



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee - 29 January 2024

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Report Summary	
Report Title	Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024–2029.
Purpose of Report	To provide Policy & Performance Improvement Committee with an opportunity to review the draft Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 – 2029 prior to being presented to Cabinet for approval.
Recommendations	That the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee consider the contents of the draft strategy and review, posing any questions, clarifications or additions as necessary. The implementation of a new Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy is both a statutory requirement and delivers against a key action within the Community Plan under Objective 2 – increase the supply, choice and standard of housing.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Policy & Performance Improvement Committee has requested an opportunity to review the draft Homeless Prevention & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024- 2029 prior to its presentation at Cabinet for approval.
- 1.2 The new Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 – 2029 follows on from the Council’s existing Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeper Strategy, 2019-2024. The production of a Homelessness Strategy is a statutory requirement under the Homelessness Act 2002, requiring housing authorities to carry out a homelessness review for their district and formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of the review every five years (as a minimum).
- 1.3 Additional duties for local authorities have been introduced via the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (to produce a strategy that involves partners in earlier identification and intervention to prevent homelessness) and the Government’s Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 (the expectation for Local Authorities to produce a Rough Sleeping Strategy).

- 1.4 Newark & Sherwood District Council has brought these duties together to create a collective 'Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 – 2029' which is attached at **Appendix 1** of this report for consideration.
- 1.5 The Homelessness Review is attached at **Appendix 2** and is based on an evaluation of:
- i. Progress in delivering the 2019-24 strategy aims and objectives;
 - ii. The current and emerging national, regional and local policy context;
 - iii. An assessment of the housing market;
 - iv. Analysis of official homelessness statistics, local rough sleeping data, stock housing data and Private Rented Sector statistics over the last four years;
 - v. Research into the root causes of homelessness and the likely future levels of homelessness; and
 - vi. Consultation with a range of stakeholders and those with lived experience throughout the development of the review and subsequent Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 Our vision is for 2024-2029 strategy is for Newark & Sherwood: *"To create an environment where people lead safe and healthy lifestyles, ensuring suitable housing for all. At the heart of this is our aim to break the cycle of homelessness by ensuring the causes of homelessness are identified at an earlier stage and prevented where possible".*
- 2.2 Whilst a statutory requirement of the Council to deliver, the Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeper Strategy can only be delivered through effective partnership work and therefore the strategy's delivery plan will be a collective plan to tackle homelessness with partners.
- 2.3 A draft delivery plan is included within the strategy. The delivery plan will be populated in partnership with key stakeholders across mid Nottinghamshire once the strategy has been approved.
- 2.4 At the core of this strategy are six priorities which will underpin our approach to the development and delivery of homelessness services in Newark & Sherwood:
- i. Early intervention through effective partnership working.
 - ii. The provision of an accessible, agile, and responsive homelessness service.
 - iii. Access to affordable and quality accommodation across all sectors.
 - iv. Tackle rough sleeping by developing and improving pathways.
 - v. Linking homelessness, health, well-being, and housing together to improve the life chances and aspirations of those affected.
 - vi. Delivering holistic support solutions to sustain long term tenancies and prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.
- 2.5 To ensure that our six priorities are delivered and progress is monitored, we will:
- i. Develop a delivery plan with key stakeholders and agree robust actions with leads and timescales assigned.

- ii. Carry out an annual review to re-evaluate and align the delivery plan to current findings or situations to be presented to Cabinet.
 - iii. Agree a robust data analysis framework to monitor performance and adapt to findings.
 - iv. Monitor the local, regional and national policy context.
 - v. Facilitate appropriate governance through the Mid-Notts Joint Homelessness Prevention Strategic Group and the Newark & Sherwood Homeless Interagency Forum.
- 2.6 To fund homelessness prevention, every local authority receives a Homelessness Prevention Grant from central government, with a recommendation to ringfence the funding and meet the following conditions:
- i. Embed the Homelessness Reduction Act and contribute to ending rough sleeping by increasing activity to prevent single homelessness.
 - ii. Reduce the number of families in temporary accommodation by maximising family homeless prevention.
 - iii. Reduce the use of B&B accommodation for families.
 - iv. Report total homelessness spend under the categories of temporary accommodation, staffing, prevention activities, relief activities.
 - v. Submit accurate data or up to 10% of funding may be deducted.
- 2.7 Newark & Sherwood received £226,279 in 2022/23 for Homelessness Prevention. This funding is used to deliver core services including prevention, staffing and contributions to partner delivery through service level agreements and grant funding including: Sherwood and Newark Citizens Advice, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire Credit Union, Home-Start, Rough Sleeper Initiative Partnership and the Furniture Project.
- 2.8 Allocations for the current and next year stand at £236,278 for 2023/24 and £240,767 for 2024/25. This funding will be aligned directly to the priorities within the new strategy.

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Financial Implications: FIN 23-24/7442

There are no additional financial implications resulting from this report. Any specific activities requiring funding would be presented under separate cover.

Background Papers

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Newark and Sherwood District Council

Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy

2024 – 2029

‘Ending Homelessness Together’

CONTENT



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FOREWORD

‘Everyone should live in an environment that enables a safe and healthy lifestyle’.



I am pleased to introduce our new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024-2029. The strategy follows on from the Council’s existing Homelessness Strategy, covering the period 2019-2024.

Our vision for Newark and Sherwood is to create an environment where people lead safe and healthy lifestyles, ensuring suitable housing for all. At the heart of this is our aim to break the cycle of homelessness by ensuring the causes are identified at an earlier stage and prevented where possible.

This Strategy sets out our priorities and objectives to respond to the challenges ahead, reduce homelessness and the impact of homelessness in Newark and Sherwood, and subsequently support the Council’s Strategic Priorities and Community Plan delivery.

Homelessness has a substantial impact on the lives of those affected - for some, homelessness and rough sleeping can be a result of more long-established and complex issues including trauma, offending and substance misuse, often resulting in inequality, poverty, poor health & wellbeing.

This strategy sets out our person-centred approach and creates sustainable solutions that focus on an individual’s need and aspirations; encouraging and working with individuals to create their own solutions.

We recognise that homelessness is complex and a much wider issue than a lack of housing or rough sleeping alone. Our partners play a vital role in their delivery of this strategy, and we value their expertise, dedication and support. We will work together to respond to the challenges ahead and to be innovative in our thinking, finding lasting solutions to tackle homelessness and support our most vulnerable residents.

We will ensure that this strategy and delivery plan are live documents. Progress will be reviewed annually by the council and through the Mid Notts Joint Homelessness Prevention Strategic Group.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all the individuals and organisations who have contributed to the collation of the comprehensive district wide homelessness review and the development of this strategy.

Councillor Lee Brazier, Portfolio Holder for Housing

INTRODUCTION



This Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 – 2029 follows on from the Council’s existing Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy documents, covering the period 2019-2024.

The Homelessness Act 2002 and Code of Guidance (Section 1 (1) of the 2002 Homelessness Act) gives Housing Authorities a power and duty to carry out a homelessness review for their district and formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of the review every 5 years as a minimum.

Additional duties have been introduced via the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 - to produce a strategy that involves partners in earlier identification and intervention to prevent homelessness.

As part of the homelessness strategy, housing authorities should develop effective action plans to help ensure that the objectives, targets and milestones are achieved. To be effective the homelessness strategy will be based on realistic assumptions and be developed and jointly owned with partners.

The Government’s Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 placed an expectation on Local Authorities to produce a Rough Sleeping Strategy.

The 2022 ‘Ending Rough Sleeping for Good’ strategy sets out how the Government and its partners will work together to deliver on the Government’s manifesto commitment to end rough sleeping in this Parliament. It also lays the foundations for long-term system change to end rough sleeping sustainably and for good.

Newark and Sherwood District Council has brought these duties together to create a collective ‘Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 - 2029’.

For the homelessness strategy to be effective, we will ensure that it is consistent with other local plans and is developed with, and has the support of, all relevant local authority departments and partners.

OUR VISION AND PRIORITIES

Our vision for Newark and Sherwood is to create an environment where people lead safe and healthy lifestyles, ensuring suitable housing for all. At the heart of this is our aim to break the cycle of homelessness by ensuring the causes of homelessness are identified at an earlier stage and prevented where possible.

At the core of this strategy there are six priorities which will underpin our approach to the development and delivery of homelessness services in Newark and Sherwood:

Early intervention through effective partnership working

The provision of an accessible, agile, and responsive homelessness service

Access to affordable and quality accommodation across all sectors

Tackle rough sleeping by developing and improving pathways

Linking health, well-being, and housing together to improve the life chances and aspirations of those affected

Delivering holistic support solutions to sustain long term tenancies and prevent homelessness and rough sleeping

To ensure that the priorities are developed, and progress is monitored, we will:

Develop an action plan with key stakeholders

Carry out an annual progress review

Agree a robust analysis framework of performance data

Monitor the local, regional and national policy context

Quarterly monitoring by the Mid Notts Joint Homelessness Prevention Strategic Group and the Newark and Sherwood Homeless Interagency Forum

HOW THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN DEVELOPED



This strategy was developed alongside colleagues at Ashfield District Council and Mansfield District Council as part of our continued commitment to joined-up working across Mid-Nottinghamshire to tackle homelessness.

It is based on a review of:

- Our progress in delivering the 2019-24 strategy aims and objectives
- The current and emerging national, regional and local policy context
- An assessment of the housing market
- Analysis of official homelessness statistics, local rough sleeping data, stock housing data and Private Rented Sector statistics
- Research into the root causes of homelessness and the likely future levels of homelessness

The full findings of this review are detailed separately in our Homelessness Review 2024.

We consulted with a range of stakeholders throughout the development of this strategy:

-
- We asked internal teams and external stakeholders to identify the strengths and weaknesses of our work to tackle homelessness, and to tell us what we should consider doing differently.
- We later invited internal teams and external stakeholders to a face-to-face event to discuss the proposed priorities and identify actions they'd like to see us and our partners take to deliver them.
- The Local Influence Networks discussed and approved the proposed priorities.
- Supported housing and temporary accommodation residents were invited to a focus group to discuss their experience of homelessness and the proposed priorities.

2019 – 2024 ACHIEVEMENTS



As part of our Homeless Review, we have reviewed the success of our 2019-24 Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy. The following successes have been identified:

- Improved access to, and sustainment of tenancies in privately rented accommodation with dedicated Landlord Liaison Officers
- Continued partnerships with Sherwood and Newark Citizens Advice to provide a Debt and Welfare Advice Service
- A homelessness Prevention Programme in secondary schools and colleges, delivered by Broxtowe Youth Homelessness
- Introduction of Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire Credit Union Service
- Targeted support to young families through Home-Start
- Additional supported housing for rough sleepers with higher/complex needs following a successful bid to the Next Steps Accommodation Programme
- Supporting faith groups to provide 'The Well' Drop in for homeless singles or rough sleepers
- The delivery of Alexander House, a new temporary accommodation provision in Newark
- Initiation of a successful Rough Sleeper Action Group
- Countywide Rough Sleeper Initiative bid and funding for Rough Sleeper services
- Domestic Abuse Housing Liaison Worker in place as a result of the new Domestic Abuse Act

HOMELESSNESS IN NEWARK AND SHERWOOD



Between April 2019 and March 2023, the main findings from the Homelessness Review tell us that:

- On average 800 households request assistance from the Housing Options Team each year. In 2022/23 the council experienced the highest number of approaches with an increase of 106% since 2019/20.
- Loss of Assured Shorthold Tenancy is the highest cause of homelessness in Newark and Sherwood, closely followed by friends/family no longer willing to accommodate.
- Single female with children has been the highest household type of application, but has reduced over the last four years, similarly for couples with and without children.
- The overall highest household type threatened with homelessness and awarded a prevention duty is single households.
- 55% of cases threatened with homelessness are prevented with a move to alternative accommodation.
- The number of single males already homeless is much higher than those that can be prevented.
- Dependent children are the primary reason for a priority need in Newark and Sherwood.
- Of all the acceptances, 21% are found permanent accommodation through acceptance of a Part 6 offer (social housing).
- On average 18 households per quarter are placed into Temporary accommodation.
- The largest increase in temporary accommodation placements is single males with complex needs, the number of single females has also increased since 2019-20 but not at the same rate.
- 62% of rough sleepers placed into short-term/emergency accommodation are EEA Nationals.
- The Rough Sleeper monthly snapshots total 52 EEA Nationals being found in Newark and Sherwood in 2022/23 with 26% being new rough sleepers.
- The average number of rough sleepers found per year totals 98 and that 48% are new to the street.
- 46% of homeless households disclosed on or more other support needs in addition to homelessness, the top four support needs in Newark and Sherwood are history of mental health, substance use, physical ill health and disability or a risk of/has experienced domestic abuse.
- Housing Stock data and the allocation of the councils shows that, over the last three years, 28% of allocations have been awarded to those in a homelessness banding.

LOCAL CONTEXT



At a local level, Newark and Sherwood District Council has several strategies that guide contribute to or have synergies with the delivery of homelessness and rough sleeper services. These include:

Newark and Sherwood District Council Community Plan 2020 – 2023 The Community Plan sets out the Council’s objectives over a three-year period, to ensure that the district continues to be a place where people choose to live, work, invest and spend their recreational time.

Landlord Strategy 2022 -2027 This strategy establishes the vision for Council-owned social housing within Newark & Sherwood and the contribution that it will make to achieve the ambitions of the Community Plan 2020-23 and beyond.

Tenancy Strategy 2022 – 2026 The Localism Act 2011 placed a duty on all local authorities to produce a Tenancy Strategy to sit alongside the Landlord Strategy, Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy, Allocations Scheme and any Registered Provider’s Tenancy Policies.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2026 This strategy sets out a four-year plan for improving the health and wellbeing of local residents to support our community plan objectives.

Housing Allocation Scheme Council housing and some Registered Provider (RP) properties (where NSDC has ‘Nomination Rights’) are let to people in accordance with this Scheme. NSDC has Nomination Rights to most RP properties in the district. This means NSDC nominates applicants on the Housing Register who are successful in 'bidding'.

Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023 - 2028 The Newark and Sherwood Housing Strategy identifies the key priorities over the next five years and sets out in the Delivery Plan what the Council and its partners are planning to do to address them and move Newark and Sherwood forward by identifying opportunities, investment decisions, legislative changes and setting out how they can be realised.

GOVERNANCE



The strategy will be launched at an event with stakeholders where we will collaborate with partners to create a full delivery plan. Going forward an annual homelessness review will take place to re-evaluate and realign the action plan to deliver the priorities of the Strategy.

The Mid-Nottinghamshire Joint Homelessness Prevention Strategic Group (JHPSG) will continue to meet quarterly and will play a role in the delivery and governance of the delivery plans.

A Newark and Sherwood Homelessness Interagency Group will be established and hold responsibility for ensuring the priorities and agreed actions of the Strategy are achieved locally.

The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy is approved by Cabinet and will receive annual updates and provide scrutiny and challenge.

If you wish to contact us, please either, write to us, e-mail us or telephone: -

Homelessness Strategy

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DELIVERY PLAN

The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy Delivery Plan is a collective plan to tackle homelessness with partners that will be equally responsible for its delivery.

The action plan will be a live document which will be developed with and jointly owned with key partners.

Objective 1 - Early intervention through effective partnership working			
Milestone	Action	Lead and partners	Target date
To prevent as many residents as possible from becoming homeless, with a particular focus on those becoming homeless from a private rented sector tenancy, friends, and family no longer able to accommodate or as a result of domestic abuse.	Reduce the number of evictions from Assured Shorthold tenancies to below the national average. Ensure particular understanding for the main reasons for ending an assured shorthold and find possible solutions to mitigate this.		
	Understand the reasons that friends and family can no longer accommodate and find solutions, such as mediation or incentives to continue to accommodate.		
	high reason for homelessness is other, guidance from DLUHC is to break this down further.		
	to identify ways to increase the number of preventions through early intervention and reduce the number that are already homeless and owed a relief duty.		
	Consider the rise in single homelessness and the complexities that can make it harder for services to prevent homelessness		

Objective 2 - The provision of an accessible, agile and responsive homelessness service			
Provide a high-quality service that customers are satisfied with and provide opportunities for customers to influence the design and delivery of services – remember this is not just a council strategy, this relates to the whole system approach	To carry out a review of the effectiveness of the Housing Wizard, understand the reasons for an increase in approaches and take necessary steps to improve outcomes for the customer and to make best use of officer time.		
	to adopt a more data-driven and evidence-based approach to tackling homelessness.		
	ensure the Duty to Refer is effective and that the authority is able to assist people at the earliest opportunity to ensure the prevention of homelessness		
Objective 3 - Access to affordable and quality accommodation across all sectors			
Help as many residents as possible to move from one home to another without the need for emergency and temporary accommodation. Influence where it is needed and that it is of good quality	consider if the large number of main duty decisions having no priority need is due to the number of single homelessness that cannot be prevented or relieved and therefore resulting in continued homelessness for many that do not fit the priority need criteria		
To understand and contribute towards a robust PRS in Newark and Sherwood. PRS is our biggest reason for homelessness, but also our second biggest type of accommodation secured for homeless households after social housing	The largest number of allocations, that have been awarded a homelessness bandings are from households moving from the Private Rented Sector or no longer able to stay with friends and family. Priority should be given to the prevention of homelessness from this type of accommodation.		
Objective 4 - Tackle rough sleeping by developing and improving pathways			
RSI may come to an end before the end of the strategy, create a	No fixed abode is also high but a cohort that we know little about. More		

contingency plan if RSI funding ends and there are no further rounds of funding	knowledge on where people are staying and how they secure a place to sleep which prevents rough sleeping		
Objective 5 - Linking health, well-being and housing together to improve the life chances and aspirations of those affected			
To ensure Psychologically Informed Environments (day to day running of services are designed to take the psychological and emotional needs of people with these experiences into account) and Trauma informed Care (opportunity for individuals to engage more fully in their health care, to develop a trusting relationship with their provider) are indicated in the shaping and progression of the strategy and action plan.			
Better understand the projections of core homelessness levels and child poverty, as well as the housing market trends and the anticipation that there may be a rise in homelessness in Newark and Sherwood between 2024 – 2029			
Objective 6 - Delivering holistic support solutions to sustain long term tenancies and prevent homelessness and rough sleeping			
Encourage and support leaders of key organisations to do more to prioritise SMD and prevent homelessness			

Appendix 2

Newark and Sherwood District Council

DRAFT

Homelessness Review

2024 – 2029

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List of abbreviations or meanings

ACRS	Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy
ARAP	Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme
ASI	Afghan Syrian Iraqi
AST	Assured Shorthold Tenancy
care experienced	Those that have been cared for outside of a family
DAHA	Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance
DELTA	The online system provided by DLUHC to facilitate the collection of statistical data and the administration of grant applications
DLUHC	Department for Levelling up Housing and Communities
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
HAST	Homelessness Advice and Support Team
HCLIC	Quarterly data returns on local authorities' actions under statutory homelessness legislation
HFU	Homes for Ukraine
HIF	Homeless Interagency Forum
HPG	Homeless Prevention Grant
HWB	Health and Wellbeing Board
ICB	Integrated Care Board
ICS	Integrated Care System
JHPSG	Joint Homelessness Prevention Strategic Group
LHA	Local Housing Allowance
LINs	Local Influence Networks
lived experience	Those that have experienced homelessness themselves, giving them a personal knowledge or understanding
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MCCA	Mid Central Community Action
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
NCC	Nottinghamshire County Council
NLCU	Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire Credit Union
NHAS	National Homelessness Advice Service
NRPF	No Recourse to Public Funds
NSAP	Next Steps Accommodation Programme
NSDC	Newark and Sherwood District Council
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PIE	Psychologically Informed Environments
PRS	Private Rented Sector
RP	Registered Providers
RSAG	Rough Sleeper Action Group
RSI	Rough Sleeper Initiative
SMD	Severe Multiple Disadvantage
SNCA	Sherwood and Newark Citizens Advice
SWEP	Severe Weather Emergency Protocol
SVPR	Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation
TIC	Trauma Informed Care
UKRS	United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Homelessness Review and the related Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 – 2029 follow on from the Council’s existing Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy documents, covering the period 2019-2024.
- 1.2 The Homelessness Act 2002 and Code of Guidance (Section 1 (1) of the 2002 Homelessness Act) gives Housing Authorities a power and duty to carry out a homelessness review for their district and formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of the review every 5 years as a minimum.
- 1.3 Additional duties have been introduced via the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 - to produce a strategy that involves partners in earlier identification and intervention to prevent homelessness.
- 1.4 As part of the homelessness strategy, Housing Authorities should develop effective action plans to help ensure that the objectives, targets and milestones are achieved. To be effective the homelessness strategy will be based on realistic assumptions and be developed and jointly owned with partners.
- 1.5 This is not just a council strategy, this is a collective plan to tackle homelessness together, a partnership that includes all agencies and services that can assist anyone that is homeless or at risk of homelessness. All will be equally responsible for its delivery.
- 1.6 The Government Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 placed an expectation on Local Authorities to produce a Rough Sleeping Strategy. The 2022 ‘Ending Rough Sleeping for Good’ strategy sets out how the Government and its partners will work together to deliver on the Government’s manifesto commitment to end rough sleeping in this Parliament. It also lays the foundations for long-term system change to end rough sleeping sustainably and for good.
- 1.7 Newark and Sherwood District Council will bring these duties together to create a collective ‘Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 - 2029’.
- 1.8 For the homelessness strategy to be effective, we will ensure that it is consistent with other local plans and is developed with, and has the support of, all relevant local authority departments and partners.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 This section sets out the process we followed to progress the Homelessness Review and develop the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024-29, including working in collaboration with other Nottinghamshire housing authorities, gathering data and consulting with stakeholders.
- 2.2 We have worked in collaboration across Mid-Nottinghamshire, with Mansfield District Council and Ashfield District Council to develop the Homelessness Review. All three local authorities have taken a similar approach to carry out the review and develop the subsequent strategies. The aims and objectives of all three strategies not only align to each other, but also to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategies of other Nottinghamshire authorities.
- 2.3 A review of progress against the 2019-24 action plan has been carried out, considering if any actions should be carried forward into the 2024-2029 strategy and to learn lessons from actions that have both gone well or not progressed.
- 2.4 An analysis of the current and emerging national, regional, and local policy context was completed to identify shared priorities, as well as opportunities and changes we need to prepare for.
- 2.5 An assessment of the housing market has aided understanding on how this might be driving homelessness now and, in the future, as well as to identify opportunities to address homelessness.
- 2.6 Research into the root causes of homelessness has helped to identify the likely future levels of homelessness.
- 2.7 Analysis of HCLIC data, Rough Sleeper data submissions and Rough Sleeper Initiative data, approaches for assistance, Stock Housing allocations, Registered Provider Nominations, Ready to Move outcomes and Private Rented Access data have been collated and recorded on a detailed data spreadsheet to recognise trends, give a true picture of homelessness, and identify areas for action and improvement.
- 2.8 Meetings with our HAST Advisor from DLUHC to jointly review the above HCLIC and RSI data for Newark and Sherwood, Mid-Nottinghamshire, and Nottinghamshire as a whole.
- 2.9 An online survey was created for frontline staff, stakeholders and partners to understand if there is adequate provision of accessible and responsive homelessness and housing advice services in the district and what the gaps and strengths are to tackle homelessness effectively. A copy of the questionnaires and results are included in Appendix one.
- 2.10 The Mid-Notts Authorities secured government-funded consultancy support from Shelter, who facilitated in person consultation events with internal teams and external

stakeholders in Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield and Mansfield during June 2023.

- 2.11 In Newark and Sherwood, attendees heard a presentation summarising the findings of the data analysis and a draft set of priorities were proposed. Attendees were then asked to work in groups to discuss if these priorities were suitable and what actions they'd like to see NSDC, and its partners take to achieve them. A write up of the feedback is available in Appendix two.
- 2.12 The Newark, Sherwood and Rural Local Influence Networks have been consulted in a similar way to the above in September 2023, in particular on the proposed priorities for the strategy – a pre-meet with the chairs of the LIN's took place to ensure the expectations of the group were met.
- 2.13 In September 2023, we also consulted current and recent customers of the Housing Options Service and those with Lived Experience currently accommodated in Supported Housing Provision. The consultation outlined the proposed priorities but also asked them to think about their own experience of homelessness and help us to understand what is and isn't working well for homeless services in our district, why people experience homelessness and what we can do to assist them. The results are available in Appendix three.
- 2.14 The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024-2029 is based on the data and insights we gathered through the above process and has determined our priorities for the next 5 years.
- 2.15 The strategy will be launched at an event with stakeholders who we will collaborate with to create the full action plan. Going forward an annual homelessness review will take place to progress and develop action plans that deliver the priorities of the Strategy.
- 2.16 The Mid-Nottinghamshire Joint Homelessness Prevention Strategic Group (JHPSG) will continue to meet quarterly and will play a role in the delivery and governance of the action plans.
- 2.17 A Newark and Sherwood Homelessness Interagency Group will be established and hold responsibility for ensuring the priorities and agreed actions of the Strategy are achieved locally.

3. Acknowledgements

- 3.1 Newark and Sherwood District Council would like to thank all those with lived experience, delivery providers and professionals across all sectors who contributed to this review.

4. 2019-2024 achievements

- 4.1 This section provides an update on the progress that has been made in achieving the aims and objectives of the current strategy.
- 4.2 In 2018, Newark & Sherwood, Ashfield and Mansfield District Councils carried out a joint Homelessness Review (contracted to Homeless Link), in order to develop local Homelessness Strategies, under the terms of the Homelessness Act 2002 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- 4.3 In April 2019, we launched the Newark and Sherwood Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019-24. A second homelessness review was carried out 18 months later, in order to fully assess the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act, which came into force on 1st April 2018 and was in the process of being implemented when the first review was carried out.
- 4.4 This section provides an update on the progress that has been made in achieving the aims and objectives of the 2019 – 2024 strategy.

The full Homelessness Strategy can be found at:

<https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/media/newark-and-sherwood/images-and-files/housing/NewarkandSherwoodHomelessnessStrategy2019.pdf>

4.5 The aims of the strategy were to:

- i. Prevent as many residents as possible from becoming homeless.
- ii. Ensure options are available to ensure no one has to sleep rough other than through personal choice.
- iii. Help as many residents as possible to move seamlessly from one home to another without the need for emergency or temporary accommodation.
- iv. Provide a high-quality service that customers indicate satisfaction with.

4.6 The objectives of the strategy were:

- i. To improve the financial resilience amongst the population at risk of homelessness through a proactive and integrated local welfare benefits system.
- ii. To increase the amount of social housing available to households at risk of or experiencing homelessness and increase the sustainability of social housing tenancies by these households.
- iii. To deliver the additional required supported housing and housing related support.
- iv. To increase the amount of PRS housing available to households at risk of or experiencing homelessness and increase the sustainability of PRS tenancies by these households.
- v. To ensure the support needs of households at risk of, or experiencing homelessness are appropriately met in order to reduce their risk of homelessness and the risk of homelessness increasing their support needs.

- vi. To minimise rough sleeping and street activity and encourage the community to do their bit to end homelessness.
- vii. To achieve high customer satisfaction with the outcome and experience of the support provided by NSDC Housing Options.
- viii. To ensure services are designed based on robust evidence and effectively monitored and evaluated.

4.7 Our progress in meeting these objectives and the themes since the launch of the strategy 2019 – 2024 are summarised in the table below with additional detail at sections 4.8 – 4.15

Theme 1	Reducing the impact of poverty on homelessness	Excellent progress
Theme 2	Responding to the shortage of social housing	Progress
Theme 3	Supported housing and housing related support	Excellent progress
Theme 4	Working with the PRS	Good progress
Theme 5	Addressing the causes and consequences of homelessness	Good progress
Theme 6	Reducing the impact of homelessness on the community	Excellent progress
Theme 7	Improving customer services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness	Progress
Theme 8	Improving the data available to relevant agencies	Progress

4.8 Theme 1 – Reducing the impact of poverty on homelessness

NSDC has a continued partnership with Sherwood and Newark Citizens Advice to provide a Debt and Welfare Advice Service.

The council have made funding available to ensure that a dedicated debt service is available to all our residents and a Welfare Advisor post is in place to further support those to maximise their income. Citizens Advice also offer a bespoke service to any hard-to-reach tenants that are at risk of accruing rent arrears or at risk of homelessness.

In 2022/23 419 referrals were made to the service, 197 of those have been assisted with budget advice/debt work and 247 resulted in welfare benefit cases.

NSDC has also progressed a partnership with Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire Credit Union to promote the service in Newark and Sherwood which will in turn allow sustainable savings and lending, preventing residents from turning to high interest lenders and loan sharks.

The Housing Options team continues to work closely with local DWP advisors who are co-located in NSDC offices; both teams are active members of multi-agency case conferences and make every contact count to ensure that customers make full use of the range of services available to them.

NSDC's Housing Benefit Team approved 235 Discretionary Housing Benefits applications in 2022/23, 8% of these assisted households at risk of homelessness. Generally, by assisting with deposit or rent in advance to access the private rented sector accommodation.

4.9 Theme 2 - Responding to the shortage of Social Housing

To date the Strategic Housing team have worked with housing association partners to deliver affordable homes through either S106 agreements and 100% affordable housing schemes across the district for affordable rent, shared ownership, discount for sale and first homes. (1,785 since 2005).

The affordable housing figures below includes Section 106 contributions, 100% affordable and HRA builds:

2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
125	151	27	112	43

NSDC has secured nomination rights to most of these Housing Association homes meaning people from the Council's housing register can access them.

The Strategic Housing team has also worked with private developers to purchase affordable homes provided as part of Section 106 Planning Policy requirements to bring into the Council's housing stock where Registered Providers have not offered.

4.10 Theme 3 - Supported housing and housing related support

If there is a risk or threat of homelessness, the provision of family support in Newark and Sherwood is offered through HomeStart. Support is targeted at young families to help them manage and thereby prevent homelessness.

Additional supported housing for rough sleepers with higher/complex needs following a successful bid to NSAP. They have made available the financial resources needed to support local authorities and their partners to provide a long-term service.

The aim of the service is to ensure rough sleepers, those with a history of rough sleeping or at significant risk of rough sleeping and cannot access housing by other routes due to complex needs and risks are able to access and sustain long-term tenancies in the council's Northgate Supported Housing facility and any subsequent move on accommodation.

Additional revenue funding has also been made available to provide a full-time Intensive Support Worker to offer daily support and assistance to those placed into the Northgate Provision.

New temporary accommodation provision in Newark will be in place by 2024, alongside a bespoke service offer which will provide individuals with the skills needed to maintain a tenancy of their own through training modules.

A Domestic Abuse Housing Liaison Worker is in place as a result of the new Domestic Abuse Act.

A range of supported housing and housing related support services continue to be delivered across Nottinghamshire, some of which are as a result of the funding made available from the MHCLG (now DLUHC) Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI).

NSDC officers continue to attend the Nottinghamshire Youth Homelessness Forum and work in partnership to strengthen the local care leaver offer.

Officers have been involved in the NCC recommissioning of supported housing for young people in care and care experienced during 2021-22.

4.11 Theme 4 - Working with the PRS

In 2022/23 18% of cases were supported by the team to either maintain their current private rented tenancy or move into the private rented sector; households have been supported financially through the NSDC Homelessness Prevention Fund, this included sanctuary scheme installations, payment of arrears, rent in advance and deposits, as well as transport to places of safety.

The RSI funded Landlord Liaison Officer continued to work with customers in 2021-22 and secured accommodation for 18 households. The RSI funding for this role ended on 31st March 2022 but the role continued within the Housing Options Team and records show that the postholder secured accommodation for 32 individuals in 2022-23.

A Landlord Liaison Officer leads the RealHome Service. As part of the drive to improve landlord engagement - private sector landlords now receive a quarterly e-mail with updates on legislative changes, reminders of their rights and responsibilities, plus information on events and grants/schemes which may be of interest to them.

A quarterly virtual joint landlord forum (with Ashfield and Mansfield District Council) was launched in 2023 to share information from industry experts with landlords and provide a Q&A forum.

4.12 Theme 5 - Addressing the causes and consequences of homelessness

Funding has been allocated from the Homelessness Prevention Grant to allow a Homelessness Prevention Programme in secondary schools and colleges through Broxtowe Youth Homelessness.

'The Well' drop-in service was set up at Newark Baptist Church for homeless singles or rough sleepers. This allowed further interaction with rough sleepers as officers could

engage with people at the drop-in and assist further. Funding and support have been made available to help facilitate this service.

A successful Rough Sleeper Action Group has been set up, discussions take place and bespoke plans are put in place with partners to assist rough sleepers.

Improved strategic partnerships have been built throughout Mid Notts, focusing in particular on SMD which refers to people with two or more of the following issues: mental health issues, homelessness, offending and substance misuse.

Housing Options Officers continue to take part in multi-agency case conferences which focus on the needs of the individual household including Vulnerable Persons Panel, Sanctuary Panel, Rough Sleeper Action Group, Hoarding Panel, Child in Need Conferences.

The team also attends a number of partnership meetings to ensure robust pathways are in place to prevent homelessness upon discharge from an institution. In 2021-22, The Probation Service was re-established, and this has brought new opportunities to prevent homelessness upon release from prison.

A county-wide Out of Hospital project was also launched to ensure patients are discharged from hospital to suitable accommodation.

Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) funding was used to provide support to non-UK nationals rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping to access welfare benefits, employment and housing.

At the end of 2021-22, the Homes for Ukraine scheme was launched in response to the war with Russia; supporting non-UK nationals is expected to be a growing area of responsibility for the resettlement team.

4.13 Theme 6 - Reducing the impact of homelessness on the community

A successful countywide RSI bid was submitted in 2018, all seven authorities are involved (led by Ashfield DC). RSI funding is used for a number of services that can provide a holistic service to prevent, intervene or help with the recovery of rough sleeping.

In order to protect rough sleepers from the Covid pandemic, accommodation was offered to all rough sleepers following the 'Everyone In' response. Rough sleepers were encouraged to take up the offer of the Covid vaccine including through the use of a mobile vaccination centre.

4.14 Theme 7 - Improving customer services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

No active achievements within this theme.

4.15 Theme 8 - Improving the data available to relevant agencies

In April 2019, together with Mansfield and Ashfield District Councils, we launched the Newark and Sherwood Homelessness Prevention & Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2019-24.

A second homelessness review carried out 18 months following the Homeless Reduction Act started in 2020 and made a number of recommendations to tackle homelessness at the earliest possible stage, including through financial resilience.

The review included a Survey of Support Needs, completed by support providers, covering an extensive sample of accommodation-based supported housing services. The aim was to gain a deeper understanding of service users' characteristics, pathways, support needs, engagement with services and move-on requirements.

5. National Context

5. As highlighted by DLUHC, homelessness and rough sleeping is not simply a housing issue, meaning a whole system approach is needed, encompassing policies and initiatives across health and social care, the criminal justice system, immigration and enforcement, welfare, employment, support for care experienced individuals, as well as housing.
- 5.2 There is of course overlap between these areas, as well as regular changes to the scale and nature of homelessness and rough sleeping, both nationally and locally.
- 5.3 For this reason, organisations working to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping are encouraged by DLUHC to adopt the following core principles to guide their work through the complex and shifting policy landscape:
 - i. Integrate health and social care and housing.
 - ii. Focus on delivering person-centred, empathetic, non-judgemental support and trauma informed care in psychologically informed environments.
 - iii. Build long-lasting, trusting relationships and recognise that engagement with services may not work first time round.
 - iv. Ensure that the lived experiences of people inform any action taken.
- 5.4 This section provides a high-level summary of the national policy context (as at Spring 2023) regarding the prevention of homelessness as well as some of the other policies and challenges affecting the wider system working to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.

5.5 Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

In April 2018, the Homelessness Reduction Act was introduced which placed duties on local housing authorities to prevent and relieve homelessness. An Eligibility for homelessness assistance toolkit is provided on the NHAS website - [nhas](https://www.nhas.org.uk/)

From 1st April 2023, a new methodology to calculate the HPG funding (grant funding awarded to local authorities by central government) was introduced and funding allocations for 2023-25 announced in December 2022. The funding conditions of HPG are:

- Embed the Homelessness Reduction Act and contribute to ending rough sleeping by increasing activity to prevent single homelessness,

- Reduce the number of families in temporary accommodation by maximising family homeless prevention,
- Reduce the use of B&B accommodation for families,
- Report total homelessness spend (from HPG and other budgets) under the categories of temporary accommodation, staffing, prevention activities, relief activities,
- Submit accurate data or up to 10% of funding may be deducted.

A number of amendments have been made to the Homelessness Code of Guidance since it was published in 2018, recent notable changes include:

- People who left Ukraine because of the Russian invasion are eligible for homelessness assistance and social housing,
- Confirmed victims of human trafficking and modern slavery granted limited leave to remain are eligible for homelessness assistance and social housing,
- A duty for public bodies to consider the Armed Forces Covenant in homelessness applications and housing allocations,
- A new chapter on people who are homeless as a result of violence, other than domestic abuse,
- People made homeless due to being a victim of domestic abuse have automatic priority need for homelessness assistance.

5.6 Ending Rough Sleeping Strategy

In September 2022, DLUHC published a new strategy to end rough sleeping by 2025.

For the first time, the Government has defined what it means to end rough sleeping:

prevented wherever possible, but when it does occur, it must be rare, brief and non-recurring.

The strategy has 4 areas of focus, and each area of focus has a set of core aims:

Prevention

- Maximise affordable housing supply and reform the PRS,
- Embed the Homelessness Reduction Act,
- Target support to the most challenging transitional points in people's lives.

Intervention

- Co-ordinated local rough sleeping services,
- A clear pathway off the streets for those with restricted eligibility for public funds,
- Provide local authorities, police and other agencies with the tools they need to address rough sleeping, protect the public and make communities feel safe for all,
- Make it easier for the public to play their part in supporting people sleeping rough.

Recovery

- Support both housing-led approaches and Housing First,
- Address unacceptable poor quality supported housing and increase supply,
- Improve the support available to help people with experience of rough sleeping into employment,
- Provide significant investment into drug and alcohol treatment.

Transparent and joined-up system

- Introduce a new national data-led framework to measure progress towards ending rough sleeping,
- Ensure robust but flexible accountability structures are in place,
- Improve the evidence-base and understanding of what works to end rough sleeping,
- Improve how different services work together.
- Further detail on the current and previous Government policies on ending rough sleeping are detailed in a House of Commons Library paper - Commons Library

5.7 Supported housing oversight

Since 2020, the Government has taken a number of steps to improve oversight of the supported housing sector, it:

- published a National Statement of Expectations,
- published an evaluation of the wave 1 supported housing pilots,
- published Housing Benefit guidance for supported housing claims,
- announced a second wave of supported housing pilots,
- announced support of Bob Blackman's private member's bill.

In August 2023 Bob Blackman MP introduced the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act.

The Act will:

- Require local authorities in England to review supported housing in their areas and develop strategies,
- Provide for the creation of a national expert advisory panel,
- Give the Secretary of State power to introduce national support standards,
- Give local authorities power to create local licensing schemes for exempt accommodation,
- Give the Secretary of State an option to introduce a new planning Use-Class for exempt accommodation.

5.8 Affordable housing supply

There have been a number of recent opportunities to boost the supply of supported housing through the following national funding programmes:

- Rough Sleeping Initiative,
- Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme,
- Next Steps Accommodation Programme,
- Single Homeless Accommodation Programme,
- Night Shelter Transformation Fund,
- The Move On Fund,
- Housing Transformation Fund.

5.9 **Help with housing costs**

Housing Benefit and Universal Credit Housing Cost rates have been frozen for private renters since April 2020. Since then rents have risen by 12% on average; analysis by Crisis has found that only 12% of advertised private rented properties were affordable to those in receipt of benefits.

5.10 **PRS reform**

In August 2022, DLUHC published a white paper setting out the Government's long-term vision for a fairer private rented sector. This includes plans to:

- abolish Section 21 'no-fault' evictions and introduce a simpler tenancy structure,
- apply the Decent Homes Standard to the PRS for the first time,
- introduce a new Property Portal to help landlords understand their obligations, and
- introduce a housing ombudsman covering all PRS landlords and providing redress for tenants.

In December 2022, DLUHC opened a consultation on the amendments required to the homelessness legislation as a result of the removal of Section 21 evictions.

5.11 **Specialist support**

Domestic abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced a number of changes regarding housing and homelessness:

- A duty on Upper Tier local authorities to prepare strategies to provide accommodation-based support for all survivors of domestic abuse,
- A duty of Lower Tier authorities to co-operate with the Upper Tier authority,
- Protection of a survivor's lifetime or assured tenancy,
- Priority need status for survivors of domestic abuse.

Alongside this new legislation, the Home Office has published A Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan and a Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, which both prioritise prevention, supporting victims, pursuing perpetrators and improving the system.

A number of new measures were announced in February 2023 to protect women and girls from harassment, aggression and violence, and stop domestic abuse before it takes place.

5.12 Asylum dispersal

Since April 2022, all local authorities in England have been required to take part in asylum dispersal, which means accommodation providers working on behalf of the Home Office will procure properties for asylum seekers to occupy whilst their claims for asylum are considered. Local authorities are not expected to accommodate asylum seekers beyond 0.5% of their total population.

Home Office provided accommodation and support is withdrawn once a claim is either accepted or refused and residents are required to leave within 28 and 21 days respectively. Individuals and families granted asylum may be eligible for homelessness assistance and an allocation of social housing. Those who are granted limited leave to remain, or their application for asylum is refused, are likely to have no recourse to public funds (NRPF) and no eligibility for homelessness assistance or an allocation of social housing.

As such, there is a risk those leaving asylum accommodation could become street homeless and/or victims of modern slavery.

5.13 Refugee resettlement

There are 4 main resettlement programmes local authorities are currently involved with:

1. Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme
2. Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP)
3. Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme (ACRS)
4. UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS)

Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme

This scheme was launched in March 2022 and is open to Ukraine nationals who were resident in Ukraine prior to 1st January 2022 and their immediate family members.

The number of people who can access this scheme is uncapped and is dependent on the capacity of the sponsors who come forward. Guests will be able to live and work in the UK for up to 3 years and access benefits, healthcare, employment, education and other support.

Local housing authorities are expected to provide the following support to arrivals under this scheme:

- An in person accommodation check prior to and following the arrival of guests
- Homelessness assistance if the placement is ended
- Facilitate community and well-being events

Data shared by DLUHC shows that between 24th February and 27th January 2023, in England 4,295 Ukraine households were owed a homeless prevention or relief duty, of which 2,595 entered England through the Homes for Ukraine scheme. As at 31st December 2022, 80,305 Ukrainians have arrived into England.

Afghan homelessness pathway

Due to the number of Afghan families currently staying in “bridging accommodation”, i.e. hotels, whilst awaiting and accepting an offer of ARAP or ACRS accommodation, a “fair share” and refusals policy was proposed by DLUHC in August. Under this policy, local authorities will receive homelessness referrals on a rota system from families who have refused two offers of accommodation and have consequently been given 56 days’ notice to leave their bridging accommodation. Strategic Migration Partnerships will manage this process, including calculating how many referrals each area will receive. As at March 2023, this policy is yet to be activated.

EU settlement scheme

Following the UK’s withdrawal from the European Union and the introduction of a points-based immigration system, freedom of movement between the UK and EU has ended. All EU nationals, as well as other non-UK nationals, are now required to have a visa to reside in the UK.

Those EU citizens who were living in the UK by 31 December 2020 were able to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme for a permanent right to reside in the UK. The deadline to apply to this scheme was 30 June 2021 and a failure to apply by this deadline means individuals will have no rights to work or study, to claim welfare benefits or access health service, or to rent a property. Those with NRPF are at risk of street homelessness and/or victims of modern slavery.

5.15 Prison leavers

In December 2021, the Ministry of Justice published their Prison Strategy White Paper which includes proposals to:

- provide all prison leavers with 12 weeks temporary accommodation,
- expand the Accommodation for Ex-Offenders programme (awarded to support with deposits, landlord incentives and support staff),
- increase the number of Approved Premises,
- reduce Friday prison releases,
- double housing specialists working in prisons.

5.16 Care Experienced

The Ending Rough Sleeping for Good Strategy (see above) includes an aim to ensure that no one should leave a public institution to the streets and that young people leaving care will receive the support they need to secure and maintain suitable accommodation.

The strategy includes commitments to:

- fund targeted support to young people leaving care most at risk of homelessness (in 69 local authorities),
- invest in 'Staying Put' and 'Staying Close' programmes.

The Department of Education has introduced mandatory national standards and Ofsted registration and inspection for supported housing providers who accommodate 16 and 17 year-olds. Registration began in April 2023, national standards apply from autumn 2023 and inspection will begin in April 2024.

In February 2023, the Department for Education published its response to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, which includes a mission to increase the number of Care Experienced in safe, suitable accommodation and a reduction in Care Experienced homelessness by 2027. Actions to achieve this include:

- removing the local connection requirement for care experienced applying for social housing,
- removing the use of intentional homelessness for Care Experienced under 25,
- encouraging rent guarantor schemes.

The response also includes a mission to strengthen and extend the corporate parenting responsibilities across the public sector.

5.17 Armed forces veterans

The Veterans' Strategy Action Plan 2022-24 commits to ending veteran rough sleeping by 2025. In December 2022, Government launched Operation Fortitude and committed to end veteran rough sleeping by 2023. Operation Fortitude is a central referral scheme to provide veterans at risk of homelessness access to supported housing and wrap-around specialist care in health, housing and education.

The Armed Forces Act 2021 enshrined the Armed Forces Covenant into law, which requires certain public bodies to help prevent service personnel and veterans being disadvantaged when accessing public services such as housing, healthcare and education.

5.18 Health and social care

In 2022, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence published a guideline covering the provision of integrated health and social care services for people experiencing homelessness.

In January 2019, the NHS Long Term Plan was published and includes a commitment to prevent and tackle health inequalities, including investment in specialist mental health support for those experiencing homelessness.

Guidance published under the Health and Care Act 2022 recommends that housing and homelessness services should be engaged by Integrated Care Partnerships when developing the strategy that will inform local commissioning decisions made by Integrated Care Boards and upper tier local authorities. Guidance for Health and Wellbeing Boards also references assessing and meeting the needs of people experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping.

The Adult Social Care White Paper, published in March 2022, includes a commitment to make every decision about care a decision about housing and pledges to increase the supply of supported housing.

5.19 Substance use treatment

A 10-year Drugs Strategy was published in 2022 which highlights that homelessness and rough sleeping can be both a cause and consequence of substance use. The strategy commits to improve services for people rough sleeping, to provide housing support to those in treatment and recovery, and build the evidence base of housing related needs and the most effective interventions.

The Strategy also includes objectives to break drug supply chains, deliver a world-class treatment and recovery system, and achieve a generational shift in the demand for drugs.

6. Regional Context

6.1 There are a number of public sector bodies in Nottinghamshire who are directly or indirectly working to prevent homelessness. This section provides a summary of these bodies and their strategic objectives concerning homelessness prevention.

6.2 Nottinghamshire housing authorities

There are five Homeless and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategies in place across Nottinghamshire:

1. Ashfield Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24
2. Bassetlaw Homeless and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2017-22
3. Mansfield Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24
4. Newark & Sherwood Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-24
5. South Nottinghamshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-27

There are a number of common objectives across these strategies:

- Early prevention of homelessness,

- Increasing the supply of, access to and sustainability of affordable and quality accommodation,
- Ending rough sleeping,
- Ensuring support for housing and health needs are available,
- Provision of a high-quality service to customers.

6.3 Nottinghamshire County Council

The Public Health Team, Adult Social Care team and Children's Social Care Team each have a number of statutory duties relevant to homelessness prevention.

- The following needs assessments and strategies set out NCC's priorities in these areas:
- Annual Delivery Plan 2022/23
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-26
- The Health and Wellbeing Board Framework for Action on Homelessness
- JSNA Health and Homelessness 2019
- JSNA Substance Misuse: Young People and Adults 2022
- Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-24
- Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers 2022-25
- Nottinghamshire Care Leaver Local Offer
- Adult Social Care Strategy 2017
- Nottinghamshire Combatting Substance Misuse Partnership Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023-25
- NSAB strategic plan

NCC's areas of focus that are related to the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping across all these strategies include the following:

- Integrated housing, health and wellbeing commissioning and care pathways
- Funding homeless prevention tools
- Embedding a trauma informed approach
- Providing safe accommodation for domestic abuse survivors
- Good physical, emotional and mental health
- Young people transition to independent living
- Ensuring no one leaves a public institution without accommodation
- Work with people with lived experience
- Increase strategic collaboration
- Attract levelling up investment
- Release land for housing development
- Supporting Ukrainian refugees
- Identify early prevention opportunities
- Take a whole system approach

NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care System

The Health and Care Bill 2022 created Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) as replacements for Clinical Commissioning Groups, and establishes in law the role of Integrated Care Partnerships as the committee where health, social care, the voluntary sector and other partners come together as an Integrated Care System (ICS).

One of the aims of the ICS is to tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience and access. The Health Inequalities Strategy 2020-24 identifies 13 areas for actions including: supporting those who suffer mental ill-health, and housing.

6.4 East Midlands Mayoral Authority (launching May 2024)

The proposed East Midlands Devolution Deal includes the following actions that are relevant to the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping:

- New powers to drive the regeneration of the area and to build more affordable homes including compulsory purchase powers and the ability to establish Mayoral Development Corporations.
- Over £17 million for the building of new homes on brownfield land in 2024/25, subject to sufficient eligible projects for funding being identified.
- £18 million capital funding in this Spending Review period to support the delivery of housing priorities and drive Net Zero ambitions in the East Midlands area.
- The proposed Deal also identifies other areas of focus to bring into the remit of the new authority in the coming months and years:
 - Deliver transformative regeneration and new high-quality housing.
 - Tackle local housing challenges including homelessness and rough sleeping.
 - Tackle domestic abuse through an improved and system wide holistic approach and develop strong links between the Mid Central Community Action (MCCA) and Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to help join up public service delivery and strategies in relation to community safety.
- Develop an ambitious, long term mayoral social mobility strategy, supporting young people through their journey to adulthood.

6.5 Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Violence Reduction Partnership

The partnership has published a Serious Violence Response Strategy 2022-25, which sets out a vision for Nottinghamshire communities to feel safe from violence and the fear of violence.

One of the strategic objectives is to implement a domestic violence perpetrator programme.

To reduce the prevalence of violence against women and girls, bring more perpetrators to justice and increase support for all victims and survivors a Nottinghamshire's VAWG Strategy 2023 – 2028 has been published: Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.

7. Local Context

7.1 Newark and Sherwood District Council have created and take responsibility for a number of existing strategies across the various Business Units, each of the following are complimented by, have synergies or could link to the new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy as detailed below:

- i. **Newark and Sherwood District Council Community Plan 2020 – 2023** The Community Plan sets out the Council's objectives over a three-year period, to ensure that the district continues to be a place where people choose to live, work, invest and spend their recreational time.

- ii. **Landlord Strategy 2022 -2027** This strategy establishes the vision for Council-owned social housing within Newark & Sherwood and the contribution that it will make to achieve the ambitions of the Community Plan 2020-23 and beyond.
- iii. **Tenancy Strategy 2022 – 2026** The Localism Act 2011 placed a duty on all local authorities to produce a Tenancy Strategy to sit alongside the Landlord Strategy, Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy, Allocations Scheme and any Registered Provider’s Tenancy Policies.
- iv. **Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2026** This strategy sets out a four-year plan for improving the health and wellbeing of local residents to support our community plan objectives.
- v. **Housing Allocation Scheme** Council housing and some Registered Provider (RP) properties (where NSDC has ‘Nomination Rights’) are let to people in accordance with this Scheme. NSDC has Nomination Rights to most RP properties in the district. This means NSDC nominates applicants on the Housing Register who are successful in 'bidding'.
- vi. **Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023 - 2028** The Newark and Sherwood Housing Strategy identifies the key priorities over the next five years and sets out in the Delivery Plan what the Council and its partners are planning to do to address them and move Newark and Sherwood forward by identifying opportunities, investment decisions, legislative changes and setting out how they can be realised.
- vii. **Economic Strategy 2021 – 2026** This strategy reflects what Newark and Sherwood District Council will do to directly support and lead our local economy to achieve our vision of “building a shared prosperity”. The Council cannot deliver this big agenda alone, therefore collaboration and partnership working with our businesses, education providers, public authorities, developers and residents is the best, and only way to achieve success.

8. District Housing Situation

- 8.1 The Council owns 5,543 homes across most of the district. In addition to this ten housing associations and Registered Providers own and manage 2911 homes in many locations.
- 8.2 Despite the Council’s ambitious housing delivery programme, S106 housing and the ongoing support and investment from our housing association partners, the supply of affordable housing has not kept up with demand. Generally due to developers not being able to afford the land value and the percentage of affordable homes and still make a profit; most local authorities therefore don’t hit the 30% target. However, for the last 10 years NSDC has come top for affordable housing provision.
- 8.3 Much has changed in Newark and Sherwood since the previous housing strategy in 2016, largely resulting from the Covid 19 pandemic, alongside the cost of living, increasing house prices, the high cost of private rental properties and the impact of changes to the welfare benefits systems, it is likely that a number of people facing fuel poverty, eviction and homelessness will increase.
- 8.4 It is therefore important that the Council continues to provide advice and support to residents as well as keeping up with an increasing demand for affordable housing.

Newark & Sherwood Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023 – 2028 will help our partners, funders and residents understand our housing ambitions for new and existing homes in the district and for the housing services provided for Newark and Sherwood’s residents.

8.5 Four new priorities have been set against the Housing Strategy:

- Enabling Housing Growth and regeneration to secure sustainable communities
- Delivering an increased supply of affordable housing
- Meeting housing need for the district’s diverse communities
- Driving Excellence in Housing standards across all tenures

8.6 In the private rented sector, average rents in England increased by 5.5% in the last year, the biggest increase since records began, but Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates remains frozen at 2020/21 levels.

8.7 This is a major issue for homelessness services, with our latest Homelessness Review finding that no Private rented sector accommodation is currently available at LHA rates and is therefore one of the major factors preventing people from moving into or on from this sector.

9. Current levels of homelessness

9.1 By analysing data that is available to us, such as Government submissions through DELTA, Rough Sleeper Initiative data and homelessness approaches we can identify the levels of homelessness over the last four years (2019 – 2023).

9.2 Since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in 2017, H-CLIC is the new mechanism for quarterly data returns. H-CLIC records all local authorities' actions under statutory homelessness legislation and replaced P1E as the means for local authorities to report.

9.3 This section identifies the current levels of homelessness and as a result of the findings includes recommendations for actions which will or could be included as milestones within our priorities for the next strategy.

9.4 Appendix 4 contains a selection of charts which support the findings of the data analysis.

9.5 While carrying out the data review, we are mindful that outcomes may have been influenced by the following policy timeline that ran throughout the current strategy:

Timeline	Policy changes or implications
03 rd April 2018	Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
April 2019 to October 2020	H-CLIC statistics published by DLUHC were categorised as experimental, meaning that the data collection was still in the testing and development phase.
23 rd March 2020	The first Covid-19 lockdown began in England.
26 th March 2020	MHCLG (now DLUHC) asked all local authorities to provide safe accommodation to all rough sleepers by the end of the week. This became known as the 'Everyone In' initiative.
26 March 2020 and 30 September 2021	The provisions in the Corona Virus Act 2020 increased the notice periods landlords were required to provide to tenants when seeking possession of a residential property.
March 2020	The National Probation Service established Homeless Prevention Taskforces, and these have continued post-Covid.
Between March 2020 and March 2021	There were 22 funding announcements totalling around £11bn by MHCLG (now DLUHC) relating to the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping during Covid-19.
May 2020	The requirements of the 'Everyone In' initiative was amended, and local authorities given more discretion in how it was applied.
20 th September 2020	The stay on possession proceedings expired.
17 th November 2020 to 31 st May 2021	A moratorium on evictions from the private rented and social rented sectors was in place.
19 th July 2021	After 16 months of restrictions, all lockdown laws were ended.
1 October 2021	All notice periods returned to the pre-pandemic position.
December 2021	The Bank of England raised interest rates for the first time since August 2018. Rates have not exceeded 1% since January 2009; as at August 2023 rates were 5.25%.
2021	A cost-of-living crisis began in late 2021, with the annual rate of inflation reaching a 41 year high of 11.1% in October 2022.
February 2022	The Russian invasion of Ukraine began and the Homes for Ukraine scheme was launched in March 2022.

9.6 Approaches and Assessments

Most homelessness approaches are triaged via an online Housing Wizard tool, available on the Council's website. Households are encouraged to self-help by inputting their data, situation and personal details which results in tailored advice sheets and a printable Personal Housing Plan.

If happy with the advice given in the advice sheets and Personal Housing Plan, there should be no need to request further advice and assistance from the Housing Options Team and therefore no further duty will be owed.

We do not have knowledge of the overall number of people that use the Housing Wizard and therefore the number that are homeless or at risk of homelessness at this initial stage.

This means we are unaware of the number of people that use the Housing Wizard and feel satisfied with the information contained within the online assessment and therefore go on to resolve their homelessness situation. Equally those that are dissatisfied and request assistance straight away, upon completion of the online assessment. There may be others that approach for a second time and require intervention later on and as their situation worsens.

The number of approaches is recorded locally, this is the number of people that complete the Housing Wizard and go on to request further assistance from the Housing Options Team.

On average 800 households request intervention or further assistance from the Housing Options Team each year. In 2022/23 the council experienced the highest number of approaches with 1243 in need of intervention, this is an increase of 106% since 2019/20 when 602 households requested further advice and assistance.

Following a telephone discussion or an email (in most cases), housing advice and assistance will be given by an officer and 63% of approaches are closed at this point, resulting in an outcome of housing advice only or early closure being recorded.

Statutory guidance (section 11.13 – 11.16 of the Code of Guidance) outlining assessment arrangements advises that this should be flexible to the needs of applicants, and that in most circumstances assessments will require at least one face-to-face interview.

Use of online, email and phone contact to provide advice, information and some assessments may meet the needs for many of our applicants. However, if at least one face-to-face interview was provided - where the applicant's needs indicate it is necessary or if they request it - this may be beneficial for the individuals with severe multiple disadvantage or other difficulties.

Any triage or initial assessment arrangements must be able to identify whether a face-to-face assessment is needed or requested, as well as the urgency of that assessment. Face to face triage appointments is currently made available at Castle House, Newark for those that are found to be rough sleeping by the Street Outreach team.

Recommendations for action: To carry out a review of the effectiveness of the Housing Wizard, understand the reasons for an increase in approaches and take necessary steps to improve outcomes for the customer and to make best use of officer time.

Recommendations for action: to adopt a more data-driven and evidence-based approach to tackling homelessness.

Over the last four fiscal years, applicants that have requested officer intervention and have not been closed as a result of initial housing advice average 67 assessments per quarter. 99% of duty decisions are accepted at this stage.

When assessing an applicant's status, officers are aiming to either prevent or relieve their homelessness or threat of homelessness. As a result, 37% of assessments are owed a prevention duty - this relates to those that are threatened with homelessness and likely to become homeless within 56 days. Allowing officers time to intervene and prevent homelessness at an earlier stage if possible. If the prevention of homelessness is not possible, the application will be reassigned to relief.

62% are owed a relief duty - this relates to those that are already homeless, officers can support applicants for 56 days to relieve their homelessness by helping to secure alternative accommodation.

Data shows that a larger number of cases are entered into or assessed as a relief duty rather than a prevention duty. This tells us that households are not being identified early enough to allow intervention to prevent homelessness, households are already homeless when approaching the council for assistance.

Assessments show that, over the last four years our biggest reason for homelessness has fluctuated between the ending of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy and friends/family no longer willing to accommodate. The top four reasons for homelessness are:

- End of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy is the highest cause of homelessness overall, at 25.5% of assessments and in line with the national average of 25.1%.
- 25.4% of cases are due to friends/family no longer willing to accommodate.
- Non-violent relationship breakdown amounts to 16% of reasons for homelessness.
- Domestic abuse causes 10% of homelessness which is below the national average of 12%.

As mentioned previously within the timeline, a moratorium on evictions from the private rented and social rented sectors has been in place. An initial embargo was placed on landlords, preventing them from awarding a notice to end a tenancy and latterly to award a longer notice period. The embargo was lifted in October 2021 and therefore numbers have risen throughout the last two years.

The main reason that landlords give for the ending of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy is wishing to sell or re-let the property, rent arrears has been the 2nd biggest reason.

When a notice has been issued to end an Assured Shorthold Tenancy due to rent arrears, this is broken down further and the main two reasons for the rent arrears is due to a change in personal circumstances or a tenant having difficulty budgeting, covering the rent payments or other household payments.

In terms of age, of those owed a prevention or relief duty, 30% are aged between 25 – 34 closely followed by 35-44 at 22% and 18-24 at 21%.

94% of assessments are recorded with an ethnicity of white, we do not have any recorded details on nationality.

Recommendations for action: Reduce the number of evictions from Assured Shorthold tenancies to below the national average. Ensure particular understanding for the main reasons for ending an assured shorthold and find possible solutions to mitigate this.

Recommendations for action: Understand the reasons that friends and family can no longer accommodate and find solutions, such as mediation or incentives to continue to accommodate.

Recommendations for action: high reason for homelessness is other, guidance received from DLUHC to break this down further.

10. Homelessness Prevention and Relief in Newark and Sherwood

10.1 Prevention duty

Under the Homelessness Reduction Act, Local Authorities must take reasonable steps to prevent homelessness for any eligible applicant who is at risk of homelessness within 56 days, regardless of priority need. This can involve assisting them to stay in their current accommodation or helping them to find a new place to live.

For NSDC, single female with children was the highest household type of application in 2019/20 but has reduced over the last four years, similarly for couples with and without children.

Although single parent female is the highest household type throughout, single homelessness is on the rise and comparable with households with families throughout.

Single female parents amount to 33% of all prevention duty accepted. Single males total 22% of prevention cases and single females total 18%, therefore, the overall highest household type awarded a prevention duty is single households.

Officer intervention results in 13% of households being prevented from becoming homeless by supporting a stay in their existing accommodation.

Alternatively, 55% of prevention duties ended with a move to an alternative accommodation, broken down below:

- 25% moved into privately rented accommodation (below the national average of 40%)
- 30% moved into Social Housing (below the national average of 42%)
- 14% of prevention duties resulted in the household becoming homeless

The tables below give a full breakdown:

Reason Prevention Duty ended 2019/20 – 2022/23 (Percentages)	
Stayed in existing for 6 months+	13%
Moved to alternative for 6 months+	55%
Homeless	13%
Refused suitable offer, to cooperate	5%
Contact lost	5%
Withdrew	5%
56 days elapsed	3%
Refused to cooperate	1%

Prevention – type of accommodation secured 2019/20 – 2022/23 (percentages)	
PRS	34%
Social Rented	49%
Family	3%
Friends	3%
Owner occupier	1%
Other	5%
Not known	6%

10.2 Relief duty

Single males placed into a relief duty is much higher than prevention at 41% compared to 22% placed into prevention. Single females is similar for both prevention and relief at 18% in prevention and 19% placed into relief. Single female parents is lower in the relief category at 22% compared to prevention at 32%.

This data tells us that single males in particular are not approaching for assistance early enough and are already homeless and therefore we can only relieve their homelessness, or their needs are higher and appropriate accommodation is not available for single males in particular.

Whereas single female parents are more likely to be assisted successfully at prevention stage.

27% of relief cases ended after the 56-day window elapsed (national average is 44%)

12% of households refused the accommodation offered to them and 15% resulted in contact lost or application withdrawn.

Note the tables below for a more detailed breakdown of outcomes:

Reason Relief Duty ended 2019/20 – 2022/23 (Percentages)	
Stayed in existing for 6 months+	47%
56 days elapsed	24%
Local connection referral	1%
Intentionally homeless	2%
Refused final accommodation	11%

Refused to cooperate	0%
Contact lost	6%
Withdrew	8%
No longer eligible	1%

43% of relief cases ended with a move to secure accommodation, detailed below:

Relief – type of accommodation secured 2019/20 – 2022/23 (percentages)	
PRS	37%
Social Rented	59%
Family	1%
Friends	0%
Owner occupier	0%
Other	2%
Not known	1%

Recommendations for action: to identify ways to increase the number of preventions through early intervention and reduce the number that are already homeless and owed a relief duty. We need to understand why this is and how we might intervene at an earlier opportunity. As detailed, ending of an assured shorthold tenancy and friends or family no longer willing to accommodate are the main reasons for homelessness – overall aim is to prevent homelessness before crisis point

Recommendation for action: Consider the rise in single homelessness and the complexities that can make it harder for services to prevent homelessness.

10.3 Duty to refer

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 significantly reformed England’s homelessness legislation by placing duties on local housing authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their areas, and to provide homelessness services to all those who are eligible.

Additionally, the Act introduced a duty on specified public authorities to individuals that may be homeless or threatened with homelessness to local authority homelessness/housing options teams. This duty is effective from 1 October 2018 and will apply to the list of public authorities set out below.

- prisons
- young offender institutions
- secure training centres
- secure colleges
- youth offending teams
- probation services (including community rehabilitation companies)
- Jobcentres in England
- social service authorities (both adult and children’s)

- emergency departments
- urgent treatment centres
- hospitals in their function of providing inpatient care
- Secretary of State for defence in relation to members of the regular armed forces

Recommendations for action: ensure the Duty to Refer is effective and that the authority are able to assist people at the earliest opportunity to ensure the prevention of homelessness.

11. Main Duty, Temporary Accommodation and securing move on in Newark and Sherwood

A 'main homelessness duty' is owed where an authority is satisfied that the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falls within a specified priority need group. Such statutorily homeless households are referred to as acceptances.

A local authority only has a duty to provide accommodation under a homeless application to someone who has or might have a priority need. Some people are automatically in priority need. For example, if someone has dependent children living with them.

Other people are only in priority need if they or someone they live with is vulnerable for some additional reason. For example, someone who is vulnerable because of a health condition. The local authority must decide if the person is significantly more vulnerable than an ordinary person would be if they were homeless.

On average 12 main duty decisions are made per quarter and of these 46% are accepted for a main duty. 20% are found to be intentionally homeless (deemed to have deliberately caused the loss of a home) and 34% are not deemed to have a priority need.

Dependent children are the primary reason for a priority need in Newark and Sherwood.

Of all the acceptances, 21% are found permanent accommodation through acceptance of a Part 6 offer (social housing), however, 5% refuse a part 6 offer. 4% of households accept a Privately Rented Sector offer.

3% of those accepted as being owed a duty subsequently refuse suitable temporary accommodation, withdrew their application, or lose contact with their designated Housing Options Officer.

The Council has two temporary accommodation provisions, located at Wellow Green in Ollerton which comprises of ten bungalow style units and a new temporary accommodation provision is currently being built in Newark (Alexander Lodge), to replace the 17 units of self-contained one bed roomed units previously used at Seven Hills, Newark.

In the interim for Newark, local authority stock has been utilised pending the Yorke Drive Regeneration project.

Alexander Lodge is due to open in 2024. Plans are in place to provide a training program which will consist of modules to assist current and future tenants to build confidence, ensure a more balanced health and wellbeing and be in a position to better maintain a tenancy leading to homelessness prevention overall.

On average 18 households per quarter are placed into Temporary accommodation. 58% are placed into local authority stock and 16% recorded as being placed in a hostel. 6% are placed in any other type of temporary accommodation (private landlords or unknown) and 1% in Bed and Breakfast.

Single females with children are our leading placement but the numbers have fallen since 2019/20 and therefore the number of children in temporary accommodation has lowered overall.

Single households are our second biggest placement, in particular single males which has increased significantly since 2019/20 from 13% to 44% currently. A large reason for this is due to the 'Everyone in' initiative to accommodate rough sleepers as part of the Covid 19 lockdown period.

The largest increase in temporary accommodation is single males, the number of single females has also increased since 2019-20 but not at the same rate. This further supports the findings that single males with complex needs are harder to support and find suitable accommodation for. All households with children have reduced overall since 2019/20.

Recommendations for action: consider if the large number of main duty decisions being no priority need is due to the number of single homelessness that cannot be prevented or relieved. If alternative accommodation is lacking this therefore results in continued homelessness for many that do not fit the priority need criteria.

Rough Sleepers

62% of rough sleepers placed into short-term/emergency accommodation are EEA Nationals.

The Rough Sleeper snapshots total 52 EEA Nationals being found in 2022/23 with 26% being new rough sleepers.

The average number of rough sleepers found per year totals 98 or 8 per month, some of these may be duplicates that move on and off the streets, however, 48% are new to the street, meaning there is a constant stream of rough sleepers in Newark and Sherwood on any typical night.

Each year NSDC are required to submit a figure to DLUHC on how many rough sleepers are found on a particular night. In order to count someone as a rough sleeper the following definition must be met.

People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down, in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, Stations, or "bashes").

The numbers that have been submitted each year are detailed below:

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
4	5	5	4	5	10	6	4	4	2	6	7	3

12. Providing support in Newark and Sherwood

It is recognised that many of the households needing assistance to prevent homelessness or to relieve their homelessness have other support needs. DLUHC data shows that between 2019/20 and 2022/23, 556 households owed a homelessness duty had no disclosed support needs but 483 or 46% (below the national average of 53.5%) disclosed one or more support needs.

This section provides details on the households presenting to the Housing Options Team with one or more support need, details on the top three support needs identified and an overview of some of the support available in Newark and Sherwood.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
No Support Needs	51%	48%	54%	68%
One or more support needs	49%	52%	46%	32%

A households support needs are considered as part of the assessment of their overall housing need and the duties owed by the council to relieve or prevent homelessness.

The top four support needs over the four-year study are:

History of mental health problems

29% of households owed a homeless duty identified mental health as a support need. Mental Health can impact on a household's ability to sustain their accommodation and therefore we work in partnership with mental health services to ensure that customers are informed about the help and support available to them.

Substance use

21% identified substance use as a support need. If, at the time of approach for housing assistance, an individual is not engaging in specialist support, they are encouraged to engage through a Personal Housing Plan to access and engage with relevant support services. As part of their Personal Housing Plan, individual households can be referred to support services or can access support themselves via the commissioned services such as CGL (Care, Grow, Live).

Physical ill health and disability

19% of households owed a homeless duty have physical health and disability support needs. In assessing whether the duty is to prevent homelessness or relieve it, we consider the individuals circumstances and establish if the household's existing home is suitable to meet their needs.

At risk of/has experienced Domestic Abuse

Also significantly high is those that are at risk of/has experienced domestic abuse at 18% of households owed a homeless duty.

A Sanctuary Scheme is in place in Newark and Sherwood, this is a multi-agency victim centred initiative which aims to enable households at risk of violence to remain safely in their own homes by installing a 'Sanctuary' in the home and through the provision of support to the household.

17 Sanctuary referrals were received in the year 2021-22, the referrals related to various tenures that have been made safer for households through the installation of sanctuary measures. In cases where measures were not installed the survivor had decided to move or not progress with the scheme.

Feedback regarding the sanctuary scheme is positive, customers reported feeling safer after the measures were installed, that the measures "exceeded expectations" and that the service was timely.

13. Resources available in Newark and Sherwood and Nottinghamshire

13.1 Homeless Prevention Grant

From 1st April 2023, a new methodology to calculate the Homeless Prevention Grant funding has been introduced and funding allocations for 2023-25 announced in December 2022.

Newark and Sherwood District Council have been awarded a Homeless Prevention Grant of £236,278 in 2023-24 and £240,767 for 2024-25.

The funding conditions of the Homelessness Prevention Grant are to:

- Embed the Homelessness Reduction Act and contribute to ending rough sleeping by increasing activity to prevent single homelessness.
- Reduce the number of families in temporary accommodation by maximising family homelessness prevention.
- Reduce the use of B&B accommodation for families.
- Report total homelessness spend (from HPG and other budgets) under the categories of temporary accommodation, staffing, prevention activities, relief activities.
- Submit accurate data or up to 10% of funding may be deducted.

13.2 Allocations/Homelessness allocations

Housing Stock data and the allocation of these properties has been analysed between 2020/21 and 22/23. On average over the last three years, 28% of allocations are awarded to those in a homelessness banding. The findings are detailed in this section.

When considering property size for those placed into a priority banding due to homelessness, the largest allocation is for one beds with 43% of homeless bandings being allocated and 37% to those in need of a two bedroomed property. 19% of households are allocated a three-bed property and only 1 household has been allocated a four bedroomed property throughout the study, in 2020.

Between 2019-20 to 2022-23 a total of 241 properties have been allocated to households in a homelessness priority banding. Band two, notice to quit an Assured Shorthold Tenancy increased in 2022-23, although impacted by the embargo on landlords giving notice but still the numbers are high, and landlords are continuing to give notice.

Reasons for all priority homelessness bands are detailed in the table below:

Loss of Assured Shorthold Tenancy – current tenant	89
Loss of Assured Shorthold Tenancy – previous tenancy	4
Loss of Registered provider property	15
Friends and family no longer able to accommodate	28
Move on from supported or temporary accommodation	13
No Fixed Abode	27
Residing in a Hostel	57
Residing in a Refuge	2
Use and Occupation (cannot succeed someone else’s tenancy)	3
Loss of Owner/occupied home	1
Loss of tied accommodation	2

In addition to our own housing stock allocations, the council have nomination rights to registered providers accommodation. 79% of nominations are successfully allocated to those in a homelessness band.

Recommendation for action: The largest number of allocations, that have been awarded a homelessness bandings are from households moving from the Private Rented Sector or no longer able to stay with friends and family. Priority should be given to the prevention of homelessness from this type of accommodation.

Recommendation for action: No fixed abode is also high but a cohort that we know little about. More knowledge on where people are staying and how they secure a place to sleep which prevents rough sleeping. For example, some that sofa surf are buying electricity meter tokens as payment to stay.

Newark and Sherwood have a number of supported housing provisions for those that are homeless. Certain supported housing arrangements have been commissioned by public bodies that have a relevant duty or power to arrange such accommodation. There is also non-commissioned provision available as detailed in the table below:

Provision	Provider	Type of accommodation	Units available	Commissioned or non-commissioned
Russell House, Newark – Core service	Framework	Hostel with 24-hour staff support for 18+	16	Commissioned

Russell House, Newark - Move on	Framework	Self-contained flats for 18+	16	Commissioned
Core Accommodation in Newark	Newark Emmaus Trust	24-hour staff support for 16 – 25 years	11	Non-commissioned
Dispersed accommodation in Newark – move on	Newark Emmaus Trust	16 – 25 years	15	Non-commissioned
Mother and Baby accommodation in Newark	Newark Emmaus Trust	Self-contained	5	Non-commissioned
Branching Out, Newark – Core and Cluster	Nottingham Community Housing Association	Support for 16 – 21 years	8	Commissioned
Branching, Ollerton – move on	Nottingham Community Housing Association	16 – 21 years	5	Commissioned
Newark Women’s Refuge	Newark Women’s Aid	Women and their children fleeing domestic abuse	7	Non-commission

To ensure single households living in supported housing provision have the necessary skills in place to secure and sustain a tenancy, a Ready 2 Move (R2M) template requires completion by any support workers and agreement from key housing staff that someone is ready to transition to a council tenancy. If accepted their banding is moved to a priority banding for allocation.

The following data shows an analysis of the number of individuals that are deemed R2M by the provider and have submitted a R2M application. The data shows that the majority are approved for the allocation of a tenancy:

2019	Numbers	Percentage
1. Number of R2M submitted	35	
2. Number approved	28	80%
3. Number not approved	7	20%
4. Number secured a tenancy	20	57%
5. Average time between R2M approved and tenancy awarded		
2020		
1. Number of R2M submitted	39	
2. Number approved	29	74%
3. Number not approved	10	26%
4. Number secured a tenancy	24	61%
5. Average time between R2M approved and tenancy awarded		
2021		
1. Number of R2M submitted	32	
2. Number approved	26	81%
3. Number not approved	6	19%
4. Number secured a tenancy	17	53%
5. Average time between R2M approved and tenancy awarded	27.5 days	
2022		
1. Number of R2M submitted	32	
2. Number approved	21	66%
3. Number not approved	10	31%
4. Number secured a tenancy	6	18%
5. Average time between R2M approved and tenancy awarded		

13.3 Privately Rented Accommodation

In 2015, Newark and Sherwood District Council created RealHome, a tenant finder service for landlords.

A dedicated Landlord Liaison Officer oversees the RealHome service. There is also an additional Landlord Liaison Officer role in place, predominantly to focus on single homelessness.

As part of the drive to improve landlord engagement - private sector landlords now receive a quarterly e-mail with updates on legislative changes, reminders of their rights and responsibilities, plus information on events and grants/schemes which may be of interest to them.

A quarterly virtual joint landlord forum (with Ashfield and Mansfield District Councils) was launched in 2023 to share information from industry experts with landlords and provide a Q&A forum; marketing materials have been created - advising both landlords and tenants of

our offer; Our RealHome service has been promoted on social media by NSDC and partners; plus a survey of landlords took place with feedback given to points raised.

13.4 Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 placed a duty on local authorities to work together. The aim of the act is to strengthen the support for victims of abuse by statutory agencies.

Specific actions for authorities with a housing duty are:

- that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have ‘priority need’ for homelessness assistance
- ensure that where a local authority, for reasons connected with domestic abuse, grants a new secure tenancy to a social tenant who had or has a secure lifetime or assured tenancy (other than an Assured Shorthold Tenancy) this must be a secure lifetime tenancy

NSDC works in partnership with NCC and the districts/boroughs in Nottinghamshire on policies and guidance. Including MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) and the Violence against Women and Girls Strategy. The Community Safety Partnership already has a duty to carry out Domestic Homicide Reviews and we are working towards the DAHA Accreditation in 2024.

Domestic abuse reporting remains high and is reflected in the number of High-Risk cases being heard at the MARAC.

A Domestic Abuse Housing Liaison Worker in place as a result of the new Domestic Abuse Act.

13.4 Resettlement

A dedicated Resettlement Team manages the relocation of refugees in the district. The resettlement team consists of four staff members to work on the HFU scheme and meet the requirements of the scheme to help mitigate issues of pressures on the council’s homelessness services.

To assist local authorities further, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is introducing a £500 million capital fund – the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) – for local authorities in England to provide accommodation to families with housing needs who have arrived in the UK via Ukrainian and Afghan resettlement and relocation schemes.

One of the aims in establishing the resettlement service was to ensure the best possible use of government grants and support and this has already resulted in Newark and Sherwood being the only council in the county to successfully apply to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities’ £500m Local Authority Housing Fund. This will support the purchase of 14 homes, helping to meet resettlement and homelessness needs, with 35% of the homes secured already and the rest due to be acquired by November 2023.

The number of households relocated to date is listed below (as of August 23):

Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation	United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme	Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme	Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy	Homes for Ukraine
13	2	3	2	169

While a lot of the policies will undoubtedly impact migrants, we do not anticipate that they will have an immediate impact on homelessness services - Asylum and Refugee policies for homeless services

Existing procedures used by tenancy support workers to support households in our temporary accommodation provision will be amended to include the support for refugees of any scheme as the approach is similar. This is for the extra properties due to be brought into use by November 23.

ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) and employment will continue to be a priority for Refugees. Making sure we provide excellent tutors. Liaising with Newark College and Inspire to create a joined-up approach across the district.

13.5 Rough Sleeper Initiative

The Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) was originally launched in March 2018 and was targeted at local authorities with high numbers of people sleeping rough, based on the national 2017 rough sleeping snapshot.

This included a £30m fund for 2018-19 which was allocated to 83 local authorities (Nottingham City included), as well as a specialist team of Government Advisers made up of rough sleeping and homelessness experts drawn from local authorities and the third sector.

The initiative is part of the government’s ongoing Rough Sleeper Strategies 2018 and 2022 which initially set out the vision for halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it altogether by 2025.

The 2022 ‘Ending Rough Sleeping for Good Strategy’ brought in a new definition which has four key elements.

Prevention is the first element, meaning wherever possible people should never have to sleep rough in the first place. However, it is impractical to imagine that in a dynamic society every single episode of rough sleeping can be prevented, therefore, the definition stipulates that where rough sleeping is unavoidable it should be rare, it should be brief, and it should be non-recurrent.

Therefore, for DLUHC, rough sleeping can be defined as having ended when anyone ending up on the streets is very much the exception not the rule, and on those rare occasions, every individual will be quickly supported into suitable and sustainable accommodation.

In 2019 RSI year 2 funding was made available nationally, led by Ashfield DC, the seven local authorities across Nottinghamshire submitted a successful bid to provide rough sleeper services throughout the county.

Nottinghamshire subsequently placed successful bids for RSI funding in years 3 and 4 which provided several commissioned services delivered within Local Authorities, Statutory Services and the Voluntary Sector to the value of over 1.4m in 2021/22 (RSI4).

Following a successful bid for continued RSI funding in 2021, Nottinghamshire was awarded sustained funding for three years until 2025.

The current DLUHC RSI 2022-25 services are:

Intervention	Delivery partner	Aim
Rough Sleeping Coordinator	Framework	To develop the services and improve working practices as required. The post holder will ensure all multi-agency and Rough Sleeper Action Groups at an operation level are aligned. This post will work closely with the Strategic Leads to identify and support system change.
Street Outreach Team	Framework	The Street Outreach Team will identify and verify individuals who are rough sleeping and thereby accurately record levels of street homelessness. As the numbers of rough sleepers arriving on the streets starts to decline, the service will transition to refocus on delivering prevention and recovery work.
Navigator team	Framework	The service includes general navigators covering housing, mental health institutions and prison releases. There will be an additional Probation Navigator working with the team but funding for this post will be covered by Ministry of Justice.
Nursing outreach	Sherwood Forest Hospitals	The vision for this provision is that it integrates with specialist homeless support workers, accommodation providers and social care to establish a planned multi-disciplinary approach. Providing assertive outreach to people on the street but also following people through to more stable housing in order to prevent a return to rough sleeping.
Mental health outreach	Notts Healthcare	1 x CPN provides mental health outreach diagnosis, treatment and support in community

		locations, building trusted relationships with individuals and supporting them to access the secondary mental health services they need to gain or sustain a tenancy.
Ashfield/Mansfield supported housing	YMCA	40 units of accommodation to be split between Mansfield and Ashfield.
Nottinghamshire South supported housing	Framework	A support worker will work with the three residents that have been placed in an emergency housing provision in the south of the county (year 1 only)
Substance Misuse Outreach	CGL	The main function for this team is to support people to engage with the treatment of substance use service, provide intensive support to hard-to-reach groups, identify unmet needs and support onward referrals, identify risk and implement plans to mitigate these risks for high-risk individuals.
Non-UK national support	Tuntum	This service is available to Persons from abroad with limited eligibility to gain support and access settled status, employment support, reconnection and recognition of modern slavery and cohesive behaviour.
Local Authority surge fund	District/Borough Authorities	Surge funding to each of the authorities in the hope that the money can be used to offer a bespoke accommodation package to the individuals that are still rough sleeping and have so far not been accommodated.
Psychological Informed Environments and Trauma Informed Care		By year 2 we hope to provide psychological input and implementation of a PIE programme.

The RSI funding is held by Ashfield District Council. The current RSI Award is:

2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
£1,299,290	£1,350,604	£1,245,035	£3,894,929

Match funding held by RSI partners is:

Intervention	Funder	Held by	Delivery partner
RSI Programme Manager	District/Borough Authorities	Ashfield District Council	Newark and Sherwood District Council
RSI Administrator	District/Borough Authorities	Ashfield District Council	Ashfield District Council
Social worker	Framework	Framework	Framework
Prison navigator	East Midlands Probation Service	Ashfield District Council	Framework

Key performance indicators are collated and submitted to DLUHC. Initial analysis of the quarter 1 & 2 data for 2023/24, in comparison to 2021 and 2022 tells us:

- The reason for homelessness has increased for Mental Health Ward discharge and prison release, suggesting that local authorities are not being informed early enough or, with partners, are unable to facilitate a move to suitable accommodation. Individuals being unable to sofa surf has increased as a reason for homelessness and eviction due to non-engagement. Both these reasons may be as a result of increased complexities and support needs which family, friends or housing support workers are unable to resolve.
- The number of referrals to the Street Outreach Team has increased, generally, only 20% of those referred are found and verified as rough sleepers. This may support the increased number of people that are unable to sofa surf or being made homeless and moving on and off the streets, meaning they are harder to engage with if not approaching services directly.
- The biggest increase in referrals by service are for the Street Outreach Team, Mental Health referrals for the Community Psychiatric Nurse and Tuntum Housing that assist those with no recourse to public funds which includes housing. The largest need for this service within the county is in Newark and Sherwood.
- Five out of the seven districts and boroughs are experiencing a marked increase in referrals for RSI services. This includes Newark and Sherwood.

The Street Outreach Team has been funded to work directly with rough sleepers across Nottinghamshire County. Since April 2021 the team have carried out a spotlight street count once a month in all district and borough areas. Below are the snapshot figures for Newark and Sherwood up to October 2023:

	2017	2018	2019		2020	2021	2022	2023
Jan					0		2	2
Feb						1	3	4
Mar					0		4	4
Apr						1	2	1
May					2	2	4	1
Jun			1		2	2	5	3
Jul						7	8	2
Aug					6	7	9	3
Sep			2		1	3	6	2
Oct					6	6	6	0
Nov	4	4	2			5	2	
Dec					1	3	1	

Recommendation for Action: For a holistic overall focus, priorities should be placed on SMD rather than one element of the complexities to rough sleeping which is homelessness.

14. Consultation Response

An extensive consultation plan has been carried out throughout the Homelessness Review, various mechanisms have been facilitated including online surveys, collective events with frontline staff, Stakeholders and Partners, face to face small groups and 1-2-1 feedback sessions with those with lived experience.

We secured government-funded consultancy support from Shelter, who assisted in facilitating in person consultation events with internal teams and external stakeholders in Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield and Mansfield during June 2023.

In Newark and Sherwood, attendees heard a presentation summarising the HCLIC and RSI data, to understand if there is adequate provision of accessible and responsive homelessness and housing advice services in the district and what the gaps and strengths are to tackle homelessness effectively.

Attendees were then asked to work in groups to discuss if the proposed priorities are suitable and what actions they'd like to see NSDC and its partners take to achieve them.

The online survey for frontline staff and partner surveys gave us a good insight into the thoughts and experiences of staff that are aware of and involved in homelessness intervention on a daily basis.

A full write up of the questions and feedback to the online survey and Shelter event is available at Appendix two. Extracts of the feedback are detailed below:

Do you think there is an adequate provision of accessible and responsive homelessness and housing advice services throughout the district?

'The services to the East are much better than the services to the West. Most services are located in the larger areas such as Newark and very little in places like Ollerton'.

'There is a section of the population that are uncomfortable with formal things, usually the ones that most need the help. They are scared by it. If they come to places like Castle house to ask for help, they come scared and on the back foot, which makes them more likely to be hostile and less likely to engage appropriately. They need informal settings and contact with people who look and sound like them to help them ask for help in a positive way when it's needed'.

'On balance as professionals working to support young people to access homelessness services, we can experience challenges in accessing housing advice services via the phone, as calls go via Customer Services rather than being able to contact the homelessness team directly. It would be useful to have a direct line phone number or a dedicated representative to speak to'.

'The pre-tenancy work offered by NSDC is very good, and the relationship with the supported accommodation providers in Newark is very good, honest and realistic'.

In your experience, what do you consider to be the topmost significant causes of homelessness within the district?

'Family breakdown, family home no longer suitable, landlords selling, landlords unwilling to make adaptations to unsuitable properties, home in poor state of repair/hoarding, home no longer suitable due to medical conditions and following a stay in hospital'.

'Single homelessness, not having their own tenancy and floating between friends and family. Issues with local housing allowance for single people not matching rising room rates. Not enough provision for those with support needs or historical issues with drugs and alcohol'.

'Substance or alcohol abuse, poorly identified/supported learning difficulties or mental health problems'.

What additional services would be beneficial to the district?

'More proactive assistance, rather than reactive. More active promotion of the service so that people are aware that they can get assistance and that this can be at any stage - not just when they reach crisis point'.

'More accessible face to face/telephone advice from housing options team without needing to tick so many boxes before getting to speak to someone who has the correct knowledge'.

'A better hospital discharge service in Newark and Sherwood'.

'More single homeless accommodation, possible 'crash pads' for those not yet ready to commit to permanent accommodation'.

Do you think early intervention through effective partnership working would work, if so, which services do people interact with and should be included?

'Yes. Partner agencies - such as Citizens Advice, health visitors, debt charities, mortgage lenders, GPs, foodbanks/clubs, DWP, debt collectors - should be encouraged to tell customers to seek advice as soon as they experience housing-related problems: whether this is with paying their rent; suitability of their homes to meet the needs of their household; etc'.

'Yes, just the fact that you are the council makes it hard for people to approach you. Also, they don't always know that they can approach you, other organisations signposting is really important. However, community groups can be quite naive about whether they are being strung along, so perhaps training offered to community groups on how to spot the difference between people that have a genuine problem and people who are attention seeking (and how to give them appropriate attention without tying up services that are needed by other people)'.

'Any form of early intervention would better enable people to maintain existing tenancies. For those people that find themselves homeless/sofa surfing/rough sleeping, again, early intervention would assist rather than a deterioration in the person's circumstances leading to greater impact on mental health/possible substance and/or alcohol misuse/greater connection with health and support agencies. Agencies involved could be health, LA, Framework, Social Landlords, etc'.

What is your opinion on access to affordable and quality accommodation across all sectors? Do you think there is enough suitable accommodation for secure, long-term housing?

'LHA rates do not match the rents anywhere in the PRS. There are significant top ups, especially for those who require single person units. In social housing it may be more affordable, but the housing need does not match the available housing'.

'The levels set for funding accommodation for those on benefits don't meet the actual costs of renting privately and there is not enough non private rental accommodation available long term'.

'Not enough accommodation for single people'.

'There is a severe local shortage of affordable housing with a long waiting list, families are overcrowded or are spending a long time in temporary accommodation'.

'There are significant waiting times for access to long term housing even when the young person is in band 1. Lack of flooring in newly let accommodation eats up a lot of the care leavers home establishment grant. Affordability is already an issue which will become more challenging due to the cost-of-living crisis and increases in fuel costs'.

Do you think floating support should be considered for someone who has found accommodation and previously experienced homelessness?

'I think a training course for new tenants that have previously been homeless, should be mandatory. How to manage your finances, basic home maintenance and housekeeping, who to turn to if facing difficulties etc?'

'The revolving door of homelessness can put barriers in place in relation to people's ability to manage. Not only a tenancy but actually having to manage day to day living tasks at times that are socially acceptable, having neighbours etc. They need long term support to manage independently on a long-term basis and reintegrate into society'

'We find that supporting families can give them encouragement to achieve what they need to, this is the same for housing'

'To allow a period of adjustment and for the individual to maintain the tenancy. It would also offer opportunity to link the person with other support services, i.e. health/substance misuse, etc. as necessary once they have a safe and secure place to stay'

Do you think we need to do more to develop and improve pathways to tackle rough sleeping?

'We need the appropriate wraparound services in place and to also make transient accommodation available to those who do not want secure accommodation.'

'From what I have heard, the issue is more with rough sleepers engaging than the services we can offer to them'

'Yes, better access to mental health services. Mental Health services working to prevent homelessness. A better understanding and awareness of why and how someone becomes a rough sleeper'

'I think the pathways we have now are more than suitable; there will always be a cohort who cannot be managed via any pathway'

'We need to educate the public about pathways offered out of rough sleeping and clarify the difference between rough sleepers and people who say they are because they want money/food/support. We need a clear path that yields immediate relief from rough sleeping that everyone knows about'

'The same faces keep appearing on the streets, not succeeding in keeping a home'

Do you feel enough is done to link health, wellbeing, and housing together to improve the life chances and aspirations of those affected by homelessness?

'Young people should be encouraged to build better futures for themselves through education, positive life experiences and mentoring, instead of encouraged into tenancies'

'The cohort who struggle with their mental health and possible physical health require much more intensive support to be able to get back on their feet and then go on to manage housing'

'We've made huge gains in this area, but I think it is an important area in prevention of homelessness and as such it is worth investing in continued development'

What should be done to deliver long term support solutions to sustain tenancies for the most vulnerable?

'Provide more bespoke support. Tenancy officers are already stretched, a possible role for a tenancy sustainment officer'.

'Have a mechanism in place to identify vulnerable tenants and target support at these'.

'Funding for Complex Needs Workers to intensively work alongside a person'.

The stakeholder and partner event, hosted with Shelter, asked attendees four key questions, relating to strengths, challenges and improvements as well as suggested actions to achieve the proposed priorities for the strategy.

An overview of the first three questions is detailed below. The feedback to the fourth question will be included within the action plan. Full details are included within appendix 2.

What works well about Newark and Sherwood's homelessness service?

Attendees of the consultation feel that Newark and Sherwood's homelessness service staff have excellent knowledge of both statutory requirements and the local offer of support available to its residents, allowing for effective signposting to relevant services.

Good communication between different internal departments enables quick and clear decision making, particularly between the housing register and homelessness service teams.

Another key finding from attendees was that the service is approachable and accessible. This was highlighted in relation to the range of methods of communication offered, particularly their face-to-face service but equally clients having the option of telephone and email communication too if that is better suited to the individual's needs.

Having an allocated Housing Options officer was also seen as beneficial to clients for consistency, as well as the provision of two duty officers and a Landlord Liaison Officer working with single males.

Rough sleeper pathway – NSDC are proactive with rough sleepers and work hard to get them into temporary accommodation, often on the same day. The dedicated drop-in service (Monday to Friday) is very useful.

What are the main challenges for the service when preventing and tackling homelessness?

The main challenge identified by partners was around the lack of affordable and social housing, with rents in the Private Rented Sector (PRS) increasing at an exponential rate and the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) not keeping pace.

Unfortunately, as we know, this is a national challenge facing local authorities and resources are limited. However, it was felt that there is potential for work to be done in building relationships with PRS landlords, particularly around the stigma associated with homeless clients who are often not given priority as a result of their history/backgrounds.

It was also identified by many that there is not enough supported accommodation in the district, particularly for the growing number of people with complex needs and those requiring a high level of physical support but under the age threshold. There was concern that

people are being placed in accommodation that does not offer the correct level of support, and this was linked to difficulties with sustaining clients' engagement.

Another key challenge which participants spoke about was the availability of support to maintain tenancies. It was felt that there is a need for more floating support provision, educating tenants around basic skills for managing a tenancy and enabling better prevention.

There were also challenges raised in relation to particular cohorts. Firstly, staff from HMP Nottingham highlighted that on average, 30% of prisoners are released to no fixed abode (NFA) which equates to approximately 50 people per month (across the region, not all in Newark). It was suggested that the county wide prison release protocol is reviewed as currently there are gaps which result in homelessness on release. Secondly, supporting those with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) was also noted as a challenge due to issues around eligibility and in turn, delays in support. There is a desire to better understand this cohort and how best to support them.

How could the service be improved to better prevent and tackle homelessness?

Following on from the challenges that were identified, we asked attendees to think about how the service could be improved in order to better prevent and tackle homelessness. The most common response was around education, particularly around reducing the stigma of homelessness, which would lead to people seeking help sooner rather than later and accessing tenancy sustainment provisions. It was felt that in order to achieve this, NSDC would have to be more creative with their prevention activities, and working with schools to develop and deliver support materials was suggested as a way to identify potential homelessness early on and tackle intergenerational homelessness.

There was also a recommendation for improving the sharing of information about what services and support NSDC has on offer to its residents. It is felt that in many cases, the provisions are there but they are not always being accessed to achieve their full potential. Actions that could be taken to achieve this include improving the non-digital service, specifically not relying on the website as this is not accessible to all, and making more referrals to relevant agencies, such as Citizens Advice for debt and benefit advice. This would allow for multi-agency meetings to be more widely attended by professionals and therefore greater wraparound support offered to the client.

Although Castle House was identified in our first discussion as a useful hub where many agencies can work together, it was recommended by participants that this model is replicated in other sites across the district so that it is more accessible to others who do not live nearby. A suggestion was also made about how Castle House could be redesigned using a trauma informed lens to make it more approachable to its clients.

There was a general consensus across the groups that more could be done by NSDC to gather feedback from its residents in order to shape the way its service is designed and delivered.

Although there are surveys in place, attendees felt that it would be beneficial for the council to go further than this to co-produce the service with people with lived experience of homelessness. For example, there were recommendations for a lived experience group and service-user forums where suggestions can be made and any concerns can be raised and responded to.

The Newark, Sherwood and Rural Local Influence Networks have been consulted in a similar way to the above in September 2023, in particular on the proposed priorities for the strategy – a pre-meet with the chairs of the LIN's took place to ensure the expectations of the group were met.

In September 2023, we also consulted current and recent customers of the Housing Options service and those with lived experience currently accommodated in Supported Housing Provision. The consultation outlined the proposed priorities but also asked them to think about their own experience of homelessness and help us to understand what is and isn't working well for homeless services in our district, why people experience homelessness and what we can do to assist them. All questions and responses are included in appendix 3.

15. Future levels of Homelessness

The Homelessness Code of Guidance explains that a homelessness review should include an assessment of the likely future levels of homelessness in the district.

It is extremely difficult to predict with accuracy the likely future levels of homelessness, considering the division of the causes of homelessness between structural factors that create the conditions within which homelessness will occur and individual factors which mean some people are more susceptible to structural forces:

- Structural factors are wider societal and economic issues that affect opportunities and social environments for individuals, such as housing and labour market conditions, a weak welfare benefits system and rising levels of poverty.
- Individual factors apply to the personal circumstances of a homeless person and may include personal crisis, traumatic events, mental health, addiction challenges, relationship problems.

The Housing Options Service is not able to influence future levels of homelessness but can use the information contained within the Homelessness Review to guide the allocation and prioritisation of resources. Based on previous trends both locally and nationally the following can be surmised:

- The number of approaches remains high, households approaching for assistance in 2023/24 (Quarters 1 & 2) predicts a total of 1302 requests for officer intervention may be received throughout the year and following years will remain higher than those two years ago.
- Single homelessness has continued to rise over the last four years of the study, particularly in single men. Complexities of single homelessness has increased, a holistic Severe Multiple disadvantage approach is needed to ensure the success of housing and support for this cohort and to stem the potential increase.

- A reduction or loss in funding for housing related support to vulnerable people, including those with mental health needs, learning disabilities and substance use means that people in these groups may find it more difficult to sustain their tenancies and to live independently successfully. This is likely to result in an increase in homelessness amongst these households.
- The number of rough sleepers found has been consistent overall, including the number of new rough sleepers on the streets in Newark and Sherwood. Government plans to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end rough sleeping by 2027 will only be successful if long-term and sustainable funding is made available and the wider national issues tackled.
- Nationally, the cost of private renting continues to increase. Of those housed during 2021/22 and 2022/23, the average monthly rent for a 2-bedroom property in the East of our district was 24.5% higher than the LHA rate. Of those housed during 2021/22 and 2022/23, the average monthly rent for a 3-bedroom property in the West of our district was 30% higher than the LHA rate.
- Many tenants are required to top-up their rent from other income they receive meaning that this additional outlay, on top of the current Cost of Living crisis affecting gas and electricity prices and food, has created a very challenging environment for households when managing their budgets.
- With high rent and property prices locally, many young people are living with parents for longer or returning to the parental home. Family relationships can become strained and lead to parental eviction. This is likely to remain a predominant cause of homelessness unless the fundamental causes, (such as young people being able to access affordable accommodation independently) are tackled at a national level.
- The end of an assured shorthold tenancy is likely to remain a predominant cause of homelessness, as the private rented sector continues to thrive in the wake of home ownership being largely unaffordable to those on low incomes. Only action taken at a national level will address the issues within this sector. The Council's ability to access the private rented sector is likely to remain challenging (given the issues with affordability locally and impact of Welfare Reform). The Council will need to consider how best to work with landlords in the future to meet the needs of homeless households in the District.
- The Council does not have the resources to meet the shortfall between the private rent levels and the amount of assistance that low-income households are entitled to, through the benefits system, except through short term use of Discretionary Housing Payments.
- Of the structural factors, research has identified that childhood poverty is a "powerful predictor" of homelessness, though as depicted above the causation of homelessness is complex and there is no single trigger – structural and individual factors combine in differing ways, producing different outcomes, not all of which include homelessness.
- The Resolution Foundation have forecast that relative child poverty will increase to around 31% by 2026/27 (a 20% increase on the 2020/21 figure above), but for families with 3 or more children that increases to between 50% and 77%. This variation in impact is attributed to the caps within the welfare benefit system for larger families.

- Of all the structural factors, housing market trends appear to have the most direct impact on levels of homelessness – The Homelessness Monitor, published annually by Crisis, has developed a model based on these structural factors to project the amount of “core homelessness” to 2041. The 2022 report (written prior to the cost-of-living crisis) projects that core homelessness in the midlands will rise by 25% between 2019 and 2024, and from 2024 will remain fairly static.
- For Newark and Sherwood, since December 2021, there has been a steady rise in mortgage interest rates. Consequently, this upward trend has led developers to scale back their planned projects. Given that a significant portion of affordable housing relies on Section 106 contributions, this reduction in development activity has resulted in a decrease in the availability of affordable housing, which plays a crucial role in addressing homelessness.

16. Next steps

By examining past and future levels of homelessness six key issues emerge. These issues are the Councils objectives for the future - shaping and providing focus for the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029.

Because the strategy is a collective plan to tackle homelessness with partners that will be equally responsible for its delivery, the action plan will be developed with and jointly owned with key partners.

Launch events will take place across Mid-Notts in March/April 2024, delivered in two parts:

The first event in March 2024 will be a launch event, concentrating on the findings and content of the Homelessness Review and the Homeless Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2024 – 2029.

The second event in April 2024 will be a workshop-based event and concentrate on populating the milestones and actions under each objective/priority and assigning responsibility.

Recommendations for action have been added throughout this Homelessness Review document and will be proposed for consideration as the action plan progresses.

The objectives/priorities identified for the strategy and agreed through consultation are listed below.

Objective 1 - Early intervention through effective partnership working.

Milestone – to prevent as many residents as possible from becoming homeless, with a particular focus on those becoming homeless from a private rented sector tenancy, friends and family no longer able to accommodate or as a result of domestic abuse.

Through partners we hope to identify those that are homeless early on and therefore encourage the prevention of homelessness before crisis. Ending rough sleeping and homelessness for good is only possible if we address the root causes and prevent it happening in the first place.

The chronic shortage of affordable housing and appropriate support services means we are just responding to people already in crisis, rather than preventing them from reaching that point in the first place.

Recommendations for action: Reduce the number of evictions from Assured Shorthold tenancies to below the national average. Ensure particular understanding for the main reasons for ending an assured shorthold and find possible solutions to mitigate this.

Recommendations for action: Understand the reasons that friends and family can no longer accommodate and find solutions, such as mediation or incentives to continue to accommodate.

Recommendations for action: high reason for homelessness is other, guidance from DLUHC is to break this down further.

Recommendations for action: to identify ways to increase the number of preventions through early intervention and reduce the number that are already homeless and owed a relief duty.

Recommendation for action: Consider the rise in single homelessness and the complexities that can make it harder for services to prevent homelessness.

Objective 2 - The provision of an accessible, agile and responsive homelessness service.

Milestone – Provide a high-quality service that customers are satisfied with, and provide opportunities for customers to influence the design and delivery of services – remember this is not just a council strategy, this relates to the whole system approach

Recommendations for action: To carry out a review of the effectiveness of the Housing Wizard, understand the reasons for an increase in approaches and take necessary steps to improve outcomes for the customer and to make best use of officer time.

Recommendations for action: to adopt a more data-driven and evidence-based approach to tackling homelessness.

Recommendations for action: ensure the Duty to Refer is effective and that the authority are able to assist people at the earliest opportunity to ensure the prevention of homelessness.

Objective 3 – Access to affordable and quality accommodation across all sectors.

Milestone - Help as many residents as possible to move from one home to another without the need for emergency and temporary accommodation. Influence where it is needed and that it is of good quality.

Milestone – To understand and contribute towards a robust PRS in Newark and Sherwood. PRS is our biggest reason for homelessness, but also our second biggest type of accommodation secured for homeless households after social housing.

Recommendations for action: consider if the large number of main duty decisions having no priority need is due to the number of single homelessness that cannot be prevented or relieved and therefore resulting in continued homelessness for many that do not fit the priority need criteria.

Recommendation for action: The largest number of allocations, that have been awarded a homelessness bandings are from households moving from the Private Rented Sector or no

longer able to stay with friends and family. Priority should be given to the prevention of homelessness from this type of accommodation.

Objective 4 - Tackle rough sleeping by developing and improving pathways.

Milestone – RSI may come to an end before the end of the strategy, create a contingency plan if RSI funding ends and there are no further rounds of funding.

Recommendation for action: No fixed abode is also high but a cohort that we know little about. More knowledge on where people are staying and how they secure a place to sleep which prevents rough sleeping.

Objective 5 - Linking health, well-being and housing together to improve the life chances and aspirations of those affected.

Milestone – To ensure Psychologically Informed Environments (day to day running of services are designed to take the psychological and emotional needs of people with these experiences into account) and Trauma informed Care (opportunity for individuals to engage more fully in their health care, to develop a trusting relationship with their provider) are indicated in the shaping and progression of the strategy and action plan.

Milestone – Better understand the projections of core homelessness levels and child poverty, as well as the housing market trends and the anticipation that there may be a rise in homelessness in Newark and Sherwood between 2024 – 2029.

Objective 6 - Delivering holistic support solutions to sustain long term tenancies and prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.

Milestone – Encourage and support leaders of key organisations to do more to prioritise SMD and prevent homelessness.

Appendix 1 – Frontline staff and partner Consultation Online Survey

Appendix 2 – Consultation Event with Stakeholders

Appendix 3 - Public consultation

Appendix 4 - Supporting charts evidencing current levels of homelessness

Appendix 5 – Equality Impact Assessment

Please note –detailed appendices to the Homelessness Review are available upon request.