

Broadland and South Norfolk Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy

From small acts to big changes:
Together we can stop homelessness



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Introduction

In recent years, both Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council have made significant strides in our efforts to combat homelessness and rough sleeping. Through person-centred service provision, partnerships, and innovative solutions, we have been able to provide support to many individuals and families in need.

Reviews of our current homelessness and rough sleeper strategies show we have succeeded in our ambitions including increasing the amount of dedicated temporary accommodation for victim-survivors of domestic abuse, introducing greater housing support for care leavers and growing our in-house rough sleeper team. In addition, between 2020-2025 in Broadland, 679 new social housing homes let at an Affordable Rent were delivered by our Registered Provider partners and let to applicants on the Housing Register. In South Norfolk, that figure is 935 homes.

However, economic challenges, rising housing costs, and other socio-economic factors have grown to contribute further to the wider causes of homelessness in our areas. Where possible, we have mitigated against these pressures, but we are not immune from national housing crises and despite our successes, there is more work to do.

As an illustration, in 2024, the Councils commissioned a specialist data organisation, PPL to forecast our Temporary Accommodation (TA) need over the next five years. The results were sobering. With no further mitigating actions, household need for TA is predicted to increase over 300% by 2029 with a corresponding upsurge in costs to the Councils.

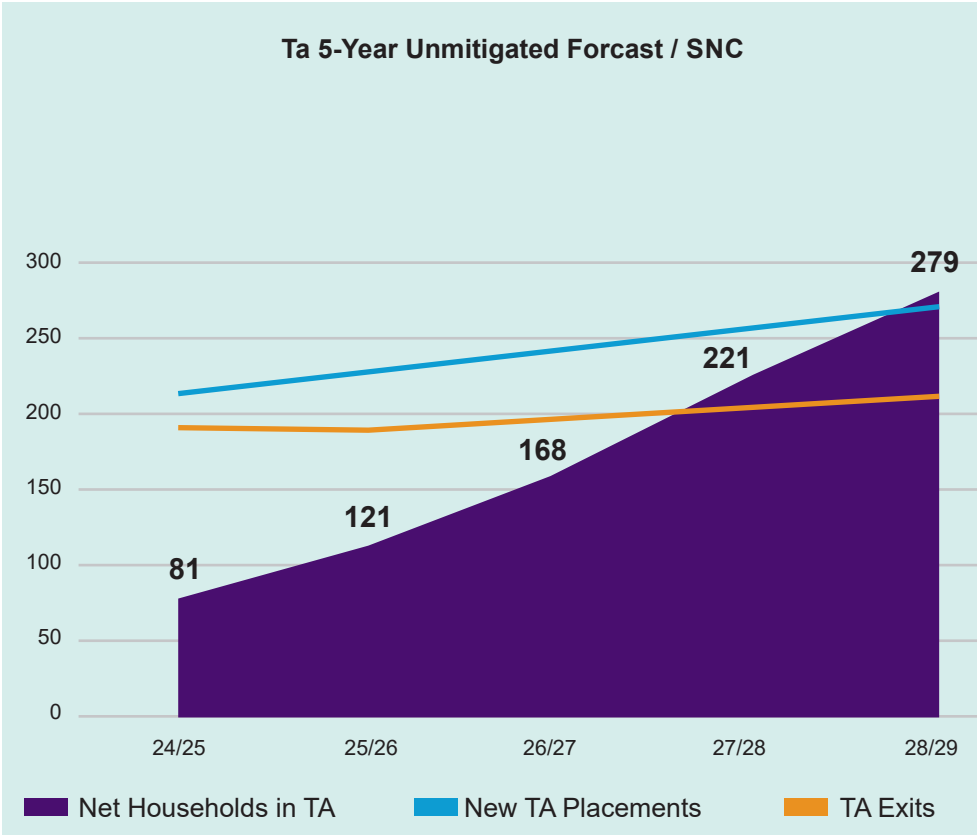
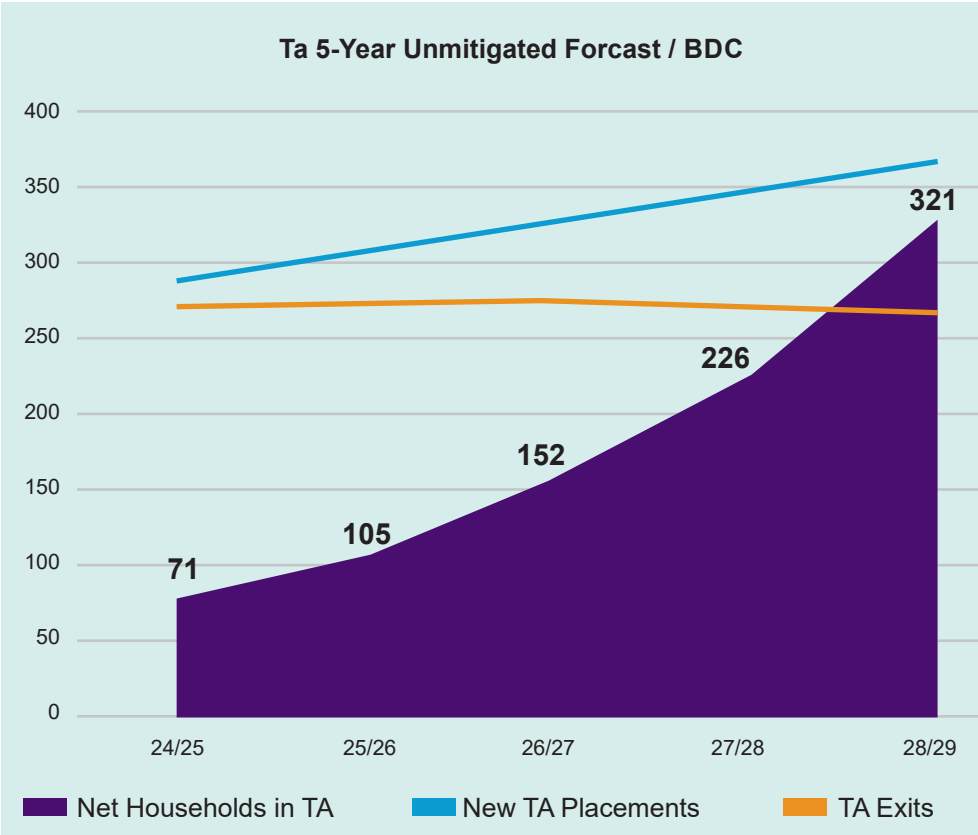
Therefore, as we move forward it is crucial that we adapt our strategies and resources to meet these increasing demands.

This is a joint Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy for Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council. It sets out the vision for both Councils until 2030 to stop the challenges of homelessness and rough sleeping as well as our priority focus areas to achieve that.

Within the strategy is an acknowledgement that no one thing alone will achieve those goals, instead we need to focus on a multitude of tasks undertaken collaboratively by our customers, by the Councils and by partner organisations.

Some of these are ambitious and wide reaching, such as our trailblazing programme to purchase our own Temporary Accommodation (TA) units resulting in an additional 47 units in Broadland and 48 units in South Norfolk by July 2025. Providing good quality TA for households in need and reducing costs of expensive nightly paid B&B. Other actions are smaller and more specific, for example, working with people with lived experience to review and update our personalised housing plan template.

Each one makes a positive impact, becoming a collective and collaborative response to stop homelessness and working towards a future where everyone has a safe and stable place to call home.



The vision is

From small acts to big changes:

Together we can stop homelessness.

Our four priority areas are:

1. Prevention

2. Accommodation

3. Housing Solutions

4. Systems and collaboration

Our proposed vision therefore is:

The strategy comprises two parts:

- i. The first part provides some of the wider context, how we developed the strategy and what else is happening both locally and on a larger scale with national government.
- ii. Part two details our proposed priorities and the actions we will take to meet those priorities over the next five years.

This strategy focuses on those actions that can stop homelessness and rough sleeping and will sit within a broader Housing Strategy for each Council. Both documents form a key aspect of the Councils own Corporate and Delivery Plans.



Part One: Shaping the strategy

1. Engagement and Review

Nationally, Local Housing Authorities have a duty under the Homelessness Act 2002 to carry out a homelessness review and to formulate and publish a strategy based on the results of that review.

The Councils completed reviews of the former Homelessness and Rough Sleeper strategies in late 2024. The outcomes showed we had been broadly successful in achieving the set actions, some of which are highlighted below.



Temporary Accommodation (TA)

Since 2023 we have acquired 95 units of TA across both Councils



Sanctuary Scheme

More than 400 referrals across both Councils into our Sanctuary Scheme supporting survivors of Domestic Abuse to stay safely in their homes. Preventing the need for TA in 67% of cases assisted.



Tenancy Preparation

Four presentations of Tenancy and Independent Living Skills (TILS) courses empowering attendees to consider and manage their housing options sustainably.



Criminal Justice Housing Support

Created a bespoke role to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping on release from prison



Early Intervention Officer

Supported 57 customers across both Councils from needing statutory homelessness interventions in the first six months.



Affordable Rented Housing

In the period 2020-2025, across both Council's over 1,600 new social housing homes have been delivered by Registered Provider partners.

Our evidence and data review of the local housing market and of customers seeking housing advice and support suggested there is still a highly complex picture of factors that are driving increased demand on the services.

These are provided in more detail in our Housing Evidence Review document, however, key findings are highlighted below.



Private Rents

Since 2015, average rents have increased by 52%



Housing Register

There are 1.65 housing register applications for every household housed through the register



Single People

Single person households accounted for 59-64% of relief homelessness applications in 2023/24



Domestic Abuse

85% of approaches from households experiencing domestic abuse are from out of area



Temporary Accommodation

There were 141 households in temporary accommodation in July 2025 compared to 66 in April 2022.



Rough Sleeping

45% of individuals in our rough sleeper service self-reported a mental health condition

2. Consultation

Overall, the strategy must set out our plans for the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping and for ensuring that sufficient accommodation and support are, or will be, available for people who become homeless or who are at risk of becoming so.

Consultation formed a vital aspect of strategy development work. This included workshops for external partners, council officers, and members of the council. In addition, we held a session with the Shelter Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG) and ran a 4 week public consultation.

We are grateful to the partners that have worked with us:

- Bridges Outcomes Partnerships
- Broadland Housing Association
- Department for Work and Pensions
- HM Prison and Probation Service
- Home Group
- Homeless Link
- Hopestead
- Magdalene Group
- Norfolk Integrated Housing and Community Support Service (NIHCSS)
- Norfolk Probation Service
- North Norfolk District Council
- Norwich City Council
- Office of Alice McDonald MP
- Office of Jerome Mayhew MP
- Shelter
- Shelter Lived Experience Advisory Group
- The House of Genesis
- Your Own Place CIC
- Members of the public – online consultation responders
- Registered Provider partners
- Big Sky
- Broadland Living Ltd

Workshop findings

The stakeholder workshops identified several common themes when considering barriers and solutions to housing for different cohorts of people including:

- Care Leavers
- People fleeing domestic abuse
- Young People
- Households in private rented homes
- People rough sleeping for the first time
- People who have had long periods rough sleeping

The main themes taken from the workshops were:

- Stigma and exclusion
- Prevention of homelessness earlier
- Preparation for tenancies
- Affordable accommodation options
- Collaborative working

Consultation

Our public consultation ran for 4 weeks in April 2025 with respondents broadly in favour of the proposed priorities in the draft document (70%).

Key themes arising from the responses are:

- Overwhelmingly strong support for early intervention work.
- Need to involve people with lived experience of homelessness, looking at opportunities to co-produce work.
- Importance of using and sharing data appropriately to best target services
- Support for council owned high quality temporary accommodation.
- Importance of holistic trauma informed support – understanding that some of our customers have experienced traumatic events and what the impacts of trauma can be. Working with them to prevent re-traumatisation and to achieve positive outcomes. In addition, ensuring Council officers are supported to prevent vicarious trauma.

3. Homelessness mitigation work

Ahead of publishing this strategy and in light of the current housing challenges, and the feedback received during the consultation process, the Councils are driving forward efforts now to support households at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping. Following our work with PPL, a Homelessness Mitigation Strategic Workplan has been established with three focused workstreams which seek to improve outcomes for households at risk of, or who are homeless.

Prevention

**Temporary
Accommodation
(TA)**

Throughput

These lay the groundwork for the strategy with the priorities outlined in Part Two aligning with the workstreams above.

4. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

Central government is committed to reforming local government, commonly known as LGR. Through this, it is expected that one or more Unitary Authorities will be created in Norfolk within the lifetime of this strategy, replacing the current two tier local authority system in the County.

The collaboration and long-standing relationship between Broadland and South Norfolk Councils shows what can be achieved by good and open collaboration around a shared purpose and vision.

In addition, the issue of homelessness will supersede any local government reorganisation and discussions with our discussions with other neighbouring councils at partner meetings at partner meetings and our stakeholder workshops highlight that pressures we face are often aligned.

Therefore, it is vital this strategy will provide a sound and considered base for the superseding authorities to continue our sector leading work and continue to deliver the vision we have set.



5. On the horizon

The below highlights some of the key areas of focus within central government that may inform the Councils work to stop homelessness and rough sleeping.

Name	What it will do
Spending Review – June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocates £100m for homelessness early intervention. • Local Authority Housing Fund 4 – £950m enabling purchase of Temporary Accommodation in addition to homes for those on Afghan Resettlement schemes. • New affordable homes programme - £39bn. Grants to build new affordable homes, including social rent, affordable rent and shared ownership.
Renters' Rights Act 2025 <i>Seeks to improve protections for private rented tenants, give clarity to landlords and abolish unfair practice.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abolish section 21 'no fault' evictions • Fair possession grounds for landlord and tenants. • Local councils – create a private rented sector database and strengthen enforcement. • Apply Decent Homes Standard and Awaab's Law to privately rented homes. • Make it illegal for landlords and agents to discriminate against prospective tenants in receipt of benefits or with children. • End rental bidding for offers above advertised rent and restrict rent in advance payments to one month.
Homelessness Strategy for England	A cross-government Inter-Ministerial Group on Homelessness and Rough Sleeping has been established and it is expected the new strategy will be published in 2025.

Name	What it will do
Local Authority Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Funding Review	<p>Bringing together local authority funding streams for homelessness and rough sleeping. Removing the requirement for competitive bid processes and amending formulas used to calculate funding allocations.</p> <p>Proposes homelessness prevention funding based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Core Prevention and Relief (60%)ii. Temporary Accommodation Pressure (40%) <p>Encourages strong prevention work and accurate data.</p>
Social Housing Rent Settlement	<p>From 2026, sets a 10 year settlement on Registered Providers (RPs) capacity to raise rents by 1% above inflation. Provides confidence to RPs to budget for new housing delivery and undertake improvement programmes. Aims to provide consistency in rent rises for tenants.</p>
Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023	<p>Enacting provisions within the legislation, such as a duty for local authorities to produce Supported Housing Strategies. Government consulting on introducing mandatory licensing for supported housing providers and a clearer definition of 'Care, Support and Supervision' for determining rents and charges.</p>
Mortgage guarantee scheme	<p>A new, permanent comprehensive mortgage guarantee scheme supporting first time buyers and home movers with a small deposit, as little as 5%, to buy a home in the United Kingdom. Available from July 2025, aiming to incentivise and sustain availability of 91-95% loan-to-value mortgages by providing participating lenders with a government-backed guarantee.</p>

Part Two: Tackling Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

6. Our vision and priorities

Our vision reflects the outcomes of the reviews undertaken of our outgoing homelessness and rough sleeper strategies and the engagement work we have carried out so far. What is clear is that there’s no ‘one size fits all’ approach to tackling homelessness and rough sleeping and there’s no single ‘big idea’ from one organisation that would end it.

Priorities expand on and embed the current workstreams in response to the housing crisis as detailed in Section 3. Each priority builds on and intersects with the others to take a comprehensive approach. They balance numerical data and a shared narrative of housing issues, the reason behind them, and what needs to happen to prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping. Most importantly the priorities and actions below are people-focused and collaborative.

Broadland and South Norfolk Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2025-2030

**From small acts to big changes:
Together we can stop homelessness**

1. Prevention

This priority focuses on early intervention and prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping.

2. Accommodation

This priority focuses on the relief of homelessness and rough sleeping, including temporary accommodation and supported housing.

3. Housing Solutions

This priority focuses on long-term housing solutions.

4. Systems and Collaboration

This priority focuses on how we will achieve our aims, including how we will work collaboratively.

1. Prevention

Why is Prevention important?

Early intervention to prevent homelessness is crucial because it addresses the root causes before they escalate into more severe issues.

Across both Councils, approaches for help by households who are homeless (relief duty) are consistently higher than households who are at risk of homelessness (prevention duty). The reasons are complex, but as an example can be attributed to:

- Some households will wait to seek help.
- People seeking help as a result of fleeing Domestic Abuse or their friends/family are no longer willing to accommodate them tend to reflect a more immediate need for support and so are far less common in prevention.
- Households who have not been able to have their homelessness prevented may have moved into the relief duty.

However, with the Council providing support and resources at the initial signs of housing instability, ideally even before a statutory duty is assessed, we can help individuals and families maintain their homes, thus avoiding the traumatic experience of homelessness. This proactive approach not only reduces the emotional and psychological stress associated with losing one's home but also alleviates the costs to themselves, the Council and other organisations.

Furthermore, early intervention promotes stability and well-being, enabling people to focus on other important aspects of their lives, such as employment, education, and health. Ultimately, it fosters a more resilient and supportive community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. Analysis by Oxera for Centrepointhomelessness charity finds that £1 spent in intervening during the early stages of homelessness, compared with similar intervention at a later stage, results in potential costs avoided by the public purse of £2.40¹.

Current examples:

Our Early Intervention Officer supported 57 customers from needing statutory homelessness interventions in the first 6 months of being in the role. The Councils have expanded this work into an additional role and these officers will be instrumental in achieving some of the actions listed below.

The Help Hub eliminates the need for residents to navigate multiple services. Trained officers, including housing triage officers provide warm handovers to internal teams or external partners, including debt and welfare, employability and discharge from hospital services. Ensuring coordinated, compassionate support. This allows the Councils to identify potential housing issues at an early stage and support offered to prevent homelessness.

¹ Oxera

A central theme arising from our stakeholder workshops was the importance of the Councils proactively working with partners to identify at an earlier stage those at risk, before any statutory interventions are needed. Public consultation responses also strongly supported early intervention, with many recognising its cost-effectiveness and long-term benefits. Good use of data was also highly prioritised, reflecting a growing awareness of its role in targeting support.

Under this priority, our actions are:

- 1) Introducing an early notification scheme for Registered Providers and other partners where households have low but ongoing arrears or are at risk of losing accommodation.
- 2) Review efficacy of Early Intervention and Prevention roles. Identify opportunities to embed the roles.
- 3) Advocate for greater data sharing and if practicable, identify a model in which the Councils can utilise household data appropriately across a number of sources to offer proactive early intervention work.
- 4) Participating in Family Connect ² with Norfolk County Council.
- 5) Use flexible and innovative adaptative aids through the Disabled Facilities Grant to help people live in their homes for longer.
- 6) Building on the success of our housing triage team located in the Help Hub. Linking households directly into additional services, creating a wrap-around support approach.
- 7) Work across housing, homelessness, and regulatory services to support private rented tenants and local landlords, including with the implementation of the Renters' Rights Act.

2. Accommodation

Why is Accommodation important?

Temporary Accommodation

Temporary accommodation (TA) plays a crucial role in relieving homelessness by providing needed and safe shelter for individuals and families. It serves as a step in the transition from homelessness to permanent housing, offering a secure environment where people can access essential services and work to find long-term housing solutions.

Feedback from the Lived Experience Advisory Group and Magdalene Group research highlighted the importance of good quality, stable TA. Frequent moves between hostels, crash beds, and TA are unlikely to result in positive outcomes and underscores the need for consistent, supportive environments. Pet-friendly accommodation was also identified as a key engagement tool for rough sleepers.

² Family Connect is a Norfolk County Council IT system that brings together the information about children and families across the partnership, to understand what is happening in a child's household and spot when issues are developing.

As Councils, our preference would be for homelessness to be prevented before Temporary Accommodation (TA) is needed but we acknowledge there is a need for good quality TA. In recent years, the number of TA placements has grown hugely. Between April 2022 and July 2025, placements had increased from 44 households to 73 households for Broadland and from 39 households to 68 households for South Norfolk. To alleviate this, the Councils have embarked on an extensive project to acquire TA properties, ensuring that it is of a high quality, well located, and equipped to meet the needs of tenants. Additionally, by not being held by a private owner, it provides good value to the public purse.

Current examples:

A best in class temporary accommodation site opened in South Norfolk over the summer of 2024. Offering 27 self-contained flats, for single people and families. The site brought a former delapidated sheltered housing complex back into use and was extensively refurbished.

Located in a market town, it is close to local services, schools and transport links.

Supported Housing

Supported housing is vital because it offers more than just a place to stay; it provides a comprehensive support system tailored to the needs of vulnerable individuals across a range of different circumstances. This type of housing includes access to essential services such as mental health care, substance abuse treatment, and life skills training, which are crucial for helping residents achieve stability and independence.

By addressing the root causes of homelessness and providing ongoing support, supported housing helps individuals build a foundation for a better future. It also fosters a sense of community and belonging, reducing social isolation and promoting overall well-being.

As Councils we see the high demand for supported housing, this can mean that those with the most complex needs struggle to find placements. Funding pressures and uncertainty over the requirements of the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 may impact on the capacity for supported housing providers to grow or maintain their services.

Under this priority our actions are:

- 1) Increase and ensure effective use of the Councils own supply of Temporary Accommodation. Providing high quality accommodation with access to services and green spaces.
- 2) Where mandated, work with other local authorities on a supported housing needs assessment and strategy for Norfolk.
- 3) Seek appropriate sites for Homes of Multiple Occupation (HMO) accommodation to best support needs of rough sleepers.
- 4) Within the rough sleeper team, embed a pilot offering space for dogs to encourage uptake of accommodation and support offers.

- 5) Seek to extend our Housing First³ offer, providing dedicated housing and intensive support for people with experience of rough sleeping and those with complex needs.
- 6) Work in partnership with providers of supported housing for smooth transition of requirements under the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 if enacted.
- 7) Working in partnership to facilitate delivery of supported housing, for all levels of need.



³ Housing First' is a recovery-oriented approach to ending homelessness. It centres on the principle of moving people experiencing homelessness into independent and long-term housing. Intensive support is then wrapped around that person to help them to sustain their new home.

3. Housing Solutions

Why are Housing Solutions important?

A long-term sustainable home is the goal for all our customers. A range of solutions and tenure types need to be available to meet the different needs and circumstances of households. For the Councils, they are also crucial to either divert need for Temporary Accommodation or enable throughput of temporary, supported and specific rough sleeper accommodation.

Across our workshops, appropriate and affordable accommodation options were consistently cited as the main intervention to relieve homelessness. Looking at our evidence data review for type of accommodation secured when a duty (prevention, relief or a main homelessness duty) has ended, the trend shows this is predominantly social housing. Between 2021-2024, this has consistently averaged between 70-80% of outcomes across both Councils. In the financial year 2023-2024, the private rented sector accounted for less than 10% of outcomes on average. This corresponds with what we are seeing of difficulties securing private rented accommodation due to affordability and availability.

Responses to our public consultation prioritised support for domestic abuse victim-survivors and care leavers, reinforcing our focus on tailored housing solutions. This corresponds with changes in regulations in July 2025, removing the requirement for a local connection when accessing social housing for two vulnerable groups: care leavers under the age of 25 and victim-survivors of domestic abuse.

For those victim-survivors, this change will add to the positive measures introduced in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, which resulted in more victim-survivors making the decision to flee abusive relationships. In 2023/24, the number of approaches for help at the prevention stage are very small, only approx. 1%.

However, at the relief stage this increases to an average of 40% of the overall households approaching, with approximately 85% coming from out of area. These out of area moves can provide distance, safety and breathing space for victim-survivors to separate from the perpetrator, access support provision and consider their next steps.

The Councils also acknowledge for some households an out of area move is not the most advantageous option. For example, a council boundary does not equate to physical distance from a perpetrator. Similarly moving away from a home, support networks, schools and work can have a negative impact. It is vital that, when working with victim-survivors, the Council takes a person-led and risk considered approach. Supporting the victim-survivor to remain in their home or local area, where it has been wanted by them, and it is safe and appropriate for them to do so. This will involve working with partners including other local authorities to achieve this. One way to achieve this is through a Sanctuary Scheme, a victim-survivor led initiative, with Sanctuary trained officers assessing individual properties and installing suitable measures to improve security, such as new locks, security lights and alarms. In Broadland, in just over two years of operation 210 referrals had been received into the service. For South Norfolk, during the same period 228 referrals had been received.

Our public consultation cited the need for holistic support—covering mental health, employment, and tenancy sustainment. Feedback from the Lived Experience Advisory Group highlighted the importance of co-producing tenancy awareness courses and raised concerns about the long-term viability of the private rented sector.

The actions below aim to increase availability of different options that are suitable for a variety of circumstances. We also want to ensure these options are sustainable; bespoke move-on support with links to employability schemes will help to achieve this.

Current examples:

The Councils ran a scheme piloting a shared house model for two young people moving on from supported accommodation with a socially rented home offered by a Registered Provider.

Ultimately, the tenancies were not successful, however the Councils will take the lessons learnt from the project to refresh the offer and try again.

Under this priority our actions are:

- 1) Exploring incentives for downsizing for households in socially rented homes – freeing up larger homes.
- 2) Embed Sanctuary Schemes in Broadland and South Norfolk – implementing measures to ensure victim-survivors of domestic abuse can remain in their homes, where appropriate.
- 3) Work with other local authorities to support victim-survivors of domestic abuse to remain in their local areas where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

- 4) Foster programmes of move-on support to help sustain housing and promote employability, with bespoke versions for refugees and care leavers.
- 5) Research levels of host interest in a lodgings scheme.
- 6) Explore opportunities including direct intervention to increase access to the private rented sector.
- 7) Evaluate the shared housing pilot for single person households, use learning from the scheme to make recommendations for any future versions.
- 8) Develop a long-term programme of outcomes tracking in both homelessness and rough sleeping areas. Helping us to understand what works, when and for whom.



4. Systems and Collaboration

Why are systems and collaboration important?

Good systems of working and collaboration are crucial to stopping homelessness because they ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively. When we work together, we can identify the right support at the right time, sharing information appropriately and coordinating efforts. By pooling expertise and resources, a more robust safety net can be created, offering timely interventions and long-term solutions. Ultimately, a well-coordinated system fosters a more resilient community, where individuals are less likely to fall through the cracks and more likely to receive the help they need to achieve stable housing.

Current examples:

Pilot Project: Ending Rough Sleeping Assessment Tool (ERSAT)

The Councils are part of a group of forty local authorities participating in the pilot project from Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). It aims to assess the risk of entrenched rough sleeping for customers who are homeless with no apparent priority need and helps to identify appropriate actions including an unconditional accommodation offer for those with a very high risk score.

Both our workshops and public consultation responders highlighted the value of working with people with lived experience, not just in consultation but in co-designing services.

The session with the Shelter Lived Experience Advisory Group made a number of practical suggestions included trauma-informed training for all staff and quiet spaces in waiting areas – small changes that can improve engagement and outcomes. This matches feedback from our workshops, where feelings of stigma and exclusion can prevent people from accessing support, leading to worsening circumstances. An example of work that has been suggested to alleviate this is co-producing a guide to demystify the homelessness process.

Under this priority our actions are:

- 1) Improving pathways to prioritise customers accessing the service.
- 2) Making an offer of trauma informed training to reception staff.
- 3) Commence a programme of working with people with lived experience of homelessness to make sure our offer is right and meets needs, including a housing guide.
- 4) Have a best-in-class officer team, retaining and developing expertise, with proactive and people focused officers.
- 5) Work collaboratively with the People from Abroad Team to support our Ukrainian guests and refugees to integrate into their communities.
- 6) Support the wider No Homelessness in Norfolk partnership and be a collaborative partner in the Norfolk Domestic Abuse Partnership Board.

- 7) Work with the rough sleeper team and partners to bring street based mental health provision into the team.
- 8) Advocate for funding to make sure those with known vulnerabilities do not face any nights on the streets, and where no vulnerabilities are known, rough sleeping is limited to no more than 2 nights.
- 9) Embed the outcomes and findings of the Ending Rough Sleeping Assessment Tool (ERSAT) pilot project.
- 10) Work with Leaving Care teams to improve housing pathways for care leavers.

7. Delivery and Review

This strategy is underpinned by the action plan which captures the actions identified in this document and sets out dedicated milestones and clear accountability for each action and will include annual review points.

Reviews will be multi-stranded, reflecting the changing landscape of local government and external factors. It will also include data evaluation and peer workshops with partners.