

# Wycombe District Homelessness, Rough Sleeping, Private Sector and Affordable Housing Strategy

Appendix: Action Plan 2020 – 2022

CONSULTATION DRAFT - August 2019

## Prevention and Reduction of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

Objectives	What will we do?	Who will deliver this?	Target/ Outcome
<b>1. Corporate commitment to produce a Strategy to prevent and reduce Homelessness following a Review, including strategic housing issues</b>	<p>1.1a) Have an adopted Strategy in place</p> <p>1.1b) Publicise the new Strategy, following adoption</p> <p>1.1c) Regularly monitor progress &amp; consider annually if any amendments to the Strategy are required</p>	WDC Officers and partner organisations	<p>a) New Strategy in place early 2020;</p> <p>b) Hold an event to share the new Strategy with colleagues and partner organisations</p> <p>c) Action Plan to be monitored quarterly at the Wycombe District Housing Forum (WDHF) Homelessness Subgroup and Strategy to be considered annually at the Housing Forum Core Group</p>
<b>2. Continue to develop partnership working to prevent and reduce Homelessness and rough</b>	<p>2.1a) Continue to gather information/ stats on Rough Sleepers and on current levels / trends of Homelessness &amp; Rough Sleeping in Wycombe District</p> <p>b) Compare stats for Wycombe District with other</p>	Officers from the WDC Housing Service, agencies including YMCA, OTW, Outreach, WHC and other	<p>a) (i) Estimate the numbers of rough sleepers monthly and;</p> <p>(ii) Carry out an annual street count/ estimate</p> <p>b) Quarterly reporting of data on homelessness and rough sleeping to the WDHF Homelessness Subgroup meetings - reporting to include</p>

<b>sleeping in the Wycombe District</b>	councils	agencies, plus (for the annual count / estimate) Homeless Link	numbers of prevention cases, relief cases and those owed the main housing duty
	2.2 a) Support and monitor the current Outreach Service in Bucks for assisting rough sleepers to access accommodation and support  b) Consider future provision of the service in the longer term	Officers from WDC Housing Service and partner agencies	a) Minimise the incidences of rough sleeping in the Wycombe District  b) Provision of funding support for the Outreach service, in partnership with other District Councils in Buckinghamshire
	2.3 Provide targeted support for rough sleepers, using Flexible Homelessness Support Grant; Rapid Rehousing Pathway funding etc. - working towards the aim of ending rough sleeping	Officers from WDC Housing Service and partner agencies	Provide appropriate assistance to rough sleepers, including the provision of emergency beds and tenancy sustainment once in accommodation
	2.4 Explore opportunities and where appropriate submit applications for available funding	Officers from WDC Housing Service and partner agencies	Submit funding bids for appropriate initiatives
	2.5 Develop closer working relationships with agencies specialising in support for clients affected by substance	Officers from WDC Housing Service, the Street Support	Contribute to the work of the organisations providing outreach help for clients affected by substance misuse to engage with specialist services

	misuse	Partnership, One Recovery Bucks and Thames Valley Police	
	2.6 Develop closer working relationships with agencies specialising in support for clients affected by mental health issues	Officers from WDC Housing Service and the Street Support Partnership, Bucks CC commissioning and specialist mental health agencies	Explore potential for provision of additional help for clients to engage with specialist mental health support services
	2.7 Reach and support people at risk of homelessness at the earliest opportunity, aiming to prevent homelessness	Officers from WDC Housing Service and partner agencies - including P3, Connection Support; Targeted use of DHP funding	Promotion of agencies to notify WDC of potential clients (with consent)
	2.8 Obtain feedback on the Housing Options service from service users - including via an online website link to a survey form	Officers from WDC Housing Service	Findings to be reviewed and shared at the WDHF Homelessness Subgroup

	2.9 Monitor the impacts on homeless households of the amended Bucks Home Choice Allocation Policy	Officers from WDC Housing Service	Findings to be reviewed and shared annually at the WDHF Homelessness Subgroup
	2.10 Actively support residents at risk, seeking to prevent mortgage repossessions	Officers from WDC Housing Service and partner agencies	a) Monitor the number of approaches involving provision of advice for households in mortgage arrears/ facing repossession b) Improve the information available on the Council's website
	2.11 Continue to work closely with Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme (WRDGS) to assist people who are not in priority need	Officers from WDC Housing Service and partner agency - WRDGS	a) WRDGS figures to be reported at the WDHF Homelessness Subgroup b) Review meeting(s) in connection with annual revenue grant
	2.12 Encourage provision of emergency accommodation during periods of severely cold weather	Agency partners and Officers from WDC Housing Service	Ensure adequate arrangements are in place for Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP)
<b>3. Continue to implement the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017</b>	3.1 Continue to deliver appropriate information for clients, including use of information from NHAS and consider developing a self-help guide	Officers from WDC Housing Service	a) Provide information via website links to NHAS factsheets for members of the public b) Aim to have a self-help guide available on the District Council's website
	3.2 Ensure information is available for clients to obtain advice and support	Agency partners and Officers from WDC	Carry out an annual review of service mapping information

		Housing Service	
	3.3 Monitoring of the Duty to Refer from public bodies and impacts on the housing service	Officers from WDC and other public bodies	Provision of monitoring statistics to the WDHF Homelessness Subgroup and liaison with the organisations
<b>4. Provision of sufficient good quality temporary accommodation</b>	4.1 Minimise use of Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - no placement of family households into B&B other than in exceptional circumstances or emergencies and then for less than 6 week	Officers from WDC Housing Service	a) Minimise use of B&B for single person households – monitor and report quarterly to the WDHF Homelessness Subgroup  b) Minimise use of B&B for families – monitor and report quarterly to the WDHF Homelessness Subgroup
	4.2 No placement of 16/17 year olds by the WDC housing service into B&B	Officers from WDC Housing Service and Bucks CC	Protocol with Bucks CC Social Services – monitor and report quarterly
	4.3 Enhance provision of temporary accommodation	Officers from WDC Housing Service and other services at WDC	Deliver the Desborough Road project for new accommodation - to replace Saunderton Lodge
	4.4 Provide funding for the project for 8 additional homes for letting on ASTs to homeless families	Officers from WDC Housing and Harrow Churches HA	Enable to project to be delivered by March 2020
<b>5. Monitor and respond to the</b>	5.1 Closer working between Officers in the Council's	Officers from WDC Housing	WDC attendance at the County-wide Stakeholder Group run by the DWP, sharing

<b>impacts of Universal Credit</b>	Housing service and agencies involved in UC cases	Service and partner agencies - including DWP, RPs & CAB	information etc.
<b>6. Review and develop partnerships with providers involved with people with additional needs who may be at risk of homelessness, including monitoring / development of Protocols</b>	6.1 Strengthen links with the Prison Service and develop a protocol for prison leavers, to include those with complex needs	Officers from WDC Housing Service and the Prison Service	a) Working with other District councils in Buckinghamshire, fund a specialist Probation and Prison liaison worker b) Develop and agree a Protocol for people leaving prison who need access to housing accommodation
	6.2 Monitor the effectiveness of the Protocol with Social Services for families considered to be intentionally homeless	Officers from WDC Housing Service and BCC Social Services	Discuss / report any feedback regarding the existing Protocol
	6.3 Monitor the effectiveness of the Protocol with Social Care for 16/17 year olds	Officers from WDC Housing Service and Bucks CC Social Services	Discuss / report any feedback regarding the existing Protocol
	6.4 Monitor the effectiveness of the Protocol for young people leaving care	Officers from WDC Housing Service and Bucks CC Social Services	Discuss / report any feedback regarding the existing Protocol
	6.5 Continue to work closely with Women's Aid services in helping victims of domestic abuse	Officers from WDC Housing Service and Wycombe	Consider if a Protocol is required

		Women's Aid	
	6.6 Develop partnership with primary care providers for people with complex needs, including a protocol for people being discharged from hospital	Officers from WDC Housing Service, Bucks housing leads and the Community Mental Health Service	a) Develop and agree a Protocol for people leaving hospital who need access to housing accommodation  b) Develop and agree a Protocol for people with mental health issues who need access to housing accommodation
	6.7 Develop move-on arrangements from specialist/ supported accommodation	Officers from WDC Housing Service and partner agencies	Explore potential options for more move-on opportunities
<b>7. Provision of appropriate affordable settled accommodation</b>	7.1 Maximise the use of nominations / allocations to local affordable housing	WDC Officers to monitor the effectiveness of Bucks Home Choice policy	Monitor the number of nominations via Bucks Home Choice and share findings annually at the WDHF Homelessness Subgroup
	7.2 Encourage the provision of good quality private rented sector accommodation for prevention & relief of homelessness	Officers from WDC Housing Service WRDGS; RPs and Private Landlords	a) Engage with landlords and agents, including regular Landlord Forum meetings;  b) Achieve an increased use of the private rented sector – monitor and report quarterly; target of 15 per quarter

<p><b>8 Monitor the levels of new home building delivery in the district and maximise the provision of affordable housing in the district, within Local Plan policy and guidance</b></p>	<p>8.1 Achieve the new house building target through the Local Plan and secure the delivery of housing</p>	<p>Officers from WDC, Private Developers, Landowners and RPs</p>	<p>10,925 homes to be provided in the period 2013 to 2033 (average 546.25 dwellings per annum)</p>
	<p>8.2 Secure quality new housing development through planning negotiations and review quality of new housing via the annual Quality Counts Tour</p>	<p>Officers from WDC, Private Developers and RPs</p>	<p>Obtain feedback via the Quality Counts tour</p>
	<p>8.3 Support appropriate funding bids to Homes England/ Government</p>	<p>Officers from WDC, RPs and Homes England</p>	<p>Submit funding bids as appropriate within the prescribed timescales</p>
	<p>8.4 Continue to work with RPs to maximise the provision of affordable / social housing within Local Plan policy, including shared ownership, shared equity and affordable home ownership</p>	<p>Officers from WDC, RPs and Private Developers. May include grant from Homes England</p>	<p>Delivering of homes in accordance with the Local Plan / needs identified in the Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA)</p>



	tenures	/ MHCLG	
	8.5 Use of Council resources to enable the provision of affordable housing Resources from S106 financial developer contributions; land/ properties in WDC ownership	Officers from WDC and RPs; possible resources from S106 financial developer contributions; land/ properties in WDC	a) Make effective use of accumulated S106 financial developer contributions to deliver additional affordable housing  b) Work with WDC Estates team regarding land or properties in which WDC has ownership and which may have potential for affordable housing
	8.6 Enable the provision of specialised housing in accordance with the needs identified in the Bucks CC Market Position Statement for Specialised Housing	Officers from WDC, Bucks CC, RPs and other appropriate organisations	Work with Bucks CC and housing providers to deliver appropriate specialised housing accommodation to help meet identified needs
<b>9. Enhance the quality of housing in the district, including standards in the private sector</b>	9.1 Take a pro-active approach to engaging with owner-occupiers and landlords & tenants of rented properties regarding housing standards	Officers from WDC	Improve information to landlords via the Council's website, to include information on the Landlord Forum and landlord responsibilities
	9.2 Engage with owner-occupiers, tenants and landlords of rented properties in respect of requests for service regarding issues of any disrepair in residential	Officers from WDC, private sector landlords, letting agents, Registered Providers &	Respond within timescales based on level of priority  Application of the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 - which amends The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985

	accommodation - in accordance with legislation	other agencies (including potential increased budget)	Monitor & report quarterly
	9.3 Engage with landlords, tenants & other appropriate organisations - to ensure mandatory HMO licensing is undertaken as appropriate in accordance with legislation	Officers from WDC, private sector landlords, Bucks New University and letting agents	Monitor & report quarterly
	9.4 Support the WDC Housing Options Service in its use of private sector homes by inspecting the properties prior to the commencement of letting	Officers from WDC, private sector landlords, letting agents & Housing Options Team officers	Property inspections to be arranged within 10 working days  Report quarterly
	9.5 Explore options to develop partnerships with other agencies	Officers from WDC, Bucks CC, Thames Valley, Trading Standards, Fire & Rescue, HMRC, Immigration and other agencies	Develop intelligence-led enforcement via information sharing protocols  Report quarterly

	9.6 Continue with partners to deliver a fuel poverty strategy - using funding from the Better Care Fund and other external funding streams	Officers from WDC, National Energy Foundation, Government Agencies, local authority partners, housing providers etc.	Report quarterly
	9.7 Improve energy efficiency levels for properties in all tenures in accordance with the Housing Act 2004 and The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England & Wales) Regulations 2015	Officers from WDC, housing providers, owners, Trading Standards etc.	Report quarterly
	9.8 Continue to promote and deliver Flexible Home Improvement Loan (FHIL) products	Officers from WDC & property owners – subject to qualifying criteria	To spend the recycled funding - allocations to be linked with demand Annual monitoring and report
	9.9 Reduce number of long term empty homes in the	Officers from WDC & property	a) Monitor the number of long term empty homes in the district and report quarterly

	private sector and continue to work with owners to bring empty properties back into use	owners	<p>b) Report quarterly on the number of long term empty homes brought back into use</p> <p>c) Review and update the Council's Empty Property Strategy Private Sector Housing</p>
	9.10 Undertake adaptations to residential properties using resources from the Better Care Fund, including mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)	Officers from WDC, Bucks CC, residential property owners, NHS Occupational Therapy teams and GP practices	Report quarterly on the numbers of adaptations to homes
	9.11 Improve access to housing for households which include one or more persons with a disability, using a range of resources under the private sector housing renewal policy – including discretionary DFGs, Heath funding, RPs funding, Relocation Grant and Healthy Homes on Prescription	Officers from WDC, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Bucks Health Trust, BCC and RPs	Report quarterly
	9.12 Be proactive in promoting and positively	Officers from WDC, Bucks	Report quarterly on the number of Healthy Homes on Prescription referral cases agreed

	improving the health and wellbeing of vulnerable residents using resources from the Better Care Fund	CC, residential property owners, NHS Occupational Therapy teams and GP practices	with NHS partners
--	--	--	-------------------

Consultation draft