

Homelessness Strategy 2014 – 2019



Brighton & Hove
City Council

Homelessness Strategy 2014 – 2019



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Introduction

Foreword by Councillor Bill Randall

I am pleased to introduce you to the Council's Homelessness Strategy 2014 – 2019. Brighton and Hove is in the middle of a perfect housing storm. House prices and private sector rents are rising rapidly to the point where both are beyond the pockets of many on modest incomes and housing associations are building very little affordable rented housing.

As a result, homelessness is rising in the city. The council's homelessness team dealt with 1,444 homeless applications in the last year, and the latest street homelessness count revealed that 132 people are sleeping rough on the streets of Brighton.

This Strategy is the culmination of a great deal of hard work by many people and seeks to set the agenda for the next five years - building on the years of experience of the many people who contribute to planning and service delivery to some of our most vulnerable residents.

Homelessness is not just a housing department issue. It is not just a council issue. It affects every council department, health, police and court services. Each year thousands of residents approach the council, voluntary and other public sector services, in need of advice to prevent homelessness or seek support to find an alternative home. Homelessness can affect anyone at any time and sometimes very unexpectedly.

This Strategy endorses the highly successful and well-developed prevention and partnership approach, recognising the city council cannot solve this problem on its own.

The next five years will be challenging. This Strategy seeks to adopt flexible ways of working together to ensure that we can deliver services that meet the needs of homeless people.

Chair of Housing Committee
Councillor Bill Randall

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Randall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Aim of the Strategy

The Homelessness Act

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires local authorities to carry out a review of homelessness and homelessness services in their area, and to formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on this review.

Brighton & Hove carried out a review of homeless and homelessness services in the area in 2013 and has carried out consultation - with a Homelessness Conference in December 2013 and an open consultation from January to April 2014.

Over the past 11 years, Brighton & Hove has developed two homelessness strategies and a number of theme related strategies covering youth homelessness, single homeless and temporary accommodation.

The Strategy aims to:

- Combine all of the theme related sub-strategies into one over-arching Homelessness Strategy covering the period 2014 – 2019.
- Integrate the City's Homelessness Strategy with the Sustainable Community Strategy and wider corporate and housing objectives - to place homelessness and prevention services at the centre of a strategic approach to reducing inequality, and to address housing need by providing support and access to settled homes.
- Continue to promote and improve partnership arrangements that have contributed to the success in preventing homelessness and, where this has not been possible, to provide services that meet the needs of homeless households to work towards independence.
- To build on our multi-agency approach and partnership approach to ensure holistic, seamless services that are accessible, timely, responsive, personalised, and tailored to the complex needs of homeless people.
- To mitigate, where possible, the effects of welfare reform and its impact on homeless households - developing integrated approaches to housing, skills and employment to enable the most vulnerable residents to participate in the City's economic success, widen their choice of housing options and provide real opportunities for social mobility.
- Work with City-wide partners to reduce offending and anti-social behaviour.

Local Strategic Principles and Priorities

Local Strategic Partnership

Brighton & Hove Connected (BHC) is Brighton & Hove's Local Strategic Partnership. It is the overarching strategic partnership for the City and provides a single local co-ordination framework within which other partnerships can operate. The BHC brings together the different parts of the public sector, as well as the private, business, community and voluntary sectors so that different initiatives and services support each other and work together. BHC is responsible for developing and driving the implementation of the [Sustainable Community Strategy](#) (SCS).

The Sustainable Community Strategy Brighton and Hove, The Connected City, has two principles:

- Increasing our equalities
- Improving our engagement

These are driven by six priorities:

- Economy
- Children and Young People
- Health and Wellbeing
- Community Safety and Resilience
- Environmental Sustainability
- Partnership Approach

Brighton & Hove City Council's Corporate Plan

The Council has defined four current priorities through the Corporate Plan. These describe our collective aspiration and the difference we want to make and are determined by the need to respond to the most pressing challenges facing the City and the organisation. They are:

- Tackling inequality
- Creating a more sustainable city
- Engaging people who live and work in the City
- Modernising the Council

Housing Department Priorities:

- Improving housing supply
- Improving housing quality
- Improving housing support

Links to National Policy Drivers

- Laying the Foundations. A Housing Strategy for England
- A Vision to End Rough Sleeping: No Second Night Out, 2011
- Making Every Contact Count, August 2012
- Social Justice Strategy: Transforming Lives, 2012
- The Cost of Homelessness, 2012
- Work It Out: Barriers to Employment for Homeless People
- Improving Hospital Discharge for Homeless People 2012, Homeless Link
- Herriot Watt University – Multiple Exclusion Homelessness Across the UK, December 2011
- The Statutory Homeless System in England: A Fair and Effective Rights Based Model, December 2011
- Allocation of Accommodation (Statutory Code of Guidance,) 2012
- Healthy Lives, Healthy People, Improving Outcomes and Supporting Transparency, 2012 DCLG
- Breaking the Cycle, Effective Punishment, Rehabilitation and Sentencing of Offenders 2012, Ministry of Justice
- Offenders Rehabilitation Act 2014
- Caring for our future (White Paper on future of social care 2012)
- Care Bill 2014 (will become the Care Act 2014)

HOMELESSNESS IN CONTEXT

Brighton and Hove has a population of 273,369 in 121,540 households. It is located between the sea and the South Downs, which is a newly created national park. The city is 53 miles from London, and is well known as a centre for the arts, new media and entertainment. There is a vibrant music scene, including both live bands and dance venues. It is also a much visited tourist destination, with beautiful architecture and interesting shops. However, Brighton & Hove is also one of the most deprived areas in the South East, and residents have a large variety of social issues and health and wellbeing issues that need to be addressed through services provided by the Council, the NHS and the community and voluntary sector.

For the Council homelessness is not just about housing those to whom it has a statutory duty to accommodate. The Council has range of duties and powers that range from giving advice and assistance to prevent homelessness on the one hand to providing accommodation to households that are considered vulnerable for one reason or another. These vulnerabilities range from having children in the household to some one being vulnerable as a result of pregnancy, age, mental or physical disability or have been institutionalised as a result of being in care, the forces or other institution.

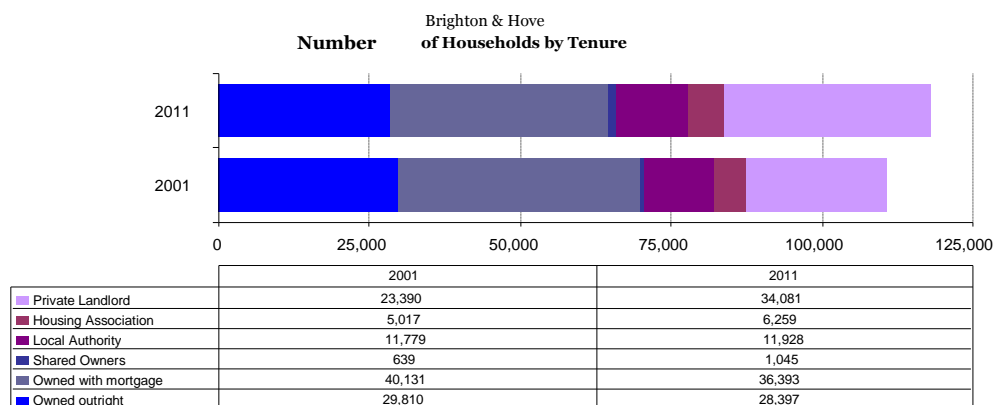
Homelessness is complex is not always limited to the duties and powers under housing legislation. As a Unitary Authority we work with our partners across the City to discharge other provisions such as the duties and powers under the Children's Act, Children Leaving Care Act, and National Assistance Act. Our partners here include Adult Social Care, Children's Services & Sussex Partnership NHS Trust.

We have a well established partnership approach in the City that has been developed over a number of years. We know that the Council and its other public sector partners cannot solve the issue of homelessness without working with our partners in the Voluntary and Private sectors. We want acknowledge the work of all of our partners in developing this strategy and providing much needed and valuable services to homeless people in the City.

Tenure

- The number of households has increased 6% since 2001 to 121,540.
- The size of the private rented sector has increased by 37% since 2001, with an extra 10,691 homes.
- Two out of every seven households in the city are now renting from a private landlord.
- Brighton & Hove has the ninth largest private rented sector in England & Wales with 34,081 homes (28%).
- The number of social rented homes has increased by 8% since 2001.
- We have a smaller proportion of social rented housing than the England & Wales average, but larger than the South East average.
- Brighton & Hove has a large student population occupying family-sized accommodation.

As can be seen above, the private rented sector has increased by 37% since 2001. This presents both threats and opportunities. Tenure in the private sector is governed by the Assured Tenancy regime and the majority of private sector tenancies in the City are shorthold, giving lower levels of security and mandatory possession at the end of the fixed term. Homelessness acceptances as a result of private sector evictions now account for the main reason for homelessness in the City.



2001 - Total Households in Brighton & Hove 114,479 2011 - Total Households in Brighton & Hove 121,540

Affordability of accommodation is a significant factor. With both high property prices and rents, this is likely to be a continuing factor over the lifetime of this strategy. The private rented market is not dependent on those on welfare benefits as there is high demand for people commuting to London to work and a high number of students in the City's two universities, which keeps rental prices in the City high.

Demand for social housing is high in the City. There are now more than 18,500 households on the Council's Housing Register - an increase of 85%

from 2007. There has been a noted decrease in the number of social letting in the City to around 500 a year. With a continued approach to prevent homelessness and promote access to the private rented sector and coupled with the allocation of 50% of properties to those who are working or positively contributing, this has resulted in an improved income mix amongst those entering social housing.

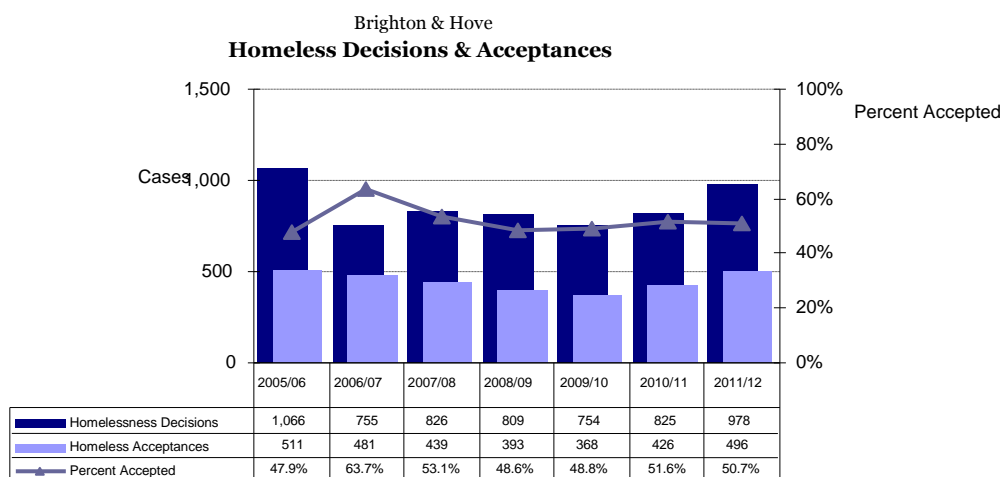
With such a small social housing sector with decreasing numbers of lettings the Council has acquired properties from the private rented sector and established Brighton and Hove Seaside Home to bridge the gap between supply and demand. Households in temporary accommodation decreased to 333 households in March 2010. Since this time there has been a 237% increase in the number of households accommodated. There are however low numbers of households living in bed and breakfast accommodation as the Council increases the number of properties leased to those that are owed a statutory housing duty. By providing leased properties of between five and ten years the council can offer some stability of families and others in temporary accommodation, which is often more stable than that offered in the private rented sector. In pursuing the acquisition of long term leased accommodation the Council has been able fulfil its statutory duty of not having households with children or someone pregnant for more than six weeks. Other Councils with similarly high levels of homelessness have not been able to do so, or have resorted to accommodating people substantial distances from their previous home.

The City has higher than average numbers of residents in contact with mental health services, with 59.2 per 1,000 against the English average of 33.1.

Drug and alcohol misuse is a continuing issue and there is a noted increase in the number of people with complex needs in the City.

Levels and Causes of Homelessness in Brighton and Hove

The Council carried out a review of homelessness using the statutory guidance of the Secretary of State to look at homelessness in the City over a five-year period from 2007 – 2012. The picture that emerges over this period is consistent with the national picture and can be seen as numbers of homeless approaches and acceptances dropping from 2007 to 2010 and then an increase in both approaches and acceptances from 2010 to-date.



Source: P1E

The reasons for homelessness are varied and complex. The Council monitors the presenting reason for homelessness as a way of understanding the underlying issues and how they can best be addressed.

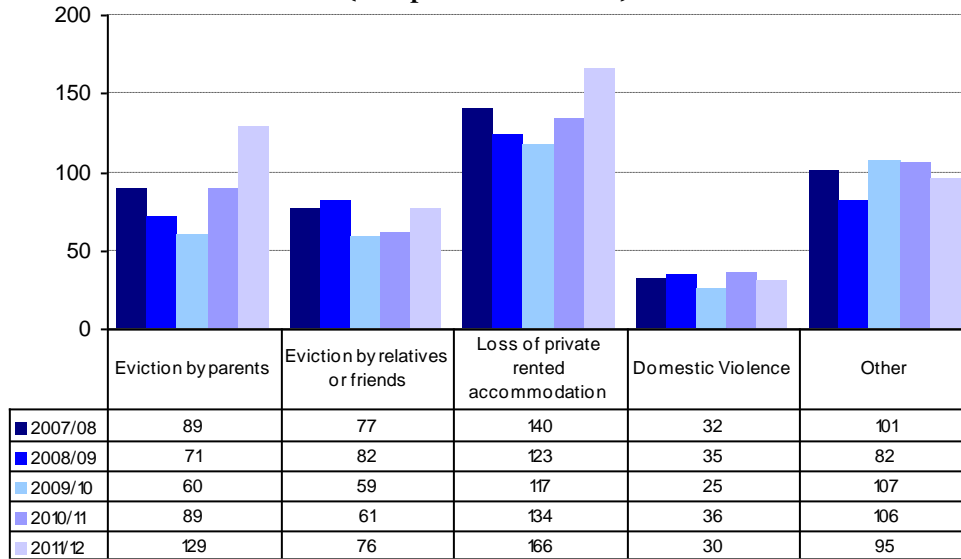
The three main causes of homelessness have remained consistent and are:

- Parental eviction
- Eviction by other family or friends
- Loss of private sector accommodation

The main change in the main reasons for homelessness is that the loss of private sector accommodation is now the primary reason for people presenting as homeless. This can be accounted for in the increased size of the private rented sector (37% increase since 2001) and the increased cost of renting in the City over the past five years, along with the impact of some of the welfare reforms that have been introduced over the past three years.

Source: P 1E

**Brighton & Hove
Reason for Homelessness
(accepted households)**



What has been achieved so far?

The delivery of Brighton & Hove’s Homelessness Strategy has seen a continuation of the prevention agenda for people in danger of losing their homes. The Council and its partners assist over 2,000 households to either sustain or find alternative accommodation in the City and surrounding areas.

The Council has assisted 1,000 households under the Deposit Guarantee Scheme to access private rented accommodation, where they have not had the resources to do so.

The Council has worked with the Housing Benefit Department to strategically align the Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) to prevent homelessness and mitigate the effects of welfare reform.

The Council has developed working protocols to ensure delayed discharge from hospital and other care settings is avoided.

The Council has worked with Adult Social Care to ensure timely assessments people discharged from Hospital in wheelchairs are assessed for services and move on accommodation.

The Council has worked with partners in Probation and HMP Lewes to assess remand and short-term offenders' housing needs, to prevent homelessness or find accommodation to avoid street homelessness and reduce re-offending.

The Council has continued to work in partnership to work with rough sleepers, building on the assertive outreach model with a balance of support and enforcement, adopting the No Second Night Out approach in the City and across the sub-region.

The Council has continued to work with partners working with young people, with joint assessments for all 16/17-year-olds and their parents, a joint protocol for young people leaving care and provision of a Youth Advice Hub for 16-25-year-olds.

The Council has acquired private sector properties to provide longer-term temporary accommodation to discharge our duty to accommodate homeless households, reducing the amount of accommodation with shared facilities, and not having households with children or a person who is pregnant for more than six weeks.

In partnership with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) we have commissioned 56 units of supported accommodation for people with complex mental health issues - including dual diagnosis.

Working with Brighton Housing Trust (BHT) we have opened up access to the drop in centre and floating support service for 300 people. This has reduced demands on statutory services and improved outcomes for service users.

Seventy people per year with learning disabilities presenting in housing crisis have had this resolved by maintaining current accommodation or finding suitable alternative independent accommodation.

We have commissioned a supported housing project for teenage parents working towards independence with better parenting skills.

Key Themes Moving Forward to 2019

Welfare Reform

A key objective of the Coalition Government's welfare reform programme is to ensure that the system is less complex, fairer and more affordable. There have already been a number of reforms in welfare assistance including:-

- The maximum number of bedrooms under size criteria is now restricted to four (from the previous five).
- The age restriction for single people claiming the shared room rate was raised from 25 to 35 years.
- Maximum weekly LHA rates have been set for one, two, three and four bed properties.
- LHA rates are now set at the 30th percentile of rents (down from the previous 50th percentile) and are set annually.
- A cap on the maximum amount a household can claim was introduced at £500 for families and £350 for single households.
- Social housing tenancies are subject to household size criterion.

The Government has signalled its intent to make further reductions in Government expenditure for the rest of this parliament and into the next. Although no announcements have been made, it is expected that the Department of Work and Pensions' budget will be reduced still further, which will ultimately be reflected in the amount of welfare support unemployed and low paid workers will receive.

Affordability

The cost of both owning and renting homes in the City is expected to rise in the City in the next five years. The rising cost of home ownership will mean that fewer households will be able to access homeownership in the City where costs are already high and unaffordable to most low and middle income households.

Similarly, rents in the private sector continue to rise and this rise is at a higher rate than the Local Housing Allowance that has been capped to 1% increases from 2012. This is likely to affect people's ability to access private rented accommodation and will also see a likely increase in low income working households not being able to afford to rent privately.

The number of people who are in multiple debt remains high in the City and this is often a contributory factor that households do not have the financial means to move from one property to another without some form of assistance.

Managing Resources

Resources available to the Council are increasingly under strain as the Government's financial settlement is reduced still further. The Council has saved £60 million over the past three years and will be a further expected reduction of between £20 and £25 million over the lifetime of this strategy.

The Council will have to increasingly look to innovative and new ways to commission and deliver services and look to alternative sources and new funding streams when, and if, they become available.

The Council will support its partners to bid for new resources where they can demonstrate that projects demonstrate that they are aligned with the Council's strategy and they fulfil the needs of service users in the City. This will build on recent successful funding awards from the Homeless Transitions Fund, to Equinox and Stonewall and the £9.2 Million Big Lottery Fund award to Brighton Housing Trust for its sub regional partnership **Fulfilling Lives: Supporting people with multiple needs** initiative. This programme will be delivered over the next 8 years bring together organisations that tackle the issues of homelessness, mental ill health, addiction and offending to improve the stability, confidence and capability of people who are affected by some or all of these issues, and to enable them to lead better lives.

It is recognised that quantifying the cost of homelessness to the Council and its partners is a difficult exercise. Establishing how much the Council and its partners save as a result of accommodating or providing housing related support is an area that needs further exploration. As a City we need to agree a methodology that looks at the risk factors and triggers of homelessness and differentiate between those costs that would have occurred in any event (the loss of accommodation due to substance misuse or mental health) to the cost savings of prevention and early intervention in these areas. This will seek to identify the true cost savings to Housing and its partners in Social Care, Health, Offender Management, Police and the Courts.

The Housing Department operates according to the principles set out in the Council's corporate statement on resource management. The financial strategy for the Homeless Strategy is also based upon the following principles:

- Investment decisions are targeted at the extent to which they contribute to the objectives and principles of the strategy - to produce outcomes that

meet the needs for people who are, homeless, insecurely housed or in housing need.

- Resource decisions are based on the agreed priorities and priority groups outlined in this strategy.
- A continued “whole systems” approach to planning and commissioning services. Managing risk with the aim of reducing budget pressures arising from high cost services across the City.

PREVENTION OF HOMELESSNESS & STATUTORY HOMELESSNESS

The Council is under a duty to provide advice and information about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness, free of charge, to any person in their district. This duty is carried out by the Council’s Housing Options Team based in Bartholomew House, Sussex Central YMCA, Brighton Housing Trust and a number of other voluntary sector agencies who may also advise on other issues.

The Council and its partner agencies monitor the number of people that it prevents from becoming homeless on a quarterly and this data is compiled and sent to Central Government on a quarterly basis (P1e) The Council and its partner agencies have maintained good levels of sustaining people in their existing tenancies or have found alternative accommodation in the social, private or support housing sectors. The approach is considered to be pivotal in managing demand for services in the City with 18,500 people on the Council’s Housing register and in excess of 500 households being accepted as homeless and owed a housing duty each year. Prevention of homelessness contributes to keeping these numbers lower than they would be without intervention and also contribute to keeping people from rough sleeping in the City.

The Council is also under a statutory duty to receive and assess homeless applications from any person that it believes is homeless or threatened with homelessness within 28 days. Government Guidance expects that most applications should be processed in a timely manner within a 33 working day period to allow applicants to know if their application is successful or otherwise. The Council is under a duty to notify the applicant in writing of this decision and any reasons that it has for not accepting a duty to the applicant.

There is a statutory right of review for applicants who receive an adverse decision. This review should be carried out within 56 days of the request. The final recourse an applicant has against the Council's decision is to the County Court. This is only available on a point of law.

The Council sees approximately 4,500 people a year and gives advice and assistance to help them resolve a housing problem that may lead to homelessness. Approximately 1,000 people receive a case prevention case work service and a further 1,000 people make a homeless application each year.

The Housing Options service work with our partners to maximise income, resolve housing benefit issues, works with landlords to resolve issues and works with other landlords to provide housing solutions that are affordable to meet the needs of the applicant.

PROVIDING TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

The Council is under a statutory duty to provide accommodation for an applicant if they are considered homeless and in one of the priority need categories. This duty can be extended if the Council is satisfied that that the person meets the criterion in Housing Acts, this extended duty last until the Council has discharged the accommodation duty.

Other Council departments also have accommodation duties, normally where the housing department does not accept a duty to accommodate. This may be to people who have no recourse to public funds due to their immigration status or other who may be covered by the National Assistance Act 1948.

It is considered good practice that as a unitary authority that the Council takes the lead in acquiring, leasing and managing properties that provide stable long term accommodation to meet the statutory needs of the whole Council.

The Council has procured a substantial number of properties from the private rented sector in order fulfil its legal obligation to accommodate people and where possible the Council aims to find accommodation located within the City

boundaries. This is becoming increasingly difficult to achieve, mainly due to the fact that private rented Market not reliant on the Council.

The Council has had to increasingly look to procuring accommodation out side of the City boundaries. Primarily these properties are procured in the Broad Market Rental Area (BRMA) which covers the surrounding areas of Shoreham, Peacehaven & Newhaven.

The Private rented stocks in these areas in limited and this may, over the lifetime of this strategy, mean that the Council has to look further afield to the BRMA's in Eastbourne, Worthing or further afield. The Council is mindful of the needs of people to remain as close to the City as possible but is also mindful of the needs to have self contained accommodation that is affordable to the individual households income. There are safeguards built into the process when allocating temporary accommodation. This includes a statutory review of the offer of accommodation.

OUR STRATEGY

Our Vision

We have always aimed to address homelessness in its broadest sense, using a range of powers and duties to prevent homelessness and provide accommodation - and not just for those that the Authority has a duty to secure accommodation for. The emphasis has always been to prevent homelessness in the first instance and look to provide alternative solutions where this fails.

Our vision for preventing and tackling homelessness in Brighton & Hove is:

To prevent homelessness through early intervention, and the timely provision of advice and support. When homelessness is unavoidable, to ensure that people receive appropriate housing, care and support, with a clear pathway towards living independently.

The Council consulted widely on the vision that was agreed in the previous Homeless Strategy 2008 – 2013 to see if there was a need to make any changes. The overwhelming consensus was that the vision remains strategically relevant moving forward to the next five years. This allows us to further embed the vision when carrying out activities, both within the Council and with our other statutory, voluntary and private sector partners.

Our Guiding Principles

To underpin our work we have an established set of guiding principles to tackle homelessness and address housing needs in the City.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. PREVENTION | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting life change through early supportive intervention and preventative action. |
| 2. INTEGRATION | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A lifelong, holistic approach. |
| 3. EMPOWERMENT | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A personalised service, with rights and responsibilities. |
| 4. ENGAGEMENT | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active community, service user and stakeholder engagement. |
| 5. SUSTAINABILITY | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing sustainable solutions that promote value for money and innovation and challenge underperformance. |
| 6. PARTNERSHIP | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote and develop partnership working across all sectors. |

Having consulted on our guiding principles there was again an overwhelming consensus that our existing guiding principles remain strategically relevant to the City. There is one addition to the guiding principles that has been included in this Strategy to acknowledge and underpin the vast amount of partnership work that is carried out across the City to prevent, support and resolve homelessness.

The Council acknowledges that it cannot resolve homelessness on its own. The City has developed a strategic partnership approach that has driven the homelessness agenda forward over the past eight years. The Council strongly

believes that this the correct approach going forward and can be demonstrated by

- The partnership working with rough sleepers including
 - Rough Sleepers and Street Services Team (CRI)
 - Rough Sleepers Day Centre First Base (BHT)
 - Sussex Police (Brighton Neighbourhood Police Team)
 - Housing Options (Brighton & Hove City Council)
 - St John's Ambulance
 - Community and Voluntary Sector Organisations
 - Faith based groups
 - Churches winter emergency Shelters
 - New Stein Mews Hostel
 - Voluntary Sector Accommodation providers

- The Sussex Homeless Outreach, Reconnection and Engagement (SHORE) Partnership This is a pan Sussex partnership of all local authorities in Sussex dealing with common issues that arise across the two counties with rough sleepers.

- Partnership working with Young People including
 - Housing Options (BHCC)
 - Sussex Central YMCA
 - Stopover
 - Sanctuary Housing (The Foyer)
 - Night stop Plus

- Partnership working on Hospital Discharge
 - Housing Options
 - Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
 - Adult Social Care
 - Royal Sussex University Hospital

These highlight just a few of the partnerships that are involved in dealing with the day to day issues of Homelessness in the City, they advise, support and accommodate some of the most vulnerable households in the City.

Prevention of Homelessness remains the focus of much of the work that is carried out in the City by the Council and its many partners. Prevention and early intervention is still seen, both locally and nationally, as the most effective way of dealing with homelessness. The Council and its partners have helped to prevent or find alternative accommodation for over 2,000 households each year. The Council concentrates on prevention for those who would be a priority for the Council to accommodate, Sussex Central operates a Youth Homeless Advice Service and Brighton Housing Trust operates a service of single homeless services for the over 25 age group.

Brighton Housing Trust has been successful in bringing in additional resources into the city in a number of funding bids, working in partnership with others. They have also shown innovation in bringing in converted shipping containers that house 35 individuals, who would not have alternative accommodation.

Our Strategic Objectives

1. Provide housing and support solutions that tackle homelessness and promote the health and well-being of vulnerable adults.
2. Develop 'whole families' housing and support solutions that tackle homelessness and promote the health and well-being of families and young people.
3. Develop access to settled homes.
4. Tackle homelessness amongst our communities of interest.
5. Provide integrated housing, support and employment solutions as a platform for social and economic inclusion.

Having consulted widely on our strategic objectives from the last strategy we learnt that, overwhelmingly, that the strategic objectives still remain relevant moving forward for the next five years. They along with our guiding principles give a strong message that we will prevent homelessness or provide support or accommodation solutions that meet people's needs.

Our Priority Groups and Issues

Rough Sleepers	Welfare Reform
Military Veterans & Serving Personnel	Discharge from hospital and other care settings
Young people 16 – 25	Accessing Health Services
People with Learning Disabilities & Autism	People living in Supported accommodation
People with Physical and Sensory Disability	People living in Temporary Accommodation
LGBT Community	BME Community
People with Substance Misuse issues	Violence against Women & Girls. Domestic Violence
People with Mental Health	Offenders
People who need housing and floating support	People who need support with Work and Learning

Homelessness is a complex issue. There are many drivers that may ultimately lead to homelessness and we know that some issues cross over from one issue to another. We do know, however, that the issues above are the main issues that drive requests for assistance and therefore the above groups are considered priority groups that require attention if we are to mitigate the effects of homelessness in the City.

A number of these groups have featured in previous strategies there are however new groups included in this strategy these include People with Autism, Military Veterans & Serving personnel and people affected by welfare reform.

UK Ministry of Defence formally defined the word “veteran” as a person who has served more than one day in any of the 3 services, together with his/her dependants. Often services are more restrictive when devising policy that affect Military Veteran. We want to ensure that Military Veterans and serving personnel receive services that reflect the formal definition and that we work in partnership with organisations that help us develop a better understand of the needs of this group and ensure that staff are adequately trained to meet these needs. This will become an increasing issue as the Armed Forces move from the traditional model to more reservists, many of whom will be based in the City.

We have expanded the definition in learning disability to include people on the Autism Spectrum, many who can live independently with the right support.

Welfare reform-

We know that welfare reform will continue for a number of years. The introduction of Universal Credit is planned to be rolled out nationally by 2017. Recent announcements in the Government's budget proposals will see a total cap on the welfare budget and there are expectation that welfare reform and budget reductions will potentially lead to a decrease in income for welfare recipients including the low waged.

There is already a challenging environment for people in receipt of benefits to obtain or sustain accommodation. The merger of in and out of work benefits into welfare reform may exacerbate people's ability to access accommodation. There are already large numbers of private landlords who will not accept people considered to be in receipt of DSS payments. If this were to continue with landlords refusing accommodation to people in receipt of Universal Credit this would see a lot of low income working households being denied access to accommodation as they will receive support with working tax credits and may receive support with housing cost.

A continued cap on rent rises for tenants when rents are rising has a potential to see more people struggle to pay their rent, the current 1% cap is far lower than the rent rises seen in the City.

The Council expects that in future years the Government will reduce funding to the Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) fund. This fund has been increased in the past few years to assist Councils to work with households affected by reductions in benefits to downsize or move to cheaper accommodation.

The CAP on individual household welfare support, currently at £26,000 for families or £18,500 for households without children affects the City especially as rents in the area are some of the highest in the Country outside of London. Any further reduction in the CAP or a mix of any of the above pose a risk for increased homelessness.

Our Strategic Outcomes

The outcomes below were the subject of consultation at the Homeless Conference on the consultation portal or listening to what people have told us. Each outcome is listed against the priority outcome and guiding principle and indicates the working group that will take the responsibility to take the action forward.

Rough Sleepers				
Group	Strategic Action	Strategic objective	Guiding Principle	Lead
Rough Sleepers	To embed the key principle of no second night out, to prevent those newly arrived to rough sleepers becoming entrenched.	1	1,2,3,4	Day and Street Services
Rough Sleepers	To support new and innovative approaches to dealing with rough sleeping that fill gaps in service provision.	1,2,4	2,3,4,6	Housing
Rough Sleepers	To develop and implement a housing and support commission strategy for rough sleepers and single homeless people.	1,4,5	2,3,4,5	Housing
Rough Sleepers	We want to improve our links with other regions and write a Reconnections Policy.	1,2,3	1,3,4,6	Housing and SHORE Partnership
Rough Sleepers	We want to continue to use evidence based interventions for the hardest to reach through the use of psychological interventions.	1,5	1,2,5	Housing
Rough Sleepers	Develop new approaches to deal with complex needs of entrenched rough sleepers.	1,3,5	1,2,5	Housing and Day and Street Services
Rough Sleepers	Learn from the Brighton Hospital Pathway and to embed good practice for people leaving hospital and to improve health outcomes.	1	1,2,5,6	Public Health & IPSWG
Rough Sleepers	We want to develop annual action plans with the Single Homeless Strategy Partnership for all 'working groups' so they can work on key strategic aims.	1- 6	3,4,5,6	Day and Street Services

Rough Sleepers	We want to continue to ensure that the Integrated Support Pathway continues to provide services that meet the housing and support needs of clients.	1,4,5	3,5	ISPWG
Rough Sleepers	We want to take a strategic lead in opening up the Private Rented Sector for single homeless people, by acquiring more properties and provide more services to help people access private housing.	1,2,3	1,3,5	Housing and partner organisations in prevention
Rough Sleepers	We want continue to improve service user involvement to ensure they are able to have a say in service design, development and delivery	1 - 6	4,5,6	Day and Street Services
Rough Sleepers	We want to continue to work with local health stakeholders to develop strategies for socially excluded groups.	1,2	2,6	Public Health

Accommodation Based Services				
Group	Strategic Action	Strategic objective	Guiding Principle	Lead
Accommodation based Services	We want to improve links between services so that people who need support can move easily from one service to another as their needs change.	1,4,5	1,3,5,6	ISPWG
Accommodation based Services	We want to support new and innovative approaches to dealing with 'revolving door' and complex needs people.	1,3,5	5,6	Housing
Accommodation based Services	We want to ensure where possible that services develop personalised responses that meet people's needs.	1,2,5	3,5	ISPWG
Accommodation based Services	We want to explore the potential for services to become psychologically informed environments.	1,5	3,5	Housing
Accommodation based Services	We want to develop and implement housing and support commission strategy for rough sleepers and single homeless	1,5	1,2,3,5	Housing

	people.			
Accommodation based Services	We want to develop annual action plans with the Single Homeless Strategy Partnership for all 'working groups' so they can work on key strategic aims.	1,5	2,3,4,5	ISPWG
Accommodation based Services	We want to learn and embed good practice from the Clinical Nurse Specialist Project.	1,5	5,6	ISPWG & Public Health
Accommodation based Services	We want to establish services that can meet a wide range of complex needs.	1,5	2,5	Housing
Accommodation based Services	We want to have the right balance of different kinds of services.	1,5	2,3,5	Housing
Accommodation based Services	We want to help people to move into homes in the private rented sector.	1,5	1,5	Integrated Support Pathway Working Group

Housing Related support				
Group	Strategic Action	Strategic objective	Guiding Principle	Lead
Housing Related Support	Ensure that we are able to deal with people in crisis situations timely and with appropriate support.	1,2,3,5	1	Integrated support pathway working group
Housing Related Support	To provide support to households in Temporary Accommodation to mitigate the effects of homelessness.	1,2,5	1,3,5	Housing
Housing Related Support	To make services available for people who are placed outside of the City when local accommodation is not available or not an option.	1,2,5	1,3	Housing
Housing Related	Ensure that young people are linked into support	2,5	1,3	Youth Homeless

Support	services that meet their needs.			Working Group
Housing Related Support	Ensure that support is available for people who have moved to independent living to establish themselves within their new homes and enable them to sustain their tenancies.	1,2,5	1,2,5	Integrated Support Pathway working group
Housing Related Support	To encourage peer to peer support groups wherever there is an identified need.	1,5	1,2	Working groups

Aim for BME community within the Homelessness Strategy is:

Our overall aim is to ensure that there are no barriers to the BME community accessing appropriate housing.

Aim for LGBT community within the Homelessness Strategy is:

Our overall aim is to plan and provide accessible, welcoming and safe housing and support services that are responsive to the needs of LGBT people and promote their health and well-being.

A re-occurring theme that was raised by our communities of interest is that staff in all services are trained appropriately in the needs of people that they are dealing with. This issue was not confined to just Council services, but across the statutory, voluntary and private sectors.

How we will reach these aims is

Communities of Interest				
Group	Strategic Action	Strategic objective	Guiding Principle	Lead
BME	To work with the BME Needs Assessment Steering Group.	4	1 - 6	Housing
BME	To implement any agreed recommendations	4	1 – 6	Housing

	from the BME Needs Assessment.			
BME	Ensure that private sector Landlords and letting agents are aware of the new provisions in the Immigration Act to avoid discrimination on BME communities.	4	1,3,4,5,6	Housing
BME	To link with the recommendations of the Gypsy and Travellers' Action Plan.	4	4,5,6	Housing
BME	To ensure that allocation to the permanent travellers' site includes homeless applicants.	4	1,2,3	Housing
Trans	Work with Trans Groups to provide guidance on gender appropriate guidance for supported accommodation	4	1,2,3	Housing
Trans	Produce guidance for private letting agents and landlords on protection for trans people	4	1	Housing
LGBT	Ensure that the assessment of homeless applications takes into account relevant issues for the LGBT community.	4	3,5	Housing
LGBT	Ensure that information is available to members of the LGBT community who wish to relocate to the City so that it is available for them to do in a planned way.	4	1,3,5	Housing
LGBT	Ensure that staff receive relevant training on homophobia, transphobia &	4	5	Housing

	biphobia.			
LGBT	Ensure that same sex domestic violence is treated in a sensitive manner and that discrimination does not occur.	4	1,2,3	Housing

Mental Health				
Group	Strategic Action	Strategic objective	Guiding Principle	Lead
	With our partners, help prevent homelessness for people with mental health issues.	1,2	1	Integrated support pathway working group
	Ensure that staff are adequately trained in mental health issues.	1,2	1,2,5	Housing
	To ensure that people with mental health problems have access to the services and support they require.	1,2	1,2,	Housing
	Ensure that services are working in a multi-agency approach to resolving housing difficulties.	1,2	2,5,6	Housing

Substance Misuse				
Group	Strategic Action	Strategic objective	Guiding Principle	Lead
	Ensure that support and treatment pathways are clear and accessible.	1,2	1,2,3,5	Working Groups
	Ensure that there is a multi agency approach to prevent homelessness by the provision of support.	1,2	1,3,5,6	Housing

	Provide accommodation that allows recovery and avoids relapse back into substance misuse.	1,2	1,2,3,5,6	Housing
	Review pathways for people who are unsuccessful in rehabilitation to avoid street homelessness.	1	1,3,5,6	Integrated support pathway
	To work with partners to reduce drug related deaths.	1,2	1,2,3,5,6	CCG

People with Disabilities and Health				
Group	Strategic Action	Strategic objective	Guiding Principle	Lead
Learning Disability & Autism	Provide a dedicated Options resource providing information and housing solutions that meet the needs of people with learning disabilities and autism.	1,2,3,	1,2,3,5,6	Housing & Adult Social Care
Learning Disability & Autism	To work with the Community Learning Disabilities Team in finding housing solutions for people that are ready to leave residential care.	1	1,2,3,5,6	Housing & Adult Social Care
Physical, Mental, Learning Disability & Autism	Continue to work with partners in Health and Social Care to provide timely discharge from acute and short- term health settings.	1	1,2,6	Housing, Health & Adult Social Care
Physical, Mental, Disability	To learn from the Brighton Hospital Pathway for single homeless and rough	1	1,3,5,6	Housing, CCG

	sleepers to reduce the use of emergency health services and achieve better health outcomes for this group			
Physical, Mental, Learning Disability & Autism	To work with Social Care services with move on plans for residents in residential care settings where residential care is no longer required.	1	2,3,5,6	Housing and Adult Social Care
Physical, Mental, Learning Disability & Autism	Work with Adult Social care to assess the needs of people in Temporary Accommodation to provide appropriate packages of care & avoid bed blocking in accessible temporary accommodation	1	2,3,5,6	Housing & Social Care

Housing Options & Temporary Accommodation				
Group	Strategic Action	Strategic objective	Guiding Principle	Lead
ALL	Provide online housing advice system to residents on a range of issues	1,2,4	1,2,3	Homeless Prevention Working Group
ALL	Role out online options to partners and across the city	1,2,4	1,2,5,6	Homeless Prevention Working Group
	Commence government's gold challenge in providing options services	1 – 6	1 - 6	Homeless Prevention Working Group
	Carry out a comprehensive cost benefit analysis with a methodology agreed by partner agencies of prevention and housing related support activity	1 - 6	5	Homeless Prevention Working Group

	Advise and support landlords in maintaining and managing properties to a high standard.	1,2	1,5	Homeless Prevention Working Group
	Ensure that legal requirement for placing households with children; where a person is pregnant; or 16/17-year-olds; do not exceed six weeks where there are shared facilities.	2	2	Housing
	Learn from pilot projects such as 'Smile to Live' in looking for innovative providers of Temporary Accommodation.	1,5	1,3,5	Housing
	To develop and ensure compliance with the Temporary Accommodation Framework Agreement.	1,2	5	Housing
	Audit and monitor all temporary and emergency accommodation stock - ensuring the maintenance of high standards of health and safety.	1,2	5	Housing
	Effectively manage repairs and health and safety through monitoring and inspections, and contract and performance management.	1,2	5	Housing
	Continue with corporate commissioning role by working with our internal partners to procure suitable accommodation to meet their requirements.	5	6,5	Housing
	Maximise income collection.	1,2,5	5,6	Housing

	Reduce void periods to ensure the efficient use of accommodation - including use of discretionary powers to accommodate non- statutory households (Localism Act).	1,2,5	5,6	Housing
	Increase participation in the Landlord Accreditation Scheme.	1,2	5,6	Homeless Prevention Working Group
	Increase the ability of households to access private rented sector accommodation.	1,2,3	1,2,3	Homeless Prevention Working Group
	Build contact with private landlords and letting agents to increase the provision of adapted properties across the City.	1,2,3	2,5,6	Housing
	Provide a client focused service to match people with suitable properties, including providing introductions, viewings and support.	1,2	2,3,5	Housing
	Continue the development and implementation of sub-regional working to maximise access to housing across the sub-region.	3	5,6	Housing

Military Veterans				
Group	Strategic Action	Strategic objective	Guiding Principle	Lead
Military Veterans	Work to ensure service providers are aware of the definition of Military Veterans under the Military	5	5,6	Civil Military Partnership Board

	Covenant.			
Military Veterans	Ensure that families of Military Veterans are included in Housing Policy and service provision.	5	2,3,5	Housing
Military Veterans	Ensure that staff are trained to identify the complex issues faced by Military Veterans.	1,2,4	1,5	Housing
Military Veterans	To work with local groups working with Military Veterans.	1,2	6	ALL
Military Veterans	Work on the information project for information and access to services for Military Veterans.	1,2	6	Housing
Severing Personnel	Work with Military and voluntary services to understand the needs of serving personnel in the territorial & reservists army	1,2,5	6	Homeless Prevention Working Group

Work & Learning				
Group	Strategic Action	Strategic objective	Guiding Principle	Lead
ALL	To develop and implement a housing and support commission strategy for rough sleepers and single homeless people.	1 – 6	5	Housing
ALL	We want to develop annual action plans with the Single Homeless Strategy Partnership for all 'working groups' so they can work on key strategic aims.	1 - 6	5,6	Work and Learning Working Group
ALL	As part of the Young Peoples'	2,5	5	Work and

	Housing and Support Pathway, work with Children's Services and service providers to support young people to engage in education, training or employment.			Learning Working Group
ALL	Improve links with JobCentre Work Programme providers to ensure the best opportunities for service users to progress into employment.	5	5	Work and Learning Working Group
ALL	Work with service providers to increase the numbers of homeless individuals accessing work and learning services.	5	5	Work and Learning Working Group
ALL	Ensure service users, service providers and external agencies working with the homeless are aware of the work and learning opportunities available within the City.	6	5	Work and Learning Working Group
ALL	Seek to support providers to develop strong links with the local business and community organisations.	6	5	Work and Learning Working Group
ALL	We want to continue to map work and learning opportunities across the city and seek to find innovative solutions to barriers and gaps in provision.	5	5	Work and Learning Working Group
ALL	Continue to carry out basic skills assessments on all new arrivals in hostel accommodation.	1,5	5	Work and Learning Working Group

ALL	Support individuals to enter and sustain employment through welfare benefits support and financial advice.	1,2,5	5	Work and Learning Working Group
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Youth Homelessness				
Group	Strategic Action	Strategic Objective	Guiding Principle	Lead
Youth	Promote the approach that young people should be supported to remain in the family home.	2	1,2	Youth Homeless Working Group
Youth	Carry out joint needs assessment for all 16/17-year-olds.	2	1,6	Youth Homeless Working Group
Youth	To support new and innovate approaches to dealing with youth homeless that fills gaps in service provision	2	1,3,5	Youth Homeless Working Group
Youth	Continue to develop and implement a young people's housing and support commissioning strategy.	2	5	Youth Homeless Working Group
Youth	We want to develop annual action plans with the Youth Homelessness Working Group so they can work on key strategic aims that remain relevant for the lifetime of the strategy.	2	1 - 6	Youth Homeless Working Group
Youth	We want to continue to ensure that accommodation and support service continue to provide services that meet the housing and support needs of clients.	2,5	2,3,5	Youth Homeless Working Group
Youth	We want continue to improve service user involvement to ensure they are able to have a say in service design, development and delivery.	2	4,5	Youth Homeless Working Group

Reducing Reoffending and Community Safety				
Group	Strategic Action	Strategic objective	Guiding Principle	Lead
Offenders	To continue to work with the local Reducing Offending Board to provide initiatives that support people not to reoffend.	1	1,3	Reducing Re-offending Board
Offenders	To work with local prison services such as HMP Lewes and HMP Bronzefield who look to resettle offenders back into the local community.	1	1,2,3	Reducing Re-offending Board
Offenders	To work in a multi-agency approach to avoid offenders being released from prison to street homelessness.	1	6,2,3	Day and Street services
Offenders	To work with services to reconnect families, where appropriate.	2	1,5,6	Reducing Re-offending Board
Offenders	Look to work with partners on accommodation options in Court Diversion Scheme.	1,2	6,1,3,5	Reducing Re-offending Board
Offenders	Work with MAPPA to look at ways of accommodating offenders to protect public safety.	1	1,5,6	Reducing Re-offending Board

Developing the new Homelessness Strategy.

The City has had a well developed strategic approach to preventing and tackling homelessness for over a decade. Strategies and partnerships were developed before legislation required the City to do so.

In the past five years we have further developed our strategic and partnership approach, listening on the way to people who run and use services. We have developed this Strategy, starting with the Homelessness Review and this was followed by a major homelessness conference and a three month consultation on the Council's consultation portal. Meetings were held on request by groups to consider specific issues and needs.

The Strategy is aligned with a number of other strategies and policies, including:

- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)
- Travellers' Strategy
- Tenancy Strategy

We have incorporated a number of sub-strategies into the Homeless Strategy to give a more cohesive strategic approach, allowing us to adopt action plans on an annual basis that are aligned with the vision, guiding principles and objectives, but allow us to respond to an increasingly challenging and complex work load in economically challenging times. These are:

- Single Homeless Strategy
- Temporary Accommodation Strategy
- Youth Homeless Strategy

What we have learnt Through Consultation

We have learnt that in general the Council's strategic approach is the correct one and overwhelmingly we are told that preventing homelessness should be high on the list of priorities. Sustaining people's accommodation is the most cost effective method of prevention and finding alternative housing solutions within the private sector also allows people some choice in where they live.

We continue to hear, and acknowledge, that homelessness can only be tackled if we continue to work together in partnerships across the sectors, using health professionals and teachers to spot the early signs of homelessness for example, to be accessible to the general public to report people that are rough sleeping who may be in need of services and support.

We have carried out a health needs audit of homeless and insecurely housed people and have learnt that we need to have closer working links with the

Clinical Commissioning Group, to ensure that health inequalities are reduced for some of the most vulnerable people in the City.

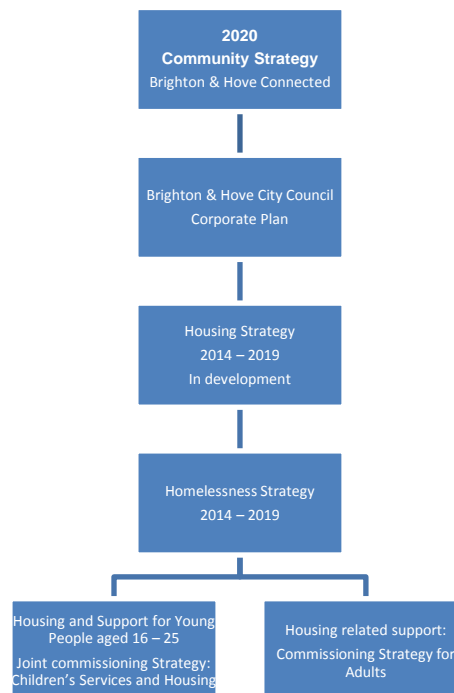
Delivering the Strategy

Embedding the Homelessness Strategy within the Citywide Housing Strategy 2015 -2020

This Strategy will be embedded within the overarching Housing Strategy 2015 -20, with the aim of delivering mixed and cohesive communities.

The Housing Strategy’s overall priorities are:

- **Improving housing supply** - making sure that the City has the right type of housing to meets the needs of residents.
- **Improving housing quality** - making sure that residents are able to live in decent homes suitable for their needs.
- **Improving housing support** - making sure residents are supported to maintain their independence.



To enable us to deliver the Homelessness Strategy we are working on commissioning strategies for young people and adults. These strategies will

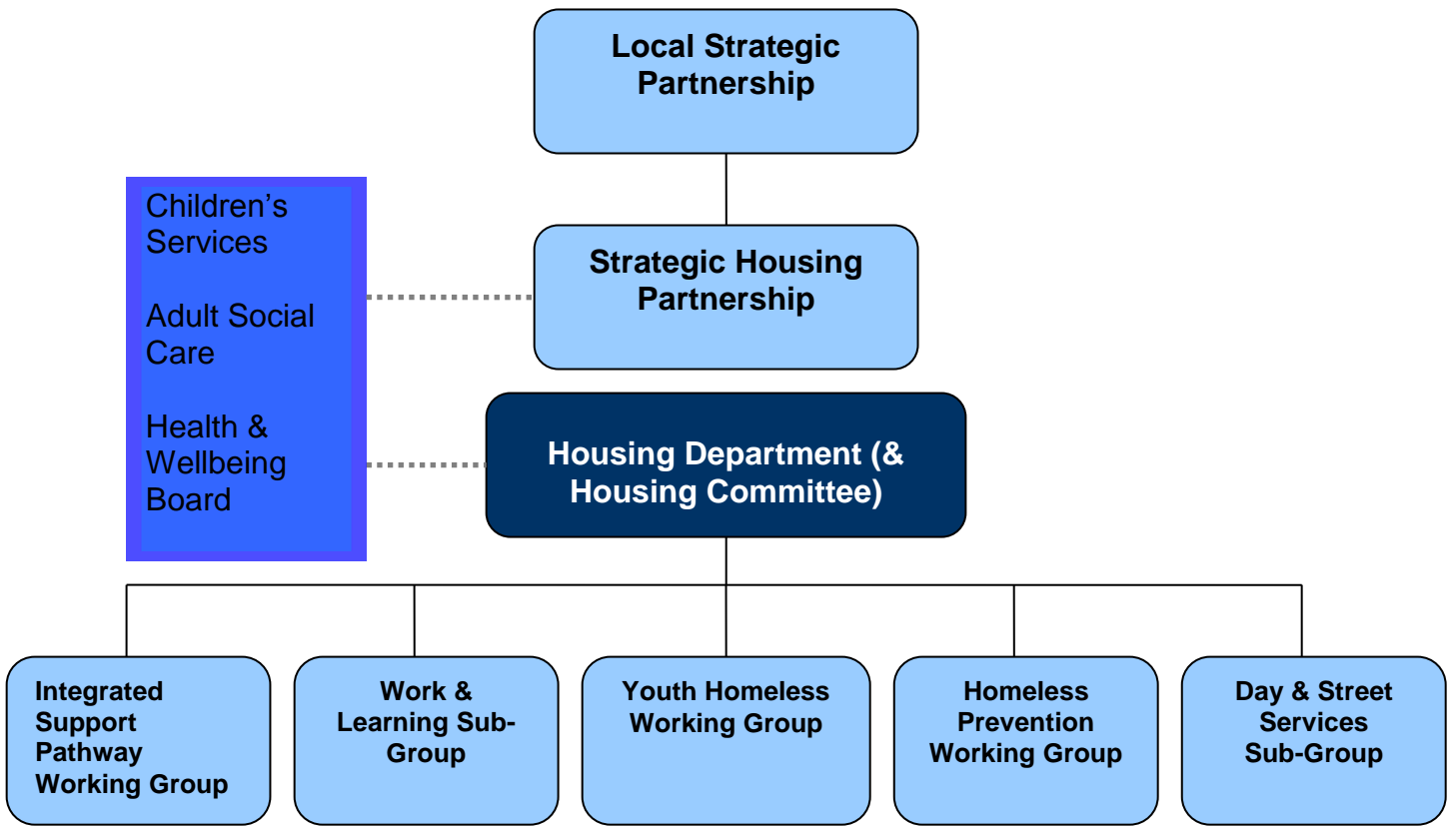
work within the objectives of the Homeless Strategy and look to further develop and promote partnership working to meet the needs of homeless people in the City.

Monitoring and Review

The Council and its partners are committed to working together to achieve better outcomes for homeless people. This strategy has been developed by the Strategic Housing Partnership in consultation with the wider community. There are five working groups that oversee the day-to-day activities with a remit to take the strategic actions and develop a detailed plan on how the strategy will be implemented. These groups will produce an annual plan that will be presented to the Strategic Housing Partnership on what has been achieved and any necessary actions that are required in light of an ever-changing and challenging environment.

The working groups above comprise representation from Housing and other Council departments along with partners from Health, Mental Health, probation, police, Voluntary and community organisations and faith groups. Membership of these groups is open to any organisation that provides services to or has an interest in tackling the homelessness in our city. These groups are there to take forward this strategy and devise action plans. They meet on a bi-monthly basis and to monitor the work programme and to also bring emerging issues to attention of other members of the group and the Council so that we can take action to address these emerging issues. They also act as a communication point between organisations to keep up to date on service activities new initiatives and can act as a conduit to pass down intelligence on potential new funding streams that become available.

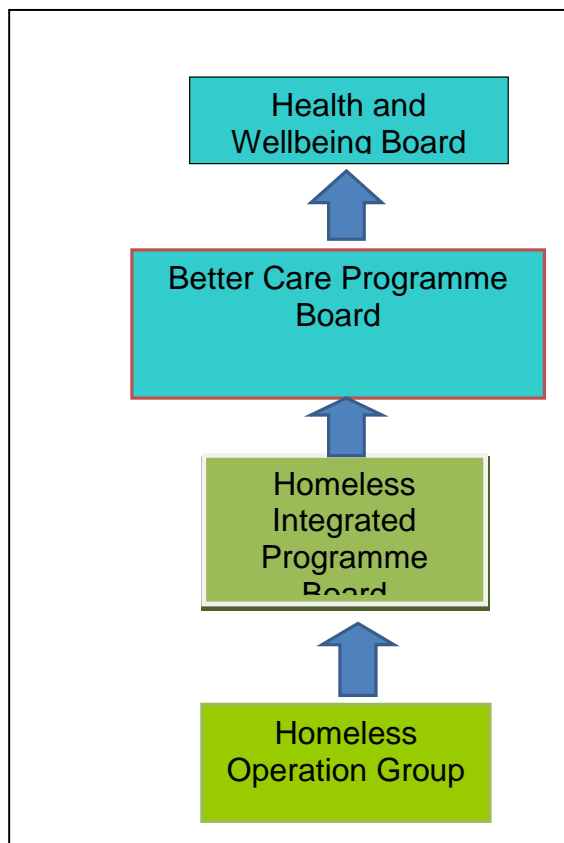
Some actions are strategically aligned to other strategies where Housing is an active participant and these actions will be taken to these groups to take them forward. These include the Violence Against Women and Girls (DV) and Reducing Re-Offending Board. Progress on actions that are worked in partnership with others will also be monitored on an annual basis.



The Health and wellbeing of homeless people is seen as an integral part of the city's strategic approach in mitigating the effects of homelessness. Some of our most vulnerable individuals, often with a combination of physical ill-health with mental illness and substance misuse (drug and alcohol), complex health needs and premature death. Homeless people are more likely to use A&E, spend time in hospital and to be heavy users of mental health and substance misuse services. Despite some beacons of good local practice and innovation there has never been a strong enough focus on a multi-agency personalised joined up approach in the City

Brighton and Hove CCG, in partnership with the City Council, Public Health, the Third Sector, Primary Care, Community Healthcare, Mental Health and Substance Misuse Services and Secondary Healthcare providers are keen to pioneer a person centred model of health, social care and housing support to homeless people in the City. This approach was endorsed by the Health and Wellbeing Board in June 2013.

In order to strengthen the approach a Homeless Integrated Programme Board was established in March 2014, reporting to the Better Care Programme Board, including representation from health, social care, housing, community safety, police and the community & voluntary sector The Better Care Board reports into the Health and Wellbeing Board



The governance in this area is emerging to ensure that the focus can achieve better health outcomes for homeless people.

Appendix 2 List of organisations that attended the Homeless Consultation	
Age UK Brighton & Hove	Justlife
Antifreeze	LGBT Switchboard
Autism Sussex	MIND in Brighton & Hove
B&H Clinical Commissioning Group	MindOut LGB&T Mental Health Project
Basics Bank	NHS - Foundation Trust
BHT - Central Management	Off the fence
BHT - First Base Day Centre	Off The Fence Trust
BHT - Mental Health Homeless Team	Rethink
BHT - Phase One Project	Rise
BHT - Route One Project	RISE (Refuge, Information, Support and Education)
BHT - Support 4 Housing	Riverside
Black and Minority Ethnic Community Partnership (BMECP)	Rough Sleepers Helpline
BMECP	Salvation Army
Brighton & Hove Churches Night Shelter	Sex Worker's Outreach Project (SWOP)
Brighton and Hove Foyer	SHORE
Brighton Homeless Healthcare	Southdown Housing Association
Brighton Oasis Project	Southern Housing Group
Brighton Station Health Centre	St Basil's
Brighton YMCA	St John Ambulance - Brighton Homeless Service
BHCC Housing Options	St John's Ambulance
BHCC Temporary Accommodation	St Luke's Advice Service
BHCC Credit Control	St Mary Magdalen Soup Run
Business Action on Homelessness	St Patrick's Hostel
Carers Link Group (Carers Centre)	St Peter's Brighton
Churches Night shelter	St Peter's Safe haven
City Coast Trust	St. Anne's Day Centre & Souprun Brighton
Clock Tower Sanctuary (Brighton)	Stopover - Impact Initiatives
Community Mental Health Centre (Sussex Partnership NHS)	Supported Housing
Counselling, Mediation and Family Services	Surrey & Sussex Probation Trust
CRI	Sussex Beacon
Crime Reduction Initiatives (CRI)	Sussex Central YMCA
Diocese of Chichester	Sussex Nightstop Plus
Emmaus Brighton & Hove	Sussex Oak leaf
Equinox Brighton	Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
Equinox Central Office	Sussex Police
Family Mosaic	Terrence Higgins Trust
Fed on Line	The Big Issue
Friends Centre	The Clock tower Sanctuary
Friends First Drop-in	The Fed Online

Friends First Trust (Supported House)	West Pier Project
Homeless Link	Youth Advice Centre (YAC) - Hove
In Touch Support	
Inspire	