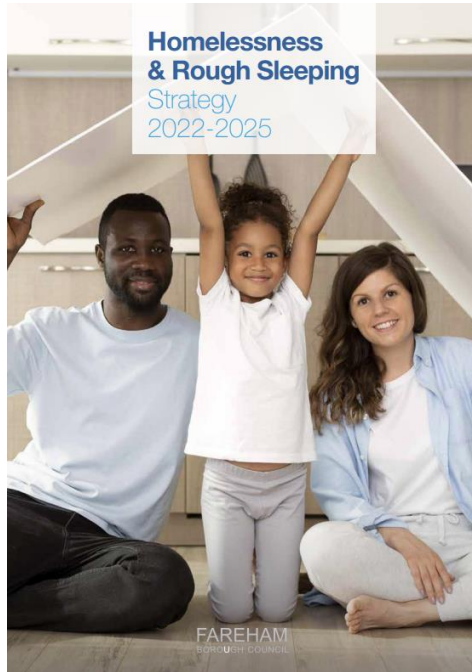


Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-2025

Progress Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel
24 October 2024

Progress report – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022-25



Recap on Strategy aims:

- To build on Fareham BC's positive track record of investing in front line housing services, and its positive approach to preventing and relieving homelessness effectively.
- To support previous Corporate Strategy aims of ensuring Fareham remains a prosperous, safe and attractive place to live and work.
- To have due regard to the Council's Allocation of Social Housing Policy and Affordable Housing Strategy.

Statutory Homelessness – the National picture

Headlines from the Statutory Homelessness Annual Report for England 2022-23

Circumstances & Causes



- 45.7% (64,350) of households owed the prevention duty lived in the **private rented sector** at the time of application. 24.5% were **living with family** and 9% were living with friends.
- Households owed a relief duty are **most likely to be living with family (24.6%)** at the time of their application and the most common reason for loss of accommodation for households owed a relief duty was due to "friends or family no longer willing or able to accommodate" for 50,350 or 31.9% of households owed a relief duty.
- For households owed a prevention duty, the most **common reason for loss of last settled home was termination of a private rented assured shorthold tenancy (AST)**, which accounted for 54,320 or 38.6% of households owed a prevention duty.
- 9.4% or 14,790 of households owed a relief duty were **rough sleeping** and the number of single households assessed as rough sleeping at the time of approach has increased by 30.5% since 2021-22 – this may **reflect improved accuracy in reporting** with 'no fixed abode' decreasing by 17.3% and 'other/not known' falling by 50% for prevention duties and relief duties.

Temporary Accommodation



- On 31 March 2023 there were **104,510 households in temporary accommodation**, of which 64,940 were households with children – this has been previously published and is not new information.
- 13,780 households were living in B&B on 31 March 2023, of which 3,930 were families with dependent children **1,840 families with children were living in B&B for longer than the statutory 6-week limit**.
- 17,100 or over a quarter (26.3%) of households with children **had been in temporary accommodation for 2 to 5 years**; of these households, (36.1%) were either in private sector accommodation and (31.2%) were in local authority/housing association accommodation.
- 13,530 (20.8%) households with children **had been in temporary accommodation for 5+ years**

Key elements



**Meeting
Demand**



**Preventing
Homelessness &
Supporting Tenancies**



**Annual reports to the
Council's Housing
Scrutiny Panel**



**Key Partnership
Forums**



**Providing
Solutions**



**Ending
Rough Sleeping**



**Updated Delivery Plan
published annually on the
Council's website**



**Mandatory statistical returns
to the Ministry of Housing,
Communities and Local
Government (MHCLG)**

Action 1: Meeting Demand



Action	Progress
Use local and national data and benchmarking information to determine service development and delivery.	Action ongoing:- data continues to inform work of the service. Work with Farelets / Affordable homes team / Two Saints
Conduct regular casework reviews to ensure consistency of decisions and compliance with legal framework	Action complete: - Permanent Team Leader in post and case reviews embedded monthly to ensure compliance.
All staff to receive training to ensure they have the skills to deliver excellent customer service.	Action complete:- Bespoke training completed to help in decision making.
Review the range of online housing advice with consideration given to “off the shelf” self-help IT packages.	Action complete:- For new customers, the triage team will guide the client through completing an online outline of their circumstances via our website.
Analyse homelessness decisions looking at what action was taken to prevent/relieve homelessness and whether anything more might have been done.	Action complete:- All homelessness decisions are ratified by a senior officer and where applicable, learning brought back through to the team.
Continue to work with the Strategic Housing Officers Group (SHOG) to collaborate on benchmarking and commissioning.	Action ongoing: SHOG review currently underway with our Hampshire LA partners.

Action 2: Providing Solutions



Action	Progress Update
Formulate and publish a Temporary Accommodation (TA) Procurement Policy and TA Allocation Policy	To commence:- Work to understand this scope and whether separated policies are required.
Work with private landlords to understand what could be done to prevent the end of assured shorthold tenancies.	Action ongoing:- discussions continue with mixed results – wider context of Government proposed rental reform is a contributor.
Increase the number of households whose main duty is ended by an offer of suitable private rented housing.	Action complete: Figures from 2022/23 and 23/24 demonstrate numbers have increased (work to sustain this).
Continue to promote the FareLets scheme and ensure it is adequately resourced.	Action ongoing:- Resources have been redistributed to focus on this but work is ongoing.
Formulate a new Tenancy Strategy.	To commence: - January 2025
Explore consultation opportunities to learn from people with lived experience of homelessness.	To commence:- Service users experiences to be used to help shape policy – how this will be explored is to be established.

Action 3: Preventing homelessness and supporting tenancies



Action	Progress Update
Continue to monitor employment circumstances of people seeking homeless assistance from the Council.	Action ongoing:-partnerships in place with DWP and employment initiatives engaged with (BEAM, IPS etc..)
Improve how the Council works with other public organisations to fulfil the Duty to Refer	Action complete: successful partnerships with Care Leavers Teams, Probation, DWP and Hampshire County Council.
Ensure there continues to be funding for independent housing rights assistance; this is currently provided by CAB.	Action complete: funding previously secured.
Improve joint working with other public bodies by adopting protocols and shared working relationships:	Action ongoing:- delivery of training and attendance at team meetings undertaken. More identified into 2025.
Implement tenancy sustainment initiatives.	Action ongoing:- use of Household Support Fund and Homeless prevention funds to tackle financial hardship.
Investigate why levels of prevention activity have declined.	Action complete: prevention levels are now increasing.
Adopt pre-eviction protocols with local housing associations.	To commence: informal processes need to be formalised.

Action 4: Ending rough sleeping



Action	Progress
Increase the parameter of matters monitored via the annual rough sleeping count carried out every November.	Action complete: - The annual rough sleeper count has taken new parameters into consideration for mapping out the picture of rough sleeping in the Borough.
Build on the existing success of tackling street homelessness through the delivery of additional move-on accommodation and, working with the Partnership Action Group, embed the Housing First model	Action complete: - Housing First has been expanded and other models such as 92 Gordon Road and 123 Bridge Road have helped alleviate street homelessness and tackle community safety concerns.
Work with Hampshire County Council Adult Services with regard to the commissioning of homelessness services.	Action ongoing:- for the duration of the strategy, this has worked effectively – current focus will be post 1/4/2026
Ensure there continues to be adequate Outreach and Complex Needs provision to assist with access to accommodation, primary health care, substance misuse treatment services and employment and training opportunities	Action ongoing:- Rough Sleeping Initiative Funds have secured this service provision – but future post 1/4/25 not yet known.

Next steps

- Financial forecasting and planning for grant funding in 2025/6.
- Development of future strategy in 2025;
- Respond to new legislative and governmental reform;
- Shape the service to reflect the local picture;

Early Intervention and Prevention of Homelessness

