

# Lancashire Single Homelessness Initiative

## Project Evaluation



### 1. Background

In 2012 DCLG awarded a total sum of £504,000 across all Lancashire authorities in respect of the Lancashire Single Homeless Project. Chorley BC acted as the Lead Authority for the project. Local authorities were arranged in Clusters to take responsibility for delivery of the programme – East, Central and North. Fylde council is part of the North Cluster of authorities which also includes Lancaster and Wyre Councils. The North Cluster had a total of £102,517 to take forward the projects under the Lancashire Single Homelessness Initiative.

From the total funding available each cluster was allocated an additional sum of £18,000 to cover the administration element, specifically relating to the project management and the procurement functions. Fylde Borough Council agreed to act as the lead authority for the North Cluster providing administration and project management support at a cost of £10,500 and Wyre Council procurement support at a cost of £3,000. Leaving £4,500 to be used to support the projects.

Under the requirements of the funding Lancashire Authorities were to pilot approaches to support single homeless households across Lancashire for a period of 12 months. The three initiatives are:

#### Project 1 - Shared housing for under 35 year olds

Pilot project to provide shared housing for single people under the age of 35. The Contractor finds suitable properties working with private landlords, completes referrals with clients put forward by the local authority, matches tenants and landlords and responds to all tenancy issues reported to them by the landlord. The contractual relationship is between the Tenant and the Landlord. The Contractors role is to support the tenancy.

Welfare Reform changes to Housing Benefit entitlement for under 35's means that they are only entitled to the shared room rate therefore the ability to pilot this approach was welcomed. Within Fylde single households under 35 in receipt of housing benefit are entitled to £61.50 per week under the shared room rate. The average rent for a one bedroom property is £85 per week/£368 per month and for a 2 bedroom property is £115 per week or £500 per month within the private rented sector.

#### Project 2 - Accommodation finding service including an enhanced rent bond scheme for under 35 year olds in Lancaster and Wyre

Accommodation finding service tailored to helping young people under 35 identify and broker accommodation. Service is targeted at customers who are single and not owed any statutory duty by the local authority under homeless legislation. This service is only available in Lancaster and Wyre. In Fylde, F2F already provide an accommodation finding service and paper rent bond scheme on behalf of Fylde BC.

Most young people under the age of 35 will have their housing benefit assessed on the LHA rate for one bedroom in a shared house. The levels are below

### Project 3 - Pre-tenancy training to single people who are seeking accommodation or are at risk of losing their existing accommodation

The pre-tenancy training was aimed at single people who are looking to secure accommodation, and have an identified need to improve their understanding of housing related issues and also improve their prospects of being provided with accommodation, or retaining their existing tenancy or license. There was no age limit to who could attend the courses, however the majority of students were under 35.

Courses are split into three modules, run over a three week period in St Annes, Fleetwood and Morecambe giving applicants the flexibility to drop in and out of courses as is convenient. The requirement is that students complete all three sessions and show an understanding of the course and topics covered before a certificate is issued confirming they have completed the pre-tenancy training. To assess understanding a 30 question quiz is undertaken where clients must demonstrate a firm understanding of the issues discussed during the course.

Module 1 – Housing options and finding suitable accommodation

Module 2 – Tenancy readiness and independent living skills

Module 3 – Managing your tenancy effectively

## **2. Contract arrangements**

The projects were initially tendered in July 2014 and the North Cluster drew down £70,450 of the total allocated amount leaving a remainder of £32,067 to support successful projects into a 6 month extension to the initial 12 months. Contractors were appointed as follows;

Project 1 - Accommodation finding service for under 35 year olds and Project 2 – Shared Housing for under 35 year olds were awarded to AAW Ltd/Safelets. The total contract value for both projects was £59,450 for 12 months.

Project 3 – Pre-tenancy training was awarded to DISC with a contract value of £11,000 for 12 months.

Table 1 details the tendering arrangements for all three projects.

Table 1 - Year 1 Funding arrangements

Total project funding	£70,450.00 Year 1 Accommodation finding £44,600.00 (AAAW Ltd) Shared housing £14,850.00 (AAAW Ltd) Tenancy Training £11,000 (DISC)  (Remaining £32,067 for possible extension)
Administration and funding Fylde BC Project Lead (£10,500) Wyre BC procurement (£3,000) Miscellaneous (£4,500)	£18,000.00
	<b>£88,450.00</b>

In January 2015 it was announced AAW Ltd had ceased trading which resulted in the shared housing and accommodation finding projects run by the 'Safelets' arm of the business no longer had paid staff

to deliver the projects. The financial impact for the North Cluster of authorities was limited to 3 rent bonds of £150 (2 in Wyre and 1 in Lancaster) that AAAW Ltd had promised to clients and the Landlord, then not signed them up. The Contractor had delivered against agreed outputs and received payment for Quarter 1 (Sept to Dec 2014). The Pre-tenancy training was delivered by DISC and was not affected by AAAW Ltd ceasing trading.

In February 2015, the North cluster of authorities made a decision to re-tender the accommodation finding and shared housing projects with flexibility for contractors to bid for separate lots for each authority rather than across all three authorities. It was agreed to draw down the remainder of the funding from Chorley BC £32,067 and tender the projects for a period of 12 months. Lancaster City Council also had an amount of £1,000 from a 'Personalised Solutions Budget' that all authorities were given initially from the fund which was not drawn down which they are happy to add to the total funding amount. It was agreed to re-negotiate the Tenancy Training contract for a further 12 months to ensure the programme was up and running to support the re-tendered accommodation finding and shared housing contracts.

Project 1 – Shared Housing for under 35 year olds - 01/07/2016 to 30/06/2016

The project was re-tendered in June 2015 for 12 months and YMCA Fylde Coast were awarded the project across Lancashire, Wyre and Fylde. The price was £14,910.24.

Project 2 – Accommodation finding service including an enhanced rent bond scheme for under 35 year olds in Lancaster and Wyre – 01/07/2016 to 30/06/2016

The project was re-tendered in June 2015 for 12 months and Calico were awarded the project across Lancaster and Wyre. The Contract price was £49,250.00.

Project 3 - Pre-tenancy training Year 2

The contract was re-negotiated in September 2015 for the second year of the contract. DISC were unable to provide the second year at £11,000. It was agreed at the project steering group meeting in August 2015 that the course to be condensed into two weeks as many applicants are completing sessions 1 and 2 but failing to complete session 3. In addition many applicants are working or have child care responsibilities and an e- learning version of the course needed to be developed. Disc were to develop an e-learning module and physical courses condensed to two courses very three weeks.

The Contract value for Year 2 for 17 sessions of 2 over 3 weeks is a cost per Local Authority is £4,670.00 which totals £14,010.00. This equates to an additional £1,003.33 per Local Authority on top of the £11,000 available for year 2 within the Lancashire Single Homeless Initiative pot. It has agreed each local authority will fund this additional amount separately.

However, DISC did not deliver on the agreed additional e-learning module, but condensed the three week course to two sessions, over three weeks, therefore it was agreed the contracted sum for year two would remain at £11,000.

Table 2 - Project expenditure January 2015

	Amount Paid	Committed	Remainder
Accommodation Finding 01/09/14 to 30/11/14	£11,150.00	£0	£33,450.00
Shared Housing 01/09/14 to 30/11/14	£3,712.50	£0	£11,137.50

Pre-tenancy training	01/09/14 to 30/11/14 01/12/14 to 28/02/15 £5,500	01/03/15 to 31/05/15 01/06/15 to 31/08/15 £5,500	TBC
Rent bond x3	£450.00	£0	£0

Table 3 details funding available from sources to support the new 12 month re-tendering of the accommodation finding and shared housing initiative. The Tenancy ready training project was also to be re-negotiated to run alongside the re-contracted accommodation finding and shared housing initiative.

Table 3 – Funding available for renegotiated contracts from July 2015

<b>Funding available</b>	
Accommodation finding	33,450.00 – 450 (rent bonds paid) £33,000
Shared housing	11,137.50
Year 2 plus Lancaster City £1k	33,067.00
Remainder Administration funding	4,500.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£81,704.50</b>

Table 4 – Year 2 Funding arrangements

<b>Funding available</b>	
AAAW Ltd possible liability	£6,500.00
DISC Re-negotiated contract 12 months 01/09/2015 to 31/08 2016	£11,000.00
Accommodation Finding	£49,250.00
Shared Housing	£14,910.24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£81,660.24</b>

NB. Under the Homeless Partnership Agreement F2F YMCA receive £29,561 to run the Rent Bond Scheme on behalf of Fylde BC which includes an accommodation finding service.

### 3. Project Outcomes

#### 3.1 Year 1 – 01/09/2014 to 31/01/2016 managed by AAW Ltd Projects 1 and 2 - Shared housing for under 35 year olds and Accommodation Finding Service for under 35 year olds

AAAW Ltd/Safe Lets ran the shared housing and accommodation finding service projects from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2015 across all three authorities. The shared housing service was available across all three authorities, whereas the accommodation finding service was only available in Lancaster and Wyre. In Fylde, F2F already provide an accommodation finding service and paper rent bond scheme on behalf of Fylde BC.

Table 5 provides information on referrals and accommodation sourced. In Wyre and Lancaster referrals were made into both the accommodation finding service and shared housing simultaneously. In Wyre the project had greater success finding independent accommodation for 4 occupants and 3

occupants sharing accommodation in Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO's). In Lancaster 1 person had sourced independent accommodation and 3 occupants had entered shared accommodation. In Fylde referrals are only made into the shared housing initiative. 5 referrals have been made and no shared accommodation had been set up, however 4 households were able to source Accommodation working with F2F YMCA or independently.

Table 5 - Summary of referrals and accommodation sourced across the accommodation finding service and shared housing initiative 01/09/2014 to 30/01/2015

	Lancaster	Wyre	Fylde
Referrals	28	45	5
No contact for referral	3	8	1
No contact after referral interview completed and/or viewings made	2	3	0
House shares/HMO	3	3	0
House share found but unable to sign as no AAW Ltd	0	2	0
Accommodation found	1	4	0
On hold/high risk/not eligible	2	5	0
Accommodation being sourced	11	14	3
Sourced own accommodation	6	6	1

Table 6a - Key outputs shared housing  
Progress report 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 to 31st January 2015 across all three authorities

Establish at least one house share in each authority with a minimum of 3 house shares delivered	Lancaster - 1 house share delivered with two residents. 1 other house share delivered but only one of the applicants signed up. Wyre – 3 occupants have signed up and moved into the properties. A further 2 were to be signed up on Saturday 31 <sup>st</sup> February but were not signed up as company ceased trading. Fylde – no house shared
Deliver tenancies to no less than 10 individuals	6 Tenancies delivered from 01/09/14 to 31/03/15.

Table 6b - Key outputs accommodation finding service  
Progress report 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 to 31st January 2015

100 new tenant referrals accepted and advice provided	78 referrals made across all three authorities to AAW Ltd for both services. 12 no contact to complete referrals and 5 no contact after referral interview completed. Totalling 61 people successfully referred to the service. In Fylde F2F YMCA have worked with 26 under 35 year olds.
	5 tenancies (4 in private rented sector and 1 in social rented sector) have been enabled through

50 New private rented properties accessed for single people under 35 that result in a tenancy start as a direct result of intervention	the accommodation finding service, 4 in Wyre and 1 in Lancaster. In Fylde F2F YMCA have worked with and accessed private tenancies for 3 single under 35 year olds.
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### 3.2 Year 2 – 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016

#### Project 1 - Shared Housing for under 35 year olds

In Year 2 the Shared Housing and Accommodation Finding Service were delivered by separate Contractors. Fylde Coast YMCA were awarded the Shared Housing for under 35 year olds. The second year of the shared housing project was not successful despite a good rate of referrals and the majority of clients being contactable. The majority of clients self-sourced independent accommodation using either the accommodation finding service or F2F YMCA in Fylde, however one shared house was set up in Lancaster.

Table 7a – Key outputs shared housing

<b>Contacts</b>	Fylde	Lancaster	Wyre
Referrals made	11	34	9
Clients unable to contact	0	12	4
<b>Clients/3<sup>rd</sup> party contacted</b>	11	34	9
Assessments undertaken	5	25	3
Assessments completed/clients accepted for sharing	0	2	0
<b>Outcomes re Contacted clients</b>			
Shared Assured Shorthold Tenancies	0	2	0
Self-Sourced Assured Shorthold Tenancy	2	4	0
Supported Accommodation	0	4	1
Social Housing	0	2	0
Barnardos	1	0	0
Family	0	4	0
Assured Shorthold Tenancies via Accommodation Finding Service/Calico	0	4	2
No outcome/assessment incomplete/lack of engagement	8	14	6

#### Case Study 1

##### Project 1 - Shared Housing for under 35 year olds

A 32 year old male was referred into the Scheme by the Local Authority. He had been 'sofa surfing'/sleeping in a garage since August 2015. He was a little wary of sharing due to past experiences but was happy to explore the option. During the assessment process he identified another 21 year old male (whom he knew) who he would be interested in sharing with.

The second client was also subsequently referred into the Scheme by the Local Authority. He was living in overcrowded accommodation in the family home and had been struggling to secure his own property. He knew the first client and was happy to look at sharing with him. Subsequent meetings with both of them followed which resulted in them completing the assessment process. A 2 bed

property was identified with a local landlord, but they chose not to accept as they felt it was too small. Further research identified another property with another local landlord. They wished to accept this property and the tenancy was secured with the help of funding from the Vicars Relief charity. The tenancy has now been in force for nearly 3 months in June 2016, and clients advise all is well and there are no issues.

**3.3 Year 2 – 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016**  
**Project 2 - Accommodation finding service for under 35 year olds**

In Year 2 the accommodation finding service was delivered by Calico. Calico were also able to deliver shared accommodation as part of the accommodation finding service. Referral rates and clients contactable were good with Lancaster reported 20% success rate in tenancies being sourced and Wyre 30%. The accommodation finding service dealt with 91 referrals in Lancaster and 71 referrals in Wyre. In Fylde F2F already run an accommodation finding service and there are no age restrictions to the clients they deal with. During the same period they took 296 applicants into the rent bond scheme, of which 85 were under 35 year olds and of those under 35 years olds 10 applicants were assisted to source accommodation.

Table 7b – Key outputs accommodation finding service

Number of referrals	Tenancies established	Success Rate
Lancaster 91	19 established tenancies - 18 Private rented sector (2 shared) and 1 Social Housing.	20%
Wyre 71	22 established tenancies – 18 Private rented sector in Wyre, 3 in Blackpool. 1 Social Housing.	30%

Case Study 2  
Project 2 - Accommodation finding service for under 35 year olds

Initial assessment was completed on two young men under the age of 25 years old wishing to be supported by the service to obtain shared accommodation on the 12/08/15. One of the customers was a care leaver on Income support and his friend was doing part time work, claiming Universal credit and in education. Both of the potential tenants had been referred into and completed the Disc Tenancy Ready Training as it was their first tenancy.

They were supported to find a suitable 2 bed property; the property was then assessed by the local council’s housing standard team as being safe and acceptable for us to proceed to sign up. The customers signed up for the property and the support worker completed all the necessary paperwork with the tenants ensuring they understood their rights and responsibilities. The tenants were assisted to make a claim for benefits, set up utility and rent payment plans, budgeting and to acquire furniture. Visits continued with the tenants providing ongoing support for a short period of time assisting them with any issues relating to their tenancy. These tenants have maintained their accommodation to date requiring very little ongoing support.

### **3.4 Conclusions shared housing and accommodation finding service for under 35 year olds**

- Fylde is the authority where shared housing has had the least effect. In year 2 despite F2F YMCA having a strong network of Landlords to source properties, interest from Landlords and households who did not know each other was limited mainly because they were able to let their two/three bedroom properties easily without having to look at house shares.
- Initially there were issues with the quality of referrals into both services with applicants not being contactable. A joint referral form was brought in where every applicant looking for assistance was referred into both services in addition to the pre-tenancy training.
- Referrals have been good with and contact in the main has been made within 24 hours of referral and applicants are assessed as eligible for support within 3 to 4 working days. Applicants can start to look for accommodation straight away.
- In Lancaster referrals into both services was strong and there was interest from Landlords. Year 2 of the project coincided with Lancaster University increasing the expected standards for student accommodation and some previous student let's were no longer suitable and therefore became available for the shared housing and accommodation finding services.
- Variety of ways are used to source accommodation including Lettings Agencies, local landlords advertising in papers, Zoopla, MacDonalds and Right Move.
- All properties let under the scheme had to be assessed by Private Sector teams within each of the authorities which ensured the properties complied with relevant legislation. No properties were considered unfit, however if that had been the case the tenancy could not have been set up. To be considered suitable properties would need to have Gas Safety Certificates, Energy Performance Certificate, Electrical testing and a fire assessment completed in the last 6 months.
- In Lancaster and Wyre both services have worked well. A single point of contact referrals resulted in all enquiries for single households were referred direct into the shared housing, accommodation finding and tenancy training projects. The project puts the onus on the individual to work with the accommodation finding service to actively look for affordable accommodation.
- Drop in's were held weekly at Wyre and Lancaster authorities which worked well and clients could either book an appointment or turn up at the session and wait. This arrangement is already in place in Fylde at F2F YMCA on a daily basis from 9.30am to 12.30pm.
- An emerging issue early on was the need for funding for households to access accommodation with the Rent Bond and Rent in Advance. The project gave top up amounts for Rent Bonds or Rent in Advance alongside grants from the Vickers Relief Fund (VRF), where over 90% of the funding was sourced. The VRF is a homeless prevention fund that awards small but essential grants to help alleviate housing difficulties for vulnerable people. Grants are awarded up to a maximum of £350.

- Pre-tenancy advice, housing options and where to look for accommodation including affordability advice was given in addition to arranging for clients to attend the tenancy training courses and the benefits of attendance to source accommodation. Clients were supported with Housing Benefit applications and claiming the housing element under Universal Credit.
- Calico ran the accommodation finding service in Year 2. They also ran the LCC Supporting People Tenancy Floating Support programme therefore clients also received support to access substance mis-use support, Foodbanks, furniture and the Care and Urgent Needs scheme. More vulnerable clients who accessed support under the Accommodation Finding Service were then transferred into the Tenancy Floating Support programme for intensive floating support. The support that was in place made it a more straightforward process with private landlords to get the tenancy offered and set up.
- Floating support provided for a limited period assisted in ensuring the tenancies were set up correctly. All tenancies that were set up were contacted after a 3 month period to establish if everything was going well.
- The project was also able to review tenancy agreements that clients were being offered being able to give advice to Landlords and Clients as to what would be considered a reasonable tenancy agreement. In one property the tenancy agreement was so constrained it was setting the Tenant up to fail and with careful negotiation the Landlord changed the agreement. In one situation the Landlord was advised to change the tenancy agreement to a license agreement as they were living on the premises.

### **3.5 Project 3 - Pre-tenancy training**

**Year 1 – 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016**

**Year 2 – 1 September 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016**

DISC were awarded the pre-tenancy training project for 2 years. Table 8 details the outputs from the project from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014 to the 11<sup>th</sup> August 2016.

Fylde had the greatest success with the project with 52% of referrals starting the course and 41% completing the course. 22 households sourced accommodation and of those 16 tenancies have been sustained for in excess of 6 months. The proximity of the housing advice service at Fylde BC and F2F YMCA to where the tenancy training sessions were being held allowed for clients to work with the agencies while attending the tenancy training.

In Lancaster 32% of referrals started the course and of those 24% completed the course. 8 households sourced accommodation and of those 5 tenancies have been sustained in excess of six months. The tenancy training take up was slow during the first year, but once the venue had been changed to Oak Tree House in Lancaster, attendance and completion rates improved as support services and training sessions were in closer proximity.

In Wyre 25% of referrals started the course and of those 16% completed the course. 8 households sourced accommodation and of those 4 tenancies have been sustained in excess of six months. The courses were held in Fleetwood and clients not attending the course were high. A conclusion for this could be the ease of access into private sector tenancies in Fleetwood without the need to complete the course.

### Case Study 3

#### Project 3 - Pre-tenancy training

A couple were referred to the Tenancy Ready training after accessing the Rent Bond Guarantee Scheme in Fylde in July 2015. As part of the scheme, applicants are required to complete the training before being accepted on to the bond scheme. At the time of referral, the Tenancy Ready training consisted of three sessions.

At the time of being referred to the training, the couple were living with a relative and neither of them had lived independently before. The couple were 18 and 17 and expecting their first child together, and so needed to find independent accommodation.

It was agreed that the clients Leaving Care worker would attend the first session with the couple, as they were very nervous in new situations. Despite being very quiet at the beginning of the first session, the couple soon relaxed and began to participate in the discussions about housing history and barriers that they had experienced.

The couple attended the subsequent two sessions by themselves and participated well. At the end of each of the three sessions, participants were required to answer 10 quiz questions. The couple answered all thirty questions correctly, and gave feedback that they had enjoyed the course and had learned important information about signing for a tenancy, their responsibilities as a tenant and budgeting. At the point of completion, they were given a handbook that covered everything in the course, so that it could be used for reference once they had moved into independent accommodation.

The couple completed the tenancy Ready course on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2015 and then began working with Face2Face to identify a suitable property. A privately rented property was sourced and secured via the bond guarantee scheme and the couple moved in on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2015. The couple are still living at the property and have managed their tenancy well for the 11 months since moving in.

Table 8 – Key outputs Pre- tenancy ready training

**Performance Report 01/10/14 - 11/08/16**

	<b>Fylde</b>	<b>% of Referrals</b>	<b>Lancaster</b>	<b>% of Referrals</b>	<b>Wyre</b>	<b>% of Referrals</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of Referrals</b>
<b>Referrals</b>								
Total Students Referred	148	N/A	189	N/A	88	N/A	425	N/A
<b>Starts</b>								
Course Started	78	52.7%	62	32.8%	22	25.0%	162	38.1%
Not started	70	47.3%	127	67.2%	66	75.0%	263	61.9%
<b>Completion</b>								
Course complete	61	78.2%	46	74.2%	14	63.6%	121	74.7%
Partially complete (engaging)	4	5.1%	6	9.7%	0	0.0%	10	6.2%
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	<b>Fylde</b>	<b>% of Referrals</b>	<b>Lancaster</b>	<b>% of Referrals</b>	<b>Wyre</b>	<b>% of Referrals</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of Referrals</b>
<b>Students Housed (post completion)</b>								
Housed	22	36.1%	8	17.4%	8	57.1%	38	31.4%
Not Housed	39	63.9%	33	71.7%	6	42.9%	78	64.5%
<b>Housing Sustained</b>								
Tenancies Sustained +6 months	16	72.7%	5	62.5%	4	50.0%	25	65.8%
Tenancies Sustained -6 months	0	0.0%	2	25.0%	0	0.0%	2	5.3%
Unable to contact	4	18.2%	1	12.5%	4	50.0%	9	23.7%
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	<b>Fylde</b>	<b>% of Referrals</b>	<b>Lancaster</b>	<b>% of Referrals</b>	<b>Wyre</b>	<b>% of Referrals</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of Referrals</b>
<b>Completion Satisfaction</b>								
Session responses	176	N/A	138	N/A	29	N/A	343	
Average satisfaction	90.0%	N/A	84.0%	N/A	89.0%	N/A		87.0%
<b>Sessions Delivered</b>								
Total sessions delivered	66	N/A	37	N/A	28	N/A	131	N/A

### 3.6 Conclusions pre-tenancy training

- The tenancy training project works best in Fylde due to the proximity of both F2F YMCA and Fylde BC Housing Offices and clients were working with F2F to access the rent bond scheme or rent in advance via the local authorities Invest to Save fund.
- The project was least successful in Wyre despite being held in Fleetwood where the majority of private tenancies are available. A conclusion could be as a result of the ease of accessing private rented accommodation without the need to attend the courses.
- In Lancaster the course was more successful in year 2 as the venue was moved to Oaktree House a supported housing project for homeless people over 25 therefore the housing advice and support were available in one place.
- During year 1 there was a high drop off of clients attending course 3, but completing fully courses 1 and 2. A decision was made to condense the courses into two week sessions over 3 weeks and completion rates increased.
- In Year 2 it was agreed an e-learning course needed to be developed to pick up clients who are working or in training.
- The production of a tenancy training certificate has been useful in demonstrating to Landlords that their potential tenants are fully aware of managing a tenancy and affordability.
- An incentive scheme was introduced which was a £15 voucher that could be claimed when the course was completed and applicants had signed a tenancy agreement. Applicants welcomed the voucher but as an incentive to get students to complete the course its use is limited. The offer of support to source a tenancy and assistance with a rent bond and/or rent in advance are more worthwhile.
- Courses needed to be flexible and run regularly to enable clients to jump on and off as needed. Courses needed to be in locations which gave easy access to Housing Advice services.
- Single referrals via the local authority into all three services resulted in clients having access to a full range of support, including an opportunity to understand more about a scheme and the benefits available.

## **4 Learning for the Lancashire Single Homelessness Initiative**

- 1 Support to access accommodation either via a paper or financial rent bond and rent in advance are necessary to assist clients into accommodation. An agreement can be in place to ensure the funds are returned by the Landlord once the tenancy has ended.
- 2 Vickers relief fund is a source of grant funding not widely used. In Fylde Face 2 Face are now regularly access it for assistance alongside Fylde BC Invest to Save applications to assist households facing homelessness with rent in advance payments. Within Fylde there is a paper rent bond scheme managed by Face 2 Face under the Homeless Partnership Agreement between YMCA and Fylde BC.
- 3 Single referrals via the local authority into all services available gives clients access to a full range of support, including an opportunity to understand more about a scheme and the benefits from engagement.
- 4 Shared housing worked when ran alongside the accommodation finding service. The pilot was able to compare the progress of the accommodation finding service and shared housing initiative if they were delivered by separate or the same Contractors. Although AAW Ltd only ran the project for 4 months in that time they delivered 6 shared tenancies. In Year 2 F2F YMCA struggled to get Landlord interest in the scheme as an alone project, yet Landlords that were engaging with the accommodation finding service in Wyre and Lancaster were willing to consider Shared Housing as an alternative to single tenancies.
- 5 The tenancy training project has been an essential element to bind the shared housing and accommodation finding services together. In Fylde the tenancy training has had the most success as households attending were also working with F2F YMCA to access the rent bond scheme therefore the incentive was in place to complete the course.
- 6 Drop in sessions where appointments can either be booked or clients can wait to be seen gives flexibility for under 35 year olds to access accommodation finding service.
- 7 Contact within 24 hours and assessment within 3-4 days ensured clients remained engaged with the service in order to source accommodation.
- 8 Proximity of housing advice services and pre tenancy training sessions ensure continuity and commitment to complete the training and work with services to source accommodation.
- 9 Access to floating support to set up the tenancy and check status after 3 months, gives the Landlord some security to set up the tenancy.
- 10 Using the accommodation finding service to source accommodation for vulnerable clients and the joint working with Private Sector Housing Standards for HSSRS assessments, gave access to properties that may have not been visited previously or regularly.
- 11 In areas where the abundance of private sector accommodation has resulted in applicants not completing the tenancy training it may be worthwhile offering two separate courses, pre-tenancy prior to a tenancy being sourced and tenancy ready available when a tenancy has been set up or there are emerging issues with how the tenancy is being conducted.
- 12 It is essential an e-learning course is developed for the tenancy training project to make it more accessible to households who work and/or are in training or have child caring responsibilities.