Homelessness Strategy 2024 – 2029

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Introduction

About this strategy

Not having a home or living somewhere that is unsafe or unsuitable can have a devastating effect on individuals and families. We want to ensure that we are taking the right approach to preventing homelessness and rough sleeping and supporting those who become homeless.

Our Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets the direction and priorities we will follow for the next five years in order to address homelessness in North West Leicestershire.

The strategy sets out our plans for the prevention of homelessness and for securing appropriate accommodation and support for those who are homeless or at risk of becoming so.

In order to inform and develop this strategy we have carried out a review of our homeless data from the last five years alongside a series of consultation points with customers, stakeholders and key partners. This has allowed us to understand the challenges and gaps within existing homeless services and identify the opportunities that we want to develop over the next five years.

We are lucky to have already developed strong partnerships locally with many homeless services and joint pathways are now being delivered at a County or sub-regional level. We have also maintained our own distinct voice in our locality through a regular homelessness forum for the area and this has allowed us to develop strong working relationships with a range or partners, organisations, and individuals.

Since our last homeless strategy we have increased the affordable housing available to those in need, secured funding for new services and repurposed vacant Council housing into use as emergency accommodation.

But despite the success and progress we have made over the last few years there remains further work to do. Homelessness is not unique to North West Leicestershire and the challenges we face in tackling the underlying issues as well as the effects is significant. This strategy aims to build on the strong foundations we have developed with an ambitious and comprehensive approach to tackling homelessness in North West Leicestershire.

The homeless picture

Much has changed since the last homelessness strategy was developed in 2018.

The Coronavirus created a number of challenges for homelessness services but also created opportunities. The need to redesign services to be delivered remotely has

allowed us to widen opportunities for people to access our services but at the same time other changes have reduced flexibilities in service provision, especially in accommodation settings.

The need to make accommodation covid safe led to changes that mean that some of the short-term emergency accommodation options our providers had in place to respond to surges in demand or extreme weather events, such as shared spaces or through sit up night provision, are no longer available.

Ongoing economic challenges have meant that some services have reduced, are at risk or are under increased pressure. We have had to be proactive with our own resources to fill these gaps. We have sought to work together wherever possible with our neighbouring authorities to maximise opportunities for bringing in funding and creating efficiencies. We have been successful in putting in place a Countywide Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) lead by ourselves on behalf of the seven district councils and Rutland which has both improved the range of services and support available to rough sleepers but also allowed us to better understand the true level of need in the district. This is one of a number multi-agency and sub-regional initiatives now in place covering areas such as prison release, hospital discharge and leaving care.

There have been other external factors too which have impacted on demand and have lead to us review our model of support. The most notable is probably the impact of the troubles in Ukraine and the introduction of the Homes for Ukraine scheme whereby members of our community opened their homes to those fleeing the war.

Over the lifetime of the last strategy we saw an increase in demand for our homeless services whilst at the same time a reduction in available accommodation options. Over the lifetime of this strategy we need to work smarter to address these challenges.

Key Challenges

Increasing Demand

The graph below shows the number of approaches for help received by the Council's Housing Choices Team that were assessed under the Homeless Reduction Act over the last five years.

Homeless Appications by Year
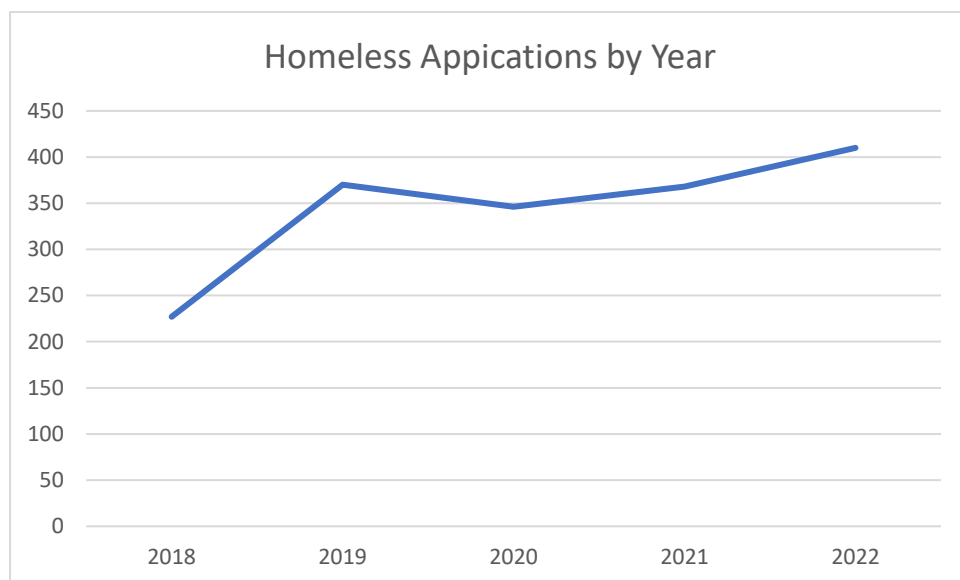
As can be seen there has been a significant increase in homelessness cases over the period. The biggest jump was between 2018 and 2019 and this may in part be explained by the fact that this was the period where staff and indeed customers were adjusting to the new requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act but the trend has continued overall since then albeit at a slower place.

Age of primary applicant
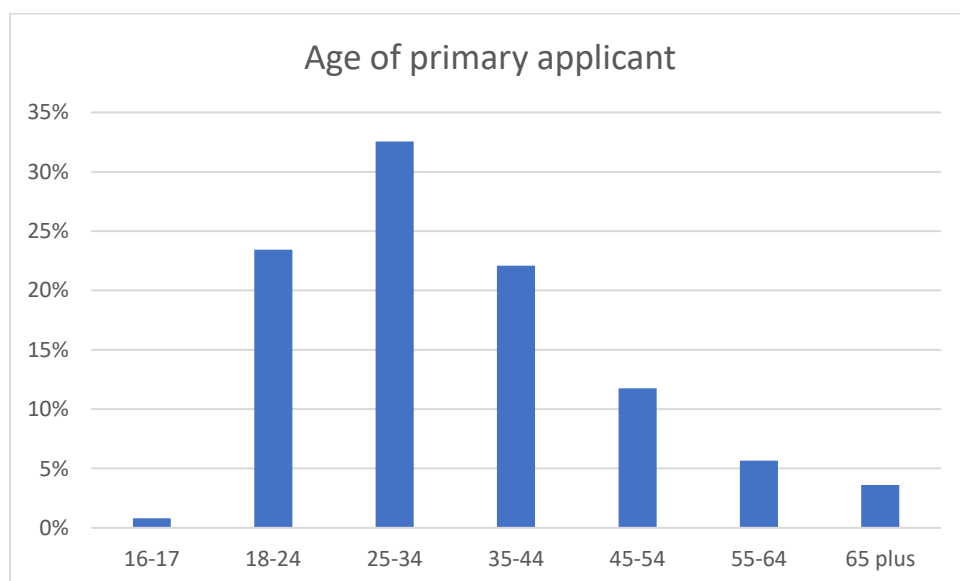
The majority of people approaching us for assistance are between the ages of 25 and 34 with 51% identifying as Male. This has been largely consistent over the last five years.

Of the households who are dealt with at the prevention stage 45% contain dependent children. At relief stage this drops to 20%. The split between singles/couples approaching for support and families has remained at a similar level throughout the last five years.

Early Intervention

The chart below shows the split between households approaching at a point where they are still in accommodation (prevention cases) and those who are already homeless (relief cases).

Where households do require assistance this is most effective when it can be provided before someone becomes homeless (so at the prevention case stage).

In 2018 and 2019 prevention cases were outnumbering relief cases however in 2020 this situation reversed and the gap between the two has been increased.
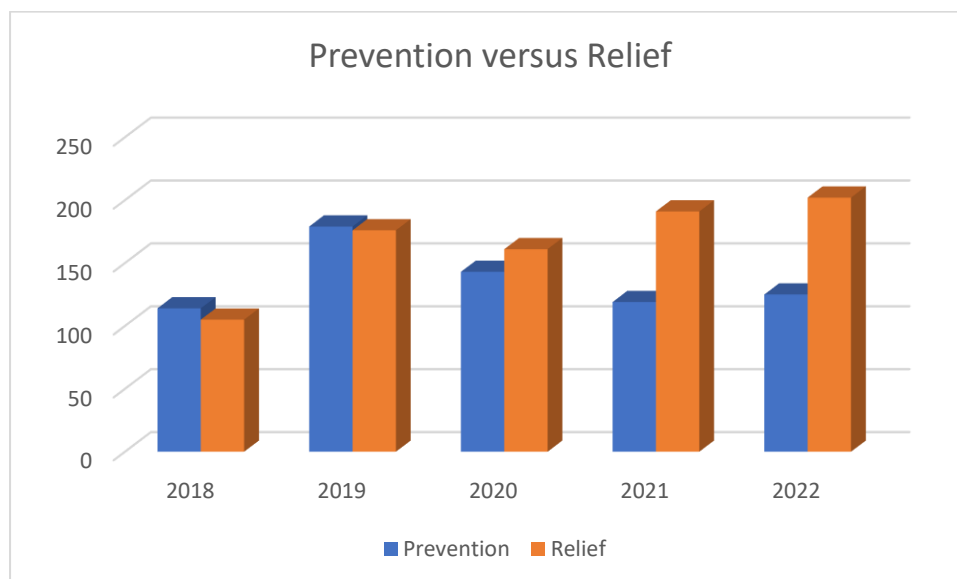
During the prevention stage a positive outcome can be as a result of providing assistance so that someone can remain in their existing accommodation or providing support to access a new home through a planned move. Only around 9% of prevention cases are closed because the household's existing accommodation was secured for at least another six months with the number of prevention cases that move through into relief (when homeless cannot be prevented) averaging around 11%.

The graph below illustrates the change in outcomes for those approaching us as threatened with homeless over the last five years. It should be noted though that the profile of cases falling into this category will have fluctuated during the period as a

result of government interventions during the Covid pandemic such as the moratorium on evictions.
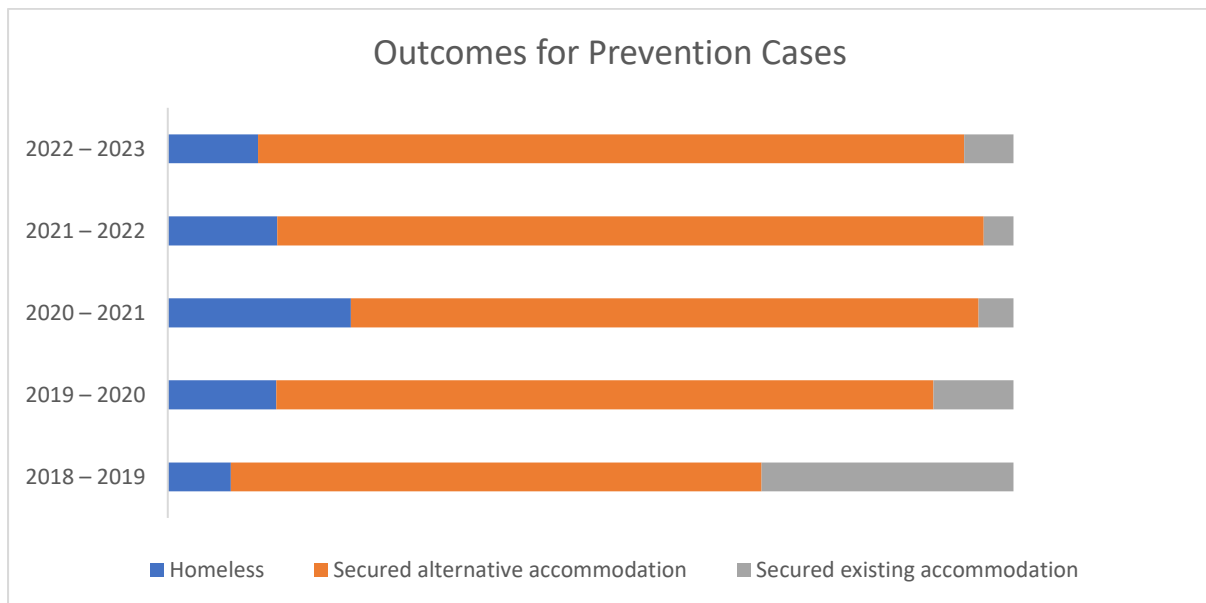
The chart below illustrates the outcomes for those who secure alternative accommodation at the prevention stage. As can be seen well over half move into social housing through the council or a registered provider.

Prevention Outcomes (alternative acccommodation)
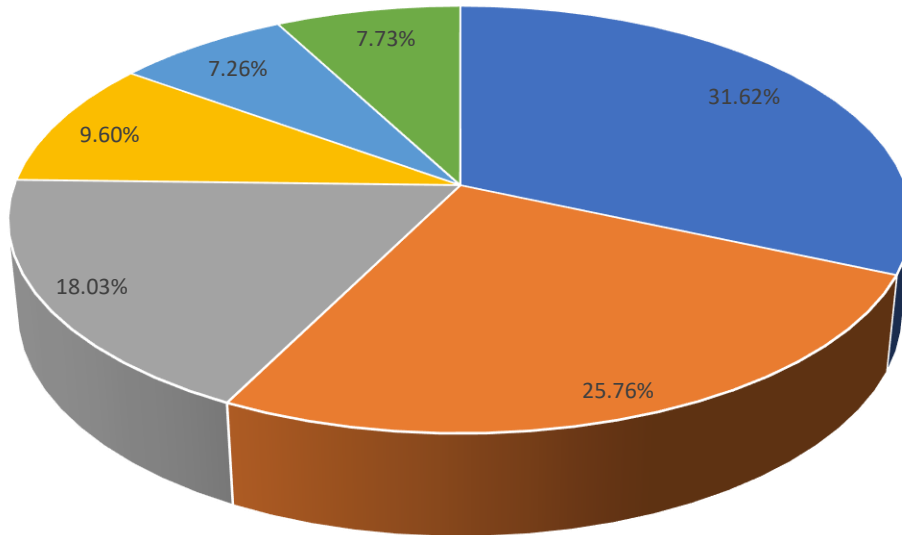
- Council tenancy — 31.62%
- Registered Provider tenancy — 25.76%
- Private rented sector: self-contained — 18.03%
- Staying with family — 9.60%
- Social rented supported housing or hostel — 7.26%
- other — 7.73%

If we are to minimise the impact of homelessness on our customers and make best use of our resources it is critical that we maximise the number of households we support at prevention stage and maximise the number of positive outcomes for all of our customers.

Not only have we seen an increase in the proportion of cases being assisted at relief stage as can be seen from the graph below there has been a steady increase in those not securing alternative accommodation within the 56 day relief period.

Outcomes for Relief Cases

Legend: ■ 56 days elaspsed ■ Secured accommodation

Categories (top to bottom): 2022 – 2023, 2021 – 2022, 2020 – 2021, 2019 – 2020, 2018 – 2019
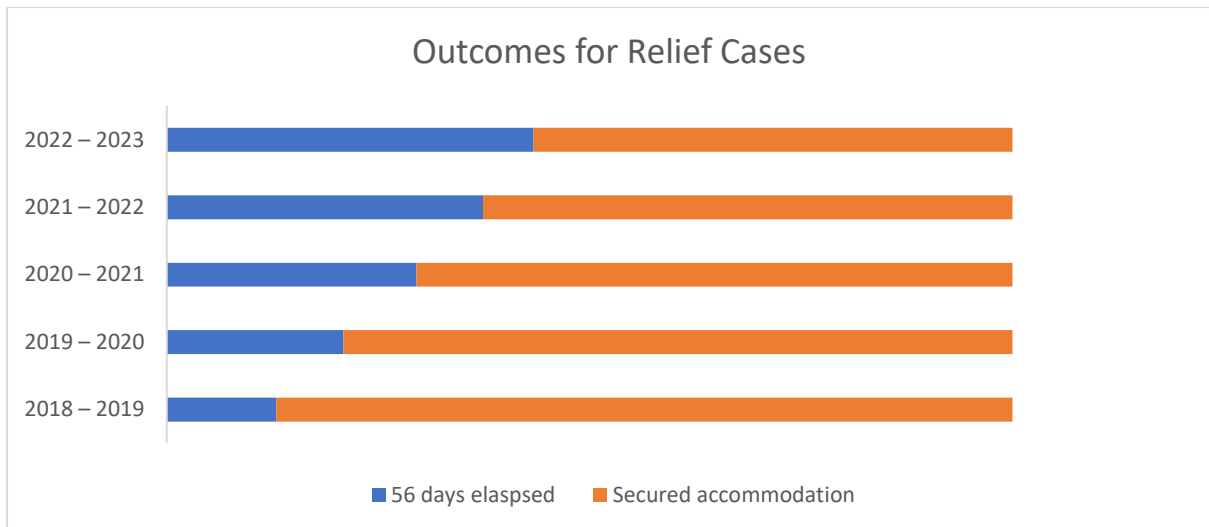
Whilst those households to whom we owe a full homeless duty will continue to receive support once the relief stage has ended at the very least this reduction in positive outcomes will lead to extended stays in temporary accommodation and for those to whom we don't owe a full duty the likelihood of a prolonged period of homelessness.

Through engagement with partners during the development of this strategy we have identified a number of areas to explore in terms of additional prevention options.

These include improving access to appropriate advice, ensuring support is available when needed and upskilling customers to maintain accommodation more effectively.

Additionally the opportunities afforded to households through access to social housing has been decreasing particularly to those with lower levels of housing need. In 2016 almost 75% of lettings were to applicants in the lower bands and this had reduced to around 30% by summer 2023. This means the chances of assisting people with planned moves before they reach serious housing difficulty has greatly reduced. As access to social housing constricts we will need to identify alternative options to support people to maintain their existing accommodation or move to more appropriate homes.

Temporary Accommodation

Temporary accommodation is provided to households who are homeless and in priority need. This will be all families with children or where a household member is pregnant but for single people they will need to have been assessed as vulnerable.

Over the last five years we have seen a significant increase in the demand for temporary accommodation.

Focussing on the last three years where our data is more detailed the number of people requiring (and entitled to) temporary accommodation has increased from around 100 each year to over 150 (as illustrated in the graph below.) As the Government's "everybody in" initiative whereby local authorities were encouraged to accommodate those individuals to whom they did not owe a duty was in place in the

early part of 2020 the increase in demand over the last three years would inevitable have been even starker was this not the case.

Number of temporary accommodation placements
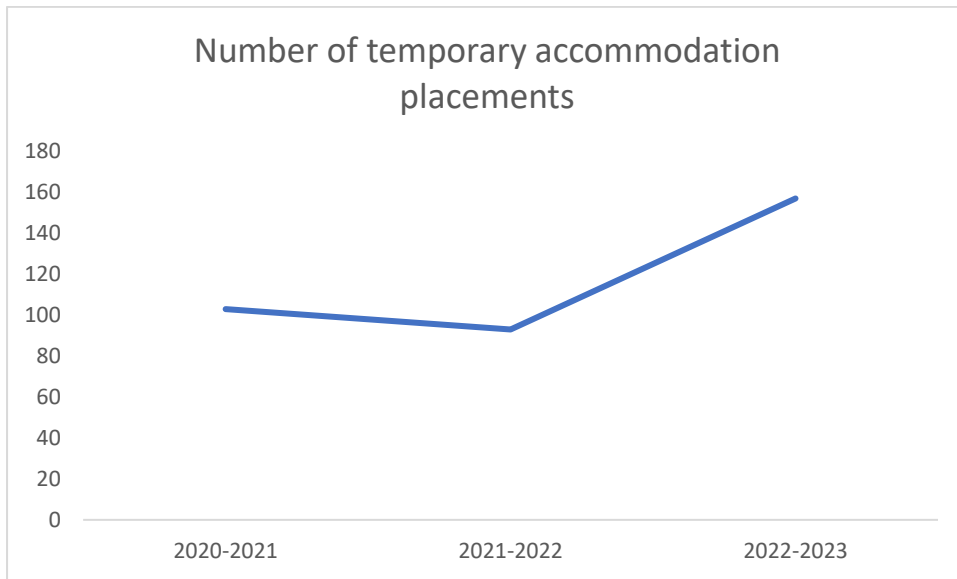
The graph below illustrates the number of days of accommodation provided and this shows that even though the number of placements dropped in 2021/22 the number of nights of accommodation provided still increased.

Days of temporary accommodation provided
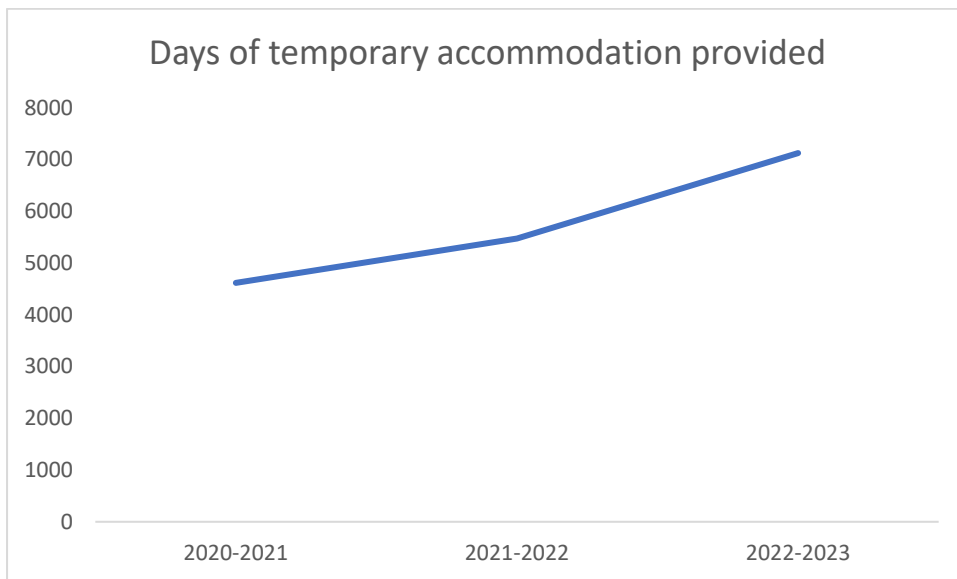
As a result expenditure on temporary accommodation has also increased.
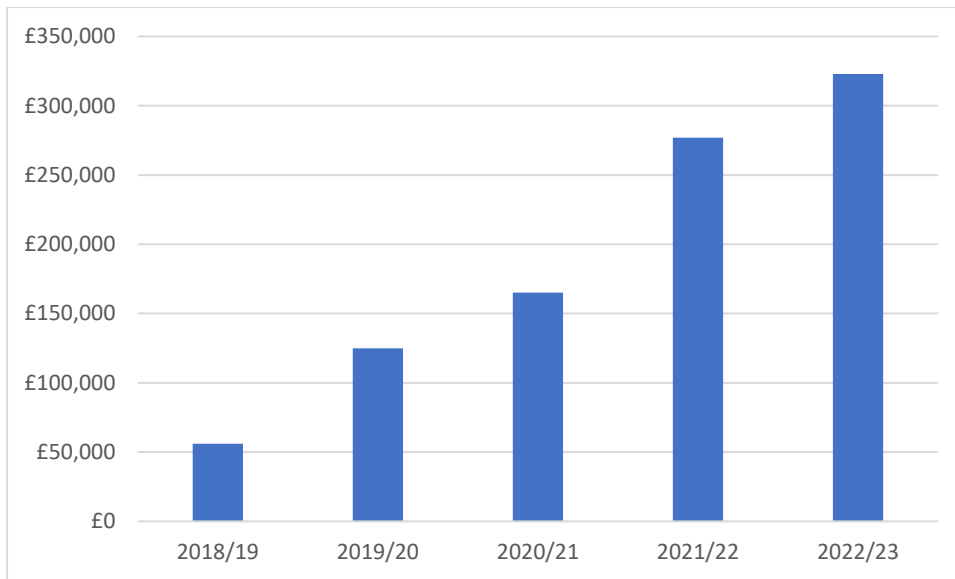
Of 413 households placed in temporary accommodation since April 2020 almost 84% were in temporary accommodation for less than 3 months. Another 13% were accommodated between three and six months. Only 15 individuals were accommodated for over six months but whilst our long term placements are fortunately low these cases will be some of the most challenging in terms of suitable long term options.

Around 85% of cases accommodated were single people and childless couples with families with children or expectant mothers making up just 15%

The average length of stay for those with children or who were pregnant was 43 days slightly lower than the 50 days for those without although the longest stay of any family was 221 days as opposed to 404 for a single person suggesting that more challenging cases are often single person households.

89 of the singles/couples or 26% were accommodated for 7 days or less for families this was just below 20%. This demonstrates that any temporary accommodation model developed needs to be responsive to a significant throughput of short stay placements as well as a number of longer term stays.

Whilst reducing temporary accommodation is a key target so too is increasing the quality of Temporary Accommodation when we do need to use it.

If we can improve positive outcomes for people at the prevention stage this will have the direct impact of reducing demand for emergency accommodation as well as delivering better outcomes and reducing uncertainty and disruption to people.

If we are able to increase the range of alternative housing options for all, this will benefit those in emergency accommodation and reduce the length of time households are required to stay in such provision.

The district has seen a significant increase in demand for temporary accommodation. Whilst a key objective is to reduce the overall use of emergency accommodation there will always be a need for some people to access such provision.

Bed and Breakfast is both poor quality in terms of outcomes but also in terms of value for money. Therefore we will continue to work on alternative provision that is improves outcomes for customers by redirecting current expenditure.

We also need to review our approach to charging for emergency accommodation to ensure we are fair and consistent.

Role of the Private Rented Sector

The Private Rented Sector (PRS) Is both a cause of homelessness but also an effective housing option for many customers.

Whilst reforms to the sector, such as the Rent Reform Bill are intended to improve security for private tenants this coupled with other external factors such as interest rate rises do appear to be having an impact on the sector and leading to some movement in the market with smaller landlords in particular looking to withdraw.

PRS accommodation currently makes up a much lower percentage of accommodation outcomes than social housing for our homeless households however it remains an important option particularly for certain households who are unable to access social housing or who have needs that cannot easily be met through the available social housing stock.

To ensure the PRS works effectively it is important that both tenants and landlords understand their rights and responsibilities and are able to access the support they need.

We, therefor,e need to review our offer of support to existing and potential PRS tenants as well as review our engagement with private landlords in the district to work more effectively with them as well as to try and improve the quality of the PRS and customer confidence.

Key causes of homelessness

The chart below shows the main causes of homelessness in the District. The top four causes of homelessness are the same at both the prevention and relief stage albeit coming out in a different order with notices from private accommodation being the biggest single cause at the prevention stage whilst family and friends asking people to leave is the bigger cause at the relief stage.

Although for homeless monitoring purposes family and friends no longer able to accommodate, are grouped separately, we have chosen to view these as one group as they cover a wide range of similar scenarios.

Main Causes of Homelessness
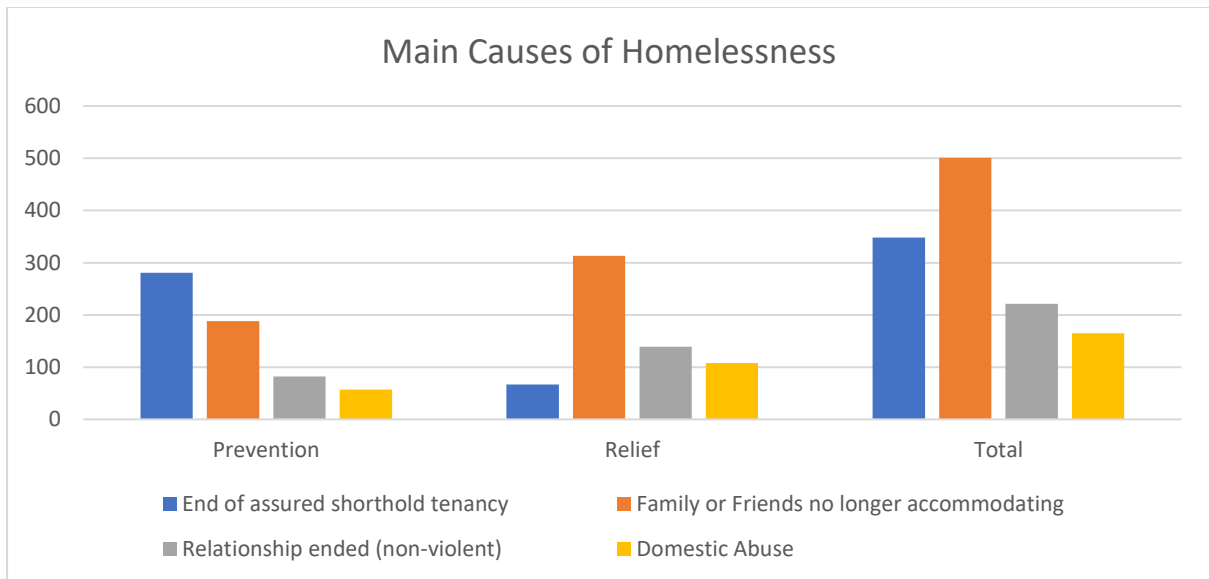
When grouped together, family and friends no longer able to accommodate accounts for 30% of cases overall and the single greatest cause in total.

In most of these scenarios interventions need to focus on facilitating planned moves and managing short term friction rather than sustaining arrangements on a longer term basis.

Accommodation Options

When we look at the accommodation outcomes for people who have become homeless we can see the importance of supported accommodation. Almost a fifth of homeless households move into supported accommodation (usually shorter term accommodation.)

Relief Outcomes (alternative accommodation)

Pie chart segments:
- 22.52%
- 19.21%
- 17.56%
- 13.64%
- 7.23%
- 6.20%
- 5.17%
- 8.47%

Legend:
- ■ Council tenancy
- ■ Social rented supported housing or hostel
- ■ Registered Provider tenancy
- ■ Staying with family
- ■ Staying with friends
- ■ Private rented sector: self-contained
- ■ Private rented sector: HMO
- ■ other
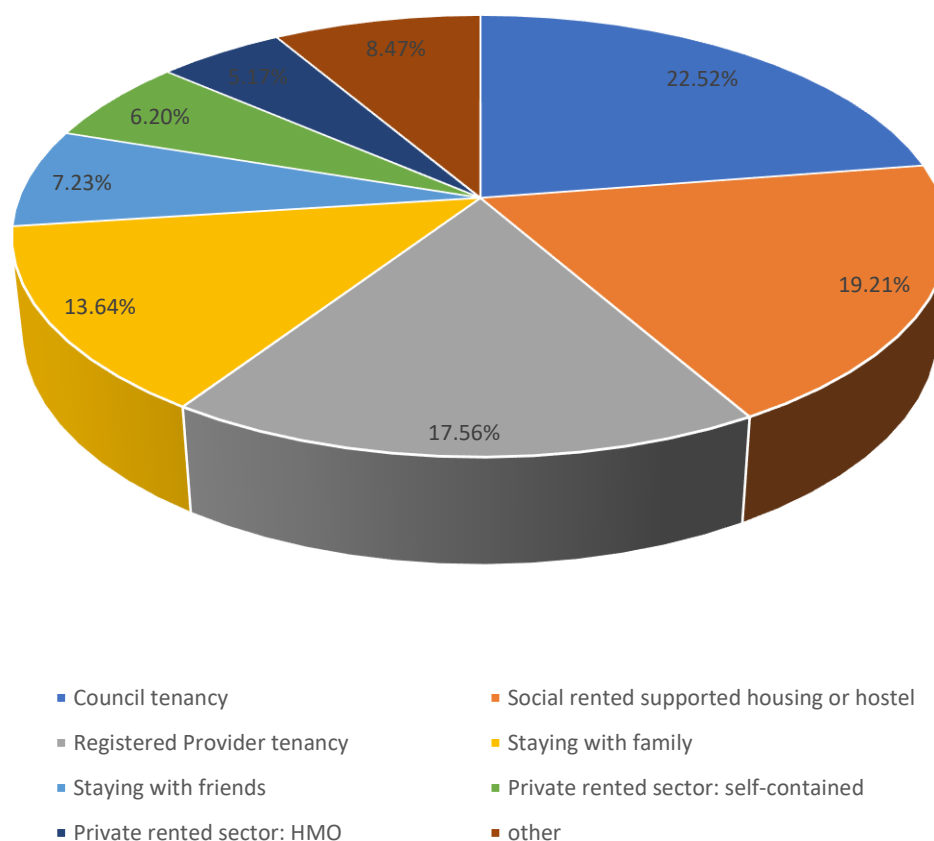
This is likely to be in part because those who find themselves homeless are more likely to have support needs but also because such schemes often prioritise their vacancies based on need so those already homeless will tend to be better placed on waiting lists.

If we want to continue to provide positive outcomes for homeless households we will need to ensure that we have a good supply of supported housing which is able to meet people's needs as well as more flexible options for support. Equally important though is the need to ensure such schemes have effective move on pathways to generate sufficient vacancies. Developing options to support households in general needs accommodation as they transition into independence and at times of crisis is therefore key both to support move on from supported accommodation as well as to assist those for whom supported placements are not available or appropriate.

Improving access to services

As part of the development of this strategy we have asked customers about their experience of the service they received.

Whilst it is reassuring that the majority of customers who have received assistance felt the experience was positive there are key themes that came out of the consultation that we can address to improve the customer experience.

Customers felt that they are approaching the local authority for assistance at the earliest possible opportunity although as can be seen from our data we are seeing an increasing proportion of approaches after people have become homeless.

Customers also reported that they were not sure how to seek assistance and the vast majority approached the local authority in the first instance despite a range of partners in the district who provide advice and support.

Once receiving assistance they felt they would benefit from having more timely information about their case and what was happening.

This insight will help inform future service development.

Meeting the Needs of Particular Groups

Section 179 of the Housing Act 1996 set out an obligation on the local housing authority to provide advice around homelessness to people in the district

Section 179(2) sets out particular groups the service must be designed to meet the needs of

a. people released from prison or youth detention accommodation;
b. care leavers;
c. former members of the regular armed forces;
d. victims of domestic abuse;
e. people leaving hospital;
f. people suffering from a mental illness or impairment;

furthermore we should consider any other group identified as being particularly at risk of homelessness in the district.

The table below provides indicative figures for the number of customers who fall into each of the categories below by year together with the total number of homeless cases each year for context. The categories are not exclusive and one applicant may fall into more than one category.

Year	2018 – 2019	2019 – 2020	2020 – 2021	2021 – 2022	2022 – 2023	Total
Domestic Abuse	34	33	48	66	47	230
Mental Health	31	51	56	91	59	288
Leaving hospital	0	1	0	3	0	4
Armed Forces	2	1	3	3	1	10
Care Leavers	1	5	1	5	4	16
Prison Leavers	7	9	11	15	15	57
Total Homeless Applications	337	358	335	405	397	1845

When developing this homeless strategy we have specifically looked at each key group to determine what the demand is and what existing service provision looks like. Our consultation work has then identified any gaps in provision and opportunities to improve support which we have then sought to include as potential actions under our identified priorities.

People Released from prison or youth detention accommodation
Available Evidence
Around 5.5% of homeless cases are identified as having a support need as a result of their offending history however this contrasts with less than 1% that are identified as being homeless as a result of leaving custody. This could suggest that the impact of offending goes far beyond the initial homelessness that occurs for some on release from prison.

The majority of referrals that are received through the duty to refer, a statutory requirement for certain agencies to refer homeless households to the local authority are for those within the criminal justice system with an average of seven referrals a year.

What we are currently doing

North West Leicestershire District Council takes a sub-regional approach to those released from prison and youth detention being a signatory to a protocol shared with the City Council, the other Leicestershire districts and Rutland.

The protocol is currently being reviewed and one of the emerging issues is the fact that because of the structure of the criminal justice system prisoners may be released from a number of prisons and courts across the region.

We have, therefore, begun work to try and develop more regional approaches to managing ex-offenders.

What we need to do

Two areas identified within the consultation that partners felt were key to this group were ensuring appropriate accommodation was available recognising that those with an offending history often face additional barriers to accommodating both emergency and long term accommodation with specific offences, such as arson making it particularly difficult to access emergency accommodation.

It was also identified that ensuring that prisoners can access the right advice ad services in a timely manner whilst still within prison was key to positive outcomes.

Care Leavers

Available Evidence

Only 1% of applications are identified as having support needs as having been in care (within the age group 18-20) and a smaller proportion again as older care leavers.

Leicestershire County Council is subject to the duty to refer in terms of children leaving their care. On average we received two referrals a year.

Because we take a proactive approach to supporting care leavers access accommodation before their care placement ends we are able to keep the number of homeless cases low.

What we are currently doing

The Leicestershire Districts work closely with the County Council leaving care team to ensure positive pathways for young people leaving care in the County.

As well as reviewing and updating a county wide leaving care protocol we are also working on a number of new accommodation options to better meet need and enable a more appropriate set of transition options.

What we need to do

Whilst wherever possible we work jointly to ensure young people transition into settled accommodation in a controlled way there are occasions where this does not

happen. Also a number of people leaving care will not settle effectively in their accommodation and require further assistance after moving into independence. Anecdotally people who have been in the care system are particularly prone to repeat instances of homelessness within a relatively short period of time.

One particular challenge which we have seen is an appropriate offer of support for those within the care system who form relationships with much provision geared up for single people only.

The consultation identified the need for appropriate move on accommodation for young people when they are leaving care but also the need to ensure staff are appropriately trained to understand the needs of care leavers. We also need to ensure that support can meet the range of needs that care leavers present with.

Former members of the regular armed forces

Available Evidence
North West Leicestershire does not have any MoD estate within the district however we do have a strong tradition of support veterans who approach us for support.

On average though only two cases a year have been identified where an applicant has support needs as a result of having been in the armed forces and the numbers presenting as homeless as a result of leaving the forces are even lower.

What we are currently doing
The Council has signed up to the armed forces covenant. We have also framed our allocations policy to offer additional preference to former members of the armed forces

What we need to do
The support available to veterans and agencies working in the district has changed in recent years and we need to ensure all frontline staff are aware of the current offer. We will, therefore, begin an engagement exercise with relevant stakeholders to ensure that former members of the armed forces are assisted to access all the support that is available.

Victims of domestic abuse

Available Evidence
Around 8.5% of homelessness applicants have an identified support need as a result of domestic abuse. This is slightly lower than the 10% of cases where domestic abuse is the cause of homelessness.

What we are currently doing
We have identified the advantages of taking a pro-active multi-agency approach to supporting victims of domestic abuse.

As a result we have funded a domestic abuse link worker to work within the housing choices team for a number of years.

Recent changes to legislation in particular the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 have widened the responsibilities toward victims of domestic abuse. It is a particular challenge then to ensure we are working effectively with other statutory partners as

well as the voluntary sector to ensure that our response is suitable, sustainable and sensitive.

Work is underway to develop a multi-agency pathway for victims of domestic abuse to ensure a clear and consistent offer to those seeking support. Because a number of key partners work across the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) area and because on occasions those fleeing domestic abuse will want to move away from their existing localities for safety reasons this work is being carried out at a sub-regional level. A scoping workshop with all key agencies is already scheduled.

What we need to do
Consultation identified the need to increase the availability of dispersed accommodation for people fleeing domestic abuse. The County Council is currently in the process of commissioning additional accommodation services and we will work with them to support the delivery of these units.

People leaving hospital
Available Evidence
Whilst the majority of people leaving hospital will have safe and secure accommodation to return to a small number will have lost accommodation as a result of their medical situation or no longer have a home to return to suitable to their needs.

A lack of suitable accommodation to discharge into to continue recovery is a significant drain on health resources and so effective joint working is key to making the best use of scarce resources across the public sector.

That said over the last five years only four cases have been recorded as homeless as a result of leaving hospital.

At the same time around 9% of homeless applications are identified as having a support need as a result of physical health (alongside over 15% as a result of mental health issues.) Whilst there is no reason to assume these are approaching us from a hospital setting it may suggest that we need to review our data to ensure we are capturing peoples circumstances correctly particularly in this area.

What we are currently doing
We are part of a sub-regional partnership with our local authority peers and the local NHS services to provide pro-active support to patients who face barriers to discharge from hospital.

The service provides both practical support to allow those with accommodation to return home as well as assistance with accessing alternative housing options where this is not an option.

What we need to do
Consultation has identified the advantages that having appropriate step down accommodation for people leaving hospital would make. It also identified the importance of having appropriately trained staff within housing teams.

People suffering from a mental illness or impairment

Available Evidence

Approximately 15.5% of applicants are identified as having support needs in relation to their mental health

Anecdotally this group is the one that have the greatest difficulty securing, and maintaining appropriate accommodation whether that be emergency placements, short term supported accommodation or longer term housing options.

They are also disproportionately represented within the rough sleeping community a group that are the most excluded from many services.

What we are currently doing

We have been working hard to integrate services to those struggling with their mental health into the wider homelessness offer. Work has been ongoing for a number of years to develop a specialist service for the homeless with mental health issues and we continue to support and advocate on behalf of our colleagues in health to move this work forward. We have also submitted and supported funding bids for more resources in this area.

What we need to do

The overwhelming feedback from consultation was the need for more specialist accommodation for this client group. This mirrors the conclusion of other work within the County.

Other Groups

The Act encourages us to consider whether there are other groups within the locality who would benefit from a focussed homelessness response. Whilst there have been no other specific groups identified as part of this strategy development we have identified that groups with multiple needs find it particularly difficult to secure appropriate services to meet their complex needs.

Supporting those with complex needs

As part of the homeless assessment, officers have to identify both the accommodation needs of the household but also any support needs.

Whilst around half of households to whom we owe a homeless duty have at least one identified support need around 3.5% of applicants have three or more. Whilst these figures are low overall such cases often require a disproportionate amount of resource to secure positive outcomes and are most likely to become repeat cases after being unable to maintain housing independently.

The Rough Sleeping Initiative has introduced the concept of the Target Priority Group. This involves an assessment to identify those individuals at particular risk of rough sleeping and with additional needs. We are then encouraged to monitor the housing situation of these clients and identify when they are at risk of further homelessness.

We hope to replicate this approach to those without a history of rough sleeping to identify cases where additional resource or a different approach will be required.

The Council has also been part of a pilot programme with health and colleagues in adult social care to develop a complex needs accommodation board where individuals with complex needs whose accommodation needs are not being effectively met can be escalated to a panel of senior staff to unblock barriers and seek creative solutions. We will continue to support this programme and use the learning to improve services more widely.

As a result of the particular challenges those with multiple needs face we have included a priority in this strategy to better meet the needs of this group.

Rough Sleepers

The Homelessness Code of Guidance sets out that "in districts where there is evidence that people are sleeping rough, the homelessness strategy should include objectives to work toward eliminating rough sleeping."

We are fortunate that in North West Leicestershire reports of rough sleeping are relatively low. The table below shows the number of reports and number or uniquely identified cases over the last two years. (Reports will often include people who are not actually sleeping rough and multiple reports of a single individual may be received.)

	2021/22			2022/23				2023/23
	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Quarter Four	Quarter One	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Quarter Four	Quarter One
Reports	3	9	7	8	16	8	12	16
identified	0	4	1	3	6	0	2	8

As part of the rough sleeping initiative funding we are required to develop an annual ending rough sleeping plan through co-production with our rough sleeping advisor and we will continue to do this however there are a number of key actions that interrelate with the wider objective of this strategy.

We have adopted a definition of ending rough sleeping in keeping with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) publication "Ending Rough Sleeping For Good." Our end goal is for rough sleeping to be prevented wherever possible but when it does occur, it must be rare, brief and non-recurring. Achieving this is the final priority of this strategy.

Our Priorities and Actions

This strategy sets out five priority areas that will drive the Council's work over the next five years and allow us to deliver our vision for preventing homelessness and rough sleeping

We cannot deliver this work alone and we will, therefore, work closely with the community and partner organisations to ensure these commitments are delivered..

Priority One: reduce demand for homelessness services through proactive support

WHY? We are seeing more people approaching us for help at the point that they are homeless and in urgent need of housing. We are also finding more people, particularly younger people, returning into homeless services after finding it difficult to maintain a home. We need to focus on prevention and support to reach people at a stage where we can enable a planned move into the best possible home to meet their needs. By the end of this Strategy Period, we are seeking to:

- Work collaboratively with key partners to improve advice and support
- Develop a communications programme to promote the housing choices service and other support available to residents
- Review case work processes to ensure customers are provided regular and appropriate updates
- Develop a training programme for housing choices staff which includes trauma informed approaches
- Carry out a mapping exercise of available support and services to former members of the armed forces within NWL

Priority Two: increase the number of positive outcomes for homeless households

WHY? We are seeing too many households that are unable to resolve their housing situation before becoming homeless and too many cases where households lose contact with services. We need to have the tools available to resolve homelessness rapidly and effectively and the processes in place to monitor and support people during a time of insecurity.

By the end of this strategy period we are seeking to:

- Explore opportunities to introduce mediation services for those asked to leave by family/friends
- Review private rented sector support offer for tenants
- Re-establish landlord engagement projects to promote joint working and take up of local accreditation scheme(s)
- Explore options for step down/move on accommodation for care leavers, those released from hospital, ex-offenders
- Identify opportunities for network of safe disbursed accommodation for those at risk of domestic abuse
- Identify a nominated Single Point Of Contact (SPOC) within the housing department to work with key referral partners
- Explore a regional approach to prison release protocols and pre-release assessments

- Develop multi-agency sub-regional approach to domestic abuse
- Identify pathways into appropriate support for veterans in relation to issues such as PTSD.

Priority Three: reduce demand and improve the quality of emergency accommodation

WHY? Staying in temporary accommodation is stressful and takes people away from employment, schools and support networks at an already difficult time. The cost of providing temporary accommodation is increasing and takes valuable funding away from the delivery of other homeless services. We need to ensure that when we provide emergency accommodation it is for as short a time as possible and provides a stable and supportive base that allows people to move forward with their lives.

By the end of this strategy period we are seeking to:

- Undertake a modelling exercise identify our emergency accommodation needs
- Develop alternative provision to bed and breakfast accommodation
- Evaluate and re-commission the floating support service for those in emergency accommodation
- Introduce a charging policy for emergency accommodation

Priority Four: better meeting the needs of people with complex needs

WHY? Households with complex needs face some of the greatest challenges and resolving their housing often requires a sharing understanding and collaborative approach across several agencies. These households are also those most likely to return into homeless services due to difficulties in sustaining accommodation. We need to develop a more innovative approach to resolving homelessness for these households that will improve outcomes and free up resources.

By the end of this strategy period we are seeking to:

- Work with Leicestershire County Council to help roll out a homeless mental health service in the District
- Develop more specialist accommodation for people with mental health issues
- Agree a definition of "complex" cases and ensuring cases and individuals are identified and outcomes monitored.
- Develop a multi-agency approach to housing complex cases where housing options are limited due to support needs or past behaviour

Priority Five: End Rough Sleeping

WHY? No one should have to suffer living a life deprived of shelter, warmth and basic necessities. Although rough sleeping numbers in the District are low the impact on the individuals is high. Tackling rough sleeping requires a dedicated and thoughtful response in order to engage and support people with often complex reasons for ending up sleeping rough.

By the end of this strategy period, we are seeking to:

- Explore opportunities for closer working between City and County
- Increase off the street accommodation options for rough sleepers
- Promote the streetlink service so that the public are able to effectively report potential rough sleepers

How we will Measure Success

Our strategy covers a period of five years. It is hard to fully predict the changes that will occur over this time period so we will need to be flexible in our approach to the delivery of the Strategy and be able to adapt and change depending on the circumstances. We will continue to be open to new opportunities wherever they help us to meet the priorities of the Strategy which we believe provide the correct long-term direction for tackling homelessness.

Partnership working is key and the sub-regional homelessness delivery group as well as our local Homeless Prevention Partnership (HPP) will be key to ensuring the right agencies are involved in moving services forward.

To make sure that the delivery of our strategy is monitored and scrutinised, and that work is progressing as it should a regular update will be provided to the HPP alongside an update on the key homeless data to demonstrate the impact of our activity. The Strategy actions will also be reviewed annually to ensure they are still relevant and appropriate with input from the HPP.