

# Bath & North East Somerset Council

## Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019/24

### Introduction

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires the Council to carry out a review of homelessness to inform the production of a homelessness strategy every 5 years. The review sets out the extent to which the population in our district is or is at risk of becoming homeless, assess the likely extent in the future, identify what is currently being done and identify what resources are available to prevent and tackle homelessness.

This Strategy sets out what homelessness looks like in Bath & North East Somerset and wider, how national trends and issues impact locally and how we intend to respond.

Bath & North East Somerset Council's recognises the impact homelessness has on individuals and families. Our Corporate Strategy Priorities reflect this, aims to put residents first and includes a focus on providing more homes.

## Our Area

Bath & North East Somerset's borders extend from the outskirts of Bristol, south into the Mendips and east to the Southern Cotswolds and Wiltshire border, covering a geographical area of 135.2 square miles. The World Heritage City of Bath is the main urban area, acting as the commercial and recreational centre of the district. It is an international tourist destination and is one of the few cities in the world to be named a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The other main urban communities are Keynsham, a traditional market town that lies to the west of Bath and Midsomer Norton and Radstock, small historic market towns that have a strong heritage of mining and industry stemming from the North Somerset Coalfield. They form the centre of the area to the south, locally referred to as the Somer Valley. The rest of the district consists of 69 diverse rural communities of varying sizes and characteristics, 39 of which are in Conservation Areas, including a line of villages along the foothills of the Mendips, the Chew Valley in the west and Cotswold villages around Bath

The resident population of Bath and North East Somerset is approximately 192,000, an increase of over 16,000 since 2011. The local population's age structure is similar to the UK's population as a whole. The local population's age structure is similar to the UK's population as a whole. However, there are a higher number of people aged between 20 and 24, highlighting the impact of having two universities within the district which increases the demand on the housing stock. Between 2001 and 2017, the growth in this age range accounted for nearly 50% of the area's population growth. Overall, the district's population is predicted to increase to 199,100 by 2037, an increase of 12% from 2012, with the most significant increases expected in older people.

## Our Local Economy

Bath & North East Somerset continues to be one of the least deprived areas in the country, ranking at 269 out of 317 local authorities (1 is the most deprived). However, it is important to acknowledge that across the area there are growing gaps between the most and least prosperous. Deprivation levels are calculated by looking at 7 key indicators; income; employment; education; health; crime; barriers to housing & services and the living environment. Despite the overall picture of a prosperous and thriving area, there are pockets of deprivation that compare with some of the poorest in the country. As a whole, Bath and North East Somerset remains one of the least deprived local authorities in the country and continues to become relatively less deprived over time. However, within some areas, inequality is widening and deprivation remains significant. There are now two small areas within the most deprived 10% nationally, both in south-west Bath. (Source: Indices of Deprivation October 2019)

Unemployment remains low at 2.9%, lower than the national rate of 4.1% and marginally lower than the rest of the south-west (3.1%). (Source: Nomisweb.co.uk) In September 2019, there were 7,450 households in Bath & North East Somerset in receipt of 'out-of-work' benefits or Universal Credit.

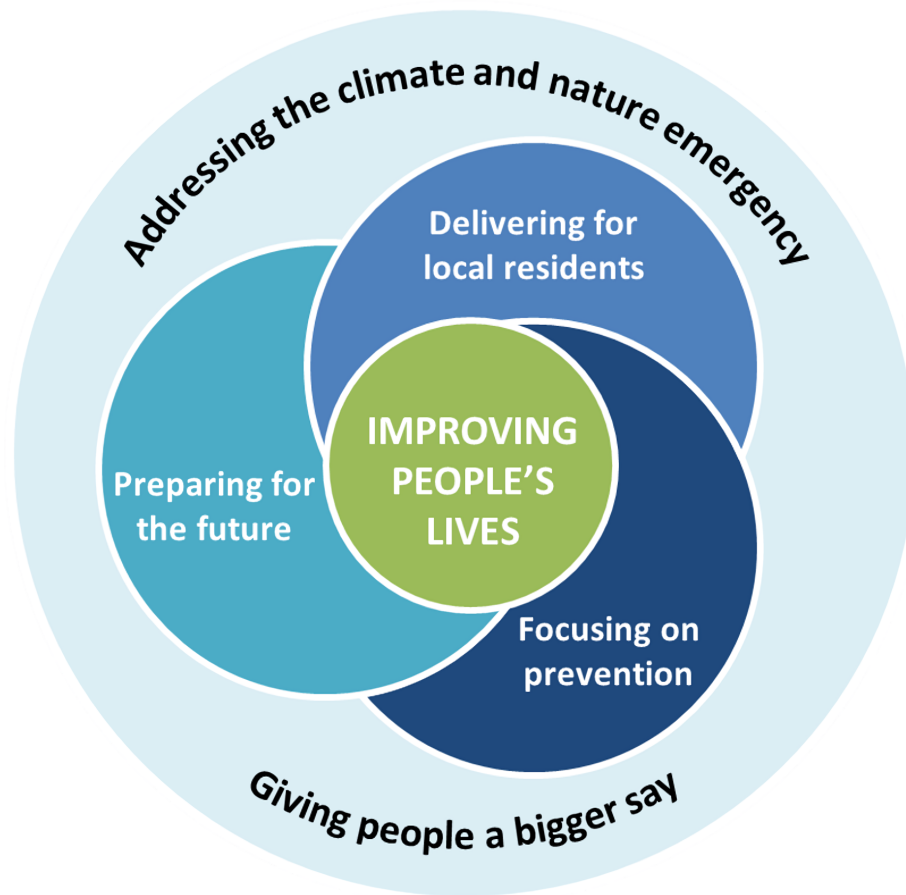
In September 2019, there were 7,450 households in Bath & North East Somerset in receipt of 'out-of-work' benefits or Universal Credit



# Homelessness

A definition of homelessness is 'someone having no home; without a permanent place of residence'. It can also mean that a person or family has nowhere suitable for them to live, that they are not safe in their home or that they do not have a legal right to be there. The Council must assist people who are or may become homeless.

## Corporate Strategy Priorities\*



\*Yet to be formally adopted

## The Legal Context

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 came into force in April 2018. The Act reformed England's homelessness legislation and places a greater emphasis on the prevention of homelessness and on partnership working. Much of the work carried out by the Council's Housing Options & Homelessness team pre-empted the Act. For several years prior to the Act coming into force, the team worked on the basis that anyone facing housing difficulty could approach the team at any stage and receive advice and assistance that aimed to prevent or delay any housing crisis. This open approach to service delivery meant that there was little change to the approach taken, though processes and back-office structures were reviewed and changed to meet the new requirements. The biggest impact has been on the length of time each person presenting now requires from individual advisors, with in-depth solutions and Personal Housing Plans taking up a good deal of advisor time.

# The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 introduced the following:

The definition of being threatened with homelessness was extended from 28 days to 56 days. Although our Housing Options Team had for a number of years worked with people at the point they made contact about housing problems, the Act made this approach statutory.



For private rented tenants coming forward, we must accept a valid 'section 21' notice as evidence that the tenant is threatened with homelessness within 56 days.

A greater duty to give advice and information to a wider range of people at a much earlier stage than previously.



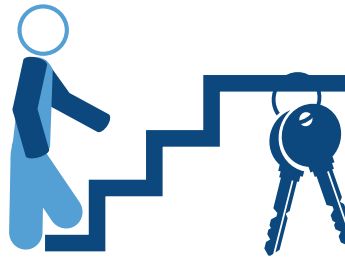
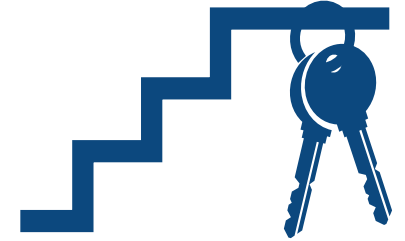
A new Duty to Refer, which commits public authorities to notify us of service users they think may be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. This ranges from hospitals and prisons to colleges and the DWP.

Duty to assess all eligible applicants' cases and agree a plan (known as the 'personal housing plan').



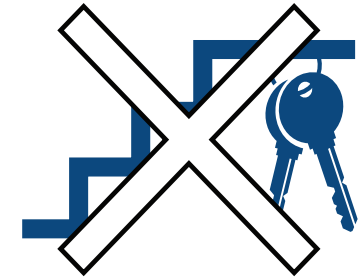
The creation of a stronger prevention duty for anyone threatened with homelessness and eligible for assistance. This can involve assisting them to stay in their current accommodation or helping them to find a new place to live.

A new relief duty which is available to all those who are homeless and are eligible regardless of whether they have a priority need. It requires us to take reasonable steps to help secure accommodation. This help could be the provision of a rent deposit or debt advice for example.



Incentives to people to engage in prevention and relief work by allowing councils to discharge their prevention and relief duties if an applicant unreasonably refuses to cooperate with the course of action set out in their Personal Housing Plan.

A right for us to discharge the prevention and relief duties if an applicant unreasonably refuses to cooperate with the course of action set out in their Personal Housing Plan.



A right to a review at the prevention and relief stages to ensure councils are held to account.

A requirement to collect data in order to monitor the overall effectiveness of the new legislation.

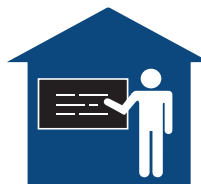


# Review of last strategy

In 2019, a review of achievements from the last Homelessness Strategy was undertaken by the Homelessness Partnership Core Group. The full document is attached as Appendix 1. Under the strategic aims set out in the 2014/18 Strategy, the following changes have been made:



186 loans given to homeless people to help pay a deposit and rent in advance



'Tenancy-ready' training is in place for anyone in supported or temporary accommodation, as is Curo's Passport to Housing financial assessment and affordability tool.

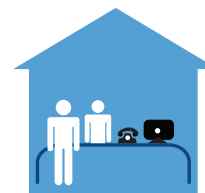
20 shared housing spaces for young people created with the YMCA's 'Platform for Life'



Young people facing a housing emergency can be given a place to stay with a volunteer through a new project managed by the YMCA called 'Nightstop'.



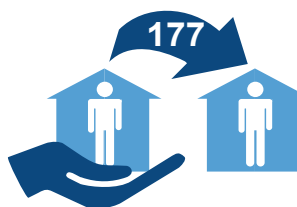
331 empty properties brought back into use through pro-active promotion and enforcement action.



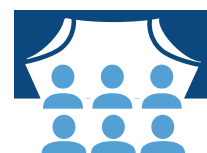
Advice and support around preventing homelessness is in all One Stop Shops in Bath and North East Somerset



177 people moved-on from supported housing to their own tenancy in social rented properties through AMOS, the scheme that gives more priority to people ready to live independently.



Licensing of houses in multiple-occupation in more areas of Bath; improving the standard of private rented housing in the authority.



11-13 year olds educated with the reality about homelessness through the Natural Theatre Company.

Increase access to affordable housing

Prevent homelessness

## Ending rough sleeping



Seven 'Housing First' homes have been made available for rough sleepers with complex needs.



Advice and support is available in hospital to stop patients returning to living on the streets.

The Rough Sleeper Outreach Team is better placed to help people experiencing mental health trauma, substance misuse, and complex females because we have specialists working within team.



Safe Sleep, an additional night shelter, is established every year to ensure no-one sleeps rough during the winter months.

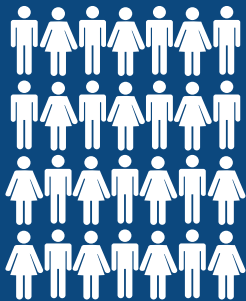


More than 200 people were helped to end their rough sleeping and return to live in their home local authority and access existing support networks.



85 rough sleepers helped to return to their existing tenancy either in, or outside of B&NES.

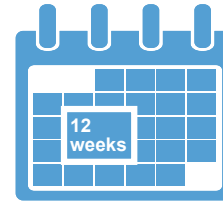
Average of 28 Streetlink referrals every month from members of the public alerting the Outreach Team to people rough sleeping.



Better specific accommodation and support for female rough sleepers provided by Julian House.



## Support survivors of domestic abuse



Up to 75 survivors of domestic abuse every year take part in a 12-week 'Freedom Programme' to make positive changes and recover from domestic abuse.

A wider range of accommodation options available in B&NES, ensuring more choice.



Increase in refuge spaces with support to end the cycle of offending behaviour for women who have suffered trauma and homelessness.

Men can now access refuge in B&NES either as individuals or with their children



Provision of accommodation for people with complex needs fleeing domestic abuse, both as individuals and with their children.

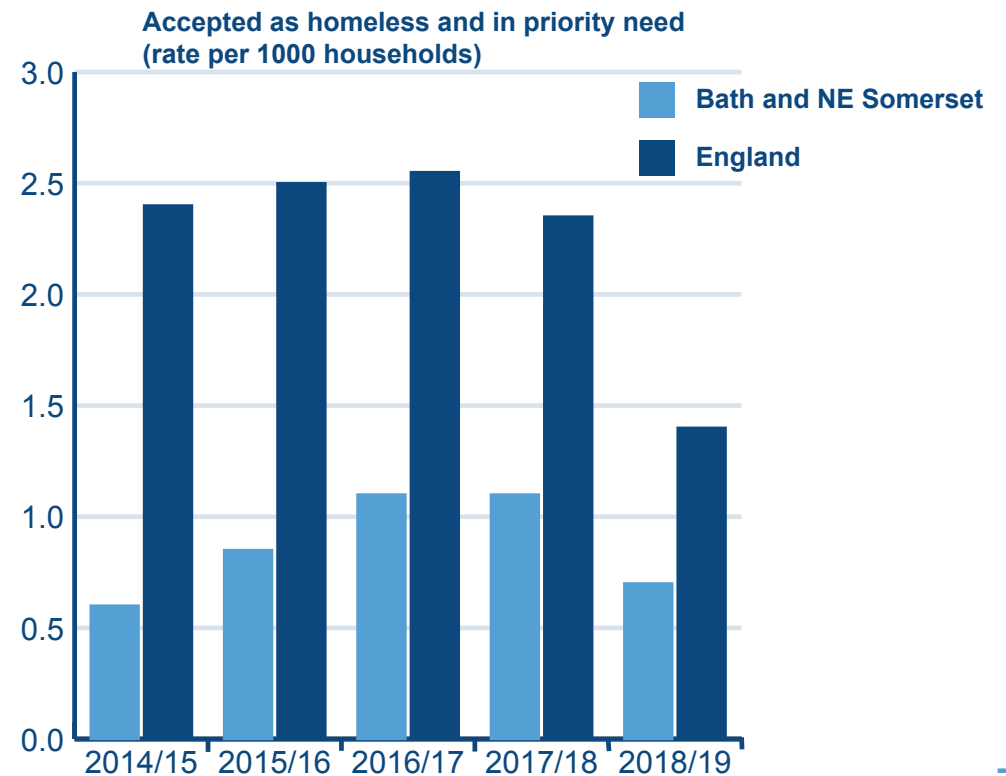
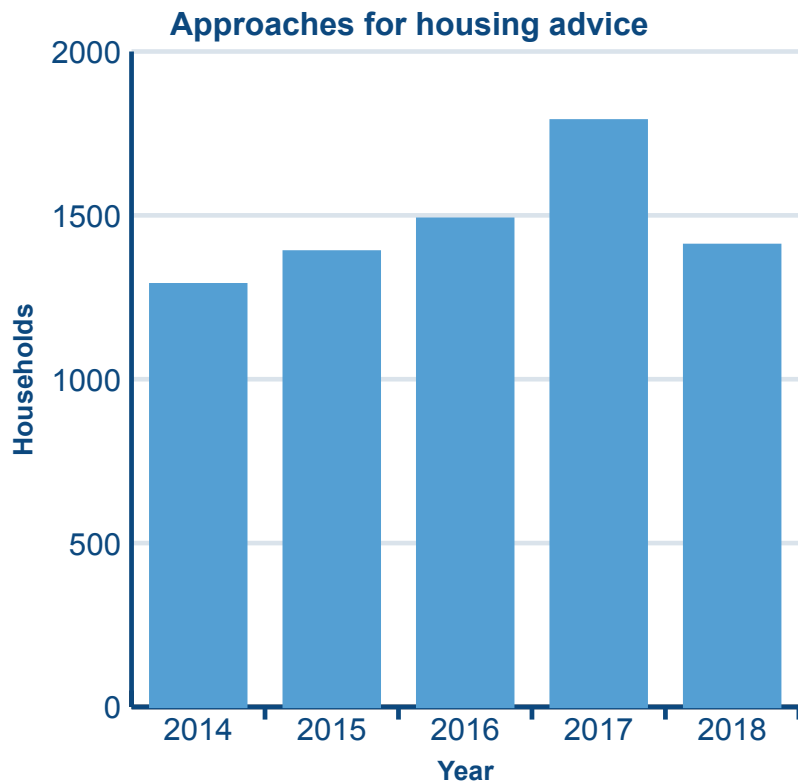
# Homelessness & its causes

Homelessness has a wide range of causes and is commonly linked to financial insecurity or ongoing poverty, poor health and wellbeing, domestic abuse and family breakdown. In Bath & North East Somerset in 4 out of the last 5 years, the most common cause of homelessness has been loss of a private rented tenancy held on Assured Shorthold basis. Family no longer being willing to accommodate and non-violent relationship breakdown are the two next most common causes.

Bath & North East Somerset has a large private rented sector, estimated to be 27% of all stock in 2018, and in common with the national picture, security of tenure is not guaranteed. Assured Shorthold tenancies are easily ended and, with the correct procedures, there is no defence to a landlord's serving notice because the shorthold term has ended.

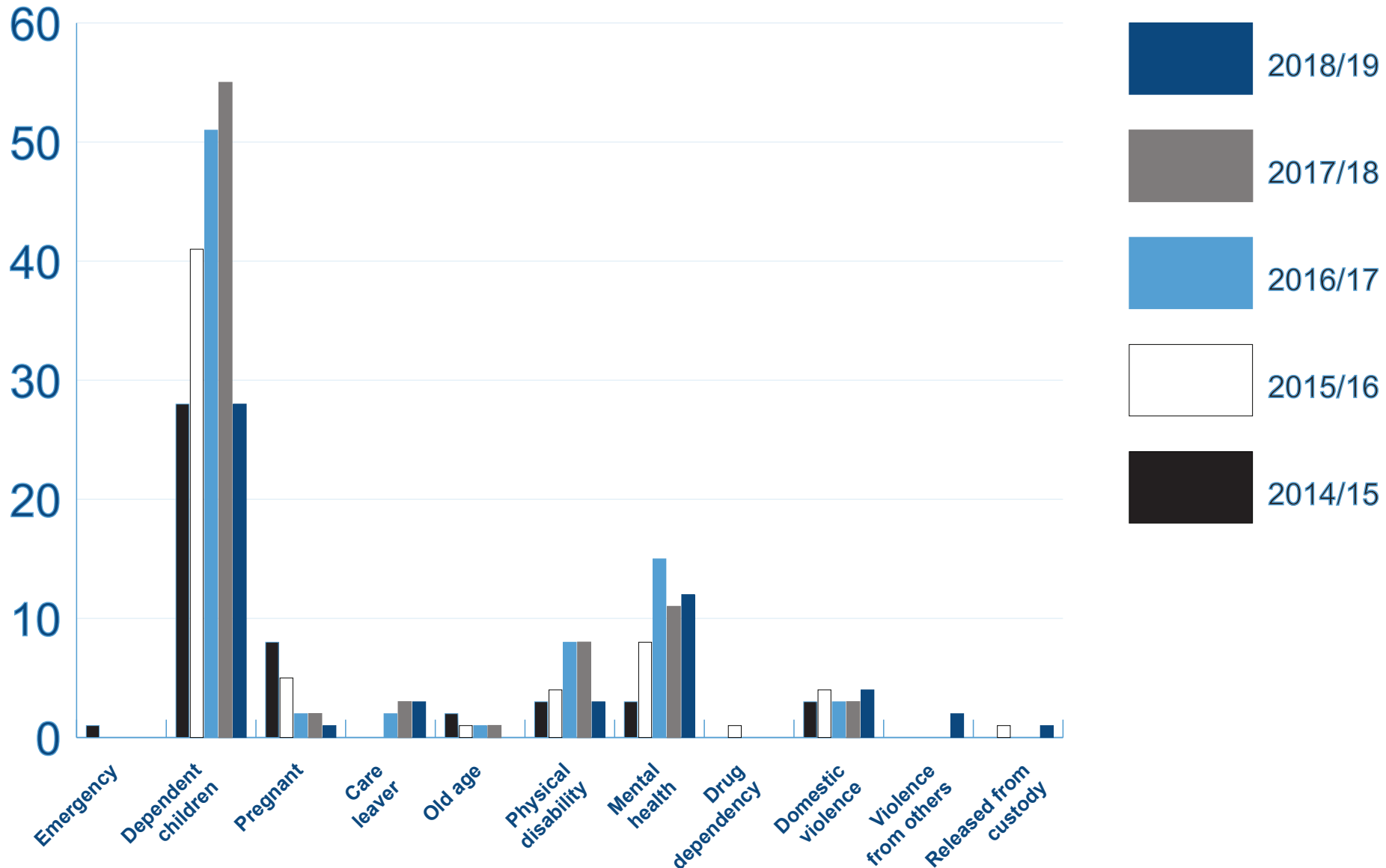
## Homelessness in Numbers

The number of people coming to the Council to talk about housing and homelessness has risen steadily since 2014, with a small drop in 2018. The reasons for this are unclear, but could relate to uncertainty around the new legislation.



The main reasons for acceptances as being in priority need are also largely unchanged over the years, with the most common being having dependent children in the household. Whilst the numbers are low, mental health still represents the next most common reason. A lack of appropriate support continues to be a barrier to preventing loss of accommodation and in the provision and sustainment of temporary accommodation. Good working protocols with Leaving Care staff and providers of young people’s supported accommodation mean that young people and Care Leavers do not figure significantly in homelessness acceptance data.

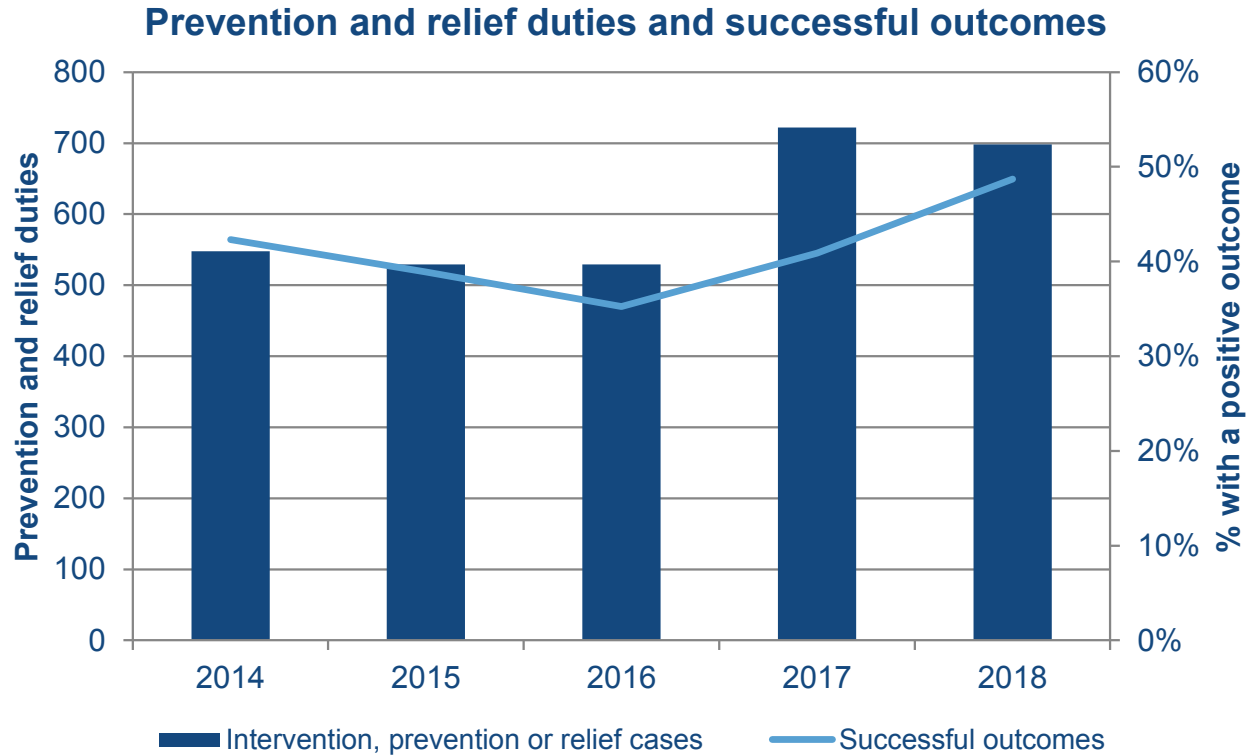
**Households accepted by Reason for Priority Need**





# Preventing Homelessness & Providing Relief

Prevention of homelessness occurring in the first place is the main driver of the HRA and is central to the work of the Housing Options & Homelessness team. The level of successful outcomes has climbed since a relative low in 2015 and now represents over 48% of all presentations. Performance at a national (England) level for the same financial year was 50% of all presentations.

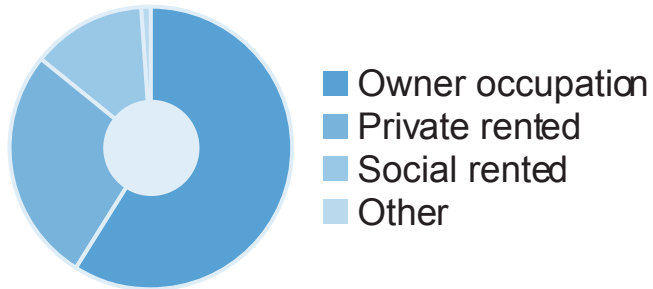


By working with anyone in housing difficulty as early as possible, the team are able to identify practical remedies and make best use of all possible resources.

We aim to improve on this by continuing to be accessible and open, working closely with partners and promoting the Duty to Refer.

# Economy and Incomes - The Housing Market in Bath & North East Somerset

There are 83,019 dwellings in Bath and North East Somerset. 59% (49,335) are owner occupied, 27% (22,673) private rented and 13% (11,011) social rented.



The owner-occupied and private rented housing markets in Bath & North East Somerset continue to be very competitive. When comparing owner-occupation data across the region, based on sales and valuations between June and August 2019, the lower quartile house price in Bath & North East Somerset is currently £249,000, whilst the regional average for the same period is £191,300.

Within the owner-occupied market, in 2019, the average time a property stayed on the market was under 12 weeks, with an average of 96% achieving their asking price. Based on the average resale price in 2019 to date, the average price of a two-bedroom property in Bath & North East Somerset was £273,011.

Affordability in the private rented sector is acknowledged as a major barrier across the area and finding a new home to rent is expensive. Limits on how much rent can be covered by Universal Credit mean that the pool of affordable housing is further limited for households in receipt of welfare benefits. At September 2019, the typical weekly rents and Local Housing Allowance rates under Universal Credit by property are:

Type of property	Typical weekly rent	Local Housing Allowance limit
Room in a shared house	£126.00	£74.66
1-bedroom accommodation	£180.00	£144.00
2-bedroom accommodation	£229.00	£172.25
3-bedroom accommodation	£288.00	£201.43
4-bedroom accommodation	£438.00	£309.68

The figures below are based on data from Hometrack, the national housing market database. They are indicative rather than exact but give a broad picture of the levels of income needed for owner-occupied, private rented, affordable rented and social rented properties:

	£ pw	Gross income needed*
Standard mortgage**	£274	£40,709
Private rent	£229	£33,429
Affordable rent	£136	£20,206
Social rent	£104	£15,451

\*based on 35% of gross income spent on housing

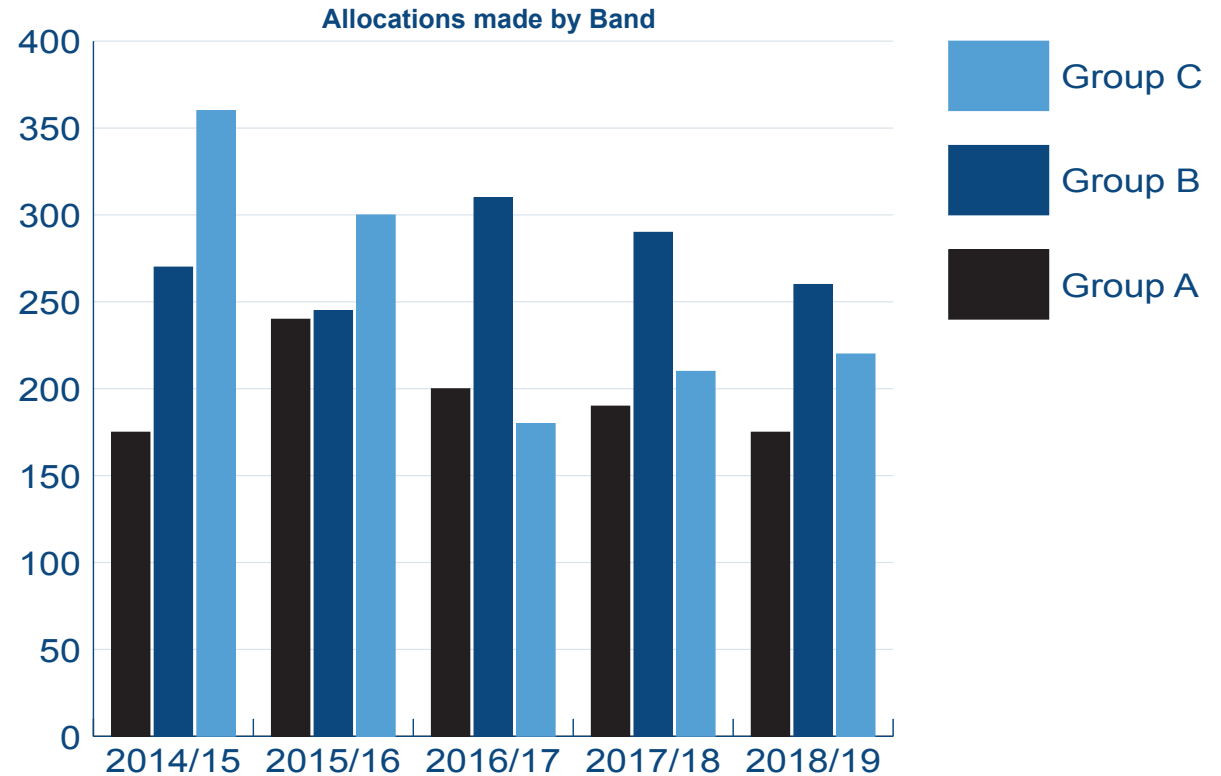
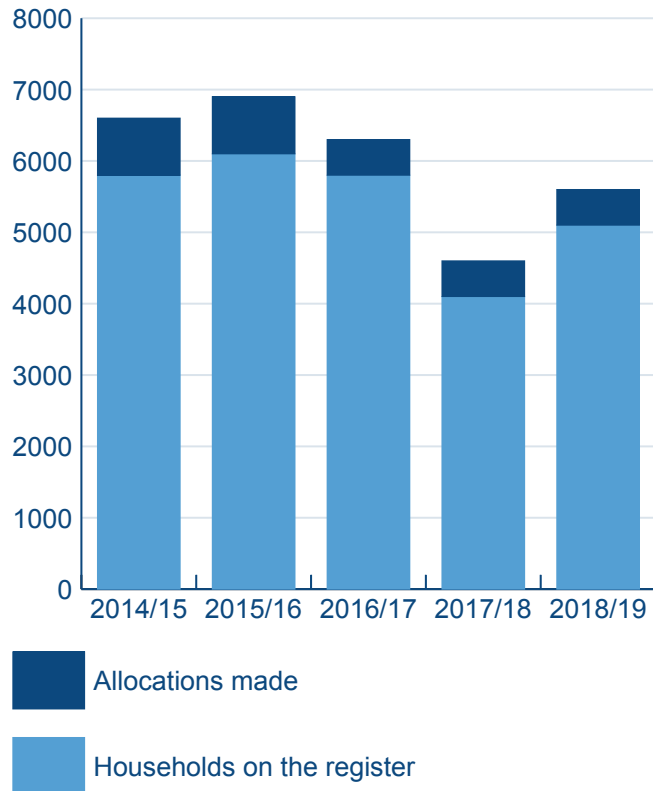
\*\*based on average resale

The Bath & North East Somerset Council Core Strategy set a target of 3,400 new homes delivered across the area by 2026. The target for 2018/19-2020/21 is 600 new homes of all types and tenures. At September 2019, performance against this target was good, standing at 284 delivered in 2018/19 alone. 1,582 affordable homes of all tenure have been developed since 2011.

Since 2000/01, 1,072 Curo properties have been removed from the social rented stock as a result of Right to Buy (RTB). Coming from a high of 200 in 2002/03, RTB sales dropped to just 6 in 2018/19.

# Homesearch, the Housing Register

Our local housing register, Homesearch, is a broad indicator of housing need for our area. Currently, there are 5,138 households on the register. As can be seen from the graph below, demand for affordable housing cannot be met by social rented provision. Prevention work is key to addressing growing need and the HRA is helping with this. Better access to the private rented sector also plays a large part in meeting need and though in the past this has been resisted by individuals and their advocates, it is now being recognised as the quickest and sometimes only route to rehousing.



# Use of Temporary Accommodation

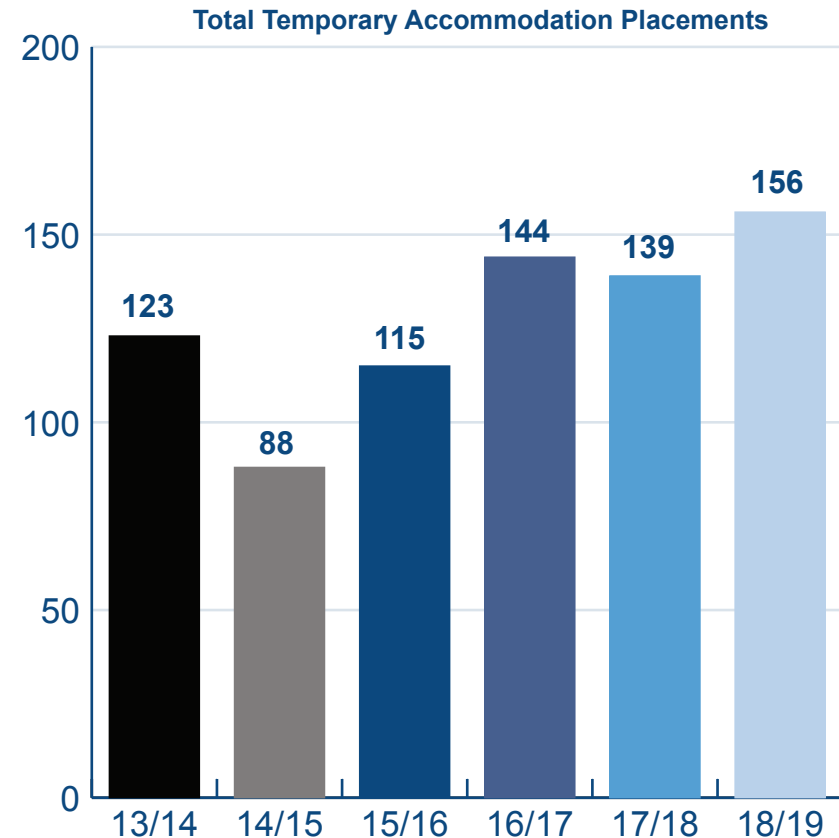
Bath and North East Somerset Council has a duty under Housing Act (1996) Part 7, to provide temporary accommodation for eligible homeless people and their families.

Temporary accommodation provided by the Council can include:

- Hostel accommodation occupied on a licence at Dartmouth Avenue, managed by Curo
- Dispersed flats occupied on an assured shorthold tenancy, owned and managed by Curo
- Bed & Breakfast accommodation, owned and managed by a range of private sector providers

It is Council policy to provide high quality temporary accommodation located in the district, or if that is not practical, as close as possible to the district and as close as possible to where the homeless household was previously living, so they can retain links with key services, such as schools and doctors. The aim of the Council's Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy is to try to avoid placing people in Bed and Breakfast and ensure that temporary accommodation is not in an isolated location away from public transport, shops and other facilities.

The following graph illustrates how the overall use of temporary accommodation has grown in recent years.

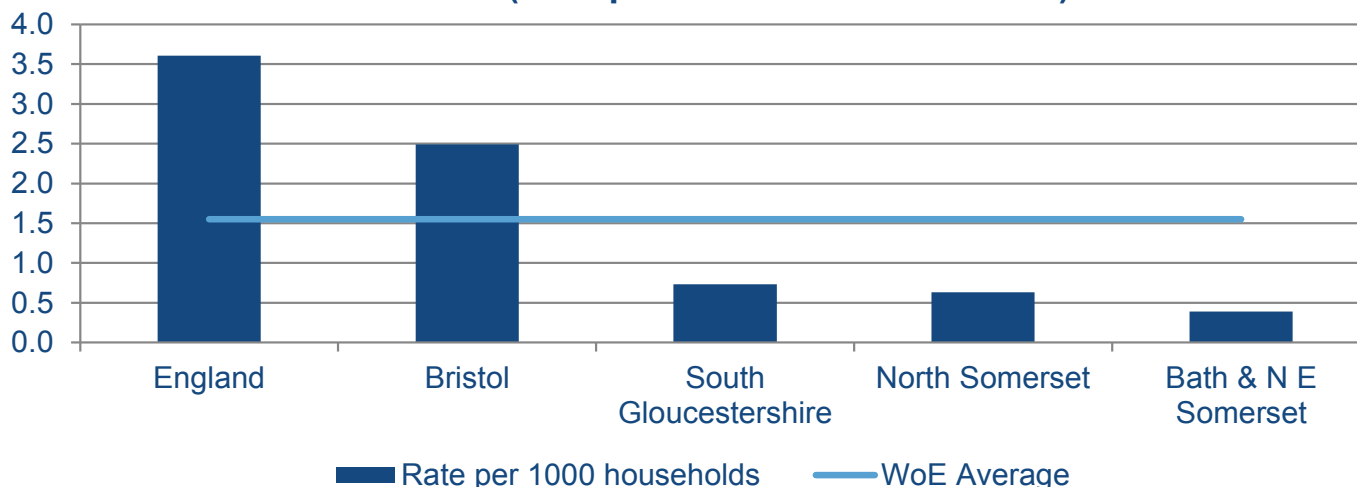


This table shows that performance around use of temporary accommodation is also good.

We are well below the West of England and all-England rates.

In 2019, a root and branch review of the use of temporary accommodation was completed by Housing Services. It can be read in full as Appendix 3.

**Households in temporary accommodation at the end of December 2018 (Rate per thousand households)**



The following findings are the headlines:

- Use of temporary accommodation is continuing to increase, but Bath and North East Somerset Council remains among the 30 lowest ranked local authorities for use of temporary accommodation in England.
- Services are well managed and accommodation is generally of a good standard, but some processes could be reviewed to improve efficiency and value for money.
- The Council works well with providers of temporary accommodation but ongoing continuous improvement should be developed through regular discussion and review.
- Mixing families and vulnerable single people in the same hostel building does present challenges and needs to be addressed.
- Access issues at Dartmouth Avenue are being looked at to ensure facilities and allocation policies meet the needs of people with a disability.
- Move-on from the dispersed flats has slowed down significantly. This not only delays permanent rehousing but impacts on use of other forms of temporary accommodation.
- Dispersed flats need to be provided in areas other than Bath.
- The use of B&B is growing, especially for vulnerable single people. Most B&B provision is not within the district and this is problematic for this group of people, who often need to be near support networks and service providers within Bath & North East Somerset. The use of a property adjacent to Dartmouth Avenue is being looked at as an alternative to B&B for those individuals who present with greater life challenges.

# Rough Sleeping in Bath & North East Somerset

Rough sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness and affects the most vulnerable people in catastrophic ways. The effects of rough sleeping are long-lasting and can mean the individual is caught in a downward spiral unless early and effective interventions are put in place. The government's national Strategy aims to end it by 2027, using an approach based around 'Prevent, Intervene and Recover'. Locally, we are aligned with this approach and have agreed an action plan for reducing rough sleeping, attached as Appendix 2, and will work with our partners to deliver on its aims.

## Local Trends & Pressures

*As stated above, rough sleeping numbers are high. This is covered by Appendix 2, the Rough Sleeping Action Plan.*

*Use of Temporary Accommodation is increasing, particularly by single people with complex needs.*

In 2018/2019, 65% of people in temporary accommodation were living with a mental health related condition e.g. long-term depression, personality disorder, psychosis, schizophrenia, suicide risk, and 40% of customers were living with a diagnosis of two or more conditions. (for example; mental health, learning disabilities, drug/alcohol misuse, diabetes)

40% of people described themselves as disabled or having a disability which impacts on their life, and 70% of customers smoke and have another medical condition, such as a mental health issue or a physical health disease such as heart disease or cancer.

30% of people have been supported with domestic violence, and 25% have received support around offending behaviour. 25% of people to whom we have issued food bank vouchers were drug or alcohol users.

The higher support needs of this group, sometimes presenting as risky or disruptive behaviour, places pressure on the providers of TA and can cause distress, not least to other households in TA and the vulnerable person themselves. Mental ill-health and lack of appropriate support is an ongoing issue that affects individuals' ability to maintain the accommodation and of TA providers' ability to support them to succeed. Some work has already gone into improving cross-agency working between Curo and AWP to ensure a better understanding of the responsibilities and limits of both services and to jointly plan for individuals' support. This needs to be built on and strengthened if improvements in outcomes for people with complex needs and families are to be achieved.

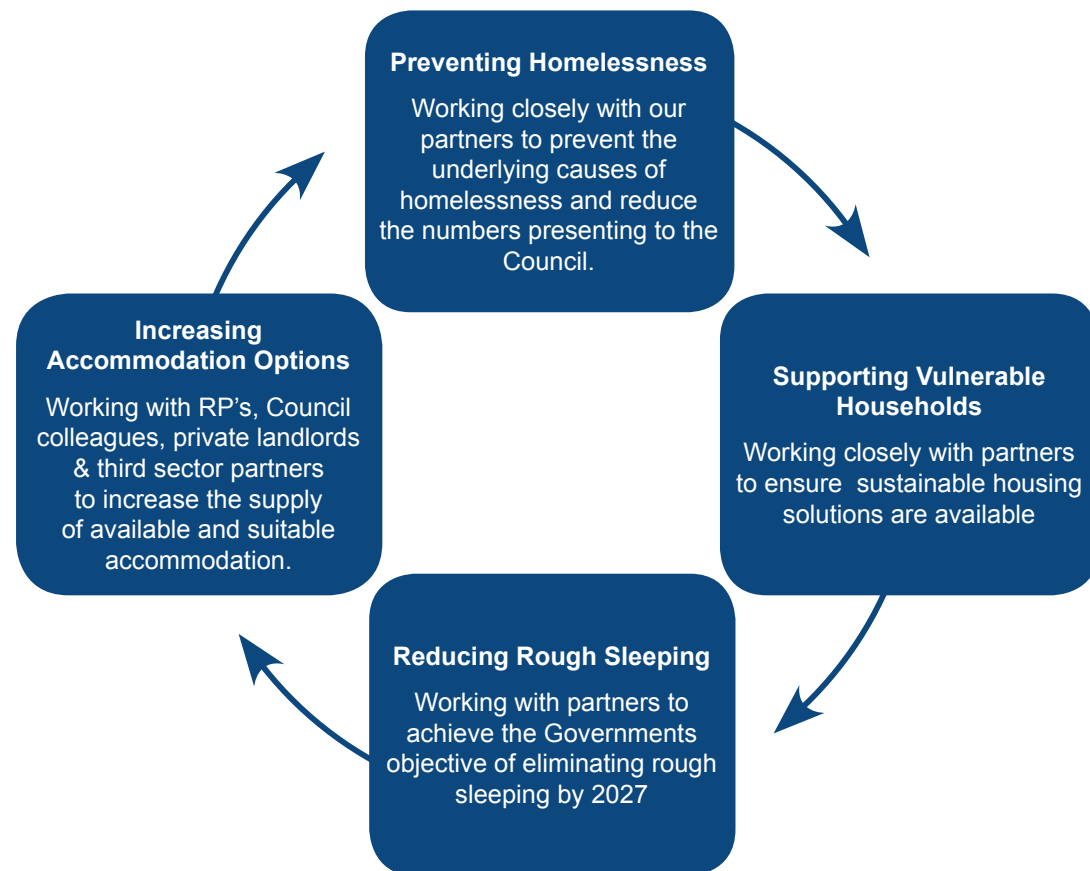
'No-fault' termination of Assured Shorthold tenancies continues as the top cause of homelessness in Bath & North East Somerset. With a buoyant private rented sector, the ability of low-income households to secure new tenancies is limited. We have a strong local offer in a dedicated officer sat within the Housing Options Team and a commissioned service providing zero-interest loans for deposits and rent in advance. Even with these resources in place, finding a landlord happy to accept families and vulnerable people who will rely on welfare benefits to meet the rent is a challenge, especially as the disparity between rents and Local Housing Allowance is so marked in Bath & North East Somerset. There is more work to do around engaging private landlords to understand what would change this. We are looking at how landlords might be incentivised to let to households coming through the Housing Options team and our partner-agencies. At a national level, government has said it will look at the impact of s21 notices and that it will consider legislative changes to address this.

*Use of Housing-related Support* needs to be better understood. We know that our local services are providing excellent services. What we cannot be assured of without further investigation is how services working with homeless people across Bath & North East Somerset might work together better. We need to understand the pathways people take and identify blockages and solutions in order to get better outcomes for more people and therefore best value out of the sector. The Homelessness Partnership has already started to bring together data that will enable a closer and more analytical approach to this.

*Meeting the demand for affordable housing* through our enabling role. It is clear that demand for affordable housing far outstrips supply. The challenge locally is high land prices and a very buoyant owner-occupation market. We need to find creative solutions that are attractive to developers and to people in need of housing.

## Our strategy

The Homelessness Strategy for Bath & North East Somerset will be based around the following 4 principles:



# Housing-related Support

Targeted help at the right time can prevent people from becoming homeless or help them re-establish a settled life and build up their resilience to change. HRS services can be provided to residents of specific properties or through 'floating support' schemes where the support is linked to the individual. Unlike many local authority areas, Bath & North East Somerset continues to commission housing related support services from a wide range of specialist and generic providers via the Community Services contract held with Virgincare. Services are commissioned via subcontract by Virgincare. Housing Services has strong links with contract managers in Virgincare and works closely to ensure that they are effective and appropriate. Extra to these contracts, due to funding from the government's Rough Sleeper Initiative, Housing Services directly contracts targeted services that work to reduce rough sleeping levels across Bath & North East Somerset. A full list of all services commissioned by the Council and via Virgincare can be found in the Rough Sleeping Action Plan at Appendix 2. In addition to the services commissioned via Virgincare to provide housing related support, voluntary and faith groups are also active in Bath & North East Somerset to support people in housing difficulty. The Housing Related Support Model is illustrated here:



Despite having diverse and effective provision of services providing housing related support, we are aware that there is a shortage of supported and specialist accommodation for people with complex needs. The section above covering Temporary Accommodation has more information on the impact of this issue and more work is planned to identify and reduce blockages.



# Partnership Working

B&NES has a long history of partnership working. The list below represents just some of the groups working on homelessness and housing issues.

The *Homelessness Partnership* has worked for many years to co-ordinate responses to Homelessness, collect evidence of trends, develop joint funding bids and share good practice. With members from the housing and homelessness sector, advice & information, employment and training, criminal justice substance misuse, a Core Group of roughly 12 members carries out much of the work of the partnership.

*Task & Targeting* is a group of operational staff working mostly with entrenched rough sleepers for whom solutions are difficult to find. By sharing information on a confidential basis, the group aims to identify workable solutions for people whose needs are highly complex and who may have already tried most mainstream services, without any degree of success.

The *Complex Needs & Housing Group* meets bi-monthly. It is made up of people working in Housing Services, criminal justice, substance misuse, housing related support and supported accommodation. The aim is to ensure that barriers to housing solutions are minimised and that pathways away from substance misuse, offending behaviour and homelessness are as effective as possible.

The *Young People's Housing Group* includes Children & Young People Services (Social Services), Housing Services, supported accommodation and mediation service providers, advocacy groups, faith based groups. Similar to the Complex Needs & Housing Group, it aims to drive improvement through better understanding of the critical factors impacting young people that can cause or end their homelessness.

*The B&NES Domestic Abuse & Violence Partnership (DAP)* promotes education about healthy relationships, protection of victims, provision for survivors and disruption of perpetrators. It was formed in 2017 to establish stronger links across a wider range of partners including Public Health, Children and Families, Housing, survivors groups, offender management and criminal justice and the Police.

Nationally, government is looking at how local homelessness boards might address gaps in partnership working, improve practice and provision, join up sectors and reduce levels of all types of homelessness. This could introduce radical change to our partnerships, possibly adding weight and impetus, but possibly shifting the debate onto a higher strategic level. Should this develop, we will need to ensure all strategic partners and more importantly, those with lived experience, have a voice and are heard. Feedback has been given on how we would see this working at a local level and we await guidance from central government.

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## Strategic Links

**Bath & North East Somerset Council Corporate Strategy 2016/20**

[https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/bnes\\_corporate\\_strategy\\_2016-2020.pdf](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/bnes_corporate_strategy_2016-2020.pdf)

**National Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/733421/Rough-Sleeping-Strategy\\_WEB.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/733421/Rough-Sleeping-Strategy_WEB.pdf)

**Bath & North East Somerset Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy**

<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/neighbourhoods-and-community-safety/working-partnership/health-and-wellbeing-board>

# Action Planning

In June 2019, Bath & North East Somerset Homelessness Partnership met to review the local position on homelessness. As part of the day, members were asked to give feedback on draft priorities and to identify gaps that needed to be closed in our strategic view. The following table sets out in no particular order the resulting priorities we intend to work on and why and how we will achieve this:

No.	What we will do	Why we are doing it	What needs to happen
1	Increase access to PRS	Move-on from all supported housing and TA has slowed down. Increase in rough sleeping levels and impact on Council budgets for TA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult with landlords to find out what would persuade them to work with us.</li> <li>• Consider how existing resources (eg Home Turf Lettings, Turnkey) can be further developed, using social investment and capital grants, to increase the pool of property available to homeless people traditionally excluded from the private rented market.</li> <li>• Investigate and pilot an incentives scheme for estate/lettings agencies securing PRS accommodation. Use Payment by Results model</li> <li>• Investigate purchase of properties for lease to Third Sector agencies</li> </ul>
2.	Improve the Temporary Accommodation offer and reduce duration of all stays, particularly B&B.	Use of all Temporary Accommodation and duration of stays is increasing. TA stays are known to have negative impacts on health, wellbeing and educational outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act on recommendations of the Review of Temporary Accommodation 2019.</li> <li>• Improve throughput –cut void times and move people on to long term housing more quickly.</li> <li>• Reduce use of out of area B&amp;B placements.</li> <li>• Establish units of Dispersed accommodation outside Bath.</li> </ul>
3.	Improve likelihood of successful tenancies	Even with support some tenancies fail. We need to reduce the incidence of evictions from all tenures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure tenancy training is appropriate and current. Review with training providers.</li> <li>• Establish a pathway through training to long-term accommodation</li> <li>• Improve awareness of work &amp; training opportunities –increase incomes.</li> <li>• Ensure that formerly-homeless or otherwise vulnerable people are able to integrate into the local community by improving links to community navigation services, via for example the Wellbeing College, Wellbeing Options or social prescribing</li> </ul>
4.	Improve accommodation options for vulnerable women who sleep rough or are at risk of sleeping rough.	Whilst the numbers of women in Rough Sleeper Counts are consistently lower than men, the numbers are significant. The support needs and levels of complexity amongst women rough sleeping are known to be higher than men.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review current provision for suitability for vulnerable women, eg Housing First</li> <li>• Consider options for development of gender-specific provision.</li> <li>• Identify and earmark resources to deliver units of accommodation and support for women and couples.</li> </ul>

No.	What we will do	Why we are doing it	What needs to happen
5.	Improve our understanding of the pathway into and through homelessness services.	There is little shared or common data on use of advice and support services around homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a Task &amp; Finish group to agree a data set for all Homelessness Partnership members.</li> <li>• Develop a better understanding of the causes of homelessness in our rural areas.</li> <li>• Quarterly reports to Homelessness Partnership on trends and outcomes.</li> <li>• Drive service developments and improvements to housing pathways.</li> <li>• Improve the quality of funding bids through better data.</li> </ul>
6.	Identify new funding sources to ensure new rough sleeper provision continues	Whilst our success rate of securing additional funding in B&NES is high, better data would enhance bids further. Pressure on LA budgets; RSI funding not guaranteed after March 2020.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Source new funding streams</li> <li>• Work more closely with the CCG, Virgincare and Public Health to identify common outcomes and funding opportunities.</li> <li>• Improve readiness to submit bids for funding.</li> </ul>
7.	Improve use of supported housing.	We have high rough sleeper numbers. We need to create capacity in accommodation based services to enable move-on from Manvers Street hostel. There have been vacancies at some supported housing due to not enough people deemed ready/suitable or being too high-risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providers to collaborate on moves between supported housing to create vacancies at Manvers St Hostel</li> <li>• Offer of additional support from floating support and outreach services to ensure stability.</li> </ul>
8.	Agree a partnership approach to working with rough sleepers unable to access public funds (known as No Recourse to Public Funds –NRPF)	NRPF a thread through all RS work. It's an issue for providers, who provide support via voluntary donations. It also impacts on Safesleep provision/rough sleeping levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with regional/national/government bodies to identify best practice. This has already started and will be further developed.</li> <li>• Agree criteria for access to services that does not discriminate but that ensures best use of resources</li> </ul>

No.	What we will do	Why we are doing it	What needs to happen
9.	Investigate the extent and nature of homelessness, poverty and the impact of Continuous Cruising requirements on local 'liveaboard' communities	We have evidence of hardship, including rough sleeping, from outreach services working with people living on the waterways. We also know that the requirement to move on a regular basis negatively impacts on health, employment and educational outcomes; a combination of these factors can lead to homelessness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support providers, health commissioners and Housing Services to identify service gaps and blockages; collaborate on best practice in working with 'liveaboard' residents;</li> </ul>
10.	Continue to develop affordable housing that meets the needs of homeless people.	Increasing numbers of households on housing register/in supported housing/TA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate purchase of empty properties for use as social housing.</li> <li>• Promote shared options across all tenures.</li> </ul>
11.	Work with service users and providers to identify creative prevention approaches	To reduce repeat homelessness rates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve early warning mechanisms that improve partnerships between accommodation and support providers –without compromising privacy</li> <li>• Support and accommodation providers to develop trauma-informed ways of working.</li> <li>• Look at options for specialist women's services.</li> <li>• Work with criminal justice partners to deliver on national policy for offenders on release.</li> </ul>
12.	Improve the focus and impact of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The service user voice tends only to be heard by individual agencies.</li> <li>• A more strategic approach to hearing of lived-experiences is needed if we are to make any significant and effective change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish new service user feedback methods that enable real change in and across services and in our strategic approaches</li> <li>• Look at how the Homelessness Partnership can include the voice of service users in its routine work</li> <li>• Financial resources will be needed to underpin newly-developed approaches. Homelessness Partnership to consider how this might be secured.</li> </ul>
13.	Address the increase in mental health and substance misuse needs amongst homeless people.	Increases in the numbers of people living with both poor mental health and substance misuse issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Health and Public Health commissioners, service providers and users to identify gaps</li> <li>• Secure resources for a dual diagnosis outreach and in-reach service.</li> </ul>