

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Review and Strategy 2019

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Foreword

This 2019 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Review and Strategy is an important Council document. We have reviewed our performance in the year proceeding the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act (from April 2018) and we have identified what we are doing well and what we consider needs improving.

We are committed to provide a housing solutions service that puts homelessness prevention at its core, and we will work closely with our partners to ensure that this happens. If we cannot prevent homelessness, we will endeavour to make sure that support is available that can relieve the situation and minimise the distress and suffering caused.

Homelessness can be a complex issue and is usually a result of a combination of factors. Households on low incomes however are generally at greater risk of facing a homelessness situation and requiring assistance. There are many people in the borough whose income only just meets their outgoings and even the slightest 'income shock' can have dire consequences in maintaining rental or mortgage payments. Unemployment, unexpected bills, relationship break downs and poor health can all be factors in income loss and people are often forced to make decisions on what bill to pay. We will support services who help people manage debt and maximise incomes.

Any household type can become homeless but certain groups of single people are at risk of not only being homeless but also becoming 'rough sleepers'. The groups include single people who have left care, or left prison, or left the Forces. These groups of single homeless people are also often associated with alcohol or drug dependency and poor mental health. The Council's housing solutions team will very rarely be the first agency working with these clients and it is therefore vital that all agencies work together and recognise when there is a risk of homelessness. Whilst homelessness is often the result of certain behaviour and health issues, if not prevented it can also be the cause. We will work to improve partnerships in order to provide a holistic service for single people at risk of homelessness.

A household facing a homelessness situation will generally have to deal with far more than just having to find a home. There is often a stigma attached to being homeless. People fleeing domestic abuse will often find themselves in areas they are unfamiliar with, away from friends, family and support, which all too often leads to them returning to an abusive situation. Families with children placed in emergency accommodation for any length of time face education being disrupted and relationships strained because of the uncertainty of their future. We will treat all households facing a homeless or potentially homeless situation with respect and empathy

Our aim is that the homelessness service provided in Amber Valley will offer a realistic housing option to everyone who is homeless or potentially homeless and this strategy will set out how we intend to achieve this aim.

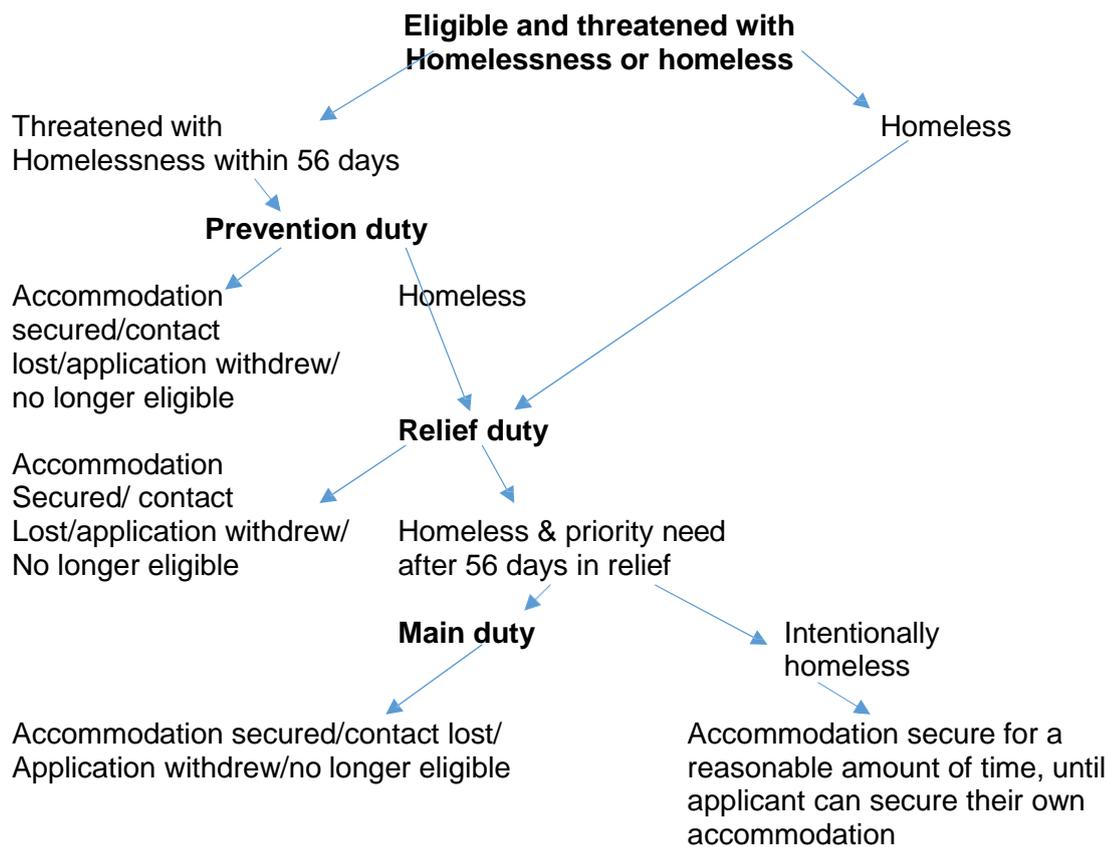
Councillor Tony Holmes
Cabinet Member Housing and Public Health

1 **Introduction**

- 1.1 This document should be read in connection with the Council's previous ([Homelessness Review and Strategy \(2015-18\)](#)) and in particular the Homelessness Review and Strategy Addendum 2018 ([Homelessness Review and Strategy Addendum 2018](#)), which provides details of how the Council has developed the housing solutions service to incorporate the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act.
- 1.2 The statistical information provided in this document has been taken from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government homelessness statistics (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>)
- 1.3 On April 3rd 2018 the Council brought the homelessness and housing advice service along with the management of the housing register back 'inhouse' after being contracted out to Amber Valley Housing Limited (now Futures Homescape) in February 2003. This move coincided with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 which was described as 'seismic legislation' that would fundamentally change how local authority's deliver homelessness services. The Homelessness Reduction Act has been designed to reduce homelessness by:
 - Improving quality of advice
 - Improving homelessness prevention
 - Increasing support specifically for single people
 - Providing a holistic service with partners to deliver better support for people, especially those leaving prison/hospital and people who are at an increased risk of being homelessness, including care leavers and those who have been subject to domestic abuse.

2 **The 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act**

- 2.1 Full details of how the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) altered the way homelessness services are delivered by housing authorities can be found in the Homelessness Strategy and Review Addendum 2018.
- 2.2 The Act requires three areas of service, Homelessness Prevention, Homelessness Relief and Homelessness Main Duty. The diagram overleaf illustrates how and when the duties are delivered:



2.3 Homeless Prevention

2.3.1 Under the HRA if any 'eligible' person is not actually homeless but is threatened with homelessness within 56 days, they are owed a 'prevention' duty by the Council. At this stage there is no duty to determine whether the person is in priority need. Where a prevention duty is owed to an applicant there is a further duty to assess and produce a 'Personalised Housing Plan' (PHP). The PHP is in effect a contract between the local authority and the applicant to agree actions that will lead to a homelessness situation being prevented. The PHP will continually be assessed and updated over the 56-day period.

2.4 Relief Duty

2.4.1 A 'relief' duty comes into force when a local authority is satisfied that an applicant is eligible for assistance and is 'actually' homeless (or is a private rented tenant who has been served with a 'Section 21' notice). The relief duty requires the local authority to 'take reasonable steps' (PHP) to help the applicant secure suitable accommodation that is available for the applicant's occupation for at least six months. For an applicant eligible for assistance who is 'actually' homeless, the local authority also has a duty to determine whether they 'may' be in priority need. If it is considered the applicants **may** be in priority need the local authority has a duty to provide interim accommodation. Interim accommodation can include different types of temporary accommodation, including: accommodation provided by a local authority, accommodation provided by a registered provider, accommodation provided by a private landlord, accommodation provided by the voluntary sector and accommodation provided on a temporary basis by family or friends. Bed and breakfast may need to be used in an emergency although the homelessness code of guidance states authorities should avoid the use of bed

and breakfast wherever possible. Bed and breakfast is not suitable for applicants with family commitments (including pregnant women), except where there is no alternative accommodation available.

2.5 Main Housing Duty

- 2.5.1 If homelessness is not successfully prevented or relieved, a housing authority will owe the main housing duty to applicants who are eligible, have a priority need for accommodation and are not homeless intentionally.
- 2.5.2 Under the main housing duty, housing authorities must ensure that suitable accommodation is available for the applicant and their household until the duty is brought to an end, usually through the offer of a settled home. The duty can also be brought to an end for other reasons, such as the applicant turning down a suitable offer of temporary accommodation or because they are no longer eligible for assistance. A suitable offer of a settled home (whether accepted or refused by the applicant) which would bring the main housing duty to an end includes an offer of a suitable secure or introductory tenancy with a local authority, an offer of accommodation through a private registered provider (also known as a housing association) or the offer of a suitable tenancy for at least 12 months from a private landlord made by arrangement with the local authority.

2.6 Targets

There are currently no national targets relating to homelessness other than aims stated by the Government to reduce and then end rough sleeping. It is quite likely that national targets may be set at a future date once the new duties have settled in. The targets are likely to relate to both prevention and relief cases and will be incorporated into any future performance management frameworks.

3 Working with Partners

- 3.1 Dealing with homelessness and the cause of homelessness cannot be the sole responsibility of the Council. A good service will involve the input of multiple agencies many of whom will have experience and expertise of their client groups that is vital for successful outcomes to be achieved.
- 3.2 The Derbyshire authorities have built a strong partnership over many decades through the Derbyshire Homelessness Officer group (DHOG) which, has been successful in joint funding bids for homelessness services across the borough, most recently the 'Rough Sleeping Initiative' and the 'Rapid Rehousing Pathway'. The partnership will remain an integral part of service delivery that operates throughout Derbyshire and will also support system leadership through the Derbyshire Health and Housing Systems Group which in turn reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

4 Review of Homelessness in Amber Valley since April 2018

- 4.1 The purpose of this section is to review homelessness and the homelessness service provided by the housing solutions team in Amber Valley in the proceeding period following the introduction of the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018.

4.2 In 2018-19 the Housing Solutions team assessed 825 homeless applications and deemed 622 to be 'eligible' whereby a duty was owed. Of the 622, 427 were deemed as being homeless within 56 days and were owed a 'prevention' duty and the remaining 196 applicants were deemed to be 'actually' homeless and therefore had a relief duty owed.

4.3 The reasons for homelessness are provided in Table 1;

Table 1: Reason for loss of last settled accommodation for households owed a prevention or relief duty in Amber Valley in 2018/19

	April 18 – June 18	July 18 – September 18	September 18 - December 18	January 19 – March 19
End of private rented accommodation	35	43	36	37
End of non-assured shorthold private tenancy	3	4	1	5
Friends or family no longer willing to accommodate	23	34	22	41
Non-violent relationship breakdown with partner	7	16	19	13
Domestic abuse	11	23	19	16
Other violence or harassment	2	1	1	0
End of social rented tenancy	2	8	20	6
Eviction from supported housing	9	10	11	6
Left institutional care with no accommodation	1	5	2	2
Other reason*	85 (this figure includes cases dealt with under previous homelessness legislation which were recorded differently)	11	9	24

*A number of reasons are included in the other category that include, housed in emergency (fire or flood), Mortgage repossession, property in disrepair, property unsuitable.

4.4 Although loss of settled accommodation for any reason is a concern and efforts are made to prevent it happening, the figures show that the main reasons for homelessness within Amber Valley is consistently, the loss of private rented accommodation, families no longer willing to accommodate, relationship breakdown and victims of domestic abuse.

4.5 **Loss of Private Rented Accommodation**

4.5.1 Loss of private rented accommodation is usually because of one of two reasons, either a breach of tenancy conditions including rent arrears, or the end of the fixed term when the landlord wants the property back. Although by far the most common reason given by a landlord for wanting his/her property back is because they claim they want to sell it, there is little evidence to show this to always be the case. It is more likely that the landlord for whatever reason simply would prefer another tenant. There is evidence that tenants who complain to the Council or other housing advice agencies may be subject to 'retaliatory evictions' although this would rarely be given as the reason a landlord served a notice of seeking possession. The simplest way for a landlord to repossess a property is to serve notice at the end of a fixed term (a section 21 notice) as this does not require any other reason to be given.

Table 2. Reason for loss of private rented accommodation 2018/19

	April 18 – June 18	July 18 - September 18	October 18 – December 19	January 19 – March 19
Total	35	43	36	37
Rent arrears	2	7	9	4
Breach of tenancy not related to rent arrears	1	0	0	0
Landlord wishes to sell	26	25	22	26
Tenant abandoned	0	0	0	1
Illegal eviction	0	1	0	0
Other/not known	6	10	5	6

4.5.2 The Council has supported a scheme called 'Call Before You Serve' provided by DASH (Decent and Safe Homes) and DLC (Derbyshire Law Centre). The service, which covers Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire authorities is a mediation service between tenants and landlords with the aim of resolving disputes that results in the landlord either withdrawing notices or 'holding back' on further legal action.

4.5.3 There are actions the Council will support to help reduce rent arrears which may include financial support that has perhaps accrued due to a short-term reduction in income or other financial shock. The Council also funds a money advice service provided by Citizens Advice Derbyshire Districts and the Court Desks at both Derbyshire County Court and Chesterfield County Court whereby tenants are supported at court hearings.

4.5.4 The housing solutions team works closely with housing standards to ensure that private tenants are supported in terms of regulation relating to repair and standards. The Councils 'Private Rented Sector Housing Plan' recognises the strong link between homelessness and the private rented sector.

4.5.5 Although there have recently been amendments to tenancy law that has supported tenants, current legislation makes it a constant challenge to prevent homelessness by keeping private tenants in their accommodation when the landlord has decided to embark on the legal process to repossess their property. Homelessness relief cases that are successful when a tenant is served with a correct notice invariably means alternative accommodation is provided. There has been success in negotiating with private landlords to allow tenants to remain in their property whilst alternative accommodation is sought and therefore avoiding the need to provide temporary accommodation.

4.6 **Families/friends no longer willing to accommodate**

4.6.1 In the first instance (unless allegations of violence are made) the Council will mediate with family/friends to try and get a family/friend to accommodate long term or for sufficient time to allow a planned move to settled accommodation to be made. Most homelessness applicants who have been asked to leave by family/friends are young single households.

4.7 **Domestic Abuse**

4.7.1 The Council along with appropriate partners will support victims of domestic abuse whether through finding safe alternative accommodation or ensuring that advice is available that allows someone to remain safe in their home. The Council accepts that many victims of domestic abuse will come from out of area and will need dealing with in an empathetic and respectful manner. Derbyshire Law Centre receives funding support from the Council to assist victims of domestic abuse get the legal support they require that can allow injunctions to be obtained quickly and effectively allowing a safe return home.

4.8 **Homelessness Prevention in Amber Valley**

4.8.1 Whilst it is always likely that a significant number of homelessness applicants will approach the Council as 'actually' homeless, it is reassuring that many people are aware that early intervention can lead to a housing crisis being avoided. This can be shown by the number of homelessness applicants who are assessed as having a prevention duty owed. The housing solutions team has and will continue to make people and organisations aware of the services provided and the benefits of early intervention through good advice and information.

Table 3: Applicants approaching the Council as homeless 2018/19

	April 18 – June 18	July 18 - September 18	October 18 – December 18	January 19 – March 19
Number of homelessness assessments	184	158	140	152
Applicants assessed to have a duty owed.	178 (This figure includes cases that were dealt with using previous homelessness legislation that recorded cases differently)	153	140	151

Prevention duty owed*	121	108	92	106
Relief duty owed	57	45	48	45

*the national average of those owed a homelessness duty that are assessed as having a prevention duty is 55%. In Amber Valley the percentage of those owed a homelessness duty that are assessed as having a prevention duty is 68%. This is a positive position and reflects the work undertaken by the team and the importance of encouraging those at risk of homelessness to approach the Council as early as possible.

4.8.2 Where it is accepted that an applicant is owed a prevention duty the housing solutions team will work with the applicant to secure settled accommodation for a period of 6 months or more. Table 4 identifies the number of homelessness applicants whose prevention duty came to an end after they successfully secured accommodation

Table 4: Homeless prevention duty came to an end 2018/19

	April 18 – June 18	July 18 – September 18	October 18 – December 18	January 19 – March 19
Total number of homeless prevention duty cases ended	44	109	114	81
Total number of homelessness prevention cases ended with settled accommodation (6-months or more)	38	73	77	64

4.8.3 There are various reasons why homelessness prevention duty cases do not end with secure accommodation. These are included in Table 5:

Table 5: Prevention duty coming to an end without settled accommodation being secured.

	April 18 – June 18	July 18 – September 18	October 18 – December 18	January 19 – March 19
Homeless including intentionally homeless	3	9	7	3
Refused suitable offer	0	1	3	1
Contact lost	3	9	15	5
Withdrew application/deceased	1	3	2	1

4.8.4 Where accommodation has not been secured within the prevention period it can result in households being 'actually' homeless and then dealt with as a 'relief' case. Some households may refuse a 'suitable' offer which may end the prevention duty but again may mean a relief duty is still owed. Some households will withdraw their application and not require further assistance, and in some

cases the 56 days will come to an end and it will be decided that no further action is required.

4.8.5 Table 6 provides details of the type of accommodation that is secured for households that brings the prevention duty to an end.

Table 6: Destination of households with alternative accommodation secured at end of prevention duty

		April 1 – June 18	July 18- September 18	October 18 – December 18	January 19 – March 19
	Total number of households where prevention duty ended with accommodation secured	38	73	77	64
Private rented sector	Total	9	20	15	17
	Self-contained accommodation	7	19	15	17
	Houses in Multiple Occupation	1	1	0	0
	Lodging with family or friends	1	0	0	0
Social rented accommodation	Total	18	51	65	50
	Register provider tenancy	9	38	31	22
	Supported Housing or Hostel	9	9	14	10
	Staying with family/friends	4	3	6	4
	Owner occupier	0	0	1	1
	Other	1	0	0	1
	Not known	6	1	0	0

4.8.6 It should be noted that most social rented accommodation will be secured for households with dependent children. There are relatively few social rented units for single people under retirement age. It should also be noted that although supported housing and hostel units provide a vital resource, because of the lack of affordable single person accommodation both in the social rented sector and the private rented sector a significant number of single people find it difficult to 'move on' to more settled accommodation. The supported housing and hostel units generally provide low level support and will not consider single people with high level support needs. Accommodation for single people with high level support needs is lacking in Amber Valley which can result in inappropriate accommodation being provided because of necessity.

4.8.7 Although homeless households with dependants who are eligible are generally well placed on the housing register, there are exclusions on the housing register particularly for those households with a previous tenancy related debt or those with a history of anti-social behaviour. An ongoing challenge for the housing solutions team is to work with applicants in order to get the exclusions lifted. This is often a part of the PHP and can include setting up payment plans, obtaining

debt advice, working with other agencies etc. The housing solutions team will review all new applicants on the housing register (including applicants who are homeless/potentially homeless) to determine what action is appropriate if exclusion is being considered.

4.8.8 Table 7 identifies the type of household that has been accommodated under the prevention duty in Amber Valley.

Table 7: Type of households with accommodation secured at end of prevention duty

		April 18 – June 18	July 18 – September 18	September 18 – December 18	January 19 – March 19
	Total	38	73	77	64
Single parent with dependent children	Male	0	2	3	1
	Female	10	21	20	20
	Other/Gender not known	0	0	0	0
Single Adult	Male	15	16	22	16
	Female	8	16	19	15
	Other/Gender not known	0	0	0	1
	Couple/two adults with dependent children	3	8	7	7
	Couple/two adults without dependent children	2	10	6	3
	Three or more adults with dependent children	0	0	0	0
	Three or more adults without dependent children	0	0	0	1
	Not known	0	0	0	0

4.9 Homelessness Relief in Amber Valley

4.9.1 Table 3 identifies the numbers of applicants who were owed a relief duty.

4.9.2 When a relief duty is owed, the Council must determine whether the applicant is in 'priority need'. Although the applicant is an individual the assessment must include all those who normally reside with the applicant. There are certain categories when an applicant (or those normally residing with them) will automatically be considered priority need, they include:

- A household containing a pregnant woman
- A household containing dependent children
- A person aged 16 or 17 who is not a relevant child

- A person aged under 21 who was looked after
- As a result of an emergency such as flood fire or other emergency

4.9.3 Other applicants may be priority need because they are considered 'vulnerable' as a result of:

- Old age
- Mental Health
- Learning disability or physical disability
- Aged over 21 and previously been in care
- Served in the armed forces
- Served a custodial sentence
- Having been remanded in custody
- Ceasing to occupy accommodation because of violence or threats of violence.

4.9.4 It is a matter for the Council (housing solutions officer) to decide whether an applicant is vulnerable and in doing so must consider all relevant facts and circumstances. What is considered a relevant fact or circumstance can be open to a legal challenge.

4.9.5 **Assistance for non-priority need applicants under the relief duty**

Most non-priority need applicants will be single households or households with non-dependents who are not considered vulnerable. The support given to non-priority need applicants at the relief stage will be similar to the support given at the prevention stage and include help getting private rented accommodation, referrals into hostels and low level supported accommodation, and higher banding on the housing register (lack of single person general need accommodation in the social rented sector means that the possibility of an offer of a housing association property can be difficult to obtain).

4.9.6 **Assistance for priority-need applicants under the relief duty**

Priority need applicants receive similar support to non-priority need applicants although they will be placed in a higher band on the housing register. Because most priority need applicants are households with dependent children, they are more likely to be rehoused in housing association properties. There are however significant numbers of homeless households owed a relief duty who are excluded from the housing register due to former tenancy related debt or a history of anti-social behavior. These households are dealt with in a similar manner to those owed a prevention duty described in para. 4.8.7.

Table 8: Type of accommodation secured for households at end of relief duty

	April 18 – June 18	July 18 – September 18	October 18 – December 18	January 19 – March 19
Total number of households where relief duty ended with accommodation secured.	25	31	34	21
Accommodation secured by LA or organisation delivering housing options service	7	14	16	3
Helped to secure accommodation found by applicant with financial payment	0	1	0	1
Helped to secure accommodation without financial payment	1	2	6	3
Supported Housing Provided	13	13	11	11
Other activity through which accommodation secured	4	0	0	2
No Activity	0	1	1	1

4.9.7 Providing temporary accommodation for priority need applicants as part of relief duty.

Temporary accommodation can be staying with family or friends or staying in current accommodation on an agreed temporary basis. Where neither of these options are available applicants can be placed in one of ten temporary units provided by Futures Housing Group on behalf of the Council. In a necessity, applicants can be placed in emergency accommodation which is usually Bed and Breakfast. Bed and Breakfast accommodation will only be used as a last resort and when a placement is made it should only be until more suitable permanent or temporary accommodation becomes available.

Table 9: Bed and Breakfast Placements 2018/19 as part of relief duty.

	April - June	July- September	October - December	January - March
Number of placements each month	10	14	15	23
Average length of stay (days)	11	12	18	14
Single person placements	8	10	9	23
Average length of stay (days)	12	7	26	13
Pregnant woman no dependants	0	1	0	0
Average length of stay (days)	0	1	0	0
Applicant with Children	2	1	4	6

Average length of stay (days)	9	1	5	2
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4.9.8 Table 9 identifies that most placements made in to bed and breakfast accommodation as part of the relief duty are for single people who the housing solutions team have assessed as being 'vulnerable'. There are several reasons for this being the case:

- Single people are more likely to approach the Council when they are 'actually' homeless and therefore will be assessed under the relief duty.
- Single people assessed as vulnerable under the relief duty are more likely to have high level support needs and there is not suitable temporary accommodation in Amber Valley able to meet their needs.
- Lack of accommodation in both the social rented sector and the private rented sector for single people who are under retirement age means people in hostels and other forms of temporary accommodation are unable to 'move on'.
- There are applications from vulnerable single people who cannot manage tenancies and have repeatedly lost accommodation that has been made available to them.

4.10 The Main Housing Duty

Table 10: The Main Housing Duty 2018/19

	April – June	July - September	October - December	January to March
Total main duty for eligible households	15	9	10	13
Homeless and priority need and unintentionally homeless (acceptance)	7	4	3	3
Homeless and priority need and intentionally homeless	0	1	1	5
Homeless and no priority need	2	3	6	5
Not homeless	6	1	0	0

4.10.1 Households who are assessed as owed the main housing duty are those whose housing needs have not been met during the prevention/relief period because they have a specific requirement that has not become available. These households include families who require large properties (4+ bedrooms), single people with high level support needs and households who are not eligible for the housing register. In these situations the household will remain in temporary accommodation until an offer of settled accommodation is made. The Council will aim to minimise the numbers of people who are owed a main housing duty.

5 Rough Sleepers

5.1 In August 2018 the Government published its 'Rough Sleeping Strategy'. The commitment from the government is to half rough sleeping by 2022 and completely end it by 2027. In order to achieve this ambitious aim the government has recognised the need for local government, business, community faith and voluntary groups and the general public to work together in new ways.

- 5.2 Rough sleepers are defined by Government for the purposes of calculating for counts as ‘*People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or campments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or bashes)*’. The definition does not include people in hostels or shelters, sofa surfers, people in campsites or other sites used for recreational purposes or organised protest, squatters or travellers.
- 5.3 An estimated figure is provided by local authorities to the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) each year based on a single night (usually in November). The figure for Amber Valley is usually between 2- 4 and is determined by a range of ‘fieldworkers’ who report their sightings to the Council. Until March 2018 a County wide outreach service was delivered by housing support providers (Riverside and P3). The service would respond to all people reported as rough sleepers (usually through the national ‘Homelink’ service) with an aim to get people sleeping rough to engage with services. Since April 2018 there has been no specific service in dealing with rough sleepers in Amber Valley.
- 5.4 Although a count/estimate of rough sleeping on a single night is a useful indicator to monitor levels of rough sleeping, it does not provide any detailed information on the rough sleepers or what can be done to help prevent rough sleeping. Lack of fieldworkers who are specifically trained to engage and support rough sleepers means that there is a limited amount that can be achieved when someone reports a rough sleeper to the Council.
- 5.5 A partnership of the Derbyshire authorities and Staffordshire Moorlands have been successful in obtaining funding (initially for 12 months) from the ‘Rough Sleeping Initiative’ and the ‘Rapid Rehousing Pathway’. Five outreach workers and six rough sleeping co-ordinators will be employed. The partnership will aim to gain an understanding of those affected by rough sleeping and those at risk of becoming rough sleepers in order to create pathways and services that tackle the problem and effectively prevent its reoccurrence.

6. **Financial Position**

- 6.1 The delivery of the homelessness service is funded through a combination of sources including the General fund, Flexible Homelessness Support Grant, New Burdens Funding plus additional in year allocations and grants that the council has the opportunity to bid for. The Council works very closely with other Derbyshire Districts and Derby City Council to bid for non-recurrent funding regimes that the Government have made available to Councils reflecting the increasing focus on issues like rough sleeping.
- 6.2 The allocation of funding from Government to deliver the new duties has increased but there have been increased costs especially in terms of provision of temporary accommodation and use of the spend to save budget. The Council continues to invest in Derbyshire Districts Citizens Advice recognising their important role and has increased investment in the Derbyshire Law Centre recognising the growing need to provide legal support to tenants. This is balanced by investment in Call Before You Serve as a service that supports landlords.
- 6.3 There is a forward plan for the budget that includes known funding but there is considerable uncertainty about the future allocations from Central Government and the Council has to plan for the worst and a reduction in the funding. The

Council has 3-year budget that takes into account variation in demand and seeks to balance the budget despite future uncertainty. The Council believes that the Government will recognise the Housing authorities that are performing well in terms of prevention and relief.

6.4 The estimated budget for the service for 2020/21 is shown below.

Staffing Costs £212,700

Funding on External Services £188,500 (including support and temporary accommodation)

Known External Grants £157,677

Action Plan

Objective 1: To ensure there is effective partnership working that will prevent homelessness				
	Action	Lead	Outcome	Progress
1.1	Provide an effective forum that includes all agencies involved with clients who are at risk of homelessness	AVBC	The forum will make sure that agencies are kept informed about changes to the homelessness service. The forum will also help generate positive relationships where shared interests including concerns can be discussed	Since the introduction of the HRA the Council has introduced a Homelessness Forum in partnership with Erewash Borough Council. Both Councils share many partners and by working together there will be a better use of time and an opportunity to develop joint services.
1.2	Agree clear and effective referral routes with agencies whose clients are at risk of homelessness	AVBC, Prisons' Youth Offending, Job Centres, Social Services, Hospitals, Armed Forces	Will meet legislative responsibilities. Will identify clear agency responsibility. Will help prevent/ relieve homelessness by making sure that clients are referred when homelessness is first raised	The Council has worked with all Derbyshire authorities to develop a common referral pathway and ensured that partners from all over the County are familiar with it and are able use it.
1.3	Develop partnership working with agencies that will deliver a holistic service to people at risk of homelessness.	AVBC, Prisons' Youth Offending, Job Centres, Social Services, Hospitals, Armed Forces	People who receive suitable support will be at less risk of becoming 'actually' homeless	The percentage of cases being resolved at prevention stage is a positive indication that the Council is pursuing the correct direction of travel but must continue this approach with the support of partner agencies.
Objective 2: To provide effective and accessible homelessness prevention advice				
2.1	Improve accessibility of good information that can prevent/relieve homelessness	AVBC	People able to easily access good information on homelessness and homelessness support are more	The Council has improved its website to become a more user-friendly platform.

			likely to be able to prevent homelessness People who are homeless or threatened with homelessness will be better able to prevent/relieve homelessness themselves	
2.2	Improve quality of information that can prevent or relieve homelessness	AVBC	Good quality information on homelessness and homelessness will help people access services that will help them prevent /relieve homelessness	The Council has improved the information that is provided on its website and targeted groups of households who are at a greater risk of homelessness with specific advice relating to them.
Objective 3: To provide a range of options that can effectively prevent or relieve homelessness				
3.1	Increase the numbers of affordable general needs single person affordable homes.	AVBC, Housing association partners	Additional 1-bedroom general need affordable accommodation will help single people to 'move on' from temporary accommodation, it will also prevent the need for temporary accommodation if there are sufficient numbers.	Efforts will be made to include 1-bedroom general need properties in all new developments that include affordable units.
3.2	Help homelessness applicants access social rented/affordable accommodation that will prevent/relieve homelessness	AVBC, Housing association partners	People who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and who are eligible for social housing are well placed on the housing register to 'bid' for vacant accommodation.	In 2018/19 there were 139 households who had a homelessness situation prevented thanks to being housed from the housing register into social housing. In the same period there were 57 households who had their homelessness situation relieved thanks to being housed from the housing register into social housing
3.3	Help homeless applicants access the private rented sector that will prevent/relieve homelessness	AVBC, Housing Support providers	People who are homeless or threatened with homelessness will be able to access the private rented sector who without assistance would be unable to do so.	In 2018/19 there were 121 households who had a homelessness situation prevented thanks to being housed in private rented accommodation. In the same period 26 households had their homelessness situation

				relieved thanks to being housed in the private rented sector
3.4	Increase the availability and range of supported accommodation in order to prevent/relieve homelessness	AVBC, Housing support providers	People who are homeless or threatened with homelessness receive the support they need to live independently	The Council is currently in discussion with housing support providers to deliver accommodation for those with high level support needs.
Objective 4: Minimise the use of bed and breakfast as emergency accommodation				
4.1	Improve the availability of temporary accommodation	AVBC, Housing support providers	Temporary accommodation that is available and can be accessed when it is required will avoid the use of emergency accommodation such as bed and breakfast	Processes have been agreed with Futures that has enabled temporary accommodation provided by the housing association on behalf of the Council to be made available more quickly. There is however still room for further improvement. The Council has agreed to provide and manage its own temporary accommodation
4.2	Work with housing support providers to deliver emergency accommodation.	AVBC Riverside P3 Framework Action	Housing Support providers able to provide emergency accommodation for vulnerable single homeless people that will relieve rough sleeping and avoid the use of bed and breakfast placements	There is ongoing discussion with several major supported housing providers who operate in the borough to provide short term emergency accommodation
4.3	Provide incentives for friends/relatives of homelessness applicants to provide emergency accommodation	AVBC	Friends/relatives able to provide temporary/emergency accommodation can prevent vulnerable households being placed in bed and breakfast accommodation and reduce the risk of rough sleeping	Where there is no risk of violence the Council will try and mediate with family and friends to prevent/relieve homelessness. In 2018/19 there were 18 homelessness households who had their homelessness situation prevented/ relieved by staying with family or friends
Objective 5: Provide an effective service that will prevent/relieve rough sleeping				
5.1	Ensure that there is accommodation	AVBC City Mission	Rough sleeping is usually a last resort and it can be avoided if	The Council is working to provide options for those at risk

	provision provides an alternative to rough sleeping		suitable accommodation is provided	
5.2	Engage with rough sleepers at an early stage	AVBC City Mission	Early effective intervention with rough sleepers will increase the likelihood of it not becoming a long- term problem	The Council is working with a number of organisations to identify rough sleepers and intervene to help those at risk secure accommodation