

**BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL CABINET**  
**4<sup>th</sup> October 2012**

**REPORT TITLE:** Homelessness Prevention Commissioning – Lower and Floating Support

**Ward(s) affected by this report:** All

**Service Director:** Nick Hooper, Service Director, Strategic Housing

**Report author:** Joanna Roberts, Senior Commissioning Project Officer, Strategic Housing

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**Report signed off by executive member:** Anthony Negus 5<sup>th</sup> October 2012

**Purpose of the report:**

To seek approval of commissioning plans for homelessness prevention lower and floating support services for vulnerable people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

**RECOMMENDATION for Cabinet approval:**

1. That Cabinet adopts the Commissioning Plan for Homelessness Prevention Lower and Floating Support Services (Appendix 2) and agrees the purchasing proposals set out in this report.

**The proposal:**

**Background**

1. The commissioning of homelessness prevention services has been split into the a number of workstreams. For each group of services the commissioning process has reached a different stage as follows:
  - a. High support accommodation based services – contracts have been tendered and will be awarded shortly with new services starting between December 2012 and summer 2013.
  - b. Lower and floating support services – commissioning plan and purchasing proposals to be adopted by cabinet (the subject of this report).
  - c. “Wrap-around” services (ie. non housing support including help to access employment, training and health services) – the analyse stage of the commissioning review is underway with a view to consulting on

- commissioning plans in the autumn 2012.
- d. Specialist higher support services for 16-17 year olds – the analyse stage is underway and plans will be developed in the autumn.
  - e. Mental health specialist services – the commissioning review will start in autumn 2012.
2. This report concerns lower and floating support services. These services generally provide a low level of housing-related support (under five hours per client per week) and include:
    - a. Short-term supported accommodation for single people, families and young parents; and
    - b. Floating support and advice services to help people settle into new homes or stay in their existing homes.

The purpose of the support is to help people to live independently and to develop the skills to obtain and sustain tenancies or other suitable housing. Details of the services are set out at Appendix B
  3. The 2012-13 budget for these services is £4.141M but expenditure is expected to reduce as follows, following implementation of this Commissioning Plan:

2013-14	£3,823M
2014-15	£3,689M
2015-16	£3,689M

#### Current services and key issues

4. Except for the young parent services, all services in this review are either level 2 (providing between 2-4 hours support per week) or level 3 (providing 1-2 hours support per week). See Appendix 1 for more details on current services.

	<b>Units</b>
Single homeless accommodation-based support	579
Single homeless & generic floating support	367
Family accommodation-based support	63
Family specialist floating support	60
Young parents accommodation-based support	45
Young parents specialist floating support	66

5. Demand for these services is expected to increase substantially. This is because of changes to welfare benefits, the lack of affordable housing in Bristol and the continued economic downturn. In addition, changes to high support homeless accommodation services will mean significantly more people moving on from that accommodation to the lower support homeless accommodation (ie. likely to increase from about 200 per year to 375 per year).
6. The table below is a summary of more detailed demand projections set out in section 11 of the Commissioning Plan Needs Analysis published on the council's website <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/commissioning-homelessness-prevention-support-services-bristol>

<b>Service type</b>	<b>No of placements 2011-12</b>	<b>Projected no of placements annually (from 1 October 2013 when new services will start)</b>	<b>Change [no]</b>	<b>Change [%]</b>
Single homeless supported accommodation	520	720	200	38
Families supported accommodation	144	176	32	22
Young parents supported accommodation	45	45	0	0
Floating support - generic and families (excluding resettlement support)	470	480-540	10-70	2-15
Floating support – young parents	75	82	7	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,324</b>	<b>1,621 - 1,686</b>	<b>297 - 362</b>	<b>22 - 27</b>

7. The analysis and consultation process highlighted a range of issues across the services including:

- Nearly two-thirds of clients in low-medium supported accommodation are under 25 years old, half are aged 16 to 21. Floating support clients are more evenly spread across age groups. Nonetheless young people are also over-represented in floating support services (around one third are aged 16-24).
- The gender profile of clients in these services is quite different to the profile of clients in higher support services and rough sleepers: there are significantly more women in lower and floating support services (43%) and receiving floating support (52%). Some women want and need separate women-only supported accommodation. Currently there is insufficient women-only accommodation for women with medium level support needs.
- The need to improve outcomes for clients and improve outcomes monitoring.
- The shortage of social housing in Bristol means it will be necessary to assist more supported accommodation clients to move on to private sector tenancies.
- Nearly all clients interviewed said it is very important for them to have the same support worker most of the time. Clients highly value support workers who listen to them and are friendly, helpful and understanding.

#### Commissioning Plan summary

8. As the demand for these services is expected to significantly increase, the key challenge will therefore be to meet future demand within available resources. The Commissioning Plan sets out how this will be achieved by:
- Focussing on outcomes for clients (particularly sustained independence)
    - a. Awarding contracts to providers that show they are more efficient and effective and will deliver new ways of supporting people to achieve independence;

- b. Improve outcomes recording and setting targets for delivering outcomes
    - c. Robust contract monitoring
  - Commissioning services that are:
    - a. Deliver outcomes for clients with reduced levels of support funding
    - b. are targeted at those in greatest need but at the appropriate level
    - c. Provide the minimum level of support necessary to meet individuals' needs
    - d. Support clients in homeless accommodation to move on to general needs accommodation more quickly and to develop the skills to sustain their tenancies when they do move.
  - Emphasising the need to help clients to move from supported accommodation to private-rented sector tenancies.
9. There is a strong record of partnership working to address homelessness in Bristol. The majority of the services in this review are currently provided by external voluntary-sector partners funded by the council. The Commissioning Plan aims to continue to build on this effective partnership working.
10. We are taking an outcomes-based approach to commissioning these services. An outcomes focused approach is not prescriptive in the specification about the services to be provided. Instead the procurement process will specify the outcomes being sought and the service users who will be eligible for services. The procurement process will include an assessment of whether the proposed service is likely to address the needs of relevant clients and enable them to achieve the outcomes identified.

#### Purchasing proposals

11. The intention is to award contracts for three years with the option to extend contracts for a further period(s) totally no more than two years. The budget to purchase these services is set out at paragraph 3 and will amount to annual expenditure of up to £3,823M in 2013-14 and £3,689M in 2014-15 and subsequent years.

<b>Floating support (excluding support to young parents)</b>		
	<b>Current services</b>	<b>Proposed services</b>
<b>Contracts</b>	8 contracts (including 1 in-house service)	3 contracts (2 generic and 1 young people)
<b>Specialism</b>	68% generic 16% young people (16-24) 14% families 2% women rough sleepers	Approx 66% generic Approx 33% young people (16-21) The generic service will support families
<b>Number of units</b>	427	No reduction (But do not intend to specify number of units – instead will focus on throughput and waiting times)
<b>Support funding per client per week</b>	Range 1.87 - 5.58 hrs Average 4.05 hrs	All services 2.25 hrs per week

<b>Proposed purchasing option</b> Contracts will be awarded following a two-stage competitive tender process. The in-house Tenant Support Service will be invited to submit bids for both the young people's service and for one of the generic service contracts. The in-house bids will be evaluated alongside any external bids received for this service.		
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Single homeless supported accommodation		
	Current services	Proposed services
<b>Contracts</b>	11 contracts	6-8 contracts
<b>Specialism</b>	35% generic 35% young people (16-25) 11% women only 17% former rough sleepers 2% refugees	up to 50% young people (16-21) up to 15% women only
<b>Number of units</b>	579	At least 604
<b>Support funding per client per week</b>	Range 2.31- 5.58 hrs Average 3.34 hrs	All services 2.25 hrs plus c.20hrs per client who moves on to own tenancy (resettlement support)
<b>Proposed purchasing option</b> Open tender process to create a framework (ie. an umbrella agreement setting out the terms under which individual contracts are awarded or "called off").		

Families emergency supported accommodation		
	Current services	Proposed services
<b>Contracts</b>	3 services (including 2 in-house services)	3 services
<b>Number of units</b>	63	71 in first year (may need to increase in future years)
<b>Support funding per week</b>	Range 1.58 - 5.8 hrs per family Average – 2.9 hrs per family	Low level (similar to lowest current funding). Details TBC Plus c. 20 hrs per family resettlement support
<b>Proposed purchasing option</b> Retain in-house services. Invite the current external provider to renegotiate a new contract with a reduced level of support		

Integrated young parents service		
	Current services	Proposed services
<b>Contracts</b>	5 contracts: 3 supported accommodation services 2 floating support services (including 1 in-house service)	1 contract to provide an integrated supported accommodation and floating support service
<b>Number of units</b>	45 units supported accommodation 66 units floating support	35-37 units supported accommodation*. We will not specify the number of units of floating support, but expect a similar number of placements per

		year as currently provided for.
<b>Support funding per week per unit / family</b>	<u>Supported accommodation</u> Range - 3.15 -12.88 hrs Average - 7.8 hrs <u>Floating support</u> Range - 2.94 – 3.77 hrs Average – 3.4 hrs	<u>Supported accommodation</u> 3.5 hrs and cost of 24 hr cover at one scheme. Plus c.20 hrs per client resettlement support. <u>Floating support</u> 3 hrs
<b>Proposed purchasing option</b> Two-stage competitive tender process.		

Other changes proposed to improve outcomes and meet increased demand with reduced budget

12. Using supported accommodation more effectively
  - In order to meet increased demand, providers will be required to reduce the average length of stay to 9 months for 90% of clients (4 months for all families). This will be monitored regularly and providers will be required to take steps if the required targets are not be achieved.
  - For those clients who want and need to stay longer, this will have to be approved by an assessment panel / assessor.
  - The average void time (the time a room is empty between placements) will need to reduce to 14 days across all supported accommodation services.
  - All single homeless accommodation-based services will be funded to provide a consistent level of support, equivalent to 2.25 hours per person each week. For young parents this will be 3.5 hours. For families the levels of support funded will be low, similar to the levels of support currently provided by the council's in-house services. Each service will be expected to take a range of clients with low or medium support needs.
  - Services will need to be targeted at those in greatest need. To help achieve this we will monitor refusals and take steps to improve the quality and consistency of referrals.
  
13. Timely and effective move on
  - Because there is a shortage of social-rented accommodation in Bristol, timely move on from supported accommodation will mean greater numbers moving to private sector tenancies. (Currently only 3% of clients moving on from supported accommodation move to private tenancies, 9% to housing association tenancies and 32% to council tenancies. Others do not move on to their own tenancies – 21% move to other supported accommodation, 17% move in with friends or family, 5% are placed in custody, 2% to previous home or home ownership and we do not know where 10% move to). Providers will have to meet targets for the percentage of their clients moving to the private sector. This will require a culture change and work to change clients' expectations.
  - To enable people to sustain their tenancies when they move on, supported accommodation contracts will include funding for resettlement support to those clients who move on to new tenancies (this will amount to approximately 20 hours of support for 60% of clients, ie. the proportion expected to move on to their own tenancies). This will mean the necessary support is available to clients when they most need it, immediately before and after they move into their new home. It will also mean they do not need to change support provider at this important time.

- We will also make supported accommodation providers more accountable for their clients' long-term outcomes, by monitoring where their clients are living 6 and 12 months after departure.
14. Providing support more effectively
- Contracts will focus on providers delivering long-term positive housing outcomes for their clients. Outcomes will be recorded and contracts monitored regularly.
  - Providers will be expected to take a holistic approach to working with clients and measure progress against a range of outcomes (eg. education/employment, income and debts, employment and training, recovery from addiction and/or mental health, meaningful occupation, social networks).
  - Providers will need to develop more cost effective ways to deliver outcomes. This is likely to mean less one-to-one support to clients in their own homes and more of the following:
    - peer mentoring
    - use of volunteers
    - group support sessions
    - other group activities
    - training and practical skills sessions
    - support by telephone and contact by email
    - improving client involvement and control
    - better use of technology
    - improved links with other agencies and community groups and other community resources
15. More specialist services for young people
- We recognise that it is important that young people are housed separately to older clients.
  - Young people also benefit from specialist services providing services targeted to meet their needs.
  - We plan to significantly increase the number of units of supported accommodation for 16-21 year olds and to commission a city-wide floating support service for this age group.

#### Indicative timetable

16. The timescales for implementing these proposals are as follows:
- Draft Commissioning Plan published - June 2012
  - Consultation period - June-August 2012
  - Plans revised - August 2012
  - Cabinet approves Commissioning Plan - October 2012
  - Notice to current providers - November 2012

#### Tender process for floating support and young parents service

- PQQ – October 2012 – January 2013
- ITT and evaluation – January - March 2013
- Contract award – March 2013
- New services start – June - September 2013

Process for single homeless supported accommodation

- Tender process leading to framework agreement – February - May 2013
- Call off – June 2013
- New services start – September - December 2013

#### TUPE implications

17. The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 applies when a service activity transfers from one provider to another. This means that employees currently providing lower and floating support services may transfer, on the same terms and conditions, where a new provider is awarded a contract. The current services to which TUPE may apply include the council's in-house Tenant Support Service.

#### **Consultation and scrutiny input:**

There has been extensive consultation with service users, stakeholders (both internal and external), providers, landlords and equality groups both during the analysis and planning stages of the commissioning process. The draft Commissioning Plan was published for a consultation period from 15<sup>th</sup> June to 10<sup>th</sup> August 2012. Responses were invited via email, post, an on-line questionnaire and in a range of forums (10 separate events and focus groups). Following the consultation period the Commissioning Plan was revised. The response to consultation feedback is summarised in a You Said, We Did schedule (Appendix 3).

##### **a. Internal consultation:**

Commissioners from other relevant council teams have been involved in developing and commenting on the commissioning plan (ie. Health and Social Care, Safer Bristol and CYPS). The Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission considered the proposals on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2012. Support and advice has also been provided by:

- Legal Services
- Commissioning and Procurement Service
- Finance
- Supporting People Team

##### **b. External consultation:**

See above.

#### **Other options considered:**

- a. No change to providers. Achieve savings by negotiating proportionate funding reductions with all providers. This option would not have achieved value for money or delivered improved outcomes for clients.
- b. Competitively tender all services. This option was not the best solution for all services and was not deemed to be the best way to achieve value for money for the lower value services.
- c. Commission floating support only (and not supported accommodation). This option would mean that all service users (including those moving on from high support hostels) would have to be housed in general needs accommodation into which the council has no referral rights. There was a high risk that service users would not be able to access accommodation.



## Risk management / assessment:

**FIGURE 1**

**The risks associated with the implementation of the (subject) decision :**

No.	RISK  Threat to achievement of the key objectives of the report	INHERENT RISK  (Before controls)		RISK CONTROL MEASURES  Mitigation (ie controls) and Evaluation (ie effectiveness of mitigation)	CURRENT RISK  (After controls)		RISK OWNER
		Impact	Probability		Impact	Probability	
1	Increases in homelessness for external reasons (recession, changes to housing benefit, etc.) could significantly increase demand for services -- particularly for families and young people	High	High	Maximise use of accommodation by setting targets for length. Ensure services targeted at those in greatest need. Commission effective services and monitor regularly. Framework agreement and family support contract will allow for increases in supported accommodation units (funded through £1M reserves) in future, if needed.	Med	Med	Nick Hooper & Richard Nochar
2	Reduction in high support beds will increase need for low-medium supported accommodation and potentially increase the support needs of people in lower support accommodation (as people with complex needs moving quicker from high support accom)	High	High	Increase number of units of lower support accommodation set targets to ensure adequate throughput. Commission effective supported accommodation services. Services to link effectively with other agencies and services / groups in communities.	Med	Med	Nick Hooper
3	Levels of support funded are too low, particularly for families. As a result providers fail to achieve outcomes for clients leading to repeat homelessness and/or client turnover is reduced and waiting times increase	High	High	Outcomes focused commissioning will ensure that the most cost effective services win contracts or are negotiated in the case of family services).	Med	Med	Carmel Brogan
4	Reduction in budget means unable to meet needs for service (eg. providers unable to maintain necessary skills-mix) leading to increased homelessness / use of B & B and/or other statutory and social costs	High	High	Commissioning to be informed by priority to achieve more for less, ie. effective, VFM services.	Med	Medium	Nick Hooper & Richard Nochar
5	Supported accommodation providers are unable to meet the 9 months average length of stay (4 months for families) leading to lack of bedspaces to meet demand	High	High	Effective move on strategy developed as quickly as possible. Effective contract monitoring.	Med	Medium	Carmel Brogan
6	Current landlords withdraw accommodation and/or do not put their properties forward for inclusion as supported accommodation on the framework for single homeless accommodation.	High	Med	Liaise with current landlords to identify their concerns and address issues where possible	Med	Medium	Carmel Brogan
7	Delays and/or challenges to the commissioning process or decisions cause delay in achieving savings	Med	Med	Good management of commissioning process and of the transition to new services. Robust and transparent decision making.	Med	Low	Carmel Brogan

**FIGURE 2****The risks associated with not implementing the (subject) decision:**

No.	RISK  Threat to achievement of the key objectives of the report	INHERENT RISK		RISK CONTROL MEASURES  Mitigation (ie controls) and Evaluation (ie effectiveness of mitigation)	CURRENT RISK		RISK OWNER
		(Before controls)			(After controls)		
		Impact	Probability		Impact	Probability	
1	The savings required in the budget are not achieved	High	High	Much higher reliance would be placed on the use of the £1M homelessness prevention reserves which would be exhausted much more quickly. Pressure to achieve increased savings elsewhere.	High	High	Nick Hooper
2	Clients are unable to move on from high support homeless accommodation causing these services to silt up	High	High	It will be difficult to mitigate this risk	High	High	Nick Hooper
3	Unable to meet increased demand for supported accommodation leading to increased street homelessness and use of expensive B&B accommodation	High	High	Would need to call on reserves to pay for B&B accommodation	High	High	Nick Hooper
4	Unable to meet increased demand for floating support services leading to increase tenancy breakdown and homelessness	Med	Medium	Restrict access to services by changing eligibility criteria to access services. Potential for increased homelessness remains.	Med	Med	Nick Hooper
5	There is no significant improvement in outcomes, unplanned move on remains high and future homelessness is not prevented	Med	Medium	Liaise with current providers to improve services and outcomes and monitoring arrangements.	Med	Med	Carmel Brogan

**Public sector equality duties:**

*Before making a decision, section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:*

*i) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.*

*ii) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:*

*- remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic.*

*- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);*

*- encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.*

*iii) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.*

In order to ensure that all future providers comply with legal requirements and are committed to promoting equality and diversity, bidders equality policies and practices will be assessed at both PQQ and ITT stage.

A full Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out (Appendix 4). Data analysis indicates that there is poor recording of equality data (particularly for disability and sexual orientation) and that equality data is not regularly updated. New contractors will be required to update data once a trusting relationship with each client has been established. Emerging equality information, including comparing outcomes for equality groups, will be addressed at regular performance management meetings.

Other key issues identified in the EqIA include:

### **Age**

- Young people have specific needs that warrant specific services, and generally benefit from being accommodated separately from older people. This is particularly true for the 16-21 age group.
- There are also people in the 22-24 age range who are particularly vulnerable and would benefit from access to services for the 16-21 age group (eg. Care leavers and people with learning disabilities).
- Services for young people should focus on mediation and support to build relationships with families and enabling them to move back home with families (but only where this is safe and appropriate).
- Young people are particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse and other exploitation.

### **Disability**

- There is inadequate reporting of disability. Records show that only 8% of clients in the services are disabled. This is unlikely to correctly reflect the numbers of clients with disabilities. In particular the numbers with mental health problems and learning disabilities are likely to be significant.
- There is a need for accessible supported accommodation.
- Some disabled clients are at increased risk of exploitation.
- A high proportion of clients have literacy issues and need help to develop literacy skills. Providers must ensure communications with clients do not rely on clients being able to read and write.

### **Gender**

- There is a lack of suitable low-medium support move on accommodation for women in high support hostels who need women-only accommodation.
- There are higher proportions of women among the younger clients. About half of homeless clients under 25 are women.
- Routes into homelessness are often different for women (domestic violence is the key difference).
- Some men prefer men-only accommodation for cultural/religious reasons.
- There is a need for supported accommodation that is able to accommodate young fathers (both as single parents and in couples).

### **Race**

- There is over-representation of all black and dual heritage groups in single homeless services. Black African people are significantly over-represented in single

homeless and family services (these are mainly refugees and other new arrivals to the UK).

- There are concerns about the costs of interpreting and how it may act as a disincentive to providers accepting clients who do not speak English. Providers will be encouraged to develop cost effective ways to minimise language barriers.
- Some BME groups prefer accommodation in certain areas of the city to avoid isolation.
- We do not propose to commission the 11-unit specialist supported accommodation for refugees. Consultation feedback from refugees was that they did not want or need specialist accommodation and preferred to integrate with British clients.

### **Religion and Belief**

- Current data on religion and belief is incomplete.
- Consultation feedback from Muslim clients was that both women and men preferred single sex accommodation (separate schemes or separate floors). There is a need, therefore, for some men only accommodation as well as women only.

### **Sexual Orientation and Transgender**

- There is inadequate recording of sexual orientation.
- There are concerns about the safety of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in supported accommodation. There are reports of LGBT clients experiencing fear, isolation and homophobia in current accommodation.
- LGBT people experience higher rates of mental health problems, self-harm, suicide and drug use.
- Consultation feedback from LGB young people indicated they would prefer to live in LGBT only supported accommodation.

### **Eco impact assessment**

**The significant impacts of this proposal are** - During service delivery Lower and Floating Support Service Providers and service users will:

- Consume electricity, gas, water, food, non-renewable materials and transport fuel
- Produce waste

It should be noted that existing provision of Lower and Floating Support Services also has similar impacts.

**The proposals include the following measures to mitigate the impacts -**

The procurement process and ongoing contract management will ensure that wherever possible Lower and Floating Support Service Providers take active steps to:

- Reduce their own operational impacts
- Reduce the transport impacts of staff
- Report their progress in these areas

As a minimum, accommodation used for this service will be required to meet the decent homes standard which includes standards for thermal comfort. However, the viability of rewarding providers with higher standards of energy efficiency will be considered during the procurement process. In addition, the advice of the Departmental Environment adviser will be incorporated into the procurement process.

**The net effects of the proposals are** - Although difficult to quantify at this stage, it is anticipated that the environmental impact of Lower and Floating Support Service Providers and service users will be reduced as a result of the mitigation measures that are included as part of this proposal.

**Checklist completed by:**

Name:	Matthew Sands
Dept.:	Neighbourhoods
Extension:	25545
Date:	31/8/12
Verified by Sustainable City Group	Steve Ransom 4/9/12

**Resource and legal implications:**

***Finance***

**a. Financial (revenue) implications:**

The commissioning of Lower and Floating support services will be undertaken within the envelope of budgetary provision as laid out in the report.

**b. Financial (capital) implications:**

There will be no impact on capital budgets as a result of these proposals

**Advice given by** Rob Hamilton, Finance Manager  
**Date** 31/08/2012

***Legal implications:***

The procurement exercises will need to comply with the usual procurement regulations, (both Council and national), though given the nature of the services (in that they may be viewed as falling within Part B of Schedule 3 to the 2006 Regulations) the procedure may not need to follow the full EU tendering regime. The exercise will still need to meet the general obligations of transparency and equal treatment etc, and given the recent exercise involving high support, it would be worth seeing if there are lessons learnt from that which could apply here.

**Advice given by Eric Andrews, Senior Solicitor Contracts, for Head of Legal Services**  
**Date 6<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) Regulations 2006 apply by operation of law where there are employees who are dedicated to providing a service, that service is brought in-house, externalised or re-tendered and remains fundamentally or essentially the same. The affected employees are transferred to the new provider resulting in a change to the contractual employer. The Council is legally obliged to comply with the requirements of TUPE in relation to consultation with the affected staff and ensuring their terms and conditions of employment are protected on transfer.

As the approach being taken is outcomes based, the applicability of TUPE will require further assessment once the services to be provided are confirmed. The Council should also ensure compliance with the Managing Change and Redeployment Policy where this is applicable.

**Advice given by Husinara Jones, Senior Practitioner Solicitor Employment, for Head of Legal Services**  
**Date 30 August 2012**

**d. Land / property implications:**

**Advice not sought**

**e. Human resources implications:**

If a new provider is awarded a contract paragraph 16 of this report refers to the transfer of council employees under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) Regulations 2006 which may include the Tenant Support Service approximately 19 employees. Appropriate consultation with trade unions and employees affected will need to be undertaken in accordance with the councils Managing Change Policy and Procedure.

**Advice given by Chris Dagger, HR Business Partner, Neighbourhoods and City Development Directorate**  
**Date 31<sup>st</sup> August 2012**

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Current services

Appendix 2 – Commissioning Plan for Homelessness Prevention Lower and Floating  
Support Services  
Appendix 3 – You Said, We Did  
Appendix 4 – Equality Impact Assessment

**Access to information (background papers):**

Lower and Floating Support Review Needs Analysis  
Consultation Analysis

## APPENDIX 1

Single Homeless Services				
Provider	Service Name	Number of units	Funded support hours/week per unit	Total funded support hours / week
1625 Independent People	Dispersed Accommodation	200	3.49	698
Elim Housing Association	Phoenix Place	55	3.5	192
Elim Housing Association	Ron Jones	42	2.42	102
Home Group Limited	Home Group Homelessness Service	18	4.76	86
Knightstone Housing Association	Supported Housing	44	2.31	102
Missing Link	Dedicated Rough Sleepers Unit	6	4.17	25
People Can	27 Stonebridge Park	3	3.83	11
Places for People	2 Trelawney Road	11	3.62	40
Places for People	Dispersed Accommodation	26	3.20	83
Places for People	RSI Floating Support (attached to accommodation)	98	3.44	337
Self Help Community Housing Association	Temporary Housing for Homeless people with Support	76	3.41	259
Total Accommodation based		579		1935
1625 Independent People	Floating Support	70	3.65	255
Bristol City Council	Tenant Support Service (includes 38 units support to teenage parents)	172	3.77	758
Solon South West	TSO - Floating Support	23	1.87	43
Missing Link	RSI resettlement service - Floating support	8	5.58	45
Knightstone	Floating Support	26	2.45	81
People Can	Tenancy Sustainment Team (Single Homeless)	54	4.86	262
Salvation Army	Tenancy Sustainment and Resettlement Team	52	3.85	200
Total Floating Support (i Includes 38 units of support for young parents, and some services support families)_		405		1644
Family Services				
Bristol City Council	Windermere	23	NA	NA
Bristol City Council Neighbourhoods	Trinity Lodge	19	1.58	30.02
Places for People	Fortfield Road	21	5.8	121.8
Total Accommodation based		63		151.82
Shelter	Homeless to Home	60	3.06	183.6
Total Floating Support		60		183.6
Teenage Parent Services				
Elim Housing Association	Lanercost and Wigton	11	3.15	34.65
Orbit Housing Association	Bristol Mother & Baby Project	15	12.88	193.2
Young Mother Group Trust Ltd	Supported Accommodation	19	6.63	125.97
Total Accommodation based		45		353.82
Places for People	Floating Support for Teenage Parents	28	2.94	82.32
Bristol City Council Neighbourhoods	Tenant Support Service	38	3.77	143.26
Total Floating Support		66		225.58

	Young people only
	Women only
	Refugee only





**HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION  
LOWER AND FLOATING SUPPORT REVIEW**

**COMMISSIONING PLAN  
October 2012**

20.9.12

Author: Commissioning and Performance Team, Strategic Housing

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### **Other supporting documents available on request:**

Client questionnaire responses

Provider and referrer questionnaire responses

Young parents client questionnaire responses

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Bristol City Council commissions a range of services to prevent homelessness. These include short-term accommodation-based services, floating support services and complementary 'wraparound' services. The current services are mainly 'inherited' and were not originally directly funded or commissioned by the council.

Commissioning of preventing homelessness services has been split into different work streams:

- High support review (high support accommodation-based services)
- Lower and floating support review
- Mental health specialist services
- Specialist higher support services for young people
- "Wraparound" services (non-housing support like health and employment).

This strategy sets out the council's plans for commissioning lower and floating support homelessness prevention services. These are services provided to vulnerable people who need support with their housing. They include:

- Short-term low support accommodation-based services for single people and families
- Support and advice services which help people learn skills to settle into their new homes or stay in their existing home
- Short-term supported accommodation for young parents

The commissioning of these services is overseen by the Preventing Homelessness Board (PHB), a multi-agency board, including representation from:

- Bristol City Council
- NHS Bristol
- Avon and Somerset Probation
- Provider organisations
- Voscur

Since 2003, the funding of these housing-related support services have been funded through the Supporting People (SP) programme. Until 2009, central Government have given the council a ring-fenced SP budget for these and other housing-related support services. This funding is no longer ring-fenced and since 2011 has been in the general grant the council receives from central Government.

## 1.2 Objectives

This commissioning strategy is focused on commissioning services that deliver value for money and improved outcomes for both individual clients and the city. The services will focus on preventing homelessness wherever possible and will provide support that seeks to minimise the time people spend being homeless. Services will ensure people are equipped to sustain independent living and avoid repeat episodes of homelessness.

The key challenge will be to meet future demand for these services within the resources that are available. Changes to welfare benefits and a shortage of

affordable homes in the city are likely to increase the need for help to prevent homelessness. At the same time, the council's budget for these services has reduced.

This means that services will have to be provided more efficiently, developing different ways of supporting people to achieve independence. Services will need to be targeted at those in greatest need and provide the minimum level of support necessary to meet individuals' needs. Clients in supported accommodation will need to be supported to move on to general needs accommodation more quickly and to develop the skills to sustain their tenancies when they do move. In view of the shortage of social housing in Bristol, there will be an emphasis on helping to move people from supported accommodation to private-rented sector tenancies.

There is a strong record of partnership working to address homelessness in Bristol. The majority of the services in this review are currently provided by external voluntary partners funded by the council. This commissioning strategy aims to continue to build on this effective partnership working.

The council values feedback from people who use services and from provider and partner organisations. We will continue to listen carefully to this feedback through all stages of the commissioning process and will establish effective means for making sure that future consultation with stakeholders is integral to this process.

## **1.3 Outcomes**

### **1.3.1 Client outcomes**

We will commission services to deliver the following outcomes in accommodation-based services:

- People are able to access services quickly
- Those in greatest need are able to access the service
- People not staying in supported accommodation longer than necessary
- Increase planned departures
- Increase proportion of people moving on to private-rented tenancies
- Clients develop independent living skills to maintain a home
- Prevent recurrence of homelessness
- Reduce void times

The housing outcomes for clients of floating support services:

- People able to access services quickly
- Services are targeted at those with greatest need
- People avoid becoming homeless
- People develop independent living skills to maintain a home
- Reduced rent arrears

Effective work with clients will also involve working with clients to achieve range of other outcomes for clients including:

- Maximising income and reducing debt
- Improved skills to manage money, pay bills and other personal administration
- Access to work, education or training

- Recovery from addiction
- Recovery from mental illness
- People make more meaningful use of their time'
- Improving literacy skills
- Building social networks and positive relationships
- Reducing offending
- Improving physical and emotional health and well-being

### **1.3.2 Homelessness strategic outcomes**

The services in this strategy will contribute directly to achieving the following strategic outcomes:

- reducing homelessness
- reducing rough sleeping
- reducing the numbers of people in bed and breakfast accommodation

### **1.3.4 Other strategic outcomes**

Homelessness prevention services also contribute to a range of broader strategic outcomes including the following priorities set out in the Bristol Partnership 20:20 plan:

- keep young people safe
- ensure children achieve their full potential
- tackle the causes and effects of child poverty
- reduce crime
- reduce the impact of substance misuse
- strengthen volunteering and the voluntary sector
- promote equality and reduce historic inequality
- improve people's health and well-being
- reduce the harm caused by drugs and alcohol
- support young people and long-term workless people into employment

## **2. National and Local Policy Context**

### **2.1 National policy**

#### **2.1.1 Homelessness and rough sleeping**

The Government is committed to tackling and preventing homelessness, working in partnership with voluntary sector partners, local authorities and housing associations. There are three key strands to current government policy:

- *Rough sleeping:* Vision to end rough sleeping (No second night out)
- *Homelessness prevention:* The DCLG is investing £400m over four years in Preventing Homelessness Grant to support the work of local authorities and the voluntary sector.
- *Preventing repossessions measures:*
  - Financial Services Agency regulation of lenders
  - a 'Mortgage Pre-Action Protocol' in the Courts

- funding for debt advice services
- Support for Mortgage Interest
- the Mortgage Rescue scheme

### **2.1.2 The Localism Act 2011**

The Localism Act includes new rights and powers for communities and individuals including the right to challenge the ways in which services are run and the right to apply to manage public assets locally.

The key areas that impact on this plan are:

- *Abolition of regional strategies* – Likely to “make it more difficult to ensure that our national need for new housing is met.” (Commons Select Committee Report 2011).
- *Social housing allocations reform* - The Act gives local authorities greater freedom to set their own policies about who should qualify to go on the waiting list for social housing in their area.
- *Social housing tenure reform* – Allows social housing providers to grant tenancies for new tenants for a fixed period of time.
- *Reform of homelessness legislation* – allows local authorities to fulfil their homelessness duty with an offer of private sector accommodation.

### **2.1.3 The Big Society**

The coalition government has stated its aim to change the relationship between communities, service users and service providers by shifting more responsibility for the provision of services and facilities to communities and voluntary organisations. To enable this, the government proposes that the local and central state should step back from providing services and enable a combination of local voices, voluntary effort and market forces to determine community facilities in the area.

### **2.1.4 Positive for Youth**

This policy brings together all of the government’s policies relating to young people aged 13-19:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/Positive%20for%20Youth>

It sets out a shared vision for all parts of society to work together in partnership to support families and improve outcomes for young people, particularly those who are most disadvantaged or vulnerable. It includes the following priorities:

- Helping young people to succeed
- Promoting youth voice
- Putting families first
- Strengthening communities and the voluntary sector
- Valuable role of services for the young
- Importance of early help
- Stronger local partnership
- Monitoring progress

## **2.2 Local policy and strategic objectives**

### **2.2.1 Our Sustainable Community Strategy**

The 20:20 plan has been developed by the Bristol Partnership and features four strategic outcomes for our city. These outcomes aim to make Bristol one of the top ten cities in Europe within the next decade, achieved through making Bristol more sustainably safer, more prosperous, without health or wealth inequalities and a place where people, families, and communities can thrive.

### **2.2.2 Preventing Homelessness Strategy**

Five priorities

- Homelessness Prevention
- Early Interventions
- Multi-Disciplinary Approaches
- Individual Solutions
- Value for Money

### **2.2.3 My home is my springboard for life: Bristol's housing strategy 2010-15**

Three themes

- 'Mind The Gap': sustain Bristol's economic competitiveness and future prosperity, achieve more balanced housing markets and reduce inequality.
- 'Early Bird': create a high-quality approach to housing advice, early intervention and prevention – deal with problems before they become a crisis.
- 'Healthy Home, Healthy You, Healthy City': improve health through quality housing and places – good housing is good for you and your community.

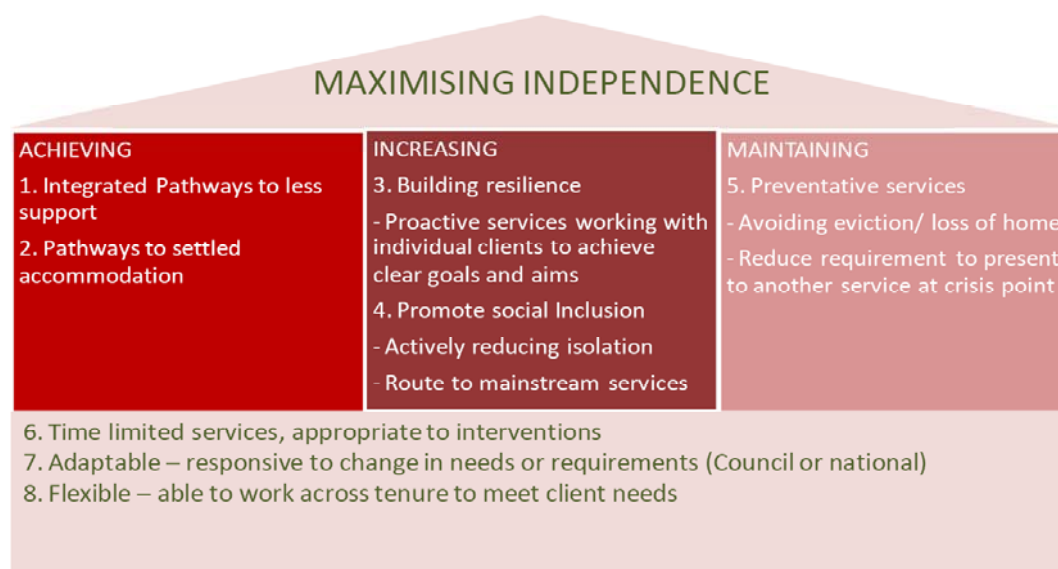
### **2.2.4 Children and Young People's Plan 2011-2014**

Themes

- Keeping our children and young people safe
- Tackling the causes and effects of child poverty
- Ensuring that all our children and young people achieve to their full potential
- Improving our shared understanding and planning for the needs of our children and young people

It is a priority for the first theme to ensure that 16-17 year olds who are homeless or at risk of homelessness have somewhere safe to live.

## 2.2.5 Supporting People priorities



## 3. Commissioning principles and process

### 3.1 Enabling Commissioning Framework

Strategic commissioning is the process by which the council identifies strategic outcomes and priorities in relation to assessed user needs and designs and secures appropriate services to deliver these outcomes, whether those service are provided in-house or by external providers.

In order to guide and standardise strategic commissioning practice, the council has developed the Enabling Commissioning Framework. This includes a comprehensive set of guidance, templates and checklists for use in all commissioning processes which will support public, private and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations to better engage in commissioning processes and secure contracts. The framework incorporates Bristol Compact principles and guidance as well as recommendations from the council's recent Select Committee on Third Sector Commissioning.

This framework is based on four key elements:

**Analyse** -- understanding the priorities, values and purpose, the needs they must address and the environment in which they operate.

**Plan** – identifying the gaps between what is needed and what is available, and planning how these gaps will be addressed within available resources.

**Do** – ensuring that the services needed are delivered as planned, to efficiently and effectively deliver the priorities, values and purpose set out in the commissioning strategy.



**Review** – reviewing the delivery of services and assessing the extent to which they have achieved the purpose intended.

More information about the Enabling Commissioning Framework is available on the council's website:

<http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/enabling-commissioning>

## **3.2 Bristol Compact**

The Bristol Compact is an agreement between the Bristol Partnership and the VCSE sector to improve their relationship for mutual advantage and community gain. This commissioning review applies the shared principles of the Bristol Compact

Agreement: <http://www.bristolcompact.org.uk/>

## **3.3 Outcomes-based approach**

This is an outcomes-based commissioning process. An outcomes focused approach is not prescriptive in the specification about the services to be provided. Instead the procurement process will specify the outcomes being sought and the service users who will be eligible for services. The procurement process will include an assessment of whether the proposed service is likely to address the needs of relevant clients and enable them to achieve the outcomes identified.

The assessment will be based on evidence provided about the specific approach and its appropriateness for the relevant client group. The strength of evidence base will be critical to the chance of success.

Throughout the contract period, commissioners will work together with providers positively and constructively to achieve outcomes for people in Bristol who experience or are at risk of homelessness. Quality of services and achievement of outcomes will be evidenced through reporting processes and regular monitoring.

Proposed outcomes are set out in the following section of this document. The final outcomes will be developed with stakeholders during the consultation period. Providers will be required to report on some outputs that are necessary to ensure sufficient throughput of clients.

## **3.4 Value for money**

The general duty of best value requires the council to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.”<sup>1</sup>

This means that we must consider overall value, including economic, environmental and social value, when reviewing service provision. Statutory guidance indicates that

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<sup>1</sup> Section 3(2) Local Government Act 1999

social value is about seeking to maximise the additional benefit that can be created by procuring or commissioning goods and services, above and beyond the benefit of merely the goods and services themselves.

The aim of commissioning is therefore to achieve value for money, ie. services that deliver the best balance between economy (cost), efficiency (degree of output) and effectiveness (outcomes and results).

### **3.5 Stakeholder involvement during “analyse” phase of review**

There has been extensive consultation with stakeholders in analysing clients needs and service requirements and in developing this commissioning plan.

#### **3.5.1 Professional stakeholder involvement**

On-line questionnaires were used to collect views and data from providers, referrers and front line staff. The responses from these questionnaires are included in the appendices. A series of stakeholder events were arranged in February to April:

Young parents workshop (30 January 2012) – SWOT analysis to identify strengths and weaknesses of current services and future opportunities and threats to services. The workshop also identified options for improvement.

Workshop 1 (28<sup>th</sup> February 2012) - Considered the needs of different client and equality groups with a wide array of providers and professionals who work with the different clients groups using lower and floating support services in the city. Client groups considered were: BME, families, disabled and long-term ill, LGBT, offenders, people with complex needs (including mental health and addiction issues), refugees and young people.

Workshop 2 (12<sup>th</sup> March 2012) - SWOT analysis to identify strengths and weaknesses of current services, and future opportunities and threats to services focusing on accommodation-based services, floating support services and other commissioned homelessness prevention / ETE services (“wrap-around” services). The second session concentrated on options for meeting gaps identified in workshop 1 and for improving outcomes.

Workshop 3 (24<sup>th</sup> April 2012) - To discuss the emerging issues and options paper and and focus on:

- Giving providers an early indication of possible proposals
- Enabling stakeholders to shape proposals and identify options
- Discussing key questions with stakeholders
- Developing a partnership approach

#### **3.5.2 Service user involvement**

A questionnaire was used to ask clients about the services they received; a summary of responses is attached as an appendix. Responses were collected by telephone and in one to one sessions between Commissioning and Performance team staff and service users. A number of focus groups were also held covering different client and

equality groups that covered the needs of service users and how services could be improved and made more accessible. The following table shows details of consultation events with clients.

<b>Client group</b>	<b>Service/Provider</b>	<b>Where/how</b>	<b>When</b>
Young parents	Lanercost and Wigton (Elim); Priory Court (Orbit HA) and Kilburn Court (Yong Mother's Group Trust)	Community spaces near the venues and Priory Court	January 2012
Families	Windermere, Trinity Lodge (both BCC) and Fortfield House (Places for People)	At the family hostels	Feb/March 2012
Single people	Ron Jones house (Elim)	At Ron Jones House	March 2012
Single women	Phoenix Place (Elim)	At Phoenix Place	Feb 2012
Young people	1625 Independent People and the Foyer	At 1625 offices and at the Foyer	March/April 2012
Refugee women	Refugee Women of Bristol	Congregational Hall, Newton St	April 2012
Women service users of drug and alcohol services	Users Feedback Organisation (women's group)	Bristol Drugs Project (Brunswick Square)	March 2012
Single BME service users of drug and alcohol services	Users Feedback Organisation (Mushwera)	Barton Hill Settlement	April 2012

### 3.6 Consultation on draft Commissioning Plan

The draft Commissioning Plan was published for a consultation period from 15<sup>th</sup> June to 10<sup>th</sup> August 2012. Stakeholders were invited to comment on the draft plan and purchasing proposals via email, post, through responding to an electronic questionnaire and the stakeholder events and focus groups set out below. Analysis of feedback received, along with a "You Said, We Did" summary of the council's response to the key issues raised in the consultation, are published on the council's webpages: <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/commissioning-homelessness-prevention-support-services-bristol>

### 3.6.1 Consultation events and focus groups

Consultees	Where/how	When
Women users of drug & alcohol services	UFO women's group – Brunswick Square	19 June 2012
Young parents at the Meriton School	Meriton School	20 June 2012
Young parent clients	Lanercost and Wigton supported accommodation for young parents	25 June 2012
Professional stakeholders	The Pavilion, Harbourside	25 June 2012
Women service users	Phoenix Place	27 June 2012
Service users	Focus group - Barton Hill Settlement	2 July 2012
Young parents practitioners	Meeting in council offices	10 July 2012
Service users	Focus group - Bristol Youth Hostel	16 July 2012
LGB young people	Focus group - Out Loud	17 July 2012
Young service users	Focus group - 1625	19 July 2012
Mental health service users	Focus group - Second Step	24 July 2012
Professional stakeholders	Stakeholder event - Old Council House	25 July 2012
Professional stakeholders	Stakeholder event – Old Council House	1 <sup>st</sup> August 2012

## 3.7 Equalities

The commissioning review and plans aim to tackle discrimination and promote equality for all protected characteristics. The equality impact assessment is included as an appendix to this strategy.

The tender process will require bidders to demonstrate their commitment to providing an inclusive environment that is equally effective in meeting the needs of all protected characteristics. We will evaluate bidders arrangements for training staff in equality issues.

Providers will be required to improve equality monitoring and to comply with the s.149 Equality Act 2010 public sector duty to have due regard to equality objectives.

Our contract monitoring will include comparing outcomes, refusals and waiting times for all equality groups. We will expect providers to take action to address any significant differences for particular equality groups.

## 4. Current services

### 4.1 Overview of current services

The services in this review include accommodation-based services (including specialist services for young people, women, refugees, young parents and families) and floating support provided to people in their own homes (including specialist support for young people, women rough sleepers, young parents and families). Except for the young parent services, all services are either level 2 (providing between 2-4 hours support per week) or level 3 (providing 1-2 hours support per week).

	Units
Single homeless accommodation-based support <sup>2</sup>	579
Single homeless & generic floating support <sup>3</sup>	405
Family accommodation-based support	63
Family specialist floating support	60
Young parents accommodation-based support	45
Young parents specialist floating support	28

#### 4.1.1 Eligibility for services

To be eligible for all the services (including specialist family and young parent services), people must be homeless or at risk of losing their home:

1. be 'vulnerable';
2. be in need of 'housing-related support' to prevent homelessness or to assist a client who is homeless;
3. have recourse to public funds; and
4. have a clear local connection with Bristol, or have special circumstances (which can be evidenced) to show why a move to Bristol to obtain supported housing is needed.

#### 4.1.2 Housing-related support needs

Generally, 'housing-related support' is support that develops or sustains an individual's capacity to live independently in the community. It is intended to be preventative and enabling. It is aimed at providing support to an individual who might remain in or be admitted to institutional care, or become homeless or suffer loss of accommodation if support were not provided.

Housing-related support services include practical support tasks that enable vulnerable people to live as independently as possible in the community. Housing-related support services are services provided over and above basic housing management services but they do not include personal care services.

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<sup>2</sup> Includes 10 family units

<sup>3</sup> Includes 38 units of support for young parents, and some services support families

#### 4.1.3 Referral and assessment process

Referral and access to the following services is facilitated through the Housing Support Register (HSR):

- Single homeless accommodation-based support
- Single homeless & generic floating support
- Young parents specialist floating support

The HSR is the single point of access to a range of housing-related support services including accommodation based homelessness and drugs and alcohol services, and housing related floating support. These SP funded providers are contracted to take all of their clients from the HSR. Referrals are made to the HSR by strategic and provider agencies which assess clients for eligibility and suitability to these services and also prioritise them according to their individual circumstances. Each service on the HSR has its own waiting list which is ordered by priority status and date of application. Providers are expected to allocate their vacancies on the basis of the client's priority on the waiting list.

The services below have not been assimilated into the HSR and are referred and assessed on an emergency basis in the following ways:

- *Family accommodation-based support* – Referrals are made by the Housing Advice Team (HAT), predominantly for households with children that BCC has a duty towards under part VII of the Housing Act 1996. Where there has been reduced demand in the past, childless households and family prevention cases have also been placed in this accommodation. The BCC Single Point of Access Team (SPA) has responsibility for managing the vacancies and will make nominations to the providers according to the need for accommodation from the HAT.
- *Family specialist floating support* – Referrals to this are made directly through the provider.
- *Young parents accommodation-based support* -- Assessment and referrals are made by the Housing Advice Team (HAT) who liaise directly with the accommodation providers over vacancies as they arise.

#### 4.1.4 Specialist family services

There are three accommodation services for families in the city offering a geographical spread. This enables families to be accommodated near support networks and schools. Other providers also provide 12 units of dispersed accommodation for families (not reflected in their contract). Floating support is provided to families by the in-house Tenant Support Service and an external specialist floating support service.

The primary client group for the family hostels is families that Bristol City Council has a duty to accommodate under the Housing Act 1996. This may be because the council has reason to believe that the family may be owed a duty of accommodation,

or may be because a duty has been accepted following an investigation into their circumstances.

Families (and occasionally childless households) are placed in the family hostels according to availability and geographical need. Windermere provides very low levels of support (around 1-2 hours) and is not in receipt of any funding to provide support. Trinity Lodge receives some funding towards support and similarly provides relatively low levels (1-2 hours with additional support given to larger refugee families). Fortfield Road receives a greater level of funding for support (5.8 hours per family per week). This funding also contributes to 24 hour staffing within the scheme.

#### 4.1.5 Specialist young parent services

There are three accommodation-based services for young mothers and two floating support services. The current young parent accommodation-based provision consists of one high-support accommodation scheme with 24-hour cover and sleeping-in staff, on medium support scheme and one lower-support scheme. There are also 10-12 units in Phoenix Place (women-only supported accommodation scheme) that have been used to accommodate pregnant women. Most of the young women placed in Phoenix Place have moved on to social tenancies with floating support before their babies are born.

These young parent services are available to people aged under 25 years who are young single parents or couples with children up to two years old, or who are pregnant.

## 4.2 Costs of current services

Total single homeless accommodation based support	£1,838,443
Total family and TP accommodation-based support <sup>4</sup>	£437,109
Non SP costs (Trinity Lodge & Windermere)	£63,489
<b>Total accommodation-based support</b>	<b>£2,339,040</b>
 Total single homeless floating support	 £1,422,679
Total additional family and TP floating support	£265,201
<b>Total floating support</b>	<b>£1,687,880</b>
 <b>Total expenditure</b>	 <b>£4,026,921</b>

	Units	Price
Total accommodation based support	687 (58%)	£2,339,040 (58%)
Total floating support units	493 (42%)	£1,687,880 (42%)

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<sup>4</sup> Excluding Windermere

## Single Homeless Services

Provider	Service Name	Number of units	Funded support hours/week per unit	Total funded support hours / week
1625 Independent People	Dispersed Accommodation	200	3.49	698
Elim Housing Association	Phoenix Place	55	3.5	192
Elim Housing Association	Ron Jones	42	2.42	102
Home Group Limited	Home Group Homelessness Service	18	4.76	86
Knightstone Housing Association	Supported Housing	44	2.31	102
Missing Link	Dedicated Rough Sleepers Unit	6	4.17	25
People Can	27 Stonebridge Park	3	3.83	11
Places for People	2 Trelawney Road	11	3.62	40
Places for People	Dispersed Accommodation	26	3.20	83
Places for People	RSI Floating Support (attached to accommodation)	98	3.44	337
Self Help Community Housing Association	Temporary Housing for Homeless people with Support	76	3.41	259
Total Accommodation based		579		1935
1625 Independent People	Floating Support	70	3.65	255
Bristol City Council	Tenant Support Service (includes 38 units support to teenage parents)	172	3.77	758
Solon South West	TSO - Floating Support	23	1.87	43
Missing Link	RSI resettlement service - Floating support	8	5.58	45
Knightstone	Floating Support	26	2.45	81
People Can	Tenancy Sustainment Team (Single Homeless)	54	4.86	262
Salvation Army	Tenancy Sustainment and Resettlement Team	52	3.85	200
Total Floating Support <sup>5</sup>		405		1644

## Family Services

Bristol City Council	Windermere	23	NA	NA
Bristol City Council Neighbourhoods	Trinity Lodge	19	1.58	30.02
Places for People	Fortfield Road	21	5.8	121.8
Total Accommodation based		63		151.82
Shelter	Homeless to Home	60	3.06	183.6
Total Floating Support		60		183.6

## Teenage Parent Services

Elim Housing Association	Lanercost and Wigton	11	3.15	34.65
Orbit Housing Association	Bristol Mother & Baby Project	15	12.88	193.2
Young Mother Group Trust Ltd	Supported Accommodation	19	6.63	125.97
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Bristol City Council Neighbourhoods	Tenant Support Service	38	3.77	143.26
Total Floating Support		66		225.58

	Young people only
	Women only
	Refugee only

<sup>5</sup> Includes 38 units of support for young parents, and some services support families



## 4.2.1 Cost comparisons

### Single homeless accommodation-based services 2010-11

	Lowest	Highest	Median
Rate per support hour	£14.99	£20.93	£18.34
Cost per unit	£1,502	£4,584	£3,348
Cost per client <sup>6</sup>	£1,139	£3,438	£2,091

### Generic floating support services

	Lowest	Highest	Median
Rate per support hour	£13.66	£18.45	£17.18
Cost per unit	£2,004	£6,041	£3,922
Cost per client <sup>7</sup>	£739	£4,027	£1,454

Family accommodation-based services – The average cost per unit per year of the three accommodation services is £2,618 and the lowest cost service funded by Supporting People is £1,180. Average cost per family is £845 and the lowest cost per family is £445.

Young parents accommodation-based services – The average cost per unit per year of the three accommodation services is £6,492 and the lowest cost service is £2,769. The average rate per support hour is £16.95 and the lowest is £15.56. Average cost per client is £3143 and the lowest cost per client is £1324.

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<sup>6</sup> Annual contract price divided by total clients in year (total departures and numbers in service at end of Q4 SP returns)

<sup>7</sup> Annual contract price divided by total clients in year (total departures and numbers in service at end of Q4 SP returns)

## 5. Summary of needs analysis

The full needs analysis can be found at appendix 1. The results of questionnaires for clients, staff, providers and referrers are also available on request.

The following is a summary of the key findings relating to lower and floating support services (L&F services) and clients.

- Nearly two-thirds of clients in supported accommodation are under 25 years old, half are aged 16 to 21. Floating support clients are more evenly spread across age groups. Nonetheless young people are also over represented in floating support services (around one-third are aged 16-24). The age profile of clients has not significantly changed in the last 6 years. A high proportion of under 25 year olds are currently living in generic services rather than specialist young people's accommodation.
- Young people generally want and need specialist and separate services.
- The gender profile of clients in these services is quite different to the profile of clients in higher support services and rough sleepers: there are significantly more women in lower and floating support services (43%) and receiving floating support (52%).
- Some women want and need separate women-only supported accommodation. Currently there is insufficient women-only accommodation for women with medium level support needs.
- The main support needs recorded by support providers for their clients include maximising income, maintaining accommodation, obtaining settled accommodation and external contacts (which includes contact with other agencies as well as with friends and family).
- People who experience homelessness have significantly poorer health and well-being than non-homeless people. 57% of users of Bristol homeless services said they had long-term mental health problems and 66% reported feeling stressed or anxious or experienced mild depression.
- A significant proportion of people experiencing homelessness have diagnosable personality disorder. Also over-represented among these clients are histories of neglect, abuse and traumatic life events dating back to childhood and continuing through adult life.
- Effective work to prevent homelessness will often involve taking a holistic approach to enable clients to change their lives, for example by enabling changes in behaviours and emotions, enabling clients to establish and maintain positive relationships, reduce drug and alcohol use and feel less depressed, isolated and fearful.
- Nearly all clients interviewed said it is very important for them to have the same support worker most of the time.

- Clients highly value support workers who listen to them and are friendly, helpful and understanding.
- Most clients in supported accommodation aspired to move on to a social-rented tenancy (84%). Only 20% thought that a private-rented tenancy would be suitable for them.

## **6. Challenges and potential for improvement**

### **6.1 Meeting increased demand with reduced budget**

The current economic climate and financial difficulties mean that Bristol City Council has to make savings of around £50 million between 2011 and 2014. The budget for lower and floating support services is reducing by 20% over this period. This financial year (2012-13) some savings have already been achieved. The commissioning process is required to deliver a further reduction of around 13.5%.

At the same time, demand for services is increasing. This is partly as a result of the economic downturn but also because of welfare benefit reform and changes to Bristol's high support homelessness prevention services.

In this environment it is more important than ever to maximise the effectiveness of services in preventing homelessness and avoiding recurring homelessness. This will be extremely challenging for both providers and the council.

#### **6.1.1 Welfare reforms**

Changes to welfare benefits will continue to impact on services and individuals. Many people who are not in work (including people on incapacity benefit) or on low or insecure incomes are likely to see a reduction in the benefits they receive. In addition many services rely on funding generated from benefits. In particular, housing benefit plays an important role in underpinning the funding of supported accommodation.

#### **6.1.2 Increased flow from high support services**

New contracts for high support homelessness prevention services are likely to start in late 2012. Providers will have targets to significantly increase the proportion of their clients who leave their services in a planned way; they will also have targets to reduce repeat homelessness. This is likely to mean that there are substantially more people moving on from high support hostels to lower and floating support services (from about 200 per year to 375).

## **6.2 Using supported accommodation more effectively**

### **6.2.1 Enabling progress through pathways**

The council has adopted a “pathways” approach to homelessness prevention. Single people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, are accommodated in level 1 high support accommodation, or level 2 or 3 supported accommodation depending on the level of support they require. The expectation is that generally clients move step-by-step through the pathway towards independence. This should mean a person gradually receives less support, for example moving from a high support hostel to level 2-3 supported accommodation and from there to their own tenancy, perhaps with short-term floating support. The ultimate aim is that the individual will be able to sustain their own general needs tenancy without support. Analysis of HSR data, and Supporting People data collected by St Andrews University (SP data) indicates that the pathway is not working very well.

HSR records show that in 2010-11, only about one third of people moving in to level 2 and 3 supported accommodation came directly from high support accommodation. In 2011-12 this increased to 40%. In 2010-11, excluding internal transfers, 66% of departures from level 2-3 supported accommodation were planned (45% of these planned departures moved to their own tenancy). A check of the latest known whereabouts of all those who left level 2-3 supported accommodation in 2010-2011 indicated that in March 2012 22% were back living in a high support hostel or in level 2-3 supported accommodation.

### **6.2.2 Maximising use of supported accommodation**

For those who left accommodation-based services in a planned way (excluding internal transfers), the average duration of stay in 2010-11 was 9.8 months and in 2011-12 was 12.5 months.

In order to meet increased demand with diminishing resources it will be necessary to ensure timely move on from supported accommodation. We will require that the average duration of stay in single homeless services to reduce to 9 months. We will also expect average void times to be no more than 14 days. This will enable significantly more clients to be accommodated each year.

It is acknowledged that some clients have more entrenched chaotic lifestyles and will need to remain in supported accommodation for longer than the average. We will establish an assessment panel (or other assessment arrangement) to consider whether such clients want and need to remain longer in supported accommodation. Providers will be required to apply to the panel for permission to allow the placement to continue for a further 9 months. If permission is not given, the provider will need to assist the client to move on. This assessment process will identify clients whose support needs might be more appropriately met by another service (eg. because they have learning disabilities or enduring drug or alcohol issues).

Last year, there were about 525 clients placed in to the supported accommodation in this review. We anticipate this will increase to about 720 new placements per year (taking into account the increased flow from high support accommodation and the impact of welfare benefit changes). We will expect that about 90% of those placed

will stay in supported accommodation for an average of 9 months, and the remaining 10% for an average of 18 months. If 100% of the accommodation is available at all times, and void times are reduced to an average of 14 days, a total of at least 604 units of single homeless supported accommodation will be required.

We will ensure supported accommodation is spread geographically across the city and aim to ensure there is sufficient supply accessible to people with mobility impairments.

### **6.2.3 Services targeted at those in greatest need**

As resources become scarcer, it becomes increasingly important to ensure that services are provided to those who most need them and that clients are receiving appropriate levels and types of support to effectively meet their needs. The aim is to have an initial assessment of the level of a person's needs before they access services. This will enable the council to check that providers are taking clients with an appropriate range of needs, as well as help to ensure that only those with genuine support needs, rather than simple housing needs, access the services. We will monitor refusals and are likely to include targets for the proportion of people refused on the grounds of risk or because their support needs are too high.

Current providers have expressed concern and frustration about the quality of referrals and assessments. In particular there are issues about the lack of information on referrals and the inconsistency of assessments. The council's Housing Solutions Single Point of Access Team is liaising with providers to improve HSR guidance and take other steps to improve the content, quality and consistency of referrals. Providers will be encouraged to contribute to the learning process by contacting referrers to discuss poor quality referrals and identify potential improvements.

There are concerns that the Bristol Home Choice criteria for accessing social housing creates an incentive for people to access level 2-3 supported accommodation and stay there until they succeed in bidding for a council tenancy. The Priority Move on Scheme (PMOS) gives priority 2 to people who have been living for six months in supported accommodation. This scheme helps to enable clients to move on from supported accommodation when they are ready. However, the scheme also creates problems. There is evidence that some clients with minimal support needs are using supported accommodation as a conduit to social housing, and that others remain in supported accommodation longer than necessary in order to qualify under the scheme. There are also concerns that the criteria for priority access to social housing should relate more to vulnerability, rather than housing history. The PMOS is being reviewed and a revised scheme will be the subject of public consultation. Changes to the PMOS are likely to reduce the incentive to access and remain in supported accommodation simply in order to obtain social housing. This will assist in ensuring supported accommodation is targeted at those who most need it.

### **6.2.4 Consistent support levels**

Support providers are currently contracted to provide different levels of support per client per week from 2.3 hours to 4.8 hours. In future all supported accommodation services commissioned in this review will provide equivalent levels of support to clients with a similar range of needs. All services will be expected to take a range of

clients with low or medium levels of support need (currently described as level 2 and level 3).

We will monitor refusals to ensure that providers are accepting clients with an appropriate range of support needs. Providers should not refuse referrals solely because of drug or alcohol use.

### **6.3 Timely and effective move on**

Meeting the increased demand for supported accommodation will mean that people need to move on when they are ready, and will need effective support to sustain their tenancies and independence once they do move on. The prevention of repeat episodes of homelessness will be an important priority.

The services we will commission will develop move on plans with their clients from the outset. Providers will need to work with clients both to ensure clients have realistic expectations about their length of stay in supported accommodation and to help them develop the knowledge and skills required to sustain their own tenancy.

Except for those people who are able to move in with friends or family, timely move on will only be possible if there are affordable tenancies for people to move on to. With a continuing shortage of affordable housing in Bristol for low-income households, this will continue to be a challenge. Many households cannot afford housing at market rents and there is increasing pressure on the limited supply of council and housing association properties.

#### **6.3.1 Making the best use of the private rented sector**

The council has been making increasing use of the private rented sector to meet housing demand, particularly to prevent households from having to make a homelessness application. However, for those leaving supported accommodation in 2011-12 only 3% moved to a private rented tenancy (while 32% moved to a council tenancy and 9% to a housing association tenancy). The views of both clients and staff in lower and floating support services generally were that the private rented sector is not suitable for people moving on from supported accommodation. Staff also reported that they are significantly less confident about supporting clients to obtain and sustain private rented tenancies.

It is acknowledged that there are barriers to this client group accessing private rented accommodation. However, in order to meet their housing needs it will be necessary to increase the proportion moving on to the private rented sector. Supported accommodation providers will be expected to encourage and enable their clients to move on to private sector tenancies and contracts are likely to include targets for this. The changes to the PMOS may also mean that there is a cap on the number of clients in supported accommodation schemes who may use the PMOS to access social housing. Providers will need to train and inform staff and clients to change their expectations and prejudices about their housing options.

It will also be necessary to work with landlords to ensure they are more willing to accept households who have come through homelessness, particularly young

people. The council will be developing a Move-on Strategy. Integral to this will be plans for the council to engage with private landlords and Registered Providers to find ways to incentivise both sectors to increase access to PRS housing for homeless people.

### **6.3.2 Effective support to sustain tenancies**

Many people leaving supported accommodation and moving into their own tenancies will require “resettlement support” to establish themselves in their new home, to develop tenancy skills and ensure they are able to independently sustain the tenancy into the future. The same is true for other people moving into new tenancies from homeless high support hostels, prisons, hospitals and other institutions.

Surprisingly, SP records suggest that only about 16% of those leaving L&F supported accommodation have floating support when they move on. More than twice as many people move into their own tenancy without any floating support. Currently resettlement support is provided by the city’s nine floating support providers. People often have very short notice before moving into their new tenancy, particularly council tenancies. There is then often a long delay, for as much as two months, before floating support starts. This can mean that for weeks clients are without furniture, equipment and/or utilities and assistance with applying for the necessary benefits. When the support does start, it is with a new provider and new support worker.

It is recognised that continuity of support is extremely important to clients, particularly through the transition from supported accommodation to settled accommodation. In order to provide this continuity and to avoid delays in accessing support, resettlement support will be commissioned from supported accommodation providers. Supported accommodation providers will be commissioned to support their clients in their settled accommodation to enable them to establish their new homes and ensure they sustain their tenancies.

We will monitor long-term outcomes for clients by checking the HSR to determine if they are homeless again in 6 and 12 months and by requiring providers to check and report on their clients’ housing circumstances 6 and 12 months after departure. Providers will be expected to equip their clients with independent living skills to enable them to sustain their tenancies. The services commissioned will also include a small element of ongoing support to all clients who have left services. Providers will be encouraged to have an open-door approach to former clients who need support with issues that can be quickly resolved, or who would benefit from maintaining links with the organisation, its activities and other clients.

If clients have an ongoing need for regular support once resettlement support has been provided, they should be referred on to an appropriate agency. If their need is primarily a continuing need for housing-related support to prevent homelessness then a referral could be made for floating support.

### **6.3.3 Addressing other barriers to move on**

The Move-on Strategy will also consider the other barriers to timely move on and what measures would assist people to move on when they are ready and succeed in their new tenancies. The main barriers identified by stakeholders include rent arrears and obtaining furniture and white goods.

## **6.4 Providing support more effectively**

We will commission services that strongly promote independence from the outset, discourage dependency and encourage people to do things for themselves, learning the skills they need to become independent. Providers will be expected to help people through crises as quickly as possible and enable them to prevent or better deal with future crises. Services will need to be flexible to meet people's changing needs. Providers will be expected to have clear plans between support workers and clients which identify the individual clients' needs and priorities, set out the services and activities to be provided and a timescale and plan for graduated withdrawal of support, and if appropriate for move on from supported accommodation. Providers will need to regularly review service plans to reconsider support needs and ensure that clients participate in an appropriate level and type of support or other activities.

### **6.4.1 Outcomes-focused commissioning – all services**

Current contracts for both accommodation-based and floating support focus on units, hours of support and hourly support rates. In future we plan to commission services on the basis of outcomes and numbers of clients supported. In accommodation-based services we will also commission on the basis of unit costs. We will not stipulate the amount of support that should be provided to clients, nor do we expect that one-to-one support will be the main way clients will be helped.

Instead we will encourage providers to build upon best practice and develop innovative ways of achieving improved outcomes for clients. The purpose of the services we are commissioning is to prevent homelessness. For this reason, the key outcomes we will measure will relate to clients' housing outcomes. For accommodation-based services the outcomes are likely to be:

- % of planned departures from supported accommodation
- % returned to hostels or supported accommodation in 6 and 12 months
- % moved to private-rented tenancy

For floating support services we will define positive housing outcomes (these are likely to include: sustained current tenancy; moved to and sustained new tenancy; sustained suitable housing with friends or family; or moved elsewhere in a planned way). The housing related outcomes are likely to be:

- % with positive housing outcome 6 months after case opened (and every 6 months thereafter until the case is closed)
- % with positive housing outcome 6 and 12 months after case is closed.

We also recognise that successful support to prevent homelessness does not just involve helping people with issues directly relating to their housing and tenancy skills. Depending on the needs of each individual, the help required is likely also to involve working with people to develop a range of practical skills:

- tenancy skills
- managing money
- access to work, education or training
- recovery from addiction
- recovery from mental illness



- developing more constructive lifestyles
- improving literacy skills
- building social networks and positive relationships
- reducing offending behaviour
- physical and emotional health and well-being

We will expect providers to take a holistic approach to working with their clients where appropriate and to monitor their clients' progress in these other aspects of their lives.

We will consider whether there are other “hard” quantitative outcomes that we will monitor. These are likely to include the following outcomes (based on current St Andrews SP outcomes): :

- increase in income
- reduction in debt /arrears
- increased participation in paid employment
- increased participation in training / education
- increased activity in work-like activity

We do not propose to set targets for providers in relation to the more subjective “soft outcomes”. However we will expect providers to have their own systems to monitor the distance travelled by clients in addressing individuals' identified needs. We will meet regularly with providers to discuss how successful they have been in working with clients to meet those needs. In particular we will be concerned that providers are able to demonstrate that, where relevant, they are assisting clients to increase the amount of time spent in meaningful occupation and in building positive social networks.

We will not stipulate how providers deliver services, but would expect that they would wish to reduce support worker travel time and will consider a range of cost effective ways of improving client outcomes including:

- Group support session
- Peer support
- Use of volunteers
- Training and practical skills sessions
- Group activities
- Improving client involvement and control
- Providing one-to-one support by telephone
- More contact with clients by email
- Use client exit surveys to inform service improvements
- Better use of technology (eg. use of laptops on home visits)
- Out of hours services (especially for those in full time work or education)
- Better links with other agencies
- Enabling clients to engage in community groups and benefit from other community resources

We recommend that providers consider the research and guidance on psychologically informed environments (PIEs) as this approach has been very successful in delivering outcomes for people who have experienced homelessness. <http://rjaconsultancy.org.uk/6454%20CLG%20PIE%20operational%20document%20AW-1.pdf> ). We encourage providers to consider how they might incorporate this

approach into their practices. We will require providers bidding for contracts to show how they will meet the psychological needs of their clients.

#### **6.4.2 More effective floating support services**

We do not propose to commission units or hours of floating support. Instead we will commission three city-wide floating support services: one for people aged 16-21 and the two others for people aged over 22 (which will also provide support to families). People aged 22 to 24 year olds may be placed with the young people's service if that service is better able to meet their needs (eg. they are particularly vulnerable or have a learning disability) or if they have a very strong preference for the young people's service. We will also commission an integrated supported accommodation and floating support service for young parents (see section 6.6).

The three city-wide services will be expected to provide homelessness prevention support to those who need it in the city. We will not stipulate how many hours of support are to be provided to clients, or how long cases should remain open. The services might include a drop-in or triage service delivering quick fixes for people (eg. to interpret a letter or make a few phone calls). There will be no imperative to close cases quickly although we will expect cases to be closed when support plans are achieved or clients are failing to engage. We will monitor waiting times, the number of new people helped in a year and the outcomes achieved for those people. If demand increases significantly, we will reconsider waiting times targets and/or eligibility criteria for accessing services.

We will not commission separate specialist floating support services. However, providers may opt to deliver specialist services if this delivers improved outcomes. This might be specialist services for particular clients groups (eg. women only, or for 16-19 year olds) or for clients with particular needs (eg. longer-term support for those with more complex needs). Providers may also chose to sub-contract the provision of specialist services.

Current floating support is not always currently available to people who are not tenants. This means that some services are not available to people who need support to avoid homelessness on the grounds that they are owner occupiers or living with friends and family. The new floating support services will be available to eligible people regardless of their tenure or housing status.

We will not continue to use the current categories of floating support – standard, complex and crisis – as they do not always reflect either clients' needs or the support provided.

### **6.5 Specialist services for young people**

The majority of clients in the supported accommodation in this review are young people aged 16 to 24 years. Half of clients in these services are aged 16 to 21, and two-thirds are under 25. The age profile of clients using floating support services is more evenly spread, however over one third are aged 16 to 24.

While nearly two-thirds of clients in the supported accommodation are aged 16 to 24, only 36% of the accommodation is exclusively for this age group. This means that a high proportion of 16-24 year olds are accommodated together with older clients (just over one third of 16-21 year olds and 46% of 22-24 year olds).

Stakeholders expressed strong views about the need for young people to be provided with specialist services by people with expertise in working with young people and addressing their specific needs. There are compelling reasons why young people aged 16-21 should be housed separately from older clients, particularly those with entrenched homeless lifestyles, such as chaotic drug and alcohol users. Young people themselves were very clear that they needed and wanted to live with other young people, and definitely not with older homeless people.

For these reasons we will commission an increased proportion of supported accommodation for young people aged 16-21. Up to half of the supported accommodation we commission will be exclusively for people aged 16 to 24. Young people aged 21 years and under will only be accommodated in specialist young people's services. People aged 22 to 24 year olds may be placed in young people's accommodation if that is appropriate to meet their needs (eg. they are particularly vulnerable) or have a very strong preference for young people only accommodation.

As described above, we will commission a specialist floating support service for young people aged 16 to 21. This will enable the provision of a floating support service with expertise in working with this age group.

Providers of floating support and supported accommodation will be expected to take a proactive role in helping young people to rebuild relationships with their families and in helping them to move back to, or stay in the family home where it is safe to do so. This is likely to involve providing family mediation and could involve support to other family members beside the young person client.

Services for young people will also need to have a particular focus on –

- Access to education, training and employment
- Developing skills to manage budgets and pay bills
- Training young people to make good decisions and choices

As a higher proportion of young people are in full time education, it is particularly important that support services and group sessions are available outside of normal working hours.

## **6.6 Integrated services for young parents**

We will commission one integrated service for young parents (aged 16 to 24) to include both supported accommodation and floating support. We will commission 35-37 units of specialist supported accommodation for young parents, as well as an additional 10 units able to accommodate pregnant young women and young women with babies (this will be within the women-only supported accommodation). We propose to re-commission the 35-37 units from among the current specialist young parents supported accommodation.

It will be important that the supported accommodation commissioned provides a good geographical spread to enable young parents to be accommodated close to their families and social networks. This is likely to mean that there are three schemes, one in South Bristol, one in the East and one in North Bristol. We will require that at least one of these schemes is able to accommodate young fathers (under age 25) either as single fathers or with their partners.

We will also require that at least one scheme, if not all, is able to accommodate young parents who are the subject of a parent and child assessment ordered by the court.

Floating support will be available to young pregnant women and young parents regardless of where they are living, be it with their parents, with friends or in their own tenancy. The focus when a case is first opened is likely to be to support young parents to explore their housing options. Particular care will need to be taken when considering the options for 16 to 17 year olds, which is likely to involve a multi-agency discussion before decisions are made. Generally the options will include enabling young parents to remain living in the family home with their child if appropriate, and if not, to help them to access their own tenancy or supported accommodation depending on the level of their support needs.

Floating support will continue to be available to those with support needs who move into their own homes or remain living with friends or family. Resettlement support will be provided to clients moving on from supported accommodation to settled accommodation.

There are currently three supported accommodation schemes for this client group: one providing high levels of support and 24-hour cover, one providing medium levels of support, and one low support service. We will commission a service to provide consistent levels of support across all young parents supported accommodation at a relatively low level. However, one scheme will be required to provide 24 hour cover and is likely to be used to accommodate clients with the greatest need or where there are child protection or other concerns. The 24-hour cover will provide a telephone service to other young parents in other schemes as well as floating support clients. Where parents require more than the standard low level of support, this will be provided by way of floating support.

The expectation will be that the average length of stay is 9 months across all the young parents supported accommodation. However, as for single homeless services, the provider may apply to the assessment panel / assessor to allow a person to stay for up to 18 months.

The service for young parents will need to focus on the same outcomes set out above in section 6.4.1. There will also need to be a particular focus on:

- assisting young parents to access childcare to enable them to access education and employment
- improving parenting skills
- help to connect young parents to appropriate local services

In addition we are likely to require the young parents service to monitor outcomes relating to the following:

- engagement with external services and groups

- establishing or re-establishing positive social networks
- safety of children and adequacy of parenting
- improved health of children and parents

## **6.7 Meeting demand for family accommodation**

Interviews with clients in family services indicate that families need help in relation with benefits, information and sign-posting, accessing settled accommodation and resettlement. Changes to welfare benefits will mean that there needs to be an increased focus on assisting parents to access education, training and employment. However, the primary need for most homeless families is to obtain settled accommodation rather than for significant levels of housing-related support. For this reason we will commission low levels of support across all supported accommodation schemes, similar to the level of support currently provided in the services at Trinity Lodge and Windermere. For those families with higher support needs not being met by other agencies, additional support will be provided from one of the city-wide general floating support service or spot purchased.

We will expect that the average duration of stay is 4 months. Average void times will need to be 7 days. Supported accommodation providers will provide resettlement support to families moving on to general needs accommodation (the equivalent to an average of 20 hours of work for each family).

If current trends continue, the need for temporary supported accommodation is likely to increase each year. We will monitor demand for this accommodation and commission increased units as necessary.

## **6.8 Specialist services**

We will commission separate and specialist services for young people, women, young parents and families as described above.

There is currently a lack of medium-level women-only supported accommodation. We will commission a greater number of units of women-only supported accommodation. Both services will be commissioned to provide services for women with a range of support needs from low to medium.

There are currently specialist services for refugees (11 accommodation units) and offenders (18 accommodation units). We do not propose to commission these specialist services in the future. However, there is also a specialist floating support service for offenders currently provided by People Can that is outside of the scope of this review and will continue to be commissioned on a sub-regional basis.

It will be open to support providers to opt to provide specialist or separate services in order to best meet the needs of particular groups and to improve outcomes for those groups. We will encourage the provision of some men-only supported accommodation (requested by Muslim clients) and LGB-only accommodation. Providers may also opt to deliver separate services for other groups (eg. prison

leavers and/or people at risk of offending, refugees, young people aged 16 to 19) provided the specialism does not impact on turnover or voids.

Stakeholders have expressed concerns about routes in to supported accommodation for offenders, particularly prison leavers. It is acknowledged that it is important that accommodation and support is available to those prison leavers who need it on release and that delay in accessing these services increases the risk of re-offending. It also increases the use of exempt accommodation.

## **6.9 Improving processes and record keeping**

All services, including family and young parent services, will be added to the Housing Support Register. This will create standard record keeping and enable the council to better understand clients' needs, allow a consistent approach to performance monitoring and enable more accurate assessment of value for money. In relation to young parents it will also enable clients to be referred to services that match their needs and avoid duplication of processes.

We will liaise with partner agencies to consider whether there are process changes or links that could be made to improve referral and access arrangements for prison leavers.

There are concerns that there is significant under-recording of some equality protected characteristics, particularly information on disability and sexual orientation. In order to ensure that equality data is up to date and correct, providers will be required to confidentially collect equality monitoring information from clients after they have entered their service.

## **6.10 Better joint working with drug and alcohol services and mental health services**

A high proportion of clients in these services have mental health problems (both diagnosed and undiagnosed) and/or are drug or alcohol abusers, or recovering from drug or alcohol addiction.

In order to help meet the needs of clients with drug and alcohol issues, we will require providers bidding for contracts to have a written working agreement with an appropriate local drug treatment agency.

The council commissions some homelessness prevention services, both accommodation-based and floating support, which specialise in meeting the needs of people with mental health issues. These services will be the subject of a separate commissioning review.

In the past, joint working with mental health agencies has been problematic and it has been difficult for clients in homelessness prevention services to access the mental health treatment and support they need. The current NHS Modernising Mental Health programme involves the re-commissioning of adult primary and secondary mental

health services in Bristol. Council commissioners will liaise with the providers of homelessness prevention services and providers of the future mental health services in order to promote effective joint working in the future.

## **7. Commissioning Plan**

### **7.1 Resources**

The total budget for the services we are commissioning will be £3.5M.

### **7.2 Key factors informing plan**

- Clients who are in receipt of services at the time new contracts start will generally continue to be supported until they are ready to move on (although this may be with a new support provider and/or in different accommodation).
- We will commission services to meet the needs of an increased number of clients. Demand projections are set out in section 11 of the Needs Analysis (Appendix 1). Savings will be achieved by requiring services to be more cost effective and more focused on delivering outcomes for their clients.
- We will seek to minimise disruption to clients (ie. promote service continuity).
- We intend to decrease the number of supported accommodation contracts. This will enable more effective contract monitoring. Larger contracts will also give providers more flexibility to meet the needs of clients with a range of varying support needs. Current smaller providers and landlords are encouraged to collaborate with others so that they are able to meet the requirements for larger contracts.
- In relation to floating support, we plan to have two contracts. We encourage providers to consider the potential for joint provision and/or sub-contracting.
- Where current supported accommodation is bespoke or particularly well-suited to meet the needs of specialist clients groups, we aim to re-commission services in the current accommodation (ie. family and young parent accommodation). In these cases we will negotiate with landlords to secure the accommodation.
- We will increase the number of supported accommodation units for single homeless people and families. The only supported accommodation to be de-commissioned is 8-10 units for young parents. The decision on which units to de-commission will be based on factors including geographical location and quality of accommodation.
- We intend to retain in-house services that are currently delivering good value for money, but only where there is no intention to significantly remodel the service.
- We will commission more generic and fewer specialist services. Providers of specialist services for rough sleepers, refugees and offenders are encouraged to consider their ability to provide generic services.

### **7.3 Service users, access and referral arrangements**

The services will be for vulnerable people with support needs who are homeless or at risk of homelessness or care leavers. To be eligible for services, people will:

- be vulnerable; be in need of 'housing-related support' to prevent homelessness or to assist a client who is homeless;
- have recourse to public funds; and
- have a clear local connection with Bristol, or have special circumstances (which can be evidenced) to show why a move to Bristol to obtain supported housing is needed.

Access to all services will be via the Housing Support Register (HSR).

This is the access software for all high support services, and is administered by the Councils Single Point of Access Team.

### **7.4 The services we are purchasing and preferred procurement options**

#### **7.4.1 Floating support services**

We will commission three city-wide floating support services: one to provide floating support to 16-21 year olds and two general floating support services for over 22 year olds, to include services for families. The services will be provided to vulnerable people at risk of homelessness who are living in their own home (rented or owner occupied) or staying with friends or family.

We will commission a standard level of support across all three services (the equivalent to an average of 2.25 hour per week per client).

#### ***Preferred procurement option***

Conduct a two stage tender process. Pre-qualification questionnaires (PQQs) will be completed by external providers to ensure they meet basic criteria and have the organisational competence (through the Proactis e-tendering portal).

Invitation to tenders (ITTs) will be issued to those external organisations that are short-listed. Providers will submit a bid which will include TUPE considerations. The in-house Tenant Support Service will also be invited to submit bids for both the young people and generic contracts.

All bids will then be evaluated. We will ensure that there is a fair and transparent process to evaluate submissions. We will appoint an independent person to the panel whose role will be to ensure the decision-making is fair.

#### ***Reasons***

- We are looking for significantly fewer contracts and remodelled services. Renegotiation with current providers would not achieve this.



- The review of the in-house Tenant Support Service indicated the service it provides a good quality and effective service. However, as we are seeking substantial changes to the service we require, this does not provide a clear opportunity to simply renegotiate a new service with the in-house team. Instead we intend identify the providers best able to cost effectively deliver client and strategic outcomes.

#### **7.4.2 Single homeless supported accommodation**

We will reduce the total number of contracts to between six and eight. No contract will be for fewer than 50 supported accommodation units (except the women-only services).

We will initially commission a total of 604 units of supported accommodation. This represents about 20 more units than current contracts.

Up to half of the 604 units will be exclusively for 16-21 year olds and up to 15% will be for women only.

The women-only supported accommodation must be able to safely accommodate at least 10 pregnant young women and young mothers with babies.

We will commission a standard level of support across all services (the equivalent to an average of 2.25 hours per week per client) plus resettlement support to those moving on to their own tenancies (the equivalent of 20 hours of support per client who moves into a tenancy, about 60% of all clients) and a small element of follow-on work for all previous clients (equivalent to 5 hours for each client).

#### ***Preferred procurement option***

Conduct an open tender process to create a framework of providers. Providers will need to evidence that they meet the equivalent of basic PQQ criteria, accommodation standards. Rent and service charges will also be taken into account.

Providers will also be assessed on quality and price. Quality will include outcomes and the capability to provide required accommodation. Providers will submit a price per unit. A ceiling limit on this price may be applied however, in order to ensure best value, price will be part of the evaluation.

Once evaluation is complete, we will have a list of potential supported accommodation (the framework). Allocation of units will be based on the providers Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) score, including consideration of the geographical location of properties, ability to minimise disruption to clients and type of accommodation.

## ***Reasons***

- To retain as much existing provision as is of reasonable quality, location and cost whilst opening up the market for potential new landlords who are better able to deliver temporary accommodation to meet our requirements.
- To introduce an element of competition in order to achieve improved outcomes and best value.

### **7.4.3 Families supported accommodation**

We will commission a total of 71 units of supported accommodation. This represents 8 more units than current specialist family contracts.

We will not commission family accommodation from other providers including the supported accommodation currently provided by Solon and Self-Help Community Housing Association. We encourage the providers of that accommodation to bid for that accommodation to be included on the single-homeless supported accommodation framework.

We will commission a standard level of support across all services similar to the level of support provided by the current in-house services) plus resettlement and follow-on support to those families moving on to their own tenancies (the equivalent of 25 hours of support per unit previously occupied).

These services will be provided to families. In exceptional circumstances they may be provided to particularly vulnerable childless couples.

### ***Recommended procurement option***

Retain in-house services (Trinity Lodge and Windermere) as the value for money consideration demonstrates they deliver best value.

Retain the 21-unit supported accommodation scheme at Fortfield Road. Subject to checks that the accommodation meets minimum requirements, offer a waiver process for current landlord provider. The waiver process would include the provider meeting the equivalent of PQQ requirements and submitting a proposal setting out a business case for delivering the new service expectations and providing best value. If the waiver application is approved, we will negotiate the support contract to provide a significantly reduced level of support.

If a waiver application is not approved, we would negotiate with the landlord to agree a tendering process for securing an integrated housing management and support contract. This is a similar process to that used in the high support review.

Both providers will be encouraged to consider proposals for the provision of the additional 8 units and potential further units in the future.

## ***Reasons***

- The in-house service currently delivers significantly better value for money than other supported accommodation in this review. There is no indication that a competitive tender could achieve the same or better value for money.

- We wish to retain the supply of specialist family accommodation – and enable the flexibility to commission additional units in the future if needed.
- There would be risks in using a framework agreement process (as outlined above for the single homeless supported accommodation), in particular the risk of losing the current family accommodation.
- A waiver process (with a competitive process if the landlord does not get a waiver) enables the bespoke accommodation at Fortfield Road to be retained. The current provider will only be awarded the contract if it demonstrates it will deliver best value.

#### **7.4.4 Integrated young parents service**

We will commission one integrated service for young parents to include floating support and resettlement support for young parents and 35-37 units of specialist supported accommodation for young parents aged 16-24. This represents 8-10 fewer supported accommodation units than currently provided contracts. At least one supported accommodation scheme must be able to accommodate fathers in this age group. We will also commission a young women's supported accommodation service that is able to accommodate at one time least 10 young mothers and their babies.

The services will be provided to parents aged 16-24 who have children aged less than two years old.

#### ***Recommended procurement option***

Determine which of the current 45 supported accommodation units to retain on the basis of the quality and location of the accommodation. Liaise with landlords to confirm the procurement process for one support contract (to include floating support and integrated housing management and support across all accommodation).

#### ***Reasons***

- An integrated service will be able to offer better value for money and greater flexibility.
- We want to retain the current specialist accommodation supply, albeit with a reduced number of units.
- The procurement route proposed offers the most robust way to meet our requirements. This process is similar to the process used in the high support review, however it is not possible to offer a waiver opportunity for existing landlord providers as we intend there to be only one contract across all supported accommodation.

## 7.6 Indicative Timetable

<b>TIMESCALES</b>	<b>DATE</b>
<b>Demand/Needs Analysis</b>	<b>December 2011 – April 2012</b>
Needs Analysis and review process	December 2011- March 2012
Gap analysis	Mar - April 2012
Procurement options appraisal	Feb - April 2012
Stakeholder event – emerging issues & options	April 2012
<b>Consultation and Pre-tender Phase</b>	<b>June – Nov 2012</b>
Consultation on draft commissioning plan	June - August 2012
Checks on quality of accommodation to be retained (family and young parent).	June - August 2012
Cabinet approval of commissioning plan	October 2012
Notice to current providers of commissioning intentions and contract extensions	November 2012
<b>Tender process for floating support and young parents service</b>	<b>Oct 2012 – June / Sept 2013</b>
Tender documents prepared	October 2012
PQQ	Oct - Jan 2013
ITT and evaluation	Jan – March 2013
Contract award	March 2013
<b>New Services Commence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 6 weeks minimum implementation period (e.g. where no change in provider)</li> <li>- 3-6 months implementation period (6 months if TUPE transfer of BCC staff )</li> </ul>	May 2013  June – Sept 2013
<b>Process for single homeless supported accommodation</b>	<b>January 2013 – Sept / Dec 2013</b>
Tender documents prepared	Jan – Feb 2013
Tender process leading to framework agreement	Feb – May 2013
Call off	June 2013
<b>New services commence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 month minimum implementation period</li> <li>- 6 month maximum implementation period</li> </ul>	September 2013 December 2013

## **8. De-commissioning arrangements and transition to new contracts**

Our commissioning plans do not include any reduction in service activities or supported accommodation units (except for the reduction in specialist young parent units). Nonetheless, all current inherited service contracts will be terminated.

In order to provide certainty to both providers and clients we will offer contract extensions to current providers for the period to at least 31st March.

The Supporting People team will liaise with current providers to develop a process for identifying the impact of the proposed changes to services and the associated risks. They will also consider how best to manage the transition to new services.

The key consideration will be the impact on service users and how to manage the transition process in a way that minimises any negative impact on clients, particularly the need for them to move from one supported accommodation unit to another.

This process may result in further extensions of contracts during the transition period. In all cases providers will be given a minimum of 3 months notice.

## **9. TUPE implications**

Current and potential providers will need to be aware of the implications of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE).

When a service activity transfers from one provider to another, the relevant employees delivering that service transfer from the old to the new provider and must transfer on the same contractual terms and conditions of employment. The new provider/employer takes on all the liabilities arising from the original employment contracts. The council will obtain from current providers basis information about the employees who will potentially be affected by this commissioning process.

Bidding providers will need to consider the cost and other implications of TUPE. The council will provide bidders with the information it has collected from current providers about the employees who will be potentially affected. Providers must seek their own legal and employment advice on TUPE. It is the responsibility of bidders/ providers to satisfy themselves regarding TUPE requirements.

## **Glossary**

BCC	Bristol City Council
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
DLA	Disability Living Allowance
ETE	Entry to Employment
HA	Housing Association
HAT	BCC Housing Advice Team
HSR	BCC Housing Support Register
L&F	Lower and floating support review
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
LHA	Housing Benefit Local Housing Allowance
NHS	National Health Service
PIE	Psychologically informed environment
PIP	Personal Independence Payment
PMOS	BCC Priority Move on Scheme
PRS	Private rented sector
RSL	Registered Social Landlord
SP	Supporting People
SPA	BCC Single Point of Access Team
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
VCSE	Voluntary, community and social enterprise

## Homelessness Prevention Commissioning – Appendix 3

### Lower and Floating Support Services Draft Commissioning Plan

#### Issues raised in consultation period (June – August 2012)

You Said	We Did
<b>1. General</b>	
a. Proposed support levels for single homeless services are too low (ie. the equivalent of 2.25 hours per person per week)	<b>No change.</b> The proposed support levels have been set based on the available funding. We will build flexibility into the contracts so that they can be extended if it becomes apparent that these levels are untenable and there is funding available for additional support.
b. Average 7 day void time for single homeless and young parents supported accommodation is not achievable and would impact on the safety and quality of accommodation	<b>Change.</b> We will liaise with landlords to determine the minimum average that is practicable. If void times were increased to 14 days, our demand model would still work. Changing void times to 14 days would not have a significant impact on the number of units of supported accommodation required.
c. Average length of stay of 9 months for 90% of single homeless people is too short. There is particular concern that clients will stay for shorter periods in high support hostels and will therefore be less ready for change when they move into the lower support accommodation in this review. There are also concerns that shortages of affordable housing in Bristol and barriers faced by clients in supported accommodation (eg. on benefits, history of homelessness, young age) make it very difficult for them to access housing when ready to move on.	<b>No change.</b> The contention that a 9 month average is too short is not supported by evidence. In 2010-11 the average length of stay was 8.5 months for all departures, and 9.5 months for planned departures. Allowing 10% of clients to stay an average of 18 months mitigates the risk to individual clients. We will also ensure that transitional support is provided, and that longer term floating support is accessible. We acknowledge that availability of move-on accommodation can present a barrier to timely move on from supported accommodation. We are developing a Move-on Strategy that will develop proposals to facilitate move on (the project to develop this strategy has commenced).
d. Consultees generally supported the proposal to allow the average length of stay to be extended to 18 months for clients with higher support needs. However, there were concerns	<b>No change.</b> We will develop an efficient application and decision-making process, which will include a quick appeal procedure.

that more than 10% of clients will need to stay longer and that the decision process needed clarification, should involve clients and should include an appeal.	
e. The draft Commissioning Plan set out different ways of providing support more effectively. These approaches were generally considered to be effective and positive. There was particular support among service users for peer support, group activities, training and practical skills sessions, and improving client involvement and control. However, many consultees said the approaches were currently being used and would not enable services to be delivered more cost effectively. There was also a wide-spread view that the suggested approaches should be used to compliment, not replace, face-to-face one-to-one support.	<b>No change.</b> Organisations should employ a range of support techniques in order to achieve good results and efficiency. The commissioning process will focus on achieving outcomes for clients. This means that we will not stipulate how services should be provided, but tenderers will need to demonstrate how they will deliver cost effectively outcomes for clients.
f. Some client consultees, particularly younger people, raised the need for out of hours services for people in full-time employment or education. They said they were unable to develop independence and tenancy skills because support was not accessible out of hours and that this meant they needed to stay in supported accommodation for longer.	<b>Review.</b> We will consider how best to ensure that the needs of clients working or studying full time are met.
g. Providers supported plans to introduce a small number of common outcomes measures and for regular, six monthly, contract review meetings. Providers thought it was important to record non-housing outcomes as well as housing outcomes. Some providers asked that we modified St Andrew's Supporting People outcomes measures rather than introduce new measures for non-housing outcomes.	<b>Change.</b> We are modifying St Andrews outcomes measures for a small number of "hard" non-housing outcomes (including client income, debts/arrears, involvement in paid work, work-like activity and education/training). We will monitor performance against these standard outcomes measures, but will not set targets for them.
h. The majority of clients consulted expressed a preference for larger supported accommodation schemes where clients are housed in clusters. However, some clients, particular young parents and single people aged over 30 years had a clear preference for self-contained accommodation.	<b>Change.</b> When "calling off" single homeless supported accommodation from the framework, we will take into account the type of accommodation offered. We will endeavour to get a mix of different types of accommodation to include cluster-type larger schemes, self-contained units and shared houses.



<b>2. Floating support</b>	
<p>a. There was widespread concern about having only two city-wide floating support services (one for young people and one generic service). Concerns included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of choice for clients</li> <li>- Lack of options for clients who have fallen out with the provider (especially people with personality disorders / mental health problems)</li> <li>- Lack of competition and impact on local supplier market</li> </ul> <p>Other views expressed included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Young people's needs insufficiently distinct to require a separate service</li> <li>- The needs of families are different and they require a specialist service</li> </ul>	<p><b>Change.</b> We will go out to tender for three city-wide floating support services, of which two will be generic and one will be specifically for young people. The contracts are likely to be of different sizes.</p> <p>The three floating support contracts will be awarded to three different organisations.</p> <p>The young people's service will be for clients aged 16-21. People aged 22-24 will be able to access the young people's service if appropriate to need their needs or if they have a very strong preference for the young people's service.</p>
<p>b. Many consultees expressed concern that there would be fewer specialist floating support services. A number of consultees were particularly concerned that specialist services for people with mental ill health should not be lost.</p>	<p><b>No change.</b> Current floating support services within this review include specialist floating support services for the following groups: young people; young parents; families; and women rough sleepers. Our plan is to continue to commission specialist floating support services for young people and young parents. However we do not intend to re-commission specialist services for families or women rough sleepers as the needs of these groups can be met effectively by generic services. The council also funds specialist homelessness prevention floating support services for people with mental ill health. These services are not included in the lower and floating support commissioning review and are not affected by these proposals; they will be reviewed separately in the future.</p>
<p>c. One consultee suggested that BCC should encourage the creation of community hubs for homelessness prevention support.</p>	<p><b>No change.</b> However similar ideas of 'community support' for vulnerable or un-supported people are being developed as part of the change programme of the BCC's Health and Social Care directorate, and it is proposed that this idea be taken forward as part of that work.</p>

<b>3. Young people's services</b>	
a. Supported accommodation. There was no consensus about which age groups should be accommodated together except perhaps that young people aged 16-19 should generally not be accommodated with people aged over 25. Some felt strongly that clients aged 16-19 should be accommodated separately from those aged 20-24, others thought it was important that it depended on individuals' needs and maturity. Some thought that all ages could benefit from living together and it depended on each individual.	<p><b>Change.</b> In line with the high support services, the young people's accommodation in this review will be for people aged 16-21 (changed from 16-24).</p> <p>People aged 22-24 may also be accommodated in young people's accommodation, on a case by case basis, if their needs warrant it, or they expressed a very strong preference for the young people's service.</p>
b. Women only support accommodation. Some women clients and some providers thought that age groups in women only accommodation should not be separated; that women of different ages benefited from living together.	<p><b>Change.</b> We have reviewed research and consulted further on this. There is a lack of clear evidence to inform the decision. There are concerns about the risk that older women pose to young women, particularly in relation to sex work. We have decided that we will tender for a women only service or services able to provide a range of women-only accommodation – including young women only accommodation as well as mixed-aged accommodation. This may be provided within one supported accommodation scheme as long as the different age groups are adequately separated (eg. in separate clusters or floors). It will be particularly important to ensure there is women only accommodation available for clients with higher support needs and they are not excluded because of the risk they may pose to younger women.</p>
<b>4. Family services</b>	
a. Proposed levels of funded support funded are too low (1.5 hours per unit) – will not meet needs of families and are not viable for provider.	<p><b>Possible change.</b> This is the subject of further discussion but is unlikely to change significantly. The current in-house services provide an average of 1.5 hours of support per unit per week and achieve good outcomes for their clients. We believe that the external provider should be able to meet the needs of the</p>

	majority of families with funding for a similar level of support.
b. The proposal that the needs of families with higher support needs could be met by bolting-on floating support is not practicable. Other options should be considered including spot purchase of additional support and building in extra support for some families into the main support contract.	<b>Review.</b> This is the subject of further discussion with the current providers (in house and external).
c. Concern that the additional accommodation required will not be forthcoming (it is anticipated that 8 additional units will be required in 2013-14)	<b>No change.</b> The additional accommodation has been identified by the council's landlord services. The current external provider has also indicated it is likely to be able to deliver additional units.
d. Eligibility criteria for services need to change as they currently appear to exclude people with dependents.	<b>Change.</b> This error has been corrected. Except for supported accommodation for single homeless people, the services are available to people with dependents.
<b>5. Young parents services</b>	
a. Reduction in supported accommodation units (from 45 to 35) could mean unable to meet demand.	<b>No change.</b> If average length of stay in young parents accommodation is 9 months, there should be sufficient accommodation to meet demand. However, records show that the demand for supported accommodation for young parents fluctuates considerably. In order to meet peaks in demand, one of the women-only supported accommodation schemes will include 10 units that can be used to accommodate young mothers who are pregnant or have babies.
b. The loss of specialist floating support service for young parents will not meet the needs of young parents who are staying with friends or family (eg. sofa surfing) or at risk of losing their tenancies.	<b>No change.</b> This concern appears to be based on a misunderstanding of the proposals. There will be no loss of floating support for young parents. The only difference is that it will be provided as part of an integrated supported accommodation and floating support service. The new support service will be available to young parents wherever they are living, regardless of tenure (it will not only be provided to clients who access supported accommodation). An integrated service

	will provide continuity – for example for a young parent who starts out living with friends/family, then moves into supported accommodation and then on to their own tenancy.
c. Support levels too low (equivalent to 3.5 hours per week for clients in supported accommodation and 3 hours per week for floating support clients)	<b>No change.</b> The proposal includes additional funding to cover the cost of 24-hour cover at one supported accommodation scheme (in addition to the funding for each unit). The levels of funding for floating support have not reduced significantly. However, the funding for supported accommodation has reduced as funding levels need to decrease across all services to meet budget reductions.
d. Lack of choice	<b>No change.</b> There will be one provider, and therefore there will be limited choice. However, it is not clear that there is a genuine choice at present. The advantages of having one integrated service outweighs the disadvantage of less choice.
<b>6. Procurement issues</b>	
a. The proposed framework agreement for single homeless supported accommodation will disadvantage providers that do not own their own properties (ie. managing agents)	<b>No change.</b> We will liaise with current managing agents to consider their concerns and mitigate those where possible.
b. Bristol City Council Tenant Support Service (TSS) should not be required to compete to provide a services, but should undergo a service review and to deliver the remodelled service required.	<b>No change.</b> A service review would not be an effective way of delivering the change needed, therefore we will follow a competitive process for all floating support. The TSS will be able to compete on a fair basis with other organisations.
c. BCC TSS should be permitted to compete for the young people's floating support service as well as the generic floating support service	<b>Change.</b> Seeing as the TSS's core work includes work with young people, it can compete for the young people's floating support contract, in addition to the generic floating support contract.
d. Some providers expressed concerns about ensuring the fairness and transparency of a tender process that allowed the BCC in-house floating support service to compete. In particular they are concerned about the ability of the in-house service to identify the true cost of its service.	<b>Change.</b> We recognise the importance of ensuring the tender process is fair and transparent. To achieve this, BCC has accepted consultees suggestions that we use an independent auditor to establish the true cost of the TSS, allowing for fair comparison with other organisations. We will also include an independent person on the tender evaluation panel to ensure

	fairness.
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<b>7. Equality issues</b>	
a. Some male client consultees indicated that they preferred and/or needed to live in men-only accommodation.	<p><b>Change.</b> The preference for men only accommodation will be built into the specification, and tenderers will be expected to have regard to this when formulating their bid. They will need to remain flexible to meet changing demand.</p> <p>This requirement, particularly as expressed by Muslim men is included as a cultural requirement in the EqIA.</p>
b. LGB people consulted indicated that there was a need for some LGB only accommodation, particularly for young people.	<p><b>Change.</b> The preference for LGB accommodation will be built into the specification for supported accommodation services, and tenderers will be expected to have regard to this when formulating their bid, and delivering services. They will need to remain flexible to meet changing demand.</p>
<b>8. Miscellaneous issues</b>	
a. The Bristol Offender Accommodation Forum (BOAF) stressed that it is important providers are aware of the needs of offenders and have strong links with staff in the Probation Service and local prisons.	<p><b>Review.</b> We will consider how best to evaluate this in the tender process.</p>
b. Need to acknowledge the extent to which clients have literacy problems. Providers should not rely on approaches that assume clients can read and write (eg. emails and texts)	<p><b>Change.</b> This will be built into the specifications.</p>

# **Homelessness Prevention Lower & Floating Support Services**

## **Commissioning Plan**

### **Equality Impact Assessment – Final version**

**Directorate and Service:** Neighbourhoods Directorate: Strategic Housing

**Lead Officer:** Joanna Roberts (Senior Commissioning Projects Officer)

**Start date for EqlA:** May 2012

**Completion date:** 7 September 2012

Approved for publication by:

Nick Hooper, service director strategic housing, 7.9.12

Simon Nelson, equality officer 20.9.12

### **Background**

Preventing homelessness services were previously funded from the Supporting People (SP) programme. They include short-term accommodation-based services and floating support allocated through the housing support register. These are mainly “inherited services” (not directly commissioned by the council) from before the SP programme began. The overall value of these preventing homelessness contracts is £10.7M for 2011-2012.

For the purposes of commissioning, the preventing homelessness services have been split into different groups:

- high support accommodation-based services;
- lower support accommodation-based and floating support services;
- mental health specialist accommodation-based and floating support services;
- higher support services for young people;
- “wrap around” prevention services.

These proposals concern the commissioning of lower and floating support services. These are services provided to vulnerable people who need support with their housing. They include:

- short-term low support accommodation-based services for single people and families
- support and advice services which help people learn skills to settle into their new homes or stay in existing homes
- short-term accommodation-based support to young parents (aged 16-24).

The commissioning review was being carried out by officers in the Commissioning and Performance Team, Strategic Housing. The Preventing Homelessness Board has oversight of the process. The Preventing Homelessness Board is a multi-agency board, comprising senior officers from BCC Strategic Housing, BCC Children and

Young People's Services, Safer Bristol, Avon and Somerset Probation, Voscur, and representatives from the Bristol Supported Housing Forum (who are present only for the non-sensitive parts of the meeting). The Board is chaired by Nick Hooper, Service Director for Strategic Housing, who represents the board at the Strategic Management Board. The tender process will be managed by the Commissioning and Performance Team with support from the Strategic Procurement and Commissioning Team. The services will be delivered by in-house teams or contractors (all current contractors are housing associations or other third sector organisations).

The Commissioning Plan is focused on commissioning services that deliver value for money and improved outcomes for both individual clients and the city. The services will focus on preventing homelessness wherever possible and will provide support that seeks to minimise the time people spend being homeless. Services will ensure people are equipped to sustain independent living and avoid repeat episodes of homelessness.

The key challenge will be to meet future demand for these services within the resources that are available. Changes to welfare benefits and a shortage of affordable homes in the city are likely to increase the need for help to prevent homelessness. At the same time, the council's budget for these services has reduced.

The draft Commissioning Plan was the subject of consultation June to August 2012. The final Commissioning Plan and procurement proposals are due to be approved by Cabinet on 4 October 2012.

## **Current services**

The services in this review include accommodation-based services (including specialist services for young people, women, refugees, offenders, teenage parents and families) and floating support provided to people in their own homes (including specialist support for young people, women rough sleepers, teenage parents and families). Except for the teenage parent services, all services are either level 2 (providing between 2-4 hours support per week) or level 3 (providing 1-2 hours support per week).

	<b>Units</b>
Single homeless accommodation-based support <sup>1</sup>	579
Single homeless & generic floating support <sup>2</sup>	405
Family accommodation-based support	63
Family specialist floating support	60
Teenage parents accommodation-based support	45
Teenage parents specialist floating support	28
<b><u>Eligibility for services</u></b>	

To be eligible for all the services (including specialist family and young parent services), people must:

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<sup>1</sup> Includes 10 family units

<sup>2</sup> Includes 38 units of support for young parents, and some services support families

1. be 'vulnerable';
2. be in need of 'housing-related support' to prevent homelessness or to assist a client who is homeless;
3. have recourse to public funds; and
4. have a clear local connection with Bristol, or have special circumstances (which can be evidenced) to show why a move to Bristol to obtain supported housing is needed.

## **Summary of proposals**

The detailed proposals are set out in the Commissioning Plan.

## **Challenges and options for improvement**

### **Using supported accommodation more effectively**

- For clients with more entrenched chaotic lifestyles, there will be an assessment process after 9 months to consider if the client wants and needs to remain in the accommodation. This will enable clients with higher level of needs to stay in supported accommodation up to 18 months. Disabled people may need longer – see amendment in disabled people's impact table p. 9.
- Services will be targeted at those with highest need.
- All single homeless supported accommodation providers will be contracted to provide equivalent levels of support (the equivalent of about 2.25 hours per client) and will be expected to take clients with low or medium support needs. This is a reduction in the overall levels of support across all services (the current average is 3.3 hours per client per week).
- All generic and specialist services will need to be accessible to, and able to effectively meet the needs of, all equality groups that are not expressly excluded from their service.

### **Timely and effective move on**

- Providers will need to develop move-on plans with their clients from the outset and ensure clients have realistic expectations about their length of stay in the service and the accommodation they are likely to move on to.
- In view of the shortage of social housing in Bristol, providers will need to assist more clients to move on to private rented accommodation.
- To improve long-term outcomes and ease the transition to settled accommodation, supported accommodation contracts will include the provision of "resettlement support" for those clients who move on to their own tenancies.



Single Homeless Services				
Provider	Service Name	Number of units	Support hours/week per unit	Total Support hours / week
1625 Independent People	Dispersed Accommodation	200	3.49	698
Elim Housing Association	Phoenix Place	55	3.5	192
Elim Housing Association	Ron Jones	42	2.42	102
Home Group Limited	Home Group Homelessness Service	18	4.76	86
Knightstone Housing Association	Supported Housing	44	2.31	102
Missing Link	Dedicated Rough Sleepers Unit	6	4.17	25
People Can	27 Stonebridge Park	3	3.83	11
Places for People	2 Trelawney Road	11	3.62	40
Places for People	Dispersed Accommodation	26	3.20	83
Places for People	RSI Floating Support (attached to accommodation)	98	3.44	337
Self Help Community Housing Association	Temporary Housing for Homeless people with Support	76	3.41	259
Total Accommodation based		579		1935
1625 Independent People	Floating Support	70	3.65	255
Bristol City Council	Tenant Support Service (includes 38 units support to teenage parents)	172	3.77	758
Solon South West	TSO - Floating Support	23	1.87	43
Missing Link	RSI resettlement service - Floating support	8	5.58	45
Knightstone	Floating Support	26	2.45	81
People Can	Tenancy Sustainment Team (Single Homeless)	54	4.86	262
Salvation Army	Tenancy Sustainment and Resettlement Team	52	3.85	200
Total Floating Support (Includes 38 units of support for young parents, and some services support families)		405		1644
Family Services				
Bristol City Council	Windermere	23	TBC	TBC
Bristol City Council Neighbourhoods	Trinity Lodge	19	1.58	30.02
Places for People	Fortfield Road	21	5.8	121.8
Total Accommodation based		63		151.82
Shelter	Homeless to Home	60	3.06	183.6
Total Floating Support		60		183.6
Teenage Parent Services				
Elim Housing Association	Lanercost and Wigton	11	3.15	34.65
Orbit Housing Association	Bristol Mother & Baby Project	15	12.88	193.2
Young Mother Group Trust Ltd	Supported Accommodation	19	6.63	125.97
Total Accommodation based		45		353.82
Places for People	Floating Support for Teenage Parents	28	2.94	82.32
Bristol City Council Neighbourhoods	Tenant Support Service	38	3.77	143.26
Total Floating Support		66		225.58

	Young people only
	Women only
	Refugee only

### Providing support more effectively

- The emphasis will be on improving outcomes for clients, particularly planned departures from supported accommodation and sustained independence. Planned departures are those people who move on from supported accommodation in a planned way either into their own tenancy, in with friends or family or other suitable accommodation.
- Across all single homeless services, the council will fund the equivalent of 2.25 hours per person per week. However services will be expected to vary the levels of support to meet the individual needs of clients.
- Contracts will not set out the amount of support to be provided to clients or the way that support should be provided. Instead we will encourage providers to build on best practice and develop innovative ways of achieving outcomes for clients. This might include:
  - o Group support sessions
  - o Peer support
  - o Use of volunteers
  - o Training and practical skills sessions
  - o Group activities
  - o Improving client involvement and control
  - o Providing one-to-one support by telephone
  - o More contact with clients by email
  - o Use client exit surveys to inform service improvements
  - o Better use of technology (eg. use of laptops on home visits)
- The key outcomes will relate to clients' housing outcomes at the time they leave the service and 6 and 12 months later.
- Providers will also be expected to take a holistic approach to working with their clients which might include help with:
  - o Managing money and reducing debt and arrears
  - o Access to work, education or training
  - o Recovery from mental illness
  - o Recovery from addiction
  - o Engaging in meaningful occupation
  - o Improving literary skills
  - o Building social networks and positive relationships
  - o Reducing offending behaviour
  - o Physical and emotional health and well-being

### Specialist services

- We plan to increase the proportion of specialist young people's services for people aged 16-21. This will include an increased number of young people's accommodation and two city-wide floating support services for people over 22. People aged 22-24 may be placed in young people's services in that is appropriate to meet their needs (eg. they are particularly vulnerable) or if they have a very strong preference for that service. Young people's services will need to have a particular focus on rebuilding relationships with families and helping clients to move home if it is safe for them to do so. They will also need to focus on education, training and employment.
- We will increase the number of women-only supported accommodation units. This will include some accommodation exclusively for young women (aged 16-21).

- There will be an integrated supported accommodation and floating support service for young parents. At least one accommodation scheme must be able to accommodate young fathers.
- We will continue to commission specialist supported accommodation for families – all providing a low level of support. However, we will no longer commission a specialist floating support service for families. Instead, floating support to families will be provided by the generic city-wide floating support services.
- We will no longer commission specialist services for refugees (11 units), offenders (18 units) rough sleepers (98 units) or women rough sleepers (6 units of supported accommodation and 8 units of floating support) as we believe the needs of these groups can be met within generic services.
- We will allow providers to opt to provide specialist services or schemes within their services, eg. for a particular age group, men-only LGB people, people with more complex needs.

#### Better joint working with drug and alcohol services and mental health services

- In order to assist in meeting the needs of clients with drug and alcohol issues, we will require providers bidding for contracts to have a written working agreement with an appropriate local drug treatment agency.
- The current NHS Modernising Mental Health programme involves the re-commissioning of adult primary and secondary mental health services in Bristol. Council commissioners will liaise with the providers of homelessness prevention services and providers of the future mental health services in order to promote effective joint working in the future.

## Proposed purchasing plans

The intention is to award contracts for three years with the option to extend contracts for a further period(s) totalling no more than two years. The budget to purchase these services will amount to annual expenditure of up to £3,823M in 2013-14 and £3,689M in 2014-15 and subsequent years.

Floating support (excluding support to young parents)		
	Current services	Proposed services
<b>Contracts</b>	8 contracts (including 1 in-house service)	3 contracts (2 generic and 1 young people)
<b>Specialism</b>	68% generic 16% young people (16-24) 14% families 2% women rough sleepers	Approx 66% generic Approx 33% young people (16-21) The generic service will support families
<b>Number of units</b>	427	No reduction (But do not intend to specify number of units – instead will focus on throughput and waiting times)
<b>Support funding per client per week</b>	Range 1.87 - 5.58 hrs Average 4.05 hrs	All services 2.25 hrs per week
<b>Proposed purchasing option</b> - Contracts will be awarded following a two-stage competitive tender process. The in-house Tenant Support Service will be invited to submit bids for both the young people's service and for one of the generic service contracts. The in-house bids will be evaluated alongside any external bids received for this service.		

Single homeless supported accommodation		
	Current services	Proposed services
<b>Contracts</b>	11 contracts	6-8 contracts
<b>Specialism</b>	35% generic 35% young people (16-25) 11% women only 17% former rough sleepers 2% refugees	up to 50% young people (16-21) up to 15% women only
<b>Number of units</b>	579	At least 604
<b>Support funding per client per week</b>	Range 2.31- 5.58 hrs Average 3.34 hrs	All services 2.25 hrs plus c.20hrs per client who moves on to own tenancy (resettlement support)
<b>Proposed purchasing option</b> - Open tender process to create a framework (ie. an umbrella agreement setting out the terms under which individual contracts are awarded or "called off").		

<b>Families emergency supported accommodation</b>		
	<b>Current services</b>	<b>Proposed services</b>
<b>Contracts</b>	3 services (including 2 in-house services)	3 services
<b>Number of units</b>	63	71 in first year (may need to increase in future years)
<b>Support funding per week</b>	Range 1.58 - 5.8 hrs per family Average – 2.9 hrs per family	Low level (similar to lowest current funding). Details TBC Plus c. 20 hrs per family resettlement support
<b>Proposed purchasing option</b> - Retain in-house services. Invite the current external provider to renegotiate a new contract with a reduced level of support		

<b>Integrated young parents service</b>		
	<b>Current services</b>	<b>Proposed services</b>
<b>Contracts</b>	5 contracts: 3 supported accommodation services 2 floating support services (including 1 in-house service)	1 contract to provide an integrated supported accommodation and floating support service
<b>Number of units</b>	45 units supported accommodation 66 units floating support	35-37 units supported accommodation*. We will not specify the number of units of floating support, but expect a similar number of placements per year as currently provided for.
<b>Support funding per week per unit / family</b>	<b>Supported accommodation</b>  Range - 3.15 -12.88 hrs Average - 7.8 hrs <b>Floating support</b>  Range - 2.94 – 3.77 hrs Average – 3.4 hrs	<b>Supported accommodation</b>  3.5 hrs and cost of 24 hr cover at one scheme. Plus c.20 hrs per client resettlement support. <b>Floating support</b>  3 hrs
<b>Proposed purchasing option</b> - Two-stage competitive tender process.		

### **Stakeholder involvement January – April 2012**

There has been extensive consultation with stakeholders to better understand clients' needs and service requirements and develop the commissioning strategy.

#### **Professional stakeholder consultation**

On-line questionnaires were used to collect views and data from providers, referrers and front line staff. The responses from these questionnaires are included in the appendices. A series of stakeholder events were arranged in February to April:

Young parents workshop (30 January 2012) – SWOT analysis to identify strengths and weaknesses of current services and future opportunities and threats to services. The workshop also identified options for improvement.

Workshop 1 (28<sup>th</sup> February 2012) - Considered the needs of different client and equality groups with a wide array of providers and professionals who work with the different clients groups using lower and floating support services in the city. Client groups considered were: BME, families, disabled and long-term ill, LGBT, offenders, people with complex needs (including mental health and addiction issues), refugees and young people.

Workshop 2 (12<sup>th</sup> March 2012) - SWOT analysis to identify strengths and weaknesses of current services, and future opportunities and threats to services focusing on accommodation-based services, floating support services and other commissioned homelessness prevention / ETE services (“wrap-around” services). The second session concentrated on options for meeting gaps identified in workshop 1 and for improving outcomes.

Workshop 3 (24<sup>th</sup> April 2012) - To discuss the emerging issues and options paper and and focus on:

- Giving providers an early indication of possible proposals
- Enabling stakeholders to shape proposals and identify options
- Discussing key questions with stakeholders
- Developing a partnership approach

### Client consultation

A questionnaire was used to ask clients about the services they received; a summary of responses is attached as an appendix to the draft commissioning strategy. Responses were collected by telephone and in one to one sessions between Commissioning and Performance team staff and service users. A number of focus groups were also held covering different client and equality groups that covered the needs of service users and how services could be improved and made more accessible. The following table shows details of consultation events with clients.

<b>Client group</b>	<b>Service/Provider</b>	<b>Where/how</b>	<b>When</b>
Young parents	Lanercost and Wigton (Elim); Priory Court (Orbit HA) and Kilburn Court (Yong Mother's Group Trust	Community spaces near the venues and Priory Court	January 2012
Families	Windermere, Trinity Lodge (both BCC) and Fortfield House (Places for	At the family hostels	Feb/March 2012

	People)		
Single people	Ron Jones house (Elim)	At Ron Jones House	March 2012
Single women	Phoenix Place (Elim)	At Pheonix Place	Feb 2012
Young people	1625 Independent People and the Foyer	At 1625 offices and at the Foyer	March/April 2012
Refugee women	Refugee Women of Bristol	Congregational Hall, Newton St	April 2012
Women service users of drug and alcohol services	Users Feedback Organisation (women's group)	Bristol Drugs Project (Brunswick Square)	March 2012
Single BME service users of drug and alcohol services	Users Feedback Organisation (Mushwera)	Barton Hill Settlement	April 2012

### **Consultation on draft Commissioning Plan**

The draft Commissioning Plan was published for a consultation period from 15<sup>th</sup> June to 10<sup>th</sup> August 2012. Stakeholders were invited to comment on the draft plan and purchasing proposals via email, post, through responding to an electronic questionnaire and the range of stakeholder events and focus groups set out below. Consultation Analysis of feedback received, along with a You Said, We Did summary of the council's response to the key issues raised in the consultation, are published on the council's webpages. <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/commissioning-homelessness-prevention-support-services-bristol>

#### **3.6.1 Consultation events and focus groups**

<b>Consultees</b>	<b>Where/how</b>	<b>When</b>
Women users of drug & alcohol services	UFO women's group – Brunswick Square	19.6.12
Young parents at the Meriton School	Meriton School	20.6.12
Young parent clients	Lanercost and Wigton supported accommodation for young parents	25.6.12
Professional stakeholders	The Pavilion, Harbourside	25.6.12
Women service users	Phoenix Place	27.6.12
Service users	Focus group - Barton Hill Settlement	2 July 2012
Young parents practitioners	Meeting in council offices	10 July 2012

Service users	Focus group - Bristol Youth Hostel	16 July 2012
LGB young people	Focus group - Out Loud	17 July 2012
Young service users	Focus group - 1625	19 July 2012
Mental health service users	Focus group - Second Step	24 July 2012
Professional stakeholders	Stakeholder event - Old Council House	25 July 2012
Professional stakeholders	Stakeholder event – Old Council House	1 <sup>st</sup> August 2012

### **Needs Analysis**

Appendix 2 to the draft Commissioning Strategy is the Needs Analysis. This sets out the findings from data analysis, questionnaire responses, stakeholder involvement and our review of research and good practice. It contains information about current clients and client needs, including information relating to various equality groups.



## Protected characteristic - Age

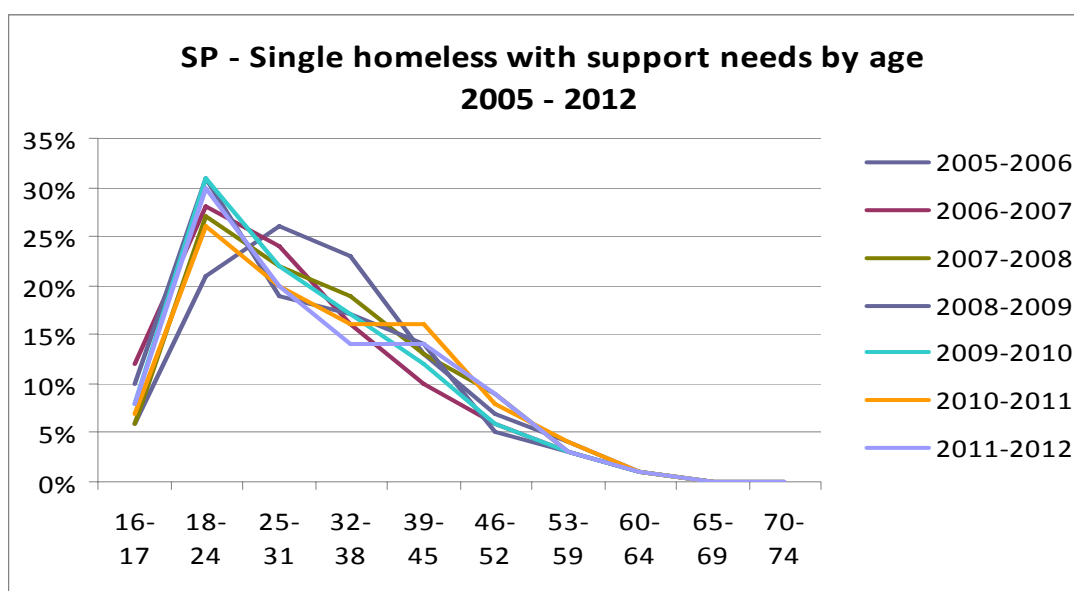
### Current position

Young people are significantly over-represented in the services.

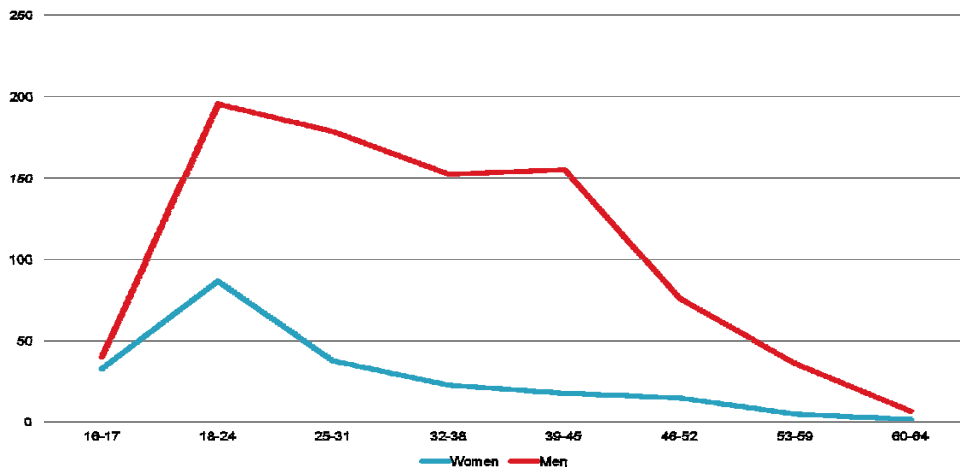
Age	Floating support services	Accommodation-based services
16-17	3%	7%
18-21	30%	43%
22-24	11%	14%
25-34	17%	19%
35-44	17%	10%
45-54	16%	6%
55-64	5%	1%
65+	2%	

Half of people in single homeless supported accommodation are aged between 16 and 21. Two-thirds are under 25. 83% are under 35. Floating support service users are more evenly spread across the age groups. Nonetheless, one third are 16-21 and nearly one half are under 25 (44%).

Looking at all SP clients who are in the primary clients group “Single Homeless with Support Needs”, the age profile has not changed substantially since 2006. The only real change is that in the last two years there has been an increase in 32-45 year olds (likely to be an affect of the recession).



The chart below shows the proportions of men and women in all homelessness prevention services in Bristol, including high support hostels. The proportions of men are significantly higher in all age groups. The numbers of men and women both peak in the 18-24 age group. However, the numbers of women drop off much more rapidly from the age of 25.

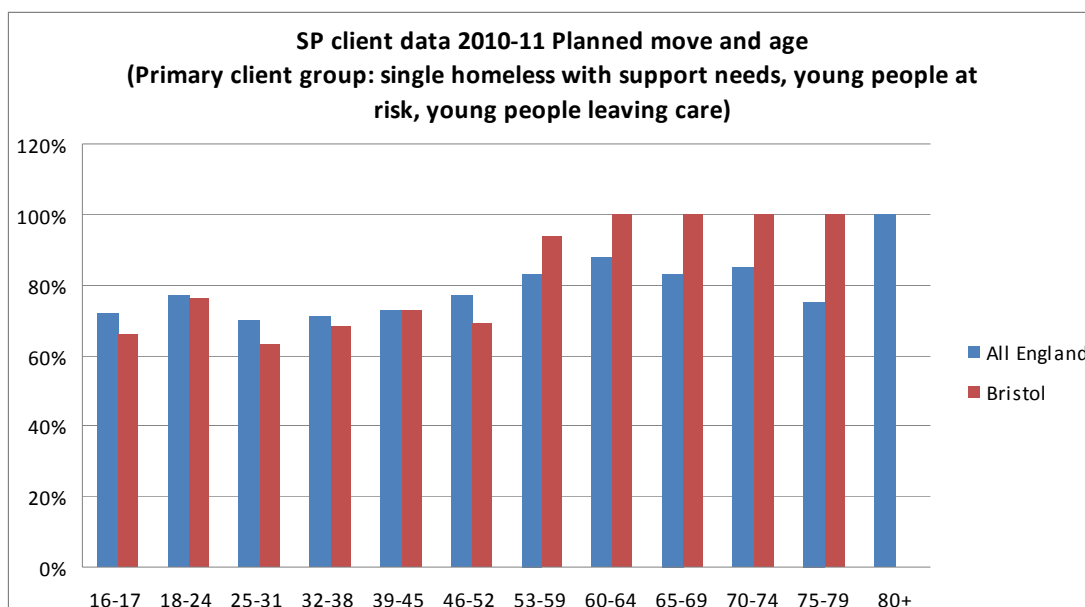


There may be external pressures that increase homelessness amongst young people. The housing benefit changes may lead to increased homelessness amongst young people (for example the four bed cap, and the forthcoming maximum benefit cap). The changes to the single room rate may also mean that there is much more homelessness amongst people aged 25-35, although there will be exceptions for people who have lived in homeless hostels.

Currently high proportions of young people aged 16-24 are in generic supported accommodation and housed with older age groups.

### Outcomes – planned and unplanned departures

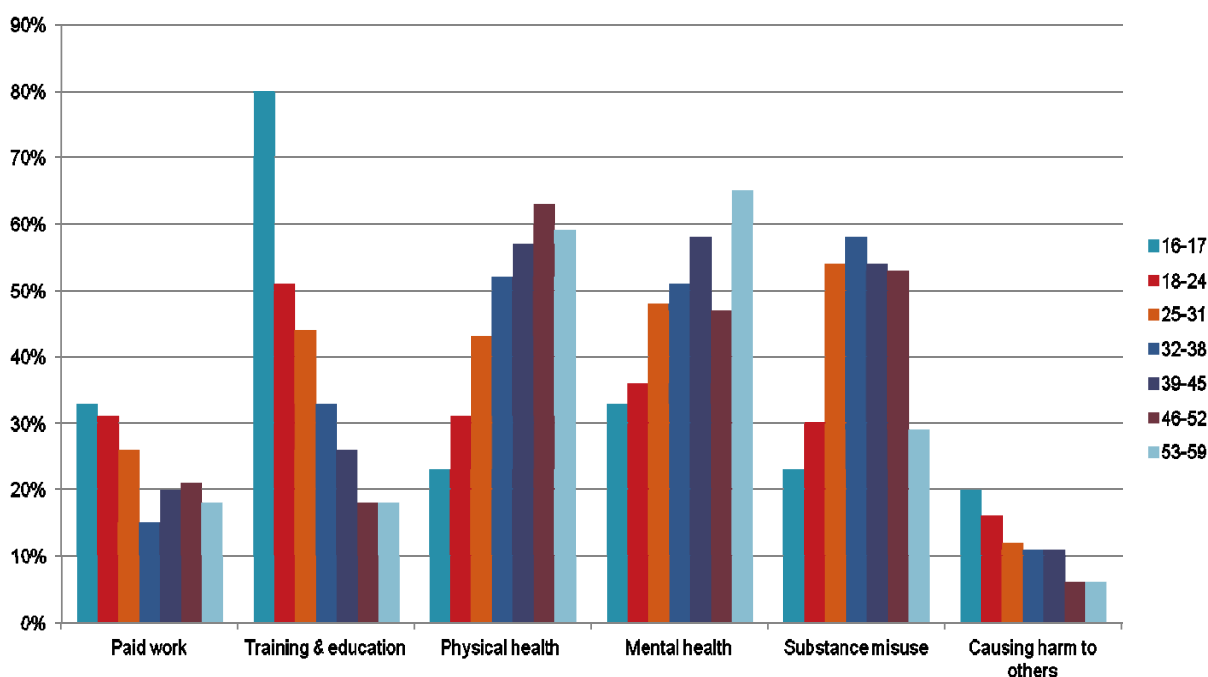
The chart below show the proportions of clients in all services who left the service in a planned way (a positive outcome for the client). For example about 65% of 16-17 year olds in Bristol had planned departures (eg. to their own tenancy, or a planned move to family or friends) while the other 35% departures were unplanned (eg. to prison, rough sleeping or an unplanned move to family or friends). The chart shows that outcomes are generally best for those aged 53 plus. There is not very significant variation in outcomes for the different age groups younger than 53.



### What do we know from the review about specific needs of different age groups?

See Needs Analysis for more details.

When cases are closed providers record what their clients needed help with. This data indicates that all age groups have similar levels of need in relation to obtaining and sustaining accommodation, maximising income and managing debt. The chart below shows the areas in which there is greatest variation between the different age groups. The need for support with issues relating to physical and mental health increases with age and a greater proportion of people in the older age groups need help with substance abuse. Younger age groups have greater needs for support accessing work, training and education and in relation to causing harm to others.



### Views of professionals and clients – young people

- Young people are particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation.
- They need to be protected from forming relationships with older homeless people who may take advantage of them, or be a bad influence. It is very important that young people are housed separately.
- 16-25 year olds have different entitlement to benefits and need support and advice from workers with specialist knowledge of working with this age group. Specialist services are also well placed to link with other young people's services and agencies.
- All clients were very clear that young people should only be in supported accommodation with other young people. One said he would prefer to sleep on the streets than spend another night in a generic hostel. Young people only environments felt much safer and more positive.
- Prevention issues are very important, and likely to be different to those in older age groups (eg. family mediation is very important).
- Young LGB people often fear and experience rejection and/or violence from their families.
- Some clients thought family mediation might help to prevent homelessness or help people to move back into the family home, depending on the culture of the family. Others said they thought support workers would take sides and could not be trusted.
- Young people do not know where to go for help with housing issues. They suggested there should be more publicity about services (eg. in Metro).
- Clients were enthusiastic about the idea of group support sessions, either in a shared house or other setting.

### Views of professionals and clients – other age groups

- There are a significant number of older men in supported accommodation who find it difficult to manage a home as have been made homeless as a result of relationship breakdown.
- Often high levels of illiteracy and heavy alcohol use amongst older age groups.
- Many men in their 40s become visible when their parents have died, they have no life skills to maintain a home.
- Many of the men (and sometimes women) in their 40s who present to BCC have the physical care needs of people in their 70s due to their lifestyle (eg. may have liver problems, lower limb injuries, bone density problems and deep vein thrombosis).
- Smaller shared homes work, providing a mutually supportive environment work for middle-aged clients.
- Middle-aged men with entrenched lifestyles have traditionally had their needs ignored in generic services. Demand likely to increase as increasing numbers of people with complex needs move into their late 30s and 40s.
- Need for more provision suitable for middle-aged women.

### **Proposals relating to this protected characteristic**

- Increase the number of supported accommodation units for 16-24 year olds from 200 to 302 (of which 30-50 to be for young women only). 16-21 year olds must be accommodated in young people's accommodation. 22-24 year olds may be accommodated in generic accommodation (depending on their wishes and availability of accommodation).
- Commission a city-wide specialist floating support service for young people aged 16-24 (again people aged 22-24 may be placed with the generic floating support service).
- Commission an integrated supported accommodation and floating support service for young parents aged 16-24.
- All providers to have the option to provide specialist services / houses for different age groups (eg. a shared house for older people or for young people aged 16-19).

### **Consultation on proposals**

Consultation events focussed on issues relating to this protected characteristic

- Focus groups with young parents – 20.6.12, 21.6.12 and 25.6.12
- Meeting with young parents practitioners – 10.7.12
- Freedom Youth, Outloud (LGBT young people's group) – 17.7.12
- 1625 Youth Board – 19.7.12
- Professional stakeholder events focussed on issues relating to young people – 25.6.12 and 25.7.12

Key issues relating to this protected characteristic raised in electronic questionnaires, consultation events and other feedback:

- There was a lack of consensus about which age groups should be accommodated together except perhaps that young people aged 16-19 should generally not be accommodated with people aged over 25 (this may not apply to women, see gender section).
- Young people felt strongly that people in their early 20s should be able to opt for either a young people only service or a generic service and that what was the right service would depend on the individual.
- Most consultees agreed that young people's services should focus on helping young people to rebuild relationships with their families and help them to move back in with them if safe to do so.
- Some young clients raised the need for out of hours services for people in full-time education and employment.

## Impact of proposals on this group

Possible Impact on different age groups	Actions to be included in the proposal – to maximise improvements and mitigated adverse impact
Increasing the total number of bed spaces young people will help to improve the service provision for this client group and will ensure no 16-21 year olds are accommodated with older clients.	Monitor waiting times and compare for young people and generic services.
Commissioning an increased proportion of specialist young people's services will mean that all 16-21 year olds receive services tailored to their needs.	
Providing young people only services amounts to direct discrimination on the grounds of age. This discrimination will be lawful as it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim (ie. to keep young people safe and meet their specific needs).	
Focusing on mediation and support for young people to return home (where this is appropriate) will help with reconnection with family and support networks for young people and will decrease the demand for supported accommodation for this age group.	Further consider how best to incentivise providers, particularly supported accommodation providers, to work with young people to enable them to return to live with their families. We also recognise the specific issues for young LGB people
There will be a decreased proportion of supported accommodation and floating support for people aged 22 plus, many of whom may have more entrenched chaotic lifestyles and higher support needs.	Monitor and compare demand and waiting times for young people's and 22+ services. More 22-24 year olds could be placed in young people's services if necessary to even out discrepancies.
It is possible that more people in 22+ age group require supported accommodation for a longer period than 9 months.	Monitor duration of stay by age group. This should be mitigated by the reassessment after 9 months for people with chaotic lifestyles Mitigate as above.
	Providers will be permitted to create specialist units / services as long as this does not adversely impact throughput. For example, they may provide a shared-house for older men or a specialist service for 16-19 year olds or for young LGB people.

<b>Possible Impact on different age groups</b>	<b>Actions to be included in the proposal – to maximise improvements and mitigated adverse impact</b>
<p><b>Commissioning process</b> Decommissioning the inherited services (originally directly funded and not commissioned by the Bristol City Council) and tendering competitively will mean that all successful organisations' equalities policies have been through robust evaluation.</p>	<p>Tenders will be scored according to their demonstrable commitment to providing an inclusive environment, including staff training arrangements. Contracts will require that tenderers comply with the s.149 Equality Act duty to have due regard to equality objectives.</p>
<p><b>Monitoring</b> New services will be expected to vastly improve monitoring of equalities data, by updating the HSR with the relevant data once a trusting relationship has been built, and the person is not trying to access the service (one reason why current data is of such poor quality).</p> <p>The council will be offering equality policy and monitoring training to providers and prospective providers from October 2012 to help improve tenderers' understanding of the council's equality monitoring and performance requirements.</p>	<p>There will be six monthly performance meetings with new contractors around regular agenda. One item on these agenda will be the contractors' understanding of the equalities concerns within the service, their commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive service, feedback from residents including those with protected characteristics, and the organisations' responses to any problems that have arisen.</p> <p>We will monitor outcomes, refusals and waiting times by equality group and will expect providers to take action to address any significant differences (eg. if disabled people are waiting longer to access supported accommodation)</p>



## Protected characteristic - Disability

### Current position

#### Client profile for all lower and floating support services

HSR data for 2010-11 for all single homeless lower and floating support services records that 8% of clients are disabled. This data is recorded at point of referral and is not deemed to be very reliable, in particular because it does not reflect the high number of clients with significant mental health problems.

The 2010 Homeless Health Needs Audit surveyed 152 clients from a range of homelessness agencies in Bristol (for more information see Health Needs section below). Of those interviewed, 76% reported one or more problems relating to mental health and 57% said they had a long-term mental health need or condition. 59% said they experienced a long-term physical health need or problem.

There are also likely to be quite high numbers of people with a learning difficulty in these services, but the figure is not available, partly because it may be undiagnosed, but mainly because the information is not recorded. Prior to 2011, there was a national indicator relating to 'adult service users with learning difficulties in settled accommodation as a proportion of people with learning difficulties known to the LA'. In April 2010 in Bristol 42.2% of people with learning difficulties were in settled accommodation, this dropped to 31.7% in April 2011. The indicator has been removed by Government so we do not have up to date information. However the information gained whilst measuring the indicator could imply that people with significant learning difficulties have difficulties in accessing settled accommodation and their needs should be recognised within commissioning homelessness services.

Research conducted in another area highlighted the high proportion of homeless clients with literacy difficulties.

- Over a third of respondents had difficulty understanding what they read
- Around half had problems with writing
- Almost 10% indicated that they are functionally illiterate
- 55% needed help to fill in forms
- 46% had trouble writing letters

The EHRC Hidden in Plain Sight review of disability related harassment identified there have been a significant number of homicides of people with learning difficulties where the perpetrators have been 'friends' who have exploited disabled people. The report identifies 'many of the victims in these cases were socially isolated, which put them at greater risk of harassment and violence. The harassment often took place in the context of exploitative relationships'. The Government Hate Crime Strategy (April 2012) recommends that police and local government responses to the exploitation of disabled people and their exposure to anti-social behaviour are treated more seriously than they have been considered in the past.

## Outcomes for disabled people

The outcomes for those clients recorded to be disabled are better than average, but numbers are so low that this data is not very reliable.

## **What do we know from lower & floating support review about specific needs of this group?**

- Disabled clients can be subject to exploitation.
- Better links are needed with health services and health and social care.
- There is a continued need for accommodation that is accessible, particularly to people with mobility and sensory impairments.
- The lower and floating support services are short-term and unable to meet the long-term needs of many disabled people including clients with learning difficulties, enduring mental health needs and other long-term ill health needs. Therefore liaison with longer-term support services is necessary to enable people to move on from short-term homeless prevention support services.

## **Proposals relating to this protected characteristic**

- The current NHS Modernising Mental Health programme involves the re-commissioning of adult primary and secondary mental health services in Bristol. Council commissioners will liaise with the providers of homelessness prevention services and providers of the future mental health services in order to promote effective joint working in the future.

## **Consultation on proposals**

Give details of any consultation events focused on issues relating to this protected characteristic:

- Second Step floating support user group (mental health specialist services) – 24.7.12
- Stakeholder event with focus on clients with complex needs – 25.7.12

Key issues relating to this protected characteristic raised in electronic questionnaire, consultation events and other feedback:

- Clients with mental ill health reported that they had a clear preference for self-contained accommodation and that shared accommodation was very problematic for them.
- Clients with mental ill health and/or personality disorders were more likely to fall out with their provider and would therefore be more adversely affected by a reduction in the number of floating support services.
- Many clients have literacy problems, so providers should not rely on approaches that assume clients can read and write (eg. emails and texts).
- Face to face individual work is particularly important for clients with mental ill health.
- The importance of good joined up working with mental health agencies.

- Young people aged 22-24 with learning disabilities should be able to access the young people's services if those services would more appropriately meet their needs.

### Impact of proposals on this group

Possible Impact on disabled people	Actions to be included in the proposal – to maximise improvements and mitigated adverse impact
We plan to commission 604 units of supported accommodation for single homeless people using a competitive framework process as well as 35 supported accommodation units for young parents and 71 units for families	Criteria for selecting accommodation is likely to include accessibility. We aim to ensure there are sufficient accessible units across the city. Assessment of the quality of all accommodation will include consideration of physical and communication access issues.
We will commission services that deliver improved outcomes for clients, particularly housing related outcomes. Providers will also be expected to measure their clients' progress in achieving outcomes relating to a range of other needs including: recovery from mental illness; improving physical and emotional health and well-being; improving literacy; access to work, education or training. We will meet regularly with providers to monitor client outcomes.	Providers will be expected to improved outcomes for all equality groups. They will also be encouraged to learn from the experiences of "psychologically informed environments" and adopt those practices. This would help to deliver better outcomes for clients, particularly those who have experienced trauma.
Requiring average length of stay to reduce to 9 months may adversely impact some disabled people with longer-term support needs – for example people with learning disabilities or enduring mental health problems.	This will be mitigated by introducing an assessment process to determine whether individuals want and need to stay for longer (up to 18 months). This also provides an opportunity to consider how best to meet the needs of people with longer-term needs, and make appropriate referrals to other agencies.
<b>Commissioning process</b> Decommissioning the inherited services (originally directly funded and not commissioned by the Bristol City Council) and tendering competitively will mean that all successful organisations' equalities policies have been through robust evaluation.	Tenders will be scored according to their demonstrable commitment to providing an inclusive environment, including staff training arrangements. Contracts will require that tenderers will comply with the s.149 Equality Act duty to have due regard to equality objectives.

<b>Possible Impact on disabled people</b>	<b>Actions to be included in the proposal – to maximise improvements and mitigated adverse impact</b>
<p><b>Monitoring</b></p> <p>New services will be expected to vastly improve monitoring of equalities data, by updating the HSR with the relevant data once a trusting relationship has been built, and the person is not trying to access the service (one reason why current data is of such poor quality). This will include monitoring by impairment group.</p> <p>The council will be offering equality policy and monitoring training to providers and prospective providers from October 2012 to help improve tenderers' understanding of the council's equality monitoring and performance requirements.</p>	<p>There will be six monthly performance meetings with new contractors around regular agenda. One item on these agenda will be the contractors' understanding of the equalities concerns within the service, their commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive service, feedback from residents including those with protected characteristics, and the organisations' responses to any problems that have arisen.</p> <p>We will monitor outcomes, refusals and waiting times by equality group and will expect providers to take action to address any significant differences (eg. if disabled people are waiting longer to access supported accommodation).</p>

## Protected characteristic – Gender

### Current position

#### Client profile for all lower and floating support services

Housing Support Register data 2011

	<b>Floating support services</b>	<b>Accommodation-based services</b>
<b>Women</b>	52%	43%
<b>Men</b>	34%	54%
<b>Prefer not to say</b>	14%	3%

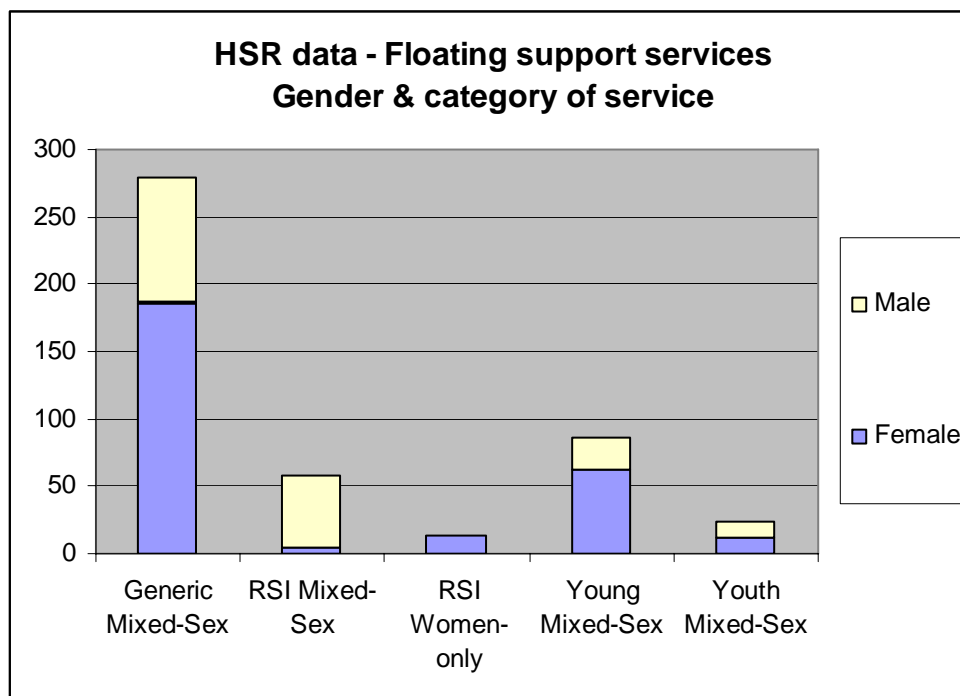
In the last 2 years, only 3% of clients in all young parents services were male.

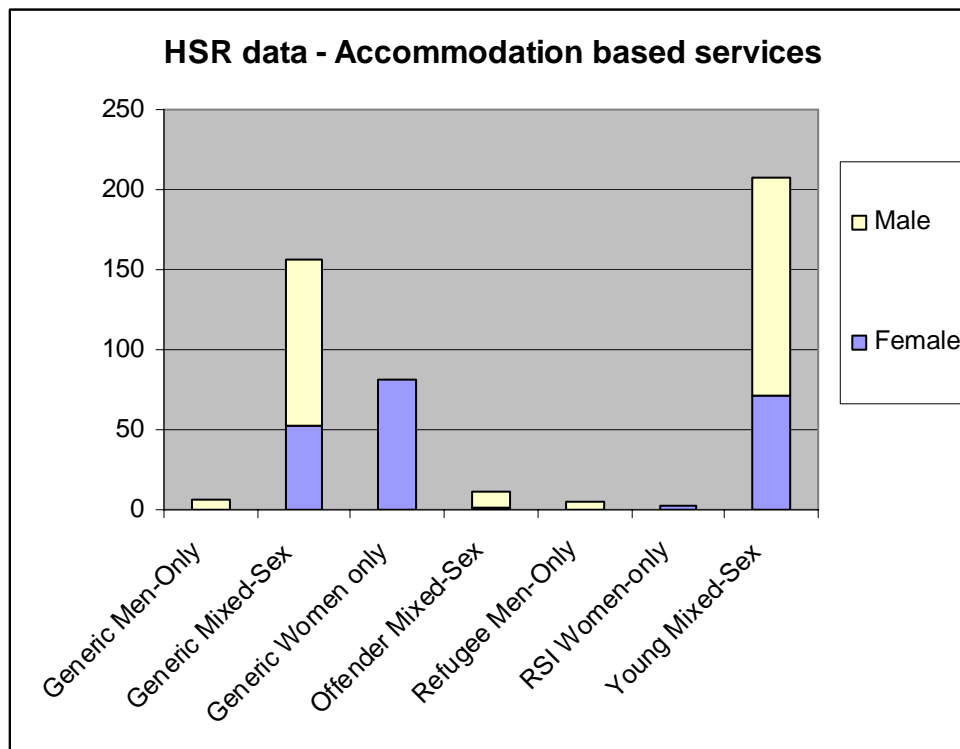
#### Gender and category of service

There are currently contracts for the following single-sex services:

- 55 units generic women only supported accommodation
- 6 units women rough sleepers supported accommodation
- 11 units refugee men-only supported accommodation
- 45 units women only young parents supported accommodation
- 8 units women rough sleepers floating support

The tables below show the proportions of men and women in different categories of service.



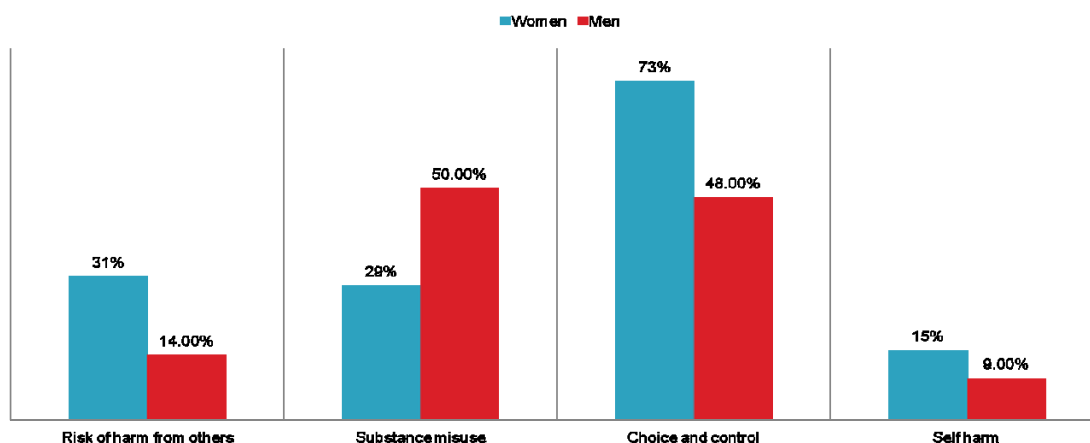


### Gender and age

There are higher proportions of females in the younger age groups. See age section for more details.

### Gender and needs

When cases are closed, providers record what clients needed help with. The following chart shows those areas where there is most difference between the needs of men and women.



### Planned and unplanned departures – data for this characteristic

SP data for 2010-11 on planned departures for people in the client groups single homeless, homeless families, rough sleepers and young people at risk indicates the following:

Women – 81% departures were planned

Men – 70% departures were planned

### **What do we know from lower and floating support review about specific needs of men and women?**

See the Needs Analysis for more details.

- There is a lack of move on accommodation for women with higher support needs in women-only services. There is no pathway from women-only high support services to women-only level 2-3 services.
- Some women may benefit from a women-only floating support service staffed by women with understanding of the issues facing women including domestic abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation.
- Concern that the introduction of HSR leads to a reduction in the proportions of women in homelessness SP services.
- All projects need a good understanding of domestic violence and exploitation issues.
- The routes to homelessness are different for women. They may be staying in unsafe or unsuitable situations instead of seeking help. Domestic abuse is the main factor where it differs for women.
- Women often live in unsafe or inappropriate situations as opposed to approaching services. This is the hidden side of women's homelessness.
- Shared houses where women can support each other should be an option.
- Women are more likely to take parental responsibility for their children and need to be housed with their children and are less likely to become homeless as they get older. They are also less likely to admit to drug and alcohol use.
- There is currently no supported accommodation for young fathers either in couples or as single fathers.
- There are a significant number of middle-aged men in supported accommodation who find it difficult to manage a home as have been made homeless as a result of relationship breakdown and there are often high levels of illiteracy and heavy alcohol use amongst this group. Other men in their 40s become visible when their parents have died, they have no life skills to maintain a home. Basic skills needed by this group such as budgeting and cooking.

## **Proposals relating to this protected characteristic**

- 10-18% of young people's supported accommodation to be women-only.
- 10-15% of supported accommodation for 25 plus years to be women-only.
- At least one of the young parents supported accommodation schemes will accommodate young fathers (aged 16-24).

## **Consultation on proposals**

Give details of any consultation events focused on issues relating to this protected characteristic:

- Women's UFO (users of drug and alcohol services) – 19.6.12
- Focus group with women clients – 27.6.12

Key issues relating to this protected characteristic raised in electronic questionnaires, consultation events and other feedback:

- About a third of clients who responded to electronic questionnaires said they preferred single sex accommodation. There was not a significant difference between the responses for men and women. However, the total number of clients who responded to this question was only 15 (10 women and 5 men), so the results are not conclusive.
- Just over two-thirds of clients who responded to electronic questionnaires said they would like to be able to choose the sex of their support worker (the answers did not differ between male and female responders). However, the total number of clients who responded to this question was only 15 (10 women and 5 men), so the results are not conclusive.
- Some male clients, particularly Muslim men, expressed discomfort about living in mixed sex accommodation and would prefer to live in men-only accommodation. This could be separate floors, or separate clusters in a larger accommodation scheme.
- Some female clients of all age ranges indicated that they thought that women only accommodation should be for all age groups; that younger women benefited from living with older "motherly" women and that older women found it helpful to live with younger women. This view was shared by some professional stakeholders, but not all. Other stakeholders were concerned about the potential risk older women with entrenched chaotic lifestyles pose to younger women, particularly the risk of encouraging involvement in sex work.



## Impact of proposals on this group

Possible Impact on men and women	Actions to be included in the proposal – to maximise improvements and mitigated adverse impact
There will be an increased number of women-only units to meet the needs of women who want and need to be in women-only supported accommodation.	
The majority of clients consulted indicated they would like to chose the gender of their support worker. Some indicated this was a preference, and others that it was a necessity (eg. could only discuss past sex abuse with a woman).	We will consider requiring providers (except single-sex services) to have a gender-balanced workforce able to maximise the opportunity of providing clients' preferred gender for their support worker, although it is unlikely we will be able to guarantee a choice
Stakeholders suggest that some men have particular needs. Some men would also prefer men-only accommodation. However we are not commissioning any specialist services for men.	Providers will be permitted to create single-sex units, or other specialist units / services as long as this does not adversely impact throughput. We will encourage the provision of some men-only accommodation.
Currently the three young parents supported accommodation schemes do not accommodate fathers.	Ensure that at least one scheme is able to accommodate young fathers and that there is no direct or indirect sex discrimination against young fathers wishing to parent their children.
<b>Commissioning process</b> Decommissioning the inherited services (originally directly funded and not commissioned by the Bristol City Council) and tendering competitively will mean that all successful organisations' equalities policies have been through robust evaluation.	Tenders will be scored according to their demonstrable commitment to providing an inclusive environment, including staff training arrangements. Contracts will require that tenderers will comply with the s.149 Equality Act duty to have due regard to equality objectives.

<b>Possible Impact on men and women</b>	<b>Actions to be included in the proposal – to maximise improvements and mitigated adverse impact</b>
<p><b>Monitoring</b></p> <p>New services will be expected to vastly improve monitoring of equalities data, by updating the HSR with the relevant data once a trusting relationship has been built, and the person is not trying to access the service (one reason why current data is of such poor quality).</p>	<p>There will be six monthly performance meetings with new contractors around regular agenda. One item on these agenda will be the contractors' understanding of the equalities concerns within the service, their commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive service, feedback from residents including those with protected characteristics, and the organisations' responses to any problems that have arisen.</p> <p>We will monitor outcomes, refusals and waiting times by equality group and will expect providers to take action to address any significant differences.</p>

## Protected characteristic – Race

### Current position

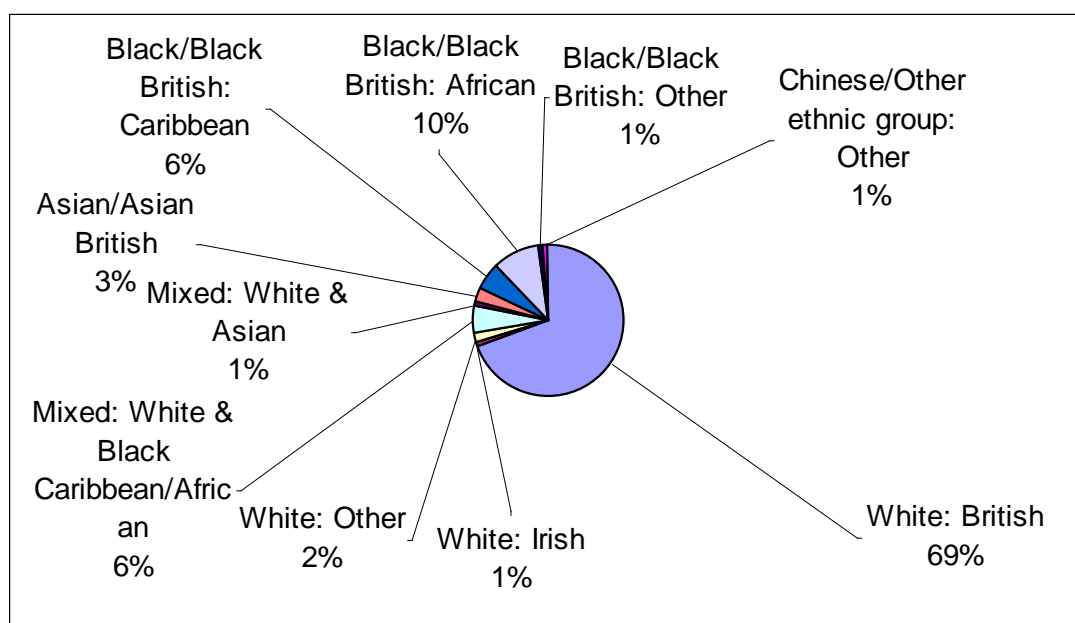
All single homeless lower and floating support services – HSR data 2010-11

The following groups were significantly over-represented in lower and floating support services:

Mixed White & Black Caribbean / African

Black or Black British: Caribbean

Black or Black British: African



	L&F clients 2010-11	Bristol ONS population estimate 2009	Difference
White: British	69%	80.6%	-11.6
White: Irish	1%	0.9%	+0.1%
White: Other	2%	5.5%	-3.5%
Mixed: White & Black Caribbean / African	6%	1.2%	+4.8%
Mixed White & Asian	1%	0.6%	+0.4%
Asian or Asian British	3%	5.1%	-2.1%
Black or Black British: Caribbean	6%	1.3%	+4.7%
Black or Black British: African	10%	1.8%	+8.2%
Chinese / Other ethnic group	1%	2.6%	-1.6%

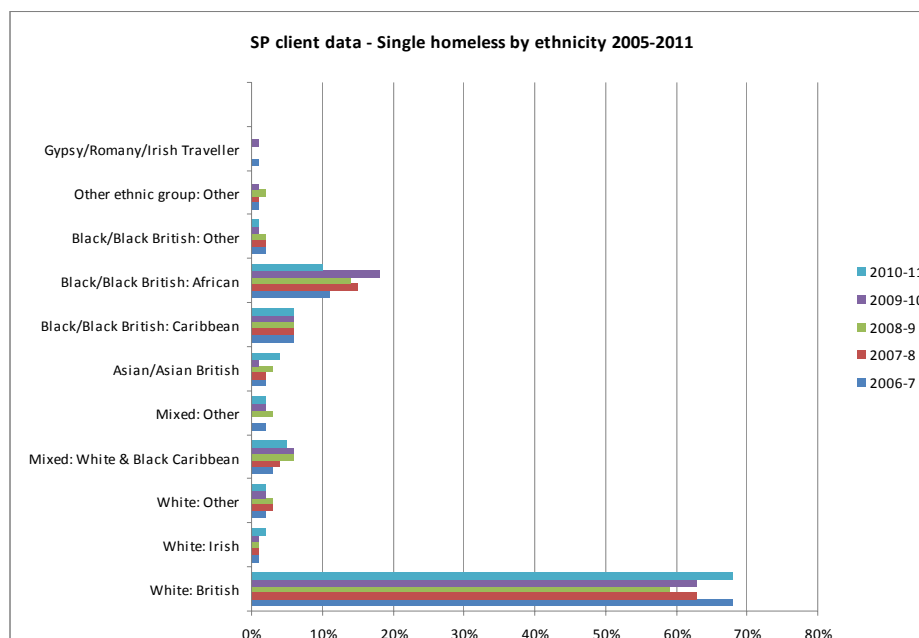
There is over-representation of all black and dual heritage groups, partly explained by the increased likelihood of these groups to live in poverty, and to live in accommodation with less security of tenure. This does not indicate that there is an access problem for these groups, but may indicate that the preventing homelessness services which work to prevent people becoming (for example the advice services and services to help people move on successfully) may not be reaching these groups.

There is significant over-representation of Black African people in these services. A lot of these people are refugees and are new to the country, and so are more likely to be homeless. The Population of Bristol document itself points out that the actual population of Black Africans in Bristol is likely to be considerably higher than 1.8%.

There is an under-representation of White British people, but seeing as the number is still the largest by some distance, this is better explained by the over-representation of other groups, rather than any problems relating to access for White British people.

There is also an under-representation of other white groups, many of whom will be central and eastern Europeans. This difference is explained by the limited access to these services those people have because of the eligibility criteria for housing benefit, and for accommodation under part 6 of the Housing Act 1996.

Some providers have expressed concerns that the introduction of the Housing Support Register (the council's central referral system for single homeless support services) about 4 years ago lead to a reduction in the proportions of BME people accessing services. The SP data shows this is not the case: proportions have fluctuated, but there is no overall trend.

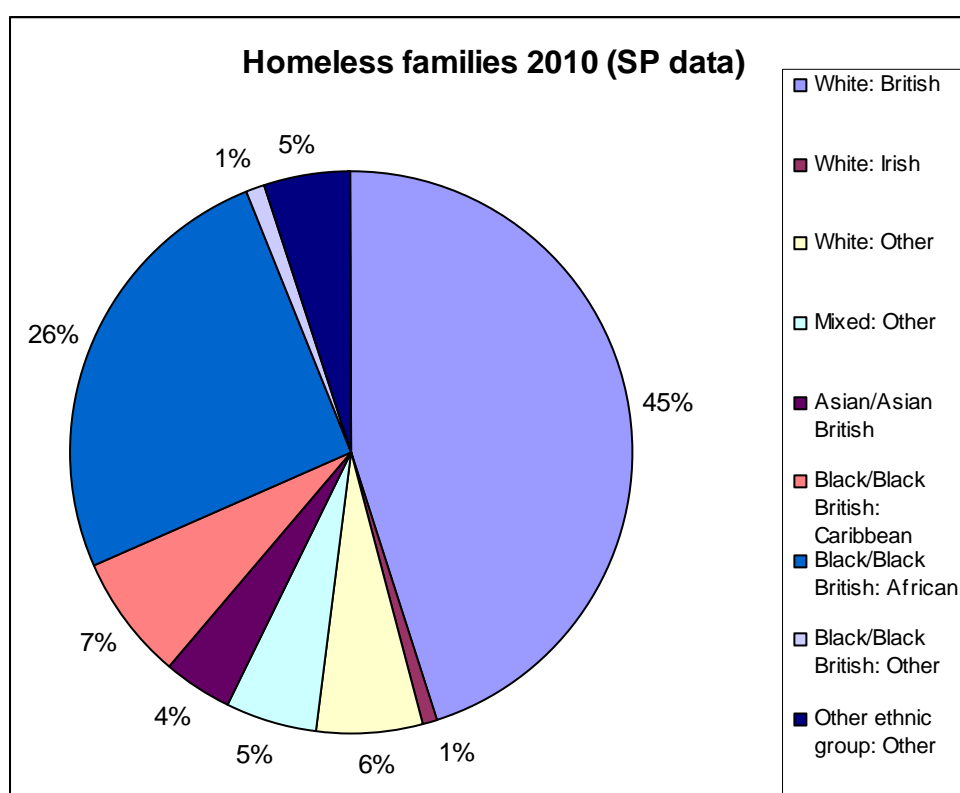


### Teenage parent services

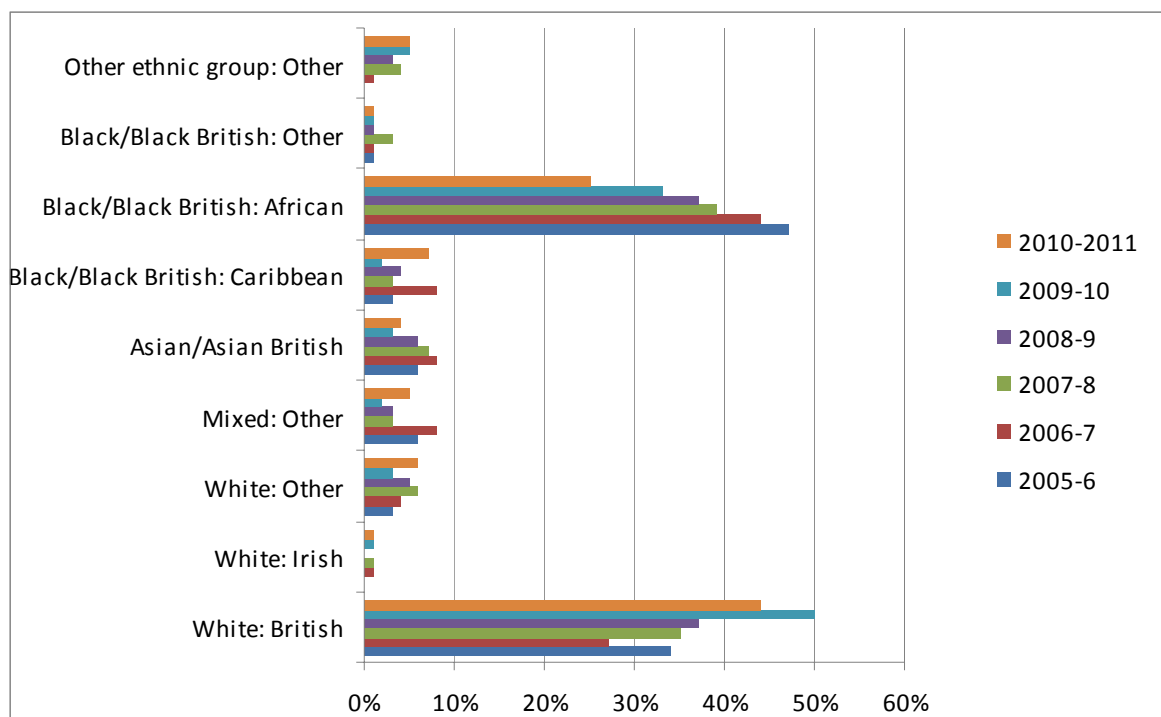
The percentage of clients who were BME in 2008-09 was 11.8%, 2009-10 was 16% and 2010-11 was 11.4% as compared to 13.5% in the Bristol population (*Source: ONS Population Estimates by Ethnic Group, Crown Copyright 2011 (Experimental Statistics)*). However, recent council estimates are that 18% of 15-30 year olds in Bristol are not 13%. Mixed race young mothers accessing the teenage parent service have increased significantly in 2010-11 from 4% of all clients in 2008-09 & 2009-10 to 12% in 2010-11.

### Families

The SP data for homeless families with support needs receiving services in Bristol shows that all BME groups were over-represented except Asian and White Irish families. Black/Black British African is hugely over-represented. This probably reflects the high proportion of Somali and other refugee families receiving services.

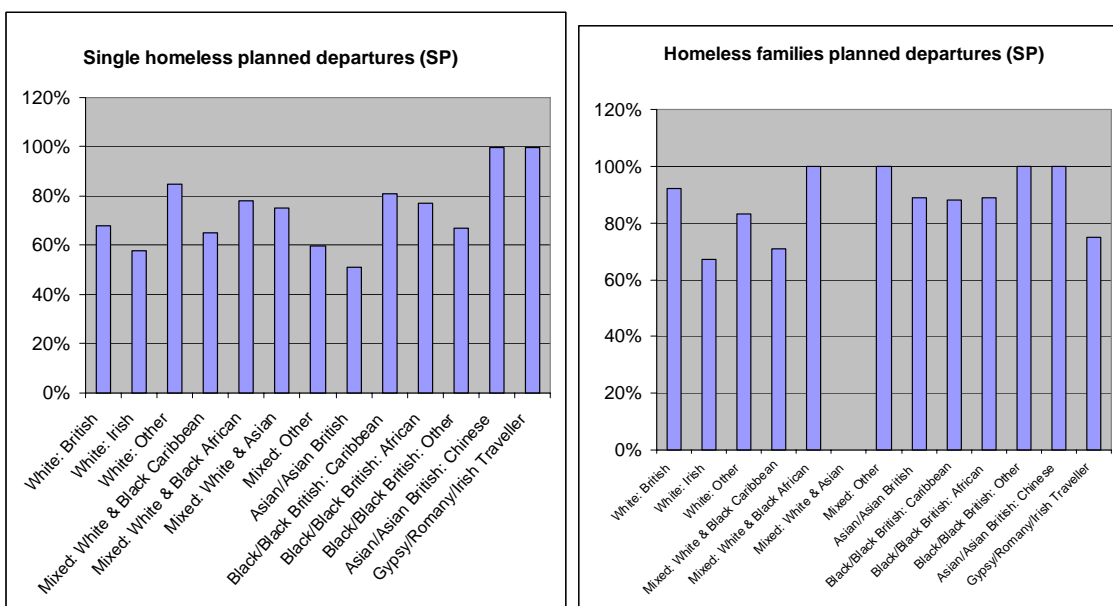


The chart below shows proportions of different ethnic groups in family services since 2005. This shows that the proportions of Black/Black British African is steadily decreasing, reflecting migration patterns.



### Outcomes - planned and unplanned departures

SP records indicate that for single homeless people with support needs in Bristol services, planned departures are lowest for Asian clients (total 41 clients), then White Irish (total 12 clients), then Mixed White and Black Caribbean (total 54 clients) and then White British (total 768 clients). For families planned departures are lowest for White Irish (total 3 families), Mixed White and Black Caribbean (7 families) and Gypsy and Traveller families (total 4 families).



Outcomes for Black British people (both of Caribbean and African backgrounds) are generally better than for other groups. Most refugee clients are included in the Black

African category, indicating that outcomes for refugee single people and families are generally good.

Further consideration of these differences is required to better understand the reasons and what steps might be necessary to help clients from all backgrounds to achieve successful outcomes.

### **What do we know from lower & floating support review about specific needs of this group?**

See Needs Analysis for more details.

- The cost of interpreting may act as a disincentive to providers accepting clients who do not speak English. Need a more cost effective way of accessing interpreting.
- Asylum seekers are often granted leave to remain very quickly, then given 28 days notice from NASS accommodation. A large proportion of these households become homeless and have to live sometimes for long periods in temporary accommodation. There are delays in getting national insurance numbers and benefits. Additional support may be required to improve English language skills and support clients with language barriers to navigate bureaucracy.
- In order to avoid social isolation, some BME groups prefer housing in particular areas of the city.
- Need for staff teams from diverse ethnic backgrounds as well as staff with relevant language skills.
- Some clients said they experienced racism in referral and assessment processes and that they felt demonised or stigmatised before even entering a service.
- Service users thought peer support was an effective way of working with people. Would welcome more BME support groups and/or mentoring provided that mentors were well trained.
- Refugee service users said the when new to the UK and setting up a home, they needed help with benefits and managing money, especially how much to pay for things we need and where to get them from.

### Research and good practice

Multiple Exclusion Homelessness in the UK: Migrants Briefing Paper No. 2,  
Suzanne Fitzpatrick, Sarah Johnsen and Glen Bramley (ESRC 2012)

Migrants were significantly less likely than non-migrants to report childhood experiences of disadvantage and trauma. They were more likely than non-migrants to have slept rough, but were less likely to report experience of virtually all other indicators of multiple exclusion, including other forms of homelessness, substance misuse problems, institutional care and street culture activities.

Mental Ill Health in the Adult Single Homeless Population: a review of the literature,  
Sian Rees, Public Health Resource Unit (2009) Study commissioned by Crisis

Refugees and asylum seekers are known to have high rates of mental disorder, particularly depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. This is particularly the case for those that have survived war or torture.

### **Proposals relating to this protected characteristic**

- We do not propose to commission the specialist 11-unit supported accommodation for refugees. Instead the needs of all homeless refugees with support needs will be met within the general services.

### **Consultation on proposals**

Give details of any consultation events focussed on issues relating to this protected characteristic:

- Refugee service users – 30.7.12

Key issues relating to this protected characteristic raised in electronic questionnaires, consultation events and other feedback:

- Refugee clients consulted indicated clearly that they did not need refugee-only accommodation but instead preferred accommodation where they could integrate with British people. They felt that they benefited from contact with British people who had a better understanding of the way things worked in the UK and could help to introduce the refugees to the local area.

People from abroad needed help to learn about bills, council tax and how systems work, especially benefits. They also need to be introduced to Bristol, particularly helped to know about different areas to enable them to make informed decisions about suitable areas to live.

### **Impact of proposals on this group**

<b>Possible Impact on the group</b>	<b>Actions to be included in the proposal – to maximise improvements and mitigated adverse impact</b>
Will no longer commission the 11-unit specialist supported accommodation for refugees which may disadvantage some single homeless refugees.	Ensure all services are able to effectively meet the needs of refugees with housing-related support needs.
	Providers will be permitted to create specialist units / services as long as this does not adversely impact throughput. For example, they may provide a shared-house for refugees, or a group support session for a group of BME clients.



<b>Possible Impact on the group</b>	<b>Actions to be included in the proposal – to maximise improvements and mitigated adverse impact</b>
We will encourage providers to develop cost effective ways to minimise language barriers for example we recognise the desire for peer support within language groups. We would also like to promote peer support across language groups/with native English speakers to minimise social isolation and improve preparedness for work.	Providers to be encouraged to create opportunities for migrants to practice English speaking with native English speakers. Cohesion initiatives could be included as part of the tender process.
<b>Commissioning process</b> Decommissioning the inherited services (originally directly funded and not commissioned by the Bristol City Council) and tendering competitively will mean that all successful organisations' equalities policies have been through robust evaluation.	Tenders will be scored according to their demonstrable commitment to providing an inclusive environment, including staff training arrangements. Contracts will require that tenderers will comply with the s.149 Equality Act duty to have due regard to equality objectives. This will include a requirement that staff receive training in cultural competency and are equipped to provide language support where needed..
<b>Monitoring</b> New services will be expected to vastly improve monitoring of equalities data, by updating the HSR with the relevant data once a trusting relationship has been built, and the person is not trying to access the service (one reason why current data is of such poor quality).	There will be six monthly performance meetings with new contractors around regular agenda. One item on these agenda will be the contractors' understanding of the equalities concerns within the service, their commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive service, feedback from residents including those with protected characteristics, and the organisations' responses to any problems that have arisen.  We will monitor outcomes, refusals and waiting times by equality group and will expect providers to take action to address any significant differences.

## Protected characteristic – Religion and Belief

### Current position

#### Client profile for all lower and floating support services 2011

Religion/Beliefs	% in supported accom	% in floating support
Christian	9%	9%
Don't Know	41%	56%
Muslim	9%	4%
No religion	32%	19%
Other religion	2%	1%
Rather not state	7%	6%

Currently monitoring data is collected at the point of referral and the data on religion and belief does not appear to be complete or reliable. “Don’t know” is likely to represent clients who were not asked about their religion, rather than those who do not know what their religion or belief is.

### What do we know from high support review about specific needs of this group?

- Members of a particular religious community like to be able to access support networks and places of worship.
- Muslim people may not want to be in South Bristol where there is a perceived lack of services, outside of the Totterdown area.
- Some LGB consultees in the high support review expressed concerns that LGB people may not feel that their sexual orientation was supported or respected within an organisation with a Christian ethos.

Research done by the University of York, *The Role of Faith-Based Organisations in the Provision of Services for Homeless People* found that there is unlikely to be a disadvantage to any group from using faith based organisations, with some exceptions where bad practice was uncovered.

### Proposals relating to this protected characteristic

- No specific accommodation for people with particular religious beliefs

### Consultation on proposals

Give details of any consultation events focused on issues relating to this protected characteristic:

- Refugee service users – 30.7.12

Key issues relating to this protected characteristic raised in electronic questionnaires, consultation events and other feedback:

- For cultural / religious reasons there is a need for some men-only accommodation. This has been requested by some Muslim clients. This would be separate floors or separate clusters in a larger accommodation scheme.

**Impact of proposals on this group**

<b>Possible Impact on the group</b>	<b>Actions to be included in the proposal – to maximise improvements and mitigated adverse impact</b>
Some concerns have been expressed about the ability of providers with a religious ethos to provide an environment that embraces all, particular LGBT clients.	To ensure organisations with a religious ethos make clear commitments to non-discrimination and specifically state their level of service for LGB clients will be of a similar quality as for all clients and that staff have received relevant training, or will acquire this within a certain timeframe if it has not been provided to date.
Some Muslim men clients expressed discomfort living in mixed sex accommodation.	Providers will be permitted to create single-sex units, or other specialist units / services as long as this does not adversely impact throughput. We will encourage the provision of some men-only accommodation
<b>Commissioning process</b> Decommissioning the inherited services (originally directly funded and not commissioned by the Bristol City Council) and tendering competitively will mean that all successful organisations' equalities policies have been through robust evaluation.	Tenders will be scored according to their demonstrable commitment to providing an inclusive environment, including staff training arrangements. Contracts will require that tenderers will comply with the s.149 Equality Act duty to have due regard to equality objectives.
<b>Monitoring</b> New services will be expected to vastly improve monitoring of equalities data, by updating the HSR with the relevant data once a trusting relationship has been built, and the person is not trying to access the service (one reason why current data is of such poor quality).	There will be six monthly performance meetings with new contractors around regular agenda. One item on these agenda will be the contractors' understanding of the equalities concerns within the service, their commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive service, feedback from residents including those with protected characteristics, and the organisations' responses to any problems that have arisen. We will monitor outcomes, refusals and waiting times by equality group and will expect providers to take action to address any significant differences.

## Protected characteristic – Sexual Orientation and Transgender

### Current position

Client profile for all lower and floating support services - 2011

Sexual Orientation	%
Bi-sexual	1%
Don't Know	30%
Gay	1%
Heterosexual	63%
Lesbian	0%
Rather not state	4%

There is likely to be a significant under reporting of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in the services. No people were reported to be transgender. Currently monitoring data is collected at the point of referral. “Don’t know” is likely to represent clients who were not asked about their sexual orientation, rather than those who do not know what their orientation is.

Feedback during the consultation process was that some people are not likely to feel confident about disclosing their sexual orientation when trying to access services and when talking to people with whom they have not built any trust.

### Outcomes – planned/unplanned departures

HSR data for 2011 indicated that only three people leaving lower and floating support services were LGB. All three were recorded as unplanned departures, ie. 100%. This is concerning, but does not show the full picture, as there is such significant under-reporting of LGBT people in the services.

### **What do we know from lower & floating support review about specific needs of this group?**

See the Needs Analysis for more details

- Isolation is a serious issue for LGBT homeless people. For example in a shared house, they might be concerned about homophobia and unable to come out or relate to housemates.
- Concern that hostels are unsafe for LGBT homeless people. The fear for safety in hostels adds to the trauma of being homeless.
- LGBT young people are at additional risk of homelessness because of rejection and fear of rejection by families.
- There is a lack of services for transgender people. To house in single sex services, even where they have transitioned to their new gender.

- LGBT people experience high levels of mental health problems and substance misuse<sup>3</sup>. There are also higher levels of suicide and self-harm among these groups.
- There needs to be specific staff training on LGBT issues. General equalities training is not sufficient.
- Concerned about poor recording of LGBT data. Clients need to feel comfortable before they give true answers. Would be best for sexual orientation monitoring to be anonymous. Otherwise, the information should be requested on a form in confidence, e.g. completed by the client and then put in a sealed envelope.

### **Proposals relating to this protected characteristic**

- No specific provision proposed for LGBT service users.

### **Consultation on proposals**

Give details of any consultation events focussed on issues relating to this protected characteristic:

- Freedom Youth, Outloud (LCGT youth group) – 17.7.12

Key issues relating to this protected characteristic raised in electronic questionnaires, consultation events and other feedback:

- Young LGB people expressed a preference for cluster type accommodation or shared houses. They felt that LGBT only accommodation would definitely be preferable. They were very concerned they would face homophobia in supported accommodation.
- Young lesbian women indicated they would prefer and feel safer in LGBT only accommodation rather than women only accommodation.

### **Impact of proposals on this group**

<b>Possible Impact on the group</b>	<b>Actions to be included in the proposal – to maximise improvements and mitigated adverse impact</b>
Increased specialist provision for young people will benefit young LGBT people	The tender could include a question asking specifically what prevention and support services would you offer to young LGB people?
An increased emphasis on peer support will help improve outcomes. Feedback during the High Support consultation is that this may be especially advantageous for LGBT people.	Given the low numbers of people identifying as being LGBT, providers may need to network to ensure sufficient numbers of LGBT people can access peer support.

<sup>3</sup> *Sorted Out: Bristol Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Drug & Alcohol Survey 2009*, Berkeley Wilde, Minotaur Communications, for Bristol Drugs Strategy Team, Safer Bristol October 2009.

<b>Possible Impact on the group</b>	<b>Actions to be included in the proposal – to maximise improvements and mitigated adverse impact</b>
<p>We do not propose to commission any specialist LGB services but would encourage the provision of specialist services where this is the most effective way of improving outcomes for clients</p>	<p>The generic services must have a proactive response to state what they will offer for LGBT people. Providers will be permitted to create single-sex units, or other specialist units / services as long as this does not adversely impact throughput. Women only services have an opportunity to provide safe space for lesbians and need to be clear about their commitment to do so. There are opportunities for providers provide a shared-house for LGB young people, or a support group for LGBT clients.</p>
<p>An increased focus on mediation in young people's services will help some young LGBT people who have been made homeless by their family to maintain connection with their support networks.</p>	<p>Specialist providers will need to acquire additional skills to ensure young people's provision is sensitive around family mediation for LGBT young people</p>
<p><b>Commissioning process</b> Decommissioning the inherited services (originally directly funded and not commissioned by the Bristol City Council) and tendering competitively will mean that all successful organisations' equalities policies have been through robust evaluation.</p>	<p>Tenders will be scored according to their demonstrable commitment to providing an inclusive environment, including staff training arrangements. Contracts will require that tenderers will comply with the s.149 Equality Act duty to have due regard to equality objectives. This will include a requirement that staff receive training in LGBT equality issues.</p>

Possible Impact on the group	Actions to be included in the proposal – to maximise improvements and mitigated adverse impact
<p><b>Monitoring</b></p> <p>New services will be expected to vastly improve monitoring of equalities data, by updating the HSR with the relevant data once a trusting relationship has been built, and the person is not trying to access the service (one reason why current data is of such poor quality).</p>	<p>Very few people are identifying as being LGB and this needs to be a clear focus for work to improve equalities monitoring. Improving LGB people's confidence to identify to staff they are LGB is an important pre requisite to providing sensitive support and developing peer support networks. There will be an additional focus as part of developing equalities policies to ensure organisations state they are welcoming to LGBT people and will create accommodation which is safe and promote harassment procedures where clients can report homophobia and transphobia. As part of the commissioning process we will also emphasis the importance for specialist services to review their materials to remove heterosexist assumptions. There will be six monthly performance meetings with new contractors around regular agenda.</p> <p>We will monitor outcomes, refusals and waiting times by equality group and will expect providers to take action to address any significant differences.</p>