

**Working with our partners**

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# **Homelessness Strategy**

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**2014 - 2016**

# Runnymede Borough Council Homelessness Strategy 2014-16

## Foreword

I am pleased to present Runnymede's third Homelessness Strategy which has been developed at a time of unprecedented change in national policy and continuing uncertainty within the public sector. This includes ongoing reductions in public expenditure and changes in national policy in areas such as welfare reform and the reform of social housing.

Homelessness is increasing nationally and locally. I am concerned about the impact homelessness can have on many areas of life, for example putting extra demands on health services, undermining educational achievement and acting as a barrier to those seeking and keeping employment.

Since our first homelessness strategy in 2003-2006, there has been real progress in tackling the issue which has so many negative effects on local individuals, families and communities. A new prevention focused ethos has been introduced and many new initiatives and partnerships have developed which demonstrate the Council's commitment to working with others.

The challenging economic climate and reduction in government spending has necessitated new ways of thinking about how services are delivered and a renewed effort to achieve real partnership working across the public, private and voluntary sectors. This strategy clearly sets out the case for careful co-ordinated planning from local agencies in order to ensure that the scope and effect of homelessness on local people is reduced.

The strategy reviews the success of current and previous initiatives, the context and challenges within which we are operating. Most importantly, it highlights 4 key aims and objectives to prevent and reduce homelessness within Runnymede.

Councillor Peter Taylor  
Chair of Housing Committee



## Contents page



- 1 Introduction**
- 2 Equality and Diversity**
- 3 How does this document link to other Council strategies?**
- 4 What is Homelessness?**
- 5 National Policy**
- 6 Review of Homelessness and Services in Runnymede 2011 - 13**
- 7 Securing Sufficient Accommodation: Threats and Opportunities**
- 8 Welfare Reform, Housing Income and Fuel Poverty – Threats and Opportunities**
- 9 The Current Position – regional context**
- 10 Delivering against our Aims and Objectives**
- 11 Resources available to prevent and reduce Homelessness**
- 12 Consultation and Involvement**

# 1 Introduction



## Definition of Homelessness

There are many definitions of homelessness but the one used for the purposes of this strategy will be as outlined in the Housing Act 1996. This definition determines that a person is homeless if:

- There is no accommodation they are entitled to occupy, or
- They have accommodation but it is not reasonable or possible for them to continue to occupy this accommodation.

People who are staying temporarily with family or friends (also known as sofa surfing), people staying in a hostel or bed and breakfast accommodation, those at risk of domestic violence in their own home and people living somewhere they have no legal right to occupy, are all included in this legal definition of homelessness.

The Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) also sets out local authorities' statutory responsibilities to assist certain households and to provide advice and assistance to all who approach as homeless or threatened with homelessness.

## Homelessness Strategy

Under the Homelessness Act 2002, A Homelessness Strategy is a strategy formulated by a Local Housing Authority for:

- **Preventing homelessness** in their district;
- Securing that **sufficient accommodation is and will be available** for people in their district who are or may become homeless;
- Securing the satisfactory provision of **support** for people in their district -
  - Who are or may become homeless; or
  - Who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again.

## Prevention

Within the 2002 Homelessness Act, the Government made homelessness prevention a priority through providing increased funding to tackle it, setting challenging targets for prevention and placing requirements on local authorities to produce Homelessness Strategies.

This Homelessness Strategy seeks to set out how the Council, working with our partners, will reduce and prevent homelessness. Our overarching goal is to prevent homelessness wherever possible from this most harmful and life changing event for those affected by the threat of homelessness as well as actual homelessness.

Preventing homelessness is far more cost effective than dealing with its consequences and the new strategy will continue to focus on prevention and early intervention. It will also focus on gaining a better understanding and tackle some of the wider experiences of homelessness that make households and individuals susceptible to it.

In addition there is growing evidence of people facing real difficulties in managing their income and housing as a result of the downturn in the economy over the last 5 years and its impact on the housing market, as well as the changes taking place around the future of social housing and welfare benefits as more people are approaching the homelessness prevention services with multiple debt problems.

## Aims and Objectives

The aim of this strategy is to:

**Prevent homelessness by enabling access to affordable accommodation wherever possible and providing support which is both available and tailored for individual needs but which is also realistic requiring co-operation from applicants and professional partners.**

Our main objectives for this strategy focus on four main priority areas, which are:

### **Strategic Objective 1**

**Increasing access to the private rented sector**

### **Strategic Objective 2**

**Reducing under occupancy in the social rented sector  
and sustaining tenancies**

### **Strategic Objective 3**

**Building upon effective partnerships**

### **Strategic Objective 4**

**Preventing homelessness through partnership  
working**

## **Who will be involved in achieving the aims of this strategy?**

Partnership working has always been crucial to the effectiveness of homeless prevention work. As well as the provision of a roof over someone's head there are often many other areas of support needed in order to secure and maintain a tenancy.

In the current financial climate, where public finances are under increasing pressures, it is now more crucial than ever for the Council, local agencies, charities and faith groups to work together to realise mutually beneficial aims and to provide the best possible outcomes for Runnymede residents.

## Who are our stakeholders & partners?

- CAB
- Surrey Save Credit Union Community Bank
- Registered Providers within the Borough
- Council Tax and Benefits
- Surrey County Council Adult Social Care
- Surrey County Council Children's Services
- Surrey Community Mental Health Recovery Services
- Local Public Health & Wellbeing Board
- Drug & Alcohol Action Teams
- Faith Groups
- Surrey Police
- Surrey Fire & Rescue
- Surrey Sussex and Hampshire Probation Services
- Surrey County Council Youth Support service
- Private landlords and letting agents
- LookAhead Floating Support Provider
- Jobcentre Plus
- Local Residents
- Homeless Link
- Surrey Local Authorities
- YourSanctuary(DA)
- Community Groups
- Carers Association (Surrey)
- Foodbanks

The list of stakeholders and partners listed above is not exhaustive but provides an indication of the number of agencies and individuals involved in the formation and delivery of this strategy and committed to reducing homelessness.

By working together to tackle homelessness these stakeholders will also be helping to alleviate other associated social and welfare issues in Runnymede.

## 2 Equality and Diversity



As an organisation we are committed to the principles of equality and diversity in the delivery of services. We work hard to ensure that equalities practices

are embedded across the organisation and into our service areas. Equality means that everyone is treated fairly and in accordance with their individual needs.

This does not necessarily mean that people experience the same treatment, but that the treatment will lead to fair outcomes. Diversity means valuing and embracing people in terms of their background and for the differences, skills, abilities and experiences they bring into the workforce and in the wider community.

### 3 How does this document link to other Council strategies?



The Homelessness Strategy 2014-16 links to, supports and builds on other relevant strategies and plans for housing, support and community services in Runnymede. Below are the key strategies to which this homelessness strategy will link into.

- **Housing Strategy Statement October 2012**

The Homelessness Strategy is informed by the overarching Housing Strategy for Runnymede which outlines the Council's vision for housing and is to be reviewed in 2016.

The strategy outlines the Council's commitment to many areas which influence the success of homeless prevention activity. These include the promotion of good quality housing in the private rented sector, the bringing back into use of empty homes, the development of new affordable homes by the Council and partner housing associations and the management of the Council's own housing stock to best meet local needs.

- **Housing Needs Survey 2008**

The last Housing Needs Survey conducted for Runnymede was in 2008 and no longer serves as a meaningful strategy upon which to refer. We are currently in the process of commissioning a new survey in 2014. This



strategy therefore will not include statistical information relating to the Borough and will include findings from the new Housing Needs Survey upon review in 2016.

- **Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SMHA)**

In order to respond to the needs of local communities and to help the Council to deliver its strategic housing function, it is important to have a sound understanding of local housing needs, local housing markets and how they interact with other local areas.

The Council has a duty to undertake some form of local housing needs survey every 5 years. This information informs a wide range of housing policies and development of documents. It also informs investment programmes. Runnymede is commissioning a SMHA in 2014 as the last Housing Needs Survey/SMHA was in 2008 and no longer serves as a meaningful strategy on which to base future plans. The review of this strategy will incorporate the finding of the SMHA in 2016.

- **Runnymede Local Plan (RLP) 2014**

In 2012 the Government introduced a new planning system in England through the National Planning Policy Framework. It placed a requirement upon Local Planning Authorities to produce a new set of planning documents called the Local Plan.

The RLP is the future plan for Runnymede. It will present our spatial vision. Instead of being just one document, the Local Plan consists of a number of different documents covering the full set of planning policies that will manage and influence future development in Runnymede.

The Runnymede Local Plan (RLP) is currently being reviewed.

- **Community Strategy September 2012**

The Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) establishes the main themes for the Borough and provides a flexible framework for the Council's detailed strategies such as the Local Plan and the Housing Strategy.

The CSC has four priority areas that directly link into this strategy:

- A voice for Runnymede
- An environment to be proud of
- Healthy & vibrant communities
- Revitalisation

- **Temporary Accommodation Strategy 2014**

Runnymede's Temporary Accommodation Strategy addresses the provision of suitable housing for the prevention of homelessness as well as for those applicants who are threatened with homelessness. This includes partnership working with existing partners such as Omega Housing, working on Empty Homes initiatives as well as private rented sector procurement with private landlords. The strategy also includes working with RPs to procure through sale or leasing arrangements existing buildings within the borough. We are also looking to procure where possible commercial buildings which have the potential to convert to residential use.

- **Tenancy Strategy 2012**

Runnymede adopted a Tenancy Strategy and Policy in 2012 which outlined the way in which it works as a Local Authority and as a landlord in line with changes through Localism. Runnymede offers 10 year flexible tenancies with exceptions for vulnerable groups. Our Tenancy Strategy is due for review in 2014.

- **Empty Homes Strategy 2010**

The presence of empty homes can bring down an area. People living near to a poor condition empty property can be affected almost daily because empty homes can attract arson attacks, squatting, burglary, fly tipping, drug usage and general anti-social behaviour. Furthermore, a neglected empty home can cause damage to adjoining properties and can devalue neighbouring properties because of the poor state of the property. Runnymede will be reviewing its Empty Homes Strategy in 2014.

- **Private Sector Renewal Strategy 2010**

Housing conditions have a significant impact on people's health and wellbeing. Those people who are unable to adapt their homes to meet their needs or improve and maintain them to a 'decent' standard are at greater risk of suffering ill health and a poorer quality of life.

The Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy sets out what needs to be done to ensure that people, particularly those people who are least able to help themselves, can adapt, improve and maintain their homes to a 'decent' standard.

The private sector has much to contribute to the provision of affordable housing in Runnymede but we need to ensure that affordable housing is decent. Runnymede will be reviewing this strategy in 2014.

- **The HRA Business Plan and Asset Management Strategy 2012**

This Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan was adopted by the Housing Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2012 and sets out how we intend to use our housing assets to meet the needs of the Borough.

The Localism Act 2011 put an end to the previous housing subsidy system and gives the Council greater control over its housing stock. This was a major change that required a review to the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

The new arrangements will generate new opportunities and provide greater freedom to retain income from rents to invest in housing services.

The new Business Plan outlines how the new arrangements would work and sets out the key assumptions that have been made about the stock, the service delivered to tenants and existing policies for the Council.

### **Links to County wide Strategies:**

- **DA Strategy for Surrey 2014**

This strategy is a commitment by all involved public, voluntary, community and faith organisations to work together as one, to raise awareness, to address both the causes and effects of domestic abuse and to improve lives. This will require changes to current working practices around education, information sharing, referral, service delivery and a refocusing of the money spent. The aim is to make changes that lead to improved outcomes for those affected through focussed interventions, and to reduce the total cost to the public sector through long term culture change and a reduced demand on services.

- **Surrey County Council Early Help Strategy 2014**

Collaborative development of the Early Help approach is a collective vision and shared purpose with shared values and principles. It is a common methodology and approach with common governance arrangements – Surrey Safeguarding Children Board, Children Trust arrangements, Health and Wellbeing Board. It will respond where help is needed at the earliest opportunity.

The first approach is an early help assessment (unless urgent child protection situation) and SCC will adopt a pathway approach, with robust and clearly understood safeguarding and child protection processes. The role of lead

appropriately designated on the premise of skill, risk and ongoing relationship with family.

- **Surrey Substance Misuse Strategy 2014**

Surrey Substance Misuse Partnership Group is a multi-agency sub group of Surrey Community and Public Safety Board with representatives from police, boroughs and districts, CCG, housing, adult services, Children Service, PCC, probation and education.

The Strategy aims to respond to local needs by ensuring a coordinated and evidence-based approach to tackling the health and societal impact of substance misuse in Surrey.

## 4 What is Homelessness?



The stereotypical view of homelessness is of the rough sleeper who is living on the streets, but this group of people form a relatively small proportion of all homeless households. Many homeless households are “hidden” as they may have access to some form of shelter, some of the time but lack a stable, long term, settled home. For others, there are frequent moves from one temporary accommodation or shelter to another (e.g. emergency accommodation, refuges, friend’s homes, ‘sofa surfing’) – people with no settled home.

Homelessness is a harmful and risky lifestyle. It is linked to wider social and health issues and living on the streets is likely to increase these problems. Anyone can become homeless but we can identify some of those at risk:

- young people leaving the care of a local authority;
- those leaving prison;
- people suffering from domestic abuse;
- those with poor mental health or a substance misuse issue;
- families with complex needs;
- people on low incomes and those who are in debt.

Homelessness is expensive, not just to the individual or household experiencing it but also to the community and the taxpayer - it has been estimated that on average each homeless person costs the public purse £26,000 per year and the overall costs of homelessness exceed £1 billion p.a. (Homeless Link 2013).

Below are some of the individual costs associated with some of the public services used by homeless people:-

- £387– average cost of each homelessness assessment (Homeless Link 2013)
- £1,668 – average cost of an arrest (research shows homeless people are at significantly greater risk of offending) (Ministry of Justice 2010)
- £147 – average cost of a visit to A&E leading to admission (it is estimated that homeless people use A&E five times more than the general population) (Lesley Curtis – ‘Unit Costs of Health and Social Care’ (2011) and Inclusion Health (March 2010))
- £1,005 average weekly cost of residential care for older people (Lesley Curtis – ‘Unit Costs of Health and Social Care’ (2011))

Preventing homelessness is not just about finding accommodation. The failure rate amongst rough sleepers, ex offenders and young people who obtain accommodation and then lose it, is high. There is a need to provide support to help build life skills, independence and the ability to attain and retain a settled home. This can reduce both repeated homelessness and admissions to institutional or residential care, or hospital and can deliver significant savings on the costs listed above.

## 5 National Policy



In addition to the Homelessness Act 2002, national strategies and guidance that have helped shape this Homelessness Strategy include:

### Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England 2011

The national housing strategy published in 2011 identified addressing homelessness as a key priority for the Government to tackle, with greater focus on prevention as well as targeting action for dealing with rough sleeping.

The strategy introduces the Ministerial Working Group comprising of representatives from across eight Government departments working together to prevent homelessness and crisis. The group published “Making Every Contact Count”, a joint approach to preventing homelessness in August 2012.

The document provides detailed guidance for how councils should work collaboratively with other local authority services to prevent homelessness through early intervention in order to avoid households reaching crisis point.

## **Making Every Contact Count: A Joint Approach to Preventing Homelessness 2012**

The aim of the report by the Ministerial Working Group is to make sure that every contact local agencies have with vulnerable people and families has value. It brings together five government commitments to:

- 1) Tackle troubled childhoods and adolescence
  - 2) Improve health
  - 3) Reduce involvement in crime
  - 4) Improve skills, employment and financial advice
  - 5) Pioneer social funding for homelessness
- The report poses ten local challenges to the sector (Gold Standard)

The Government is encouraging Local Authorities to take part in the Gold Standard Challenge and in doing so commit to continuous improvement.

## **Social Housing Reform 2011**

Through the [Localism Act 2011](#), Government has reformed the social housing system. The legislation has:

- given social landlords more flexibility on the types of tenancies they can offer, while protecting existing tenants’ rights
- given local councils the power to manage their housing waiting lists
- made it easier for social tenants to move within the social sector by introducing a national home swap scheme [HomeSwap Direct](#)
- allowed local authorities to end the main homelessness duty in the private rented sector, without requiring the applicant’s consent

New guidance was made available on [guidance on allocating social housing](#) on 29 June 2012 to accompany the changes in the Localism Act.

## Welfare Reform Act 2012

On 8th March 2012, the Welfare Reform Bill received royal assent and came into law as the Welfare Reform Act 2012.

The Act makes a wide range of changes to the UK's benefits system. Key changes include:

**Universal Credit:** This new benefit is a major feature of the Welfare Reform Act. It aims to simplify the system by combining a number of different benefits into one payment, including income-related Employment and Support Allowance. It is a key part of the Government's pledge to make work pay and cut fraud in the benefits system.

**Personal Independence Payment (PIP):** This new benefit will replace Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for working age people from April 2013. Between 2013 and 2016, current DLA claimants who are aged 16 - 64 will be reassessed to see if they are entitled to this new benefit. PIP uses a new assessment process that will take account of a range of abilities, but maintains a very similar structure to DLA.

There are also a wide range of changes introduced in the Act to cut fraud, change the Housing Benefit system and overhaul child support payments.

## Housing Revenue Account reform (self-financing) 2012

In April 2012 the Government ended the Housing Revenue Account subsidy system. This means councils can now keep their rental income and use it to fund their housing stock.

The powers to introduce self-financing were included in the Localism Act 2011. On 1 February 2012, Government published the final details of self-financing. This included the one-off payments to or from each council, which were used to adjust housing debt to reflect the value of stock.

The objectives of this reform were:

- to give councils the resources, incentives and flexibility they need to manage their own housing stock for the long term and to improve quality and efficiency
- to give tenants the information they need to hold their landlord to account, by creating a clear relationship between the rent a landlord collects and the services they provide

## Private Rented Sector 2013/2014

The private rented sector has grown and improved enormously in recent years and accounts for approximately 16.5% of all households, or nearly 3.8 million homes in England.

The private rented sector offers a flexible form of tenure and meets a wide range of housing needs. It contributes to greater labour market mobility and is increasingly the tenure of choice for young people.

The Government wants to see a bigger and better private rented sector and believes that the most effective way to make rents more affordable is to increase the supply of new homes.

The Government is investing £1 billion in a Build To Rent Fund, which will provide equity finance for purpose-built private rented housing, alongside a £10 billion debt guarantee scheme to support the provision of these new homes; and up to 30,000 additional affordable homes.

In October 2013, the Government published their [response](#) to a select committee report on the private rented sector. The response sets out an ambitious package of proposals to ensure all private tenants get proper protection from their landlords. This will include:

- raised standards on the condition of rented properties
- greater protection for tenants against hidden agency fees and improving tenants' access to longer-term family friendly tenancies.

## Health and Wellbeing Agenda-The Care Act 2015

The Care Act will become law from April 2015. It will introduce major changes to adult social care across England, including:

- New responsibilities on all local authorities to promote people's wellbeing, prevent residents' adult social care needs from getting worse, and to provide information and advice,
- The introduction of a consistent, national eligibility criteria for receiving adult social care support,
- New rights to support for carers, on an equivalent basis to the people they care for, and
- A legal right to a personal budget and direct payment for vulnerable adults with eligible social care needs.



The Department of Health has written detailed regulations and guidance which give much more information on what the Care Act means and how local authorities must respond. This directly links to the provision and sustainment of good quality housing and support services and the need now, more than ever, to work together as partners to deliver these services.

Housing has a major role to play in terms of enabling active ageing and wellbeing. Dating back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Philanthropists such as Octavia Hill and Joseph Rowntree recognised how important good quality housing in sustainable communities was for the health and wellbeing of people in their localities.

More recent measures all clearly demonstrate the beneficial impact of good housing on health, wellbeing and wider community benefits, these include:

- Increasing energy efficiency
- Addressing fuel poverty
- Adapting homes to improve accessibility
- Wider programmes of home and neighbourhood improvement
- Housing related support through health action zones

## 6 Review of Homelessness and Services in Runnymede 2011-13



The Council is required by The Homelessness Act 2002 to review the issues relating to homelessness in the area and to have a Homelessness Strategy setting out its plans to prevent and tackle the causes of homelessness, support homeless households and ensure that there is sufficient accommodation available for those who do become homeless. Although we are not obliged to publish our review findings it is helpful to incorporate the review process as part of the overall strategy, which we have done as part of this new strategy.

Since 2003 and the launch of our first homelessness strategy, considerable work has been carried out by the Council and its partners to tackle the issues around homelessness. However, this is a two year interim strategy and a full five year strategy will be in place for 2016-20. The Council is currently working towards a revised SMHA and Housing Needs Survey and is keen to ensure that all strategic documents feed into the overall direction of the

Council as a business. Following on from that informed decision making becomes possible based on accurate and current information.

Since the publication of the 2010-13 Homelessness Strategy and in line with the national picture, homelessness in Runnymede has increased. This is in the main, largely down to applicants being asked to leave the homes of friends and family, breakdown of relationships and the majority of approaches has been where landlords are ending tenancies in the private rented sector.

For the purposes of this review we have set out statistical information based on years 2011, 2012 and 2013 for a complete year overview as the last strategy was launched later in 2010. Set out below in table and graph format is the overview of both Runnymede and Surrey as a whole, to put our performance into context. It sets out household type, those accepted as homeless in priority need and those found to be intentionally homeless. It also sets out temporary accommodation numbers in Runnymede and across the County as well as numbers on Council housing registers up until the end of 2013. The performance statistics for the County are taken from Shelter Databank who in turn collate their information from the submission of P1E returns nationally.

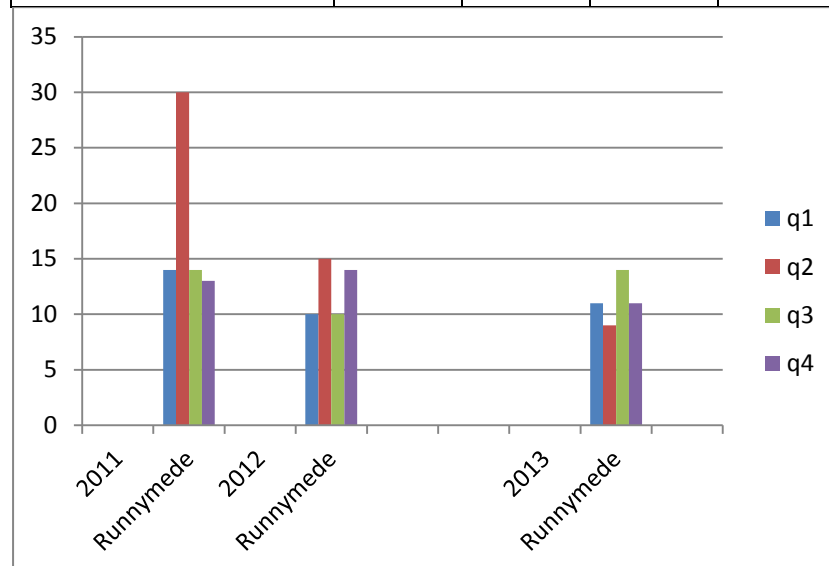
## Families with children accepted as homeless 2011-13

	2011 Q1	2011 Q2	2011 Q3	2011 Q4
Elmbridge	2	2	4	4
Epsom and Ewell	0	1	0	2
Guildford	1	0	2	5
Mole Valley	3	7	6	5
Reigate and Banstead	4	10	10	14
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>
Spelthorne	0	0	0	3
Surrey Heath	9	9	10	8
Tandridge	1	0	1	2
Waverley	0	0	0	0
Woking	0	1	5	7

	2012 Q1	2012 Q2	2012 Q3	2012 Q4
Elmbridge				
Epsom and Ewell	1	5	3	5
Guildford	1	1	7	5
Mole Valley	3	2	1	2
Reigate and Banstead	4	4	5	9
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>
Spelthorne	6	13	9	6
Surrey Heath	4	5	11	7
Tandridge	13	20	11	14
Waverley	1	2	3	5
Woking	0	0	2	0
	2	6	3	5

	2013 Q1	2013 Q2	2013 Q3	2013 Q4
Elmbridge	1	9	12	7
Epsom and Ewell	17	8	32	11
Guildford	4	1	3	1
Mole Valley	10	5	7	7
Reigate and Banstead	14	17	20	23
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>
Spelthorne	8	10	16	34

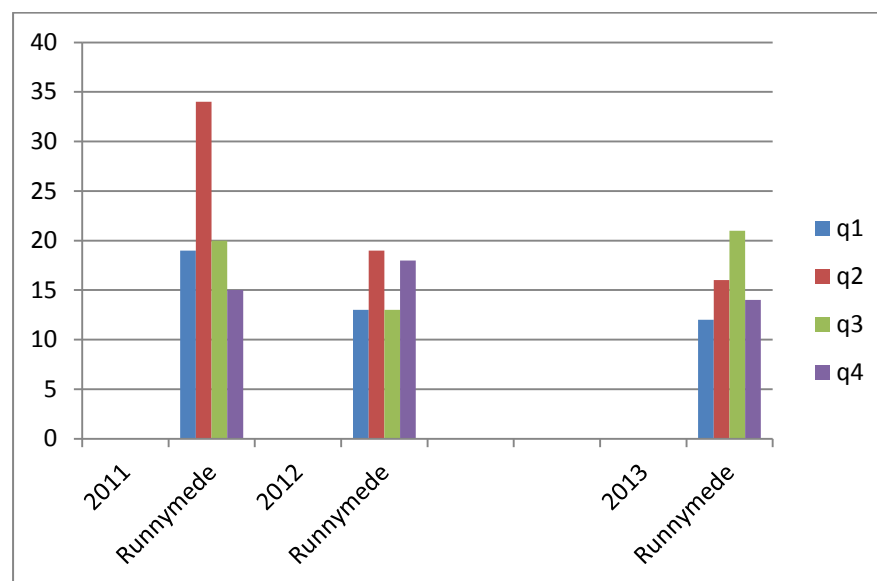
Surrey Heath	13	11	17	15
Tandridge	3	6	3	4
Waverley	0	0	0	0
Woking	8	2	2	6



## Households accepted as homeless 2011-13

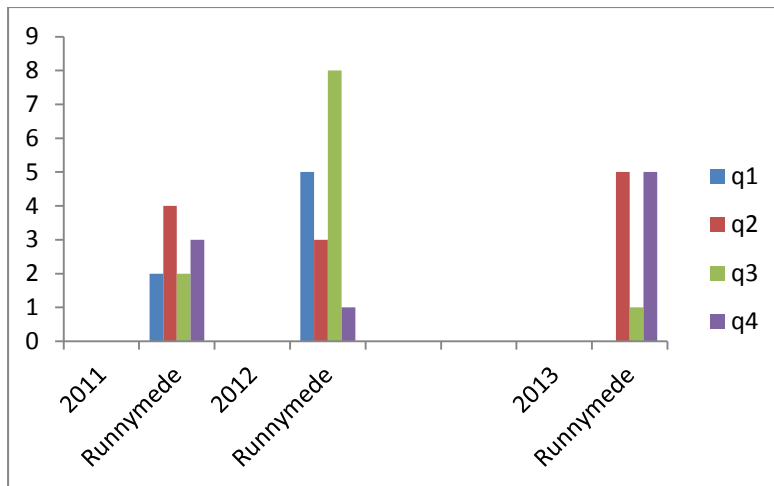
	2011 Q1	2011 Q2	2011 Q3	2011 Q4
Elmbridge	3	4	5	5
Epsom and Ewell	1	2	0	3
Guildford	2	0	3	9
Mole Valley	3	7	8	5
Reigate and Banstead	7	12	15	18
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>
Spelthorne	1	0	0	3
Surrey Heath	13	11	13	12
Tandridge	1	1	2	3
Waverley	0	0	0	0
Woking	1	1	6	11
	2012 Q1	2012 Q2	2012 Q3	2012 Q4
Elmbridge	2	5	4	7
Epsom and Ewell	2	1	12	5
Mole Valley	6	3	3	3
Reigate and Banstead	4	4	6	10
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>
Spelthorne	6	17	13	8

Surrey Heath	4	7	13	10
Tandridge	21	27	17	15
Waverley	1	2	3	5
Woking	0	0	2	0
	6	8	7	7
	2013 Q1	2013 Q2	2013 Q3	2013 Q4
Elmbridge	3	11	17	8
Epsom and Ewell	19	10	33	12
Guildford	5	1	5	2
Mole Valley	11	5	7	7
Reigate and Banstead	15	22	25	29
Runnymede	12	16	21	14
Spelthorne	9	14	18	39
Surrey Heath	13	14	17	15
Tandridge	4	6	3	4
Waverley	0	0	0	1
Woking	9	4	2	12



## Those found to be Intentionally Homeless 2011-13

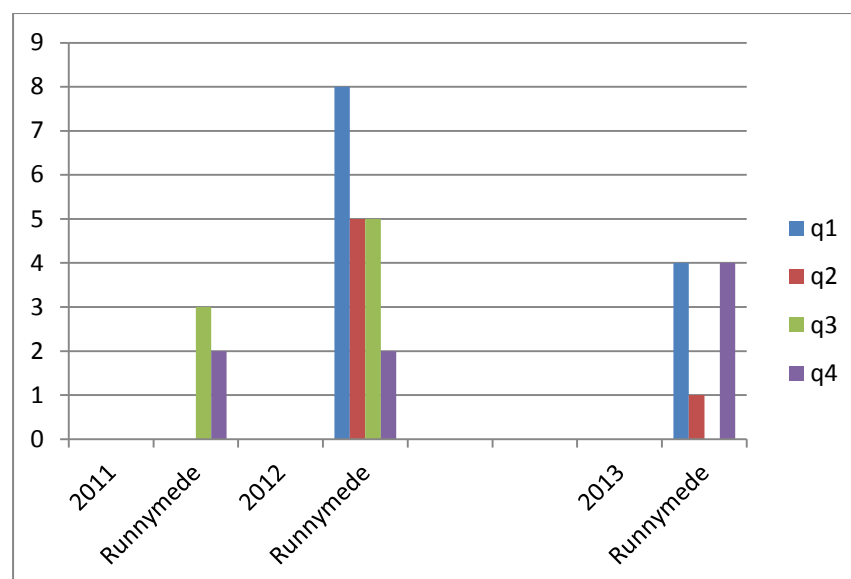
	2011 Q1	2011 Q2	2011 Q3	2011 Q4
Elmbridge	0	0	1	1
Epsom and Ewell	2	0	0	0
Guildford	2	2	2	2
Mole Valley	0	1	2	1
Reigate and Banstead	1	3	4	3
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Spelthorne	2	1	3	4
Surrey Heath	1	2	1	4
Tandridge	0	2	0	1
Waverley	1	0	1	2
Woking	0	0	0	1
	2012 Q1	2012 Q2	2012 Q3	2012 Q4
Elmbridge	4	1	1	1
Epsom and Ewell	1	0	1	3
Guildford	4	4	3	3
Mole Valley	0	0	0	1
Reigate and Banstead	2	6	4	1
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>
Spelthorne	5	2	2	5
Surrey Heath	3	0	1	2
Tandridge	4	1	3	2
Waverley	0	1	4	2
Woking	1	0	1	1
	2013 Q1	2013 Q2	2013 Q3	2013 Q4
Elmbridge	7	4	0	1
Epsom and Ewell	0	0	2	1
Guildford	3	1	4	5
Mole Valley	1	2	2	2
Reigate and Banstead	3	2	0	1
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>
Spelthorne	1	6	2	3
Surrey Heath	2	2	0	4
Tandridge	2	0	1	1
Waverley	2	1	0	1
Woking	0	1	0	1



## Those found not to be in priority need 2011-13

	2011 Q1	2011 Q2	2011 Q3	2011 Q4
Elmbridge	6	4	13	10
Epsom and Ewell	0	0	5	1
Guildford	1	0	1	0
Mole Valley	0	2	1	2
Reigate and Banstead	4	6	4	4
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
Spelthorne	0	0	1	2
Surrey Heath	1	0	2	2
Tandridge	0	0	1	0
Waverley	0	1	1	0
Woking	0	0	0	0
	2012 Q1	2012 Q2	2012 Q3	2012 Q4
Elmbridge	4	2	3	2
Epsom and Ewell	0	0	1	3
Guildford	4	2	2	1
Mole Valley	1	1	0	1
Reigate and Banstead	6	5	1	10
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>
Spelthorne	2	4	1	6
Surrey Heath	3	3	0	3
Tandridge	1	0	0	3

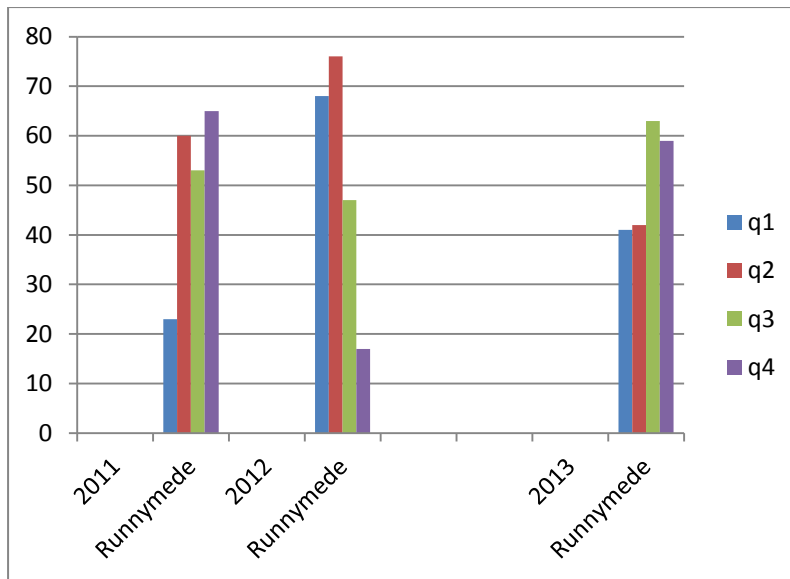
Waverley	0	0	3	0
Woking	0	0	0	0
	2013 Q1	2013 Q2	2013 Q3	2013 Q4
Elmbridge	1	7	5	4
Epsom and Ewell	0	2	1	0
Guildford	1	0	1	0
Mole Valley	2	0	0	0
Reigate and Banstead	4	5	2	5
Runnymede	4	1	0	4
Spelthorne	5	9	8	1
Surrey Heath	2	1	1	3
Tandridge	1	1	2	0
Waverley	0	0	0	0
Woking	0	0	0	0





## Households in Temporary Accommodation 2011-13

	2011 Q1	2011 Q2	2011 Q3	2011 Q4
Elmbridge	22	17	24	25
Epsom and Ewell	32	32	34	46
Guildford	9	11	14	19
Mole Valley	18	19	22	27
Reigate and Banstead	24	35	44	55
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>65</b>
Spelthorne	7	6	7	10
Surrey Heath	50	48	49	48
Tandridge	16	19	15	18
Waverley	2	2	4	2
Woking	28	32	33	32
	2012 Q1	2012 Q2	2012 Q3	2012 Q4
Elmbridge	23	43	37	38
Epsom and Ewell	37	49	58	64
Guildford	27	22	22	21
Mole Valley	18	25	24	27
Reigate and Banstead	65	75	90	88
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>17</b>
Spelthorne	24	26	33	32
Surrey Heath	48	51	52	55
Tandridge	15	20	22	21
Waverley	2	4	4	3
Woking	30	28	31	35
	2013 Q1	2013 Q2	2013 Q3	2013 Q4
Elmbridge	41	36	34	37
Epsom and Ewell	65	91	108	114
Guildford	25	25	28	29
Mole Valley	28	33	33	31
Reigate and Banstead	99	101	95	108
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>59</b>
Spelthorne	47	57	73	88
Surrey Heath	59	67	59	57
Tandridge	17	22	23	24
Waverley	1	1	4	5
Woking	38	30	28	36



## A Review of Runnymede Temporary Accommodation

We have through the life of the 2010-13 Homelessness Strategy placed homeless households in Runnymede Borough Council (RBC) temporary accommodation within the Borough. We do not own or lease units outside of the Borough and currently we have no partnership arrangements with RPs or private landlords for the use of units on a contractual basis, either within or outside of Runnymede.

Runnymede has a current total of 71 units of temporary accommodation within the Borough. The units are owned and managed by the Council and vary in type. All temporary accommodation units are let on non-secure tenancies and cannot default into a secure or flexible tenancy.

Our temporary accommodation stock is managed by a designated Temporary Accommodation Manager who is part of the Housing Advice Team and works directly with the Housing Options officers. Throughout the 2010-13 Homelessness Strategy we reviewed the way in which we managed all aspects of this service including rent arrears and anti-social behaviour.

The Temporary Accommodation Manager provides a one to one service to all homeless applicants including attending professionals meetings in respect of members of the household and in 2013, began to work more closely with the Family Support Team as applicants were identified as meeting this criteria.

RBC temporary accommodation is generally of a good standard and is varied in type and location throughout the Borough. With the exception of one

shared facilities hostel, RBC temporary accommodation is considered fit for purpose for the life of this new strategy. Listed below is the description and unit numbers per scheme of our temporary accommodation units:

### **Heathervale**

Fifteen mobile homes comprising single and family units in New Haw. These units are renewed on a regular basis. Breakdown is 6 double units and 9 single units.

### **Parkside**

Eighteen units of 1 and 2 bedroom self-contained flats in New Haw assigned as temporary accommodation from general needs stock as the building has Pre-cast Reinforced Concrete with a limited lifetime and included in the Council's asset management strategy for redevelopment. Breakdown is, 9 single units, 9 double units.

### **Ashdene**

Twenty four units of single and family accommodation in a shared facilities hostel in Englefield Green with a limited life usage of 2 more years. Breakdown is 3 family units, 14 x 1 bed units and 8 x 2 bed units.

### **Coopers Close**

Two 3 bedroom maisonettes in Egham assigned from general needs stock as the building is PRC with a limited lifetime and included in the Council's asset management strategy for redevelopment.

### **Station Road**

Six 3 bedroom maisonettes above shops in Addlestone. These are corporately owned properties and are being leased on a short term basis to the Housing Business Centre to house homeless households. However, they are also in the area of phase one town centre regeneration plans and the Housing Business Centre will need to transfer these properties to the developer at the end of 2014.

### **Devonshire Cottages**

Four 2 bedroom self-contained houses in Addlestone. These properties are in the area of phase 1 and 2 town centre regeneration plans and will be transferred over to developers at the end of 2014.

### **Literary Institute**

One 2 bed unit and one 3 bed unit on the top floor of the Literary Institute in Egham. The refurbished premises result from one larger unit previously let to private tenants.

Due to the town centre regeneration plans, we will lose 10 units of temporary accommodation of which 6 of those are the larger 3 bed units. We are also looking to dispose of the shared facilities hostel, Ashdene, in 2 years which will mean replacing 24 units of temporary accommodation in the Borough.

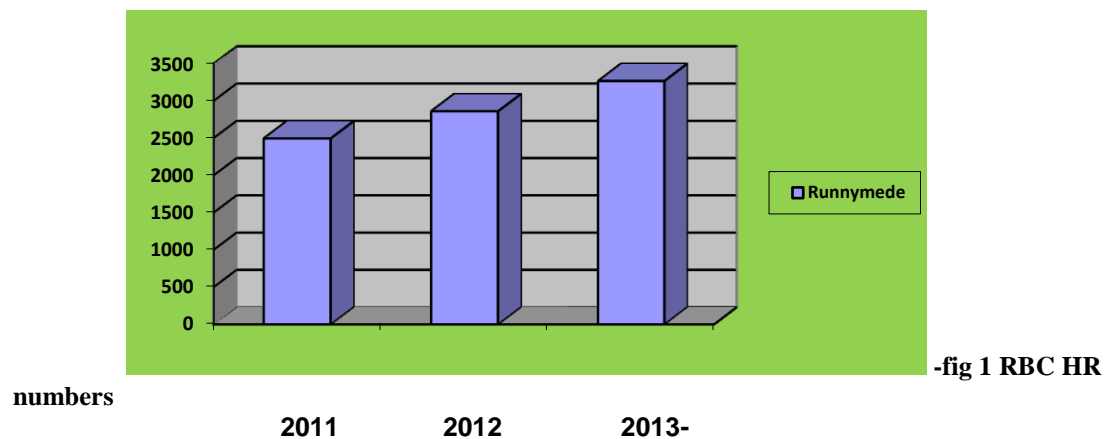
Runnymede's temporary accommodation strategy is addressing these issues and will form part of the review of this Homelessness Strategy in 2016. .

## Households on Council waiting Lists - Review of the Allocations Policy 2011-13

In accordance with the requirements of the Homelessness Act 2002, this strategy must have regard to our current allocation scheme and part of the review process must reflect how the allocations scheme for the life of the previous strategy related to homelessness and the prevention of homelessness.

Set out in the table below, are the numbers on the Runnymede Housing Register for 2011, 2012 and 2013.

	2011	2012	2013
Elmbridge	1497	1756	2234
Epsom and Ewell	1915	2037	2190
Guildford	3041	2924	3074
Mole Valley	1489	1434	1399
Reigate and Banstead	2758	2169	1836
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>2496</b>	<b>2861</b>	<b>3267</b>
Spelthorne	1546	1933	2184
Surrey Heath	1244	1379	959
Tandridge	1663	1726	1998
Waverley	2606	2697	1350
Woking	2087	1801	1809



For the life of the 2010-13 homelessness strategy, Runnymede has been an active partner in the SEARCH MOVES sub regional Choice Based Lettings partnership of Runnymede BC, Elmbridge BC, Spelthorne BC, Paragon Housing Group and A2Dominion Housing Group. The partnership legally remains until July 2015. In December 2013 Runnymede gave notice to the group of our wish to exit at the end of the contractual period.

The sub regional group was formed to provide social mobility opportunities across the north west of Surrey as well as a consistent assessment for social housing in the area. SEARCH MOVES went live in November 2009 with a Common Allocations Policy for all partners and a 30% cross partner contribution of all vacant properties in each Borough by the three landlords in the group, of which Runnymede was one.

Sub regional CBL is a concept promoted by the previous Labour Government and not an initiative promoted by the current Coalition Government. Localism does not lend itself to sub regional working, particularly for stock retained local authorities who need to ensure local needs are met and address the issues from welfare reform, in particular size criteria. To do this we needed to create our own independent allocation policy which would allow the flexibility to use our stock to its best possible use and react quickly to changing legislation and applicants' circumstances.

In 2013, 4 years after launching SEARCH MOVES, Runnymede had the highest number of applicants on its housing register, not only in the SEARCH MOVES partnership but also compared to the other Boroughs and Districts in the County at 3267. We were, with little doubt, an attractive option for those applicants both within and outside of the Borough, offering lifetime secure tenancies at social housing rent and owning a high number of temporary accommodation units within the Borough, the majority of which were very attractive options as interim accommodation.

During 2012 and 2013, we consulted with applicants on the Runnymede housing register, our partners and stakeholders on their views of our

proposed Independent Allocations Policy for Runnymede which was implemented on 1 April 2014. At this time we also advised of our intention to implement an online housing registration system to replace the manual hard copy application forms and also the launch of our targeted housing options website, RBC Living & Homes, which also went live on 1 April 2014.

The majority of responses were in favour of the proposed changes, in particular those from applicants who were working. There were concerns from some of our partners that their client groups may suffer from the proposed changes, in particular vulnerable groups at threat of homelessness. We met with our partners who raised such concerns to explain in detail how the new policy would work. We also explained that changes to priority in banding assessment for homeless applicants was consistent across all client groups and did not differentiate apart from armed forces where legislation in December 2012 required local authorities to give additional preference.

The Housing Committee approved the final Independent Allocations Policy for Runnymede in September 2013. It is without doubt that the Common Allocations Policy for SEARCH MOVES encouraged, in our view, a fast track approach to homelessness and a culture that by presenting as homeless to the Council it would automatically result in an offer of social housing.

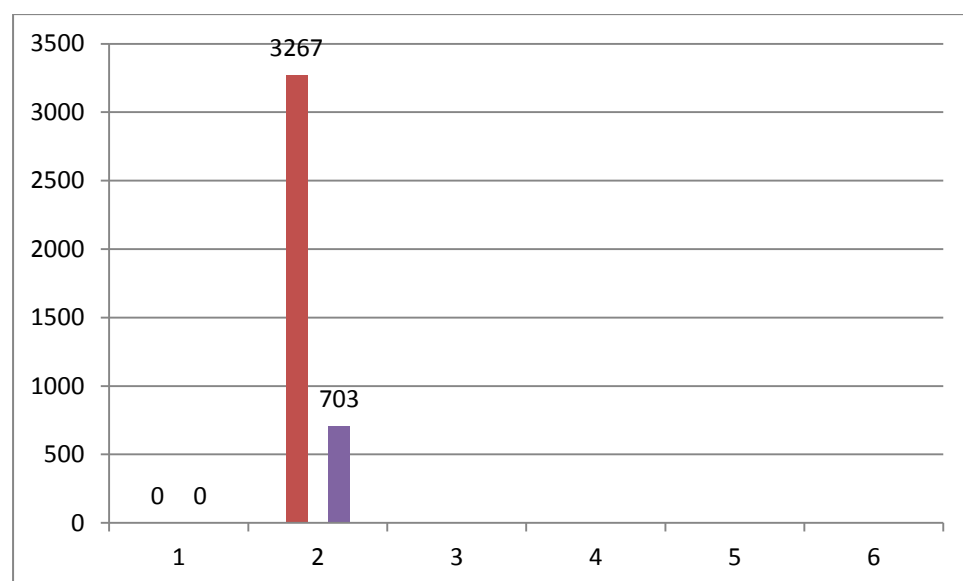
The independent Allocations Policy for Runnymede has taken advantage of new powers under Localism in which to discharge our main homelessness duty into the private rented sector. This is called a PRSO discharge and it carries with it the new duty to retain a two year duty to an applicant placed under these powers. We will in all cases of homelessness and the prevention of homelessness look to assist applicants into the private rented sector and there is no guarantee of social housing for anyone.

The new Allocations Policy also prevents homeless households from bidding for properties and 'direct lets' of one suitable offer are made to all homeless applicants. Priority on the housing register has also been reviewed and homeless applicants are now placed into a Band C1 with no escalation to a higher band and no composite need considered, with the exception of armed forces who are given additional priority in line with legislation.

We have also reviewed our local connection criteria which has had the main impact on numbers on the new housing register. We have also considered community contribution and have given priority for 25% of all our voids to go to working households throughout a 12 month period.

There are positive signs already, only a short while into our new allocations policy, that the culture is beginning to change and that applicants are beginning to realise there is not enough social housing to meet the demand and that the private rented sector is their main option. More importantly it is managing expectations of temporary accommodation times and outcomes for applicants. We will review our new Independent Allocations Policy on a yearly basis and in particular the impact on homeless households.

On 1 April 2014 Runnymede went live with RBC Living & Homes, Targeted Housing Options Website, a new Independent Allocations Policy and a housing register of 703 applicants.



Runnymede Housing Register snapshot as at 31 03 14 and 01 04 14

## A Review of Housing advice approaches - Local Context

In 2011 Runnymede dealt with 925 approaches, in 2012, 949 approaches and in 2013, 1540 approaches, which evidences a very steep increase but which is in line with national and local trends. Housing advice approaches are increasing as people seek help with their housing and support circumstances and approaches are becoming more complex, often requiring multi agency involvement. Not all approaches result in a homeless application and early prevention work is vital to avoid eventual homelessness.

Runnymede has a small team of 4 housing options officers, a front desk housing advisor, a temporary accommodation manager and a private rented sector resettlement officer who form the housing advice section of the housing needs team. One housing options officer post and housing advisor post are both funded from the DCLG prevention fund to address the increasing demands on the service.

Housing advice approaches are made in various ways. The majority of approaches are made in person to the housing advice drop in service. Applicants also telephone, e mail and seek advice through their housing register application, which sometimes triggers a Part VII Homelessness application. Runnymede is proactive with approaches made in such a way and contact is made with applicants for housing advice.

Approaches fall into main categories and we monitor trends regularly. Below is a brief summary of the main approach reasons and the way we worked in partnership with agencies and applicants.



Housing advice approaches 2011, 2012 and 2013

**The analysis of categories of approach reasons is consistent over the 2011 to 2013 period. Family breakdown, relationship breakdown, private rented sector tenancies being brought to an end and general housing advice being the predominate categories.**

## The Private Rented Sector (PRS)

The majority of approaches throughout the 2011 to 2013 reporting period were tenancies brought to an end in the private rented sector. There were a number of reasons for this. Many landlords were fearful of the reforms to welfare benefits and chose to no longer let their properties to those tenants dependent on housing benefit. Some landlords chose to move back into their properties as the economic situation continued to worsen and in some cases those landlords living abroad where the economic situation became difficult chose to return to the UK to reside.

The market for private rented properties became so competitive over this period of time that landlords and their agents were able to let properties well above the Local Housing Allowance rates (LHA), which made such properties inaccessible for applicants dependent on benefits. Even where rentals were unaffordable within set LHA rates, many agents required a working guarantor earning at least £36,000 per annum and often rent paid 6 months in advance. For many of our applicants this was not a possibility. Where possible we negotiated with landlords for tenants to remain but this was largely unsuccessful due to the reasons given above.

We reviewed our offer to private landlords in 2012 and began offering up to 3 months' rent in advance, payment of administrative fees, our bond deposit for



the life of a tenancy and private insurance for landlords where tenants were claiming housing benefit (LHA). We also offered tenancy sustainment visits to reassure landlords and support tenants.

We continued to work with our partner Omega Lettings who claimed a DWP management subsidy fee to manage lettings on behalf of landlord and where rents were guaranteed as direct payments where there was a risk of homelessness or actual homelessness.

Despite our reviewed offer to landlords, the local PRS market became more and more unavailable to applicants dependent on the lower quartile properties. Our success in rehousing into the PRS was very limited and continues to be so.

Runnymede does not have any portfolio landlords and relies on landlords in the main with one property to let. Our proximity to London has had an impact on finding properties also as there has been a migration of tenants from London seeking private rented properties at lower rents. We also have the added impact of surrounding London Boroughs signposting applicants to 'cheaper' areas but retaining their proximity to London.

We have worked with landlords and tenants over this period of time to negotiate lower rents where possible, and to achieve Discretionary Housing Payments to allow time for tenant relocation but the trend has been and remains a very concerning one with our current portfolio of landlords diminishing.

## Relationship Breakdown, Domestic Abuse

Another main category for housing advice approaches in the 2011-13 reporting period was relationship breakdown and domestic abuse, and quite often these were combined reasons in an approach. Housing advice cases of this category were more often than not very complex and required multi agency responses.

We worked closely and continue to do so with YourSanctuary as the support provider for outreach and also the Refuge Provider in the Borough.

An alarming increase in the number of single parents approaching with children from a family breakdown started to arise also in this period. In many cases children were split between a parental break down, with both parents requiring a home with children in their care. Pressure was placed not only on Runnymede but on the children's services teams who were supporting families also.

Runnymede worked closely with Surrey County Council throughout the life of the 2010-2013 homelessness strategy, attending professionals meetings to support households and look for multi-agency responses and outcomes.

Our approach to domestic abuse cases is to consider the risk to an applicant and to highlight how small Runnymede is as a Borough for rehousing options. We do work in partnership with agencies involved but often there is a conflict between rehousing locally and an applicant's safety.

## Parental Eviction

Another main approach reason was parental eviction throughout the life of the 2010-13 homelessness strategy. We introduced in 2011 a home visit policy for every parental eviction with the aim of mediation and negotiation to remain in the parental home, as long as there was no threat of or actual violence identified as a risk to the applicant. This was successful in many cases up until 2013, as managing the expectations of both parent and applicant was important.

In 2013 we evidenced a steep increase in parental eviction and this continues to be of great concern. Financial situations were often the cause of the breakdown where applicants had moved into the parental home having lost their initial home at an earlier point in the economic downturn.

## Review of Bed & Breakfast (B & B) Use 2011 to 2013

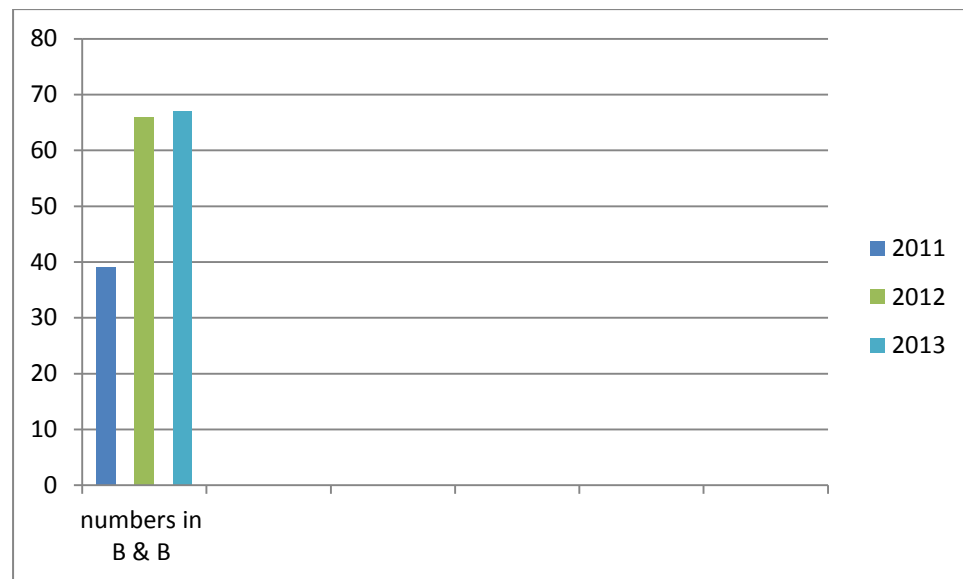
Runnymede has used B & B out of the borough for the life of the 2010-13 Homelessness Strategy and continues to do so out of necessity to meet the demand for emergency accommodation.

In line with national trends our use of B & B has increased over the period of time and will no doubt continue to rise. We recognise the distress it causes applicants to be offered out of borough placements but the Council has no control over the availability of such accommodation and is in competition with other local authorities, both within and outside of Surrey and in particular with the London Boroughs, for placements on any given day.

We have and will continue to check on the suitability of such accommodation either through our own inspections or reliance on the Local Authority area teams' to update with suitability information. We have also sourced self-contained B & B accommodation out of area which is more suitable for a family's needs. We have widened our portfolio of establishments in 2010-13 due to the increase in demand.

The chart below shows the use of B & B by Runnymede for 2011, 12 and 13. B & B is used for a number of reasons by local authorities as emergency accommodation. Applicants who are not safe to remain in the Borough cannot be placed into our temporary accommodation and therefore out of Borough placements are needed. Applicants who approach as homeless with

little or no notice to the Council are also placed in B & B as their approach is unplanned. We also use B & B when our temporary accommodation is unavailable.



Whilst reviewing the revenue budgets, during the autumn of 2013 it was noted that demand for B & B accommodation in 2013/14 was exceeding budget and therefore the revised budget was increased to £30,000 for 2014/15 as the budget was set at £16,300 in line with the original budget for 2013/14.

## Review of Rough Sleeping in Runnymede 2010 to 2013

Sleeping rough is a dangerous and traumatising experience and for those who do sleep rough they will most probably suffer from multiple health conditions such as mental health problems and drug misuse and they are also in greater danger of violence and death than the general population.

It is difficult to get a realistic figure of rough sleeping in Runnymede, not only because rough sleepers usually want to protect themselves and hide away in places but also because Runnymede has no one main town centre. In the majority of cases rough sleepers concentrate on a town centre but due to the way in which Runnymede is set out as a Borough there are small towns scattered around and no main 'gathering places' unlike larger Boroughs in the County.

We are required by DCLG to carry out a rough sleeping count or to provide an estimate if we do not carry out a count. Due to the reasons set out above Runnymede provides an estimate which we collate from our housing advice approaches and from partner agencies who also deal with rough sleeping and refer to us directly.

As part of the 10 local challenges set by DCLG to all local authorities, Runnymede is working towards the No Second Night Out challenge. We have throughout the life of the 2010-13 homelessness strategy worked with our partner local authorities in Surrey to provide Severe Weather Emergency Protocols (SWEP), and new initiatives which includes a partnership with Elmbridge and Spelthorne Borough Councils in 2013 for DCLG funding towards the provision of a short term night shelter in Elmbridge, managed by Transform Housing but available for access by the three Boroughs.

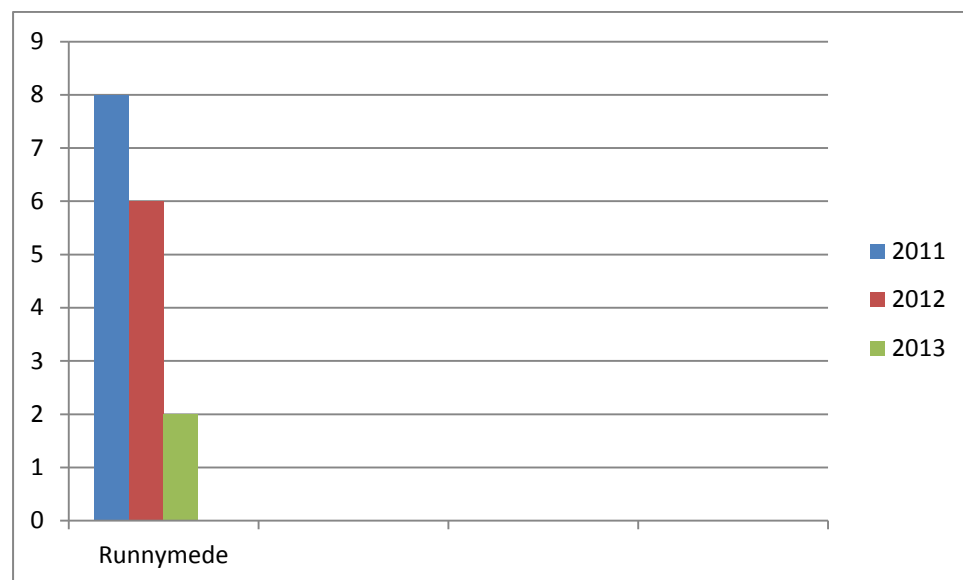
The pilot in Elmbridge saw 21 clients referred, which equals one in every four days. This occurred in a very mild winter with no SWEP nights at all.

## StreetLink

StreetLink is a service that enables the public to alert local authorities in England about rough sleepers in their area. It is funded by the Government as part of its commitment to end rough sleeping. The aim to offer the public a means to act when they see someone sleeping rough, and provide the first step someone can take to ensure people sleeping rough are connected to the local services and support available to them.

Runnymede has contributed to this initiative and our first point of contact for all referrals is Safer Runnymede.

Below is the chart showing the rough sleeping count for Runnymede as reported to Homeless Link for the years 2011, 2012 and 2013.



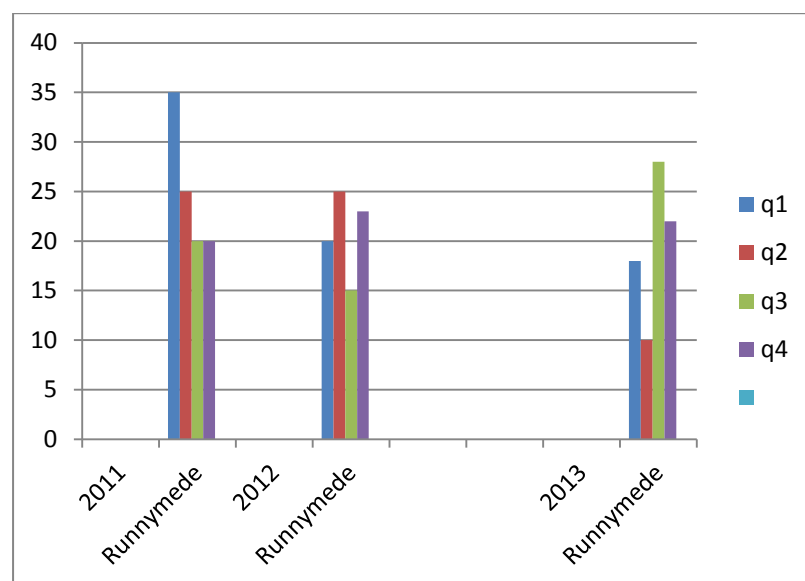
## Review of Lettings made to new social housing tenants ( not including transfers)

	2011-12
Elmbridge	263
Epsom and Ewell	92
Guildford	508
Mole Valley	192
Reigate and Banstead	424
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>142</b>
Spelthorne	265
Surrey Heath	176
Tandridge	211
Waverley	264
Woking	280

## Review of Possession Claims by Landlords 2011-13

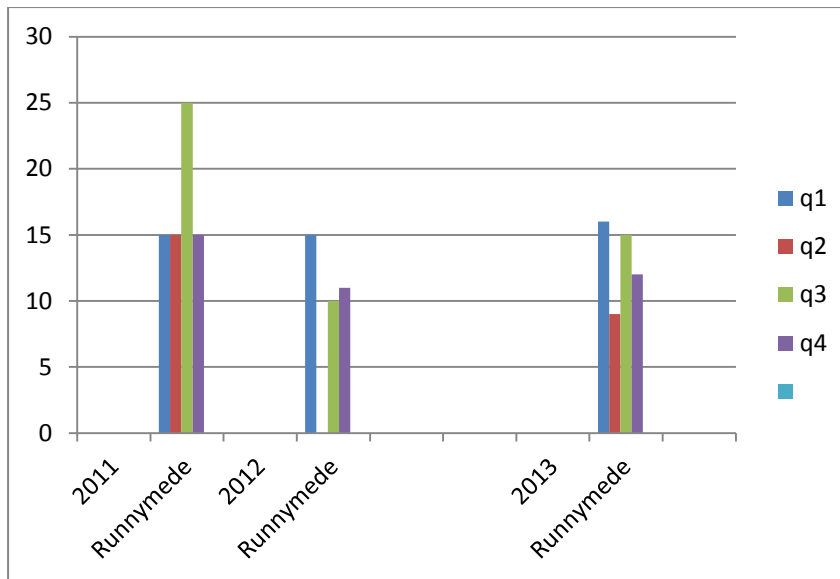
	2011 Q1	2011 Q2	2011 Q3	2011 Q4
Elmbridge	30	30	45	50
Epsom and Ewell	15	15	25	15
Guildford	40	30	35	45
Mole Valley	15	10	20	30
Reigate and Banstead	65	40	50	40
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>
Spelthorne	70	45	45	60
Surrey Heath	25	15	35	15
Tandridge	35	20	35	40
Waverley	15	15	25	20
Woking	35	30	50	35
	2012 Q1	2012 Q2	2012 Q3	2012 Q4
Elmbridge	70	50	40	45
Epsom and Ewell	15	25	35	15
Guildford	35	40	45	53
Mole Valley	30	20	25	26
Reigate and Banstead	60	35	60	25
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23</b>
Spelthorne	50	40	55	45
Surrey Heath	25	20	25	47

Tandridge	35	20	35	31
Waverley	20	20	15	22
Woking	55	60	60	62
	2013 Q1	2013 Q2	2013 Q3	2013 Q4
Elmbridge	53	34	40	42
Epsom and Ewell	43	31	37	21
Guildford	40	37	65	66
Mole Valley	32	35	39	20
Reigate and Banstead	50	38	46	35
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>22</b>
Spelthorne	48	60	38	27
Surrey Heath	57	29	21	21
Tandridge	40	44	41	23
Waverley	33	36	22	25
Woking	57	60	57	62



## Review of Possession Claims by Mortgage Lenders 2013-14

	2011 Q1	2011 Q2	2011 Q3	2011 Q4
Elmbridge	20	20	30	20
Epsom and Ewell	20	15	10	10
Guildford	20	15	20	25
Mole Valley	10	20	20	10
Reigate and Banstead	30	25	25	20
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>
Spelthorne	25	25	25	25
Surrey Heath	25	15	10	15
Tandridge	20	25	25	25
Waverley	25	25	20	10
Woking	25	20	15	10
	2012 Q1	2012 Q2	2012 Q3	2012 Q4
Elmbridge	20	20	25	20
Epsom and Ewell	15	15	10	12
Guildford	20	15	15	13
Mole Valley	15	10	10	11
Reigate and Banstead	30	25	30	22
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>15</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
Spelthorne	25	10	20	17
Surrey Heath	25	20	15	6
Tandridge	15	10	20	21
Waverley	20	10	10	18
Woking	15	10	10	16
	2013 Q1	2013 Q2	2013 Q3	2013 Q4
Elmbridge	17	17	25	25
Epsom and Ewell	8	12	10	8
Guildford	19	12	22	13
Mole Valley	12	10	11	10
Reigate and Banstead	28	32	34	18
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>
Spelthorne	20	11	21	10
Surrey Heath	15	13	12	10
Tandridge	22	13	13	16
Waverley	11	16	9	15
Woking	27	14	8	13

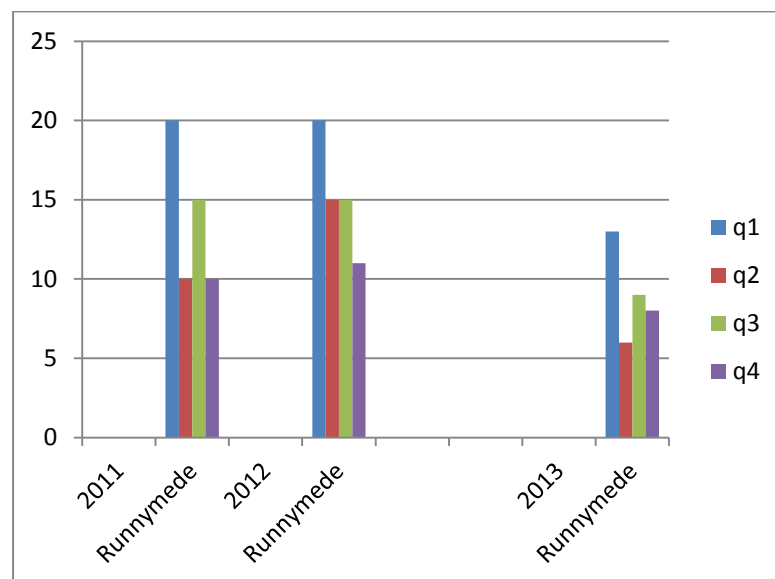


## Review of Possession Orders made for Landlords 2011-13

	2011 Q1	2011 Q2	2011 Q3	2011 Q4
Elmbridge	25	15	30	35
Epsom and Ewell	10	10	15	10
Guildford	20	15	20	20
Mole Valley	15		15	10
Reigate and Banstead	45	25	35	25
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>
Spelthorne	55	30	40	35
Surrey Heath	15	15	20	20
Tandridge	15	15	25	20
Waverley	15	10	10	10
Woking	25	20	30	25
	2012 Q1	2012 Q2	2012 Q3	2012 Q4
Elmbridge	30	35	40	31
Epsom and Ewell	15	10	25	17
Guildford	30	25	20	36
Mole Valley	15	15	15	27



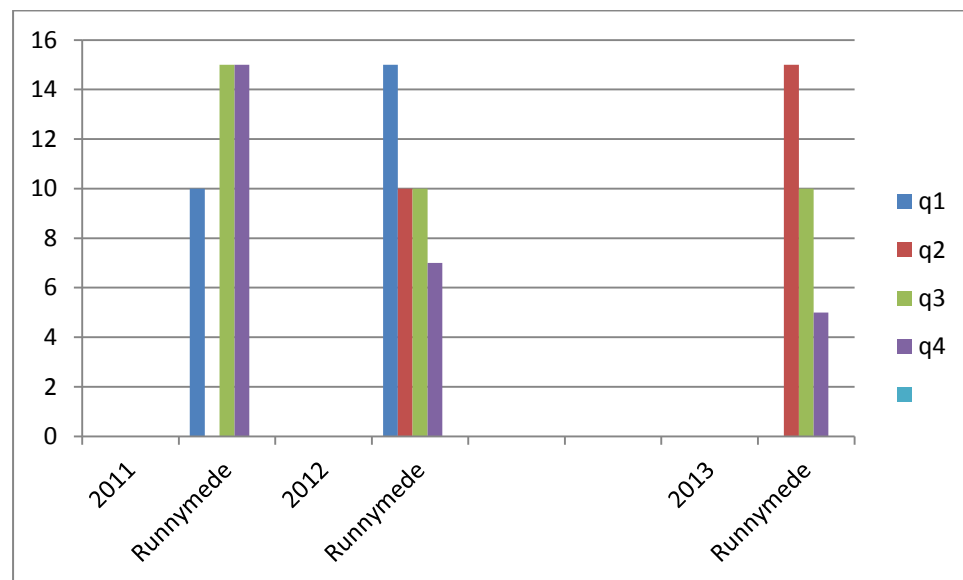
Reigate and Banstead	35	25	45	39
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>
Spelthorne	40	35	30	44
Surrey Heath	10	20	10	18
Tandridge	30	15	20	23
Waverley	15	15	10	16
Woking	25	35	30	42
	2013 Q1	2013 Q2	2013 Q3	2013 Q4
Elmbridge	30	26	34	38
Epsom and Ewell	16	23	21	14
Guildford	19	24	25	42
Mole Valley	9	24	31	14
Reigate and Banstead	27	30	38	26
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>
Spelthorne	24	41	44	26
Surrey Heath	42	22	24	15
Tandridge	20	30	28	24
Waverley	16	27	8	17
Woking	37	33	30	32



## Review of Possession Orders made for Mortgage Lenders 2011-13

	2011 Q1	2011 Q2	2011 Q3	2011 Q4
Elmbridge	15	10	20	10
Epsom and Ewell	10	15	10	10
Guildford	15	10	10	10
Mole Valley	10			10
Reigate and Banstead	20	20	20	20
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
Spelthorne	10	15	20	15
Surrey Heath	15	20		10
Tandridge	15	10	15	10
Waverley	10	10	15	10
Woking	20	20	15	10
	2012 Q1	2012 Q2	2012 Q3	2012 Q4
Elmbridge	10	10	15	10
Epsom and Ewell		10	10	7
Guildford	10	15		13
Mole Valley	10		10	9
Reigate and Banstead	20	10	20	24
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>
Spelthorne	20	15		12
Surrey Heath	15	15	10	6
Tandridge	15	10	10	10
Waverley	10	10		6
Woking	10	15	10	8
	2013 Q1	2013 Q2	2013 Q3	2013 Q4
Elmbridge	13	11	12	25
Epsom and Ewell	8	5	8	8
Guildford	12	8	4	17
Mole Valley	0	0	9	4
Reigate and Banstead	15	13	31	25
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
Spelthorne	8	15	4	3
Surrey Heath	0	0	8	12

Tandridge	19	8	9	12
Waverley	14	3	11	6
Woking	10	14	8	8



## Reviewing our services - How did we deliver against our last Strategy's Aims & Objectives?



The most important aspect of our service is that we ensure we comply with our statutory duties as a local housing authority.

We have a duty to provide advice and assistance to all households facing homelessness and may have a duty to provide interim or temporary accommodation pending an offer of permanent housing. If we accept a homeless application, we must reach a decision on that application and enable the applicant to request a formal review of the decision if they wish to challenge it.

These are actions we must carry out directly and cannot delegate them to another party. We work within very rigid legislation and our services have to be compliant and transparent. They are, like all statutory services decisions, open to judicial review should we fail to comply.

In April 2013, the Housing Minister announced that the new Gold Standard would set the bar for local homelessness services, and would be backed by a peer-led support and training scheme. He urged councils to strive to achieve the Gold Standard by making a first step continuous improvement pledge.

The ten local challenges the Government poses to the housing sector are to:

- adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local council services
- actively work in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs
- offer a housing options prevention service, including written advice, to all clients

- adopt a No Second Night Out model (to tackle rough sleeping) or an effective local alternative
- have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that includes appropriate accommodation and support
- develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both clients and landlords
- actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme (now ended)
- have a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually so that it is responsive to emerging needs
- not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in bed and breakfast accommodation
- not place any families in bed and breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and then for no longer than six weeks

Our service currently meets most of these challenges and this new strategy will help ensure that we continue to do so.

In the 2010-13 Homelessness Strategy we set ourselves five key aims and objectives. They were to:

**Objective 1 :To deliver prevention services that keep homelessness as low as possible**

**Objective 2:To reduce the use of temporary accommodation wherever possible**

**Objective 3:To maintain a housing options service that assists in giving access to a choice of homes**

**Objective 4:To reduce homelessness amongst vulnerable groups e.g. young people**

**Objective 5: To ensure our services are accessible and delivered fairly**

## So how did we do?

### **Objective 1 : To deliver prevention services that keep homelessness as low as possible**

The demand for housing advice grew rapidly in the life of the 2010-13 homelessness strategy, as set out in the previous section, showing housing advice approaches over that period. To assist as many people as possible we changed the way in which we delivered our front line services.

We created a housing advice desk service in the main reception area which is open Monday to Friday and provides a drop in service for customers to deal with both applicant and landlord issues. We funded this service through the use of the prevention grant funding by making a business case for a post of Housing Advisor. This service provides a 'one stop shop' approach for customers who may have general housing advice queries but it also provides a pathway to more complex options assessment by professional staff.

We also recruited an additional fixed term Housing Options Officer through the prevention grant funding to ensure we were able to resource the team to a level where prevention was possible as a proactive service rather than a reactive service to homelessness.

We delivered training to partners to ensure we were working together to prevent homelessness where possible and to manage expectations where homelessness had occurred. Housing Options Officers gave presentations and talks to probation services bail hostel staff and residents as one example.

We regularly attended MAPPA and MARAC panels to work with our partners to prevent where possible homelessness and to find multi agency solutions for the safety of applicants and the public where appropriate.

We funded and continue to fund CABRentstart to provide rent bond deposits for single non priority applicants and couples without dependent children.

We also worked closely with LookAhead floating support service to ensure those applicants most at risk of losing their tenancies were able to receive tenancy sustainment support to prevent the loss of their homes.

We worked with the 10 Surrey Boroughs and Districts as part of the Surrey Homelessness Alliance Group, using the DCLG single homeless funding obtained in 2012 to achieve a county wide action plan approved by DCLG with agreed tasks to deliver services across the County to this non-priority group to assist them into accommodation. Runnymede assigned the funding for the Borough to CABRentstart as our existing partner for non priority prevention to take this forward.

As a stock retained landlord our aim is to make best use of our social housing and we did this using the concept of downsizing. Downsizing is a term used to describe where current social housing tenants move to a smaller home that meets their actual housing need. This avoids, in some case, deductions in their housing benefit though size criteria and in some cases to help older tenants into homes that are more manageable for their health and welfare and provide network support.

We did this in 2012/13 mainly to address welfare reform issues and we also amended our mutual exchange policy to allow RBC tenants with arrears to be able to downsize and where plans were put place for repayment of any housing related debt.

In 2012 we achieved 15 downsizing transfers and in 2013 we achieved 13 downsizing transfers. That equates to 28 RBC tenants who moved to a smaller home, but which met their actual housing need and avoided the impact of between 14% and 25% deductions in their housing benefit allowance. Without such a downsizing scheme these tenants would have accrued arrears through size criteria deduction which ultimately may have led to eviction and homelessness.

We worked closely with our Housing Benefit team in 2013 and reviewed the Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) policy to ensure it addressed prevention of homelessness in a number of ways. We assisted RBC tenants and applicants to make claims where they were affected by welfare reform impact to enable them to either downsize or look for alternative private rented accommodation which they could afford in the longer term.

We also contributed £20,000 from our DCLG prevention funding to assist tenants and applicants not currently claiming housing benefit and where they would not have been eligible for a DHP. We successfully applied for a total of £41,657 of DHP for RBC tenants with £28,596 total 'ongoing' plus £13,061 total 'one-off' payments to save individual tenancies.

We created a suite of welfare reform policies that aligned with our new independent Allocations Policy, but were implemented outside of the existing SEARCH MOVES Common Allocations Policy at the time. These policies included changes to our mutual exchange policy, priority on the housing register for downsizers and priority for applicants in the private rented sector affected by benefit capping, which were by nature the larger households and where we wanted to prevent their homelessness in the longer term.

We worked closely with neighbouring RPs to share best practice which is ongoing and created publications to assist tenants with dealing with financial management. We also took part in mutual exchange roadshows across the County including hosting our own event to give the opportunity to social housing tenants to meet and discuss potential property exchanges.

**Objective 2: To reduce the use of temporary accommodation wherever possible**

Although the Council set out its achievements in its prevention services above, the overwhelming demand from applicants for housing advice and ultimately the need for temporary accommodation meant we had to increase our temporary accommodation portfolio to address the growing problem. We were not alone in this demand and the trend was the same locally and nationally. There were peaks and troughs over the 2010-13 homelessness strategy lifetime, in that where new developments become available we were, through the use of Local Lettings Plans (LLPs) able to house many of our homeless households.

For the purposes of delivering against this objective we have not been successful as an overall outcome.

**Objective 3: To maintain a housing options service that assists in giving access to a choice of homes**

Our aim as an options service has always been to provide a proactive service that considers all options for customers rather than an assumption that a homeless approach would lead to social housing as an outcome. We encouraged through the life of the 2010-13 homelessness strategy that our applicants became more responsible for their own housing solutions and that they helped themselves as much as possible. We actively encouraged customers to look for their own private rented accommodation, to consider LHA rates in other areas and we conducted affordability assessments to help them to do this. We funded and continue to fund, the CAB to help with debt advice and solutions and we sign post customers to CAB to help in that area of their lives.

We worked closely with the Home Buy agent for the South East to ensure customers knew how to access the scheme and we carried out housing need assessments with local providers to assist them with prioritising applicants for new developments.

In all new developments we create LLPs to achieve sustainable communities. During the lifetime of the 2010-13 Homelessness Strategy, LLPs were created which gave priority to existing RBC tenants to access homes they would otherwise not have had the opportunity to do. Where housing need is assessed as low against allocations policy criteria, tenants are often restricted in moving to another part of the Borough to be nearer support networks and schools, employment etc and through the use of LLPs the Council is able to offer this access to tenants. This links in with our downsizing initiative also to address welfare reform impact on those tenants in larger properties.



Where appropriate we assisted applicants to join the Runnymede Housing Register which for the life of the 2010-13 Homelessness Strategy was part of SEARCH MOVES CBL sub regional partnership. This gave choice not only in Runnymede to social housing but to two other neighbouring local authority areas for applicants who qualified for such accommodation.

**Objective 4: To reduce homelessness amongst vulnerable groups e.g. young people**

The Council worked in the later part of the 2010-13 Homelessness Strategy and continues to do so with Surrey County Council (SCC) through the Youth Support Service. The Young Persons Commissioning Group was created in August 2013 due to the fact that Supporting People funding (£1.8m) paid to SCC was no longer ring fenced. As a statutory authority, SCC has increasing duties to homeless young people and therefore a review of the provision of accommodation and support took place in late 2013 with contracts now awarded to providers.

The YSS service came about following a review of services in the County for young people. The main aim was to ensure that 16/17 year olds no longer ended up in B & B placements as homeless and without support and again forms part of the 10 local challenges for Local Authorities.

This service has been successful and Runnymede no longer places 16/17 year olds into B & B and works directly with YSS support workers to find accommodation suitable for their needs with ongoing support.

Runnymede, along with its partner 10 boroughs and districts in Surrey has also worked towards a joint protocol for young people with partner organisations in Surrey and in particular children's services which is still to be finalised.

The vision of the young people's supported accommodation project is to:

'ensure that supported accommodation for young people is outcomes based and commissioned according to best practice; it will be fit for purpose, and contribute to achieving the Children's, Schools and Families (CSF) strategic outcomes'.

Runnymede has two supported housing schemes within the Borough for young people. LIFE housing has two houses in Chertsey which support pregnant young people and those with babies. Runnymede also has a Young Person's scheme for 16 to 21 year olds in Egham which is managed by Transform Housing. However with the changes to the way in which young people are referred to the schemes through the YSS service we have chosen to review all of our supported accommodation within the Borough in 2014.

Through the life of the 2010-13 Homelessness Strategy we have worked closely with partners such as YourSanctuary and Surrey Police in the area of domestic abuse. We have provided security measures to ensure that victims of

domestic abuse and violence can remain in their homes where they choose to do so, in both privately rented, privately owned and social housing accommodation.

Runnymede also revised its Domestic Abuse (DA) policy in 2014 and this is available on the Council's website. We also attended the DA forum for NW Surrey throughout the 2010-13 life of the Homelessness Strategy and contributed to initiatives and best practice in the County. Examples of our work with the DA forum were participation in DA awareness weeks, hosting stands at supermarkets and local mainline railway stations to advise and inform the public of DA issues, involvement in serious case reviews, homicide reviews and communications and publicity to other partner agencies regarding campaigns surrounding major sporting events and new legislation.

#### **Objective 5: To ensure our services are accessible and delivered fairly**

As mentioned previously we have created the housing advice desk service which is a drop in service for customers Monday to Friday in office hours. We also worked in the later part of 2013 on the procurement and design of our Homelessness Prevention and Advice module as part of our new Targeted Housing Options website, RBC Living & Homes. Our services as a local authority are subject to internal appeal and in some cases judicial review if applicants and customers feel they are treated unfairly.

Our policies in relation to allocation of housing and prevention of homelessness as well as actual homelessness are subject to equality impact assessments to ensure we are considering the needs of all applicant groups.

We provide direct dial telephone numbers and email contacts for all staff so applicants and customers are able to access during office hours and we provide a 24 hour seven day a week statutory homelessness out of hours duty service.

Staff conduct home visits where applicants and customers cannot access our offices and staff also conduct assessments and visits at prisons and hospitals to ensure vulnerable groups have the same access as non vulnerable groups.

We provided throughout 2010-13 a CBL lettings surgery for all applicants twice a week in our reception area and we continue to do so as we have made the transition to housing registration online.

Throughout 2010-13 staff attended professionals meetings to offer advice and assistance where there was a threat of homelessness and to ensure professionals were able to support their clients through our partnership working.

## 7 Securing Sufficient Accommodation: Threats and Opportunities



There have been and continue to be changes in housing policy and social and welfare reform. What we have achieved in the past may not be possible to do in future. Listed below are some of the challenges that we need to overcome and deal with over the next two years.

### Access to Housing-Threats

Not enough housing is a key issue. Demand for affordable housing is high. House prices are high and increasing and mortgages have been difficult to access.

Fortunately, not all the unmet need results in a homeless application every year, because many of those who seek or need affordable housing instead find housing in the private rented sector, or in some cases remain living with families or friends or find other housing options such as shared or full home ownership .

The Government introduced the new concept of ‘affordable rents’ in 2011 and, allied to them, a new funding regime for affordable housing. The new affordable rents are set at a maximum of 80% of open market rents (for comparable properties in the area) and are generally higher than the ‘social’ rents that had previously been charged by social landlords. The higher level of rent charged on such properties means that the level of subsidy required for their development is far less, the Government’s intention being to enable reduced funding for affordable housing to actually deliver more units.

There were concerns that properties offered at the higher rents would be less accessible to those in greatest need, and we continue to monitor this situation.

Despite the delivery of over 366 affordable homes in the last five years, there is still a rising demand for housing in Runnymede. A range of housing opportunities are needed to encourage people to live close to employment, or for instance to encourage older people to downsize which will free up family accommodation. Our long-term aspiration is to address the

shortage in affordable housing options, through affordable rented and shared ownership as well as encouraging outright home ownership.

A shortage of affordable housing creates an imbalance in communities and forces young people amongst other applicant groups to move away or at worst to become homeless. To achieve healthy and vibrant communities the Council will continue to deliver affordable, decent and appropriate housing.

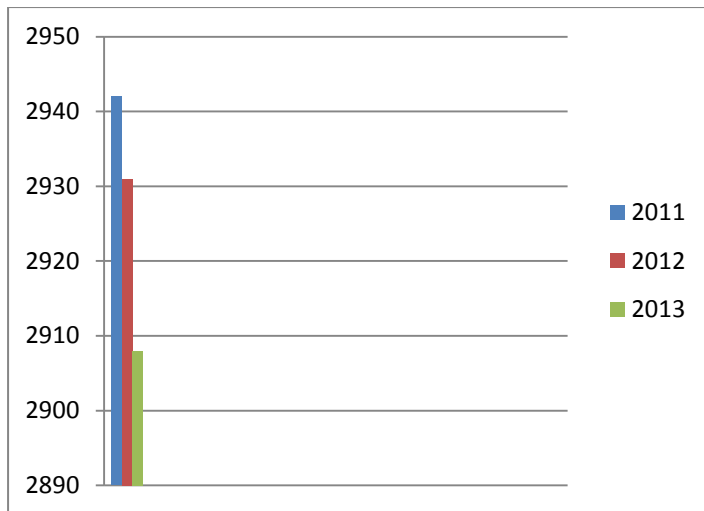
We will also profile applicants through our Housing Register as one measure of local need, in order to identify the longer term needs for specific types of housing in the Borough, therefore targeting need and creating sustainable communities and feeding into our Local Plan.

In the tables below, set out is the number of homes owned by Runnymede and in Surrey to put it into context. Set out also is the local and County context of the delivery of new homes to show Runnymede's performance on delivery in context of access to housing.

## Homes owned by Surrey Local Authorities

	2011	2012	2013
Elmbridge	7	7	7
Epsom and Ewell	0	0	11
Guildford	5312	5293	5280
Mole Valley	27	23	23
Reigate and Banstead	55	55	55
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>2942</b>	<b>2931</b>	<b>2908</b>
Spelthorne	0	0	0
Surrey Heath	0	0	0
Tandridge	2675	2668	2656
Waverley	4881	4869	4858
Woking	3379	3372	3409

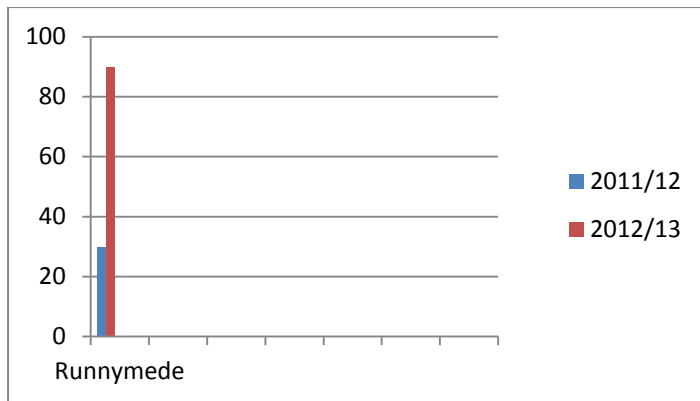
Runnymede is the fourth largest in the Surrey table of social landlords as a stock retained Local Authority as at 2013



## Homes built by Registered Providers in Surrey

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Elmbridge	50	70	
Epsom and Ewell	70	120	
Guildford	50	10	
Mole Valley	10	20	
Reigate and Banstead	20	80	
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>90</b>	
Spelthorne	140	60	
Surrey Heath	70	20	
Tandridge	10	10	
Waverley	0	60	
Woking	10	30	

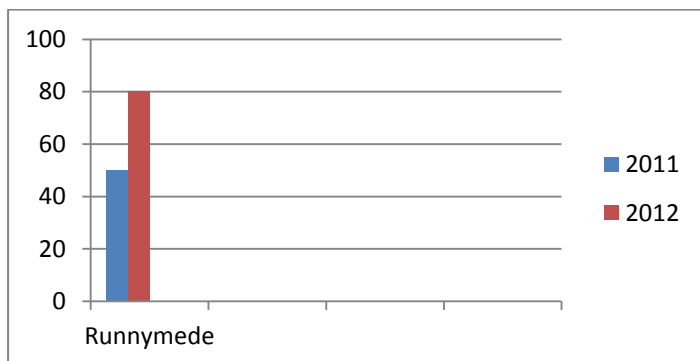
Runnymede is 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Surrey table for the provision of homes by RPs as at 2012/13.



## Affordable Homes delivered in Surrey

	2011	2012	2013
Elmbridge	70	30	
Epsom and Ewell	120	180	
Guildford	70	20	
Mole Valley	100	20	
Reigate and Banstead	90	90	
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>80</b>	
Spelthorne	110	120	
Surrey Heath	90	40	
Tandridge	60	40	
Waverley	30	120	
Woking	30	10	

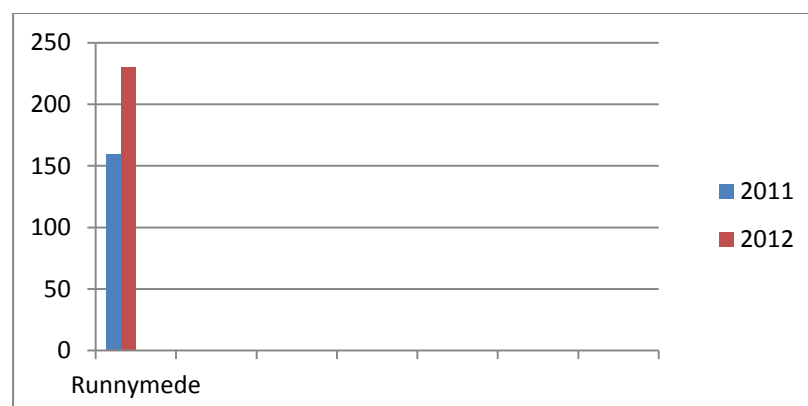
Runnymede was 7<sup>th</sup> in the Surrey table as a provider of affordable homes as at December 2013



## Total Number of New Homes Built in Surrey

	2011	2012	2013
Elmbridge	290	300	
Epsom and Ewell	290	280	
Guildford	300	240	
Mole Valley	130	130	
Reigate and Banstead	420	440	
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>230</b>	
Spelthorne	260	190	
Surrey Heath	200	170	
Tandridge	240	140	
Waverley	80	170	
Woking	180	320	

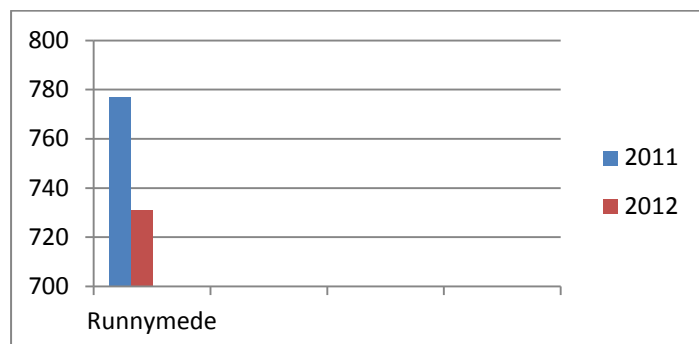
Runnymede was 6<sup>th</sup> in the table of providers out of the 11 Boroughs and Districts in Surrey as at December 2013



## Vacant Dwellings in Surrey

	2011	2012	2013
Elmbridge	1707	1660	
Epsom and Ewell	715	747	
Guildford	1312	1335	
Mole Valley	872	802	
Reigate and Banstead	1495	1494	
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>777</b>	<b>731</b>	
Spelthorne	955	901	
Surrey Heath	737	714	
Tandridge	947	979	
Waverley	1553	1491	
Woking	811	901	

Runnymede was second in the Surrey table for the least amount of vacant dwellings as at December 2012



## The Localism Act 2011- Opportunities

The Localism Act permits local authorities to meet their homelessness duty by providing good quality private rented homes. This option can provide an appropriate solution for people experiencing a homelessness crisis, whilst freeing up social homes for people in real need on the Housing Register. The new provisions represent powers available to local authorities should they choose to adopt them.

Sections 148 and 149 of the Localism Act 2011 were introduced through a commencement order in November 2012. The order identified certain criteria that must be met if a local authority intended to use this power to discharge a 'full' homelessness duty into the private rented sector:

- The tenancy offered must be for at least 12 months
- The accommodation must be 'suitable' in the view of the Local Authority.

Runnymede has chosen to adopt the power to discharge duty into the private rented sector. In doing so, we have incorporated into our policy for the discharge of the main duty, a property standard which needs to be met in order to discharge the homeless duty. This standard will apply for all homeless applicants in the Borough and those placed outside of the Borough.

In addition to this, local authorities will be under a 're-application' duty if accommodation provided under the new S193(7F) is lost unintentionally within 2 years. This means we will automatically be required to provide accommodation to any household whose duty had been discharged into the private sector if they become homeless from the address through no fault of their own.



Applicants have the right to request a review of the suitability of private rented sector offers and to appeal to the County Court on a point of law if they remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the review.

The Localism Act 2011, and consultation documents issued earlier by the Government, in 2010, also introduced the principle that social housing tenancies should cease to be 'tenancies for life' and that increasingly applicants should be offered flexible tenancies that run for a fixed period that could be reviewed at the end of that period and would not have to be renewed, normally where the tenant household had ceased to have a housing need.

The intention is to enable better use of limited housing stock, for example by enabling landlords to require households who no longer need and are under-occupying housing to move to smaller accommodation and free up their current homes for those who need housing of that size. However, it is difficult to envisage households 'outgrowing' other types of housing need when open market house prices are so high and employment opportunities are relatively poor.

The Localism Act also required local housing authorities to develop Tenancy Strategies giving guidance to social landlords about how and when flexible tenancies should be used and terminated. RBC's Tenancy Strategy was adopted in 2012 and should be read in conjunction with this Homelessness Strategy.

## **8 Welfare Reform, Household Income and Fuel Poverty-Threats and Opportunities**

Changes to welfare benefits have been taking place since April 2011 and add significant risks of increased homelessness as household's incomes are reduced and they struggle to meet their housing costs.

The first changes were the reduction of local housing allowance rates (LHA) affecting housing benefit paid on privately rented properties by changing the basis on which the allowances were based (from rents at the 50th percentile in the market to rents at the 30th percentile in the market). Additionally the capping of LHA rates at a four bed rate were introduced, followed by the increase of the age limit at which the shared accommodation (room) rate is paid from claimants under 25 to under 35.

In April 2013 the Government introduced bedroom size criteria, by which social housing tenants under occupying properties would have their housing benefit reduced:

- by 14% if they had one unused bedroom and
- by 25% if they had two unused bedrooms.

At the same time the Council Tax Benefit scheme was replaced by a locally determined Council Tax Support scheme. Because the Government required savings to be made by councils as they implemented the scheme the maximum support (benefit) to be paid in RBC to working age claimants has been capped at (?) of the tax due for year 1 and (?) for year 2.

For those previously affected by the LHA reductions, or by size criteria deduction, this is a second reduction in benefit income, and there are concerns about the cumulative impact of these changes.

In July 2013 phase 1 of the 'benefit cap' was implemented for smaller sized authorities. The intention of this measure is to ensure that no family receives more than £500 per week in benefits and no individual receives more than £350 per week.

Changes to the assessment of benefits for disabled people are also likely to negatively affect some households. The timetable for the introduction of Universal Credit is not yet final. Social landlords are very concerned about the possible increases in rent arrears if housing benefit is paid direct to the tenant, rather than to the landlord (as happens with social housing claimants at present). Universal Credit will be paid monthly in arrears and it is feared that some low income households will struggle to manage their budgets.

Fuel poverty affects people's ability to afford their housing. Fuel bills are expected to rise in the next decade as the costs of energy efficiency schemes (such as the Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation) and the provision of alternative fuel sources such as nuclear energy have to be funded from the charges energy companies make to their customers. Some estimates have suggested prices could double, which would double the numbers in fuel poverty.

Households experiencing fuel debt have also increased. Often households will make choices about which bills to pay at the expense of rent or mortgage costs, especially in winter and where there are young children in the household. This increases the risk of homelessness as well as contributing to the rise of anxiety and depression amongst low income households.

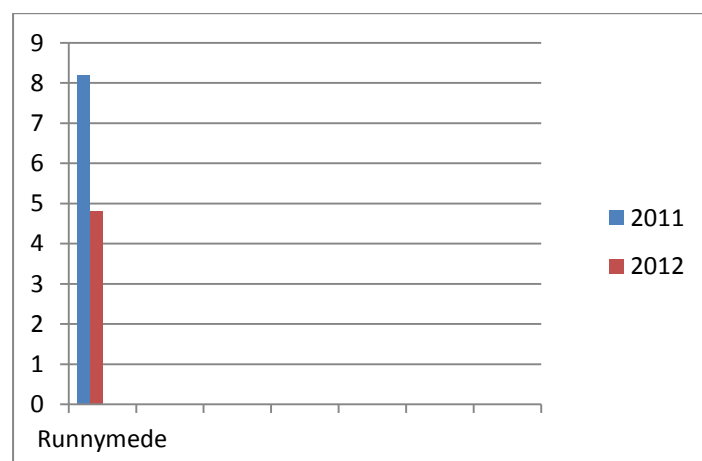
Fuel poverty is also responsible for the increasing problem of damp and mould. Cold, damp homes in turn increase the risk of serious health issues such as respiratory and circulatory issues which in turn can put housing at risk as it becomes less suitable to live in.

Below set out in table format is the number of housing benefit claimants in Runnymede and within Surrey to put it into context.

## Working Age Unemployment rate %

	2011	2012	2013
Woking	4.7	3.4	
Waverley	4	5	
Tandridge	5.6	6.8	
Surrey Heath	2.9	3	
Spelthorne	4.3	4.4	
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>4.8</b>	
Reigate and Banstead	3.8	5.9	
Mole Valley		5.3	
Guildford	2.7	5.8	
Epsom and Ewell	5.6		
Elmbridge	4.3	4.1	

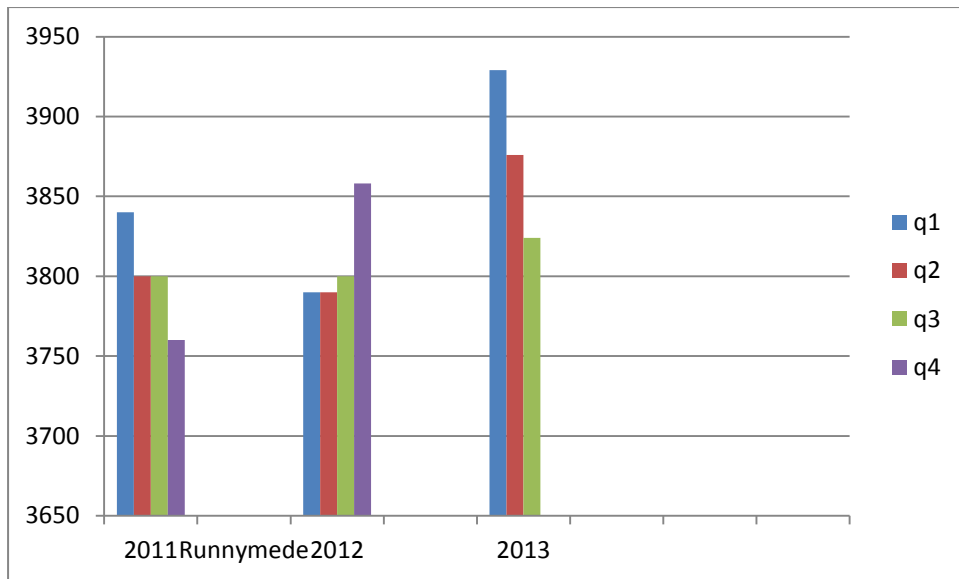
Runnymede was 6<sup>th</sup> in the Surrey table for working age unemployment rate as at the end of December 2012.



## Housing Benefit Claimants all tenure

	2011 Q1	2011 Q2	2011 Q3	2011 Q4
Woking	4490	4490	4490	4540
Waverley	5100	5120	5170	5140
Tandridge	3370	3440	3430	3500
Surrey Heath	2900	2920	2970	2990
Spelthorne	4660	4730	4760	4850
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>3840</b>	<b>3800</b>	<b>3800</b>	<b>3760</b>
Reigate and Banstead	6000	6020	6120	6200
Mole Valley	3400	3440	3480	3530
Guildford	6080	6160	6140	6230

Epsom and Ewell	2890	2970	3010	3070
Elmbridge	5580	5600	5670	5690
	2012 Q1	2012 Q2	2012 Q3	2012 Q4
Woking	4550	4630	4640	4688
Waverley	5240	5210	5290	5314
Tandridge	3590	3640	3610	3685
Surrey Heath	3030	3050	3040	3046
Spelthorne	4860	4970	4930	4943
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>3790</b>	<b>3790</b>	<b>3800</b>	<b>3858</b>
Reigate and Banstead	6280	6300	6280	6320
Mole Valley	3550	3620	3660	3668
Guildford	6340	6270	6250	6298
Epsom and Ewell	3060	3080	3110	3077
Elmbridge	5730	5760	5730	5765
	2013 Q1	2013 Q2	2013 Q3	2013 Q4
Woking	4634	4659	4656	
Waverley	5368	5330	5321	
Tandridge	3686	3745	3615	
Surrey Heath	3074	3085	3019	
Spelthorne	4726	4983	4809	
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>3929</b>	<b>3876</b>	<b>3824</b>	
Reigate and Banstead	6374	6410	6467	
Mole Valley	3667	3668	3664	
Guildford	6342	6387	6184	
Epsom and Ewell	3063	3100	3013	
Elmbridge	5817	5774	5766	

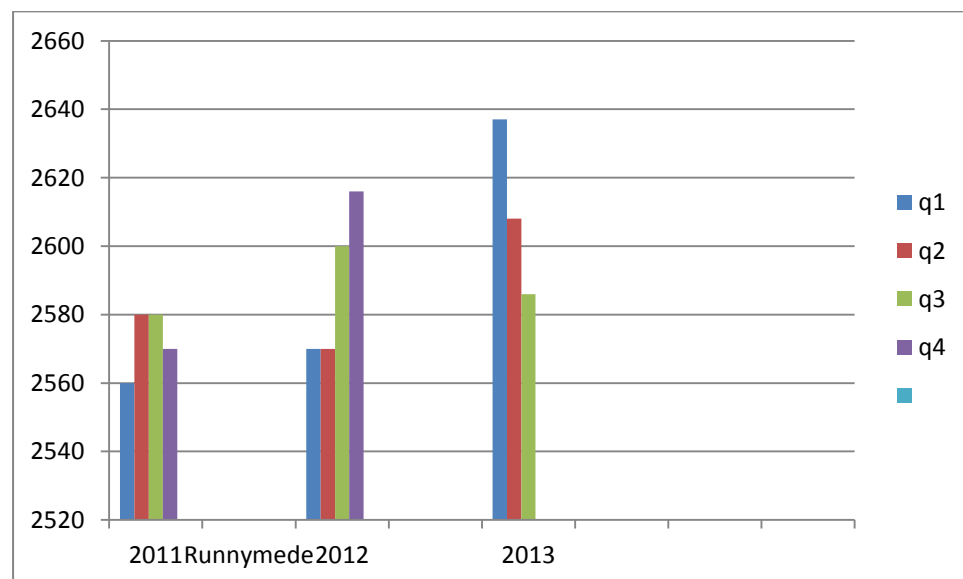


(quarter 4 statistics unavailable at writing)

## Housing Benefit Claimants Council and Housing Association

	2011 Q1	2011 Q2	2011 Q3	2011 Q4
Woking	2990	3000	2970	2990
Waverley	3770	3780	3810	3800
Tandridge	2130	2180	2160	2170
Surrey Heath	2060	2060	2090	2090
Spelthorne	3130	3170	3180	3250
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>2560</b>	<b>2580</b>	<b>2580</b>	<b>2570</b>
Reigate and Banstead	4150	4160	4210	4240
Mole Valley	2360	2400	2430	2460
Guildford	4310	4320	4330	4340
Epsom and Ewell	1650	1680	1720	1720
Elmbridge	3610	3650	3710	3750
	2012 Q1	2012 Q2	2012 Q3	2012 Q4
Woking	2950	3020	3010	3021
Waverley	3850	3830	3890	3877
Tandridge	2220	2250	2220	2252
Surrey Heath	2120	2140	2140	2139
Spelthorne	3240	3300	3290	3312
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>2570</b>	<b>2570</b>	<b>2600</b>	<b>2616</b>
Reigate and Banstead	4270	4300	4270	4272

Mole Valley	2490	2540	2560	2535
Guildford	4400	4370	4360	4365
Epsom and Ewell	1720	1730	1740	1739
Elmbridge	3760	3780	3770	3802
	2013 Q1	2013 Q2	2013 Q3	2013 Q4
Woking	2983	2996	2985	
Waverley	3917	3880	3863	
Tandridge	2227	2268	2189	
Surrey Heath	2128	2130	2057	
Spelthorne	3107	3318	3182	
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>2637</b>	<b>2608</b>	<b>2586</b>	
Reigate and Banstead	4309	4325	4364	
Mole Valley	2522	2524	2550	
Guildford	4392	4391	4312	
Epsom and Ewell	1743	1781	1789	
Elmbridge	3816	3804	3828	

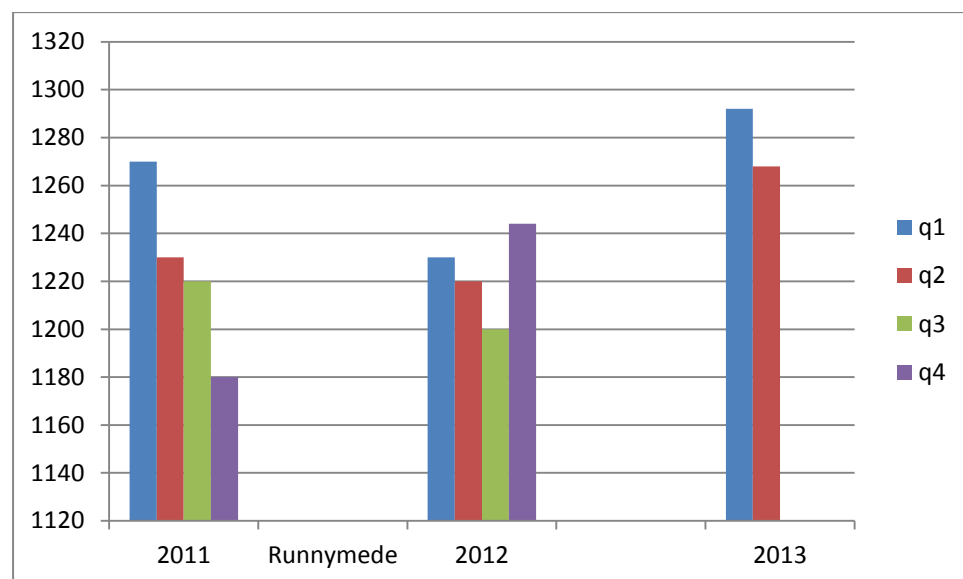


(quarter 4 statistics unavailable at time of writing)

## Private Rented Housing Benefit Claimants ( LHA)

	2011 Q1	2011 Q2	2011 Q3	2011 Q4	
Woking	1490	1490	1520	1550	
Waverley	1330	1340	1360	1340	
Tandridge	1240	1270	1280	1320	
Surrey Heath	850	870	880	900	
Spelthorne	1520	1560	1580	1600	
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>1270</b>	<b>1230</b>	<b>1220</b>	<b>1180</b>	
Reigate and Banstead	1860	1870	1910	1950	
Mole Valley	1040	1050	1050	1070	
Guildford	1770	1840	1810	1890	
Epsom and Ewell	1240	1290	1300	1350	
Elmbridge	1970	1950	1960	1950	
	2012 Q1	2012 Q2	2012 Q3	2012 Q4	
Woking	1600	1610	1630	1660	
Waverley	1390	1380	1390	1443	
Tandridge	1360	1390	1390	1427	
Surrey Heath	910	920	900	910	
Spelthorne	1610	1670	1630	1631	
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>1230</b>	<b>1220</b>	<b>1200</b>	<b>1244</b>	
Reigate and Banstead	2010	2000	2010	2053	
Mole Valley	1060	1070	1100	1131	
Guildford	1940	1890	1900	1925	
Epsom and Ewell	1330	1340	1370	1337	
Elmbridge	1970	1980	1960	1959	
	2013 Q1	2013 Q2	2013 Q3	2013 Q4	
Woking	1651	1663			
Waverley	1451	1433			
Tandridge	1459	1477			
Surrey Heath	946	955			
Spelthorne	1619	1665			
<b>Runnymede</b>	<b>1292</b>	<b>1268</b>			
Reigate and Banstead	2065	2085			
Mole Valley	1145	1144			
Guildford	1950	1984			

Epsom and Ewell	1320	1319			
Elmbridge	2001	1970			



(quarters 3 & 4 statistics unavailable at time of writing)

## Public Sector Finance and Support Services - Threats

The Supporting People programme funding that the Government provides to RBC is no longer ring-fenced, meaning that this can now be spent on non housing support issues. Many homeless clients, especially those with complex needs, need support to help them obtain and sustain tenancies. Any reduction in that funding may threaten the ability of vulnerable clients to access settled housing.

## Preventing Homelessness through Housing and Health-Opportunities

Homelessness is both a cause and consequence of depression and other mental health issues. Research by Crisis (the national charity for single homeless people) found that 42% of homeless people accessing services had mental health problems. Drug and alcohol misuse is also high amongst homeless people with approximately 52% experiencing both mental health and substance misuse issues. Increased smoking and a lack of access to adequate and healthy food compound the poor health of homeless people and have long term effects.



With Health and Wellbeing now being a strategic priority for the Council we will continue to work to ensure health services do more to help identify those at risk and prevent any possibility of homelessness by referring them on to the appropriate services to address their needs thus making 'every contact count'.

Addressing and reducing the support needs of vulnerable people will be a specific priority over the 2 year period of this strategy.

Realising opportunities and establishing relationships with health colleagues to improve outcomes for those at risk of becoming homeless will also be key to our future success.

## 9 The Current position – regional context



Below are the main points from the latest South East Homelessness Forum which provides a brief summary of regional information

### DCLG

- Department announcing further funding , includes single homeless funding, 'Fair Chance Fund', 'Platform for Life' and expanding the Gold Standard. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-expanding-support-to-beat-homelessness>
- Acceptances outside London are down by 9% but situation within London is getting worse.
- Across the country the numbers of families in B+B accommodation are falling but this is not happening in London. London accounts for 75% of people in TA.
- Ending of Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST) the most common reason for homeless acceptances, totally 24% nationally and 33% in London.
- Out of borough placements up by 23%. 95% of out of borough placements by London Boroughs and a majority of these are still within London.
- Change to P1E later this year will allow statistics on where out of borough placements are to be collected.

## National Housing Federation

- The NHF has been working with Housing Associations and the DWP on Universal Credit pathfinder projects. Number of teething problems as expected, but have been managing to work through them.
- DWP to provide a single point of telephone and email contact for RPs and LAs.
- LA Housing Benefit staff to be seconded to Universal Credit Centres.
- IPSOS-MORI have carried out research projects for NHF, focussing on the impact of welfare reform. Their findings include that 46% of those affected by the bedroom tax are more likely to borrow money to pay for their rent, 32% of those affected are spending less on food and 26% of those affected are spending less on heating.
- At this stage it is difficult to assess the social impacts as size criteria has only been in place for just over a year. A strong opinion from all agencies is that it will lead to homelessness eventually in many cases.
- Some LAS in the South East advised that social services teams had been spending an extra £4m working with the families affected.
- Concerns that many people were now finding themselves ineligible to join housing registers. NHF felt that alternative options for these people needed to be looked at.

## Homeless Link

- General trend of homelessness rising in recent years, although there was a small drop in acceptances in 2013. The number of people in TA continuing to rise.
- Brighton and Hove have the highest number of applicants in TA in the South East, at 1270 with 140 acceptances last year.
- Rough Sleeper Count was 532 in South East in 2013, and 310 in 2010. This is only a snapshot. Brighton, Slough, Canterbury, Oxford and Chichester are the South East boroughs with the most rough sleepers.

## Shelter Advice Line-Trends in South East

- Shelter received 200,000 unique calls in 2013/14. This has doubled in 4 years.
- 37% of the calls received come from London and the South East. Landlord issues and street homelessness amongst the most common reasons for calls.
- After initial calls, cases can then be referred to 'Helpline Plus' which provides a casework service for applicants.
- Casework trends for Helpline Plus in the South East include, 'leave to remain with no recourse to public funds', bedroom tax arrears, increasing rent levels and more people residing in studio flats.

### Out of Area Homelessness Placements- London Councils

- London Boroughs having to source accommodation outside of London due to affordability. Majority of out of area placements are into the Home Counties so still a commutable distance to London.
- Benefit cap has caused a number of moves but perhaps not as many as originally expected.
- Companies allegedly being set up to actively attract people into Home Counties from London. Concerns about London Boroughs placing in sub-standard accommodation/working with rogue landlords.
- Need expressed for London Boroughs to inform boroughs of their placements.

### Future of Supported Funding

- Spending reductions having to be made, roles of local government changing, effects of welfare reforms, will need to prioritise funding.
- Discussion around future models of services. Concerns about a 'race to the bottom'. Likely models include a sole focus on statutory duties, a 'no frills' sector.
- 'Specified accommodation', an expansion of current 'exempt accommodation'. These are accommodation units that are not affected by the benefit cap and direct payment criteria. Includes: refuges, hostel accommodation providing care and support (does not matter who provides this care and support) and accommodation provided by a relevant body in which claimant has been 'admitted' to meet needs.'
- LAs expected to have a register of specified accommodation within their borough by October 2014.

## 10 Delivering against our Aims & Objectives:



Our objectives are aligned to the requirements of a homelessness strategy as set out in the Homelessness Act 2002 and are text within brackets:

### **Objective 1: Increasing access to the private rented sector for families and single people ( *securing sufficient accommodation is and will be available for people in the district* )**

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires this Strategy to set out how it will secure that sufficient accommodation is and will be available for people in the district who are or who may become homeless. Objective 1 considers this issue.

Runnymede has created a Temporary Accommodation Strategy for 2014. One aim of this strategy is to address the gap in provision of private sector properties for rental for the prevention of homelessness and for rehousing of homeless households where we owe a full duty.

This is combined with our Empty Homes initiatives and partnership working with RPs and private landlords. Runnymede is exploring all possibilities of procurement and purchase both through use of HRA monies and HCA grant funding through partnership working. We aim to create partnerships with portfolio landlords who will work with the Council on a long term basis to lease their properties and let their properties directly for the prevention of homelessness and the discharge of the main duty.

The Temporary Accommodation Strategy also includes the current and future initiatives for purchase of street properties and possible conversion of existing commercial premises and residential properties to replace the number of units within the shared facilities hostel in the Borough, which as outlined earlier in this strategy has only 2 years to remain as a viable temporary accommodation provision.

We will continue to work in partnership with Omega Lettings who have procured and managed private rental properties for RBC over the last 3 years through the DWP temporary accommodation management subsidy and who

are also involved in our potential partnership projects for Empty Homes initiatives.

We will ensure our Discretionary Housing Payments policy is reviewed in March 2015 to consider the effectiveness of the revised policy in line with the prevention of homelessness.

## **Objective 2: Reducing under occupancy in the social rented sector and sustaining tenancies (*preventing homelessness in the district*)**

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires this Strategy to set out how it will prevent homelessness in the district. Objective 2 considers this issue.

We will continue with our successful work in downsizing to address the impact of size criteria on RBC tenants and to meet the health and welfare needs of tenants. We will also work in partnership with RPs in the Borough to achieve a mutually beneficial outcome for downsizing tenants where appropriate.

We will review our independent allocations policy in March 2015 to measure the effectiveness since its implementation on 1 April 2014 and how it lends itself to the prevention of homelessness. In particular we will review the impact on homeless households and the direct letting policy.

Runnymede works in partnership with SurreySave, Credit Union Community Bank and we will continue to explore ways this partnership can help the local community. Our recently launched 'Money Mondays' have been very successful and we will build upon this success to support tenants and the local community to manage their finances and access loans in a safe and legal way.

We will continue to work with our Local Authority and RP partners in the County to prepare for future welfare benefits changes in order to support and assist our tenants and the local community, by way of shared good practice, and mutual exchange roadshows.

We will continue to subscribe to Homeswapper, the social housing mutual exchange website database in order that tenants can find a suitable home for their needs both within and outside of the Borough.

Runnymede will provide access for tenants and applicants seeking advice on welfare benefits, in particular under occupation by way of the drop in service at the housing advice desk and continuation of CBL surgeries at the Civic Centre.

Our targeted Housing options website RBC Living & Homes provides a 24 hour service to tenants and applicants to seek housing advice and delivers an action plan of housing options based on their responses.

We will continue to work closely with LookAhead our floating support providers to ensure the most vulnerable tenants are referred to prevent their homelessness through their inability to sustain tenancies without such support.

### **Objective 3: Building upon effective partnerships (*securing the satisfactory provision of support for people in the district*)**

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires this Strategy to set out how it will secure the satisfactory provision of support for people in the district. Objective 3 considers this issue.

Runnymede is dependent on the effective partnership working it has built up over many years to deliver good prevention services to the local community. Below are some of the ways we intend to build upon existing partnerships in the life of this Strategy to provide the support to people in the district

We have worked closely with Surrey Heath since late 2013 where we have a joint initiative around the Family Support Programme (FSP). This is the name given to the Governments Troubled Families Programme. The aim of the programme is to turn around 120,000 families nationally and 1,050 families in Surrey by May 2015. The Programme looks at families and their circumstances. Three criteria have been set which determine if the family is worked with which are the following:

- i) Members of the family are involved in crime or anti-social behaviour
- ii) There are children not in school
- iii) Adults in the family are on out of work benefits

The Local Family Support Team for Surrey Heath and Runnymede has been operational since November 5th 2013. The programme supports families with multiple and complex needs by offering intensive coordinated support, building a team of professionals around the family (Team Around the Family) enabling whole family intervention. This approach places the family at the heart of the service and takes the full family situation into account and any contextual factors to enable the whole family to benefit and effect sustainable change.

SCC proposes to scale up the programme to work with 4,000 to 7,000 families over the five years from 2015 to 2020. This will extend the Family Support Programme to cover families that currently do not meet the existing eligibility criteria but still have multiple needs such as those included within the present local discretionary criteria. This offers much more flexibility in the programme

and enables a more preventative approach. This is in line with the Government's planned expansion of the Troubled Families Programme post 2015. This initiative plays a key role in the prevention of homelessness for the most vulnerable households and those who cost the public purse the most money. It also brings together a realm of professionals across the public sector and forges new partnerships to build upon.

We are also working in partnership with other Surrey local authorities to secure funding from DCLG to enhance the current Family Support Programme with a specific focus on prevention of homelessness and addressing single non priority homelessness which may result from this Team around the Family intervention.

We will continue to work in partnership with CAB who we fund to provide our debt counselling service and who we help fund to provide our Rentstart rehousing initiative for single non priority homeless applicants and couples with no dependent children. We also work with CAB as an advocate for applicants who support applicants in challenging our legal decisions in respect of homelessness which we welcome as a fair and transparent way of delivering our statutory duty in this area.

We have initiated a complete review of our supported housing in the Borough in 2014 to review existing contracts and service level agreements with support providers to ensure we are supporting the needs of the local community and to enable Runnymede to prevent homelessness through supported living.

We have agreement in principle with our partner Local Authorities, Spelthorne, Elmbridge BC and Transform Housing to work towards the provision of a night shelter and winter shelter for access by all three Boroughs to address the need for single non priority homeless applicants in the North West of Surrey. We will take this initiative forward with a view to provision of a winter shelter beginning winter 2014. This initiative will also include partnership working with faith groups. We are also working with the same partner local authorities and Transform Housing to review the use of our shared hostel in Hersham to expand the provision and the support for residents to enable them to access move on accommodation in the private rented sector through the Rentstart services in all three local authority areas.

We will continue to support and work with the Foodbank projects in the Borough and their wider remit of outreach work for homelessness referrals and support.

We have transferred our proportion of the Surrey Homeless Alliance Group funding to CABRentstart as our partner to deliver private rented accommodation for single non priority applicants and couples without dependent children and we will continue to work in partnership with the other 10 Boroughs and Districts in the County to provide a joined up access for single non priority homeless applicants and deliver our action plan agreed by DCLG.

## **Objective 4: Preventing Homelessness through partnership working with Health & Communities (*preventing homelessness in the district and the satisfactory provision of support for people in the district*)**

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires this Strategy to set out how it will prevent homelessness in the district and provide satisfactory support for people in the district. Objective 4 considers this issue.

Runnymede is a prosperous and healthy borough. The Council promotes healthy lifestyles, leisure activities, life long learning and employment opportunities to produce a healthy and vibrant community.

A few wards in the Borough have a life expectancy around five years lower than those from others areas of the Borough. There are also over 1,500 children living in income-deprived households, and young people continue to be hit disproportionately hard by the effects of the economic downturn, although that is beginning to show signs of recovery at the time of writing this Strategy.

This means the Council and its partners will have to respond effectively to these various needs through joint working. In some areas the Council's response in the past has involved redevelopment, such as the replacement of housing in Wapshott Road and Bowes Road. In other areas, such as Chertsey St Ann's, our response has been to work with partner organisations to try to offer more activities, employment training and services locally.

We also recognise that the Borough's population profile will change over the next 15 to 20 years. The national trend will result in a larger number of older people and fewer workers to support them. Nearly one-sixth of the Runnymede population is 65 or older now, and this is expected to rise to one-fifth by 2030. This will have a profound effect on demand for services.

Good housing improves health and creates family cohesion. The Council will need to work innovatively with housing partners to deliver a supply of affordable housing, and private housing which meets residents' needs. Government support for housing through the Home and Communities Agency may still be available but will increasingly be the subject of fierce competition.

As pressure on finances increase, the Council and other agencies will need to target limited resources on prevention and early intervention to help the most vulnerable members of our community. The growing number of older people in the Borough will increase pressures on community care, and we will



therefore work with Surrey County Council and the new health organisations to focus on preventative care and extra care facilities/housing for older people.

We have developed a working partnership with Hanover Housing who are developing a scheme in the Borough and in 2014 we will be working together to profile the needs and aspirations of older people in Runnymede so they may have a quality life in later years in a home they can manage. We are beginning to see a rise in the number of older people approaching for housing advice and indeed have become homeless, where debts have built over the years in trying to maintain homes that are too large and do not meet their current needs.

We will also review our offer of supported living for older applicants to ensure we are meeting the needs of the community within our own stock.

### **Vulnerable groups - Mental Health**

The Government issued [The Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat](#) in February 2014. This concordat describes what people experiencing a mental health crisis should be able to expect of the public services to respond to their needs. The concordat has been agreed by a partnership of national organisations and representative bodies with an expectation that every local health, social care and criminal justice system commit to delivering their own mental health crisis declaration.

The concordat establishes key principles of good practice that local services and partnerships should use to raise standards and strengthen working arrangements. The principles are:

- **A jointly agreed local declaration across the key agencies establishing a commitment for local agencies to work together to continuously improve the experience of people in mental health crisis in their locality.**
- **Development of a shared action plan and a commitment to review, monitor and track improvements.**
- **A commitment to reduce the use of police stations as places of safety by setting an ambition for a fast track assessment process for individuals whenever a police cell is used and**
- **Evidence of sound local governance arrangements.**

There is growing evidence that it makes sense, both for the health of the population and in terms of economics, to intervene early when people may have an issue with their mental health.

Runnymede will be contributing as an active partner to the work of a local concordat with its partners across all agencies in the coming months which will bring together professionals from all disciplines to work towards the prevention of homelessness as one aspect.

We will also review the way in which we work with health professionals in the assessment of applicants for supported housing to ensure we are meeting the needs of the local community.

### **Domestic Abuse**

Runnymede will continue to provide a sanctuary scheme to assist those victims of domestic abuse who wish to remain in their homes. This will need to be reviewed on a yearly basis for the life of this strategy due to budget restrictions and further spending cuts.

We will review our domestic abuse strategy in line with our independent allocations policy to ensure we are meeting the needs of this applicant group.

### **Community Initiatives**

Runnymede is working towards the creation of a job club similar to those found in Sunbury and Guildford. We are looking to work towards a service that provides the following:

- Basic IT skills through Surrey Life Long Partnership as well as a BTEC certificate in computing
- Cooking on a budget with a certificate
- CV writing and job searches
- Volunteering opportunities
- NVQ Level 3 Child Training
- Health and Social Care courses
- Work experience in the crèche and in administration
- College courses

Such an initiative would assist the local community to find employment, receive better education in terms of health and welfare, sustain families and homes and prevent homelessness from other social causes.

The above aims and objectives set out the Council's aspirations to prevent homelessness and work in partnership with our existing and future partners both public, private and voluntary sector. This is not an exhaustive set of aims and objectives and through our monitoring and review of this strategy we will add and extend to these as appropriate.

Our main aims and objectives are set as a summary action plan as appendix in this strategy.

## 11 Resources available to prevent and reduce Homelessness



The Government's most recent spending review confirmed that local authorities and other publicly funded bodies will continue to receive reduced government funding at least in the medium term.

The current Local Government Financial settlement indicates a £594,000 reduction of Revenue Support Grant for Runnymede Borough Council in 2014/15. It is anticipated there will be a further reduction in government funding of £575,000 in 2015/16, equating to an overall reduction of 48% over two years. However it is anticipated that the Council will retain approximately an additional £200,000 a year from Retained Business Rates.

Careful consideration will be given as to how each action on the action plan can be resourced. Given the nature of budget setting resourcing for each action, beyond the first year of the action plan, will need to be reviewed annually.

The Council has a revenue budget in 2014/15 of £132,650 to fund its statutory homeless responsibilities. Whilst in recent years we have been allocated DCLG prevention funding to assist with the prevention of homelessness this has now been incorporated within the ever decreasing overall Revenue Support Grant and is no longer ring fenced for homelessness prevention work. Therefore the business case for securing this funding must be made each year.

At the end of March 2014, the Council has invested £52,400 over the preceding three financial years in providing rent-deposit loans, for 42 households as a means of preventing homelessness and discharging statutory homelessness duty. In addition during the same three years the Council provided Rent Bonds to the value of £85,750 to enable access for housing for 94 households.

The Discretionary Housing Payments fund for 2014/15 of £100,433, administered by the Housing Benefit Team, is of particular significance to the aims of this Strategy. Government DHP contribution for 2013/14 was £102,996 and £38,380 in 2012/13.

## 12 - Consultation and Involvement



In preparing this Homelessness Strategy we have worked with staff, elected members, partners and stakeholders to ensure that the document was shaped to reflect legislation, national priorities and key local objectives. Consultation has been undertaken to get the views of as many people and organisations as possible to inform the development of this Strategy.

## 13 Monitoring and Review



In order to move the objectives of this Strategy forwards, monitor and implement the initiatives of the Government's 10 Local Challenges and the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan, the Council will review and re-establish a Homelessness Working Group. The working group will consist of key partners involved in preventing homelessness in the District. These include representatives from Children's Services, Registered Providers, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Support and Voluntary Agencies.

It will be the responsibility of the Homelessness Working Group to ensure that the Homelessness Strategy continues to set out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness and that the strategy is reviewed annually and remains responsive to emerging needs, so meeting one of the requirements of the Governments 10 Local Challenges.

### **Useful Links and References**

#### **The National Homelessness Advice Service (NHAS).**

[www.nhas.org.uk](http://www.nhas.org.uk)

Offers advice agencies the specialist support and professional resources to give appropriate and accurate housing advice.

#### **Homelessness Link**

[www.homeless.org.uk](http://www.homeless.org.uk)

Offers advice agencies specialist support and professional resources. Vision to end rough sleeping – No second night out.

[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/visionendroughsleeping](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/visionendroughsleeping)

Guidance to Children's Services and district housing authorities about  
Provision of Accommodation for 16 and 17 year old young people who may  
be homeless and/or require accommodation.

[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/homelesssexteenseventeen](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/homelesssexteenseventeen)



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Runnymede Borough Council

June 2014

