

Co-ordinating Public Services from the Top Down or Bottom-up? Implementation Gaps in ‘Joined-up Government’ Initiatives and Street-level Co-ordination of Homelessness Services in England

**Workshop on Performance in Multi sector/organisation Collaborations
A Performing Public Sector: Second Trans-Atlantic Dialogue
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, June 1st-3rd 2006**

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Abstract: There has been a lot of conceptual work setting out various forms of vertical and horizontal mechanism for coordinating organisations that provide public services. However, most empirical work has focused either on case studies or general characterisations, particularly noting the importance of networks as well as traditional hierarchical forms of co-ordination. This paper attempts to develop measures that systematically describe variation in co-ordination for organisations in localities that are involved in providing services to homeless people in England. The forms of coordination include joint planning and delivery, joint budgets, staff transfer and shared protocols occurring between organisations including local government housing departments, other public sector, voluntary and commercial agencies. The paper then suggests how variation can be analysed and suggests that there is an implementation gap for coordination processes desired by higher level bodies, as has been found for 'regular' policies in the past. However, locally adopted strategies are largely consistent with higher level policy statements and local choice appears to be from a national menu. The analysis presented here is the first stage in an explanation of variation in co-ordination mechanisms based on factors including variation in the nature of the homelessness problem, and managerial, political and socio-economic features of the local system. This early draft contains preliminary analysis from the first stage rather than the full results of the project

(preliminary draft, not for quotation without authors' permission)

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Co-ordinating Public Services from the Top Down or Bottom-up? Implementation Gaps in ‘Joined-up Government’ Initiatives and Street-level Co-ordination of Homelessness Services in England

Coordination of organisations involved in public policies involves bringing organisational units in a system into a desirable set of relations, usually to bring about a set of favoured policy outcome. The issue of co-ordination is an enduring theme in discussion of public organizations; there is usually a trade off between benefits from division of labour between organisations and the resulting problems of co-ordination between parts of government (Gulick 1937). Focusing an organization (defined in terms of a unit with a distinct staff, budget or accountability structure) primarily on a purpose, set of processes, place -such as a region or client group, tends to result in some issues spanning more than one organizational unit. Coordination can involve a range of mechanisms and processes and a distinction is often made between the use of top down instruments or methods to influence the behaviour of lower level actors further down the policy chain, and bottom up procedures. The movement towards a broader array of organisations from both the public and private sectors and proliferation of levels of government involved in public services have made concerns about co-ordination mechanisms more pressing in recent decades. It is generally accepted that the era of hierarchical ‘government’, if it ever really existed, has long passed. Present day ‘governance’ often involves coordination in more complex, often horizontal, organisational structures with some hierarchical elements (Rhodes, 1996; Kickert *et al.*, 1997; Bardach 1998; Balloch and Taylor 2001).

Whilst there is much conceptual discussion about co-ordination and research using case studies there are fewer studies that seek to map the pattern of co-ordination in a policy sector and to explain variation in co-ordination mechanisms. This paper maps the operation of co-ordination at lower or ‘street’ level for the provision of local housing services to people without homes to identify vertical and horizontal co-ordination mechanisms. It assesses the relationship between component parts of co-ordination

(principally joint planning, delivery, budget, staff transfer and joint-protocols) to see whether parts are characteristically found in combination or are used separately. Section One sets out the existing state of academic research on co-ordination that motivates the research. Section Two explains the contemporary UK policy context which makes co-ordination in homelessness services a salient policy issue. Section Three sets out the study and the research methods used. The research is currently in progress so, in the absence of final results, the preliminary findings are presented and methodological issues are discussed.

Section One: Co-ordination of public services

It is widely recognised that many public sector activities involving collective attempts to address a policy issue and/or state activity entail multiple organisational units. Many of these units are private or voluntary sector bodies outside of direct public sector ownership or funding. Discussion of co-ordination often makes the distinction between vertical and horizontal forms of co-ordination and authority based versus voluntary co-ordination (Hjern and Porter, 1981; Provan and Milward, 1991; O'Toole, Hanf and Hupe, 1997, Stoker, 2000). Whilst a variety of forms are typically found in practice, agencies in service delivery networks such as those involved in local homelessness services in England are particularly subject to two forms of co-ordination: formal authority by super-ordinate bodies to direct activity and horizontal co-ordination through a variety of relationships that tend to be more voluntary in nature.

a) Vertical co-ordination

Vertical co-ordination mechanisms involve higher level governmental bodies using formal authority and a variety of informal tools, usually connected to their formal supervisory role, to mandate or encourage lower tier bodies to coordinate their activities. However, the operation of such systems is not straightforward. Research has long acknowledged the influence of lower level implementation actors on policy processes and outcomes, noting how public policy is often changed, adapted or even designed at this

level. For example, studies in the 1970s attempting to explain the apparent failure of large scale public programmes in the USA, highlighted a lack of fit between top level policy makers' intentions and the actions of administrators and civil servants on the ground. The 'implementation gap' was thought to be a sort of 'principal-agent problem' in which higher level actors encounter difficulties achieving compliance from subordinates (Lynn, 1996). It was also seen as a consequence of complex service delivery networks involving numerous organizations which meant that policy instructions or messages had to be transmitted through and vetoed by several agencies (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973). Later research from an economic theory of bureaucracy angle argued that as self-interested utility maximisers, civil servants had their own agendas to pursue which resulted in a distortion of policy outcomes (refs – Niskanen; Buchanan and Tullock).

Coordination, in the traditional approach, was seen principally as a question of top down control in order to counter such implementation gaps. Ideal typical models of hierarchical, bureaucratic systems outlined the conditions for 'perfect' implementation in which control and coordination would be possible. For instance, Hood (1976) suggests that in conditions of perfect implementation, the following features would be present. First, systems would be unitary, with only one line of authority; second, there would be uniform objectives, norms and rules across sub-units; third, 'perfect obedience' would be achieved, that is, there would be no resistance to the objectives set. In the absence of perfect obedience there would at least be perfect control to allow some room for recalcitrant bureaucrats whose behaviour would be scrutinised and monitored at every step. Fourth, there would be 'perfect coordination between administrative units, perfect information concerning the situation in hand and the capacity to specify tasks or the content of one's orders unambiguously' (1976: 7). Finally, there would be an absence of time pressure. Similarly, Hogwood and Gunn (1984) outline certain preconditions necessary for perfect implementation, two of which are of particular interest in the context of this discussion. First is the idea that there is a single implementing agency which is not overly-dependent on others, and that where there is some necessary dependency, this should be minimal. Second, perfect communication and coordination

among the various elements of a programme is seen as necessary. The first precondition is, by definition, lacking in an inter-organizational implementation network, and the second is highly unlikely to be present since messages are likely to lose accuracy as they are transmitted along informal channels. Drawing on such ideal typical models, conventional top-down strategies for countering implementing deficits and enhancing control in bureaucracies include tightening control over policy implementers, closer monitoring of their activities, and better clarified, less ambiguous policy mandates. Such arguments, in sum, supported the idea that effective implementation and effective outcomes was a case of strengthening bureaucracy, and making use of traditional instruments of coordination such as legislation and regulation (Ham and Hill, 1993).

b) Horizontal forms of co-ordination

Horizontal coordination involves a wide range of mechanisms that do not involve vertical authority and the associated controls outlined above. Such relationships typically include use of contracts, service level agreements, joint agreements, partnership structures but often looser, informal ties based on trust and reciprocity. Bottom up conceptions of the policy process emphasise that policy on co-ordination is, and on occasions should be, left deliberately ambiguous at the higher tiers of bureaucracy, with the intention that it should be 'worked out' at the implementation level. Some suggest that the implementation level is where policy should be made since this is where the real knowledge of local circumstances and needs is held (Elmore, 1979). In professional or semi-professional occupations, it is argued, the practitioners on the ground possess relevant expertise and information which higher level policy-makers lack. In these cases professionals may have particular claims to autonomy, making hierarchical regulation of these actors more difficult than for bureaucrats conducting routine work that is easily monitored and controlled. For such groups alternative regulatory mechanisms are more likely to be in place, such as professional codes and bodies, professional registers and disciplinary panels. Other work suggests that the pressures and demands on resources mean that street level bureaucrats have to play a creative game, rationing services and coping with the everyday pressures of work at the chalk face (Lipsky, 1980). It has also been argued

that in many cases policies which are likely to encounter resistance or prove unpopular are left deliberately vague, thus shifting responsibility for these policies from central onto local government. Some policies, on the other hand, are merely symbolic with few resources and policy makers have little intention that they should ever be realised on the ground (see Ham and Hill, 1993 for a discussion of this literature). These examples provide suggestions as to why responses to co-ordination problems are often generated from the bottom-up.

Growing recognition of the inherent limits of top down control within multi-actor policy settings has led to a search for new appropriate tools of governance (Salamon, 2002). Such tools are often described as ‘informal’ (Peters, 20XX), ‘soft’ or ‘light touch’ (Stoker, 2000). These involve exerting indirect influence over implementing actors, often by setting a broad policy direction whilst leaving room for discretion about how this is achieved. As one commentator has noted, governments that use contractors to provide services can ‘negotiate, create incentives, or threaten non-renewal of contract, but they cannot command’ (Kettl, 2002: 491). There is also a fairly substantial body of work which posits that inter-organisational policy settings are somehow ‘self-governing’ or ‘self-steering’, resisting central control (for example, Rhodes, 1996; Bogason and Toonen, 1998; Kooiman, 2003), albeit within the ‘shadow of hierarchy’ (Peters, 20XX). The role of central government in this view, rather than to control, is to enable interactions.

It has been suggested that instruments suitable for governing implementation networks therefore need to be capable of changing relationships between actors rather than simply their behaviour. According to de Bruijn and ten Heuvelhof (1997), ‘second-generation instruments’ such as communicative planning, parameters, covenants, contracts and incentives are considered more appropriate in such cases. These can be used in structures which are predominantly horizontal since they do not require a governing actor to be situated above the governed actors in a hierarchy.

An alternative view from the indirect tools approach suggests that coordinating multi-actor settings should not focus so much on instruments of governance, which are discussed because of their visibility, but on an understanding of the primary interactions between those in the field (Kooiman, 2003). According to this account, it is necessary to influence or coordinate at the level of the ‘spontaneous and relatively little organised forms of interactions’ which take place between policy implementers (Kooiman, 2003: 83). These patterns of interaction are described as fluid and informal channels of personal traffic between actors and include informal agreements, self-applying rules and semi-formalised codes of conduct. Others sympathetic to a bottom-up model have stressed the importance of processes of strategic interaction and games within networks (O’Toole, 1993; Klijn and Teisman, 1997). Klijn and Teisman (1997) suggest that network processes are analogous to games in which actors choose strategies that seem rational to them, and that these strategies are based on their perceptions of the game in which they are involved.

The literature on network management provides some pointers as to how processes of interaction or strategic action might be influenced. Klijn and Koppenjan (2000) suggest two methods of network management, namely process management and network constitution. These can be used to solve tensions in policy games which arise because of the diverse goals and interests of the players involved. Process management concerns aligning the perspectives of diverse participants in order to improve interactions. This type of management does not involve changing the network structure in any way; rather, the emphasis is on influencing the rules and resource distributions between existing actors. Methods include conflict management, supervising interactions, creating temporary organisational arrangements to coordinate the strategies of different actors, selecting and activating key actors with the resources to contribute, and encouraging the development of shared perceptions and common goals.

Network constitution, by contrast, involves making changes to the network. This may involve changing perceptions or ‘reframing’, changing rules, either formal or informal, changing the regulatory mechanisms, or changing the position and make up of

actors within the network, for example by introducing new actors. Network constitution strategies are regarded as time consuming and more difficult to implement, requiring a special set of skills, notably negotiation, motivational and mediation skills. These are the skills required of network mediators or stimulators. Williams (2002) also discusses the role of these individuals, known as ‘boundary spanners’. He suggests that these people, who possess the skills and competencies relevant for effective collaborative working, play a pivotal role in network-like situations.

In sum, the challenge of coordinating networks can be responded to in two principal ways. First, it can be regarded as a question of devising tailored, soft or indirect methods suitable for steering from a distance, in lieu of more traditional hierarchical instruments. Alternatively, it can be considered a matter of acknowledging that since networks present a fundamentally different set of coordination issues and due to the importance of influences at the implementation level, the most effective response is through bottom up network management and the development of appropriate competencies in public sector managers. Much of the previous work on the coordination of multi-actor, multi-agency implementation or policy networks has been developed in a fairly abstract way. The research reported below examines the methods of coordination used in the development of joint working in the homelessness sector. By measuring the extent of different forms of coordination it is possible to judge the relative importance of these different forms for a particular public service.

Section Two: Co-ordination and the contemporary ‘joined-up government’ policy agenda

The current UK government has been particularly concerned with trying to improve joint working under the ‘joined up government’ label (Goodship and Cope, 2001; Newman, 2001; Ling, 2002; James, 2003; Flinders, 2004; Entwistle and Martin, 2005). Indeed, rhetoric on partnerships and collaboration has been so strong that it has been suggested there is a new ‘hegemony of joined up governance’ within government (Williams, 2002: 106). Joining up government is usually seen in two ways. First, it is regarded as a

prerequisite for addressing cross-cutting issues which require input from several government departments and service delivery agencies. Secondly, it is regarded as a means of overcoming institutional fragmentation, that is, gaining some foothold over complex present day public service delivery systems, or ‘networks’ which increasingly involve multiple non-governmental and governmental organisations working on the same policy issue.

At central level in the UK, a number of initiatives have been introduced to enhance the seamlessness of central government, with the aim that better coordination at the centre will lead to improved joint working at the local level (see Ling, 2002; James 2003). Examples of such initiatives have included the creation of a number of dedicated units within central government to improve central coordination of cross-cutting issues such as a Regional Coordination Unit, a Social Exclusion Unit, a Strategy Unit, a Rough Sleepers Unit and a Neighbourhood Renewal Unit. A series of reviews have been undertaken by inter-departmental teams in order to improve joint working at central level on a range of cross-cutting issues (for example HM Treasury, 2002; DH, 2002). In addition, a number of more general reports have also been produced by government which discuss approaches for achieving joint working within central government (Richards *et al.*, 1999; PIU, 2000; NAO, 2001). A new regime of Public Service Agreements (PSAs) have been set out, detailing the key aims of each department with targets and measures of progress towards them. Several of the PSAs set out targets for programmes that cut across traditional departmental boundaries and are intended to improve the planning and delivery of cross-cutting policies (James 2004).

It is clear that in the homelessness sector, like many others, central government is currently attempting to encourage joint working at local authority level. The governance arrangements are summarised in Figure 1 in Appendix 1. Joint working can be conceived of as a meta-policy which the government is seeking to implement, concerned with the processes and structures by which policy is delivered rather than with substantive policy content. In this research an implementation gap is considered as a failure to bring about this meta-policy, both in terms of the ability to set in motion processes of coordination

and coordinated outcomes. By measuring the forms of joint working that are practised at the local level, the extent to which local systems have the joint working approaches desired by central government can be assessed, and it is possible to discern whether there is an implementation gap between government's concern to promote joint working, and practice on the ground.

Co-ordination through joint working is regarded as important in the provision of homelessness services for a number of reasons. Research has increasingly drawn attention to the multi-faceted nature of homelessness, and the government's approach has been a holistic one, recognising the need to address the wider factors associated with homelessness. Therefore, while it is known that homelessness is caused by structural issues such as unemployment, poverty, inadequate amounts of affordable housing and lack of appropriate community care services, it is also clear that other personal problems such as family breakdown, domestic violence and mental health problems can also be a catalyst for homelessness. In addition, there is a higher than usual prevalence of health and mental health problems including substance addictions amongst homeless populations, particularly rough sleepers (Fitzpatrick *et al.*, 2000). There is, therefore, a general acceptance that homelessness is not simply a housing issue and requires the involvement of multiple agencies.

The promotion of joint working by central government is also a response to the very practical problem of coordinating the multiple agencies involved. In the UK a loose network of agencies provides homelessness services, including a range of statutory and non-statutory agencies. Statutory agencies have a limited range of responsibilities for particular categories of homeless people, for instance in relation to housing needs and health issues. Voluntary sector agencies generally provide the majority of advice and associated support services for homeless clients requiring additional help, for instance in relation to financial, health or other personal issues, as well as hostel provision for those ineligible for housing under statutory definitions, including many rough sleepers. There are some quasi-market elements in the homelessness sector, with competition over resources allocated by the local authority as the commissioner of services and distributor

of central funding. For example, housing advice services are frequently contracted out to third sector providers. Housing provision is made by a range of providers, including housing associations which are quasi-public, non-profit bodies, private sector landlords and voluntary sector providers.

A number of methods have been used by government to encourage a joined up approach at local level, mainly using softer policy instruments but with some legislative requirements. Legislation has been updated under the Homelessness Act 2002 to include measures to encourage a more strategic, preventive, multi-agency approach. The Code of Guidance accompanying the Act (ODPM, 2002a) clarifies the responsibilities of different agencies where there are overlaps between their work in relation to homelessness, for instance where social services departments are involved with young people leaving care or families with dependent children.

Another statutory requirement which aims to stimulate joint working is the production by local housing authorities of multi-agency homelessness strategies for their local area, with certain the bodies singled out for involvement in this process. It is clear from the central guidance on producing homelessness strategies that government envisages the involvement of social services, probation services and health services in the process. Registered Social Landlords, as the principle provider of social housing, are also identified as important partners in this process, as well as neighbouring local authorities and local strategic partnerships.

Aside from limited these traditional, top down methods, a number of additional tools of governance have been used by the centre to encourage joint working between implementation agencies. These are mainly soft, light touch instruments suitable for coordinating fragmented systems, as discussed above. A classification by Stoker (2000) provides a useful organising framework for categorising these tools. This typology was developed to classify policy instruments used by the UK government since the late 1980s in the field of urban politics, although Stoker has suggested that the framework is also

suitable for analysing government's attempts to stimulate partnerships and collective action.

The first type of instrument is the 'cultural-persuasive technique', in other words, the use of government's moral authority to promote and extol the virtues of partnership approaches. This technique has been used widely in the promotion of joint working in the homelessness sector, with a discourse of partnerships pervading much of the recent policy documentation and central guidance. For instance, the Homelessness Code of Guidance (ODPM, 2002a) recommends a number of formal methods of joint working which could be adopted at local level, including multi-agency forums or working groups for practitioners and housing providers, 'joint protocols' outlining how agencies will share information and refer clients, joint assessment of clients by housing and social services departments, and the formalizing of links between agencies.

The second tool, again using Stoker's typology, is labelled 'communication' which involves creating forums or partnerships in which a range of stakeholders are brought together to communicate in order to enhance mutual learning. The urban field, argues Stoker, is replete with examples of both nationally and locally induced forums of this nature. Analysis of local authorities' homelessness strategies suggests that a range of homelessness forums exist at the local level, which provide a structure within which information sharing and collaboration can occur, such as landlords forums, domestic violence forums and housing officers forums. In addition, one of the consequences of the multi-agency homelessness strategy exercise has been the creation of multi-agency forums and strategy implementation groups in English local authorities.

The third instrument is the use of financial incentives to promote joint working. In the homelessness sector the Homelessness Innovation Fund is a competitive funding stream with special focus on projects employing collaborative, multi-agency approaches. The Supporting People programme is an additional pot which funds homelessness services generally but which also places emphasis on multi-agency approaches.

Fourth, monitoring can be a tool for promoting partnership approaches. The homelessness strategies can be seen as one form of this, since there is a requirement for local authorities to publish details of their multi-agency working arrangements and show a commitment to the joint working agenda within their strategies (ODPM 2004b). The identification and promotion of best practice is another variety of monitoring in Stoker's typology. In the homelessness sector the ODPM has identified a number of 'Regional Champions' to disseminate good practice on tackling homelessness, including the development of multi-agency approaches. Additionally, a number of best practice guides have been produced which identify local models of best practice in partnership working in relation to specific issues facing homeless people (ODPM, 2002b; 2004a; 2004c). In most cases this has been issued jointly by the relevant government departments or central agencies.

Section Three: The co-ordination of homelessness services

The research sets out to map the use of mechanisms for co-ordination of homelessness services in local areas within England. This enables the extent to which different vertical and horizontal methods are used and the balance between authority based methods and softer instruments to be assessed. In particular, are there implementation gaps in coordination: both in terms of an absence of vertical coordination and in centrally advised co-ordination policies for local adoption, such as joint protocols, joint assessment and joint monitoring, not being used on the ground?

Measuring co-ordination

The range of bodies involved at the local level are summarised in Figure 2 in the Appendix. This Figure is inclusive, not all bodies are found in all cases, and there is considerable variation in the operation of co-ordination between housing authorities and other bodies. Drawing on the existing literature, methods of co-ordination can be characterised on several dimensions with associated measures, and the relationship between these dimensions can be assessed:

- vertical authority based coordination eg directives, management intervention
- informal steering by the centre eg local knowledge of best practice guidance
- horizontal links, eg number of bodies in a network, joint budgets, staff transfer, local protocols

The full study will use a survey of all 354 local housing authorities, the main local government agencies with statutory responsibilities for homelessness. The draft survey is attached as Appendix 1. This will produce an assessment of the amount of joint working centred on the activities of the housing authority (rather than characterising the local network in its entirety). The aim is to produce valid and reliable measures of coordination activity. There are good reasons for thinking that the measures selected for the study are likely to be both. The survey will be addressed to the lead person in charge of homelessness at strategic level. Respondents are professionals in the area of housing and, especially given the discussion of issues around joint working, are likely to have an understanding of the concepts which fits with our understanding. Clearly, responses to a questionnaire are a subjective measure of joint working, but will be cross-checked with measures of coordination provided by auditors and subjective responses of people in other agencies, which assists the exposure of misrepresentation by respondents.

Because there are a wide range categories of issue faced by homeless people, respondents are asked to answer all questions in relation to 'single' vulnerable homeless people. This category is a widely understood label within the British homelessness sector, and many such people, providing they can demonstrate 'priority need' (for example due to a mental health problem, an illness or being vulnerable as a result of time spent in an institution) now qualify for assistance under legislation. There are networks of agencies involved in the provision of services for vulnerable single homeless people, ranging from hostels through to employment and training projects and specialist mental health, drug and alcohol services for those with complex needs. Whilst single homeless people are not a homogeneous group, specifying this category nevertheless provides some boundaries for defining the service, and allows identification of variation in the nature of

the homelessness problem that local providers face (for example, in terms of health, addiction, socio-economic characteristics of the homeless people).

The survey results are not yet available but analysis of a random sample of 40 homelessness strategies gives an indication of the form of the analysis and preliminary results. The strategies were used to identify the formal modes of co-ordination for homelessness services in general; the forms of co-ordination are summarised below for service planning and delivery (with the number of schemes given in brackets). Whilst it seems likely that the strategy documents do not give a full picture of joint working, ignoring informal contact for example and making the survey work an important part of the research, they do seem at least a reasonable measure of whether joint working is on the agenda of senior management in local housing authorities.

Service planning co-ordination

- Rent deposit or bond scheme (27)
- Multi-agency homelessness strategy steering or working group (24)
- User/ community consultation (24)
- Cross-boundary/ sub-regional homelessness working groups (11)
- Joint work to make use of empty properties, eg through empty property strategies , renovations grants (9)
- Multi-agency problem solving groups (5)
- Joint provision/ commissioning of services (5)

Operational co-ordination

- Joint protocols (29)
- Signposting customers to other agencies/ improving publicity about services, eg leaflets, posters (25)
- Directory of support services/ accommodation providers for users (20)
- Joint/ inter-agency training (19)
- Multi-agency monitoring system/ compatible data collection methods (19)
- Information sharing between agencies regarding services (18)

- Joint assessments/ common assessment procedures (14)
- Joint case work on specific complex clients (8)
- Attendance at other agencies' team meetings (8)
- Multi-agency early warning/ alerting system (8)
- Development of common referral procedures/ multi-agency referral forms (7)
- Placement of one agency inside another for surgeries, advice sessions etc (6)
- Joint events e.g. conferences, annual review days (5)

The results by local authority classified into three groups are summarised in Table 1. There is considerable variety in the use of schemes. Most local areas have several mechanisms, with the cases having a mean score of 9, a maximum of 16, a minimum of just 1 and a standard deviation of 3.9. Illustrative examples from each category (from high to low) are Stockton on tees, Colchester and Brentwood. The component parts of the packages of coordination mechanisms vary extensively, perhaps indicating that they are seen as substitutes for each other.

**Table 1 Classification of local housing authorities:
number of joint working practices**

	N	%
High (>10)	15	38
Medium(6-10)	20	50
Low (0-5)	5	12
Total	40	100

Conclusion

The use of formal means of coordination varies extensively between local areas. Although formal vertical coordination is very limited, horizontal coordination involving a range of formal methods (such as joint planning and delivery mechanisms) is evident in most local areas. Much of the formal coordination appears consistent with the

exhortations of central government to ‘join-up’ government. Although homelessness legislation does not explicitly state what forms collaboration should take, it is clear that the good practice in joint working suggested by the government is to some extent being followed. Homelessness strategies indicate that most local authorities have either adopted or are considering adopting at least some of the measures listed in central guidance. However, the use of co-ordination measures is much more varied than is suggested by central policy documents. Whilst some areas seem to adopt a package of measures, others have only a few mechanisms, and some very few. There is also variation in the component parts of the packages, perhaps suggesting that forms of coordination are seen as substitutes for each other. Alternatively, this may indicate a lack of consensus on best practice in coordination, or at least the need to choose strategies based on highly local characteristics that, at first sight, would seem to be more than only variation in the nature of the homelessness problem between areas.

The analysis of formal strategies as set out in homelessness strategies is likely to understate the extent of coordination which may take place through informal personal contacts and linkages between staff in relevant agencies. It is plausible that collaboration involves local networking, sharing information, communicating, educating and learning from each other, as much as more formal collaborative mechanisms and structures of governance. The survey of local authorities will provide a better picture of such practices through assessing overall contact between bodies. However, the variation in the mix of informal and formal practices will itself be a finding about the use of coordination tools, raising the issue of whether they are effectively substitutes for each other serving similar purposes by different means

In a second stage of the analysis, the research will seek to explain the variety of coordination methods used locally through multivariate regression techniques. In particular, whilst national policy sets the menu, local choice appears to have been influential in determining which measures have been selected. Whilst it is hard to separate out the factors that are local or national some authorities have come under more central pressure to adopt desired models, for example because of poor overall

performance of the local authority as assessed by auditors. This factor could potentially explain variation, as could the differing characteristics of street level bureaucrats between localities (such as the relative dominance of housing professionals), variety of institutional structures and political factors (extent of single party political control, and whether the local party is the same as the party of national government). The relative importance of such factors can be assessed alongside other variables, such as variation in the nature of the single homelessness problem. Finally, some indication of the perceived effectiveness of the structures can be given. The survey notes, as a potential alternative dependent variable, the difference between actual contact between organisations and a notional ideal level. Such a variable indicates perceived co-ordination gaps (and potentially over-co-ordination) which will form the subject of further analysis.

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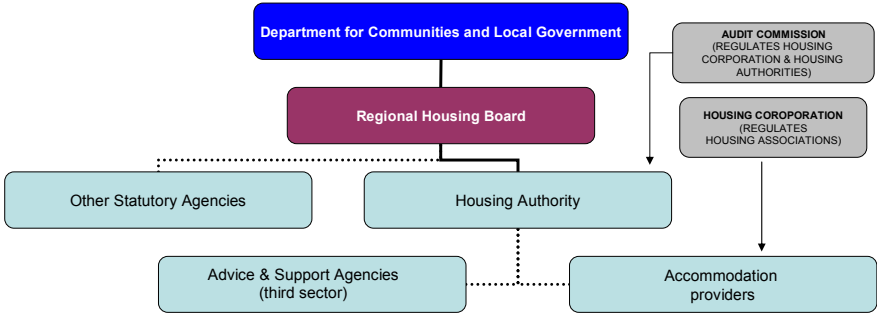
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Fig 1: GOVERNANCE OF HOMELESSNESS SECTOR



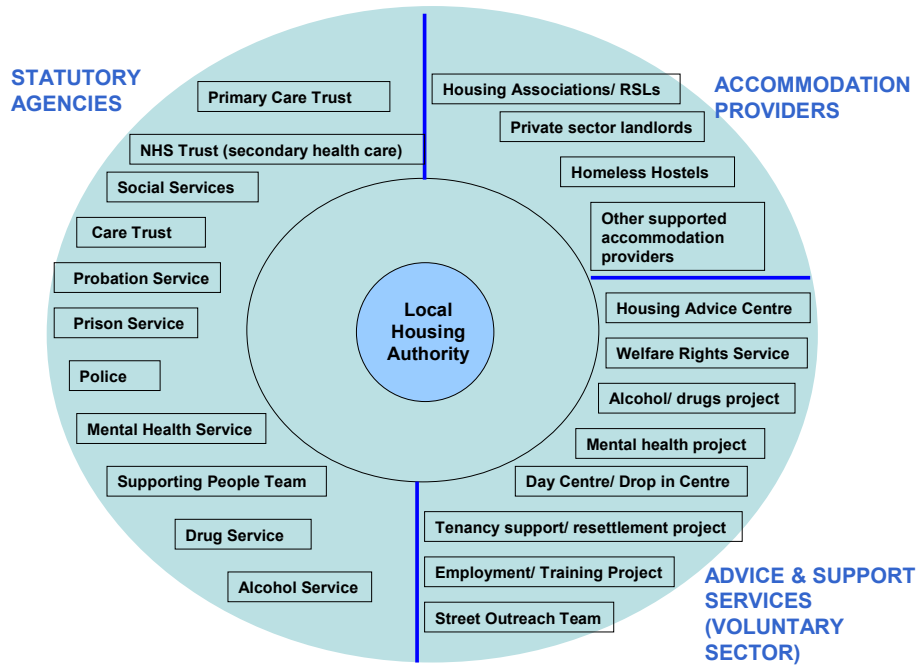


Figure 2: Local bodies involved in homelessness services

Questionnaire: Joint working in Homelessness Sector

This questionnaire seeks to find out your views on joint working between your housing authority and other organizations involved in providing accommodation and support services to homeless people or those at risk of homelessness. The group of homeless people we are interested in is **single homeless people**, both statutory and non-statutory cases, including but not exclusively rough sleepers. Please answer all questions in relation to your work with single homeless people. The research **does not include** children and families, young people or care leavers, or those affected by domestic violence.

The questionnaire should be completed by the person in your housing authority leading on the homelessness strategy.

Please write in answers, circle or tick the boxes as appropriate.

<p>Background information</p> <p>1. Your job title: _____</p> <p>2. How many years have you been in your current post? _____</p> <p>3. Has your career so far predominantly been in housing or in other services? Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> (please state which) _____</p> <p>4. Is your overall homelessness service contracted out to another organisation? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>5. Is your housing advice service contracted out to another organisation? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>6. Is your homelessness service/ homeless person's unit separate from your housing advice service? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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7. To the best of your knowledge, which, if any, of the following formal joint working arrangements are in place between agencies working with *single homeless people* in your local authority (even if these involve only some agencies or are present only in relation to specific categories of single homeless people)?

Please tick as appropriate, also indicating if the housing authority is directly involved in the process.

Formal joint working arrangement	Yes	No	Don't Know	If YES, is the housing authority directly involved?	
				Yes	No
Operational level multi-agency group/ forum					
Middle management level multi-agency group/ forum					
Strategic management level multi-agency group/ forum					
Inter-agency training for staff					
Joint client monitoring procedures					
Joint case conferences					
Outreach service involving more than one agency					
A dedicated post for forging inter-agency links					
Jointly commissioned services					
Joint budgets					
Location of additional specialist services within existing agencies					
Joint directory of information on local services					
Information sharing protocols					
Other joint protocols					
Joint assessment procedures					
Multi-agency homelessness team or project					

8. How much contact (for example, by phone, e-mail, fax, or in person) does your housing authority have with the agencies listed in relation to service planning and delivery for single homeless people? Please circle the number which represents the amount of contact for service planning (column A) AND case referrals/ handling of individual cases (column B). If applicable, add up to 2 other bodies you think are important but are not listed.

Codes 1 = very little contact 2 = little contact 3 = a moderate amount of contact 4 = a lot of contact 5 = a very great deal of contact 6 = don't know/ not applicable	A - Contact in relation to general service planning for clients					B - Contact for regular case referrals/ handling of individual clients						
	Very little		Very great deal		N / A	Very little		Very great deal		N / A		
STATUTORY AGENCIES/ LOCAL AUTHORITY DEPARTMENTS:												
Social Services	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Care Trust (if applicable)	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Primary Care Trust (GPs for column B)	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
NHS Trust (hospitals for column B)	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mental Health Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Drug Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Alcohol Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Supporting People Team	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Police	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Probation Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Prison Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Housing Benefits section in authority	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Housing Advice section in authority (if different from homelessness section)	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
VOLUNTARY SECTOR AGENCIES:												
Housing advice project	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Welfare rights service (eg CAB)	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Meaningful occupation/ training/ employment project	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Day centre/ drop in centre	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mental health project	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Drug/ alcohol project	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Tenancy support/ resettlement project	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Street outreach project	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
ACCOMMODATION PROVIDERS/ MANAGERS:												
Homeless hostel(s)	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Relevant housing association(s)	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Other relevant supported accommodation providers	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Private sector landlords	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Large Scale Voluntary Transfer Organisation (if applicable)	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
OTHER BODIES NOT LISTED:												
1.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6

9. We are also interested in the *appropriate* amount of contact. For the bodies listed below, how much contact would the housing authority *ideally* have with the agencies listed to deliver and plan services for single homeless people, without hindering its ability to achieve its other organizational aims. Please circle as appropriate. If applicable, add up to 2 other bodies you think are important but are not listed.

Codes 1 = very little contact 2 = little contact 3 = a moderate amount of contact 4 = a lot of contact 5 = a very great deal of contact 6 = don't know/ not applicable	A - Contact in relation to general service planning for clients						B - Contact for regular case referrals/ handling of individual clients					
	Very little				Very great deal	N / A	Very little				Very great deal	N / A
STATUTORY AGENCIES/ LOCAL AUTHORITY DEPARTMENTS:												
Social Services	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
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Mental Health Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Drug Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Alcohol Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Supporting People Team	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Police	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Probation Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Prison Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
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Drug/ alcohol project	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Tenancy support/ resettlement project	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
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Other relevant supported accommodation providers	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Private sector landlords	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Large Scale Voluntary Transfer Organisation (if applicable)	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
OTHER BODIES NOT LISTED:												
1.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6

10. We are also interested in the amount of contact between higher level regional and national bodies and your housing authority, both in terms of the amount you think *there is* and the amount you think *there should be*. By contact we mean the extent to which these bodies contact your authority to influence the way in which homelessness services are co-ordinated or 'joined up'.

Circle one answer in **column A** for each body to indicate *how much overall contact of this sort there is from the following bodies*.

Circle one answer in **column B** for each body to indicate *how much overall contact of this sort there should be in an ideal world*.

Please add up to two other bodies you think are important which are not listed.

Codes 1 = very little contact 2 = little contact 3 = a moderate amount of contact 4 = a lot of contact 5 = a very great deal of contact 6 = <i>don't know/ not applicable</i>	A – ACTUAL CONTACT						B – IDEAL CONTACT					
	Very little	Very great deal				N / A	Very little	Very great deal				N / A
REGIONAL/ NATIONAL BODIES												
Auditors/ Inspectors	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Housing Corporation	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Regional Housing Board	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Department for Communities and Local Government (formerly Office of the Deputy Prime Minister)	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
OTHER REGIONAL/ NATIONAL BODIES NOT LISTED:												
1.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6

11. Additional comments. Please use this space if you have any additional views you would like to express on the topic of joint working in homelessness services or in relation to this survey.



**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE,
YOUR INPUT IS HIGHLY VALUED. PLEASE RETURN IN THE STAMPED-
ADDRESSED ENVELOPE.**

**Contact details: Alice Moseley, Department of Politics, University of Exeter,
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