

# HERO scheme

Pat Smith

Chief Housing Officer

# Background

- No JCP and isolated rural and deprived communities
- HERO project in place since 2009
- Originally DCLG Trailblazer funding for 2 year with 1 HERO Officer (Housing Energy Re training and Options)
- Holistic outreach service
- Works with gypsy/travellers

# Bringing in income 1

- The scheme so successful others wanted the service
- Charge of £10,000 per day per annum
- Self sufficient scheme with income /external funding
- Currently 1 day with an HA (may be increased to two)
- I half day for Children centres

# Bringing in income 2

- 2 days a week for Dartford BC
- Looking to do surgery for Dartford Children centre
- Looking to increase surgeries for District wide children centres
- Possible work to minimise impact of Universal credit and Welfare reform

# Considered excellent service

- Awarded Kent award for innovation and homelessness
- DCLG see it as excellent practice
- Kent Local Authorities consider excellent practice and want the service or try to emulate it !
- Michael Fallon MP thinks it is a great service

# Breakdown of type of advice

- Benefits 47%
- Housing (homelessness and housing advice) 31%
- Debt 11%

# Results

- 2013/2014 ....245 cases assisted
- 2014/2015 ....271 cases assisted
- 2015/2016 quarter 1 only....78
- Every case above is a success preventing eviction and homelessness
- Proactive work avoids eviction

# Comments from service users

- “A big thank you from the bottom of my heart”
- “HERO officer are so easy to talk to , very knowledgeable and really helpful”
- “Thanks for helping me claim back my benefit I couldn’t have done it without you”
- “Words cannot express the gratitude from my family for your support and assistance over a difficult time”