

Appendix 1: Action Plan

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan details the work we will complete to achieve our priorities. The Action Plan is a live document that will be regularly reviewed and updated during the five years of the strategy. This document outlines some of the key actions within the current Action Plan.

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1. Provide a high-quality advice service.	
Aim 1	Ensure staff are highly trained housing professionals with an empathetic approach, delivering inclusive services that are welcoming and empower people to seek help as early as possible, without stigma.
Actions	Explore further ways to support professional standards for staff.
	Ensure equalities data is recorded and review in line with the Equality Act (Customer Services).
Aim 2	Provide a range of means to access services meeting the needs of all members of our community, making the best use of resources and technology.
Actions	Maintain a high-quality website with the latest news and legislation updates along with up-to-date policies and procedures, where appropriate.
	Promote the Housing Options service effectively to the public and our partners.
Aim 3	To be open, fair, and transparent in our advice, putting the person at the centre to ensure they have clear options and to manage expectations. Listen and learn from complaints to improve our services and the customer experience.
Actions	Complete a service user survey regarding all aspects of the service we provide to inform service development.
Aim 4	Work with other relevant Council departments and partners within the town delivering advice and support to share expertise and provide holistic support to customers seeking advice, accessing shared training and resources where possible.
Actions	Ensure each department is aware of each department's key policies and procedures to promote the "one Council" approach.



2. Focus on early prevention.

Aim 1	Investigate new models to early/upstream prevention by early identification of at-risk groups using data and insight to target resources where they are most effective in preventing homelessness, and ensuring funding is having the maximum impact on the prevention and relief of homelessness.
Actions	Explore using specialist software (Power BI) to develop a dashboard for the Housing Advice team.
	Streamline processes to ensure we are targeting resources to meet local housing need.
Aim 2	Develop and review robust pathways for vulnerable groups such as residents with mental health problems, care leavers, survivors of domestic abuse, and any other groups that might be identified in local data analysis.
Actions	Develop a pathway (from hospital to home) for patients with complex illness that require stable accommodation during treatment plans.
	Explore early intervention for specific groups such as care leavers, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), young single men and those unemployed.
	Evaluate the criminal justice link worker and domestic abuse link worker pilots to provide specialised support and intervention.
Aim 3	Work with our partners to further develop processes and deliver interventions to prevent homelessness early.
Actions	Promote the 'Duty to Refer' (DTR) placed on statutory partners where they believe there is a risk of homelessness, or someone is already homeless. Expand and encourage voluntary groups to use this process.
	Explore family mediation and partnership working to assist with early prevention work.
	Make every effort to connect applicants to support services at the earliest opportunity to prevent poverty and homelessness.

3. Work with our partners to end rough sleeping.

PREVENTION: Activities to stop people from sleeping rough for the first time.

Aim 1	Work with partners to deliver joined-up services for the most vulnerable.
Actions	Plan for the reduction and ending of Housing Related Support (HRS) accommodation contracts in Suffolk.
	Reduce number of evictions from medium and long-term accommodation.

INTERVENTION: Support for those currently sleeping rough to move off the street.

Aim 2	To make an off the street offer to all rough sleepers, where possible.
Actions	Address no suitable off-the-street offer for complex rough sleepers.
Aim 3	Work proactively with the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to share risk, inform policy, maximise grant funding, review annual ending rough sleeping plans, deliver on grant conditions, and complete all data returns in a timely way.
Actions	Plan for the end of the current Rough Sleeping Project government funding in 2025 and plan to manage the impact of a reduction in funding.
Aim 4	Deliver on the Housing First project by continuing to lobby for sustainable funding.
Actions	Further develop existing Housing First scheme to 28 tenancies.
Aim 5	Deliver on a bi-monthly steering group to discuss data and trends, funding opportunities and foster collaboration. Continuing to review and develop the group, and to expand membership to a wider group of partners.
Actions	Continue to extend the invitation to Rough Sleeping Working Group weekly meeting to all relevant agencies.

RECOVERY: Support for those who have slept rough to ensure they do not return to the street.

Aim 6	Be the strategic lead for local services for rough sleepers, working proactively with all partners and sharing resources. Deliver a joined-up approach to ending rough sleeping that is reflected in all relevant published strategies.
Actions	Continue and develop multi-agency working with Turning Point (substance misuse support service) at Rough Sleeping Working Group, steering group, and Housing First meetings.
Aim 7	Maximise the support to all Housing First tenants to work towards graduation from the project.
Actions	Utilise the peer mentor support offer for Housing First tenants who need low support, to ensure tenancy sustainment.

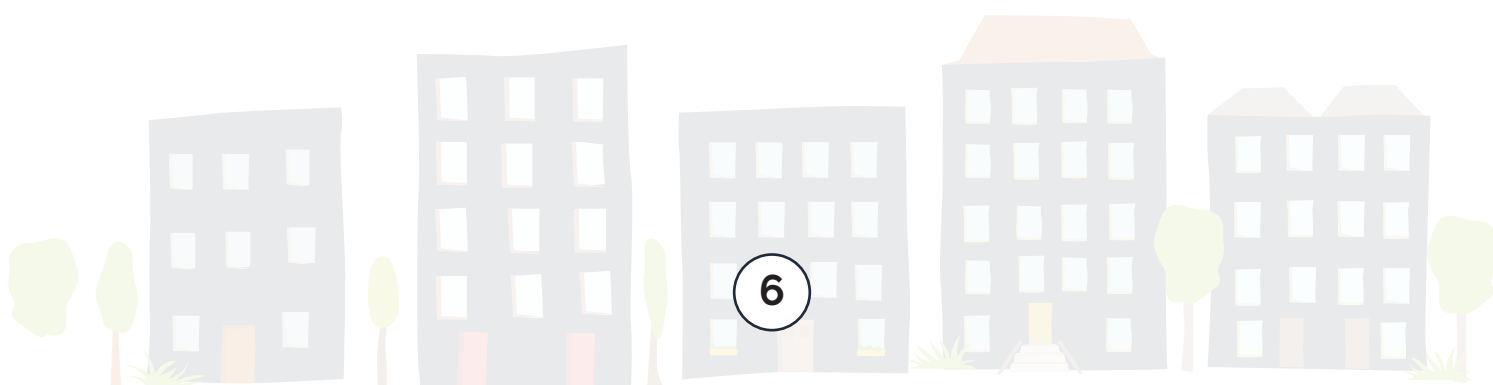
SYSTEMS SUPPORT: Systems and structures to embed change and monitor progress.

Aim 8	Educate the public and raise awareness of the good work that is being undertaken.
Actions	Communicate to a wider audience our achievements and what the Rough Sleeping Initiative delivers.
	Promote a wider understanding of rough sleepers as one of the most vulnerable groups in society with health care and support needs and risks.
Aim 9	Engage grass roots groups to join with statutory and voluntary services to deliver interventions, by being open and inclusive, encouraging participation and ideas from interested parties.
Actions	Make the offer to more groups to join our Rough Sleeping Initiative working group to boost joint working and understanding.
Aim 10	Be open to new learning and research in the field to ensure we are learning from and sharing best practice. Benchmark our outcomes nationally, regionally and with our “nearest neighbours” to share progress.
Actions	Continue to monitor and capture relevant rough sleeper data to assist monthly submissions and to demonstrate successes and challenges.
Aim 11	Implement an improved system to support clients in getting care needs assessments.
Actions	Work effectively with the Suffolk County Council social work teams.
Aim 12	Implement joint working to ensure all rough sleepers are safeguarded.
Actions	Ensure that Suffolk Safeguarding Boards are introduced locally for adults rough sleeping.



4. Facilitate access to suitable accommodation.

Aim 1	Review the current provision of temporary accommodation to ensure the Council provides a high-quality offer to statutory homeless applicants that is financially sustainable.
Actions	Review our temporary accommodation provision.
Aim 2	Work with Council departments on the development of new affordable housing, ensuring the right split of property types and sizes as demand changes.
Actions	Provide staff with training in enabling and planning policy and to be given the option of becoming members of the enablers group. Staff to be trained regarding legislative changes and to participate in major project meetings.
Aim 3	Be a proactive member of Gateway to Homechoice allocations scheme, ensuring vulnerable groups including homeless households are given the correct priority.
Actions	Work with our Tenancy Services colleagues to ensure void Council properties are turned around, advertised, and relet as quickly as possible.
Aim 4	Increase access to the private sector by offering attractive rent deposit and guarantee schemes to both landlords and tenants.
Actions	Review products to help applicants to access the private rented sector.
	Review our private rented team (Ipswich LET) to consider how it is operated in other Local Authority areas.
	Alongside our Environmental Health colleagues, provide advice and support for private landlords to enable them to provide safe and decent homes and meet their legal obligations.
	Keep abreast of Renters Rights Bill and plan for implementation alongside our Environmental Health colleagues.
Aim 5	Continue to develop ways to support residents to maintain their accommodation through schemes such as money advice and mediation.
Actions	Explore support and mediation for families where there is a risk of homelessness to other family members.



Aim 6	Continue to work with our partners to provide tailored support for those with specialist and complex needs such as domestic abuse and criminal justice.
Actions	Review the role of the domestic abuse link worker and continue to explore options on how best to support victims of domestic abuse.
	Review the role of the criminal justice link worker and continue to explore options on how best to support prison leavers.
	Ensure opportunities for partnership working with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) are maximised.
Aim 7	Continue to work with our partners to further develop housing options for single people.
Actions	Work with partners to deliver options for single/one-person homeless households.
	Rewrite the move-on process with consideration to the reduction in housing related support (HRS) funding.
Aim 8	Explore funding opportunities for specific groups including refugees and rough sleepers.
Actions	Implement funding under the local authority housing fund (LAHF) to fund accommodation for refugee groups.



5. Build and maintain partnerships that support residents.

Aim 1	Work to minimise the impact of the ending of housing related support funding on residents and explore other funding opportunities to protect services to vulnerable single people.
Actions	Progress the development of an Ipswich supported housing pathway.
Aim 2	Work with statutory partners through the Suffolk Housing Board to ensure a joined-up approach across Suffolk with shared aims.
Actions	Review pathways in relation to the Homelessness Reduction Act.
	Engage with stakeholders regularly to monitor the impact of the strategy and to improve the service.
	Participate in the Suffolk Homeless Officers Group (SHOG) meetings.
Aim 3	Facilitate fair access to mental health services for vulnerable groups who might struggle to access mainstream services.
Actions	Review the senior mental health practitioner role and pathway to identify outcomes achieved and a long term sustainable financial solution.
Aim 4	Contribute to the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure projects undertaken include people experiencing homelessness as a vulnerable group and to ensure fair access to health and wellbeing services.
Actions	Partnership working to support those suffering from tuberculosis.
Aim 5	Ensure we are undertaking a strategic approach to partnership working and are aware of how our involvement is set out in the policies and strategies of partner agencies.
Actions	Work with Children and Young Peoples Services (CYPS) and Suffolk partners to review joint protocols for young people and care leavers.
	Best practice in homelessness provision to be explored: "Nearest neighbours" group, Homelessness Advisory and Support Team (HAST), Suffolk Homelessness Officers Group (SHOG) and research on what is provided by other Local Authorities.
	Link with Suffolk Local Authorities at Suffolk Housing Board on rough sleeping initiatives.
	Review to be undertaken looking at the level of engagement with other Local Authorities and other agencies, and how relationships could be developed with them (Rough Sleeping Initiative, Suffolk Housing Board, Suffolk Homelessness Officers Group, etc).
	Further develop our relationships with registered providers to ensure we are working collaboratively to best serve current and prospective tenants.
	Attend Suffolk policy officer meetings with other Suffolk Local Authorities.