



IPSWICH'S HOMELESSNESS & ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY **2019 - 2024**



IPSWICH HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY

CONTENTS

5	Foreword
6	Introduction
7	Executive Summary
8	Vision
9	About Ipswich
10	Key Facts
12	Achievements
13	The Challenges
14	The priorities
19	Interventions
20	Action plan
21	Consultation and feedback
22	Glossary
24	Action Plan



IPSWICH HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2019/2024

FOREWORD

Homelessness and rough sleeping have been massively increasing since 2010. These problems blight the lives of those involved and can also spill over into crime and anti-social behaviour affecting a wider audience. This strategy is a coherent response to these pressures. There is a focus on prevention - better than a cure - as well as increasing access to accommodation and supporting households to keep a tenancy.

It is often thought that all homeless people are rough sleepers, though this is not the case. Rough sleepers are at the extreme end of homeless, often with complex problems and needs. However, the majority of homeless people become homeless, or are threatened with homelessness, because of family breakdown or simply because their tenancy ends. Prompt action and advice by Ipswich Borough Council has enabled many hundreds of households to remain in their homes. Prevention will remain a core plank of our response.

A second priority is to access suitable housing. The Council's house building programme is not explicitly part of this strategy and will not provide the volume of permanent accommodation required in the medium term. The council has procured a new temporary

accommodation unit which will massively reduce the use of B&Bs. For permanent accommodation in the short term, this strategy looks to the private rented sector for more housing, and will use the Ipswich Lettings Partnership to work with it.

Rough sleepers are the human face of homelessness, which is often on show to the general public. A coherent response of outreach work, day centre, night provision and support, including dedicated mental health support is in place to help the rough sleeper community. This will be enhanced through the strategy period, with the aim of turning around as many lives as possible.



Councillor Neil MacDonald
Housing portfolio-holder
Ipswich Borough Council

INTRODUCTION

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping is very much in the public eye and tackling these issues has become a higher priority at both a national and local level.

In August 2018 the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government published “The Rough Sleeping Strategy” which set out the government’s vision for halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it by 2027. Ipswich shares this vision. The actions required from this approach, coupled with the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, has led the Council to separate out the actions addressing homelessness from our Housing Strategy to produce this strategy focused on tackling homelessness and rough sleeping. Our first Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

This Strategy sets out the Council’s Vision for tackling homeless and rough sleeping in Ipswich over the next five years, what actions the Council will be

carrying out and what the Council can either perform or influence.

There is suite of documents that support this Strategy. The “Homelessness Review” informed this Strategy, it provides an assessment of the extent of homelessness in the Borough and the likely extent of homelessness in the future. It also identifies what is currently being done and by whom, identifies what resources are available, to prevent and tackle homelessness and what is required in the future. The “National and Local Context” document details the legislation and strategies that shape and affect how homelessness and rough sleeping is addressed in Ipswich; this includes Partner organisations and their relevant strategies.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council's Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy is published at a time of change in the housing sector. The years ahead are uncertain and local authorities need to respond to the changes.

Over the five-year period some of the challenges the Council faces locally include:

- Impact of benefit cuts
- Funding uncertainty
- Economic uncertainty
- Affordability
- Housing Supply

The Council's vision is:

For an "Ipswich where those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness receive the advice, support and assistance they need to access accommodation they can call home"

This Strategy has four priorities:

- Prevention of Homelessness
- Increasing access to suitable accommodation
- Supporting Vulnerable Households secure and maintain accommodation
- Tackling Rough Sleeping





Our vision is for an
“Ipswich where those who
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VISION

This Strategy provides a focus to address the two key issues of homelessness and rough sleeping.

A number of recent key achievements are referenced within this Strategy and the Council will build on these successes in the future through the implementation of the action plan.

This Strategy and Action Plan will:

- Identify the issues and the interventions required to address them.
- Be reviewed periodically and at least annually to ensure it remains relevant and fit for purpose.

The Council, with stakeholders has identified four key priority areas:

- Prevention of Homelessness
- Increasing access to suitable accommodation
- Supporting Vulnerable Households secure and maintain accommodation
- Tackling Rough Sleeping

ABOUT IPSWICH

Ipswich is the county town of Suffolk, located on the estuary of the River Orwell. The town is a key employment centre with a University and a growing population. Ipswich currently has a population of 138,480 inhabiting 61,070 homes.

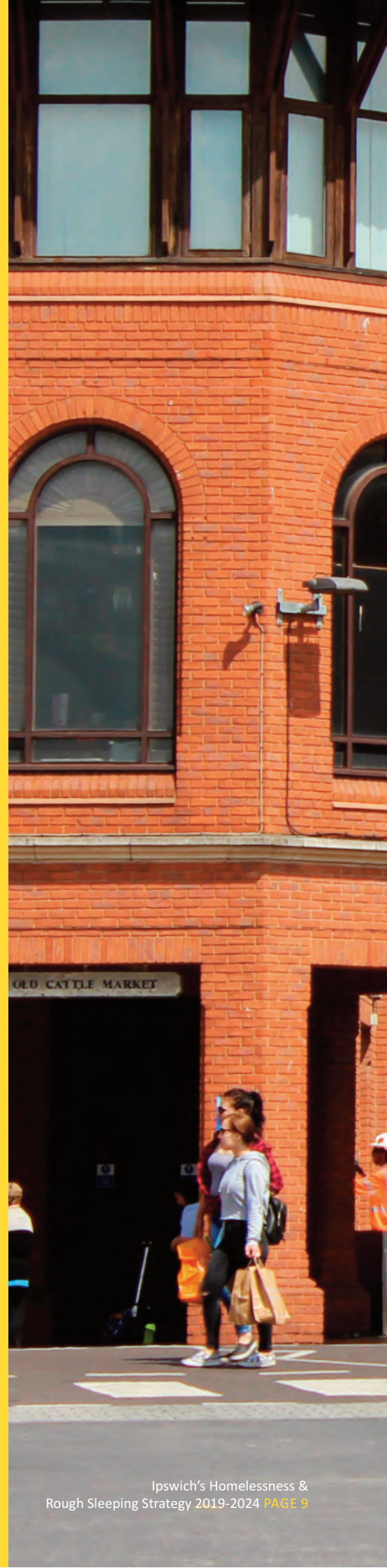
The population has increased by more than 12% over the past decade; this is a larger increase than seen by Suffolk, the East of England and England as a whole. Ipswich has a young age profile; with almost twice as many people aged under 25 than there are people aged over 65. However, there is projected to be an 80% increase in the population aged 75 -84 over the next 25 years; and a 94% increase in those aged over 85.

There are currently 61,070 dwellings in Ipswich, the majority of these, 78%, are in the private sector; this is less than the percentage nationally which stands at over 82%; furthermore proportionally Ipswich has fewer properties that are owned outright or with a mortgage and more properties that are rented from private landlords than there are nationally. The overall housing supply in Ipswich has increased by 2310 dwellings since 2010.

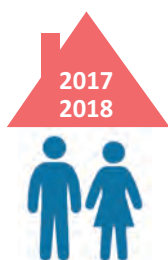
Ipswich Borough Council is one of only approximately 100 local authorities retaining their housing stock. Ipswich Borough Council currently owns and maintains 7898 properties. This equates to almost 13% of all the dwellings in Ipswich. Over 43% of all IBC stock are three bedroom general needs houses; 7% is sheltered housing and 33% are general needs flats. At the end of 2017, all IBC properties met the Decent Homes Standard and the enhanced 'Ipswich Standard' except where tenants had declined works.

Ipswich Borough Council's Housing Options Team saw 1500 households in need of housing advice and assistance in 2017/18; in the same year, 601 of these households were prevented or relieved from becoming homeless. This was an increase of almost 52% since 2012/13. 175 households were accepted as homeless, in priority need and not intentionally homeless in 2017/18.

The health of the people of Ipswich varies compared with the England average. About 18% (4900) of children live in low-income families. Life expectancy for both men and women is similar to the England average but life expectancy is 7.1 years lower for men and 5.3 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Ipswich than in the least deprived areas.



KEY FACTS

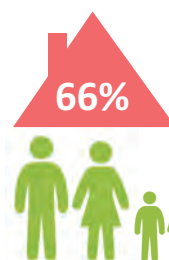
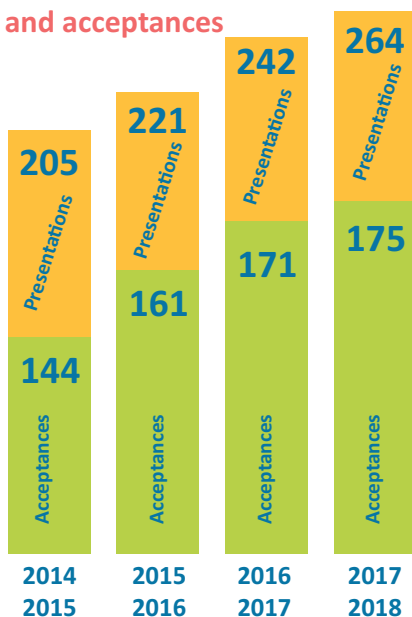


130 households prevented from becoming homeless by assisting them to remain in their existing home.
391 households prevented from becoming homeless by assisting them to obtain alternative accommodation.
80 households relieved from homelessness

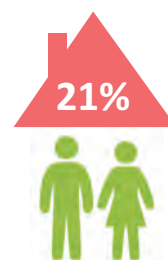


Households prevented or relieved from homelessness

Homelessness presentations and acceptances



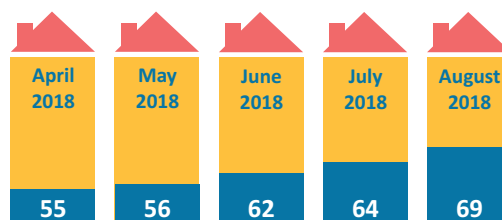
66% of households accepted as homeless in 2017/18 were in priority need due to having dependent children



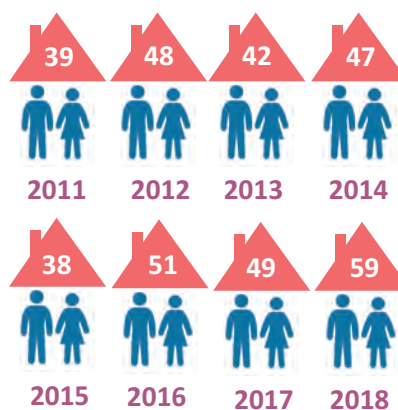
21% of households accepted as homeless in 2017/18 were homeless due to the termination of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy. An increase of **16%** since 2010/11



1379 advice contacts since the implementation of the Homeless Reduction Act in April 2018.
Average of 42 a week



Number of households in temporary accommodation since HRA on **3 April 2018**
Average of 14 weeks stay



households in temporary accommodation on **31 March**

KEY FACTS

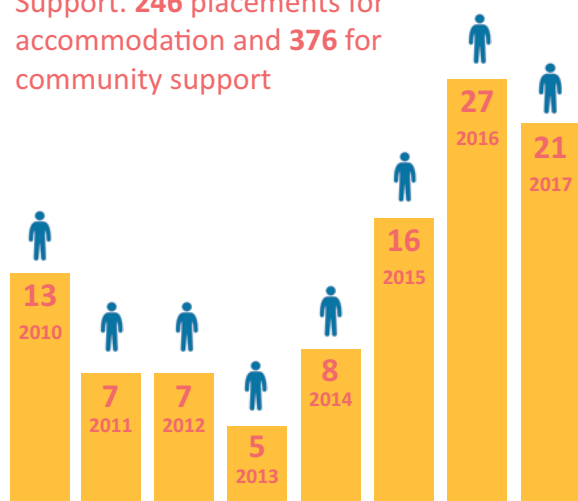


In **2017/18** there were **710** lets in Ipswich through Choice Based Lettings: **146** of these were to homeless households



2017 - 2018

984 applications for accommodation and **428** applications for community Support. **246** placements for accommodation and **376** for community support



Number of rough sleepers in Ipswich

Referrals to IHAG Money Advice Service



Jan 2018

40 referrals - Homelessness prevented in **4** cases

Feb 2018

26 referrals - Homelessness prevented in **7** cases

Mar 2018

35 referrals - Homelessness prevented in **7** cases

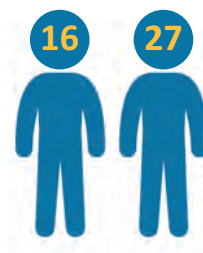
April 2018

29 referrals - Homelessness prevented in **9** cases

May 2018

21 referrals - Homelessness prevented in **6** cases

2015 2016



Rough Sleeping: 0.45 per 1000 of the population; this is greater than the rough sleeping rate in London



TOTAL £986,500

Funding over three years for tackling homelessness



June 17 - March 18
101 people sleeping rough were worked with. **55** helped into accommodation



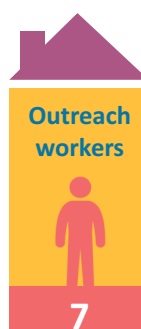
April - June 18
61 people sleeping rough were worked with. **32** helped into accommodation



7 new emergency beds this winter



24 emergency beds in Ipswich this winter



7 outreach workers in Ipswich working with Rough Sleepers.



ACHIEVEMENTS

Prior to this Strategy, our Homelessness Strategy was incorporated as a key strand into our Housing Strategy.

Since adopting the 2017 - 2022 Housing Strategy, we have:

- Implemented the provisions of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. Earlier interventions, new IT systems, additional staff, more information on website, online referral processes have resulted in an enhanced service to customers.
- Secured funding for tackling rough sleeping – already 7 additional bed spaces have been provided and additional outreach support.
- Developed the Ipswich Lettings Partnership to access private rented sector accommodation.
- Increased Debt and Money advice availability
- Used Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to prevent homelessness
- Expanded our Spend to Save scheme to prevent homelessness
- Proactively worked with chaotic and complex needs households
- Proactively worked with individuals discharged from prisons
- Joint funded a mental health social worker to focus on the needs of households in need of housing assistance.

In addition we have:

- Increased successful homelessness preventions and reliefs – up 37% from 2013/14 to 2017/2018
- Moved temporary accommodation to provide more modern self-contained accommodation.

Partnership Working

It is recognised that successful partnership working will be key to the success of this strategy. Ipswich Borough Council holds its working relationships with Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) agencies and statutory agencies in the highest esteem. There is a long history of successful and ambitious voluntary sector organisations working within the boundaries of Ipswich for the good of the people of Ipswich and Ipswich Borough Council fully recognises the value that these groups bring. Many of the achievements listed would not have been possible without the input and expertise of these organisations both in the initial planning stages and at the point of delivery. The continuation of these successful working relationships is recognised as being integral to achieving the aims of this strategy.

THE CHALLENGES



Impact of benefit cuts

Concerns about Universal Credit are well documented. Claimants are reported to have increased financial problems affecting their ability to secure and maintain accommodation.



Funding uncertainty

Funding from Government for Homelessness Prevention services are time limited, often only guaranteed for 1 or 2 years.

Other funding like Housing Related Support are under pressure and are reducing year on year.



Affordability

Property prices, both for purchase and rent remain high resulting in difficulties for households to afford suitable accommodation.



Housing Supply remains limited, resulting in longer waits for housing



Economic uncertainty whilst the outcomes of Brexit remain unclear there is an expectation that there will be some adverse economic consequences. There could be an increase in those experiencing financial problems affecting their accommodation.

OUR PRIORITIES

PRIORITY ONE PREVENTION OF HOMELESSNESS

The Housing (Homeless persons) Act 1977, Housing Act 1996 and The Homeless Act 2002 placed statutory duties on local housing authorities to prevent and tackle homelessness in their areas.

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 has put a legal duty on councils to offer more support to a wider range of people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and to intervene earlier. Preventing homelessness remains the primary focus of the council.

For many years, the Housing Options Team has been focussed on the prevention and relief of homelessness; this is reflected in the official number of households successfully prevented or relieved from homelessness which saw a 37% increase from 2010/11 to 2017/18; from 438 households to 601 households. The number of homelessness presentations has also been increasing; there has been a 14% increase in homeless presentations from 2013/14 to 2017/18 and an almost 16% increase in the number of households accepted as homeless.

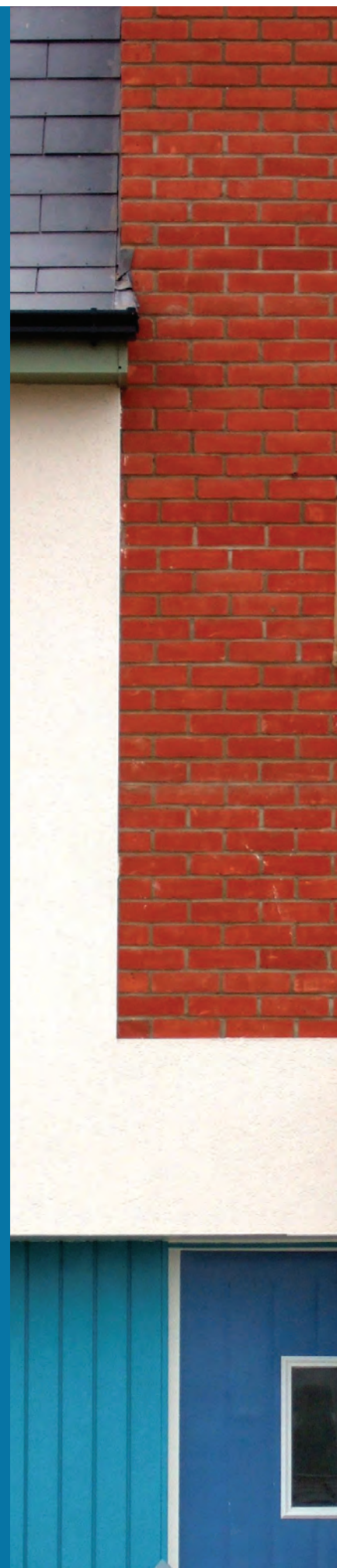
The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) on 3 April 2018, whilst challenging in terms of supporting infrastructure and staff/team capability (both training and resources), did not require a complete culture shift as the prevention of homelessness had always been the primary priority of the team. The Housing Options Team successfully prepared and were ready for the introduction of the HRA; more staff were employed; the supporting IT system was upgraded; intensive staff training was completed and partnership - working relationships were strengthened.

There has been a noticeable upward trend in the volume of households homeless or threatened with homelessness due to financial difficulties. Ipswich Borough Council has strived to assist these households and prevent them from becoming homeless by providing access to quality money advice. This service is currently provided via Ipswich Housing Action Group (IHAG) Money Advice Service. There were 352 referrals made to the service in the year to September 2018 and in 75 of these cases homelessness was prevented. The value of this service and the importance of access to timely and quality money advice and financial capability cannot be underestimated when striving to prevent homelessness.

Effective partnership working has long been recognised as a key element in the drive to prevent homelessness. Ipswich Borough Council has historically actively fostered strong working relationships with partners across the borough. This has been bolstered further by the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act. These relationships are integral to ensuring that potential homelessness is recognised at the earliest stage to provide the best outcomes. Strong and effective partnership working creates a holistic, whole system approach to meeting the housing needs of homeless households and those threatened with homelessness.

WHAT WE WILL DO

- Ensure that the primary focus of the Housing Options Team is the prevention and relief of homelessness.
- Develop range of online forms for customer use; strengthen data collection within the IT system to comply with H-CLIC (the new homelessness data collection system) requirements and monitor the use of resources.
- Improve working relationships with partners across the borough to ensure the best outcomes for homeless households and those threatened with homelessness.
- Develop a predictive data analysis tool to be better able to forecast, plan and prepare for homelessness. This would be formed from a database of known triggers and therefore intervention would be at the earliest point to maximise opportunities for preventing homelessness.
- Explore further use of the Discretionary Housing Payment system to prevent homelessness wherever possible.
- Encourage our Housing partners to refer those threatened with homelessness to the Housing Options team to achieve effective preventions.
- Work with Tenancy Services to prevent evictions.
- Maintain homelessness pathways for those named in the Code of Guidance.
- Continue to work with all Suffolk local authorities to develop partnership initiatives to prevent and relieve homelessness.



PRIORITY TWO

INCREASING ACCESS TO SUITABLE ACCOMMODATION

A key part of preventing homelessness is ensuring that there is access to suitable accommodation within the borough; without this the prevention of homelessness stagnates.

The Gateway to Homechoice, Choice Based Lettings (CBL) system governs how Ipswich Borough Council and Registered Provider properties are let to households in need of accommodation within Ipswich. In 2017/18 there were 721 properties in Ipswich let through CBL. On the 1st December 2017 there were 2805 households (new applicants and transfer applicants) waiting for accommodation in Ipswich through CBL; of these; 1232 were in priority bands A-C. The housing needs of the people of Ipswich cannot be met solely through social housing and the choice based lettings system. However, Ipswich Borough Council is aiming to build an additional 1000 Council houses over 10 years to add to this valuable resource.

Ipswich Borough Council recognizes the importance of the Private Rented Sector for providing households with suitable accommodation. An extensive and in depth study of the Ipswich Private Rented Sector was conducted in 2017; to better understand the sector. The subsequent report and recommendations will feed into the direction of travel for the future relationship between Ipswich Borough Council and Ipswich's private sector landlords.

The Ipswich Lettings Partnership (ILP) was established by Ipswich Borough Council to increase access to good quality homes in the private rented sector for anyone living in Ipswich. It provides a professional, committed, and free service to private sector landlords with property available to rent in Ipswich. The Ipswich Lettings Partnership works with over 70 letting agents and over 60 private landlords across Ipswich. Since its inception in 2013, it has secured more than 90 tenancies. The ILP has recently been expanded with the appointment of a Senior Officer to oversee and steer its development.

Access to suitable temporary accommodation is also important; where homelessness could not be prevented, it is essential that households have access to suitable temporary accommodation on their journey to settled accommodation. Ipswich Borough Council is currently expanding its temporary accommodation so as to limit the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless households. 2019 will see the opening of a new temporary accommodation resource and the disbanding of unsuitable and outdated temporary accommodation.

WHAT WE WILL DO:

- Regular review of the CBL policy to ensure that it remains compliant with any legislative changes and any other factors that affect the way in which the policy is operated.
- Further development of the Ipswich Lettings Partnership to maximise opportunities to work with landlords to ensure a supply of suitable private rented sector properties.
- Implementation of Rent Guarantee Scheme to ensure that financial barriers are not preventing households from securing accommodation.
- Expansion of IBC's temporary accommodation resource; and disposal of temporary accommodation that is unsuitable.
- Endeavour to ensure that no homeless family will be accommodated in Bed and Breakfast accommodation except in exceptional circumstances.



PRIORITY THREE

SUPPORTING VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS SECURE AND MAINTAIN ACCOMMODATION

Supporting our vulnerable Ipswich residents to both access and then to maintain accommodation is a key focus of Housing Services.

Vulnerable households include (although not limited to):

Those with care of dependent children, older people, those who experience physical health issues, those who experience mental health issues, gypsies and travellers, those experiencing abuse and violence (including domestic violence), those who have left the care system, those who are institutionalised having recently left prison, those who are institutionalised having left the armed forces.

Accommodation can mean supported accommodation, accommodation within the private rented sector or social housing accommodation.

As part of the homelessness prevention focus, Housing Options will always try remedies to ensure that vulnerable households can remain in existing accommodation if that is the best course of action to meet their needs.

The joint gateway to Homechoice allocation policy has been written to have specific regard to vulnerable households needing access to social housing. The Policy is kept under constant review to ensure it reflects new government guidance; such as new guidance concerning service personnel and those experiencing domestic abuse.

Tenancy Services have an experienced Tenancy Support team and Anti-Social Behaviour team who work to ensure that vulnerable IBC tenants can maintain their tenancies. Housing Options and Tenancy Services fund the Money Advice Service through IHAG to provide an in depth and comprehensive money advice service to IBC tenants and to Ipswich residents threatened with homelessness. Housing Options fund a specialist housing/mental health social worker post which has proved successful in aiding Housing Options to prevent homelessness within this vulnerable group. The Council is proactively working to establish how best to serve the needs of our growing ageing population of IBC tenants through conducting a review of IBC older persons accommodation. A key feature of the Ipswich Lettings Partnership is to offer ongoing tenant support to ILP tenants once they have moved into their new homes.

A key part in IBCs success to date in helping vulnerable households to secure and maintain accommodation is through the development of partnership working. Developing better working relationships with Adult Community Services (ACS), Children & Young People (CYP) Services, Learning Disabilities and Ipswich NHS Trust has been a particular focus and will remain so.

WHAT WE WILL DO:

- Participate in the county wide review of Housing Related Support (HRS) following the appointment of a joint HRS Officer, part funded by IBC
- Build upon relationships with key partners to include (but not limited to) ACS, CYP, Learning Disabilities, local CCG and NHS Trust, Womens Aid
- Work with other district and borough councils within Suffolk on wider system issues through the Suffolk Homeless Officers Group to help households maintain tenancies.

PRIORITY FOUR TACKLING ROUGH SLEEPING

Rough Sleeping in the Borough more than doubled in the period 2010 to 2016. The annual snapshot surveys that identified the number of people rough sleeping on a particular night was 13 in 2010, ranged between 5 and 8 for the next 4 years before increasing to 16 in 2015 and then reaching 27 in 2016. Through interventions led by the Council that figure dropped to 21 in 2017.

IBC was invited to bid for funding in late 2016 from the then Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Homelessness Prevention Programme and was successful in securing a £331,719 Rough Sleeper Grant (RSG) to halve the numbers of people sleeping rough in Ipswich Borough Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council areas, as measured in the annual rough sleeper counts.

Interventions funded through the RSG from 1st July 2017 to 30th June 2019 include:

- Rough Sleeper Outreach provided by Ipswich Housing Action Group (IHAG) and delivered from the Chapman Centre in Ipswich and Anglia Care Trust (ACT) in Suffolk Coastal District Council.
- Short Term Emergency Beds; 3 dormitory style beds located in Notting Hill Genesis (NHG) Cavendish Lodge in Ipswich and 1 bed in Buregate Gate Road Felixstowe.
- A Mental Health Link Worker contracted with Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust (NSFT) to cover both areas.
- Financial Capability training for all clients who move through the project delivered by ACT and IHAG.

In November 2016 we estimated that we had 27 rough sleepers on a particular night in November. In 2017 that number had reduced to 21. We experienced very cold temperatures in winter 2017/18 and rough sleeping became high on the political agenda. The DCLG turned into the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and an additional £30 million fund was launched to tackle rough sleeping hot spots. Ipswich was invited to bid along with 81 other LA's for funding. We secured £267,234 Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) grant to deliver targeted interventions that could be implemented quickly and make a real difference to the numbers on the streets in winter 2018/19.

The Council in conjunction with partners in the Ipswich Locality Homelessness Partnership have initiated a Housing First project. The Housing First approach involves providing non-conditional and independent accommodation with high quality, intensive, open-ended holistic support. This project is to address the major issue of a small group of clients who will never get off the streets into independent housing through the current supported housing provision.

WHAT WE WILL DO

- Develop a coordinated and committed multi agency initiative
- Develop services to meet the needs of entrenched Rough Sleepers in Ipswich in order to change lives and encourage rough sleepers to engage with relevant agencies
- Deliver, monitor and review existing rough sleeping services to ensure value for money and the project outcomes are met
- Work closely with the MHCLG rough sleeper advisor on existing and new grant opportunities and to shape services for 19/20 from provisional award
- Gather data on the rough sleeping population to inform future bids for funding and feed into future service provision.
- Work with other statutory partners on identifying gaps in services for the most complex individuals.
- Provide local authority leadership in tackling rough sleeping and promoting the vision to end rough sleeping within the borough



**INTERVENTIONS FUNDED
THROUGH THE RSI FROM
1 SEPTEMBER 2018 – 31 MARCH
2019 INCLUDE:**

- A Rough Sleeper Coordinator
- 2 Drug and Alcohol outreach workers; in partnership with Public Health who commission the service
- Rough Sleeper Outreach provided by IHAG
- In reach provided by ACT and IHAG
- Expansion of the existing Short-term Emergency provision (STEP) contract to provide self-contained beds, to include couples and provision for one dog
- Extended Ipswich Winter Night Shelter (IWNS) opening by two months from 11th October 2018 to 31st March 2019, create three more beds and deliver from one location
- Extended IHAG Chapman Centre weekend opening hours to 3.5 hours on a Saturday and 3.5 hours on a Sunday

We have since been awarded a provisional RSI grant for 2019/20 of £387,547 which is heavily dependent on the success of the current 2017/19 grants, delivering four night time rough sleeper counts and by having a rough sleeping strategy by March 2019. We have been allocated a Rough Sleeper Advisor from the MHCLG who will help us to shape services for 2019/20.

In total that is a potential £986,500 funding over three years ring fenced to the prevention or relief of rough sleeping.





ACTION PLAN FOR HOUSING SERVICES 2019-2024

This is the pinnacle of the strategy itself and will evolve and respond throughout the period to reflect local and national change.

The Action Plan is written around the four priorities:

- Prevention of Homelessness
- Increasing access to suitable accommodation
- Supporting Vulnerable Households secure and maintain accommodation
- Tackling Rough Sleeping

CONSULTATION & FEEDBACK

Prior to the government announcement in August 2018 that all councils needed to produce a separate Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, the Council's Housing Strategy contained a priority section concerning homelessness in Ipswich. The Housing Strategy was published less than a year before the government's August announcement. The Housing Strategy had been extensively consulted upon prior to its publication in November 2017.

The homelessness section of the Housing Strategy has been removed and forms the basis of this new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. The existing evidence base and content has been expanded. IBC has already been working extensively and intensively with key stakeholder and partners to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in Ipswich for a number of years and a number of partnership groups have been established to this end.

A Consultation ran from 10th December to 21st December 2018 via a Survey Monkey Survey. This was sent to 200 Stakeholders and Partners and 15 responses were received; 12 via the survey and 3 additional written responses.

Feedback

The majority of the survey monkey results were in support of the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. The written comments focused on three areas:

- Partnership working needed greater emphasis
- The Action Plan needed clarity
- Concerns over timing and length of the consultation

Our response

- A new section on Partnership Working has been added to the Strategy to highlight the importance of these working relationships in achieving the aims of the Strategy. The Action Plan has also been altered to include a 'Partnership Working' section.
- The Action Plan is a high-level plan for operational areas; this will be backed up with individual plans for each area as the actions are implemented.
- The timing and length of the Consultation was largely dictated by MHCLG requiring that the strategy be in place by March 2019 in order to secure continued funding to tackle homelessness. The Strategy also needs to be approved through the IBC corporate process. These two timelines meant that the maximum time that could be allocated to this consultation was 10 days and there was a limited period during which the consultation could be held.

See Appendix C: Consultation Report for further details relating to feedback and our response.

Monitoring & Governance

This Strategy will be monitored and governed through the Action Plan. The Action Plan is designed to underpin the whole Strategy and will be under constant review through regular meetings with managers. Any amendments to the Action Plan, whether by way of amending, archiving achieved actions or adding new actions, will need to be approved by an Ipswich Borough Council Steering Group which also meets on a regular basis. Partner agencies will be updated as appropriate.

This robust process will ensure that the Action Plan remains current and relevant, both a measure of work to be completed in order to meet the aims of the Strategy and a measure of work that has been completed. The Action Plan will be available on our website, alongside the Strategy, and will be updated on the website annually.

The regular monitoring of the national and local context will also form part of the monitoring and governance process and will also feed into the ongoing development of the Action Plan.



GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS

A

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Social rented, shared ownership, intermediate housing and starter homes for households who cannot afford to meet their housing needs through the market.

B

BEDROOM TAX

The informal name for the Removal of the Spare Room Subsidy; A change to Housing Benefit Entitlement that means a social tenant receives less in housing benefit if they have one or more spare bedrooms.

C

CARE LEAVERS

A person aged 25 or under, who has been looked after by a local authority for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14; and who was looked after by the local authority at school-leaving age or after that date.

CHOICE BASED LETTINGS

A system that enables applicants for housing to choose from a range of vacant properties.

D

DECENT HOMES STANDARD

A minimum standard that requires a reasonable state of repair, modern facilities and services and thermal efficiency.

DEPOSIT BOND

A written agreement replacing the traditional cash deposit provided by the LA guaranteeing the Deposit value should a claim be made against it.

DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENT

An extra payment to help people who claim housing benefit and are struggling to pay the rent

F

FINANCIAL CAPABILITY

Improving people's ability to manage money well, both day to day and through significant life events, and their ability to handle periods of financial difficulty.

FUEL POVERTY

A household is considered to be in fuel poverty if: they have required fuel costs that are above average and were they to spend that amount they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

G

GATEWAY TO HOMECHOICE

The choice based lettings service for all social housing in Ipswich.

GATEWAY TO HOMECHOICE: BANDS

Once an application has been assessed the applicant will be placed into one of five bands (Bands A - E), depending on assessed level of housing need. A is the highest need and E is the lowest level of housing need.

GYPSY, TRAVELLER AND TRAVELLING SHOWPERSONS ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT (GTAA)

A study of the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show people.

H

H-CLIC

The Homelessness Case Level Information Classification (H-CLIC) is the new homelessness data collection system, which was introduced in April 2018 to coincide with the commencement of the Homelessness Reduction Act. It collects case level data, which will provide more detailed information on the causes and effects of homelessness, long-term outcomes and what works to prevent it.

HOMELESS ACCEPTANCES

Local housing authorities are required to consider housing needs within their area, including the needs of homeless households, to whom local authorities have a statutory duty to provide assistance; such statutorily homeless households are referred to as 'acceptances'.

HOMELESS REDUCTION ACT

An Act of Parliament which came in to force on 3rd April 2018: the Act puts a legal duty on councils to offer more support to a wider range of people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and to intervene earlier.

HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

A house occupied by more than two people who are not all members of the same family.

HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Non-profit making organisations that provide low-cost "social housing" for people in need of a home. Any trading surplus is used to maintain existing housing and to help finance new homes.

HOUSING OPTIONS TEAM

Offer advice on a wide range of housing issues, including: Homelessness or at risk of being homeless, Private rented accommodation, Landlord and tenant issues, Rent or mortgage arrears, Eviction, Tenancy deposits, Domestic abuse and Relationship or family breakdown.

HOUSING REGISTER

A housing register is for people who are 16 and over, who are interested in being considered for council or housing association properties.

HOUSING RELATED SUPPORT

Help for vulnerable people to find or stay in their own home.

I

INTENTIONALLY HOMELESS

Local Authorities make enquiries to decide if homeless households are intentionally homeless; that is that they consider that the applicant deliberately did or didn't do something that caused them to lose their home. If the local authority decides that a homeless household is intentionally homeless, it only has a duty to provide short-term accommodation, usually for 28 days.

IPSWICH LETTINGS PARTNERSHIP Has been developed by Ipswich Borough Council to increase access to good quality homes in the private sector for anyone living in Ipswich faced with losing their existing accommodation.

IPSWICH LOCALITY HOMELESS PARTNERSHIP (ILHP)

Brings together over 30 charities, local authorities, churches, health organisations and funders in an active network that is committed to working together to create and deliver a range of services to meet the needs of people affected by homelessness in Ipswich and the surrounding area.

L

LOCAL LETTINGS SCHEME

In exceptional circumstances, the Gateway to Homechoice may decide to let properties on a slightly different basis from normal: in the interests of building a strong and sustainable community or to deal with particular local issues. The set of criteria where this applies is called a "local lettings scheme".

M

MARGINALISED AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Lack of access to resources, opportunities and rights which leads to relegation to the edge of society. Some marginalised adults may also be vulnerable for a reason and may be unable to take care of or protect themselves from harm or exploitation.

MINISTRY OF HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The UK Government department with responsibility for housing, communities and local government in England.

MULTI AGENCY RISK ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE (MARAC)

A local, multi-agency victim-focused meeting where information is shared on the highest risk cases of domestic violence and abuse between different statutory and voluntary sector agencies.

N

NO RECOURSE TO PUBLIC FUNDS

People who are subject to immigration control and have no entitlement to welfare benefits, to home office asylum support for asylum seekers or to public housing

O

OBJECTIVELY ASSESSED NEED (OAN)

Establishes the total quantum and mix of housing that households are willing and able to buy or rent, either from their own resources or with assistance from the State.

OWNER OCCUPATION

Properties owned outright by the occupier or being bought by the occupier with a mortgage.

P

PRIORITY NEED

A priority for accommodation given to specified groups of people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness under part 7 of the Housing Act 1996

PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR

All rented property other than that rented from local authorities and housing associations.

PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING TEAM

Offer advice and support to tenants, homeowners and private landlords to ensure that homes are safe and healthy environment for everyone.

PRIVATE SECTOR LEASING SCHEME

A scheme run by Local Authorities to provide longer term temporary accommodation to homeless clients.

R

REGISTERED PROVIDER (RP)

Provider of Social Housing registered with the HCA.

REGISTERED SOCIAL LANDLORD (RSL)

Housing Association.

RENT DEPOSIT

A sum of money paid by the tenant to the landlord which the landlord retains as security against loss or damage or rent arrears. Landlords are required to register their deposits in a government approved scheme.

RENT IN ADVANCE

Landlords can require tenants to pay rent in advance.

ROUGH SLEEPING

Defined by the Government as 'people sleeping, or bedded down, in the open air (such as on the streets, or in doorways, parks or bus shelters); people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, station).'

S

SHELTERED HOUSING

Accommodation for sale or rent exclusively to elderly or vulnerable people, often with estate management services, emergency alarm system and warden service.

SOCIAL INEQUALITY

The existence of unequal opportunities and rewards for different social positions or statuses within a group or society.

SOCIAL RENT

Rented housing owned and managed by local authorities and Housing Associations.

T

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation provided by the Local authority to homeless households pending enquiries into their homeless application AND to homeless households accepted as homeless.

U

UNIVERSAL CREDIT

A new type of benefit designed to support people who are on a low income or out of work. It will replace six existing benefits and is currently being rolled out across the UK. The new system is based on a single monthly payment, transferred directly into a bank account

W

Welfare Reform Act

Act of Parliament which made changes to the rules concerning a number of benefits offered within the social security system. It was enacted by Parliament on 8 March 2012.

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