



# Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029

12/02/24

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# Foreword

As the Council's Executive Member for Housing, I am pleased to present the Council's new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

We recognise that homelessness is complex, and a much wider issue than rough sleeping alone and the significant negative impact it can have on people's health and wellbeing. Many people in North Northamptonshire live in unsettled or unsuitable accommodation and a significant number are either made homeless or live in fear they soon will be. Homelessness however is often not something that can be resolved by housing solutions alone, recognising the importance of the right support and effective collaboration with key partners in tackling homelessness together.

This strategy therefore sets out our commitment and vision to preventing and tackling homelessness across North Northamptonshire including our focus on preventing and reducing rough sleeping locally over the next few years. As a new unitary Council, we have also included what we have achieved to date since April 2021 and outline the priorities and actions we plan to take in tackling the challenges faced locally.

Our overall goal is to prevent homelessness wherever possible, but when customers do find themselves homeless, we will aim to provide timely and effective support tailored to customer's needs to help resolve their situation.

**Cllr Mark Rowley**

Executive Member - Housing, Communities and Levelling Up

# NNC Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

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# Section 1 - Introduction

The term ‘Homelessness’ evokes images of the street homeless rough sleeper. Whilst this is the most visible form of homelessness, the services provided by the Council and its partners are far more complex and wide reaching. Homelessness also includes people living in insecure, unsuitable, or unaffordable housing and people experiencing domestic violence, as well as those required to leave their existing housing, often through no fault of their own.

Homelessness and the threat of homelessness is incredibly stressful for individuals and families, and this can lead to a wide variety of challenges for often vulnerable people, including those affected by physical and mental health problems, and those experiencing drug and alcohol abuse and child protection issues. North Northamptonshire Council and its partners support people at this challenging time by providing services that can help to prevent, relieve, and resolve homelessness, and to sustain accommodation moving forward.

North Northamptonshire’s Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy has been developed in response to our legal duties and powers, as well as national and local policy requirements which include:

- The Housing Act 1996 (as amended) – Part 7 – determines the way councils respond to homelessness. It has been amended by:
- The Homelessness Act 2002 put greater emphasis on prevention and placed a duty on local authorities to review homelessness, and its causes in their area, and to develop a strategy which addresses the findings of the review.
- The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 imposed new duties so that anyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to support if they are eligible for assistance.
- The Care Act 2014 sets a strong expectation that agencies will work together to protect children, young adults and people with care and support needs.
- The Ending Rough Sleeping for Good strategy was published in September 2022. It focuses on a “four-pronged approach” of prevention, intervention, recovery and ensuring a joined-up transparent approach.
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 imposed a duty on councils to provide support to victims of domestic abuse in safe accommodation.
- The Health and Social Care Act 2012 lays the foundations to improve health outcomes by joining up NHS, social care and public health services at a local level and tackling growing health inequalities.

This strategy will also help to deliver the ambition within the Integrated Care Northamptonshire Strategy: Live your best life (2023 – 2033) to ensure residents of Northamptonshire have access to affordable, safe, quality accommodation and security of tenure.

As required by the legislation we have carried out a review of homelessness in the area to inform and shape this strategy and some of its findings are included herein. This strategy will set out a plan to:

- Deliver action and services to prevent and reduce homelessness in North Northamptonshire.
- Ensure that there is sufficient accommodation available for people who are, or may become, homeless in the area.
- Ensure support services are available for those people who are, or who may become, homeless – or who need support to prevent them from becoming homeless again.

This strategy has been co-produced based on feedback from the statutory and voluntary organisations which form our Homelessness Forum, with consultation taking place before its production. Partnership working developed during the pandemic, particularly in relation to the ‘Everyone In’ response to rough sleeping, has been maintained to ensure the pathways are in place to meet our strategic priorities:

- preventing, reducing, and stopping the cycle of homelessness.
- ensuring on-going improvement and development of services and accommodation to provide solutions which are sustainable in the long term.
- ensuring everyone has access to a decent, safe, and secure home.

We are a young council having formed in April 2021 from the former councils of Corby, East Northamptonshire, Kettering, and Wellingborough, as well as part of Northamptonshire County Council. Together with our partners, we have delivered some great achievements on homelessness since then. This has included the establishment of a dedicated Rough Sleeping Team and a continuing commitment to ‘Everyone In’ which has reduced the number of individuals sleeping rough in North Northamptonshire. In 2018 the annual rough sleeper estimate required by Government for North Northamptonshire was 62 rough sleepers on a single night. This figure has dramatically reduced from year to year down to 12 individuals in the annual estimate for 2022 showing the significant impact the grant funded initiatives are having on rough sleeping numbers locally.

We still have a great deal of work to do and face many challenges but our Action Plan underpinning this strategy will keep us focussed on the tasks ahead. By working together with the Government and our partners locally, we will aim to continuously develop best practice to better serve our residents.

## Section 2 - The National and Local Context

This strategy has been developed at an unprecedented time for the country. People are still impacted both economically and personally by the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic and the recovery from it. Brexit, the war in Ukraine, pressures of Refugee Resettlement Programmes including asylum dispersal, and the recent uncertain political climate have further contributed to the current economic crisis and recession. This has resulted in elevated levels of inflation, particularly rapidly rising food, fuel, utility, mortgage, and rental costs, as well as the potential for increased unemployment. We are concerned that this will in turn lead to continued increased pressures on our homelessness services and hamper our ability to prevent homelessness as wages and benefits fail to keep pace with inflation resulting in households becoming unable to afford to pay their rent or mortgage.

Local authority stockholders and Registered Housing Providers will be under greater pressure to house homeless households as less financially viable alternative housing solutions become available. This will also impact other local households in housing need who wait on our Housing Register as fewer properties become available for those not already in an emergency homeless situation. This will in turn lead to greater levels of homelessness as those in need, over time, become unable to remain in their current accommodation.

North Northamptonshire is part of the Oxford/Cambridge Arc growth area and as such it is a fast-growing area of the country. According to the 2021 Census data, the population has increased by 13.5% and households have increased by 6.1% since the 2011 Census – both over twice the national average. We are now the 22<sup>nd</sup> largest local authority in terms of population out of 133 local authorities in England and Wales. There has also been an increase in population of over 30% in the over 65 years age group and increasing numbers of people living with a disability (17.9% of the North Northamptonshire population are classed as disabled under the Equality Act 2012).

The Adopted [North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-31](#) is the strategic Part 1 Local Plan for North Northamptonshire. North Northamptonshire is a diverse area made up of a network of settlements including the 4 larger towns of Corby, Kettering, Rushden and Wellingborough, several smaller market towns and over 100 villages, many of which are small and remote with very few facilities.

Whilst house prices are relatively affordable (in comparison to other areas within an hour of London by train), wages are low due to the prevalence of low-skilled distribution jobs. The rapidly increasing population has led to an increased demand for housing which in turn has led to increasing house prices and rents. However, local wages have not kept pace with these increases. The average property price in North Northamptonshire in 2022 was almost 7.8 times the average gross annual earnings in the area. Private rents are also unaffordable for those on low incomes,

particularly in the rural areas, and there is a considerable shortfall between market rents and the Local Housing Allowance rates which determine the level of Universal Credit Housing Element allowable.

The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) includes new build housing targets to meet the objectively assessed housing needs in North Northamptonshire, ensuring that a sufficient proportion is affordable and accessible to all. Targets for affordable housing are:

- 20% on sustainable urban extensions
- 30% on growth and market towns (excluding Oundle)
- 40% in the rural areas and Oundle.

Despite relatively high levels of house building in the area, it has not been possible to deliver either the 44% affordable housing identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment as required to meet the need, or the affordable housing targets set in the JCS. In 2020/21 – 18.7% of new builds were affordable and in 2021/22 this was lower still at only 14.9%. This impacts on our ability to provide housing for our local households with a housing need including almost 5,000 who approached us for help with homelessness or a risk of homelessness in 2022/23, and more than 4,000 households who are in housing need on our Housing Register.

Since its formation in April 2021, North Northamptonshire Council's [Corporate Plan](#) has been developed. It has as its **vision 'A place where everyone has the best opportunities and quality of life'**. In addition, the Council has the following key commitments, some of which have specific priorities related to housing and homelessness:

<p>1. <b>Active, fulfilled lives:</b> We will help people live healthier, more active, independent, and fulfilled lives.</p>	<p><b>Housing related Priorities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>provide enhanced support to improve mental health and wellbeing.</i></li><li>• <i>tackle the causes of complex problems such as poverty and homelessness.</i></li></ul>
<p>2. <b>Better, brighter futures:</b> We will care for our young people, providing them with a high-quality education and opportunities to help them flourish.</p>	
<p>3. <b>Safe and thriving places:</b> We will enable a thriving and successful economy that shapes great places to live, learn, work and visit.</p>	<p><b>Housing related Priorities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Improve the standard of new and existing homes and ensure housing supply meets demand.</i></li><li>• <i>Tackle the causes of difficult issues leading to nuisance, crime, and anti-social behaviour.</i></li></ul>

<p><b>4. Green, sustainable environment:</b> We will take a lead on improving the green environment, making the area more sustainable for generations to come.</p>	
<p><b>5. Connected communities:</b> We will ensure our communities are connected with one another, so they are able to shape their lives and the areas where they live.</p>	<p><b>Housing related Priority:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Empower a thriving voluntary and community sector.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Modern public services:</b> We will provide efficient, effective, and affordable services that make a real difference to all our local communities.</p>	

Ensuring that affordable, decent, and safe accommodation is available for everyone, and enabling people to access the right support when needed, are key components in achieving the Council's corporate vision and commitments.

Not everything can be achieved at once, but as a new council we feel that the development of this strategy shows our continued commitment to preventing, reducing, and resolving homelessness in the area.

## Section 3 - Vision and Values

The overarching vision for the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is:

**"Working effectively with our partners to ensure homelessness is prevented and when it does occur, we intervene and relieve homelessness efficiently by providing suitable advice, guidance, support and accommodation, and reduce the need to sleep rough in North Northamptonshire"**

We aim to achieve this vision with the support of our partners by focusing on the following four building blocks in the delivery of our services. Our ambition therefore over the next 5 years is to:

- **PREVENT:** stop homelessness occurring in the first place
- **INTERVENE:** assist people to find a home where homelessness occurs
- **PROVIDE:** ensure an adequate supply of accommodation and related support is available to meet demand
- **SUSTAIN:** break the cycle of repeat homelessness through support

Underpinning this vision and ambition is a set of core values (shown in bold) which link to our corporate Council values. These are threaded through and apply to every theme and element of this strategy. This is reflected in the way that we work with households who are impacted by homelessness and how we will work with our partners to deliver effective support and housing services across North Northamptonshire. The core values are:

- 1) Ensuring services are **customer focused** with a person-centred approach that is developed from involving those with lived experience.
- 2) **Respectful, supportive, efficient** services focused on prevention and early intervention and, customers are equipped to help themselves through accessible **trustworthy** services and education.
- 3) Responding to the changing environment and market through an innovative and proactive approach.
- 4) Improving service delivery through effective partnership working to deliver positive outcomes.
- 5) Always maintaining value for money and maximising funding opportunities.

## Section 4 - Summary of the Homelessness Data Review

The following table provides key findings of the Homelessness Data Review conducted for North Northamptonshire to help understand the current levels of homelessness and factors impacting it locally:

<b>Homelessness approaches</b>	Homelessness approaches to North Northants Council have been increasing year on year and levels are considerably higher in the start of 2023/2024 compared to the same period in the previous years.
<b>Homelessness caseload</b>	Homelessness caseload increased by 10% in the last quarter of 2022/23 and has remained consistently over 1,100 households per month during the first two quarters of 2023/2024, putting significant pressure on the Housing Options Team to find housing solutions in a challenging housing market locally.
<b>Household type of homeless households</b>	The highest percentage of homeless approaches received by the Council were from single adults with no dependents in both 2021/22 and 2022/23.
<b>Support needs of homeless applicants</b>	The three main support needs expressed by homeless applicants in North Northants are a history of mental health problems, physical ill health and disability, and those experiencing or at risk of domestic abuse.
<b>Causes of homelessness locally</b>	The two main reasons for Homelessness in North Northants in 2022/23 were a private rented tenancy coming to an end and family or friends being no longer willing or able to accommodate. The third most common reason for homelessness among applicants owed a relief duty in North Northants during 2022/23 was domestic abuse. The Council has seen a higher proportion of homelessness from the loss of a private rented tenancy and from family/friends' accommodation than the regional and national averages.
<b>Profile of homeless applicants</b>	The highest number of homeless applicants who are owed a relief or prevention duty are between the ages of 18 and 44 years old. Most homeless applicants in North Northants are UK nationals with only 13.3% being from non-UK nationals which is a higher proportion of non-UK nationals when compared to the overall North Northants population.
<b>Households accommodated in temporary accommodation</b>	The number of households in temporary accommodation has remained consistently above 230 each month from March 2023 to October 2023, with single adults and single parents with dependents making up the majority of these households.
<b>Rough Sleeping</b>	Although the overall number of rough sleepers has drastically fallen since a peak in 2018, the number of rough sleepers seen on a monthly basis fluctuates and was higher in 2022/23 than in 2021/22. The majority of rough sleepers are male aged between 30 and 49 years and are UK nationals. However, almost a quarter of rough sleepers are non-UK nationals. The top three reasons for rough sleeping in North

	<p>Northants are being evicted, drug or alcohol misuse and mental health problems.</p> <p>69.7% of rough sleepers were found to have support needs with the main requirements for support being due to Alcohol / Drug misuse and/or Mental Health issues.</p>
<b>Social housing demand</b>	The number of active households on the Council's Housing Register has significantly increased reaching over 5,600 in September of 2023. The majority of active households are single adults or couples with no dependents resulting in an increased demand for one-bedroom accommodation.
<b>Population</b>	The population in North Northamptonshire has increased by 13.5% (2021) since the previous census in 2011 and is now an area with 359,525 people. This is a much higher increase in population levels than the 7.7% and 6.6% increase seen regionally and nationally.
<b>Number of households</b>	North Northamptonshire falls within the top 22 Local Authority areas for population in England and Wales, and compared with the other 21 Local Authorities has seen the largest household growth (12.3%) from 132,635 in 2011 to 148,900 in 2021, an increase of 16,265 households.
<b>Private rented sector</b>	According to the 2023 North Northamptonshire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENNA) 50.8% of households are likely to have insufficient income to afford lower quartile market housing rent.
<b>Local Housing Allowance Rates</b>	The cost of renting privately has been increasing year on year but the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) has not increased since 2021 despite a rise in inflation and interest rates.
<b>Average house prices</b>	The ratio of median house price compared to median annual gross income in North Northamptonshire is 7.8 which means that the average price of a property in the locality is 7.8 times more than the average annual salary indicating that this is unaffordable for many households.
<b>Landlord possession claims</b>	Landlord possession claims have increased since the removal of the Coronavirus Act in September 2021 and have continued to rise throughout 2023, particularly claims made by private landlords.

## Section 5 - Our Priorities

The next section will focus on achievements to date, current challenges and what our focus will be going forward with the support of our partners within the following five priority areas:

- 1. Increase the availability of and access to suitable accommodation to meet local need.**
- 2. Embed early and effective upstream prevention, reaching people earlier to reduce homelessness.**
- 3. Support people to sustain current or find suitable accommodation.**
- 4. Make rough sleeping rare, brief, and non-recurring through a comprehensive and multi-agency Rough Sleeping Service.**
- 5. Maximise opportunities for funding and collaboration to develop effective pathways and make the best use of resources.**

## **1.Increase the availability of and access to suitable accommodation to meet local need**

### **Why is this important?**

Not having an adequate supply of affordable housing, including private rented sector properties that are accessible and of a decent standard, and specialist supported housing that meets local need, are all key factors that can impact the levels of homelessness locally.

Where homelessness cannot be prevented prior to crisis, temporary accommodation is provided by the Council to those who are vulnerable through age or health, pregnant or have dependent children as defined in the legislation. In March 2023 there were just over 230 households in temporary accommodation across North Northamptonshire, with the majority being single households. The negative impact of homelessness and insecure temporary accommodation is wide ranging and links to poverty, education, health, and wellbeing. Therefore, accessing suitable housing across all tenures to meet local need remains a key priority for the Council.

### **Achievements to date**

North Northamptonshire Council is now one of the largest councils in the country and therefore understanding the local housing market and how it differs between each area is key to tackling homelessness. Understanding what provision is in place and how it meets local needs is a significant challenge. Some of the recent achievements in ensuring there are accessible and suitable accommodation provisions to meet local need includes:

- **Seen & Heard (S&H) model** - Following on from a Safeguarding Adults Review, and as a result of Government grant funding, the Council have entered a partnership with The Housing Network, a private accommodation provider, to deliver the Seen & Heard project. As well as providing accommodation, S&H also provides support for individuals affected by rough sleeping, many of whom have complex needs. The provision has been extended temporarily to provide move on accommodation in an adjoining property to help meet demand.
- **Housing Allocation Scheme** – Ensuring this scheme is fit for purpose to provide a single access point to good quality, affordable housing managed by both the Council and registered providers for people in housing need and to be allocated by eligibility and priority need. The Council monitors registered provider allocations and is currently developing a service level agreement to help ensure timeframe and standards are maintained.
- **Private Rented Sector Access Fund policy** – With the greater demand for social housing locally than there is supply the Council uses this policy to help access the private rented sector to meet this housing need by preventing or

relieving homelessness through a spend to save initiative. This policy is utilised to support households with rent in advance payments or deposits to help secure or sustain suitable accommodation.

- **Homelessness Prevention Fund policy** – This is a flexible fund that allows for creative problem solving for households who are owed certain homelessness duties. The payments may enable households to remain in existing accommodation, secure alternative accommodation, or prevent or delay the provision of temporary accommodation.
- **Temporary accommodation provision** - ensuring there is sufficient supply and turnover of temporary accommodation units to meet the demand for temporary accommodation has been a key focus for the Council. Progress has been made in ensuring that suitable temporary accommodation options are available in terms of accessibility, volume, type, and location, whilst also ensuring that out of area placements and use of bed and breakfast accommodation for families are avoided where possible. The Council has also achieved this in terms of continuing to exercise discretionary powers to ensure off-street temporary accommodation provision for verified rough sleepers who are engaged with our Rough Sleeping Team. The Council has purchased properties on the open market via its general fund to help meet the level of demand. In addition, the introduction of a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) framework for temporary accommodation in August 2023 has helped to increase accommodation options, achieve value for money, and ensure high standards of accommodation are being provided.
- **Pilot Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) model** – Established a new HMO model to be used for temporary accommodation which is a better alternative to hotel use for single homeless people to help meet local needs. This new model provides 35 bed spaces in HMOs which will provide settled accommodation, prevent placement breakdown, safeguard vulnerable service users, and cost one-third of the total cost of hotels.
- **Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP)** – Successfully secured Government grant funding to support the delivery of ten one bed properties across North Northamptonshire dedicated for individuals affected by rough sleeping with complex needs. This longer-term accommodation with support through dedicated Tenancy Support Workers will ensure individuals affected by rough sleeping are supported to access the help they need and supported towards longer term goals of securing training and employment.
- **The Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)** – The Council secured capital funds through LAHF funding to obtain housing for those who are unable to find settled accommodation on resettlement schemes. The Council agreed to deliver 30 homes by November 2023 and a further 11 homes in 2024 to help reduce the impact on existing housing pressures locally.
- **Strategic Registered Providers Forum** - this was introduced to build stronger working relationships between the Council and registered providers in the area. A few meetings have been held since becoming a unitary Council and this will be something that will need to be developed further. There is a

Pre-eviction Protocol in place with registered providers and some have been assisting the Council by providing temporary accommodation for our homeless households.

- **Transitions supported housing model** – The Council have seven dedicated HMO properties to support homeless individuals to develop their independent living skills and progress on a pathway to their own tenancy. This shared accommodation is located across North Northamptonshire for individuals who have experienced, or who are at risk of, homelessness and rough sleeping.

## **Current challenges**

The data review shows that locally demand outstrips supply and that social housing only accounts for 15% (2022) of the housing market highlighting the need to effectively utilise the private rented sector to access affordable and suitable accommodation. With over 5,600 households accepted onto the Council's Housing Register this is a huge demand on the service.

The local private housing market is also difficult to access with competing demands for the same types of accommodation from various Government schemes, and the lack of affordable housing options in the private rented sector. This is exacerbated by many private sector landlords preferring to accept tenants who are not in receipt of Universal Credit.

New build delivery is slow and inconsistent even though North Northamptonshire is in the growth arc. Affordable housing targets are not being met and therefore the supply is not meeting the growing demand. The Council can use right to buy receipts to build new properties, but this is proving difficult as the amount received does not cover the cost of a new build property.

## **Our focus going forward**

1. To increase access to affordable and decent housing in the private rented sector by developing a Private Rented Sector Scheme to build effective relationships with private landlords to work with us to help meet local demand.
2. To make best use of existing housing stock and increase affordable housing provision through the delivery of the Council's new Housing Strategy for North Northamptonshire.
3. To review existing supply of accommodation available across the whole of the area and identify gaps that need addressing, opportunities for change in use and finding solutions based on local housing needs.

4. To continue to ensure there is an effective supply of suitable temporary accommodation available for households that require it within North Northamptonshire. Also, to minimise the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for families and reduce the use of costly nightly purchased accommodation through other forms of procurement.
5. To work effectively with supported housing providers to ensure local accommodation meets local need along with the review and introduction of the Supported Exempt Sector Standards.
6. To monitor affordable housing delivery locally and work with registered housing providers to access affordable housing in the area.

### **What difference will it make?**

- Ensuring that we continue to increase supply and accessibility of affordable housing across the whole of North Northamptonshire to meet local needs.
- Helping to meet the needs of homeless households locally by increasing the awareness of the type of accommodation options required based on local need.
- Increasing the use of Private Rented Sector to help meet demand through relationship building with landlords to ensure a decent, quality supply of accommodation in addition to social housing is accessible.
- There are different types of accommodation to meet all needs and safeguard vulnerable people including adapted properties available for households.
- Supported accommodation provision in North Northamptonshire is fit for purpose and delivered to a high standard and can meet demand for single homeless households with complex needs.
- Increase the supply of suitable temporary accommodation in the area along with reducing the overall temporary accommodation spend and enabling homeless households to effectively sustain their temporary placement.

## **2.Embed early and effective upstream prevention to achieve reaching people earlier to reduce homelessness**

### **Why is this important?**

North Northamptonshire Council accepted a homelessness duty to 1,362 households in 2022/23. The reasons for homelessness are varied and often the result of a complex chain of events from financial difficulties causing the loss of a private rented tenancy to relationship breakdowns and many more. The main reasons recorded for homelessness in 2022/23 was due to ending of tenancies, mainly in the private rented sector and family and friends no longer willing or able to accommodate.

Successful early intervention and homelessness prevention leads to better outcomes for all, but the Council can't solve homelessness alone; multi-agency partnerships are an essential element to be able to make a positive difference locally. By working together with partners to identify households at risk of homelessness before a crisis situation occurs, is key to ensuring that homelessness can be prevented more frequently.

In North Northamptonshire, the data shows that a large proportion of households could have approached the Council for help earlier yet unfortunately approach when they are already homeless. We need to understand the reasons for this in greater depth. Providing a prevention focused homelessness service requires a shift from a reactive service to a preventative service, despite being in a climate of increasing homelessness, to ensure that everyone is aware of the help available to try and prevent and reduce homelessness locally.

### **Achievements to date**

With ever increasing demand on the homelessness service and the current financial and housing climate causing increased risk of homelessness locally, the Council are keen to try and help by ensuring that services are fit for purpose, can be accessed in a timely manner and homeless households are fully supported to find suitable accommodation. The Council has several initiatives in place to help prevent homelessness in North Northamptonshire which are:

- **Effective Housing Allocation Scheme** - ensuring that the Council's Housing Allocation Scheme supports homelessness prevention through appropriate priority within the scheme.
- **Health and Housing Partnership** - We have Health and Housing Options Advisors, supported by the Health and Housing Partnership, and funded by health partners to help with hospital discharges where housing is causing a delay. The advisors are based in Kettering General Hospital and at Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHFT) working directly with staff and patients to help ensure that suitable accommodation is available for patients on discharge or that they are supported to return home.

- **Accommodation for Ex-Offenders scheme (AFEO)** – the Council have secured additional grant funding to help reduce reoffending and homelessness by supporting ex-offenders who might otherwise become homeless to access settled homes in the private rented sector. The Council has received 77 referrals into the scheme to date and supported 44 individuals into accommodation.
- **Resettlement services** – working alongside the Council's dedicated Resettlement Team to meet the Council's initial pledge to resettle 10 Afghan families into private rented tenancies. Also delivering responses to ongoing requirements to support additional Afghan and Ukrainian families under various resettlement schemes, and most recently working together around asylum dispersal accommodation.
- **Supporting MAPPA meetings** - housing representatives attend Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) to provide housing advice and solutions when required. These meetings aim to help protect the public, including previous victims of crime, from serious harm by sexual and violent offenders.
- **Supporting MARAC meetings** – housing representatives attend Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) to help collectively ensure those identified at high risk of serious harm are supported to find appropriate housing solutions if required.
- **Trialling Housing Options service in the community** – along with the regular rough sleeping surgeries being held in the community, the Council have identified there is a demand for Housing Options advice to be available in more community locations to support individuals at risk of homelessness. Therefore, the Council are currently piloting a weekly drop-in session at the Daylight Centre in Wellingborough providing advice and guidance to those attending the centre.
- **Working with Northamptonshire Children's Trust** – joint working with the Children's Trust to help prevent youth homelessness through the review and development of protocols for young people and care leavers which outlines how partners will work together to ensure the best outcome for young people.
- **Duty to Refer** – this is an online referral tool for public sector partners to use if they are supporting someone who might be homeless or at risk of homelessness to ensure they get access to homelessness services early to prevent crisis where possible. This is working well and over 50% of all referrals made in 2021/22 and 2022/23 were through this process.
- **Tenancy Support** – Introduction of several externally funded roles to provide tenancy support to ensure accommodation can be maintained and avoid tenancy failure by providing the right support to meet individual's needs. There is now Tenancy Support Workers in place for former individuals affected by rough sleeping placed within specialist accommodation delivered under the Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme, for households in

treatment and recovery for substance misuse and for single households placed in temporary accommodation who have support needs.

## **Current challenges**

The Council are supporting a high percentage of households when they are already in crisis which requires more resources and cases can then take longer to resolve. There is a real need to shift focus from crisis management and relief efforts to prevention activity in the Housing Options service.

A high proportion of households approaching the Council as homeless are single adults with no children reflecting that single homelessness is a challenge in North Northamptonshire.

Increased demand on the Housing Options Service and the challenge of becoming a unitary council have impacted service delivery resulting in households approaching the council not being assessed quickly enough to maximise the chances of successful homeless prevention.

Lack of suitable accommodation to help prevent homelessness locally, not enough affordable properties in the private rented sector and lack of adapted properties across all housing types to meet housing needs is also a barrier in securing housing solutions.

Tenancy sustainment is also a key issue and often a main cause of homelessness highlighting the lack of tenancy support provision locally to help prevent evictions and accommodation placements failing across the social and private rented sectors.

Increased demand on temporary accommodation (TA) provisions, with the existing supply not able to meet demand is also a challenge which is also financially costly to the Council. TA is disruptive and impacts households' health and wellbeing and therefore TA use needs to be reduced.

## **Our focus going forward**

1. To improve the advice and information available on the Council's website to ensure clear access to support information and awareness of the current services available.
2. To identify who is at higher risk of homelessness and introduce targeted intervention to meet the housing needs of vulnerable groups to prevent homelessness.
3. To understand the reasons or barriers for households not seeking help sooner by conducting analysis on current cases and addressing the root causes of homelessness.

4. To improve links with partners to increase the number of early referrals through Duty to Refer to help intervene earlier and prevent crisis.
5. To facilitate through education and awareness across the Council and with partners the early signs of housing problems to try and help resolve the situation before a homelessness crisis occurs.
6. To review and restructure the existing Housing Options service to ensure it is fit for purpose to meet local demand and is prevention focused.

### **What difference will it make?**

- To increase the number of households making early approaches to the Council when threatened with homelessness rather than at crisis stage and in turn preventing the need for TA.
- To increase awareness and understanding of homelessness and support services available locally for both the public and our partners.
- To increase the number of referrals from partners by promoting the Duty to Refer to ensure prevention opportunities are not missed.
- To offer accessible services to all, including key vulnerable groups, which are flexible, timely and provide robust information to support households and meet local demand.
- To increase the number of successful interventions by the Council and its partners where a household may be at risk of homelessness, and ensure that the situation is resolved in a timely manner and homelessness is prevented.
- To reduce the number of Adult Risk Management meetings held as situations are resolved before reaching this stage.

### **3. Support people to sustain or find suitable accommodation by intervening and relieving homelessness in order to break the cycle of repeat homelessness**

#### **Why is this important?**

Of course, the ideal is to eliminate homelessness in North Northamptonshire, but we accept that this isn't a realistic goal. We can however strive to reduce homelessness by ensuring homeless households are supported to find a housing solution.

Therefore, the Council acknowledge that the homelessness service needs to be a more proactive and preventative service to enable earlier intervention in situations where our residents face the risk of homelessness. There also needs to be an effective timely response for those who do present as homeless and we need to ensure that there are strong mechanisms in place to relieve homelessness in these cases.

Often homelessness is linked to other issues including mental and physical health problems, drug and alcohol dependency or financial difficulties and so support needs will differ depending on individuals' circumstances. The Council needs to ensure there is a flexible response to supporting people to find suitable accommodation along with working with key partners to ensure the right level of support is provided for them to sustain their accommodation as housing in the bricks and mortar form alone is not the answer.

The importance of partnership working involving multi-agency and cross departmental working is a key focus moving forward to ensure homelessness can be tackled collectively and positive outcomes achieved as a result of effective and efficient partnerships. Often if support needs of individuals are not addressed then this results in placement failures and evidences the need for the right wraparound support in addition to accommodation.

#### **Achievements to date**

- **Safeguarding focus** – a huge amount of work and training has been undertaken to ensure safeguarding is a high priority within the Housing service, and the wider Council and the Adult Risk Management process is effective to support homeless households. The role of these multi-agency meetings is to allow the teams to identify and mitigate risks, including homelessness, rough sleeping and other support needs and ensure suitable move on options are secured collectively with partners to help prevent placement breakdowns.
- **Improved internal working relationships** – becoming a unitary council has provided the opportunity for the Housing Service to work more closely with Adult Social Care, Occupational Therapy, Public Health, and several other teams to ensure the right support is being provided and is something that will continually be developed to improve joined up services.

- **Introduction of tenancy support roles** – through various external grants the Council have been able to put in place several transitional floating support roles to help provide person centred support to households to maintain their accommodation by working closely with them to understand their needs.
- **Transitional support** – within the Rough Sleeping Team once individuals affected by rough sleeping are ready to move on to their next accommodation, a 12-week transitional support programme is put in place. This is to ensure that they can maintain their accommodation and helps to reduce instances of tenancy failure.
- **Targeted prevention** – The Council have secured grant funding for several initiatives to provide support for households to find or maintain their accommodation. This includes Tenancy Support Workers for households in substance misuse treatment and recovery or temporary accommodation, a dedicated Resettlement Team for Ukraine and Afghan households, protocols for young people and care leavers along with a scheme dedicated to support ex-offenders.
- **Working with landlords** –Housing Options and Rough Sleeping Teams work closely with landlords to try and intervene where possible by preventing evictions and negotiating repayment agreements of arrears and mediating where required.
- **Single Homeless Accommodation Programme** – the Council have submitted a bid to try and secure additional funding for supported housing for single households with complex needs as this is a current gap in the single homeless pathway locally.

## **Current challenges**

Accessing suitable housing solutions to resolve homelessness locally is becoming more challenging meaning it is taking longer to resolve homelessness in most cases. Not just an issue for North Northamptonshire but nationally, is the lack of social housing availability which is continually reducing through the Right to Buy scheme whilst the demand for affordable housing solutions continues to increase. Also, specialist accommodation locally is not set up to meet the needs of vulnerable individuals with complex needs and often results in tenancy failures.

In addition, support services are not outreach focused or operating yet on a multi-disciplinary basis which is needed to ensure there are suitable interventions to break the cycle of rough sleeping and prevent homelessness cases.

The challenges of combining four local authority areas in to one unitary council, has resulted in gaps in accommodation provision in some areas based on what existed historically and highlights the need to try and address these gaps in North Northamptonshire. As well there are several internal challenges created through unitary in terms of resources and restructures that need to be undertaken to help

address some of these issues to help with responding to the level of demand being seen.

The Council are currently developing the Housing Strategy for North Northamptonshire and therefore this will help provide an overall strategic direction for the area and focus on increasing the supply of suitable accommodation locally to meet local needs.

## **Our focus going forward**

1. To understand the main causes of tenancy failure and where the Council can intervene to prevent this from happening to others, learn from cases and transform services where required.
2. To ensure households are only telling their story once by improved partnership working both internally and externally and reviewing the service on offer.
3. To identify opportunities for upskilling and providing tenancy training and life skills to households with an identified need for this level support to help tenancy sustainment.
4. To review the Housing Allocation Scheme to ensure it is fit for purpose and helps prevent homelessness and meet the objectives of this strategy.
5. To ensure a multi-agency approach is achieved through a range of service providers to ensure individuals are supported particularly when they have complex support needs.
6. Improve our understanding and the service offer to key customer groups to ensure the pathway meets their needs through engaging with people with lived experience (domestic abuse, young people, mental health, criminal justice, ethnic minorities, LGBTQ, physical or learning disabilities, non-statutorily homeless and individuals affected by rough sleeping).
7. Ensuring Personal Housing Plans completed by the Housing Options Service with homeless households are effective and the actions are monitored and delivered to help support someone to find the best housing solution.

## **What difference will it make?**

- To see a reduction in the number of Adult Risk Management meetings and households or individuals needing to be supported in crisis.

- Increasing the number of households whose homelessness has been prevented due to being able to stay in their current accommodation.
- Contribute to a reduction in instances of rough sleeping across North Northamptonshire by making rough sleeping, rare, brief, and non-recurring.
- Help to reduce the need for temporary accommodation use to both improve households' health and wellbeing and reduce overall costs for the Council.
- To have pathways in place that are easy to access and more effective through improved partnership working.
- To be using data, feedback, and evidence to understand ways to work smarter to manage demand and to inform how we improve homelessness services.

## **4. Make rough sleeping rare, brief, and non-recurring through a comprehensive multi-agency rough sleeping service**

### **Why is this important?**

Whilst ensuring the housing and related support opportunities for families facing homelessness is a strategic priority for the Council, a focus on preventing single homelessness and preventing rough sleeping is equally as important. In August 2023, 82.4% of homelessness approaches were single people, often requiring support with complex needs including health issues, drug and/or alcohol misuse issues and individuals experiencing mental ill health.

Individuals affected by rough sleeping are some of the most socially excluded and vulnerable people in our community who have often experienced multiple disadvantages. With the average age of a death of homeless people being in the mid-40's (ONS 2022) individuals affected by rough sleeping often do not access mainstream services or maintain engagement with services due to their circumstances and support needs. Current service pathways are therefore not tailored to their needs and this priority remains a strong focus of the Council's strategy moving forward.

The aim of the dedicated Rough Sleeping Service across North Northamptonshire is to help engage and support people to move away from a life on the streets and ultimately reduce significant harm and prevent deaths on the streets across North Northamptonshire.

### **Achievements to date**

The Rough Sleeping Service at North Northamptonshire Council is now well embedded across the whole area offering a streamlined approach which ensures all individuals affected by rough sleeping are provided with the same support and access to services in all locations. The team focus on making rough sleeping rare, brief, and non-recurring wherever possible and achievements to date to support individuals affected by or at risk of rough sleeping include:

- **Growth and development of a dedicated Rough Sleeping Team** – The team are now well established and have dedicated Rough Sleeper Workers covering each area including senior roles overseeing complex cases and coordinating the service. There is a dedicated Housing Options Advisor within the Rough Sleeping Team to help support and secure suitable accommodation for individuals and progress and decide on homelessness applications considering their individual needs. More recently a part time dedicated Adult Social Care Worker has joined the team to support cases.
- **Flexible timely interventions** - the Rough Sleeping Team funded via the Government's Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) are now at full capacity and have a good presence locally and strong relationships with partners. The

team are visible within communities and have a dedicated phone line to receive reports of rough sleeping. The team of Rough Sleeper Workers are out and about across the whole area undertaking assertive outreach on a regular basis and responding quickly to any reports of rough sleeping in North Northamptonshire.

- **Increased access in the community** – weekly Rough Sleeping Surgeries are held at The Daylight Centre in Wellingborough attended by a range of partner services. The Rough Sleeping Team support the Big Blue Bus initiative each Friday night in Corby which is hosted by The Hope Church. The team also attend St Edward's Soup Kitchen in Kettering and Teen Challenge in Wellingborough. All provide a great opportunity to engage with individuals affected by rough sleeping and provide advice and guidance alongside key partners in the community.
- **Access to off street emergency and supported accommodation** – utilising Government's Rough Sleeping Initiative funding to increase access to suitable off street and supported accommodation in various locations to ensure there is dedicated accommodation available to help and encourage individuals affected by rough sleeping off the streets.
- **Dedicated self-contained RSI flats** – additional longer term accommodation option for individuals affected by rough sleeping with complex needs to be supported in accommodation whilst seeking to address their support needs.
- **Continuation of 'Everyone In' initiative** – post pandemic commitment to offer discretionary placements of accommodation to engaged individuals affected by rough sleeping regardless of their immigration status and to support them in their transition away from the streets with in-reach support provided by the Rough Sleeping Team.
- **Effective partnership working** – developing effective links with a range of partners to deliver initiatives to support individuals affected by rough sleeping including working with International Lighthouse to support non-UK national cases, the Police and local Environmental Warden teams to ensure local accommodation provisions are supported effectively to minimise anti-social behaviour issues.
- **Dedicated health events** - Health Outreach Support Team (HOST) events are held twice a year at Lakeside Surgery in Corby supporting those experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping. Individuals can access support from a range of partners for advice on both health and housing.
- **Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP)** – Robust processes are in place to ensure that the Rough Sleeping Team increase outreach and ensure all known rough sleepers are offered accommodation to safeguard individuals affected by rough sleeping in severe weather.
- **Improved safeguarding processes and procedures** – through a dedicated lead to support the Rough Sleeping Team on complex cases and Adult Risk Management meetings. Along with the roll out of Multiple Exclusion

Homelessness and Mental Capacity Act training to front line staff and partners to ensure this is a priority and embedded locally. For reference people have experienced multiple exclusion homelessness if they have been ‘homeless’ and have also experienced one or more of the following other domains of ‘deep social exclusion’: ‘institutional care’ (prison, local authority care, mental health hospitals or wards); ‘substance misuse’ (drug, alcohol, solvent or gas misuse); or participation in ‘street culture activities’ (begging, street drinking, ‘survival’ shoplifting or sex work).

- **Housing First model** – Delivery of the Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) with funding secured to deliver 10 properties with support from dedicated Tenancy Support Workers to house former rough sleepers with complex needs. This model is working well and has enabled some entrenched rough sleepers to be housed and is operating on a Housing First basis with support plans in place to ensure the tenancy can be sustained.
- **Intervention Fund** – Part of the Government’s Rough Sleeping Initiative funding is available for the team to access and creatively use to pay for a variety of things to support individuals affected by rough sleeping including to meet their aspirations, goals, and hobbies.

### **Current challenges**

North Northamptonshire continues to see a continuous flow of rough sleepers locally despite the team delivering and supporting a high number of successful moves into accommodation and even supporting individuals affected by rough sleeping directly into accommodation from the streets. There is also a high number of repeat rough sleepers whose needs are complex, with the offer of accommodation locally being unable to meet their needs and often resulting in placement failures. Also supporting individuals affected by rough sleeping who are Non-UK Nationals is challenging as they are not always eligible for support.

Accessibility of partner services to support individuals affected by rough sleeping is also a challenge with many services not offering remote working to engage with rough sleepers on the streets. With mental health needs, and drug and alcohol misuse issues being the main support needs of individuals affected by rough sleeping, individuals are experiencing missed opportunities to access assessments and treatments required in a timely way that can most appropriately accommodate their needs.

The transition to North Northamptonshire Council has also been a challenge with the council undergoing a huge transformation process impacting timescales for delivery on RSI funded projects to improve services. The change to a unitary area has also resulted in an increase in refusals of accommodation by individuals experiencing rough sleeping due to location (when the location within North Northamptonshire that is offered is not as local to them or their support network that previous district and borough boundaries enabled).

The final challenge within this priority is the increasing number of individuals being supported by the Rough Sleeping Team that are experiencing multiple exclusion homelessness or who have significant complex needs. This continues to require collaborative, creative and adaptable working between housing and health services in order to meet their needs effectively.

### **Our focus going forward**

1. To reduce the number and occurrence of rough sleeping locally through various prevention initiatives including focused tenancy support for households at risk of rough sleeping.
2. To ensure rough sleeping, when it does occur, is rare, brief, and non-recurrent by providing timely support and access to suitable accommodation where appropriate.
3. To increase the accommodation and support provisions in place for individuals affected by rough sleeping including individuals with multiple complex needs across the North Northamptonshire area.
4. To ensure individuals with lived experience are engaged regularly and inform service development and delivery to ensure services and processes are accessible to all.
5. To improve the wraparound support on offer out in the community to increase engagement and improve timely access to treatment and support for individuals affected by rough sleeping.
6. To ensure commissioned support services are well-embedded within the rough sleeping pathway and are built on a strong evidence base of local need.
7. To continually review rough sleeping data to identify causes and reasons for rough sleeping in North Northamptonshire and act on this intelligence where possible.

### **What difference will it make?**

- Ensuring that all individuals affected by rough sleeping in North Northamptonshire are engaged with and supported effectively and with a timely offer of accommodation off the streets.
- Improving engagement from individuals affected by or at risk of rough sleeping and increasing access to support and treatment faster through an outreach offer of specialist wraparound support.

- Processes and services are developed based on learning from individuals with lived experience and are regularly reviewed.
- Joined up outreach services are available for individuals affected by rough sleeping to access on a regular basis to meet their needs.
- Improved health and wellbeing for former rough sleepers along with improved life expectancy and preventing people sleeping rough from dying on the streets.

## **5. Maximise opportunities for collaboration and funding to develop effective pathways and services**

### **Why is this important?**

The Council recognise the importance of partnership working in preventing and relieving homelessness. Successful homelessness services cannot be delivered solely by the Council and therefore resources and capacity need to be dedicated to ensuring ongoing commitment and development of effective partnership working with all statutory and voluntary partners across North Northamptonshire.

Good partnership working improves customer experience, achieves better outcomes, reduces duplication, and creates a better awareness and access to services locally based on shared vision and values to support people faced with homelessness.

Additionally, the Council needs to ensure in a difficult financial climate that access to external grant funding opportunities is maximised and any funding secured is then utilised effectively to ensure that services can develop and evolve to meet the ever-changing local needs within the community.

### **Achievements to date**

The Council is committed to working with partners collaboratively and to building a strong partnership network to help tackle homelessness together and have several initiatives in place to achieve this. The Council maximises any external funding opportunities to help improve and develop services locally and achievements to date include:

- **Effective partnership response to the Covid 19 pandemic** - strong alliances were formed between all local agencies through the development of a 'Housing Cell' as part of the Emergency Response across the whole of Northamptonshire. Colleagues from housing, public health, adult social care, the health authorities, primary care trusts, mental health services, drug and alcohol services, registered providers and a range of voluntary organisations came together to provide accommodation, food, and other essentials for rough sleepers under the 'Everyone In' initiative. This partnership working has continued post Covid.
- **Securing over £2 million of Rough Sleeping Initiative funding** – this money has been used to fund a whole team of dedicated roles to support individuals affected by rough sleeping along with providing funding for our voluntary sector partners to deliver supported accommodation and fund additional services to provide specialist support. This funding has been secured from 2022/23 up to the end of March 2025.
- **Established a North Northamptonshire Homeless Forum** - We have developed a Homelessness Forum with clear Terms of Reference for the new unitary area which includes all partners involved in the Covid 19 response as

well as partners previously engaged in the former local authority areas along with several new members. Along with initial meetings all forum members were invited to a Homelessness Conference held in September 2022 which kick started our consultation on the production of this strategy and helped to define the priorities partners felt we need to focus on. The conference was well attended by 130 delegates representing 50 different services and organisations.

- **Northamptonshire Joint Housing Protocol for 16 and 17 year old young people who may be homeless and/or require accommodation –**  
Development of this protocol ensures that partners across the County work together to provide a consistent and coordinated response to young people facing homelessness. This helps to promote and safeguard their wellbeing by facilitating a return to their family or supporting them to find alternative suitable accommodation.
- **Northamptonshire Housing Protocol for Care-Experienced Young People** – This protocol is a formal agreement between professionals which aims to ensure that care-experienced young people have the best possible chance by being able to access suitable accommodation which is tailored to their individual needs. The aim is for partners to work together to help such young people maintain tenancies and avoid the risk of homelessness.
- **Multiple Exclusion Homelessness training** - Since the Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) into the case of a rough sleeper who tragically died in the area, we have been working on a multi-agency basis to improve how such complex cases are dealt with through an action plan based on the recommendations of the SAR report. Many recommendation have already been embedded within teams and help to ensure that safeguarding is at the centre of services for all teams across the Council.
- **Additional Government funding stream** - As mentioned in the other sections of this strategy the Council has successfully secured external grant funding to provide dedicated accommodation and support for individuals affected by rough sleeping (page 23), a team dedicated to support ex-offenders with accommodation (page 15) and is also currently bidding for funding to enable us to provide further accommodation and support for single homeless households.

## **Current challenges**

Being a new unitary Council has taken time to understand each area in terms of the provisions and resources available, the partnerships in place and how these can be utilised going forward as North Northamptonshire.

The successful amount of Government grant funding that has been secured is time limited which makes long-term planning difficult and creates uncertainty for both staff

and services. It also brings with it an additional burden of monitoring, reporting, and delivery which the Council do not have dedicated resources to lead on.

Partnership working has been recognised as a priority throughout this strategy as one of the main ways to try and tackle homelessness locally but again this requires sufficient time and resources to ensure this is being supported and driven forward effectively.

### **Our focus going forward**

1. To identify all opportunities for external funding and to help develop services that meet people's needs and deliver on the priorities within this strategy.
2. Further development of the North Northamptonshire Homeless Forum to bring together service providers, stakeholders and other interested parties who have an objective to investigate and resolve the factors and causes of homelessness through improved communication and collaborative working.
3. To have shared aims and outcomes in respect of homelessness and rough sleeping across partnerships in North Northamptonshire so everyone is clear about what we are trying to achieve and how their contribution can help make a difference.
4. To establish dedicated resources to help manage and monitor grant funding delivery and partnership development in North Northamptonshire.
5. To build clear exit strategies for all services externally funded via Government grants to ensure continuation of service and sustained positive outcomes at the end of the secured funding period.

### **What difference will it make?**

- Improved services and outcomes locally through better communication and collaboration between partners.
- A clear strategic vision for tackling homelessness in North Northamptonshire with support from partners to make a positive difference together.
- To meet gaps in need locally by maximising funding opportunities and grant income and enhancing service delivery.
- To create opportunities for best practice and utilise external funding effectively to develop pathways.

- Improved experience for people navigating local homelessness services with the support of partners.

# Section 6 - Delivery, Monitoring and Review

This strategy is supported by a high-level action plan detailing the areas of focus we plan to take in collaboration with our key partners where possible to help deliver against the priorities outlined for North Northamptonshire to tackle and reduce homelessness. The actions within the remaining pages of this document are a starting point and will be developed with partners to ensure the plan captures all actions and initiatives that are to be delivered to support homelessness and rough sleeping in the area over the next five years.

The actions listed against the five priorities will primarily be monitored through the North Northamptonshire Homelessness Forum as well as any sub or task and finish groups that are arranged going forward. For the purposes of this table, please note that short term refers to approximately 12-24 months, medium term 2-3 years and long term is up to 5 years.

**Table of suggested actions for each priorities.**

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Resources</b>
<b>Priority 1 - Increase availability of and access to suitable accommodation to meet local need</b>	1.1 To develop and introduce a Private Rented Sector Scheme which includes financial and practical incentives to build effective relationships with landlords	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Medium term	New
	1.2 To support the delivery of the Council's Housing Strategy	ALL	Short term	Existing
	1.3 To review the supply of housing availability across North Northamptonshire against housing needs to ensure all accommodation types are being accessed	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Medium term	Existing
	1.4 To reduce and monitor the use of bed and breakfast and nightly paid accommodation	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Short term	Existing
	1.5 To introduce additional temporary accommodation options including a dedicated HMO model	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Short term	Existing
	1.6 To work effectively with Supported Housing providers in North Northamptonshire through the introduction of a dedicated single access panel	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Medium Term	Existing

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Resources</b>
	1.7 To monitor, review and implement the requirements of The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Medium Term	Existing
<b>Priority 2 - Embed early and effective upstream prevention, reaching people earlier to reduce homelessness</b>	2.1 To produce a Homelessness directory of services and support available in North Northamptonshire to achieve an increased awareness and encourage people to seek help earlier and work together effectively	North Northants Homeless Forum partners	Short Term	Existing
	2.2 To review and improve the Homelessness information and advice available on the Council's website to ensure it is clear and accessible	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Short Term	Existing
	2.3 To link in with partners to share learning, processes and pathways including Duty to Refer to increase the number of early referrals of households at risk of homelessness	North Northants Homeless Forum partners	Short Term	Existing
	2.4 To identify vulnerable groups at higher risk of homelessness and determine if and what targeted intervention is needed	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Short Term	Existing
	2.5 To review internal processes and involve service users to help shape the Homelessness Service	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Long term	Existing
	2.6 To undertake analysis of prevention and relief cases regularly to understand reasons for homelessness and current barriers faced in order to identify opportunities for prevention	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Short term	Existing
	2.7 To restructure the Housing Options Service to be prevention focused and ensure that capacity and resources can meet the demand in North Northamptonshire	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Long term	Existing

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Resources</b>
	2.8 To diversify roles within Housing Options Team and have dedicated leads for specific areas of knowledge and guidance	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Medium term	Existing
	2.9 To roll out Housing Options sessions and advice in the community to increase accessibility of the service	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Medium term	Existing
	2.10 To ensure mediation and home visits are increased within the Housing Options service to help increase the number of homelessness preventions locally	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Short term	Existing
<b>Priority 3 - Support people to sustain or find suitable accommodation</b>	3.1 To review the main causes of tenancy failures and identify opportunities to intervene by learning from cases and implementing initiatives or adapting services as appropriate	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Short term	Existing
	3.2 To increase tenancy support and introduce tenancy training opportunities for households that require this level of support to maintain their accommodation	North Northants Homeless Forum partners	Medium term	New
	3.3 To identify opportunities for joined up services and internal teams working together more effectively	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Medium term	Existing
	3.4 To undertake a review of the Council's Allocations scheme to ensure it is fit for purpose and is effective in addressing homelessness	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Short term	Existing
	3.5 To introduce Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings for individuals with complex needs to ensure they receive the right support	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Medium term	Existing

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Resources</b>
	3.6 Review the service pathway for key customer groups to ensure the current homelessness pathway meets their needs	North Northants Homeless Forum partners	Medium term	Existing
	3.7 To ensure Personal Housing Plans (PHP) are wide ranging and partners are engaged to help deliver the actions	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Short term	Existing
<b>Priority 4 - Make rough sleeping rare, brief, and non-recurring through a comprehensive multi-agency rough sleeping service</b>	4.1 To regularly monitor rough sleeping data and identify the main causes and act on this intelligence where possible	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Short term	Existing
	4.2 Ensure tenancy support funded through Government grants is effective in ensuring tenancies can be sustained for individuals who have experienced rough sleeping	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Short term	Existing
	4.3 To continue to deliver a robust rough sleeping outreach and in-reach service to ensure rough sleeping is rare, brief, and non-recurring	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Short term	Existing
	4.4 To introduce a dedicated role to help with developing and building links with Supported Accommodation Providers	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Short term	Existing
	4.5 To monitor the outcomes of a dedicated Adult Social Worker supporting the Rough Sleeping Team and identify opportunities for improved joint working with other teams	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Short term	Existing
	4.6 To ensure individuals with lived experience are engaged with regularly and are able provide input to ensure services and processes are accessible to all	North Northants Homeless Forum partners	Short term	Existing

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Resources</b>
	4.7 To work with partners to find and utilise volunteering, befriending, and mentoring services locally	North Northants Homeless Forum partners	Short term	Existing
	4.8 To improve the wraparound support services for individuals affected by rough sleeping through the introduction of additional dedicated specialist roles for mental health, drug, and alcohol support needs	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Short term	Existing
	4.9 To ensure the needs of individuals affected by rough sleeping are considered in the re-commissioning of drug and alcohol services	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Medium term	Existing
<b>Priority 5 - Maximise opportunities for funding and collaboration to develop effective pathways and make the best use of resources</b>	5.1 To further develop the North Northamptonshire Homeless Forum to build strong partnerships and hold regular meetings to share learning and provide opportunities to work together	North Northants Homeless Forum partners	Short term	Existing
	5.2 Through the delivery of this strategy have shared aims and outcomes with partners so all stakeholders are working towards the same goals	North Northants Homeless Forum partners	Medium term	Existing
	5.3 To maximise external grant funding opportunities to help drive service improvement within homelessness and rough sleeping pathways	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Medium term	Existing
	5.4 To establish an exit strategy for all externally funded roles and accommodation to enable continuity of services	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Short term	Existing
	5.5 To work in partnership to develop a toolkit of prevention focused housing solutions	North Northants Homeless Forum partners	Medium term	Existing
	5.6 To establish dedicated resources to help manage grant funding and partnership development	Housing Strategy and Solutions Team	Medium term	New