

# **UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy**

**2020-2025**

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## Foreword by the Housing Portfolio Holder

There are few things more important in life than having a roof over your head. This is why your council has a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. It sets out our vision for preventing homelessness in the first place and then what we can do to help if it does happen.

This document sets out our key priorities for the district. It also considers the broader context, including the supply of new affordable housing, homes delivered through the councils emerging Local Plan and its Housing Strategy.

We recognise that for some people in Uttlesford access to an affordable home is challenging. For many residents even those homes classified as 'affordable homes' are still unaffordable. This is compounded by continuing austerity, welfare reform and uncertain economic times. We also understand that the reasons aren't always economic, especially for residents who already have complex needs which makes them more vulnerable to losing their accommodation.

Nationally the introduction by Government of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018 has been an opportunity to look at our homelessness services afresh. We are fully committed to the principles of the Act, we have embraced early intervention to prevent homelessness wherever possible, we provide first class housing advice for people in need and we offer assistance to those in need or who are vulnerable.

We have friendly and supportive communities in Uttlesford. Our district is lucky in that we have never seen the rough sleeping problems experienced by many of our neighbours. However we must not be complacent and so will ensure that we have policies, programmes and solutions in place to keep people in their homes and find new suitable long and short term accommodation when needed.

No one authority has all the answers, we recognise that working together is fundamental. The council has a dedicated and experienced team of housing options officers that work hard for residents. They know that through partnership with other statutory agencies and local organisation they can deliver a strategy that will be successful in the years ahead.

As a team we look forward to continuing to work with all people involved in preventing and tackling homelessness in Uttlesford

**Cllr Petrina Lees**  
Portfolio Holder Housing Health and Communities  
Uttlesford District Council

## Introduction

The Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy, which set out their vision for halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it by 2027, was published by the Ministry Of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in August 2018. Uttlesford within the national context has low levels of homelessness and is in the fortunate position of not having a rough sleeping problem, however the council cannot be complacent, homelessness effects lives and life chances and one rough sleeper must be considered one too many.

This strategy looks at the national and local context for homelessness and rough sleeping, the work the council has been doing since the last Homelessness Strategy and sets out the council's strategic priorities for tackling homelessness and rough sleeping over the next 5 years.

## National Context

Nationally accepted homelessness applications have increased by 19,000 from the low point in 2009/10 to almost 57,000 by 2017/18.

The main causes of homelessness nationally remains static

- Parents, other relatives or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate (28%)
- Loss of rented or tied accommodation due to termination of assured shorthold tenancy (25%)
- Violent breakdown of relationship involving partner (12%)
- Other reason (e.g. homeless in emergency, sleeping rough or in hostel returned from abroad) (7%)
- Non-violent breakdown of relationship (6%)
- Loss of rented or tied accommodation other than termination of assured shorthold tenancy (6%)

At the end of March 2018 the number of households in temporary accommodation arranged by a local authority under their homelessness duties stood at just under 80,000, an increase of 66% from the low of just over 48,000 in December 2010, with many having been trapped for years in what is often unstable, overcrowded accommodation far from previous support networks

During the same period the estimated number of rough sleepers in England has increased each year since 2010. The autumn 2010 estimated snapshot for a single night was 1,768 while the autumn 2017 total was more than two and a half times as high, at 4,751. This has been recognised by Government, who have committed to halving rough sleeping by 2022 and eliminating it altogether by 2027 and have required all local authorities to have a rough sleeping strategy in place by the end of 2019.

Contributing factors that have led to this national picture of increasing homelessness includes:

- High housing demand and a lack of supply leading to high house prices and private rents with greater shortfalls between rents and Local Housing Allowance
- Shortage of social housing or truly affordable 'affordable housing' to rent
- Increasing household bills
- Cuts and reforms to welfare benefits
- Cuts in funding to statutory and voluntary services which support vulnerable people

It is within this context of rising homelessness and rough sleeping that the Government supported a Private Members Bill in parliament that resulted in a significant change in homelessness legislation. The Homelessness Reduction Act was introduced in England in April 2018.

The major change in the new legislation is the integration of prevention and relief into a local authority's statutory duty. From April 2018 prevention and relief are available to any household vulnerable to homelessness in 56 rather than 28 days' time. This broader definition of homelessness beyond priority need groups means that more information will be available on some households that are currently considered the 'hidden homeless.' In the longer term, it will enable Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government to report on what prevention activities actually work for those at risk of homelessness.

The Act places new duties on councils to:

- Intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness
- Provide homelessness services to everyone threatened with homelessness regardless of whether they have a 'priority need'
- Create and monitor individual Personal Housing Plans for all homeless applicants within the Prevention and Relief duties
- Identify reasonable steps to be taken by the council and the applicant to help them secure accommodation to either prevent or relieve their homelessness
- Not to consider local connection or intentionality until after the council has tried to prevent or relieve homelessness
- Place the current statutory homelessness duty (main duty) at the end of the homeless process following attempts to 'prevent' and 'relieve' homelessness

The Act also places a duty on specified public bodies to refer clients they are working with who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

The Homelessness Reduction Act is one part of the Governments continuing national agenda to tackle the root causes of homelessness and drive through change in the housing sector. There is recognition within Government that there is

not one single solution to end rough sleeping or tackle the increase in homelessness. A strategic approach to tackling the causes of homelessness and the health and well-being of rough sleepers is as important as the supply of affordable homes and supported housing.

Future regulation, policy change are likely to be driven by:

- Housing White Paper (2017)
- Social Housing Green Paper (2018)
- Licensing of Homes in Multiple Occupation (2018)
- Rough Sleeping Strategy (2018)
- Tenant Fees Act 2019
- Private Landlords (Registration) Bill 2017-19
- Lifting of council borrowing caps to encourage council house building

### The Local Context - Policy

The priorities of Uttlesford District Council's corporate plan not only recognises the importance of delivering more affordable homes for the district but the need for the council's actions and influence to contribute to the economic growth of the district, to protect the character of Uttlesford and to be at its most effective when working closely with others.

Sitting alongside the draft Local Plan and its proposals for delivering 3 new garden communities within the district, the council's current Housing Strategy and the new draft one that will be delivered in 2020, contain high level objectives supported by operational policies and related strategies, including this Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. This is also driving the need to review of the council's Allocations Policy in 2020/21.

The Government announced on the 3 October 2018 the borrowing restrictions on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) will be removed enabling councils to play a key role in delivering the homes their communities need. In light of this change the council has been looking at the range of initiatives it has to deliver additional housing and how it can respond to the change in legislation to accelerate delivery and increase the amount of housing delivered in the district.

The council is already committed to a development programme to build more council housing, to increase the supply of social housing available to those who are homeless and those on the council's housing register, and will be using the new flexibilities to support expansion of this programme. However, any borrowing undertaken will need to be prudent, affordable and sustainable and work is being undertaken on the 30 year HRA financial plan to ensure that the borrowing is affordable for the HRA.

The council, where appropriate, will also look to make use of grant funding from Homes England for the delivery of new social housing. The council has been confirmed as an Investment Partner with Homes England for 2019/20 on the basis of previous delivery performance and good standing.

The links within and between the council’s various policies and strategies that relate to housing, will ensure that a combined approach to housing is taken across the district. This will include the mix of housing tenures and affordability within the new garden communities, the use and expansion of the council’s existing stock, the council’s duties to those who are vulnerable and threatened with homelessness and the council’s future Housing Strategy and Allocations Policy. This strategy will sit alongside these documents to provide maximum benefit and support the overall aims and objectives of the council.

### The Local Context - Statistics

Uttlesford District Council is a stock holding council with 2,850 properties scattered across 56 parishes in what is the largest geographical district in the county of Essex. The district has a population of around 83,500 (2014 figure). As well as the council stock there is Registered Social Landlord (RSL) stock of approximately 2,000 properties.

The average private market 2 bed house price across the district is £316,100 (Hometrack July 2019) whilst 60% of residents earn less than £34,000 and of these 40% earn less than £25,000.

The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) (example below in Table 1) across the district does not match the private sector rents, meaning that many people who rely on benefits to help with their rent have a weekly/monthly shortfall to make up.

**Table 1 Local Housing Allowance Rates North Uttlesford**

Number of Bedrooms	Category	Weekly Amount	Monthly Amount
Shared Room Rate	A	£80.52	£349.88
1 Bedroom	B	£133.72	£581.05
2 Bedrooms	C	£153.79	£668.25
3 Bedrooms	D	£178.71	£776.54
4 Bedrooms	E	£238.38	£1035.82

LHA rates for North Uttlesford 2019/20

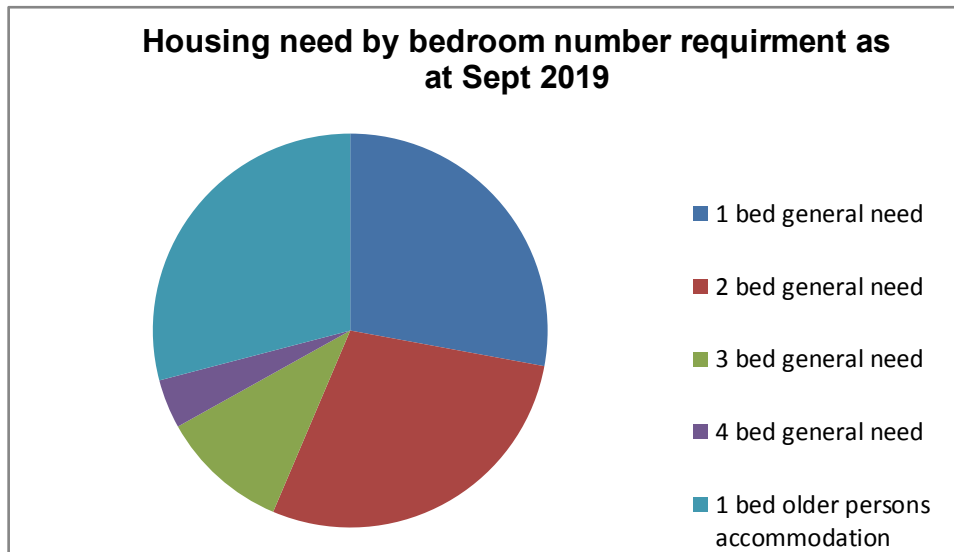
- Single rooms in the Saffron Walden area advertised in July 2019 ranged from £410 per month to £750 per month
- 2 bed flats in the Saffron Walden area advertised in July 2019 ranged from £775 to £1200 per month – well outside LHA

In 2018/19 Uttlesford delivered 515 new affordable homes across the district, 460 through the council’s RSL partners and 55 through the council’s development programme.

In spite of the new housing that has been delivered in the past 2 years and allocating a record 502 void properties in 2018/19, the housing register has remained static. As at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019 there were 1,145 applications on the register.

Figure 1 below shows the number of applications on the housing register at a given date and the size of accommodation that is required by bedroom number. It is clear that for general needs accommodation the demand is for smaller units of accommodation. This data is used to determine the councils own development programme and future housing requirements to be delivered by RSL partners through the planning process on new developments within the district.

Figure 1 Housing Need by bedroom number requirement



Council Housing Register data Sept 2019

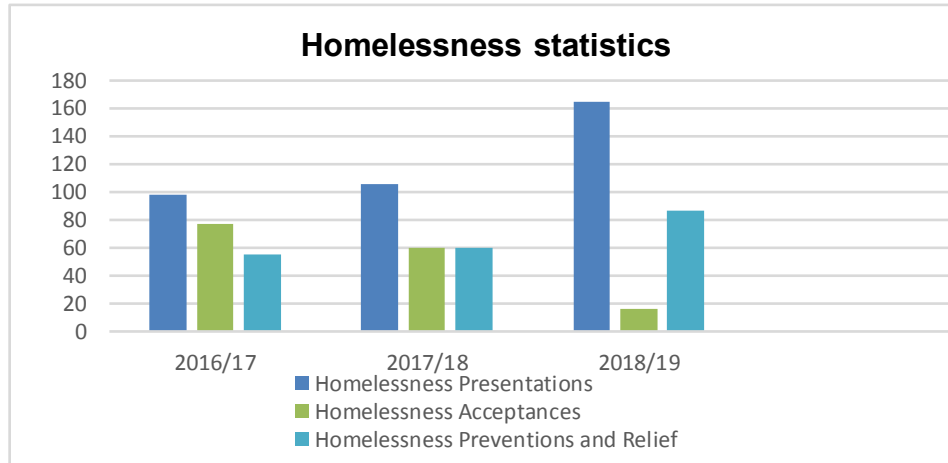
Figure 2 shows the number of homeless applications the council has taken in the past three years and the number of those applications for which the council has accepted the full homelessness duty – to find them permanent housing.

The chart clearly demonstrates that with the introduction of the Homelessness reduction Act the number of homelessness applications has increased, however the number of those accepted as homeless has decreased. The emphasis on



preventing and relieving homelessness sees the council working closely with clients and partner agencies to find affordable housing solutions before applicants become actually homeless and requiring temporary accommodation.

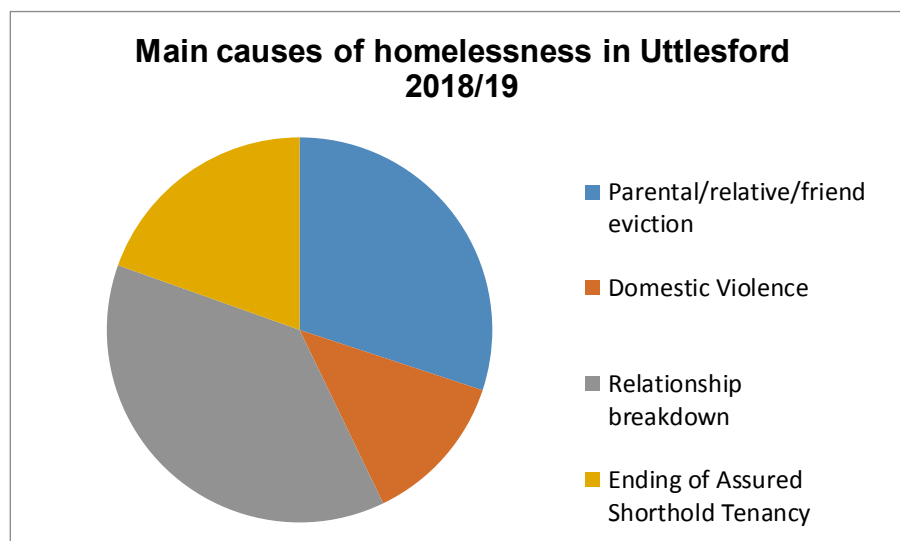
Figure 2 Homelessness Statistics 2016 - 2019



Council KPI data

Figure 3 shows the main causes for homelessness within Uttlesford over the past year. These four main causes have remained static for many years and follow the National trends. The main cause as can be seen is family and friends no longer willing to accommodate other households within their properties. This is indicative of these households struggling to obtain or sustain their own affordable housing in either the private rented or owner occupied sector.

Figure 3 Main Causes of Homelessness



HCLIC data from council system

The ending of Assured Shorthold Tenancies remains another common reason for people approaching the council as threatened with homelessness, with the local levels of LHA being substantially lower than actual private rents in the district, it is

hard for people losing one private rented property to source another at a rent they can afford.

This is why it is also difficult for the council to prevent homelessness by using the private sector. For many of the clients seen by the Housing Options service, an affordable rented property from either the council or partner RSL is their only realistic affordable housing option. Whilst the council's Housing Strategy aims to increase the provision of affordable housing within the district, the council will also continue to work with private landlords and to help tenants who are in precarious housing situations sustain their accommodation.

The numbers of rough sleepers within the district has always been historically low. The estimated numbers for rough sleeping in Uttlesford was 0 as at November 2018 (date of last estimated count) and has fluctuated between 0 and 3 at the estimated counts during the life of the previous strategy. It is however important the council does not become complacent about this situation and acts immediately on any reports of rough sleeping that are received. The council is committed to ensuring that rough sleeping does not become an issue in the district and that the council is ready to work with any rough sleepers to find sustainable long term housing solutions for them.

## Local Services

The council has access to services within Uttlesford to assist us in preventing homelessness and rough sleeping the principle ones being:

- Young person homelessness support services from Essex County Council (ECC). This includes working to the Essex wide Joint Protocol on 16/17 year olds
- Floating Support Services from Peabody
- Domestic Abuse services from Next Chapter
- Tenancy management for council and RSL stock
- Housing Benefit Visiting Officer/ Welfare Officer
- DWP support
- Probation/Community Rehabilitation Company – Including Essex Prison Release Housing Protocol
- ECC Adult AND Children Services
- Community Mental Health Services
- Addiction Services – Open Road and ADAS
- Bromfield House Supported Housing Scheme
- Railway Meadow Mother and Baby Unit – nomination rights to 4 bed spaces

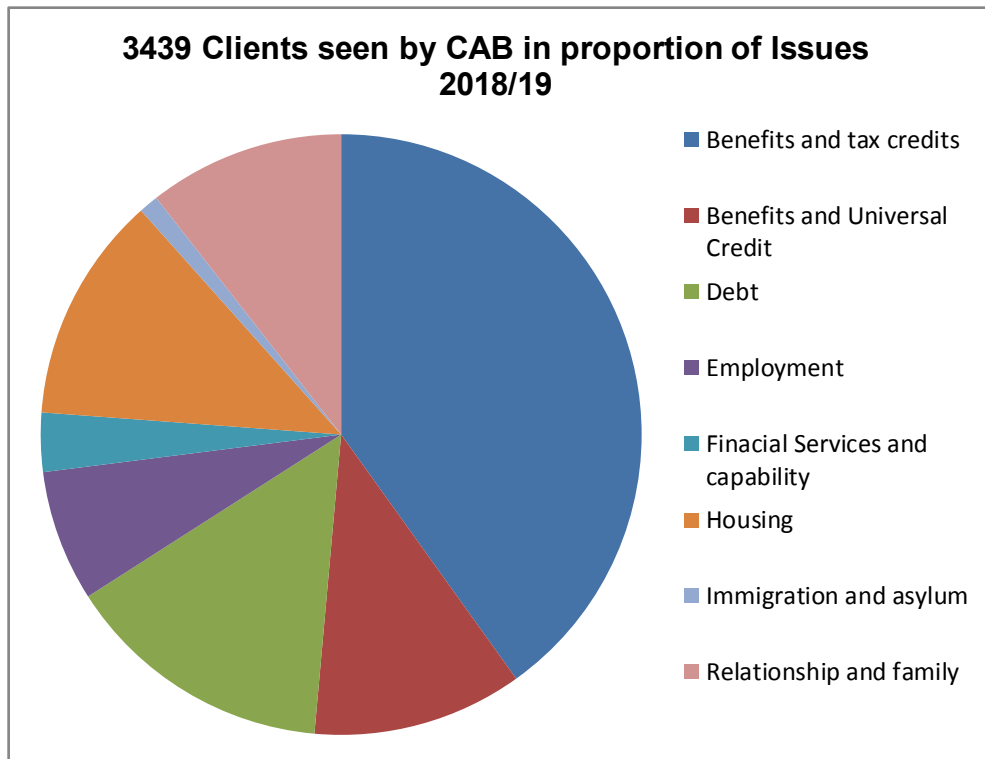
There are also independent voluntary sector services within Uttlesford, some that receive council grant funding that also support council offices in their work on preventing and relieving homelessness.

Voluntary Sector Services include:

- Uttlesford Citizens Advice Bureau
- Uttlesford Food Bank - the foodbank has given out over 3600 parcels in the past 5 years, with over 1000 of these in the past 9 months
- Stansted Food Bank
- Saffron Walden United Charities
- Faith groups

As can be seen by the below data Uttlesford CAB are an important partner for the council in assisting Uttlesford residents with issues that can lead to homelessness, including problems with debt and benefits, as well as more general housing and relationship issues.

Figure 4 Uttlesford Citizens Advice Client Data 2018 -2019



Data from Uttlesford CAB

## Service Developments since the Last Strategy

With the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act the council recognised that its approach to homelessness would require a new focus to meet the requirements of the Act. There has been corporate support to ensure homelessness funding has been used solely to implement the changes needed to ensure that the council can provide effective homelessness services both now and into the future.

Since the last Homelessness Strategy the council has:

- Relunched the council's Homelessness Partnership ensuring that representation from all agencies both statutory and non statutory that have a role in helping us tackle homelessness and rough sleeping within the district are around the table
- Used government grant funding to create additional Housing Options/ Homelessness Prevention Officer roles.
- Added additional council stock into the council's portfolio of temporary accommodation to ensure that Bed and Breakfast is used for only the direst emergency situations
- Installed a new homelessness prevention module into the council's Choice Based Lettings IT System to help the Housing Options Team reconfigure the homelessness service in light of the Homelessness Reduction Act. The system allows for the production of effective statistics to meet new statutory reporting requirements. The new module also allows potentially homeless clients to access their personalised housing plan that the council's Housing Options Team creates with them, from an online portal. The plan details the actions that the council will take and actions that they can take to try to prevent or relieve their homelessness
- Continued to accommodate rough sleepers past the provision of the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) in order to co-ordinate work with agencies to end their rough sleeping.
- Increased the council's own housing stock by over 100 properties and enabled the development of 518 new affordable RSL rented homes
- Provided financial assistance to over 20 households to secure or maintain private rented accommodation

The Homelessness Reduction Act has resulted in a culture change for staff as well as clients. Although people can now present to the council within 56 days of potentially being homeless the Housing Options Team are finding that people are still leaving it later than this before they approach us for advice.

The emphasis is much greater now on working alongside the client to prevent homelessness and find a housing solution without the need, initially at least, to decide 'is this person in priority need or are they intentionally homeless'.

The situation remains difficult as far as finding alternative housing for people is concerned, as the private rented sector continues to be unaffordable within this area for most of the people the team are seeing. It is therefore essential that if the council is to effectively tackle homelessness and maintain the low levels of rough sleeping that the council ensures that the supply of affordable housing is maintained.

## Strategic Priorities for the Next Five Years

The following priorities have been developed alongside the key priorities within the council's Corporate Plan and the council's Housing Strategy:

1. Improve the effectiveness the council's homelessness prevention work by investing in the service to ensure the council is providing high quality housing advice to clients in all housing tenures
2. Aim to end all use of bed and breakfast accommodation by investing in and facilitating the delivery of good quality affordable housing and suitable temporary accommodation
3. Work with partners and other stakeholders to prevent homelessness by intervening at the earliest opportunity
4. Work to maintain Uttlesford as an area without rough sleeping by ensuring that the causes of rough sleeping are not ignored

### **Priority 1: Improve the effectiveness of the council's homelessness prevention work by investing in the service to ensure the council is providing high quality housing advice to clients in all housing tenures**

To meet this priority the council will:

- Ensure that the principles of and ethos behind the Homelessness Reduction Act are fully embedded within the council's housing options service
- Ensure that those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness receive a personal Housing Plan and that reasonable steps are identified to help them resolve their housing situation
- Develop good quality, easily accessible housing advice materials, including web based material which reflect the diversity of applicants needs and abilities and provide for these to be delivered in different formats and at different locations
- Provide regular training opportunities to staff to maintain and enhance their knowledge and skills
- Prevent homelessness by helping people sustain their tenancies across all tenure through the increased provision of debt and welfare advice
- Work with partner agencies to mitigate the effects of Universal Credit and the Benefit Cap
- Flexible use of the council's homelessness prevention fund
- Flexible use of the Discretionary Housing Payments

**Priority 2: Aim to end all use of bed and breakfast accommodation by investing in and facilitating the delivery of good quality affordable housing and suitable temporary accommodation**

To meet this priority the council will:

- Ensure that enough ready to access temporary accommodation is available in the right location for homeless households to access support, maintain employment and education
- Ensure through the council's Housing Strategy that the council is able to deliver sufficient units of social housing to allow the free flow of households from temporary accommodation into permanent housing
- Ensure through the council's Housing Strategy that the council is able to deliver suitable supported housing for homeless households with complex needs, particularly single homeless households
- Promote the council's incentive scheme which encourages households under-occupying in council stock to downsize to smaller properties
- Identify opportunities for the council to develop new affordable housing on its own land or through working with Registered Providers and private developers

**Priority 3: Work with partners and other stakeholders to prevent homelessness by intervening at the earliest opportunity**

To meet this priority the council will:

- Continue to build effective working relationships with other agencies through the Homelessness partnership
- Promote the duty to refer under the Homelessness Reduction Act and have a dedicated email address for these referrals
- Refer tenants within the private sector to appropriate support agencies to help them maintain their tenancies when difficulties first arise
- Have closer links between the Housing Options Team and the Housing Benefit Department
- Review the council's Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme to see if it can provide greater incentives for private sector landlords to work with the scheme
- Continue to encourage owners of empty properties to bring them back into use
- Continue to hold a Landlords Forum and review other ways to connect with landlords

#### **Priority 4: Work to maintain Uttlesford as an area without rough sleeping by ensuring that the causes of rough sleeping are not ignored**

To meet this priority the council will:

- Respond to reports of rough sleeping within 24hours and ensure that this response engages with the rough sleeper
- Commit to engaging with all rough sleepers to develop a Personalized Housing Plan that seeks to help them find a sustainable solution to end their homelessness
- Accommodate rough sleepers in line with the severe weather emergency protocol
- Develop closer links to voluntary and community agencies such as the foodbank, faith based organisations or local charities to promote an effective local response to anyone found rough sleeping in Uttlesford
- Work through the members of the Homelessness Partnership and other key agencies to prevent individuals and families from getting into a housing crisis
- Work with health partners to ensure that homeless households and linked into appropriate health services
- Make appropriate referrals to support agencies to ensure homeless households have access to support that meets all their needs
- Data sharing and data analysis with statutory and voluntary partners
- Review and strengthen existing protocols and implement new ones particularly with mental health, drug and alcohol services and probation

### **Consultation and Engagement**

In preparing this Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy the council has worked with a wide range of staff, elected members, partners and stakeholders to ensure that the document is shaped to reflect legislation as well as national and local priorities.

Consultation has been undertaken to get the views of as many people and organisations as possible to inform the development of this strategy. A draft document was circulated for comment and put out for public consultation via the council's website.

This has included work through the Homelessness Partnership

The final document will be agreed by the council's Housing Board prior to being recommended to the council's Cabinet for adoption.

## Monitoring and review

How the council will deliver the priorities within this Strategy is contained within the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan which sets out clear tasks and targets within identified areas of work. The Action Plan will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Homelessness Partnership, with regular reports being presented to the council's Housing Board.

As the Housing Options Team, continues to implement the Homelessness Reduction Act new trends and learning will emerge. By regularly reviewing the Action Plan the council can be responsive to these emerging needs and set new actions to ensure strategic priorities are achieved.

The Strategy and Action plan will also be reviewed in light of any changes to national legislation and policy.

By adopting this Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, Uttlesford Council is making a firm commitment to tackling and preventing homelessness within the district and ensuring that Uttlesford continues to be an area where incidences of rough sleeping are tackled as soon as they are identified.

If you require any further information about the Uttlesford District Council Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020 – 2025, please contact Thee Housing Options/Homelessness Team on 01799 510510 or email [housingoptions@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:housingoptions@uttlesford.gov.uk) or write to:-

Housing Options/Homelessness Team  
Uttlesford District Council  
Council Offices  
London Road  
Saffron Walden  
Essex  
CB11 4ER



## Action Plan – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020 – 2025

<b>Priority 1: Improve the effectiveness of the council’s homelessness prevention work by investing in the service to ensure the council is providing high quality housing advice to clients in all housing tenures</b>					
<b>How this priority will be achieved</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Key Officer</b>	<b>Comments /Progress</b>
Ensure that the principles of and ethos behind the Homelessness Reduction Act are fully embedded within the housing options service	Dec 2019 and ongoing	Within current resources	Housing Options Team fully compliant with HRAct	Housing Options Team Leader	
Ensure that those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness receive a personal Housing Plan and that reasonable steps are identified to help them resolve their housing situation	Dec 2019 and ongoing	Within current resources	Homelessness prevention numbers increase year on year	Housing Options Team Leader	
Develop good quality, easily accessible housing advice materials, including web based material which reflect the diversity of applicants needs and abilities and provide for these to be delivered in different formats and at different locations	Dec 2020 and ongoing	Within current resources	Up to date and accurate information accessible to clients	Housing Options and Housing Management team leaders	
Provide regular training opportunities to staff to maintain and enhance their knowledge and skills	Ongoing	Within current resources	Staff fully trained to be able to deliver first class service	Housing Options Team Leader	
Prevent homelessness by helping people sustain their tenancies across all tenure through the increased provision of debt and welfare advice	Ongoing	Within current resources	Homelessness prevention numbers increase year on year	Housing Options Team Leader	
Work with partner agencies to mitigate the effects of	Ongoing	Within	Clients	Housing	

Universal Credit and the Benefit Cap		current resources	directed to best available solutions	Options Team Leader	
Flexible use of the council's homelessness prevention fund	Ongoing	Within current resources and use of futures government funding	Clients accessing best available housing solutions	Housing Options Team Leader	
Flexible use of the Discretionary Housing Payments by working with the HB department	Ongoing	Within existing resources and future government funding	DHP money fully utilized by the authority	Housing Options Team Leader and Benefits Manager	
<b>Priority 2: Aim to end all use of bed and breakfast accommodation by investing in and facilitating the delivery of good quality affordable housing and suitable temporary accommodation</b>					
<b>How this priority will be achieved</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Key Officer</b>	<b>Comments /Progress</b>
Ensure that enough ready to access temporary accommodation is available in the right location for homeless households to access support, maintain employment and education	Dec 2020 and ongoing	Within current resources	Only exceptional use of B and B required	Housing Strategy/ Operations Manager	
Ensure through the council's Housing Strategy that the council is able to deliver suitable supported housing for homeless households with complex needs, particularly single homeless households	Ongoing	Within current resources	Only exceptional use of B and B required	Housing Strategy/ Operations Manager	

Promote the council's incentive scheme which encourages households under-occupying in council stock to downsize to smaller properties	Dec 2020 and ongoing	Within current resources	Tenants housed in suitable sized properties	Housing management team Leader	
Identify opportunities for the council to develop new affordable housing on its own land or through working with Registered Providers and private developers	Ongoing	Within current resources	Year on year development program in place	Housing Strategy/ Operations Manager	
<b>Priority 3: Work with partners and other stakeholders to prevent homelessness by intervening at the earliest opportunity</b>					
<b>How this priority will be achieved</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Key Officer</b>	<b>Comments /Progress</b>
Continue to build effective working relationships with other agencies through the Homelessness partnership Work to the joint protocols i.e. 16/17 year joint protocol, Probation etc	Partnership meetings held quarterly. Protocols implemented	Within current resources			
Promote the duty to refer under the Homelessness Reduction Act and have a dedicated email address for these referrals	Dec 2020 and ongoing	Within current resources	Referral being received from all statutory partners in timely manner	Housing Options Team Leader	
Refer tenants within the private sector to appropriate support agencies to help them maintain their tenancies when difficulties first arise	April 2020 and ongoing	Within current resources	Reduced number of applicants presenting as homeless from the private sector	Housing Options Team Leader	

Have closer links between the Housing Options Team and the Housing Benefit Department	Dec 2019 and ongoing	Within current resources	Regular monthly meetings being held between departments	Housing Options Team Leader	
Review the council's Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme to see if it can provide greater incentives for private sector landlords to work with the scheme	Dec 2020	Within current resources	Increased uptake of Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme	Housing Options Team Leader	
Continue to encourage owners of empty properties to bring them back into use	Dec 2020	Within existing resources	No empty homes within district where there is not a plan for their future use	Empty Homes and Private Sector Housing Officer	
Continue to hold a Landlords Forum and review other ways to connect with landlords	Annually	Within existing resources	Information easily accessible to Private landlords. Annual Forum held. Increases	Empty Homes and Private Sector Housing Officer Housing Options	

			prevention work within the private sector	Team Leader	
<b>Priority 4: Work to maintain Uttlesford as an area without rough sleeping by ensuring that the causes of rough sleeping are not ignored</b>					
<b>How this priority will be achieved</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Key Officer</b>	<b>Comments /Progress</b>
Respond to reports of rough sleeping within 24hours and ensure that this response engages with the rough sleeper	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Rough sleepers within Uttlesford are supported out of rough sleeping	Housing Options Team Leader	
Commit to engaging with all rough sleepers to develop a Personalised Housing Plan that seeks to help them find a sustainable solution to end their homelessness	Dec 2020 and ongoing	Within existing resources	Rough sleepers within Uttlesford are supported out of rough sleeping	Housing Options Team Leader	
Accommodate rough sleepers in line with the severe weather emergency protocol.	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Rough Sleepers accommodated in line with severe weather emergency protocol	Housing Options Team Leader	

Develop closer links to voluntary and community agencies such as the foodbank, faith based organisations or local charities to promote an effective local response to anyone found rough sleeping in Uttlesford	Dec 2020 and ongoing	Within existing resources	Rough sleepers within Uttlesford are supported out of rough sleeping	Housing Options Team Leader	
Work with members of the Homelessness Partnership and other key agencies to prevent individuals and families from getting into a housing crisis	Partnership meetings held quarterly	Within existing resources	Homelessness prevention numbers increase year on year	Housing Options Team Leader	
Work with health partners to ensure that homeless households and linked into appropriate health services	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Homeless applicants have access to health care services	Housing Options Team Leader	
Make appropriate referrals to support agencies to ensure homeless households have access to support that meets all their needs	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Homeless applicants have all necessary support to resolve their homelessness	Housing Options Team Leader	

Data sharing and data analysis with statutory and voluntary partners	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Good flow of statistical information to better focus services	Housing Strategy and Operations Manager	
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