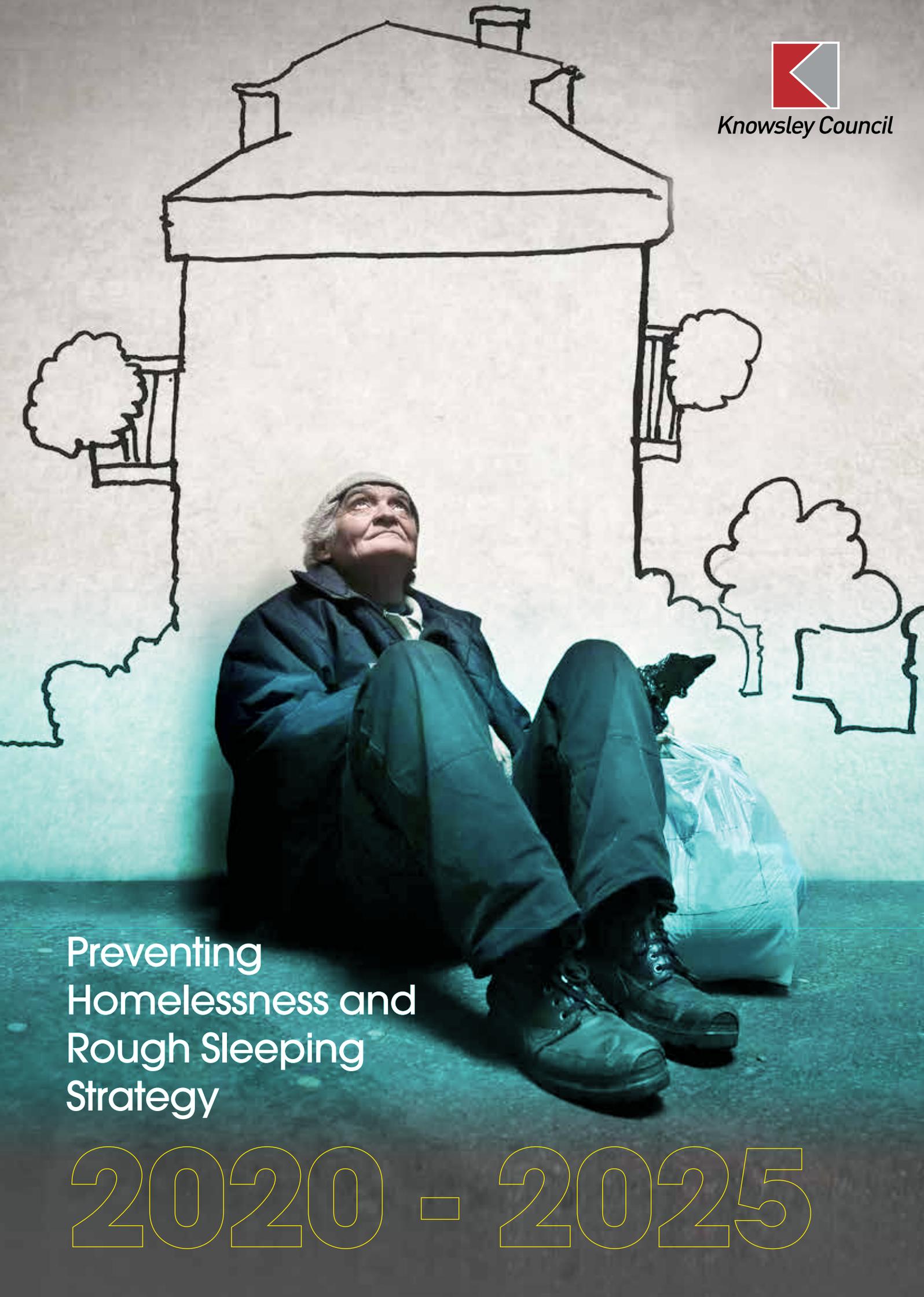




Knowsley Council



Preventing
Homelessness and
Rough Sleeping
Strategy

2020 - 2025

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Foreword

Preventing homelessness in the first instance has been at the forefront of our approach to tackling homelessness for many years and remains a priority. I am particularly proud of the work of the Housing Options Service over the past three years. They have supported almost 6,000 households with essential advice and guidance with more than 1,700 households being prevented from becoming homeless which is a huge achievement in itself. We have also seen the positive impact that the Sit Up Service has had on tackling rough sleeping in the Borough, last year alone 65 people were provided with a safe place to stay, without this service they would have had no alternative but to sleep rough.

Having a safe place to stay and call home is one of the most basic human necessities, and yet as we enter a new decade we still face challenges in preventing individuals and families becoming homeless. The new 'Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy' for Knowsley sets out our intention for tackling homelessness. We will place an emphasis on early intervention, through the offer of personalised help to address individual and families housing issues, increasing their ability to better sustain their home and to receive the support to improve their own wellbeing.

We recognise that tackling this important issue can only be achieved by making homelessness 'Everybody's Business' and working 'Better Together'. Therefore we will continue to work with all stakeholders and partners to tackle the underpinning reasons for homelessness. Through continued commitment, dedication and tenacity I am confident that together we will be successful in increasing the levels of households in Knowsley prevented from becoming homeless and in the unfortunate circumstances where this cannot be avoided we will be better placed to secure a new permanent home for everyone.

Councillor Tony Brennan
Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Development

Introduction

Homelessness is not just a housing issue, it is an issue that is affected by a range of social and economic factors which interact. This Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out the priorities for Knowsley over the next five years and ensures that the Council continues to fulfil its statutory duties.

The aim of this strategy is to address the root causes of homelessness, with the ultimate aim of ensuring that people more susceptible to homelessness receive the right help at the right time to avoid housing crisis. Where homelessness occurs we aim to ensure that this is for the shortest period possible to reduce the negative impact that this may have on households. The strategy is informed by the findings of the homelessness review undertaken in 2019 which identified the following key objectives:

- Prevent homelessness at an earlier stage
- Work cohesively with partners so that strategically, tackling homelessness becomes “**Everybody’s Business**”
- Raise the awareness of homelessness and how households can be supported
- Continue to improve the accommodation and service offer through sharing best practice with other Local Authorities and developing strong partnerships
- Improve the way in which data is captured so that a better understanding of homelessness can be gained, which will inform future commissioning and service delivery.

In order to take forward the Strategy for 2020 – 2025 clear tasks have been identified and are set out in the five year action plan which can be viewed in Appendix 1

Legislative background:

The introduction of The Homeless Reduction Act 2017 (HRA) was the first major piece of homelessness legislation for 15 years. The Act introduced new duties for Local Authorities to help prevent and relieve homelessness at an earlier stage.

The new duties are welcomed and naturally compliment the forward thinking/ upstream approach Knowsley have adopted over the past 10 years which has focussed on prevention as a primary objective. The Act simply reaffirms the positives of the preventative approach which improve individuals and family’s health and wellbeing. The new duties place a focus on agreed collaborative actions undertaken by the Council and the individual aimed at resolving the crisis rather than passing judgement on the reasons behind the crisis.

The key changes introduced by the Act include:

- **An extension of the period** during which an authority should treat someone as threatened with homelessness from 28 to 56 days
- **A new duty to prevent homelessness** for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness, regardless of priority need
- **A new duty to relieve homelessness** for all eligible homeless applicants, regardless of priority need. This help could be, for example, the provision of a rent deposit or debt advice
- **A new duty on public services to notify** a local authority if they come into contact with someone they think may be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Welfare Reform

Whilst tackling homelessness remains high on the Government agenda, there is challenge from other policies which are considered to effect individual’s housing situations. The Government’s welfare reform agenda has had significant implications for housing and homelessness. The changes which present the biggest challenges are:

- Introduction and roll out of Universal Credit which is paid in arrears and now includes housing costs paid directly to the Tenant which is reportedly increasing the levels of arrears owed to Landlords
- Local Housing Allowance (LHA) freezes which has led to the amount of LHA being paid falling behind market rents, meaning ‘Affordable’ rental properties are in many cases beyond the reach of those on the lowest incomes
- Local Housing Allowance entitlement for single applicants under the age of 35 results in limited housing options available within the Borough
- The reduction of Discretionary Housing Payment funding and the expectation that this funding pot is the solution for a growing cohort of people negatively affected by welfare changes
- The benefit cap which has seen many households income reducing particularly larger families, resulting in homelessness due to their inability to maintain their rent payments.

Additional legislative and regulatory considerations

Knowsley's strategy has been developed in the context of a wide range of national, regional and local policies, strategies and plans. These are summarised in the diagram below.



Picture of homelessness in Knowsley 2018 - 2019



The number of households that accessed the Housing Options Service

2274



989

households were assessed as either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless within ...

56 days

Main reason for homelessness



- Family no longer willing or able to accommodate
- End of private rented tenancy
- Non-violent relationship breakdown



Household type

- People aged 25-34 are more likely to present to the housing options service as homeless/ threatened with homelessness
- Single men are more likely to present to the Housing Options Service compared to single women



Average number of households in Temporary Accommodation (per week)

30

Support Needs

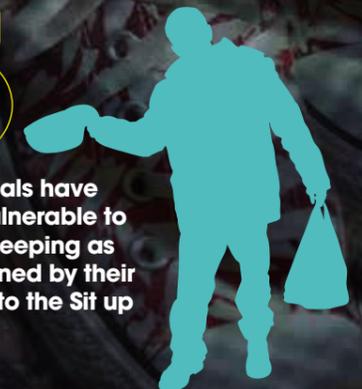
The main three support needs that clients

present with are, mental health issues, physical ill health/disability, victim of domestic abuse



65

individuals have been vulnerable to rough sleeping as determined by their access to the Sit up Service



Average wait time for Social Housing Property dependant on banding

BANDING	DAYS
Band A	230
Band B	287
Band C	289

Homelessness in Knowsley for 2018/2019

Key Facts

Demand on the Housing Options Service

1	<p>The number of households accessing the Housing Options Service has risen from 1831 in 2017/2018 to 2274 by 2018/2019 which represents a 24.19% increase.</p>	<p>Trends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally the numbers of people accepted as statutory homeless (either under the prevention / relief or full housing duty) has risen from 5,000 per year to over 18,000 Knowsley recorded the second highest number of people presenting to their homeless service compared to Authorities within the Liverpool City Region It has been reported nationally that the increase in statutory homelessness, in part, is attributed to the sharp rise in the number of people made homeless through the loss of accommodation in the private rented sector. Homeless acceptances due to mortgage repossession or evictions due to Social Housing rent arrears are said to be at a historic low.
2	<p>In 2017/2018 the Housing Options Service completed 989 options interviews for households that were threatened with homelessness within 56 days or immediately homeless. Following the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 duties in 2018/2019 there was a sharp increase in the number of households progressing to an options interview. In total 1,692 households were interviewed, a 71.8% increase on the previous year.</p>	

Key homeless facts for Knowsley

3	<p>The Council owed the prevention duty to 68% of the households they assessed, 31% of households were owed the relief duty and only 2% went on to be assessed as being owed the full main homelessness duty</p>	<p>Trends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main reasons for homelessness in Knowsley are reflective of the national picture Authorities across Liverpool City Region report that single applicants under the age of 35 are more likely to seek help from the homeless service and it's less likely for someone over the age of 65 to seek help Knowsley Housing Options service have reported lower numbers of people accessing their service who are able to work and registered unemployed compared to Liverpool City Region Authorities, as a consequence they see a higher number of people accessing the service who are not in employment within which a high proportion are unable to work due to long term illness/disability Mental health and physical ill health disability are the two main support needs that clients accessing the Housing Options Service report, this is consistent with the support needs of clients accessing the homeless services across the Liverpool City Region At a local, regional and national level it has been highlighted that young people are lacking the skills to manage their own tenancy.
4	<p>The Housing Options Service prevent 75% of households from becoming homeless by enabling them to move to alternative accommodation, this is their primary prevention solution.</p>	

Key homeless facts for Knowsley

5	The three main reasons for homeless in Knowsley is; family no longer willing or able to accommodate, end of private rented tenancy and a non-violent relationship breakdown with partner. These reasons mirror the reasons for homelessness across the UK (Crisis 2019). ¹
6	You are more likely to become homeless in Knowsley if you are aged between 25-34 years old. You are less likely if you are over the age of 65, this age group only represent 5% of the total number of households accessing the service
7	There were 21 (16/17 year olds) that presented to the Council in housing crisis in 2018/19 which is a 20% increase from 2017/2018 figures. Out of the 21, 7 (33%) were provided advice and assistance which enabled them to be reconciled with their family. The remaining 67% (14) were jointly assessed by Children Social Care and the Housing Options Service, and provided with emergency accommodation
8	40% of the households seen by the Housing Options Service are from Kirkby and 34% are from Huyton
9	In 2018/2019 44.3% of households presenting to the Housing Options Service were not in work (18.6% registered unemployed, and 27.7% not working due to long-term illness or disability)
10	In 2018/2019 the three main support needs that clients presented to the Housing Options Service with were mental health, physical health/disability and domestic abuse

Rough Sleeping

11	On the last rough sleeper count 2018/2019 there were no identifiable rough sleepers in Knowsley, however in 2018/19 65 single persons accessed the emergency Sit Up service.	Trends <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally homelessness is ever more prominent on the political agenda and the attention is in large part a response to the ongoing rise in officially estimated rough sleeper counts. It has been reported that since 2010 rough sleepers have now increased by 169%.
12	Knowsley have a sit up service offer that provides overnight shelter for anyone that would otherwise have no choice but to sleep rough. This provision was utilised by 65 individuals for a cumulative total of 75 nights in 2018/2019, most often in the summer months by males	

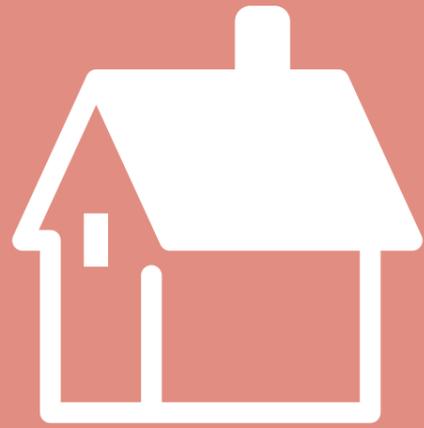
Temporary Accommodation

13	There is an increasing demand for Temporary Accommodation. In 2017/18 there were 120 households placed in Temporary Accommodation throughout the year, this increased to 204 households being placed into Temporary Accommodation in 2018/2019 The Council have responded by approving plans to increase dispersed Temporary Accommodation provision up to 36 units by February 2020 and recommission the management and support function to allow for 40 units to be managed	Trends <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally homeless placements into Temporary Accommodation has risen sharply at twice the rate of homelessness acceptances. Research suggest that Temporary Accommodation placements would rise to over 100,000 by 2020.² Bed and Breakfast placements have increased rapidly particularly since the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act, research suggest that placements now stand 250% higher than figures reported in 2009.
14	The timing of the surge in demand for Temporary Accommodation coincided with the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act. At the same time Knowsley has seen a reduction in the number of social/affordable rented properties becoming available for let	
15	In 2018/19 49% of the households that have been placed into Temporary Accommodation are single adults and the remaining are couples and families	

Impact of Welfare Reform

16	Single homeless people under the age of 35 that are reliant on Universal Credit are finding it increasingly difficult to find affordable accommodation due to the lack of shared accommodation in the private sector and one bedroom accommodation within the social housing sector	<p>Trends</p> <p>It has been reported nationally that people under the age of 35 are finding it difficult to find affordable accommodation options when faced with homelessness if reliant on Universal Credit</p> <p>Home ownership has declined for younger people and the number of new genuinely low-cost homes being built has fallen to near record lows</p> <p>Another concern raised from the Housing Options Service and at regional and national level is that young people are lacking the skills to manage their own tenancy. If young people are denied the chance of making their own home due to unaffordability, then it is expected that their independence and confidence is hampered and the accompanied dependence on parents then leads to increased stress and mental health issues for all those that are concerned.</p>
17	Single households that face homelessness with low level support needs do not have a realistic Temporary Accommodation offer within Knowsley, supported accommodation is in high demand in Knowsley and available for those assessed to have higher needs	
18	Young people are reportedly living with their parents for longer and home ownership for young people has declined	





Key Aims and Objectives

The most recent homeless review that has been carried out has identified four common themes these being Homes, People, Services, and Research/Quality Monitoring. Each action that has been identified for Knowsley has been listed under the most relevant theme.

Homes

- ✓ Address the shortage of one/two bedroom and shared accommodation
- ✓ Aim to increase the supply of privately rented accommodation
- ✓ Explore the need for specialist supported accommodation for clients that have mental health, substance misuse and victims of domestic abuse
- ✓ Ensure that the Temporary Accommodation provision is in the right locations, and offers support to improve households tenancy management skills so that they can sustain their own accommodation in the future
- ✓ Make best use of Supported Accommodation, ensuring that the accommodation is being utilised by households that require this level of support, and that the support is tailored around independence and there is a focus on 'move on'
- ✓ Explore the options of developing step down low level Supported Accommodation for households that no longer require the level of support offered from a hostel or refuge.



People

- ✓ Keep the service offer for people sleeping rough under consideration, and ensure there are clear referral pathways into partner agencies so that the right support can be offered at the right time
- ✓ Aim to reduce the number of households becoming homeless due to family breakdowns through better negotiations with family members and improved access to early help support services
- ✓ Ensure that everyone knows what their housing options are, and how to access advice and assistance from the Housing Options Service if needed
- ✓ Look to develop an accommodation offer for homeless households under the age of 35 that do not meet priority need criteria.



Services

- ✓ Increase partnership working and make “Homelessness Everybody’s Business”, raise awareness of the impact homelessness has on households and ensure that all agencies know how to appropriately refer households into the Housing Options Service
- ✓ Ensure that support and accommodation providers are practicing within a psychologically informed way
- ✓ Invest in the continuous development of staff that are employed to undertake homelessness assessments and investigations to ensure that the homeless service is operating lawfully and providing a high quality service for clients
- ✓ Develop the prevention tools to support those that are at threat of losing their homes through mortgage repossession
- ✓ Aim to support more households at threat of homelessness to keep in their own homes
- ✓ Ensure that all nominated agencies are abiding by their duty to refer homeless households or those households that are at threat of homelessness within 56 days to the Housing Options Service
- ✓ Make best use of available funds to prevent homelessness
- ✓ Ensure that services and accommodation provision is located in the right areas.



Research & Quality monitoring

- ✓ Undertake robust contract management so that the homeless service and accommodation provisions are offering both quality and value for money, offered to the right people in the right locations
- ✓ Better understand Homelessness within the Borough and the barriers that people face with accessing services for effective commissioning
- ✓ Seek opportunities to raise education and attainment of clients accessing the Housing Options Service
- ✓ Understand how the provision of the Sit-Up Service impacts rough sleeping within the Borough
- ✓ Define what we mean by ‘complex households’
- ✓ Ensure that the Social Housing allocation scheme is administered lawfully and provides adequate preference dependant on households need
- ✓ Review the effectiveness of the homeless prevention tools, and seek opportunities to develop the prevention approach based on evidence of good practice from other Local Authorities.

Appendix 1 – Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2020 - 2025

The initial action plan focusses primarily on year one and two, however the Strategic Housing Team plan to provide an annual progress report to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Development to report on progress, with the aim to gain approval for the following years actions. This process will allow consideration for any changes that could affect homelessness within Knowsley.

Homes

No	Action	How	Outcome	Year	Key Agencies
1	<p>Accommodation shortage - Explore options to address the shortage of:</p> <p>One and two bedroom affordable accommodation and shared accommodation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Social and Private Sector Landlords to increase supply of one and two bed accommodation Work with partners to develop suitable exempt supported shared accommodation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased access to affordable one and two bedroom accommodation to accommodate people facing homelessness 	1	<p>Lead - Strategic Housing</p> <p>Social Housing Providers</p>
2	<p>Private Rented Sector - Improve the offer to increase the supply of private rented accommodation to homeless households</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the Landlord Accreditation Scheme Undertake a review of the Bond Guarantee Scheme to test its effectiveness at supporting homeless households into private rented sector accommodation Work more cohesively with Environmental Health to ensure that any property condition issues or illegal evictions reported to the Housing Options Service are actioned appropriately in accordance with Housing law. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased access to good standard of accommodation for homeless households in the private rented sector Increased awareness of Accreditation Scheme 	1	<p>Lead - Strategic Housing</p> <p>Housing Options Service</p> <p>Environmental Health Service</p>

No	Action	How	Outcome	Year	Key Agencies
3	<p>Specialist Supported Accommodation - Explore the need for specialist supported accommodation for clients that are fleeing domestic violence, have mental health issues or substance misuse issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the current Specialist Supported Accommodation offer, and ensure that this offer meets the support and accommodation needs of the clients Identify best practice from other Local Authorities to support the commissioning of floating support services and accommodation models. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure there is an offer of high quality Supported Accommodation and floating support for those that need it. 	1	<p>Lead - Whole Life Commissioning</p> <p>Strategic Housing</p> <p>Housing Options Service</p>
4	<p>Temporary Accommodation offer - Review the Temporary Accommodation dwelling portfolio</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the Temporary Accommodation provision and ensure it remains a flexible offer whereby provision can increase and decrease dependant on demand, for those households who we have a reason to believe are in priority need For all households that become homeless, aim to provide a Temporary Accommodation offer in the Township that they present from Only use bed and breakfast provision in the case of emergencies or out of hours Explore the options of developing an out of Borough Temporary Accommodation offer for any households fleeing violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that the Temporary Accommodation offer is fit for purpose in the Borough, offers flexibility and value for money. 	1	<p>Lead - Strategic Housing</p> <p>Housing Options Service</p> <p>Whole Life Commissioning</p>

No	Action	How	Outcome	Year	Key Agencies
5	Move on from Supported Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure there are adequate move on options for people leaving Supported Accommodation provision Ensure commissioned services have a focus on move on and fully aware of the housing options available for each of their clients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More effective use of Supported accommodation which will avoid bed blocking Ensures households are provided with accommodation that best meet their needs. 	1	Lead - Whole Life Commissioning Strategic Housing Housing Options Service
6	Low level support (step down accommodation provision) - Consider developing a step down accommodation offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the option of implementing (low level support) step down accommodation in the Borough. This accommodation offer would be available to households that are utilising Supported Accommodation that are ready to move to live more independently with a lower level of floating support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would provide a cost effective way of accommodating homeless households in the most appropriate accommodation for their needs The Step down accommodation would provide a truer environment for Social Care and other supporting agencies to assess household needs and progress within the community. 	1 & 2	Lead - Strategic Housing Social Housing Providers Whole Life Commissioning
7	Single Households - Develop housing options for homeless households below the age of 35 and not in priority need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the option of providing a Temporary Accommodation offer to bridge the gap for homeless people under the age of 35 that do not meet priority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will ensure that all single homeless households have fair access to affordable accommodation irrespective of their age and priority need status This will ensure that homeless people under the age of 35 are provided with somewhere safe and affordable to stay, will prevent this cohort from falling further into deprivation and prevent their health and wellbeing deteriorating. 	1 & 2	Lead - Strategic Housing Housing Options Service

People

No	Action	How	Outcome	Year	Key Agencies
8	Rough Sleeping - Keep the service offer for people sleeping rough under consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with the LCR Combined Authority partner to ensure effective delivery of the Housing First Project and realise the ambition of 'Always room inside'. Annually communicate to partners about the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol Keep the Sit Up Service demand under review and adapt the service accordingly to ensure there is enough emergency accommodation for people to access directly from the streets, particularly during periods of severe weather. Ensure that the clients using the service are provided with support from the Housing Options Service at the earliest possibility Monitor the number of rough sleepers in the Borough Develop a communication plan around rough sleeping and the support available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that the Council adequately responds to street homelessness/rough sleeping to prevent individuals from having to sleep on the streets. 	All Years	Lead - Whole Life Commissioning Strategic Housing Housing Options Service
9	Young People - Preventing family breakdowns / family evictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build effective links with early help services so that families are provided with timely support to address issues within their households to avert family eviction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will prevent family evictions and allow younger people to move into their own settled accommodation in a far more planned way. 	1 & 2	Lead - Strategic Housing Housing Options Service

No	Action	How	Outcome	Year	Key Agencies
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the option of providing family mediation as a prevention tool, and develop a pool of mediators that have lived experience • Housing Options Service to undertake home visits for all clients that have been excluded from the family home • Investigate what other Authorities are doing to mitigate against family evictions and review the effectiveness of these approaches • Work with Children Social Care to continue to develop homelessness advice and guidance for young people, and progress the 'Thinking of leaving home' communications • Address the issue that young people lack the skills to manage their own tenancy through the offer of training and education around themes such as budgeting, setting up bills, cooking skills, how to find accommodation, how to access support etc • Assess the effectiveness of the resettlement programme in providing young people with the skills to manage a tenancy effectively. Identify what other authorities are doing to raise young people's tenancy management skills 			

No	Action	How	Outcome	Year	Key Agencies
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness to be a topic that is spoken about at an earlier stage in schools and colleges, and as part of a care package, through foster care placements etc. Link in with education to see if there is an appetite to discuss homelessness as part of the curriculum, and link in with the commissioners for children's care home/ foster placement provision to identify what is taught already, and what opportunities there is to develop homelessness learning. 			
10	<p>Homeless Prevention & Accommodation Service - Ensure that there are housing options to meet the needs of the following cohorts:</p> <p>Over 65's (Explore options of sheltered schemes and extra care)</p> <p>People leaving armed forces</p> <p>People fleeing domestic abuse</p> <p>People leaving prison</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide adequate preference to accommodation and support for all excluded groups • Provide Adult Social Care and Public Health with intelligence around older person's homelessness so that an effective response to tackling homelessness in this age group can be actioned • Work with Liverpool City Region Authorities to develop a collaborative approach to improve prison release processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that potentially vulnerable households are prioritised 	1	<p>Lead - Whole Life Commissioning</p> <p>Adult Social Care</p> <p>Strategic Housing</p> <p>Housing Options Service</p> <p>Safer Communities</p>

Services

No	Action	How	Outcome	Year	Key Agencies
11	Homeless to become everybody's business - Ensure that all agencies take responsibility for the reduction of homelessness, in doing this ensuring agencies and members are upskilled so that they understand homelessness in the Borough and know how best to support someone facing homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a communication strategy so that partners are more aware of homelessness so that they can offer practical advice and guidance to their clients around available support and accommodation options in the Borough Partners will be able to successfully refer any households into the Housing Options Service if they are facing homelessness Agree referral mechanism between all key partners, so that clients facing homelessness have easy access to support services in the Borough Monitor the Duty to Refer referrals from nominated agencies to improve the quality of these referrals, and identify any key agencies that may need refresher training Keep under review attendance at partnership meetings to ensure that Officers are utilising their time in the most effective ways, and that the meetings are providing meaningful information for the service Work with partners and homeless services across Liverpool City Region to share best practice Raise public awareness of the support Environmental Health can offer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homelessness will be tackled jointly and seen as a strategic priority 	2	Lead - Strategic Housing Housing Options Service

No	Action	How	Outcome	Year	Key Agencies
12	Create a homelessness working group - to have strategic oversight of homelessness in the Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key agencies to be represented on the homelessness board so that together there is a clear strategic direction on tackling homelessness in Knowsley. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that all agencies have prevention of homelessness on their agendas 	2	Lead - Strategic Housing
13	Skilled employees - Provide annual update training on primary legislation, guidance and case law to Local Authority contract officers employed to undertake homelessness assessments and investigations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council/contract officers to have training needs established through the PRD process - offer appropriate knowledge based training on homelessness legislation, landlord tenant law including court advocacy procedures, welfare reform, housing benefit, income maximisation, debt advice and recent case law Provide annual refresher training module and workshop for all service staff covering their duties and how they should be applied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that new and current staff responsible for investigating homelessness maintains continuous personal development to enable them to undertake their duties and make decisions which are compliant with the law and statutory guidance. 	All Years	Lead - Strategic Housing Housing Options Service
14	Mortgage repossession support - To provide advice and assistance to households faced with mortgage repossession.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the effectiveness of the current approach to supporting households faced with mortgage repossession Work with Liverpool City Region partners to identify other approaches to mortgage repossessions and share best practice Explore what options are available to provide financial intervention to stop repossessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home owners faced with mortgage repossessions have access to advice and assistance. Reduce the number of home owners who become homeless as a result of mortgage repossessions. 	All Years	Lead - Strategic Housing Service Housing Options Service

No	Action	How	Outcome	Year	Key Agencies
15	Keeping people in their own homes - Explore the feasibility of creating a Preventing Homelessness and Tenancy Sustainment Panel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the feasibility of creating a Preventing Homelessness and Tenancy Sustainment Panel so that a multiagency approach can be taken to find joint solutions to avert households from becoming evicted within the Social Housing Sector/Private Sector Have more of a focus on landlord negotiation and keeping tenants in their own home Utilise the skills of the Private Rented Sector Engagement Office to build effective relationships with Private Landlords and work cohesively to improve the quality of private sector accommodation in the Borough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the number of tenants becoming homeless as a result of eviction Increase stability within families and neighbourhoods. Less reliance on Social Housing to rehouse households after they have become homeless 	All Years	Lead - Strategic Housing Service Housing Options Service
16	Increase partnership working - Introduce partnership working with other organisations working to reduce and assist in tackling homelessness/worklessness in the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influence Partners to push homelessness up their agenda so that together this issue can be tackled Work together to tackle worklessness, making sure that effective referral pathways are established with Knowsley works and the Job Centre so that appropriate advice and guidance can be provided to clients not in education or employment Ensure that Supported Accommodation providers strive to tackle worklessness and that their support sessions with clients are designed to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the level of shared knowledge. This will provide earlier identification of homeless households and ensure that the hard to reach are able to easily access the homeless service when needed. 	1	Lead - Strategic Housing Whole Life Commissioning Housing Options Service Environmental Health Knowsley Works Job Centre

No	Action	How	Outcome	Year	Key Agencies
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore education employment opportunities and the benefit this can bring to them Increase partner's knowledge of homelessness through provision of training, marketing materials, useful Q&A, scripts to guide conversation around housing etc Identify ways in which the Housing Options Service can make contact with hard to reach clients alongside partner agencies i.e. drop ins within mental health drug and alcohol services etc Work more cohesively with Environmental Health to ensure that any property condition issues or illegal evictions reported to the Housing Options Service are actioned appropriately in accordance with Housing law. Raise public awareness of the support Environmental Health can offer. 			
17	Effective use of funds - Make effective use of available funds which can be accessed to prevent homelessness i.e. the prevention funds and discretionary housing payments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have oversight and actively bid for available funding to support the delivery of the homelessness service Housing benefit to explore how Discretionary Housing Payments interact with homelessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures that Households are able to overcome financial barriers to accessing accommodation 	1 & 2	Lead - Housing Benefit Strategic Housing Housing Options Service

No	Action	How	Outcome	Year	Key Agencies
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify which households are applying for Discretionary Housing Payments at an earlier stage so that the Housing Options Service have the opportunity to work with any households who are struggling with maintaining their tenancy with the aim of preventing them from becoming homeless Review each Discretionary Housing Payment refusal so that effective challenge can be commenced, but equally learning to be sought to aid future applications. 			

Research / Quality Monitoring

No	Action	How	Outcome	Year	Key Agencies
18	Effective research - to aid understanding of homelessness in Knowsley and to inform future commissioning of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a public health model of research using both qualitative and quantitative methods, to gain a real understanding of the barriers people face accessing private rented sector accommodation To evaluate the impact that the Sit Up Service is having on rough sleeping numbers in the Borough Explore the intelligence that clients accessing the homeless service are becoming more complex, and if this is the case identify what 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To better understand homelessness in Knowsley To ensure effective commissioning of accommodation and services To understand how the homeless service can be adapted to meet need 	2	Lead - Performance and Business Intelligence Team Housing Options Service

No	Action	How	Outcome	Year	Key Agencies
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> other Authorities are doing to address this need Take a more in depth look into the reasons why homelessness presentations is particularly low for clients over the age of 65 Understand the reasons why the majority of homeless presentations are made by households from Huyton and Kirkby as opposed to other Townships Analyse the reasons why homelessness seems to decline in the winter months. 			
19	Quality Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue quarterly contract management meetings to manage the performance of the homeless service, including staffing levels Introduce a monthly review of operational practices through case audits to ensure that prevention and relief cases are properly recorded. As a result of the review seek to identify further tools aimed at maximising prevention and homelessness relief activity Undertake case audits system of randomly selected prevention and relief cases Review the allocation scheme to ensure that it continues to be lawfully administered and provides adequate preference dependant on households housing need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular audits will identify any errors in recording and will enable appropriate intervention and training to take place Quarterly allocation audits to be completed to ensure compliance and fair access to Social Housing Ensure that partners share the responsibility of preventing homelessness Ensure best practice 	All Years	Lead - Strategic Housing Whole Life Commissioning

No	Action	How	Outcome	Year	Key Agencies
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the effectiveness of the Young Persons protocol to ensure young people are being offered the most appropriate support and being assessed jointly by Social Care and Housing Options • Ensure that the young person protocol is adhered to • Crash bed accommodation provider to provide crash bed usage figures to Strategic Housing each month so that demand can be monitored, which will inform future commissioning. 			
20	<p>Effectiveness of prevention tools – Undertake a review to identify why in some occasions homelessness cannot be prevented within prevention 56 day timeframe</p> <p>Review the effectiveness of the prevention tools utilised by the Housing Options Service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a review to understand the reasons why households have not been prevented from becoming homeless to improve learning • Review the effectiveness of the prevention tools utilised by the Housing Options Service, and identify best practice prevention models from other Authorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue to improve the way in which the homeless service operate. 	1	<p>Lead - Strategic Housing</p> <p>Housing Options Service</p>

