

# West of Scotland HOUSING OPTIONS HUB



## Welcome to the second newsletter of the West of Scotland Housing Options Hub.

We hope you find it informative and enjoyable. If you have any questions or comments please email [claire@ghn.org.uk](mailto:claire@ghn.org.uk)

### Investing In Staff Training

In our last newsletter we told you about our commitment to working with staff across all partner agencies to build additional knowledge and skills to support the delivery of high quality Housing Options services across the West of Scotland.

At that point we were delighted to be working in partnership with the Local Authorities making up the Tayside, Fife and Central Hub to commission a training toolkit that covered the following key themes:

- Introduction to Housing Options;
- Accessing Accommodation;
- Maintaining Accommodation;
- Health & Wellbeing;
- Income & Affordability; and
- Employment & Training.

Since then, we are even more delighted to say that the remaining three hubs across Scotland have also signed up to commissioning the training toolkit which means that we will have a national approach to staff training that will ensure an important level of consistency while respecting and understanding the different contexts in local areas.

Early in 2015 a new national steering group was established to oversee the commissioning, training and launch of the national training toolkit. The training is now being fully considered in tandem with the forthcoming Housing Options Guidance and we hope to be delivering training to frontline Housing Options staff throughout 2016.

In the next edition of our newsletter we look forward to telling you more about the different ways we hope training will be delivered, and the views of staff who are going through the training.

## How Well Are We Doing?

How do we know we are achieving positive housing outcomes for people through the delivery of Housing Options?

This has been one of our key questions since the Hub was established and we have been working hard to develop a framework for monitoring our performance. Additionally, Local Authority partners have been using the new Scottish Government PREVENT1 monitoring system to help contribute to a national picture of how Housing Options is being delivered locally.

In terms of an agreed Performance Monitoring Framework for the West Hub, we have worked with all partners to agree a common set of performance indicators that we will measure ourselves against throughout 2015-16 and benchmark our performance.

These indicators have been specifically selected in order to show the progress we are making towards our four agreed Hub outcomes:

- The incidence of housing crisis reducing, evidenced by falling homeless presentations (if appropriate);
- A more successful operation of housing waiting lists, evidenced by reduced numbers of applications and waiting times;
- The delivery of sustainable housing solutions, evidenced by falling repeat homelessness presentations, increasing customer satisfaction levels and more positive outcomes being achieved for customers; and
- The maximisation of existing resources, evidenced by the delivery of change driven by well trained, confident and motivated staff; and the delivery of strong partnerships to meet the relevant needs of every customer.

We are now in the middle of the information collection stage and we will be able to tell you more about what we learn when we produce our annual report at the end of 2015-16.

## Multiple Exclusion Homelessness



There has been a lot of recent focus on how we best work together to sustainably address homelessness for those who also have multiple and complex needs; often called Multiple Exclusion Homelessness in research.

Members of the West Hub have been involved in the early discussion sessions hosted by the Scottish Government about different policy and practice ideas that could help us all achieve better outcomes.

Also, this year's national homelessness event will take this as its theme. And across the Hub there are a number of practical developments being undertaken that will help us all learn and improve.

For example:

- Y People is working with South Lanarkshire Council to develop a service built on the principles of Psychologically Informed Environments; taking full account of how we best meet people's emotional and psychological needs;
- Glasgow City Council, in partnership with voluntary sector providers, has developed the City Ambition Network. The service will deliver a coordinated and enhanced response to Multiply Excluded service users;
- The Housing First approach, with evidenced high levels of tenancy sustainment for people with complex needs, is being developed in Glasgow, Renfrewshire and East Dunbartonshire, working in partnership with Turning Point Scotland. East Dunbartonshire Council is due to evaluate their first year of activity and increase their capacity to 12. Renfrewshire Council is further developing the Housing First model, working with Shelter Scotland in their Foundations First project to offer support to families who are at risk of homelessness;

- West Dunbartonshire Council is representing the Hub at the national Multiple Exclusion and Homelessness meeting convened by the Scottish Government;
- North Lanarkshire Council has re-tendered their Housing Support Services, refreshed and updated their Temporary and Supported Accommodation Strategy and has almost concluded a joint Homelessness and Health Needs Assessment in partnership with NHS Lanarkshire. Using the MEH research and local evidence, a firm emphasis has been placed on responding more effectively to trauma and distress within existing and future service responses;
- East Renfrewshire is currently working through implementing a joint protocol with social work and health to respond to the needs of 'looked after' as well as other vulnerable young people. 'Homelessness Champions' have also recently been appointed corporately within the Council to enhance joint working and tackle blockages in service provision;



- East Dunbartonshire Council is looking to open a new First Stop Emergency Accommodation project in Kirkitiloch by April 2016 and is continuing to work with Arneil Johnston to review and update the temporary accommodation strategy for the area.
- The Hub will continue to be a central place to consider all of the learning from these approaches to ensure that we are all delivering the best service responses to people experiencing Multiple Exclusion Homelessness.