

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

2019 - 2023



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Foreword

I am proud to introduce this strategy which sets out our vision for the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping in the New Forest.

Whilst this strategy demonstrates our key priorities in responding to and preventing homelessness, it is very much linked to our overall strategic vision for housing and the wider housing market in the New Forest, combining with the launch of our new Housing Strategy and our new Allocation Policy.

We recognise that for many people in the New Forest access to secure, good quality affordable housing at a time of economic uncertainty and welfare reforms is extremely challenging. We also recognise the serious impact homelessness has on people's lives and how vulnerable people are adversely affected and are at greater risk of homelessness.

Prevention of homelessness is very much at the forefront of national initiatives and policies to improve peoples' lives. This council is equally committed to early intervention and has fully embraced the principles of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 in its service delivery, with access to advice and assistance for all who approach, no matter whether they are vulnerable or not.

We welcome other national initiatives, such as the drive to end rough sleeping and will play our part in tackling this issue locally.

We recognise that early intervention at a local level is extremely important as there is far greater impact on the health and well-being of households once they become homeless.

Responding to individual cases of homelessness crisis is also far more costly for the wider public sector than prevention and we must demonstrate value for money in our approach.

In response to these challenges this new homelessness strategy reflects our strong commitment to tackling homelessness and develops the vision for our frontline services. In the

last year we have made great strides forward with a task and finish member led group scrutinising our response to homelessness.

The strategy looks very much to the future and sets out the actions we intend to take to help us reach our goals and how the council, and its partners, will work together to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping over the next five years.

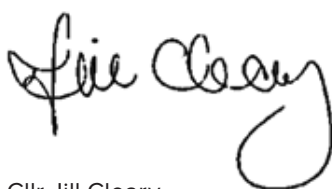
In setting our priorities we will embed specific initiatives aimed to stop people sleeping rough and provide a pathway for those that already find themselves in this situation.

Working in partnership is key to the success of the strategy. This year we have established a multi-agency forum of statutory agencies and local organisations to assist us in our efforts to tackle homelessness. We will continue to engage with, maintain and develop relationships with these organisations and agencies to develop a more cohesive set of priorities.

The strategy aims to develop these priorities in recognition of national, regional and local policy and proposes a vision for the benefit of all our residents, stakeholders and partners.

Our response to homelessness will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure our initiatives are having the desired outcomes, so that we can stay ahead of emerging trends and so that we can seize opportunities to benefit the people of the New Forest.

I look forward to continuing to work with all people involved in preventing and tackling homelessness in the New Forest.



Cllr Jill Cleary
Portfolio Holder for
Housing Services

Strategic Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Priorities 2019-2023

- Continue to invest in and improve the effectiveness and responsiveness of front line services to prevent homelessness.
- Work with partners and stakeholders to identify issues early on and prevent homelessness by working together.
- Invest in and facilitate the development of good quality affordable housing and temporary accommodation.
- Bring Rough Sleeping to an end.



National context

Nationally, incidents of homelessness have been increasing for a number of years and the increased use of, often unsuitable, temporary accommodation has been a direct consequence.

Homelessness acceptance rates and use of temporary accommodation have gone up nationally in recent years. At nearly 57,000, annual homelessness acceptances were nearly 17,000 higher across England in 2016/17 than in 2009/10. Main housing duty acceptances stood at 42% above their 2009/10 low point.

At the end of March 2018 the most common reasons for loss of last settled homes nationally were:

- Parents, other relatives or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate (28%).
- Loss of rented or tied accommodation due to termination of assured shorthold tenancy (25%).
- Violent breakdown of relationship involving partner (12%).
- Other reason (e.g. homeless in emergency, sleeping rough or in hostel, returned from abroad) (7%).
- Non-violent breakdown of relationship with partner (6%).
- Loss of rented or tied accommodation due to reasons other than termination of assured shorthold tenancy (6%).

On 31 March 2018, the total number of households in temporary accommodation arranged by local authorities under homelessness legislation was 79,880, up 66% on the low of 48,010 on 31 December 2010.

In addition, homelessness services across the country had an inconsistent approach. Some local authorities assisted only those people it owed a statutory duty and those without a 'priority need', particularly single homeless, were not receiving effective and consistent assistance across the country to relieve their homelessness.

With rising homelessness and temporary accommodation costs MPs within Government sought to redress the situation and proposed improvements to the legal framework to prevent and tackle single homelessness more effectively.

A new Homelessness Reduction Framework was proposed and began as a Private Member's Bill introduced to parliament in June 2016 by Bob Blackman, MP for Harrow East. It was published following a homelessness inquiry conducted by a cross-party Select Committee.

In its Homelessness Monitor 2018 report Crisis identified that:

- Since 2010/11, homeless placements in temporary accommodation have risen at twice the rate of homelessness acceptances.
- The national total rose by 8% in the year to 31st March 2017, up 61% on the low point six years earlier.
- A continuation of this trend would see placements topping 100,000 by 2020.
- Bed and breakfast placements now stand 250% higher than in 2009.
- The National Audit Office has drawn attention to a 39% real terms increase in local authority spending on temporary accommodation in the five years to 2015/16.

| Summary of Homelessness Statistics | 2009/10 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | % change 2009/10-2017/18 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------------------------|
| Rough sleeping in England – snapshot | 1,768 | 2,744 | 3,569 | 4,134 | 4,751 | 169 |
| Local authority statutory homelessness cases | 89,120 | 112,350 | 114,780 | 115,580 | 109,380 | 23 |
| Local authority statutory homelessness acceptances | 40,020 | 54,430 | 57,740 | 59,120 | 56,630 | 42 |

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The framework was given Royal Assent as The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and commenced on 3rd April 2018. The Act amends the legislative framework laid out in the Housing Act 1996 and places new duties on Councils to:

- intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their areas as the period a household is threatened with homelessness is extended from 28 days to 56.
- provide homelessness services to all those affected, not just those who have 'priority need'.
- identify reasonable steps to help secure accommodation to either prevent or relieve the homelessness of applicants who approach for assistance.

The Act also places a duty of specified public bodies to refer those clients they are working with and are homeless or threatened with homelessness, to a local authority homelessness service. This duty commenced on 1st October 2018.

Recent Central Government policy and initiatives have been focussed on reducing the impact on vulnerable households and to ensure local housing authorities are providing effective prevention activities and consistent frontline services, for all those who approach.

It is part of a continuing national agenda to tackle the root causes of homelessness and drive through change in the housing sector.

Future regulation, policy change and subsequent impacts in the wider housing sector are likely to be driven by:

- Housing White Paper (2017).
- Social Housing Green Paper (2018).
- Licensing of Homes in Multiple Occupation (2018).

- Rough Sleeping Strategy (2018).
- Tenant Fees Act 2019.
- Private Landlords (Registration) Bill 2017-19.
- Lifting of council borrowing caps to encourage council house building.

The Government also continues to evaluate and review access to the private rented sector with the Tenant Fees and Landlord Registration Bills proceeding through Parliamentary process in an effort to redress access to the sector for low income households.

The Government aims to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end it by 2027. It launched its new Rough Sleeping Strategy in August 2018 and requests that all homelessness strategies are reviewed and rebadged by the end of 2019 to include a specific focus on addressing rough sleeping.

The annual count of those sleeping rough in the autumn of 2018 showed a 165% increase on the figures for the same count in 2010, with a further 2,909 people sleeping rough.

The Government recognises that there is not one single solution to end rough sleeping and a strategic approach to tackling the causes of homelessness and the health and well-being of rough sleepers is as important as the supply of affordable homes and supported housing.

With the lifting of Council borrowing caps to facilitate increased building of social housing, grant funding for tackling Rough Sleeping and new legislation across the social sector Councils must respond to the challenge and co-ordinate effective response to tackling the housing issues in their area.

The profiles of people who currently sleep rough

People who sleep rough in England tend to be:

- Male.
- between 25 and 55 years old.
- Predominantly white.

In the 2018 counts and estimates:

- 84% of people found sleeping rough were men.
- 14% were women (gender for the remaining 2% was unknown).

It is estimated to cost the public purse £21,200 per person per year if rough sleeping occurred alongside substance misuse and offending.

Contributory factors leading to homelessness nationally:

- High demand for housing leading to high house prices & private rents with greater shortfalls between rents and LHA Levels.
- Shortage of social housing for rent.
- Increasing household bills.
- Welfare benefits cuts and reform.
- Cuts in funding for statutory and voluntary services offering support to vulnerable people.

Corporate context

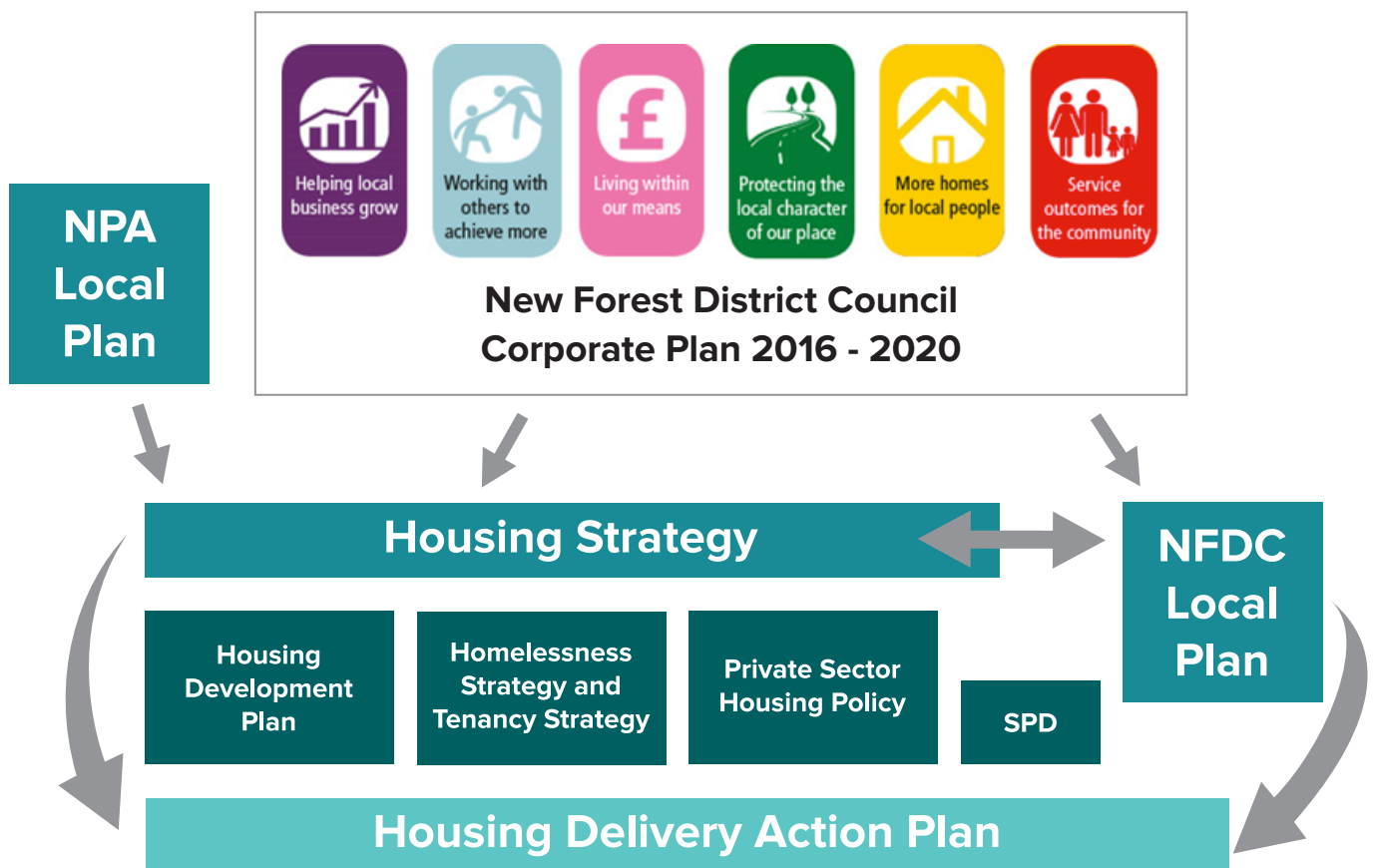
The priorities of the New Forest District Council Corporate Plan not only recognise the importance of delivering more homes for local people (both market and affordable) but the need for our actions and influence to contribute to economic growth, to protect the character of our place, and to optimise our effectiveness by working closely with others.

Sitting alongside the recently published draft local plan - and its 20 year target of 10,500 new dwellings across the New Forest district - the new Housing Strategy contains high level objectives supported by a suite of new operational policies and related strategies, including this

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, which is also driving through a review of the Allocations Policy for social housing lettings.

The relationships within and between the various policies and documents will ensure that a composite approach is taken to housing interests in the district, be they related to new-build, the existing stock or duties and services to those who are vulnerable or facing homelessness.

Alongside this strategy the Council's new Housing Strategy, Tenancy Strategy and Allocation Policy brings about a joined up strategic approach to provide maximum benefit and support overall aims and objectives.



*SPD = Housing Supplementary Planning Document

Local context

The district is one of the most populated non-unitary authorities in England with 179,236 residents.

Located between the largely urban areas of Southampton and Bournemouth/Christchurch/Poole the district has unique characteristics with a large National Park area covering the majority of the district.

There are significant housing issues in the district. In contrast with those parts of the district that can be characterised as affluent with house prices and rentals above the UK average, areas of deprivation and a number of significant housing challenges exist, which include:

- Acute income/housing affordability disparity.
- High proportion of high value detached homes with a dearth of smaller homes.
- High numbers of second homes in some parts of the District.
- 60% of households earn less than the UK average.
- 9,000 households supported with Housing Benefit and/or Council tax reductions.
- 28% of the population over 65 years' old.

Low average incomes and high average house prices, results in significant cross commuting between those who work in the forest but can't afford to live here and those who can afford to live within the district but work elsewhere.

Under the pre Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA) legislation the number of homeless applications increased from the lows of 2011, with the numbers of households accepted as being owed a full duty to secure accommodation by the Council at their highest in 2017/18.

As the Council largely concentrated efforts on those households who met statutory duties the figures are considered an under representation of the homelessness issues within

| Homeless applications and decisions by year | | |
|---|--------------------------|----------------------|
| | Total applications taken | Homeless acceptances |
| 2017/18 | 165 | 115 |
| 2016/17 | 194 | 108 |
| 2015/16 | 196 | 115 |
| 2014/15 | 185 | 95 |
| 2013/14 | 160 | 83 |
| 2012/13 | 124 | 55 |
| 2011/12 | 112 | 42 |

the district, when compared with the scope of the new duties under the new Act from 2018.

In 2017/18 115 households were accepted as homeless and owed the main housing duty. This figure has increased year on year and we project the figures for those owed the new legislative duties and subsequently the main housing duty, to be much higher for 2018/19, as the number of approaches to the service continues to rise.

The urban areas of the New Forest district are naturally shown as having the highest levels of homeless applications with the eastern strip of the district representing the source of 49% of all homelessness applications from 2012 to 2018.

All approaches to the service from April 2018 are now recorded. The first 11 months shows consistently high demand, with 1,855 new cases opened and 752 new duties for the council to take reasonable steps to help secure accommodation. 121 cases which have come to the end of their new duties (47% of all duty ended cases), within the first six months, have been successfully discharged by securing accommodation.

The Council has accepted 94 main housing duties in the first 11 months of the HRA. Without further policy intervention these are expected to increase exponentially as more of the new duties come to an end.

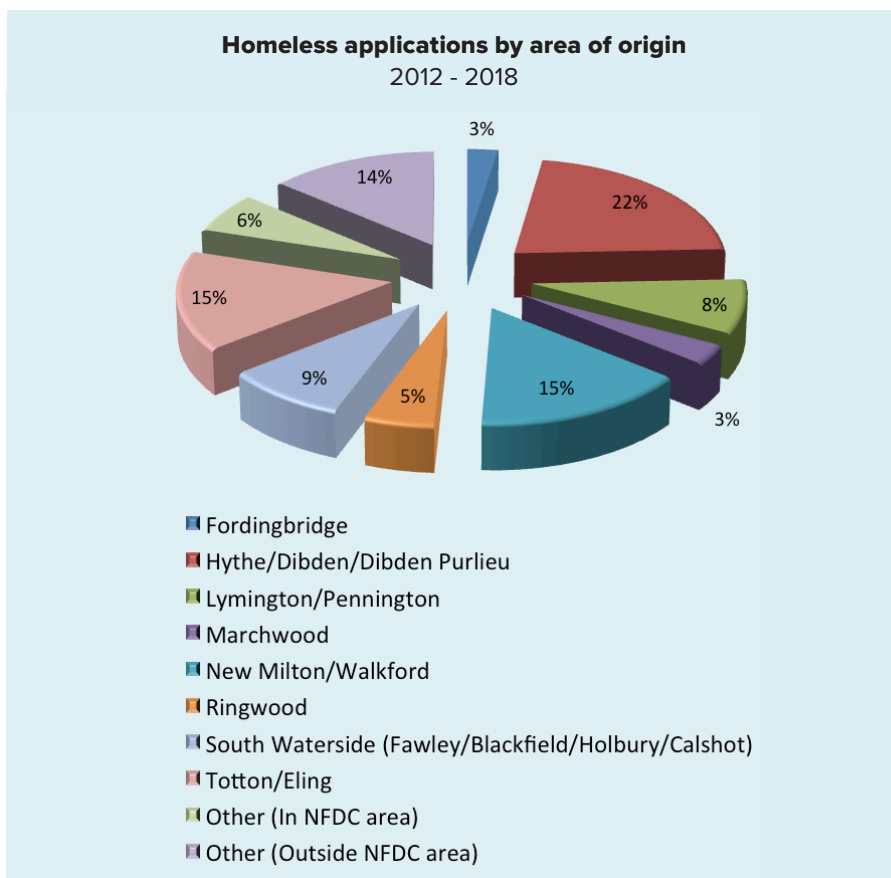
Approaches from April 2018 show the following key features:

- 58% of approaches have dependent children or are pregnant.
- 24% of approaches are single males.
- 13% of approaches are single females.
- 94% of approaches are of white British background with no discernible ethnic group in the remaining 6%.
- 14% of relief duties are granted to cases fleeing domestic abuse.

Although not a determining factor in the award of duty the 'Priority Need' of Relief Duty Cases is recorded to determine temporary accommodation duties and shows:

- 51% of duty cases had a priority need due to dependent children.
- 16% of duty cases had a priority need due to mental health issues.
- 10% of duty cases had a priority need due to physical disabilities.
- 5% of duty cases had a priority need due to experiencing domestic abuse.
- 5% of duty cases had a priority need due to experiencing learning difficulties.

Mental health issues are not just experienced by the 16% above. In fact, 355 applicants and/or household members stated they needed support with their mental health. Many of these applicants have acute needs where holistic partnership working with specialist agencies is required to resolve their housing issues and ability to sustain accommodation in the future. Others will require low level support but it is clear the Council must ensure these services are on offer and there is a route to obtaining such services.



| Approaches for assistance under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 post 3 April 2018 | | | |
|---|------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Month | New cases opened | Prevention duty accepted | Relief duty accepted |
| April | 176 | 44 | 20 |
| May | 165 | 61 | 14 |
| June | 185 | 60 | 29 |
| July | 164 | 41 | 24 |
| August | 153 | 29 | 20 |
| September | 155 | 35 | 28 |
| October | 166 | 45 | 34 |
| November | 166 | 42 | 16 |
| December | 143 | 32 | 20 |
| January | 230 | 66 | 37 |
| February | 151 | 41 | 14 |
| Total | 1854 | 496 | 256 |

The main reasons for homelessness follow national trends. The main cause as shown to the right continues to be family and friends no longer willing to accommodate other households within their properties. This is indicative of these households struggling to obtain or sustain their own affordable housing in either the private rented or owner occupied sectors. Moving in with family is often as a result of having to give up or having lost settled accommodation in the past.

The end of private rented tenancies remains the second most common reason and the council aims to target these areas within its priorities.

The Council aims to increase the provision of affordable housing in the district whilst working with landlords and tenants in precarious housing situations to help sustain accommodation.

Numbers of rough sleepers remains low but is no less important in our efforts to reduce homelessness. These figures represent a core group of rough sleepers with multiple complex needs such as drug and alcohol addictions, mental and physical health issues.

The Council is committed to finding solutions to rough sleeping issues within the district and will include these in its priorities. It is also important that these solutions create long term sustainability to prevent clients returning to the streets.

| Main reason for loss of last settled home | 2012 - 2018 total of duty acceptances | April 2018 - 28 Feb. 2019 total of new duty acceptances |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| Parents, other relatives or friends no longer able/willing to accommodate | 189 | 232 |
| Termination of assured shorthold tenancy | 185 | 209 |
| Violent breakdown of relationship involving partner | 72 | 73 |
| Non-violent breakdown of relationship with partner | 62 | 78 |

| Rough sleeper counts | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Year | 2012/2013 | 2013/2014 | 2014/2015 | 2015/2016 | 2016/2017 | 2017/2018 | 2018/2019 |
| Number | 4 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 8 |

There is high demand for social housing in the area whilst social housing lettings continue to fall year on year, with the number of Council stock lettings being:

- 242 in 2017/18.
- 295 in 2016/17.
- 345 in 2015/16, representing a 30% reduction in 2017/18.

The Right to Buy scheme continues to offset new build additions to the stock. 34 Council properties were sold under the scheme in 2017/18.

Excluding the Council stock, Sovereign are the main social housing provider in the district with nearly 1800 properties. Several other registered provider landlords including Radian, Stonewater, Aster and Vivid provide smaller numbers of units throughout the district.

The New Forest became a full service area for Universal Credit from 26th September 2018. There are 1,462 working age housing benefit claimants in the Council stock and 1,440 in the housing association and private rented stock.

Migration of nearly 2,900 housing benefit claimants to Universal Credit is estimated to begin in 2020. New tenants or those facing a change of circumstances will now be required to claim Universal Credit. The Council will monitor this situation and put in place measures to manage the transition and any concern in the housing market.

Two Saints are commissioned by Hampshire County Council to provide Community Support to vulnerable people, including families and single people in the district. They provide tenancy sustainment, help claiming welfare benefits and help to access services and appointments in relation to health needs.

In the first 6 months of 2018/19 Two Saints supported 191 clients through its drop in sessions alone. The scale of the contract is due to be reduced post August 2019 to single complex people only. It is likely to have a detrimental effect upon support provision to vulnerable households. The Council will include measures to address this shortfall in its priorities.

5,056

Number of council properties

3,354

Number of households on the New Forest Homesearch Housing Register

| Emergency Accommodation (EA) Placements post 3 April 2018 | | | |
|---|---------------|------------|-------------------------------|
| Month | EA placements | Left EA | Households in EA at month end |
| March | | | 59 |
| April | 19 | 16 | 62 |
| May | 6 | 23 | 45 |
| June | 15 | 20 | 40 |
| July | 18 | 17 | 41 |
| August | 16 | 21 | 36 |
| September | 17 | 20 | 33 |
| October | 18 | 10 | 41 |
| November | 5 | 18 | 28 |
| December | 15 | 12 | 31 |
| January | 25 | 13 | 43 |
| February | 8 | 20 | 31 |
| Total | 162 | 190 | / |

| Social Housing Lettings 2017/18 | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| | General needs | Age restricted |
| Council Stock | 201 | 41 |
| Registered Provider Stock | 101 | 42 |
| Total | 302 | 83 |
| Overall total | 385 | |

Local services

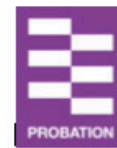
The Council has access to the following principal functions and activities within the New Forest to assist in the prevention of homelessness:

- Community Support for single complex homeless clients provided by Two Saints (From August 2019).
- Community based Inclusion Services to address drug & alcohol addiction needs.
- Three Supported Accommodation projects for residents suffering with mental health conditions.
- NHS Mental Health Services in Totton and New Milton.
- Wellbeing Centres in Hythe and New Milton.
- Supported Housing & Community Support provided by Together who help people deal with the personal and practical impacts of mental health issues.
- Young Person Supported Accommodation with support provided by You First and Two Saints.
- Support for youth homelessness through It's Your Choice and The Handy Trust who offer information and advice about many issues that affect young people including drug and alcohol abuse, sexual health, homelessness, employment & education and mental health issues.
- Supporting Families Programme through the internal Community Safety Team.
- Domestic Abuse support, target hardening and response through MARAC and You First.
- Tenancy Management and Rent Officers for Council owned stock.
- Housing Benefit visiting officers
- Job Centre Plus in Hythe, Lymington and Ringwood.

- Hampshire County Council Adult and Children Services.

The Voluntary Sector provides additional resources and support and includes:

- Benefits advice and advocacy.
- Foodbanks across the district.
- Faith and other voluntary groups providing befriending, practical and mentor support.
- Services for young people.



Hampshire County Council



Actions to date & future direction of travel

In late 2017 the Council recognised that its approach to homelessness and housing would require new impetus and vision to meet the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act and housing demand in the district. Full corporate backing was provided to implement a number of changes to lay the foundations for effective future service delivery which will continue beyond the publication of this strategy.

Since the start of 2018 the Council has:

- Allocated a new Executive Head to drive through change across the Housing Service.
 - Appointed three new Housing Service Managers including a new Housing Options Service Manager.
 - Set up a Task & Finish Member group, led by the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services to establish the priorities for change.
 - Reported position statements and priorities for change to the Member led Housing Overview & Scrutiny Panel.
 - Utilised grant funding to create three additional Homelessness & Housing Advisor roles and a Service Support role.
 - Procured additional temporary accommodation.
 - Increased its portfolio of Private Sector Lease (PSL) properties by 14 properties.
 - Carried out viability assessments to convert existing communal facilities to emergency accommodation.
 - Procured, installed and tailored a Homelessness IT Management System to embed its approach to delivering the Homelessness Reduction Act and produced effective statistics to support initiatives and meet new statutory reporting requirements.
- Participated as a leading development group member in the development of Locata's Homelessness Reduction Act IT system.
 - Set up and held three meetings of the Multi-Agency Forum involving statutory and voluntary groups in the district.
 - Reduced the numbers of households living in emergency accommodation.
 - Continued to accommodate rough sleepers past the provision of the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) in order to co-ordinate work with agencies to end their rough sleeping.
 - Acquired 11 properties as part of its 'Buy-Back Scheme'.
 - In 2018/19 the Council has budgeted to spend £19m on increasing the council housing stock through development and acquisitions.
 - In 2017/18 the Council provided financial assistance to 245 households to secure private rented accommodation.



New build Council properties in Lyminster, 2018

Strategic priority 1

Invest in and improve the effectiveness and responsiveness of front line services to prevent homelessness

We will:

- Ensure the principles of the Homeless Reduction Act are fully embedded and all applicants receive a Personal Housing Plan (PHP) and reasonable steps are identified to help resolve their housing situation.
- Develop housing pathways and discharge protocols with partner agencies, create and provide accessible self-help guides and information for the following vulnerable groups in line with the homelessness code of guidance:
 - people released from prison or youth detention accommodation;
 - care leavers;
 - former members of the regular armed forces;
 - victims of domestic abuse;
 - people leaving hospital;
 - people suffering from a mental illness or impairment; and,
 - other groups we deem at particular risk of homelessness in the district.
- Review and adopt a new Social Housing Allocation Policy to better respond to housing need and homelessness.
- Increase access to homelessness services and housing assessments in satellite and remote locations with the availability of face to face appointments, homelessness referral portal and the expansion of IT facilities, website content and self-help guides.
- Ensure clients have access to Council facilities and dedicated support in order to claim Universal Credit and other benefits online.
- Provide annual training to Homeless and Housing Advice Officers on legislation and welfare benefits plus periodic training to enhance mediation and negotiation skills to help tackle family and landlord evictions.
- Review and optimise internal processes to progress households through our frontline homeless services to move on and independent living.
- Review the current allocation of staffing resources against the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, emerging demand trends, client support requirements, rough sleeper engagement, move on of temporary accommodation and landlord liaison.
- Produce support and resource directories of agencies providing services within the district.
- Monitor the impact of Welfare reforms and the go live of Universal Credit full service post September 2018. Work alongside the Council's Housing Benefit department to action further initiatives.
- Establish a working protocol with the New Forest Supporting Families programme to provide support to vulnerable families in place of the reduced Community Support contract.



Strategic priority 2

Work with partners and stakeholders to identify issues early on and prevent homelessness by working together

We will:

- Continue to develop the Multi-Agency Forum and its outcomes.
- Establish a Landlord Forum to improve relationships with landlords and letting agents to:
 - Improve access to the Private Rented Sector;
 - Maintain Landlord confidence in the sector;
 - Promote early intervention to resolve tenancy issues;
 - Consult on the review of rent in advance and rent guarantee schemes;
 - Promote the Council's Private Sector Lease Scheme;
 - Help create a Private Rented Sector Offer to discharge homeless duties.
- Work with Registered Providers to prevent evictions through joint working arrangements and establish an eviction protocol.
- Promote the duty to refer and develop specific protocols and referral pathways with external agencies, such as DWP.
- Attend and actively participate in strategic and operational groups across Hampshire to protect and enhance services in the New Forest.
- Attend team meetings of partner agencies to promote the service and early intervention and to provide training on homelessness legislation.
- Establish an updated protocol with Hampshire Social Services for homeless 16-17 year olds and an effective approach to clients with an assessed care need.
- Establish positive working relationships with The Council's Private Sector Enforcement Team, Disabled Facilities Grants Team and link to the Private Sector Housing Strategy in order to prevent homelessness.
- Establish local support networks with Support providers, Advocates, Voluntary Agencies, Community and faith groups to include:
 - Appropriate support to sustain tenancies;
 - Furniture and home start packs;
 - Access to Foodbanks if required;
 - Befriending and support;
 - Help with budgeting, money management, benefits advice and claiming benefits;
 - Support to the 'hidden homeless' who will not engage with statutory services, to obtain housing assistance.
- Establish links with the Credit Union to offer financial products where required.
- Work alongside domestic abuse services, refuges and the Police to assist victims of domestic abuse remain safe.
- Review and propose support arrangements for households with complex needs who need support with daily living.



Strategic priority 3

Ending the use of B&B accommodation through investing in and facilitating the development and use of good quality affordable housing and temporary accommodation

We will:

- Develop in-house emergency accommodation through remodelling of existing stock and property acquisitions as an alternative to Bed & Breakfast accommodation.
- Develop support and processes to successfully move on households to long term accommodation to free up existing temporary accommodation.
- Develop an incentive scheme/ package to encourage households under-occupying in Council housing stock to move to smaller properties.
- Continue with the 'buy back' of ex-council housing stock.
- Adopt an innovative approach to new affordable housing provision, including implementing shared ownership, in addition to social rent to increase the range of products the Council has to offer its residents.
- Identify and optimise council house building capacity through partnerships with Registered Providers and private developers.
- Identify opportunities for the development of Council owned land and garage sites for affordable housing purposes.
- Develop a landlord incentive scheme to attract landlords to work with the Council in providing access to their properties.
- Continue to support the provision of refuge accommodation in the district for victims of domestic abuse.



Strategic priority 4

Bring rough sleeping to an end

We will:

- Respond to reports of rough sleeping within 24 hours and ensure this response adequately engages with rough sleepers.
- Establish a rapid rehousing pathway response to incidents of rough sleeping which incorporates a multi-agency and voluntary sector response.
- Explore the viability of launching a Housing First model of support to the most complex and vulnerable to sustain tenancies.
- Ensure a targeted support approach can be called upon for rough sleepers who have been provided with accommodation to prevent them returning to the streets. This will require 'Navigators' to co-ordinate support services, and provide support, encouragement and advocacy.
- Develop closer links with voluntary and community agencies, such as foodbanks and faith based organisations to promote effective local responses and consistency in tackling homelessness across the New Forest.
- Commit to accommodating people rough sleeping beyond incidents of the severe weather emergency protocol (SWEPE) to ensure a multi-agency approach can be called upon to end their street homelessness.
- Ensure those considered not in 'priority need' receive the same level of advice and assistance as those who trigger the statutory definition.



Monitoring and review

Performance and progress against each of the actions within this strategy will be reviewed annually in conjunction with members and stakeholders.

A transparent annual position statement will be produced to highlight our progress and how effective these measures have been in reducing homelessness and rough sleeping.

As we implement the Homelessness Reduction Act new trends and learning will emerge. We are keen to understand the ongoing impact on our residents and our annual review will incorporate a full statistical analysis of approaches to the service. This will enable us to be responsive in tackling any emerging issues.

New actions and targets may be agreed if further changes are made to national legislation and policy. It is expected the Government will regularly review the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act and will seek to work more closely with Councils to implement its Rough Sleeping Strategy.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing Services, working with the Executive Head of Governance & Regulation and Service Manager – Housing Options will lead the review of the delivery plan.

In reviewing its strategy annually this council remains committed to embracing amended policy direction and incorporating it within annual updates.

New Forest District Council

Appletree Court, Beaulieu Road, Lyndhurst. Hampshire. SO43 7PN

Email homeless@nfdc.gov.uk • **Web** newforest.gov.uk/housing • **Phone** 023 8028 5234

Self-Referral website including Duty to Refer information

<https://hpa2.org/refer/NEWF> • newforest.gov.uk/housing

 [newforestdc](https://twitter.com/newforestdc)  [newforestgov](https://www.facebook.com/newforestgov)

