

# Prevention of Homelessness Strategy and Review

2012-2016



**Chorley**  
Council

**SOUTH  
RIBBLE**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL  
*forward with  
South Ribble*

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આ માહિતીનો અનુવાદ આપની ખોતાની ભાષામાં કરી શકાય છે. આ સેવા સરળતાથી મેળવવા માટે કૃપા કરી, આ નંબર પર ફોન કરો: 01257 515822

ان معلومات کا ترجمہ آپکی اپنی زبان میں بھی کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ یہ خدمت استعمال کرنے کیلئے براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر ٹیلیفون کیجئے: 01257 515823

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## **Introduction**

This is the Prevention of Homelessness Strategy and Review for Chorley and South Ribble Councils. It replaces previous strategies and is in line with existing statutory requirements placed on Local Housing Authorities (hereafter referred to as Councils) by the Homelessness Act 2002.

The review element of the document is a legal requirement and must explore the current situation in both Councils, what services are available, what information we know about homelessness, any trends and also a summary of what was delivered as a result of the previous strategy action plan.

Chorley and South Ribble Councils currently work closely on a number of measures targeting housing related issues and so in order to build on this approach and make best use of resources, this document has been developed collaboratively. However distinctions are made between the two districts where appropriate.

Homelessness prevention is a key responsibility of Councils and the framework of responsibilities are set out in the housing legislation and associated statutory guidance.

## **Purpose**

Tackling homelessness, including the provision of a basic safety net consisting of access to emergency accommodation and longer term social housing and associated advice and support services, has been part of the core business of Councils for many years.

In 2002 the Government laid down additional responsibilities on Councils to publish prevention strategies, in order to encourage more measures being used to identify those at risk of homelessness and stop situations reaching crisis point.

Many of the prevention measures are now embedded within Council housing functions however recent changes in the global and national economy, including impacts on the housing market and unemployment, are expected to create further pressures, with expectations that there will be rising repossessions and greater numbers of households unable to access affordable housing.

## National Context

It is essential that Homelessness services in Chorley and South Ribble respond to the changing local and national context and deliver a service, which is focussed on prevention and achieves outcomes which improve the life chances of those living in the boroughs.

The Coalition Government established in 2010 is in the process of introducing some key policy and legislative changes which will impact on the Councils services and the customers who use them. Therefore an essential driver of some of the measures within this strategy will be in response to some of these initiatives, exploiting any benefits they bring and mitigating any impact

The Localism Act is expected to be enacted in 2012 and introduces some new responsibilities and flexibilities for Councils regarding housing, particularly around homelessness and allocations. The Act introduces greater freedoms for Councils to set their own housing qualification policies, providing that the most vulnerable customers continue to be given the highest priority.

Councils will also be able to meet their homelessness duty by providing good quality private rented homes, which will provide for a greater role and use of the private rented sector and assist in reducing the pressure on social rented stock.

There is the introduction of the new affordable rent model of social housing, which will be set at upto 80% of market rents, which is anticipated to generate higher returns for reinvestment into the delivery of new affordable housing. Registered Providers will also be able to use new types of 'flexible' tenancy that can have fixed length tenancies (minimum term of 2 yrs ) which represents a significant change from the traditional social rent of nationally set rent level and assured tenancy. These measures are in the infancy stage and so it is too early to predict what the implications will be.

Flexible tenancies are intended to enable providers to make better use of the stock, reflect changing customer needs and enable providers to consider customer's changing circumstances when renewing a tenancy. However, with rising rent levels and less security of tenure there could also be unwanted consequences unless appropriate measures are not put in place.

The Localism Act places a duty on Councils to publish a tenancy strategy within 12 months of the Act coming into force and which is to set out the details regarding types of tenancy, policy for renewals and so forth and must be developed in consultation with Registered Providers.

The Welfare Reform Bill was introduced to Parliament in February 2011 and introduces a wide range of reforms with the key objective to make the benefits and tax credits system fairer and simpler by creating the right incentives to get more people into work, ensuring work always pays, protecting the most vulnerable in society and delivering fairness to those claiming benefit and to the tax payer. Two of the key measures within the bill are Personal Independence payment (which will replace Disability Living Allowance) and Universal Credit. More closely linked to housing are the introductions of caps to the amount a household can claim in housing benefit, the extension of the single room rate to those aged 25 years to 35 years and proposals to reduce housing benefit for those under occupying a social rented property.

Further radical change is proposed in the Health and Social Care Bill which is proposed to establish independent health boards in order to promote patient choice and reduce NHS administration costs.

The National Planning Policy Framework proposes to radically overhaul the planning system, creating a simpler system which promotes sustainable development and supports economic growth, involves communities and which is more accessible to the common person.

Caselaw continues to influence how homelessness services are delivered and of key importance is the G vs. Southwark case in 2009, which was a landmark decision which then initiated more effective joint working between agencies, specifically Homelessness Teams and Children's Services.

Homelessness remains a high priority nationally and a Ministerial working group of representatives from relevant government departments has been established with the aim of preventing and reducing homeless and improving the lives of those who do become homeless. The focus of this group is very much on rough sleeping, with links to the national the 'No second night out' strategy & campaign.

The global economic crisis of 2008 continues to bear down heavily on the housing market and whilst this impacted on house building & delivery of affordable housing for South Ribble Council, it has less of an impact for Chorley Council, where record numbers of affordable housing have been delivered in the 2010-2012.

## Scope of the Strategy

The scope of this strategy is to provide prevention measures and services primarily for those living in or with a local connection (or recognised link or need, such as domestic violence) to Chorley and South Ribble respectively, and for those where there is a specific need, duty or request for a specific service and where this is appropriate. It is not the case that households will have to be homeless in order to access or benefit from any of the measures within this strategy. It is the aspiration of Government and all stakeholders delivering or engaged in these services that households are able to access appropriate, good quality housing advice long before there is a risk of homelessness or a crisis point is reached.

Homelessness can be defined in many ways and can mean different things depending on the person or household experiencing it.

The legal definition of 'homeless' is contained in three inter-related sections of the Housing Act 1996, part 7. Taken together these sections provide that a person is homeless if he or she:

- 1) Has no accommodation physically available for him or her to occupy in the UK or elsewhere
- 2) Has no accommodation available which he or she is legally entitled occupy
- 3) Has accommodation which is available and which he or she is legally entitled to occupy but cannot secure entry to that accommodation or
- 4) Has accommodation available which he or she is entitled to occupy but that accommodation consists of a moveable structure and there is no place where the applicant is entitled or permitted both to place and reside in it or
- 5) Has accommodation available, which he or she is entitled to occupy and entry can be secured to it, but that accommodation is not reasonable to continue to occupy.

Irrespective of this definition, not everyone qualifies for help from the Councils under the homelessness legislation. It can be said that within the framework of Housing Options services in each respective Council, there are those to whom the Council owes one or a number of legal duties, and there are those to whom no duty is owed, however these customers are still able to access a variety of housing services.

There are a number of legal duties and powers contained within the Housing Act 1996 part 7 ('Homelessness') ranging from the duty to notify of a decision to an obligation to provide accommodation. In order to determine if a duty is owed, the Councils are required to make enquiries in order to assess if an applicant is eligible, homeless or threatened with homelessness within 28 days, has a priority need, and is not intentionally homeless.

Pending these enquiries, in certain circumstances there are duties to provide interim accommodation and to provide assistance with the storage of belongings. Where all the required tests are satisfied and an acceptance is made, the full or main housing duty will be owed. This requires the Council to '*secure that accommodation is available for occupation by the applicant and his household*'. The law does not state for how long this period of accommodation should be and the new provisions of the Localism Act will enable Councils to discharge this duty by providing a 12 month Assured Shorthold tenancy in the private rented sector.

Homelessness services will to some extent be reactive and must provide for those cases in crisis, however the strategic aim is to provide measures which result in these cases being the exceptions rather than the rule.

Further, there are measures proposed which may mean that the customer accessing them is never in a position to be at risk of homelessness, for example by accessing the Select Move choice based lettings scheme and therefore planning ahead.



## **Review of Homelessness**

A key element of the Prevention of Strategy as defined by the law is that Councils must review homelessness in their boroughs. This includes looking at what services are available and if these meet local need, analysing the nature and profile of homelessness to see what patterns emerge and reflecting on performance.

### **Review of Homelessness in Chorley**

The previous Prevention of Homelessness Strategy was produced in 2008, running upto 2013. Given our performance in delivering many of the measures included within it and also the changing external context, it is timely that a refreshed strategy be produced.

The context of the previous strategy was quite different; with the Council transferring the Homelessness Service back in from our agent, Chorley Community Housing in April 2008.

The three key priorities of the strategy were:

- a) Improving the services for customers
- b) Reducing the use of temporary accommodation
- c) Increasing the Prevention of homelessness

All of these three aims were achieved, with service quality rising significantly post transfer, to include a new Choice Based lettings scheme and to include a range of new services including a rental bond scheme and court desk. The Council significantly reduced its use of temporary accommodation and increased the volume of preventions and reliefs of homelessness, which lead to a significant reduction in formal homelessness presentations.

### **Trends**

The trends in homelessness do not tend to change significantly, with the main causes in Chorley continuing to feature parents, relatives or friends no longer being able to accommodate, with violent breakdown following closely (see table 1.0).

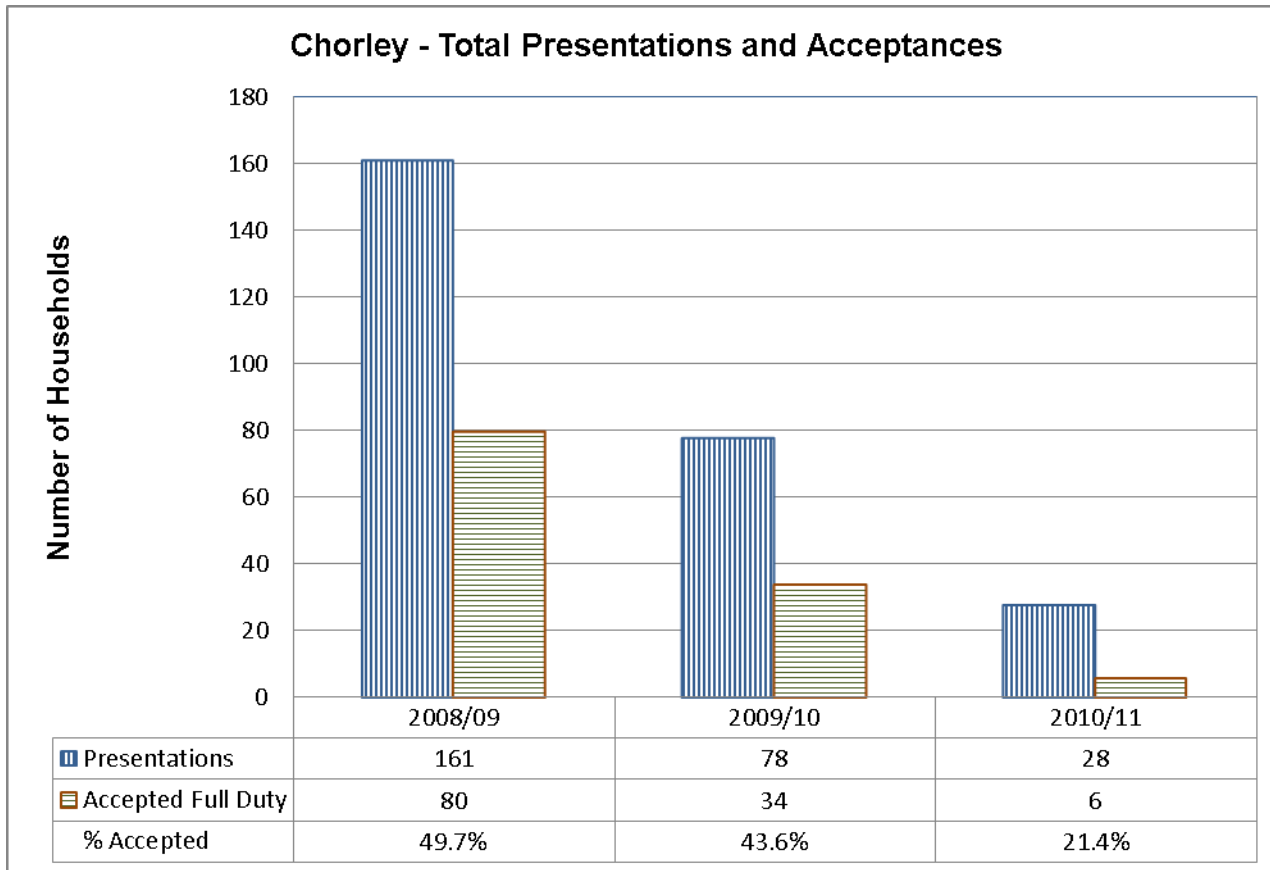
There has been a steady reduction in the number of formal homeless presentations which are in part attributable to the increase in preventions being achieved and the revised Allocations Policies which gave additional priority to those accepting a prevention option.

**Table 1.0: Number of Formal Homelessness Presentations 2008-11**

<b>Chorley Presentations - Main Reasons for Loss of Home</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>Total</b>
Parent no longer willing or able to accommodate	37	16	7	60
Friend/Relative no longer willing or able to accommodate	27	10	5	42
Violent breakdown of relationship, involving partner	23	13	0	36
Termination of Assured Shorthold Tenancy	20	7	3	30
Non-violent breakdown of relationship with partner	6	9	5	20
Mortgage arrears (repossession or other loss of home)	9	1	2	12
Rent arrears private sector	1	3	3	7
Other forms of violence	1	3	3	7
Other forms of harassment	3	4	0	7

Figure 1.0 illustrates the number of presentations and acceptances (where the Council has accepted the full main duty to provide accommodation). There has been a significant drop in the number of presentations and acceptances which demonstrate the change in focus from crisis management, to prevention, including the use of allocations and choice based lettings to encourage customers to plan ahead and approach the service as early as possible.

**Figure 1.0 Number of Total Presentations and Acceptances**



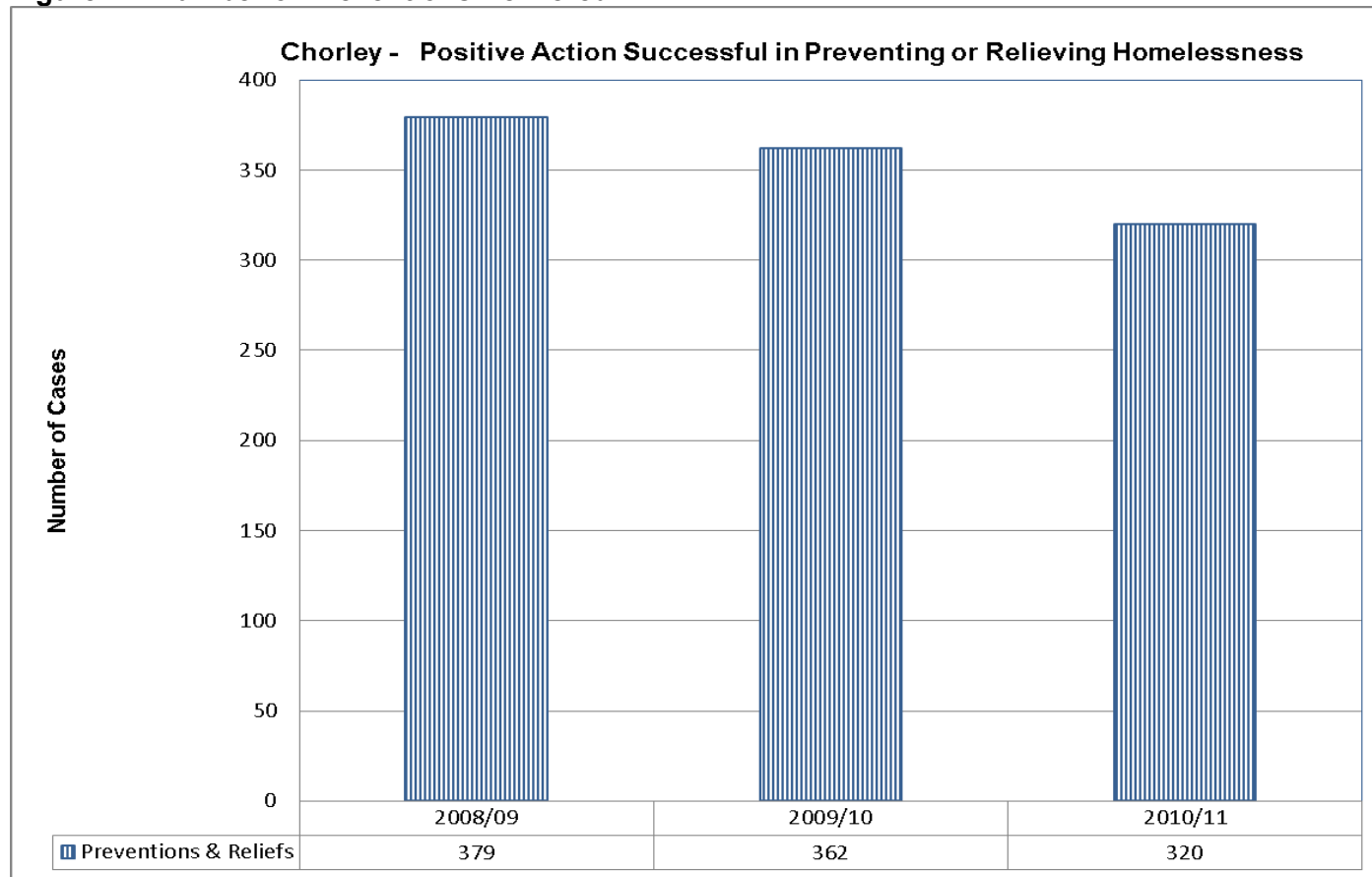
As referred to above, a key element of the homelessness assessment is to ascertain if the applicant has a priority need. In the absence of this, the legal duty to provide advice and assistance only (although often there are a range of options which we can offer). Table 1.1 illustrates the split between these categories, with dependant children being the most common.

**Table 1.1 Main Reasons for Priority Need**

<b>Chorley Presentations - Main Reason for Priority Need</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>Total</b>
Dependent children	57	24	11	92
Expectant mothers	17	8	2	27
16/17 year old	23	1	1	25
Physical disability	6	4	0	10
Mental illness or learning disability	5	3	1	9
Having fled violence (domestic)	4	1	0	5
18 to 20 formerly in "Care"	2	1	0	3

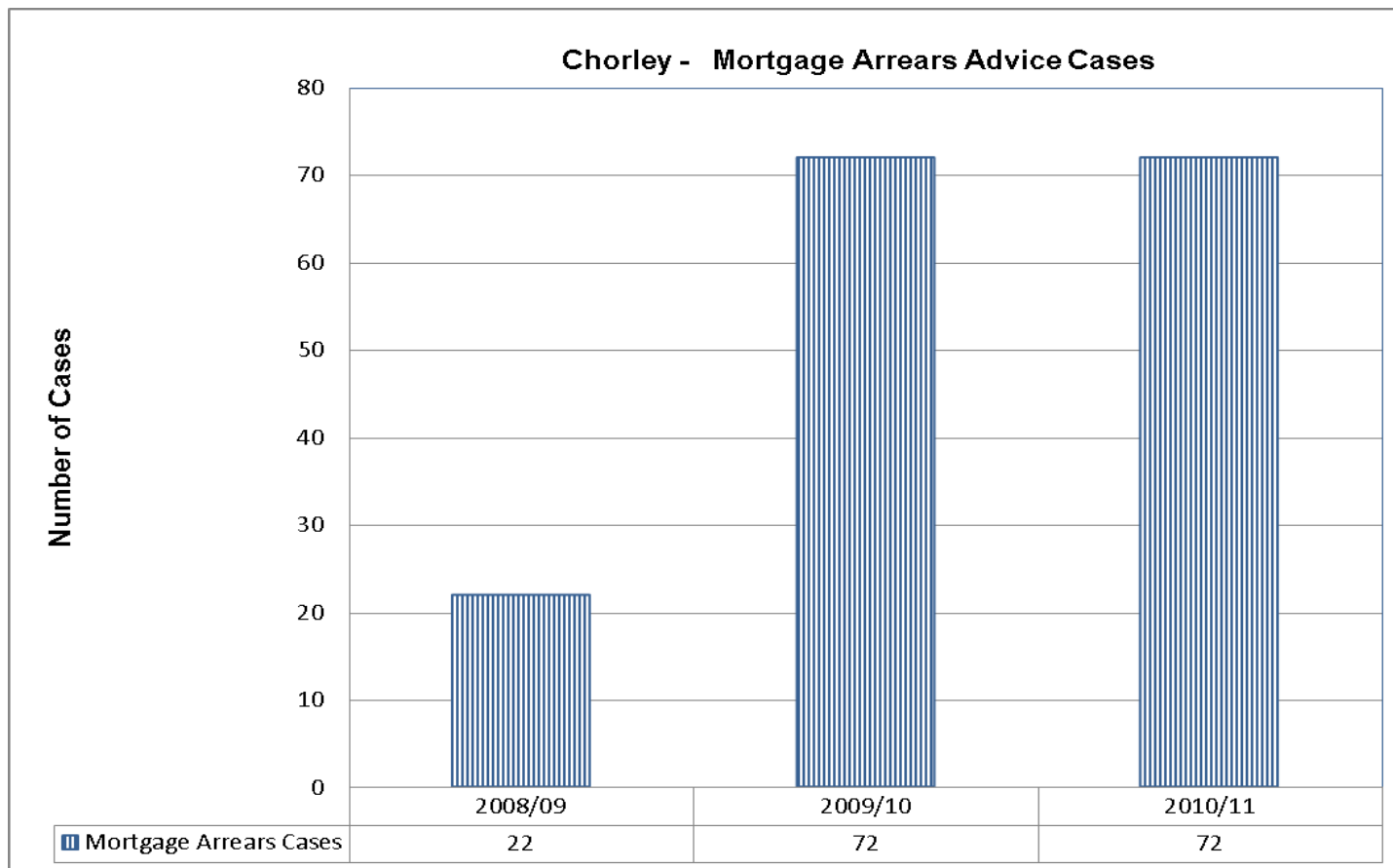
However formal homelessness presentations are only part of the picture and the bulk of the service demand comes from customers seeking general housing advice or those who may face a risk of homelessness and where a prevention measure will eliminate that risk.

**Figure 1.1 Number of Preventions Delivered**



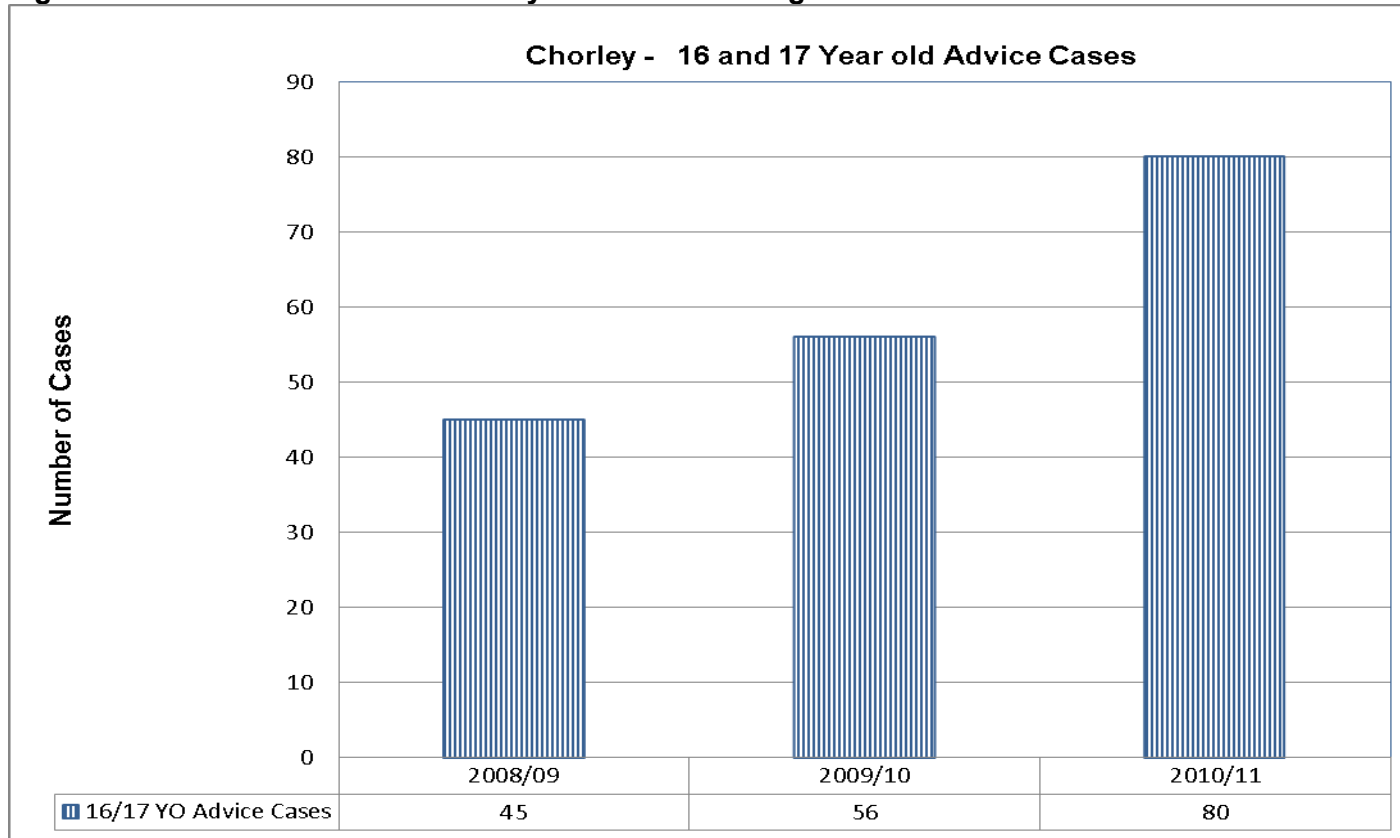
In recent times, the Councils service has seen growing numbers of those experiencing mortgage difficulties coming to us for help and advice. In the backdrop of the economic downturn and high unemployment, this is placing greater pressure on households whom in the past may never have used our services.

**Figure 1.2 Number of Mortgage Arrears Cases Handled 2008-2001.**



Two high profile pieces of caselaw lead to significant change in the responsibilities for homeless 16 & 17 year olds, with the expectation that the majority of homeless 16 & 17 year olds will fall under the responsibility of Children's Social Care as opposed to the Council. Chorley Council has developed good working relationships with Children's Social Care in order to ensure young people are provided with the best possible advice, with the focus very much on a return to the parental home where appropriate. Figure 1.3 illustrates the gradual increase we have seen in the number of 16 & 17 year olds coming to the service for housing advice.

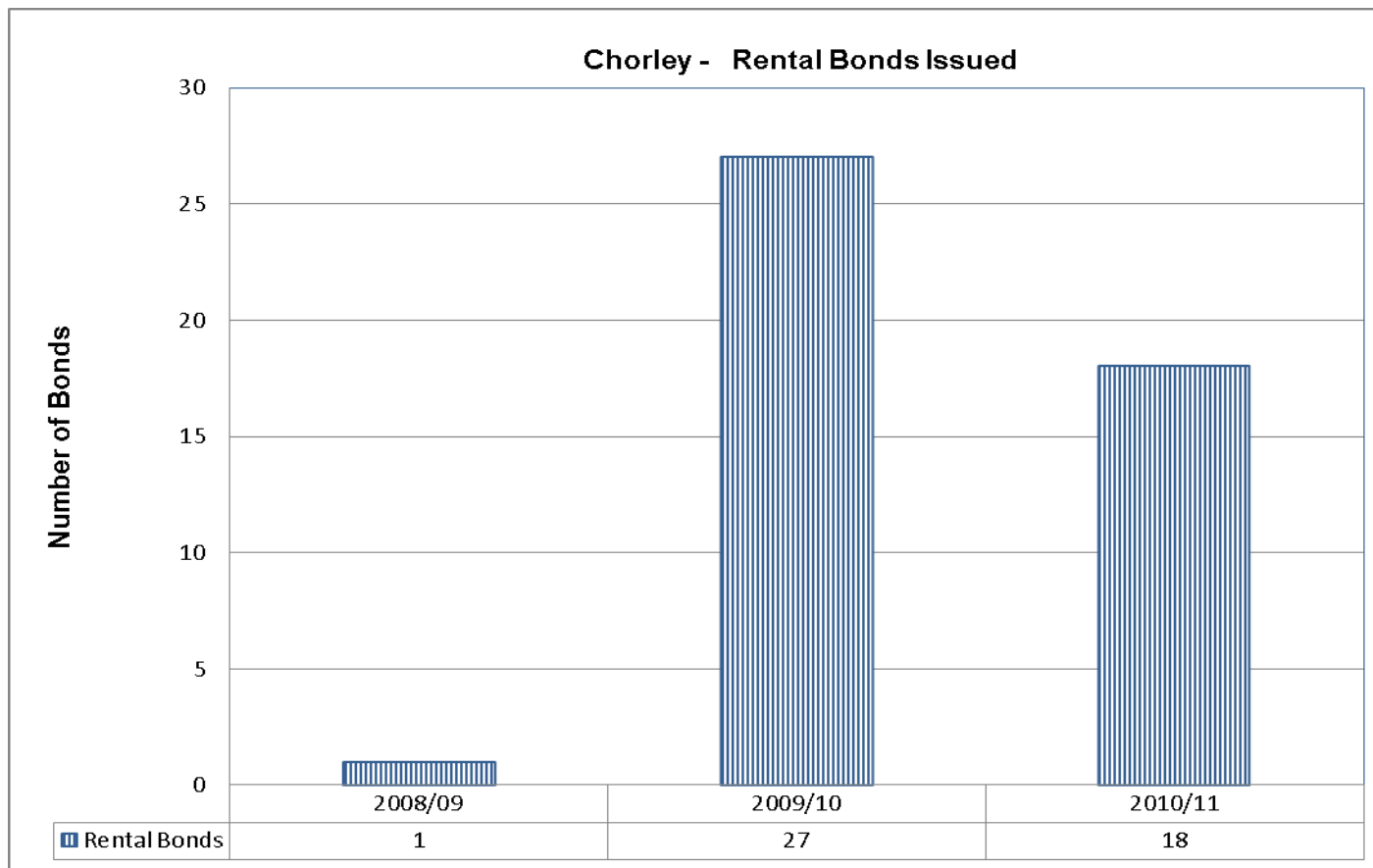
**Figure 1.3 Number of Homeless 16 & year olds accessing the Service**



The Rent Bond scheme in Chorley is an important tool which enables customers struggling to get into the social sector to access housing. The number of bonds issues remains steady although there is an opportunity to further promote the scheme and possibly link it into the emerging social lettings mode.

**Figure 1.4 the Number of Rent Bonds Issued 2008-2011.**



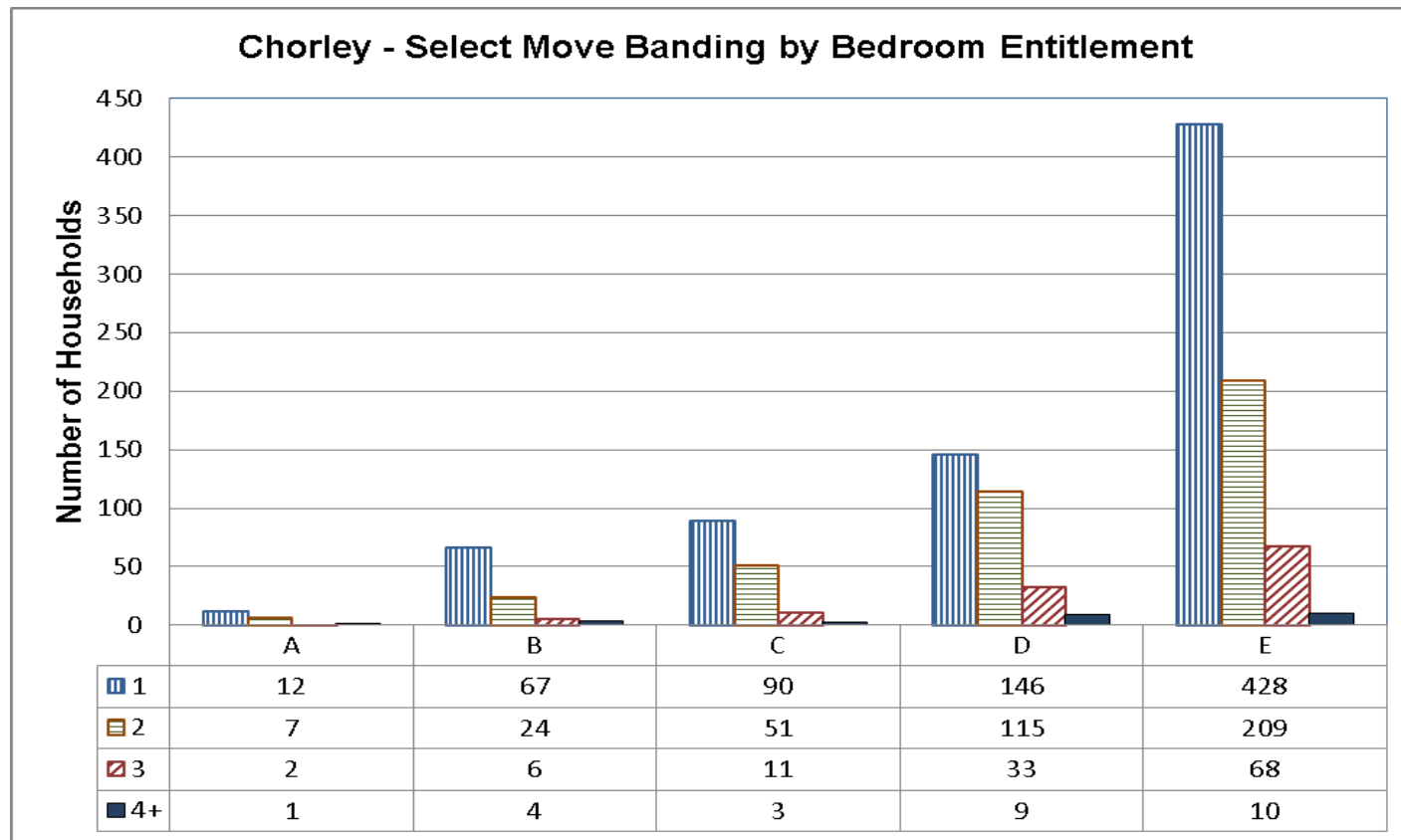


In March 2011 the sub regional SelectmoveChoice Based Lettings scheme was launched, covering the Chorley, South Ribble and Preston areas. The partnership comprises of the three Councils along with the majority of Registered Providers (RPS). The system provides a comprehensive allocations system which is inextricably linked to a single Allocations Policy (which meets the legal requirements of part 6 of the Housing Act). The Allocations Policy is based on a five band system, with band a being the highest priority band and band E being the lowest (in no housing need) band.

A snapshot of the system taken on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011 illustrated in figure 1.5. This table shows the number of customers placed in each priority band and the size of property they need. The highest need is for one bedroom properties, followed by two and then three bedroom homes. The proposed welfare

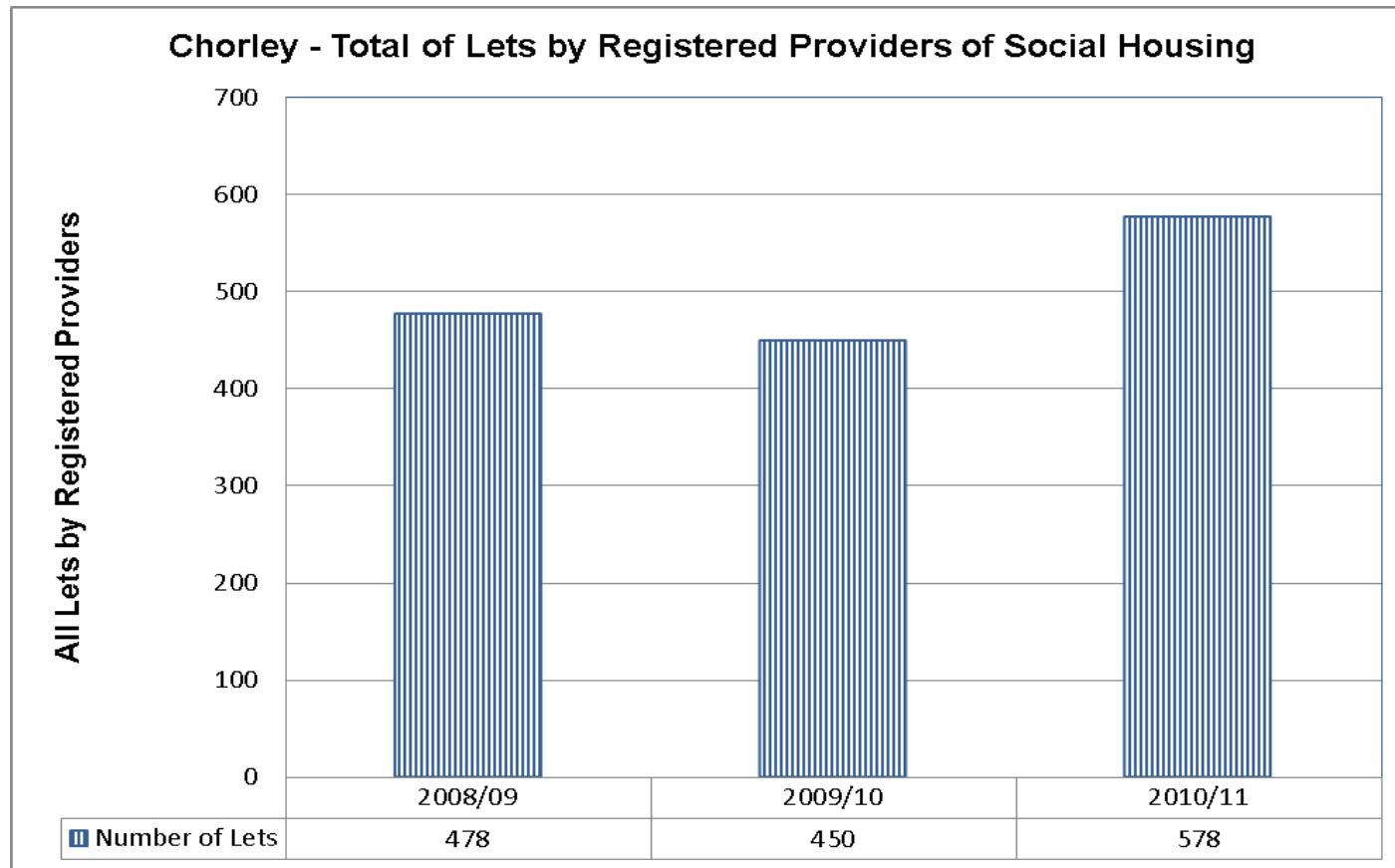
reforms are expected to place greater pressure on one and two bedroom properties and therefore this intelligence is being fed into new development negotiations, to ensure future housing best meets local need.

**Figure 1.5 Waiting List Snapshot as at 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011**



The supply of social housing lets seen in figure 1.6 below has been boosted in recent years by new build social rented properties.

**Figure 1.6 Social Housing Lets**



**Local agencies/services including Chorley**

Chorley is an area covering a population of 105,000 with 48,000 dwellings and therefore is a relatively small district. The Council offers a single point of access Housing Options service, based at its Union Street Building in the centre of Chorley.

A team of generic Housing Options officers provide advice on a broad range of housing issues , across all tenures as well as referrals into supported housing, applications and assessments for social housing and also formal homelessness presentations. There is significant expertise within the team which provides a daily service both over the phone and for face to face appointments. The team also deliver some outreach surgeries as and when required.

Locally there are few other voluntary and community sector organisations providing housing services. The CAB provides a service for customers requiring independent advice regarding housing and debt and the Council works closely with this service to ensure referral in and also to avoid duplication. Help the Homeless is a local charity providing advice for those facing crisis point and offer practical services such as food parcels, furniture and accommodation finding. The Council works closely with Help the Homeless both operationally and strategically.

### **Rough sleepers**

Historically Chorley has not experienced the level of rough sleeping (for definition see glossary) as seen by the larger cities. In November 2007, Chorley conducted a rough sleeper count and reported a finding of zero rough sleepers. In subsequent years, in accordance with the guidance, estimated figures of rough sleepers were submitted to the CLG of 1. In 2011, a further rough sleeper count was conducted following a survey of local agencies which suggested that the issue had become more prevalent. However the findings of the count were zero, although evidence of where rough sleepers had bedded down was reported.

### **Prevention measures**

There are a number of services available in Chorley which enables the Council to prevent homelessness and so avoid facing crisis point, with the stress of making a formal homelessness presentation, accessing temporary accommodation. These include a rent bond scheme, a court desk advice and advocacy service, a surgery for 16 and 17 year olds including mediation, a prevention fund, a mortgage assistance fund ( which supports the regional mortgage rescue service), home visiting, protocols with a range of statutory and voluntary partners such as probation, social services, hospitals etc. to forward plan moves into housing, an Allocations Policy and associated CBL scheme which enables choice and gives priority to those in most need, signposting to debt advice, a floating support service, and a Sanctuary Scheme.

### **Supporting People Programme**

Chorley is part of the Lancashire Supporting People Commissioning body and commissioner for a wide range of both accommodation and non accommodation based services. These services include supported housing projects for homeless single people (including young people) and families, Ex-offenders, parent and baby, survivors of domestic violence and older persons sheltered accommodation. There is also a single gateway service for floating support for all socially excluded client groups.

The removal of the ring-fence on Supporting People funding along with the national reduction in the programme poses some challenges for the future. The Commissioning Body is working at a strategic level to manage the medium and longer term programme and plan for any reductions in finance. Further, there is work being undertaken to ensure that the services currently provided best fit local need and strategic priorities and also that the pot is allocated consistently across Lancashire.

## What did we deliver in 2008-2013 Prevention of Homelessness Strategy?

The Council have made significant progress since the last strategy, including the transfer back in house of the Housing options service and the implementation of a range of prevention measures.

The following measures were successfully delivered in Chorley during the period of the previous strategy.

**Table 1.2 Measures Successfully Delivered**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Expand the homelessness and housing advice service	Better customer service and increase in preventions
Establish procedures for home visiting	Increase in home visits for early identification and prevention of issues prior to crisis point
Toolkit of advice leaflets and a Chorley advice pack	Comprehensive information provided to all customers receiving a service
Public awareness campaign of issues around home ownership including repossessions	Increased awareness and demand for court desk service
Comprehensive training programme for staff	Staff fully equipped to respond to all housing relating issues. Better customer service
Establish Choice Based Lettings Scheme	State of the art service which promotes choice and is transparent
Renewal of protocols with Registered Providers	Improved partnership working and early identification of households at risk of homelessness
Implementation of customer satisfaction collection mechanism	Collection of data and improved understanding of customer profile
Reduction in the use of B&B as	Elimination of the regular use of

temporary accommodation	B&B.
Increase in the variety and number of lifeskills projects delivered at Cotswold Supported Housing	Comprehensive programme delivered
Improve standards at Cotswold Supported Housing	Further phase of refurbishment completed with significant improvement in security, safeguarding and quality of accommodation.
Engagement of the Housing Options Team in the Private Landlord Forum	Regular attendance and delivery of agenda items, improved understanding
Review of the 16/17 year protocol	Principles for joint working established and a specific joint surgery established
Customer focus group for services	Residents association established based at Cotswold
Develop joint working arrangements with the Revenues and Benefits Team	Regular engagement, facilitation of vulnerable customers applications
Establish a rent bond scheme	Rent bond scheme established, improved access to the private rented sector
Improve access & engagement with various partners and services including floating support and family intervention services.	Regular meetings established , floating support presence within the Housing Options Team
Refresh risk assessments procedures and deliver health and safety training to staff	Risk assessment embedded and Team leaders comprehensively trained in health and safety.
Develop a Sanctuary Scheme	Sanctuary scheme well established and preventing homelessness/protecting survivors

	of domestic abuse
Develop a new Allocations Policy	A revised Allocations Policy for Chorley was introduced followed by a sub regional wide Allocations Policy. This simplified prioritisation of applications for housing and introduced element of choice.
Increase the supply of affordable homes	Significant increase in number of affordable homes delivered, totalling 107 in 2009/10 and 173 in 2010/11



## Measures which were not delivered In Chorley

Table 1.3 illustrates the measures which were not completed as part of the previous strategy and the reason why. This can be for a variety of reasons, including a change of priorities or circumstances outside the control, of the Council. Where it is appropriate, measures will be carried forward for delivery.

**Table 1.3 Measures from Previous Strategy Action Plan Not Delivered**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Carry forward Yes/No</b>
Develop exclusions protocols and panel with Registered Providers	Measures were built into the shared Allocations Policy	No
Reduce time taken to make homelessness decisions	This was deleted from the national suite of BVPIs as it was no longer seen to be of relevance. Cases are treated on individual merit, with investigations varying in length depending on the circumstances.	No
Identify and engage with Registered Providers Homelessness Champions	Variance in how each organisation delivers this. Engagement delivered via other means.	No
Develop young persons peer education programme for housing	Capacity and prioritisation of other measures	Yes

## **Review of Homelessness in South Ribble**

The previous Homelessness strategy covered the period 2008 – 2011. We have achieved many of the measures outlined in the strategy and the national changing context makes the review timely

The key strategic aims of the 2008 strategy were:

1. To halve the number of customers in temporary accommodation from the baseline of 48.  
This was achieved, with a figure of 22 reported by the end of 2010
2. To ensure that no 16/17 year olds were placed in Bed and Breakfast  
This has been achieved to a limited extent given the lack of suitable temporary accommodation in South Ribble. Bed and Breakfast has had to be used to accommodate 16/17 year olds pending child in need assessments.
3. To end the Use of Bed and Breakfast for all households except in an emergency.  
This was achieved in 2010 however in the current economic climate the use of B&B has on occasion been unavoidable.
4. To sustain zero levels of rough sleeping whilst this has been achieved the Council is reporting a figure of 5 in 2011
5. To develop and enhance services to prevent homelessness where possible  
Prevention work has continued to deliver success stories and the Council prevents around 80 to 100 cases per quarter

## **Trends**

**There has been an overall trend of reduction in presentations and acceptances since 2008 however the recent trend is one of increase in 2010/11**

**The main causes of homelessness in South Ribble continue to be parents, relatives and friends no longer being able to accommodate, non violent relationship breakdown and also the ending of Assured Short hold tenancies.**

**The Housing options service continues to use prevention options and the allocations policy to award priority to those accepting prevention options.**

**Figure 2.0 Number of Formal Homelessness Presentations 2008-11**

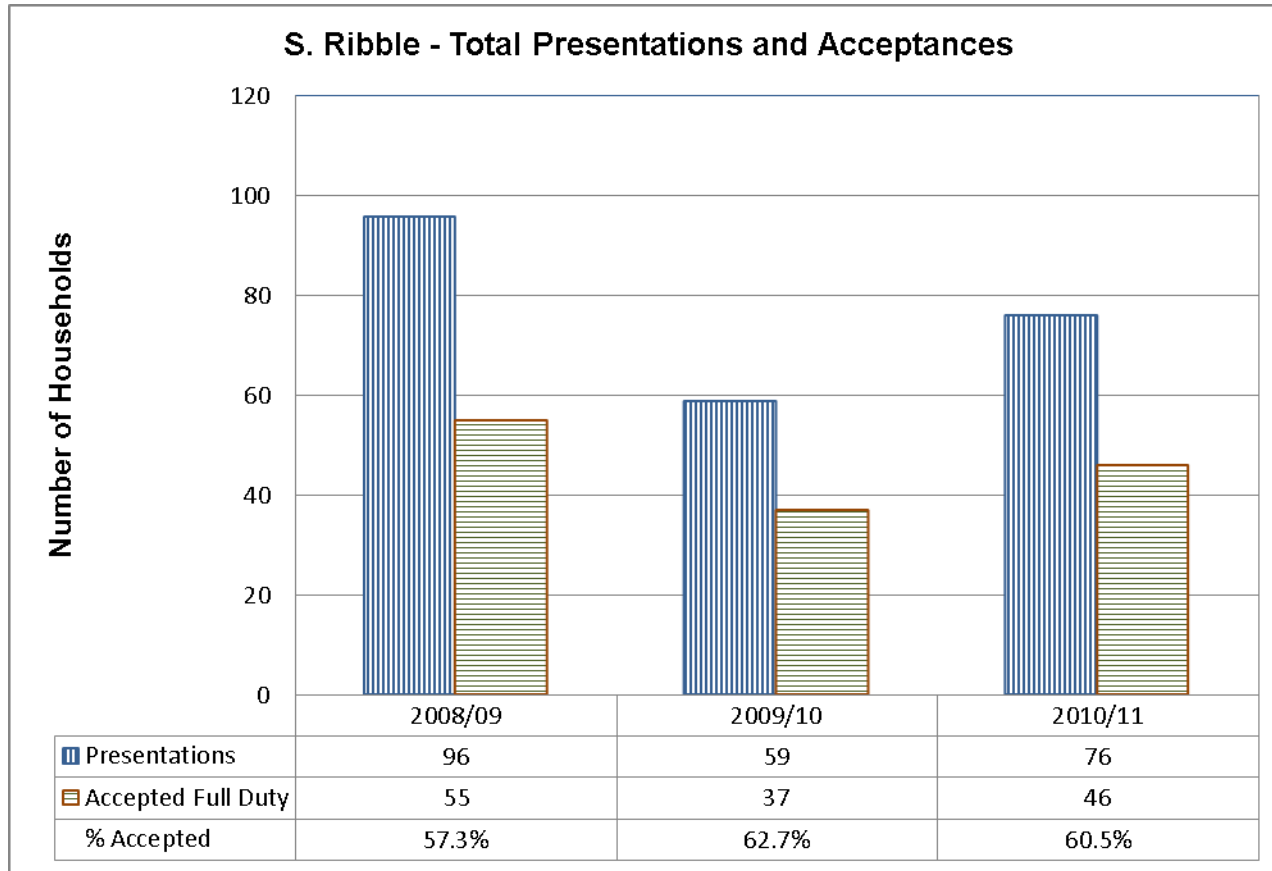


Figure 2.0 illustrates the number of presentations and acceptances (where the Council has accepted the full main duty to provide accommodation). There has been a slight increase in presentations to the service in 2010/11. However, this is still below the 2008/9 figures.

**Table 2.0 Number of total presentations by main reason for loss of home**

<b>S. Ribble Presentations - Main Reasons for Loss of Home</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>Total</b>
Parent no longer willing or able to accommodate	20	12	16	48
Termination of Assured Short hold Tenancy	17	14	10	41
Non-violent breakdown of relationship with partner	15	9	16	40
Friend/Relative no longer willing or able to accommodate	16	14	5	35
Violent breakdown of relationship, involving partner	7	6	7	20
Rent arrears RSL	5	4	1	10
Mortgage arrears (repossession or other loss of home)	5	0	4	9
Rent arrears private sector	1	2	3	6

The main causes of homelessness in South Ribble continue to be parents, relatives and friends no longer being able to accommodate, non violent relationship breakdown and also the ending of Assured Short hold tenancies

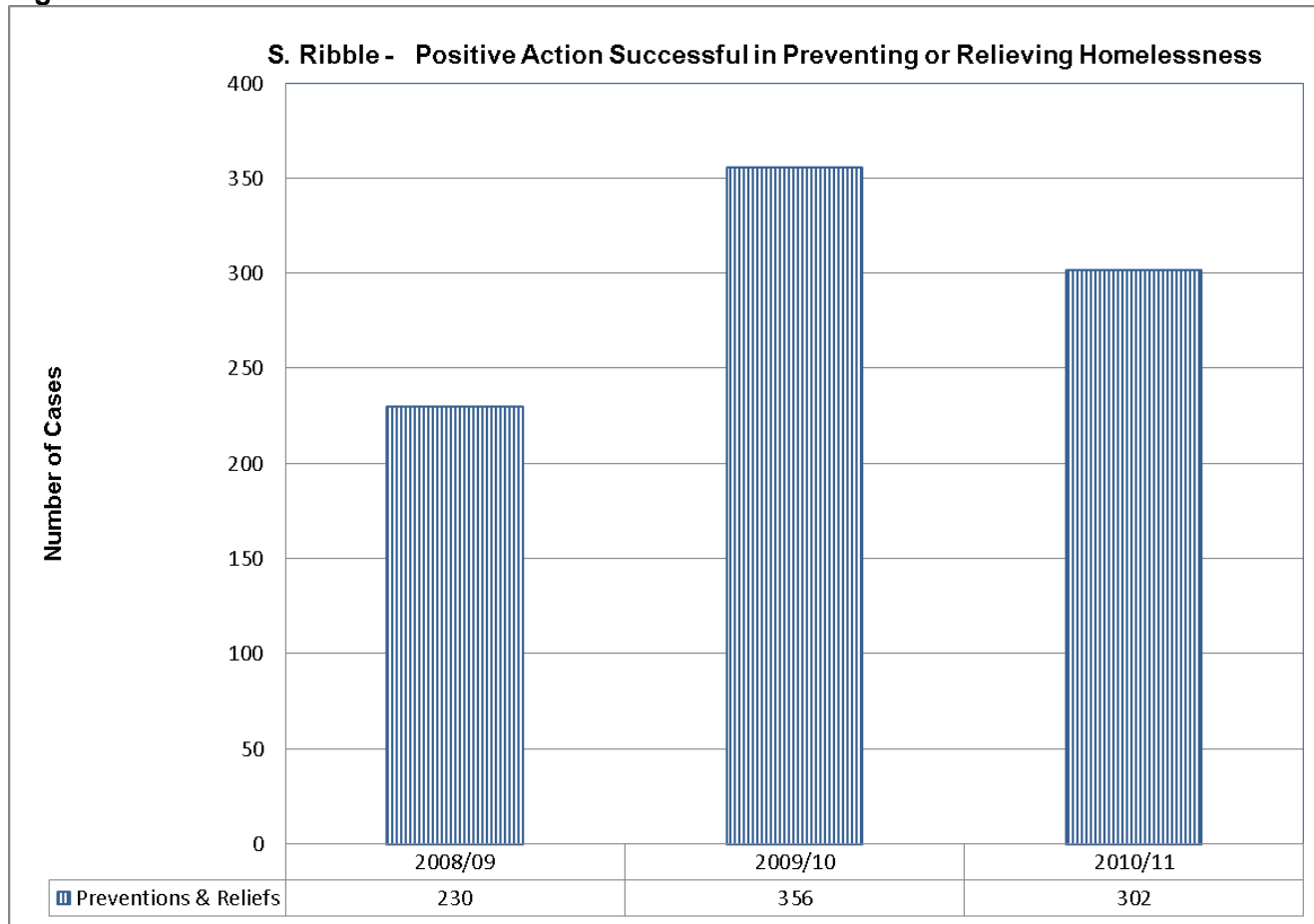
**Table 2.1 Main Reason for Priority Need**

<b>S. Ribble Presentations - Main Reason for Priority Need</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>Total</b>
Dependent children	66	40	39	145
Expectant mothers	10	7	4	21
Mental illness or learning disability	6	4	2	12
18 to 20 formerly in "Care"	3	1	4	8
Physical disability	4	1	3	8
16/17 year old	2	1	4	7
Having fled violence (domestic)	0	3	0	3

A key element of the homelessness assessment is to ascertain if the applicant has a priority need. In the absence of this, the legal duty is to provide advice and assistance only (although often there are a range of options which we can offer). Table 2.1 illustrates the split between these categories, with dependant children being the most common.

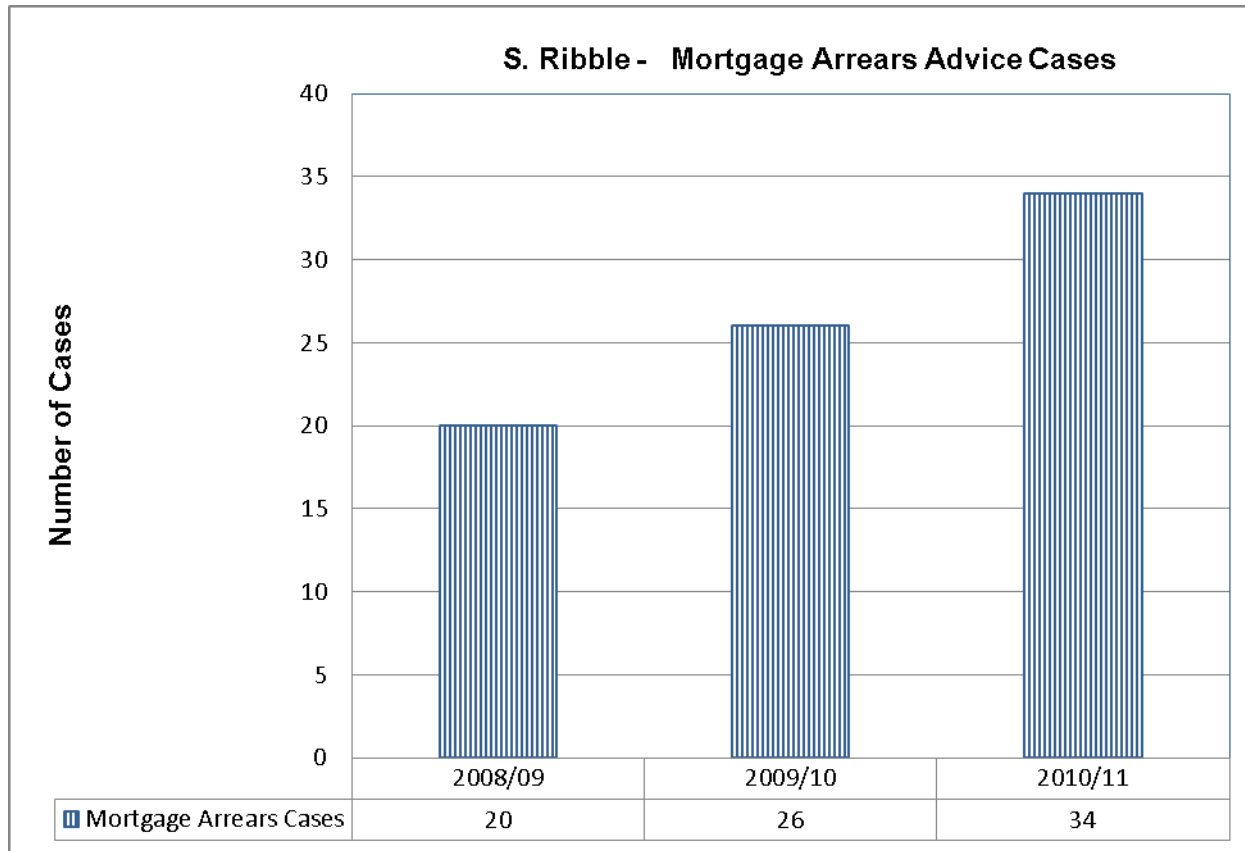
However formal homelessness presentations are only part of the picture and the bulk of the service demand comes from customers seeking general housing advice or those who may face a risk of homelessness and where a prevention measure will eliminate that risk.

**Figure 2.1 Number of Preventions Delivered**



There has been an increase in the numbers of preventions that we have achieved and whilst this has fallen slightly in 2010/11 the trend and focus continues to be towards prevention services.

**Figure 2.2 Number of Mortgage Arrears Cases Handled 2008-2011.**

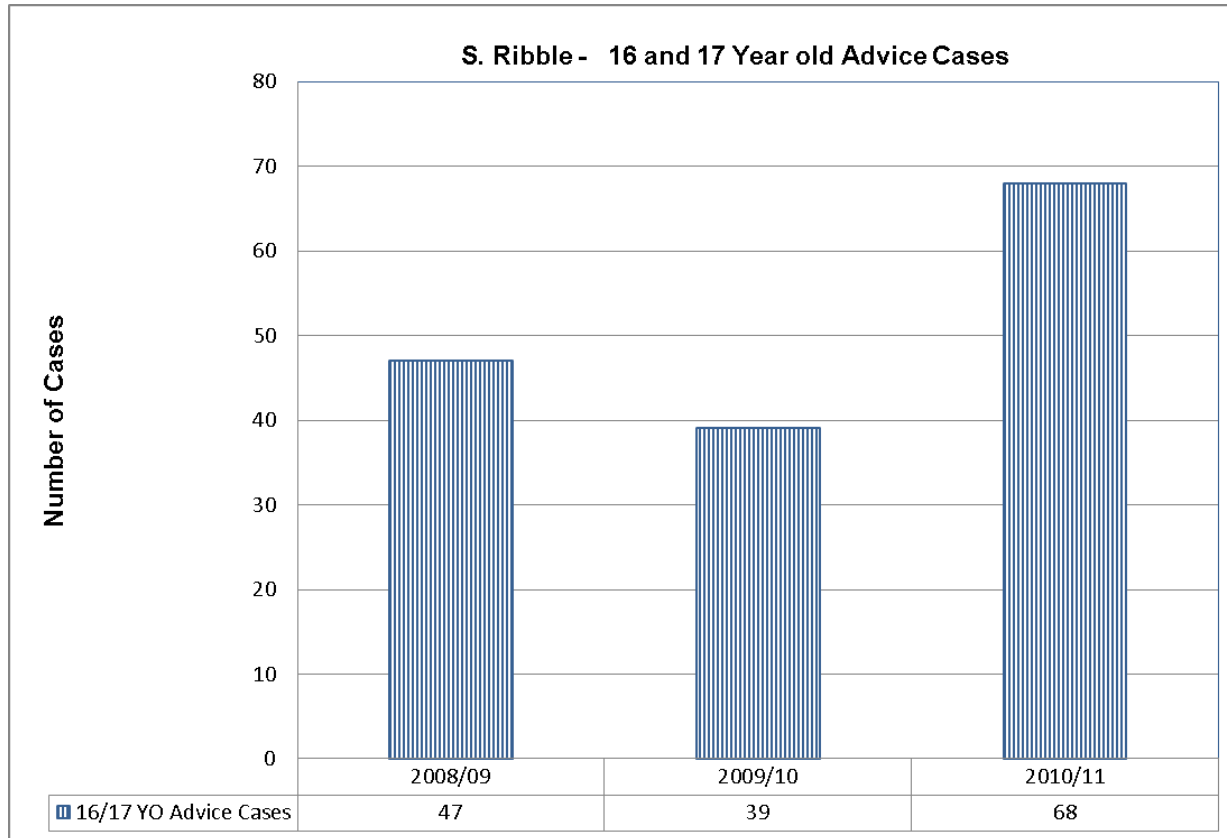


In recent times, the Councils service has seen growing numbers of those experiencing mortgage difficulties coming to us for help and advice. In the backdrop of the economic downturn and high unemployment, this is placing greater pressure on households whom in the past may never have used our services.

Figure 2.2 indicates the continual increase in the trend of, those in mortgage arrears approaching the Council for advice services. In the period Jan 2011 – Dec 2011 we contacted 145 people directly to offer services where we had received notifications from mortgage companies of possession action.

The mortgage rescue scheme has been used as an effective prevention tool. Since its introduction in In 2009 we have completed 12 mortgage rescues and we anticipate a further three are to be completed before April 2012

**Figure 2.3 Number of Homeless 16 & 17 year olds accessing the Service**



Two high profile pieces of caselaw lead to significant change in the responsibilities for homeless 16 & 17 year olds, with the expectation that the majority of homeless 16 & 17 year olds will be owed the full section 20 'Child in need' duty. Figure 2.3 illustrates the increase we have seen in the number of 16 & 17 year olds coming to the service for housing advice.

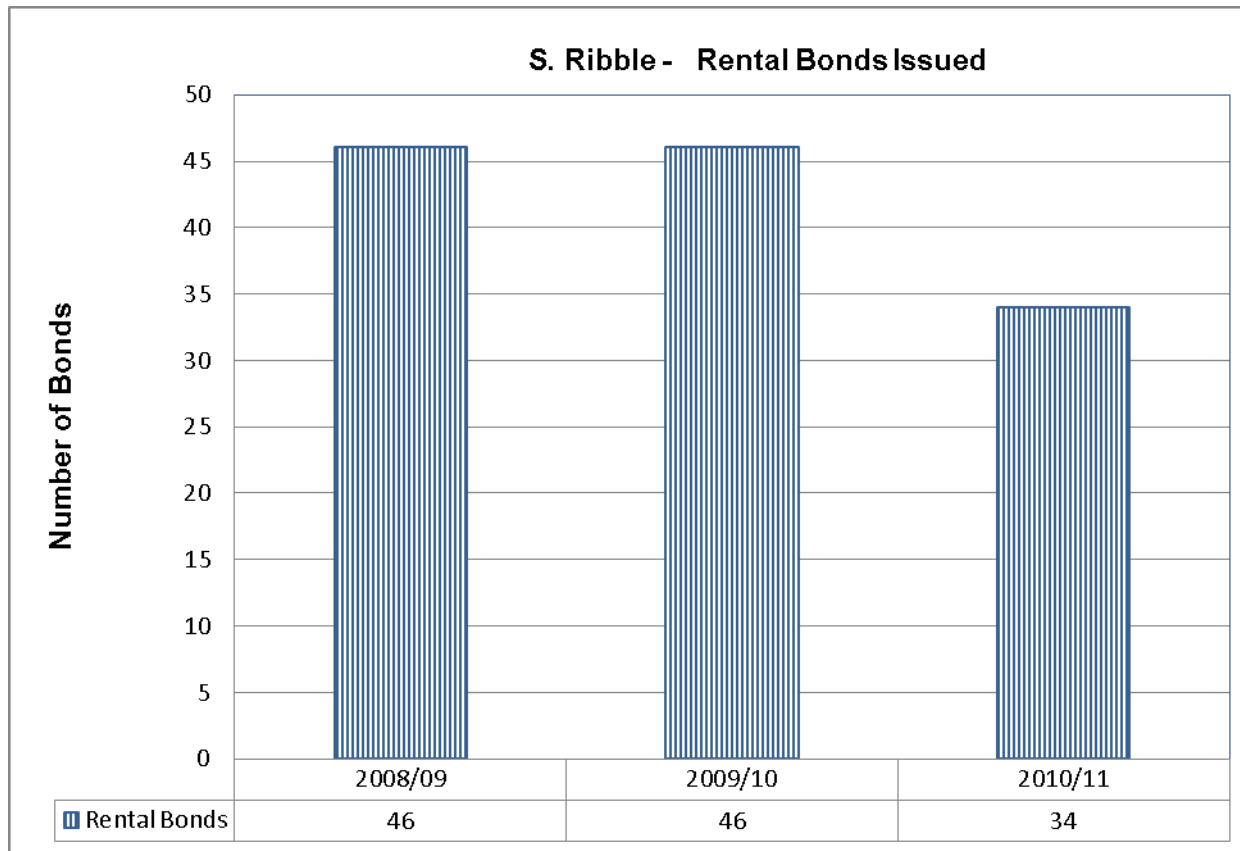
This increase in youth homelessness has meant that we were unable to avoid placing this age group in bed and breakfast and so were unable to achieve one of the aims of the 2008 strategy.

Consequently South Ribble Borough Council now works to the principles set out in the Lancashire protocol for joint working with Children's Social Care. This includes joint assessments by duty officers and multi agency working to ensure that the young person receives the best possible advice.

The Council works very closely with voluntary provider KEY and a new project has recently been agreed with Children's Social care and KEY to focus on prevention work and young people remaining at home where it is safe to do so. This includes work with young people on mediation, and anger management issues where there is a threat of homelessness alongside the other services offered by KEY. KEY has also agreed to act as a litigation friend for young people where prevention is not an option and an independent tenancy is the most suitable option.



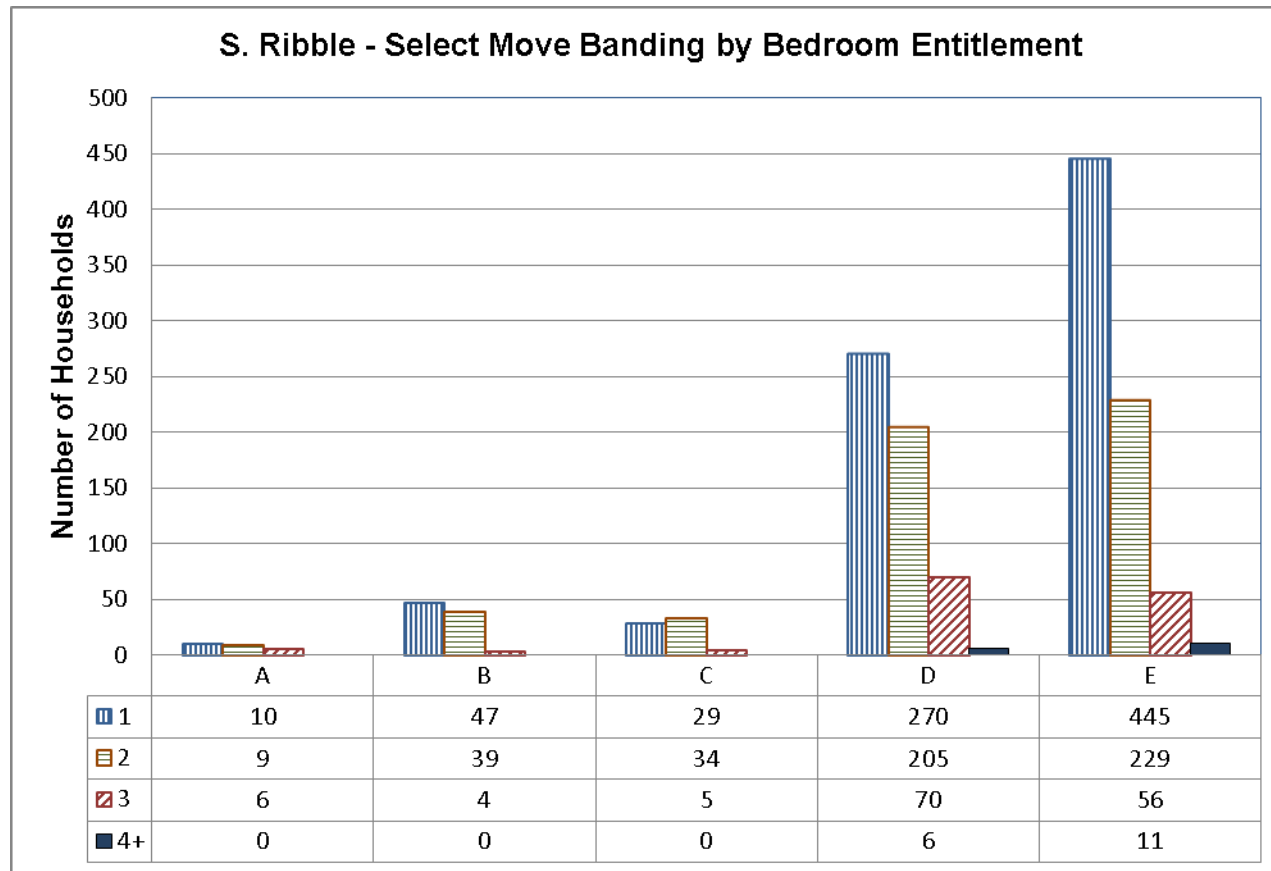
Figure 2.4 the Number of Bond Guarantees Issued 2008-2011.



The Bond guarantee scheme in South Ribble is an important tool which enables customers struggling to get into the social rented sector, improved access to renting in the private sector. The number of requests for bonds has been maintained and the number of bonds provided has remained steady.

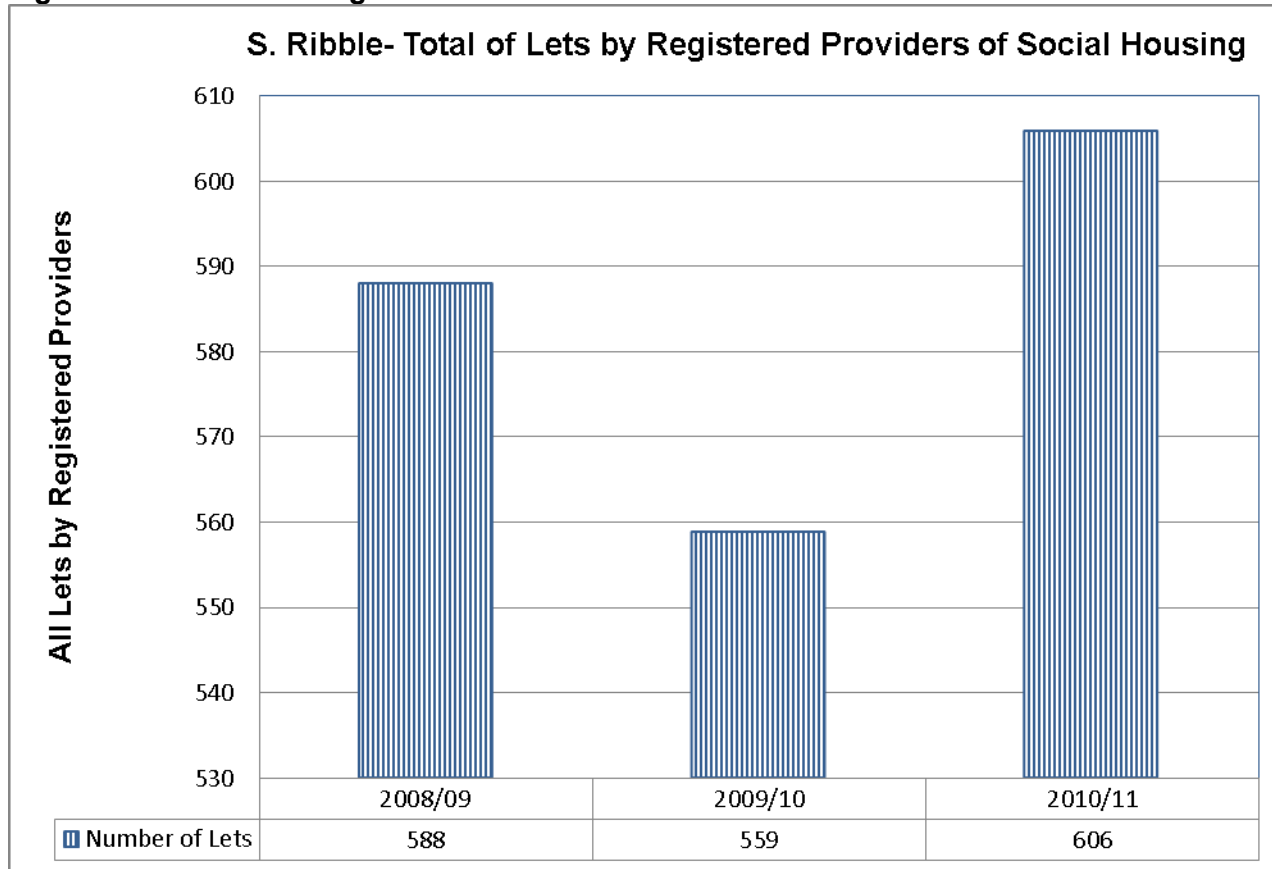
The reduction in 2010/11 was due to staffing changes which removed a dedicated resource to matching customers and private rented properties. However the bond scheme will be merged into the new Social Lettings Agency model in the future and will continue to be promoted as part of this work.

Figure 2.5 Waiting List Snapshot



The waiting list reflects that in all of the bands the highest level of need is for one and two bed roomed accommodation in the borough. .

**Figure 2.6 Social Housing Lets**



Whilst the number of lets have increased the proportion of lets that were made have not necessarily impacted on homeless households or those in temporary accommodation as upto 40% of the lets are for sheltered/supported housing as opposed to general needs housing.

## **Local agencies and Services.**

South Ribble is an area covering a population of 108,300 and is a mix of rural and urban areas spanning 113 square kilometres with household numbers totalling 47,369.

The Council provides a daily drop in Housing Options service based at the Civic Centre in Leyland offering face to face, home visits and telephone advice. This is provided by the Housing Options team. They offer a broad range of housing advice, across all tenures including landlord and tenant mediation, referrals to supported housing, banding assessments under the allocations policy, housing options advice and assessment of applications under the homelessness legislation. The team offer advice and assistance to other agencies where required and regularly attend multi agency meetings to address complex needs and housing issues.

The Housing Services Team which includes Housing Options has undergone a service review since the last strategy, in order to deliver efficiencies and streamline services. As part of the service review initial contact with the housing team is now made via Gateway who offer advice and assistance using scripts and guidance. Contacts which are not resolved in Gateway are sent to the back office and dealt with by the specialist housing options team. This remains under review and further work is being carried out with private sector scripting and a new housing options script for non priority households presenting as roofless.

Outreach surgeries at Bamber Bridge and Penwortham and also at Pathways mental health resource are only provided on request as required, due to reduced resources.

Homelessness prevention funds are utilised to support a drop in service through KEY. KEY provides a drop in service at the Youth and Community centre five afternoons a week. They work with single people aged 16 to 25 and offer advice on housing including referral to supported housing schemes, mediation, counselling, accredited life skills training, a handyman service, and an education and employment coach. KEY also provide food parcels and washing facilities.

The CAB provides independent housing advice and also debt advice. Referrals are made into the CAB for financial assessments where mortgage rescue and repossession prevention funds are being considered.

The out of hours homelessness service is provided on our behalf by our main Registered Provider, New Progress Housing Association.

## **Joint Working**

A Lancashire wide protocol has been agreed with Children's Services regarding the way the needs of 16/17 year olds should be responded to. Locally this continues to be monitored and funding has been granted to deliver a pilot project to prevent homelessness occurring for this client group. This is delivered by KEY, Children's Services and South Ribble and Chorley Councils.

The MARAC has been implemented which is attended regularly by Housing services. Chorley and South Ribble continue to provide a Sanctuary Scheme to assist with prevention of homelessness through security measures for those suffering from domestic violence.

## **Rough sleepers**

Historically South Ribble has not experienced a significant problem with rough sleeping with a zero count submitted up to 2008. We have conducted a joint count with Preston Council in 2009 and submitted a count of 4. All four of these people were known to services in Preston. In 2011 an estimate of 5 was submitted following multi agency consultation. The Council actively works with the Foxton centre in Preston and has a joint winterwatch initiative with Preston City Council to assist rough sleepers when temperatures fall below zero.

We are actively working on the No Second Night Out initiative which is being Co-ordinated by the Foxton centre in Preston and which is a priority for the Lancashire Homelessness Forum.

## **Supporting People Programme**

South Ribble is part of the Lancashire Supporting People Commissioning body and commissioner for a wide range of both accommodation and non accommodation based services. These services include supported housing projects for young single homeless people; single homeless with a mental health diagnosis, parent and baby, survivors of domestic violence and older persons sheltered accommodation. There is also a single gateway service provided by DISC for floating support for all socially excluded client groups.

The removal of the ring-fence on Supporting People funding along with the national reduction in the programme poses some challenges for the future. The Commissioning Body is working at a strategic level to manage the medium and longer term programme and plan for any reductions in finance. Further, work is being undertaken to ensure that the services currently provided best fit local need and strategic priorities and also that the pot is allocated consistently across Lancashire

## **Prevention measures**

The Housing Options team work well to ensure that prevention is a priority and offer a range of services, to prevent crisis situations.

This includes a signposting service to debt advice, proactive landlord and tenant mediation, referrals to floating support and use of the allocations policy to provide prevention options.

There is a bond guarantee scheme which has been managed with South Ribble Churches but is currently being reviewed and linked in to the development of a Social Lettings Agency.

The council provides advice on repossession and also assesses applications for mortgage rescue and the repossession prevention fund. A court desk is provided at Preston County Court by Keoghs solicitors and the Council utilises this service.

The Sanctuary scheme provided 75 preventions last year for victims of domestic abuse and burglary

The homeless prevention fund is used to provide small sums of money to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping services.

There are a range of services for 16 – 25 year olds including mediation and counselling provided through KEY.

The Council has a number of joint protocols, with statutory and voluntary agencies including a move on initiative from supported accommodation, hospital discharge procedures, and leaving care protocols which allows for choice and planned approaches.

A social lettings agency model has been developed with Methodist Action to provide a wider range of private sector options in the borough, such as shared lodging and rent a room schemes

## What did we deliver in 2008-2013 Prevention of Homelessness Strategy?

Table 2.2 illustrates the following measures were successfully delivered in South Ribble during the period of the previous strategy.

**Table 2.2 Measures Delivered In South Ribble**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<b>Protocol with court officers and advice agencies to prevent homelessness as a result of possession orders for mortgage / rent arrears</b>	Changing regulations has meant that we are notified of all households threatened with mortgage possession we write to all households that we are notified of to offer assistance. The Largest RSL provider provides notifications of tenant threatened with eviction and all are written to – signposting is also done by RSLs
<b>Publicity for RSL Buy Back Schemes for those facing mortgage difficulties</b>	This is done as part of Housing Options interviews
<b>Hospital discharge procedures</b>	Housing Options officers attend multi agency discharge case conferences
<b>Joined up services for ex-offenders at risk of homelessness and exchange of offender information</b>	SLA was signed in 2008 but in need of review – Approved Premises attended at Lancashire Homelessness forum in October 2011 to discuss move on
<b>Implement, monitor and evaluate Sanctuary Scheme across Chorley and South Ribble</b>	Scheme implemented and monitored, new model of ordering works introduced June 2011. Monitoring of the scheme is ongoing
<b>Undergo a CLG diagnostic assessment</b>	This was completed in 2010 and SRBC services were considered to be operating at beacon level.
<b>Monitoring on-going initiatives for</b>	This was initially implemented and undertaken but was

<b>effectiveness</b>	subsequently stopped due to change in priorities for the team. Homeless prevention continues to be monitored quarterly
<b>West Lancs District Councils to work together on benchmarking</b>	This is done via the Lancashire Homelessness Forum
<b>Review list of providers of pre owned furniture and public information</b>	Housing options booklet produced by Help the Homeless
<b>Initiatives to tackle overcrowding in partnership with RSLs</b>	This was partially addressed by the review of the allocations policy however further work needs to be done in relation to overcrowding and under occupation
<b>Handyman service to assist vulnerable households taking up tenancies</b>	scheme set up with KEY and Eaves Brook – needs to be evaluated
<b>Ensure full utilisation of Support hours for DISC in the SRBC area</b>	DISC operating at over full hours in South Ribble
<b>Undertake a review of the choice based allocations policy in line with new guidance</b>	Policy reviewed and implemented with new partners
<b>Monitor referrals to JSAF</b>	Outcomes and referrals are monitored by young persons housing support group
<b>Explore the possibility of increased provision of Supported lodgings for offenders and teenage parents</b>	this was fed into the wider supporting people partnership consultation
<b>Introduce local performance indicator to monitor length of time in temporary accommodation</b>	introduced and on going
<b>Engage with and support the vulnerable households project (Families First) explore possibility of SP funding for floating support</b>	Attended Steering groups and funding secured via SP for Floating Support – project remit has now changed



<b>Explore the utilisation of some blocks of interim accommodation as supported housing</b>	6 bed unit decommissioned as temporary accommodation and funding secured to provide a provision for people with mental health diagnosis
<b>Strengthen links with the private sector to assist those in housing need and ensure decent homes are managed responsibly</b>	partially done by BGS but will be strengthened by emerging Social lettings agency

## Measures which were not delivered In South Ribble

Table 2.3 illustrates the measures which were not completed as part of the previous strategy and the reason why. This can be for a variety of reasons, including a change of priorities or circumstances outside the control of the Council. Where it is appropriate, measures will be carried forward for delivery.

**Table 2.3 Measures which were not delivered**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Carry forward Yes/No</b>
Increased debt advice	discussions held with external agencies but not taken forward due to specialised nature and capacity issues	yes
Raised awareness of the sub prime lending market	No considered a priority following economic downturn	No
Mentoring scheme for young people to manage independent living	A feasibility study undertaken and resources not available to undertake this	No

Train the trainer package on food safety, health in the home to be delivered to those supporting vulnerable households	Delivered for a limited period of time	No
Identify need for dedicated mental health professional and develop referral pathways	PCT led and project stopped with PCT changes	No
Dedicated post to work with offenders and substance mis users	no available funding streams	No
Initiatives to tackle worklessness with RSLs and homeless network	not undertaken due to resources	Yes
Prevention of homelessness strategy to be developed with each RSL with homelessness champions	difficulties as some of larger RSLs had national champions	To be addressed as part of tenure strategy
Use of qualifying offers in RSL leased properties	– the Housing association Leasing scheme was subsequently de commissioned as in the climate at the time the scheme was costly and the temporary accommodation was not being fully utilised.	No

Temporary to permanent offers to be explored in RSL stock	– again this was to address the temporary accommodation target which was subsequently met and some of the temporary accommodation was being left void at the time	No
Use of licences instead of contractual tenancies in the temporary accommodation – This cannot be done for legal reasons	Investigated and not taken further as legal restrictions	No

## **Future challenges for Chorley and South Ribble Councils.**

The challenges we now face as district councils preventing homelessness are quite different to that of previous years. The pace of change externally requires Councils to be forward thinking and responsive, with the global and national economic climate creating pressure on household incomes and employment, and the introduction of new policy and legislation all creating new challenges and opportunities.

The new power to discharge into the private rented sector is regarded as an opportunity to make better use of this sector and work with landlords; however this requires some commitment from landlords and may prove difficult in Chorley and South Ribble where the private rented sectors are smaller than the national average.

Changes in welfare benefits will almost certainly impact on homelessness services, particularly the extension of the single room rent policy to those 25 to 35 years and the introduction of penalties for under occupation in social housing.

The housing market has slowed significantly, with access to mortgage finance and tightening of lending criteria affecting access to home ownership, particularly for first time buyers and those buying at the lower end of the market. In Chorley affordable housing delivery continues to buck the trend however in South Ribble, development has slowed and the introduction of lower grant rates within the Affordable Housing Framework programme 2011-2013 has further dampened affordable housing delivery.

New intermediate housing needs to address this, with products such as Homebuy, First buy, shared ownership and Low Cost Home Ownership all part of the solution.

Working collaboratively can bring real benefits and this is strongly encouraged by Government, for example, with the Single Homelessness Funding and the Rough Sleeper funding programmes which both require authorities to work together at a Lancashire level to deliver prevention initiatives.

There are many examples where this work is happening already, both across district councils and also with the County Council and other agencies. The Lancashire Youth Homelessness Strategy presents a key opportunity for partnerships to evolve in this area, particularly with regards to homeless 16 & 17 years olds.

There is a significant review of Supporting People Services being undertaken which may also have an impact on the frontline services funded in the boroughs.

## **Vision and Strategic Objectives**

This strategy has been developed taking to account the local, national and global context. The vision for this strategy is

**Vision – To enable people to have access to the housing they need and prevent housing crises.**

The key strategic objectives of the measures within this strategy for Chorley and South Ribble are:

- 1) **The provision of a high quality Housing Options service which meets the needs of all our customers**
- 2) **To ensure we deliver effective, timely prevention of homelessness for all cases which are preventable**
- 3) **To proactively target youth homelessness across Chorley and South Ribble to deliver reductions over the medium term.**
- 4) **To minimise the impact of welfare reform on homelessness within the boroughs.**
- 5) **To increase the supply of private rented properties available to those in housing need**
- 6) **To ensure positive outcomes following the introduction of a new social tenancy standard.**

These objectives are consistent with the corporate strategic values of Chorley and South Ribble Councils, ensuring they meet the needs and aspirations of local residents, elected members and stakeholders and partners of the Councils.

### **Chorley Council strategic vision:**

Chorley will smile as the most attractive and supportive place in the North West to live, work, invest, play and visit. People will be healthy and happy in safe communities where they can achieve their ambitions

### **South Ribble Council strategic vision:**

- A place with a strong identity
- A place with diverse, dynamic communities which work together for a better future
- A place which goes from strength to strength
- A place which has safer, healthier, caring communities

- A place where there are education, personal development and employment opportunities for all
- A clean, green and sustainable environment, with decent housing for all
- A place where there is sustainable, integrated transport for all

**In short, we want South Ribble to be a great place to live, work, visit and play.**

## **Action plan and key measures of success**

The strategy action plan is the cornerstone of the strategy and sets out what is to be achieved and by when and any resource implications. The themes which have emerged from the review including the reductions seen in preventions and reliefs and number of rental bonds issued in both boroughs, have been fed into the measures identified. The effectiveness of this strategy will be measured by the delivery of these actions and associated outcomes and they will be the key drivers for service improvement over the next five years. Before deciding which tasks and measures to pursue and which to reject, key aims of what we want to achieve overall have been identified.

The impact of the key priorities of the strategy will be as

- 1) Improving our service for customers
- 2) Reducing the use of temporary accommodation
- 3) Increasing the prevention of homelessness

### **Key:**

Actions 1 - 10 for delivery collaboratively by Chorley and South Ribble Councils

Actions 11 - 18 for delivery by Chorley Council

Actions 19 - 24 for delivery by South Ribble Council



**Prevention of Homelessness Strategy Action Plan Chorley & South Ribble**

	<b>Key Action</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Action Lead</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Link to Strategic priorities</b>
1	<p>Develop a web based Housing Directory including a self service enhanced housing option tool</p> <p>Utilise the enhanced options service to link into services providing job opportunities</p>	Select move partnership commissioning of Enhanced Options Module	31/12/12	<p>Abritas Enhanced Options Software Revenue funding</p> <p>RSL partners and Homelessness network</p>	<p>Housing Manager (options)</p> <p>Suzanne Ravenscroft</p> <p>IT Depts.</p> <p>Select move Partners</p> <p>Suzanne Ravenscroft</p>	<p>Online housing advice and information available to anyone, to include all tenures and a housing advice tool.</p> <p>Increase in number of customers self serving.</p> <p>Enhanced housing options module to address worklessness</p>	<p>Improving our service for customers</p> <p>Increasing the prevention of homelessness.</p>
2.	Update and improve existing IT systems for Homelessness that link in with existing housing applications	Implementation of new Homelessness software	31/1/13	Abritas Revenue funding	<p>Housing Manager (options)</p> <p>Suzanne Ravenscroft</p>	<p>Improved connectivity with Selectmove and other software</p> <p>Consistency of data collection and correspondence to customers</p> <p>Improved Single port of information which will reduce number of</p>	Improving our service for customers.

						times we collect customer information and reduce processing time.	
3.	To develop a system for discharging legal duties in to the PRS including support for landlords	<p>Establishment of a small task and finish group and project plan.</p> <p>To produce an note for Executive Cabinet seeking approval to make use of the new power</p> <p>Development of a suite of letters and procedures including referrals for property inspection and discharge of duty.</p> <p>Launch of scheme including staff training</p>	<p>30/05/12</p> <p>30/09/13</p> <p>31/01/13</p> <p>31/8/13</p>	<p>Legal Dept</p> <p>Housing standards Team</p> <p>Revenues and Benefits Team</p>	<p>Housing Manager (options)</p> <p>Jane Maguire</p> <p>Suzanne Ravenscroft</p>	<p>Increase in landlords understanding of what support is available when managing properties for vulnerable customers</p> <p>Reduction use of temporary accommodation for those no longer requiring support and to whom main housing duty owed.</p>	<p>Improving our service for our customers</p> <p>Reducing the use of temporary accommodation</p> <p>Increasing the prevention of homelessness</p>
4.	Establishment of a specific young	Location and arrangements for	Delivered	£30,000 non recurrent	South Ribble Key	Reduction in the number of young people presenting as homeless	Improving our service for our customers

	persons service including mediation and advice	service delivery agreed  Procedures for referrals, information sharing, outcomes and monitoring information to be collected agreed.  Regular monitoring meetings to be arranged	30/02/12  30/02/12	CLG funding  £10,000 SRBC Prevention grant funding	Housing Manager (options) Jane Maguire	Increase in young people accessing housing advice prior to crisis point  Improved life chances for young people  Increase in the number of young people accessing the service successfully returned home.	Reducing the use of temporary accommodation Increasing the prevention of homelessness
	Develop an exit strategy for the project	MOU established between stakeholders	30/3/12				
5.	Review of the Sanctuary Scheme	RSLs engaged in discussions about the scheme	30/02/12	Revenue Budget	Kath Knowles Jane Maguire	To increase the contributions of RSL partners  Ensure the service remains	Improving our service for our customers

		Principles of scheme for 2012/13 agreed  Scheme launched April 2012	01/03/12  01/04/12		Sarah Bell  New Progress Chorley Community Housing Places for People Accent NW Contour	accessible to all tenures	
6.	Review of the sub regional Allocation Policy (Selectmove) to accommodate Localism Bill provisions and ensure best use of local stock	Project plan established including key responsibilities and timescales  Key areas for review identified including principles of Localism Bill, review of performance of existing policy including quota system  Draft document to Exec Cab for approval to consult  Revised Policy adopted	31/04/12  31/8/12  30/10/12	Legals Registered Providers Postage & printing for consultation costs	Housing Manager (options)  Jane Maguire Zoe Whiteside  Selectmove partners	Ensure policy maximises the best use of the available housing stock  Ensure compliant with Localism Act  Produce principles regarding quotas, bands and local connection which best meet the needs of the customer	Improving our service for our customers  Reducing the use of temporary accommodation  Increasing the prevention of homelessness

			01/04/13				
7.	Develop procedures for responding to complaints of Harassment and Illegal Eviction	Staff PACE trained Case studies of cases used for purpose of action learning/training	31/07/12	£500 revenue funding	Housing Manager (options)  Suzanne Ravenscroft	Staff fully trained to deliver the service	Improving our service for our customers  Reducing the use of temporary accommodation  Increasing the prevention of homelessness
8.	Develop a Tenancy Strategy  Work with Lancashire project team and then provide strategy for each Borough	Key principles of the strategy produced  Initial consultation with RSLs over principles  Draft Strategy produced and report to members for approval to consult.  Any amendments in light of consultation	31/03/12  01/04/12  30/06/12	Legals Democratic Services PR/Communications	Housing Manager (options) Mick Coogan Zoë Whiteside Kath Knowles Mary Mather Fiona Daniels  Jane Maguire Suzanne Ravenscroft	Agreed principles for Affordable Rent  Agreed principles for flexible tenancies including tenancy review	Improving our service for our customers  Reducing the use of temporary accommodation  Increasing the prevention of homelessness

		feedback	30/08/12				
		Tenancy Strategy published	01/10/12				
			30/09/12				
9.	Work with partners to explore Empty Homes Initiatives	Submit bid with NPHA	15/02/12	NPHA People and Places staff £25k capital funding	Kath Knowles	Investment secured and empty homes successfully brought back into use as affordable housing.	Improving our service for our customers  Increasing the prevention of homelessness
		Deliver project if funding secured including legal agreement	30/03/13				
		Submit bid with Methodist action	17/04/12	Methodist action.	Jane Maguire Dave Bradley		
10.	Expand the Choice Based Lettings Scheme to include advertisement of all tenures	Draft advert templates including procedures	30/08/12	I.T services Legal Services Plumlife Homebuy agents	Zoë Whiteside Jane Maguire	Select move advertise private rented properties, Low Cost Home Ownership and Shared Ownership Properties.	Improving our service for our customers
		Pilot advert Private Rented properties	30/09/12				
		Pilot advert for LCHO	30/12/12				
		Pilot advert for					

		Homebuy, Firstbuy and Shared Ownership	30/12/12				
11.	Review prevention measures and delivery.	Initial scoping exercise to discuss performance and identify any gaps with Housing Options Staff  Produce paper outlining findings and suggestions for options for new measures or refreshed policies	30/06/12  30/09/12		Zoë Whiteside Fiona Daniels  Housing Manager (options)	Any blockages or gaps identified	Improving our service for our customers
12.	Explore provision of cross tenure older persons housing related support	Incremental conversion from accommodation based support floating support	01/04/15	Supporting People Legals	LCC Michael Coogan Registered Providers	Value for money for older persons supporting people service Older people in the private sector assisted to remain in their own home for longer More equitable service across tenures A need for housing related support no longer a prerequisite for accessing	Improving our service for our customers  Increasing the prevention of homelessness

						sheltered accommodation	
13.	Develop a Peer Education Project for Homelessness	Completion of the PID 30/3/12	30/3/12	Legals HR Printing and materials	Cat Parsons Fiona Daniels Lousie Eli Early Intervention Officer Georgine Lee Children's Services	Long term reduction in the number of Young people presenting as homeless from the targeted schools.  Young people who are former Cotswold residents engaged in delivery of peer support  Young people have better understanding of housing options, and risks of homelessness	Reducing the use of temporary accommodation  Increasing the prevention of homelessness
		Data collection & analysis including survey to schools and appropriate	30/6/12				
		Summary of findings from data analysis and survey produced	31/10/12		KEY		
		Target schools and educational establishments identified and permission to engage sought-	31/12/12				
		Recruitment & engagement /training of volunteers					
		Develop programme & hold pilot/rehearsal sessions	31/3/13				
		Deliver programme					
		Review impact of programme and	30/6/13				



		produce end of project report  Continuing monitoring of 16/17 years presenting upto	30/11/13  28/2/14  31/3/16				
14.	Explore the development of a Social Lettings Agency in Chorley	Undertake an Options appraisal of implementation of a social lettings agency & produce short note of benefits including a proposal from Methodist Action.	30/07/12	Legal/finance Access to CLG funding	Fiona Daniels Mick Coogan	Increase in successful move on into PRS  Positive engagement with private landlords	Improving our service for our customers  Reducing the use of temporary accommodation  Increasing the prevention of homelessness
15.	Lead on the coordination and delivery of the Single Homelessness Funding Initiative for Lancashire	Steering group established  Draft action plan complete  Detailed proposals for measures/services	31/3/2012  14/5/2012  30/10/12	Finance Housing leads from across Lancs	Zoë Whiteside Mary Mather Mick Coogan	Improved prevention offer across Lancashire, including single service model  Increase in prevention & reliefs (Chorley)  Key objectives of CLG funding requirements met.	Improving our service for our customers  Reducing the use of temporary accommodation  Increasing the prevention of homelessness

		developed Delivery implemented	01/04/13				
16.	Explore the feasibility of remodelling an existing Accommodation Based Service for a bespoke service for 16/17 year olds	Initial scoping meeting with stakeholders Modelling of service Funding source identified and explored Decision made if service can proceed	30/02/12 30/03/12 30/05/12 30/05/12		Zoë Whiteside Housing Manager (options) Places for People Children's Social Care LCC	Comprehensive assessment of the possibility of a bespoke service	Improving our service for our customers Reducing the use of temporary accommodation Increasing the prevention of homelessness
17.	To develop and report on monthly dashboard of Housing indicators	Develop a suite of suitable measures which assist in early identification of any risks or negative trends (ie mortgage repossessions, waiting lists and housing advice cases)	30/03/12		Michael Coogan Fiona Daniels Debbie Johnson	Monthly performance figures available to managers and Strategy Group to review trends and plan any necessary response.	Improving our service for our customers

		Implement monthly monitoring	01/04/12				
18.	To review service for customers at risk of mortgage repossession and explore solutions for improving services	<p>Establish a system for monitoring mortgage repossession cases from lender notification through to court action</p> <p>To populate system with retrospective data including data of outcomes of legal action</p> <p>To consider possible solutions to improve service and produce an options report.</p>	<p>30/03/12</p> <p>30/04/12</p> <p>30/09/12</p>		<p>Fiona Daniels</p> <p>Fiona Daniels</p> <p>Housing Manager (Options)</p>	Improved services for those facing repossession Preparation for any anticipation increase in repossessions	Improving our service for our customers
19.	Explore options available for development for The Maltings	<p>Tenants rehoused and site cleared</p> <p>Plans for site redevelopment</p>	<p>31/10/12</p> <p>31/10/13</p>	Planning Finance/ PFP	Jane Maguire	Provision of single person accommodation	<p>Improving our service for our customers</p> <p>Reducing the use of temporary accommodation</p>

		approved					Increasing the prevention of homelessness
20.	Work with South Ribble Partnership on project to explore the feasibility of a social enterprise linking education, employment and housing opportunities for vulnerable young people and families	Engage Key Stakeholders  Complete feasibility study  Identify potential funding/income streams  Develop business plan	30/06/12  30/09/12  30/09/12  31/12/12		South Ribble Partnership  Suzanne Ravenscroft	Comprehensive feasibility carried out and provision of a hub linking education, employment and housing in the Borough	Reducing the use of temporary accommodation  Increasing the prevention of homelessness
21.	Explore the current debt advice services to ensure they are sufficient to assist with homelessness prevention	Review current service delivery signposting and referrals, investigate credit unions and community banking services  Conduct an assessment of financial advice requirements  Provide recommendations	30/10/12	CAB/RSL partners and partner	Suzanne Ravenscroft	Comprehensive assessment conducted in relation to debt advice available in the borough to meet needs for Homeless prevention	Improving our service for our customers

22.	Improve services for ex-offenders at risk of homelessness and exchange of offender information	<p>SLA signed in 2008 needs to be reviewed</p> <p>Link review in with work carried out by Lancashire Homelessness Forum</p> <p>Identify gaps and opportunities in existing provision in South Ribble</p>	30/10/12	Probation Supporting people team Legal	Suzanne Ravenscroft	Full review of service provision for ex offenders	Improving our service for our customers
23.	Implement Social Lettings business model with Methodist Action	<p>Produce Service level agreement</p> <p>Establish process and procedures</p> <p>Monitor activity and performance</p> <p>Develop central information point and access to private rented services</p> <p>Establish a Private Landlord Forum in South Ribble including</p>	<p>30/03/12</p> <p>30/08/12</p>	Finance Legal	Jane Maguire Suzanne Ravenscroft	<p>Greater number of rent bonds issued</p> <p>Reduction in time in temporary accommodation</p> <p>Increase in the number of offers made in private rented accommodation</p> <p>Improved engagement with Private Landlords</p> <p>Use of lodging schemes and rent a room schemes</p>	<p>Improved access to accommodation.</p> <p>Improved service to customers</p>

		consideration of a joint forum.	30/03/13				
24	Review provision of temporary accommodation	<p>Conduct comprehensive review of use of temporary accommodation identifying cost, customer views and suitability</p> <p>Identify potential gaps, and issues and recommendations for re modelling and alternatives</p>	30/03/14	Finance Legal Housing providers and private owners	Suzanne Ravenscroft Lee Westwell	<p>Value for money appraisal of use of temporary accommodation</p> <p>Recommendations for alternatives</p>	<p>Improving our service for our customers</p> <p>Reducing the use of temporary accommodation</p>

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## **Consultation and Integrated Equality Impact Assessment**

### **Strategy Development**

This strategy has been developed in partnership with local agencies that support and contribute to the overall delivery of related services in Chorley and South Ribble.

The Chorley and South Ribble Homeless Network is a forum comprising of the key operational partners, including the statutory agencies and voluntary sector.

The first stage of the development of the strategy was a workshop with the Chorley and South Ribble Homeless Network which took place on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2012

The workshop comprised of series of questions and groupwork to determine what the partners felt the key priorities in light of the changes taking place and what measures could be delivered to improve services and prevent homelessness.

The ideas and priorities have been integrated into this document along with other opportunities which have arisen further, for example, the Single Homelessness Funding Initiative.

The strategy has been approved by both Chorley and South Ribble Executive Cabinets.

### **Equality and Integrated Impact Assessments**

Chorley Council conducted an Integrated Impact Assessment as part of the development process of this document to analyse any positive or negative impacts this strategy may have on the residents of Chorley with regards to equality, health or sustainability, as well as impact on Chorley Council's reputation. Chorley Council currently recognised 9 equality strands; age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity race religion and belief rurality, sex and sexual orientation. The listed groups of people were given additional consideration during the writing of the strategy.

The aim of the assessment was to help maximise positive impacts and mitigate any negative impacts. The final draft of the strategy incorporates changes highlighted through the assessment process.

### **Consultation Partners and partnerships**

The consultation of the strategy included engagement from all the following partnerships and will include a variety of methods ranging from a drop in or presentations, to circulation of the strategy with a short questionnaire for completion. The strategy was also placed on the Councils online consultation database.



**List of Key Partnerships**

Chorley and South Ribble Homeless Network  
Chorley Private Landlord Forum  
Lancashire Homelessness Forum  
Lancashire Strategic group for 16 & 17 year olds  
Lancashire Supporting People Commissioning Body  
Chorley Strategic Housing Partnership  
Cotswold Supported Housing Residents Group  
Chorley Equalities forum  
South Ribble Churches  
KEY

**List of Key Partners**

Adult and Childrens Social care  
CAB  
Police  
Community Safety Partnership  
Supporting People Commissioning Body  
Registered Providers  
Drugs and Alcohol teams  
Young Peoples Services  
Connexions  
PCT and local hospitals  
Probation & YOT  
South Ribble Churches  
KEY  
Methodist Action

## **Monitoring and Review Arrangements**

Lead responsibility for the delivery of the strategy action plan will be strategic housing leads in each respective Council, Zoë Whiteside Head of Housing Chorley Council and Jane Maguire, Housing Services Manager, South Ribble Council.

The delivery of this strategy will be governed by internal and external bodies and performance reported regularly. The Chorley & South Ribble Homelessness Network and the Chorley Strategic Housing Partnership will receive quarterly updates on performance. There will be an annual review of the action plan which will be produced as a short summary document available on the website.

The annual summary of performance will be circulated to the executive member for strategic housing and Chief Officers.

## Glossary

Affordable Housing	Housing for households whose needs are not met by the market included, social rented, affordable rented, intermediate home ownership and intermediate rented.
Allocations Policy	The set of rules which determine priority for applicants on a housing register or Choice Based Lettings system for the purpose of accessing social housing.
Choice Based Lettings	A proactive online bidding system which allows choice to households wishing to access social housing as opposed to waiting to be allocated a property.
Chorley and South Ribble Homeless Network	Forum comprising of the key agencies engaged in frontline service delivery linked to housing and homelessness , includes Children's Social care, Probation, Youth offending team, supported housing providers, Connexions, young peoples services, Help the Homeless, Key, Supporting People
DISC	Developing Initiatives Supporting Communities – North of England charity supports communities by focusing on people who have fallen through the net of statutory provision and whom many agencies struggle to help.
Eligible Applicant	During a homeless investigation we will consider whether applicants are eligible for assistance. This is considered against set criteria.
Homelessness	Anyone who does not have a safe or permanent home may be Homeless.
Intermediate Home Ownership	Housing models to enable households to buy a property to meet their needs who can't afford to buy the open market. Models include Shared Ownership, Shared Equity/Equity Share (e.g. Firstbuy), Discounted for Sale, Rent to Buy.
Intentionally homeless	You have deliberately done something or not done something which has resulted in you becoming homeless? This includes Failure to act on advice that has been given to you.

Mediation	Facilitating dialogue between a client threatened with eviction and the property owner other tenants (often parents or partners) or landlord in order to assist the client to remain in their current home.
P1E	The quarterly homelessness statistical return made by the local housing authority to the Department of Communities and Local Government
Partnerships	Allow different initiatives and services to support and work together more effectively.
Peer education	a range of initiatives where young people from a similar age group, background and culture and/or social status educate and inform each other about a wide variety of issues.
Preventing Repossession Fund	Funding provided to councils in February 2012 to support in preventing homelessness as a result of homelessness repossession.
Prevention	where a local authority takes positive action to provide housing assistance to someone who considers him or herself to be at risk of homelessness in the near future, and as a result the person is able to either remain in his or her existing accommodation or obtain alternative accommodation, providing a solution for at least the next six months.
Priority Need	Priority need is the second homelessness test. People in priority need are considered to be more vulnerable than other people, and so more in need of help to find accommodation
Private Landlord	An owner of a property who rents the property to tenants who is not a housing association, council or third sectors organisation
Rental Bond Scheme	Assistance provided to people in housing need, but do not have a cash deposit to access private rented accommodation. Landlords are offered a bond in the form of a non-cash deposit guarantee by the Council.

Rough Sleeper	People sleeping, or bedded down, in the open air (such as on streets, or in doorways, parks or bus shelters); people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations or "bashes").
Select Move	The sub-regional Choice Based Lettings system for Chorley, Preston and South Ribble local authorities accessed via <a href="http://www.selectmove.co.uk">www.selectmove.co.uk</a> .
Sanctuary Scheme	The Scheme provides professionally installed security measures to allow those experiencing domestic violence to remain in their own accommodation where it is safe to do so, where it is their choice and where the perpetrator no longer lives within the accommodation.
Supporting People	The grant administration programme which commissions housing related support services to allow vulnerable people to remain in their own homes. Lancashire County Council administers the budget on behalf of the 12 lower tier districts in the county.
Strategy	A strategy is a long-term plan of action designed to achieve a particular goal.
Temporary Accommodation	When an individual or household makes a homeless application the Council must offer them temporary accommodation if they have nowhere else to stay. This accommodation may consist of a flat, house, bedsit, and hostel or, in some limited circumstances, a bed and breakfast hotel.

Document Produced on 06/03/12 ZW

Amended on 09/03/12 JM

Amended by