegal pitches with lack of facilities



### Areas with concentrated populations of Gypsies and Travellers

LSOA description	Number of residents	% of local population
Beckington and Berkley	29	2.4%
Tintinhull	14	1.2%
Frome Keyford North / Market South	16	1.0%
Frome The Butts and Lower Keyford	13	.9%
Frome The Mount	13	.9%
Shepton Mallet North	13	.9%

*This is a snapshot in time as some gypsy and Irish travellers live transient lifestyles.*

### **Refugees and asylum seekers**

Refugees and asylum seekers have differing housing needs and a range of dwelling sizes (due to multi-generational households) and types need to be provided in both the private and social sector. Many refugees and asylum seekers face challenges relating to low or lack of income; lack of capital for a deposit; few household possessions and high forced mobility (in terms of where they are offered accommodation) which makes it difficult to establish a 'local connection'. Some kinds of temporary accommodation currently used by authorities nationally to house refugees and asylum seekers are inappropriate – especially for women and children and young people, many of whom are traumatised by their experiences – and can place them at unacceptable levels of risk on arrival. With many migrants choosing to share dwellings for cultural or financial reasons, there may be a greater need for larger accommodation although many migrants are single people seeking work. Current economic migration from abroad from poorer countries is also likely to affect housing tenure by sustaining demand for cheaper, private sector rented accommodation

### **Sex(Gender)**

*Economy and Jobs:* Women in Somerset are likely to be paid 14% less than men and 48% are in part time jobs, which may lead to difficulties in sustaining rent payments putting them at risk of homelessness. (Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2013). (Census, 2011)

*Housing:* Around half (47%) of householders accepted as homeless and in priority need by local authorities are female lone parent households. Male lone parent households account for 4% of homelessness. (MHCLG, Live Tables on Homelessness, 2012/13)

### **Somerset Gender Breakdown**

	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset	South West	Great Britain
Males	48.7%	49.1%	49.1%	48.6%	48.1%	49.2%	49.3%
Females	51.3%	50.9%	50.1%	51.4%	51.9%	50.8%	50.7%

The gender breakdown of eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need households from July 2016 to June 2017 was about 70% female to 30% male

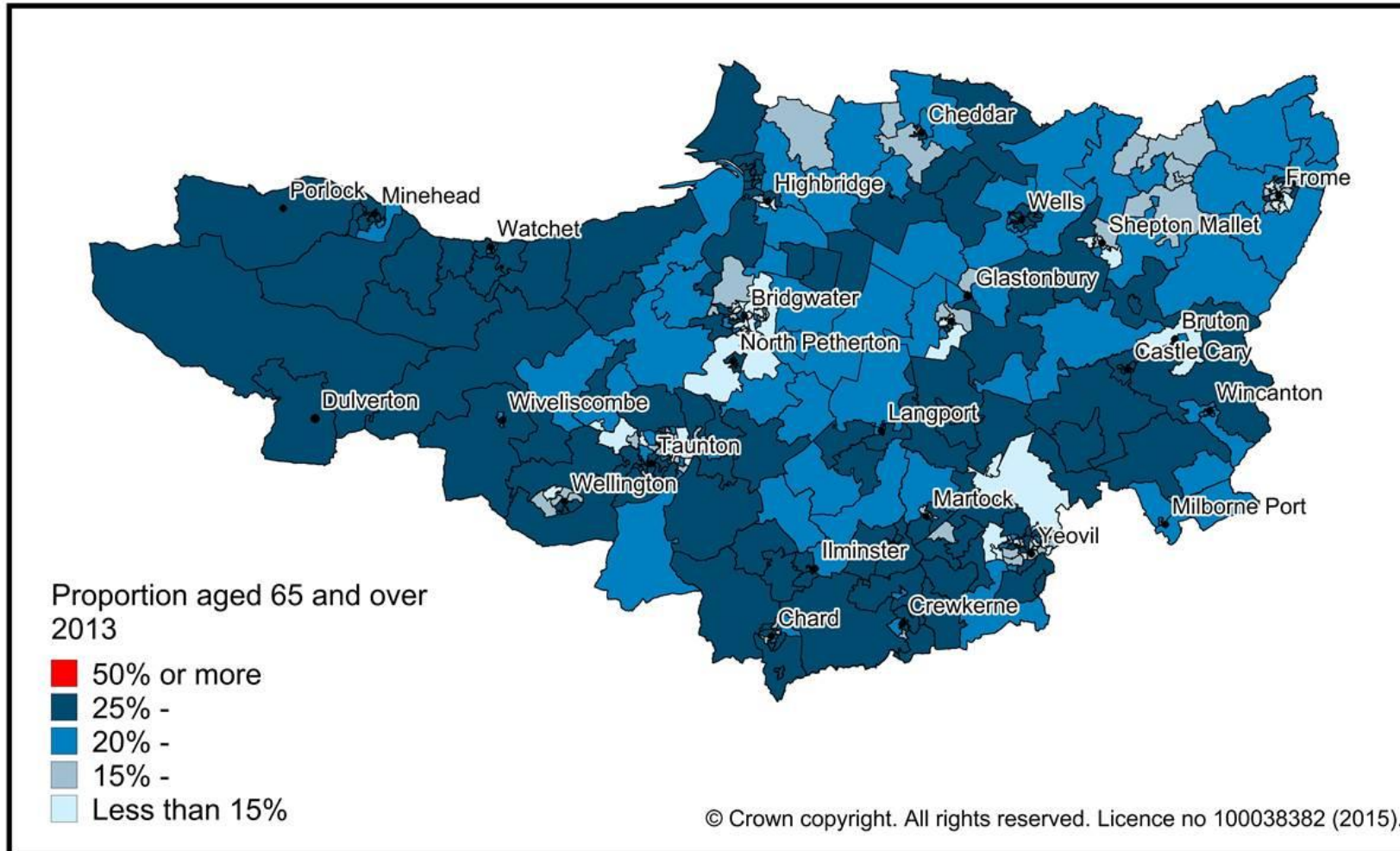
### **Sexuality**

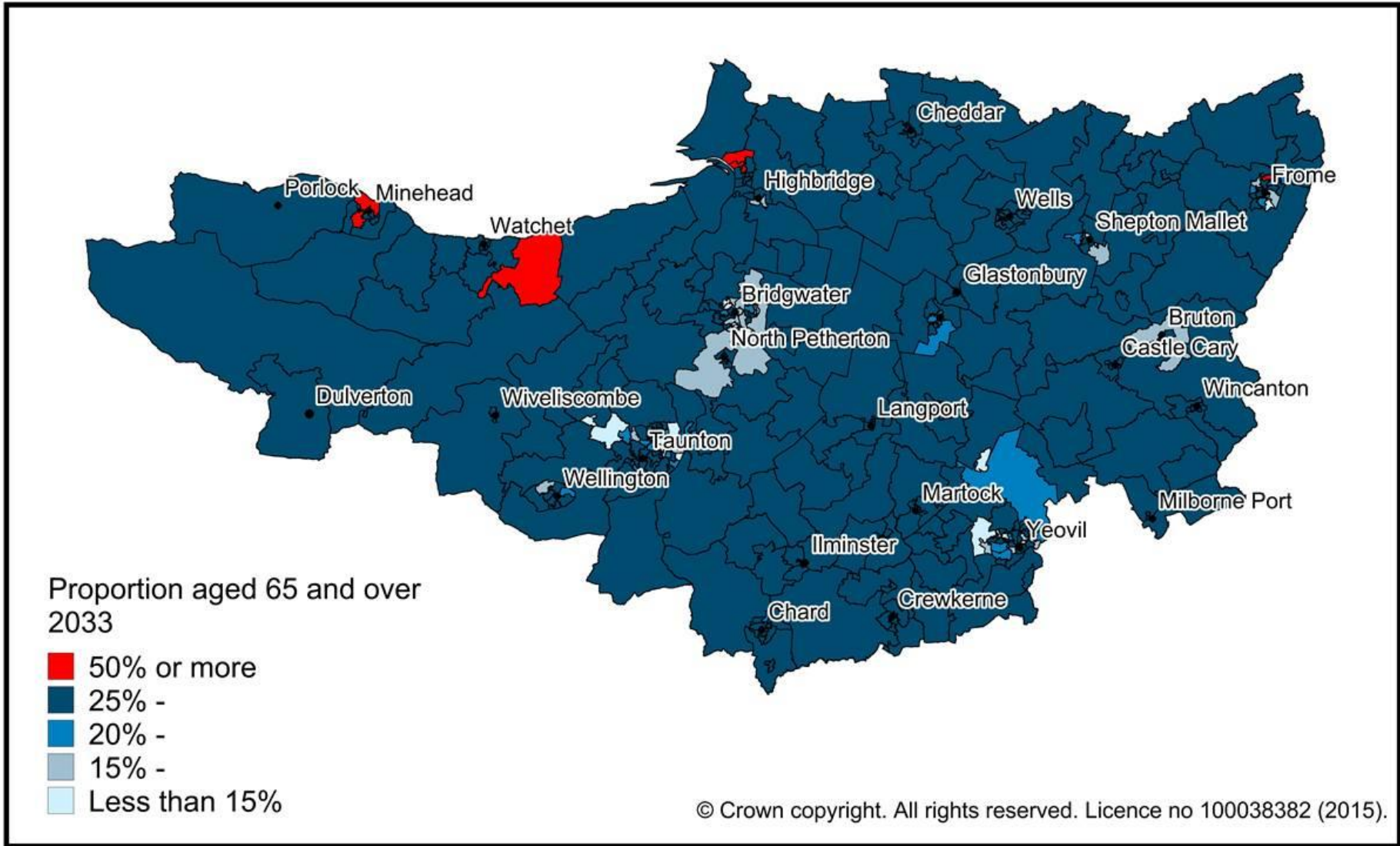
In April 2017, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) published experimental estimates of sexual identity at a local authority (county) level for the first time, based on survey data covering 2013 to 2015. The estimates suggest that 95.2% of Somerset's adult (aged 16 or over) population identify themselves as heterosexual or straight; 0.9% (4,000 residents) identify as gay or lesbian; 1.1% (5,000 residents) identify as bisexual; 0.4% (2,000 residents) as 'Other'.

### Appendix 3

Comparison of the population in 2013, and local projections, show how most of Somerset, including almost all rural areas, is likely to have at least 25% of the population over 65 by 2033 (see maps below and <http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/population-estimates-and-projections/>)

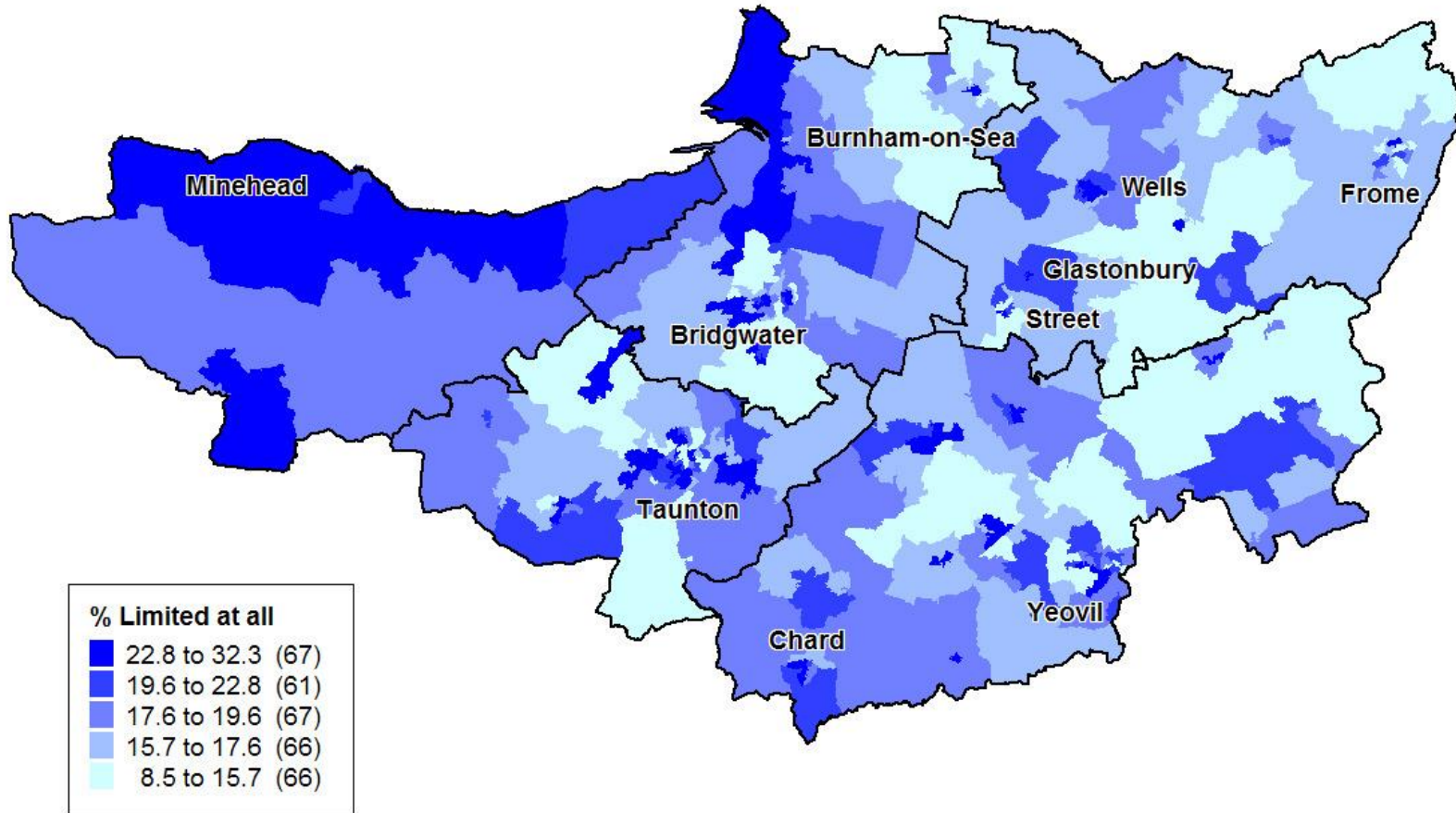
Page 123





The map below shows distribution of disabled households in Somerset. <http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/census-health.html>

Page 125



## Appendix 4

<b>Organisations Consulted During the Homelessness Review 2017</b>
Homes In Sedgemoor
Aster Group
Magna Housing
Yarlington Housing Group
Taunton Association for the Homeless (TAH)
Knightstone Housing Association
Homegroup
HAL Housing Association
Stonewater
Community Credit Unions
Citizens Advice services
Somerset Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (SIDAS)
Elim
Rethink Mental Illness
Brandon
Bournemouth Churches
Barnabas
Sanctuary Housing Association
Hannover Housing Association
Somerset Partnership Mental Health Teams
Avon and Somerset Police
Somerset County Council – Adult Social Care

<b>Organisations Consulted During the Homelessness Review 2017</b>
Somerset County Council – Children Services and Leaving Care Service
Somerset County Council – Public Health
Somerset County Council – Housing Occupational Therapist
Somerset County Council – service commissioners
Somerset County Council – Education
Somerset County Council – Troubled Families
P2i
National Probation Service
Mendip YMCA and YMCA Somerset Coast
Somerset Care and Repair
Somerset Drugs and Alcohol Service (SDAS)
DWP Partnerships manager for Somerset
RIS
Turning Point
Somerset YRP
Sedgemoor Lodgings Scheme
Centre for Sustainable Energy
Keyring Lettings
Somerset West Lettings Agency
Sedgemoor District Council
Taunton Deane Borough Council
West Somerset Borough Council
South Somerset Council

<b>Organisations Consulted During the Homelessness Review 2017</b>
Mendip District Council
Town Councils
Frome Trinity Church
Wells Vinyard Church





# Somerset Homelessness Review & Strategy 2017 (updated Sept 2018)

## ACTION PLAN

Mendip District Council  
Sedgemoor District Council  
South Somerset District Council  
Taunton Deane Borough Council  
West Somerset Council

December 2017

## 13.0 ACTION PLAN

### PRIORITY 1: Support the transition in services required by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 to reduce and prevent homelessness

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?	Update
1.1	Address any staffing skill gaps by recruiting/retraining individuals to effectively deliver what is required by the Act including increased ability to provide good quality advice and information	April 2018 and on-going	HMG	Within existing resources and New Burdens funding from Government.	Assess current staffing skillsets Identify gaps in skillsets Identify training programmes Recruit new skills required	Achieve and deliver the requirements as set out by the Act	Increase in support available to clients  Improvement in the quality of advice offered to clients  Increase in the number of cases where homelessness is successfully prevented and relieved	Transformation has restricted any permanent recruitment.  Sharing best practice.  Currently met to the extent.
1.2	Share best practice in delivering the Act amongst Somerset Homelessness Managers & Officers	Ongoing	HMG	Within existing resources	Ensure that each Local Authority is represented at HMG meetings  Improved use of IT to share information  Explore options for sharing best practise	Share best practice across Districts  Brainstorm challenges  Share information  Share resources	Evidence of new ideas, practices & initiatives that will contribute to improved homeless prevention	Working together on breaking the cycle.  Sharing best practice on HMG.

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?	Update
1.3	Develop protocols for Public Services, Housing Providers & all other Agencies to refer clients they believe to be homeless or at risk of homelessness	October 2018 and on-going	HMG  Public Services to be defined by Government	Within existing resources	Create procedure  Create associated forms  Monitor effectiveness of new protocol  Raise awareness of new protocol and duties on Public Services	Achieve and deliver the requirements as set out by the Act	Increase in the number of referrals from third parties of clients believed to be homeless or at risk of homelessness	Refer to Jan Errington. CD to work with Jan on this.
1.4	Maximise partnerships with all existing service providers to ensure the quality of support provided to clients	Ongoing	HMG  All Partners	Within existing resources	Raise awareness of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 amongst partners	Achieve and deliver the requirements as set out by the Act	Increase in support provided to clients  Improvement in the quality of advice offered to clients  Increase in the number of referrals to and from third parties of clients believed to be homeless or at risk of homelessness	Same as 1.1

**PRIORITY 2: Support clients to remain in their existing accommodation where appropriate**

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?	Update
2.1	Review options and availability of tenancy support services both for families and single homeless clients	Jan 2019	HMG  Solutions to be identified on a District basis Floating support providers	Within existing  Use of new burdens funding.	Identify gaps in provision of floating support & barriers to effective use	Increase in the number of tenancies sustained	Increase in the number of homeless prevention & relief cases	Jan to Map  Look at what LA's, County and RP's have commissioned and any other.  Produce a directory.  Review date to Jan 19
2.2	Review the countywide Pre Eviction Protocol to take account of the Homelessness Reduction Act	September 2018	HMG	Within existing resources	Create awareness and campaign using social media, radio and Local Authority publications  Appoint a landlord liaison officer in each District	Increase in landlords contacting the Council  Increase in early interventions  Reduction in number of eviction notices served  Reduction in officer caseload created by Homeless Reduction Act  Improvement in landlord relations	Fewer homeless approaches as a result of loss of last settled home  Fewer homeless presentations to Local Authority	Done and going August Board for approval.  CD to publish on the website.

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?	Update
2.3	Review the initiatives currently in place to prevent the ending of Assured Shorthold Tenancies (AST's) in the Private Rented Sector	December 2018	HMG / Partners	Within existing	Brainstorm within the Partnership  Develop pilot projects, procedures, plans for any new initiatives	Reduction in the number of evictions caused by private landlords serving notice	Fewer homelessness approaches as a result of loss of last settled home	Jan to map and share best practice in a toolkit to all LA's.  TAS Tenancy HMG Support Debt workers Landlord forum Marketing from TBBC
2.4	Continue to monitor the effectiveness of the P2i initiative in supporting 16-24 year olds to remain in their homes	Ongoing	P2i Monitoring Board	Within existing	Develop any new services, initiatives or pilot projects within this framework to meet a specific need	Increase in the number of 16-24 year olds remaining at home	Fewer homelessness approaches by clients aged 16-24  Fewer homelessness approaches as a result of parents or relatives no longer willing to accommodate	P2i board and sub groups monitor.  LA's are delivering service in the best way for the district and resources available.  Anna Stats monitored to look at's these.
2.5	Ensure housing/homelessness awareness sessions are promoted in schools & colleges in each District	December 2018	HMG Somerset County Council YMCA	Within existing	Meet with Somerset County Council to improve school "buy	Increase in the number of 16-24 year olds remaining at home	Fewer homelessness approaches by clients aged 16-24	P2i deliver this.  CD to ask Kirsty for an update.

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?	Update
			TAH P2I		in” and attach to curriculum  Expand on work already initiated by YMCA and TAH  Develop a programme		Fewer homelessness approaches as a result of parents or relatives no longer willing to accommodate	
2.6	Evaluate the “stay safe” at home options available for victims of domestic violence where this choice is suitable  Where ‘stay safe” at home is not an option, review banding, policy and processes around domestic violence to ensure consistency	January 2019	HMG  Avon & Somerset Police  Somerset County Council  Homefinder Somerset	Within existing	Evaluate existing “stay safe” at home options  Identify gaps and weaknesses of current schemes  Develop any new services  Review banding, processes & Procedures	Ensuring victims of domestic violence remain safe	Increase in the number domestic violence victims able to remain in their home where it is practical to do so  Consistent banding policy for victims of domestic violence	
2.7	Explore the options to provide mediation services to different	January 2019	HMG	Within existing	Identify and create new relationships	Increase in the number of clients	Increase in the number of cases where	

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?	Update
	age groups/client groups		Mediation Providers		with mediation providers	supported to remain in their homes	homelessness is successfully prevented	

DRAFT

**PRIORITY 3: Support clients to access suitable and affordable alternative accommodation where appropriate**

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?	Update
3.1	Review available options for the use of Social Lettings Agencies and the services offered by existing Social Lettings Agencies to improve access to affordable private rented sector accommodation	May 2019	HMG	Additional funding required / re allocation of existing budget	Evaluate the effectiveness of Keyring Lettings and Somerset West Lettings  Explore additional services that could be offered to landlords by both organisations  Carry out feasibility studies for social lettings agencies in Taunton Deane and South Somerset	Increase in the number of households able to access good quality and affordable private rented sector accommodation  Expansion of existing social lettings agencies or creation of new social lettings agencies	Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention & relief cases	
3.2	Reduce the impact that Universal Credit is having on private landlords and agents shying away from households in receipt of UC.	Ongoing	Each District Authority	Existing resources	Promote awareness of loan schemes available to households amongst landlords and agents  Promote awareness of support services available to households amongst landlords and agents  Explore guaranteed rent options within	Increase in the number of households able to access good quality and affordable private rented sector accommodation	Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention & relief cases	Jan to co-ordinate from all LA's on what they are doing and share for best practice.



No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?	Update
					social lettings agencies  Explore additional pre-tenancy training or support for clients in successfully making UC claim			
3.3	Continue the development of the Tenant Accreditation Schemes and ensure consistency provision and availability throughout the County	December 2018	HMG  Local providers  Somerset Tenant Accreditation Group	Additional funding required for expansion	Explore options to extend pre-tenancy training across more Districts and all client groups  Explore option to deliver programme online  Increase awareness of scheme with private landlords & agents	Increase in the number of households able to access good quality and affordable accommodation	Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention & relief cases  Fewer homeless approaches	Leisa Kelly to take forward using a graduate from SSDC.
3.4	Monitor the success of the Lodgings Scheme in Sedgemoor, Taunton Deane & W Somerset and consider roll out to other Somerset Districts	Ongoing	HMG	Within existing resources. Additional funding may be required for any grant adaptations	Review pilot Identify deliver partners  Develop eligibility criteria  Develop procedures & raise awareness	Increase in the number of single units of accommodation available in the private rented sector  Increase in the number of residents able to	Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention & relief cases  Fewer homeless approaches	Service has been re-launched. Lisa Godfrey is now in post.  CD to invite to a future HMG 21/8/18 at Bawler.

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?	Update
						afford to remain in their own homes		
3.5	Explore options to increase the number of single units available to single homeless clients, particularly the 25-34 year age group	November 2018	HMG	<p>Within existing resources to explore options</p> <p>Additional funding may be needed if grants to landlords considered viable</p>	<p>Carry out feasibility study to assess type, numbers and areas in which units are needed</p> <p>Consider options to meet this need</p> <p>Consider grant funding to property owners to increase number of single units available in exchange for referral rights to properties</p>	<p>Increase in the number of single units of accommodation available in the private rented sector</p> <p>Increase in availability of move on accommodation from 16-24 year housing projects</p>	<p>Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention &amp; relief cases</p> <p>Fewer homeless approaches by those aged under 35</p>	Leisa Kelly to take forward at County Enablers.
3.6	Work with social housing providers to ensure that there are transparent and fair tenant selection practices. Monitor skipping reasons more closely.	Ongoing	<p>HMG</p> <p>Social housing providers</p> <p>Homefinder Somerset Board</p>	Within existing resources	<p>Written and transparent selection criteria</p> <p>Review processes for refusals or review boards</p> <p>Explore risk mitigation options</p>	<p>Reduction in the number of households refused by social landlords</p> <p>Improved access to social housing for clients with difficult housing histories</p>	<p>Improved housing options for clients</p>	<p>Leisa Kelly to take forward at County Enablers.</p> <p>Raise at Board in November.</p>

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?	Update
3.7	Develop Somerset wide Rough Sleepers Strategy	April 2019	HMG	Within existing resources	Carry out consultation with partners  Develop strategy and action plan	Improved communication between partners in relation to rough sleeping  Improved options & outcomes for rough sleepers  Improved access to services for rough sleepers	Fewer rough sleepers	
3.8	Raise awareness amongst Planners and Enabling Teams on the need and demand for particular units of accommodation	Ongoing	HMG	Within existing resources	Create & distribute fact sheets  Meet Development Teams  Attend Development Committees	Address the need within each District for 1 bedroom accommodation	Fewer households waiting for 1 bedroom accommodation on Homefinder Somerset	M & M Board Work Plan  TDBC met with enablers.  MDC still to meet.  How many bedsits and 1 bed have been let in the last year.  CD to provide.  No on register New build 1 beds advertised.  Leisa Kelly to take forward at County Enablers.

**PRIORITY 4: Continue to build and maintain strong working partnerships to deliver cost effective and responsive services**

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?	Update
4.1	Improve partnership working between Community Mental Health Teams and Drug/Alcohol dependency support to improve outcomes for dual diagnosis clients	Ongoing	Somerset County Council  Rethink  Connect  Drug alcohol teams  HMG	Within existing resources	Identify where cases are falling between services  Develop protocols to prevent clients falling between services	Personalised and planned positive outcome for client	Reduction in the number of clients falling between services  Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention & relief cases  Fewer repeat homeless cases  Increase in the number of successful move on cases	Breaking the cycle group that Kate Reed has been involved with on behalf of the County.
4.2	Continue to work with Community Mental Health Teams, Hospitals, Prisons and Probation to develop a protocol to ensure that clients are not discharged/released without suitable accommodation	Ongoing	HMG  Hospitals  Community Mental Health Team  Prisons  Probation	Within existing resources	Effective protocol in place  Protocol launched  Awareness raised Protocol monitored	Personalised and planned positive outcome for client	Reduction in the number of discharge patients presenting in homeless departments without warning	1.3

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?	Update
					Review Dangerous Offender Protocol			
4.3	Work with Registered Providers to maximise the creation of new properties using creative design solutions in the right locations	Ongoing	HMG Homefinder Somerset Registered Providers Planners	Within existing resources	Work in partnership and provide data/evidence to ensure that new developments meet desired local housing need	Suitable units of affordable housing provided	Increase in the number of affordable units of social housing provided  Fewer clients registered on Homefinder Somerset	3.8  Leisa Kelly to take forward at County Enablers.
4.4	Continue to share best practice within the HMG	Ongoing	HMG	Within existing resources	Share knowledge on challenges and achievements within the homelessness sector  Identify best practice  Implement pilot projects	Partnership working  Increased knowledge  Cross District services linked more closely	Reduce costs  Improved use of resources	Standing item on the agenda.
4.5	Provide briefings for elected Members periodically on the work of HMG	Ongoing	HMG	Within existing resources	Produce briefing every 6 month and circulate	Better awareness amongst Members on	Fully informed elected Members on homelessness achievements and challenges	Portfolio holder meetings held across LA's.

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?	Update
						homelessness issues		

DRAFT

TDBC Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme 2018/19

16 <sup>th</sup> Oct (CR)	13 <sup>th</sup> Nov (CR)	12 <sup>th</sup> Dec/Jan/Feb (CR)	Mar/Apr (JMR)	May/June (JMR)	July/Aug (JMR)	TBC
Update on Crime and Policing in Taunton Deane – Chief Inspector Lisa Simpson Inspector Andy Pritchard	N. Taunton Woolaway Proposal – J. Humble	Corporate Plan 17/18 Review – Invite select Exec Members				Pedestrianisation of Town Centre
Homelessness Strategy – H. Stewart	2018/19 Financial Performance Mid-Year Report – A. Stark	Leisure Operator Procurement Project – S. Hughes				Asset Strategy Review of Land at Frobisher Way Disposal – M. Clarke
	Q2 Performance Report – R. Doyle	Brewhouse Update – V. Lefrancois/ I. Timms				River Tone Task and Finish Report – M. Prouse
		Review of Affordable Employment Land Task and Finish				DLO Finance Update –

		Report – M. Prouse				