CABINET REPORT

DATE	11th November 2026
REPORT OF	Councillor Paul Batson - Portfolio Holder Housing, Infrastructure and Transport
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Katie Brown - Director for Adults, Housing and Communities
SUBJECT	Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy
STATUS	Open
FORWARD PLAN REF NO.	CB11/26/01

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

The strategy supports the Council Plan priorities of Stronger Communities, Stronger Economy and an Effective and Engaging Council by promoting earlier intervention, preventing homelessness, ending rough sleeping and improving access to suitable accommodation and support. Secure housing provides an important foundation for health, wellbeing, education, skills development, employment and financial resilience, contributing to reduced inequalities and stronger communities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report presents the new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-2029 and accompanying Action Plan. It also summarises the formal consultation responses and changes made in response to the feedback received.

The council has a statutory duty to publish an up-to-date homelessness strategy. The previous strategy covered 2019-2024. A new strategy is therefore required and must reflect current legislation, national policy, local housing and homelessness pressures and the findings of our homelessness review.

The strategy has been developed with partners, stakeholders and people with lived experience. Formal consultation generated 165 responses and identified broad support for the proposed direction, particularly its focus on prevention, partnership working and improved housing outcomes. Feedback highlighted the need for more accessible services, earlier intervention, improved tenancy sustainment, clearer partnership accountability and greater involvement of people with lived experience.

In response, the final Strategy and Action Plan include stronger commitments to review routes into homelessness services, respond earlier to warning signs, help residents remain in their homes where it is safe to do so, strengthen partnership

governance and increase engagement with people with lived experience.

RECOMMENDATIONS
It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Notes the outcome of the consultation. (Appendix A)
2. Notes the revised targets. (See section 1.7 of the report)
3. Approves and adopts the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-2029. (Appendix B)
4. Approves and adopts the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Action Plan (Appendix C)
5. Delegates authority to the Director for Adults Housing and Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing Infrastructure and Transport to take all operational and administrative steps necessary to implement and administer the policy.

REASONS FOR DECISION

All local authorities in England have a statutory duty to publish an up to date Homelessness Strategy under the Homelessness Act 2002.

The proposed Strategy has been developed in line with our statutory requirements, completing an assessment of current and future needs in regard to Homelessness, understanding opportunities for prevention activities and identifying how local resources, including accommodation and support can be best utilised to meet need. Approval of this Strategy will ensure the Council is compliant with our statutory requirements, providing a framework for partnership working, accountability and place-based service delivery.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

1.1 The Homelessness Act 2022 requires local housing authorities to undertake a review of homelessness within their area and publish a homelessness strategy informed by that review. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 subsequently strengthened local authority duties to prevent and relieve homelessness at an earlier stage.

1.2 National policy has increasingly emphasised prevention, coordinated support and action to reduce rough sleeping and repeat homelessness. The 2018 Rough Sleeping Strategy established a national focus on prevention, intervention and recovery. This was followed in December 2025 by A National Plan to End Homelessness - GOV.UK, which reinforced the need for collaboration between housing, health, social care, criminal justice and other services.

1.3 Our homelessness review identifies continuing pressures with North East Lincolnshire, including sustained demand for homelessness assistance, limited access to affordable and suitable accommodation, affordability pressures within the private rented sector, demand for social housing that exceeds supply, temporary accommodation pressures and the increasingly

complex support needs experienced by some residents. These findings support stronger emphasis on prevention, tenancy sustainment, suitable move-on accommodation and coordinated support for residents whose needs extend beyond housing alone.

1.4 The evidence gathered through the homelessness review and consultation has informed five strategic priorities: prevention, rough sleeping, accommodation and support, data and insights and partnership working. The Action Plan identifies the initial activities required to progress these priorities.

1.5 The Strategy was informed by engagement with partners, stakeholders and people with lived experience and was subsequently subject to formal consultation. Responses were broadly supportive of the proposed direction, while identifying areas where the strategy and Action Plan should be strengthened. Key themes included:

- Earlier intervention and prevention.
- Simpler and more accessible routes to advice and support.
- Stronger housing pathways and tenancy sustainment.
- Clearer partnership responsibilities, governance and accountability.
- A stronger role for people with lived experience in shaping services.

The Strategy and Action Plan have been amended to reflect these findings.

The principal changes include:

- Strengthening early identification, referral routes and preventative intervention, reflected in Priority 1 and the associated prevention actions in the Action Plan.
- Reviewing how residents access homelessness information, advice and support, including face-to-face, online and non-digital routes, reflected in Priority 1 and Action 1.1
- Strengthening tenancy sustainment, landlord engagement and support to prevent avoidable loss of accommodation, reflected across Priorities 1 and 3.
- Improving housing and support pathways, including for people experiencing repeat homelessness, rough sleeping and other vulnerabilities, reflected across Priorities 1, 2 and 3 and their associated pathway actions.
- Strengthening partnership governance, accountability and oversight of delivery, reflected in Priority 5 and the governance arrangements for the delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan.
- Strengthening the role of people with lived experience in governance, service design, delivery and review, reflected in Priorities 4 and 5.

1.6 The Strategy introduces a set of locally developed targets to provide a clear basis for measuring progress and strengthening accountability. These reflect the direction of the Governments National Plan to End Homelessness and support the council’s ambition to end rough sleeping. The targets are focused on prevention, relief, ending rough sleeping, minimising the use of temporary accommodation and improving long-term housing outcomes. Performance will be monitored through the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping

Partnership Board and reported to the Housing Board. The targets will be reviewed annually alongside the action plan.

1.7 Consultation respondents were specifically asked whether the Strategy, including its priorities and proposed targets, are ambitious enough to achieve the changes needed locally. 54.55% of respondents felt it was not ambitious enough, compared to 45.54% who felt it was. Feedback called for greater ambition, earlier intervention, stronger partnership working and a stronger focus on measurable outcomes. In response to this feedback and reflecting the changing national landscape, the Strategy has been strengthened. The Strategy now adopts an ambition of ending rough sleeping within North East Lincolnshire, and the performance targets have been revised to reflect this ambition, including strengthening the target for long-term rough sleeping from two individuals to zero by 2029. Cabinet is therefore asked to note that the final Strategy represents a higher level of ambition than that originally consulted on.

2. RISKS, OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUALITY ISSUES

Risks

2.1 Failure to deliver the intended change.
There is a risk that the Strategy does not deliver its intended outcomes if actions are not adequately resourced, partner commitments are not maintained, suitable accommodation is unavailable or delivery concerns are not addressed. This will be mitigated through agreed actions, timescales and intended outcomes, regular performance monitoring, oversight through the governance arrangements and an annual review of the Action Plan to reflect progress, emerging risks and changes in local need.

2.2 Public criticism.
Homelessness services attract significant public and stakeholder interest. There is a risk that publication of the Strategy creates further criticism where the councils' responsibilities, the assistance available or the complexity of the outcomes we are seeking to achieve are not clearly understood. The Strategy mitigates this risk by clearly setting out the local evidence and the changes the Strategy is intending to deliver, and how. This will be supported by maintaining accessible information about available assistance, working with partners to address emerging pressures and reporting transparently on progress against the strategy.

2.3 Failure to publish an up-to-date Strategy.
There is a risk that the council does not publish an up-to-date Strategy and action plan with the timescales sought by the Ministry for Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG) (December 2026) if the proposed documents are not approved or require substantial further work. To mitigate this risk, the Strategy and Action Plan has been taken through a full formal consultation process, including engagement with local partners and Scrutiny members.

Opportunities

2.4 The Strategy provides an opportunity to:

- Identify and respond to households at risk of homelessness earlier.
- Improve access to advice and assistance.
- Support more households to remain in their homes where appropriate.
- Reduce avoidable reliance on crisis and temporary accommodation.
- Strengthen partner coordination and accountability.
- Use data and lived experience more effectively to improve services.

These are intended outcomes and remain dependant on effective delivery of the Action Plan.

2.5 An Initial Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. It identifies that the Strategy is expected to have an overall positive impact but highlights potential barriers relating to service accessibility, digital exclusion, communication needs, access to face-to-face support and the availability of suitable accommodation.

2.6 The Strategy and Action Plan include commitments to review access routes and improve the involvement of people with lived experience. A full assessment will be completed alongside the action plan implementation to assess any disproportionate impacts on protected characteristic groups and other vulnerable residents, and to identify any mitigating actions required.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 Maintain the existing position.
This option is not recommended because the previous Strategy covered 2019-2024 and the council is required to publish a new strategy informed by a further homelessness review within five years of publication of the previous Strategy. Failure to produce and publish an up-to-date strategy would mean that the council is not meeting its statutory requirements, creating a risk of legal challenge and potentially affecting access to future funding opportunities.

3.2 Adopt a shorter-term Strategy
This option is not recommended because it would not provide sufficient time to implement the proposed improvements, embed partnership arrangements and assess their impact.

3.3 Adopt a longer-term Strategy
This option is not recommended because it could reduce flexibility to respond to changes in legislation, national policy, funding and local housing need.

The proposed three-year period provides an appropriate balance between enabling sustained delivery and retaining flexibility to respond to emerging issues. The Action Plan will be reviewed annually.

4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Failure to demonstrate that consultation feedback has been considered could

reduce confidence in the consultation process and weaken partner and community support. Appendix A therefore summarises the principal issues raised, the council's response and the resulting changes made.

4.2 The partnership Board will provide a mechanism for maintaining partner involvements, monitoring delivery and identifying and addressing barriers. The Strategy will be published with the Action Plan and the consultation report together with accessible information about how residents can obtain advice and assistance.

4.3 Annual progress reporting against the Action Plan will include communications explaining the councils' statutory responsibilities, the role of partner organisations and will recognise achievements, delivery challenges and areas requiring further improvement.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan will be managed within the councils approved budget allocations. In 26/27, the total budget for the Housing and Homelessness Prevention Service is £6.3m. Any action requiring additional expenditure will be subject to the identification of funding and the councils established financial and decision-making processes. The Strategy's focus on prevention is intended to reduce avoidable crisis demand and pressures associated with temporary accommodation.

6. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Strategy places a strong focus on preventing homelessness at the earliest opportunity, recognising that relationship and family breakdown is a leading cause of homelessness locally.

6.2 The strategy creates a commitment to supporting families, using trauma informed and person-centred approaches to enable families to remain safely in their homes.

6.3 Where families cannot safely remain in their homes, the Strategy supports access to suitable alternative accommodation and seeks to minimise the use of unsuitable temporary accommodation such as B&B accommodation.

6.4 Young people, including care experienced young people may face increased homelessness risks during transition to independent living. The Strategy supports earlier accommodation planning, clearer joint pathways and tenancy sustainment assistance. The National Plan to End Homelessness also includes a commitments to develop a cross-government action plan to reduce homelessness among care experienced young people.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE, NATURE RECOVERY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy is not expected to have a significant direct on climate change, nature recovery or the environment.

8. PUBLIC HEALTH, HEALTH INEQUALITIES AND MARMOT IMPLICATIONS

The Strategy is expected to have a significant, positive impact on the public health and wellbeing of the borough. Access to safe, secure and suitable housing is a key determinant of health. The Strategy supports the council's Marmot ambitions through earlier intervention, improved housing stability, more accessible support and strengthened pathways for residents experiencing disadvantage. Progress will be assessed annually as part of the Action Plan review and will include consideration of differences in access and outcomes between groups.

9. CONSULTATION WITH SCRUTINY

The draft Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy has previously been considered by Scrutiny and has been amended to reflect the feedback received. The updated Strategy will return to Scrutiny before Cabinet, with a verbal update on the outcome of that consideration provided.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Strategy does not in itself create any new financial commitments beyond those already approved through the Council's budget-setting process. Delivery will be managed within existing budget allocations, with any future proposals requiring additional expenditure subject to separate business cases, funding identification and approval through the Council's established financial governance arrangements.

10.2 The Strategy's emphasis on prevention and early intervention has the potential to mitigate future demand and cost pressures associated with homelessness services and temporary accommodation.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Adoption of the above policy will position the Council to better enable it to meet its obligations as set out in the above report.

11.2 The delegations sought are appropriate. Ultimately the Portfolio Holder has constitutional authority to approve any future modifications to a policy touching upon the services within the Portfolio Holders defined remit, even those having a borough wide application.

12. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct HR implications arising from this report

13. WARD IMPLICATIONS

This decision will impact on residents in all wards in the borough.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Appendix A - Consultation Report on the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy
- Appendix B - Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy
- Appendix C - Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan

15. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

Laura Tilney Head of Service Housing and Homelessness Prevention

COUNCILLOR PAUL BATSON
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING, INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT

Annex A: North East Lincolnshire Council's draft Action Plan to deliver our Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy

Prevent homelessness wherever possible, work towards ending rough sleeping, and ensure that every resident of North East Lincolnshire has access to a safe, stable and affordable home				
The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Partnership Board will coordinate partnership delivery of the Action Plan, with overall accountability resting with the council's Housing Board. Progress will be monitored regularly and the Action Plan will be reviewed annually to reflect delivery progress, emerging local needs, consultation and lived-experience feedback and changes in national policy or funding. The Action Plan will continue to be developed with partners to capture wider activity supporting the strategic priorities.				
Priority 1: Prevent homelessness wherever possible				
Strengthen universal prevention				
Action		**Desired outcome**	**Lead owner(s)**	**Milestone**
1.1	Review access to homelessness information, advice and support across face-to-face, telephone, digital and non-digital routes, including reasonable adjustments and accessibility needs.	Residents can access clear, inclusive homelessness advice and support through routes that meet their needs.	Partnership Board	April 2027
1.2	Explore the introduction of a "Call Before You Serve" (CB4YS) approach to support landlords and tenants before notice is served.	Landlords and tenants receive earlier support to sustain tenancies and prevent avoidable evictions.	Housing and Homeless Prevention Service	March 2027
1.3	Work with partner organisations, including health and education providers, to raise awareness of homelessness prevention.	Partners identify housing risks earlier and make timely referrals for preventative support	Partnership Board	September 2027
1.4	Implement the new Home Choice Lincs (HCL) Housing Allocations Policy	Social housing is allocated fairly and effectively, with	HCL Partnership	April 2027

		priority given to households in greatest housing need.		
1.5	Deliver a new Homelessness Financial Assistance Policy	Financial assistance is provided through a clear, consistent and transparent decision-making framework.	Housing and Homeless Prevention Service	January 2028
1.6	Strengthen future commissioning by embedding clear outcome measures, lived experience feedback and independent evaluation to ensure services deliver meaningful impact and value for money.	Commissioned services demonstrate their impact, value for money and contribution to sustained housing outcomes.	Housing and Homeless Prevention Service	Applied to new commissioning from April 2027
Targeted prevention				
1.7	Develop a coordinated youth homelessness, family mediation and relationship-support pathway, providing earlier intervention where family or relationship breakdown places a young person or household at risk of homelessness.	Young people and families receive earlier, support to prevent homelessness or secure a planned alternative housing pathway.	Partnership Board	December 2027
1.8	Develop pathways for households that repeatedly experience homelessness	Households experiencing repeat homelessness receive coordinated support to achieve greater housing stability.	Partnership Board	December 2027
1.9	Develop a coordinated prison leaver accommodation and support pathway with Probation	Prison leavers receive planned accommodation and support to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping on release.	Partnership Board	June 2027

1.10	Develop a hospital discharge protocol preventing discharge into homelessness.	Housing needs are assessed before discharge, preventing discharges into homelessness or temporary accommodation.	Partnership Board	September 2027
1.11	Review and strengthen the Joint Housing Protocol and associated accommodation and support pathways for young people who are care-experienced ensuring current legal requirements are reflected.	Care-experienced young people receive planned accommodation and support to sustain independent living.	Housing and Homeless Prevention Services/Children's Services	March 2027
1.12	Strengthen domestic abuse accommodation pathways with commissioned partners, informed by the Domestic Abuse Strategy and understood local need.	Survivors of domestic abuse access safe accommodation and coordinated trauma-informed support.	Partnership Board	Review April 2027
1.13	Maintain and promote housing pathways for military veterans.	Veterans at risk of homelessness access appropriate housing advice, accommodation and support at the earliest opportunity.	Partnership Board	March 2027
1.14	Improve access and referrals to the Crisis Resilience Fund through partner relationships.	Households experiencing financial hardship access timely assistance that helps prevent homelessness.	Partnership Board	April 2027

Priority 2: We will work towards ending rough sleeping.				
Action		**Desired outcome**	**Lead owner(s)**	**Milestone**
2.1	Review and strengthen Rough Sleeping Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) arrangements to ensure coordination between housing, mental health and substance misuse services.	Partners coordinate accommodation, health and support interventions for people experiencing rough sleeping and multiple disadvantage.	Senior Rough Sleeping Strategic Group	Revised arrangements agreed by January 2027, effectiveness reviewed June 2027
2.2	Establish a Senior Rough Sleeping Strategic Group focused on outcomes for people experiencing long-term and repeat rough sleeping.	Partners provide shared oversight and accountability for improving outcomes for people experiencing long-term or repeat rough sleeping.	Housing and Homeless Prevention Service	Established October 2026 Review effectiveness October 2027
2.3	Strengthen outreach and relationship-based engagement with people sleeping rough who experience multiple disadvantage, reviewing barriers to support and approaches to non-engagement so that services provide persistent, proportionate and person-centred support.	People experiencing rough sleeping receive flexible and persistent support, with avoidable barriers to engagement reduced.	Senior Rough Sleeping Strategic Group	April 2027
2.4	Complete an options appraisal to assess the need and options for commissioning access to a 24/7 warm space for people experiencing rough sleeping.	An evidence-based proposal determines the need, feasibility and delivery options for access to a 24/7 warm space.	Senior Rough Sleeping Strategic Group	March 2027

2.5	Develop a proposal for a new multi-agency hub supporting rough sleepers and homeless residents with complex needs.	An evidence-based proposal sets out how a multi-agency hub could improve access to accommodation, health and support services.	Senior Rough Sleeping Strategic Group	December 2028
2.6	Review and strengthen housing pathways and accommodation options for rough sleepers.	People experiencing rough sleeping have improved access to suitable accommodation and coordinated support.	Senior Rough Sleeping Strategic Group	September 2027
2.7	Assess the feasibility of developing a Housing First model for people experiencing entrenched rough sleeping and multiple disadvantage.	The feasibility of a local Housing First model is assessed and informs future commissioning decisions.	Senior Rough Sleeping Strategic Board	March 2028

Priority 3: We will ensure suitable accommodation and support for all residents				
Action		**Desired outcome**	**Lead owner(s)**	**Milestone**
3.1	Recommission Housing Related Support	Housing Related Support helps residents sustain accommodation, increase independence and achieve improved long-term outcomes.	Housing and Homeless Service	March – July 2027
3.2	Strengthen tenancy sustainment and move-on support, including landlord mediation, financial inclusion and practical support to establish a new home and proportionate follow-on support after placement.	More households establish and sustain suitable accommodation, reducing	Partnership Board	September 2027

		tenancy breakdown and repeat homelessness.		
3.3	Develop and implement a Temporary Accommodation Strategy covering future demand, supply, quality, cost-effectiveness, family B&B use, care experienced young people, move-on and council-owned provision.	Temporary accommodation is planned and managed to improve supply, suitability, quality, value for money and timely move-on.	Housing and Homeless Service	April 2028
3.4	Develop and publish a Supported Housing Strategy, informed by an assessment of local accommodation and support needs.	Support housing and support services are planned around evidenced local need and promote independence and housing stability.	Housing and Homeless Service	March 2027
3.5	Develop an Affordable Housing Strategy	A clear framework supports increased affordable housing delivery in response to identified local need.	NELC	September 2027
3.6	Develop a new Section 106 Affordable Housing Policy	Affordable housing contributions are secured and used consistently to support local delivery.	NELC	September 2027
3.7	Establish a Registered Provider Forum	Registered Providers and the council maintain a shared delivery pipeline and work tougher to increase affordable housing supply.	Housing and Homeless Prevention Service	Completed July 2026 Review effectiveness July 2027
3.8	Develop an Empty Property Strategy	More long-term empty properties are brought back	NELC	August 2027

		into use through coordinated and targeted action.		
3.9	Review the Housing Assistance Policy to support households requiring adapted accommodation	Residents can access suitable adapted accommodation where adapting their existing home is not practical.	Housing and Homeless Prevention Service	April 2028

Priority 4: We will use data to drive improvement and transparency				
Action		**Desired outcome**	**Lead owner(s)**	**Milestone**
4.1	Establish a dedicated housing and homelessness data and intelligence function.	Reliable quantitative and customer-experienced data informs service planning, resource allocation and improvement.	Housing and Homeless prevention Service	June 2028
4.2	Develop and publish a partner-facing homelessness and rough sleeping dashboard	Partners have timely performance information to monitor outcomes, identify pressures and strengthen accountability.	Partnership Board	April 2027
4.3	Use data and intelligence to identify emerging trends and support earlier intervention	Emerging housing and homelessness pressures are identified earlier and inform targeted preventative action..	Partnership Board	December 2027
4.4	Collect, analyse and report customer feedback and lived-experience insight, using it alongside performance data to inform service design, delivery and review.	Customer feedback and lived experience insight routinely	Partnership Board	March 2027

		inform service design and delivery.		
4.5	Review the end-to-end customer journey to identify and address delays, duplication and pathway blockages.	Residents experience clearer and more timely routes to advise, assessment and support.	Housing and Homeless prevention Service	September 2027
4.6	Embed trauma-informed and psychologically informed practice across relevant homelessness policies, procedures and commissioned services.	Residents receive consistent, person-centred support that recognises trauma and reduces barriers to engagement.	Housing and Homeless prevention Service	April 2028

Priority 5: We will work in strong partnership to deliver this strategy				
Action		**Desired outcome**	**Lead owner(s)**	**Milestone**
5.1	Establish a Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Partnership Board accountable to the Housing Board	Partners provide shared leadership, accountability and oversight of the Strategy and Action Plan delivery.	Housing and Homeless Prevention Service	October 2026 Review effectiveness October 2027
5.2	Establish multi-disciplinary Targeted Prevention Panels for households with multiple needs or repeat homelessness, supporting a ‘one system, one story’ approach to coordinated assessment and action.	Households with multiple needs or repeat homelessness receive earlier coordinated support through a shared action plan.		March 2027
5.3	Expand and strengthen partnerships with community organisations including food banks and community cafés	Community organisations provide trusted routes to		April 2027

		earlier housing advice, referrals and preventative support.		
5.4	Explore establishing a lived-experience panel or equivalent co-production arrangement to influence service design, commissioning, delivery and review.	People with experience influence service design, commissioning and delivery.		April 2027

North East Lincolnshire's

Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy

2026 - 2029















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Executive Summary

Everyone deserves a safe place to call home. Yet in the last year alone, at least 1361[1] households were owed a homelessness prevention or relief duty in North East Lincolnshire. With well evidenced links between housing, employment and health, preventing and reducing homelessness is central to the achievement of positive health and economic outcomes for residents across the borough.

The Government's National Plan to End Homelessness sets out a clear expectation on local authorities and their partners to strengthen their focus on prevention and tackling the most severe forms of homelessness, including rough sleeping. While our 2019-2024 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy has provided a strong foundation and delivered important improvements, homelessness remains a significant challenge and demand for support continues to grow. We recognise that there is more to do. This Strategy acknowledges the progress made but also reflects the need for further change through more innovation and partnership working to respond to emerging challenges and continual improvement across services to deliver better outcomes for residents at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping.

This strategy sets out how we will strengthen our work with committed and ambitious partners across the borough to tackle the challenges we face. These challenges include:

- Persistent demand for homelessness support and temporary accommodation
- Complex challenges with supporting long term rough sleepers
- Demand for social housing that outstrips supply
- Affordability and supply challenges in accessing private sector housing
- Complex needs, including alcohol and drug addiction and mental health challenges in homeless households

The strategy sets out our five priorities, informed by conversations with partners and people with lived experience. These priorities will be our focus for action over the next three years to successfully prevent and reduce homelessness. They are:

1. **Prevent homelessness wherever possible** by strengthening universal support, improving early intervention, and targeting those most at risk. This includes care experienced young people, prison leavers, and people leaving hospital. Through expanding access to the Crisis Resilience Fund, we can help households facing financial shocks, while developing stronger referral networks and resilience services to support residents to sustain tenancies and build long-term financial stability.

[1] Source: H-Click Data return collated by NELC and submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) 2025/26

2. **We will work towards ending rough sleeping,** by enhancing multi-agency working, strengthening outreach, and ensuring access to a 24/7 warm space.
3. **We will ensure suitable accommodation and support for all residents** through recommissioned support services, a new accommodation strategy, improved provision for care experienced young people, eliminating B&B use for families, and increasing the supply of social and affordable homes.
4. **We will use data to drive improvement and transparency**, investing in better data, insight and reporting to support a more preventative and evidence-led approach.
5. **We will work in strong partnership to deliver this strategy**, supported by a new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Partnership Board to provide leadership and oversight.

We will measure our success by tracking progress against new locally developed targets. This is in line with government expectations set out through the National Plan to End Homelessness and the new Local Government Outcomes Framework.

1. Introduction

1.1 During 2024/25, at least 1361 people were owed a prevention or relief duty in North East Lincolnshire. With no place to call home, we know that people's lives and life chances across health, education and employment outcomes are hugely impacted.

1.2 Everyone deserves a place to call home. This strategy sets out how we will work in partnership with committed and ambitious partners across the borough to support all of our residents to have safe and secure homes.

1.3 The government's National Plan to End Homelessness sets out a clear expectation on local authorities and their partners to strengthen their focus on prevention and to tackle the worst forms of homelessness. It sets out new requirements that local authorities will set, publish, and report against a set of targets to prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping. As a condition of receiving government funding, local authorities are expected to publish and regularly update their strategies and related action plans.

1.4 This strategy has been developed with engagement and consultation with our partners and service users. It sets out the commitments and targets we will meet in North East Lincolnshire and how we intend to do that through strengthened partnership working. It demonstrates high local ambition to improve outcomes for our residents, ensuring connections are made across related strategies, teams and systems, including for example Children's Services and Public Health.

2. National and regional context

2.1 Since the publication of North East Lincolnshire's 2019 to 2024 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, there has been significant change at both a national level and regional level.

2.2 Nationally, the UK Government has published the cross-government National Plan to End Homelessness, setting out the government's long-term vision to end homelessness and rough sleeping, making sure everyone has access to a safe and secure home. It sets out rising need as a result of the rising cost of living, lack of social and affordable homes and poor quality, high-cost homes. It highlights the need for an urgent response to get back on track to ending homelessness and rough sleeping, tackling the root causes and investing in long-term solutions. It has a significant focus on prevention, setting out action from a range of government departments, greater freedoms and accountability for local authorities to make changes locally, and a range of funding and support to enable councils to achieve positive outcomes.

2.3 This national focus on reducing homelessness and rough sleeping has been further strengthened by Prime Minister Andy Burnham announcing that his top priority is to end rough sleeping. This announcement was supported by the launch of a new Rough Sleeping Programme in August 2026.

2.4 The legislative context is changing, with new duties being introduced across a number of new Acts. This includes:

- Greater protection for tenants under the Renters' Rights Act.
- Sharing data between services for children staying in temporary accommodation through the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act.
- Changes to homelessness legislation that exempt care-experienced young people under the age of 25 from being treated as 'intentionally homeless'.
- Strengthening the regulation of Supported Housing through the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act.

2.5 Other relevant national strategies and legislation include, but are not limited to:

- Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996
- Child Poverty Strategy 2025
- Statutory guidance: Local Supported Housing Strategies
- Freedom from Violence and Abuse Strategy
- Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Community Cohesion Strategy 2026

2.6 Regionally, the establishment of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) in February 2025 introduces new opportunities through devolved funding and strategic collaboration. We are part of a new GLCCA homelessness group, working with partners to share learning and develop solutions to shared challenges. The government allocated funding for the new Rough Sleeping Programme to combined authorities where in place, so we are working with the GLCCA to agree the allocation of funding across all councils.

2.7 In parallel, Local Government Reorganisation aims to streamline council structures and improve efficiency and accountability. North East Lincolnshire Council, as a unitary authority, submitted proposals to retain its independence within this evolving landscape. The previous decision shared by government for North East Lincolnshire Council to retain its independence is on pause as part of a wider review of the local government reorganisation programme.

2.8 All of these changes collectively require a renewed approach to North East Lincolnshire's homelessness prevention and relief activity. This strategy sets out how we are responding to national and regional policy direction whilst ensuring all action we take is informed by and focussed on meeting the needs of our residents in a changing environment.

3. Local context

3.1 North East Lincolnshire Council has high ambition for the borough and its residents. The Council Plan details the council's commitments to building a stronger economy and stronger communities. To support this, in July 2025 the council approved a decision to become a Marmot Place, embedding a focus on reducing inequalities through all we do. The Marmot Principles are embedded through all council strategies and activities, including the Children and Families Growing Stronger Together Strategy, which has a commitment to giving every child the best start in life – one of the eight Marmot principles. Strategies across council services set out related actions aligning and strengthening actions to prevent and relieve homelessness. The actions and commitments set out in this strategy support our Marmot commitment by ensuring support is targeted to residents most in need.

3.2 North East Lincolnshire is a place of huge opportunity, with significant investment in the borough to support regeneration. This includes the regeneration of Grimsby Town Centre and the delivery of Pride in Place funding for both Grimsby and Immingham and Harborough. In Cleethorpes, regeneration schemes are also underway at Pier Gardens and Cleethorpes Market Place.

3.3 The borough has a strong connection with the Armed Forces community, with the council reaffirming their commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant in 2023 and appointing a new Armed Forces Officer in 2026. The new officer works across all services to ensure serving and former members of the Armed Forces and their families are not disadvantaged by their service and sacrifice.

3.4 Whilst need for social housing outstrips supply, we are seeing examples of national and local house builders partnering with registered providers of social housing to build, sell and rent new social and affordable homes in the borough. The government's £39bn Social and Affordable Homes Programme provides an opportunity for the borough to continue on this path.

3.5 This regeneration, opportunity and investment is happening against a backdrop of social and economic challenges; as a borough we have higher than average unemployment rates, lower than average wages [2]and areas of significant deprivation.

3.6 From a housing and homelessness perspective these challenges result in affordability issues, tenancy sustainment challenges and poor-quality housing stock. In North East Lincolnshire, we have:

[2] Economy - UTLA | North East Lincolnshire | Report Builder for ArcGIS

a) Continued demand for homelessness support

The charts below show the number of prevention and relief cases over the last 5 years. The number of cases have decreased after the impact of the pandemic, but demand remains.

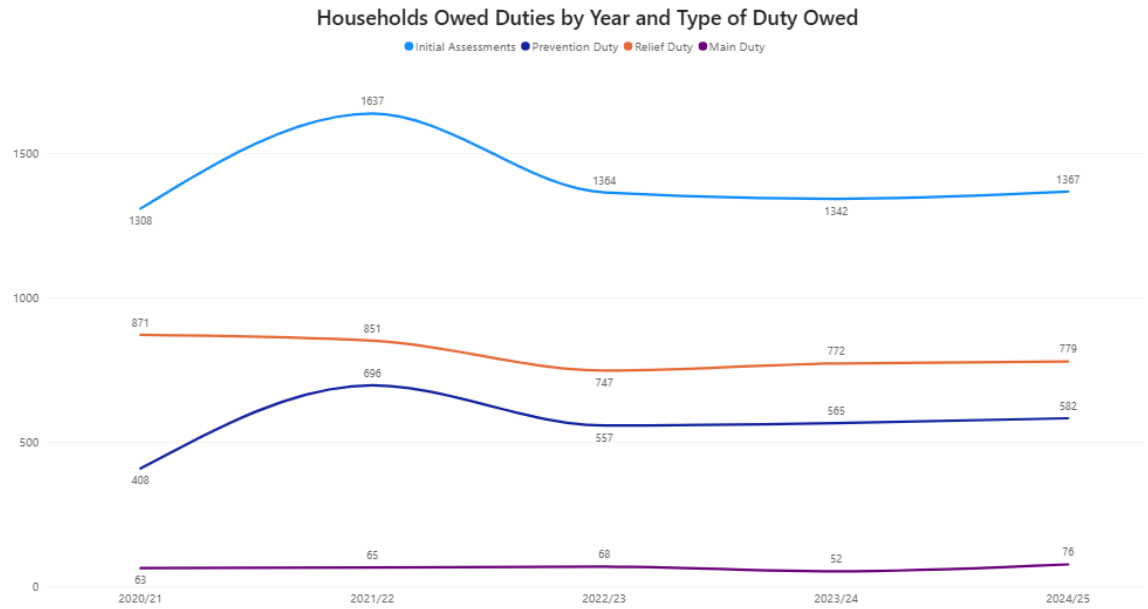


Figure 1 Households owed duties by type 2020 - 2025

Figure 1 shows changes in the number of households owed prevention, relief and main housing duties over the period shown. It indicates that demand remains significant, although the rate of relief duties has reduced in the most recent years.

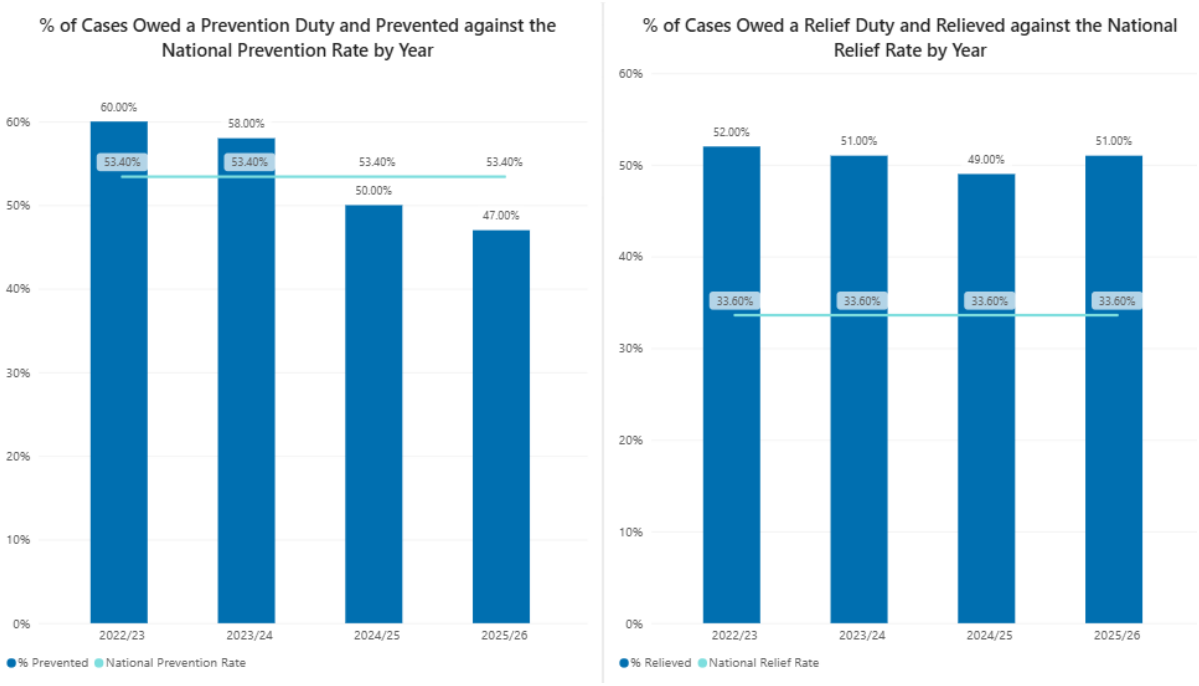


Figure 2 % of cases owed prevention duties and relief duties 2022 - 2026

As shown in figure 2, we have a good record of relieving homelessness, with our relief rate staying around 50% over the past 4 years, above the national average. Conversely, our prevention rates have fallen just below the national average, falling from 60% in 2022/23 to 47% in 2025/26. This suggests that there is more to do to prevent homelessness in North East Lincolnshire.

Between 2023 and 2025, the three main reasons households became homeless in North East Lincolnshire were:

- Family or friends no longer being willing or able to accommodate them
- Leaving an institution without accommodation
- Domestic abuse

Figure 3 below shows that loss of accommodation with family or friends is by far the most common cause of homelessness, accounting for just over 30% of cases opened in 2023/24 and slightly lower, but still the largest proportion, in 2024/25. This pattern mirrors national trends, where relationship breakdown remains the leading driver of homelessness.

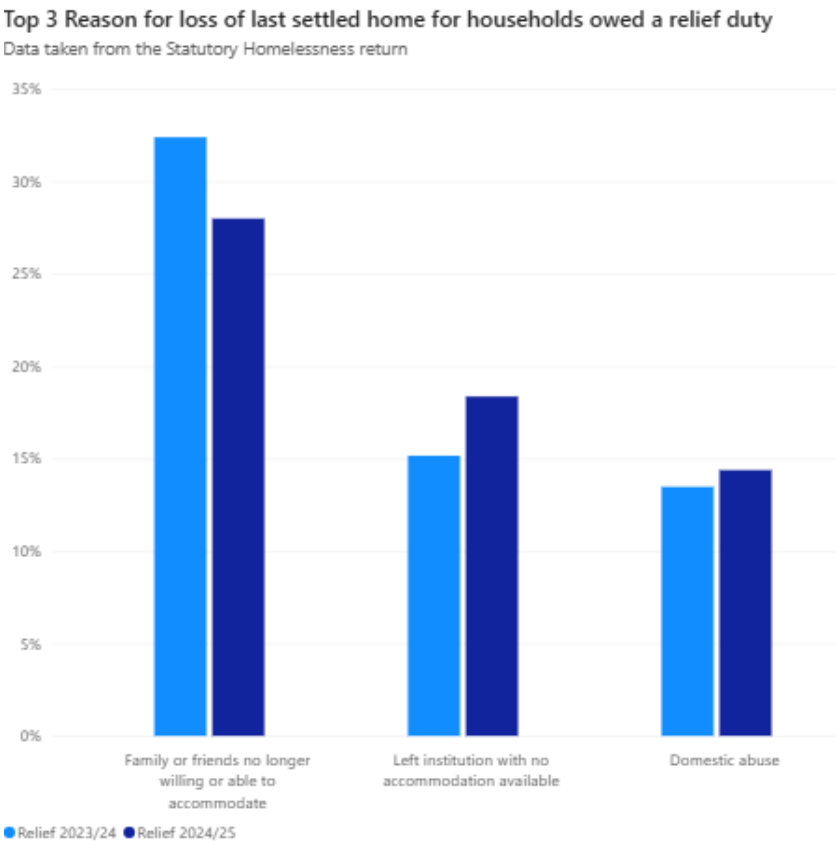


Figure 3 NELC reasons for loss of settled home 2023-2025

b) A cohort of long-term rough sleepers with complex needs

During the COVID-19 pandemic, strong partnership working enabled rapid accommodation of those sleeping rough, successfully supporting people with complex needs through emergency provision. Since then, demand and complexity of need has increased, with rising numbers of rough sleepers and more entrenched support needs.

We are seeing increasing levels of multiple disadvantage, including non-engagement, substance misuse, mental health issues, limited access to communication, literacy barriers, and a shortage of suitable supported housing options.

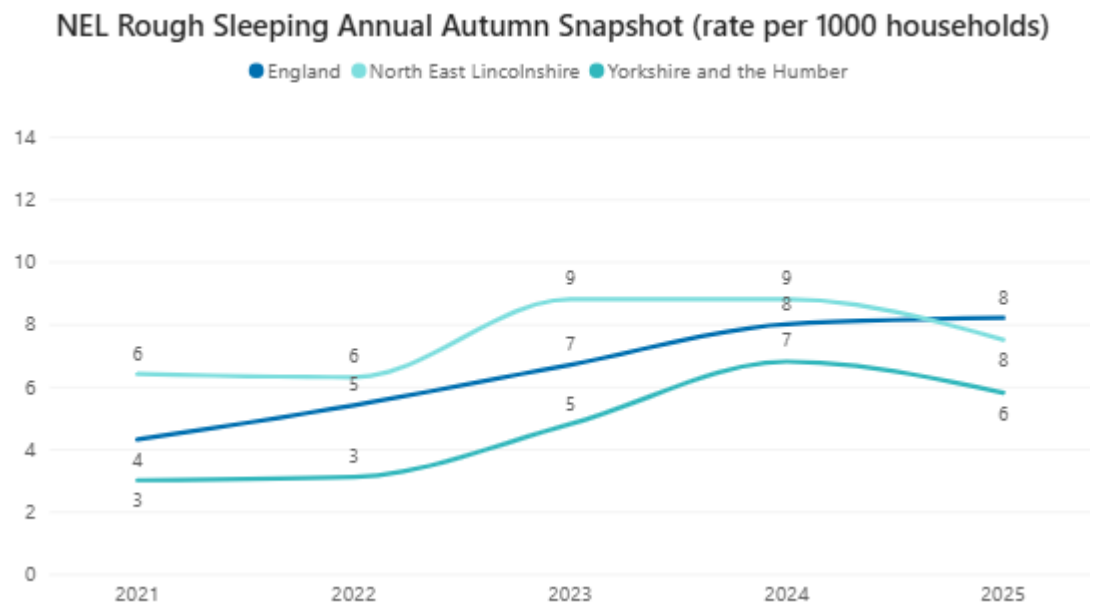


Figure 4 NEL Rough Sleeping Snapshot per 1,000 households 2021 - 2025

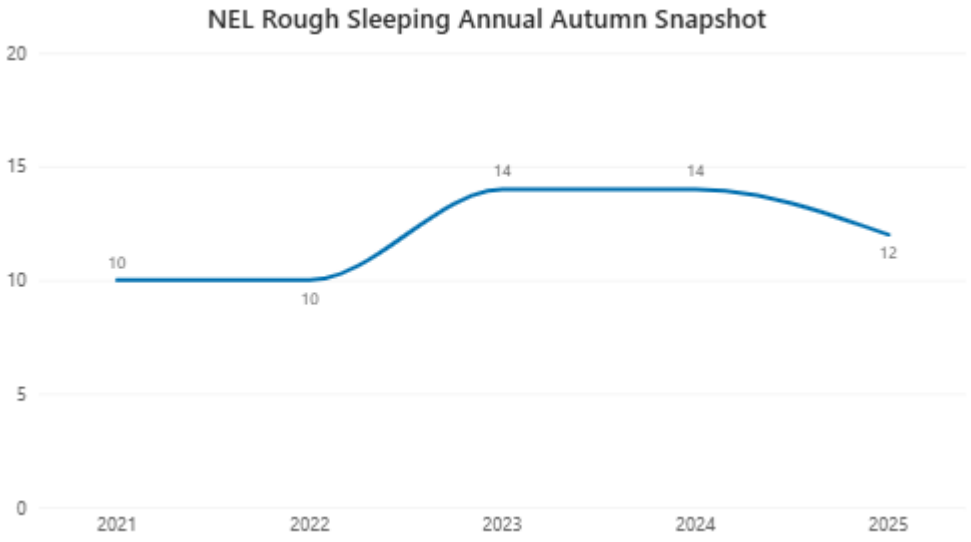


Figure 5 NEL Rough Sleeping Annual Snapshot 2021 - 2025

The annual autumn snapshot recorded 12 people sleeping rough in 2025, down from 14 in 2024 but higher than the figure recorded in 2022. When population size is taken into account, the local rate remains above the regional and national comparators shown. Snapshot figures represent a single point in time and do not capture everyone who may experience rough sleeping during the year.

While partnership foundations remain strong in North East Lincolnshire, growing demand is placing pressure on the system. A more flexible, targeted approach to

supporting the most vulnerable is needed. The new Rough Sleeping Programme provides an opportunity to deliver this.

Outreach data for August 2026 highlights the challenge of sustaining positive housing outcomes for some individuals. During the month, 4 people were new to rough sleeping, 21 people returned to rough sleeping after a previous experience of rough sleeping and 10 people returned to rough sleeping within 12 months of leaving supported accommodation.

C) Demand for social housing outstrips supply

The 2021 census evidenced that approximately 22 out of 100 homes were rented from a private landlord. In comparison, only about 13 out of 100 were rented from a social landlord. Across the UK, about 20 out of 100 homes are rented privately, and 18 out of 100 are social homes. This means that in North East Lincolnshire there is a higher reliance on private renting despite high need for social housing, likely contributing to affordability pressures and increasing the risks of homelessness.

According to the 2021 census, there were 69,826 households in borough. In May 2026 there were 4,230 households on the housing register[3]. This includes households who are in temporary accommodation or wish to move to more suitable accommodation that meets their requirements.

In the past five years we have seen a shortfall in delivering new affordable housing, meaning need for social housing continues to outstrip supply. The figures below are evidenced in the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment 2026.

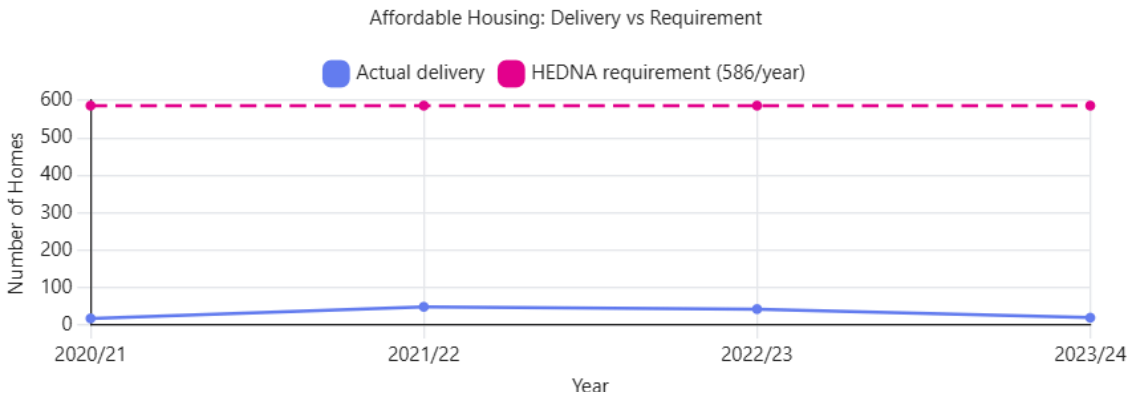


Figure 6 Affordable Housing Delivery Vs Requirements 2020 - 2024

[3] Registered on Home Choice Lincs Social Housing Register

D) Affordability and supply challenges in accessing private sector housing

Whilst private rents and house prices in North East Lincolnshire remain lower than many parts of the country, affordability remains a challenge for many households due to lower incomes, unemployment, fuel poverty and a shortage of suitable affordable homes. These challenges are particularly concentrated in the borough's most deprived communities.

In April 2026, as demonstrated by the chart below, North East Lincolnshire's average monthly private rent was £617, increasing by 4% from the previous year. This average remains much lower than regional and national rents, but with the challenges set out above, affordability remains a challenge for many residents.

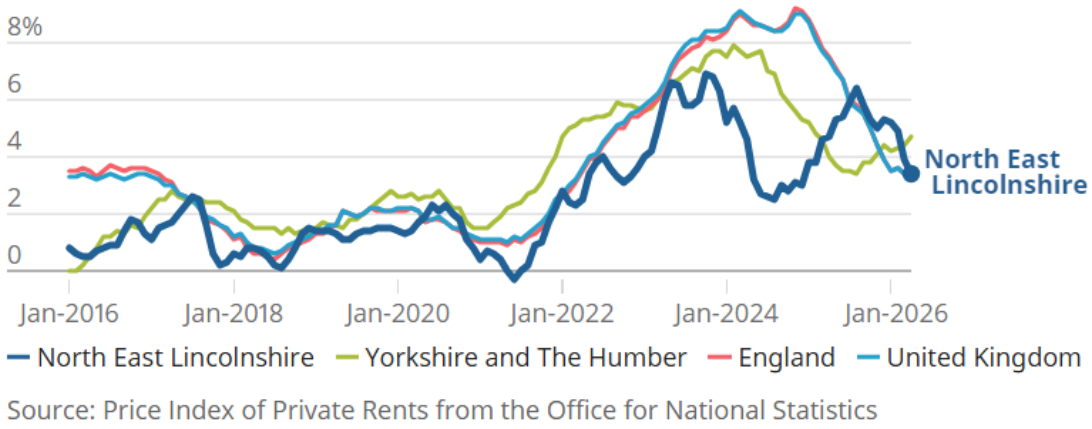


Figure 7 Renting prices comparison 2016 - 2026

E) Unemployment is Rising

Levels of unemployment are higher in North East Lincolnshire in comparison to the rest of the UK. Nearly 7 out of 100 people in North East Lincolnshire are unemployed (ONS December 2025), compared to 5 out of 100 nationally.

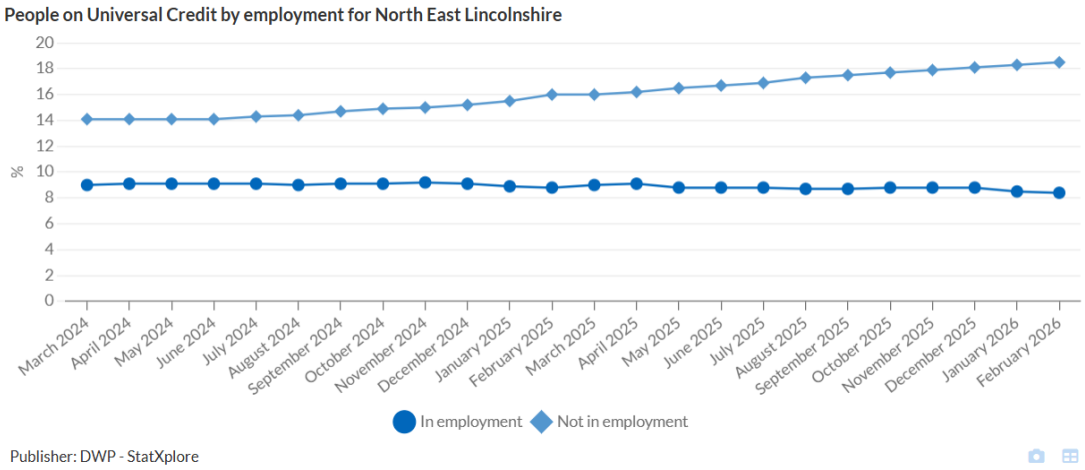


Figure 8 NEL No. of people claiming Universal Credit 2024-2026

The above chart shows the current trajectory of people on universal credit who are both in and not in employment in North East Lincolnshire, showing a widening gap between those in and out of employment.

F) Lower incomes for those in employment

The chart below shows data from the Employee Earnings in the UK published by the Office for National Statistics.

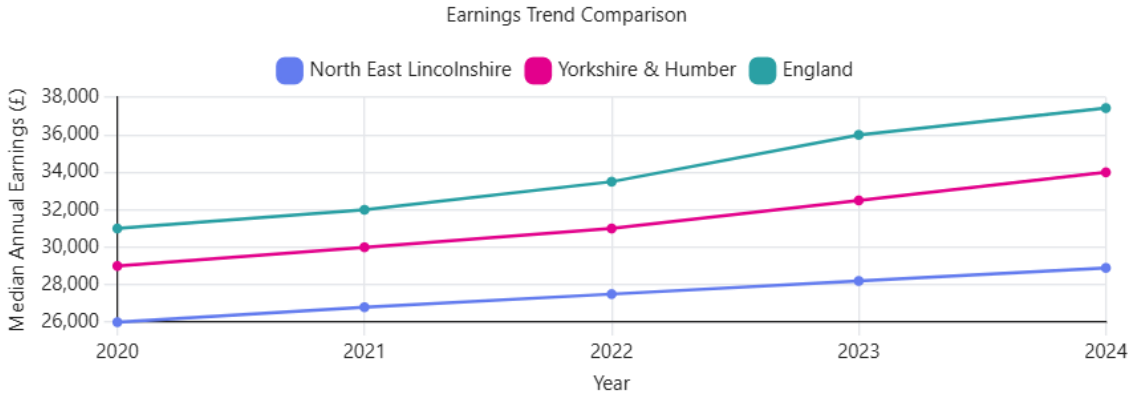


Figure 9 ONS Employee Earnings in the UK 2020 - 2024

The above chart shows that although earnings have increased steadily across North East Lincolnshire, Yorkshire & Humber, and England between 2020 and 2024, a clear gap remains between them. North East Lincolnshire consistently has the lowest earnings, rising from around £26,000 to just under £29,000, while Yorkshire & Humber sits higher, and England remains the highest, reaching over £37,000. This demonstrates a persistent and widening disparity, with local wages in North East

Lincolnshire not keeping pace with regional and national levels, contributing to ongoing affordability and inequality challenges.

G) Affordability Pressures

There are a number of ongoing pressures affecting low-income households, many of whom are reliant on Universal Credit. Households are assessed for bedroom need and typically only receive Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates aligned to this, meaning those assessed as requiring one or two bedrooms are only entitled to LHA for properties of that size. However, due to a shortage of suitably sized and affordable accommodation, households are often forced to consider bigger properties than they need and must meet any shortfall in rent themselves.

This financial pressure is compounded by rising utility bills and general household costs, meaning many households enter tenancies already facing affordability challenges.

These issues are further intensified by the high proportion of older housing stock[4]; these properties that are less energy efficient and more expensive to heat. As a result, fuel poverty is a significant concern in North East Lincolnshire, affecting around 18.4% of households compared to 9.4% nationally, highlighting the disproportionate impact on lower income-

[4] HEDNA 5.15 P.65

Figure 10 shows the difference between market and LHA rates according to House Prices data published by the ONS. LHA rates vary when the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) reviews and publishes rates to reflect the cheapest 30% of local rental market rates. The government has the discretion to freeze or cap them during uprating periods, and has over recent years.

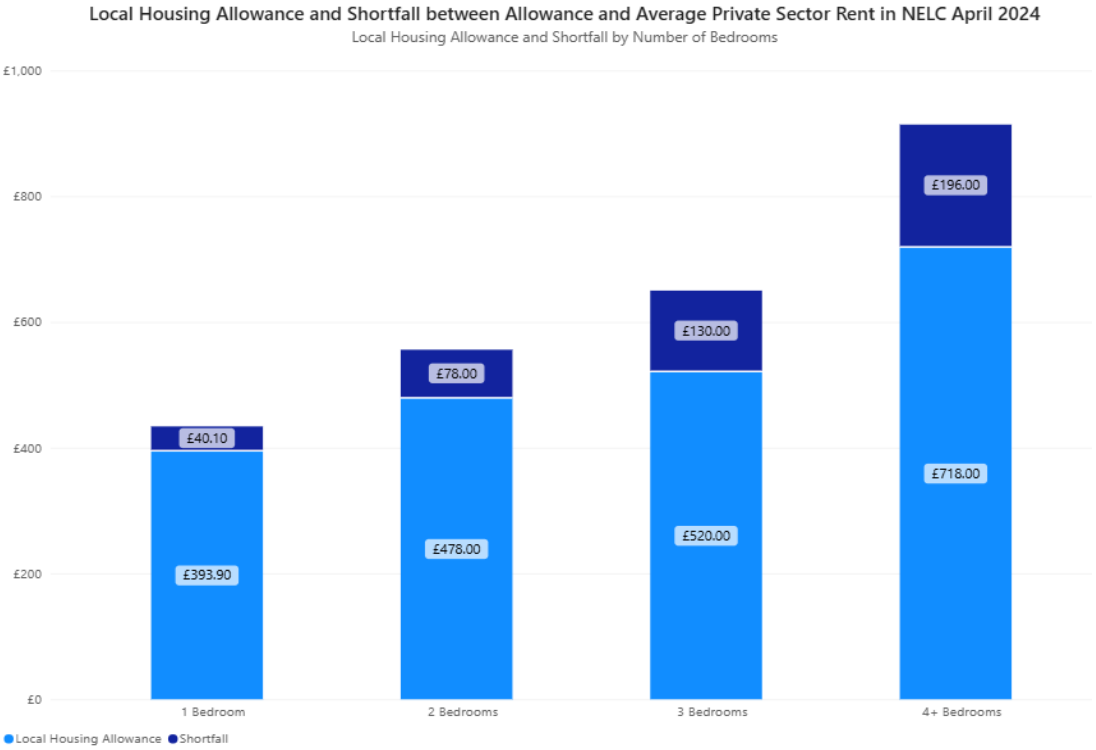


Figure 10 Difference between LHA Rates and private rent per bedroom

H) Types of Property

Affordability is further impacted by the types of property available when compared with the types of property needed. According to the Census 2021, 54.9% of the borough's housing stock has three bedrooms, with only 29% 1 or 2 bedroom properties. These do not align with the national figures where 40% of housing stock has three bedrooms and 39% has one or two bedrooms. Currently, demand for smaller homes is greater than supply, creating a barrier for households unable to afford larger properties. There is a need for more 1 and 2 bedrooms in the borough.

The 2021 Census evidence 32.5% of households in North East Lincolnshire were single households slightly exceeding the national average. Single households rely on one income and therefore are likely to be unable to afford higher rents.

Future forecasts look towards North East Lincolnshire continuing to have smaller household sizes (which is below the national average), continuing our local need to increase both one and two bedroom homes, creating more access to affordable housing.

I) Areas where we have high levels of deprivation

Deprivation in North East Lincolnshire is highly concentrated in a small number of urban wards, particularly in central Grimsby, where several neighbourhoods fall within the most deprived decile nationally. In contrast, suburban and rural wards such as Humberston, Wolds and Laceby experience significantly lower levels of deprivation. This uneven distribution highlights a clear spatial divide across the borough, with the most acute deprivation linked to areas of lower income, poorer health outcomes and higher unemployment.

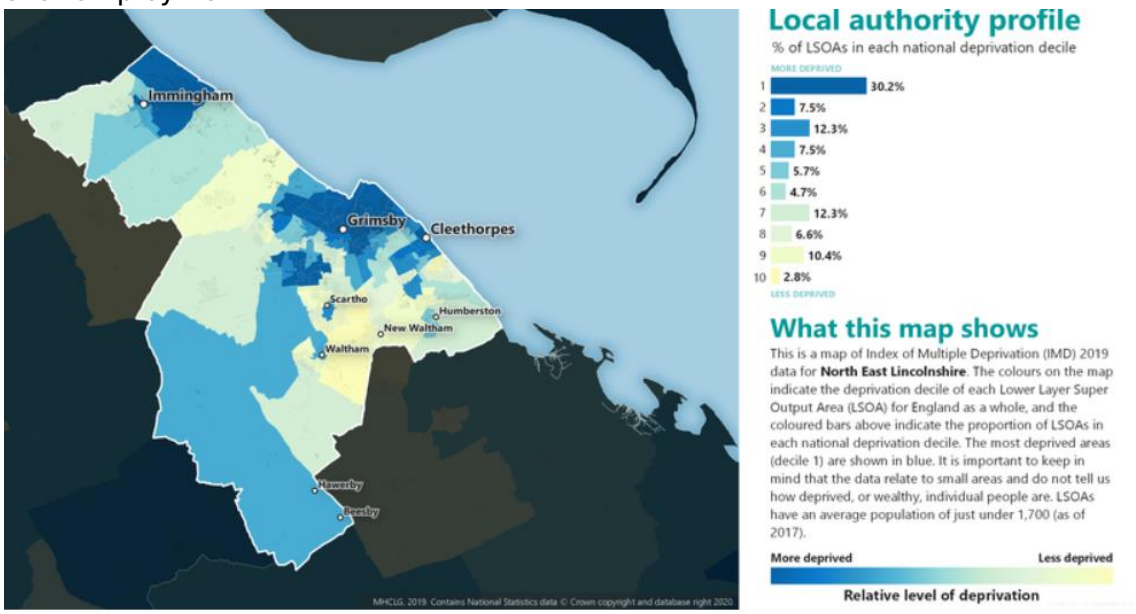


Figure 10 Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019

The areas identified as having higher levels of deprivation are the inner urban areas, e.g. the East and West Marsh, Sidney Sussex and Heneage Wards. These areas have high levels of terrace housing built in the 1900s to provide housing for families coming to work in the former fishing industry.

J) Challenges in homeless household experiencing multiple disadvantage

Adults experiencing multiple disadvantage arises from a combination of needs including substance misuse, mental ill health, domestic abuse, contact with the criminal justice system or challenges in homeless households.

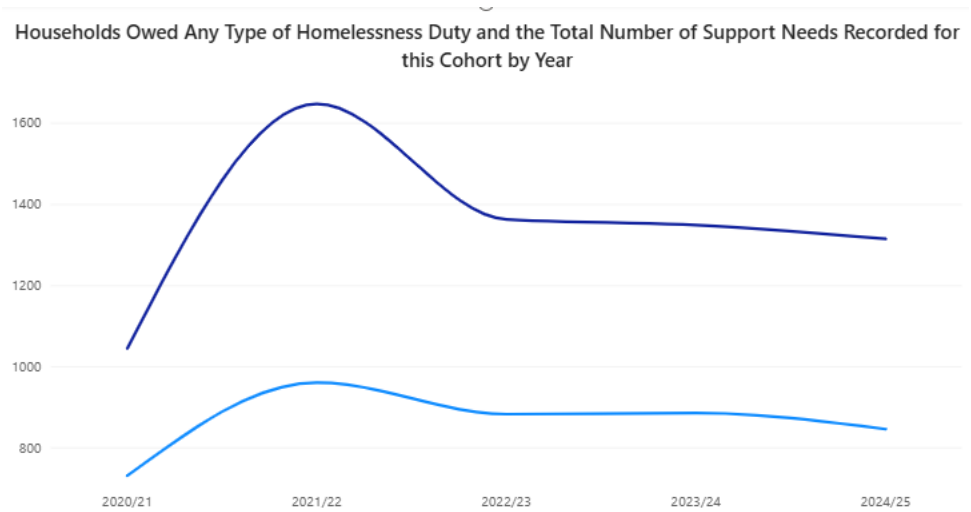


Figure 11 Households owed duties & Support needs 2020 - 2025

There are many reasons why a household becomes homeless. Sometimes it is because the household is struggling with a combination of needs, resulting a need for help with the most complex problems to regain control over their lives. Without the right support at the right time, it can become extremely difficult for those who struggle with a combination of needs to maintain a tenancy consistently and live independently.

The data we collect and provide to MHCLG evidences the increase in need during 2020/21 and 2021/22, likely as a result of the impact following the Covid-19 pandemic, Over the years since then need has returned to pre-Covid levels. The data demonstrates a continued high level of support needs in the borough, with many households having more than one need identified. Individuals and households with multiple needs, require a multi-disciplinary team approach, with services working together to deliver a range of support to achieve sustainable outcomes.

Partners and customers have shared their experiences with us about the cycle of Dual Diagnosis where individuals have multiple needs, requiring a range of support from across multiple services and organisations. Customers have shared their journeys and tell us they find ways of coping with their needs, such as self-medicating with substances. This fuels further addiction and creates additional needs with their mental ill health or ability to manage their money. This creates changes in behaviours which results in crisis situations arising in short periods of time. Often when presenting to services, housing is not their priority need resulting in them rough sleeping, with the cycle continuing.

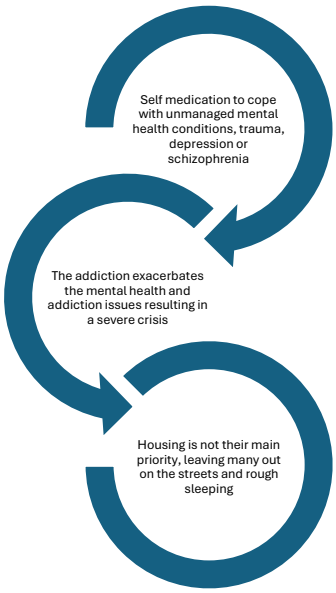


Figure 12 Cycle Representation for Rough Sleeping

4. Progress made under the 2019 – 2024 Homelessness Strategy

4.1 The 2019 – 2024 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy set out four priority areas to focus action on to improve support for residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The four priorities were:

- Preventing homelessness – early intervention, quality advice, timely assistance to help people maintain their accommodation.
- Reducing rough sleeping – effective outreach, accommodation and health pathways to assist those who are roofless
- Accommodation and support provision – working with the private, supported and social sectors to secure and maintain tenancies;
- Partnership working – an effective Homelessness Forum and multi-agency working to improve outcomes, advice and guidance.

4.2 The COVID-19 pandemic brought new challenges to the delivery of the strategy. The 'everyone in' initiative was a success, with thanks to the commitment and dedication of officers working in the Housing and Homelessness Prevention service and our partners.

4.3 Progress against the four priorities from the 2019- 2024 strategy is summarised below.

A) Preventing homelessness;

- We developed protocols with partners for groups at higher risk of homelessness - prison release, homeless 16/17-year-olds and care experienced young people.
- Working through the Home Choice Lincs Partnership, we developed and consulted on a new Housing Allocations policy to ensure that the allocation of social housing reflects a fair prioritisation of need, supporting the prevention of homelessness.
- We worked with a number of partner organisations including Equans to support a number of empty homes being brough back into use.
- The protocol between Children's Services and Housing has improved services for those aged 16-17 years old.
- Selective Licensing was introduced in April 2026 and aims to improve housing conditions and partnership working with landlords.

Case study: Project Athena provides wrap around, intensive, long term support for female prison leavers starting from 16 weeks prior to release. With a person-centred approach, Project Athena focuses on an individual's support needs and external barriers or gaps in service provision. Spear-headed by lived experienced Navigators at Wizer CIC, key stakeholders across North East Lincolnshire work in collaboration to provide continuity of care through daily updates and weekly meetings to discuss and plan care, ensuring joint working and preventing duplication. This project focuses on all aspects of the woman's life to address criminogenic needs, health, employment and sustainability. This helps prevent homelessness.

B) Reducing Rough Sleeping;

- Swan House was opened by the council in 2024, providing rough sleeper accommodation to support former rough sleepers to move off the streets and turn their lives around. One to one support is provided through dedicated housing related support provision.
- We have implemented a Rapid Rehousing Pathway for rough sleepers with our partner Amplius who provided accommodation and support.
- We have published articles to support the public to understand how the council is supporting rough sleepers and how they can too.
- We have produced a leaflet containing contain vital information for rough sleepers, including the location, opening times and contact details for the major local services for rough sleepers.
- We have supported dentistry outreach with rough sleepers.
- We have established and continue to lead a multi-disciplinary approach to identifying support for rough sleepers, working with our partners to strengthen co-ordination of support.

- We have continued to fund a rough sleeper outreach and related support service provided by Harbour Place, and strengthened multiagency outreach activity.

Case study: An elderly man in his 80s became homeless for the first time and needed support to secure housing. The gentleman had no pension and little experience of independent living. He was placed in a crisis unit. Officers helped him arrange paperwork to access his pension and benefits, assisted with food shopping, and obtained a bus pass. They supported him to find and view a suitable property, sign his tenancy, and set up utilities and set up his new home. After moving in, they helped him register with a GP so he could attend medical appointments. Nearly two years on, he is settled and happy in his flat.
Officers still check in occasionally and he remains grateful for their support.

C) Accommodation and support provision;

- We have reduced B&B use overall, including for families**.** Since 2020/21, numbers of households with children in B&Bs for over six weeks have fluctuated, peaking at 19 in January 2023 and 10 in July 2024. The council introduced a B&B elimination plan in December 2025, and as a result, the number of households with children in B&B accommodation beyond six weeks reduced to zero between January and March 2026.

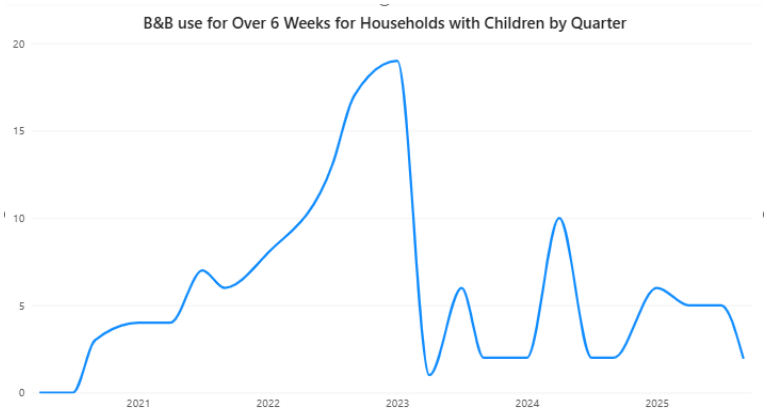


Figure 13 - NELC B&B Use over 6 weeks for household with children

- The Authority has focused on reducing our use of bed and breakfast for all households – not just families – as it is unsuitable for long-term use. We have worked closely with local providers to ensure, where possible, households are allocated self-contained, furnished accommodation, rather than the interim use of guesthouses.

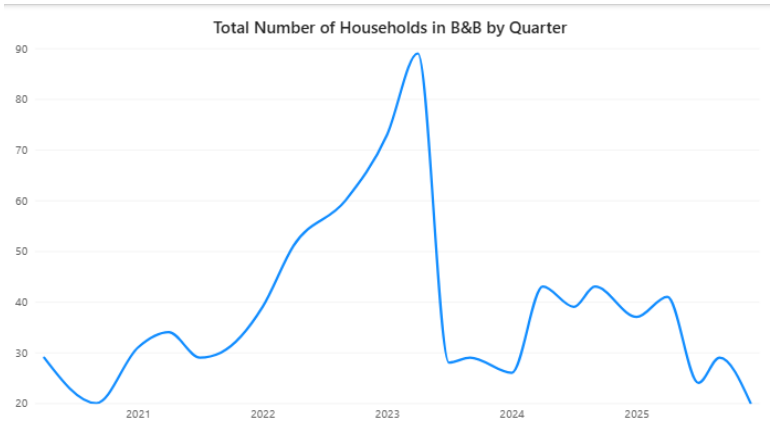


Figure 14 - NEL B&B use 2021-2025

- Our latest quarterly returns evidence that during Oct-Dec 2025, 20 *households were in B&*Bs compared to 89 households in Jan-Mar 2023. Our data demonstrates an average net reduction in B&B use of 67% between 2022/23 and 2025/26.

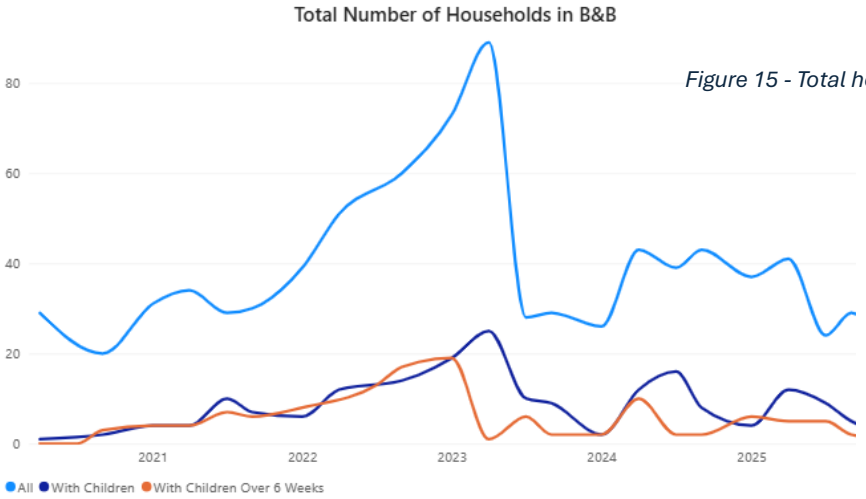


Figure 15 - Total households in B&B 2021 - 2025

- Since 2021, over 4,500 households have received Housing Related Support, including individuals and families requiring support to maintain a tenancy via a dedicated framework. In 2025/26, 581 households accessed over 60,000 hours of support via this framework. The support provided by the framework covers areas such as financial management, tenancy sustainment, employment, health, daily living skills, and support networks.
- Engagement has taken place with stakeholders including pre-market engagement events to help design the new housing related support framework that will be commissioned in 2026.

Case study: A woman in her 40s became homeless after a relationship breakdown and was placed in a B&B with her two children. She was very anxious but engaged well with support, actively bidding for homes and searching privately. After moving into a crisis unit, she was matched to a new 3-bed property with ONGO. Officers supported her application and sign-up; she was overwhelmed with happiness and very grateful for the help from the team.

D) Partnership working;

- The Council and Navigo have strengthened their partnership working to ensure individuals experiencing rough sleeping are consistently supported to access appropriate mental health services.
- We have implemented a coordinated multi-agency outreach model, working in partnership with police, drug and alcohol services, Navigo, and social care to deliver holistic support.
- We have enhanced system-wide coordination between the Council and housing providers to increase access to supported accommodation, including pathways into Swan House.
- We have embedded collaborative practice between the Council and Focus to ensure individuals with multiple and complex needs are effectively assessed and supported under the Care Act 2014.
- We have improved transition pathways through joint working between the council's support officers and external housing related support providers, ensuring seamless handovers of support for those in temporary accommodation.
- We have improved collaboration with the Council's Housing Enforcement team to ensure individuals living in unsafe accommodation are rapidly identified and provided with suitable alternative housing during works and remediation activities.

5. Funding

5.1 The Housing and Homelessness Prevention Service receives a mixture of funding from NELC's core budget and grants directly received from central government for homelessness prevention and rough sleeping. Whilst the council pays directly for the accommodation it owns and leases, we also receive rents and charges from residents who live in this accommodation, largely via Housing Benefit recovery.

5.2 In 2025/26, the Housing and Homelessness Prevention Service;

- Spent £6.636m.

- Received £1.930m via government grants, £1.292m in fees and charges and £271k in other income (for example Home Choice Lincs administrative costs that are recharged to partners).
- Had a net spend of £3.142m.

5.3 The council will continue to fund homelessness support services through a mixture of core council budget, government grants and fees and charges, ensuring spend aligns with the strategic priorities identified within this strategy. The total budget for the Housing and Homelessness Prevention Service in 26/27 is £6.3m.

6. Our vision and priorities for 2026 – 2029

6.1 Our 2026 – 2029 vision in North East Lincolnshire is to:

"Prevent homelessness wherever possible, end rough sleeping, and ensure everyone in North East Lincolnshire has a safe, stable and affordable place to live."

6.2 We have engaged with stakeholders to reflect on recent successes and challenges with our collective efforts to prevent and relieve homelessness, and to agree our collective priorities for the next three years.

6.3 There is a consensus that together we need to renew and strengthen our focus on the areas prioritised under the last strategy, supported by a new focus on capturing data and insights under each priority.

6.4 We will achieve this by taking forward actions with partners under five priority pillars. We will:

1. Prevent homelessness wherever possible
2. Work towards ending rough sleeping
3. Ensure we have suitable accommodation and support solutions for all residents
4. Use data and insights to forecast emerging need, drive continuous service improvement and ensure transparency
5. Work in partnership to deliver our council and borough wide strategy, improving outcomes for all residents.

6.5 **Priority 1: Prevent homelessness wherever possible by strengthening universal support, improving early intervention, and targeting those most at risk. This includes young people (including young people with care experience), prison leavers, and people leaving hospital**

To strengthen universal prevention we will:

- Work with health and education providers to raise awareness of homelessness, housing options and available support, promoting early intervention and homelessness prevention.
- Review the council's website to provide consistent up to date information for our partners and the general public on how to access support at the earliest opportunities.
- Review how people access homelessness services, ensuring residents can access support through face-to-face, telephone and digital routes and are able to receive help in a way that meets their needs. Explore how referrals into the service from partners can be developed, enabling early warning signs that someone could be at future risk of homelessness.
- Work with young people and their families to resolve conflict, improve communication and prevent homelessness. Through early intervention, mediation and trauma-informed support, we will help young people remain safely at home where appropriate.
- Explore introducing 'call before you serve' (CB4YS) providing support to landlords and tenants before a notice is served.
- Strengthen partnerships with existing services (e.g. Family Hubs, Crisis Resilience Fund, health services, DWP, voluntary and community sector organisations), education providers; to provide education, earlier intervention, coordinated support to improve access to preventative services.
- Implement a new social housing allocations policy via a new Home Choice Lincs system to ensure suitable prioritisation of those at risk of homelessness.
- Deliver a new Homelessness Financial Assistance Policy providing transparency on how we use the Crisis and Resilience Fund[5] and Homelessness Prevention Funding.
- Develop family mediation and relationship support pathways for households at risk of homelessness due to family breakdown.

To strengthen targeted prevention (focusing on known high risk groups) we will:

- Work with partners to develop a coordinated and preventative approach to youth homelessness, improving early identification, support pathways and outcomes for young people including young people with care experience.
- Strengthen the implementation of the updated Joint Housing Protocol for young people with care experience.

[5] The Crisis and Resilience Fund provides rapid financial support and assistance, helping households to withstand financial shock and build resilience.

- Develop clear pathways for households who repeatedly experience homelessness, ensuring coordinated multi-agency support is accessible to help them sustain a stable home
- Work closely with probation to develop a coordinated approach for prison leavers, improving pre-release planning, accommodation pathways and support to prevent homelessness, especially those who are not priority need who often resort to rough sleeping
- Develop a hospital discharge protocol, to strengthen joint working with health care providers ensuring no one is discharged without suitable accommodation, through early planning and clear referral pathways
- Support young people with care experience to transition successfully into independent living through clear, individually tailored pathways to stable accommodation, improving long-term life outcomes
- Continue to develop and deliver a coordinated, victim-centred response to high-risk domestic abuse victims, ensuring all Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference referrals are triaged and supported through full assessment. We will work together to ensure victims are actively engaged with partners via statutory and multi-agency forums, providing quick and safe housing outcomes, along with practical support including access to grants to enable sustainable resettlement.
- Continue to support Veterans with a clear pathway into housing.

6.6 **Priority 2: End Rough Sleeping Through Early Intervention, Needs-Led Support, Strengthened Outreach, Timely Access to Safe Accommodation and 24/7 Warm Spaces**.

Supported by new funding through the government's Rough Sleeping Programme, we will:

- Implement a person-centred, needs-led assessment approach to identify people at imminent risk of or experiencing rough sleeping at the earliest opportunity, enabling timely access to accommodation, support, and specialist services.
- Establish a new Senior Rough Sleeping Strategic Group to monitor outcomes for long-term rough sleepers included in the council's Target Priority Group, ensuring shared accountability across partners for actions that will enable them to live independently in a stable home.
- Review and strengthen our multi-disciplinary meetings to ensure partner engagement, improved co-ordination ensuring positive outcomes for rough sleepers, as well as providing clear accountability through the Senior Rough Sleep Strategic Group and the Housing Board.
- Work with partners to review barriers to support and explore how services can provide more persistent engagement and relationship-based support for people experiencing multiple disadvantage.

- Explore the development of a Housing First model for entrenched rough sleeps and those experiencing multiple disadvantage, recognising the strong support for this approach from consultation responses and evidence of its effectiveness in supporting long-term housing stability.
- Strengthen, street outreach activity and related support services to maximise engagement with long term rough sleepers experiencing multiple needs. This will include exploring the commissioning of a 24/7 warm space for rough sleepers and the development of a proposition for a new multi-agency hub to support rough sleepers and other homeless residents with complex needs.
- Review and strengthen housing options for rough sleepers, ensuring access to appropriate accommodation with integrated, multi-agency support to address underlying needs and promote recovery.

6.7 **Priority 3: Ensure we have suitable accommodation and housing-related support solutions for all residents through recommissioned support services, a new accommodation strategy, improved provision for care experienced young people, eliminating family B&B use, and increasing the supply of social and affordable homes.**

We will:

- Learning lessons from the current housing-related support framework, recommission housing-related support to create a more integrated and responsive system. Housing-related support will be, aligned with wider services and focused on prevention, early intervention and long-term independence. This will include greater emphasis on understanding whether support is leading to sustained positive outcomes, supported by a new Payment by Results framework.
- Develop and implement a Temporary Accommodation Strategy based on forecasted future need (including accommodation for young people with care experience), that ensures we have efficient, cost-effective, suitable temporary accommodation. As part of the strategy development we will explore all options to improve outcomes and make efficiencies, improve standards and quality, and support households to move into settled accommodation as quickly as possible. This will include exploring the financial feasibility and viability of options for the council to own more of its own housing stock.
- Strengthen tenancy sustainment support, mediation, move-on support and practical assistance to help households establish and maintain successful tenancies.
- Work with relevant partners to strengthen domestic abuse accommodation pathways, informed by the recent needs assessment and existing Domestic Abuse Strategy, ensuring access to safe accommodation and coordinated support for households at risk of immediate harm.

- Deliver a review of services across the borough with partners to look at how we support vulnerable groups including;
  - Families, including large families
  - Single and young people, to support the prevention of rough sleeping
  - People leaving Institutions
  - Households with physical or mental health needs, and addiction dependencies. Other groups; including people who have multiple disadvantage
- Develop a Supported Housing Strategy in partnership with Adult Social Care for publication by the statutory deadline of March 2027.
- Develop an Affordable Housing Strategy in partnership with key stakeholders to increase the supply of social and affordable homes, reduce pressure on housing waiting lists, and ensure provision meets local needs. This will include the development of a new section 106 policy, action to support community-led housing and actions to ensure North East Lincolnshire benefits from the new £39 billion Social and Affordable Homes Programme.
- Establish a new Registered Provider Forum to help meet these aims, strengthening tenancy sustainment and landlord relationships.
- Develop an Empty Property Strategy in partnership with key stakeholders to increase the number of properties brought back into use.
- Review the Housing Assistance Policy to ensure households with an adapted need receive support to move earlier.

6.8 **Priority 4: Use data to predict need, drive continuous service improvement and ensure transparency, including use of customer experience data.**

We will:

- Undertake a review of the customer journey to ensure pathways are efficient, waiting times are minimised and service blockages are identified and resolved.
- Establish a dedicated data and intelligence function within the Housing and Homelessness Prevention Service to ensure we are collecting, analysing and using qualitative data to better understand need, target interventions, and support a more proactive, preventative approach. Where possible, performance monitoring will include referral outcomes, tenancy sustainment rates and levels of repeat homelessness.
- Develop and publish a data dashboard for partners, providing real-time insight into performance, enabling informed decision-making, and reinforcing joint accountability for delivering this strategy
- Use data and insights from a range of sources to identify emerging trends, enabling the service to respond to changing need and work with partners to identify and prevent homelessness at an earlier stage

- Use homelessness data to identify and address links between homelessness, unemployment and financial hardship, supporting earlier intervention and improved outcomes.
- Embed customer voice and lived experiences throughout the service, ensuring we are led by the needs of the residents we are seeking to support.
- Ensure we adopt a trauma-informed and psychological informed practice across all policies, procedures and service environments.

6.9 **Priority 5: Work in partnership to deliver this strategy, supported by a new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Partnership Board to provide leadership and oversight.**

We will:

- Establish a new 'Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Partnership Board', which is accountable to the council's Housing Board. The Partnership Board will be made up of partners who will have a shared accountability for preventing homelessness and ending rough sleeping across North East Lincolnshire.
- Explore new opportunities to strengthen the role of people with lived experience in shaping homelessness services, including the potential development of a lived experience panel, ensuring the voices of people with experience of homelessness inform service improvement and are at the centre of all we do.
- Report outcomes for young people with care experience through North East Lincolnshire's Corporate and Community Parenting Board.
- Establish new multi-disciplinary panels for 'Targeted Prevention' households, who have multiple needs, to co-ordinate person-centred solutions that support reducing trauma.
- Expand and strengthen our network of partners, including community organisations such as food banks and community cafés, to improve early engagement, better understand the drivers of homelessness, and enable earlier, more effective prevention
- Work towards a 'one system, one story' approach, enabling residents to tell their story once and receive coordinated support across services. Partners will work together to reduce duplication, improve communication and simplify pathways into support.

7. How we will measure success

7.1 In line with the Government's *Plan to End Homelessness and the Local Government Outcomes Framework*, the Council will adopt a set of new, published performance targets focused on prevention, relief, ending rough sleeping, minimising the use of temporary accommodation and improving long-term housing outcomes. These targets will be monitored regularly by the new

Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Partnership Board and the Housing Board to ensure continuous improvement in response to changing local need.

7.2 Our targets are:

Outcome Metric	Baseline 2024/25 Data	Annual Checkpoint 1 September 2026	Annual Checkpoint 2 September 2027	Target at End of Parliament September 2028
Households with children in temporary accommodation	**0.48 per 1,000 Households**	**0.46 per 1,000 Households**	**0.43 per 1,000 Households**	**0.41 per 1,000 Households**
Households with children in B&B over 6 weeks	**1 Household**	**0 Household**	**0 Households**	**0 Households**
Success at preventing and relieving homelessness	**58.6% Percentage of all duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved**	**65% Percentage of all duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved**	**72.5% Percentage of all duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved**	**80% Percentage of all duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved**
Success at preventing and relieving homelessness for those experiencing multiple disadvantage	**57.1% Percentage of all duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved**	**59% Percentage of all duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved**	**61% Percentage of all duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved**	**63% Percentage of all duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved**
People sleeping rough on a single night	**12 People**	**10 People**	**8 People**	**6 People**
People sleeping rough long-term	**4 People**	**4 People**	**3 People**	**0 People**

Figure 16 NEL Outcomes Metric

Whilst stronger prevention and relief activity should reduce future demand, levels of family temporary accommodation are also heavily influenced by housing supply, affordability, availability of suitable move-on accommodation and wider economic pressures. The targets therefore reflect a stretching, but realistic trajectory based on local housing market conditions.

8. Governance

8.1 Delivery of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will be overseen through the council's governance arrangements, with elected Members providing strategic oversight and scrutiny of progress and outcomes. The Council's Housing Board will have overall responsibility for monitoring delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan. The new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Partnership Board and the new Senior Rough Sleeping Strategic Group will report into the Housing Board, providing strategic leadership and coordination across partners. A number of operational groups and forums will support delivery of the Strategy, as shown in the diagram below.

8.2 The Housing Board will provide regular performance updates on outcomes for care experienced young people to the Corporate and Community Parenting Board.

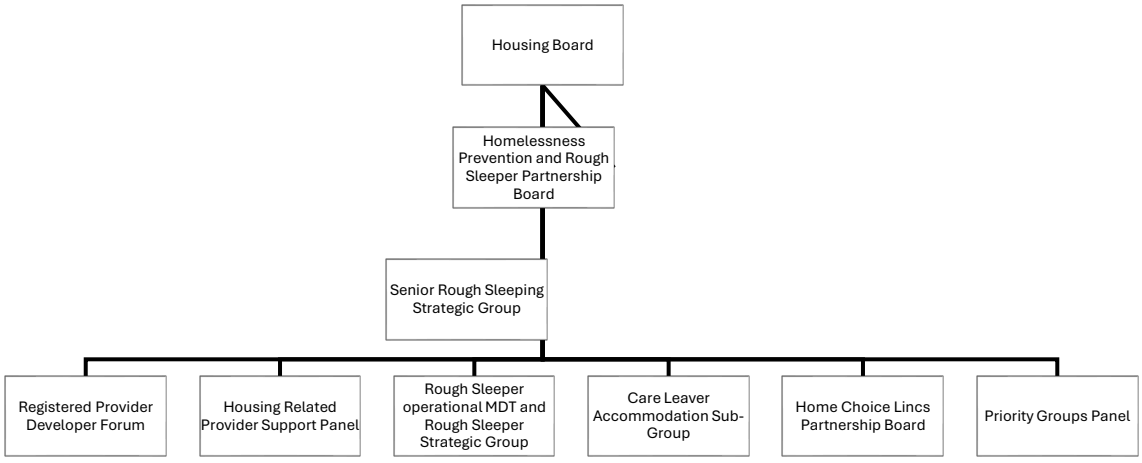


Figure 17 NEL Governance Model

9. Review

9.1 Progress against the strategy will be monitored through an annual review of the Action Plan undertaken by officers in the Housing and Homelessness Prevention Service with input from partners. The annual review will include an assessment of all measures and targets to ensure they remain appropriate, relevant and sufficiently ambitious. The strategy will be formally reviewed after 3 years.

10. Acknowledgments

10.1 We are grateful to everyone who has contributed to the production of this strategy, from residents with lived experience of being homeless who have shared their experiences and ideas, to partner organisations across the borough who continue to show commitment and dedication to doing all they can to end homelessness. Thank you to you all.















North East Lincolnshire's

Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy

2026 - 2029

Briefing Note

To: Councillor Batson, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Infrastructure and Transport

From: Laura Tilney, Head of Service, Housing and Homelessness Prevention

Subject: Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy Consultation

This briefing note summarises the consultation on the draft Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-2029, its principal findings and the changes made in response.

Consultation Process

Formal Consultation ran for eight weeks from 8 July to 2 September 2026. It included an online survey through the council's Have Your Say web Portal, two stakeholder workshops and targeted engagement with council services, elected members, government officials and local partners.

The online survey recorded 165 returns, comprising 59 completed and 106 partially completed surveys. Respondents included people with experience of homelessness, local authority representatives, housing providers, voluntary and community organisations, health and social care partners, landlords and education providers. Not every respondent answered every question; the percentages below relate only to those answering the relevant question.

Overall Consultation Findings

The consultation showed support for key elements of the Strategy:

- 59.38% agreed or strongly agreed with the proposed vision and priorities, while 18.76% disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 65.62% considered the proposed prevention measures effective or very effective.
- 90% supported the proposed actions to reduce temporary accommodation use and strengthen local housing pathways.
- 91.67% supported closer working between the council and its partners.

These results relate to four central elements of the draft strategy, its vision and priorities, prevention measures, accommodation pathways and partnership working.

Respondents expressed strong support for closer partnership working, although only 16% of those answering a separate question considered the existing local arrangements to be effective.

Respondents were specifically asked whether the Strategy, including its proposed targets, are ambitious enough to achieve the changes needed locally. Of those responding. 54.55% felt the Strategy was not ambitious enough, compared with 45.45% who felt it was. Whilst respondents did not identify a single alternative target, feedback consistently called for stronger ambition, earlier intervention, improved partnership working and a greater focus on measurable outcomes. In response to this feedback and the changing national landscape, the Strategy now adopts an ambition of ending rough sleeping and the performance targets have been revised accordingly.

Those questioning the effectiveness of the prevention measures most referred to limited confidence arising from previous experience. Written feedback also identified insufficient engagement with landlords and concerns about how existing support was coordinated and accessed.

Briefing Note

What we heard and how we responded

Earlier prevention, access and customer experience.

What we heard:

The consultation identified significant concerns about access to help:

- 61.90% did not know where to go for help before becoming homeless or being at risk of homelessness.
- 57.14% did not know where to go for advice.
- 86.36% of those answering a follow-up question about approaching the council described getting help as hard or very hard.

Written feedback reported difficulties contacting services, delays, digital and telephone barriers, limited face-to-face access and unclear responsibilities between organisations. A mixed approach combining different communication and access options was preferred by 62.22% of those answering the relevant question.

How we responded

The Strategy and Action Plan have been strengthened and include commitments to:

- Review face-to-face, telephone, digital and other appropriate non-digital routes.
- Improve public and partner information.
- Strengthen early identification and referral routes.
- Provide earlier support to landlords and tenants before a notice is served.
- Develop family mediation and relationship support
- Strengthen targeted prevention for young people, care-experienced young people, prison leavers, people leaving hospital and households experiencing repeat homelessness.

Data and involving individuals with lived experience will assist to identify barriers and inform continuous service improvements.

This is evidenced in Priority 1.

Partnership working and accountability

What we heard

Respondents wanted clearer pathways, better information sharing, consistent communication, clearer responsibilities and stronger accountability. Responses highlighted an ambition for ‘one system, one story’, reducing duplication and the need for residents to repeat their circumstances.

How we responded

The final documents distinguish between:

- The strategy-, which sets the overall vision, priorities and commitments and
- The Action Plan, which sets out the principal actions, intended outcomes and delivery dates.

Delivery responsibilities and partner contributions will be confirmed and monitored through the newly established Homeless Prevention and Rough Sleeping Partnership Board. The councils Housing Board will have overall responsibility for monitoring delivery. Strategic and operational partnership arrangements will support delivery, coordination and accountability. Outcomes for care-experienced young people will also be reported through the Corporate and Community Parenting Board.

This is evidenced in Priority 5 and Governance section.

Housing pathways and sustained support

What we heard

Respondents supported improved housing pathways and sustained support. Feedback particularly highlighted move-on accommodation, practical and financial support, landlord engagement and planned pathways for people leaving institutions.

How we responded

The Strategy and Action Plan now commit to:

- Exploring the development of a Housing First model.
- Strengthening rough sleeping, repeat homelessness and institutional discharge pathways.
- Improving tenancy sustainment, move-on and practical support.
- Developing approaches to temporary accommodation and increasing affordable housing options.

This is evidenced in Priorities 1,2 and 3

Persistent and person-centred support

What we heard

Respondents called for persistent, flexible and relationship-based support, with fewer barriers for people whose trauma, mental health, substance use or communication needs make engagement difficult.

How we responded

The strategy strengthens person-centred assessment, outreach and persistent engagement. It also includes commitments to improve coordination between mental health, substance misuse services and embed trauma-informed practice.

This is evidenced in Priority 2 and 4.

Briefing Note

Lived experience, data and outcomes

What we heard

Respondents wanted lived experience to shape services and reporting to focus on sustained outcomes, including repeat homelessness, tenancy sustainment, rough sleeping and service response times. 54.39% of respondents considered that the council should report on additional priority areas. Suggestions included repeat homelessness, tenancy sustainment, service response times and outcomes for people leaving institutions.

How we responded

The final documents include a commitment to:

- Explore establishing a service user panel and strengthen lived experience involvement.
- Introduce and publish local targets for preventing and relieving homelessness, temporary accommodation, rough sleeping and multiple disadvantage.
- Establish a housing data and intelligence function.
- Develop a partner performance dashboard.
- Review the Action Plan, measures and targes annually.

The introduction of published targets represents a significant change in council's approach and will support greater transparency and accountability for homelessness outcomes.

This is evidenced in Priority 4.

Conclusion

The consultation supported the Strategy's prevention-led and partnership-based direction but did not provide an unqualified endorsement of the draft proposals. It identified concerns about access, customer experience, partnership effectiveness, sustained support and accountability.

In response, the Strategy and Action Plan have been strengthened to provide earlier intervention, clearer access routes, improved housing and support pathways, stronger involvement of people with lived experience, clearer governance and more outcome-focussed performance monitoring.

The council is committed to continuous improvement in the delivery of homelessness services. The detailed feedback received through the consultation will inform service development and implementation of the Strategy, alongside the high-level commitments set out within it. Progress will be reported against published targets providing greater transparency about homelessness outcomes and whether the Strategy is delivering the intended change.

Some delivery arrangements will continue to be developed with partners and people with lived experience through implementation of the Action Plan. The Action Plan will remain a live document and will be review annually with partners. This will enable actions to be strengthened and expanded in response to progress, emerging evidence, changing local needs and lessons from delivery. Progress and delivery challenges will be monitored by the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Partnership Board and the council's Housing Board.