INNOVATION
& GOOD
PRACTICE

REDUCING EVICTIONS AND ABANDONMENT

A GUIDE TO TO DEVELOPING A NEW APPROACH

MARCH 2012

CONTENTS

This guide was published in March 2012 following Homeless Link's Evictions & Abandonment project. While the practice solutions are still effective, some information about policy and processes – particularly in relation to welfare benefits – have changed or will change with the introduction of Universal Credit. Please check www.homeless.org.uk, www.gov.uk or specialist agencies for current information.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

This guide has been developed to enable managers of supported accommodation projects to reduce evictions and abandonment through learning from good practice across England.

The guide can be used to do any of the following:
- Identify ideas for reducing your unplanned moves.
- Introduce a more effective and supportive approach to problematic behaviour such as non-engagement, non-payment of rent, and aggression.
- Review your current warnings policy and procedure.
- Involve your whole staff team in finding creative solutions to keep people in.

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

This guide was developed by Homeless Link's Innovation and Good Practice Team between 2009 and 2011, as part of a project to reduce evictions and abandonment from supported accommodation across England, funded by the Oak Foundation. This involved researching the problems faced by services, testing solutions and monitoring the results with a variety of services and in numerous areas, and sharing the learning as widely as possible. The sessions that form the guide have been trialled with managers and frontline staff to ensure they are useful in identifying actions for their own services.

LEARNING FROM GOOD PRACTICE

It is helpful to consider good practice when deciding how to reduce evictions and abandonment at your own service. Considering existing good practice does not mean that your own practice is poor, but that you can get ideas from things others have tried in order to make your own work even better. It is also important to remember that good practice can rarely be taken as a whole and incorporated into a different service – you have to think about how it could work for your unique service, building on the ideas you have been given.

USING THE GUIDE

The guide is divided into a series of session plans looking at good practice in different aspects of reducing evictions and abandonment and enabling a discussion with your teams on what could work for you. It is important to involve your teams in doing this so that they have ownership of any new ideas, are able to share any concerns and fears that you will need to be aware of, and contribute their expertise to the new approach. It is also good practice to discuss new ideas with clients so that they are able to feed in their own ideas.

The sessions can be delivered as a one-day training course or away day, or as stand-alone units to discuss particular issues within team meetings. Each session is focussed around one of the key areas that contribute to or are part of preventing evictions and abandonment.

The guide includes the following:
- guidance on how to run each session
- good practice hand-outs for participants
- template documents to trial during the sessions (on hand-outs)
- a PowerPoint presentation – this includes notes pages to explain the points.

You are free to use and amend the templates in order to make them appropriate for your service.

BEFORE THE SESSIONS

It is important to prepare what you want to cover and how you will run the sessions. These notes are to help you ensure you are fully prepared.

1. Decide which session(s) you want to deliver – use the outline of sessions on page 4 to help you with this

2. Ensure you have the time and resources you will need (outlined in each section)

3. Prepare your presentation slides
   - Decide how you will use the presentation – you can display it on a screen or simply use printed out for your own reference
   - Remove any unnecessary slides (i.e. those for sessions you are not delivering)
   - Amend slide 5 so that it reflects the content of your session
   - Print out the notes pages of the presentation to help you elaborate on the points.

4. Remember that the sessions are designed to generate staff discussion on what could work for you – it is not up to you to have all the ideas.

OUTLINE OF THE SESSIONS

SESSION A: INTRODUCTIONS (15 MINUTES)
Objectives
- To introduce what you are going to discuss
- To get to know the delegates (if you don't already know them)
- To discuss expectations and hopes from delegates
- To outline the key principle of reducing evictions and abandonment.

SESSION B – GOOD PRACTICE: USING WARNINGS (60 MINUTES)
Objectives
- To define the purpose of a warning so you can be sure when they are appropriate
- To discuss good practice in issuing warnings and introduce the idea of reviews
- To try out template warnings and reviews
- To identify ideas for you to try.

SESSION C – GOOD PRACTICE: USING ALTERNATIVES TO WARNINGS (45 MINUTES)
Objectives
- To discuss good practice in use of alternatives to warnings
- To introduce a checklist in deciding upon an appropriate alternative response
- To consider how these could be used in this organisation.

SESSION D – GOOD PRACTICE: POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT AND SUPPORTIVE SANCTIONS (30 MINUTES)
Objectives
- To discuss that effective changes can only be made by changing the power balance between staff and clients, and supporting clients at all stages
- To identify where there are gaps in support
- To consider where there are opportunities to reward positive behaviour.

SESSION E – GOOD PRACTICE: PREVENTING AND MANAGING ARREARS (45 MINUTES)
Objectives
- To consider why people do not pay their rent or service charge
- To discuss good practice in managing and preventing arrears
- To discuss barriers and identify solutions for this organisation.

SESSION F – GOOD PRACTICE: ENGAGING CLIENTS (60 MINUTES)
Objectives
- To highlight that engagement is key to making all other policies and procedures work
- To discuss barriers that exist and identify solutions
- To discuss barriers and identify solutions for this organisation.

SESSION G – GOOD PRACTICE: REDUCING ABANDONMENT (30 MINUTES)
Objectives
- To explain that abandonment is preventable
- To discuss good practice in reducing abandonment
- To identify triggers of abandonment and solutions for this organisation.

SESSION H – CLOSING THE SESSION (15 MINUTES)
Objectives
- To summarise everything discussed at the session
- To firm up actions
- To review expectations delegates had at the start
- To get any feedback on improving the session.

DELIVERING THE SESSIONS

SESSION A – INTRODUCTIONS

Objectives
- To introduce what you are going to discuss
- To get to know the delegates (if you don't already)
- To discuss expectations and hopes from delegates
- To outline the key principle of reducing evictions and abandonment.

Time
15 minutes

Resources needed
- Presentation slides 1-7
- Laptop and projector (if delivering formally)
- Flipchart and pens.

Exercise
Introduction and expectations
1. *Load presentation*
   Introduce yourself (if required)
2. *Load presentation slide 2*
   Ask each delegate in turn to say their name, their role, and one hope or expectation they have from the session – write these on a flipchart so you can refer to them at the end
3. *Load presentation slide 3*
   Discuss ground rules of the session – ask the delegates if they have anything to add
4. *Load presentation slide 4*
   Explain that the materials have been developed through a three-year good practice project across England and have been tried and tested with lots of services.

Content of the session
5. *Load presentation slide 5*
   Explain what you will be covering in this session (use notes pages in presentation to elaborate on the content of the slides)
6. *Load presentation slide 6*
   Explain what you will not do (use notes pages in presentation to elaborate on the content of the slides)
7. *Load presentation slide 7*
   Talk through the key focus of preventing evictions and abandonment.

SESSION B – GOOD PRACTICE: USING WARNINGS

Objectives
- To define the purpose of a warning so you can be sure when they are appropriate
- To discuss good practice in issuing warnings and introduce the idea of reviews
- To try out template warnings and reviews
- To identify ideas for you to try.

Time
60 minutes

Resources needed
- Presentation slides 8-15
- Laptop and projector (if delivering formally)
- Flipchart, pens and a piece of card
- Warning template (one for each delegate)
- Achievement review template (one for each delegate)
- Action plan template
- Hand-out: *Good practice: using warnings.*

Exercise
Defining a warning – part one
1. *Load presentation slide 9*
   Ask the delegates as a group what they think warnings are for – write their responses on a flipchart. The point of the discussion is to get staff to be clear what clients are **being warned** *about* **– i.e. putting licence at risk** – and therefore warnings should only be used where this is the case. Once agreed, ask a delegate to write it card and stick it to the wall.

Defining a warning – part two
2. Ask delegates in pairs to identify at least one problem with warnings then feed back
3. *Load presentation slide 10*
   Go through the examples of issues on the slide, then ask a delegate to write down second half of purpose of warning – **i.e. it is an opportunity to support a change in behaviour**
4. *Load presentation slide 11*
   Reiterate when a warning should be used, based on the discussion. Ask delegates if this is how they are currently used – if not, put an idea on flipchart that there is a review into kinds of things that warnings are appropriate for.

How to issue a warning
5. *Load presentation slide 12*
   Talk through the good practice in how to issue a warning (slides 12 & 13 - use notes pages in presentation to elaborate on the content of the slides)
6. *Load presentation slide 14*
   Ask delegates in pairs to practise using the template warning, considering a real person
7. Discuss feedback: what people found useful, what people thought wouldn't work in your service, and ideas that could be adopted by your service – write ideas on flipchart.

Reviewing a warning
8. *Load presentation slide 15*
   Back in their pairs, ask delegates to practise using the achievement review template.
9. Discuss feedback: what people found useful, what people thought wouldn't work in your service, and ideas that could be adopted by your service – write ideas on flipchart.

Finishing the session
10. Run through all the ideas discussed and add to your action plan
11. Complete the session by giving a delegates a copy of *Good practice: using warnings.*

SESSION C – GOOD PRACTICE: USING ALTERNATIVES TO WARNINGS

Objectives
- To discuss good practice in use of alternatives to warnings
- To introduce a checklist in deciding upon an appropriate alternative response
- To consider how these could be used in this organisation.

Time
45 minutes

Resources needed
- Presentation slides 16-21
- Laptop and projector (if delivering formally)
- Flipchart and pens
- Scenarios for exercise
- Alternative response checklist template (one for each delegate)
- Action plan template
- Hand-out: *Good practice: using alternatives to warnings.*

Exercise
Good practice in alternative responses
1. *Load presentation slide 17*
   Talk through the good practice in using alternatives to warnings (slides 17-19 - use notes pages in presentation to elaborate on the content of the slides.)

Identifying what motivates your clients
2. *Load presentation slide 20*
   As a group, ask delegates to brainstorm some possible motivations for their clients – write these on a flipchart.

Deciding on an appropriate response
3. *Load presentation slide 21*
   In pairs or small groups, ask delegates to work through the alternative response checklist template, considering either a real example of using the scenarios available
4. Discuss feedback: what people found useful, what people thought wouldn't work in your service, and ideas that could be adopted by your service – write ideas on flipchart.

Finishing the session
5. Run through all the ideas discussed and add to your action plan
6. Complete the session by giving a delegates a copy of *Good practice: using alternatives to warnings.*

SESSION D – GOOD PRACTICE: POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT AND SUPPORTIVE SANCTIONS

Objectives
- To discuss that effective changes can only be made by changing the power balance between staff and clients, and supporting clients at all stages
- To identify where there are gaps in support
- To consider where there are opportunities to reward positive behaviour.

Time
30 minutes

Resources needed
- Presentation slides 22-25
- Laptop and projector (if delivering formally)
- Flipchart and pens
- Action plan template
- Hand-out: *Good practice: positive reinforcement and supportive sanctions.*

Exercise
Good practice in positive reinforcement and supportive sanctions
1. *Load presentation slide 23*
   Talk through the good practice in positive reinforcement and supportive sanctions (slides 23 & 24 - use notes pages in presentation to elaborate on the content of the slides.)

Identifying changes needed to language and practice
2. *Load presentation slide 25*
   In pairs or small groups, ask delegates to brainstorm ideas to try such as changes in language, possible rewards. Feed back to group and write these on a flipchart.

Finishing the session
3. Run through all the ideas discussed and add to your action plan
4. Complete the session by giving a delegates a copy of *Good practice: positive reinforcement and supportive sanctions*.

SESSION E – GOOD PRACTICE: PREVENTING AND MANAGING ARREARS

Objectives
- To consider why people do not pay their rent or service charge
- To discuss good practice in managing and preventing arrears
- To discuss barriers and identify solutions for this organisation.

Time
45 minutes

Resources needed
- Presentation slides 26-34
- Laptop and projector (if delivering formally)
- Flipchart and pens
- Action plan template
- Hand-out: *Good practice: preventing and managing arrears.*

Exercise
Good practice in preventing and managing arrears
1. *Load presentation slide 27*
   Talk through the good practice in preventing and managing arrears (slides 27 & 33 - use notes pages in presentation to elaborate on the content of the slides.)

Identifying opportunities to try at your organisation
2. *Load presentation slide 25*
   In pairs or small groups, ask delegates to consider three questions: why do clients not pay here; what things have worked with individuals in the past; what other ideas could be tried
3. Feed back to group and write ideas on a flipchart.

Finishing the session
4. Run through all the ideas discussed and add to your action plan
5. Complete the session by giving a delegates a copy of *Good practice: preventing and managing arrears.*

SESSION F – GOOD PRACTICE: ENGAGING CLIENTS

Objectives
- To highlight that engagement is key to making all other policies and procedures work
- To discuss barriers that exist and identify solutions
- To discuss barriers and identify solutions for this organisation.

Time
60 minutes

Resources needed
- Presentation slides 35-41
- Laptop and projector (if delivering formally)
- Flipchart and pens
- Action plan template
- Hand-out: *Good practice: engaging clients.*

Exercise
Identifying why people do not engage
1. *Load presentation slide 36*
   In small groups, ask delegates to brainstorm reasons why clients do not engage. Be clear that people should think about barriers that may be on the part of the service as well as just from the clients.

Good practice in engaging clients
2. *Load presentation slide 37*
   Talk through the good practice in preventing and managing arrears (slides 37-40 - use notes pages in presentation to elaborate on the content of the slides)
3. *Load presentation slide 41*
   Return the delegates to their groups and ask them to identify one thing they could try, using the good practice discussed, to reduce the barriers to engagement they identified earlier
4. Feed back to group and write ideas on a flipchart.

Finishing the session
5. Run through all the ideas discussed and add to your action plan
6. Complete the session by giving a delegates a copy of *Good practice: engaging clients.*

SESSION G – GOOD PRACTICE: REDUCING ABANDONMENT

Objectives
- To explain that abandonment is preventable
- To discuss good practice in reducing abandonment
- To identify triggers of abandonment and solutions for this organisation.

Time
30 minutes

Resources needed
- Presentation slides 42-48
- Laptop and projector (if delivering formally)
- Flipchart and pens
- Action plan template
- Hand-out: *Good practice: reducing abandonment.*

Exercise
Identifying why people abandon
1. *Load presentation slide 43*
   In small groups, ask delegates to brainstorm reasons why clients abandon. Feed back and write on a flipchart.

Good practice in reducing abandonment
2. *Load presentation slide 44*
   Talk through the good practice in reducing abandonment (slides 44-47 - use notes pages in presentation to elaborate on the content of the slides.)

Identify solutions for your organisation
3. *Load presentation slide 48*
   Hand out *Good practice: reducing abandonment*. Ask delegates to return to their groups, and using the warning signs table on the hand-out, discuss signs they see and possible options to try to reduce abandonment when these are seen
4. Feed back to group and write ideas on a flipchart.

Finishing the session
5. Run through all the ideas discussed and add to your action plan.

SESSION H – CLOSING THE SESSION

Objectives
- To summarise everything discussed at the session
- To firm up actions
- To review expectations delegates had at the start
- To get any feedback on improving the session.

Time
15 minutes

Resources needed
- Presentation slide 49
- Laptop and projector (if delivering formally)
- Action plan template.

Exercise
Summary of ideas and evaluation
1. *Load presentation slide 49*
   Run through all the ideas suggested and develop a clear action plan to take these forward.
2. Return to the expectations you wrote on a flipchart at the start of the day. Go through each of these and check if you have met them all or if any further discussion is needed
3. Ask delegates for any feedback on the session
4. Thank delegates for their contributions.

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Objectives
- To introduce what you are going to discuss
- To get to know the delegates (if you don't already know them)
- To discuss expectations and hopes from delegates
- To outline the key principle of reducing evictions and abandonment.

SESSION B – GOOD PRACTICE: USING WARNINGS (60 MINUTES)
Objectives
- To define the purpose of a warning so you can be sure when they are appropriate
- To discuss good practice in issuing warnings and introduce the idea of reviews
- To try out template warnings and reviews
- To identify ideas for you to try.

SESSION C – GOOD PRACTICE: USING ALTERNATIVES TO WARNINGS (45 MINUTES)
Objectives
- To discuss good practice in use of alternatives to warnings
- To introduce a checklist in deciding upon an appropriate alternative response
- To consider how these could be used in this organisation.

SESSION D – GOOD PRACTICE: POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT AND SUPPORTIVE SANCTIONS (30 MINUTES)
Objectives
- To discuss that effective changes can only be made by changing the power balance between staff and clients, and supporting clients at all stages
- To identify where there are gaps in support
- To consider where there are opportunities to reward positive behaviour.

SESSION E – GOOD PRACTICE: PREVENTING AND MANAGING ARREARS (45 MINUTES)
Objectives
- To consider why people do not pay their rent or service charge
- To discuss good practice in managing and preventing arrears
- To discuss barriers and identify solutions for this organisation.

SESSION F – GOOD PRACTICE: ENGAGING CLIENTS (60 MINUTES)
Objectives
- To highlight that engagement is key to making all other policies and procedures work
- To discuss barriers that exist and identify solutions
- To discuss barriers and identify solutions for this organisation.

SESSION G – GOOD PRACTICE: REDUCING ABANDONMENT (30 MINUTES)
Objectives
- To explain that abandonment is preventable
- To discuss good practice in reducing abandonment
- To identify triggers of abandonment and solutions for this organisation.

SESSION H – CLOSING THE SESSION (15 MINUTES)
Objectives
- To summarise everything discussed at the session
- To firm up actions
- To review expectations delegates had at the start
- To get any feedback on improving the session.

DELIVERING THE SESSIONS

SESSION A – INTRODUCTIONS

Objectives
- To introduce what you are going to discuss
- To get to know the delegates (if you don't already)
- To discuss expectations and hopes from delegates
- To outline the key principle of reducing evictions and abandonment.

Time
15 minutes

Resources needed
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- Laptop and projector (if delivering formally)
- Flipchart and pens.

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3. *Load presentation slide 3*
   Discuss ground rules of the session – ask the delegates if they have anything to add
4. *Load presentation slide 4*
   Explain that the materials have been developed through a three-year good practice project across England and have been tried and tested with lots of services.

Content of the session
5. *Load presentation slide 5*
   Explain what you will be covering in this session (use notes pages in presentation to elaborate on the content of the slides)
6. *Load presentation slide 6*
   Explain what you will not do (use notes pages in presentation to elaborate on the content of the slides)
7. *Load presentation slide 7*
   Talk through the key focus of preventing evictions and abandonment.

SESSION B – GOOD PRACTICE: USING WARNINGS

Objectives
- To define the purpose of a warning so you can be sure when they are appropriate
- To discuss good practice in issuing warnings and introduce the idea of reviews
- To try out template warnings and reviews
- To identify ideas for you to try.

Time
60 minutes

Resources needed
- Presentation slides 8-15
- Laptop and projector (if delivering formally)
- Flipchart, pens and a piece of card
- Warning template (one for each delegate)
- Achievement review template (one for each delegate)
- Action plan template
- Hand-out: *Good practice: using warnings.*

Exercise
Defining a warning – part one
1. *Load presentation slide 9*
   Ask the delegates as a group what they think warnings are for – write their responses on a flipchart. The point of the discussion is to get staff to be clear what clients are **being warned** *about* **– i.e. putting licence at risk** – and therefore warnings should only be used where this is the case. Once agreed, ask a delegate to write it card and stick it to the wall.

Defining a warning – part two
2. Ask delegates in pairs to identify at least one problem with warnings then feed back
3. *Load presentation slide 10*
   Go through the examples of issues on the slide, then ask a delegate to write down second half of purpose of warning – **i.e. it is an opportunity to support a change in behaviour**
4. *Load presentation slide 11*
   Reiterate when a warning should be used, based on the discussion. Ask delegates if this is how they are currently used – if not, put an idea on flipchart that there is a review into kinds of things that warnings are appropriate for.

How to issue a warning
5. *Load presentation slide 12*
   Talk through the good practice in how to issue a warning (slides 12 & 13 - use notes pages in presentation to elaborate on the content of the slides)
6. *Load presentation slide 14*
   Ask delegates in pairs to practise using the template warning, considering a real person
7. Discuss feedback: what people found useful, what people thought wouldn't work in your service, and ideas that could be adopted by your service – write ideas on flipchart.

Reviewing a warning
8. *Load presentation slide 15*
   Back in their pairs, ask delegates to practise using the achievement review template.
9. Discuss feedback: what people found useful, what people thought wouldn't work in your service, and ideas that could be adopted by your service – write ideas on flipchart.

Finishing the session
10. Run through all the ideas discussed and add to your action plan
11. Complete the session by giving a delegates a copy of *Good practice: using warnings.*

SESSION C – GOOD PRACTICE: USING ALTERNATIVES TO WARNINGS

Objectives
- To discuss good practice in use of alternatives to warnings
- To introduce a checklist in deciding upon an appropriate alternative response
- To consider how these could be used in this organisation.

Time
45 minutes

Resources needed
- Presentation slides 16-21
- Laptop and projector (if delivering formally)
- Flipchart and pens
- Scenarios for exercise
- Alternative response checklist template (one for each delegate)
- Action plan template
- Hand-out: *Good practice: using alternatives to warnings.*

Exercise
Good practice in alternative responses
1. *Load presentation slide 17*
   Talk through the good practice in using alternatives to warnings (slides 17-19 - use notes pages in presentation to elaborate on the content of the slides.)

Identifying what motivates your clients
2. *Load presentation slide 20*
   As a group, ask delegates to brainstorm some possible motivations for their clients – write these on a flipchart.

Deciding on an appropriate response
3. *Load presentation slide 21*
   In pairs or small groups, ask delegates to work through the alternative response checklist template, considering either a real example of using the scenarios available
4. Discuss feedback: what people found useful, what people thought wouldn't work in your service, and ideas that could be adopted by your service – write ideas on flipchart.

Finishing the session
5. Run through all the ideas discussed and add to your action plan
6. Complete the session by giving a delegates a copy of *Good practice: using alternatives to warnings.*

SESSION D – GOOD PRACTICE: POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT AND SUPPORTIVE SANCTIONS

Objectives
- To discuss that effective changes can only be made by changing the power balance between staff and clients, and supporting clients at all stages
- To identify where there are gaps in support
- To consider where there are opportunities to reward positive behaviour.

Time
30 minutes

Resources needed
- Presentation slides 22-25
- Laptop and projector (if delivering formally)
- Flipchart and pens
- Action plan template
- Hand-out: *Good practice: positive reinforcement and supportive sanctions.*

Exercise
Good practice in positive reinforcement and supportive sanctions
1. *Load presentation slide 23*
   Talk through the good practice in positive reinforcement and supportive sanctions (slides 23 & 24 - use notes pages in presentation to elaborate on the content of the slides.)

Identifying changes needed to language and practice
2. *Load presentation slide 25*
   In pairs or small groups, ask delegates to brainstorm ideas to try such as changes in language, possible rewards. Feed back to group and write these on a flipchart.

Finishing the session
3. Run through all the ideas discussed and add to your action plan
4. Complete the session by giving a delegates a copy of *Good practice: positive reinforcement and supportive sanctions*.

SESSION E – GOOD PRACTICE: PREVENTING AND MANAGING ARREARS

Objectives
- To consider why people do not pay their rent or service charge
- To discuss good practice in managing and preventing arrears
- To discuss barriers and identify solutions for this organisation.

Time
45 minutes

Resources needed
- Presentation slides 26-34
- Laptop and projector (if delivering formally)
- Flipchart and pens
- Action plan template
- Hand-out: *Good practice: preventing and managing arrears.*

Exercise
Good practice in preventing and managing arrears
1. *Load presentation slide 27*
   Talk through the good practice in preventing and managing arrears (slides 27 & 33 - use notes pages in presentation to elaborate on the content of the slides.)

Identifying opportunities to try at your organisation
2. *Load presentation slide 25*
   In pairs or small groups, ask delegates to consider three questions: why do clients not pay here; what things have worked with individuals in the past; what other ideas could be tried
3. Feed back to group and write ideas on a flipchart.

Finishing the session
4. Run through all the ideas discussed and add to your action plan
5. Complete the session by giving a delegates a copy of *Good practice: preventing and managing arrears.*

SESSION F – GOOD PRACTICE: ENGAGING CLIENTS

Objectives
- To highlight that engagement is key to making all other policies and procedures work
- To discuss barriers that exist and identify solutions
- To discuss barriers and identify solutions for this organisation.

Time
60 minutes

Resources needed
- Presentation slides 35-41
- Laptop and projector (if delivering formally)
- Flipchart and pens
- Action plan template
- Hand-out: *Good practice: engaging clients.*

Exercise
Identifying why people do not engage
1. *Load presentation slide 36*
   In small groups, ask delegates to brainstorm reasons why clients do not engage. Be clear that people should think about barriers that may be on the part of the service as well as just from the clients.

Good practice in engaging clients
2. *Load presentation slide 37*
   Talk through the good practice in preventing and managing arrears (slides 37-40 - use notes pages in presentation to elaborate on the content of the slides)
3. *Load presentation slide 41*
   Return the delegates to their groups and ask them to identify one thing they could try, using the good practice discussed, to reduce the barriers to engagement they identified earlier
4. Feed back to group and write ideas on a flipchart.

Finishing the session
5. Run through all the ideas discussed and add to your action plan
6. Complete the session by giving a delegates a copy of *Good practice: engaging clients.*

SESSION G – GOOD PRACTICE: REDUCING ABANDONMENT

Objectives
- To explain that abandonment is preventable
- To discuss good practice in reducing abandonment
- To identify triggers of abandonment and solutions for this organisation.

Time
30 minutes

Resources needed
- Presentation slides 42-48
- Laptop and projector (if delivering formally)
- Flipchart and pens
- Action plan template
- Hand-out: *Good practice: reducing abandonment.*

Exercise
Identifying why people abandon
1. *Load presentation slide 43*
   In small groups, ask delegates to brainstorm reasons why clients abandon. Feed back and write on a flipchart.

Good practice in reducing abandonment
2. *Load presentation slide 44*
   Talk through the good practice in reducing abandonment (slides 44-47 - use notes pages in presentation to elaborate on the content of the slides.)

Identify solutions for your organisation
3. *Load presentation slide 48*
   Hand out *Good practice: reducing abandonment*. Ask delegates to return to their groups, and using the warning signs table on the hand-out, discuss signs they see and possible options to try to reduce abandonment when these are seen
4. Feed back to group and write ideas on a flipchart.

Finishing the session
5. Run through all the ideas discussed and add to your action plan.

SESSION H – CLOSING THE SESSION

Objectives
- To summarise everything discussed at the session
- To firm up actions
- To review expectations delegates had at the start
- To get any feedback on improving the session.

Time
15 minutes

Resources needed
- Presentation slide 49
- Laptop and projector (if delivering formally)
- Action plan template.

Exercise
Summary of ideas and evaluation
1. *Load presentation slide 49*
   Run through all the ideas suggested and develop a clear action plan to take these forward.
2. Return to the expectations you wrote on a flipchart at the start of the day. Go through each of these and check if you have met them all or if any further discussion is needed
3. Ask delegates for any feedback on the session
4. Thank delegates for their contributions.

NO ONE SHOULD RETURN TO THE STREETS

INNOVATION & GOOD PRACTICE

GOOD PRACTICE: USING WARNINGS

Risks and problems with warnings

Common problems encountered by staff when using warnings are:

- They are overused
- They are meaningless – you wouldn't evict clients anyway
- Clients don't care about them
- They are used as a means for staff to restore peace or their authority

When are warnings appropriate?

The above problems can be minimised by always keeping in mind the purpose of warnings. A warning should only ever be used **where you are informing someone that their licence or tenancy is at risk** – this is what you are warning them about. For behaviour that requires a consequence but for which you would not ultimately evict someone, you should consider the use of alternative responses (see *Good practice: using alternatives to warnings*).

Within supported accommodation, warnings also serve another purpose: **they are an opportunity to change behaviour**. If warnings are issued to reassert authority, restore peace, or without discussion, they are being used solely as a punishment and not an opportunity. Good practice is to deal with the incident, then decide on whether a warning i s appropriate or not once the member of staff has reflected, and the client has calmed down.

Issuing warnings: the how

Who

- Decisions should not be taken by one person alone.
- All staff should be empowered to make decisions – collective responsibility.

Format

- Be clear about the issue/ need for the warning.
- It is important to include steps needed to prevent future issues – from both client and staff. A template is available overleaf.

Signing

- Asking the client to sign warnings gets more ownership and understanding.

Length

- All warnings should have a time limit of a maximum 28 days (this can be reviewed and extended in individual circumstances) to give clients a realistic timeframe to work to.

Review

- A review allows for a formal recognition of achievements made by the client. A template is available overleaf.
- This recognition creates an opportunity to discuss how to maintain the behaviour in a constructive way.

Appeals

- Clients should be entitled to appeal any warning.
- Appeal should involve someone different to the person issuing the warning.

TAKE A STEP HELP END ROUGH SLEEPING

Only issue a warning where I would ultimately evict.

TEMPLATE: WARNING

Warning information

Date	
Name of client	
Level of warning	
Warning issued for	

Agreement

I agree to do the following to change my behaviour:

1

2

3

4   *Attend an achievements review on the date agreed below*

My key-worker agrees to do the following to support me:

1

2

3

4

Next steps

Consequences of not adhering to terms	
Length of warning	
Review date (28 days maximum from issue)	

Signatures

Client	
Key-worker	

Appeal

Does client wish to appeal this warning?	
Outcome of appeal	

TEMPLATE: ACHIEVEMENT REVIEW

Date	
Name of client	
Type of sanction	

What was the improvement and how did I achieve it?

How can I maintain this in future?

Key-worker comments:

Signatures

Client	
Key-worker	

NO ONE SHOULD RETURN TO THE STREETS

INNOVATION & GOOD PRACTICE

GOOD PRACTICE: USING ALTERNATIVES TO WARNINGS

What are the alternatives?

Some services have developed alternative approaches to responding to situations where behaviour, while needing a consequence, would not ultimately lead to eviction. These alternative approaches should be used wherever warnings are inappropriate (see *Good practice: using warnings.*)

What kind of alternatives work?

Response	When is it appropriate to use?
Support only	Where the behaviour can be resolved through discussion or is primarily a support need
Multi-agency work/case review meetings	Where a multi-agency support approach could help the client to maintain his/her current accommodation
Withdrawal of privileges e.g. denying access to communal space, visitor bans	Where the behaviour needs a sanction response but does not meet eviction criteria.
Criminal sanctions	Where the behaviour is a criminal activity.
Sideways moves	Where a planned move to alternative accommodation would be most appropriate for the client's support needs

Making them work

Personalise them

Operating an alternative system to warnings is not as easy as saying a specific behaviour will result in a specific response. It works best where the response is tailored to the individual and the incident. It is about deciding what might motivate that person to change.

Ensure they are appropriate to the incident

Any response should be proportionate in severity and should, where possible, be reparative. For example, if someone makes a mess then they clean it up.

Combine them with support

Any response to behaviour should always include an offer of support alongside any sanction. This is important to maintain the relationship with the client and capitalise on the response as an opportunity to change behaviour.

Why is it difficult?

- Support workers have to balance managing risk for everyone in the building alongside supporting the individual to learn from and change behaviour.
- Clients can view a personalised response as unfair. It is important that staff can explain to clients that such a response enables a fairer approach than applying an inflexible rule to what can be very different situations.

The appropriate response

A checklist of questions to consider when deciding on an appropriate response can be found overleaf.

TAKE A STEP HELP END ROUGH SLEEPING

Think about the best motivation for each individual.

ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE CHECKLIST

Basic information

	Notes
What is the behaviour?	
Why is it unacceptable? *Not just about what rule it is breaking, but why is that rule important.*	

Factors affecting the response

	Notes
Can the behaviour be resolved through discussion only? *If yes, support only may be best option*	
Is the behaviour primarily a support need? *If yes, support only may be best option*	
What support can be offered?	
Would we evict for this behaviour if it was repeated? *If no, look at alternative sanctions*	
What other motivation could work for this client? *E.g. move on, activities.*	
Is the behaviour a criminal activity? *If yes, criminal sanction may be best option*	
Is it the client's first infringement?	
Is there a continued threat?	
Can a combination of responses be used or an option put to the client?	

Risks

What are the risks of both issuing and not issuing a particular sanction (both to the individual and the service)?

	Risk to service	Risk to client
If sanction issued		
If sanction not issued		

Carrying out the response

	Notes
What response do you recommend?	
What level of authorisation is needed to issue this particular response?	
If a notice to quit is issued, what are the alternative accommodation responses for this client?	

NO ONE SHOULD RETURN TO THE STREETS

INNOVATION & GOOD PRACTICE

GOOD PRACTICE: POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT & SUPPORTIVE SANCTIONS

Why is positive reinforcement important?

The key underlying principle of making sanctions effective tools to change behaviour is ensuring they are balanced with support. A key worker is there to support change, not punish, and this requires changing the power balance from the key worker 'telling off' the client, to client and key worker addressing issues together. But in reality, the language used and practice within accommodation services can make this difficult. Sometimes subtle changes can make a big difference to the approach.

Practical steps

Have a Support Intervention Process rather than Warnings Procedure

This reminds staff and emphasises to clients that policies and procedures aimed at responding to behaviour are there to support the client at every stage, even where sanctions are necessary.

Scrap rules and use expectations, or rights and responsibilities

Rules immediately create conflict. By talking about expectations that all residents and staff can have about the service, the implication is on how clients benefit as well as the responsibilities they have. This also enables a more constructive conversation when incidents occur, as it can be about how it is affecting the service, as opposed to 'you broke a rule'.

Develop a customer charter

In addition to the above, a customer charter helps staff and clients to recognise they are customers of a service rather than passive recipients. It can also be a useful means of increasing client involvement and hearing what clients would like from the service.

Don't say no

Trial periods of staff not saying no to residents forces them to consider the reasons why clients are not able to do certain things, and ensures they can explain these reasons fully to clients.

Refer to 'move-on', not eviction

This simple language change, while not removing the option of 'emergency move-on', leads to staff always thinking about move-on options, even in immediate situations.

Reward positive behaviour

Wherever possible, establish systems that reward positive behaviour, rather than sanction negative. Rewards that have been used successfully include the following:

- Credit schemes – these are where clients receive credits or points for positive activities such as attending key work or being involved in meaningful activity, that add up and can be used either for one-off rewards such as trips, or larger opportunities such as move-on.

- Extra choice – when clients engage well, they can be rewarded with additional choices such as over when and where their key-work sessions will take place.

- Additional privileges – this is about allowing certain things for everyone who has positive behaviour, such as visitors for anyone who has not had a warning in the past month, and room moves (where available) for clients not in arrears.

Force yourself to reflect on positives

At team meetings, always end by discussing positives for clients. This ensures that good behaviour is not lost through always responding to poor behaviour.

TAKE A STEP HELP END ROUGH SLEEPING

Change the language I use with clients.

NO ONE SHOULD RETURN TO THE STREETS

INNOVATION & GOOD PRACTICE

GOOD PRACTICE: PREVENTING AND MANAGING ARREARS

Can't pay/won't pay

It is important to think about why clients might or are not paying rent and service charges as each will require a different response.

Can't pay	Won't pay
Financial reasons: • Housing benefit issues (delays, errors) • Other debts • Level of service charge	They want money for other things
Personal reasons such as being too chaotic	They think they shouldn't have to pay

The approach

Be assertive and consistent from the outset

This is about discussing rent at interview and booking in, and as soon as any payment is missed. It is about challenging the client but also offering support.

Be clear that clients are responsible for their rent

This includes the element covered by Housing Benefit. While it is their responsibility, remind them that you are there to support them to pay.

View finances as a support need

Helping clients to manage their money and pay their rent should not be seen as conflicting with support, but rather as an integral part of it that his helping to prepare them for independence.

Implementing your approach

Don't penalise clients for Housing Benefit mistakes

Where clients are unable to pay due to delays or mistakes from Housing Benefit, support the client to resolve these rather than sanctioning them.

Use rent agreements to set manageable repayment plans

It is important that amounts and timescales set out in repayment plans are realistic. Reward adhering to the repayment plan rather than focussing on the amount still owed.

Have processes that enable clients to see increasing seriousness and impact of not paying

Where clients continue not to pay it is important to help them understand this is unacceptable, and that not paying will affect where they can move on to as well as put their current accommodation at risk.

Remind clients on pay day and support them to attend appointments

Work as a team to know when someone gets paid and remind them about their payments. Supporting people to attend appointments can be reminding them of times, or accompanying them – this level of support can be reduced as clients get used to attending.

TAKE A STEP HELP END ROUGH SLEEPING

View managing money as a support need.

Case study

Preventing abandonment related to arrears at Booth House

In 2009/10, 38 people abandoned Booth House service, largely due to their arrears.

In response to this, Booth House developed and implemented a new arrears process. This is now a three-month process beginning with a letter and discussion with the key-worker when a problem first arises. There are then three warning letters if no action is taken to address the arrears – the first invites the client to a three-way meeting with his key-worker and line manager (for support); the second comes with a case conference that includes the referrer and deputy manager; and the third involves a complex case meeting with the agency responsible for move-on, referrer and the deputy manager (to enable the client to understand the move-on implications if the arrears are not reduced). After these warnings, if no action is taken then a 7-day notice is issued; if the client pays at this point the notice is rescinded. A letter may also be issued to inform them that their room will be kept for a further 7 days after the departure date and if an agreed sum is paid within this period then they may return to the centre.

During 2010/11, only nine people abandoned Booth House. This is a 76% reduction from the previous year.

Make it easy to pay service charges

- Be clear what they are for
- Listen to ideas for improvements from residents
- Keep them as low as possible e.g. use meters where possible, have self-catering, source cheaper food, make meals optional.
- Be flexible about how to pay:
  » Direct deductions – where the service charge is taken automatically from the client's benefits. These can be useful where the client is unable to budget and is unlikely to remember or be willing to pay.
  » Cash – in order to have fullest control over their money, clients may wish to pay in cash each week or fortnight. Where you do this, you should ensure you have a system for being clear when payments are due and that means all staff reminding the client at this time.
  » Credit unions – these can offer basic banking and savings accounts that include direct debit facilities.
  » Installing meters – this means the client is able to pay for what they use, and modify their use based on this, in preparation for this when they move on to independence.
  » Holding money for people – this is a controversial method, but one which has been used successfully in some services. It involves clients voluntarily handing over all their money when they receive it, and then being given an allowance each day.

Look at wider financial inclusion

- Clients' financial support needs are about more than just paying rent
- Support residents to maximise their income
- Run workshops and offer individual budgeting work
- Help to sort out debts

Make paying worth it!

- Link payment to move-on
- Include paying as part of any rewards schemes you may operate
- Make the service a place they want to be

Support staff too

In order to support clients, staff need to have the knowledge and confidence to work with them on a variety of issues. As a starting point, ensure they are clear why finances are a support need. Training and specialist knowledge may also be required in the following:

- Welfare benefits knowledge
- Financial inclusion
- Debt management.

Be creative when clients enter employment

It can be challenging to keep on top of payments and ensure clients pay when they find work. It is important that staff remember that it is very positive for clients to be working, despite these difficulties. The following table outlines some of the common challenges faced and suggests ways to overcome them.

Clients entering employment – difficulties and solutions

Clients and/or staff use cost of rent as reason not to work	• Use better-off calculations at JCP to give confidence that the HB taper would protect clients' accommodation e.g. **http://www.crisis.org.uk/pages/into-work-simple.html** • Ensure tenants know about and apply for benefits that they may still be eligible for – e.g. Housing Benefit and Working Tax Credit, extended Housing Benefit & Council Tax Benefit, plus the assorted return to work benefits: **http://bit.ly/eligiblebenefits** • Consider positive move-on options • Support staff and clients to recognise that entering employment is a good thing and has benefits beyond simply the financial
Rents are higher and clients don't want to pay more from their wages	• Support re budgeting and reality of costs of living – the rent in hostels within London is often comparable to the private rented sector. Use London rents map **http://www.london.gov.uk/rents/search/** to find rents in your area • Ensure tenants know about and apply for benefits that they may still be eligible for – e.g. Housing Benefit and Working Tax Credit, extended HB & Council Tax benefit, plus the assorted return to work benefits: **http://bit.ly/eligiblebenefits**
Clients don't tell HB and/or staff when they start working – already accrued arrears when staff realise HB has stopped	• All advice and support around employment should include info on what to do before and when start working, e.g. better-off calculations, support to access eligible benefits
Clients stop paying so they can save for rent deposits	• Ensure alternative system in place for accessing rent deposits, e.g. savings from outset of stay, Credit Unions, local rent deposit schemes
Agency/short-term work means complicated breaks in claims	• This is difficult under the current benefits system operating, and is one of the issues that Universal Credit is specifically meant to address – keep up to date with developments on this at **http://www.cesi.org.uk/keypolicy/universal-credit** • Keep in regular contact with your Housing Benefit department – most are seeing an increase in people approaching them with these complicated changing circumstances and have developed approaches to responding to this

NO ONE SHOULD RETURN TO THE STREETS

INNOVATION & GOOD PRACTICE

GOOD PRACTICE: ENGAGING CLIENTS

Getting the right approach

The overall approach to engaging clients is about promoting positive engagement, not punishing non-engagement. This quote from a client forces services to think about barriers they put up as well as those of clients, but it is support workers' jobs to remove these barriers.

> "STAFF SHOULD EXPECT THEIR CLIENTS TO BE UNRELIABLE"
>
> *– CLIENT*

How to do it

Be clear what engagement is

Engaging clients is about much more than attending key-work sessions. Staff need to recognise and encourage all forms of engagement to give different clients the best possible chance of doing this. For those who do not respond well to formal settings, activities and trips may be the only opportunity to get to know individuals and support them. These opportunities should not be seen as separate to support, nor something to sanction, but an integral and legitimate form of engagement that can often yield better results than attempting to enforce formal structures.

Engage positively from the outset

- At interview talk about expectations instead of rules, show prospective clients around to ensure they are making an informed choice about moving in

- Have regular initial contact during the first week or month of someone's stay, including giving information (often given at time of booking in but rarely taken in), and developing a support plan over time to ensure it is appropriate and not overwhelming

- Most importantly, develop a relationship through formal and informal interaction.

TAKE A STEP HELP END ROUGH SLEEPING

Interact less formally with clients – more often.

Ensure ongoing formal engagement (key work)

- Give clients choices over things such as key-worker, location and times of sessions
- Don't arrange sessions via letter – this is the least engaging means of communicating
- Link increased choice to incentives e.g. when people first come in they have to meet for formal key work sessions once a week, but if they stick to this, after four weeks as a reward they can choose the location and frequency of the next sessions
- Use motivational and aspirational key work tools such as Blue Salmon or Outcomes Star.

Enable ongoing informal engagement

Informal interaction is the most effective way to form genuine relationships. This could include:

- Activities (within the service or outside - those outside are often seen as most productive)
- Spending time in communal areas rather than remaining in offices
- Having open door policies where clients can have access to managers and other staff
- Run 'Connect' sessions at night to occupy clients at a time when incidents can be more likely, and to make better use of night staff.

Create the right environment

Consider and remove any barriers you put between yourselves and clients that can make engagement more difficult. This might include physical barriers such as closed doors or shutters, or more practical barriers such as opening hours. For further information on this see **http://homeless.org.uk/places-of-change**.

Incentivise rather than sanction

Wherever possible, make it appealing for your clients to engage with your service. Sanctioning non-engagement is likely to increase the risk of eviction or abandonment rather than reduce it. For more information on this see Good practice: positive reinforcement and supportive sanctions.

Work together as a staff team

Ensure that everyone is working together to engage clients. If particular individuals prefer to engage with, for example, caretakers or reception staff then recognise this engagement as positive and use it constructively. It is important to remember however that not all engagement is positive, and staff should make every effort through regular communication to ensure that clients do not divide them as a team.

Effective tools

Complaints and suggestions

These should be actively encouraged and used, and you should always be seen to act on these. This doesn't mean always doing what is suggested, but should involve always clearly communicating any decisions and the reasons for these. You can get these through suggestion boxes, surveys, resident meetings and any informal engagement.

Client involvement

Run residents' meetings on their terms. Many have agendas set by staff and residents find them boring at best. Be engaging, offer food if your budget allows to get people along. It can take a few meetings to convince people if they have historically been poor, but try to find something you can have a quick win with. If you can, also have your residents involved in developing and reviewing things you are doing in the service, e.g. if you want to run an activity, get them involved, if you are thinking of reviewing a policy make sure they have their say too.

Customer charter

This is one way that services have started the process of engaging clients if they haven't done so much in the past. It allows clients to feel their views are being heard, and also enables staff to change the way they view residents from being 'recipients' of a service to 'customers'.

Review rules

Ask yourselves honestly if all your rules are appropriate – are they necessary to manage risk, and do they put barriers in place to engagement? We have developed a tool to help – see http://www.homeless.org.uk/evictions-abandonment-toolkit-behaviour-criteria.

Recruitment and performance management

This is often overlooked but should be part of any thorough engagement policy – do you have questions as part of your interviews that look for competency in client engagement? You can also look to recruit former clients, who can sometimes display more empathy and develop better relationships with clients.

Similarly, managers should be looking at how much time their staff spend talking and engaging with clients. This should form part of the performance management process and should include collecting anonymous 360° feedback from clients and other staff members.

NO ONE SHOULD RETURN TO THE STREETS

INNOVATION & GOOD PRACTICE

GOOD PRACTICE: REDUCING ABANDONMENT

Can abandonment be prevented?

Reducing abandonment can often be neglected by services to the belief that once someone has left there is little the service can do. However, reviewing abandonments as they happen can enable common warnings signs to be identified that can prevent others abandoning in future. Once you begin to recognise these, you can use a number of mitigating actions with those individuals at risk.

Practical steps

Adopt a whole team approach

The key to preventing abandonment is to establish a strong positive relationship with clients as quickly as possible after they move in. This involves all staff proactively making the client feel welcome, helping them become accustomed to their new surroundings, and ensuring they are aware of support on offer.

Have extra support for the first few weeks

People often abandon in the first few weeks of moving in because they cannot adjust to the hostel lifestyle.

This could include having more support sessions, more informal interaction with staff (as above), formal schemes to help them get to know other residents such as buddying, or informal opportunities such as activities and trips. You could also negotiate some transitional support from someone they already know e.g. an outreach worker or referrer for a short time.

For people who have been rough sleeping for a long time, this might require being flexible with your rules and processes to encourage them to stay.

Case study

Encouraging a long-term rough sleeper to stay in

Tim was an entrenched rough sleeper with a long history of refusing accommodation - the hostel and the outreach team worked together to encourage him to start accessing the dining room; he started coming in for meals and social events which helped him to feel comfortable and happy in the surroundings and gave him time to build up trust with staff and other residents. The hostel was flexible and allowed him to access services on his own terms, for example he began occasionally sleeping in the dining room and eventually he went into a bedroom of his own.

The room was offered to him as being 'empty' and having few facilities, which helped the client overcome the problem he had previously experienced of feeling as though he was being a burden on services. In consultation with the client, the staff introduced furnishings and beddings step by step, until eventually he was completely settled in the environment. The client now has a permanent room at the hostel and a tenancy agreement; however the key to him coming in to the room in the first place, was putting no pressure on him and also helping the client to feel that he wasn't a burden. Many clients do not want to impose and have very low expectations about what they deserve; this approach can help individuals overcome this.

TAKE A STEP HELP END ROUGH SLEEPING

Proactively look for warning signs.

Ensure you have informal interaction opportunities

Informal interaction is the key to building good relationships. Staff need to feel able to spend time around the service with residents.

Link engagement with rewards

Instead of putting pressure on clients to engage with support, link engagement to rewards instead. See *Good practice: engaging clients*, and *Good practice: positive reinforcement and supportive sanctions*.

Ensure all communication about arrears is supportive

Anxiety over the amount of arrears they are in is a common cause of abandonment. Don't send letters unless absolutely necessary and ensure all discussion about arrears includes what support can be offered.

Make it a place they want to stay

Clients can abandon if they feel staff are 'dismissive' of them, or if they find the service boring or tense. Make sure you regularly ask clients for their ideas and suggestions to improve the service. Use satisfaction surveys to formally engage clients in this, as well as complaints and residents meetings.

Be aware of and act upon warnings signs

Recognising when people are more at risk of abandonment is key to preventing it. The table below lists some of the most common warning signs and outlines some of the actions you can take to help prevent abandonment relating to them.

Warning sign	Possible mitigating actions
Not engaging with support on offer	• Informal interaction and relationship building at meal times/activities • Use opportunities such as H&S/room checks to engage • Whole team approach – may respond better to certain members of staff • Be persistent and link engagement with rewards and sanctions
Spending a lot of time outside the hostel	• Contracts where client agrees to spend certain amount of time in hostel • Discuss where client goes – is there opportunity for positive move-on? • Discuss reasons for not being here – is it lack of support needs or environment? Could the client make an appropriate sideways move?
Mounting arrears	• Ensure all communication about arrears is done with support clearly identified • Support to maximise income • Provide budgeting support
Unhappy with environment	• Encourage complaints and make changes based on these where possible • Encourage participation of client to change the environment at residents' meetings and in more creative ways
No social networks in area	• Enable participation in social events within the hostel • Link up to positive social networks outside the hostel via activities • Consider planned move to another area
Entrenched rough sleeper	• Adopt a personalised approach • Engagement contracts where client agrees to spend certain amount of time in hostel • Hold bed open for longer than normal and work with outreach to bring client back in
Never lived in similar environment	• Produce materials (leaflets, DVD) for potential residents on what the service can offer and distribute through referrers and directly • Walk round at interview stage wherever possible • At interview or booking in develop a coping strategy plan • Provide more intensive support in first few weeks • Develop a buddy system to help new residents integrate
At risk of offending	• Engage in positive diversionary activity

PREVENTING EVICTIONS AND ABANDONMENT

CASE STUDY SCENARIOS

- A resident continues to smoke cannabis in the hostel grounds, after he has been told several times by staff.

- A resident has accrued a large amount of arrears; when asked why he has not paid rent or taken information to housing benefit, he blames staff as they had previously done this for him.

- Residents come to you complaining of a horrible smell coming from one room. When you investigate you find a blocked sink due to needles, and bottles of urine in a row along the floor.

- Night Staff allow a resident into the hostel; staff are suspicious that he may have been drinking and are aware that he can be verbally aggressive and has a history of violence. On entering the building the resident stands outside a room with 4 other residents inside shouting that they are all 'smack heads'.

- A resident keeps playing her music so loud that the other residents keep complaining. One night another resident "has had enough" and goes in and punches her.

- A resident tells you that he thinks another resident has been injecting heroin in the toilet.

- A man has been your resident for six months. He has always paid his rent and been seen around the hostel frequently with a cheerful demeanour. Recently his mood has changed. He has stopped paying his service charge, and you rarely see him.

- A new resident has just moved in to your service. During his interview it emerged that he has a history of poor behaviour, non-engagement and eviction.

REDUCING EVICTIONS AND ABANDONMENT ACTION PLAN

Service: **Date:**

Aim	Action	Date due	Lead	Other people needed	Progress