

# Derbyshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

2022 – 2027



**Derbyshire  
Homelessness  
Officers Group**



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# Foreword

## Stronger Together

**I am delighted to introduce Derbyshire's first ever countywide Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. This strategy marks a pinnacle moment in our approach to tackling homelessness, signalling a multi-agency collaborative approach, recognising that we are stronger together.**

The reasons that lead to homelessness are multiple and often extremely complex. Many people have needs that extend beyond the basic need for a home and impact on their health and wellbeing. It is not possible for Local Housing Authorities to meet those needs in isolation, but rather a successful strategic approach to preventing homelessness is dependent upon a coordinated multi-agency response, ensuring that the right advice and support is given at the right time, with opportunities for early intervention and promotion of wellbeing being prioritised wherever possible.

Partners in Derbyshire face considerable challenges in responding to homelessness and rough sleeping, set against a backdrop of the global pandemic, increases in the cost of living and an increasingly unaffordable housing market.

The multi-agency response to protecting people experiencing homelessness during the pandemic shows what can be achieved when we work together. The close collaboration between district and borough councils, our partners at Derbyshire County Council, the NHS, criminal justice system and the Health & Wellbeing board proved what can be achieved when we work together and the driving force behind this strategy is to ensure that this new way of working remains the new normal.

Derbyshire's Homelessness Strategy builds on the work during COVID-19 by further preventing people from experiencing homelessness in the first place and helping people who are experiencing homelessness build a more positive healthier future.



The vision is simple -  
***“Working collaboratively across Derbyshire to prevent and reduce homelessness – making it everyone’s responsibility.”***

This Strategy reflects our strong shared commitment to realising this vision.

Meeting these challenges requires a radical change in how everyone works; simply carrying on as before will not deliver the reduction in homelessness and rough sleeping that needs to be achieved.

This is an exciting time with opportunities to transform our approach to tackling homelessness and ending the need for anyone to sleep rough.



**Dean Wallace**  
*Director of Public Health for Derbyshire*



## Group Members



**Cllr Paul Hillier**

*Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing & Public Health, Amber Valley Borough Council*



**Cllr Paul Maginnis**

*Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing, Erewash Borough Council*



**Cllr Sandra Peake**

*Portfolio Holder – Housing, Bolsover District Council*



**Cllr Fiona Sloman**

*Executive Councillor for Housing & Licensing, High Peak Borough Council*



**Cllr Christine Ludlow**

*Cabinet Minister for Housing, Chesterfield Borough Council*



**Cllr Carolyn Renwick**

*Cabinet Member for Housing & Community Safety, North East Derbyshire District Council*



**Cllr Chris Furness**

*Chair of Community and Environment, Derbyshire Dales District Council*



**Cllr Gordon Rhind**

*Chair of Housing & Community Service Committee, South Derbyshire District Council*



**Derbyshire  
Homelessness  
Officers Group**

We are excited to be able to adopt such an ambitious Countywide Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy and are committed to working in partnership across the County to transform our response to homelessness.



# Introduction

**This is Derbyshire's first Countywide Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and signifies a transformation in our response to homelessness. Through this strategy we want to ensure a whole system approach whereby homelessness is everyone's responsibility. The development of this strategy has been commissioned by the eight district and borough Councils to ensure a collaborative and innovative approach to transforming our response to homelessness.**

This strategy has been developed at a time of significant pressures – including the recovery from the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, the largest increases in the cost of living witnessed in 10 years, and inflation at the highest level in 40 years. This is set against a backdrop of an increasingly unaffordable housing market and national increases in homelessness levels. The challenges we are facing are significant – and that is why it is more imperative than ever to have a strategic countywide response to tackling homelessness across Derbyshire.

It is widely recognised that homelessness, in its causes and consequences, is a cross-cutting issue, which cannot be tackled by one agency alone. In order to effectively prevent and respond to homelessness it is essential that all partner agencies work collaboratively together in an integrated way to both address the underlying causes that have led to homelessness, but also develop a system that meets the needs of this, often vulnerable, client group in a coordinated way.

The homelessness response to the COVID-19 pandemic has seen a collective partnership approach to protecting the most vulnerable members of our communities. Through our response to the pandemic we have demonstrated what working together can achieve and there is strong evidence to show that our actions have saved lives and prevented hospital and intensive care admissions.

This unprecedented challenge has led to creativity, innovation, improved partnership working, and a wider recognition of the intrinsic link between homelessness and health. Through a co-ordinated approach to service delivery we have witnessed



improved outcomes for some of our clients with long and complex histories of homelessness.

Through this strategy we want to build upon this collaborative approach and create a new normal that breaks down current blockages within the system, ensuring a multi-disciplinary approach designed around the needs of customers.

We now have a unique opportunity to ensure that systems change permanently. Through this strategy we want to ensure that there is a legacy; changing the way homelessness and wider services are designed, commissioned, and delivered across Derbyshire.

This strategy also provides a platform to work in partnership to meet the complex and multiple needs that some individuals experiencing homelessness present with – over recent years we have witnessed a stark increase in the complexity of need that people are presenting with. The solution to homelessness is rarely ever just a home and through the implementation of this strategy we will develop a multi-disciplinary approach that seeks to address the underlying causes of homelessness and the wider support needs that people experience, alongside developing clear pathways between services.

This strategy sets out a clear and ambitious plan to transform our response to homelessness and has been developed through close collaboration between the Derbyshire Homelessness Officer's Group (DHOG), Derbyshire County Council, Public Health, NHS, Police, Probation, and a wide range of partner agencies.

The success of its delivery will rest upon the ongoing commitment of all of these organisations to meet our vision, and to ensure that homelessness is everyone's responsibility and the response that we saw during the pandemic becomes the new normal.

Whilst the ambitions of this Strategy are to collaborate to ensure consistent and high quality provision to meet the needs of the people of Derbyshire, there will still be a need for individual local authorities to undertake localised projects to meet the individual needs of their specific communities.

## Building on Success: Derbyshire Homelessness Officers Group

Derbyshire Homelessness Officers Group's (DHOG) purpose is to promote homelessness reduction and prevention through strategic leadership and the development and commissioning of improved and integrated homelessness services in the County. DHOG's mission is to make homelessness, and the causes of homelessness, everyone's responsibility.

DHOG is made up of homeless leads from the 9 District and Borough Authorities (including Staffordshire Moorlands), together with representatives from Public Health and Derbyshire County Council.

DHOG recognises that this Strategy sets out an ambitious plan and vision for tackling homelessness over the next five years, and to successfully deliver this will require significant commitment from all of the Local Authorities and our key partners. However this strategy is built upon a successful partnership, which has a unique reputation for getting things done, and bringing about collaboration and change.

The response to the pandemic has crystallised the impact that a joint and collaborative approach can have, and the combined effort of all DHOG partners ultimately saved lives. Our response included:

- Jointly commissioning the use of a local hotel to provide emergency accommodation.
- Securing match funding of £86,000 from Derbyshire County Council in order to pool COVID-19 emergency funds to enable a collaborative approach.





- Bringing together partners from the NHS, public health, adult social care, police, substance misuse services and the charitable sector to provide support to those accommodated as part of the crisis response.
- Establishing a 'Keeping Everyone In Service' (KEIS) to continue to provide accommodation and support to clients with severe and multiple deprivation, securing funding from a wide range of partners.
- Development of the Mount Cook Winter provision to provide emergency cold weather provision, with multi-agency support available on site.

Other achievements and successes of DHOG include:

- Derbyshire Move-on support protocol.
- Joint commissioning on an integrated ICT solution to meet the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- Co-ordination of rough sleeper counts across Derbyshire and Staffordshire Moorlands.
- Successful Rough Sleeper Initiative funding bid to provide outreach services across Derbyshire.
- Joint commissioning of a countywide out of hours service
- Joint commissioning of Call B4U Serve to prevent homelessness from the private rented sector



- These achievements provide us with a solid platform of collaboration to meet the ambitions set out in this strategy.
- Effective and successful partnership established with the Derbyshire Law Centre to deliver the Homelessness Prevention and Court Desk liaison services.

These achievements provide us with a solid platform of collaboration to meet the ambitions set out in this strategy.



# Our Vision

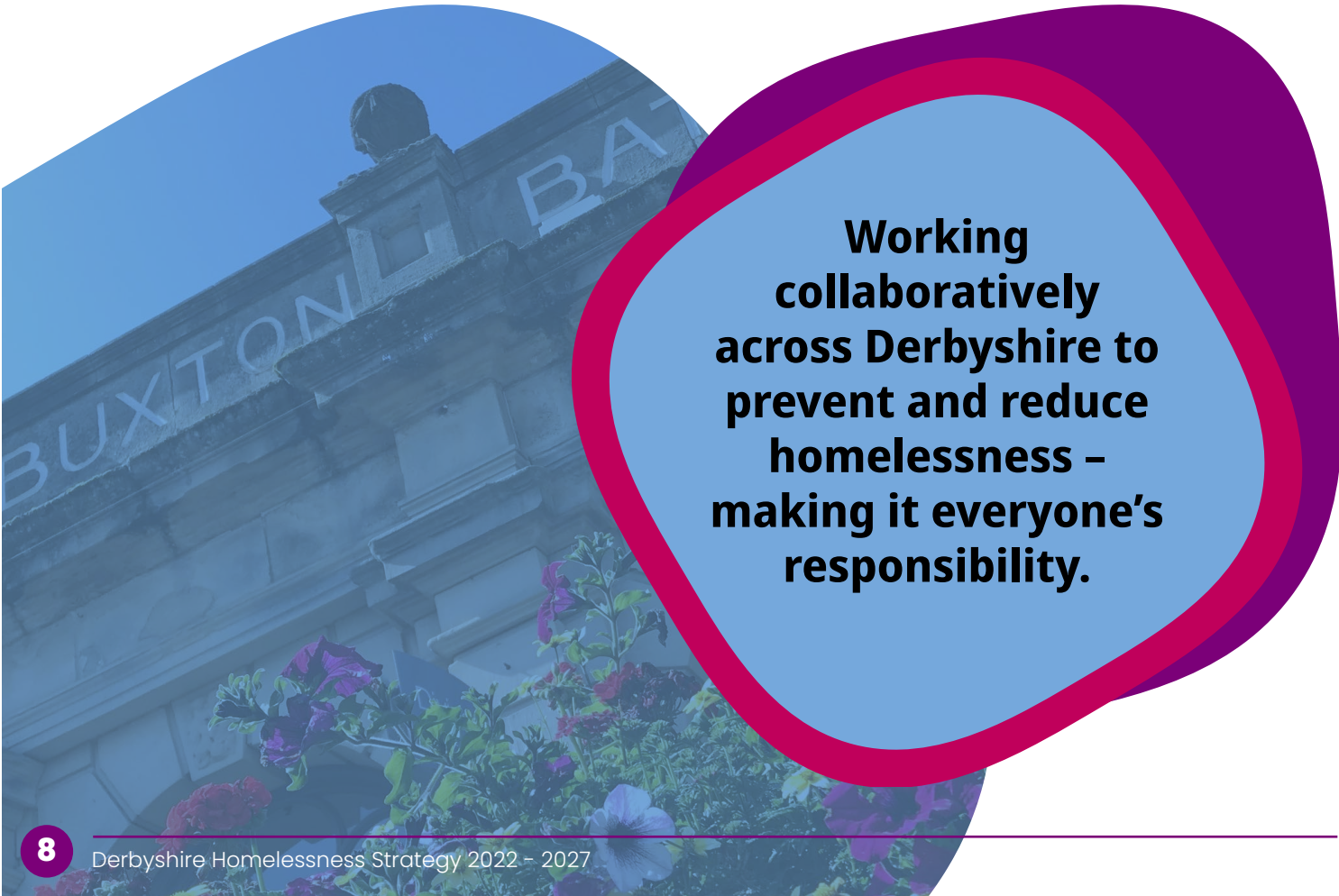
## Our Vision for Homelessness across Derbyshire

We recognise that while each district and borough is unique, many of the challenges we face in tackling homelessness are common across the whole of Derbyshire, and therefore this Strategy provides us with a platform upon which to transform homelessness services across Derbyshire. We recognise that the impact that we have when we work together is greater and we can achieve more. Together we are stronger.

Through this Strategy we aim to:

- Create, share, and replicate best practice and innovation in responses to homelessness and its prevention across Derbyshire.

- Commission and develop joint services and improve collaboration wherever possible.
- Prevent homelessness across the whole system by intervening earlier and developing individual solutions.
- Respond to homelessness by ensuring individuals have prompt access to homes and tailored support.
- Secure system wide transformation of all services in recognition that homelessness is everyone's responsibility.
- Increase the range of affordable housing options available across the County.
- Develop a better understanding of the causes of homelessness through improved data capture across the sub region.



**Working collaboratively across Derbyshire to prevent and reduce homelessness – making it everyone's responsibility.**



# Meeting our vision

## Transforming our Approach

This Strategy sets out an ambitious plan for transforming our response to homelessness across the County. The scale and complexity of the challenges that face the partnership over the lifetime of this strategy cannot be underestimated; these challenges include the recovery from the pandemic, high increases in the cost of living, national increases in homelessness and rough sleeping, and pressures on budgets – set against an increasingly unaffordable housing market.

Through the delivery of the Strategy we will continue to work closely with partners to develop a new approach to responding to homelessness that focuses on preventing homelessness at the earliest opportunity, while providing rapid housing responses to those that need them. We will work to embed homelessness prevention approaches across all public services.



To meet the vision and aims of the strategy there is a need to transform service delivery through the following principles:

### Collaboration

A collaborative partnership approach is fundamental to being able to effectively tackle homelessness. This Strategy is a multi-agency document and has been developed with partners to tackle the underlying causes of homelessness, create effective pathways out of homelessness, and design out system blockages.





## Making homelessness everyone's responsibility

We are clear that all agencies have a responsibility to prevent homelessness. We will work with partners and local communities to ensure that the factors that lead to homelessness can be better understood and identified, with effective pathways into preventative services in place, and clear and accessible referral mechanisms. We aim to embed this approach across Derbyshire, significantly reducing crisis presentations and ensuring effective homelessness prevention interventions, partnerships and pathways are in place.

## A personalised approach

We recognise that people experiencing homelessness are individuals and have different and unique circumstances and needs. Through this Strategy we intend to deliver solutions that are tailored to the individual needs of people. Our approach is to recognise the strengths and assets that individuals have, and we will build upon these strengths, empowering individuals, and ensuring a trauma informed approach across all key services.

## Strategic Priorities

This Strategy will meet the vision and aims through the delivery of 4 clear priorities:

### 1. Make homelessness everyone's responsibility through a system wide approach

- Secure System-wide commitment to transform services in recognition that homelessness is everyone's responsibility.
- Embed homeless prevention across public services.

### 2. Prevent and respond to homelessness through early intervention and personalised solutions

- Intervene earlier to ensure opportunities for homeless prevention are maximised with effective and targeted tools in place.
- Promote customer choice in developing bespoke housing solutions.





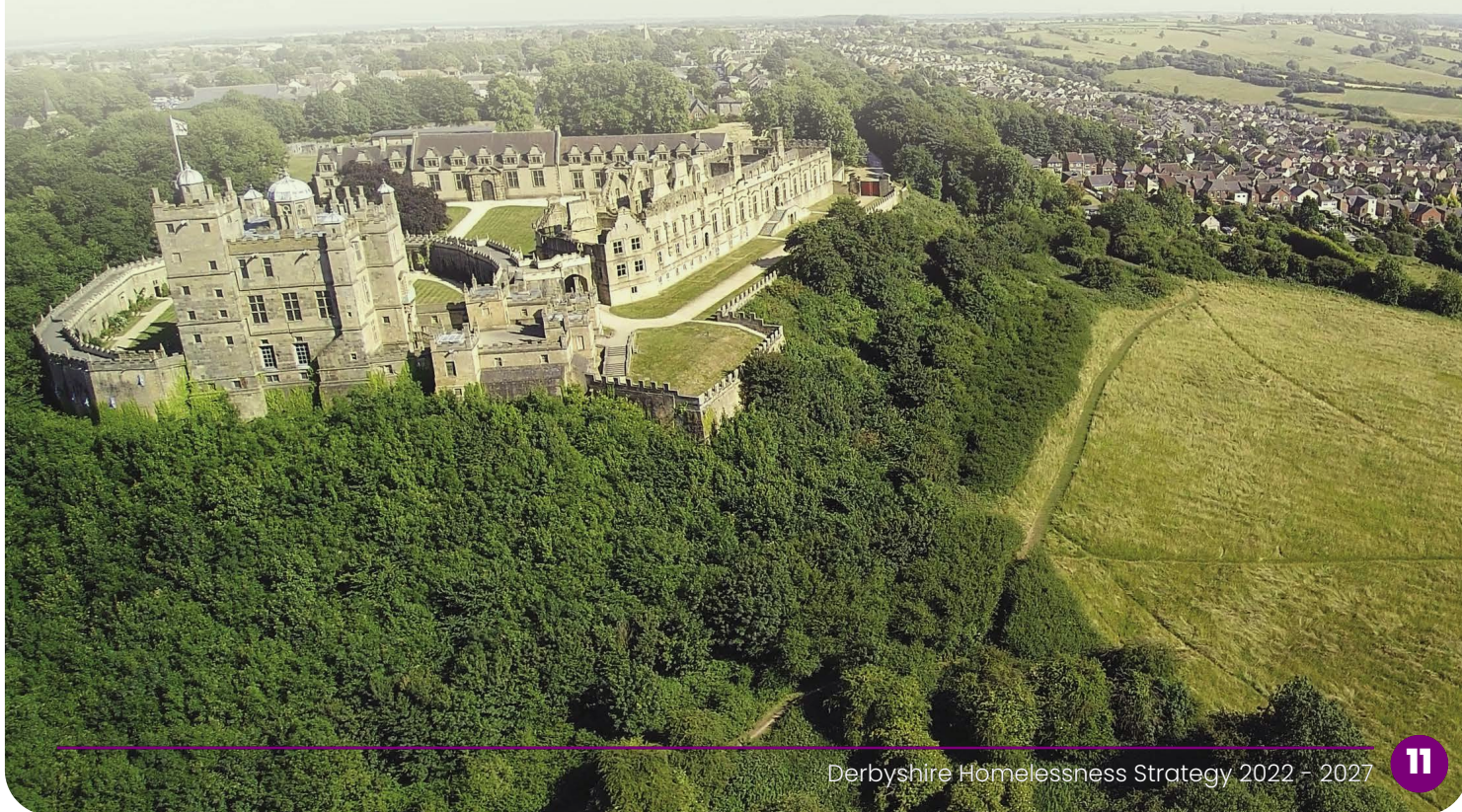
### 3. End rough sleeping and repeat homelessness

- Deliver a multi-agency, trauma informed approach to meet the multiple and complex needs of individuals through multi-disciplinary interventions
- Develop targeted rough sleeping prevention services and rapid accommodation and support
- Prevent repeat homelessness through individually tailored accommodation and support options.

### 4. Develop sustainable supported and settled housing solutions

- Advocate for higher standards in the regulation of supported housing at a national level
- Develop, improve, then maintain the standards and management of supported housing provision to meet the needs of our homeless population
- Improve access to affordable, quality, private sector homes to respond to homelessness
- Secure commitment from social housing providers to tackle homelessness as a corporate priority
- Ensure an adequate supply of temporary accommodation and minimise the use of B&B accommodation.

The Strategy sets out how these strategic priorities will be delivered.



# Homelessness in figures

## Understanding homelessness across Derbyshire

A full data report is available upon request.

In 2020/21, there were

**2,603**

households  
who were  
homeless or  
threatened  
with  
homelessness.



In 2020/21,

**104**

people were verified  
rough sleeping across  
Derbyshire

The main reason for  
homelessness in 2020/21  
was family eviction



**613**

households were  
homeless for this  
reason.

**434**

households were  
homeless due  
to the loss of  
private rented  
accommodation  
in 2020/21.

In 2020/21,

**382**

households were homeless  
due to relationship  
breakdown.



**344**

households  
were homeless  
due to  
domestic abuse.

In 2019/20,

**292**

households  
were evicted  
from social  
housing.



In 2020/21,

**143**

people were  
evicted from  
supported  
housing.



In 2020/21, there were

**1,479**

people experiencing homelessness had an identified support need.



In 2020/21,

**1,031**

households had their homelessness prevented.



Mental Health is the most prevalent support need, with

**33%**

of homeless households having a mental health support need.

In 2020/21,

**796**

households had their homelessness relieved.

**28%**

people were verified increase in the use of B&Bs in 2020/21 compared with the previous year.

**592**

households were accommodated in B&Bs in 2020/21.



**43%**

increase in the use of temporary accommodation in 2020/21 compared with the previous year.

**951**

households were accommodated in temporary accommodation in 2020/21.

# Make homelessness everyone's responsibility through a system-wide approach

**In order to be able to meet the vision of this Strategy we intend to develop a clear Derbyshire Homelessness Charter for partner agencies to be sign up to.**

The Charter will set out our vision for homelessness and ask partner agencies to sign up to this and make a pledge as to what they can do to help us achieve the vision. Building upon this we will explore the feasibility of developing a commitment from partners to collaborate to prevent homelessness in order to embed homeless prevention across public services. In the meantime we will streamline the existing duty to refer process to ensure timely and quality referrals.

We know that there are currently missed opportunities across the system to prevent homelessness; a wide range of agencies have opportunities to reduce housing crisis amongst

the clients that they work with. We can achieve this by working in a more joined up way to identify those individuals that are at a greater risk of homelessness. By working to identify the triggers for homelessness and ensuring that agencies can recognise the indicators of housing stress, we can ensure that partner agencies are equipped to prevent homelessness and make appropriate timely referrals. We are clear that homelessness is everyone's responsibility, and by all agencies accepting this responsibility we can transform our approach to homelessness across the County.

While it is widely recognised that there are strong correlations between homelessness and severe physical and mental health conditions, alongside significantly reduced life expectancy, the pandemic has crystallised the links between health and homelessness like never before.



**Embed  
homeless  
prevention  
across public  
services**

**Secure system-  
wide commitment to  
transform services  
in recognition that  
homelessness  
is everyone's  
responsibility**



We will work to improve access to health services for people experiencing homelessness to address both immediate and longer term needs, while recognising that people experiencing homelessness may not find it easy to access mainstream service provision.

It is acknowledged that there are currently barriers within the current system that often mean that individuals experiencing homelessness with complex needs aren't always able to access the wider services that they need to, including mental health, substance misuse, and adult social care services. Often individuals with complex and multiple needs fail to attend appointments at specific locations and times, or engage with the necessary services, this can result in them being discharged from services. We will work closely with Public Health, the Primary Care Trust, Derbyshire Foundation Trust, and Derbyshire County Council to ensure that services are accessible to those experiencing multiple and severe deprivation and that individual outcomes are improved.

We have identified high levels of evictions from social housing in some parts of the County, we will work closely with all social housing providers to end evictions into homelessness, through the development of pre-eviction protocols and encouraging landlords to sign up to the principles of Homes for Cathy.

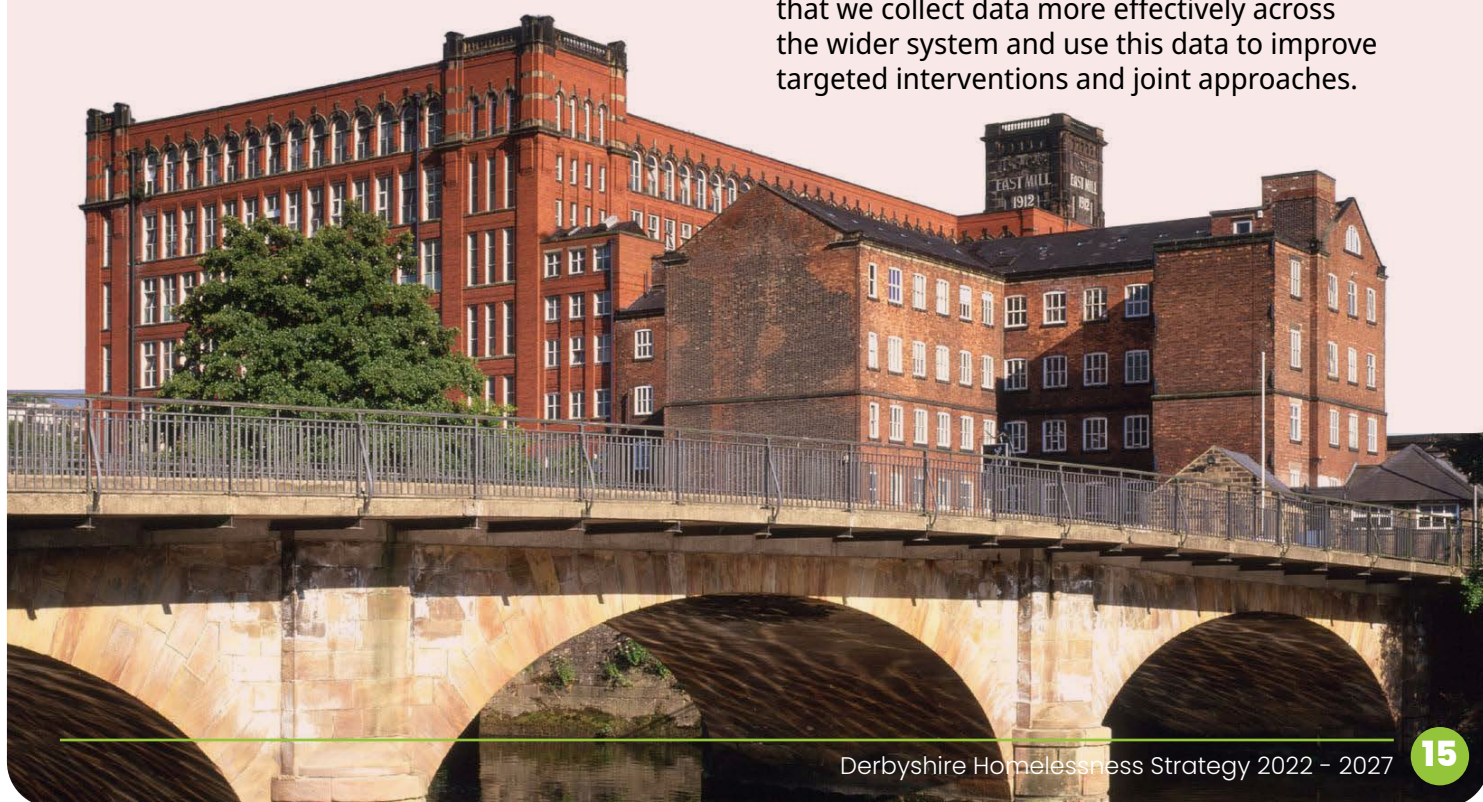
Significant parts of the County are very rural and as such homelessness in these areas is often hidden. People who are experiencing homelessness or in housing difficulty are more



likely to try and make temporary arrangements with family and friends, compared with more urban areas with greater provision available. We will undertake research into the nature and extent of rural homelessness across the County and raise awareness within rural communities of the help and support that is available to people who are at risk of experiencing homelessness.

This Strategy provides the opportunity to develop more consistent approaches to how each Local Authority delivers their housing options and homelessness services, including learning from, sharing, and replicating best practice and innovation.

We will also ensure that data informs and underlies everything that we do. We will ensure that we collect data more effectively across the wider system and use this data to improve targeted interventions and joint approaches.





# Actions

## What we will do to make homelessness everyone's responsibility through a system-wide approach

1. Gain commitment from partner agencies across Derbyshire to develop a Homelessness Charter together.
2. Assess the feasibility of a Commitment to Collaborate in order to embed homeless prevention across Derbyshire's statutory and voluntary services.
3. Identify the key triggers for homelessness and work with partners to ensure that they are equipped to prevent homelessness and/or make seamless referrals where necessary.
4. Streamline the Duty to Refer referral system and work with partner agencies to improve the timeliness and quality of referrals.
5. Develop a Countywide Homelessness Forum as a vehicle for delivering the Countywide Homelessness Strategy.
6. Seek to better understand the health needs of the homeless population through a health needs audit with partners.
7. Improve access to health services and health outcomes for individuals experiencing homelessness, by working with partners.
8. Work with Derbyshire County Council, the Primary Care Trust, Derbyshire Foundation Trust, and Public Health to influence and inform the commissioning and delivery of mental health, substance misuse, and adult social care services to ensure they are accessible and meet the needs of clients experiencing homelessness with complex and multiple needs.
9. Seek that stock holding authorities sign up to the principles for Homes for Cathy.
10. Encourage all social housing providers to become a member of Homes for Cathy.
11. Evaluate the extent of rural homelessness across the area and the need for a specific public awareness campaign within rural communities.
12. Identify opportunities to create more consistent approaches and promote best practice in the delivery of housing options services.
13. Develop a common referral form to access supported housing services across Derbyshire.
14. Ensure that data is captured widely and effectively across the system to understand homelessness and the wider determinants, and that this data is used to improve interventions and joint approaches.





## Prevent and Respond to Homelessness Through Early Intervention and Personalised Solutions

Across Derbyshire we have had significant success in both preventing and relieving homelessness following the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, but we recognise that we can always do more.

By acting quicker and earlier to identify problems alongside the provision of high-quality advice, assistance, and advocacy, we will ensure people have the best chance of staying in their home. We will also develop a greater understanding of the impact of wider social issues such as childhood poverty and disadvantage, unemployment, poor health and wellbeing, and lack of access to affordable, decent homes. We believe this will greatly increase the chances of positive outcomes for people at risk of experiencing homelessness.

Alongside our intention to promote the earliest possible prevention by embedding homelessness prevention awareness and information through a multi layered, whole system, partnership approach, we are committed to ensuring all Housing Options services work with individuals prior to the statutory 56-day threat of homelessness. We will work with people at the earliest possible point to ensure that opportunities for prevention are maximised, this will include undertaking an awareness raising campaign encouraging people to seek help at the earliest point.

In order to ensure that we are able to deliver personalised housing solutions we will develop an integrated homelessness and wellbeing assessment which will identify the wider support and wellbeing areas that people need help with alongside understanding their strengths and aspirations.

We will continue to work with partners to develop and deliver effective, targeted, and consistent homelessness prevention services targeted at the main causes of homelessness – in particular we will undertake research into the causes of family evictions across Derbyshire in order to gain an in depth insight into this area and develop targeted interventions accordingly. We will work with key partners to ensure that a range of joint protocols are in place to prevent homelessness and create clear pathways out of homelessness.

**Intervene earlier to ensure opportunities for homelessness prevention are maximised with effective and targeted tools in place.**

**Promote customer choice in developing bespoke housing solutions.**

It is anticipated that increases in the cost of living will lead to people finding it increasingly difficult to meet their housing costs. We will ensure that a range of measures are in place to prevent homelessness linked to the wider economy, increases in the cost of living, and the recovery from the pandemic. We will work in partnership to ensure adequate services are in place to improve people's financial capability, including accessing education, employment and training. We will also ensure that there are targeted interventions to support both tenants and landlords in order to minimise evictions from the private rented sector.

Following the enactment of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 we will work closely with Derbyshire County Council to meet the requirements of the Act, and ensure that for those experiencing domestic abuse there are a range of options and choice available to assist them in having a safe home to live in.

The months ahead are going to be very hard with soaring food and energy prices on top of extortionate and rising rents. If struggling families are to stand a chance at recovery, the government has to build decent social homes - it is the only solution to homelessness that will last."

The impact of homelessness on families with children can be significant – not only do children feel an overwhelming sense of displacement having lost a sense of home, experiencing homelessness and living in emergency accommodation can impact upon access to healthy meals, limited access to bathrooms and laundry facilities, potentially having to move away from family, schools, and wider support networks. Experiencing homelessness can also lead to severe emotional trauma.

With increases in the cost of living there will be an increase in the number of children living in poverty, an increase in families being able to meet their housing costs, and a very likely increase in homelessness amongst families.

We will work closely in partnership with a range of agencies including Children's Services to minimise the detrimental impact of homelessness on families, specifically children.

## Actions

### What we will do to prevent and respond to homelessness through early intervention and personalised solutions

1. Consider research projects into the impact of wider social issues on homelessness where shared partnership approaches are central to resolving them. Prioritise projects and seek resources for these based on impact and extent of existing research.
2. Commit to working to prevent homelessness prior to 56 days (in advance of any statutory duty), and where funding allows develop a specialist early intervention project.
3. Undertake an awareness raising campaign focusing on homeless prevention, encouraging individuals to seek help at the earliest point.
4. Work with partners to develop an integrated homelessness and wellbeing assessment.
5. Work with Derbyshire County Council to meet the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, including ensuring that there is a range of housing options, choice and information available to those experiencing domestic abuse.





6. React accordingly and ensure a range of measures are in place to prevent homelessness linked to the wider economy and increases in the cost of living.
7. Work with partners to ensure access to services to improve customer's financial capability – including access to education, training, and employment.
8. Commit to improving prevention toolkits across Derbyshire.
9. Work with partners to better understand the nature and extent of family evictions, and develop targeted preventative tools accordingly.
10. Work to maximise preventions from the private rented sector through the development of targeted interventions.
11. Explore the viability of creating a county-wide private landlords forum in order to improve landlord participation and engagement.
12. Develop a supported housing pre-eviction protocol in partnership with providers.
13. Develop a prison release protocol.
14. Secure support from leadership at relevant hospitals to develop discharge protocols with Derbyshire councils.



15. Develop a Young Persons Positive Pathway with Children's Services to include a joint protocol for 16/17 year olds.
16. Work in partnership with Children's services and other key agencies to minimise the detrimental impact of homelessness on children.



# End rough sleeping and repeat homelessness

**Through this strategy we are committed to ensure that we can end the need for anyone to sleep rough across Derbyshire. Rough sleeping is harmful to both individuals and communities and we believe that no one should have to sleep on the streets.**

We will deliver a reduction in rough sleeping and address the multiple harms it brings to individuals and communities through rapid intervention to offer a route off the street for all, improving health and wellbeing, and tackling street activity associated with rough sleeping.

**Develop targeted rough sleeping prevention services and rapid accommodation and support**

If we are to minimise the considerable harm caused by rough sleeping, the most important thing we can do is to prevent it from happening in the first place. However, we can't do this in isolation, rather, we need to ensure that the right support is in place from other key agencies, including health services, adult social care, prison, probation, police, the care system and the Job Centre working together to support the most vulnerable, with services in place that prevent people ending up in crisis.

**Prevent repeat homelessness through individually tailored accommodation and support options**

**Deliver a multi-agency, trauma-informed approach to meet the multiple and complex needs of individuals through multi-disciplinary interventions**



We will identify the key triggers that lead to rough sleeping, and work with partner agencies to ensure that these key triggers and risk factors are identified, and referrals are made. We will also ensure that effective preventative work is targeted at groups who have a greater likelihood of experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping.

We will provide a rapid intervention for all rough sleepers which will offer a route off of the streets for everyone, through an assertive outreach service, that works effectively and rapidly with those new to the streets – alongside supporting more entrenched rough sleepers into accommodation and support and providing supported reconnections to those from out of area.

We will ensure that no one in Derbyshire has to sleep rough through the creation of a clear accommodation pathway from the streets into a range of accommodation options, including exploring the feasibility of a Countywide assessment centre. We will also create specialist winter provision, building upon the success of the Mount Cook project – which provided both accommodation and multi-agency support under one roof.

While rough sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness, and one that creates the greatest risk of harm, we recognise that across the majority of Derbyshire Local Authority areas rough sleeping levels are low; however there has been over recent years an increase in the number of individuals with complex and multiple needs who have a history of repeat homelessness across all areas of Derbyshire.

For many people experiencing homelessness is not just a housing issue, it is closely linked with complex and chaotic life experiences, often having their roots in entrenched disadvantage, and leaving people socially and economically excluded.

We cannot successfully tackle homelessness and rough sleeping without addressing the multiple needs of clients, and to do this we must work in partnership.

Through the establishment of a Multi-Disciplinary Team we aim to deliver assertive and co-ordinated services to those clients with the most complex needs to ensure a holistic and collaborative approach to responding to their homelessness and the wider support and health issues that they experience, breaking down some of the



existing system blockages and preventing repeat homelessness from occurring.

We recognise that homelessness in adults is more likely amongst those who have experienced a history of childhood adversity and poverty. We are committed to working to develop trauma-informed approaches to delivering homelessness services and ensuring that existing systems do not result in retraumatising individuals.

Many of the current rough sleeping and complex needs services across Derbyshire are funded through Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) funding from central Government which is only confirmed until 2025. Over the first two years of this strategy we will assess the impact and outcomes of the RSI funded projects, including a cost benefit analysis –working to develop a business case to secure future ongoing funding for these essential services which are critical to our aim to end rough sleeping.

While rough sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness, the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the true extent of hidden homelessness across the County, individuals living in insecure accommodation, vulnerably housed and/or sofa surfing. We will undertake research to understand the nature and scale of hidden homelessness across Derbyshire and develop targeted interventions.

We will also work in partnership to develop specialist services for families with complex needs to prevent repeat cycles of homelessness occurring, with the aim of tackling inter-generational homelessness.

# Actions

## What we will do to end rough sleeping and repeat homelessness

1. As part of the Rough Sleeping Initiative, develop a targeted prevention approach to prevent the flow of new rough sleepers on to the street.
2. Develop a multi-disciplinary team to work to deliver assertive and coordinated services to rough sleepers and individuals experiencing homelessness with multiple, complex needs, with a focus on preventing repeat homelessness.
3. Explore how we can provide a rapid offer of off the street accommodation so that no-one has to spend a second night on the streets.
4. Explore the feasibility of developing an assessment centre to provide off the street accommodation for rough sleepers.
5. Plan and develop specialist winter provision for future winters.
6. Develop a supported reconnection policy to support rough sleepers to return safely to their home areas.
7. Assess the impact and outcomes of the Rough Sleeper Initiative funded projects, and develop a business case to secure future funding, including a detailed cost benefit analysis.
8. Develop an alternative giving campaign, and work to promote public awareness around rough sleeping and begging, where there is evidence that the issues exists.
9. Develop specialist education, employment, and training opportunities for those with a complex history of homelessness and rough sleeping.
10. Gather evidence and consider research projects into
  - The extent of dual diagnosis within the homelessness population in order to create an evidence base to work with commissioners to create new service pathways.
  - The nature and scale of hidden homelessness.
  - The nature and scale of intergenerational homelessness across Derbyshire.
  - Prioritise those projects needed based on impact and seek funding to progress them.





# Develop sustainable supported and settled housing solutions

**We want to maximise every mechanism to increase the number of affordable housing options available across Derbyshire to both prevent and relieve homelessness ensuring long-term solutions to people's housing situation. A range of accommodation options is needed across the social, affordable private and supported sector to cater for a wide range of housing needs.**

We will work across Derbyshire with all social housing developers to increase the provision of appropriate and affordable social housing to meet the identified need in each area.

The private rented sector plays an increasingly critical role in meeting the housing needs of those who are experiencing homelessness or threatened with homelessness.

There are clear opportunities to increase access to the private rented sector through the development of an attractive and comprehensive Derbyshire landlord offer, alongside this we will explore the feasibility of developing a countywide private sector leasing scheme.

Supported housing has an important role to play in meeting the housing and support needs of clients who are not ready to live independently. However, this must provide quality accommodation with good support. Increasingly we are seeing a rise in unscrupulous landlords taking advantage of the exempt accommodation rules and failing to provide the necessary levels

**Develop, improve, then maintain the standards and management of supported housing provision to meet the needs of our homeless population**

**Improve access to affordable, quality, private sector homes to respond to homelessness**

**Secure commitment from social housing providers to tackle homelessness as a corporate priority**

of support or expected standards of tenancy management. Through this Strategy we will advocate at a national level for higher standards in the regulation of supported accommodation. We will work closely with Adult Social Care to protect and safeguard the most vulnerable residents of supported accommodation.

Locally we will develop a Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for exempt accommodation, we also recognise we have many good private landlords of exempt accommodation, and we will support them to achieve Registered Provider status.

To ensure that supported housing provision is able to meet our customers' increasingly complex and multiple needs, we will undertake a detailed needs assessment of housing related support services, to understand the current and future needs of our residents. This will provide the basis for a robust delivery strategy.

DHOG is committed to investing in a supported housing model that acts as a place of change. We will work with the Derbyshire County Council to develop appropriate housing for clients with complex, multiple and care needs, ensuring that provision and support is psychologically informed, and builds upon the assets of the individuals supported.

We will also work closely with Derbyshire County Council to develop provision for those experiencing domestic abuse, including rapid safe provision together with advocacy support.

**Advocate for higher standards in the regulation of supported housing at a national level**

Where homelessness cannot be prevented, temporary accommodation is an essential part of a household's journey out of homelessness. There has been an increase in the use of temporary accommodation across Derbyshire over the last three years, including increases in the use of bed & breakfast accommodation, this is partly linked to the response to the pandemic.

By ensuring a continued focus on early intervention and prevention work we aim to reduce the flow of new placements into temporary accommodation. However, as a County we need to ensure that we have a sufficient supply of temporary accommodation to meet demand, of the right type and in the right place. This will be essential to avoid the high use of B&B.

In order to achieve this we will undertake a review of temporary accommodation identifying future need and an options appraisal for future delivery arrangements. We will also explore the feasibility of jointly commissioning nightly paid accommodation as an alternative to B&B.

**Ensure an adequate supply of temporary accommodation and minimise the use of B&B accommodation**





# Actions

## What we will do to develop sustainable supported and settled housing solutions

1. Work towards increasing the provision of appropriate, affordable social housing.
2. Following consultation with private landlords develop a comprehensive and attractive countywide landlord offer.
3. Explore opportunities to develop a countywide private sector leasing scheme
4. Review exempt supported accommodation leading to:
  - A needs assessment.
  - A charter of rights and quality standards.
  - Support for accommodation providers becoming Registered Providers.
  - Advocating at a national level for better regulation.
  - A delivery strategy.
5. In partnership with Derbyshire County Council, develop appropriate housing provision for clients with complex, multiple and longer-term care needs where funding permits.
6. Work with current exempt supported accommodation providers to achieve Registered Provider status.
7. Carry out a review of the use of temporary and interim accommodation:
  - Identifying future need and an options appraisal for future delivery arrangements, including the option of nightly paid emergency accommodation.
  - Explore opportunities for a countywide temporary accommodation forum.



# Transforming our approach to homelessness

## Delivering our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

**In order to deliver the priorities that we have set out in this Strategy we need to continue to work closely with our key partners to ensure that across Derbyshire we have the expertise, services, provision, resources, partnerships and infrastructure to deliver the Strategy.**

The Strategy and its action plan will be reviewed annually so that it is responsive to emerging needs, alongside policy, and legislative changes.

While Derbyshire Homelessness Officers Group will lead on the delivery of the strategy, it is essential that it joins up with over workstreams across the County. DHOG will report into the County's Housing and Health Systems Group, who will adopt the Strategy as priority 2 of their own work plan. The Housing and Health Systems Group operates as a coalition of partners who share good practice and expertise around housing and health, as well as explore external investment opportunities and work towards a joined-up system.

The delivery of the Strategy will be governed by Derbyshire's Health and Wellbeing Board, ensuring the intrinsic link between homelessness and health is fully understood and cementing the partnership approach required to deliver the Strategy.

We will also ensure that the Homelessness Strategy continues to feed into the Place Board and the seven Place Alliances, joining up housing, health, care and community support.

This strategy will be complemented by a detailed delivery action plan and we will work closely with all of our key partners to agree the detail on how our priorities can be met. We will annually review the strategy action plan to ensure that it remains relevant, up to date and responsive to new policy developments and external pressures.

We acknowledge that the plans set out within this Strategy are ambitious, however we are confident that with the full commitment from all of the Local Authorities and our key partners we can transform our response to homelessness across the County and make homelessness everyone's responsibility.





# Appendix 1: About Homeless Link

**Homeless Link is the national membership charity for organisations working with people experiencing or at risk of homelessness In England. We aim to develop, inspire, support, and sustain a movement of organisations working together to achieve positive futures for people who are homeless or vulnerably housed.**

Representing over 900 organisations across England, we are in a unique position to see both the scale and nature of the tragedy of homelessness. We see the data gaps; the national policy barriers; the constraints of both funding and expertise; the system blocks and attitudinal obstacles. But crucially, we also see – and are instrumental in developing – the positive practice and ‘what works’ solutions.

As an organisation we believe that things can and should be better: not because we are naïve or cut off from reality, but because we have seen and experienced radical positive change in the way systems and services are delivered – and that gives us hope for a different future.

We support our members through research, guidance, and learning, and to promote policy change that will ensure everyone has a place to call home and the support they need to keep it.

**Homeless Link,**  
Minorities House,  
2-5 Minorities,  
London EC3N 1BJ  
[www.homeless.org.uk](http://www.homeless.org.uk)



## Local Authority contacts

### **Amber Valley Borough Council**

Jon Leigh  
Email: [jonathan.leigh@ambervalley.gov.uk](mailto:jonathan.leigh@ambervalley.gov.uk)

### **Bolsover District Council**

Victoria Dawson  
Email: [Victoria.Dawson@bolsover.gov.uk](mailto:Victoria.Dawson@bolsover.gov.uk)

### **Chesterfield Borough Council**

Carl Griffiths  
Email: [Carl.Griffiths@Chesterfield.gov.uk](mailto:Carl.Griffiths@Chesterfield.gov.uk)

### **Derbyshire Dales District Council**

Simon Benyon  
Email: [simon.beynon@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:simon.beynon@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)

### **Erewash Borough Council**

Leah Taylor  
Email: [Leah.Taylor@erewash.gov.uk](mailto:Leah.Taylor@erewash.gov.uk)

### **High Peak Borough Council**

Helen Core  
Email: [Helen.Core@highpeak.gov.uk](mailto:Helen.Core@highpeak.gov.uk)

### **North East Derbyshire District Council**

Lee Pepper  
Email: [lee.pepper@ne-derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:lee.pepper@ne-derbyshire.gov.uk)

### **South Derbyshire District Council**

Kirsty Barker  
Email: [Kirsty.Barker@southderbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:Kirsty.Barker@southderbyshire.gov.uk)



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