

# broadway: the voice

July 2010

Welcome to the Broadway Voice, a monthly bulletin designed to keep you up-to-date with key homelessness and housing news.

The bulletin is divided into three parts:

- Key policy developments/news
- Summary of a key issue
- List of other reports, consultations and guidance.

For information or comments about the Voice, please contact Polly Morgan, at [voice@broadwaylondon.org](mailto:voice@broadwaylondon.org) or on 020 7710 0550.

## Policy News

### Homelessness

#### **Government consultation on changes to street count methodology published**

Proposed changes include:

- Conducting street counts to be a choice for individual local authorities based on their assessment of whether the local rough sleeping problem justifies counting.
- Local authorities should submit an estimate of the number of people rough sleeping on a typical night.
- The definition of what constitutes being "bedded down" to be changed to include rough sleepers about to bed down.
- Neighbouring authorities to count on the same night.
- An update to the recommended starting time for counts to 2.00am.
- The responsibility for providing independent verifiers to attend counts will become a responsibility of Homeless Link. [More info](#)

See [Consultation section](#) below for more information.

Meanwhile, the government has published official experimental estimates which showed that showed the number of rough sleepers in England could be as high as 1,247. This compares with the figure of 440 shown by the official count. This is because for the first time, all councils have been asked to submit estimates of the number of people sleeping rough on the streets in their area. [More info](#)

#### **Annual rough sleeping figures for London released**

Annual rough sleeping figures in London have been released by Broadway on behalf of the government. Overall the total number of people seen sleeping on the streets of London in 2009/10 rose by six per cent from the previous year. However this was due to a rise in non UK rough sleepers, mainly from Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries. Where this group is excluded the number of people seen rough sleeping actually reduced by 3% in 2009/10. The figures are based on information provided in the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN). [More Info](#)

#### **Government guidance on meeting the psychological needs of homeless people**

Guidance published by the National Mental Health Development Unit and Communities and Local Government (CLG) aims to describe effective ways of recognising and meeting the psychological and emotional needs of people who have experienced homelessness, are sleeping rough or living in insecure accommodation, in particular young people and rough sleepers with histories of complex trauma/personality disorder. The guidance, part of the new cross-Government approach to tackling homelessness, is aimed at doctors, health workers, probation staff and other frontline workers. It claims the evidence shows that up to 60 per cent of hostel residents have a diagnosable personality disorder compared to 10 per cent in the general population. [More Info](#)

#### **Survey of needs and provision (SNAP) 2010 published**

Homeless Link has published its third annual nationwide review of 500 homelessness service providers including day centres and 2<sup>nd</sup> stage accommodation. It showed that the biggest gaps in service provision were move-on housing and resettlement, and access to mental health and substance misuse services. Other topics covered include employment and training, client involvement, local connection and eviction processes. The report concludes that overall service availability has increased since last year for all types of specialist services. [More Info](#)

## Housing

### Critical response to planned housing benefit reform

A number of organisations have warned about the possible effects of the government's planned reform of housing benefit (reported on in last month's Voice):

The Chartered Institute of Housing has warned that with the new cap on Local Housing Allowance private tenants might well be unable to afford to rent a property within a decade. [More Info](#)

Opposition councillors in Westminster have calculated that 84 per cent of the 5,430 housing benefit claims in the borough would breach the limits recently set by the government of £280 a week for a one-bedroom property and a cap of £400 a week for a four-bed property. [More Info](#) In a joint letter to the Government with Hackney mayor and chair of London Councils Jules Pipe, Boris Johnson outlines his concerns for the effect on London. [More Info](#)

Shelter said: "Nearly half of housing benefit claimants are making up a shortfall of £100 to meet their rent. If this support is ripped out suddenly from under their feet it will push many households over the edge, triggering a spiral of debt, eviction and homelessness."

Homeless Link said: "Whilst we welcome the Government's aim to protect the most vulnerable, we are deeply concerned that the reform of Housing Benefit risks hitting people at risk of homelessness. With no sign that the shortage of social housing will change, the private rented sector has become the best chance of a home for many unemployed people or those on low incomes. It is vital that the drive to cut costs in the housing benefit bill does not inadvertently drive up homelessness." [More Info](#) and [More Info](#)

### Shelter report on 900,000 'forgotten households'

Low-cost home ownership is failing to reach hundreds of thousands of low-income households, a new report published by Shelter claims. The report '*The forgotten households*' examines the effectiveness of publicly-funded low cost home ownership schemes and questions whether they are successfully bridging the gap between renting and home ownership. [More Info](#)

### Local Housing Trusts to be created

Housing Minister Grant Shapps has confirmed that he will take forward legislation allowing the creation of Local Housing Trusts. These would have to show they have the support of the local community for planned housing developments, and would have to meet some basic planning criteria, but would not need to lodge specific planning applications. The Minister announced that the Local Housing Trusts will be included in the forthcoming Decentralisation and Localism Bill, due to be introduced this Autumn. [More Info](#)

### Regional Strategies to be abolished

Local Government Secretary Eric Pickles has announced that the Government will abolish Regional Strategies and their centrally imposed building targets as he claims they have failed to increase housebuilding. Councils will now have the freedom to prepare their local plans without having to follow top-down targets. [More Info](#)

### National Tenant's Voice body no longer to receive government funding

Housing minister Grant Shapps has announced that the National Tenant Voice, which was set up by the previous government, will no longer receive government funding. [More Info](#)

### Mortgage Rescue Scheme to close by next April

The government has announced that the mortgage rescue scheme is to be closed by the end of the financial year. [More Info](#) For a Government website which helps with mortgage problems go to: [More Info](#)

### The Financial Services Authority (FSA) sets out rules to help people in arrears and sale and rent back customers

The following key areas have been confirmed by the FSA to help vulnerable clients in arrears on their mortgage or entering sale and rent back (SRB) agreements:

- Firms must not apply a monthly arrears charge where an agreement is already in place to repay the arrears;
- Payments by customers in financial difficulties must first be allocated to clearing the missed monthly payments, rather than to arrears charges, which can be repaid later; and
- Firms must consider all options for borrowers. Repossessions should always be the last resort.

[More Info](#)

## Immigration, refugees, and asylum seekers

### Non-EU immigration interim cap introduced and public consultation launched

Theresa May, the Home Secretary, has announced that the number of migrant workers coming to the UK from outside the European Union will be limited to 24,400 a year, fulfilling a Conservative manifesto pledge. A public consultation on the permanent number of non EU migrants has opened to be decided and put in place by 1 April 2011. [More Info](#) and see our [Consultation section](#) below.

## Employment, welfare and benefits

### Welfare system reforms

Employment Minister Chris Grayling has announced reforms to the welfare system to roll out from October 2010. The new Work Programme will replace current back to work schemes, and the Government is inviting expressions of interest from the private, public and voluntary sectors to help deliver this. From October, starting in Burnley and Aberdeen, Jobcentre Plus will ask people who are receiving incapacity benefits to attend a Work Capability Assessment. The rest of the country will follow over the next three years. The government has invited comments by 13 August 2010 (see [Consultation section](#) below). [More info](#)

## Health

### Government launches biggest shake-up of the NHS in years

The White Paper *'Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS'* has been published and details how power will be devolved from Government to patients and professionals. Under the new plans, patients will be able to choose which GP practice they register with, regardless of where they live, and choose between consultant-led teams. Major reforms outlined in the white paper include the abolition of primary care trusts (PCTs) and strategic health authorities by 2013. PCTs' commissioning powers will move to a newly created NHS Commissioning Board and consortia of GPs. [More Info](#) and [More Info](#)

## Mental health

### Psychological therapies to be given £70 million boost

Psychological therapies will continue to be rolled out across the NHS in the coming year, Health Secretary Andrew Lansley has announced. He outlined the Government's commitment to increase access to services by pledging £70 million over the next year. [More Info](#)

### Guide to personalisation published

The National Mental Health Development Unit (NMHDU) with the Department for Work and Pensions' Putting People First national delivery team has published *'Paths to Personalisation'*. The guide aims to provide information about what personalisation means for mental health services and support, offer examples of what needs to be in place, and provide recommendations for good practice and sources of advice and information. [More Info](#)

## Substance misuse

### Government shelves plans for Welfare Reform Drugs Recovery Pilots

The Social Security Advisory Committee (SSAC) has published its consultation report on the Welfare Reform Drugs Recovery Pilots that were proposed by the previous Government. The report identifies a number of significant concerns with the proposals, including the further extension of sanctions within the benefits system, the role of Personal Advisers in identifying problem drug users, the use of both mandatory and voluntary drug tests and the ethics and robustness of the pilot design. Department for Work and Pensions Ministers have announced that they do not plan to take forward these pilots. [More Info](#)

### Draft national skills framework published for key workers providing treatment to drug users

The Skills Consortium, which is made up of representatives from the NHS, the voluntary sector and the Royal Colleges, has drafted a national skills framework, describing skills key workers need to deliver treatment throughout a drug user's journey to recovery. The framework will form the basis for an internet-based resource that will provide workers with the practical tools for driving successful outcomes, and improving the quality and impact of treatment. [More info](#)

### Think-tank publishes Green Paper on Criminal Justice and Addiction

The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) has published a *'Green Paper on Criminal Justice and Addiction'* in which it outlines proposed changes to the system including:

- The National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse (NTA) should be replaced by an Addiction Recovery Board (ARB) which they say would be charged with reducing drug and alcohol addiction through, for example, 'pioneering recovery communities'.
- New outcome measures include abstinence, improved mental health and employment and housing status.
- Financial power at local levels for commissioning drug and alcohol treatment services should rest with local authorities rather than Primary Care Trusts (PCTs). The CSJ argues that the current PCT-led arrangement has contributed to an "overinvestment" in substitute prescribing services. [More Info](#)

### 24% increase in alcohol dependency could cost £3.7 billion

A new report from Alcohol Concern has revealed a 24% rise in levels of moderate and severe alcohol dependency in England between 2000 and 2007, and found that the cost to the public sector could be as high as £3.7 billion per year if dependent drinkers are not supported to cut their drinking. [More Info](#)

## Criminal Justice

### Justice Secretary calls for prison reforms

Justice Secretary, Kenneth Clarke, has given a speech on criminal justice reform at the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies. He proposed to "shut the revolving door of crime and reoffending". The new measures will involve paying private firms and voluntary groups according to how many prisoners they rehabilitate. [More Info](#)

## **Report calls for reform to the response to youth crime and antisocial behaviour**

'*Time for a Fresh Start*' a report published by the Independent Commission on Youth Crime and Antisocial Behaviour calls for a restorative rather than just punitive criminal justice system. Regarding resettlement the body has set out a case for a practitioner to work with young offenders to bring greater coordination to resettlement. The report points out that the current system which enables employers to access criminal records make it harder for young offenders to gain employment. They also call for an urgent reform of the way girls and young women are treated in the criminal justice system. [More Info](#)

## **Social Exclusion**

### **Single person needs £14,400 a year to live on finds report**

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has published its annual update based on what members of the public think people need to achieve a socially acceptable standard of living. It found that a single person in the UK needs to earn £14,400 a year before tax in 2010 to afford a basic but acceptable standard of living. The costings include the effect of tax allowances and tax credit thresholds, and how the recent Budget announcements could affect people on low income. [More Info](#)

### **Reports to help guide young adults with multiple needs**

Charity Revolving Doors have produced two new reports called '*Aiming Higher*' and '*Towards a Shared Future*' as guides to good practice for those working with young adults with multiple needs. [More Info](#)

## **Public Sector**

### **Communities and Local Government budget to be cut by £220 million**

The Communities and Local Government department is to cut previously agreed spending commitments by £220 million. The money will be cut from the Homes and Communities Agency's budget. [More Info](#)

## **Third Sector and Community**

### **Government's 'Your Freedom' website launched**

Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg has launched the Your Freedom website, an opportunity for anyone to suggest ideas on restoring liberties, repealing laws and cutting business and third sector regulations. He said: "Too many of the business and voluntary groups I meet tell me that they feel overwhelmed with forms to fill out and boxes to tick, whether it's a fledgling business looking to take on more staff or a charity struggling with the complex record checks their volunteers have to undergo." To have your say on the new regulations visit: [More Info](#)

### **Big Society agenda outlined**

Prime Minister David Cameron has outlined his agenda for the Big Society:

- "Social Action - the government will foster and support a new culture of voluntarism and philanthropy
- Public service reform - getting rid of the centralised bureaucracy and in its place giving professionals much more freedom, opening up public services to new providers like charities, social enterprises and private companies so we get more innovation, diversity and responsiveness to public need
- Community empowerment - creating communities with neighbourhoods who are in charge of their own destiny, who feel if they club together and get involved they can shape the world around them." [More Info](#)

The Big Society Bank is likely to have assets of between £60m and £100m by its planned opening date next April. The money is to come from dormant accounts in banks and building societies. [More Info](#)

### **Communities and Local Government reform plan to devolve power to communities**

This new action plan marks a radical shift of power from Whitehall to local councils and communities as part of the Big Society agenda outlined above. The plan sets out a new 18 month programme for the department that will deliver decentralising and transparency reforms that put citizens and councils in control of their communities. It is one of the first fundamental Structural Reform Plans for making departments accountable for the implementation of the reforms set out in the Coalition agreement. [More Info](#)

### **Think tank explores impact of 'emergency' 2010 budget on charities**

The Directory of Social Change (DSC) has outlined the effects the emergency budget will have on the sector, saying that the increase of VAT to 20% from January next year will add an estimated £14million to an irrecoverable VAT burden for charities of between £500million and £1.3billion. The DSC said: "If you pay VAT, or have paid staff, the budget will affect you one way or another. Where you have budgets and fixed income that cross over the transition points you will need to carefully re-budget and/or re-forecast to take account of the changing costs." [More Info](#)

### **National Citizen Service to be piloted**

A new non-military, non-compulsory National Citizen Service (NCS) will be piloted next summer. Around 10,000 places will be available to 16 year old school leavers. NCS aims to give them chance to learn new skills that will help them to make a positive contribution to their community. [More Info](#)

# Issue of the Month

## Working with drug users in hostels – Broadway hostel's new drug strategy for decreasing substance use

Broadway's Manor Place women's hostel, which opened in 1993 and is situated in Kennington, London, has struggled with drug misuse and sex working among residents.

Historically, at Manor Place, staff would use warnings and behaviour contracts to deal with drug use on the premises. But after visiting St. Mungo's hostel on Great Guildford Street, London, which uses a more open approach while staying within legal lines, Manor Place staff have negotiated a strategy which is proving more helpful, including not using warnings as a first response but rather trying three-way meetings with clients and staff. Staff adopted this new approach in March 2010. Project Manager Channa McDonald said: "Clients know they should not be using Class A substances because it is against the law; the question was how we could open up a dialogue which could help them in quitting drugs as well as make them aware, for example, of the treatment options available."

Channa cites one example of a young woman who was struggling with a heavy drug habit. Channa said: "We visited the young woman in her room and found a heap of used needles piled up on the floor. Instead of threatening her with eviction we tried to make her aware of the health dangers of such a situation such as Hepatitis C and that there was a Sharps box available in which to dispose of her needles safely. Two days later, she booked herself into rehab. We let her know her room would be still there when she got out."

Manor Place strengthened links with local resources such as a Blenheim CDP Evolve Project which supports women with heroin and crack issues and offers a weekly drop-in session and therapy treatments and the Scarlet project which offers help to sex workers. With a representative from Evolve, staff met with a client who had substance misuse issues in a joint meeting and managed to avoid evicting the client who is now ready for move-on.

Manor Place currently houses 9 clients who are active drug users and sex workers. It also houses 8 drug users currently on prescription substitutes such as methadone or who are abstinent from drugs. Of these 8 clients, 2 have started training in Drug Awareness and 1 client is starting a PCT health program. Channa is hopeful that the new drug strategy will help drug dependent women out of street sex work.

Channa said: "We have one young woman who came out of detox and said it was the first week she'd been clean in fifteen years. She looked so good she encouraged other clients to think about going into detox. She is determined to stay clean now. She wants to start voluntary work which we are helping her with and we are helping her manage her 'triggers' such as other residents and visitors."

One resident who supports the new strategy is Tracey\* who, when told about it in a residents' meeting, replied: "Wow! I wish you'd done this a year ago!" After she had a stillborn son, she became addicted to heroin and crack cocaine and was in and out of prison for shoplifting for fourteen years and lost custody of two of her four children before coming to Manor Place two years ago. "I was determined to stay clean when I got a place at the hostel but it was hard. Back then everyone was using. I managed to stay clean give or take a few slips, but friends of mine were evicted for using. They went back on the streets and started sex working again. Their attitude was 'what's the point in stopping now?'"

"But ever since our meeting in March, I've noticed a dramatic difference, residents are more relaxed and are closer to staff. I encourage friends who are still on drugs or sex working to be open with staff. I tell them that staff do not condone drug misuse but they are here to work with them and support them to get help to stay clean. And now I know if I have a difficult time I can talk to staff about it instead of thinking about using."

Staff have now recommended Tracey for move-on and she has taken a computer and catering course and they are supporting her in finding voluntary work. She now sees a future for herself. She said: "Now I am determined to lead a normal, drug-free life with more access to my children, which I've wanted for so long."

*\*Name has been changed to protect identity*

For more information please contact Channa McDonald, Project Manager for Manor Place, Broadway at: [channa.mcdonald@broadwaylondon.org](mailto:channa.mcdonald@broadwaylondon.org)

# Consultations, Guidance and Reports

## Consultations

[Proposed changes to guidance on evaluating the extent of rough sleeping: Consultation](#) This consultation proposed by Communities and Local Government describes a set of proposed changes to the existing rough sleeping guidance. It also gives users of the rough sleeping figures and those involved in evaluating the scale of rough sleeping in their local area an opportunity to comment on the proposals. This is a public consultation and the Department particularly welcomes responses from local authorities and the voluntary sector. **Deadline: 3 September 2010.**

[Work Programme consultation](#) DWP consultation on the proposed singular Work Programme to replace other work programmes installed by the previous government. The first theme is inviting comments on capital raising and payment models and is available for comment until **30 July 2010**. The second theme, inviting comments on efficiencies, customers and implementation will be available for comments from **2 August 2010 to the 13 August 2010**.

[Limits on non-EU economic migration \(June to September 2010\)](#). 12-week public consultation on non-EU economic migration. **Deadline: 17 September 2010.**

[Consultation by the Migration Advisory Committee \(MAC\) on the Level of an Annual Limit on Economic Migration to the UK](#)

A parallel consultation by the MAC with the above Government consultation seeks views on how the limits on non-EU economic migration, through tiers one and two of the points-based system, should be implemented. **Deadline: 7 September 2010.**

[Gender and Race Equality GLA consultation](#) The Greater London Authority (GLA) has published its draft Gender and Race Equality Schemes, which set out what the GLA has done, and plans to do, in relation to gender and race equality and has opened a consultation on these issues. **Deadline: 11 August 2010.**

[Alcohol dependence and harmful use consultation](#) A clinical practice guideline on alcohol dependence and harmful alcohol use is being developed by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) for use in the NHS in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Registered stakeholders for this guideline are invited to comment via the website. **Deadline: 19 August 2010.**

[Psychosis with substance misuse consultation](#) The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) clinical guidelines on psychosis with substance misuse is due to go to consultation on 10 August 2010. **Deadline: 5 October 2010.**

## Reports

[Ethnicity and alcohol: A review of the UK literature](#) Literature review of evidence on drinking patterns among minority ethnic groups in the UK over the last 15 years and on service provision for this group. Key findings include that most minority ethnic groups have a higher level of abstinence and lower levels of drinking compared to people from white backgrounds but that people from mixed ethnic backgrounds are less likely to abstain and more likely to drink heavily compared to other non-white minority ethnic groups.

[Community and mutual ownership: a historical review](#) The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has published this review of the history of 'community and mutual ownership' and the implications for policy and practice in this area.

