

Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2020-25) Improvement Plan 2021/2022 (Year 2)

In developing our Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025, the council consulted widely with stakeholders, partner agencies, service users and the public. This established that the four key priority outcomes that were developed for the previous homelessness strategy remain relevant, as follows:

1. Homeless prevention activity for all households at risk is maximised. (Ref: PO1)
2. Rough Sleeping is minimised and tenancy sustainment opportunities for rough sleepers and those with complex needs are increased. (Ref: PO2)
3. Homeless people and those at risk are able to access appropriate housing and support services are targeted effectively. (Ref: PO3)
4. The health and wellbeing of homeless people and those at risk is improved. (Ref: PO4)

These broad priority outcomes will help to inform an annual Improvement Plan, which will be reflective of the multi-agency approach necessary to ensure that homelessness prevention, intervention and recovery is at the very the centre of all work practices..

Through identifying improvement activities for each year the Improvement Plan underpins the whole strategy. The Improvement Plan will be available on the council website alongside the strategy and will be updated annually.

In March 2020 the UK Government introduced a number of restrictions upon society in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. One of these restrictions was the introduction of the 'Everyone In' initiative. The UK Government made it a requirement that all local authorities had to provide emergency accommodation for everyone who was rough sleeping. Over 280 individuals in Herefordshire were accommodated during the first period of 'lock down'. The individual's being accommodated had a wide range of backgrounds and differing support needs. They were accommodated in a variety of settings across the whole county. Herefordshire called this approach Project BRAVE (Building Resilience Against Enduring Vulnerabilities). Project BRAVE developed three strands: -

1. Meet the needs of accommodated persons during the current period of COVID – 19 emergency accommodation;
2. Post the COVID – 19 emergency accommodation period, provide support for individuals to access mainstream housing; &
3. In the long-term, provide support to sustain mainstream housing and reduce the risks for homelessness and rough sleeping to re-occur.

This approach enabled Herefordshire council to work with a range of partners from the Statutory and the Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector (CVFS), to develop an integrated approach to working with, for and in support of people who use services, with the intention of making homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring.

Herefordshire Council has also worked across the accommodation landscape to expand access to accommodation through the Private Rental Sector, Registered Providers, as well as develop our own housing stock option to meet these increased accommodation needs.

This action plan captures the progress to meet the key priorities set out in the strategy.

No	Strategic Priority	Improvement Activity	Lead Responsibility	Resources	Improvement Outcome	Links to Strategy Priority Outcomes	Progress
1.	<p>Strategic Priority - We will review and improve our current operational structure to ensure that preventative activity is central to everything that we do. We will do this as part of our improvement activity for the first year of the strategy.</p> <p>Strategic Priority - We will work with key partners to identify how we can deliver a Housing First project in Herefordshire.</p> <p>Strategic Priority - Through Team Herefordshire we will support a lead agency to develop a cross-sector systemic approach</p>	<p>Improvement Activity - Deliver Covid 19 Housing Exit and Support Recovery Plan – Project BRAVE</p>	HSHPM and All partners	Existing & Department for Levelling up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC)	<p>Further develop the multi-agency ‘blueprint’ for rough sleeping prevention, intervention and recovery.</p> <p>Agency responsibility in the pathway is agreed and clearly understood.</p> <p>Information sharing protocols are put in place.</p> <p>Rough sleeping becomes infrequent, then rare, then non-occurring.</p> <p>Housing First Model implemented in Herefordshire</p>	PO1, PO2, PO3, PO4	<p>Project Brave continues to develop.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Governance through Project Brave Strategic Board and Operational Delivery Group. Delivery through the Breaking the Cycle (BTC) multi agency / sector Case conferencing to deliver strategy. Review and re-launch of project Brave and pathways – Housing, Health & Social Care, Justice and CVFS. Three key themes to progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a. Pre-prevention pathway – to be delivered through Talk Community Hubs. Funding to recruit a post to deliver support to communities. b. Complex / multiple Disadvantage’s pathway – to be delivered through BTC. c. Rough sleeping pathway – to be delivered through BTC. Comprehensive Information sharing protocol in place, understood by all partners and incorporated into service user assessment processes. Herefordshire successful in joining the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) national network.

	<p>that moves rough sleeping and sofa surfing sequentially rare, infrequent and non-reoccurring.</p>					<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Using DLUHC Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) 2022-25 grant funding employed Project Brave / Rough Sleeping Outreach Team Operational Lead. 7. Severe Weather Emergency Protocol developed and in use. 8. Emergency Winter Accommodation:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. In 2020/21 Herefordshire Council provided emergency winter accommodation with support from CVSE charitable partners. (Funded by Herefordshire Council and DLUHC Cold Weather Grant Funding, Protect and Vaccinate and Protect Plus grant funding) b. In 2021/22 Herefordshire Council provided emergency winter accommodation with support from CVSE charitable partners. (Funded by Herefordshire Council and DLUHC Winter Transformation Grant Funding) c. In 2022/23 Herefordshire Council worked with Herefordshire Homeless Forum to provide emergency winter accommodation, with Vennture providing the management and support staff and with support from other CVSE charitable partners. (Funded by Herefordshire Council and DLUHC Night Shelter Transformation Grant, Eveson Trust, Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership, St Peters Open
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							Door (Charity), Ethos (Charity) and Hereford Mayors fund)
2.	Strategic Priority - We will develop and broaden our accommodation offer to reduce reliance upon Bed and Breakfast and Hotel Temporary Accommodation	<p>Improvement Activity - We will investigate opportunities for entering into a long term lease with a private landlord to develop bespoke temporary accommodation for vulnerable households.</p> <p>Improvement Activity - Further develop monitoring and evaluation of existing services and sharing of learning across organisations</p> <p>Improvement Activity - Develop a temporary accommodation (TA) policy. Document to include needs assessment, plan for sufficient supply and TA placement policy.</p> <p>Improvement Activity - Work with new and existing accommodation</p>	HSHPM and HSM	Existing	<p>Ensure that services are people focused. Ask for and use feedback from service users and providers to improve services.</p> <p>Learn from best practice.</p> <p>NEW – to develop and implement processes and practices that ensure the voice of experts by experience are utilised to their fullest in the design, delivery and management of these services.</p> <p>Clear assessment of current use of and future need for TA to inform future supply.</p> <p>Soft market testing of market for TA to enable greater understanding of market and potential delivery models.</p> <p>Clear placement policy to enable people to understand the process that the council applies</p>	PO1, PO2, PO3, PO4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Officer employed (RSI4 Funded) to capture data and analyse trends to inform ongoing service development. Incorporate information to improve services into this action plan. 2. To be developed – feedback and evaluation processes, co-production / co-design / co-management of services with users of these services (Experts by Experience). 3. Secured membership to MEAM network. 4. Continue to conduct research and identify best practice – nationally and internationally to further develop and improve our offer of service. 5. Housing Strategy Officer attended several conferences and fact finding visits and the identified best practice from these was shared via Homeless Forum and with statutory partners across the County. 6. Temporary Accommodation Policy developed and in use. 7. Temporary Accommodation Procurement Framework Policy still in development – projected operational date May 2023. 8. Temporary Accommodation market analysis undertaken and comprehensive list of providers developed.

		<p>providers to expand range of 'move on' accommodation and related support offer.</p>			<p>when placing households in TA.</p> <p>Rough sleeping is reduced through enhanced intervention and housing provision.</p> <p>Rough sleeping prevention in increased. Those at risk of rough sleeping are supported to maintain their existing home.</p>	<p>9. Homeless Prevention Protocol agreed with local Registered Provider's.</p> <p>10. Using DLUHC grant funding delivered a Trauma Informed Training program to 165 front line staff.</p> <p>11. Referral Pathways in place for placement of former rough sleepers with a range of RP's across the county.</p> <p>12. Using RSI 2022-25 grant funding and through the grant of a contract to a VCSE sector organisations, develop a Day / Drop in centre for homeless and rough sleeping individuals – 2022-25</p> <p>13. Developed a suite of accommodation offers through:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Developing 12 units of supported accommodation with Citizen Housing at White Cross Road. b. Using Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) funding redeveloped 6 units of accommodation at Blackfriars Street. c. Using Herefordshire Council Grant funding worked with Trustees at Hope Scott House homeless shelter to refurbish, redesign and extend the accommodation offer to 13 units of en-suite accommodation and 2 self-contained 'pod' homes. d. Using DLUHC Grant funding and Herefordshire Council core grant funding purchased 6 properties
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							<p>of 1 bedroom accommodation off the open market.</p> <p>e. Using DLUHC Grant funding and Herefordshire Council core grant funding refurbished a Private Rental Property to give 7 units of one bedroom self-contained accommodation.</p> <p>14. Using Herefordshire Council Grant funding secured the long-term use of a former hotel to give 18 units of self-contained 1 bedroom accommodation.</p> <p>15. Working with a Private Sector Landlord secured 16 units of accommodation in New Town Road – mix of 1 bed-room self-contained and 1 bed-room with shared facilities.</p> <p>16. Continued to rent an 8 bedroom HMO.</p> <p>17. In development / purchase: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Six units of accommodation in two semi-detached houses (HC owned) b. Purchase and conversion of an office block to give 21 units of accommodation (HC Owned) c. Purchase and conversion of a block of flats 28 units of accommodation. (HC Owned)
3.	Strategic Priority – We will seek alternative funding to enable the implementation of the homelessness	Improvement Activity - Apply for external funding opportunities to implement projects	All partners	DLUHC funding Charitable funding	Physical and mental health services are more accessible to rough sleepers and those at risk	PO1, PO2, PO3, PO4	<p>1. Funding secured 2020 to date is £5,622,212 (as a mix of revenue and capital.) Breakdowns follows: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. RSI3&4 - £1,200,404 b. RSI 5 - £2,072,329

	<p>health improvement projects as part of our improvement activity.</p>	<p>that meet an identified need.</p> <p>Improvement Activity - We will strengthen our ability to provide support to people through our Rough Sleeper Outreach Team and partner agency support services</p>			<p>through outreach provision.</p> <p>Expand support available to rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping or homelessness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. OPCC 2021 - £4,000 d. NSAP 2020 - £524,745 e. RSAP 2021 - £490,892 f. Winter Provision 2021 - £93,913 g. Protect Plus 2021 - £20,000 h. Protect and Vaccinate 2021/22 - £150,437 i. Winter Transformation 2020 - £96,500 j. Community Safety 2022 - £20,000 k. Night Shelter Transformation Grant 2022/23 - £54,000 l. Rough Sleeping Drugs and Alcohol Grant 2022-24 - £894,992 <p>2. Above funding used to recruit: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Rough Sleeping Outreach Team – Tenancy Sustainment Officer. b. Rough Sleeping Outreach Team – Navigator c. Rough Sleeping Team – Prison Release Navigator d. Rough Sleeping Outreach Team – Lead officer e. Turning Point recruited a range of staff and resources to enhance their service. f. Recruit to a Trauma Specialist to work with people affected by Adverse Childhood Trauma and the effects of it.
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Key:

Housing Solutions & Home Point Manager	HSHPM
Strategic Housing Manager	SHM
Chief Executive Officer	CEO

*The lead may delegate operational responsibility to other colleagues in his/her team.

On Going Focus

The Homeless Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-25 is continuing to develop, through project BRAVE. In addition to the above actions, the following points will commence during the 2023/24 year of operation: -

- Full mid-point review of the Strategy and report to Elected Members and Senior Management Team. (By October 2023)
- Interlinking of Project BRAVE into this Strategy and Herefordshire Community Safety and Drugs Partnership core strategy.
- Further develop our capacity and ability to map an individual's journey through our systems by using our data to shape our thinking.
- Further development of the Project BRAVE review to deliver three distinct tracks: -
 - Early intervention through Herefordshire Council Talk Community Hubs
 - Developing and applying an integrated MEAM focus to individuals who require the partnerships support to overcome enduring multiple disadvantages.
 - Continue to apply a Team around the Individual / Breaking the Cycle approach to all people who present and are rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping
- Research into how the County may develop an 'Experts by Experience' working party to shape and enhance our services to make the voice of communities heard.
- Research into how the County may develop its whole workforce to become 'Trauma Informed' and enable them to work in a Trauma Informed way, taking account of an individual's strengths to maximise all opportunities to break the cycle of homelessness.
- Use the data around Cost Benefit's across the partnerships systems, to enable the development of an integrated and funded homelessness prevention system in Herefordshire, to ensure that homelessness becomes rare, brief and non-recurring.

These points will be managed by the Strategic Housing Manager and interwoven into the Homeless Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-25 at the full mid-point review. This action plan will reflect them as distinct actions.