Nottingham Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024

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Foreword from Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Heritage

I am pleased to introduce Nottingham's Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy, the first we have developed under the framework of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. In Nottingham, we have delivered the principles of homelessness prevention and relief for a number of years and have continually endeavoured to support more people and offer interventions at an earlier point than the previous legislation said we were required to. Therefore, we wholeheartedly welcome the ethos of the new legislation in enabling us to do more of what we know we are very good at.

However, the past few years have been a challenging time in Nottingham. In a climate of continued national austerity and much-reduced government funding, the council and other public sector bodies have had to make some difficult decisions on the use of budgets to support vulnerable people in the best possible way. Three years ago, Bed and Breakfast hotels had not been used as temporary accommodation in Nottingham for over a decade and the number of people sleeping rough on Nottingham's streets was never more than single figures at any one time. However, as in most other areas in the country, levels of homelessness have risen in Nottingham in recent years. By Summer 2017 demand for emergency accommodation reached an unprecedented high and we were increasingly reliant on local B&B provision for homeless families, vulnerable single people and to protect rough sleepers. More recently, through concerted efforts of coordinated partnerships we have developed and begun to implement a plan aimed at rapidly reducing our use of Bed and Breakfast in favour of more suitable accommodation. We are utilising data analysis to help project future need, finding better, more suitable solutions as well as targeting interventions to prevent homelessness in the first place.

By the end of 2018 we aim to have no family placed in Bed and Breakfast as temporary accommodation. We will achieve this in a number of ways. We will work with the private rented sector in order to prevent and alleviate homelessness. Partners in Nottingham will focus early interventions to prevent homelessness from the family home and cross-sector systems will ensure those who do become homeless can easily access the appropriate support (including promoting access to employment advice and support initiatives to improve financial resilience).

Our official rough sleeper figure last year was the highest we reported since government monitoring began. Tackling this is a high priority to the council and we are committed to ensuring that no one need sleep rough in Nottingham. We will continue to deliver the Nottingham 'No Second Night Out' policy to move new rough sleepers away from street homelessness as quickly as possible and we will take learning from locally commissioned research and engagement to understand better the barriers rough sleepers face. Furthermore, we will implement our new rough sleeper initiative which involves enhanced partnership work between Nottingham City Council and the community, faith and voluntary sectors.

What is very clear is that homelessness is a complex issue and can occur because of many influences and factors that are not limited to housing. It is not simply a housing issue and to combat it requires involvement from agencies, organisations and indeed individuals beyond the housing sector. We know that to achieve the best possible results for our citizens and our city, it is essential that partners across the housing, health and wellbeing, social care, community protection, criminal justice, welfare, finance, education and employment, community voluntary and faith sectors different sectors understand their important contribution and work together.

Throughout the course of the previous strategy, Nottingham City Council and partners have not faltered in their commitment to homelessness prevention and there is clear enthusiasm and drive from partners across all sectors to work together further to reduce the number of people from becoming homeless and support those who do. This new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy seeks to build on the strong partnerships and dedication shown across the public, voluntary, faith and private sectors and in doing so, coordinate a comprehensive approach to homelessness prevention that delivers sustainable outcomes for people in Nottingham.

Introduction

Current position and immediate pressures

We introduce this strategy at a challenging time. Homelessness (in all its forms) has increased throughout the country over recent years following a sustained period of government austerity and in the context of a national housing crisis. The situation in Nottingham echoes the national trend, the number of households presenting in need has risen over the last five years, and it continued to increase further following the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018. Locally, we are projecting a further pressure following the introduction of Universal Credit Full Service in the city in October 2018.

The growing demand has consequently put additional pressure on accommodation, advice and support services that were already operating at full capacity. This has resulted in increased reliance on Bed & Breakfast for use as temporary accommodation and there are more people rough sleeping than ever before (Appendix 1).

However, as a city we remain steadfast and resolute in our commitment to preventing homelessness from happening as far as we can and where we cannot, making sure we can effectively respond to it. This Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy is a partnership document. It is coordinated by the City Council but it sets out how partners across Nottingham will address the pressures that we currently face as well as empowering citizens and communities to sustain a preventative approach in the longer term.

Key features of the strategy

The strategy contains the following key components:

1. The positive **vision and aims** of the strategy

2. The **approach** we will take to deliver the vision and meet the aims

3. Four main **themes** containing our **priority areas of focus** and key areas of activity that will be responsive and proactive in meeting local needs

4. Our governance structure and processes for sharing insight, monitoring and review to ensure that the strategy is appropriately implemented and remains relevant in responding to local need

5. For the first time this Strategy also contains a partnership **Homelessness Prevention Charter**. Through the Charter partners from a variety of different sectors across the city commit to a shared set a values to be adopted when working to meet the vision of the strategy. Partners have also been invited to develop their own specific pledges of support to the strategy by highlighting the areas of activity that will be undertaken to help meet the overarching vision.

6. Taking the actions identified through the Charter, a **combined multi-agency delivery plan** will be formulated annually with cross-sector responsibility for its implementation.

This strategy has been developed in accordance with the legislative requirement contained within the Homelessness Act 2002 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

Vision

Partners in Nottingham believe that no one should have to sleep rough in our city and we are united in the shared vision for all families, single people and couples to have a place that they can call home.

Across the public, voluntary, faith and private sector, partners support a range of people, in different ways. Who is supported and how they are supported varies between organisations for different reasons. For example, Nottingham City Council is bound by legislative requirements and will prioritise facilitating access to accommodation in the city to people who have a local connection to Nottingham. Faith and voluntary sector organisations are not restricted in who they support but they may target their services at particular groups such as rough sleepers, survivors of domestic abuse or people with no recourse to public funds. Private sector landlords may only offer housing to the household type their business model can support.

For this vision to work we need buy-in from all sectors, both strategically and operationally and across all levels of authority. Therefore, collectively the public sector, community groups, voluntary sector organisations, faith groups, businesses, developers and private sector landlords in Nottingham commit to working together to:

- Identify people at risk of homelessness or in need of support
- Provide access to quality and appropriate support and/or housing options
- Help people to meet their housing needs in a way that is sustainable and long lasting
- Look for best practice initiatives from across the country and beyond to help us further develop our services and achieve our aims

Aims

Through this strategy we aim to achieve:

- **A reduction in the number of households ever becoming homeless**
  Evidenced through a decrease in the amount of households approaching the local authority (or partner agencies) for support in crisis, once homelessness has already happened
- **A reduction in the number of households who become homeless more than once**
  Evidenced through fewer people re-approaching the local authority (or partner agencies) following rehousing
- **A reduction in the number of households living in temporary accommodation**
  Evidenced through the minimised use of Bed & Breakfast to a target of zero by December 2018 and to be retained at that level thereafter
- **A reduction in the number of rough sleepers**
  Evidenced through a decrease in the number of individuals identified as rough sleepers by the Street Outreach Team

Targets

By April 2019 the Homelessness Reduction Act will have been in force for one year and the changes that we have made to our systems and services to facilitate the new legislation will be fully operational. Therefore, it is at this time that we will establish a baseline position, which we will then set targets against to measure how successfully we are meeting the aims of this strategy.

Approach

This strategy recognises that individuals and families have a wide range of different reasons and causes for their homelessness, determined by a complex mix of societal, circumstantial and personal factors that all interconnect and are not easily separated.

It is clear therefore, that the loss of housing alone does not cause homelessness and neither will the provision of shelter alone resolve homelessness. Therefore, the housing sector should not have to work in isolation to try to prevent or respond to homelessness.

Preventing and tackling homelessness is considered everyone's business in Nottingham and this strategy has been developed to identify and enhance the partnerships, resources, delivery mechanisms and provision necessary to maximise people's ability to achieve a sustainable positive future in a place they can call home.

Multi-agency partnerships involving the public, community, voluntary, faith and private sectors are a critical element of the Nottingham Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy.

The approach emphasised throughout is one where all sectors do our bit to help individuals, couples and families address all of their support and social needs and become able to sustain accommodation in the longer term.

The image to the right shows the sectors with roles and responsibilities in homelessness prevention and relief and who, when connected together are able to successfully deliver the coordinated implementation of this strategy.



Who is supported by this strategy?

Insight tells us that there are groups of people who are at greater risk of homelessness. These include:

- People who are unemployed or with a low or irregular income
- People with mental health issues
- People living in the Private Rented Sector
- People with substance misuse or alcohol issues
- People with multiple and complex needs
- Survivors of domestic violence and victims of other forms of abuse
- Young people not in education, employment or training
- New refugees
- Failed asylum seekers and people from abroad with No Recourse to Public Funds
- Prison leavers and people with offending backgrounds

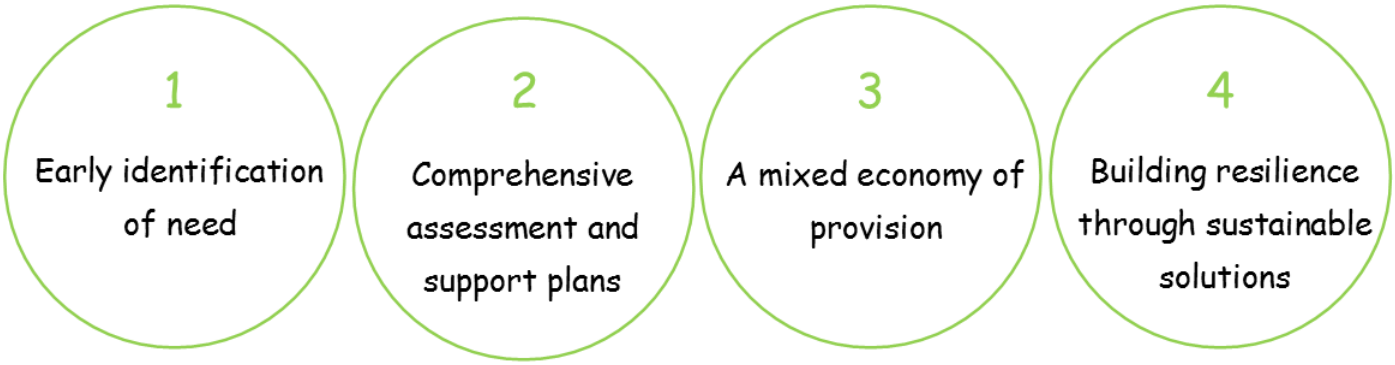
This list is long yet it is by no means inclusive of all 'types' of people who become homeless. This is because homelessness does not discriminate and therefore neither does Nottingham in our response.



For that reason this strategy focuses on putting the person or family at the core and building a response around them that is unique to their needs and not defined by a pre-determined system.

Throughout this inclusive and comprehensive approach, partners will work alongside an individual, couple or family to reduce the risk of homelessness and minimise any associated risk of harm from abuse, violence, crime, neglect or discrimination.

Four pathway principles will guide delivery of individualised activity to achieve our vision and prevent homelessness in both the immediate and longer term.



Further information on the pathway principles can be found from Page 22.

Priority Areas of focus

Informed by the 2017 local review of homelessness, this strategy contains a number of priority areas of focus, which are categorised into four core themes as set out below (Further information on the priority areas of focus can be found from page 25.)

1. Addressing the causes of homelessness

This involves understanding more about the complex mix of societal, circumstantial and personal factors that lead to homelessness and facilitating a range of interventions to help individuals build resilience against the risk of homelessness or repeat homelessness. Priority areas for focussed activity are:

1.1 Tackling social exclusion – Identifying and addressing multiple and complex needs
1.2 Responding to mental health needs and promoting positive wellbeing
1.3 Helping to protect people from violence and abuse
1.4 Promoting financial capability and independent living skills
1.5 Supporting the provision of safe accommodation

2. Homelessness Prevention

This theme focuses on the areas where we can enable people to maintain their current accommodation options and not become homeless. The priority areas of focus to deliver homelessness prevention are:

2.1 Working with tenants and landlords to reduce evictions from the Private Rented Sector
2.2 Minimising unplanned exclusion from family homes
2.3 Preventing eviction from social housing and supported accommodation
2.4 Bridging the transition to accommodation when institutional support ends (this includes when people are released from prison, when young people leave local authority care, when NASS support ends and when people are discharged from hospital, including mental health sections).

The associated activity here ranges from, provision of information and advice (to allow people to self-help) to support and advocacy (on behalf of the household) or multi agency intervention (including Children's services; landlord/tenancy support and advice services).

3. Homelessness Relief

This theme covers how we will endeavour to humanely support people into settled and stable alternative accommodation (with minimal disruption and avoiding the need for temporary accommodation) if homelessness cannot be prevented. The priority focus for the homelessness relief theme are:

3.1 Utilising the Private Rented Sector as a solution to homelessness
3.2 Delivering housing and support solutions

4. Tackling Rough sleeping

This theme outlines a multi-agency approach to the identification and assessment of people who are street homeless in Nottingham and the provision of appropriate support and accommodation and (if necessary) enforcement action. It also involves wider sector involvement in tackling circumstances that can cause rough sleeping (e.g. unplanned hospital discharge, release from prison and migration to the city) to prevent it from happening or reoccurring.

Resources

Delivering this strategy successfully will require the use of a range of resources from within the council and partner organisations.

Housing	• Effective allocations and tenancy management of 26,000 Nottingham City Homes properties and 9,000 properties provided by other Registered Providers of social housing in the city • Partnership working with landlords and owners in the private housing market to increase prevention and relief and deliver housing of a good standard • Proactive working with developers to bring forward more of the type of housing we need and working with providers to explore new types of provision • Joint working with property owners to bring empty homes back into use and utilise appropriate buildings for conversion to temporary / supported / accessible accommodation
Health and wellbeing	○ Early identification of people in need of housing related support ○ Jointly assessing needs and determining support plans to address current issues and prevent longer term reliance on health and mental health services ○ Co-designing and commissioning types of accommodation with support that meets health and wellbeing needs ○ Involvement in process and system design to support effective hospital discharge of people into housing
Adult social care	• Using expertise to assess the Care, Support and Enablement needs of individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness • Ensuring that services are flexible and available for people with multiple complex needs • Co-designing and commissioning types of accommodation with support that will help meet health and wellbeing needs and reduce the need for residential care • Helping households and individuals to have the skills (or support them if appropriate) to proactively budget income and expenditure, prioritise housing and council tax and have access to banking and mainstream banking services
Childrens social care	○ Using expertise to ensure that households on the edge of homelessness have their needs assessed and met and children are protected from the damaging impact of homelessness on their development and life chances ○ Supporting families not to exclude their children after the age of 16 without a planned move that is arranged and prepared for ○ Ensuring young people in local authority care are appropriately prepared for planned transitions to independent living, and in touch with the necessary support
Community, voluntary and faith sector	• Early identification and signposting of people in need of support with housing issues • Provision of advice and information on how to prevent homelessness and sustain housing • Provision of accommodation and support to protect rough sleepers from extreme weather • Sharing knowledge and insight from the front line about the issues they see and the interventions they think are needed • Provision of housing related support services to prevent homelessness and help people to effectively recover from homelessness • Advocating for individuals and families and helping their voice to be heard

Welfare, education and employment	○ Information and support through the full implementation of Universal Credit (including budgeting advice, identifying priority payments and optimising household income whether through benefits or increased employment) ○ Schools and colleges educating young people about the realities of the housing market, independent living and life skill requirements ○ Providing employment support for people at risk of homelessness because of insufficient income and ensuring pathways into education, training and employment are available and appropriate for people who are homeless
Criminal justice	• Early identification of housing needs prior to release from prison (including support needs impacting on ability to maintain accommodation e.g. approach to financial management) • Supporting rough sleepers away from street homelessness • Ensuring survivors of modern slavery, gang violence, honour-based violence, forced marriage and domestic and sexual violence are protected and safely housed

Delivering the strategy

A huge amount of partnership work has gone into the development of this strategy. However, even more is required to turn this approach into the activity that delivers tangible outcomes. At Appendix 2 is a list of organisations who have a role in preventing or relieving homelessness in Nottingham. This list highlights the breadth of the partners making a contribution to the delivery of this agenda locally.

The section below introduces the Nottingham Homelessness Prevention Charter and explains how through the Charter we will formulate our partnership plan of action. The governance, communication, monitoring and review section of this strategy (from page 50 onwards) outline how the action plan will be finalised and implemented.

As we progress the delivery of this strategy over the next five years it is of upmost importance that we ensure that the voice of people with lived experience of homelessness is reflected and contributes to ongoing system and service development.

The Nottingham Homelessness Prevention Charter

Partners in Nottingham agreed that a Nottingham Homelessness Prevention Charter (Appendix 3) should accompany this Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy. The Charter outlines the vision for the city alongside a series of values, which all partners are signed up to, solidifying the undertaking to work collaboratively to prevent, relieve and respond to homelessness in Nottingham.

The Charter requires organisations and community groups to make their own strategic commitment to homelessness prevention in the form of a pledge (or a number of pledges). Each focussed pledge will outline how that organisation or service area specifically intends to prioritise homelessness prevention and how they will continue to input and engage with the citywide partnership on an ongoing basis.

To ensure that the new strategy recognises and maximises partners contributions and receives the operational involvement required from all sectors to deliver this strategy, partners have outlined their own actions to lead on.

These actions will be reviewed by the Strategy Implementation Group and combined with core overarching / multi-sector actions to form the comprehensive annual strategy action plan.

For sight of the pledges please click here or email housing.network@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Local policy context

One Nottingham
Nottingham's collective overarching vision is that by 2030 the city will have tackled deprivation and inequality in Nottingham. In 2010 the city set a new direction of breaking the cycle of inter-generational poverty, through accelerating wealth creation and developing early intervention, so that the city's children grow up to benefit from the city's economy, it success and opportunities.

The Nottingham Plan to 2020 aims to get Nottingham "half way" to achieving the 2030 vision through activities that involve: transforming Nottingham's neighbourhoods; ensuring that all children and young people thrive and achieve; tackling poverty and deprivation by getting more local people into good jobs; ensuring everyone in Nottingham benefits from the proceeds of economic growth; reducing crime, substance misuse and anti-social behaviour; and improving health and wellbeing.

There will be considerable overlap between the activities governed by the Nottingham Plan and the targeted interventions set out within this Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy, and this strategy will contribute towards the city achieving the aims identified above. This Strategy sets out an approach that seeks to tackle the reasons people become at risk of homelessness rather than simply responding to presenting issues and needs and in doing so aims to build resilience amongst individuals, families and communities that will help to reduce poverty and deprivation.

Supporting people away from the risk of homelessness helps them to remain safe, well, happy and closer to achieving their ambitions to thrive and prosper. Therefore, this Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy also aligns with the ethos of the Derby and Nottingham Metro Strategy and broader D2N2 Strategic Economic Plan.

The principles contained within the Nottingham City Council Plan are echoed throughout this Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy. In delivering our strategic approach to homelessness prevention, we are supporting local people to access the means and opportunities to realise their potential and to have a fair and equal chance to succeed. Demonstrated throughout this strategy is commitment to working in partnership to ensure vulnerable citizens are supported to live independently and are safe from harm. Most importantly, this strategy has the citizen at the heart and describes an approach that endeavours to be shaped around the person and responsive to their needs and wishes, rather than expecting a person to fit into a system defined category or box.

It is without question that homelessness is damaging. Homelessness impacts on health and wellbeing, it hampers ability to positively develop, thrive and succeed and it exasperates existing problems issues and support needs. Tackling homelessness contributes to the success of many other local policies. This strategy promotes an early intervention approach to addressing complex problems in partnership and in doing so it supports the aims of the Nottingham Health and Wellbeing Strategy (Happier Healthier Lives 2016-2020), the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Plan 2015-2018, the Crime and Drugs Partnership Plan 2015-2020, the Children and Young Peoples Plan 2016-2020 and the Nottingham City Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy

The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 has been developed alongside the Nottingham Housing Strategy 2018-2021 which together will ensure that a diverse range of quality homes are accessible and sustainable for Nottingham citizens.

Legislative Framework

The Homelessness Act 2002 set the development of homelessness strategies as a statutory requirement. The legislation told local authorities they must review homelessness in their area and develop a local strategy for homelessness prevention that provides options and solutions for people who were, or who may become homeless. Nottingham has produced three five-year strategies under the terms of the Homelessness Act and the latest version expires at the end of 2018.

The Nottingham Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 has been developed in a context of new legislation which when passed by Parliament in April 2017, was the first major change in homelessness law in 15 years.

The **Homelessness Reduction Act 2017** brings in new duties for local authorities to adhere to including:

- Providing advice to anyone in the area on their rights, on how homelessness can be prevented how they can secure their own accommodation and on the services that are available locally to help them do this
- Completing an holistic assessment of need and developing a personalised housing plan for each household
- Providing support to help prevent the homelessness of any individual or family whom is at risk of losing their accommodation within 56 days (this differs from the existing legislation which only requires local authorities to accept a duty to households meeting a certain criteria and whom are at risk of homelessness within 28 days)
- Helping to facilitate access into alternative accommodation to relieve homelessness if it does occur

For further information on the Homelessness Reduction Act, please refer to our factsheet which is available here.

The new legislation also introduces a **requirement for specified public sector bodies** to refer any household they believe to be at risk of homelessness for support from October 2018.
This measure was introduced to encourage partnerships and 'every contact counts' models of early intervention. The revised Code of Guidance contains stipulations for new homelessness prevention strategies to incorporate the Duty to Refer and show how their local area will establish effective partnerships and working arrangements across sectors.

What we have done so far in implementing the Homelessness Reduction Act

1. Developed and delivered a programme of training on the new legislation to over 300 local stakeholders
2. Reviewed operating systems at Housing Aid to maximise resources towards prevention and relief
3. Amended the Allocations Policy to ensure that it complements principles of prevention and relief
4. Built upon the existing Homelessness Prevention Overview assessment overview to develop a comprehensive needs assessment to be used for each presenting household and inform the Personalised Housing Plans
5. Redesigned housing related Independent Living Support Services to enable key workers to take responsibility for the delivery of the Personalised Housing Plans
6. Purchased and installed the appropriate IT software to allow for the recording, monitoring and reporting required under H-CLIC and for wider service improvement
7. Liaised with local authorities in the districts and boroughs of Nottinghamshire to all obtain the same IT software package (ALERT) to enable public sector partners to fulfil the Duty to Refer in a consistent way throughout the county
8. Established multi agency workgroups to discuss and identify areas of risk and co-ordinated responses to mitigate risk and forward planning

What we will do to further embed the Homelessness Reduction Act

1. Deliver further training to public sector stakeholders outlining the detail of the Duty to Refer and how it will be applied locally. Ensure that we have a list of partners who need to participate and we track engagement and escalate issues of non-engagement
2. Work with the surrounding boroughs and districts in Nottinghamshire to produce a guidance document for public sector bodies who have responsibilities under the Duty to Refer. The guidance will support public bodies to give appropriate advice to the household at risk of homelessness, it will outline their responsibilities and show the referral mechanisms they should use and it will highlight the consequences of not adhering to the duty. The aim is to develop the guidance in partnership so there is a consistent approach for all public authorities that work across the county footprint.
3. Request that public sector bodies produce and publish communication plans outlining how they intend to embed the Duty to Refer within their organisations.
4. Encourage public bodies to engage in a process that goes beyond their statutory obligations but also outlines the role they will undertake in completing the holistic assessment of need for the household and their participation in delivery of the support plan.
5. Encourage non-specified public sector bodies (such as Home Office, NASS, GPs and the Police) and other partners including private sector landlords and community based support organisations to utilise the systems set up under the Duty to Refer as best practice.
6. Develop and deliver a communications plan outlining how citizens and service providers can access further information on processes as well as self-help advice.
7. Assess whether advice provision is sufficiently equipped to support provision of accessible earlier preventative information
8. Assess whether there is sufficient resource to effectively manage the increase in footfall and caseload

The **Care Act 2014** came into effect in April 2015 and consolidates all previous legislation relating to the care and support of vulnerable people. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 has many parallels with the Care Act 2014 none least the emphasis on prevention. The Care Act focuses on maintaining health and wellbeing through prevention and it seeks to ensure that local authorities help keep people well and independent rather than respond to them through crisis management in an emergency. The Care Act stipulates that local services must be provided or arranged to help stop people from developing needs for care and support or delay deterioration that would make people need ongoing care and support.

A further way the Care Act dovetails with the Homelessness Reduction Act is in the expectation within both for public bodies to work together and deliver a continuity of care and support. The Care Act makes integration of health and social care and cooperation with other sectors (such as housing and support) a legal requirement. These two pieces of legislation also complement each other by containing the same requirement for person centred assessments focussing on the outcomes the individual wishes to achieve, followed by the development of an individual plan.

Locally we have already taken steps to marry the two pieces of legislation. The Opportunity Nottingham Practice Development Unit has delivered training and shared learning sessions on the Care Act and Homelessness Reduction Act to enhance partnerships, learning and local systems and presentations have been given at the Adult Safeguarding Board to highlight areas of complexity. However, there is more work to do and this is explored further within the Priority area of focus 1.1 ‘tackling social exclusion’ (at page 26).

National policy

Over recent years government policy relating to housing and welfare has changed significantly and there is ongoing reform of the infrastructure systems across a number of sectors including housing, health and criminal justice that bring both opportunities and risks to a homelessness prevention approach.

There remain many significant decisions to be made about the future delivery of private rented, social and supported housing and there are other proposals that have been brought to parliament that might impact on the way certain groups access support and accommodation. A summary of the main potential changes is below. Further information about the changing policy context is available within the Nottingham Housing Strategy – Quality Homes for All (pages 9-18).

Universal Credit

Universal Credit (UC) is the flagship policy of the governments programme of welfare reform and is the biggest change to the way benefits are administered for decades. UC sees six benefits (Job Seekers Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Tax Credits, Child Tax Credits and Housing Benefit) combined into a single monthly payment which the recipient is responsible for managing as their household budget. Rollout for Universal Credit full service for all new claimant types began nationally in May 2016 and happened in Nottingham in October 2018. After process for new claimants to UC Full Service has completed, DWP will then begin moving all remaining existing benefit claimants to the UC full service at a date yet to be announced.

The rationale behind the introduction of UC was that it would simplify the benefits system, make it more efficient and increase the incentives for people to work rather than stay on benefits. However, earlier adopters of the system have highlighted a number of concerning observations including a lack of ability within some households to budget appropriately over a monthly period and prioritise their rent (leading to increased levels of rent arrears) and the potential for financial abuse when the payment is made to only one member of a couple. If social housing providers start to see significant increases in levels of rent arrears, their financial plans will be affected impacting on their ability to deliver supportive services beyond core business or develop further social housing supply.

To support claimants with their UC payments, particularly in the early stages of claiming, DWP put in place the following measures: 100% advance on the first pay period (which is repayable over up to 12 months), waived the 7 waiting days, made available Personal Budgeting Support, Digital Support, Direct Payments to private landlords. Additionally customers will continue to receive Housing Benefit for the first two weeks of a UC Full Service claim if they were previously receiving Housing Benefit. It is important that locally the DWP, landlords and supporting agencies continue to work together in a coordinated way to ensure that:

a) There is comprehensive awareness of the new regime
b) Systems are in place and effective in disseminating information to communities and citizens
c) Processes are available to identify those at risk and support them through the transition and into the new landscape.

However, the risk of households presenting as homeless may be heightened by the benefit's introduction. Private sector landlords could be reluctant to let to claimants due to the housing element, in the majority of cases, being paid directly to the tenant. The credit is also paid monthly in arrears, which a big change for many households to get used to and budget. Additionally all claims must be managed online, regardless of if a household owns an appropriate digital device such as a computer, tablet or smartphone. All of these elements could heighten the risk of rent arrears and either access to or eviction from privately rented housing.

National housing policy

National housing policy defines the extent of flexibility local areas have to maximise delivery of a range of housing tenures. The more stable and certain the national policy and legislation, the greater the ability to get the most out of the framework that is set. Over recent years the landscape set at a national level has been considerably changeable. There have been significant shifts in policy direction and over recent years a number of policies have

been announced and then later scrapped (such as the intention to restrict housing benefit to people aged under 21 or the various proposals contained within the funding of supported housing review). There remains a number of legislative changes or policy announcements that have not yet translated into ability for delivery. Measures announced within the Housing and Planning Act 2016 but yet to be implemented include:

- The extension of Right-To-Buy amongst Registered Providers of social housing (to be paid for by a levy on the assumed sale of "high value" council houses)
- Changes to the National Planning Policy Framework are still in draft form but change planning definitions to now consider "starter homes" to be affordable housing (and place duties on planning authorities to ensure their delivery)
- Compulsory use of "flexible" or fixed term tenancies across social housing

In early 2017 the government issued a housing white paper entitled "Fixing our Broken Housing Market". This document recognised that in order to address the housing crisis there needed to be delivery across all tenures. It promoted an enhanced role for local authorities as both builders and enablers of new housing, and placed affordable rented housing firmly back on the agenda. It also placed significant emphasis on the role of the private rented sector in future housing growth: not the traditional UK delivery model of buy to let landlords, but institutionally-funded, large scale Private Rented Sector building, some of which should be at lower than market rental levels in order to make the sector more affordable.

The Conservative Party announced at its conference in Autumn 2017 that more grant funding would be available for the delivery of affordable housing (including social housing) via Homes England's programmes, to match local needs.

The Social Housing Green Paper, pledged by Government in September 2017 to outline its wide-ranging review of social housing, was published in August 2018. In October 2018 the government announced it would be removing the Housing Revenue Account borrowing cap, which affects local authorities' ability to build new housing. During 2018 the government appointed a new housing minister, housing secretary and changed the name of its department that deals with housing showing the changeable position nationally in this area.

The **Housing and Planning (Local Decision-Making) Bill 2017-19** is currently in parliament which proposes removing powers of the Secretary of State in relation to the location of and planning permission for new housing developments; to give local authorities powers to establish requirements on such developments in their area, including requirements on the proportion of affordable and social housing.

Private rented sector regulations

For some time, the Private Rented Sector remained relatively free from a national regulatory framework. Over recent years legislation has been introduced which mainly relates to standards and tax arrangements. However, proposals that are more recent might bring quite ground-breaking reform to rent and tenants security of tenure. In July 2018, MHCLG published a consultation paper entitled Overcoming the Barriers to Longer Tenancies in the Private Rented Sector. Within the paper, government outlines a preferred model with a minimum three year tenancy but which gives both the landlord and the tenant the opportunity to leave the agreement after the initial six months if dissatisfied. If this change goes ahead as proposed, it will deliver a significant change in the private rented sector and enhance tenants' rights of occupation. Whilst this would offer more security and stability to tenants, landlords who oppose the change might seek to withdraw from the market.

The **Tenant Fees Bill 2017-19** is currently under consideration by Parliament. If enacted it would prohibit landlords and letting agents from charging tenants fees and this giving renters greater clarity and control over what they pay. The ban may help to promote longer-term tenancies by reducing the financial incentive of short-term lets that is present in the current system, where landlords and agents have the opportunity to charge renewal fees upon the signing of a new fixed term.

National homelessness policy

As detailed in the previous section, the Homelessness Reduction Act is the biggest piece of legislation related to homelessness since 2002. Local authorities are currently utilising new burdens funding from government to transition to the new system of delivery. In the meantime, government is reviewing the trailblazer projects as well

as considering other evidence reviews and research around complex needs. It is possible that this may lead to development of a future national homelessness strategy and accompanying best practice toolkits with opportunities to bid for funding.

Over Spring and Summer 2018, Government announcement the Rough Sleeper Initiative and unveiled their Rough Sleeping Strategy which sets out the vision for halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it by 2027. The initiative includes a new cross-departmental government team to support local programmes benefitting from £30m of additional funding for 2018/19 and 2019/20. Nottingham was successful in bids for both years funding and further information on how this initiative is being taken forward locally is available at page 48.

Since the launch of the Rough Sleeping Strategy in August 2018 government has also announced the following funding opportunities which local authorities (and partners where possible) can bid to help tackle homelessness:

- Move on fund – capital and revenue grant available to develop move on accommodation for homeless people in temporary accommodation or survivors of domestic abuse in refuges.
- Private Rented Sector Access Fund – funding to support the development or enhancement of local authority schemes to prevent homelessness from housing in the private rented sector or to create new tenancies in the sector.

At the time of writing this strategy, Nottingham City Council is working with partners in developing bids to maximise the use of this available funding as well as with government on opportunities to become an early adopter of the Rapid Rehousing Pathway for Rough Sleepers.

Other homelessness legislation currently under consideration in Parliament includes:

- **Homeless People (Current Accounts) Bill 2017-19** which if agreed, would require banks to provide current accounts for homeless people seeking work
- **Homelessness (End of Life Care) Bill 2017-19** to make provision about end of life care and support for homeless people with terminal illnesses, including through the provision of housing for such people.

Access to accommodation and support

The **Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill [HL] 2017-19** is currently passing through Parliament and contains measures regarding the identification and support of victims of modern slavery. The **Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill 2017-19** is also being considered by parliament. If passed, this Bill makes provision for leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom to be granted to the family members of refugees and to refugees who are family members of British citizens and settled persons, to provide for legal aid to be made available for refugee family reunion cases. Both of these Bills have the potential to enhance ability to access support and accommodation and this potential additional demand will need to be considered in levels of future provision.

Ending Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2016-2020

In 2016 government published their strategy for ending violence against women and girls (VAWG). The strategy is based on a framework of prevention, provision of services, partnership working and pursuing perpetrators. The city currently has a Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy, which is currently under review. The connectivity between the VAWG agenda and homelessness prevention is clear and the two local strategies will be aligned in approach.

Local picture

Nottingham has a strong record in tackling homelessness, underpinned by its innovative and resilient voluntary sector and multi-agency partnerships. In spite of these strengths, Nottingham has not been immune to the national crisis in homelessness. Over recent years the trends in homelessness in Nottingham have shifted from a downwards trajectory to an increasing demand. Over the course of the previous strategy, government reduced the grant they give to Nottingham City Council to enable us to provide and commission services and deliver our statutory duties by £91m. Over the past five years the council has had to make savings of £159m, £8.4m of this has been made from the Housing Related Support budget. These austerity measures alongside pressures from ongoing welfare changes and limitations in availability of affordable housing have affected Nottingham City Councils ability to deliver successful prevention and relief activity, consequently halted the declining levels of homelessness, and instead seeing an uplift in statutory applications and temporary accommodation placements.

The number of households presenting to Nottingham City Council has remained relatively stable over the past five years. There is currently no national indicator that records presentations to local authorities and so direct comparisons with other areas are not possible. However, press reporting in October 2017 suggested that a person was approaching Manchester City Council as homeless every 20 minutes; our analysis shows this to be one household every 25 minutes in Nottingham.



At the beginning of the 2013-2018 Homelessness Prevention Strategy Nottingham was a leading authority in delivery of preventative activity. However, as time limited government grants were withdrawn, opportunities for delivering prevention activity lessened and in 2017-18 homelessness was prevented for only 35% of households approaching the local authority, compared to the vast majority of cases between 2013-15. The table to the right shows the proportion of homelessness prevention or relief activity in each area per 1000 of the population.

	2009-10	2012-13	2015-16		Q4 2017
England	7.7	9.09	9.28		2.23
East Midlands	9	10.4	9.20		2.34
Birmingham	3	17.66	18.39		6.02
Bristol	14.1	18.85	22.87		5.47
Derby	12.1	15.03	10.24		1.21
Leeds	1.9	9.37	25.47		7.28
Leicester	16	18.2	20.18		6.43
Liverpool	3.6	6.23	8.52		2.15
Manchester	11.3	25.82	7.92		2.41
Newcastle	33.7	31.04	30.84		8.5
Nottingham	38	33.94	25.52		3.77
Sheffield	5.7	3.84	9.75		1.67

When records began in 2009-10 the Nottingham prevention rate was the highest of all of the comparative areas. However, over time, the rate in Nottingham has decreased to the sixth out of the ten comparable (regional and core city) local authority areas by Q4 2017. It is worth noting that this remains marginally higher than the nationals and regional average and we expect this to increase as enhanced capacity recently reintroduced takes effect.

The declining level of preventative activity correlated with an increasing level of statutory applications. There were low levels of applications in 2012-2015 with a high proportion of acceptances, compared to higher levels of applications in 2016-18 with a lower proportion of acceptances. This tells us that when resources are available to invest in prevention activity, most households can benefit from it (with only low levels needing to move) through to a full duty. Yet when resources are limited and preventative measures cannot be offered, the statutory requirements are fulfilled but there are consequently more negative decisions. This analysis proves to us that a preventative approach can have a positive impact on all households.

As a result of the rise in statutory applications came an increase in demand for temporary accommodation and by Summer 2017 households in need of temporary accommodation in Nottingham had reached an all-time high. Data analysis tells us that the number of households in temporary accommodation had trebled from 2013 to 2018. The P1E snapshot for the quarter shows a peak of 229 households being accommodated, 54% of which were in B&B. By October 2017 use of B&B had reached a peak with 140 households accommodated at one time.

Nottingham has operated a No Second Night Out policy since the end of 2012. However despite this, the city is still experiencing an increasing level of rough sleeping on its streets. The number of individuals identified as sleeping rough in Nottingham has increased by over 200% from 2012 to a total of 585 people in 2017. In November 2017, Nottingham submitted an estimate of 43 individuals rough sleeping on one night, which was five times higher than the snapshot in November 2012. In response to this challenge, partners in the city accommodated a total of 258 individuals through extended provision during the winter months of 2017-18 compared to 193 in 2016-17. At the peak of the cold weather period there were 87 individuals accommodated in additional winter measures bedspaces. At this time there were also a number of individuals who remained on the streets despite being made an offer of accommodation because they viewed the offer as unsuitable for them and had rejected it or they accepted the offer but then were subsequently evicted.

There were also a proportion of rough sleepers who would not engage with attempts at support for various reasons (further explored within Theme 4. from page 45). Additionally, there are a number of people who are homeless in the city but who are not eligible for accommodation and support from the local authority or commissioned homeless services. For example, there are currently over 140 individuals who report to Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum as destitute asylum seekers.

Alongside a numerical uplift in homeless households, the city has seen an increase in the severity, complexity and multitude of support needs amongst people who are homeless. Front line services provide frequent insight to the Homelessness Prevention Strategy Implementation Group which suggests most single homeless people are in need of specialist services beyond the housing related support sector, but that their complicated range of issues often means that they experience difficulty accessing the services that they need.

Mental health issues are significant amongst the city's homeless population. Findings from research commissioned by Nottingham City CCG and undertaken by Sheffield Hallam University in Nottingham in 2017 found three quarters of homeless households are diagnosed with a mental health condition and almost three quarters of those had multiple diagnoses. The research found that in nearly all cases the mental health condition was a precursor to homelessness and whilst exasperated by the housing situation, homelessness did not cause the mental health issues. The research concludes that homeless people in the city are socially excluded and in addition to mental health issues, there are high levels of experiences of domestic violence, offending histories, drug or alcohol misuse and almost always childhood abuse or trauma.

For further information about homelessness trends in Nottingham, please refer to the **Nottingham Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) chapter on Homelessness** which was published in October 2017.

In response to the peak in homelessness in Autumn 2017 the Council took the step of introducing a multi departmental group, sponsored at Director level and with accountability to Corporate and political leadership for the Council. Tasked with developing and delivering a joint action plan to tackle the growing demand and implement changes that would future proof potential future needs the group has implemented some short term responses including:

- Expansion of Nottingham Private Rented Assistance Scheme
- Review and rewrite of the Allocations Policy
- Additional provision of temporary accommodation
- Eviction Prevention Protocol and Panel to look at interventions to reduce the risk of eviction due to debt and arrears from Nottingham City Homes tenancies

As we enter the tenure of the refreshed strategy it is clear that as a City **it is an absolute priority to the city to work together to reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation and the number of individuals rough sleeping on Nottingham's streets. However, as well as dealing with the current pressures we are also ambitious to produce and deliver a strategy that is proactive and has prevention at its core.** We want to understand the issues that lead to the risk of homelessness and work together across sectors to introduce measures that seek to remove or reduce that risk for local people. We want to recognise households who may be at risk and lever in supportive interventions to help change them from that pathway to homelessness. Finally, in responding to homelessness we want to deliver interventions that are sustainable and reduce the risk of that household becoming homeless again in the future.

Under the priority areas of focus (page 25 onwards) there are recommended areas of activity that aim to address the points highlighted above.

Review of the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2013-2018

Each year, the Homelessness Prevention Strategy Implementation Group (SIG) conducts an annual review of homelessness in Nottingham. In Summer 2017 the annual review was combined with an update of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) chapter on homelessness. This thorough review has resulted in comprehensive insight into the level of need across the city and has directly influenced the new strategy.

Over the past five years the environment has been challenging with ongoing welfare reform, local authority budget cuts and a resulting reduction in service provision, changing patterns in tenure affordability and accessibility and an increase in the complexity, severity and multitude of support needs present amongst people at risk of homelessness. It is known that this has led to a rise in the number of households losing their accommodation (mainly from the Private Rented Sector), an increasing demand for temporary accommodation or supported accommodation and heightened levels of street homelessness

It is clear that the cross cutting strategic drivers contained in the previous strategy were the right ones to help navigate the shifts and challenges. Furthermore, they remain relevant and therefore feature within this 2019-2024 strategy. To recap, those drivers are:

- Mitigating the impact of welfare reform
- Utilising Nottingham's housing market
- Tackling unemployment
- Improving health and addressing multiple and complex needs
- Safeguarding from harm

A number of different organisations from across the public and community sectors committed to the 2013-18 Homelessness Prevention Strategy and consistently engaged in the agenda throughout the five-year strategy duration. This is evidenced in part by regularly high levels of attendance from over 20 service areas at the Homelessness Prevention SIG. Through these partnerships protocols for cross sector working practices are established that provide for process guidance ensuring the early identification and referral for housing solutions for people (including those about to be released from prison or discharged from hospital).

Review of the previous strategy confirms that in Nottingham there is a well-established and integrated system of advice and support services (commissioned and community assets in both public and voluntary sector) which help and empower people to sustain accommodation and access alternative forms of accommodation.

Nottingham is one of very few areas in the country to have maintained a housing related support budget (after Supporting People funding ended) to enable provision of support and accommodation for single homeless people even where there is no statutory duty to provide it. Nottingham City Council remains committed and in December 2017 announced investment of a further £35 million over the next nine years.

The housing related support budget funds a range of services to help prevent homelessness or support people to recover sustainably from homelessness. This includes supported accommodation, accessed via a single route known as the Homelessness Prevention Gateway which, for over a decade, has delivered a system of comprehensive needs assessment and enabled access to provision at a time of need prior to progression towards independent living. Also commissioned through the housing related support budget are various independent living support services, which help people, sustain new or existing tenancies – preventing homelessness and maximising effective resettlement and Rough sleeper reablement services – designed to identify people who are rough sleeping and link them in with assessment, support and accommodation options.

There are a number of additional services in the city operating independently of financial support from the local authority but whom are an integral and valuable part of the system of delivery. This includes supported accommodation provided by Places for People, YMCA and Arimathea Trust, Emmanuel House day centre, and a

range of community based support services such as Notts Refugee Forum, Base 51, Hope Nottingham and Muslim Hands.

Over the course of the previous strategy the city has remained committed to delivery of a variety of prevention and relief activity including:

- providing targeted advice and support to tenants in the Private Rented Sector to help them sustain their tenancies and facilitating access to suitable accommodation in the Private Rented Sector;
- delivery of the Sanctuary Scheme to assist survivors of domestic abuse to remain in their own tenancies;
- one-off prevention fund payments for individualised solutions that enable people to remain in their accommodation

Partners from across the public and voluntary sector have actively instigated the development of homelessness prevention interventions including:

- **No Second Night Out (NSNO)**
  Tackling rough sleeping remained a priority for the city throughout the course of the previous strategy. Nottingham City council and Framework have continued to resource and implement a NSNO policy after government funding ceased, to ensure that any new rough sleeper is immediately provided with accommodation and supported away from street homelessness.

- **Extended Winter Measures for Rough Sleepers**
  In 2017-18 the Nottingham Winter Shelter opened under the coordination of Emmanuel House for the 11th consecutive year to offer a safe place to sleep and access support. Winter 2017-18 also saw a new partnership between Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue and the British Red Cross, who worked together to bring forward a 'sit-up' shelter which offered comfort, protection and support to rough sleepers through the cold nights. Further information about the ongoing local approach to tackling rough sleeping can be found at page 45.

- **Multi-agency process guidance supporting young people who are at risk of homelessness**
  In 2015, Nottingham City Council Childrens Services led the development of partnership guidance clarifying pathways of coordinated support between the local housing authority, social care and the community sector for young people.

- **Responding to Complexity project**
  In 2016, the domestic and sexual violence and abuse strategy and support sector in Nottingham was successful in a bid for government funding to deliver the response to complexity project that provided refuge bedspaces and wraparound support for survivors of domestic violence with multiple and complex needs. This was a positive example of a service bridging a number of specialist areas and enabled access to accommodation and support for survivors who without this service were at risk of falling through system gaps.

A multi-agency approach to tackling issues has become the norm in Nottingham. For example, there is well-established rough sleeper task group who take a case conferencing approach to finding solutions for the most entrenched and complex people who are street homeless in Nottingham and more recently, a multi-agency task group was set up to focus on working together to improve standards in Community Interest Company supported accommodation provision.

Opportunity Nottingham

In 2014, a consortium led by Framework housing association was successful in a bid to the Big Lottery Fulfilling Lives Programme to deliver an 8-year project known as Opportunity Nottingham. This project, designed to work with 470 individuals with multiple and complex needs (including homelessness) is now halfway through its lifespan.

One of the main aims of Opportunity Nottingham is to influence the design and delivery of services and treatment locally and bring about system change so that Nottingham is effective in responding to people with multiple and complex needs in addition to working cohesively to try to reduce the numbers of people needing such support.

Opportunity Nottingham advocates for:

- Person centred approaches to support
- Services to be delivered in Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE)
- Inclusion of Housing First in the range of accommodation options that are delivered in the city

All of these elements were included within the specifications for the new housing related support services contracted out from April 2018.

Furthermore, influenced by Opportunity Nottingham's promotion for citizen led service design, beneficiaries and ambassadors of the service are involved in the development of the new services. This has included contributing questions about service user engagement and scoring tenders. The Opportunity Nottingham beneficiaries have designed a number of significant documents including a "Pledge" and "Facts about Me" sheet due to be rolled out in Nottingham to promote consistency in understanding and responding to the needs of this cohort. Most recently, Opportunity Nottingham made arrangements with Nottingham DWP to ensure that the specific requirements of people who are homeless and with multiple and complex needs are considered by the organisation.

It is this type of activity and strategic influencing to bring about system change that the refreshed Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy will build on and encourage in order to ensure that as a city there is a strategically led, operationally delivered and city-wide connected approach to homelessness prevention.

We also collectively acknowledge that moving forward we need to continue do more to include the voice of the service user, ensure all partners feel equally valued, review our communications, meetings and governance structures and ensure that we have resource, services and systems to deliver out preventative approach – including working with private landlords, families and communities.

Development of this strategy

Preparation for the drafting of this Strategy began in 2017 when two events were held in the city to inform the development of the Homelessness Joint Strategy Needs Assessment and the Nottingham City Council Strategic Commissioning Review of Housing Related Support. Stakeholders including partners from across the public, private, voluntary, community and faith sectors and service users were invited to attend the events to share their views on causes of homelessness and service requirements and gaps.

Through the Nottingham Homelessness Prevention Strategy Implementation Group, partners have continued to share insight and research from front line services to shape the drafting of this strategy. In Spring 2017 and again in Summer 2018 research was conducted with local private rented sector landlords to establish attitudes and appetite in renting property to people who have been homeless, reasons behind issuing of section 21 notices and support that might be required for better tenancy retention.

The outline strategy was presented and discussed at a number of Nottingham City Council meetings and multi-agency forums such as the Nottinghamshire Social Housing Forum, the Health and Housing Partnership Group, the Domestic Violence Strategy Group, the Voluntary Sector Homelessness Forum and the Multi-Agency Forum on Refugees and Asylum Seekers.

A further stakeholder engagement event took place in Spring 2018 to introduce the proposed approach and themes of the strategy and the insight gained through a focussed workshop on preventing and addressing rough sleeping in Summer 2018 has contributed to the development of the strategy.

Over October 2018 the draft strategy was published on line and a link to a consultation questionnaire circulated amongst stakeholder networks, via Nottingham City Council social media and communication channels and a press release issued. Feedback received through that process has further supported the final development of this strategy.

Learning from people with lived experience of homelessness

Listening to the voice of people who are, or have been homeless has been an important part of the development of this strategy and will be critical in effectively turning this strategy into action that delivers real and long-lasting outcomes.

To inform the development of this strategy a number of face-to-face interviews were conducted with service users of Emmanuel House day centre and residents in families and singles temporary accommodation including young people, survivors of domestic abuse, refugees and people who had histories of rough sleeping. Further engagement with people with lived experience of homelessness took place as part of the Sheffield Hallam research into mental health and homelessness and the Nottingham Trent University research into persistent rough sleeping. Opportunity Nottingham beneficiaries as well as other homeless people also took part in three homelessness stakeholder events over 2017 and 2018.

Learning from people who have lived experienced of being homeless, it is understood that homelessness tends to happen when lots of other things have already gone wrong and situations have escalated out of control.

People largely describe the reasons they became homeless as family or friends no longer letting them stay, splitting up with partners or landlords evicting them but it is when asked “why?” that is when the real causes become apparent.

There are some relatively straightforward links that people make, for example rent arrears because of high rents compared to their income and then changes, difficulties, gaps and caps on benefits, inability to seek, gain or sustain employment and problems with budgeting or money management with no support. Other descriptions of paths that led to homelessness are far more complicated starting with traumatic and difficult childhood experiences, significant support needs including mental health issues and substance misuse and multiple occasions of feeling let down, abandoned or conflicted with friends, family, partners, support services and statutory agencies.

However, in most instances, if support had been available, accessed, appropriately delivered and accepted at an earlier point it is likely that the resulting homelessness could have been prevented.

People have also told us about the challenges and barriers they perceive and experience when trying to get their support needs met and when seeking rehousing. Issues raised include:

- Multiple appointments, assessments and retelling of their story
- Past behaviours or issues being held against them (including arrears, debts, anti-social behaviour and criminal histories)
- Multiple or unsuitable placements (often in shared settings with people who they clash with or want to get away from)
- Uncertainty about processes and not being kept informed
- Not meeting thresholds for services and not understanding why or what they can do about it / where else they can turn
- Previous negative experiences with systems and services being a deterrent to engagement
- Difficulties in navigating the requirements within systems to get to the next step of a process without support
- The temporary nature of some interventions, and the conditions and expectations attached to others
- There are also particular sets of issues for people who are escaping violence, are new refugees, have no recourse to public funds, as well as issues that are gender or age specific

The following section of the strategy outlines the approach the Nottingham partners will take to addressing points highlighted by people who have experienced homelessness in the city and in delivering the strategy, partners will continue to ensure that the people it affects are able to influence the way that it is delivered.

The Approach – Partnerships and Principles

It is clear that the range of circumstances and issues leading up to homelessness occurring are often multi-faceted and not easily separated.

The understanding that homelessness is not simply about someone losing a roof over their head gives the impetus to provide responses that do not focus on housing alone when striving for adequate solutions to meeting people's needs and stopping homelessness from happening or responding to it if it does.

There is a responsibility across the public, private and voluntary sector to prevent homelessness from happening and help people to recover from it when it does.

Services working together to respond to support needs is the only way to prevent homelessness from happening or reoccurring. There will be times when coordinated interventions only require a small number of partners working together (such as Housing Aid, a housing provider, maybe a debt advisor and the JobCentre Plus). There will be other circumstances when support needs are multiple and complex and a wider range of partners need to be involved.

This approach does not only have a positive humanitarian impact (and sustainable improvement to quality of life) but by helping to avoid negative consequences associated with homelessness (e.g. poor health, crime and ASB, affected child development, unemployment.) it will also reduce future demand for services further down the line

This strategy therefore, is characterised by resolute commitment from partners across the public, private and community sector to delivery of an integrated system of collaborative working towards a shared vision of sustainable solutions.

Homelessness prevention in Nottingham focusses around the unique circumstances, needs, wants and ambitions of the individual or collective household.

The strategy recognises that there may be a need for different access pathways and service options for people with protected characteristics. Therefore, it is accompanied by an Equalities Impact Assessment to ensure that our recommendations and resulting service design and delivery is inclusive and accessible for all.

In Nottingham **our approach focusses on putting the citizen at the heart**.

We know that that people at risk of homelessness may be vulnerable for many reasons *and that we should work in their interests to reduce that risk and help them to find the most fitting solutions*. We do not believe that it is helpful to categorise people by a supposedly defining issue, which consequently decides their eligibility for a set service with rigid thresholds, prescriptive options and predetermined outcomes. Instead, we want to find out what is going to work for the person and flex services around them. This requires an asset-based approach that builds on the strengths of the individuals.

This strategy promotes a way of working where no matter the point of contact, a person or family can have their needs and goals recognised. Under this basis of 'making every contact count' and 'no wrong front door' we can better work together to ensure that individuals and families are not passed from service to service but are

effectively and seamlessly supported with interventions that are going to work for them. Together we will deliver an approach that is flexible and individually focussed and help to deliver **Better Outcomes and Better Lives**.

What does this look like?

1. Asking questions about the housing situation
2. Efficient and effective information sharing to minimise duplication of assessment and the individual having to repeatedly tell their story
3. Incorporating 'I statements' in personalised support plans
4. Services that are delivered within Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE)
5. Promoting widespread public sector adoption of the Opportunity Nottingham *Facts about Me*
6. Investigating the feasibility of systems for developing single records or use of a 'passport' or 'golden ticket' that allows for the transference of information between services (with informed consent)
7. Taking into account the households views, assets and ambitions to help determine a course of action

Application of the following four pathway principles will help achieve the vision for the strategy.

1. Early identification of need

The strategy seeks to set delivery of a local system where individuals and families who may be in need of advice, support or an intervention are identified at the earliest available opportunity. This requires cross sector awareness and understanding of the factors that can lead to and cause homelessness. It also means awareness of the consequences of homelessness, for the individual as well as for that sector or service areas and in turn, an understanding of how preventing homelessness would positively impact.

This means provision of resources that embed homelessness prevention within the forefront of all front line services across the public, community, voluntary, faith and private and public sectors. It requires all specified public sector bodies and their agencies to understand and commit to their role in delivering homelessness prevention and fulfil their obligations under the new Duty to Refer. This strategy also encourages all other non-specified public sector bodies to engage in the processes set up under the Duty to Refer as operational best practice.

What does this look like?

- Ensuring services across a range of sectors are trained and skilled in the identification of signs that could lead to issues developing and can understand the structural and individual causes of homelessness
- Putting in place protocols and pathways so services know how to respond effectively when they are aware of household in need or at risk

2. Comprehensive assessments and support plans

The public sector is increasingly moving towards understanding much more about the person they are in contact with than just the issue they are there to specifically help resolve. Additionally, the support needs of an individual or family are increasing in complexity and in many cases there are multiple issues that require input from more than one sector or organisation. This strategy recognises the importance of helping the individual deal with their situation in its entirety rather than intervening in each problem independently of the other. The strategy seeks to avoid situations where specialist services deny access to support until other issues are addressed. Through this strategy we are promoting cross-sector understanding of the interdependencies of support needs and how not addressing one has consequence for another.

This Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy seeks to utilise the duties around partnership working (contained in both the Homelessness Reduction Act and the Care Act). In doing so we will lay the foundations towards a local system where, regardless of the contact point or the presenting issue, *all* household members have

all of their needs considered through a joined-up and holistic assessment, followed by a coordinated plan of support.

What does this look like?

- Expanding existing and introduce new practices of joint assessments and collective support plans through encouraging and enabling increased colocation of services and information sharing
- Considering how to best maximise expertise as well as simplifying pathways to provision (e.g. single gateway for access to any form of short-term supported accommodation, inclusive framework for support and enablement services)
- Ensuring that the assessment and plans capture the views and insight from support workers or other community sector representatives involved with the household

3. A mixed economy of provision

The person or family is at the very core of this Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy and therefore in Nottingham we want to make sure that we provide accommodation and support (along with other services and solutions) that is flexible and can be tailored to the individual. We want to provide places to live that create hope and inspire change. We want our services to be adaptive rather than rigid and systems-led with defined thresholds. We want to make sure that systems work together and complement each other without unintended consequences of exclusion and that people in need are able to access provision based on how severe the totality of their support needs is, taking everything into account rather than focussing on one particular specialism. This requires enabling delivery of a broad and flexible range of housing and support options, as far as this is practicable.

What does this look like?

- Ensuring there is a range of support and accommodation provision including: social housing, private sector housing, private sector housing owned / social landlord managed, supported accommodation for people with multiple needs, accommodation with support – ranging from light touch and time limited to intensive and ongoing
- Exploring options for the joint commissioning of services (especially for people with multiple and complex needs) via a range of methods (e.g. block contracts, social impact bonds, personal budgets, dual funding streams)

4. Building resilience through sustainable solutions

The final element of the Nottingham homelessness prevention approach is to ensure provision enables the further development of capacity and resilience within individuals, families and communities. We want Nottingham to fully transition towards being a city where preventative action and not crisis response is the norm. We therefore want to help people to help themselves so that homelessness prevention or relief is sustainable in the long term.

What does this look like?

- Commissioning and delivery / linking in to services which:
  - understand behaviours through motivational interviewing and provision of psychologically informed environments
  - work with local families and communities to better utilise personal assets
  - promote income maximisation and tackling financial vulnerability with education, training and employment support
  - provide advocacy and advice to help access and sustain accommodation in the Private Rented Sector
  - give mediation and support to enable people to remain at home for longer

- Supporting individuals, families and communities to enable them recognise when, and how to seek, access and accept advice and support.
- Providing self-help information and advice and ensure that it is available, easily obtainable, understandable, consistent and coordinated throughout the city

Priority areas of focus

So far we have outlined the overarching approach to tackling and preventing homelessness in Nottingham. In this section we highlight our priority areas for focussed activity. These priority areas are framed into the following four themes:

1. Addressing the causes of homelessness
2. Homelessness Prevention – enabling people to stay where they are or stopping following prison, hospital, local authority care and NASS accommodation
3. Homelessness relief (and response) – supporting people into alternative accommodation
4. Tackling rough sleeping

Within each priority areas of focus, we identify the issue and the steps we have already taken to addressing it. We present what it is we want to achieve, highlight matters of urgency and set out the further key areas of activity that this strategy is recommending we collectively progress as a city over the next five years.

These broad ambitions will help to inform a full action plan that will be set annually. Each yearly action plan will contain a range of activity pertaining to each of the themes in this strategy. The action plans will be developed by the agencies involved in its delivery. It will contain the detail on the interventions required and the activity (including advice, support, accommodation facilitation and provision) that individual organisations have identified as needed and have committed to deliver.

The Nottingham Homelessness Prevention Strategy Implementation Group (SIG) will oversee progress against the action plan. Further information relating to governance arrangements can be found at page 50.

Theme One
Addressing the causes of homelessness

Using local insight we have been able to identify several reoccurring trends in factors that can lead to homelessness. These are not the technical reasons that people lose their accommodation (e.g. eviction from a rented property) but more the drivers that led to that accommodation becoming unavailable (e.g. rent arrears accrued because of financial hardship).

Priority 1.1.
Tackling social exclusion – identifying and addressing multiple and complex needs

What is the issue?

In 2017, Lyndsey Harris of The University of Nottingham defined Complex needs as people:
"who experience multiple disadvantage and require a person-centred, trauma-informed approach but experience barriers and challenges in accessing essential services, which would enhance their safety, wellbeing and quality of life"

The Big Lottery Fund Fulfilling Lives programme estimates that there are around 60,000 individuals in England with complex needs. It is becoming increasingly evident from our own data that peoples support needs cannot be categorised by a singular point of concern and rather there are often a complicated mixture of longstanding issues compounded by a range of presenting support needs.

Many traditional models of service provision and silos in sector working do not adequately respond to and support people with multiple and complex needs. In Nottingham we want to ensure that our local system of support is flexible and inclusive enough to work for this cohort of people and prevent them from further social exclusion.

Opportunity Nottingham has been instrumental in supporting people with multiple and complex needs in Nottingham and the project is delivering the insight and evaluation needed to make the case for system change that will ensure that the particular needs of this cohort are recognised and addressed across sectors. However, it is important to highlight as a risk that the funding from the Big Lottery to deliver Opportunity Nottingham will end in 2022 and so commissioners from all areas of housing, health, mental health, criminal justice and drug and alcohol must consider strategies such as this to make sure that we have adapted our systems appropriately to manage any future gap in provision.

What we have done so far

- As outlined earlier, Opportunity Nottingham began operating in 2014 under the Fulfilling Live Programme to support people in Nottingham exhibiting at least three of the following needs: homelessness, substance misuse issues, mental health and offending history / risk.
- To date Opportunity Nottingham has worked with 357 people and is making significant progress in bringing the voice of people with lived experience to engineer necessary system change. Ambassadors and Beneficiaries of the service were involved in the review, redesign and recommissioning of housing related support services and the development of this Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy

- In 2015 Nottingham City Council was successful in a bid to government for funding to deliver accommodation and support for survivors of domestic or sexual violence and abuse who have complex needs
- Following the 2017 Nottingham City Council commissioning review of Housing Related Support supported accommodation services were combined into one contract to allow for flexibility of movement between provision and varying lengths of stay depending on needs.

What do we want to achieve?

- That people are protected from experiencing trauma in childhood and adulthood and those who have had negative experiences are able to build resilience for later life and for future life events
- Provision of a flexible range of person-centred, accessible and effective accommodation and support options that can move a greater number of individuals onto sustainable positive outcomes
- A system of assessment which reduces the amount of appointments and repetitive 'story-telling' from the individual
- A reduction in repeat homelessness through a greater number of people with complex needs sustaining their accommodation and addressing their support needs

Urgent focus

- There are a number of individuals rough sleeping or in B&B temporary accommodation who have multiple and complex needs. We need to re-review both the amount and the type of accommodation that is currently available to this cohort.

Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years

- Consider the expansion of complex need case conferencing to ensure a multi-agency response
- Set up a regular regime of reporting to the Children and Adults Safeguarding Boards highlighting good practice as well as seeking support to overcome barriers to delivering homelessness prevention in Nottingham
- Explore options for the development and delivery of shared assessments and support plans between housing and social care and the role of support agencies in pre-assessment / provision of supporting information
- Explore the possibility of introducing a single route of access for each of long-term and short-term supported accommodation
- Consider how to collaboratively design and commission a range of flexible accommodation and support services that are accessible to those who need them and sufficient in meeting a range of care, support and enablement needs
- Seek to establish services that are trauma informed or Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE)
- Ensure that the long term effects of childhood trauma are known and understood and consider what additional interventions can be put into place to protect children from trauma and help those who have had negative experiences to build resilience for later life
- Evidence the contribution of housing related support to the health and social care prevention agenda. Show how a local system of early identification and collaborative assessment of housing and support needs and clear and accessible pathways to a range of provision supports Better Care Fund metrics
- Consider how to incentivise the delivery outcomes within 'harder to manage' groups
- Investigate and consider further use of befriending and mentoring to support people with multiple and complex need to sustain independent living

Priority 1.2
Responding to mental health needs and promoting positive wellbeing

What is the issue?

Recent research conducted in Nottingham by Sheffield Hallam University tells us that the proportion of homeless people with mental health issues is significant. Importantly, the research also shows us that the majority of people had mental health support needs prior to their homeless situation. This means that largely the mental health issues have not been caused by homelessness. Whilst it would not be accurate to assume that the mental health issues have then caused the homelessness, it is fair to conclude that untreated or unsupported mental health conditions can be a driver for homelessness. It is therefore critical for us to ensure that we are doing all we are able as a city to stop people with mental health issues from reaching homelessness (and exposing them to the risk of further compounding their issues).

We must also ensure that if people with mental health problems do become homeless, that there are clear and effective pathways into suitable support and accommodation provision that is appropriate in meeting their needs. This includes recognition of the specific support requirements for refugees and asylum seekers with Post traumatic stress disorder, survivors of domestic abuse, victims of modern slavery and people who have been through traumatic experiences in the childhood or adulthood.

What have we done so far?

- In 2016, Nottingham Clinical Commissioning Group commissioned a piece of research carried out by Sheffield Hallam University over 2017 into Mental Health and Homelessness in Nottingham. The resulting report contains rich local insight. A number of the recommendations generated from the research report have been incorporated into this strategy and more are being considered by the Mental Health Joint Commissioning Group
- Nottingham City Council Public Health have reviewed the cities mental health strategy – Wellness in Mind and are working with colleagues across the county to develop the Nottinghamshire STP Integrated Mental Health Strategy
- The Wellbeing Hub, established in 2017, places several local health based services in one building to make it easier for people to get the help and support they need for mental health, drugs, alcohol, housing and more. The Wellness in Mind service (run by Framework) is based in the hub and enables people to access advice, signposting and referrals for further mental health support
- In 2017 an Accommodation Broker post was introduced by Nottingham City Council Adult Social Care to find suitable supported accommodation for people with learning disabilities and mental health conditions. The initial focus of the role has been to support people out of residential care and two new supported accommodation projects housing 20 residents with mental health conditions will open later in 2018

What do we want to achieve?

- Fewer people with mental health support needs becoming homeless
- If people with mental health support needs do become homeless they are able to access pathways into appropriate support and accommodation
- Fewer people in emergency homeless accommodation after hospital, residential care or specialist supported accommodation placement

Urgent focus

- It is a priority for NCC to ensure that there is sufficiency in accommodation and support for people who are homeless. It is also a priority for NCC to move people with mental health issues (who are not in need of residential care) into supported independent living. There is a risk of this creating excessive demand on provision and therefore this must be coordinated effectively.

Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years

- Establish and deliver a mental health strategy for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire that sets out a system which ensures equitable access to suitable support and accommodation based services for all people in need of them
- Further build Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE) into local assessments and accommodation and support provision
- Review mental health services (including supported accommodation) to ensure that it is accessible for people who have other support needs in addition to a mental health condition
- Consider expanding the range of roles to help people with multiple and complex needs or other people at risk of homelessness to navigate the mental healthcare system
- Nottingham City Council Adult Social Care to work with Housing Aid and community sector support providers to deliver joint holistic assessment of need

Priority 1.3
Helping to protect people from violence and abuse

What is the issue?

The links between homelessness and violent and abusive situations are clear. Risk of homelessness can often seem unavoidable when escaping abusive situations such as domestic violence, sexual abuse, modern slavery, human trafficking or honour-based violence. Furthermore, the fear of homelessness can also act as a deterrent to leaving dangerous situations.

It is of absolute importance that our local strategies for homelessness prevention, violence against women and girls and modern slavery are connected and we have clear structures to:

- provide appropriate specialist support
- help survivors remain in their homes (when it is safe to do so)
- move into alternative safe accommodation with minimal disruption

Additionally, it is important to recognise that people who are homeless can have vulnerabilities that make them at greater risk of experiencing harm from others and we must consider ways to help minimise risk.

What have we done so far?

- Maintained commitment to funding refuge and specialist support services for survivors of domestic and sexual violence and abuse (including a 24 hour helpline and BME refuge)
- Provided specialist training in modern slavery and domestic violence for people working across sectors
- Ensured the housing and housing-related support sector is linked to the Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy Group and the Adult and Children's Safeguarding Board and there is an open channel of communication
- Included representation from Housing Aid and Framework at the local MARAC meetings
- Provided a Sanctuary Scheme since 2007 which has enabled around 250 survivors of domestic violence to remain safely within their own home
- Nottingham City Homes and Registered Providers who are part of the Nottinghamshire Social Housing Forum are considering how to take forward the set of standards outlined by the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA)
- Womens Aid Integrated Services (WAIS) provide support to survivors of domestic abuse by working with the courts and Nottinghamshire police in obtaining notices, injunctions and Domestic Violence Protection Orders to remove the perpetrator from the home without causing homelessness for the remainder of the household

What do we want to achieve?

- For services across all sectors to be able to identify people at risk of violence, abuse or exploitation and aware of how to support them to safety
- For survivors needs to be recognised at an early stage and for partners connect to prevent homelessness where possible whilst protecting against harm
- For a range of flexible and specialist accommodation and support services to be available and accessible for people escaping violence, abuse or exploitation

Urgent focus

- Whilst maintaining commitment to the national network of refuges, ensure that local refuges are adopting the Nottingham First approach to bedspaces (i.e. giving first refusal to Housing Aid) and that when they do, Housing Aid are maximising take up to ensure that local survivors of domestic abuse are accommodated in an appropriate supportive environment

Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years

- Ensure that housing and housing related support professionals are trained in recognising and understanding the different forms of violence and abuse, the associated pressures and the required response (particularly where there are multiple perpetrators e.g. gang violence, honour based violence, trafficking and modern slavery)
- Identify training packages and utilise communication and partnership networks such as Nouse, the Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group and the Multi-Agency Forum on Refugees and Asylum Seekers to promote – look at opportunities for joint training and shadowing possibilities
- Ensure that insight about domestic abuse and modern slavery is captured at the quarterly homelessness forum and there is appropriate representation from the sector at a strategic level
- Ensure that specialist training is featured as a requirement in service specifications for housing related support services
- Promote good practice examples of homeless organisations raising awareness with service users
- Ensure that information about pathways to support are available for homeless services to be able to make referrals and signpost their service users to
- Include questions about exploitation in homelessness assessments
- Provide clarity about what the local authority has a duty to do when violence or abuse is identified or disclosed and if/how that differs when people have No Recourse to Public Funds
- Local authority to provide information about who voluntary, community and faith sector organisations should contact for information to support bids to external funding sources
- Through Nottingham Together, further develop the availability of free accommodation units for households for survivors of modern slavery who have been displaced as a consequence of enforcement action
- Ensure connectivity between the developing Nottingham Violence against Women and Girls Strategy and the local homelessness prevention agenda
- Adopt and follow the Nottingham City Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse guidance within accommodation based and housing related support services
- Providing that it is safe for them to do so, ensure that local systems allow for survivors from Nottingham to seek accommodation in Nottingham if they are in refuge or other temporary accommodation out of the area
- Ensure that the professional opinions of agencies supporting survivors of violence and abuse are considered and utilised in the formation of Personalised Housing Plans
- Ensure there is enough refuge provision per head of population and maintain the 24 hour helpline as the key referral route (alongside the homelessness prevention gateway)
- Maintain provision of specialist services for children in refuges and in families who have escaped violence and abuse and who have been placed in temporary accommodation

Priority 1.4
Promoting financial capability and independent living skills

What is the issue?

The primary societal reason that people become homeless is because they have low levels of income and this financial vulnerability puts pressure on their ability to secure or sustain their accommodation. Over the last decade this has immixed with limited availability of affordable housing options which lead to additional difficulties in finding alternative accommodation. In recent years there have been a number of reforms to the welfare system leading to a reduction in the amount of income a household receives in benefits. Alongside this, there has been a decrease in the availability of the most affordable kind of housing (social rent) and people have to source accommodation from the private rented sector where there is often a shortfall between the higher market rental charge and the amount of local housing allowance a household is entitled to.

Where people are considered to have adequate financial means to afford to live in their housing, their ability to manage their money can cause a risk to homelessness and they may lack some of the skills required to live independently.

The introduction of Universal Credit has changed the way benefits are administered and places new responsibilities on the household for budgeting over a monthly period (separating their rent from their personal allowance etc.) which can bring additional pressure to a household unaccustomed to this kind of money management. Universal Credit Full Service was rolled out in Nottingham in October 2018 meaning the impact of the change is upon us and we must implement our plans to support local residents and landlords through the transition.

What we have done so far

- Advice Nottingham deliver a coordinated network of services that help people to manage debts and access additional benefits (i.e. disability benefits and DHP to reduce the effects of other benefit restrictions). The services liaise with landlords to prevent eviction, provide training around debt and housing and work with banks around ID needed to set up basic accounts. In 2017 alone they helped people manage over £22m of priority and non-priority debts and recovered almost £12m in additional benefits. In 2016 a Financial Resilience Steering Group was set up by Advice Nottingham to deliver a city-wide strategy, ensuring a cross sector approach to reducing financial vulnerability.
- The Nottingham DWP, across both sites, has in place Financial Support, including - Money Sorted, who attend the office every Tuesday. They engage with customers on a wide range of issues, including homeless prevention offering support and follow up meeting, where necessary. DWP has an excellent working relationship with the NCC Welfare Rights service and Nottingham City Homes, both of whom collocate officers in DWP Job Centres. DWP also are pro-active in promoting the services of CAB, Food Bank networks, Sharewear/The Arches etc. as well as homelessness support organisations, including Framework, Opportunity Nottingham, Emmanuel House, YMCA. The DWP works closely with these organisations and has regular contact with their support workers to complete joint pieces of casework.
- Housing Benefit and Council tax Support; Nottingham Revenues and Benefits Ltd take an active role in supporting the Preventing Homelessness agenda and as well as ensuring the effective assessment and delivery of benefit services to 37,592 households has taken an active role in shaping policy to support access to Discretionary Housing Payments; actively attends and inputs into the Preventing Homelessness working group and planning for the implementation of Universal Credit for the City.
- Locally, Nottingham City Homes and Registered Providers of social housing endeavour to identify and work with tenants who are experiencing financial difficulty at the earliest stage possible. Activities to support tenants include financial assessments, budgetary planning, jobs fair signposting, debt and benefit advice (surgeries), downsizing of property where applicable, health and wellbeing assessments. Social Housing providers are keen to intervene as early as possible and mitigate any costly and resource intensive action to recover rent arrears. The Notts Social Housing Forum enables local partners to share learning and best practice and collectively develop shared models for operational delivery.

- Building Better Opportunities 'Money Sorted in D2N2' is a specific project that provides individuals across Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire with a tailored package of support to improve their financial well-being and capability. The Nottingham Financial Resilience Partnership was fully established in 2016. It is a multi-agency partnership responsible for delivering a comprehensive plan to tackle the different aspects involved in improving people's financial resilience within the city.
- In 2017/18 Nottingham Jobs supported 2300 individuals into employment in the city
- In 2017/18 the Nottingham Welfare Rights Team provided advice and advocacy on benefits and debt to over 5700 households via telephone line, office appointments and home visits. The service collocates in Housing Aid one day a week and take referrals directly from local JobCentres, Nottingham City Council departments and Nottingham City Homes. The team help to negotiate repayment plans with landlords and mortgage lenders, complete court forms and agree postponed possession orders prior to the court hearing as well as advising on unclaimed benefits, maximising income, negotiating with non-priority creditors in order for higher payments to be made to their rent accounts

What do we want to achieve?

- To readdress the balance between financial vulnerability and financial capability.
- For all households in Nottingham to receive the support they require to become as independent as possible in managing their money and maximising their income.
- For more people to become financially stable through regular employment.
- To minimise the number of households becoming homeless because of Universal Credit.

Urgent focus

- Universal Credit Full Service went live in Nottingham in October 2018. We must ensure we are delivering a coordinated plan to support local people through the transition and minimise the risk of rent arrears and subsequent threat of homelessness

Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years

- Ensure delivery of a planned approach to supporting tenants in the private rented sector through the transition to Universal Credit
- Ensure that local providers of social housing collectively plan for Universal Credit to share the same message with tenants across the city and continue to utilise the Notts Social Housing Forum to share learning and best practice to mitigate the ongoing impact
- Explore options for specialist employment support workers to be available for households at risk of homelessness or those who have been supported away from homelessness
- Explore the possibility of collocating JobCentre staff with Housing Aid
- Utilise Legal Aid funding to deliver earlier advice to people who have received eviction notices and provide representation at court for people facing possession
- Nottingham Together to progress work with the Credit Union to develop a scheme that will promote financial inclusion of communities excluded by lack of access to bank accounts.
- Complete the financial vulnerability commissioning review and ensure that there is sufficiency in provision of services with clear remits on their distinct role in delivery of preventative advice and support prior to a point of crisis
- Take a cross-sector approach to considering the role of housing-related support in helping to deliver much wider outcomes than homelessness prevention alone and consider how to maximise the effectiveness of this and ensure continued impact
- Monitor trends in the number of households who are presenting to services at risk of homelessness because their rental charge is unaffordable to them
- Use local analysis to investigate reasons and causes for tenancy abandonment and develop a cross-tenure tenancy abandonment plan

Priority 1.5
Supporting the provision of safe accommodation

What is the issue?

The private rented sector in Nottingham is rapidly growing. Around one third of all housing in Nottingham is now rented from private landlords compared to around one fifth, fifteen years ago. This tenure is now relied upon by many households for whom home ownership is not an option and social housing is less accessible. The private rented sector is currently less regulated (at a national level) than social housing and as a result, standards in accommodation and property management are variable. There are many good landlords operating in Nottingham who are providing a valuable source of accessible housing at a decent standard to Nottingham citizens (Priority 2.1 has focus on building and maintaining positive relationships with these responsible landlords). However, there are other landlords in the private rented sector who do not adhere to their rights and responsibilities in appropriately supporting their tenants and providing a decent standard of accommodation. These landlords are putting people health, wellbeing and safety at risk and exposing them to increased risk of homelessness.

What we have done so far

- In 2013, Nottingham City Council utilised government funding to set up the Safer Housing Team to help tackle the issue of Rogue Landlords in Nottingham. Since then the team has:
  - handled 12,880 complaints about housing conditions in the Private Rented Sector. The team proactively supports landlords offering advice and helping to develop a plan of action to remedy the situation. If necessary to protect the tenant's safety, the team will take enforcement action to prosecute the landlord if they are not willing to do what is required to improve the conditions
  - served 128 Emergency Prohibition Orders, 134 Prohibition Orders and taken 75 Emergency Remedial Actions on landlords to safeguard tenants exposed to unacceptable risks found during inspections. Plus there have been 31 prosecutions and cautions issued to rogue landlords
- Nottingham City Council delivers mandatory and additional licensing schemes covering 3496 houses in multiple occupation (up to December 2017). During that time the scheme has attached additional conditions to 879 licenses where improvement to the property were required and refused to issue a license and taken appropriate action against 151 properties where the appropriate level of standard has not been met
- The "Nottingham Standard" landlord accreditation scheme was introduced in 2013 through a partnership between Nottingham City Council, DASH services and Unipol, which has since classified an additional 2500 as operating at an accredited standard
- In August 2018, Nottingham City Council introduced a new selective licensing scheme which is operational for 5 years until 31st July 2023. The scheme requires private rented sector landlords in most areas of the city to obtain a licence for each property they rent out to ensure it meets safety and quality standards
- In April 2016 the Nottingham Together programme was launched and includes a focus on working with and for the new and emerging migrant communities of Nottingham who're at greater risk of exploitation by rogue landlords. Activity includes:
  - Community based advice surgeries and training sessions provided on housing rights and support and advocacy work to uphold those rights provided by Nottingham Together and Nottingham Law Centre
  - Training for the Police in Nottingham City and the Notts Police call centre to improve knowledge and interventions on landlord tenant issues, with particular reference to illegal eviction and harassment
  - Development of available housing units for households displaced by enforcement activity where not owed accommodation duties by the Authority
  - Establishment of a loan mechanism via bank accounts with Nottingham Credit Union to promote financial inclusion for new & emerging communities

What do we want to achieve?

- Improvements in the quality and safety of more privately rented accommodation in the city

Urgent focus

- The Selective Licensing scheme was introduced in the city in August 2018. We must maximise contact opportunities through implementation of the scheme to:
  - ensure all s21 notices received since 01 August 2018 are validated by a licence / application
  - support tenants access any other services they require to meet their needs
  - support landlords to meet their responsibilities
  - utilise any properties that become available as a result of landlords existing the market

Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years

- Develop a process for Housing Aid (and other partners sourcing accommodation for vulnerable people in the PRS) to conduct checks on private sector landlords and properties being used to accommodate people who have been homeless.
- Ensure that Housing Aid and all support and advice agencies are aware of and actively engaging in processes to report instances of apparent poor conditions / harassment / unlawful eviction
- Ensure that resources are made available to help landlords provide appropriate support to tenants and improve levels of tenancy management across the sector
- Provide sale and leasing options for landlords or empty property owners wishing to sell or reduce their involvement in their property
- Change behaviours of poor landlords through encouragement, support, licensing / accreditation and significant consequences where there is a lack of compliance
- *See also Priority are 2.1 and 3.1*

Theme Two
Homelessness Prevention – enabling people to stay where they are

This theme is all about early intervention – targeting interventions in areas that our local data tells us are the most common reasons people become homelessness and being poised to identify and respond to issues as they arise.

Priority 2.1
Working with tenants and landlords to reduce evictions from the Private Rented Sector

What is the issue?

Our local data tells us that the ending of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST) in the Private Rented Sector is the most prevalent reason a household presents to the local authority as homeless. In 2017, 1,669 households became homeless from the Private Rented Sector and this accounted for 50% of all households who approached the local authority for assistance.

In Spring 2017, over 60 local landlords responded to a survey developed by Nottingham City Council Housing Strategy team seeking insight into appetite and experience in renting to people who had been homeless or people in receipt of benefits. Landlords cited rent arrears as the main reason they had issued a notice to a household on benefits followed by property damage and anti-social behaviour.

Further research in the form of structured interviews with 55 local landlords was conducted by the Housing Aid Nottingham Private Rented Assistance Scheme (NPRAS) team in July 2018. The findings showed 41% of landlords served notice because of tenant conduct – mainly rent arrears but also anti-social behaviour, inability to maintain property, and adhere to rules set in the tenancy agreement. However, 34% stated financial reasons were making them want to sell their property with most mentioning the changes in tax regime and 29% mentioning selective licensing as a contributing factor and 12% said they required the property back for their own personal use.

Both research projects indicate a clear requirement for more support for both landlords and tenants in the Private Rented Sector in order to prevent homelessness from the private rented sector.

What we have done so far

- The remit of NPRAS has been expanded to give officers further flexibility in the incentives they are able to provide to landlords to help negotiate for a tenancy to be continued and a section 21 notice retracted.

NPRAS
Nottingham Private Rented Assistance Scheme
Tenancy services, financial support and advice for landlords

The NPRAS team now offer a dedicated landlord advice and support telephone line and email address and promote a 'say before you serve' policy. They can provide tenancy facilitation including background checks, rent and repair guarantees and links to Housing Benefit teams. They produce a monthly newsletter for landlords and have introduced an Eviction Prevention Protocol

- Independent Living Support Services have been redesigned to work directly from the Personalised Housing plans and flexibly target those most in need. This includes vulnerable households in the Private Rented Sector where it is acknowledged that additional support may be required to maximise tenancy sustainment
- A housing engagement officer has been recruited into the Nottingham City Council Selective Licensing Team to promote positive relationships between the City Council and Private Rented Sector landlords and who has instigated delivery of a new landlords forum in the city
- Nottingham City Council has been successful in a bid to the Local Government Association for use of an advisor to further develop a coordinated approach to supporting landlords and tenants in the Private Rented Sector.

What we want to achieve

- Increased tenancy sustainment in the private rented sector
- More landlords and tenants utilising information or contacting services for support at an early stage to allow the opportunity for an intervention to resolve any issues and save the tenancy
- Where landlords are going to issue s21 notices, that they utilise a process of informing Nottingham City Council to allow time to support the household in identifying and accessing alternative accommodation
- Positive relationships and connectivity between landlords, the local authority and support services (facilitated through better communication and provision of advice, information and support for both landlords and tenants)

Urgent focus

- Review the level of resource required to sufficiently address homelessness prevention within the Private Rented Sector.

Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years

- Further **expand landlord liaison functions** and consider further incentives and support including tenant swapping and mediation functions
- Build **positive relationships** with landlords and open further dialogue to understand their concerns and requirements
- Continue to include homelessness prevention advice as part of the role of the Nottingham City Council Safer Housing and Nottingham Together teams in their interactions with landlords and tenants
- Broaden channels of **communication** between landlords and the local authority and partner advice and support services. Provide relevant web based advice, information and support to landlords. Ensure that landlords are linked into relevant service areas (such as DWP/HB, community protection)
- Ensure tenants are able/encouraged to access appropriate support / budgeting / welfare advice / life skills training to enable them to maximise their income
- Further develop, promote and deliver the new landlords forum and newsletters
- Consider further expansion of the NPRAS service to include additional tenancy management functions on behalf of the landlord for a set fee and period of time.
- Further the development of a **standardised process** for landlords to notify the local authority when they are issuing Section 21 notifications to their tenants
- Examine the feasibility for introducing a **reward system** for good tenants and landlords to try to encourage increased lengths of tenure and provide further stability for people who want to remain where they are for a number of years and for landlords who want retain their tenants
- Embed process for landlords who want to sell their properties offering first refusal to Nottingham City Council (and partners)
- Further develop services with responsibility for seeking options to **resolve rent arrears** and make the property more affordable
- Utilise Licensing teams increased contact with landlords to positively promote tenancy sustainment
- Progress Nottingham's bid into governments Private Rented Sector Access Scheme fund
- *See also Priority Area 1.5 and 3.1*

Priority 2.2
Minimising unplanned exclusion from family or friends homes

What is the issue?

Parental exclusion or not being able to stay any longer with other relatives or friends remains one of the primary reasons for homelessness in Nottingham – particularly amongst younger people, single people with multiple and complex needs who may have been homeless before and foreign nationals (including destitute Asylum Seekers). Research by national homelessness charity Crisis found that 50% of single homeless people first became homeless aged 20 or younger, 44% first became homeless from the parental or family home and 10% of single homeless people had never lived in permanent accommodation during their adult life. This shows that homelessness caused by family exclusion is both common and long lasting in impact.

Additionally, we know that being asked to leave by a friend or relative is the most common reason for a homeless crisis – meaning that the person or household is homeless that night and emergency accommodation is required. This is often because many people who have already become homeless will rely on the goodwill of friends, family or people from their national or religious communities on a conditional or temporary basis. Many people then do not seek or cannot access the assistance they require, or find that support in resolving their housing situation is taking too long and the arrangements breakdown.

What we have done so far

- Redesigned young peoples supported accommodation provision to include a focus on returning home and the use of temporary 'time out' bedspaces to facilitate this
- Bid successfully to the Life Chances Fund for research money that has been used to design a model of provision for future consideration
- Completed a departmental restructure which has moved Housing Aid under Children and Adults to further develop closer partnerships between Housing Aid and Childrens Social Care and allow for joint assessments and a case conferencing approach to complex cases
- Submitted a bid to the European Social Fund Youth Employment Initiative for employment support advisors to be based within Housing Aid and work specifically with young people at risk of homelessness
- Included a home visiting function within the new Independent Living Support Services contract to confirm homelessness, discuss options with family members and signpost to any necessary further support
- HOPE Nottingham and Open Homes Nottingham provide emergency accommodation for young people or refugees and asylum seekers in need

What we want to achieve

A reduction in the number of people becoming homeless from family and friends accommodation in an emergency through an increase in planned moves.

Urgent focus

- Promotion of 'homeless at home' – raising awareness about the options available to people, managing expectations and enabling people to be able to secure their own housing options
- Review the existing Care Leavers Protocol to ensure planned and timely moves for all young people leaving the care of the local authority. In particular, consider the use of / need for young persons supported accommodation for **complex care leavers** / youth offenders to prevent extended / unnecessary stays in costly care placements or unsuitable referrals into homelessness provision

Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years

- Review previous delivery of mediation services and explore the possibility of reintroducing an **independent mediation** service
- Ensure that young people living in the private rented sector have parity in access to **life skills / tenancy training** as that of young people living in social housing
- Revisit options for working closer with schools and colleges to help young people understand the realities of homelessness, work with families to help raise awareness of options available for young people when they leave home and dispel myths
- Work with families to help promote strong family structures and support
- Provide appropriate communications and information to ensure that people are aware of their options, are able to access self-help resources and are kept up to date by any agencies who are supporting them

Priority 2.3
Preventing eviction from social housing and supported accommodation

What is the issue?

It is extremely important to try to prevent evictions from social housing from happening. If a household is not paying their rent or is behaving in an anti-social way in social housing where the rental charge is low and the landlord is supportive, they are likely to find it extremely difficult to access or sustain alternative accommodation in the private sector. Equally, if someone has been assessed as requiring supported accommodation but their behaviour causes them to lose the placement, it is unlikely that they will be provided with an alternative option that allows them to receive the support they require to have their needs met.

What we have done so far

- Introduced an Eviction Prevention Protocol for tenants of Nottingham City Homes which is supported by a cross-sector Eviction Prevention Panel with representation from NCH, Housing Aid and Childrens Social Care
- Achieved local Registered Provider sign up to the principles of the protocol and the processes for alerting Housing Aid to households who have been served with a notice.
- Incorporated commissioned supported accommodation provision into a single contract for adults and one for young people and introduced flexibility where providers have freedom to move people around a variety of provision

What we want to achieve

- Maximisation of responsible tenant behaviour and working with tenants to take action to minimise evictions.

Urgent focus

- An increasing number of households are at risk of eviction because of high levels of rent arrears. We need to investigate and seek to address the causes of these levels of rent arrears to enable us to target earlier interventions

Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years

1. Work together with local Registered Providers to include them as partners under the **Duty to Refer**
2. Explore the further use of **Discretionary Housing Payments** (DHP) for social housing eviction prevention and develop an exit strategy for the ending of the government funding for DHPs
3. Ensure that tenants of social housing are able to access **budgeting advice, life skills training and employment support**
4. Deliver a **city-wide plan to prepare for Universal Credit** and mitigate against loss of rental income
5. Consider options for the temporary use of **Enhanced Housing Benefit** for households who require additional support for a defined period to overcome a specific issue. Assess options for a pool of support workers to operate across organisations to deliver this function
6. Nottingham City Council to monitor evictions from supported accommodation and challenge any decisions to evict over low level offences
7. When people present to Housing Aid following eviction from Community Interest Company supported accommodation, contact should be made to see if the bedspace can be offered to a person nominated by Housing Aid (where the standard of the accommodation and support means it is appropriate to do so)

Priority 2.4
Bridging the transition to accommodation when institutionalised support ends

What is the issue?

People who experience a sudden or significant change in circumstance are at increased risk of homelessness. This includes people who have no accommodation options available to them when they are **discharged from hospital (or a mental health section), released from prison, have Home Office support withdrawn or leave local authority care**. This risk of homelessness should be one of the easiest to prevent because these people are already in contact with services. However, issues arise when

- People are homeless when they enter hospital and they are not admitted into hospital for long periods of time or are treated at A&E.
- People are given short custodial sentences by the courts leaving limited time to assess and arrange appropriate accommodation upon release.
- New refugees lose their NASS accommodation before they can access employment, benefits or housing support because of a lack of coordination between the Home Office and other government agencies

What we have done so far

- The Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland Community Rehabilitation Company, National Probation Service and Nottingham City Council developed the Nottingham Prison Leaver / Offender Accommodation Pathway
- A partnership task group including representation from Nottingham University Hospitals, Citycare, Nottinghamshire Healthcare Trust, Framework Housing Association and Nottingham City Council (Public Health, Social Care and Housing Strategy) produced multi-agency hospital discharge process guidance to support the existing hospital discharge protocol
- Nottingham City Council and providers such as Framework have implemented the Mental Health Accommodation Pathway
- Established a local care leavers protocol between Nottingham City Council Social Care and Nottingham City Homes
- Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum continue to support new refugees leaving G4 NASS accommodation into their own tenancy. Additionally the organisation supports asylum seekers with negative decisions to navigate the system with legal advice and a minimal level of financial support so that they can survive despite their destitution whilst submitting fresh claims
- Open Homes Nottingham and HOST Nottingham provide emergency accommodation to young people and people with No Recourse to Public Funds

- Nottingham Arimathea Trust (NAT) provides housing and support for destitute asylum seekers and refugees in Nottingham and Derby as well as victims of human trafficking and modern slavery. NAT is a small charity with limited bed spaces. Referrals are accepted from the following partners: Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum, The British Red Cross, Street Outreach Team at Framework and Derby Refugee Advice Centre (DRAC). Referrals are prioritised according to vulnerability of the clients and their realistic prospect of submitting a claim for asylum.

What do we want to achieve?

- Increase in homelessness prevention from hospital (including mental health sections), local authority care, prison and youth offender institutions and when NASS support is withdrawn
- A reduction in the number of people who become homeless after being supported by any of the above listed institutions

Urgent focus

- Ensure that local systems and process and established and communicated to partners regarding the Duty to Refer

Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years

- Establish the challenges around short prison sentences and commission 'through the gate' services which work with prisoners during their sentence, meet them on release and accompany them to pre-arranged meetings to facilitate access to benefits, housing and other support needs
- Understand the challenges around A&E attendances and work together to find solutions for people in these circumstances
- Embed the hospital discharge protocol and accompanying guidance within the *Discharge Policy for Greater Nottingham* and ensure it is adopted by all local hospitals – including mental health hospitals
- Work across sectors to ensure that the appropriate provision of support is available to maximise successful sustainment of the accommodation and reduce the risk of repeat hospital admission, detention under the Mental Health Act or reoffending
- Consider extending the Eviction Prevention Protocol to apply to supported accommodation provision (including specialist-supported accommodation for people with mental health conditions).
- Engage the Home Office and G4s at a local level and seek commitment to the development of a policy to ensure a more seamless and timely transition from NASS support to employment, welfare and housing for people who have been granted refugee status. Additionally, encourage NASS to participate in the local processes set up to fulfil the Duty to Refer.
- The Nottingham Multi-Agency Forum on Asylum Seekers and Refugees to work with the Nottingham Homelessness Voluntary Sector Forum in the development of a process plan for supporting failed asylum seekers in appealing decisions and submitting new evidence or claims.
- Voluntary, Faith and Community Sector partners to promote their activities via Nottingham City Council communications and publicity channels such as the Nouse network
- Review the Care Leavers protocol to ensure that that there is sufficiency and variety in accommodation options available for young people leaving local authority care – including supported accommodation and accommodation with support (particularly for care leavers with complex needs and not ready for independent living). Additionally, ensure that the refreshed protocol clearly establishes the mechanisms for planning the ending of care placements.
- Develop a local prison leaver protocol and ensure that prisons for female offenders are fully involved in the pathways that are established and specialist requirements for women / mothers are considered in rehousing decisions

Theme Three
Homelessness relief (and response) – supporting people into alternative accommodation

This theme is about ensuring that when homelessness cannot be prevented and people need to find alternative accommodation that they are provided with adequate support and enabled access to options that mean they are able to move with minimal disruption and are able to sustain their resettlement.

Priority 3.1
Utilising the Private Rented Sector as a solution to homelessness

What is the issue?

Tenure profile in Nottingham has significantly changed over the past couple of decades and there is now an ever-increasing ***reliance on the Private Rented Sector as a solution to homelessness***. At the time of the 2001 census, over one third of households in Nottingham lived in social housing and just under one in six lived in the private rented sector. However, low house prices in the city have appealed to buy-to-let investors seeking to build up their property portfolios and steady market rent levels have provided a good yield for accidental or investment landlords. According to the most recent estimations[1], one third of all households in Nottingham now live in the private rented sector and just under a quarter live in social housing.

For many the private rented sector is seen as less appealing, accessible and suitable because when compared to social housing, rents are often higher, there is less stability and there is inconsistency in property standards and landlord management. Private Sector Landlords also have the ability to be selective about the 'type' of household they choose to accommodate, which can result in much of the sector being unavailable or unaffordable to low income or workless households. There is also less security of tenure within the Private Rented Sector and tenants can be asked to move on without notice within two months at any time after their initial six or twelve month tenancy has expired.

Research Nottingham City Council conducted with over 60 local landlords in Spring 2017 found that many landlords do not discriminate against households in receipt of benefits or those who are referred by the local authority. However, those who are reluctant to accept tenants on benefits cited the reasons as fear of rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, property damage and a perception that the tenancies would be short-term.

The Private Rented Sector is one of most important resources in delivering homelessness relief. The sector promotes flexibility, variety and choice and many private sector landlords want long-term stable and reliable tenants just as much as households seek the ability to settle into a place they call their home. Therefore, we must ensure that collectively as a city we provide adequate support to enable decent landlords (providing good standard, affordable accommodation in Nottingham) to retain tenants, prevent evictions and rehouse families and individuals who have become homeless.

What we have done so far

- The Nottingham Private Rented Assistance Scheme has evolved from a basic Bond Scheme to a service that now includes offering rent in advance, tenant finding, referencing and facilitation, arranging direct rental payments and providing ongoing support to tenants and landlords
- The Nacro Homes Agency and Framework deliver social lettings functions within the city, leasing properties from private sector landlords but taking on the tenancy management functions

[1] Carried out by the British Research Establishment in 2016 under commission from Nottingham City Council

What do we want to achieve?

- Access to more quality properties in the private rented sector that are affordable to sustain
- Households move seamlessly from one property to another with minimal disruption and without the need for emergency / temporary accommodation

Urgent focus

- The need for PRS accommodation continues to grow. NCC and partners must work with landlords to progress leasing/letting schemes to offer as an available option.
- Ensure that there is exists sufficient resource to identify and engage landlords and for the facilitation of new tenancies in a timely fashion

Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years

- Promoting **positive communications** about good landlords and decent properties in the private rented sector to maximise its appeal. Also, ensure that clear and consistent messages are made available about housing options
- Utilise landlord forums to find out their requirements and the incentives / support they would need to help make their accommodation more accessible to people on a low income
- Provide landlords with **information** about how they can support tenants and seek help to address issues, as well as giving information on support plans and sharing positive examples of successful tenancies to alleviate their fears about accepting certain households as tenants
- Consider how to support the facilitation of a Private Rented Sector **tenants forum** – to provide a communication platform and action group for PRS tenants to collectively raise issues of concern locally and nationally
- Explore the feasibility of introducing **area patch manager type functions** to the private rented sector who would work with NCC Community Protection, PRS landlords, NCC Safer Housing, Nottingham Revenues and Benefits to identify issues at an early stage and lever in relevant support
- *See also, Priority area 1.5 and 2.1*

Priority 3.2
Delivering housing solutions

What is the issue?

As identified earlier in this strategy, tenure profile has changed considerably over the past decade. Traditionally Nottingham has been a city with lower levels of property owner-occupiers and very high proportions of social housing. However, the Right To Buy social housing policy has continued to be popular in Nottingham (over 350 completions in 2017/18). Low house prices teamed with bigger and bigger discounts has made it an appealing and accessible option for more people. Since the start of the reinvigorated scheme in 2012, the Council has lost 1582 homes from the stock and although the Council signed an agreement with the Government to receive funds back to replace those homes, it has been insufficient to replace all the properties sold.

This strategy promotes the continued development of proactively working with landlords in the private rented sector to utilise their provision as an option for people in housing need. However, there remains a growing shortage in the amount of housing that is accessible and affordable to households on a low income and so it is necessary to explore other ways to bring forward supply of housing at affordable and social rent.

What have we done so far?

- Since 2013, 566 homes built by Nottingham City Homes or currently on site and over 450 homes built by housing association partners, namely Asra, Derwent, Framework, Nottingham Community Housing Association and Tuntum
- Revised the Allocations policy for social housing to ensure those household in most housing need are able to access social housing
- The Nottingham City Council Environmental Health service are actively utilising a range of support and enforcement tools to work with owners of around 750 vacant homes in the city to bring them back into occupation.
- A cross-council task group are currently working through a property acquisition plan as well as considering research into alternative types of accommodation provision including modular housing options and social impact bond investment
- Introduced the Nottingham Housing Strategy – Quality Homes for all to assess and address housing need in the city

What do we want to achieve?

- Increased delivery of a range of affordable housing options in Nottingham that are accessible for people with lower income levels.

Urgent focus

- Acceleration of the property acquisition plan utilising a variety of funding streams (such as one-for-one replacement receipts) to buy properties for temporary and longer-term use

Recommended key areas for activity over the next five years

- Nottingham City Council to accelerate the property acquisitions programme utilising Right to Buy receipts
- Advance a **coordinated and regular approach** to discussions with developers and providers about additional types of accommodation, identifying and maximising sites and utilising any available government funding opportunities
- Conduct single person housing need analysis and explore options for delivery of shared social housing for single people
- Consider potential conversion options for empty commercial and residential property
- Continue to engage with Community Interest Companies to maximise appropriate use of their accommodation provision for people in need and progress implementation of the 'Nottingham Way' which is a statement of expectations for the way in which Community Interest Companies (CICs) provide supported accommodation
- Consider the introduction of a single pathway to short term supported accommodation provision
- Review longer term supported accommodation provision to include consideration of longer term supported accommodation for people with multiple and complex needs
- Develop a Sufficiency Strategy projecting the local level of need for all forms of supported accommodation. Sufficiency Strategy to be implemented by a task group coordinating new supply according to need

Theme Four
Tackling Rough sleeping

Introduction to this theme

The previous themes of this strategy focus on trying to stop homelessness from happening and helping people to recover from it if it does. This theme concentrates on rough sleeping and outlines our plans to reduce the number of people who are street homeless in Nottingham.

Rough Sleeping is the most visible and arguably the most damaging form of homelessness. It has a significant impact on people's mental and physical health and reduces life expectancy dramatically. Rough sleeping is dangerous and isolating. People who are street homeless are more at risk of harm and yet they are one of the most socially excluded groups of people, often experiencing a number of additional barriers to accessing services and accommodation.

Profile of Rough Sleeping in Nottingham

It is dismaying that over recent years the number of people rough sleeping in England has increased. The annual 'snapshot' count found a national increase of 15% between 2016 and 2017. The situation in Nottingham in recent years is reflective of the national trend. Prior to 2015, the number of rough sleepers counted on any given night in Nottingham was rarely in double figures. However, in 2016, our official estimate submitted to government was 34 and in November 2017, it was 43. This now ranks Nottingham 56th of all local authority areas when looking at the rate of rough sleeping (against numbers of households in the population).

Our September 2018 street count found 44 individuals rough sleeping in Nottingham. Of the 43 rough sleepers found 86% are male 77% aged between 25 and 59 years old, 50% are considered entrenched and just over one third have a recent history of being in an institutionalised setting. 59% have issues with alcohol or substance misuse, one-third have mental health support needs and just under a quarter have health problems. Just over one-quarter of the rough sleepers counted in September 2018 are from Nottingham.

There is significant churn in the rough sleeping population in Nottingham. Our locally collected data tells us that in 2017 there was 568 different individuals found rough sleeping. This was a 23% increase from the number of different people identified in 2016. In the first six months of 2018 there had already been 341 individuals seen rough sleeping in Nottingham.

Rough sleeping in the winter months has been a particular concern because of the additional threat to health and wellbeing (and life) from winter weather conditions. Local insight highlights a 77% increase in the number of individual rough sleepers who made use of the extended provision organised by the city between winter 2016/17 and winter 2017/18. The level of provision peaked when 87 people were prevented from sleeping rough on one single night during the cold weather period.

Complexity and challenges

Supporting people away from rough sleeping has remained a strategic priority in Nottingham and partners across the city recognise that ending rough sleeping requires solutions that address both accommodation and support needs. Partners across the public, community, voluntary and faith sector provide a range of services to try to prevent people from rough sleeping and to support people away from street homelessness, however, there are a number of challenges.

The level, complexity and multitude of support needs amongst rough sleepers is significant. Local data tells us 34% have alcohol issues, 29% mental health, 22% substance misuse and 15% offending histories. The physical health needs of rough sleepers is also concerning. The Nottingham CityCare Homeless Health Team report commonly treating bacterial and viral infections, coronary, breathing, memory issues, breathing issues, liver and kidney disease, memory issues, head injuries, poor mobility, wounds and abscesses, fits and seizures.

We know that it is likely that the majority of rough sleepers exhibit more than one of these support needs. However, cuts in services and pressure to reduce costs have left gaps in service provision, which leave people at risk of not getting their needs met and at further risk of developing additional support needs. The prevalence of issues left untreated or unresolved can lead to many of these individuals becoming entrenched in rough sleeping, making them increasingly socially excluded and harder to engage.

Recent research commissioned by Opportunity Nottingham and carried out by Nottingham Trent University (NTU) shows that even if services exist there remain barriers to engagement. Through interviewing people with experience of rough sleeping the research found ambivalence or disillusionment towards a traditional system of delivery which is can be perceived as working inconsistently and in unconnected silos.

The research shows us the importance of adapting services to the unique needs of the individual and in service design avoid linear service system models with thresholds, success measures and expectations attached that people have to overcome in order to progress to the next stage.

The Nottingham Trent University research found that the formation of networks and relationships on the streets can often seem appealing to a rough sleeper and their street homelessness may be linked to mental health or substance misuse issues, which can make it seem like they are declining support. This shows us just how heterogeneous rough sleeping is and amplifies the importance of partners across the public, voluntary, faith, community and private sectors utilising a range of tools, methods and techniques to offer suitable options and maximise chances of engagement.

One of the complex challenges in providing a preventative as well as comprehensive system of intervention is around the issue of local connection. On average, only around two in five rough sleepers in Nottingham are locally connected to the city. A lack of investment in services in other local authority areas can mean individuals will migrate to places where they can get support – adding to local pressures. Furthermore, the reduced availability of services nationwide presents a problem in facilitating the supported reconnection of people (as well as being satisfied that there is adequate support at the other end when making referrals under s199 of the Homelessness Reduction Act). For this reason, Nottingham City Council prioritises services for local people. However, it is accepted that there are sensitivities in defining local connection and often good reasons people do not wish to return to their areas of origin. Individuals working or volunteering for local community, faith and voluntary sector groups can often build up trust and rapport with rough sleepers and are essential to helping unpick these issues.

There remains a significant proportion (around 20%) of rough sleepers in Nottingham whom are foreign nationals and often have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF). This cohort often face destitution as options are restricted and over-stretched resources limit community sector partners who are willing to support. Partners across Nottingham recognise that specific consideration is required to address this issue and once established, clear information should be available outlining circumstances, roles and responsibilities for supporting individuals in this situation.

Local research conducted by Framework tells us that around one in six of the people found rough sleeping at night in Nottingham have accommodation that is available for them to occupy. Furthermore, there are an increasing number of individuals who have accommodation available to them (in either Nottingham or another area) but who come into the city from early in the morning to pose as rough sleepers and make income from begging. Whilst it is recognised that people who are begging could have multiplicity of need, there is a clear distinction between begging and rough sleeping and partners in Nottingham will continue to work to educate the public about this and provide information to help people make informed choices about how to use their time and resources.

What we have done so far

- Nottingham City Council has funded services for rough sleepers for two decades and from 2010 has commissioned a rough sleeper reablement service – Framework Street Outreach Team (SOT) specifically to ensure that rough sleepers can be identified and linked into assessment, support and accommodation.



- The Street Outreach Team provides assertive outreach to rough sleepers 7 days a week and operate a 24 hour helpline to identify and reach rough sleepers to offer support
- In 2016, Nottingham was successful in a bid into governments £40 million homelessness prevention programme and used the funding to extend the reach of the Street Outreach Team across the rest of Nottinghamshire for two years.
- More recently, Nottingham City Council Community Protection Team have begun leading a street taskforce – supporting the Framework Street Outreach Team in the identification of rough sleepers and directly linking people into specialist services to help meet their presenting support needs (such as drug and alcohol or mental health).
- Nottingham City Council and Framework have continued to implement and jointly fund a No Second Night Out policy after government funding ceased, to ensure that any new rough sleeper is immediately provided with accommodation and supported away from street homelessness.
- There are a number of established and effective partnership approaches to tackling rough sleeping in Nottingham. An example of this is the multi-agency task group (chaired by Framework) who meet monthly to case conference the most complex needs rough sleepers to find solutions. Another example is the recently formed voluntary sector homelessness Forum with membership from a collection of voluntary, faith and community sector organisations who meet as a network to share rapid communication and information and influence policy by sharing the view of the sector as a whole
- Each year the Homelessness Prevention Strategy Implementation Group collectively develops the Nottingham Cold Weather Plan. This process includes analysis of what level of provision is required to ensure that rough sleepers are protected from the impact of winter weather. The Cold Weather Plan then serves as an accessible source of information outlining the coordinated system of services (known as the Winter Measures) available during the winter months
- Since 2016, Nottingham City Council has committed over £240k in additional funding to enhance the Winter Measures and ensure sufficiency of provision to meet the council pledge that no one need sleep rough in Nottingham. During winter 2017/18, the extra support provided included a range of emergency accommodation (including supported accommodation with on-site staff) and resettlement support
- For the past eleven years a network of local churches and faith partners led by Emmanuel House have organised and delivered the Nottingham Winter Shelter to provide nightly accommodation for rough sleepers in Nottingham
- In 2017/18 a new collaboration between Notts Fire and Rescue and British Red Cross introduced a sit up service operating when temperatures were predicted to fall to 0°C to give a place of shelter and safety for that night

THE NOTTINGHAM WINTER SHELTER

- Together, the Winter Measures helped 258 separate people this winter (an increase from 193 the previous year).
- This coordinated approach to determining need and planning provision enabled us to establish a sound basis for our bid into the new £30m MHCLG Rough Sleeping fund announced in March 2018 for enhanced support year-round
- In 2017, a coordinated media campaign helped to raise awareness of rough sleeping, making the distinction between rough sleeping and begging and advising people what to do if they find someone sleeping rough. Evaluation of this campaign showed a 38% increase in calls to the rough sleeper helpline,

which enabled the Street Outreach Team to locate more people, and offer them support. The media campaign also promoted Beat the Streets – a music event introduced in 2017 by the DHP Family and held in different venues across Nottingham to raise for rough sleeping. The event raised £100k which was donated to Framework to improve the lives of homeless people in Nottingham

- Local research such as that commissioned by Opportunity Nottingham and undertaken by Nottingham Trent University into persistent rough sleepers and the Nottingham City CCG commissioned research undertaken by Sheffield Hallam University into mental health and homelessness have provided us with insight and recommendations to help improve service planning and delivery
- Acknowledging that research suggests that a hostel-type supported accommodation environment is not always the most suitable or desirable for rough sleepers, the recent Nottingham City Council Housing Related Support Strategic Commissioning Review also introduced a requirement for a more mixed economy of accommodation provision – which includes Housing First and more independent accommodation with enhanced coordination of person centred support. The redesigned accommodation and support services have also included a requirement for elements of the Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE) approach in recognition that many service users have a complex mix of support needs that often developed because of experiencing trauma at early stages of their life
- Nottingham Arimathea Trust, HOST Nottingham and the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum provide housing and support for failed asylum seekers whom often face destitution whilst they appeal their decision. HOST Nottingham provides temporary accommodation in the homes of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire residents, typically housing 25 destitute people per year

What do we want to achieve?

In Nottingham, we have a commitment that no one should have to sleep rough in this city. Over the next five years partners in the city will further develop a comprehensive system containing the following key elements:

1. Swift identification and assessment – utilising active outreach and maximising partner contact
2. Ensuring that anyone who is identified as a rough sleeper in Nottingham receives an offer of support, accommodation or reconnection
3. Tenacity and persistence in attempts to engage and build trust and rapport
4. A mixed and flexible range of support and accommodation provision that is person-centred
5. Longevity in response to deliver positive sustainable solutions and reduce repeat homelessness

It is however, unacceptable for people who have accommodation to pretend to the public that they are in need of accommodation for financial gain. We recognise that many street beggars have a multiplicity of need and partners will work together to make ongoing attempts to engage people and link them in to relevant support. However, if individuals are persistent in refusing support and continue to beg on the streets of Nottingham, Nottingham City Council will pursue enforcement action to prohibit them from begging in the city so resources can be targeted at those genuinely in need of assistance.

Urgent focus

- Embed the new Rough Sleeper Initiative and monitor impact to inform the development and fulfilment of the Cold Weather Plan for 2018-19 to minimise the risk of harm caused by extreme weather in winter months.

Recommended key areas of activity over the next five years

- In late summer 2017 Nottingham City Council was successful in a bid to the Governments Rough Sleeper Initiative fund to support people out of street homelessness. The City Council was awarded £420k for the remainder of 2017/18 and £460k for 2019/20 to work alongside local partners (including Framework, Emmanuel House and the British Red Cross) to deliver the cities new rough sleeper initiative which includes the following measures:
  - Introduction of a No First Night Out service to provide emergency accommodation for up to three nights for people who find themselves homeless and at a point of crisis

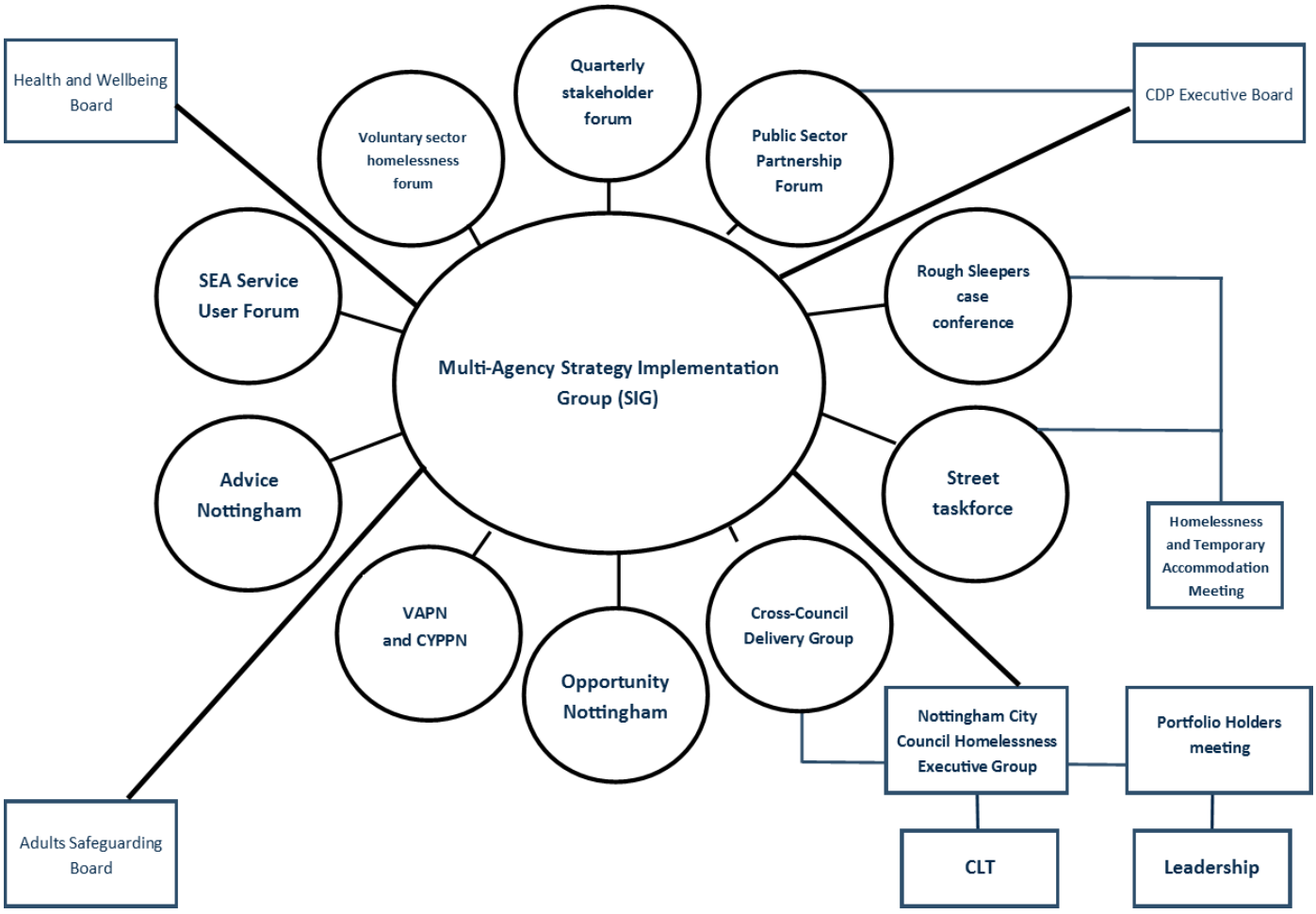
  - Provision of ring-fenced hostel accommodation for rough sleepers
  - Provision of a year round temporary-shelter
  - Additional outreach workers to engage with rough sleepers and resettlement workers to work across the proposed and existing homeless provision with the aim of stimulating throughput and maximising all available bed-spaces
  - Introduction of a coordinator role to oversee and co-ordinate all aspects of service delivery including case management supervision, supporting partners in delivery and responsible for project management and monitoring returns
  - Facilitation of training to volunteers to enable greater capacity for the provision of sit-up type services within the faith and community sector
  - Supported Reconnection available for foreign nationals with No Recourse to Public Funding but who require detoxification prior to their return back to their country of origin
  - Delivery of 20 units of Housing First accommodation to provide settled housing and support for rough sleepers presenting with complex needs
  - Delivery of 20 units of move on accommodation for rough sleepers moving out of supported accommodation into the community
- Review the membership and functionality of the cross-sector, multi-agency partnership groups working to address rough sleeping to ensure that they are operating effectively to meet the needs of rough sleepers on an operational and strategic basis. Ensure that there is commitment and delivery of regular and appropriate public sector representation at necessary meetings to echo governments multi-department response, to ensure that the range of support needs and issues are being addressed and to make sure rough sleeping is not being caused by ineffective prison release or hospital discharge
- Work with the neighbouring local authorities in Nottinghamshire to further the sharing of responsibilities and encourage cooperation, coordination, consistency and continuity
- Enhance monitoring of data and insight – learning more about histories / causes beyond presenting support needs so targeted action can be taken to prevent rough sleeping as well as respond to it.
- Nottingham City Council and voluntary and faith sector partners continuing to make connections with partners across other sectors and disciplines to seek opportunities to help ensure services are available and inclusive for people with multiple and complex needs.
- Nottingham City Council establishing/reviewing protocols with The Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland Community Rehabilitation Company, National Probation Service, Nottingham DWP, Nottingham University Hospitals and other specified public sector bodies to ensure that the Duty to Refer is applied appropriately locally and all further partnership opportunities within it are maximised.
- Establishing pledges and actions from the sectors who need to be involved in tackling circumstances that can cause rough sleeping (e.g. release from prison, migration to the city, hospital discharge, ending of NASS support, denying access to welfare on eligibility grounds)
- The Nottingham Multi Agency Forum on Asylum Seekers and Refugees working alongside the Nottingham Homelessness Voluntary Sector Forum to review the cities No Recourse to Public Funds policy and practice guidance to establish roles and responsibilities and recommend further opportunities for positive partnership work in this area
- Nottingham City Council working with members of the Rough Sleepers Task Force, Homelessness Voluntary Sector Forum, Cold Weather Plan Task Group as well as people with lived experience supported by Services for Empowerment and Advocacy and Opportunity Nottingham are to progress the development of a full Rough Sleeper Strategy to support the local initiative. The Rough Sleeper strategy should outline in detail the city-wide approach to prevention of rough sleeping as well as supporting rough sleepers way from street homelessness and into sustainable accommodation solutions. The strategy should use local insight to look in more detail at the causes of rough sleeping and the barriers in exiting street homelessness. The strategy should consider and address the distinction between rough sleeping and begging and the circumstances enforcement action would be progressed, the specific challenges around entrenched rough sleeping and persistent non-engagement with support and accommodation offers, the approach to supporting people with dogs, people in couples where there is risk and the needs of LGBT individuals
- Progress Nottingham's bid to governments Rapid Rehousing Pathway funding and work together to maximise any further funding opportunities available

Governance

During the course of the previous strategy, there were changes to the structures of sector-wide governing partnerships (such as the Housing Strategic Partnership transforming into the Nouse network) and city council management structures which have led to a need to re-establish a defined reporting regime and governance structure around homelessness.

Furthermore, the pace of change in policy areas and on budget decisions that impact on homelessness has been so rapid over recent years that there is an enhanced need for scrutiny, accountability and an accessible governance structure where impact and recommendations (informed by insight) can be considered and decisions taken to effect change when required.

The following diagram outlines the new governance system for homelessness.



The **Strategy Implementation Group (SIG)** is the central part of the governance structure as it is the multi-agency group with responsibility for developing and implementing the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy. A review of the functionality and membership of the SIG in Winter 2018/19 will relaunch the partnership in line with this new strategy to ensure that the group is able to set each annual action plan and collectively have accountability for success of the local approach. The terms of reference for the SIG can be found here.

The SIG is to be informed by rich data and insight brought forward from other partnership groups and forums including:

- Vulnerable Adults Provider Network and Children and Young People Provider Network
- Services for Empowerment and Advocacy Service User Forum

- Homelessness Stakeholder Forum
- Advice Nottingham
- Opportunity Nottingham
- Voluntary Sector Homelessness Forum
- Rough Sleepers Case Conference and Street Taskforce
- Cross Council Homelessness Delivery Group
- Public Sector Partnership Forum

These groups are to have direct links into the SIG, providing an essential, regular means of cross-sector engagement to improve understanding of issues relating to homelessness in the City and to inform and influence collective action.

The SIG has the authority and responsibility to take forward the measures outlined within this strategy. Where official decisions are required, or where there are barriers to progress that require senior officer intervention, the SIG will escalate matters to the appropriate governing group.

What we will do

- The Executive Group will receive a structured progress and information report from the SIG and NCC Operational Group as a standard agenda item at each meeting
- Review the membership and terms of reference of the SIG and develop a set agenda and timetable that will mean agencies are reporting on the actions that they are accountable for
- A report on the progress of the strategy action plan and the cross-council action plan will be provided to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Heritage and the Portfolio Holder for Community Protection on a bi-monthly basis
- On a bi-annual basis, the SIG will produce a report (approved by the Executive Group) that will be made available to the Health and Wellbeing Board, CDP Executive Board and Childrens and Adults Safeguarding Boards.
- Work in partnership to further determine and establish the mechanisms for ensuring the “voice” of the voluntary sector is heard in strategy implementation and the ongoing development of service delivery

Communications, Monitoring and Review

This strategy will be taken by its Portfolio Holder sponsor for sign off by the Full Council in November 2018. The Health and Wellbeing Board, Adults Safeguarding Board and Crime and Drugs Partnership Executive Board will be asked to agree the strategy in early 2019.

A comprehensive communication plan will be implemented throughout the first six months of Year 1. to continue to raise the profile of the strategy and embed it across and amongst all sectors.

Data Monitoring and insight

There are five main elements of the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy data-monitoring regime as follows.

1. **Demand Projection Plan**

The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy is supported by a plan projecting levels of need and demand. This analysis is to inform service provision and in particular, sufficiency of temporary accommodation. The first projection plan under the 2019-2024 strategy will be available by January 2019 and will run to December 2019.

2. **Weekly task group monitoring**

This is a weekly report that outlines data and trend analysis on demand for and use of temporary accommodation. It has been provided to the Nottingham City Council Homelessness Operational Group every week since October 2017.

3. **Commissioned service monitoring**

The Nottingham City Council Contracts Performance team monitors services commissioned under a housing related support contract quarterly.

4. **Rough sleeper analysis**

In November each year, an analysis report is presented to the Homelessness Prevention Strategy Implementation Group (SIG) by the Street Outreach Team to help determine the annual rough sleeper estimate for the city that will be submitted to Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government. After the period covered by each Cold Weather Plan ends, there is an evaluation of provision, which is used to inform projections for the following winter.

5. **Annual data report**

To inform the Demand Projection plan and Annual Review of Homelessness, a comprehensive data report is developed incorporating all of the insight captured during the year.

What we will do

- Each quarter Nottingham City Council will plan and deliver a Homelessness Stakeholder Forum with public, voluntary, faith, community and private sector partners to enable front line service providers and users to contribute their insight and views as well as raise any trending issues they see emerging in the system.
  This forum will review local operational practices, consider analysis of challenges and responses, new initiatives and the impact of policy and legislative changes.
  Feedback will then be reported into the SIG and used to form a picture on the current position, establish trends, identify risks / issues and develop a continued understanding of what works well and where there are further areas for improvement.
  It will allow the SIG to develop a consensus about the causes of homelessness and how we should use our resources to meet our challenges.

- In April 2019 we will collectively establish a baseline, targets and benchmark delivery against other core and regional cities. This will then be monitored to inform the annual data report.

Data Review

The Projection Plan will be reviewed in line with the Annual Review of Homelessness, using analysis of data monitoring to establish the current position and identify trends and emerging themes.

The Annual Review of Homelessness will take place between October and November. It will be led by Nottingham City Council Housing Strategy and informed by a summary of the weekly operational monitoring, commissioned service monitoring and rough sleeper analysis. There is also an expectation that local partners will provide data and insight (numerical and qualitative) to support the review. The templates and mechanisms for this will be reviewed and confirmed by the SIG during Strategy Year one.

Action plan Monitoring

The Homelessness Prevention Strategy Implementation Group is responsible for setting the annual action plan and overseeing its implementation. Each year, the actions associated with sector pledges will be combined into a comprehensive action plan and the SIG will agree the priority areas for formulation of the annual cross-sector action plan. The SIG will use a RAG rating to track progress and there will be time allowed on the meeting agenda for discussions to help overcome areas where there are barriers to progression.
It is anticipated that a number of actions will require multiple collaborators. The SIG may decide to convene small task and finish groups for these purposes.

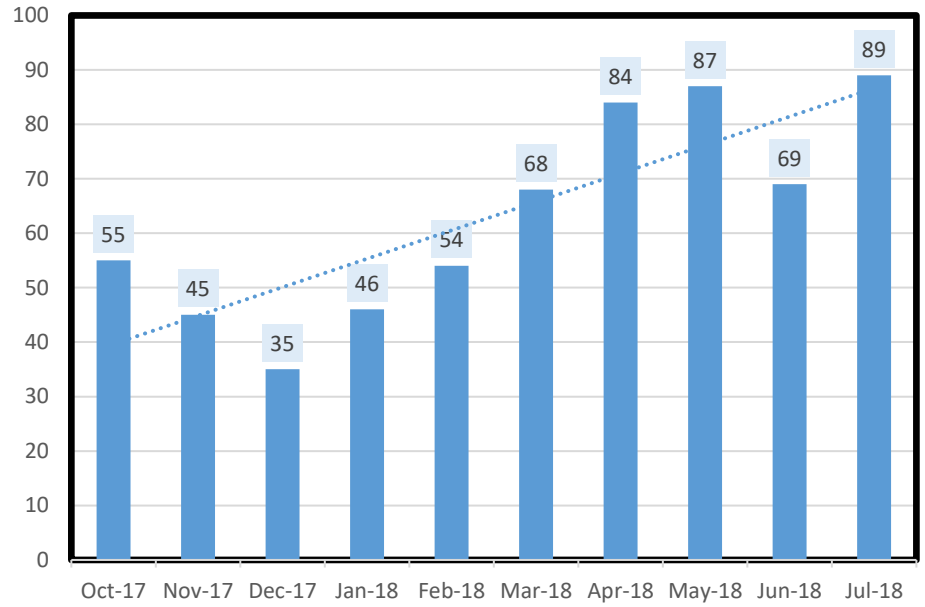
Action plan Review

Between October and November each year, the Nottingham City Council Homelessness Strategy Manager will meet with key representatives from each of the sectors on the list to the right. Collectively they will evaluate the year's progress against the annual action plan and develop a report for the consideration of the SIG. This report will also recommend the action plan for the following year.
The representatives from each sector will be responsible for taking the new action plan through the appropriate approval channels.

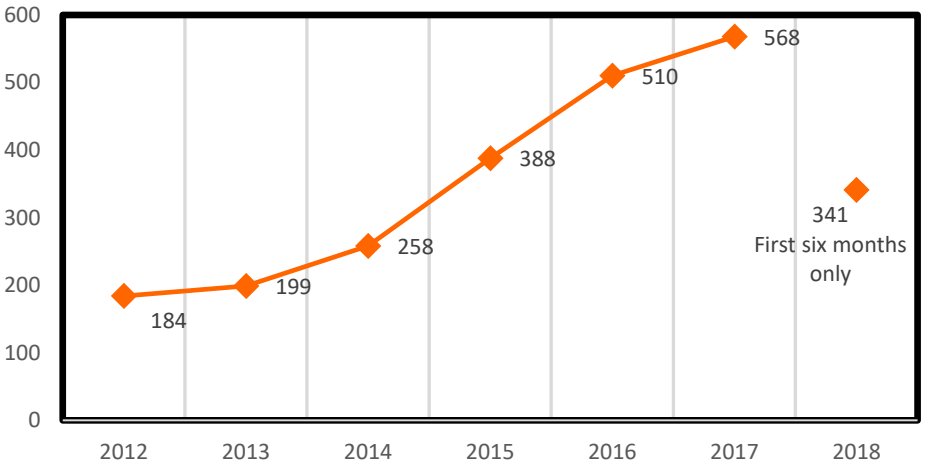
- **Housing**
- **Health and Wellbeing**
- **Adult Social Care**
- **Childrens Social Care**
- **Criminal Justice and Community Protection**
- **Welfare, Education and Employment**
- **Community, Voluntary and Faith**

Appendix 1.

B&B placements - All household types
(Source: Housing Aid)



Number of individuals found rough sleeping each year
(Source: Framework SOT)



Appendix 2.

NOTTINGHAM HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION CHARTER

VISION

Partners in Nottingham believe that no one should have to sleep rough in our city and we are united in the shared vision for all families, single people and couples to have a place that they can call home.

Across the public, voluntary, faith and private sector, partners support a range of people in different ways.

Who is supported and how they are supported differs between organisations for a variety of reasons.

For example, Nottingham City Council is bound by legislative requirements and will prioritise facilitating access to accommodation in the city to people who have a local connection to Nottingham. Faith and voluntary sector organisations are not restricted in who they support but they may target their services at particular groups such as rough sleepers, survivors of domestic abuse or people with no recourse to public funds. Private sector landlords may only offer housing to the household type their business model can support.

For this vision to work we need buy-in from all sectors, both strategically and operationally and across all levels of authority. Therefore, collectively the public sector, community groups, voluntary sector organisations, faith groups, businesses, developers and private sector landlords in Nottingham commit to working together to:

- Identify people at risk of homelessness or in need of support
- Provide access to quality and appropriate support and/or housing option
- Help people to meet their housing needs in a way that is sustainable and long lasting
- Look for best practice initiatives from across the country and beyond to help us further develop our services and achieve our aims

VALUES

Housing	Everyone should have a suitable place in good condition that they can call home, where they feel safe and stable and are receiving any level of support they need to sustain their accommodation
Protection	People and communities should feel protected from the threat of discrimination, violence, abuse and other crimes
Respect	Individuals should be treated with respect and provided with a good standard of service. People should not be judged or have assumptions made about them and their wishes and aspirations should always be heard
Understanding	Partners should be conscious and considerate of the needs of the person. They should see each individual as a person not a problem and respond to them in a courteous and compassionate way
Knowledge	Partners should actively seek to enhance their learning about the work of other sectors and build understanding of how what they do impacts on others and visa versa
Access	Pathways to information, advice and support services should be clear and accessible for all regardless of disability, language, literacy and IT ability
Opportunities	People should have equal opportunity to achieve their aspirations through education, training, employment, volunteering, leisure and creative activities
Listening	People should always be listened to and involved in decisions that affect them. Insight from people with lived experience of homelessness should be used to shape and improve service design and delivery
Inclusiveness	Partners should coordinate efforts to ensure that a response is available for all people in need in Nottingham
Honesty	Partners should be realistic with people and help them to understand what is going to happen. There should be a good standard of communication that is delivered consistently across all services
Belief	Partners should demonstrate that they have belief in people and commit to continuing working with them for as long as necessary to ensure that solutions are found and can be sustained

TAKING ACTION

All organisations have a role to play in helping to prevent homelessness and equally it is the responsibility of all sectors to ensure that effective outcomes are provided for people who are homeless – to help them to recover and sustain living in accommodation as independently as possible.

If you wish to adopt the vision and values of the Nottingham Homelessness Prevention Charter please complete the form below to pledge your commitment and outline the activity you intend to deliver or want to get more involved in.

Please put a cross in this box if you agree to having your pledge published on the webpages associated with the Nottingham Homelessness Prevention Charter ☐

Please put a cross in this box if you agree to having your organisations logo displayed alongside our other partners on the Nottingham Homelessness Prevention Charter ☐

[Organisation] recognises our responsibility in homelessness prevention and role in helping people to recover from homelessness.

We commit to….*insert pledge of support to the strategy*……

……

……

……

……

This will be achieved through the following activity:

1.

2.

3.