

# Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025

## Forward

Councillor Gill Williams Chair Housing Committee

## Introduction

### Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

Homelessness means that someone has no home in the UK or anywhere else in the world, that is available and reasonable for them to live in.

#### **Examples of homelessness:**

- Rooflessness (e.g. sleeping rough)
- Houselessness (with a place to sleep but temporary, or a shelter)
- Living in insecure housing (threatened with eviction, domestic violence, or staying with family and friends known as 'sofa surfing')
- Living in inadequate housing (in caravans on illegal campsites, in unfit housing, extreme overcrowding).

The causes of homelessness can be structural, individual, or both.

#### **Structural factors include:**

- Poverty
- Inequality
- Housing supply and affordability
- Unemployment or insecure employment
- Access to social security.

#### **Individual factors include:**

- Relationship breakdown
- Poor physical health
- Mental health problems, including the consequences of adverse childhood experiences
- Experience of violence, abuse, neglect, harassment or hate crime
- Drug and alcohol problems (including when co-occurring with mental health problems)
- Bereavement
- Experience of care or prison
- Refugees.

There isn't a single intervention that can tackle homelessness and rough sleeping, there needs to be a citywide partnership approach in the context of the national approach.

#### **The Homelessness Act**

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires local authorities to carry out a review of homelessness and homelessness services in their area and publish a homelessness strategy based on this review.

In 2019 Brighton & Hove carried out a review of homelessness and rough sleeping and related services. It also carried out consultations with residents, service users, voluntary and statutory services, charities & community activists with experience in this area as well as other interested parties such as landlords and the business community, an online citywide consultation was open in November and December 2019.

Over the past 16 years, Brighton & Hove has developed four homelessness strategies, in addition to a separate strategy that addressed the needs of people sleeping rough and a number of related strategies covering youth homelessness, single homelessness and temporary accommodation.

## **Aims & Principles of the Strategy**

This strategy sets out a strategic framework to inform work plans, engagement with communities and the citywide response to homelessness and rough sleeping. The strategy is agile to allow the city to meet emerging challenges during its lifetime.

### **Values:**

We believe that everyone who is homeless should have:

- A safe, secure home, and if needed, an appropriate level of support to create a good quality of life
- The full protection of the law, and not be subjected to violence, abuse, theft and discrimination
- Respect and a good standard of service
- Equality of access to information and services
- Equality of opportunity to employment, training, volunteering, leisure and creative activities.

We will work with partners making sure:

- That people experiencing homelessness, including rough sleeping, are listened to, involved in determining the solutions to their own housing need, and are given a voice in the development of solutions to homelessness and rough sleeping.
- We communicate effectively across services and communities to ensure a consistent person centred approach is delivered across all services.

### **Principles**

#### **People**

- We work collaboratively with people and families to find a solution to their homelessness.
- We will support peoples' strengths whilst recognising the barriers that may prevent people resolving their own homelessness or rough sleeping.
- We will try to prevent or resolve homelessness working with people holistically to promote wellbeing, greater social inclusion and positive relationships.

## **Partnerships**

- We will work in collaboration with all services and agencies providing services and support around homelessness prevention, interventions and sustainability.
- We will co-produce services addressing homelessness and rough sleeping with people who have lived experience of homelessness or being at risk of homelessness in the design, delivery and evaluation of our services.
- We will work with partners to ensure that we are working collaboratively to support the aims and principles of the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy.

## **Progress in delivering Previous Strategies**

The Homelessness Strategy 2014 – 2019 was agreed by the Housing Committee in June 2014. Its aim was to prevent homelessness or provide accommodation and various support services to tackle a range of issues. The Rough Sleeping Strategy was agreed in June 2015. Below sets out some of the Key achievements over this period.

### **Homelessness Strategy 2014–19**

- Accommodation finding workshops established
- Trailblazer funding awarded to trial new ways of working and intervening to prevent homelessness at a much earlier stage
- 1645 young people engaged with Prevention Workshops as part of the Trailblazer project, 95% reported improved knowledge
- Implemented service change in response to the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- 1043 households were helped to move to the private rented sector.
- Personal Housing Plans introduced for those at risk of or actually homeless
- Out of Area Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy adopted by Housing Committee
- Allocations policy reviewed, 40% of social housing now allocated to statutory homeless
- Nomination rights given to Adult Social Care to access social housing, increasing options for people who are ready to move on from supported accommodation.

### **Rough Sleeping Strategy 2016 – 2019**

The Council and its partners worked hard to coordinate activity and to focus combined energies on preventing homelessness and improving services for homeless people. Despite homelessness and rough sleeping providing an ongoing and growing challenge for the city, there have been a number of achievements as follows:

- The development of new services for people sleeping rough in the city, including those without a local connection to improve reconnection work 'No Second Night Out', 'Somewhere Safe to Stay', and a 365 day a year night shelter.
- A successful bid to establishment a Social Impact Bond (SIB) as a means to fund the resolution or prevention of rough sleeping for a group of 100 people.
- The establishment of the Multi-Disciplinary Rough Sleeper Navigator Team, an assertive outreach service working to end the rough sleeping of people with

multiple and compound needs by working holistically, assertively and through the lens of trauma informed care.

- The delivery of a cross-sector client database that prevents the re-traumatisation of clients by limiting the need for them to re-tell their story and allows live tracking of client's journeys, and improved information sharing.
- The ongoing delivery of dedicated primary health care services to homeless people via Arch Healthcare.
- A successful bid to expand our Housing First service recognising the effectiveness and impact of the model.
- A successful bid to expand the work of our dedicated third sector private rented scheme Umbrella, working with the Credit Union to increase access to housing in the private rented sector for people with a history of homelessness and rough sleeping.
- The establishment of a cross sector partnership to co-ordinate a welfare first approach to the growing issues of unauthorised tent encampments
- An enhanced Severe Weather Emergency protocol offer with a lower trigger point
- The completed re-modelling and re-commissioning of our supported housing service offer to establish psychologically informed environment models and better support positive change.
- The delivery of a gender informed service for women with multiple and compound need and the establishment of a gender informed move on pathway for vulnerable women.
- The development of a new risk and needs assessment process to better inform effective placements in supported housing and put the client's story at the centre of the assessment.
- Improved access to social housing for Housing First and older age adults leaving supported housing.
- The development and implementation of a Homeless Mortality review process to ensure that learning and improvement is captured, and deaths are prevented.

A full list of action are contained in the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Review document.

## **Summary findings from the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping review**

As a council, we collect information and data on homelessness and housing issues each year. Whilst this review has not given new information, it does support the fact that affordability in the city is growing issue as the housing market continues to be out of the reach of average households. The main findings are:

- Our population now stands at 290,395. This is an increase of 12,395 since 2013.
- The population is predicted to increase at a faster rate than the South East and England by 2030 (by 23,300 people or 8%).
- By 2030, Brighton & Hove's age profile is predicted to get older.
- Energy and Industrial Strategy estimates that there are 15,125 households in Brighton & Hove (11.7%) in fuel poverty.
- Out of all the people in paid employment 62% are employed on a full time 38% part time.

- The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 reported that when looking at the barriers to housing and services domain 3.4% of the areas in the city were in the 10% most deprived areas of England.
- Average annual rent inflation is higher than RPI (2.4%) or CPI (1.5%) in all bedroom categories, especially rooms (5.8%) and four bed (5.6%).
- The gap between the average rent and Local Housing Allowance has increased from £306 per month (£70pw) in 2013/14 to £771 per month (£177pw) in 2018/19.
- Household income needed to buy a flat in the city had increased to 10.3 times and to buy a semi-detached house had increased to 16.2 times.
- The average prices in the city not only continue to be above the national average but the gap between the average property prices has widened over the years.
- 876 people have been found rough sleeping in the city in the last two years. Of these 43% have been found once.
- Of people approaching the Council for assistance 24.97% were homeless from the private rented sector, 17.92% had no fixed address (excluding rough sleepers), 16.67% were living with family, 7.73% were living with friends, 7.29% were rough sleeping.
- Of people accommodated in high supported housing the most support needs were recorded as being most prevalent in the following order: mental health, joint second drug misuse and alcohol misuse, drug misuse and mental health, stress and anxiety.
- Approximately 50% of people rough sleeping in the city have a local connection to another area.
- 2011 census reported 6.2% of households are living in overcrowded homes with at least one additional bedroom needed. Households living in the private rented sector or living rent-free were more likely to be overcrowded than those living in other types of tenure.
- 48% of all households accepted as being owed a statutory housing duty during 2018/19 had a child in the household or a member of the household was pregnant compared to 62% during 2013/14. This indicates an increased number of people being owed a duty due to old age, mental or physical disability.

Full details of a comprehensive review will be published in April 2020.

## Summary of findings from the City Wide consultation

The Council carried out consultation with a range of individuals and organisations across the city. A full report on the analysis has been produced and the findings have been used to develop this strategy. There were 336 responses to the online consultation. 179 people attended consultations as representatives of different groups. The Consultation Report will be published in April 2020.

The three main priorities of Prevention, Intervention and Sustainability were overwhelming endorsed by those taking part. Other priorities identified were

1. Meaningful partnerships
2. Communication
3. Support
4. Education & training

## 5. Affordability

### **Meaningful Partnerships**

The Council understands that partnerships will be a major factor in developing the annual action plans associated with the delivery of the strategy. For this reason, Partnerships and Collaboration are contained as values & principles that underpin the strategy.

### **Communication**

Communication is also contained within the strategy as part of the values and principles of the way we and partners work with homeless people and their households, making sure they are listened to, involved in determining the solutions to their own housing need and are given a voice in the development of solutions to homelessness and rough sleeping.

It is also important that partners are communicating effectively, both in regards people they are working with and with each other.

### **Support**

Support is at the heart of what we do at each stage of homelessness, we provide support to prevent homelessness, we support people with our interventions and we need to look at how we can support people in the future to avoid repeat homelessness from occurring.

### **Education & training**

Education and training was a recurring theme. This was mentioned in respect of education in schools, to highlight homelessness and rough sleeping issues. It was also highlighted to help the homeless and rough sleepers to improve their chances in the future as a way out of homelessness or rough sleeping.

The third group was in respect of staff having the right knowledge and skills to be able to advise and support rough sleepers and the homeless households with their individual issues.

### **Affordability**

We accept that this is a major factor for the City. The impact of this is felt particularly by those who live in the private rented sector and in temporary accommodation. Whilst the council cannot not intervene directly in the private rented sector it is aiming to reduce the need for temporary accommodation and develop more council owned temporary accommodation to reduce to the associated costs.

## **Challenges**

### **Universal Credit Full Service (UCFS)**

UCFS rollout in Brighton and Hove began in October 2017. Housing cost decisions for UCFS claimants are not made locally. The Housing Options and Housing Benefits Team are co-located to assist in resolving claims and was therefore a good

homelessness prevention model. Steps have been taken to mitigate the move of payments to Universal Credit including a funded worker, co-located in Housing Options and the Job Centre. Other staff involved in this area who do not have the same access arrangements, report challenges in obtaining Assisted Payment and delays in first payments leading to immediate rent arrears cases.

### **Private rented sector**

Around 30% of the city's housing stock is privately rented. Whilst such a large supply of accommodation should be seen as an opportunity, there is still excess demand which pushes up rents. Private market rents are usually higher than low income households can afford, as the Local Housing Allowance is considerably lower than the market demands. The student population in the City has stabilised and it is anticipated that the building of purpose built student accommodation may lead to an increase in family sized accommodation coming back into circulation.

### **Single person private renters**

Most people up to the age of 35 are only entitled to the shared accommodation rate for Local Housing Allowance. This means that they receive housing benefit at the rate for a single room in a shared house. Although Brighton & Hove has the sixth highest number of Houses in Multiple Occupation in England, there is a large gap between the Local Housing Allowance (£359 per month) and the rents charged for this type of accommodation (£570 per month). The gap has increased from £89 per month to £211 per month and therefore out of the reach on those on Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. This increase has decreased the housing options for this group in the city.

### **Hidden Homelessness**

This group of people do not appear in official statistics and it is therefore difficult to quantify this issue. Polling conducted by ComRes, in 2017, suggests that two-fifths of 16- to 25-year-olds in the UK have sofa-surfed at one time because they had nowhere to live. One in ten of these young people did so for more than a month in total. Crisis Homeless Monitor estimate that the number of hidden homeless nationally has risen since 2008 by one third. It is believed that the tight housing market and the worsening real income/living standards are key drivers to homelessness in this group. It is known that the Hidden Homelessness can be in a dangerous position leaving people at risk of abuse, assault and exploitation.

### **Social housing**

There are 17,910 social rented properties in the city. Council housing stock has fallen by 778 properties since 2011 but the council remains the largest landlord. There are just under 10,000 households on the council waiting list for social housing. In 2018/19 only 787 properties became available to let, which means long waiting times for many. The number of households in temporary accommodation with a full housing duty and those with a duty owed by Children or Adult Social Care remains high. Under the Council's Allocations Policy 40% of available properties are prioritised to accepted homeless households. Homeless acceptances have fallen in 2018/19 to 283 as a result of the prevention work we have undertaken and whilst 314 social tenancies were allocated to those accepted homeless this will have a small positive impact on the number of households in temporary accommodation. We therefore need to increase prevention and reduce the number of accepted

households still further or develop more options for moving in to the private rented sector.

Providing additional affordable homes is a key priority in our Housing Committee Workplan 2019-2023 approved by Committee in September 2019, including developing 800 additional council homes and 700 other new homes.

### **Multiple and Compound Needs and Rough Sleeping**

We know that over a quarter of people sleeping rough in Brighton & Hove have multiple and compound needs, which means that they may experience several overlapping problems at the same time, such as mental ill health, homelessness, drug and alcohol addiction, offending and family breakdown. This group of people require greater levels of support to find a route of the streets and can struggle to engage with services including Health & Adult Social Care, and Substance Misuse Services.

### **Supported Housing**

Brighton & Hove commission almost 600 units of supported housing however many people find it hard to move on due to the unavailability of social housing and access to private rented homes.

## **Strategic Context**

### **National context**

#### **The National Rough Sleeper Strategy 2018**

Brighton and Hove Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will reflect the national approach. The national strategy includes the targets to halve rough sleeper numbers (from the 2017 baseline) by 2022 and to end rough sleeping by 2027. The national strategy is rooted in three 'pillars', Prevention, Intervention, Recovery. These are reflected in Brighton and Hove's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

- Recovery once rough sleepers are off the street to build positive lives and to prevent new people from starting to sleep rough.
- To intervene rapidly when people start to sleep rough to help them off the street.
- To promote an approach to support people not to return to rough sleeping.

#### **The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017**

The Homelessness Reduction Act came into force in April 2018, key measures in the Act include:

- An extension of the period 'threatened with homelessness' from 28 to 56 days.
- A duty to prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness, regardless of priority need.
- A 'duty to refer' - public services need to notify a local authority if they come into contact with someone they think may be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

The Act has prompted a comprehensive review of delivery of homelessness prevention services.



## **Care Act 2014**

The Care Act 2014, which came into effect in 2015, represents the most significant reform of care and support in more than 60 years, putting people and their carers in control of their care and support. It sets out key principles on how health and social care colleagues should work, reflecting the person centred, holistic approach set out in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020-2025.

## **Tenant Fees Act 2019**

The Tenancy Fees Act introduced in June 2019 has made restrictions on charges that landlords are able to charge tenants in the private rented sector.

## **Domestic Abuse Services & Domestic Violence Bill May 2019**

Future Delivery of Support to Victims and their Children in Accommodation-Based Domestic Abuse Services is expected to be reintroduced in the new session of Parliament in 2019.

## **Research reports**

### **LGiU Homelessness Commission 2019:**

The Local Government Information Unit (LGiU) held a commission on homelessness that reported in 2019. The LGiU is a local authority membership organisation.

The report notes that the drivers of homelessness are:

- Growth in the Private Rented Sector
- Low Housing Supply
- Broken Welfare System
- Young people and other vulnerable groups often fall through the cracks of a fragmented and overly centralised public sector.

The report made the following recommendations:

- A sustainable housing and homelessness strategy, with adequate funding.
- Local variation of housing allowance varied by local councils
- Introduce minimum three-year tenancies.

### **Crisis - The Homelessness Monitor: England 2019**

The Homelessness Monitor series is a longitudinal study providing an independent analysis of the homelessness impacts of recent economic and policy developments in England and elsewhere in the United Kingdom. This eighth annual report for England updates Crisis account of how homelessness stands in 2019, or as close to 2019 as data availability allows.

The report allows local authorities to see what is going on regionally and nationally. The year includes some feedback on the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. This contextualises the issues seen in Brighton and Hove and assists in our development of the strategy. Some of the key points are:

- Rough sleeping may have levelled off somewhat in England after rapid growth since 2010, with official estimates recording a 2 per cent decrease nationally, and a 19 per cent reduction in those areas targeted by the Rough Sleeping Initiative, between 2017 and 2018.

- Three quarters of local authorities responding to this year’s survey (75%) consider rough sleeping a problem in their area, and for nearly one council in four (23%) it was said to be a “major problem”.
- Statutory homeless acceptances fell slightly in 2017/18, although still remain 42 per cent above their 2009 low point.
- The rise since 2010 in the number of households made homeless by the ending of private tenancies seems to have peaked.
- Homelessness temporary accommodation placements, have continued to rise, and now stand 71 per cent higher than in 2011, with a disproportionate rise in Bed & Breakfast use.
- By mid-2018 some 85,000 homeless households were living in temporary accommodation, equating to over 200,000 people.
- Most local authorities (62%) reported that the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, which came into force in April 2018, had enabled a more person-centred approach to managing homelessness.
- There are concerns about impacts of future welfare reforms. Nearly two thirds of local authorities anticipate a “significant” increase in homelessness as a result of the full roll-out of Universal Credit, with a further 25 per cent expected some level of increase.

### **Homelessness National Audit Office 2017**

The National Audit Office (NAO) scrutinises public spending for Parliament. In 2017 the published a report on Homelessness in England. It can be seen from the recommendations that this is now a driver for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in its direction of travel. The recommendations have translated into action plans for the MHCLG which aim to increase transparency on Local Authority Plans and accountability in delivering against the plans.

- The MHCLG should develop and publish a strategy that sets out how it will achieve its objectives relating to homelessness.
- The MHCLG should work with local authorities to establish how they are making use of measures to tackle homelessness, in order to gain a full understanding of effectiveness and share best practice.
- The MHCLG should work with local authorities to ensure that they are making the most effective use of temporary accommodation. This work should include enabling local authorities to increase their use of the innovative short-term solutions that they are taking.
- The government, led by the MHCLG and the Department for Work & Pensions, should develop a much better understanding of the interactions between local housing markets and welfare reform in order to evaluate fully the causes of homelessness.

To date a [National Rough Sleeping strategy](#) has been developed.

### **Homelessness: Applying All Our Health Public Health 2018**

This is a public health resource to help front-line health and care staff use their trusted relationships with patients, families and communities to take action on homelessness.

Health and care professionals play an important role, working alongside other professionals to:

- Identify the risk of homelessness among people who have poor health and prevent this.
- Minimise the impact on health from homelessness among people who are already experiencing it.
- Enable improved health outcomes for people experiencing homelessness so that their poor health is not a barrier to moving on to a home of their own.

There needs to be clear local action, partnership working (across the local authority, clinical commissioning group and other local organisations), understanding, and alignment of commissioning decisions to prevent and respond to homelessness across the life course. This can include:

- Reducing the risk of homelessness to children and young people to strengthen their life chances.
- Enabling working-age adults to enjoy social, economic and cultural participation in society.
- Breaking the cycle of homelessness or unstable housing by addressing mental health problems, or drug and alcohol use, or experience of the criminal justice system.

This requires strong local leadership and prioritisation to identify unmet need, funding and actions to address gaps in provision.

A full list of other reports that have been considered in the development of this strategy can be found in the Homelessness Review.

## Local Context

### **The Corporate Plan 2020-2023**

The Corporate Plan was approved by full Council on the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2019. The Council has identified six outcomes that we want to achieve for the city. They are:

- A city to call home
- A city working for all
- A stronger city
- A Growing and learning city
- A sustainable city
- A healthy and caring city.

A city to call home has five key areas of action. These are:

- Reduce homelessness and rough sleeping
- Provide genuinely affordable homes
- Improve private rented housing
- Improve council housing
- Make better use of existing housing capacity.

The Corporate Plan places the issues of homelessness and rough sleeping at the heart of work. This signifies that the progress of this Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy will be monitored by elected Members and the Executive Leadership Team.

### **Health and wellbeing in Brighton & Hove Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2019 (JNSA)**

The JNSA for Health and Wellbeing contains a section on Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness. It acknowledges the areas that we are doing well but it also highlights the issue of hidden homelessness in the city. Hidden homelessness is a key driver to homeless and rough sleeping and also links the issues of mental health, substance misuse, alcohol, dual diagnosis and urgent care, which are known factors in homelessness.

### **Brighton & Hove Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2030**

Brighton & Hove has a Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy agreed with the Brighton & Hove Clinical Commissioning Group. The Strategy looks at the health needs of the city and has as a key action “The underlying causes of homelessness will be tackled.” It is known that homelessness is impacted by a person’s health.

There are a number of other pieces of work within the council that impact on this Strategy, including: Public Health JNSA on Multiple and Complex Need; Sussex Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.

Homelessness and rough sleeping services are involved in the development of this work and any outcomes will be incorporated into the action planning process of this strategy when they are known.

### **Rough Sleeping**

We know from the review of homelessness that rough sleeping is a significant challenge for the city. Brighton and Hove has some of the highest numbers of rough sleeping outside London. We have been successful in bringing in much needed funding in this area and have used this to develop a number of projects to work across this area including No Second Night Out, Somewhere Safe to Stay, Navigator Project & Housing First. Different projects look to address the needs of different groups of rough sleepers from transient and low need to those with multiple and complex needs.

### **Homelessness & Temporary Accommodation**

The review of homelessness shows that we have some of the highest property prices in both the home ownership and private rented sectors. Large swaths of housing in the city is totally out of the reach of residents in terms of affordability and this is compounded by the widening gap in the Local Housing Allowance and the rental market in the city.

We also have high numbers of households in temporary accommodation, with limited options for moving on within our city boundaries.

## Homeless Bill of Rights

The Homeless Bill of Rights was launched in 2017 by FEANTSA (European Federation of National Organisations working with the homeless). The aim of the European campaign is to encourage cities in Europe to reaffirm their commitment to respect the rights of people experiencing homelessness.

Brighton and Hove Housing Coalition (BHHC), in partnership with Housing Rights Watch, FEANTSA and Just Fair have progressed the Bill of Rights locally. On 25th July 2019 the BHHC submitted a petition to the full Council, this was then referred to the Housing Committee, where it was agreed it would be consulted on with the strategy. The Bill of Rights covers 13 areas

The Right to Housing	The Right to Emergency Services
The Right to Shelter	The Right to Vote
The Right to Use Public Space	The Right to Data Protection
The Right to Equal Treatment	The Right to Privacy
The Right to a Postal Address	The Right to Survival Practices
The Right to Sanitary Facilities	The Right to Respect for Personal Property
The Right to Life	

The values of the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy align to aspirations contained in the Housing Coalition's Homeless Bill of Rights <https://homelessrights.org.uk/>. Some of the rights included in the BHHC's Homeless Bill of Rights are also enshrined in UK law. However, some of the rights listed such as the right to survival practices have wider legal and financial implications.

The rights listed should be viewed as a standard against which the Council and its partners judge our policies and practices.

Once the strategy is adopted, action plans will be developed. Where appropriate the action plan will link to the 13 areas in the Homeless Bill of Rights. For example, mitigating food poverty will link in with the right to survival practices. This is set out in the Governance and Delivery of the Strategy.

## Strategic Priorities 2019–24

### Prevention

*"The best way to tackle homelessness is to stop it happening in the first place. To do so is both cost effective and humane."*<sup>1</sup>

Prevention is about addressing the issues that give rise to people being at risk of homelessness or rough sleeping, supporting people to sustain suitable

<sup>1</sup> The Plan to end Homelessness 2018

accommodation and enabling people to lead fulfilling lives as independently as possible.

This means reducing risk factors and, supporting people to manage risks as effectively as possible.

Effective prevention can only be achieved if there is a whole system approach to prevention with all services, agencies and the community working to an early intervention model and knowing where to signpost people for support or how to offer support to prevent people from becoming homeless.

The earlier we can identify a risk to accommodation the more likely we can prevent homelessness by enabling a household to sustain suitable housing or by supporting them to find alternative suitable housing.

Homelessness and rough sleeping are traumatic experiences; emotionally costly to the people who experience them and financially costly to services, including health, social care and housing that have to provide a response. The response needs to be joined up in order for it to be effective and make best use of available resources.

Examples of prevention activity are:

- Mediation Services
- Early Intervention Options Advice
- Holistic Personal Housing Plans
- Private Rented Sector Access Scheme
- Gateway service for young people
- Substance Misuse preventing accommodation loss
- Use of Discretionary Housing Payments
- Effective Welfare rights
- Referral protocols with Health, Probation, and Prison Services.

### **Interventions**

Interventions are required in a number of areas when homelessness cannot be prevented and to tackle issues such as rough sleeping or issues that affect our communities of interest.

There is no “one size fits all” when it comes to interventions. What works in one area may not be suitable in Brighton & Hove. At the heart of interventions is listening and learning from people with experience of homelessness or currently in services. Service user involvement should therefore be at the heart of developing, evaluating or changing our interventions.

Examples of Interventions are:

- No Second Night Out Hub (NSNO)
- Tenancy Ready Workshops
- Welfare officers working with people in temporary accommodation
- Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub
- Assessment Centre.

## **Sustainability**

Providing somewhere to live is not the end of the story. In order to succeed we need to make sure that the accommodation is sustainable for the household. This means that resettlement plans for individuals and households are in place. Ensuring that people understand their rights and responsibilities and importantly where people can continue to receive support to build positive relationships.

Ending the cycle of homelessness is not just about housing. When people are ready to move on or receive an offer of permanent accommodation things may be stable. However, we know that for some people things can change very quickly. We need partners to work with us to ensure that referral routes back into a service are quick and as seamless as possible.

We also need staff to be able to work with people in a way that means that do not feel stigmatised or feel that they have failed if they ask for support. Therefore, it is key to have staff appropriately trained.

## **Governance and delivery of the strategy**

No one organisation alone can solve the complex issues that the City faces on homelessness. The next five years will require a multi-agency approach to deliver excellent services, look for innovation and drive forward this strategy. We need to ensure that together with our partners we have the structures and skills in place for the delivery of the strategy's priorities.

### **Delivering the Strategy**

There is a lot of work already going on in the city around the issues of homelessness. However, in order to ensure that the work meets need there must be transparency and accountability.

In order to achieve this, we will produce annual action plans. These plans will take account of the work of the council and its commissioned services. We will work with other partner agencies in health, social care, prisons, probation and others to see what commitments they will make from their own organisations to assist in the development of this strategy. Following government guidance, actions related to partner agencies will not be included in an action plan unless formally adopted by that agency. Once these commitments are made, they will be included in the action plan and monitored. This will mean that all agencies are committed to playing an active role ending homelessness.

### **Governance**

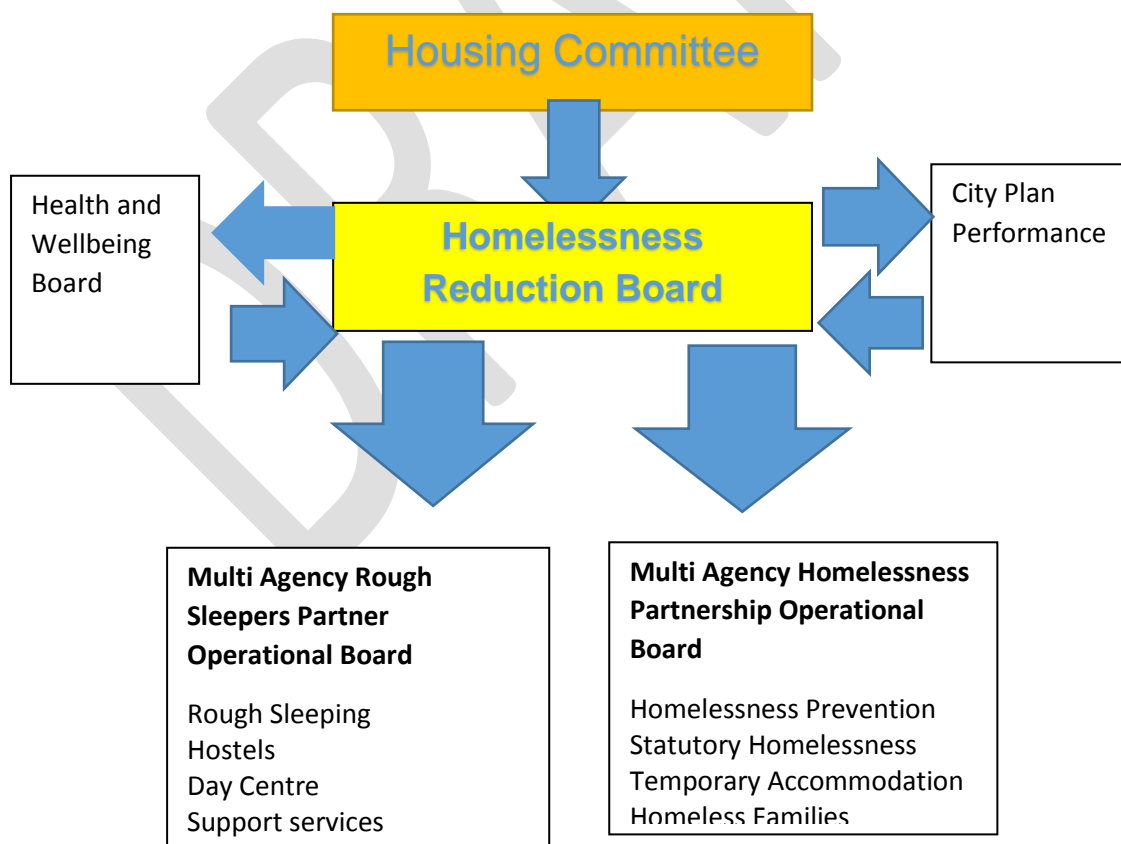
Housing Committee has the overall responsibility for the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. Housing Committee will receive an annual report in the summer of each year on the progress of actions. The first report will be delivered in June 2021.

In order to keep this strategy agile, the progress report will account for all bids and successful funding and any new legislation, with outlines of the impact on local services and any changes that are required to future action plans.

A Homeless Reduction Board will be established, this will be responsible for developing the strategic vision for reducing homelessness in the locality and monitoring progress in achieving it, including:

- Monitoring any key actions;
- Using data, evidence, and user and lived experience to identify the homelessness challenges in the area, including those that may apply to particular groups of people, and priority actions. We discuss a particular role in shaping local homelessness strategies below;
- Evaluating the effectiveness of service provision and interventions;
- Coordinate and agree to all funding bids in respect of homelessness and rough sleeping;
- Mapping homelessness services and the delivery chain in the locality, redesigning them where appropriate to improve effectiveness and outcomes;
- Identifying and co-ordinating across all partners the effective use of funding for homelessness services and interventions; and,
- Promoting and facilitating the joint-commissioning of homelessness services and interventions.

**What Happens below the board and how does this tie together?**

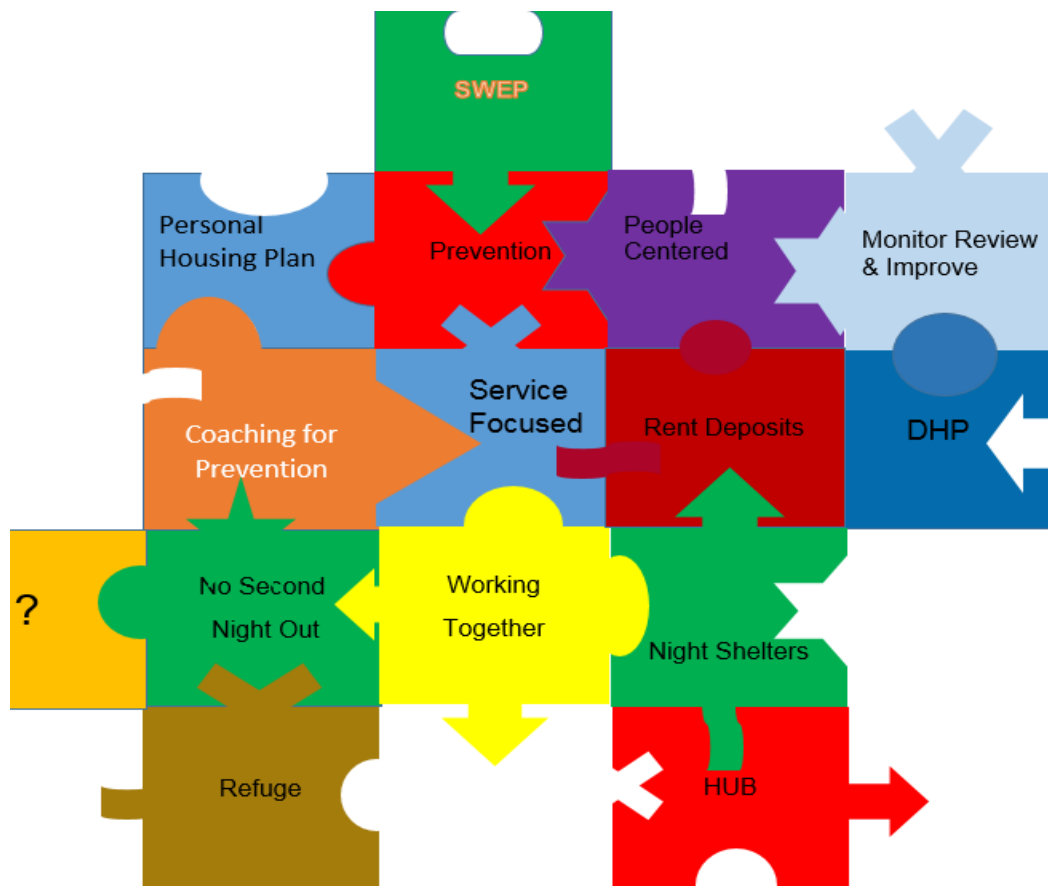




Two Operational multi agency partnership boards will be established one for Rough Sleepers and one for Homelessness Prevention, Statutory Homeless & Temporary Accommodation. These two boards will be made up of relevant operational staff from various statutory, third sector and community services, including from organisations that contribute to the day-to-day delivery of homeless services in the area.

Where strategic actions are contained in other strategies, these will also be reported to the relevant board.

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