

City of Wolverhampton Council

Homelessness Prevention Strategy

2024 – 2029



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Foreword

Wolverhampton is an ambitious city and we have a shared vision that speaks to all who live, work, study, invest and visit here. We are a diverse city committed to the values of equality, fairness and inclusivity. We celebrate that. Our belief in the city, its people and businesses is at the centre of what we do.

These core values underpin Wolverhampton's revised Homelessness Prevention Strategy which sets out our plans for reducing the challenge of homelessness in our city over the next five years.

The impacts of homelessness can have a devastating effect on our residents, uprooting families, and inflicting trauma on those who experience it.

This strategy focuses on four priorities to address the various forms of homelessness, and through its delivery, make a positive and better future for all our residents. In the face of a worsening housing crisis, we understand the urgency of taking action to prevent homelessness wherever we can and support those already affected to rebuild their lives. Homelessness is complex and affects individuals and families from all walks of life. It requires a multi-agency and collaborative solution. With this strategy, the council aims to address the root causes of homelessness while providing the necessary support and opportunities for individuals to regain stability and independence.

Such is the complexity of homelessness, it cannot be solved by one organisation alone. Tackling it needs to be a shared responsibility, across the public, voluntary and private sectors, with partners working together.

The challenges around homelessness and rough sleeping are both local and national. Despite the positive progress we have made to tackle homelessness, people across Wolverhampton continue to face this risk, especially with cost of living pressures taking effect. This strategy sets out how we will continue to build on our work, ensuring that no-one gets left behind.

We know that an affordable, settled home is the basis upon which people can thrive. I am passionate about the vision and priorities set out in this strategy to tackle homelessness. I look forward to seeing these plans implemented, making a real and lasting difference to people and communities in Wolverhampton.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who have supported the consultation work and given us feedback on the development of this strategy; I can assure you that we have listened and will act upon your views.



Cllr Steve Evans
Deputy Leader
Cabinet Member City Housing

Introduction

Homelessness is a crisis that can have a profound impact on the lives of those affected. Homelessness is most obviously seen on our streets, but it is an issue that is wider than rough sleeping – including those hidden from view who may sleep on a friend’s sofa, or those housed in accommodation which is unsafe or severely overcrowded. Homelessness is everyone’s business as long-term exposure can affect a person’s health and wellbeing, with people more likely to suffer from greater levels of ill health, unemployment, access to education and drug and alcohol dependency.

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.

The causes of homelessness are often connected to a wider set of more complex circumstances. Homelessness can affect physical and mental health wellbeing, educational achievement, the ability to gain and sustain employment, together with increased pressure on personal and family relationships. These effects, especially on children, can be life long and can cause repeated homelessness of a generational nature.

The Homelessness Act 2002 placed a statutory obligation on all local authorities to undertake a review of homelessness in their area and develop and publish a strategy to prevent homelessness at least every five years. In accordance with the legislation, our strategy sets out how we will:

- Provide an array of advice and guidance services and tools that will alleviate homelessness.
- Establish quality and consistent support to prevent and relieve homelessness.
- Ensuring that a range of safe, suitable and affordable accommodation options are available for households.
- To prevent homelessness wherever possible, and where it does occur for a household, it will be rare, brief, and non-recurrent.

To inform and develop this strategy we have carried out a review of our homelessness data over the period of the previous Homelessness Prevention Strategy, alongside a series of consultation points with residents, 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.

Our strategic approach is clear in that we recognise no single organisation can prevent homelessness alone. We are lucky to have already developed strong partnerships locally with many homeless services. As a city, we must continue to be proactive in working together to enable early intervention particularly in a framework of increasing pressure on household and sector budgets and housing market pressures.

Together, we need to tackle the root causes of homelessness by creating opportunities for people to break the cycle that they are in. With a

wealth of high-quality service providers in the city, each one of them has a role to play in achieving the prevention of homelessness, intervention to those who need our support and a range of sustainable housing solutions to meet all needs.

This strategy will outline our priorities and approach for homelessness prevention over the next five years. The strategy will be underpinned with a delivery plan, overseen by a Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Partnership which will be flexible and respond to emerging needs, trends and policy changes.



Strategic Vision – Our City: Our Plan

Our city: Our Plan is the Council’s overarching strategic framework, developed with over 4500 local people and stakeholders. It sets out how we will work with our partners and communities to build a more prosperous and inclusive Wolverhampton where everyone can share in the opportunities and success of our city.

The Plan sets out how the Council will continue to work alongside its local, regional, and national partners to improve outcomes for local people. The plan sets out an ambition that ‘Wulfrunians will live longer, healthier lives.’ Delivery of this ambition will be supported by six overarching priorities shaped by local people.

All Wolverhampton strategies feed into “our city our plan” and is a key enabler of its delivery. The Homelessness Prevention Strategy is intrinsically linked to all the priorities set out in Our City: Our Plan. The particular emphasis is on delivering ‘good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods’ priority, whilst also recognising the role of good homes in strengthening families, enabling adults of all ages to live fulfilled and independent lives, improving health and wellbeing, and the knock-on impacts on access to good work and inclusive economic growth.



National Policy

The **Homelessness Reduction Act (2017)** seeks to transform the way in which homelessness is addressed by local authorities to ensure that households at threat of homelessness receive help earlier and for longer, with a much greater focus on homelessness prevention, than ever before.

At the same time, the **Care Act (2014)** makes explicit the need for integration and better working arrangements between housing, health and social care services through a 'duty to cooperate' and the acknowledgment that housing is a health-related provision.

At the same time, the **Rough Sleeping Strategy (2018)** seeks to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end it by 2027, through organisations and services working together in new ways. Likewise, the **Ending Rough Sleeping for Good (2022)** vision is to prevent rough sleeping wherever possible, providing early support, swift and effective intervention and help to aid recovery for those who need it: delivered through a more transparent and joined up system.

To assist with the delivery of the government's Rough Sleeping Strategy, £2 billion will be invested over a three-year period from 2022 to 2025, including an expanded £500m Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) and £200m Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP).

£20m was made available by the government as part of the Supported Housing Improvement Programme (SHIP), to help address poor quality supported housing and improve standards of support.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance on Integrating Health and **Social Care for People Experiencing Homelessness (2022)**, demonstrates the need to improve access and engagement with health and social care, by homeless individuals/households, while ensuring the provision of coordinated care through greater partnership working.

This then sets a strong framework upon which to base the forging of even better partnerships and joint working approaches, which underpin the main priorities of this strategy.

Furthermore, the **Armed Forces Covenant Duty (2022)** is a promise that the armed forces community should be treated fairly and face no disadvantage when accessing public services, ensuring good access to advice and information on housing options for veterans and service families. In addition, flexibility in local connection criteria within allocation policies and appropriate prioritisation for social housing is also key – currently demonstrated well through Salford's own allocation policy.

Housing Affordability

There is a growing lack of affordable housing in the UK. Recent global factors, such as cost-of-living crisis, rising energy bills and inflation rising at unprecedented level, has made it much more challenging for residents to pay essential housing bills. As well as this, welfare support, such as Universal Credit and the Local Housing allowance, have not increased in line with rising costs. Figures from Shelter indicate that the average home in 2000 cost 4 x the average salary. By 2021, this had risen to 8 x the average salary. The rise in interest rates has further impacted on the affordability of mortgages for homeowners and prospective buyers. Landlords are also impacted by the challenge in paying mortgages and as a result many increase their rental rates. The proportion of housing for affordable or social rent in England has decreased from around 20% in 2000 to 16% in 2023. Increasing the supply of affordable housing is challenging due to funding issues, rising costs, and planning system barriers.

There is also a shortage of available accommodation. House building in England has significantly decreased over the past 50 years, including a drop in new social houses being built. The decrease in house building can be attributed to various factors, including changes in government policies, economic conditions, and challenges within the construction industry. Social houses are also being purchased under the Right to Buy scheme. The scheme has significantly reduced the stock of council housing. While it has enabled many tenants to become homeowners, it has also contributed to a shortage of affordable rental housing.

The pool of available rented accommodation is also reducing as many landlords are selling up and exiting the sector entirely. So, whilst residents are increasingly struggling to afford housing costs, there is a growing lack of available accommodation. Therefore, people are struggling to find affordable housing to buy or to rent, and there is an increasingly long waiting list for social housing. People face a lack of viable options if they do become homeless or are threatened with homelessness.



Regional Approach

WMCA Homelessness Taskforce

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Homelessness Taskforce includes Officer and Strategic Lead representation from Wolverhampton City Council and the other six constituent local authorities; as well as representation from key public-sector agencies, voluntary, private and charitable organisations.

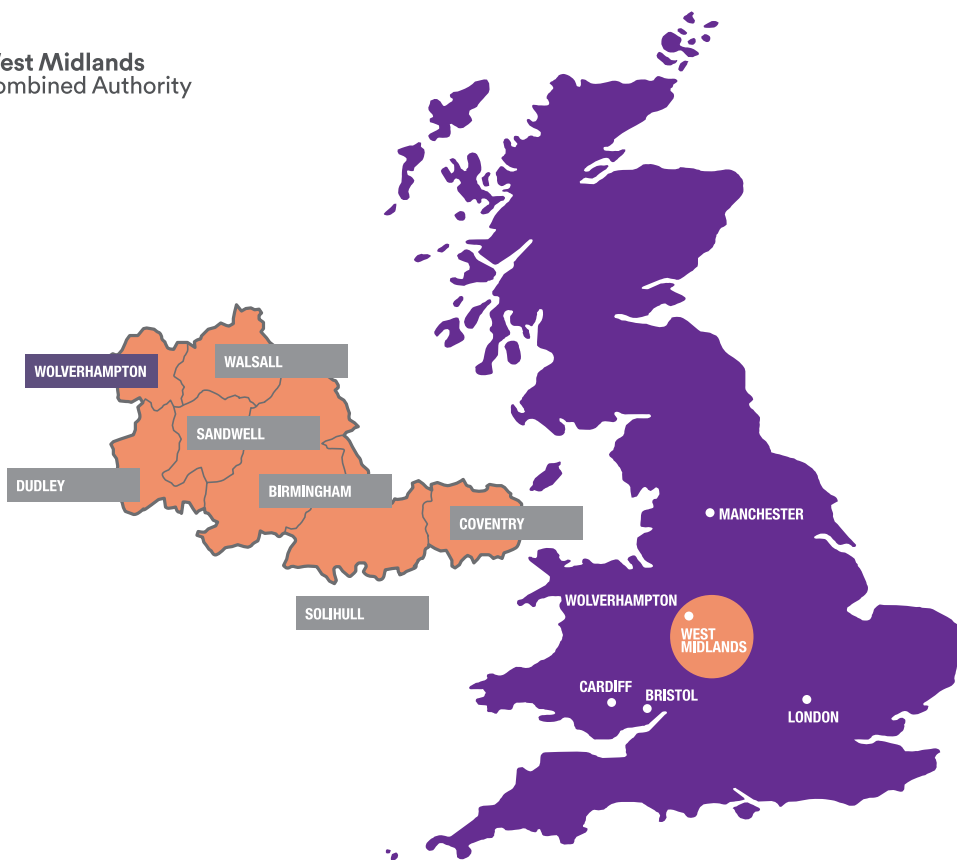
Established in 2017, the Taskforce’s central objective is to design out homelessness across the region and taskforce members have

undertaken a commitment to collaborate across local authority areas, sectors and disciplines to ensure that we are drawing on our collective resources to prevent and relieve homelessness, in all its forms.

A sub-group of the Homelessness Taskforce for Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) Leads from the constituent local authorities has collaborated on a Reconnections Protocol for people who lack a local connection to the area they are homeless in, and has also been part of the ‘Early Adopter’ testing of new data sets for the Monthly Rough Sleeping Survey.



West Midlands
Combined Authority



Local Context

In Wolverhampton we believe that everybody has the right to a safe, suitable, and stable home. The stability of a home will give, a sense of belonging, keeps people safe, together, and protected from the outside elements. It is where we make memories with friends and families, and it helps us to build a strong foundation for our lives.

Yet sadly, figures from homeless charity Shelter indicate that nationally at least 271,000 people were recorded as homeless in England in January 2023 (123,000 being children). In Wolverhampton, the rate of homelessness is significantly higher than the national average.

Homelessness and rough sleeping are not new problems. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government's 'Everyone In' policy has ensured that all rough sleepers, regardless of entitlement to funding or residency status, were housed in temporary accommodation to keep them safe. Over 37,000 people were helped through this initiative. This policy enabled councils to build relationships and reach homeless people who had been either unknown to, or ineligible for, local housing services previously. In addition, the temporary eviction bans during the pandemic also kept people in their homes who may have otherwise become homeless.

These policies have since ended, but we want to build on this momentum to tackle homelessness and end rough sleeping. We have a lot of work to do, and we face the same funding and budget challenges as many local authorities.

We have analysed key information and data to understand the current needs in Wolverhampton around homelessness. This strategy is our plan to address these needs and tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in Wolverhampton. The Strategy will be supported by a Delivery Plan that outlines how we will achieve our aims.

In Wolverhampton:

- the rate of households threatened with homelessness in 2022/23 (5.2 per 1000 households) is slightly below the national average (6.0 per 1000 households). (The Government's annual statistics for 2022/23 outlines that in England alone, 311,990 households were assessed as either being at risk of homelessness or already homeless in April 2022 to March 2023).
- The rate of homelessness (13.1 per 1000 households in 2022/23) is significantly higher than the national average (6.7 per 1000 households).
- The number of people estimated to be sleeping rough on a single night in autumn 2023 in Wolverhampton was down by five to six from 2022. 33% reduction since 2010 when the snapshot approach was introduced and a 68% reduction from 2018.

Wolverhampton Homelessness Statistics 2022–2023

Assessments and Duty Owed

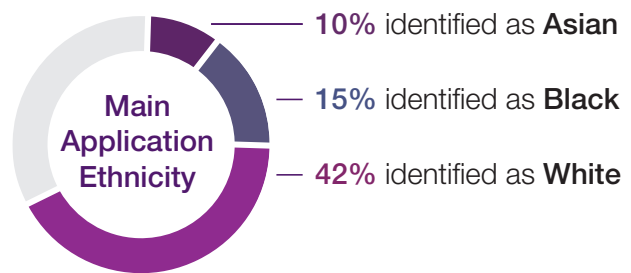
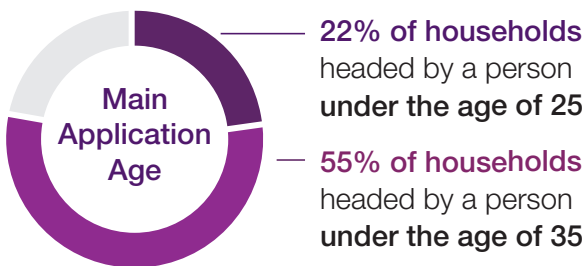
2,031
had an
assessment initiated

95%
were owed a
prevention or relief
duty

Main Duty

56%
of all main duty decisions
were homelessness
acceptances

77%
accepted a social
housing offer



PREVENTION DUTY

Reason for loss of last settled home

48%
end of private
rented tenancy

21%
family or friends no
longer willing or able
to accommodate

Household type

36%
single adult

35%
single adult with
dependent children

RELIEF DUTY

Reason for loss of last settled home

36%
family or friends no
longer willing or able
to accommodate

16%
domestic abuse
victim

Household type

54%
single adult

29%
single adult with
dependent children

Rough Sleeping



6
rough sleepers
on a single night
in autumn 2023



45%
reduction
since 2022



68%
reduction
since 2018

Temporary Accommodation

2018/19

2022/23

875
placements
during 2022/23

70%
increase
since 2018/19

Wolverhampton Contextual Data

Deprivation and Poverty

24th most deprived Local Authority in England
 (out of 317)
19th worst for **employment deprivation**
19th most income deprived

Benefits

23.4% of 16-66 year-olds claiming **Universal Credit** (as of March 2024)
2nd highest rate in the West Midlands

The claim rate in England is **15.6%**

Earnings

£613 median average per week in 2023
6% lower than regional average
11% lower than national average

Housing Affordability

7.4 times annual earnings to buy a home
7.7 times annual earnings to buy a home in the West Midlands

Social Housing Demand

6,864 households were on the housing waiting list (as of March 2024)
240 average number of bids received for a 3-bedroom house (2023/24)

Council Housing Stock

	Right to Buy	Buy Backs	New Builds	Stock up/down
2021/22	198	28	5	165 ↓
2022/23	168	20	0	148 ↓
2023/24	172	19	83	70 ↓

Substance Use

3rd highest alcohol mortality rate in the West Midlands (2022)
15th highest alcohol mortality rate from 154 areas in England (2022)
12th highest area for admission episodes for alcohol related conditions in England (2021/22)

Crime

133 crimes per 1,000 people 2022/23
2nd highest crime rate in the West Midlands behind Birmingham

The crime rate in England is **93 per 1,000 people**

Partnership Approach

Ultimately, no one organisation can end or prevent homelessness alone; the priorities, objectives and outcomes contained within this strategy can only be achieved through partnership and collaboration across organisations. Those opportunities do not just lie with specialist homelessness services. Everyone has a part to play, and everyone can make an impact including schools, health visitors, Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care, welfare rights and debt advice, mental health services, registered housing providers, GP's and many more. All services have a vital role in identifying

when there may be concerns about someone's housing, facilitating referral to specialist services to enable early intervention.

Wolverhampton already benefits from many excellent examples of good practice in relation to partnership approaches, across different settings. The work of many partners in collaboration with the City Council has achieved significant outcomes for people in need and we now want to build on this so that homelessness prevention is seen as everyone's business.



Successes since the 2018 Homelessness Strategy

Everyone in

In March 2020, the government took the unprecedented step of asking councils to move all those, and those at risk of, sleeping rough into accommodation in a scheme known as 'Everyone In'.

That initiative saw partners in the multi-agency Homelessness Taskforce pool their resources at one location - a city centre hotel - to safeguard individuals from the streets.

The facility helped more than 100 people either facing the threat of homelessness or who were rough sleeping to successfully move on from the city's emergency shelter into long term safe, suitable, and sustainable accommodation.

Rough Sleeper Initiative

The RSI funded services in Wolverhampton supported a total of 4208 individuals from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022, with a variety of needs. The reasons for people requiring support ranged from family asking them to leave, sofa surfing and relationship breakdown. Preventative services are key to ensuring that people at risk of rough sleeping are supported to ensure that they do not feel that they have no other option than bedding down on the street.

Peter Bilson House

The idea for the centre was sparked by lessons learnt from the success of supporting Wolverhampton's homeless people through the 'Everyone In' initiative during the coronavirus outbreak.

Peter Bilson House provides 34 units of accommodation, including six accessible apartments, and will be the location for the Single Persons Accommodation Project. It includes emergency accommodation and settled accommodation units, and offers bespoke, multi-agency support for the vulnerable people living in the units.

This approach will allow people to live safe and independent lives with the backing of arms-length support as and when required. Peter Bilson House opened in April 2023.

Housing First

Housing First is a specialised service for people where supported housing is not suitable and who have experienced sustained or recurrent homelessness. The Housing First model prioritises getting people quickly into stable homes. From this point, any other support needs they might have – such as alcohol and drug dependency, physical and/or mental health problems are addressed through co-ordinated and intensive support. The Housing First programme commenced in 2019 in Wolverhampton, and 52 people who were, or who have a history of rough sleeping were housed through this model.



Call Us First

Call Us First has emerged from 'Rent with Confidence' scheme and the project has been realigned to respond to city priorities, the service commenced in 2023. Unstable housing, threat of losing your home or Homelessness can significantly impact the wider detriments of health and will influence a person's overall health and wellbeing. Call Us First is inclusive of both preventative & targeted approaches which provide support and early intervention to tenants, landlords, owner-occupiers, lodgers to reduce the likelihood of homelessness, the collective approach is to keep people in their Homes.

January 2024 – March 2024, the service had over 230 referrals being made to Call Us First team to support and assist cases covering legal notices threatening eviction in the private rented sector, rents and affordability issues to housing advice for owner occupiers facing increasing financial costs because of rising mortgage rates alongside cost of living.

Call Us First is a unique service in the city, that is free and impartial, and available to all tenures in the housing sector.

Resettlement Schemes

Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme was launched in January 2014 and has helped those in the greatest need, including people requiring urgent medical treatment, survivors of violence and torture, and women and children at risk. Since 2017, 100 Syrians were resettled in Wolverhampton through this scheme.

The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) opened on 6 January 2022. The ACRS is designed to support those who have assisted UK efforts in Afghanistan and stood up for UK values, as well as vulnerable people, such as women and girls at risk.

The Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) launched on 1 April 2021. Under the policy, any current or former locally employed staff who are assessed to be under serious threat to life are offered priority relocation to the UK regardless of their employment status, rank or role, or length of time served.

Corporate social responsibility – Alternative Giving

The Alternative Giving CIO provides funding for local charities, communities and organisations which support homeless and vulnerably-housed people. Money comes from donations given by the public, including at 16 donation points and two ‘tap to donate’ points in shops and areas with high footfall. This scheme provides members of the public who want to support vulnerable people with the reassurance that their money is being spent on items or initiatives which will really help, and therefore aims to contribute to a reduction in street begging. Alternative Giving is run by Wolverhampton’s Business Improvement District, which maintains strong links with the council and partner agencies. In May 2023, grants totalling £17,000 were paid to six local services, and between October 2023 and April 2024, £9,915 has been raised from donations.

Cold Weather Protocol

During periods of cold weather, additional accommodation is arranged to prevent people sleeping rough. When existing emergency bed provision is already occupied, this can take the form of a sit-up space in a supported accommodation service or, occasionally, a hotel room. To ensure that this provision is utilised only for people with no other accommodation options, a robust referral process was introduced in Winter 2022–23 and continued for Winter 2023–24.

In Winter 2023–24, 21 people were accommodated under Cold Weather Provision, and more than half of these were transferred directly into longer-term supported accommodation provision.



Realigning of commissioned supported housing services under a new contract

The contract for commissioned housing-based support services has been realigned under five sections: emergency accommodation, Complex Needs Supported Accommodation, Tenancy Sustainment Support (including floating support and Housing First), Rough Sleeper Gateway & Outreach and Peter Bilson House. Bringing these elements together will enable a cohesive service which can support an individual on their journey from first becoming homeless and being supported by the Outreach service to having a placement in supported housing, and then ongoing floating support in their own accommodation if needed. The three models of supported accommodation included in this contract will allow for short-term stays with intensive support, longer-term accommodation once initial support needs have been met, and at Peter Bilson House, supported accommodation for people with lower levels of need, including those who are employed.

Rough Sleeping

The number of people estimated to be sleeping rough on a single night in autumn 2023 in Wolverhampton was down by five to six from 2022. It is down 33% since 2010 when the snapshot approach was introduced, and is down 68% from 2018.

Wolverhampton Homeless Health Needs Audit

The Wolverhampton Homeless Health Needs Audit (HHNA) 2023 aims to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequalities for single adults experiencing homelessness in the City by:

- Bringing statutory and voluntary services together to develop responses to local priorities and address gaps in services.
- Increasing the evidence available about the health needs of people experiencing homelessness and the wider determinants of their health, as well as the effectiveness of current services.
- Enabling local strategic and operational decisions to be driven by evidence of local need.
- Ensuring that the voices of people experiencing homelessness are incorporated into local commissioning processes and service design.

Our Vision

Wolverhampton is a city where we all work together to eradicate homelessness and rough sleeping, and where everyone has a safe place to call home.

Our Goals

- No rough sleeping in Wolverhampton for more than one night
- No evictions from social housing to the streets
- No families with children to be placed in hotels or B&B's
- No evictions from supported housing provision to the streets
- Every person at risk of homelessness will be offered face to face advice
- Residents of Wolverhampton can get good quality housing advice 24hrs a day 365 days a year

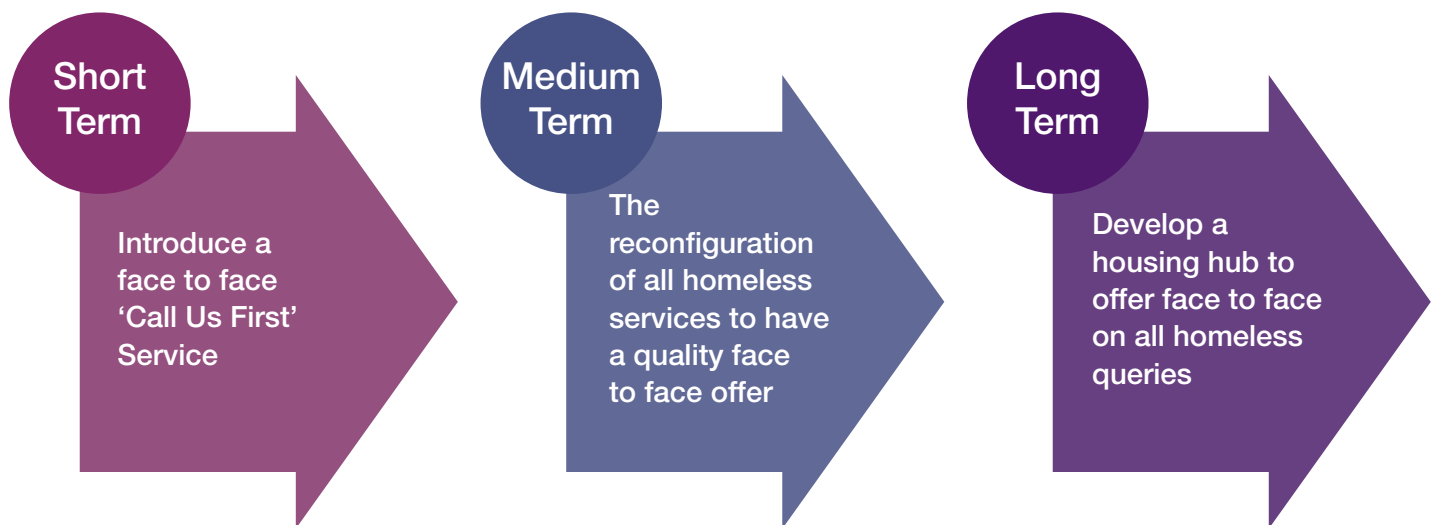
Wolverhampton Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2024–2029



Priority 1 – Advice and Guidance

Objective - Encouraging City residents to make informed decisions about their own housing choices and options by providing access to a diverse range of advice and guidance services and tools, that will alleviate homelessness.

Key aim - Increase face to face housing advice provision



This priority is focussed on providing residents with the most appropriate type of advice and guidance to prevent homelessness and enable them to maintain their home.

It is vital that a person, or household who becomes homeless, or is at risk of homelessness, is provided with the most appropriate advice and guidance at the earliest

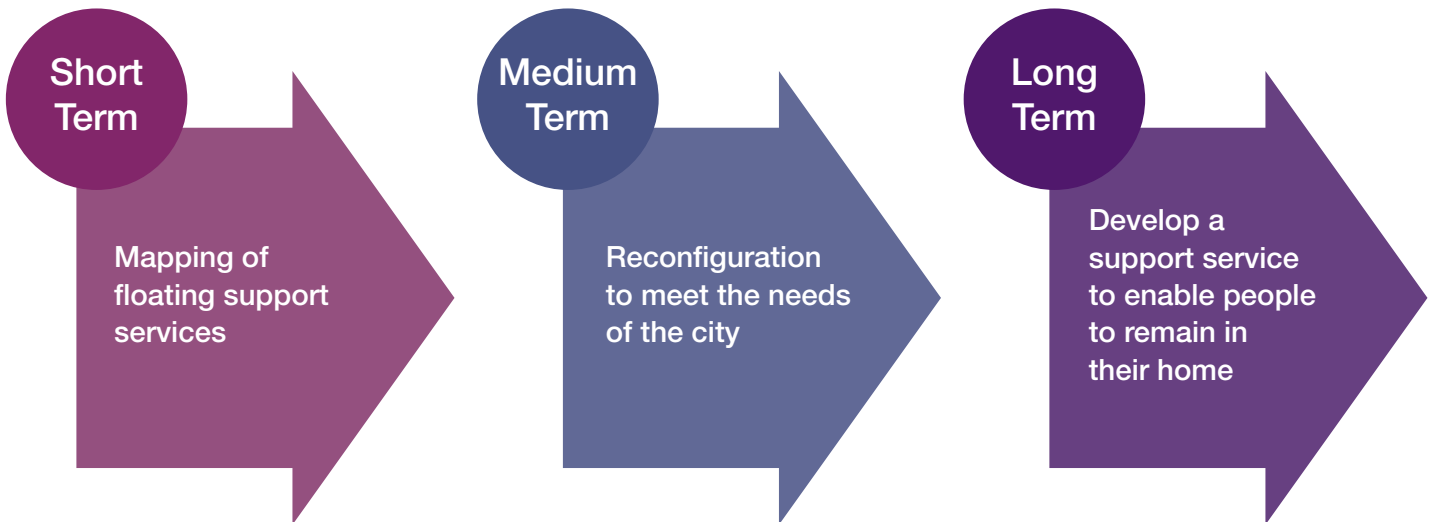
opportunity. Wolverhampton has a range of advice and guidance provisions available, provided via a combination of commissioned services and in house support. These services need to be made as accessible as possible for all residents to assist with homeless prevention, as well as supporting people to sustain their home.

Objective	Outcome
<p>Encouraging city residents to make informed decisions about their own housing choices and options by providing access to a diverse range of advice and guidance services and tools, that will alleviate homelessness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure digital advice includes tailored information for those seeking housing advice, with signposting to other services as appropriate. • Provide accurate advice and guidance to any household approaching for homeless assistance. • Promote good standards of accommodation in the private rented sector which meets legal requirements and good management standards. • Ensure quality advice and guidance is available and accessible to landlords. • Increase Face to face housing and homelessness advice. • Provide tailored advice and guidance to manage expectations and the reality of available council housing. • Provide advice and guidance across multiple locations in the City

Priority 2 – Support

Objective – Establish quality and consistent support to prevent homelessness.

Key aim – Implementation of floating support services to prevent homelessness.



This priority is focussed on providing people with the most appropriate type of support to meet their needs and to enable them to access and maintain sustainable accommodation.

It is vital that a person, or household who becomes homeless, or is at risk of homelessness, is provided with the most appropriate support at the earliest opportunity. Wolverhampton has a range of support services available, provided via a combination of commissioned services and provided by staff working in the Homeless Services Team.

The number of households identified with support needs has increased from 25% in 2021/22 to 39.7% in 2022/23. At risk of/has experienced domestic abuse was the highest support need

recorded at 21.9%. 58.7% of the support needs identified in 2022/2023 were centred on the needs of mental health, physical ill health and disability and persons at risk or experiencing domestic abuse. Levels of repeat homelessness were recorded on 21 occasions last year, although this only accounts for persons who were previously owed a duty.

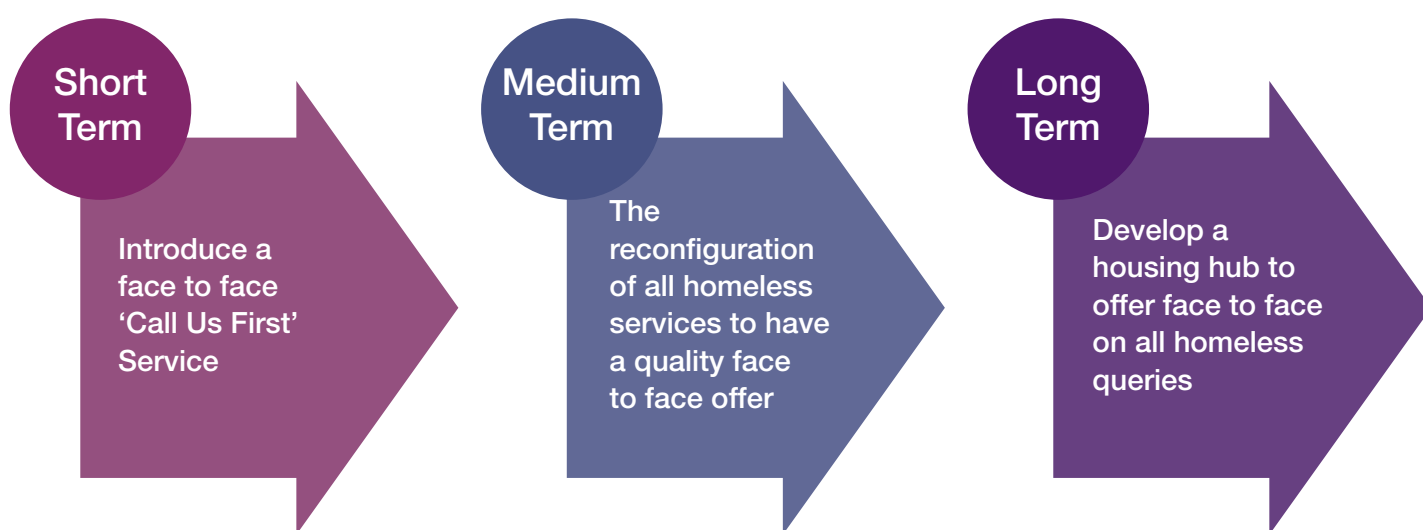
People with complex and multiple support needs can end up being inappropriately housed in accommodation that doesn't provide the right type of support, which can result in tenancies failing and people re-presenting back to housing solutions as homeless. It is important to prevent this happening by ensuring that the support needs are being met, as well as their housing needs.

Objective	Outcome
<p>Establish quality and consistent support to prevent homelessness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a robust process for early referrals from agencies, public bodies and stakeholders to improve outcomes for people at risk of homelessness. • Increase and improve access to housing related support and tenancy sustainment. • Provide specialist, appropriate and effective outreach and support services to prevent homelessness. • Provide support on employment, education and health and wellbeing to clients who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. • Use data to identify those most at risk of homelessness and deploying targeted services to prevent vulnerable households from losing their home.

Priority 3 – Emergency and Short-term Accommodation

Objective - Enabling households who are ‘roofless’ to access a safe temporary place of shelter.

Key aim - Reducing the use of temporary accommodation and develop suitable alternatives.



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.

Between 2018/19 and 2022/23, there was a:

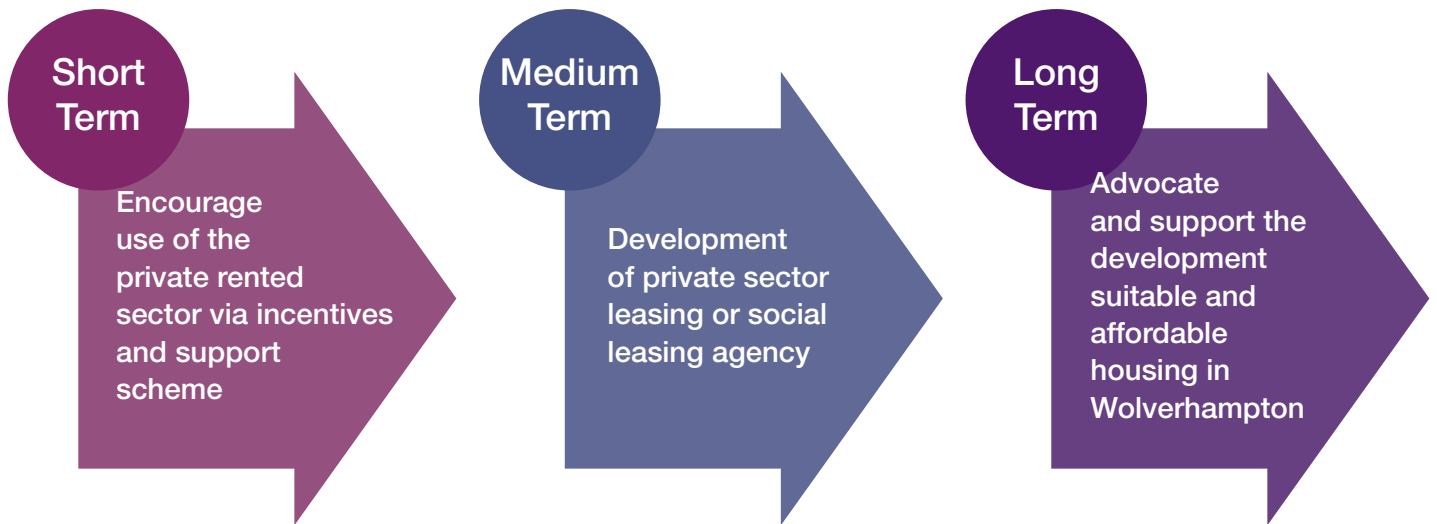
- 85% increase in single placement
- 63% increase in family placements
- 70% increase in total placements
- 942% increase in non-Local Authority temporary accommodation costs

Objective	Outcome
<p>Enabling households who are ‘roofless’ to access a safe temporary place of shelter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop temporary and emergency accommodation services for vulnerable households experiencing homelessness. • Ensure robust pathways are in place to prevent people leaving prison, hospital, armed forces, Local Authority care and Home Office support without a suitable accommodation option. • Ensure the limited use of B&B/Hotels used as temporary accommodation via offering alternative and suitable accommodation options. • Develop a standards framework for the provision of temporary accommodation. • Ensure affordable, emergency, or short-term accommodation is available for people who work. • Ensure appropriate accommodation for underrepresented cohorts and those with protected characteristics. • Develop supported accommodation for families with children. • Improve the access to, and standards of supported accommodation, including families.

Priority 4 – Move-on Accommodation

Objective – Ensuring that safe, suitable and affordable accommodation is accessible to prevent and relieve homelessness.

Key aim – Development of affordable accommodation



In situations where homelessness cannot be prevented or be addressed temporarily then a longer-term housing solution is required. The role that settled and secure “move-on” accommodation plays in offering stability to vulnerable households is of key importance. There is a direct correlation between an ever-reducing amount of affordable housing and the increase in homelessness in the city. According to the Big issue (2021) “There are simply not enough of the type of homes people need and that can lead to homelessness, people trapped in temporary accommodation or stuck paying over the odds for housing and that can force people into poverty”

Objective	Outcome
<p>Ensuring that safe, suitable, and affordable accommodation is accessible to prevent and relieve homelessness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the access and support into the provision of private rented sector accommodation. • Work with developers and housing providers to increase accommodation which is affordable for households that are homeless or at risk of homelessness. • To enable the City's housing allocation policy to offer accommodation to those in most need. • Ensure best use of housing stock across the city, including Hard to let, Empty Homes, Buy Backs and Purchasing. • Work closely with planning and housing enabling teams to ensure we encourage development of diverse appropriate housing to meet local needs. • Maximise a range of housing options to improve throughput from supported accommodation.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Partnership

Key to the delivery of this strategy is the collaborative work across the council and its partners. We are committed to maintaining and building on existing partnerships working to support people to stay in their homes or finding sustainable and affordable housing options.

Addressing homelessness is a complex issue that requires the combined expertise, skills, and resources of multiple organisations. To oversee the implementation of this strategy, we will establish a Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Partnership to monitor the delivery. This partnership will unite all key stakeholders in Wolverhampton, enabling us to work together effectively to tackle homelessness in our city.

We will develop a Delivery Plan that details the specific actions required to achieve our outcomes, identifies who is responsible for each action, and sets timelines for implementation. This plan will be reviewed annually to ensure we stay on track to meet our goals over the next five years.



Performance Measures

The Delivery Plan includes target dates for achieving some specific milestones and outcomes. Other outcomes are more reliably measured over a period of time. The following is a suite of measures, against which the adherence to the strategic aims will be assessed.

Priority 1 – Advice and Guidance	Measure
Increase the proportion of homeless applications made at ‘prevention’ stage.	Percentage of applications made at ‘prevention’ stage.
Increase the number of prevention cases resolved.	Percentage of successful preventions.
Reduce the proportion of applications that are ended for lost contact.	Percentage of applications ended for recorded reason of ‘lost contact’ or ‘application withdrawn’.
Reduce the number of Section 21’s with early intervention by providing housing advice and signposting.	Number of valid Section 21’s Number of invalid Section 21’s Number housing advice cases (‘Call Us First’)
Priority 2 – Support	Measure
Increase the proportion of duty to refer notifications that are received at the ‘prevention’ stage.	Proportion of duty to refer notifications made at pre-vention stage.
Ensure people receive meaningful assessments and tailored, collaborative personal housing plans.	A quality audit framework reviews assessments and personalised housing plans to be meaningful and tailored to the individual.
Reduce the number of new rough sleepers via delivery of support (better prevention).	Number of new rough sleepers over time.
Supporting households to remain in a safe and suitable home.	Number of households remaining in a safe and suitable home following utilising assistance and/or adaptations.
Supporting households to reduce the number of evictions from social housing providers.	Number of evictions from social housing providers.
Support individuals and households to access primary care who have a history homelessness and rough sleeping.	Review of Wolverhampton Health Needs Audit 2023.

Priority 3 – Short-term and emergency accommodation	Measure
Ensure anyone sleeping rough has an offer of accommodation.	How many current rough sleepers do not have an offer of accommodation? What are the reasons?
Reduce the proportion of temporary accommodation that lacks adequate cooking and washing facilities.	Proportion of temporary accommodation being used that is B&B/hotel/otherwise unsuitable.
Increase the number of households with support needs access supported housing. Reduction of households with support needs in Temporary accommodation who would now be accessing supported housing.	Reduction of households with support needs in Temporary accommodation who would now be accessing supported housing.
Priority 4 – Move-on Accommodation	Measure
Increase the number of households at risk of homelessness who are assisted into privately rented accommodation.	Number of households assisted into PRS (privately rented) Accommodation.
Increase the number of move-on accommodation options for households experiencing homelessness and in Temporary accommodation.	Number of properties leased. Number of properties let through Allocations Policy. Number of available properties through social housing provider.
Increase the number of households move-on from supported housing into own tenancy across all tenure.	Number of households assisted into own tenancy from support housing.

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