

Social Housing and Worklessness

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Problem facing social tenants

- Social tenants of working age 3 times as likely to be unemployed
- Social tenants of working age 3 times as likely to be economically inactive
- 50% of households of working age in social housing are workless
- 80% of new housing association tenants under 25 are workless
- Downturn making things more difficult

Good work taking place

- An audit by NHF identified that Housing Associations currently spend about £45m per year on initiatives to tackle worklessness benefiting over 67,000 tenants
- Housing Corporation Research: Housing Associations have spent over £200m over the last 5 years on work and training initiatives
- ALMOS: Tackling worklessness is also an increasing priority for ALMOs e.g. North West ALMOs
- Housing Corporation Gold Award winners for tackling worklessness: Accent Group, Derwent & Solway HA, Places for People Group
- CIH are developing a professional development module for housing staff on worklessness

CIH Good practice toolkit for social landlords tackling worklessness launched on 4 December

Projects already undertaken by social landlords include:

Signposting

Job brokerage

Construction Projects

In Work Support

Apprenticeships

Employment of tenants

Skills development

Mentoring

Procurement

Social Enterprise

Local Employment partnerships

Maintenance Projects

Slivers of Time

Examples of joint working from Toolkit

Birmingham City Council – LAA fully integrates Housing Dept into tackling worklessness including access to WNF

West Midlands Integrated Employment and Skills Pilot

Liverpool City Council pilot to enable collaboration between Social Landlords and the City to tackle worklessness

Sheffield Centre for Full Employment leading employment partnership linking social landlords to the heart of City's employment strategy. Partnership includes ALMO and all major HAs

Southampton mapping exercise of worklessness among social tenants provides baseline for joint project to tackle it

Home Connections in **North London** using CBL to ask questions about employment needs and submit info to local IAG organisations

West London HELP scheme using staff to signpost to local IAG provision

Government also tackling worklessness

- £1.5 billion Working Neighbourhood Fund - programme for LAs to develop local, community-led approaches to tackling worklessness
- Proposal for social housing providers in an area to come together to work with JCP and LSC to form LEPs to employ more social tenants. North West ALMOs have already agreed to do this.
- Independent Houghton Review for CLG/DWP published on Monday sets out proposals to support Councils' efforts to boost employment
- HCA role to play in encouraging regeneration focus on people
- TSA will regulate social housing and could promote worklessness activities especially signposting tenants to what is available locally.
- Enhanced Housing Options Trailblazers

Enhanced Housing Options Trailblazers

- Launched in March 2008
- CLG funding 42 projects covering 92 Local Authorities
- 12 mentor authorities, 20 trailblazers, 10 kickstarts
- In the North West: Blackpool (mentor), Blackburn with Darwen, Cheshire West, Manchester, Salford
- In total the programme is worth over £10m
- The first phase of trailblazers has already begun, with the majority starting from April 2009 and running to March 2011

- Good quality advice around fuller range of housing options, including social housing, private rented and low cost home-ownership
- Improve the quality of housing advice and offer it to a broader client group i.e. anyone in housing need
- Promote innovative, personalised advice services which help tackle root causes of housing need, including **worklessness**
- Mentor trailblazers in particular will help to spread good practice to neighbouring authorities – regional seminars

Enhanced Housing Options Trailblazers

- Five authorities on the mentoring programme including Blackpool have been selected to receive a Job Centre Plus (JCP) package, funded by DWP
- Response to economic downturn: increased focus on debt advice, mortgage rescue advice or similar. Built into action planning process which is currently underway
- Will be a comprehensive evaluation of the EHO programme. Good practice toolkit will be produced as a result of evaluation

- Increasing unemployment will also affect social tenants – possibly disproportionately if they are in more marginal employment.
- It may be harder for those further from the labour market to get jobs, but we should not give up on them.
- New Government initiatives in response to downturn e.g. apprenticeships, brought forward capital spending - can help social tenants.
- The government is committed to preventing long term unemployment wherever possible.

What can social landlords do?

- **Use procurement to leverage local jobs and training – RSL turnover approx £8 Billion p.a.**
- **Apprenticeships / LEPs**
- **Be included in plans to meet LAA worklessness targets**
- **Promotion and use of Good Practice Toolkit. Wide range of practical examples including low/no cost options**
- **Work with CLG Regional resource teams to promote Enhanced Housing Options**
- **Job Centre Plus want to do more.**
- **Multi-agency partnerships e.g. local strategic partnerships**