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## Background:

In 2016/17 nearly 1900 households were helped to prevent them from becoming homeless.

The Homelessness Strategy aims to prevent households from becoming homeless. It sets out how the Council and other partners support households who have become homeless, and how they are supported to find sustainable housing solutions. Prevention can only be effective through strong partnership working and empowering people to be pro-active.

The risk of becoming homeless can affect all sections of the community; however, for the majority it is a catastrophic symptom of other issues including debt, unemployment, abuse, broken relationships and complex dependencies. Some people are at greater risk including previously cared for young people.

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## What to do?

Talking helps!

Contact your landlord, letting agent or mortgage provider before they contact you.

Be realistic about housing options and what you can afford.

## Questions:

Is there a risk of homelessness if household circumstances do not change? Does the household understand the implications of homelessness? Are they realistic about their housing options? Are they planning towards a longer term goal? Have you contacted your housing provider or mortgage lender and asked them for support?

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## Why it matters:

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Homelessness impacts upon all sections of the community. For those directly affected - insecure and transitional lifestyles can seriously under-mine the life chances and wellbeing of vulnerable people including children; it can lead to loss of networks, disrupts education and is difficult to maintain employment or seek work. Without a settled address you may not be able to access specialist support

Homelessness is also expensive to the public purse; supporting households in temporary accommodation costs the Borough thousands of pounds and causes additional demands upon universal services.

## Introduction:

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Early intervention, Prevention and Partnership are the key tools. The opportunity to achieve a successful outcome is greater the sooner the household takes some action or seeks support. Accessible and affordable housing is becoming increasingly difficult to find so support includes help to get in to training and employment. A person centred approach helping people to address the underlying issues that make them vulnerable to homelessness.

## Information:

In April 2018, the Homelessness Reduction Act will place greater expectations upon the Council. All agencies will have to work together to help people remain in their home and future funding from the Government will be based more closely how they perform. The way services are delivered will change and both the homeless household and the housing advisor will be expected to work together to develop a bespoke Personal Housing Plan. This will set out what the Council will provide in terms of assistance and support and what the person at risk will do to try and prevent homelessness. This includes help to access appropriate health and training support, support in mediating between with landlords and tenants or family members, support for children and other vulnerable household members and help to find an affordable home.



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