

DRAFT

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping  
Prevention Strategy 2025-29

## Table of Contents

Forewords .....	4
Councillor Jay Hayes, Executive Member for Housing and Planning .....	4
Dr Paul Scotting, Chair of the Nottingham Homelessness Voluntary Sector Forum .....	4
Introduction .....	5
Vision.....	6
Priorities and Aims .....	6
Aims and Targets.....	7
Definition of Homelessness .....	11
Why produce a Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy .....	11
Strategy development.....	11
Context.....	12
Homelessness Needs Assessment .....	14
Homelessness statistical summary .....	15
Future forecasts .....	16
Review of previous strategy period .....	17
What did people say was important? .....	19
Homelessness Prevention Charter.....	20
Promoting Access and Inclusivity.....	20
Partnerships, Processes and Pathways.....	21
Strategy Resources.....	24
Infrastructure and implementation .....	27
Action plan(s) .....	28
Governance and accountability .....	29
Policies and Procedures .....	29
Priority 1. Homelessness is prevented and does not reoccur.....	30
Focus 1.1 Working with tenants and landlords to reduce evictions from the Private Rented Sector .....	31
Focus 1.2 Minimising the number of people becoming homeless following unplanned exclusion from family or friends’ homes .....	33
Focus 1.3 Preventing eviction from social housing and supported accommodation.....	35
Focus 1.4 Bridging the transition to accommodation when institutionalised support ends.....	37
Priority 2. The issues causing homelessness are addressed .....	39
Focus 2.1 Promoting financial capability and independent living skills.....	40
Focus 2.2 Helping to protect people from violence and abuse .....	42
Focus 2.3 Embedding systemic change for people with Severe Multiple Disadvantage .....	46
Focus 2.4 Improving the Health and Wellbeing.....	48

Priority 3. Homelessness is brief ..... 52  
    Focus 3.1 Delivering sufficiency in suitable Temporary Accommodation that is of best value ... 52  
    Focus 3.2 Delivering housing solutions..... 54  
Priority 4. Rough Sleeping is reduced ..... 57

DRAFT

## Forewords

Councillor Jay Hayes, Executive Member for Housing and Planning

Homelessness is a crisis that profoundly impacts the lives of those affected. In Nottingham, we recognise that homelessness extends beyond visible rough sleeping; it encompasses hidden homelessness, insecure housing including temporary accommodation, and vulnerable households on the brink of losing their homes. The past few years have been difficult for Nottingham. However, despite national austerity and a challenging financial environment, partners across the city remain committed to collectively supporting vulnerable individuals and families and over the next five years we will build upon the many achievements already delivered.

We recognise the importance of learning from people who have experienced homelessness and rough sleeping. Their insights guide our strategy, ensuring that our services are responsive, compassionate, and effective in preventing homelessness (or minimising its impact and duration if that isn't possible) and reducing reliance on temporary accommodation.

Tackling homelessness is complex, but our determination remains unwavering. This strategy must be grounded by what is realistically possible to achieve and backed by a comprehensive understanding of the local context. Through defining what is deliverable within the resources available, we strive to make a positive impact on the lives of those most vulnerable in our community and we are committed to preventing and alleviating all forms of homelessness, ensuring that everyone has a safe and stable place to call home.

Dr Paul Scotting, Chair of the Nottingham Homelessness Voluntary Sector Forum

This document is, above all, a commitment to working together to improve the lives of those experiencing homelessness in Nottingham. The Voluntary, Community, and Faith (VCF) groups share the City Council's dedication to alleviating and, where possible, preventing all forms of homelessness.

In Nottingham, we are fortunate to have strong partnerships between the VCF sector, the City Council, and other statutory bodies. Yet homelessness remains a pressing issue, affecting all parts of society.

Across the city, more than 40 VCF organizations, supported by local citizens, are actively addressing homelessness. Over 1,000 volunteers contribute their time, while many others offer donations of money and goods. This huge resource means that individuals facing homelessness can access a wide range of services—from hot meals to help with drug and alcohol rehabilitation. The VCF sector also provides both temporary and long-term housing solutions.

However, these are challenging times. The demand on charitable foundations that fund this essential work has grown significantly, and the financial support Nottingham City Council has provided through commissioned services has been crucial.

Over the next five years, we aim to build on our partnerships with the City Council, the NHS, and other statutory bodies by sharing knowledge and expertise. Together with the

Council, we also hope to forge stronger connections with the local business community to explore how they can best support our efforts to tackle homelessness. Our commitment is to collaborate with all agencies to deliver the best possible outcomes for those experiencing homelessness in Nottingham.

## Introduction

Homelessness is a term that refers to a wide range of situations for single people, couples, families, and other household units. When we talk about homelessness, we mean people about to lose their homes, those living in temporary accommodation, people sofa surfing, the hidden homelessness as well as rough sleepers. Predominant reasons for homelessness are when family and friends have asked people to leave, tenancies have ended in the private rented sector, immigration decisions have been made by the Home Office and survivors have escaped domestic abuse. Risk of homelessness can be heightened for people leaving care, being discharged from hospital, or released from prison and for individuals with criminal histories, drug and alcohol dependencies, mental health conditions, trauma and/or adverse childhood experiences.

Superficially, homelessness can seem to only be about not having anywhere to live and therefore can mistakenly be viewed as an issue that can be resolved simply by providing a housing solution. However, there is often a unique or interconnecting range of personal, societal and environmental circumstances that have led to homelessness becoming a veritable risk or occurrence and generally at least one additional background support need can trigger the reason why a household moves beyond housing need and into homelessness. Even when a reason for homelessness seems clear and obvious, a holistic assessment would likely show very specific needs are present and require support beyond a housing solution.

Increasingly, affordability is a prominent factor and there are extremely challenging housing market conditions that make preventing or responding to homelessness more difficult. This can impact more acutely if there is a lack of resources or resourcefulness, resilience, endurance or simply time for a household to find an affordable home for themselves.

The most vulnerable and marginalised are often the most at risk of homelessness and homelessness is extremely damaging. It can exacerbate and compound existing issues and lead to the development of further problems that can have a profound impact on health and wellbeing and current and future life quality.

People will have different experiences of homelessness, which to an extent, can depend upon how quickly they know they are about to lose their home, how quickly they seek support, their capacity to source temporary options and whether the local authority has any duty to provide them with accommodation. Homelessness starts when there is a legitimate risk that within a couple of months a household will lose accommodation that has previously been available for them to occupy as their stable home. If someone does lose their home and temporary accommodation is available, it may be overcrowded, unstable - requiring frequent moves and lead to isolation due to extended periods away from support networks. If temporary options cannot be arranged it can result in sofa surfing, hidden homelessness and ultimately rough sleeping. No matter how much investment there is into services to support people out of homelessness, no homeless

experience is positive, emphasising the importance of an approach which seeks to stop it happening in the first place.

The primary and major challenge in preventing and addressing homelessness is the national shortage of affordable housing. The purpose of this strategy is not to increase housing supply for those in housing need (as this is a national issue to resolve and more specifically addressed within the Nottingham Housing Strategy, Homes Fit for the Future). However, what this strategy will seek to do is promote equitable access to advice and support with housing options by strengthening a partnership early intervention approach to anticipate, understand and address the causes and reasons for why people become homeless, maximise opportunities for prevention and when homelessness cannot be prevented, try to make it as brief as possible, try to ensure there is infrastructure to stop it from reoccurring and try to minimise the harm that homelessness can cause.

This strategy is being introduced in an extremely difficult financial context which is being experienced nationwide but is locally acute. This strategy commits that Nottingham City Council will fulfil its statutory duties through consistent and robust decision making under homelessness legislation and duties and processes will be furthered detailed in a suite of policies and procedures in support of the strategy. Nottingham has a longstanding history of supporting people beyond those it legally obliged to help and will continue to do so where possible. However, now more than ever the council is dependent on the efforts of its partners in the public private and Voluntary, Community and Faith (VCF) sector to achieve this, and this strategy seeks to build on the effective established partnerships to continue to enable interventions and stretch resources as far as realistically possible.

## Vision

Our vision for this strategy is that:

- Everyone receives quality advice and support to stay in their home or find somewhere to live.
- Wherever possible homelessness and rough sleeping is prevented and
- When it cannot be prevented it is brief, does not reoccur and its impact on individuals, families, and communities is minimised

## Priorities and Aims

This strategy contains four priorities with focussed areas of recommended activity:

1. Homelessness is prevented and does not reoccur
2. The issues causing homelessness are addressed
3. Homelessness is brief
4. Rough Sleeping is reduced

Further information about the priorities and their specific areas of focus is available from page 27.

## Aims and Targets

The aims of this strategy are a balance of aspiration and realism. We have set objectives to help achieve the aims, benchmarked the current level of performance and set a series of accumulating measurable and nationally comparable targets to ensure achievable and continued progression.

Aim	Objective	Target
<p>To achieve a reduction in the number of households living in Temporary Accommodation.</p> <p>To decrease the length of time that households are living in Temporary Accommodation.</p> <p>To achieve a sufficient supply of TA for those households who need it at best value for the council.</p>	<p>To increase access to affordable housing solutions, including the proportion of tenancies facilitated at Prevention or Relief Duty.</p> <p>To establish a multi-model Procurement Policy with necessary procurement mechanisms and call off sufficient supply in line with projected requirements.</p>	<p>To reduce the rate of families in Temporary Accommodation to 4 per 1000 of the population by 2026 and maintain it below this rate onwards.</p> <p>To reduce the percentage of families in Temporary Accommodation to 70% of all households in TA by 2026 and maintain it below this rate onwards.</p> <p>To deliver 30 total tenancies per month in the Private Rented Sector for families, at prevention or relief stage.</p> <p>To deliver 22 total tenancies per month in the Private Rented Sector for single people, at prevention or relief stage (based on RSI and AFEO targets combined).</p> <p>To deliver 12 total tenancies per month in the Private Rented Sector for families, at relief stage, from Temporary Accommodation</p> <p>To deliver 12 total tenancies per month in the Private Rented Sector for singles, at relief stage, from Temporary Accommodation</p> <p>To reduce average length of stay in Temporary Accommodation for families to under 180 days by 2026.</p> <p>To reduce the number of single people placed in hotels to a snapshot of under 10 by 01/01/26</p> <p>To reduce the number of families placed in Nightly Paid Temporary Accommodation to a snapshot of under 100 by 01/01/26</p>

## Benchmark

Rate of households in TA (TA snapshot 2023)	
Nottingham	5.9
England (National)	4.9
East Midlands (Regional)	1.7
Regional cities	4.6
London	17.8
Core cities	6.5
Statistical neighbours	7.3

Rate of family households in TA (TA snapshot 2023)	
Nottingham	4.8
England (National)	3.1
East Midlands (Regional)	1.1
Regional cities	2.8
London	12.1
Core cities	4.3
Statistical neighbours	4.7

Rate of single households in TA (TA snapshot 2023)	
Nottingham	1.1
England (National)	1.8
East Midlands (Regional)	0.7
Regional cities	1.8
London	5.8
Core cities	2.1
Statistical neighbours	2

Household type in TA (snapshot 2023)		
	Families	Singles
Nottingham	81%	19%
England (National)	63%	36%
East Midlands (Regional)	60%	40%
Regional cities	63%	37%
London	68%	32%
Core cities	56%	43%
Statistical neighbours	70%	30%

01/04/24	
Snapshot number of families in TA	630
Snapshot number of families in hotels	125
Snapshot number of families in NPEA	67
Snapshot number of singles in TA	146
Snapshot number of singles in hotels	30

Average Length of Stay in TA for families (LOS snapshot 2023)	
Nottingham	219 days

Average Length of Stay in Core SA for singles	
Nottingham	121 days

Average Length of Stay in Dispersed SA for singles	
Nottingham	549 days

Total number of PRS tenancies to end Relief duty	
Nottingham	278
England (National)	18210
East Midlands (Regional)	1030
Regional cities	50
London	4840
Core cities	248
Statistical neighbours	191

Number of PRS tenancies to end Relief duty (families)	
Nottingham	Teams message to SC/SE 15/10

Number of PRS tenancies to end Relief duty (singles)	
Nottingham	Teams message to SC/SE 15/10



Aim	Objective	Benchmark	Target
To achieve a reduction in the number of individuals rough sleeping in Nottingham	To maximise supply of supported accommodation / accommodation with support for single homeless people.	<p>In 2023/24, in Nottingham, the total number of individual rough sleepers was 739</p> <p>At the 2024 annual count, the number of rough sleepers in Nottingham was 56</p>	To reduce the number of rough sleepers found on a monthly count in Nottingham down to single figures by 2028
	To reduce the number of new rough sleepers in Nottingham	At the 2024 annual count, the number of new rough sleepers in Nottingham was 16	<p>90% of all newly identified rough sleepers to receive a statutory housing assessment within one week of identification.</p> <p>100% of all new rough sleepers are monitored as either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessed</li> <li>• Logged as not seen again</li> <li>• Subject to an engagement plan</li> </ul> <p>• And identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New to rough sleeping entirely</li> <li>• New to Nottingham as a rough sleeper</li> </ul>
	To reduce the number of entrenched rough sleepers in Nottingham	At the 2024 annual count, the number of entrenched rough sleepers in Nottingham was 20	Achieve a reduction in the number of entrenched rough sleepers found at the annual count to 4 in 2026, 2 in 2027 (and thereafter)
	To achieve positive move on from supported accommodation	In 2023 the proportion of move on from supported accommodation (HRS adults) that was due to a positive housing outcome averaged at 73%	<p>Increase the proportion of move on that was due to a positive housing outcome to 80% by 2026</p> <p>Decrease the percentage of Relief assessments that are from supported accommodation to</p>

		<table border="1"> <tr> <td colspan="2">% of Prevention Assessments that are from supported accommodation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nottingham</td> <td>5.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>England (National)</td> <td>4.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>East Midlands (Regional)</td> <td>5.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Regional cities</td> <td>5.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>London</td> <td>3.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Core cities</td> <td>7.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Statistical neighbours</td> <td>4.9</td> </tr> </table>	% of Prevention Assessments that are from supported accommodation		Nottingham	5.7	England (National)	4.6	East Midlands (Regional)	5.2	Regional cities	5.8	London	3.2	Core cities	7.1	Statistical neighbours	4.9	under 6% by 2026 and under 5% by 2027 (maintained thereafter)
% of Prevention Assessments that are from supported accommodation																			
Nottingham	5.7																		
England (National)	4.6																		
East Midlands (Regional)	5.2																		
Regional cities	5.8																		
London	3.2																		
Core cities	7.1																		
Statistical neighbours	4.9																		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td colspan="2">% of Relief Assessments that are from supported accommodation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nottingham</td> <td>8.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>England (National)</td> <td>4.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>East Midlands (Regional)</td> <td>5.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Regional cities</td> <td>6.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>London</td> <td>3.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Core cities</td> <td>5.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Statistical neighbours</td> <td>3.8</td> </tr> </table>	% of Relief Assessments that are from supported accommodation		Nottingham	8.9	England (National)	4.5	East Midlands (Regional)	5.2	Regional cities	6.5	London	3.8	Core cities	5.6	Statistical neighbours	3.8		
% of Relief Assessments that are from supported accommodation																			
Nottingham	8.9																		
England (National)	4.5																		
East Midlands (Regional)	5.2																		
Regional cities	6.5																		
London	3.8																		
Core cities	5.6																		
Statistical neighbours	3.8																		

## Definition of Homelessness

For the purposes of this strategy, we determine homelessness and threatened with homelessness using the definition in [Section 175 of the Housing Act 1996](#)

This means families, singles and couples who do not have (or will not have within the next 56 days) access to accommodation that it is reasonable to occupy.

We also adopt the [government definition of rough sleepers](#).

This means people sleeping or about to sleep in the open air or places that are not classed as accommodation.

## Why produce a Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy

Like all local authorities, Nottingham City Council has a statutory duty to formulate a strategy for the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping. This requirement is outlined in [Section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002](#).

In the delivery of this strategy, Nottingham City Council must comply with relevant legislation and case law, principally the Housing Act 1996, Part VII as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and must have regard to a statutory code of guidance. Further information about the legal framework is available [here](#).

The requirement to produce a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy provides local authorities with an opportunity to work with partners to review all the services available in Nottingham and to collectively develop a comprehensive and focussed approach to how best to utilise all resources to provide the best possible outcomes for homeless people and those at risk in Nottingham.

## Strategy development

To inform this strategy a comprehensive needs assessment has been developed by Nottingham City Council following a lengthy process of data and insight research and analysis. This has included quantitative statistical scrutiny as well as qualitative feedback through surveys and interviews with key and specialist partner and stakeholder groups, including public and VCF sector services and people with lived experience of homelessness.

We have collated and analysed data on factors impacting homelessness and homelessness statistics, including change and trends over the lifetime of the previous strategy to understand current need. The full data analysis is available in the Homelessness Needs Assessment 2024 (HNA24) which has provided the evidence base for the development of this Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

This strategy echoes Nottingham City Council's corporate values of equality, fairness and inclusivity and will help to prioritise our statutory duties to protect and accommodate people experiencing homelessness. The HNA24 references the

national, regional and local associated strategies that are aligned with, influence or are affected by this strategy.

Homelessness Prevention is one of the key themes of the new Nottingham Housing Strategy - Homes Fit for the Future. This is in recognition of the high priority the city gives to tackling homelessness however, it is for this strategy to outline the detailed approach. Likewise, this Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy acknowledges the desperate need for increased supply of affordable, good standard housing but relies upon the Housing Strategy to specify how that can be addressed.

## Context

There has been considerable change both locally and nationally throughout the course of the last Nottingham Homelessness Prevention Strategy and this new strategy is being introduced in a context with legacy issues as well as new challenges. Over the five years since the previous strategy was published, the country has experienced a global health pandemic, the United Kingdom left the European Union, there has been increased and intense international conflict with mass displacement and worldwide financial implications. People living in the country have experienced ongoing increases in inflation and record costs of living including energy price caps, food, fuel and market rent prices which has impacted significantly in areas such as Nottingham with one of the highest levels of deprivation and lowest levels of disposable income in the country.

This strategy will be launched in the months following a new Labour government taking power for the first time since 2010. There have also been governance changes locally. In November 2022 a devolution deal was agreed and the East Midlands Combined County Authority was formed with the first regional Major elected in May 2024. Additionally, over the past five years there have been multiple changes in personnel within the political and corporate leadership teams at Nottingham City Council.

Following continuous reductions to core funding from the government, Nottingham like many other local authorities has been beset by financial issues with additional local accounting matters leading to the council budget being monitored by Government since 2020. Major pressures affecting local government nationally, including the cost of increased demand for children's and adults' social care and rising homelessness presentations to an underfunded statutory service in Nottingham, led to a £23 million overspend in 2023/24 and resulted in Nottingham City Council issuing a report under section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 which resulted in the Secretary of State appointing commissioners in February 2024. In August 2024 an Improvement Plan was approved at Full Council which sets out how the council intends to move from crisis to stability, to get back on track to deliver for the people of Nottingham.

Nationally, in 2022, the Johnson Conservative government published the cross-government strategy Ending Rough Sleeping for Good. Previous short-term and pilot funding was consolidated into a 3-year commitment through the Rough Sleeping Initiative and a requirement was introduced for local areas to develop their own Ending Rough Sleeping Plans and ensure their approach to tackling rough sleeping was referenced in their Homelessness Prevention Strategy. Over the course of the last strategy there have been various funding streams to address single homelessness

(including those experiencing Severe and Multiple Disadvantages (SMD). However, it is questionable how much funding is new resource to tackle increasing pressures and how much is replacement funding for previous budget cuts. According to the [Homelessness Link 2022 Annual Review of Support for Single Homeless People in England](#), there was a 2% increase in the number of accommodation services from the previous year, but this is still 33% lower than a decade ago.

Additionally, there has been a stark lack of parity in the level of funding to meet statutory duties and prevent families with children from becoming homeless and requiring temporary accommodation. There has been an absence of investment in early intervention initiatives to tackle the causes of homelessness, support people with lower needs before issues become more entrenched or to break generational cycles of municipal dependency. Many public sector partners have also experienced cuts to their funding and with an ongoing need for efficiencies and savings many commissioned contracts for VCF sectors and specialist services have ended.

The [2024 report by the National Audit Office on The effectiveness of government in tackling homelessness](#), concluded “the government still has no strategy or public targets for reducing statutory homelessness, and DLUHC is falling behind on key programmes to improve housing supply. Funding remains fragmented and generally short-term, inhibiting homelessness prevention work and limiting investment in good-quality temporary accommodation or other forms of housing. Until these factors are addressed across government, DLUHC will not be able to demonstrate that it is delivering optimal value for money from its efforts to tackle homelessness”.

Whilst core funding for VCF sector homelessness services has been maintained over the past five years by Nottingham City Council, it has not increased in line with growing demand and pressures. Furthermore, many of the infrastructure and specialist support services, whose work addresses the causes of homelessness, have experienced funding cuts and the crucial external funding sources they rely upon have reduced and become increasingly oversubscribed. Organisations have struggled to keep apace with inflation and the national living wage. Recruitment and retention has been challenging as existing staff are finding increasing complexity and caseload numbers ever more difficult to manage, and vacant positions have become increasingly hard to fill, especially with people with the required level of skill, knowledge and experience.

Therefore, this strategy is set in a challenging financial landscape with limitations on the ability to increase investment locally. Nottingham City Council and partners, are however, committed to achieving what is possible within local power. This includes ongoing delivery of a plan that seeks to reduce demand and subsequent cost for temporary accommodation to enable investment in preventative approaches. The Council will maximise all external funding opportunities and support and enable partners to do the same whilst lobbying the new government to meet the true costs associated with delivering an effective early intervention approach.

## Homelessness Needs Assessment

Insight collected as part of the HNA24 shows that Nottingham is a densely populated city. The population is ethnically diverse and is increasingly younger compared to the national average. Data analysis on a range of measures indicates the population in Nottingham is at greater risk of homelessness than other areas/the national average.

In Nottingham, people live less of their life in good health, have lower levels of happiness and life satisfaction, are more deprived (in every domain), have fewer educational achievements, lower rates of employment (and correspondingly high and increasing benefit dependency), receive low wages, have much less disposable income, and there are more people living in fuel poverty.

Wider issues with the national and Nottingham housing market have compounded the risk of homelessness. Average incomes in Nottingham are almost at the lowest level in the country while the rate of rental increase has been one of the highest. Even lower quartile rents within the private sector market are higher than Local Housing Allowance limits. At the same time, the private rental market within our boundaries receives pressure from the expanding student market and city professionals, further limiting supply.

There are over 10,000 households on the waiting list for social or affordable housing in Nottingham. Although Nottingham City Council has invested in new affordable housing over recent years, the city's tight geographical boundaries and high land values are limiting land supply and options for providers of new affordable housing development. Any new supply has been offset by a reduction to stock through Right to Buy sales which have been extremely high in Nottingham. Between 2019-2023, there were 988 Right to Buy sales completed while in the same period the Council completed building and purchasing 338 new permanent affordable homes. Local Register Providers have delivered a further 126 homes, despite a reduction in development programmes. However overall, there has been a net loss of 524 affordable homes in the city over the past 5 years. Recent price drops in the value of owner occupier housing are also affecting private developer confidence to build and increase general housing supply, including the Section 106 affordable homes that come along with this.

Between 2019-23, over 13,600 households were assessed as needing homelessness prevention or relief support. The Nottingham City Council Housing Needs Assessment estimates 921 social / affordable rented homes need to be delivered in the city each year until 2041 to meet local housing need. The limited supply of affordable housing in the private and social rented sector leads to a situation where there are not enough properties for the volume of people who need them.

These issues are not unique to Nottingham and there are many other cities or urban centres experiencing similar challenges. Nevertheless, the accumulation of challenges in Nottingham is acute.

## Homelessness statistical summary

A full data report analysing Homelessness Case Level Information Collection data between 2019/20 and 2023/24 for Nottingham and key comparator areas is available as an appendix to the HNA24.

There has been a 22% increase since 2019 in the number of households presenting to Nottingham City Council with homelessness issues. Homelessness assessment rates are high in Nottingham compared to comparator areas and around one third of households assessed present when they are already homeless. Most people who present at risk of homelessness (prevention stage) are homeless from a private rented sector tenancy, most of those presenting in homelessness crisis (relief stage) are homeless from living with their friends or family. The most significant increase in reason for homelessness since 2019/20 is because of Home Office support ending for new refugees.

Since 2019/20, there has been a reduction in the proportion of housing outcomes being achieved for people at risk of homelessness (i.e. under the prevention duty) across all comparator areas. When a housing outcome is achieved it is most often a move to alternative accommodation rather than support to remain in their existing home. The rate of private rented sector tenancies secured at prevention duty is high in Nottingham compared to the other areas and consequently the rate of social housing secured is lower (which is due to limited availability of social housing lets).

There is a consistent trend across the comparator areas in an increased number of relief duties ended but a lower proportion of housing outcomes secured. This means that when people are homeless, more are moving through to a main duty decision which indicates that many local authorities are struggling to secure accommodation within two months of a household becoming homeless (as the relief duty specifies).

In Nottingham, the average age of the main applicant within a homeless household has increased since 2019-20. There has also been a notable increase in ethnic diversity with the percentage applicants from Black and Minority Ethnicities being 5% higher than the percentage of people Black and Minority Ethnicities in the population. Around one fifth of homeless households are working, two thirds are unemployed or not working due to a long-term illness or disability.

In Nottingham, there has been an increase of 122% in the number of households in Temporary Accommodation from a snapshot of 349 households in 2019/20 to 776 households in 2023/24. The rate of households per thousand of the population is high for the region but low compared to other similar areas nationally. Considering that Nottingham had a higher-than-average rate of assessments, it could be determined that this means there is a lower assessment to Temporary Accommodation conversion rate in Nottingham. However, Nottingham does have a high proportion of families in Temporary Accommodation, which is in part due to the substantial increase in the length of time people are accommodated and the imbalance between the volume moving in and those moving out.

Generally, Nottingham's Temporary Accommodation portfolio is varied and has increased significantly from around 250 units in 2019/20 to over 600 units in 2023/24.

The profile of Nottingham's Temporary Accommodation portfolio is quite different to the average amongst the comparator areas. Less of Nottingham's portfolio is hotels, Nightly Paid Temporary Accommodation and Private Rented Sector and the city uses a larger proportion of hostels and social housing stock.

### Future forecasts

According to the [Crisis England 2023 Homelessness Monitor](#) baseline forecasts show core homelessness rising significantly in the immediate future, with overall core homelessness in 2024 one fifth higher than 2020 levels. Current drivers of these increases relate primarily to inflation squeezing real incomes and increasing poverty and destitution, alongside rising private rents and evictions, and declining social rented lettings. The Homelessness Monitor reports that temporary accommodation is at the highest level in 18 years and the research forecasts that the number of households living in unsuitable temporary accommodation is expected to almost double over the next twenty years if the Westminster Government doesn't take action to address the challenges councils are facing.

It is clear from the data and evidence that the current trajectory across the country is that homelessness is increasing. Areas withstanding this trend have generally injected significant resource (for example mass purchasing of units for temporary accommodation) or have legacy investments, policy approaches and housing market conditions that have helped mitigate against increased demand and pressure.

There is no indication that demand pressure is going to subside soon and therefore, this strategy needs to identify what is possible to alleviate the impact. The previous Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy was set in an extremely challenging financial context. Whilst the broad financial climate was increasing homelessness pressure and the Homelessness Prevention Grant had widened the scope of duties, the council was limited in its ability to respond as it had not benefitted from any trailblazer or pilot funding, was not receiving sufficient grant (because of an outdated formula which disadvantaged the city) nor was the council able to invest additional resources.

The demand pressures and national funding model have not improved as we enter this new strategy period. However, there has been a recent change in government who have already announced changes to promote housebuilding and locally we have significantly increased investment into the statutory service with the aim that the enhanced and restructured staff team will be able to deliver more case management at earlier stages to increase prevention outcomes and reduce those needing temporary accommodation. A hotel elimination plan has been established and is being implemented to reduce the cost of temporary accommodation. Whilst the council cannot maintain the current level of expenditure, once it is reduced, there may be more opportunity to reinvest in accommodation and prevention options.



## Review of previous strategy period

The 2019-2024 Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy aimed to achieve a reduction in the number of households ever becoming homeless, who become homeless more than once, lived in temporary accommodation or were rough sleeping. Evidently, the challenges that presented during the past five years inhibited the ability to deliver this. Aside from unexpected world events and national economic and housing issues, there were insufficient resources in the statutory service which impacted on the ability to deliver prevention casework or higher quantities of private rented sector solutions. As pressure grew on the council budget, the ability to drive and coordinate partnership initiatives became more strained there was no additional capacity or resource to redesign commissioning models, uplift contract values to align with inflation or reinvest in services once time-limited funding had expired.

There are a number of local service providers who are commissioned by the local authority or have successfully secured other public sector funding. Most of these providers are required to combine these grants with significant charitable funding and volunteer input. There are also key providers in the city who rely entirely on foundation grants from the charitable sector and their own fundraising. The financial landscape has been increasingly difficult for VCF sector providers. Funding has been reducing in advice, support and treatment across the public and VCF sectors and external grant funding opportunities have been minimal, restrictive in scope and oversubscribed, adding to the pressure on housing related support services and resulting in services needing to do more with less whilst complexity of need amongst service users continues to rise.

Over the course of the previous strategy, the government released several funding streams to assist councils to achieve the ambition to end rough sleeping nationally. Nottingham has maximised all opportunities available, securing one of the highest levels of combined resource outside of London. The council worked with partners to devise and introduce a comprehensive system of services designed to prevent, identify, engage, assess, support, shelter and resettle individuals who are rough sleeping (or at risk). Whilst the funding schemes have undoubtedly helped with the pressure there have been multiple issues as follows:

- Quickly announced funding with short timescales to bid and limited to in-year spend leading very short opportunities to plan services and overcome procurement challenges.
- Significant difficulties for providers to recruit staff, identify premises and mobilise services within the funding window
- Staffing retention issues due to short-fixed term contracts and uncertainty
- The ability for Registered Providers to engage with capital programmes due to their borrowing capacities and issues with site availability/suitability within the city boundary

Within the past five years the council has accessed the following government funding opportunities to address the increase in homeless families:

- In 2018/19, Nottingham City Council successfully bid for funding from the Private Rented Access fund which enabled the expansion of the NPRAS team into a social lettings service.

- In 2022/23, the government released additional funding to support households who had accrued rent arrears because of the pandemic and the council worked with a consortium of partners led by Nottingham Law Centre to assist in court and provide financial related support
- Over recent years, the government has topped-up the Homelessness Prevention Grant allocations to councils to help respond to some of the increased pressure as a result of displacement following international conflict and increases in Home Office decisions
- In 2023 and 2024, the Council received a combined £2.74m from government as part of the Devolution agreement and via the Local Authority Housing Fund to acquire 23 properties for homeless families to reduce temporary accommodation pressure

However, there has been no further guidance or resource from government to address the national increase in Temporary Accommodation or to assist councils in sourcing options that are better value and more suitable than hotels or other nightly paid arrangements. As demand began to increase, Nottingham City Council recognised the need to manage spend on temporary accommodation throughout the duration of the previous strategy and since 2018, has been delivering a plan developed to reduce the pressure. This has been regularly discussed with government advisors and in 2021 was formally accepted as a hotel elimination plan containing all of the measures they would expect to see but recognising the challenges in delivering it without sufficient resource.

Over the past five years, the council has significantly increased its general fund investment into homelessness. The expanded budget is largely due to the costs incurred in meeting in the statutory duty to provide Temporary Accommodation. However, in 2023 Nottingham City Council approved to resource a restructure of Housing Aid into the Housing Solutions service which increased staffing from 40 to 91 employees. The impact of the increased capacity will be apparent within the period of this new strategy. One of the main benefits will be significantly reduced caseloads which will enable more intensive casework, including in partnership with wider services. The strategic homelessness team has also recently expanded which will help reinvigorate the ability of strategic officers to instigate and nourish strategic partnerships, which has been under strain during the course of the previous strategy as remits have extended and urgent pressures have required a response.

Over the period of the previous strategy, there was a degree of national reinvestment in specialist services where funding had previously been cut. This was largely focussed on supporting single homeless people and included initiatives to support with mental health, drug and alcohol dependencies and to help the resettlement and rehabilitation of ex-offenders leaving prison. This enabled a review of accommodation based and community support homeless service specifications to focus on housing related support and principally move on into settled housing options. However, the availability of affordable housing options is limited in Nottingham. As established through the HNA24, market rents are higher than local housing allowance levels and people in Nottingham have low levels of disposal income to meet the deficit. They are also competing with demand from students and professionals working in the city as well as other public sector bodies leasing homes to fulfil their contracts and duties. Therefore, although Nottingham City Council has maintained a level of investment in

housing related support services, they have struggled to meet the intended outcomes which as a secondary effect has reduced the number of households who were expected to access the services.

Despite the challenging context over the last five years there have been a number of significant outcomes and achievements, further detail of which can be found in the 'what have we done so far?' sections of the priority areas.

Despite declining income and increasing demand and difficulty of cases, the VCF sector has made some significant advances during the period of the previous Strategy. Partnership across the VCF sector and with statutory bodies has improved substantially and in addition to the huge amount that VCF organizations have contributed independently, a great deal has been achieved through working together.

The Nottingham Homelessness Voluntary Sector Forum (NHVSF) was established in 2017 and since then this structure has allowed the entire VCF sector to coordinate their efforts to develop initiatives and to speak with a stronger voice on issues of concern.

The aims and priorities of the previous strategy may not have been achieved but they remain valid ambitions for a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy and therefore are not significantly changing as we move into this new strategy. However, to successfully deliver them, this strategy emphasizes:

- Improved insight, data monitoring and management to regularly understand existing and new areas of pressure
- Setting incrementally progressive targets, adjusted to the updated context which are regularly tracked and reviewed
- Managing expectations of citizens and improving their experiences
- Addressing inequalities and identifying gaps in service provision
- Anticipating challenges and planning to the extent we are able to respond
- Maximising resources by understanding where they can be spread or should be more intensively focussed and ensuring there is no duplication
- Galvanising partnerships through regular and consistent connectivity and enabling partner delivery through clear and available information and communication
- Being clear about processes and practices

#### What did people say was important?

During the development of the HNA24 people with lived experience of homelessness were asked about their experiences from the services they had received. Between 50-70% were satisfied overall, which whilst is the majority of service users, evidences a requirement to further understand what it is leading to dissatisfaction. Furthermore, this does not encompass the view of those who were not accessing services, or who had previous contact with services, emphasising a need to understand clearly who services are not reaching and how this can be addressed.

The feedback showed there could be a dissimilitude between what people expected and wanted and what happened. Further work is required to determine the extent that this is down to obtainable outcomes not being achieved or an unrealistic view about

the help people were going to receive, the outcome that was going to be delivered and how long this would take. Whilst this strategy aims to be ambitious and seeks to meet the needs of local people, it must do so within the realities of the resources available. This includes utilising the voluntary, community and faith (VCF) sectors to leverage additional resources and ensuring there is a role for the household to take appropriate steps to help resolve their situation. It must be clearly understood that if a household requires the local authority's assistance, the council will work within the legislation to achieve a suitable housing outcome with appropriate support, but an offer of accommodation might not be what a household would always prefer or choose.

To ensure that expectations are managed, we will develop and deliver a communication action plan including training for front line services on the processes and options available and literature, resources and guides for citizens to help them to understand what support is available and how and when to access it.

This strategy also commits to a regular programme of engagement with people with lived experience of homelessness through utilising existing groups and forums, annual service user surveys and interviews and service exit questionnaires. We will review the questions that are asked upon entry to a service to understand what outcomes people were expecting would be achieved and determine the extent people felt they were met. We will explore options for producing a simple standardised template that can be used across services and sectors to enrich insight.

#### [Homelessness Prevention Charter](#)

The previous strategy introduced a Homelessness Prevention Charter to outline a series of values, which all partners were encouraged to sign up to, solidifying the undertaking to work collaboratively to achieve the vision and aims of the strategy.

This strategy authorises the renewal of the Homelessness Prevention Charter which will be redeveloped by stakeholders and people with lived experience of homelessness in 2025.

#### [Promoting Access and Inclusivity](#)

The previous Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy recognised that a person-centred approach is required to deliver appropriate housing outcomes and address the range of unique circumstances and needs. This ethos is carried into this strategy, and we will:

- Listen to people with lived experience to learn how to improve our response to other people who are homeless or at risk
- Enabling professional curiosity to find out what people's goals are and work with unconditional positive regard whilst managing expectations and being clear about realistic options and the necessary steps and processes to achieving immediate and longer-term outcomes
- Provide an effective person-centred response which prioritises safety

- Ensure services are accessible and inclusive for all and recognising challenges and barriers that may be experienced across our diverse city community
- Treat people with dignity and deliver advice and support whilst simultaneously empowering them and building their resilience to help collectively solve problems
- Make every contact count by ensuring widespread knowledge about services and pathways so people are routed to the correct place
- Promote consistent messaging to avoid confusion and frustration and to ensure consequences are fully understood
- Deliver truly psychologically and trauma informed services so people know how to engage and achieve positive outcomes
- Promote an environment of mutual accountability which requires appropriate and proportionate personal responsibility, participation in decision making and delivery of personalised actions to achieve housing outcomes
- Provide good quality universal and specialist advice and information that is available and accessible to all
- Review the self-service and digital offer and how to ensure this can be wide-reaching with consideration to people with literacy issues, language barriers and digital exclusion
- Understand how to identify risky circumstances/triggers and consider the opportunities to proactively target information (including to groups identified by homelessness legislation as at greater risk)
- Confirm the role of communities and the VCF sector services in early intervention and pre-prevention, including consideration of what support they need to help them appropriately advise and signpost people for further support
- Identify where people are experiencing intergenerational or municipal dependency and help them to understand their unique circumstances and options, including consistently challenging inaccurate assumptions and unrealistic preferences
- Provide diverse services (including through utilisation of the VCF sectors) in recognition that one size does not fit all

When designing pathways, and services we need to address inequality and intersectionality to ensure we are meeting diverse needs. This involves researching what stops people accessing services, what we might need to do for a specific demographic or protected characteristics, understand who is disproportionately affected by homelessness, whose experience may be noticeably different from others, whether there is disparity in outcomes achieved. We should consult with communities to understand cultural sensitivities

### Partnerships, Processes and Pathways

Multi-agency, cross-sector collaboration is key to preventing first time or reoccurring homelessness as people simply cannot obtain or sustain a housing option if the focus does not extend beyond housing related support and the underlying causes and reasons for homelessness have not been addressed. If homelessness is not adequately resolved it is likely to result in additional deliver further negative consequences for a household that will require further, future interventions from the VCF and public sectors. Therefore, it is mutually beneficial for the household and a

variety of different services to deliver early interventions and achieve homelessness prevention outcomes.

Partners from across the public, private and VCF sector are invaluable in committing their resources to deliver a cohesive system to tackle homelessness and this extends beyond those organisations with contracts to deliver services on behalf of the council and those who are directly involved in responding to homelessness.

This strategy values the contribution of a broad range of partners across the public, VCF and private sectors whose connected work at the earliest opportunity through a shared purpose is fundamental to the successful delivery of this strategy.

Nottingham City Council is committed to continuing to expand the span and type of different partners with a contribution to make in this area.

There are a multitude of established and effective partnerships operating in Nottingham to prevent and respond to homelessness both strategically and through operational delivery and the previous Homelessness Prevention Strategy strongly promoted partnership responsibilities in the city. However, it is pertinent to recognise that stretched resources and reduced capacity can strain the ability to sustain momentum as intended. This strategy seeks to:

- Identify resources to ensure appropriate involvement in relevant operational and strategic partnerships and build upon local partnerships, finessing relationships through focussing on shared goals
- Instigate discussions at senior leadership level across sectors where systematic change can be affected and to ensure commitment/accountability at a senior level to underpin operational partnerships and unlock joint investment
- Ensure partnerships are inclusive and recognise the input of all relevant partners regardless of their funding source
- Direct partnerships to be purposeful, coordinated and outcome focussed, maximising resources, avoiding duplication and delivering consistency in messaging across sectors and amongst all services.
- Expand partnerships with neighbouring councils and across the combined authority to explore cross-boundary opportunities. This includes reciprocal participation at homelessness groups and meetings, aligning strategies and steering discussions to address mutual or generated pressures
- Develop and enhance partnerships throughout the faith sector to explore options to utilise the social and capital available through church communities and opportunities for developments using a community led housing approach.
- Strengthen links with core cities and statistical neighbours to share learning
- Introduce a structured process to share data, insight and intelligence across sectors to help inform evidence-based decision-making in service redesign
- Understand the limitations and possibilities in information sharing across services to avoid or minimise repeat assessments and link support plans

In Nottingham we recognise the need for diversity in pathways to support and flexibility in options to deliver individualised outcomes. Whilst the need to be realistic is explicit we are committed to identifying unique pathways, delivering a range of accommodation and support options, and ensuring specialist provision is available, including for:

- Women (including females who are street homeless but don't present as rough sleepers)
- Young people (including those leaving care)
- Survivors of domestic abuse
- People discharged from hospital
- People with mental health conditions
- Prison leavers
- People from abroad
- People who need to increase their financial resilience

We will ensure that existing groups focussed in these areas have appropriate representation from across the public, private and VCF sectors and where groups are not already established, they are set up with appropriate representation to address specific issues and needs.

Since the beginning of the last strategy period there has been significant advances across sectors in the way that people experiencing severe and multiple disadvantages are supported, the barriers that have been removed and the opportunities that are now available. There is still progress to be made to ensure that flexibility is embedded systematically and we must also be conscious that where there is limited funding, support for one group of people does not come at the sacrifice of another. We are committed to delivering parity of access across a range of support needs which means people with lower needs are given a proportionate response as well as continuing to target resource to protect those experiencing more severe and multiple disadvantages.

The statutory housing assessment is fundamental to the process of homelessness prevention or minimising time spent homeless. Whilst all partners are encouraged to explore available and appropriate housing options, if there is a risk of homelessness the consistent process should be to facilitate access to the statutory assessment from the local authority with a personalised housing plan developed to identify the next steps. More information about the statutory duties and processes is available in the HNA24. Nottingham City Council has invested additional resource to increase the number of assessment officers which will lead to flexible practices of outreach and in reach flexible and streamlined assessments at services, collocating and jointly assessing with other statutory partners. The increased capacity will also ensure caseloads are at levels that allow for the development of detailed personalised housing plans containing deliverables with clear actions and accountability that is monitored, prevention case management, communicating decisions, reasons and next steps and enhanced presence at case conferencing and liaison with partners who also have a role to play in supporting people away from the risk or reality of homelessness. The service will also include specialist roles including to support survivors of domestic abuse, rough sleepers, prison leavers, young people, people from abroad, people with mental health issues and people being discharged from hospital. The service will also be developing a range of self-help literature and a communication and training plan outlining how it will promote information about processes to partners and citizens to aid understanding of the council's statutory responsibilities and help promote consistent messages and manage expectations. Partners will be consulted as part of the ongoing service development plan to ensure that their experiences and views of supporting people to access the statutory service are considered.

A number of partnership working protocols are already established in Nottingham to outline the approach and responsibilities when supporting specific groups of people who are homeless (or threatened with homelessness). This includes, between Housing Solutions and partners in:

- criminal justice for ex-offenders released from prison
- health sector for people being discharged from hospital or mental health placements
- social care for young people aged 16 or 17, care leavers and vulnerable adults
- National Asylum Seeker Support services for new refugees
- DWP for households who require support with benefit claims to assist their housing solutions
- Specialist domestic abuse support services

This strategy commits to reviewing and renewing the suite of protocols to ensure there is a protocol in place where evidence suggests:

- there are pressure points indicating a risk of homelessness,
- it is required to meet the needs of specific groups through a partnership approach,
- it would be useful to clarify roles, responsibilities and processes amongst multiple sectors and services,
- they are required to be in place with other partners who have the Duty to Refer.

The reviews will ensure that the protocols include all relevant partners across sectors who should be involved in the processes supporting specific groups.

#### Strategy Resources

A multitude of sector involvement is required in the successful delivery of this Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Housing</b>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Effective allocations and tenancy management of social housing in the city</li><li>• Partnership working with landlords and owners in the private housing market to increase prevention and relief and deliver housing of a good standard</li><li>• Proactive working with developers to bring forward more of the type of housing we need and working with providers to explore new types of provision</li><li>• Joint working with property owners to bring empty homes back into use and utilise appropriate buildings for conversion to temporary / supported / accessible accommodation</li></ul> |
| <b>Voluntary Community and Faith sectors</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early identification and signposting of people in need of support with housing issues</li><li>• Provision of advice and information on how to prevent homelessness and sustain housing</li><li>• Provision of accommodation and support to protect rough sleepers from extreme weather</li><li>• Sharing knowledge and insight from the front line about the issues they see and the interventions they think are needed</li></ul>   |



- Provision of housing related support services to prevent homelessness and help people to effectively recover from homelessness
  - Advocating for local people and helping their voice to be heard
- Health and wellbeing**
- Early identification of people in need of housing related support
  - Jointly assessing needs and determining support plans to address current issues and prevent longer term reliance on health and mental health services
  - Co-designing and commissioning types of accommodation with support that meets health and wellbeing needs
  - Involvement in process and system design to support effective hospital discharge of people into housing
  - Using expertise to assess the Care, Support and Enablement needs of individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
  - Ensuring that services are flexible and available for people with multiple complex needs
- Adult social care**
- Co-designing and commissioning types of accommodation with support that will help meet health and wellbeing needs and reduce the need for residential care
  - Helping households and individuals to have the skills (or support them if appropriate) to proactively budget income and expenditure, prioritise housing and council tax and have access to banking and mainstream banking services
- Children's social care**
- Using expertise to ensure that households on the edge of homelessness have their needs assessed and met and children are protected from the damaging impact of homelessness on their development and life chances
  - Supporting families not to exclude their children after the age of 16 without a planned move that is arranged and prepared for
  - Ensuring appropriate pathways are in place for homeless young people and that young people in local authority care are appropriately prepared for planned transitions to independent living, and in touch with the necessary support
- Criminal justice**
- Early identification of housing needs prior to release from prison (including support needs impacting on ability to maintain accommodation e.g. approach to financial management)
  - Supporting rough sleepers away from street homelessness
  - Ensuring survivors of modern slavery, gang violence, honour-based violence, forced marriage and domestic and sexual violence are protected and safely housed
  - Taking appropriate action against landlords who illegally evict their tenants
- Welfare, education and employment**
- Information and support through the full implementation of Universal Credit (including budgeting advice, identifying priority payments and optimising household income whether through benefits or increased employment)
  - Schools and colleges educating young people about the realities of the housing market, independent living and life skill requirements
  - Providing employment support for people at risk of homelessness because of insufficient income and ensuring pathways into education, training and employment are available and appropriate for people who are homeless

Nottingham City Council has committed funding within its medium-term financial plan for:

- Housing Solutions and Homelessness Strategy staffing
- Housing Related Support services

- Temporary Accommodation

Since 2021, local authorities have received a Homelessness Prevention Grant allocation to help fulfil statutory duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The funding landscape beyond 2025 have not yet been announced. Nottingham City Council generally uses the grant to fund the cost of the Nottingham Private Rented Assistance Scheme and flexible payments to deliver prevention solutions.

Nottingham City Council invests £4.2m per annum into housing related support. This includes rough sleeping reablement, independent living support and supported accommodation for single adults, young people and teenage parents. Current contracts are committed until 2027. In 2026/27 a homelessness commissioning review will be undertaken to determine the future service models.

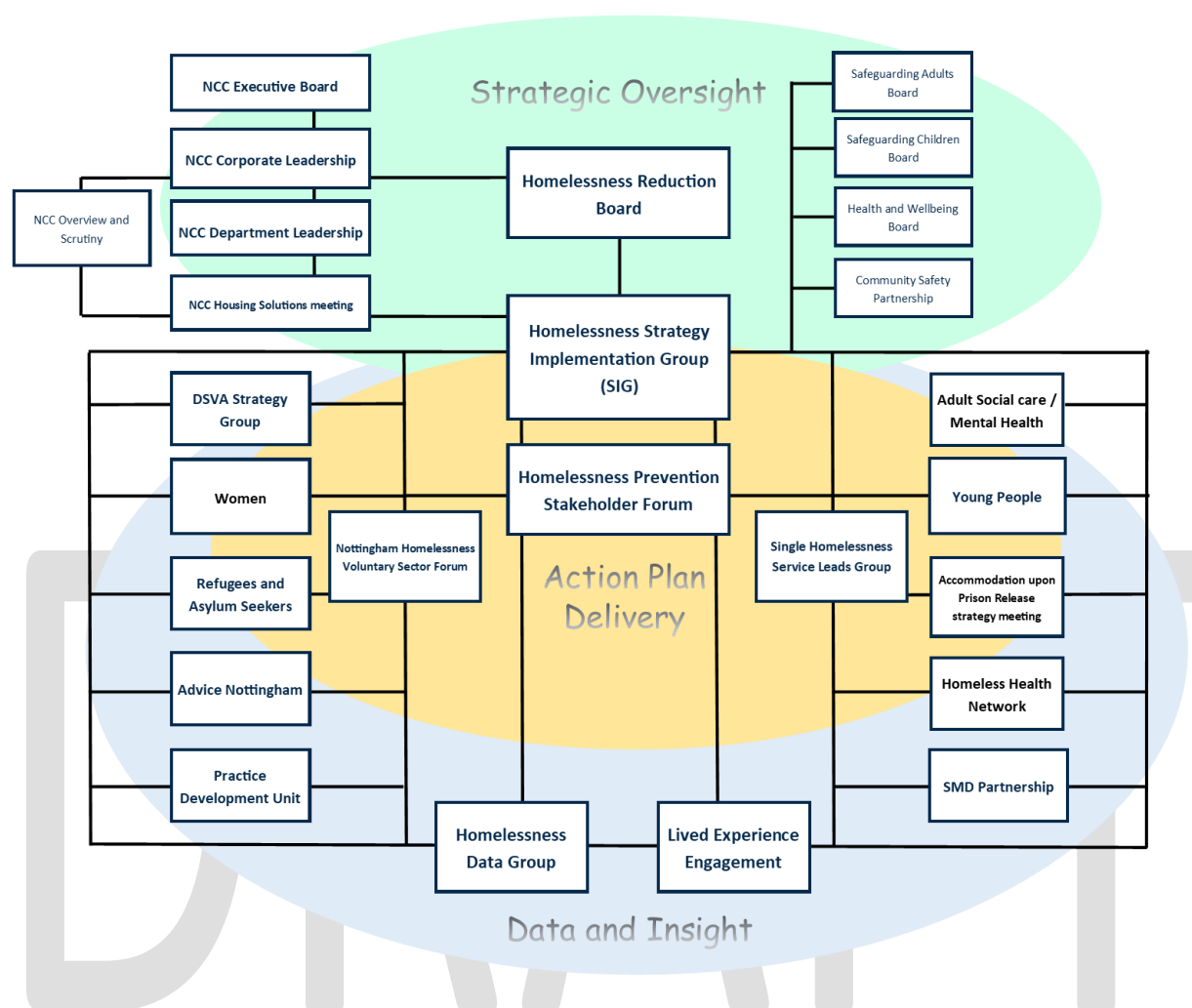
The Nottingham City Council Temporary Accommodation budget has been set in accordance with forecast need, in line with a plan to reduce reliance on using hotels.

Nottingham relies on opportunities to bid for grant funding to support its work tackling rough sleeping. All current funding is due to end in 2025 but the council will engage in all further opportunities to secure ongoing funding.

The following further commitments of this strategy will be explored collectively through the various infrastructure groups detailed in the next section:

- Widespread knowledge about local organisations and services to establish how partners could, should or would contribute to supporting the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping.
- Understanding what support is required to enable partners to deliver interventions
- Learning from expertise and experience in other areas
- Maximising funding bids - sharing insight and expertise to help strengthen the case for local funding from national sources
- Ensuring there is a balance in investment between reactive and proactive support and across the spectrum of need
- Be receptive and instigate discussions that seek to consolidate funding to maximise shared outcomes

## Infrastructure and implementation



The Strategy Implementation Group (SIG) is a specialist group with oversight of progress against the aims of the strategy, the Homelessness Prevention Charter and strategy action plans. Delivery blockages can be escalated to the SIG who will also collectively be responsible for assessing the need for any required changes to the strategic approach. The terms of reference for the Strategy Implementation Group will be revised and membership confirmed to ensure appropriate representation. The SIG will meet on a quarterly schedule defined by reporting periods.

A renewed Homelessness Prevention Stakeholder Forum will be established to take ownership of overall operational delivery of actions within the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy and Charter. Stakeholders will have mutual accountability for reporting on the progress of the actions they have identified as pledges to the Charter. Bi-monthly meetings will be scheduled to provide a regular opportunity for partnership networking and system-wide intelligence, insight and information sharing.

Established specialist groups will lead on specific areas of activity and feed progress into the Strategy Implementation Group (SIG). Additional task focussed groups will be convened as required for example to:

- review or update existing protocols, pathways or processes

- investigate and attend to an identified issue
- explore and address options for meeting gaps in provision

There will be direct communication links between these groups and the Nottingham Homelessness Voluntary Sector Forum, Single Homelessness Service Leads Group (updated membership from the previous Rough Sleeping Service Leads Group) and via a planned programme of regular engagement with people with lived experience of homelessness.

A new Homelessness Data Group (HDG) will be established to maximise value and know the return of investment from the whole homelessness sector system. Wide membership will be encouraged from all partners with insight to report. The HDG will lead on the annual review of homelessness and report this to the SIG. The data group will also provide the SIG with quarterly analysis from statistical returns, service delivery outcomes and insight from the stakeholder and service user engagement. The group will be tasked with in-depth analysis projects as required and aligned with specialist/task groups to provide further insight into specific issues.

#### Action plan(s)

This strategy implementation and further development will be supported by a series of thematic action plans which will require input from wide and varied specialist groups of partners to successfully deliver.

The scope of a Homelessness Prevention Strategy is broad and so to ensure that the action plans remain manageable and deliverable, they are being split as follows:

1. Overarching annual action plan based on the recommended areas of activity identified within this strategy
2. Charter action plan outlining specific activity linked to partner pledges
3. Sub-group action plans detailing targeted activity relating to specialist areas and projects

Nottingham City Council will support with the development of performance metrics and a progress dashboard for the action plans. The action plans will be monitored regularly and reviewed annually by the Strategy Implementation Group. Action plan owners will update them in advance of each new year. The plans will capture activity across the city, what the Council, other public bodies and the VCF sectors will do (independently as well as in partnership). Some activity will already be in delivery but with milestones and targets set and some actions will be new initiatives with plans to be implemented. Key areas of activity will include:

- Completing and embedding the Housing Solutions restructure
- Producing a temporary accommodation supply model and procurement policy and establishing sufficient suitable supply at best value for the council through appropriate mechanisms. Including the mobilisation of new Temporary Accommodation delivered by the council and Registered Provider partners.
- Understanding the post 2025 funding context for rough sleeping, bidding for any available grants, renewing and implementing the system of services

- Mobilising the new model of accommodation and support for homeless young people
- Completing a review of the housing related support model, including recommissioning as required
- Delivery of up to 40 units of specialist housing under the Single Homeless Accommodation Programme
- Complete the review of the Nottingham City Council social housing Allocations policy and implement the new policy
- Explore arrangements for joint delivery within the combined authority

### Governance and accountability

Partnership commitment and accountability at all levels is essential to the successful delivery of this Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy.

The Homelessness Prevention Strategy Implementation Group will report to a new cross-sector Homelessness Reduction Board (HRB) about the progress on the delivery of the action plan to meet the aims of the strategy and with target status updates. The HRB will be formed from senior leadership from across the public and VCF sectors who will drive and champion this strategy within their areas.

The SIG membership should include delegates who can represent all the different populations that experience homelessness and who can appropriately represent (or report to) leadership teams across the public and VCF sectors.

Following the annual review of homelessness (and annual action plan) a report will be provided to the following oversight boards:

- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Safeguarding Adults Board
- Safeguarding Children Board
- Nottingham Community Safety Partnership (NCSP)
- Nottingham City Council Overview and Scrutiny

### Policies and Procedures

The following policies and procedures will be updated (as required) to support the implementation of this strategy:

- Allocations Policy
- Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy
- Private Rented Sector Offers Policy
- Temporary Accommodation Procurement Policy
- Hospital discharge procedure
- Prison release procedure
- NASS leaver procedure
- Eviction prevention protocol
- Protocol to support homeless 16 and 17-year-olds

Partners will also consider the requirements for joint working arrangements to be formalised in procedures and protocols regarding care leavers, survivors of domestic and/or sexual abuse and rough sleepers.

#### Priority 1. Homelessness is prevented and does not reoccur

Within their *Plan to End Homelessness*, the charity Crisis identifies the best way to tackle homelessness is to stop it happening in the first place and to do so is both cost effective and humane. Preventing homelessness (including its reoccurrence) is a mutual goal across the partnership of services working with households and individuals at risk and it is the principal priority of this strategy.

Prevention ranges across every way to stop something occurring. There are several different ways the term homelessness prevention can be applied.

#### 1. Upstream prevention (early intervention before risk of homelessness)

This includes universal prevention which seeks to reduce overall risks across the general population and Targeted prevention which focusses on identifying and engaging at risk groups and risky situations (such as transition points from institutions). Upstream prevention is also applied when a household believes they are experiencing issues that might lead to them losing their home, but this risk is not likely to occur within the next 56 days.

It requires an early intervention of advice and assistance to address the issues causing the risk.

It relies upon collective and sufficient resource to identify needs early and respond to them quickly enough. Including:

- Other public and VCF sectors agencies (who come into regular contact with the public) recognising signs, asking questions and knowing how to channel people through pathways to support.
- Households seeking support at earliest opportunity and before crisis.
- Information and advice being available and accessible

#### 2. Homelessness Prevention

This is when a household is at likely risk of losing their home within the next 56 days and they need:

- a. Crisis prevention support to sustain current housing and avoid homelessness.  
This relies upon assistance being sought early enough and resolution being an option with the housing provider
- b. Emergency prevention support to secure alternative housing (in a planned way and without a break) and avoid homelessness.  
This relies upon assistance being sought early enough to identify and access a housing option and the availability of suitable and affordable housing options

#### 3. Recovery Prevention

This is when a household is at risk of becoming homeless again after their homelessness has already been resolved.

It requires the availability of a resettlement package which includes support to address the issues causing the risk. It relies upon:

- Identification of additional and ongoing needs
- Resource to coordinate access to and delivery of:
  - Assessment
  - Support
  - Treatment
  - Practical/financial interventions to promote sustainable tenancies

#### 4. Prevention of escalation of homelessness

This is when a household is homeless but provided with emergency, temporary or respite accommodation to prevent their situation and support needs from worsening. This is relevant to the prevention of rough sleeping for single people who are homeless.

Homelessness Prevention is a statutory requirement which local authorities must fulfil. Early intervention and Repeat Homelessness Prevention are necessary to sustain housing. No points can be achieved effectively by the local authority alone and require the support of a broad and coordinated partnership.

Focus 1.1 Working with tenants and landlords to reduce evictions from the Private Rented Sector

#### **What is the issue?**

Within their [2022 report Tackling tenancy insecurity in the private rented sector to prevent homelessness - what works](#), the Centre for Homelessness Impact identified concern over the insecurity of private rented sector housing, particularly for the growing number of households with unmanageable housing costs spending the majority of their income on rent. Crisis analysis of government data in 2023 assesses that the chronic shortage of housing combined with an unaffordable private rental market has seen dramatic increases in the numbers of families and individuals thrust into homelessness, concluding that the ending of a private rented Assured Shorthold Tenancy is now the biggest driver of homelessness.

In Nottingham in 2023/24, 717 households were homeless or at risk due to their Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST) in the Private Rented Sector coming to an end. This accounted for 44% of all households who approached the local authority for assistance when they were at risk of homelessness (i.e. at Prevention duty stage) and 14% when they were already homeless (i.e. at Relief duty stage).

The proportion of Prevention Duty assessments where the reason for homelessness is the ending of a private rented sector tenancy has increased significantly in Nottingham over the past five years from 25% in 2019/20 to 44% in 2023/24 and is the most common reason for the risk of homelessness. There has been no major change in the proportion of households who are homeless at Relief duty stage because of the loss of a private rented sector tenancy as this was apportioned at 13% in 2019/20 and is 14% in 2023/24. Overall, the ending of a private rented sector tenancy is the reason

for homelessness for just over one quarter (26%) of households assessed in Nottingham.

### **What have we done so far?**

- In 2023 a restructure of Housing Solutions was agreed to increase capacity within the service to build space to case manage those at risk and not just those in crisis, including to save tenancies within the private rented sector
- The Framework Independent Living Support Service is targeted towards supporting people at risk of homelessness in the Private Rented Sector.
- The Nottingham Private Rented Assistance Scheme relaunched the Say before you Serve initiative, urging landlords to contact the local authority if they are experiencing issues with their tenants to explore what support is available to overcome the issues and save the tenancy
- Following the Covid-19 pandemic, the Vulnerable Renters Project was launched as a collaboration within Advice Nottingham to assist households who had accumulated rent arrears during the pandemic and were at risk of eviction
- As part of the Nottingham City Council Selective Licensing an advice service called Tenancy Matters is offered to both landlords and tenants, to help with issues relating to landlord and tenant law. This includes assessing the validity of eviction notices and encouraging positive relationships between landlords and tenants to prevent eviction for example, on top of advising on the legal method to increase rent the team will also encourage negotiation between landlords and tenants where a rent has been suggested that the tenant feels is unaffordable. Tenancy Matters has also given training housing and social care officers within the council to help to prevent eviction through accurate support and advice as well as to Nottinghamshire Police so that they can respond to illegal eviction issues more effectively.

### **Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years**

- Further expand landlord liaison functions, incentives and support including consideration of tenancy exchanges, tenancy recycling and mediation functions
- Build positive relationships with more landlords and open further dialogue to understand their concerns and requirements (including with regard to licensing)
- Broaden channels of communication between landlords and the local authority and partner advice and support services. Provide relevant web-based advice, information and support to landlords. Ensure that landlords are linked into relevant service areas (such as DWP/HB, Community Safety)
- Examine the feasibility for introducing a reward system for good tenants and landlords to try to encourage increased lengths of tenure and provide further stability for people who want to remain where they are for a number of years and for landlords who want to retain their tenants
- Embed a process for landlords who want to sell their properties offering first refusal to Nottingham City Council (and housing provider partners)
- Further develop services with responsibility for seeking options to increase financial resilience, resolve rent arrears and maximise their income to make the property more affordable



- To expand the reach of the Nottingham City Council Tenancy Matters service and consider how to support landlords and tenants through the implementation of the Renters Rights Bill and other policy developments that may impact illegal eviction

### **Intended outcomes**

Increased tenancy sustainment in the private rented sector, through:

- More landlords and tenants utilising information or contacting services for support at an early stage to allow the opportunity for an intervention to resolve any issues and save the tenancy
- Where landlords are going to issue s21 notices, that they utilise a process of informing Nottingham City Council to allow time to support the household in identifying and accessing alternative accommodation
- Positive relationships and connectivity between landlords, the local authority and support services (facilitated through better communication and provision of advice, information and support for both landlords and tenants)

Focus 1.2 Minimising the number of people becoming homeless following unplanned exclusion from family or friends' homes

### **What is the issue?**

Family or friends asking a household to leave their home remains the most common reason for homelessness crisis in Nottingham (27% of all assessments). These people are already homeless and relying on the goodwill of family or friends. This is particularly true of young people, who will sofa surf until asked to leave.

In 2023/24, 766 households were homeless or at risk due to their parents, other relatives or friends asking them to leave their home. Just over one fifth (22%) of those households presented for assessment when their homelessness could be prevented but the vast majority (595 households) presented when they were already homeless.

Being asked to leave family and friends is the most common reason for a homeless crisis. 35% of all Relief Duty assessments were for people whose friends or family had asked them to leave. This is often because many people who have already become homeless will rely on the goodwill of friends, family or people from their national or religious communities on a conditional or temporary basis. Many people then do not seek or cannot access the assistance they require or find that support in resolving their housing situation is taking too long and the arrangements breakdown.

According to the [2022 report by Centrepont - Beyond a number: The scale of youth homelessness in the UK](#), 55% of young people are homeless because their family or friends are no longer willing or able to accommodate them. Their research shows that this proportion has increased since before the Covid-19 pandemic as lockdown and other related pressures have put more relationships under strain. Youth homelessness can lead to lifelong exclusion, at a cost to their own health and wellbeing, and to wider society through repeat interactions with health and criminal justice services and lost economic potential. A [2020 government questionnaire](#) of 563 rough sleepers found that three quarters had first experienced homelessness during this time.

Locally, 839 single people and 172 parents aged 16-25 became homeless in 2023/24. 28% of the single young people and 54% of the young parents were homeless from their friends and family.

### **What have we done so far?**

- Nottingham City Council commissions Nacro to deliver 80 units of supported accommodation specifically for single young people aged under 25
- Framework Independent Living Support Service are commissioned by Nottingham City Council to support households who are homeless or at risk of being asked to leave their friends or family. This includes mediation, looking at options with extended family, explaining processes and managing expectations to help to keep someone safely sheltered for longer and enabling the exit situation to be planned and managed
- Promoting an early intervention and flexible approach to determine possible interventions to temporarily extend arrangements pending planned moves into alternative accommodation
- Partnership protocols and panels between Housing Solutions and Children Social Care for both 16/17-year-olds and care leavers
- Employment support advisors were based within Housing Aid and worked specifically with young people at risk of homelessness through funding from the European Social Fund Youth Employment Initiative
- Charities such as Emmanuel House, HOPE Nottingham and Open Homes Nottingham providing emergency accommodation for young people, refugees and asylum seekers in need

### **Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years**

- Complete a commissioning review of the model of supported accommodation for homeless young people with the new service procured from 2025/26. Consideration to be given to:
  - the feasibility of a collaborative service for care leavers
  - different levels of support including mediation, prevention and resettlement
  - a range of accommodation options including onsite and visiting support
  - support attached to an individual
- Ensure that risk of homelessness from friends and family is considered within the wider commissioning review of housing related support
- Consider how to expand a holistic approach to supporting host families
- Assess ways for young people living in the private rented sector to have parity in access to life skills / tenancy training / literacy and digital inclusion as that of young people living in social housing
- Revisit options for working closer with schools and colleges, including pupil referral units) to help young people understand the realities of homelessness
- Work with families and refugee communities to help raise awareness of processes and options available, manage expectations and dispel myths
- Navigate any changes introduced as a result of the Renters Rights Bill

### **Intended outcomes**

A reduction in the number of people becoming homeless from family and friends accommodation in an emergency with an increase in sustained arrangements and planned moves. This will require clear information and access to self-help resources, pathways to available support, raising awareness about the options available to people, exploring flexible temporary solutions, managing expectations and enabling people to secure their own future housing options. This is needed in general for people who can be 'homeless at home' (i.e., those who know they need to leave imminently but are able to stay where they are until alternative housing is secured) and for specific circumstances including young people, care leavers, people from abroad and survivors of domestic violence.

### Focus 1.3 Preventing eviction from social housing and supported accommodation

#### **What is the issue?**

It is extremely important to try to prevent evictions from social housing from happening. If a household is not paying their rent or is behaving in an anti-social way in social housing where the rental charge is low and the landlord is supportive, they are likely to find it extremely difficult to access or sustain alternative accommodation in the private sector. Equally, if someone has been assessed as requiring supported accommodation but their behaviour causes them to lose the placement, it is unlikely that they will be provided with an alternative option that allows them to receive the support they require to have their needs met.

Supported Accommodation is expensive to live in for those who are no reliant upon benefits and therefore it does not incentivise accessing work opportunities that may ultimately help with move on. When people are working and still living in supported accommodation, they can be at risk of losing the accommodation if rent arrears accrue.

Insight from local housing association and homeless charity Framework indicates that within commissioned supported accommodation, there are a considerable number of people who have experience of local authority care as children/young people.

#### **What have we done so far?**

- Introduced the Nottingham City Council Eviction Prevention Protocol and Panel for families living within council housing which ensures all partners within the Council have taken all necessary actions to help support vulnerable families, keep them in their home and start to thrive. Between 2019-2024, nearly 400 families were referred, evictions prevented for 90% of cases and arrears reduced by 34% (totalling around £220k)
- Ensured Registered Providers are able to complete alerts as non-compulsory partners under the Duty to Refer to notify the local authority of households at risk
- Maximised funding opportunities to introduce a flexible range of accommodation, including Housing Led provision to deliver alternative options for people who are challenged in traditional supported accommodation models

- Nottingham City Council commissions Framework to provide 248 units of supported accommodation for homeless people of a wide range, including services for women and men with complex needs and people in alcohol recovery
  - Nottingham received £872,419 to participate in the Supported Housing Improvement Programme (SHIP). The funding setup a dedicated team within Nottingham City Council to:
    - Deliver a collective verification of applications submitted to exempt housing benefit
    - Undertake site visits to verify data and charges vs actual provision
    - Review and verify support arrangements provided to residents
    - Share good practice to manage Supported Accommodation
    - Ensure properties are licensed accordingly
- The team has visited 11 providers, viewed 141 units and spoke with 72 tenants. Reviewed contract and operational monitoring and management meetings with commissioned providers of supported accommodation
- Delivery of Housing Led provision in social housing to increase the chances of successfully keeping some people with very complex needs housed and engaged with support

### **Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years**

- Review the protocol for eviction prevention from supported accommodation
- Extend the Nottingham City Council Eviction Prevention Protocol and Panel to single person council tenants
- Embed eviction prevention in new supported accommodation service specifications and operational practices
- Nottingham City Council is seeking to embed the SHIP activity across teams as business as usual following the closure of the programme at the end of 2024/25 and will continue to work with MHCLG on next steps as a key champion of SHIP
- Examine the further use of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)
- Review social housing schemes offering budgeting, life skills training and employment support and consider options for a universal programme
- Explore options for the temporary use of Enhanced Housing Benefit for households who require additional support for a defined period to overcome a specific issue. Assess options for a pool of support workers to operate across organisations to deliver this function
- In depth analysis into reasons for evictions to identify trends and any missed opportunities for interventions
- Explore further opportunities to enable employment as a planned exit pathway out of supported accommodation
- Review the 'Supported to Sustained' pilot model of accommodation where support is attached to the person and not the property and people are able to remain where they live instead of needing to move when they no longer require support
- Review the delivery of Housing Led projects and consider options for their continuation and expansion
- Analyse the impact of the new Supported Housing Accommodation Programme (SHAP) provision for males and females with Severe and Multiple Disadvantage and work with partners to determine options for continuation funding
- Prepare for the introduction of the planned measures contained within the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023

## **Intended outcomes**

- Maintain a low level of eviction from social housing
- Reduce the number of households becoming homeless from supported accommodation
- Increase the proportion of exits from supported accommodation due to positive move on outcomes

### Focus 1.4 Bridging the transition to accommodation when institutionalised support ends

## **What is the issue?**

People who experience a sudden or significant change in circumstance are at increased risk of homelessness. This includes people who have no accommodation options available to them when they are discharged from hospital (including a mental health unit or rehabilitation centre), released from prison, have Home Office support withdrawn or leave local authority care. This risk of homelessness should be one of the easiest to prevent because these people are already in contact with services. However, issues arise when:

- People are homeless when they enter hospital, and they are not admitted into hospital for long periods of time or are treated at A&E.
- People are given short custodial sentences by the courts or recalled, leaving limited time to assess and arrange appropriate accommodation upon release.
- Early prison release schemes are implemented
- New refugees lose their NASS accommodation before they can access employment, benefits or housing support because of a lack of coordination between the Home Office and other government agencies
- Immigration decisions are accelerated to clear Home Office backlogs

## **What have we done so far?**

- Introduced specialist navigator roles in Housing Solutions focussing on connecting those at risk of homelessness from hospital and prison and because of mental health into the statutory housing assessment and specialist services to meet their additional needs
- Expanded the Nottingham Prison Leaver Accommodation Pathway by partnership participation at the Multi-Agency Release Board (MARB), regular Duty to Refer meetings with a dedicated Housing Solutions Prison Release Navigator accessing prisoners prior to release
- Obtained grant funding for the delivery of the Out of Hospital accommodation project for individuals at risk of rough sleeping following discharge from hospital.
- Continued to deliver the Hospital Discharge Protocol, the effectiveness of which was assessed during a health led workshop in May 2024 bringing together frontline hospital discharge teams, housing and specialist SMD and homelessness services.
- Delivered Hospital Integrated Discharge Teams and Transfer of Care Hubs as multi-disciplinary approaches to coordinate and plan health and care support to discharge

people to the right place for their on-going recovery. The teams plan to discharge patients by the date that hospital medical intervention has been completed. The plans include:

- linking in packages of on-going nursing, rehabilitation or homecare when they are discharged (often called Intermediate Care)
- working with adult social care, safeguarding and housing to enable discharge to be timely and safe.
- In 2023/24, Framework accommodated 87 individuals in specialist supported accommodation (Hughendon Lodge, The Crescent and Park Lane) through the Mental Health Accommodation Pathway.
- The Framework Leave to Remain (L2R) Service houses rough sleepers granted asylum, who lost their temporary accommodation when their status was granted
- The SMD Partnership Group has identified and begun actively addressing Institutional Discharge as one of its priorities in the Work Plan for 2024/25
- Introduction of the Department of Education Care Leavers Homelessness Prevention Posts within Nottingham City Council
- Delivered national resettlement schemes supporting households displaced by international conflict
- Established the Asylum Seekers and Homeless Concerns group to deliver a planned approach to the acceleration in Home Office decisions
- Since 2019, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum have supported people from abroad into their own tenancy and with practical and specialist assistance and advice to navigate systems
- Open Homes Nottingham provide emergency accommodation to young people including those with No Recourse to Public Funds
- Nottingham Winter Shelter delivers accommodation during the winter period for individuals leaving Home Office placements.
- Several VCF organizations, including Hope into Action and Rene House provide supported accommodation
- The Jericho Road project and other VCF organizations support people leaving prison by helping them to access housing services, providing employment training and other navigating roles.

### **Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years**

- Review the local arrangements for the Duty to Refer to ensure that notifications are sent as early as possible and can be responded to with clear actions for joint delivery
- Review the mental health accommodation pathway to ensure that provision is maximised and there is appropriate access for people who are homeless
- Utilise task groups (including the Institutional Discharge Group) to understand the challenges around short prison sentences, A&E attendances, discharge of unwell people who are not in priority need, early release schemes, accelerated home office decisions and work together to find solutions for people in these circumstances
- Explore all accommodation options, including provision where accessibility can be unlocked with the input of specialist support
- Ensure accommodation programmes are coordinated across sectors and targeted effectively

- Review the local prison release protocol alongside Nottinghamshire County local authorities and ensure that prisons for female offenders are fully involved in the pathways that are established and specialist requirements for women / mothers are considered in rehousing decisions
- Review the local hospital discharge protocol and ensure that learning on positive practice and successful outcomes from the out of hospital accommodation model is considered within future commissioning arrangements
- Utilise and expand the Nottingham City Council Community Safety group focussed on accommodation options following NASS decisions to increase partnership working and information sharing and establish a protocol including a process plan for supporting failed asylum seekers in appealing decisions and submitting new evidence or claims. Utilise the knowledge of relevant VCF organizations through regular meetings of this group
- Review the Care Leavers protocol to ensure the mechanisms for planning the ending of care placements and that there is sufficiency and variety in accommodation options available for young people leaving local authority care
- Assess accommodation options and pathways for young people who are care experienced and at risk of homelessness
- Agree a joint learning process for institutional discharge

### **Intended outcomes**

An increase in homelessness prevention from hospital (including mental health sections), local authority care, prison and youth offender institutions and when NASS support is withdrawn through a reduction in the number of people who become homeless after being supported by any of these institutions.

### **Priority 2. The issues causing homelessness are addressed**

The 2020 report by the Local Government Association, *Re-thinking Homelessness Prevention* suggests the need for a renewed focus on homelessness prevention which moves beyond homelessness services and recognises the *vital importance of upstream cross-service prevention work in local homelessness systems, and the role of councils, their partners and central government policy in delivering this work.*

The Homelessness charity Crisis suggests that *to end all types of homelessness, we need to understand and change the factors which cause it and make it worse.* Addressing the issues causing homelessness is a form of primary or universal prevention and therefore the next key priority of this strategy.

Locally, VCF sector organisations such as Emmanuel House and The Friary provide day centres with a range of services seeking to identify issues and signpost people into pathways for support, before the issues lead to homelessness. This includes help with debt, a health appointment (mental or physical), access to addiction services or support to claim benefits. Providing these services can often enable a vulnerable person to get the help they need before they lose their property.

## What is the issue?

Housing Charity Shelter cites the main cause of homelessness as people not being able to afford a home. They assess one third of renters as relying on benefits to help pay their rent but cuts in the value of benefits (particularly Local Housing Allowance) have left an unaffordable shortfall. Nearly 22,000 households in Nottingham are in receipt of the housing element of Universal Credit, 55% live in social housing and 45% in the Private Rented Sector.

Households with low levels of income are financially vulnerable and immixed with several years of reform to the welfare system and limited availability of affordable housing options puts pressure on their ability to secure or sustain their accommodation. Furthermore, local intelligence suggests that there are still landlords who will not accept households who are unemployed.

The cost-of-living crisis has led to rising prices on household essentials, including food, utilities, mortgages and rents. [The Joseph Rowntree Foundation report - Destitution in the UK 2023](#) assesses that the number of people experiencing destitution has increased by 61% since 2019.

Despite an increased need for support, the public sector has also faced significant financial pressure which has led to a reduction in services. In 2024 Nottingham City Council budget cuts ended funding for the Welfare Rights team, the Nottingham Citizen Advice Bureau Housing Advice service was decommissioned, and the Building Better Opportunities initiative ended.

## What have we done so far?

- Advice Nottingham deliver a coordinated network of services that help people to manage debts and access additional benefits (i.e. disability benefits and DHP to reduce the effects of other benefit restrictions). The services liaise with landlords to prevent eviction, provide training around debt and housing and work with banks around ID needed to set up basic accounts. Over the past 12 months, Step Forward Debt Advice supported 299 households.
- The Nottingham Financial Resilience Partnership (NFRP) is a citywide partnership which promotes a cross sector approach to reducing financial vulnerability. It offers training and resources to partners and has a wide-ranging action plan for 2024-25, including objectives around financial resilience, financial capability, income maximisation, numeracy and employability skills.
- Before the service ended, in 2023/24 the Nottingham Citizen Advice Bureau Housing Advice team helped over 8,700 people and delivered £9.9million in financial outcomes achieved, including £624,553 of debt written off
- Nottingham City Council Revenues and Benefits take an active role in supporting the Preventing Homelessness agenda and as well as ensuring the effective assessment and delivery of benefit services to over 31,000 households and in 2023/24 administered £628k in Discretionary Housing Payments made up of 1,058 awards to 831 households



- Building on the legacy of Building Better Opportunities, Framework's GROW initiative engages with economically inactive individuals and people who are long-term unemployed who have completed a DWP programme of support.
- Beam is a social enterprise commissioned by Nottingham city Council to provide a programme of employability support for homeless individuals (or those at risk). The service has been operational since June 2023 and has supported over 65 individuals directly and delivered 35 workshops for users of key homelessness support services
- Framework's New Path to Employment has embedded an Individual Placement Support model within Nottingham Recovery Network to support people in treatment for alcohol and substance use to seek and gain competitive, paid employment. 'Smart Recovery' has also been rolled out within supported accommodation.
- Framework provides Skills Plus for service users within supported accommodation services which is the delivery of courses designed to help people develop the skills they need to live independently, including managing tenancies, dealing with money issues, and building confidence and wellbeing.
- Registered Providers in the city have deployed a number of different initiatives to support tenants who are struggling with their finances, these have included:
  - Employing Financial Inclusion Officers to work with residents to maximise their incomes
  - Signposting to organisations such as StepChange Debt Charity
  - Promoting and signposting tenants to training and skills courses e.g. NCC Tenant Academy
  - P4P are exploring the establishment of an apprenticeship scheme for any tenant to complete an apprenticeship in a trade skill to then support the maintenance and build of social housing
- Between October 2016 and March 2023, Framework delivered the employability programme Opportunity and Change (which supported 1595 participants across D2N2 of whom, approximately 25% were Nottingham City residents). 88% of participants were experiencing three out of the following: homelessness, offending, domestic abuse, mental ill health, substance use at the point of access. 451 (28.3%) participants left Opportunity and Change to start work, engage with training and education, or begin actively job searching
- In 2023/24, Nottingham City Council employment projects supported 1042 people into work

### **Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years**

- Utilise the EMCCA to:
  - Assess the impact of the reduction in support services at a time of growing need and consider options for introducing services across the conurbation as universal prevention infrastructure. To include the possibility of a defined financial capability offer (specific to becoming a tenant) to vulnerable young people
  - Consider unified administration of housing benefit claims in exempt supported housing
  - Collectively lobby the government on LHA shortfall to market rent and short-term and dispersed funding
- Monitor trends in the number of households who:

- are presenting to services at risk of homelessness because their rental charge is unaffordable to them
- are homeless and unemployed/economically inactive
- are referred to and engaging in employment related support as part of their personalised housing plans
- Use local analysis to investigate reasons and causes for tenancy abandonment and develop a cross-tenure tenancy abandonment plan
- Use of predictive analytics to identify households receiving the housing element of universal credit or housing benefit but not paying their rent
- Utilise employment support services to challenge misconceptions that people facing SMD are not able or interested in work and work is not possible whilst living in supported accommodation
- Utilise the strategy infrastructure groups to further understand the range of providers across public, private VCF sectors offering support to people to improve their life skills, financial resilience, literacy and digital inclusion and promote access opportunities to help with independence, homelessness prevention and tenancy retention

### **Intended outcomes**

- To increase the number of people moving from financial vulnerability to financial capability
- For all households in Nottingham to receive the support they require to become as independent as possible in managing their money and maximising their income.
- For more people to become financially stable through regular employment.

Focus 2.2 Helping to protect people from violence and abuse

### **What is the issue?**

The links between homelessness and violent and abusive situations are clear. Risk of homelessness can often seem unavoidable when escaping abusive situations such as domestic abuse, sexual abuse, modern slavery, human trafficking, honour-based violence or cuckooing. Furthermore, the fear of homelessness can also act as a deterrent to leaving dangerous situations.

It is of absolute importance that our local strategies for homelessness prevention, violence against women and girls and modern slavery are connected and we have clear structures to:

- provide appropriate specialist support
- help survivors remain in their homes (when it is safe to do so)
- move into alternative safe accommodation with minimal disruption

Additionally, it is important to recognise that people who are homeless can have vulnerabilities that make them at greater risk of experiencing harm from others and we must consider ways to help minimise risk.

### **What have we done so far?**

- Implemented the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and delivered the new Domestic Abuse Safer Accommodation Statutory Duty in accordance with the Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance 2021.
- Through ongoing assessment of need and the development of the Safer Accommodation Strategy due to be refreshed in 2024, twelve strategic priorities have been identified and will be delivered through a Whole Housing Approach and securing Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation status for Nottingham City Council's housing services.
- Work commissioned to support the needs of domestic abuse survivors and their children include:
  - DVA Housing and Children Policy Officer
  - Children's workers in four refuges
  - Support costs for the 12 Move On properties associated with each refuge.
  - The complex needs refuge (for survivors with severe and multiple disadvantage)
  - Survivor engagement role supporting the survivor voice at the Local Partnership Board and the needs assessment.
  - Safe Accommodation Team co-located with Housing Solutions
  - Response to Complexity community-based service (for survivors with severe and multiple disadvantage)
  - Therapeutic Services for survivors and children
  - Assessment, training and accreditation for the Whole Housing Approach as set out in the Strategy.
- In addition, we have:
  - Introduced a specialist domestic abuse casework officer within Housing Solutions
  - Delivered the Respite Rooms pilot project (2021 – 2022) which supported homeless women with complex needs experiencing domestic abuse. Valuable learning from the project will inform future work to support homelessness, domestic abuse and complex needs.
  - Maintained commitment to funding refuge and specialist support services for survivors of domestic and sexual abuse (including a 24-hour helpline and BME refuge)
  - Provided specialist training in modern slavery and domestic abuse for people working across sectors
  - Ensured the housing and housing-related support sector is linked to the Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy Group and the Adult and Children's Safeguarding Board and there is an open channel of communication
  - Including representation from Housing Solutions and Framework at the local MARAC meetings.
  - Enabled survivors of domestic abuse to remain safely within their own home through delivery of the Sanctuary Scheme
- Specialist domestic abuse support services:

- Juno – provide a 24-hour freephone helpline offering specialist advice and support for women and children, and information and guidance to professionals. Wrap around support is offered to include criminal and civil justice interventions, MARAC referrals and Sanctuary Scheme referrals.
- Equation – provide specialist male and LGBTQ+ support services, deliver perpetrator programmes to increase accountability for abusive behaviours and deliver wide range of DVA specialist training.
- Refuge provision including specialist support for BAME and complex needs. Identified a need for additional provision to meet demand for safe emergency accommodation of survivors including the needs of male survivors and those with disabilities and additional needs.
- Required all commissioned community and accommodation-based homelessness services to produce an organisational safeguarding policy
- Ensured that housing and housing related support professionals are required to access specialist training to equip them to recognise and understand safeguarding signs, the different forms of violence and abuse, the associated pressures and the required response (particularly where there are persistent and repeat perpetrators, multiple perpetrators e.g. gang violence, honour-based violence, trafficking and modern slavery)
- Promoted safeguarding training and guidance through Nottingham Nouse - the strategic housing network
- Established a working group and responded to the ministerial recommendations for Safeguarding Adults Boards regarding individuals rough sleeping

### **Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years**

- Achieve DAHA accreditation for social housing services
- Consider the further development of the Sanctuary Scheme, utilising Housing First principles
- Continue to identify safeguarding and specialist training packages and utilise communication and partnership networks such as Nouse and homelessness stakeholder groups to promote and look at opportunities for joint training and shadowing possibilities
- Ensure that insight about safeguarding, domestic abuse and modern slavery is captured within the HDG and available for reporting locally as well as to central government
- Promote good practice examples of homeless organisations raising awareness of safeguarding issues (including domestic and/or sexual abuse) with homeless households
- Increase opportunities to rehouse perpetrators through training and collaborative working to reduce displacement and upheaval of survivors and their children, and where possible to develop more perpetrator accountability within our practice.
- Whilst maintaining commitment to the national network of refuges, ensure that local refuges are adopting the Nottingham First approach to bedspaces (i.e. giving first refusal to Housing Solutions) and that when they do, Housing

Solutions are maximising take up to ensure that local survivors of domestic abuse are accommodated in an appropriate supportive environment

- Ensure as a local authority we prioritise safeguarding responsibilities when violence or abuse is identified or disclosed and ensure equitable access to information and advice to all survivors including those with No Recourse to Public Funds in accordance with our statutory duties.
- Ensure that information about pathways to safeguarding and specialist domestic and/or sexual abuse support is available for homeless services and their service users
- Include questions about exploitation in homelessness assessments
- Provide clarity about what the local authority has a duty to do when violence or abuse is identified or disclosed and if/how that differs when people have No Recourse to Public Funds
- Local authority to provide information about who VCF sector organisations should contact for information to support bids to external funding sources
- Ensure that the professional opinions of agencies supporting survivors of violence and abuse are considered and utilised in the formation of Personalised Housing Plans
- Increase refuge provision to meet the demands per head of population and maintain the 24-hour helpline as the key referral route (alongside the homelessness prevention gateway)
- Develop a wider range of temporary accommodation models to meet the diverse needs of survivors of domestic abuse.
- Consideration of responding to complexity of women who are experiencing violence alongside other severe and multiple disadvantage issues
- Maintain provision of specialist services for children in refuges and in families who have escaped violence and abuse and who have been placed in temporary accommodation
- Consider the [Local Government Association Adult Safeguarding and Homelessness Experience Informed Practice](#) and the [Research in Practice Radical Safeguarding Toolkit for Homelessness](#) and how any recommendations can be locally applied
- Establish a homeless deaths review process
- Wider promotion and encouragement to access the resources, Communities of Practice, and links to partners' training, provided by the Nottingham Practice Development Unit currently delivered by Nottingham CVS provides
- Ensure there are processes for identifying cuckooing and other safeguarding concerns when people seem reluctant to use their accommodation

### **Intended outcomes**

- For services across all sectors to be able to identify people at risk of violence, abuse or exploitation and aware of how to support them through effective trauma informed practice to safety, specialist advice and support.
- For survivors needs to be recognised at an early stage and for partners to collaborate to prevent homelessness where possible whilst protecting against harm
- For a range of flexible and specialist accommodation and support services to be available and accessible for people escaping violence, abuse or exploitation

## **What is the issue?**

Severe multiple disadvantage (SMD) is a term used to describe people experiencing a combination of (Harland et al., 2022): mental ill health, homelessness, substance use, domestic abuse, and/or offending. This is sometimes referred to as 'multiple complex needs' and 'multiple exclusion homelessness' (Harland et al., 2022).

The 2022 [Evaluation of Fulfilling Lives: Supporting people experiencing multiple disadvantage](#), determines that homelessness is both a cause and a consequence of multiple disadvantage and so addressing homelessness and supporting people to maintain stable and appropriate accommodation is an important element of tackling multiple disadvantage.

According to the Homeless Link 2022 Annual Review of Support for Single Homeless People in England, since 2020 there has been a dramatic increase in the number of accommodation providers supporting people experiencing a wide variety of support needs, including a 93% increase for mental health, 200% increase for physical health, 143% increase for substance misuse, and 110% increase for people with co-occurring or complex needs. At the same time only 9% of accommodation providers state they are suited to supporting people with a high or complex needs.

For many years, Nottingham City Council and housing related support partners have delivered holistic assessments of wider support needs alongside homelessness assessments to ensure that the support needs underpinning the causes of homelessness are identified and can be addressed in parallel to funding a housing solution. It has long been evident that for some people support needs cannot be categorised by a singular point of concern and rather there are often a complicated mixture of longstanding traumas compounded by a range of presenting support needs.

The previous Homelessness Prevention Strategy recognised that many traditional models of service provision and silos in sector working do not adequately respond to and support people with severe and multiple disadvantages and introduced a local system of support that aimed at being flexible and inclusive.

## **What we have done so far**

- Included the requirement within housing related support service specifications for providers to utilise holistic support plans and coordinate access to support and treatment for non-housing related support needs
- Opportunity Nottingham operated between 2014-2022 under the National Lottery Fulfilling Lives Programme to support people in Nottingham exhibiting at least three of the following needs: homelessness, substance misuse issues, mental health and offending history / risk. Key achievements included:
  - Establishment of Nottingham Practice Development Unit

- Supported development of the Wrap Around Multi-Disciplinary Team (WAMDT) and the SMD partnership.
  - Embedded practitioners in statutory agencies, including Primary Care, Probation, Adult Social Care, and Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust.
  - Widespread system change and learning to make services more flexible and accessible for people experiencing SMD.
  - Developed roles and established a lived experience presence within service commissioning, design and delivery.
  - Helped to get SMD adopted as a priority in key City strategies, including by the ICB and Health and Wellbeing Board.
  - Trusted Assessor Social Workers for Changing Futures are now able to complete Social Care assessments
- In 2022, Nottingham was one of 15 areas nationally to secure funding for the delivery of the Changing Futures programme. The programme, a joint initiative by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and The National Lottery Community Fund to continue and expand the work of Opportunity Nottingham. This funding is due to come to an end in March 2025 but will continue for the next five years via funding from the Integrated Care Board's Health Inequalities Innovation Fund.

Between July 2022 and July 2024, the programme received 795 referrals and 30% were accepted. Of those being supported, over half who were referred to social care received an assessment and one fifth received support. Nearly two thirds referred to mental health services were offered support. 96% of those referred to drug and alcohol services and domestic abuse services were offered support. Nearly half of those referred to housing received an assessment and nearly one fifth were offered emergency accommodation. There have been 139 exits from the service and 39% were positive. Those with positive outcomes were supported for 42 weeks on average.

In partnership between the VCF sector, NHS, the Practice Development Unit and Changing Futures, the Homeless Health Network was established, which meets every two months to improve healthcare provision to people experiencing SMD.

### **Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years**

- Commit a regular regime of reporting to the Children and Adults Safeguarding Boards highlighting good practice as well as seeking support to overcome barriers to delivering homelessness prevention in Nottingham
- Explore options for the development and delivery of shared assessments and support plans between housing and social care and the role of support agencies in pre-assessment / provision of supporting information
- Review pathways into accommodation for single homeless people with Severe and Multiple Disadvantage
- Apply flexibility in locations of statutory housing assessments and closer integration with the SMD Partnership and the Changing Futures Board when resource is increased and stable within Nottingham City Council
- Utilise the strategy infrastructure groups to consider how to collaboratively design and commission a range of flexible accommodation and support services that are accessible to those who need them and sufficient in meeting a range of care, support and enablement needs

- Seek to establish services that fully understand and promote Trauma Informed Care (TIC) or Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE) and where staff utilise the Practice Development Unit for support
- Ensure that the long term effects of childhood trauma are known and understood and consider what additional interventions can be put into place to protect children from trauma and help those who have had negative experiences to build resilience for later life
- Evidence the contribution of housing related support to the health and social care prevention agenda.
- Show how a local system of early identification and collaborative assessment of housing and support needs and clear and accessible pathways to a range of provision supports Better Care Fund metrics
- Consider how to incentivise the delivery outcomes within 'harder to manage' groups

### **Intended outcomes**

- That people are protected from experiencing trauma in childhood and adulthood and those who have had negative experiences are able to build resilience for later life and for future life events
- Provision of a flexible range of person-centred, accessible and effective accommodation and support options that can move a greater number of individuals onto sustainable positive outcomes
- A system of assessment which reduces the amount of appointments and repetitive 'story-telling' from the individual
- A reduction in repeat homelessness through a greater number of people with complex needs sustaining their accommodation and addressing their support needs
- Stigma around the employability of homeless people with SND is addressed

### **Focus 2.4 Improving Health and Wellbeing**

#### **What is the issue**

Ill health can be both a cause and consequence of homelessness, although it is not always identified as the trigger of homelessness. For example, ill health may contribute to job loss or relationship breakdown, which in turn can result in homelessness.

The health and wellbeing of people who experience homelessness are poorer than that of the general population. They often experience the most significant health inequalities. The longer a person experiences homelessness, particularly from young adulthood, the more likely their health and wellbeing will be at risk.

Homeless people often do not readily or easily engage with mainstream health services, which is one of the reasons for making them more likely to have both high rates of early mortality and poor health outcomes.

Homeless children are at a higher risk for physical health problems, including malnutrition, asthma, and other chronic conditions. Research suggests that one-third of unhoused children will be diagnosed with a severe psychological disability by eight



years old. Children affected by homelessness may feel an overwhelming sense of displacement, having lost a place that felt like home. This can lead to a number of practical, emotional and behavioural challenges.

They may experience overcrowding and instability from frequent moves or just knowing that it where they are living is not a stable and permanent option. If a child is forced to move outside the area, increasing the length of journey to and from school can exacerbate tiredness, lateness, anxiety, and undermines the child ability to maintain relationships with peers and teachers. These factors may lead to isolation which is a catalyst for vulnerability to exploitation.

Access to appropriate facilities to support proper nutrition or clean clothes maybe a challenge. They cannot socialise with friends at home and may face stigma, feel shame and that they stand out. Their parents are more likely to be under stress which could mean they are overlooking or unable to meet the children's needs.

The causes for homelessness may also still be impacting which can enhance the stress, anxiety, and worry felt by homeless children leading to depression and behavioural issues. They are unlikely to be able to regularly engage in exercise or hobbies, further affecting their physical and mental wellbeing.

All homeless people are vulnerable to exploitation, particularly young people and which can have a damaging effect on their physical and mental wellbeing. more likely to contract sexually transmitted infections, have increased rates of unplanned pregnancies, misuse alcohol/substances, develop dependencies and have unhealthy relationship. A young person's lack of life skills can make it harder to access services and support, education or employment and they are more at risk of career homelessness and development of Severe and Multiple Disadvantage. It is also challenging for young people to quickly exit homelessness because of limited affordable and available housing options.

Disability, neurodivergence, mental and physical illness, drug and/or alcohol dependency can be a contributing factor to the reason for homelessness in adulthood and exacerbate homelessness as specific or a combination of complex needs make it harder to access and engage with support and secure a suitable housing solution.

Poor physical and mental health, drug and alcohol use and co-morbidities are more likely to be experienced by adults experiencing homelessness, particularly those who are rough sleeping. These factors result in significant health inequalities for people experiencing homelessness. As a result, homeless people are more likely to require urgent and emergency care because of advanced illnesses or conditions, rather than accessing preventative and primary care services.

For pregnant women experiencing homelessness, accessing healthcare services is a challenge. These women are living (and frequently moving) between temporary accommodation, women's refuges, or rough sleeping and sofa surfing. Knowing where to get support and care is one issue, research shows that women are also discouraged from seeking healthcare because of fear of discrimination and power imbalances in the medical context.

Health and care professionals have an important role in understanding homelessness is a consequence of a complex interplay between a person's individual circumstances and vulnerabilities and adverse structural factors, that requires different levels of intervention. They need to know and understand the needs of individuals, communities and populations and know who else in the local 'system' has a responsibility for or an interest in meeting these needs. Interventions which can prevent, protect, and promote health for people at risk of becoming homeless is key.

### **What we have done so far**

- Continued to deliver:
  - the Hospital Discharge Protocol, Integrated Discharge Teams, Transfer of Care Hubs and specialist housing navigators as multi-disciplinary approaches to coordinated hospital discharge
  - the Homeless Health Team providing assertive specialist nursing outreach and drop-in services to people who are rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping.
  - The Homeless Mental Health Team provide assertive outreach mental health interventions and assessments to people who are rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping, including joint planning support to hostel and temporary accommodation to meet the emotional and wellbeing needs of people experiencing homelessness
  - Specialist drug and alcohol and mental health services for rough sleepers
  - Trusted assessor social workers based in VCS services
  - The jointly commissioning Drug and Alcohol Care Team, which provides hospital based drug and alcohol nursing interventions to prevent crisis withdrawal and connect patients into the Community Drug and Alcohol Service when they are discharged.
  - At both NUH and SFH there is a specialist midwife team who works with pregnant people with complex needs. The Specialist Midwifery Team provides care to vulnerable pregnant women. Complexities of care concerns may include domestic abuse, substance misuse, mental health problems, homelessness and vulnerable pregnant migrants.
  - The Transient Families 0-19 team, working mainly with asylum seeking or refugee families, many of whom are homeless and living in temporary accommodation
  - The IPS (Individual Placement Support) Service offers intensive, individually tailored support for people with Severe Mental Illness (SMI) to help people to choose and find the right job, with ongoing support for the employer and employee to help ensure the person keeps their job
  - Participation in Alcohol Change UK Accommodation for Complex Dependent Drinkers Project to explore the challenges and solutions for housing treatment resistant drinkers
  - GP Local Enhanced Services for Severe and Multiple Disadvantage improve access to primary health care for homeless people through improvements in the way that GP services interact with homeless people. Enhanced GP Services are required to undertake training and adjust access for people experiencing severe multiple disadvantage including homelessness. This is supporting an

increase in recording of homelessness in clinical information and wider support needs.

- Established the Nottingham City Homeless Health Network which has adopted an inclusion health audit toolkit developed by the VSE Health and Wellbeing Alliance which explores the creation of an inclusion Health lead, reasonable adjustments in practice for patients, free support letters to support benefit claims, homeless and housing applications
- The NHVSF has worked closely with multiple divisions of the NHS locally to and, in partnership with the PDU and Changing Futures, establishment of the Homeless Health Network which now meets every two months to identify areas of concern, share expertise and develop further improvements in health care provision
- Established the Nottingham City General Practice Alliance SMD General Practice Centre of Excellence
- Secured funding for a homelessness adult social worker to enable the joint assessment of social care/support needs and housing and determine the most appropriate ongoing care and support plan and the suitable housing options.

### **Recommended area of activity over the next five years**

- To engage the Health and Wellbeing Board and Integrated Care Board in the consideration of interventions to respond and protect specific health and wellbeing needs of:
  - Families with children at risk of homelessness
  - Families with children in temporary accommodation
  - Adults being discharged from hospital with high levels of health and social need who would be more vulnerable if they return to rough sleeping or temporary accommodation
- Improve identification of people at risk of homelessness and utilisation of social prescriptions for referral to housing and homelessness advice and support services
- Include integrated social care, health and mental health input to the review of housing and homelessness associated protocols and pathways such as the pre-emption protocol for supported accommodation
- Deliver the Health Protection Team Immunisation and Vaccination programme with a focus on increasing uptake in the most deprived, including rough sleepers
- Taking both a 'Making Every Adult Matter' and 'Every Contact Counts' approach across health, social care and housing and exploring what this looks like in practice through the Homelessness Prevention Charter
- Embed the 'I need extra help' card into patient records via system one in Nottingham for 2025 to promote access to healthcare for patients who feel marginalised or socially excluded so accessing a GP is a more joined-up approach, with more equal power dynamics and promotes a team around the patient approach.
- Ensure widespread uptake of the NHS England training for primary care professionals on the ELFH Learning Hub entitled Supporting GP registration for people experiencing Homelessness (2024) programme, to support GP practice staff and complement the new online GP registration service, to reduce the risk of worsening health inequalities for the homeless population.

### **Intended outcome**

- Health inequality is reduced for families and individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Improved rehabilitation and recovery for people with health and social care needs who are being discharged from hospital and experiencing homelessness.

### Priority 3. Homelessness is brief

The first priority for this strategy is to generate a culture where people seek advice or are identified early enough for their issues to be resolved and their homelessness prevented. However, inevitably there will remain households for whom this is not possible to achieve. Certainly, the starting point of this strategy is one where most people are approaching the local authority for a statutory housing assessment when they are already in crisis, and we must respond to this as well as readdressing this balance. This strategy is committed to delivering swift and effective interventions that mean if a household has become homeless, it will be endured for a short a time as possible.

#### Focus 3.1 Delivering sufficiency in suitable Temporary Accommodation that is of best value

##### **What is the issue?**

Temporary Accommodation is provided to homeless households whom the local authority has a statutory duty to accommodate. The number of households in Temporary Accommodation has increased significantly over the past five years, from a snapshot of 349 in 2019 to 776 in 2024. This is in part due to increased demand (comparative approvals data) but also because of reduced throughput. In 2019, the average length of stay was around 156 days and in 2024, this increased by 72% to 332 days.

Nottingham City Council has increased provision from fewer than 200 units in 2019 to nearly 600 units in 2024, through a variety of models including via Registered Provider partners, private sector leasing, leasing short term rentals, acquiring properties and utilising the council's existing stock. Whilst ensuring that statutory duties are met, Nottingham City council seeks to divert households away from Temporary Accommodation wherever possible. There are an average of 123 presentations and 53 assessments in Nottingham per week and only 16 approvals for Temporary Accommodation. However, through an ongoing trend of more people moving in than moving out, supply has not been able to match demand and in 2024 the number of homeless families or individuals placed each night in either hotels or other nightly paid accommodation consistently exceeded 200 household.

Around 22% of placements in hotels are for single people and 88% for families<sup>1</sup>. There are issues with both over prolonged periods of time. Single people are often placed because there are no immediate supported accommodation options available to support their high or specific needs and/or risks. For families there are a lack of facilities and space, placements can change frequently and are more likely than other forms of temporary accommodation to be further away from support networks, schools, childcare and jobs. Hotels are also extremely costly to the local authority and the

---

<sup>1</sup> Average hotel placements over Q1 2024/25

cumulative spend in this area in recent years has contributed to the financial pressure faced by Nottingham City Council.

A hotel elimination plan has been developed by the council and is being consolidated into this strategy. The plan contains the following key areas of activity:

- minimising the number of households needing temporary accommodation through increasing the number of households that can be supported to either remain in their home or move to alternative housing before they become homeless
- increase and optimise supply of alternative forms of temporary accommodation
- minimise the duration temporary accommodation is needed by improving move on options and outcomes

### **What have we done so far?**

- Increased investment into Nottingham City Council Housing Solutions to deliver a restructured and expanded service with the aim of reducing assessment officer caseloads to enable a preventative focus and delivering a greater number of private rented sector tenancy outcomes
- Maximised options for bidding, borrowing, buying and building to deliver a varied supply model and introduced over 400 units of temporary accommodation within the past 5 years,
- Converted a former care home into a further 48 units of temporary accommodation for families to open in 2025 with plans progressing for a further decommissioned site later in the year
- Introduced two frameworks for the procurement of Accommodation Based Services and Community Based Support for homeless households and Nightly Paid Emergency Accommodation
- Developed a comprehensive and regular data analysis report with detailed methodology for forecasting future need
- Implemented placement and move on scrutiny and targeted Independent Living Support services to those at risk of needing temporary accommodation or placed in hotels
- Reviewed the Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy
- Appointed an Accommodation Manager at Housing Solutions

### **Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years**

- Draft and deliver a Temporary Accommodation Procurement Policy which includes a sufficiency strategy and outlines growth in a flexible portfolio of Temporary accommodation for the next five years.
- Pilot a private sector Temporary Accommodation option.
- Work with Framework Housing Association to increase availability and access to supported accommodation as temporary accommodation for single people in priority need
- Assess alternative temporary accommodation options for single people in priority need
- Review the supported accommodation as temporary accommodation requirements within the recommissioning of housing related support

- Lobby government for appropriate levels of funding or reform to models that enables councils to respond to increased demand for Temporary Accommodation more appropriately and affordably
- Consider options for incentivising employment linked to accepting a Private Rented Sector tenancy when in Temporary Accommodation (bridging rent etc.)
- Delivery of planned units under the combined county authority devolution deal
- Oversight and management of people in and through all forms of Temporary Accommodation, with a priority focus on Nightly Paid Temporary Accommodation reassessing options and requirements and delivery of move on plans
- Implement regular contract monitoring and management of commissioned providers
- Understand and maximise temporary accommodation options that can be delivered by providers such as Open Homes, Hope into Action and Green Pastures
- Consider the potential of converting dispersed council owned Temporary Accommodation into settled tenancies
- Explore options for making temporary placements into private rented sector tenancies that may become settled housing offers
- Regular in depth analysis of HCLIC data to further understand trends and making direct contact with local authorities where the data shows better outcomes to learn from their investment, model, approach and move on options
- Investigate other public sector and VCF sector land and building options that could be utilised as conversion for temporary accommodation projects

### **Intended outcome**

Those who are in need of temporary accommodation are provided with a placement that is suitable in meeting their needs and they are supported to ensure the duration is minimal.

### Focus 3.2 Delivering housing solutions

#### **What is the issue?**

The shift in tenure profile was noted in the previous Homelessness Prevention Strategy and over the past five years the proportion of private rented sector properties has continued to increase whilst social housing supply has further diminished.

There remains a growing shortage in the amount of housing that is accessible to households on a low income and so it is necessary to maximise the social housing stock there is by targeting it towards those most in need and increasing supply as much as possible. However, the Private Rented Sector is one of most important resources in delivering homelessness relief. The sector promotes flexibility, variety and choice and many private sector landlords want long-term stable and reliable tenants just as much as households seek the ability to settle into a place they call their home. Therefore, we must ensure that collectively as a city we proactively work with landlords providing adequate support to enable decent landlords (providing good standard,

affordable accommodation in Nottingham) to retain tenants, prevent evictions and rehouse families and individuals who have become homeless.

For many the private rented sector is seen as less appealing, accessible and suitable because when compared to social housing, rents are higher (often exceeding housing benefit limits), there is less stability and there is inconsistency in property standards and landlord management. Private Sector Landlords also have the ability to be selective about the 'type' of household they choose to accommodate, which can result in much of the sector being unavailable or unaffordable to low income or workless households. There is also less security of tenure within the Private Rented Sector and currently, tenants can be asked to move on without notice within two months at any time after their initial six- or twelve-month tenancy has expired.

As recognised in the introduction to this strategy, there are often underlying support needs causing homelessness. The extent of these will vary between households. Some people do not need any support once their housing need has been resolved. Others will require periods of resettlement support and others ongoing support within their tenancies. Some households will not be ready for independent living and require accommodation options with support on site for varying durations. This strategy acknowledges that whilst all housing related support should focus on moving households towards self-sustainable independent living, there will be some households who require more enduring interventions.

### **What have we done so far?**

- Supported by a successful bid to the Private Rented Sector Access Fund in 2018 and more recently via the Homelessness Prevention Grant, the Nottingham Private Rented Assistance Scheme (NPRAS) has continued to evolve and expand offering a range of services from tenant finding to tenancy management through social lettings. The service offers flexibility in the arrangements with landlords, which have been benchmarked against similar services across the country to ensure all options have been considered for local adaptation. In 2023/24, the team facilitated an average of 35 tenancies each month.
- Between 2019 and 2024, Framework built or purchased 86 new units for use as social, affordable, temporary or supported accommodation in Nottingham City.
- The Nottingham City Council Environmental Health service have used a range of support and enforcement tools to work with owners of empty homes and have brought 273 back into use since 2019
- Developed the Nottingham Housing Strategy – Homes Fit for the Future, to assess and address housing need in the city
- Delivered over 500 units of supported accommodation for homeless single adults and young people
- Conducted competitive tender processes to resulting in the commissioning and flexible delivery of the Framework Independent Living Service and P3 Prevention and Resettlement support people to increase access to accommodation with support in the Private Rented Sector. Strengthened links between these services by reciprocal attendance at team meetings to build relationships and systems/process knowledge

- Researched alternative construction, supply and financing models and assessed their viability for local delivery
- With the support of NCC and the local business community, the VCF sector has established Nottingham Street Aid, which provides funds to purchase items needed to help tenants establish stable tenancies.

### **Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years**

- Address the provision of new social/affordable housing within the delivery plan of the new Housing Strategy
- Review the Allocations policy including with consideration of enabling letting of flats to families and prioritising social lets for prevention.
- Clarifying and coordinating the options available for private property owners to provide their accommodation to homeless people
- Advance a coordinated and regular approach to discussions with developers and providers about additional types of accommodation, identifying and maximising sites and utilising any available government funding opportunities
- When able and where possible, relaunching the property acquisition plan utilising a variety of funding streams (such as one-for-one replacement receipts) to buy properties for temporary and longer-term use
- Increasing the uptake of Private Rented Sector Offers earlier under the Relief homelessness duty
- Identify how VCF partners can provide coordinated and additional resource (including accommodation funding surgeries) to help households identify private rented sector tenancies
- Working with East Midlands Combined County Authority and other local authorities, letting agents and private landlords to expand the reach of NPRAS across the county and region
- Embed the landlord support officer posts within NPRAS and explore the feasibility of introducing area patch manager type functions to the private rented sector to identify issues at an early stage and work with partners to lever in relevant support
- Promote positive communications about good landlords and decent properties in the private rented sector to maximise its appeal. Also, ensure that clear and consistent messages are made available about housing options
- Utilise landlord forums to find out their requirements and the incentives / support they would need to help make their accommodation more accessible to people on a low income
- Provide landlords with information about how they can support tenants and seek help to address issues, as well as giving information on support plans and sharing positive examples of successful tenancies to alleviate their fears about accepting certain households as tenants
- Consider how to support the facilitation of a Private Rented Sector tenants forum – to provide a communication platform and action group for PRS tenants to collectively raise issues of concern locally and nationally
- Promote the delivery of accommodation finding surgeries
- Delivery of 17 units of resettlement accommodation via the Local Authority Housing fund phase 3
- Improve void turnaround to reduce the length of time stock is not available to occupy



- Consider potential conversion options for decommissioned and otherwise empty commercial and residential property
- Continue to engage with Community Interest Companies to maximise appropriate use of their accommodation provision for people in need
- Review shared options across tenure for single people
- Explore the possibility of introducing a social housing tenancy sustainment service model predominantly funded through intensive housing management Housing Benefit
- Consider options for introducing starter tenancies which begin as a temporary accommodation placement but with the potential to become permanent housing
- Examine the viability of expanding the NPRAS social lettings into full leasing and repair to attract more landlords into supply of longer term housing
- Research models from other countries of mixed social housing / supported housing provision for elderly and young people, to offer integrated support and community through cross-generational living with support from trained agencies.

### **Intended outcomes**

- Access to more quality properties in the private rented sector that are affordable to sustain
- Households move seamlessly from one property to another with minimal disruption and without the need for emergency / temporary accommodation
- Identify and engage landlords and for the facilitation of new tenancies in a timely fashion
- Increased delivery of a range of affordable housing options in Nottingham that are accessible for people with lower income levels.

### Priority 4. Rough Sleeping is reduced

#### **What is the issue?**

Rough sleeping, the most visible form of homelessness, is increasing according to a 2023 report<sup>2</sup> by Crisis. This is based on the annual count data collected by the government ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government which shows the numbers have steadily increased in the years following the Covid-19 interventions but haven't yet reached their pre-pandemic peak. In Nottingham however, the annual count was at its highest since records began in 2010, finding 46 individuals.

Though the number of individuals rough sleeping in Nottingham fluctuates with the ending and opening of new provision, generally there are disproportionality more rough sleepers in Nottingham than in comparative areas. Nottingham is now ranked 33<sup>rd</sup> highest of all local authority areas when looking at the rate of rough sleeping (against numbers of households in the population) which is an increase from 56<sup>th</sup> at the time of the last strategy.

---

<sup>2</sup> [Sutton-Hamilton, C., and Sanders, B. \(2023\) 'I always kept one eye open': The experiences and impacts of sleeping rough. London: Crisis.](#)

Whilst all cities face similar challenges, there are a combination of factors that contribute to the high numbers locally, as follows:

- Geographical location - centrally positioned and easily accessible from across the country
- Tight local authority boundaries which are surrounded by urban areas with limited services
- High quality services, long standing practice of supporting beyond statutory duties, appealing and varied offers
- Well established practice of conducting daily outreach and regular counts with a local hotline number leading to more wide reaching intelligence and thorough reporting
- The comprehensive data also captures the transitional rough sleepers who move through the city but do not remain to receive support
- Presence of a large prison in the middle of the city (and others close by locally) which has been used as a discharge prison for the region.
- Two large hospitals within the city boundary.
- Two major universities meaning a large local student population reducing access to HMO type accommodation for other single people in need
- High number of asylum seeker placements and decisions
- Issues with non-engagement and people rough sleeping when they have accommodation available for them to occupy
- Challenging housing market - limited affordable options compounded by high volume of Right-to-Buy sales, reduction in social housing high rise flats, lack of registered provider supply, private one bed and shared housing market dominated by student lets
- General factors leading to homelessness, including high levels of child poverty, deprivation, unemployment, mental and physical health issues and substance dependency

Rough sleeping is dangerous and damaging. People who sleep rough are likely to have reached street homelessness from backgrounds of trauma and will already have multiple support needs. Once rough sleeping, it is more likely they will develop additional mental and physical health needs, substance misuse issues and have contact with the criminal justice system. Rough Sleepers are more exposed to harm from others as victims of crime, violence and abuse. It is harder for rough sleepers to access the support services they need or move away from homelessness and on with other aspects of their lives.

Women are among the most vulnerable people in the rough sleeping population. They are generally less visible as can seek shelter in fast-food restaurants, on night buses, in unsafe accommodation (sometimes with unsuitable people who exploit them). They often walk around or may turn to sex working throughout the night to avoid the dangers of sleeping on the street.

### **What have we done so far?**

The contribution of the VCF in preventing and responding to rough sleeping is vast. [Appendix X](#) details some of the interventions delivered over the past five years.

- Nottingham City Council commissions over 300 hundred units of supported accommodation for single people who are homeless (or at risk) and a homelessness prevention Independent Living Support Service which helps to keep people in their accommodation or facilitate a move to alternative accommodation and minimise time spent being homeless.
- Between 2019 and 2024, Nottingham City Council secured over £12m from the Government's Rapid Rehousing Pathway, Cold Weather, Rough Sleeping Initiative, Accommodation for ExOffenders, Respite Rooms and Out of Hospital Shared Outcomes funding streams. Currently, the grants fund the delivery of over 100 units of supported accommodation (including a prevention and assessment hub) and 20 specialist staff including:
  - Prevention and Resettlement Team
  - Community Navigators
  - Specialist navigators for hospital discharge, prison release and mental health
  - Employment placement and support
  - Statutory housing assessment and move on officers
  - Pilot project to convert supported accommodation into a sustainable tenancy
  - Through dedicated roles within the Nottingham Private Rented Assistance Scheme (NPRAS) 261 rough sleepers were found tenancies in the private rented sector in 2023/24.
- £4m has been secured by Framework, Places for People and Metropolitan Housing Associations, via the Government's Next Steps and Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programmes to develop and deliver over 90 units of Housing Led accommodation with intensive support
- Within the past 5 years the city has delivered 12 units of accommodation through the Respite Rooms Pilot for female rough sleepers who have experienced domestic abuse and Out of Hospital project for people at risk of rough sleeping following discharge from hospital
- Partners across the city successfully delivered Everyone In during the Covid-19 pandemic with coordinated services to provide shelter, safety and meet support needs holistically and with partnership practices now embedded in service specifications
- From 2021/22, Nottingham City Council has received over £3.3m in Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant which has supported nearly 600 people experiencing rough sleeping to access and engage in drug and alcohol treatment
  - In 2022, a team of mental health practitioners were established from HIS funds from the transformation of MH services and tasked with improving access to Mental Health assessment and treatment and providing a trauma informed outreach model to work with people with Severe and Multiple Disadvantage who were rough sleeping. The team work with providers of accommodation-based services for homeless individuals to offer advice and support management of Mental Health. The team have successfully supported people to LMHT and improved quality of life outcomes for patients. The team work to meet with NICE guidelines – integrated health and social care for people experiencing homelessness, also health inequalities NHS England » A national framework for NHS – action on inclusion health

- Organisations such as Emmanuel House, Framework and Arimathea Trust have worked with the council to mitigate the government fast tracking of immigration decisions through delivery of specialist additional accommodation capacity
- In 2020, the NHVSF established the Street Support Nottingham website that provides a window for all the charitable services that homeless people might need to access.
- At the start of 2023, the alternative giving platform, Nottingham Street Aid, was launched providing the public with an easy and reliable way to provide financial assistance to homeless individuals supported by local charities. Both of these initiatives had financial support from the NCC and local business community.
- We have shifted the approach during periods the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol is activated to ensuring shelter and protection is available via supported sit-up services with no reliance on hotels
- A 24-hour helpline and street outreach 365 days per year offering connectivity to support and accommodation, monthly headcounts with a process for action planning and a rough sleeping database to help inform service development
- Joint frontline operations involving a multitude of support services to encourage engagement from the most entrenched rough sleepers, particularly those that are often in and out of police custody
- The Homeless Health Team provide drop-in clinics, arrange on-site treatment (e.g., dressings/wound care), assessment and treatment of minor illnesses/injuries, health advice, blood testing, and facilitating GP registration and access to mainstream healthcare.
- Trusted assessor social workers are based within the VCF sector to improve access to Care Act assessments and treatment pathways and mental health practitioners providing outreach support
- Emmanuel House Day centre is a charitable organisation dedicated to assisting homeless and vulnerable adults, providing open access drop-in services within the support centre, including: basic needs provision, caseworker support, wellbeing support team, culturally specific mental health support and mental health outreach.
- Annual delivery of the Winter Night Shelter by Emmanuel House, which in 2023/24 supported 190 individuals, 90 of whom were moved on to a positive housing solution. The organisation also opened 7 units of homelessness respite accommodation in 2024.
- A coordinated network of free food provision
- The VCF sectors deliver advice, support and accommodation for people with no recourse to public funds
- The Rough Sleeping Task Group is a multiagency meeting that takes place fortnightly to discuss the ten most entrenched, hard to engage and highest need/risk rough sleepers, identified by partners as needing a collaborative intervention. In 2023/24, 14 out of 22 individuals on the caseload received a successful housing outcome.

### **Recommended key areas of activity over the next 5 years**

- Determine the future funding model for rough sleeping services and bid for all funding opportunities to continue to deliver and develop the local system of services

- Delivery of the Framework units for complex needs single homeless people via the Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP)
- Review the complete portfolio of supported accommodation for single homeless people and establish a plan for maximising capacity which improves throughput but also enables periods of longer-term support for those who need it.
- Review access pathways and specifications for all accommodation based and community support services for single homeless people to ensure systematic cohesion and promote throughput whilst maintaining support for those who require longer durations
- Review of the outcomes achieved and challenges faced in the delivery of Housing Led accommodation with consideration to the Housing First fidelity assurance framework.
- Recruitment to the specialist Social Worker post and Housing Solutions Casework officer within Nottingham City Council
- Expand Street Support Nottingham into a service information directory across all sectors, so that service users and workers have a single website where up-to-date information on all relevant services can be easily found.
- Complete the establishment of the “complex case board” for all Midlands prisons as a proof of concept for revolving doors prisoners to help Prisons and Housing teams to work more closely together and analyse where the gaps and barriers are for this group of people
- Review pathways and protocols for individuals at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping following hospital discharge, prison release and for young people leaving care and immigrants whose NASS support has ended.
- Confirm the involvement of the Nottingham Safeguarding Adults Board and assess local delivery against the Local Government Association Adult Safeguarding and Homelessness Experience-Informed Practice guidance.
- Continue to develop, expand and utilise partnership forums in order to meet regularly with partners across all sectors who come into contact with rough sleepers (or those at risk) so that consistent messages are being communicated, pathways, options and consequences are clearly understood and reiterated regardless of the contact point.
- Meet with neighbouring local authorities to discuss a joint policy regarding local connection and improve communication and partnerships.
- Complete further analysis to understand who is new to rough sleeping and who is a longer-term rough sleeper new to the city, trends in the background in each and different approaches that can be adopted, including understanding where they are new to rough sleeping but not new to homelessness and may have been evicted from homeless supported accommodation.
- Work with day centres to review drop-in provision with a view to how it could improve the engagement between rough sleepers and support services.