

Housing Policy Committee

**Thursday 15 December 2022 at 10.00
am**

**To be held in the Town Hall,
Pinstone Street, Sheffield, S1 2HH**

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillor Douglas Johnson
Councillor Penny Baker
Councillor Ben Curran
Councillor Sue Auckland
Councillor Fran Belbin
Councillor Denise Fox
Councillor Maleiki Haybe
Councillor Sophie Thornton
Councillor Paul Wood

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

The Housing Policy Committee discusses and takes decisions on Housing matters:

- Public sector
- Private sector
- Homelessness
- Refugee resettlement programmes
- Gypsy and traveller sites

Meetings are chaired by Councillor Douglas Johnson.

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at www.sheffield.gov.uk. You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked * on the agenda. Members of the public have the right to ask questions or submit petitions to Policy Committee meetings and recording is allowed under the direction of the Chair. Please see the [Council's Webpage](#) or contact Democratic Services for further information regarding public questions and petitions and details of the Council's protocol on audio/visual recording and photography at council meetings.

Policy Committee meetings are normally open to the public but sometimes the Committee may have to discuss an item in private. If this happens, you will be asked to leave. Any private items are normally left until last on the agenda.

Meetings of the Policy Committee have to be held as physical meetings. If you would like to attend the meeting, please report to an Attendant in the Foyer at the Town Hall where you will be directed to the meeting room. However, it would be appreciated if you could register to attend, in advance of the meeting, by emailing committee@sheffield.gov.uk, as this will assist with the management of attendance at the meeting. The meeting rooms in the Town Hall have a limited capacity. We are unable to guarantee entrance to the meeting room for observers, as priority will be given to registered speakers and those that have registered to attend.

Alternatively, you can observe the meeting remotely by clicking on the 'view the webcast' link provided on the meeting page of the [website](#).

If you wish to attend a meeting and ask a question or present a petition, you must submit the question/petition in writing by 9.00 a.m. at least 2 clear working days in advance of the date of the meeting, by email to the following address: committee@sheffield.gov.uk.

In order to ensure safe access and to protect all attendees, you will be recommended to wear a face covering (unless you have an exemption) at all times within the venue. Please do not attend the meeting if you have COVID-19 symptoms. It is also recommended that you undertake a Covid-19 Rapid Lateral Flow Test within two days of the meeting.

If you require any further information please email committee@sheffield.gov.uk.

FACILITIES

There are public toilets available, with wheelchair access, on the ground floor of the Town Hall. Induction loop facilities are available in meeting rooms. Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained through the ramp on the side to the main Town Hall entrance.

**HOUSING POLICY COMMITTEE AGENDA
15 DECEMBER 2022**

Order of Business

- 1. Welcome and Housekeeping**
The Chair to welcome attendees to the meeting and outline basic housekeeping and fire safety arrangements.
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Exclusion of Press and Public**
To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public
- 4. Declarations of Interest** (Pages 7 - 10)
Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting
- 5. Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 11 - 18)
To approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on
- 6. Public Questions and Petitions**
To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public
- 7. Work Programme** (Pages 19 - 30)
Report of Director, Legal and Governance

Formal Decisions

- 8. Gas Servicing Policy** (Pages 31 - 40)
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
- 9. Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28** (Pages 41 - 142)
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
- 10. Damp and Mould Update** (Pages 143 - 158)
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
- 11. Capital Finance Monitoring Report** (To Follow)

NOTE: The next meeting of Housing Policy Committee will be held on Thursday 2 February 2023 at 2.00 pm

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ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

If you are present at a meeting of the Council, of its Policy Committees, or of any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of the authority, and you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** (DPI) relating to any business that will be considered at the meeting, you must not:

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the meeting, participate further in any discussion of the business, or
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

You **must**:

- leave the room (in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct)
- make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any DPI at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.
- declare it to the meeting and notify the Council's Monitoring Officer within 28 days, if the DPI is not already registered.

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your **disclosable pecuniary interests** under the new national rules. You have a pecuniary interest if you, or your spouse or civil partner, have a pecuniary interest.

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner undertakes.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period* in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

*The relevant period is the 12 months ending on the day when you tell the Monitoring Officer about your disclosable pecuniary interests.

- Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority –
 - under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
 - which has not been fully discharged.

- Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.
- Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) –
 - the landlord is your council or authority; and
 - the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -
 - (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
 - (b) either -
 - the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

If you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have a **personal interest** in the matter which does not amount to a DPI, you must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent. You should leave the room if your continued presence is incompatible with the 7 Principles of Public Life (selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership).

You have a personal interest where –

- a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing (including interests in land and easements over land) of you or a member of your family or a person or an organisation with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the Authority's administrative area, or
- it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests that are defined as DPIs but are in respect of a member of your family (other than a partner) or a person with whom you have a close association.

Guidance on declarations of interest, incorporating regulations published by the Government in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, has been circulated to you previously.

You should identify any potential interest you may have relating to business to be considered at the meeting. This will help you and anyone that you ask for advice to fully consider all the circumstances before deciding what action you should take.

In certain circumstances the Council may grant a **dispensation** to permit a Member to take part in the business of the Authority even if the member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest relating to that business.

To obtain a dispensation, you must write to the Monitoring Officer at least 48 hours before the meeting in question, explaining why a dispensation is sought and desirable, and specifying the period of time for which it is sought. The Monitoring Officer may consult with the Independent Person or the Council's Standards Committee in relation to a request for dispensation.

Further advice can be obtained from David Hollis, Interim Director of Legal and Governance by emailing david.hollis@sheffield.gov.uk.

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Housing Policy Committee

Meeting held 10 November 2022

PRESENT: Councillors Douglas Johnson (Chair), Ben Curran (Group Spokesperson), Sue Auckland, Fran Belbin, Denise Fox, Maleiki Haybe, Sophie Thornton and Cliff Woodcraft (Substitute Member)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Penny Baker and Paul Wood.

2. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

2.1 It was explained that the appendices at items 9 and 10 in the agenda were not available to the public and press because it contained exempt information described in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) relating to financial and business affairs. It was proposed and agreed to moved items 9 & 10 to the end of the meeting and the Committee were asked to formally exclude the public and press for the discussions on those items to allow for consideration of the sensitive information.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no formal declarations of interest made at the meeting.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15th Sept 2022 were approved as a correct record.

4.1.1 Matters Arising

Cllr Douglas Johnson enquired about the responses to Geoff Cox and Emily Proctor from the June meeting and it was clarified that verbal responses to questions were included in the minutes of meetings and published on the website (see section 5.3 and 5.4 of the June published minutes).

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 Jennifer Fortune attended the Committee and asked the following question which the Chair answered:

Q1. Is the full amount of £90 million budgeted for the GV refurbishment

secured now? If not, how much exactly has been secured and what are the plans for securing the rest of £90 million?

A1. This was agreed by the Council in March 2021. The estimated cost is contained within the Council's Housing Investment Programme. For some areas like new build assumptions were made around the level of grant towards the cost and these are updated annually alongside the annual review of costs which also takes place annually to take account of current costs, inflation etc.

Q2. Which council officer lead and department in the council is in charge of the refurbishment of the existing housing?

A2. The Housing Service is in charge of this programme. My Head of Service Dean Butterworth is lead and we have appointed Dan Parry King is the Lead Project Manager for the delivery of the Masterplan.

Q3. What steps have been taken to establish a training and apprenticeship scheme in relation to a zero carbon retrofitting refurbishment that will be targeted at young people living on the Gleadless Valley estate?

A3. This forms part of the Council's procurement strategy for all capital procurement, not just for Gleadless Valley.

Q4. What exactly are the Building Standards and heating methods that will be used in the re-furbishment of the council housing on Gleadless valley estate in order to achieve zero carbon by 2030?

A4. The plans for Gleadless Valley are not to bring all homes to Net Zero, existing homes to EPC C or the National Decent Homes Standard. If we can secure any external funding we will try and exceed this standard where this is affordable. New Build will meet current Building Regulation Standards/ Legislation which is at a higher performance standard at close to net zero.

6. WORK PROGRAMME

- 6.1 The Principal Democratic Services Officer presented the Work Programme and informed Committee that although it contained suggestions for what it may contain, it was up to the Committee to decide. The Committee were asked to agree the set of recommendations in the report and give consideration to any necessary additions and amendments. Referrals in section 2.0 of the report were also pointed out.
- 6.1.1 The Chair pointed out the movement of items on the agenda. Cllr Curran expressed a wish to have a review of the Allocations Policy at a future meeting. Cllr Auckland raised questions around the confirmation of dates and times for certain items. It was acknowledged that certain

reports need to be brought forwards and it was stated that future work would be carried out to ensure that. It was explained that the Allocations Policy is being given more time to engage Members and discuss.

6.1.2 RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

1. That the Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed, including any additions and amendments identified in Part 1;
2. That consideration be given to the further additions or adjustments to the work programme presented at Part 2 of Appendix 1; and
3. That Members give consideration to any further issues to be explored by officers for inclusion in Part 2 of Appendix 1 of the next work programme report, for potential addition to the work programme.

7. SCC RESPONSE TO GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON THE RENT STANDARD

7.1 The Director of Housing introduced the report which provided the Housing Policy Committee with a copy of the response to the Secretary of State on changes to the Rent Standard. The response was approved in October by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Housing Policy Committee in conjunction with the Leader to meet the consultation deadline and submitted on behalf of Sheffield City Council.

7.2 RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Housing Policy Committee:-

1. Notes the response that was submitted and the implications on the Housing Revenue Account that were highlighted.
2. Notes that a further report will be submitted to the Housing Policy Committee once the outcomes of the consultation are known to inform a decision regarding council housing rents for 2023/24.

7.3 Reasons for Decision

7.3.1 Members are asked to note the response provided and the potential impacts on the Housing Revenue Account noted in the response. The Council are unable to set rents for council housing until the outcome of the consultation is known. A further report will be required to the Housing Policy Committee and/or to Strategy and Resources Committee to confirm council housing rents for 2022/23 depending on when the final determination is issued.

7.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

7.4.1 The Secretary of State provided the opportunity for Registered Providers to respond to their consultation proposals. There are significant potential implications arising from the proposals, so it was important for the Council to respond to highlight these to the government in the required timescales.

8. INTRODUCTORY TENANCIES

8.1 The Director of Housing introduced the report which sought approval to elect to operate an Introductory Tenancies regime for all new council tenants. The Report outlined the statutory framework under which the council may choose to operate Introductory Tenancies, and the rationale for taking that course of action.

8.1.1 Some discussion took place surrounding tenancy management, support options, legal processes, accommodation options, commissioning services, independent living, Housing First, dispersed temporary accommodation, Stock Increased Programme, private landlord accommodation, anti-social behaviour, tenancy breaches and the repairs service.

8.2 **RESOLVED:** That the Housing Policy Committee:-

1. To approve the adoption and operation of an Introductory Tenancies regime (ITR), the key consequence of which would be that all new council tenants would be on a non-secure tenancy for the initial probationary period (12 to 18 months). The aim will be to implement this change on or after 01/04/2023.

8.3 **Reasons for Decision**

8.3.1 The recommendation of the paper is to adopt an Introductory Tenancies regime. It is vital that SCC take every action to effectively manage the increasingly scarce supply of social housing in the city. The policy allows us to do this better by allowing SCC to make use of streamlined legal pathways to seeking possession of a property where there have been serious breaches of the tenancy agreement – something other Local Authorities in core cities are making use of currently. Further, it would bring SCC in line with registered providers in the city and other South Yorkshire local authorities, meaning that Sheffield would no longer be making the necessary process of seeking possession of tenancies harder than it is for our peer organisations and operating a more generous regime. Finally, the consultation undertaken clearly illustrates the desire of the public and our tenants to implement a policy of this nature, reinforcing the notion that people are at the heart of what we do and that we listen to our customers in making decisions. Adopting this policy would signal to our tenants and other customers that we are committed to taking action, when necessary, in a fair, consistent and proportionate manner and is therefore the recommendation of the paper.

8.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

8.4.1 The primary alternate option is 'do nothing' and opt not to implement an Introductory Tenancies regime. The decision to adopt is discretionary, meaning the Council is not required to do so. The Council has been operating without Introductory Tenancies since their introduction in legislation, and therefore this is considered a viable option. However, this option is not recommended, as it would deny the Council a useful tenancy management tool at a time when effective management of our housing stock is increasing in both difficulty and importance. Further, it would not be taking all possible steps to improve customer outcomes when there is strong tenant voice to have a fair and effective approach to dealing with violations of tenancy agreements, as demonstrated by the fact that a large majority of those consulted were in favour of this policy.

(NOTE: The result of the vote on the resolution was FOR – 7 Members; AGAINST – 1 Member; ABSTENSIONS – 0 Members)

9. HOUSING STRATEGY TASK AND FINISH GROUP

9.1 The Chair introduced the report which sought approval to appoint a Task and Finish Group to oversee work to develop a new Housing Strategy. It was explained that Membership would be drawn from the Housing Policy Committee. The Terms of Reference of the Group were appended to the report.

9.1.1 A brief discussion around the membership of the group took place for clarification.

9.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Housing Policy Committee:-

1. Approve the appointment of a Task and Finish Group on the terms described in this report to oversee work to develop a new Housing Strategy

9.3 Reasons for Decision

9.3.1 The Task and Finish Group will bring together a small, focused group of members to examine key housing policy issues and provide clear advice to officers developing the strategy. Cross party representation will mean that political agreement is reached at an early stage of the process allowing the strategy to progress. This has been a significant barrier to the Strategy's development in the past.

9.3.2 The group will feedback advice given, and progress on the work programme to the Housing Policy Committee, so the Committee can make informed decisions on the Housing Strategy.

9.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

9.4.1 An alternative would be to deliver a series of Knowledge Briefings for the Housing Policy Committee. This was rejected as it would not enable constructive debate and advice to be provided to officers.

10. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - MONTH 6

10.1 The Director of Finance and Commercial Services introduced the report which brought the Committee up to date with the Council's financial position as at Month 6 2022/23 including General Fund revenue position, Housing Revenue Account.

10.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Housing Policy Committee:-

1. Note the Council's financial position as at the end of September 2022 (month 6).

10.3 Reasons for Decision

10.3.1 This paper was to bring the committee up to date with the Council's current financial position as at Month 6 2022/23 including Revenue General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.

10.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 10.4.1 The Council is required to both set a balance budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. No other alternatives were considered.

11. CAPITAL FINANCE MONITORING REPORT

- 11.1 The Head of Housing Investment and Maintenance introduce the report which provided information on how the Housing Investment Programme (Capital) brings together the 30-year Asset Management Strategy for Council Housing that sets out the priorities for investment and, to ensure that homes meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard and, delivery of tenants' priorities to improve the quality of homes and neighbourhoods. Investment priorities are formulated from detailed stock condition and other surveys to ensure effective planning of works, repairs intelligence, life-cycle modelling and, feedback from tenants.

The Housing Investment Programme is co-designed and agreed with tenants for Council Housing stock.

The Housing Capital Programme is split into three distinct areas of activity; Council Housing Investment (existing stock and assets) and the Council's Stock Increase Programme, funded from the Council's Housing Revenue Account, as described in the annual HRA Business Plan. There is also the Non-HRA Capital Programme which includes the Programme Management, Homes & Loans to private homes and investment in private homes. The table at 1.8 how the overall Housing Capital Programme split between Council Housing Investment, Stock Increase and Non-HRA areas of the programme.

The purpose of the report was to provide an update of the progress against the approved 2022/23 Housing Investment Programme, this is reported regularly as part of the Council's Corporate Capital Programme to Strategy and Resources Committee normally on a quarterly basis. The report focussed on providing an update with regard to spend and progress against the 22/23 Housing Investment Programme as at September 2022. The report also provided an update of the 5-year Housing Investment Programme.

- 11.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Housing Policy Committee:-

1. Note the 2022-23 Housing Capital Programme forecasting and budget position at the end of period 6.

11.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 11.3.1 The report was to provide the Housing Policy Committee members with an update on progress against the approved 5-year approved Capital programme.

11.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 11.4.1 No alternative options were considered as part of the update report.

12. GENERAL FUND BUDGET POSITION FOR YEAR 2023/2024

12.1 The Chair reiterated that the report contained a closed appendix, which if discussed would require a closed session.

12.1.1 The Director of Finance and Commercial Services introduced the report which updated the Policy Committee on the progress of the 2023/24 budget process. The appendix contained specific budget proposals that the Housing Policy Committee were asked to endorse.

12.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Housing Policy Committee:-

1. Note the update on the Council's 2023/24 budget position.
2. Endorse the budget proposals set out in Appendix 1

12.3 **Reasons for Decision**

12.3.1 The Council is required by law to set a balanced budget each year. This report is pursuant to that objective and is in line with the process and timetable agreed by the Strategy and Resources Committee on 31 May 2022 and 5 July 2022.

12.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

12.4.1 The Council is required to both set a balance budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. No other alternatives were considered.

13. HRA BUSINESS PLAN 2023/24

13.1 The Director of Finance and Commercial Services introduced the report which provided a breakdown of the pressures and mitigation/savings options for the Housing Revenue Account in 2023/24. Members were asked to endorse the mitigation options presented in the paper.

13.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Housing Policy Committee:-

1. Endorses the Housing Revenue Account savings proposals/mitigations as set out in this report and recommends to the Strategy and Resources Committee that they be approved as part of the Council's budget for 2023/24
2. Request a further report on the Housing Revenue Account Business plan at their February meeting with details of the full capital and revenue expenditure proposals for 2023/24
3. Acknowledge that the final decision on council housing rents will be taken at the Full Council in February once the outcome of the government consultation on the Rent Standard is known.

13.3 **Reasons for Decision**

13.3.1 Members were asked to note the unsustainable financial position highlighted by the medium-term financial analysis presented to Strategy and Resources Committee in July 2022. The report and its recommendations, set out the scale of the challenge ahead, the limited resources available and the difficult decisions that need to be taken to deliver a balanced HRA budget for 2023/24.

13.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 13.4.1 The Council is required to both set a balanced HRA budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. No other alternatives were considered.



Report to Housing Committee

15th December 2022

Report of: David Hollis, Interim Director of Legal and Governance

Subject: Committee Work Programme

Author of Report: Rachel Marshall, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Summary:

The Committee's Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for the Committee's consideration and discussion. This aims to show all known, substantive agenda items for forthcoming meetings of the Committee, to enable this committee, other committees, officers, partners and the public to plan their work with and for the Committee.

Any changes since the Committee's last meeting, including any new items, have been made in consultation with the Chair, and the document is always considered at the regular pre-meetings to which all Group Spokespersons are invited.

The following potential sources of new items are included in this report, where applicable:

- Questions and petitions from the public, including those referred from Council
- References from Council or other committees (statements formally sent for this committee's attention)
- A list of issues, each with a short summary, which have been identified by the Committee or officers as potential items but which have not yet been scheduled (See Appendix 1)

The Work Programme will remain a live document and will be brought to each Committee meeting.

Recommendations:

1. That the Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed, including any additions and amendments identified in Part 1;
2. That consideration be given to the further additions or adjustments to the work programme presented at Part 2 of Appendix 1;
3. That Members give consideration to any further issues to be explored by officers for inclusion in Part 2 of Appendix 1 of the next work programme report, for potential addition to the work programme;

Background Papers: None

Category of Report: Open

COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

1.0 Prioritisation

1.1 For practical reasons this committee has a limited amount of time each year in which to conduct its formal business. The Committee will need to prioritise firmly in order that formal meetings are used primarily for business requiring formal decisions, or which for other reasons it is felt must be conducted in a formal setting.

1.2 In order to ensure that prioritisation is effectively done, on the basis of evidence and informed advice, Members should usually avoid adding items to the work programme which do not already appear:

- In the draft work programme in Appendix 1 due to the discretion of the chair; or
- within the body of this report accompanied by a suitable amount of information

2.0 References from Council or other Committees

2.1 Any references sent to this Committee by Council, including any public questions, petitions and motions, or other committees since the last meeting are listed here, with commentary and a proposed course of action, as appropriate:

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Issue 1 | |
| Referred from | |
| <i>Details</i> | |
| <i>Commentary/ Action Proposed</i> | |

3.0 Member engagement, learning and policy development outside of Committee

3.1 Subject to the capacity and availability of councillors and officers, there are a range of ways in which Members can explore subjects, monitor information and develop their ideas about forthcoming decisions outside of formal meetings. Appendix 2 is an example 'menu' of some of the ways this could be done. It is entirely

appropriate that member development, exploration and policy development should in many cases take place in a private setting, to allow members to learn and formulate a position in a neutral space before bringing the issue into the public domain at a formal meeting.

2.2 Training & Skills Development - Induction programme for this committee.

| Title | Description & Format | Date |
|-------|----------------------|------|
| | | |

Appendix 1 – Work Programme

Part 1: Proposed additions and amendments to the work programme since the last meeting:

| Item | Proposed Date | Note |
|--|----------------------|---|
| Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 23/24 | 2 February 2023 | Approval of the detailed actions within the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan budget approved by Full Council |
| Asbestos Management Plan for Non-Domestic and Domestic Property | None | Removed from non-allocation table. |
| Garage and Outhouses Repair and Investment Strategy | None | Removed from non-allocation table. |
| Shared Ownership Policy | None | Removed from February meeting. |
| Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy- Action Plan | 2 February 2023 | The action plan is needed in order to provide the details on how the Strategy will be delivered. |
| Domestic Heating Strategy | None | Removed from February meeting. |
| Commercial heating strategy and plans | None | Removed from February meeting. |
| Communal Areas Investment Strategy | None | Removed from February meeting. |

Part 2: List of other potential items not yet included in the work programme

Issues that have recently been identified by the Committee, its Chair or officers as potential items but have not yet been added to the proposed work programme. If a Councillor raises an idea in a meeting and the committee agrees under recommendation 3 that this should be explored, it will appear either in the work programme or in this section of the report at the committee’s next meeting, at the discretion of the Chair.

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Topic | |
| Description | |
| Lead Officer/s | |
| Item suggested by | <i>Officer, Member, Committee, partners, public question, petition etc</i> |

| | |
|---|--|
| Type of item | <i>Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</i> |
| Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 2)</i> | |
| Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 3)</i> | |
| Lead Officer Commentary/Proposed Action(s) | |

Part 3: Agenda Items for Forthcoming Meetings

| Meeting 4 | 15 December 2022 | Time | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Topic | Description | Lead Officer/s | Type of item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision Referral to decision-maker Pre-decision (policy development) Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring) | <i>(re: decisions)</i> Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i> | <i>(re: decisions)</i> Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i> | Final decision-maker (& date) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Cttee Another Cttee (eg S&R) Full Council Officer |
| Gas Servicing Policy and Procedure | Approval of a new policy and procedure for managing gas servicing cases and enforcement of annual inspections | Alison Charlesworth | Decision | Yes | | This Committee |
| Homelessness prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy | Approval of Final Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy | Suzanne Allen | Decision | Yes | | This Committee |

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|------------------|---|-----|--|----------------|
| SCC approach to tackling damp and mould | <i>SCC approach to dealing with damp and mould in homes following recent Government interventions</i> | Dean Butterworth | Service monitoring | No | | This Committee |
| Standing items | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public Questions/ Petitions</i> • <i>Work Programme</i> • <i>[any other committee-specific standing items eg finance or service monitoring]</i> | | | | | |
| Capital Finance Monitoring Report | Approval of Capital Finance Monitoring Report | Janet Sharpe | Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring) | N/A | | N/A |

| Meeting 5 | 2 February 2023 | Time | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Topic | Description | Lead Officer/s | Type of item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Decision</i> • <i>Referral to decision-maker</i> • <i>Pre-decision (policy development)</i> • <i>Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</i> | <i>(re: decisions)</i> Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i> | <i>(re: decisions)</i> Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i> | Final decision-maker (& date) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Cttee • Another Cttee (eg S&R) • Full Council • Officer |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|----------------|---|---|---|----------------|
| Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Fees | Approval of annual charges for Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Fees | Jonathan South | Decision | Yes | | This Committee |
| Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 23/24 | Approval of the detailed actions within the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan budget approved by Full Council | Janet Sharpe | Decision | Yes | | Full Council |
| Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy- Action Plan | An action plan is required to detail how the priorities within the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy will be delivered. | Suzanne Allen | Decision | Knowledge Briefings 17th November 2022, 01st December 2022 Full Strategy to Committee 15th December 2022 | Public participation and engagement detailed in full strategy | This Committee |
| Standing items | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public Questions/ Petitions</i> • <i>Work Programme</i> • <i>[any other committee-specific standing items eg finance or service monitoring]</i> | | | | | |
| Revenue Finance Monitoring Report | Approval of Revenue Finance Monitoring Report | Ryan Keyworth | Post-decision | N/A | | N/A |
| Capital Finance Monitoring Report | Approval of Capital Finance Monitoring Report | Janet Sharpe | Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring) | N/A | | N/A |

| Meeting 6 | 10 March 2023 | Time | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|----------------|--|--|--|---|
| Topic | Description | Lead Officer/s | Type of item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision Referral to decision-maker Pre-decision (policy development) Post-decision (service performance/monitoring) | (re: decisions) Prior member engagement/development required (with reference to options in Appendix 1) | (re: decisions) Public Participation/Engagement approach (with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2) | Final decision-maker (& date) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Cttee Another Cttee (eg S&R) Full Council Officer |
| Housing Strategy | Approve final Housing Strategy | Suzanne Allen | Referral to decision maker | Yes | | This Committee and Full Council |
| HNS and Repairs Performance Report | Bi-annual overview of HNS and Repairs Service performance (including Capital Programme and Stock Increase Programme updates) | Janet Sharpe | Post-decision (service performance/monitoring) | N/A | | This Committee |
| Standing items | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Questions/Petitions Work Programme [any other committee-specific standing items eg finance or service monitoring] | | | | | |
| Revenue Finance Monitoring Report | Approval of Revenue Finance Monitoring Report | Ryan Keyworth | N/A | | N/A | N/A |
| Capital Finance Monitoring Report | Approval of Capital Finance Monitoring Report | Janet Sharpe | N/A | | N/A | N/A |

| Items which the committee have agreed to add to an agenda, but for which no date is yet set. | | | | | | |
|--|---|-----------------|--|--|--|---|
| Topic | Description | Lead Officer/s | Type of item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision Referral to decision-maker Pre-decision (policy development) Post-decision (service performance/monitoring) | <i>(re: decisions)</i> Prior member engagement/development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i> | <i>(re: decisions)</i> Public Participation/Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i> | Final decision-maker (& date) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Cttee Another Cttee (eg S&R) Full Council Officer |
| Charged Gardening Scheme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of a charged gardening scheme for council tenants | Helen Scott | Policy and Implementation | Yes | | This Committee |
| Service Charges and Consultation arrangements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of the possible introduction of service charges for council tenants | Carl Mullooly | Pre-decision (policy development) – to commence formal consultation. | Yes | | This Committee |
| Net-Zero Roadmap - for existing public and private homes | Approval of plans for achieving Net Zero across SCC homes - Stage 1 | Nathan Robinson | Decision | Yes | | This Committee |
| Consultation on amendments to the Allocations Policy | Approval of proposed Allocation Policy amendments | David Wilkinson | Re-decisions (Policy development) | Yes | | This Committee |
| Gleadless Valley Delivery Plan | | | | | | |
| Older Persons Independent Living Strategy | | | | | | |

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|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Gypsy and Traveller New Pitch and Sites Plan | | | | | | |
| Housing-related Support Review | | | | | | |

Appendix 2 – Menu of options for member engagement, learning and development prior to formal Committee consideration

Members should give early consideration to the degree of pre-work needed before an item appears on a formal agenda.

All agenda items will anyway be supported by the following:

- Discussion well in advance as part of the work programme item at Pre-agenda meetings. These take place in advance of each formal meeting, before the agenda is published and they consider the full work programme, not just the immediate forthcoming meeting. They include the Chair, Vice Chair and all Group Spokespersons from the committee, with officers
- Discussion and, where required, briefing by officers at pre-committee meetings in advance of each formal meeting, after the agenda is published. These include the Chair, Vice Chair and all Group Spokespersons from the committee, with officers.
- Work Programming items on each formal agenda, as part of an annual and ongoing work programming exercise
- Full officer report on a public agenda, with time for a public discussion in committee
- Officer meetings with Chair & VC as representatives of the committee, to consider addition to the draft work programme, and later to inform the overall development of the issue and report, for the committee's consideration.

The following are examples of some of the optional ways in which the committee may wish to ensure that they are sufficiently engaged and informed prior to taking a public decision on a matter. In all cases the presumption is that these will take place in private, however some meetings could happen in public or eg be reported to the public committee at a later date.

These options are presented in approximately ascending order of the amount of resources needed to deliver them. Members must prioritise carefully, in consultation with officers, which items require what degree of involvement and information in advance of committee meetings, in order that this can be delivered within the officer capacity available.

The majority of items cannot be subject to the more involved options on this list, for reasons of officer capacity.

- Written briefing for the committee or all members (email)
- All-member newsletter (email)
- Requests for information from specific outside bodies etc.
- All-committee briefings (private or, in exceptional cases, in-committee)
- All-member briefing (virtual meeting)
- Facilitated policy development workshop (potential to invite external experts / public, see appendix 2)
- Site visits (including to services of the council)
- Task and Finish group (one at a time, one per cttee)

Furthermore, a range of public participation and engagement options are available to inform Councillors, see appendix 3.

Appendix 3 – Public engagement and participation toolkit

Public Engagement Toolkit

On 23 March 2022 Full Council agreed the following:

A toolkit to be developed for each committee to use when considering its 'menu of options' for ensuring the voice of the public has been central to their policy development work. Building on the developing advice from communities and Involve, committees should make sure they have a clear purpose for engagement; actively support diverse communities to engage; match methods to the audience and use a range of methods; build on what's worked and existing intelligence (SCC and elsewhere); and be very clear to participants on the impact that engagement will have.

The list below builds on the experiences of Scrutiny Committees and latterly the Transitional Committees and will continue to develop. The toolkit includes (but is not be limited to):

- a. Public calls for evidence
- b. Issue-focused workshops with attendees from multiple backgrounds (sometimes known as 'hackathons') led by committees
- c. Creative use of online engagement channels
- d. Working with VCF networks (eg including the Sheffield Equality Partnership) to seek views of communities
- e. Co-design events on specific challenges or to support policy development
- f. Citizens assembly style activities
- g. Stakeholder reference groups (standing or one-off)
- h. Committee / small group visits to services
- i. Formal and informal discussion groups
- j. Facilitated communities of interest around each committee (eg a mailing list of self-identified stakeholders and interested parties with regular information about forthcoming decisions and requests for contributions or volunteers for temporary co-option)
- k. Facility for medium-term or issue-by-issue co-option from outside the Council onto Committees or Task and Finish Groups. Co-optees of this sort at Policy Committees would be non-voting.

This public engagement toolkit is intended to be a quick 'how-to' guide for Members and officers to use when undertaking participatory activity through committees.

It will provide an overview of the options available, including the above list, and cover:

- How to focus on purpose and who we are trying to reach
- When to use and when not to use different methods
- How to plan well and be clear to citizens what impact their voice will have
- How to manage costs, timescales, scale.

There is an expectation that Members and Officers will be giving strong consideration to the public participation and engagement options for each item on a committee's work programme, with reference to the above list a-k.



Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Alison Charlesworth, Service Manager

Tel: 0114 2039150

Report of: *Alison Charlesworth*
Report to: *Housing Policy Committee*
Date of Decision: *15th December 2022*
Subject: *Gas Servicing Policy*

| | | | | |
|---|-----|-------------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------|
| Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken? | Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 1340 | | | | |
| Has appropriate consultation taken place? | Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:- | | | | |
| <p><i>“The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i></p> | | | | |

Purpose of Report:

To seek approval of a new policy on gas servicing.

We have not had a policy relating to gas servicing before as we have legal and statutory duties to carry out the annual safety inspections. This policy provides a clear position statement of those duties and Sheffield City Council’s commitment to achieve 100% compliance.

Recommendations:

That the Housing Policy Committee –

- 1) Approve the Gas Safety Policy for Sheffield City Council*

Background Papers:

Appendix 1 – Gas Servicing Policy

| Lead Officer to complete:- | | |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required. | Finance: <i>Helen Damon</i> |
| | | Legal: <i>Stephen Tonge</i> |
| | | Equalities & Consultation: <i>Louise Nunn</i> |
| | | Climate: <i>N/A</i> |
| | <i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i> | |
| 2 | EMT member who approved submission: | <i>Ajman Ali</i> |
| 3 | Committee Chair consulted: | <i>Councillor Douglas Johnson</i> |
| 4 | I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1. | |
| | Lead Officer Name: <i>Alison Charlesworth</i> | Job Title: <i>Service Manager, Repairs Policy and Improvement Team</i> |
| | Date: <i>28th November 2022</i> | |

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 Sheffield City Council has specific duties under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 as amended in 2018. This requires any gas appliance in a property that is owned by Sheffield City Council and subsequently let, must be inspected for Gas Safety within 12 months of its installation and within every subsequent 12-month period thereafter.
- 1.2 At the current time Sheffield City Council does not have a policy statement that outlines these responsibilities and our duties under the legislation. We feel that we should introduce a clear policy that can be shared with customers that shows our duties and outlines our intention to comply with the law.
- 1.3 Sheffield City Council aims to protect the occupiers of its properties, visitors, staff, contractors and the public, from the risks associated with the usage of gas for domestic purposes. Sheffield City Council will conduct a programme of gas safety checks to all its domestic properties where a gas supply is installed and aims to hold a valid Gas Safety Certificate for 100% of these properties.
- 1.4 Alongside the requirements outlined in law Sheffield City Council will also be required to report to the Regulator of Social Housing, its performance in meeting its compliance obligations. The Regulator of Social Housing has a set of four consumer standards, one of which relates to the standard of homes. As part of the repairs and maintenance standard Sheffield City Council will need to ensure that we can meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?

- 2.1 This policy plays a part in helping the Council meet its commitments in the Council's wider One Year Plan - Communities and Neighbourhoods. Every community in Sheffield should be a great place to live, with excellent local services, access to high quality green spaces, and a great local centre; where everyone has a home they are proud of, that suits their needs, and that supports their health; where everyone feels safe and is able to live without fear of prejudice or discrimination; where people get along and everyone can play a full part in the life of their local area, and have an expectation of health, wellbeing and happiness.
- 2.2 The Housing and Neighbourhood Service Plan has a key theme of Safe Spaces which states that our delivery outcomes meet our Landlord Commitment to 'take care of your neighbourhood' and the Regulator themes and Tenancy and Neighbourhoods. This includes having safe homes and buildings.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 It has not been relevant to consult on this policy as the duties are legislative and statutory in nature.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 The Council has a duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the public sector equality duty) in the exercise of its functions to have regard to the need to:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This duty has been considered in creating this Gas Servicing Policy.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 There are no direct financial or commercial implications for this policy.
- 4.2.2 The cost of gas servicing is funded by the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA), as part of its repairing and maintaining obligations and is included in the existing revenue repairs budget. The services are carried out by the Council's Repairs Maintenance Service (RMS).
- 4.2.3 Additional staffing resources will be required in the Repairs Policy and Improvements Team (RPIT) within the Housing and Neighbourhoods Service to implement the policy, to manage the procedure for failed access. The cost of this additional resource will be around £280k per year, this additional cost will need to be managed within the existing available resources within the HRA.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 The Council is under a statutory obligation to undertake the gas servicing work annually. The obligations are set out in Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (as amended). As such the Council is not

required by law to have a policy per se but officers consider that the Council and its tenants would be best served in implementing a policy. The Gas Servicing Policy contained in Appendix 1 sufficiently explains the legal aspects.

4.3.2 The Council is a regulated provider of social housing and must comply with the Regulator of Social Housing's Regulatory Standards including the Home Standard that includes the requirement to "meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes". Compliance with Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 through this Policy will enable the Council to discharged its regulatory obligations.

4.3.3 Insofar as the legal enforcement remedies are concerned the Council is able to seek injunction orders requiring the tenant to permit access for the gas servicing to take place, to seek possession for persistent refusals to allow access for that purpose and now intends to utilise measures provided under environmental legislation (Environmental Protection Act 1990). The latter option is a remedy employed by other authorities to address this issue but not as yet by this Council. As such it will require monitoring as to its effectiveness. The Councils Legal Service has advised relevant officers including the author of this report as to the pros and cons of employing the EPA 1990.

4.4 Climate Implications

4.4.1 None

4.4 Other Implications

4.4.1 None

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Sheffield City Council are not required to have a clear policy for gas servicing due to the legal and statutory obligations to carry out this activity, but we feel it is best practice to have one in place.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 It is recommended that the Housing Policy Committee approve this policy.

Sheffield City Council Gas Safety Policy

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Author | Pete Hoyland (HME Team Manager) |
| Date compiled | November 2022 |
| Date for document update | Next review due April 2025 |
| Document version | 1.0 |
| Sponsor | Dean Butterworth (Head of Service) |

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Aims and principles
3. Legislation and guidance
4. Implementation and policy key responsibilities
5. Quality control and monitoring
6. Legal Action
7. Vulnerable customers
8. Review

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Policy illustrates how Sheffield City Council will comply with the UK Government's Social Housing Regulatory Framework (2017) regarding gas compliance.

1.2 Sheffield City Council has specific duties under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 as amended in 2018. This requires any gas appliance in a property that is owned by Sheffield City Council and subsequently let, must be inspected for Gas Safety within 12 months of its installation and within every subsequent 12-month period thereafter.

2.0 Aims and principles

2.1 Sheffield City Council aims to protect the occupiers of its properties, visitors, staff, contractors, and the public, from the risks associated with the usage of gas for domestic purposes. Sheffield City Council will conduct a programme of gas safety checks to all its domestic properties where a gas supply is installed and aims to hold a valid Gas Safety Certificate (CP12) for 100% of these properties.

In-addition we will:

- Repair and maintain gas pipework, flues and appliances in a safe condition
- Ensure an annual gas safety check on each appliance and flue
- Keep accurate records of each safety check
- Advise customers of their tenancy responsibilities

2.2 Sheffield City Council will operate an "MOT Style" programme. This means that the gas safety check can be completed up to 60 days before the current certificate expiry date whilst preserving the original expiry date.

2.3 Sheffield City Council will ensure that an operational smoke detection device is installed to each floor of the property as part of the gas servicing regime.

2.4 Sheffield City Council aims to undertake this gas safety obligation whilst respecting the welfare and wellbeing of its customers and with adherence to the Equalities Act 2010.

3.0 Legislation and guidance

3.1 Sheffield City Council will meet its obligations under the following legislation and guidance:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (Amended 2018)
- UK Gov. Social Housing Regulatory Framework (2017)

4.0 Implementation and policy key responsibilities

4.1 The Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services and The Director of Direct Services will jointly take overall accountability for the policy and procedures. This will include ensuring the following –

- responsibility for ensuring the policy is implemented, including the legal aspect of the failed access procedure.
- the policy is implemented in adherence with procedural measures as outlined in our procedure and process document.
- responsibility for conducting an adequate ‘fit for purpose’ maintenance and repairs service, including the completion of the annual gas safety inspection.
- responsibility for ensuring adequate resources are available to meet the policy aims and objectives.

5.0 Quality control and monitoring

5.1 To ensure that we have adequate quality control and monitoring in place we will hold accurate information and performance data, including but not limited to: -

- The number of non-compliant properties at any specific time
- Details of when all properties were last inspected, and their appliances serviced
- For properties that fail access, all historic data necessary to comply with the failed access procedure e.g., frequency of visits and appointments, failed entry attempts etc.

6.0 Legal Action

6.1 Sheffield City Council will pursue legal action to enter Council owned properties where necessary. This is set out in our tenancy conditions in 'You and Your Home' under condition 29 which states:

"You must allow our employees, agents or contractors to enter the property to inspect the property, carry out repairs or improvements, service appliances or carry out any of our duties."

6.2 The specific legal measures taken by the Council will vary depending on individual circumstances of each case, including but not limited to: -

- Warrant application
- Injunction application
- EPA application (Environmental Protection Act)
- Possession proceedings

7.0 Vulnerable customers

7.1 We will make every effort to identify vulnerable tenants and highlight how this may impact on their ability to manage their property and sustain a successful tenancy. We will treat vulnerable tenants sensitively, and adapt our working practices where appropriate, to ensure they do not face any additional barriers when accessing our service. We will record vulnerable tenants on our systems and use this information to ensure we tailor our service to their needs.

8.0 Review

8.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years. We will ensure the policy is available on the Council's website and in hard copies if customers request this.

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Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: (Suzanne Allen)

Tel: (01142734326 or 07966977923)

Report of: Ajman Ali, Executive Director-Operational Services
Report to: *Housing Policy Committee*
Date of Decision: *15th December 2022*
Subject: *Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28*

| | | | | |
|---|-----|-------------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------|
| Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken? | Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? (1212) | | | | |
| Has appropriate consultation taken place? | Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:- | | | | |

Purpose of Report:

This Report seeks approval of the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28. The Report will outline the statutory framework under which the Council has developed the strategy and the rationale for taking this course of action.

Recommendations:

The Housing Policy Committee is recommended to:

- a) Approve the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28

Background Papers:

(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)

| Lead Officer to complete:- | |
|---|---|
| 1 | I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required. |
| | Finance: <i>Helen Damon</i> |
| | Legal: <i>Stephen Tonge</i> |
| | Equalities & Consultation: <i>Louise Nunn</i> |
| | Climate: <i>Jessica Rick</i> |
| | <i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i> |
| 2 | EMT member who approved submission: <i>Ajman Ali, Executive Director, Operational Services</i> |
| 3 | Committee Chair consulted: <i>Cllr Douglas Johnson</i> |
| 4 | I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1. |
| | Lead Officer Name: <i>Suzanne Allen</i> |
| | Job Title: <i>Head of City Wide Housing Services</i> |
| Date: 5th December 2022 | |

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 1. | PROPOSAL |
| | <i>(Explain the proposal, current position and need for change, including any evidence considered, and indicate whether this is something the Council is legally required to do, or whether it is something it is choosing to do)</i> |
| 1.1 | The Sheffield Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2023-28, which is attached as an appendix to this report, sets out the vision, strategic direction and priorities for homelessness prevention and reduction in Sheffield over the next 5 years. It supports our corporate priorities and will form a key chapter of the new Housing Strategy. It also complements other Sheffield City Council partnership strategies and programmes of work that encourage independence and target help to the most vulnerable. |
| 1.2 | It is a legal requirement of the Homelessness Act 2002 for Local Authorities to publish a new Homelessness Strategy, based on the results of a further homelessness review every five years. Our current strategy expires in January 2023. |
| 1.3 | <p>We have co-produced this five-year citywide strategy with our partners and customers to ensure we have an effective and inclusive response to prevent homelessness, provide appropriate housing options, and give the support needed for independent living. We have support from customers, stakeholders, senior leadership, and Councillors who are committed to the importance of preventing homelessness and making Sheffield a fair city where everybody has somewhere to call home. We have worked with them over the last year within the Strategy Steering Group to ensure that it is a city-wide strategy which all partners can take ownership of.</p> <p>Work on a draft action plan with partners is ongoing to enable better collaboration and joined-up service provision. We will launch the strategy with the following committee sign-off and hold workshops on each theme to discuss the action plan, highlighting which actions their organisation can lead on and adding any additional relevant actions. We will then bring the action plan to a later committee for a further sign-off.</p> |
| 1.4 | <p>A review of homelessness in Sheffield has been undertaken to inform the Strategy and what the priorities should be. Since April 2018, Sheffield City Council has conducted 15,516 homeless assessments. In 2021/22 968 households were accepted as homeless, which is a significant increase from the figure of 396 in 2019/20</p> <p>The top 3 reasons for homelessness in Sheffield are:</p> |

| | |
|-----|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family or friends no longer able to accommodate them • Domestic abuse • Private sector tenancy coming to an end |
| 1.5 | <p>The Strategy sets out our vision for everyone in Sheffield to have a place to call home. We will minimise homelessness by focusing on early prevention to help people keep their homes or move in a planned way.</p> <p>In a crisis, we will provide good quality housing advice and options so people can resolve their housing problems in a way that is resilient and long-lasting.</p> <p>We will aim to eliminate rough sleeping in the City by improving prevention and making sure everyone has access to suitable emergency housing and a permanent home with the support they need.</p> <p>The Strategy identifies two overarching themes which will inform all our priorities:</p> <p><u>Tackling Inequalities</u></p> <p><u>Supporting People Through The Cost of Living Crisis</u></p> <p>The five priorities that will make the most difference in addressing homelessness are:</p> <p><u>Proactively Preventing Homelessness</u></p> <p>Many people are already in crisis before they approach a homelessness service. Our evidence shows that we need to get better at helping people earlier on with the right advice, practical help, and support to keep their current home or move in a planned way.</p> <p>This priority will ensure that our advice is accurate and timely with a better range of housing options to prevent homelessness from occurring.</p> <p><u>Improving Services to Support Vulnerable Groups</u></p> <p>The homelessness strategy is legally required to secure the satisfactory provision of support for people in the district who are or may become homeless or who have been homeless and need support to prevent them from becoming homeless again.</p> <p>From our review, we know that there are some gaps in services that will make a real difference to residents to both prevent homelessness but also help them to successfully manage and maintain their homes. This includes specialist homelessness services and access to mainstream services that are more responsive and adaptive.</p> <p><u>Tackling Rough Sleeping</u></p> |

| | |
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| | <p>We want to see an end to rough sleeping in the city. Although we have had relatively low numbers¹ we have seen an increase over the last year. We are very good at responding to a crisis and most people are helped into accommodation very quickly when they experience rough sleeping. We now need to put in place earlier interventions. We will be focussing on more effectively addressing entrenched rough sleeping which particularly affects people with complex needs and circumstances.</p> <p><u>Improving Housing Options and Support</u></p> <p>The homelessness strategy is legally required to ensure that sufficient accommodation is and will be available for people in the district who are or may become homeless. We aim to help people keep their current home but sometimes a move is necessary. The strategy sets out the need to increase the range of housing options available to prevent homelessness and meet immediate and permanent housing duties.</p> <p><u>Strengthening Partnerships and Improving Systems</u></p> <p>We rely on strong collaboration between services to make sure people can access housing advice and other support they need. Over the lifetime of the previous strategy, we have strengthened our partnerships including the establishment of the Homelessness Prevention Forum and our Strategy Steering Group. We now need to build on this and tackle system-wide issues that are a barrier to homelessness prevention.</p> |
| 2. | HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE? |
| | <i>(Explain how this proposal will contribute to the ambitions within the Corporate Plan and what it will mean for people who live, work, learn in or visit the City. For example, does it increase or reduce inequalities and is the decision inclusive?; does it have an impact on climate change?; does it improve the customer experience?; is there an economic impact?)</i> |
| | Becoming homeless is one of the most traumatic events someone can experience. It is detrimental to their health and well-being and the longer someone is homeless the worse this gets ² . By preventing people from becoming homeless we are tackling inequality and improving people’s health outcomes. |
| 2.1 | Links to Sheffield Delivery Plan |
| 2.1.1 | <u>Tackling Inequalities and Supporting People Through the Cost of Living Crisis</u> |

¹ In 2021’s annual headcount Sheffield had 18 rough sleepers. Other core cities of similar size include: Liverpool:20, Nottingham:23, Manchester:43, Bristol: 68

² [Homelessness: applying All Our Health - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/homelessness-applying-all-our-health)

| | |
|-----------|---|
| | <p>A key goal of the Sheffield Delivery Plan is to tackle inequalities and support people through the cost-of-living crisis. The delivery plan includes dealing with homelessness as an urgent performance challenge.</p> <p>This strategy is critical to delivering on this by improving prevention, improving housing options and support to people who are at risk of or have experienced homelessness. It will widen the offer and pathway for rough sleepers and will focus on supporting people to sustain their tenancy to prevent repeat homelessness.</p> |
| 2.1.2 | <p><u>Our Council</u></p> <p>The strategy will support the Council’s overarching themes of tackling inequality and supporting people through the cost-of-living crisis. The strategy will enable key partners to put in place effective joint working and will inform commissioning plans.</p> |
| 2.1.3 | <p><u>Where We Go Next</u></p> <p>The Homelessness Prevention Strategy will form a key chapter in the city’s Housing Strategy which is currently being developed.</p> |
| 3. | HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION? |
| | <p>(Clearly indicate the degree and character of public engagement and participation which has been undertaken on the issue. <i>Refer to the Consultation Principles and Involvement Guide. Indicate whether the Council is required to consult on the proposal, and provide details of any consultation activities undertaken and their outcomes.</i>)</p> |
| 3.1 | <p>Paragraph 2.10 of the homelessness code of guidance requires consultation with public or local authorities, voluntary organisations and other persons as considered appropriate. It also states that it is good practice to consult with service users and specialist agencies that provide support to homeless people in the district.³ We have followed this guidance and consulted a wide range of customers and stakeholders, both internally and across the partnership. We have also sought advice and guidance from equalities officers within the Place portfolio which supported us to carry out consultation and engagement with customers for this strategy.</p> |
| | <p>Over the last year, we have run workshops, steering groups and consultation events. These are detailed in Appendix 4.</p> |

³ [Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities - Chapter 2: Homelessness strategies and reviews - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities-chapter-2-homelessness-strategies-and-reviews)

| | |
|-----------|---|
| | <p>This process allowed us to gather evidence on what should be prioritised in the strategy. We felt it was important to consult at the earliest opportunity and throughout to allow the strategy to be co-produced and for customers and stakeholders to fully engage with the process. We have also consulted on the draft strategy and comments have been incorporated into the version attached.</p> <p><u>Customer Consultation</u></p> <p>We have undertaken an online consultation at the outset to determine what should be prioritised to achieve earlier prevention, this had around 100 responses.</p> <p>We have also undertaken workshops with the Changing Futures co-production group and one with young people facilitated by the young persons charity Roundabout.</p> <p>Shelter also undertook a number of in-depth phone interviews for the consultation with people who have experienced homelessness exploring how we could have helped them earlier.</p> <p>Involving those with lived experience will be a continuous process throughout the implementation of the strategy and we will involve customers continually during the re-design of any services.</p> <p><u>Stakeholder</u></p> <p>Over the lifetime of the previous strategy, we have strengthened our partnerships including the establishment of the Homelessness Prevention Forum and our Strategy Steering Group. We have worked with them throughout the process of developing the new strategy in several online and in-person events over the last year. We have also worked with other Council Services, the Health and Wellbeing Board, Voluntary Action Sheffield, the Combined Welfare Reform group and Registered Providers in the City to inform the strategy.</p> <p>Our homelessness advisor from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has been involved throughout the process and has confirmed the draft strategy contains the all the main relevant areas.</p> <p>We have asked our key partners/stakeholders to sign up to the strategy and a full list of those organisations who have agreed to deliver the strategy with us will be included in the published version.</p> |
| 4. | RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION |
| 4.1 | <u>Equality Implications</u> |
| 4.1.1 | The equality impacts have been fully considered in the appended Equalities Impact Assessment. |
| 4.2 | <u>Financial and Commercial Implications</u> |

| | |
|-------|--|
| 4.2.1 | There are no direct financial or commercial implications for this strategy. |
| 4.3 | <u>Legal Implications</u> |
| 4.3.1 | <p>The Council is a Local Housing Authority and under the Homelessness Act 2002 (“the Act”) must have a Homelessness Strategy that must be updated every 5 years and informed by a review. The Act is augmented by the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities which is a Government maintained document.</p> <p>Under section 3(1) of the Act a homelessness strategy means a strategy for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. preventing homelessness in the district (more detail provided in the Code paragraphs 2.25-2.29); b. securing that sufficient accommodation is and will be available for people in the district who are or may become homeless (Code paragraphs 2.30-2.56); and, c. securing the satisfactory provision of support for people in the district who are or may become homeless or who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again. <p>The strategy needs to address issues found upon review and the above three themes.</p> |
| 4.4 | <u>Climate Implications</u> |
| 4.4.1 | <p>The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy is a high-level plan, and as such a full CIA is not appropriate at this stage. Full detailed CIA’s will be conducted on specific projects delivered under the plan.</p> <p>The biggest potential impact is the need to increase accommodation levels, and this is closely linked to the overall stock increase programme. Scheme-specific CIA’s will be completed for any construction or refurbishment projects.</p> <p>Advice and signposting services have less significant impacts, mostly based around use of office space and staff and customer travel.</p> <p>As this strategy will have a city-wide approach and partners from across the city will help us to deliver the key actions set out through this document, we will seek contributions from other agencies and support them as providers to align with our ambition to be a Net Zero city by 2030. We will also aim to ensure good awareness amongst teams and external providers of wider sustainability action in the City, such as education and training opportunities which may support service users to reduce their climate impacts going forwards.</p> |
| 4.4 | <u>Other Implications</u> |

| | |
|-----------|---|
| | <i>(Refer to the decision making guidance and provide details of all relevant ⁴implications, e.g. human resources, property, public health).</i> |
| 4.4.1 | There are no significant implications to note at this point other than referenced within this report. |
| 5. | ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED |
| 5.1 | It is a statutory requirement of the Homelessness Act 2002 to produce a Homelessness Prevention Strategy every five years. ⁵ The previous strategy came into effect on 03/01/2018 and a new strategy is therefore required. The option of not producing or delaying the development of a new strategy would be unlawful, we have therefore discounted this option. |
| 6. | REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS |
| | <i>(Explain why this is the preferred option and outline the intended outcomes.)</i> |
| 6.1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To address the increase in homelessness. • To have a strategic city-wide approach to homelessness prevention agreed by all of the key partners |

⁴⁴ [Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities - Chapter 2: Homelessness strategies and reviews - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

⁵ [Homelessness Act 2002 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

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Appendix 1- Legal Duties and National Policies

Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 remain the foundation of homelessness legislation.

Housing Act 1996

Part 7 the [Housing Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk) legally defines homelessness and provides the statutory framework for action to prevent and relieve homelessness.

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 was the most significant change to existing legislation in decades and placed new responsibilities on local authorities to tackle homelessness, including an enhanced prevention duty. It was a welcome development as it demonstrated commitment to tackle homelessness nationally. However, it has had significant resource implications. Councils must provide services for all those affected by homelessness and changes include:

- A duty to help people to secure accommodation 56 days before they are at risk of losing their current home.
- Anyone who has been served with a valid section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 notice that the landlord requires possession that expires in 56 days or less will now be classed as “threatened with homelessness”.
- A duty to help people for 56 days following homelessness occurring.
 - Specified public authorities will have to notify the Council of service users who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
 - The duty to provide advisory services is expanded and should cater for different groups who are at more risk of homelessness.
- Councils will have to carry out needs assessments for all eligible applicants and agree personal plans to help them to secure accommodation.
- Councils will need to take reasonable steps to prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants
 - If people do not cooperate or refuse an offer of accommodation from the Council to relieve homelessness the main homelessness duty will not apply. If an applicant does not take reasonable steps agreed in their plan, this can also end the duty.
- New rights to review are also contained in the legislation.

Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities 2018

The Code of Guidance for local authorities provides guidance on how local authorities should exercise their homelessness functions in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. This includes guidance on housing authority duties to carry out a homelessness review and publish a homelessness strategy.

[Section 1\(1\) of the 2002 Act](#) gives housing authorities the power to carry out a homelessness review for their district and formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of the review. Section 1(4) requires housing authorities undertake this process every 5 years.

Under section 3(1) of the 2002 Act a homelessness strategy means a strategy for:

- a. preventing homelessness in the district (see paragraphs 2.25-2.29 below);
- b. securing that sufficient accommodation is and will be available for people in the district who are or may become homeless (see paragraphs 2.30-2.56 below); and,
- c. securing the satisfactory provision of support for people in the district who are or may become homeless or who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again

Children's Act 1989

Under the [Children Act 1989](#) a 'child' means any person under the age of 18 years (16 years if married).

If they are homeless then they will be a child in need and need assessing.

A Local Authority will have a duty to accommodate under the Children Act if:

- no one has Parental Responsibility for the child;
- the child is lost or abandoned;
- the person who has been caring for the child is unable to provide suitable care and accommodation; or
- the child is 16 or 17 years old and the Local Authority considers the child's welfare would be seriously threatened if it does not provide accommodation.

Care Act 2014

Where a homeless applicant has care and support needs that cannot be met by Housing Solutions a referral can be made to social care for an assessment under the Care Act.

Where households that are ineligible for assistance, or there is no duty to house for another reason, contain a vulnerable adult; a referral is made to Social Care for an assessment under the Care Act.

Housing Solutions staff need to be aware of safeguarding issues and refer to adult social care where one is identified.

Domestic Abuse Act 2021:

The most significant change to legislation for homelessness in the last five years has been the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. This act reflects a national commitment to strengthen support to victims of domestic abuse. It amended part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 to update the definition of domestic abuse and extend the statutory rights of all eligible victims of domestic abuse who are homeless as a result of being a victim of domestic abuse by extending automatic 'priority need' to these victims.

DLUHC define Domestic abuse as any of the following behaviour:

- physical violence
- coercive control and 'gaslighting'
- economic abuse
- online abuse
- threats and intimidation
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse

Equalities Act 2010

The Equality Act is a law which protects people from discrimination. It means that discrimination or unfair treatment on the basis of certain personal characteristics, such as age, sex and sexual orientation. The Act now replaces all other discriminative acts.

It requires us to pay "due regard" to 3 areas: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations.

The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of any of these characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion/belief
- sex (gender)
- sexual orientation.

These are known as the 9 Protected Characteristics.

The Equality Act 2010 includes the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which applies to the Council including organisations who we contract with to deliver services on our behalf. We must therefore consider or think about how policies or decisions affect people who are protected. This includes our homelessness strategy and decisions.

National Policy-Rough Sleeping

In September 2022 the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities published a policy paper entitled 'Ending rough sleeping for good'.

The government's vision is to end rough sleeping for good. It defines rough sleeping as having ended when every local area ensures rough sleeping is 'prevented wherever possible and, where it cannot be prevented, it is a rare, brief and non-recurring experience'. In practice this means seeing more effective support to prevent rough sleeping from happening in the first place, and a tailored offer of support where it does, so people can build an independent life off the streets.

To achieve this vision, they have developed a 4-pronged approach to end rough sleeping which is supported by a programme of funding to support Local Authorities over the next 3 years.

- better prevention to reduce the number of people that reach the streets in the first place;
- swift and effective intervention for those who do sleep rough;
- additional targeted support for those that need it for their recovery (including specialist accommodation); and
- a more transparent and joined-up system to ensure everyone is working together effectively to end rough sleeping.

Sheffield City Council have worked closely with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to successfully bid for funding to enable us to plan strategically over the next three years to eliminate rough sleeping in Sheffield.

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SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

THE HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY

APPENDIX 2 HOMELESSNESS REVIEW

THE HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY

APPENDIX 1 HOMELESSNESS STATISTICS

This appendix looks to provides an overview of homelessness in Sheffield. We have looked at trends over the past 4 years and considered our performance locally against national figures. All of the data is from the SCC information that we are required to gather. We look at our data in financial years, with the information presented in this appendix ranging from between April 2018 through to September 2022. In some charts we have chosen to provide data on the first two quarters of the financial year of 2022 – 2023. This is because demand has continued to reach record levels in recent periods. This point is particularly emphasised in Figure 1.2.

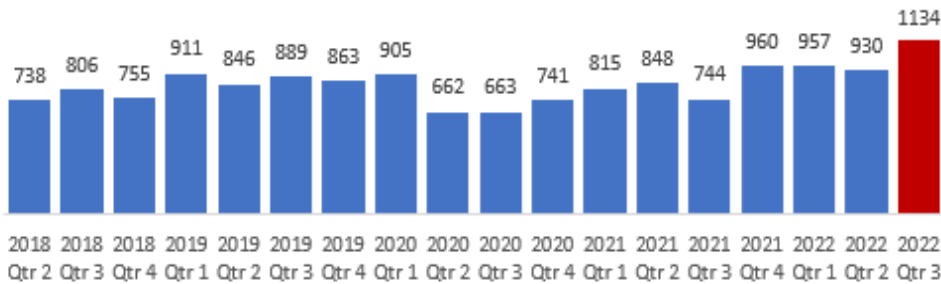
Some charts present core city comparisons. This information is from Local Authority returns provided to the Department for Levelling Up. We've focused on the latest financial year for these comparisons.

GLOSSARY

- **Application:** Any household that approaches us for assistance, who believe they are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The household can approach us directly or be referred by a third party. Some organisations have a statutory duty to refer to us when they are working with a household they believe are at risk of homelessness, this is called 'Duty to refer'.
- **Assessment:** Every household that presents to our Housing Options and Advice service has an assessment to determine their circumstances and what duty under Part 7 Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Act 2002, Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, if any, is owed to them.
- **Core Cities:** The eight largest cities in England, outside of London, who are often compared for benchmarking purposes. Detailed national statistics are published by government every quarter.
- **Decision:** If a case has been under the Relief Duty for more than 56 days, we must decide on whether we owe the household a main housing duty. If we do, we will award a Band B priority to bid on social housing.
- **Repeat Customer:** If an assessment is conducted on a household which has already presented the household is classed as a repeat customer.
- **Prevention Duty:** When we assess a household and determine they are threatened with becoming homeless within 56 days we have a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act to try and prevent this, either by assisting the household to stay in their current accommodation or by helping them secure alternative accommodation.
- **Relief Duty:** When we assess a household as being homeless on presentation, or when a household becomes homeless while we have a prevention duty, we have a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act to try and relieve their homelessness. This duty lasts for 56 days and ends either when the household is helped into accommodation, the 56 days expire and we decide on if we owe a main housing duty and a Band B award, or when the case is closed for any other reason.
- **Settled Home:** The last type of accommodation where a household was settled and not living under temporary arrangements like sofa surfing or other short-term housing.
- **Support Needs:** Categories where an individual may require additional support. These are identified during the initial assessment and rely on the individual's own diagnosis.
- **Temporary Accommodation:** When a household is homeless, and we have reason to believe they fall into one or more 'priority need' categories then we have a duty to provide interim accommodation until they are successfully rehoused. That accommodation is most commonly is our stock, but we also use hotels during periods of high demand.

SECTION ONE: Summary of Main Findings

Quarterly Assessments since the introduction of the HRA.



Homeless assessments have continued to increase quarter on quarter in Sheffield, with the third quarter of 2022 exceeding 1000 quarterly assessments for the first time since the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act.

Circumstances upon initial assessment

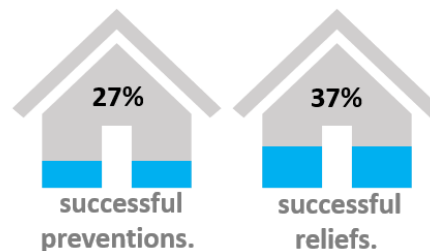


76% of all customers assessed were determined to already be homeless in 2021/2022. This is an 9 percentage point increase than in 2018/2019, where 67% of customers were owed a relief duty on initial assessment. We are reaching less people at preventative stages of homeless.

Only 2 of every 10 customers were owed a prevention duty in 2021/2022. However, in the two most recent full quarters of April 2022 to September 2022 we have observed 27% of assessments being owed prevention duty.

Securing Accommodation for 6+ Months

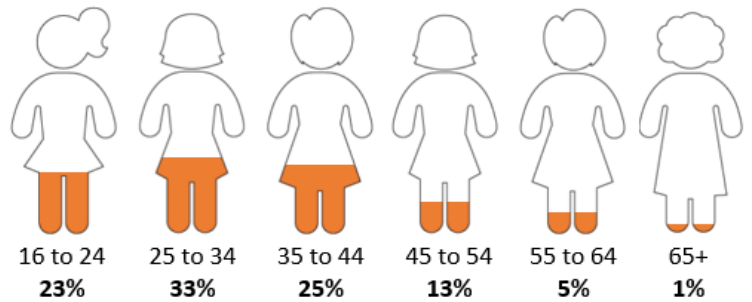
It has become more challenging for us to successfully end both prevention and relief duties by helping customers secure accommodation. In 2018/2019, 47% of prevention cases and 59% of relief cases ended with accommodation being secured. In 2021/22 27% of prevention cases and 37% of relief cases ended with accommodation being secured



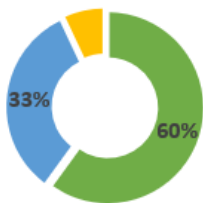
Age Profile

56% of household-lead applicants were aged under 34 years. Households where the lead applicant was female tended to be younger, with 64% of female-led households being aged 34 and under.

Likewise, younger households are more likely to have dependent children. Particularly if the lead-applicant is female.



Ethnicity



- White British
- BAMER Community
- Not Stated

60% of primary household members self defined as White British and 30% from BAMER communities.

The largest BAMER communities are Black or Black British and Asian or Asian British which both account for 11% of total households.

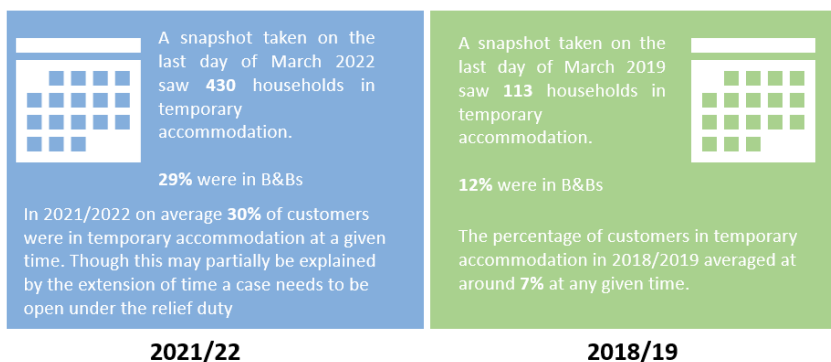
If we exclude households where ethnicity is not known, BAMER communities represent 35% of all households assessed. BAMER communities account for 16% of Sheffield's population, demonstrating that BAMER groups are disproportionately represented in homelessness.



Despite changes in circumstances, household composition, support needs and home loss reasons, some characteristics haven't changed significantly.

Customers with offending history have not fluctuated significantly, with approximately 30% of households having this support need each year.

Likewise, approximately 25% of all customers are from returning customers. Nearly 1 in 5 customers each year has a history of rough sleeping.



Main findings

Household Type

Single applicant households are the most common household type assessed. In the most recent full financial year we've seen an increase in presentations by families with dependent children.

Most of these households are made by a lone-parent with dependents opposed to a couple with dependents.



67%

Single Applicant Households



28%

Family with Dependent Children



6%

All other households.

Support Needs



Top three support needs:

- 62% - History of mental health problems.
- 39% - Physically ill health and disability
- 36% - At risk of/has experienced domestic abuse.

Last Settled Neighbourhood:



The address history of people at risk of becoming homeless shows 9 neighbourhoods in the East and South of Sheffield each had more than 200 assessments matched to them.

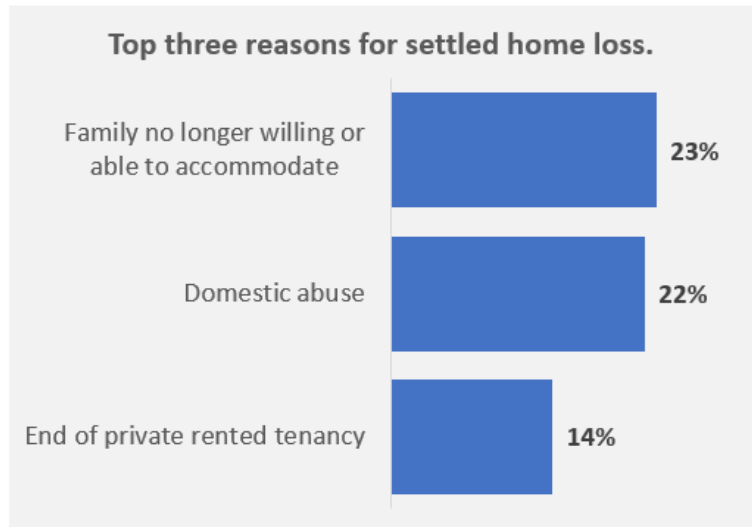
Domestic abuse has risen significantly since the pandemic, with domestic abuse as a reason for home loss increasing from 17% in 2019/2020 to 24% in 2020/2021. It remains high at 22% in 2021/2022. Likewise, the support need of being at risk or experiencing domestic abuse has increased year on year since 2018 at 29% through to record highs of 36% by the end of 2021/2022.

Main Findings

The largest reason for home loss is due to family no longer willing or able to accommodate.

This is followed by domestic abuse, which has increased from **17%** in 2019/2020 to **22%** in 2021/2022. **39%** of all customers have self-identified domestic abuse as being a support need suggesting that this is a larger contributor to homelessness, regardless of whether it is to determining factor to settled home loss reason.

14% of home loss reasons are due to ends of private rented tenancies. This reason has continued to rise in the first two quarters of 2022/2023 as **23%** of all customers said this was the reason they lost their last settled home. Likewise, end of social tenancies increased to account for **11%** of all home loss reasons in the first two quarters of 2022/2023.



Different demographics are more at risk of losing their home due to different reasons.

37%

of female-led households lost their home due to domestic abuse compared to just 5% of male-led households.



85%

of customers aged 16 - 17 lost their home due to family being unable or unwilling to accommodate them.




50%

couples with children lost their homes due to the end of a private tenancy compared to just **14%** at total cohort.



60% for 18 to 19-year-olds.




Requiring to leave asylum support provided by the home office is a key reason for homelessness within BAMER communities.

For Asian customers, **14%** of cases were due to end of asylum support. Likewise for Black customers, **7%** of cases were due to end of asylum support.

This is compared to **5%** of all customers across the wider cohort.

Single male customers have a high proportion of loss of home due to departure from custody (10%) when compared with the average (5%).



SECTION TWO:

Requests for Service

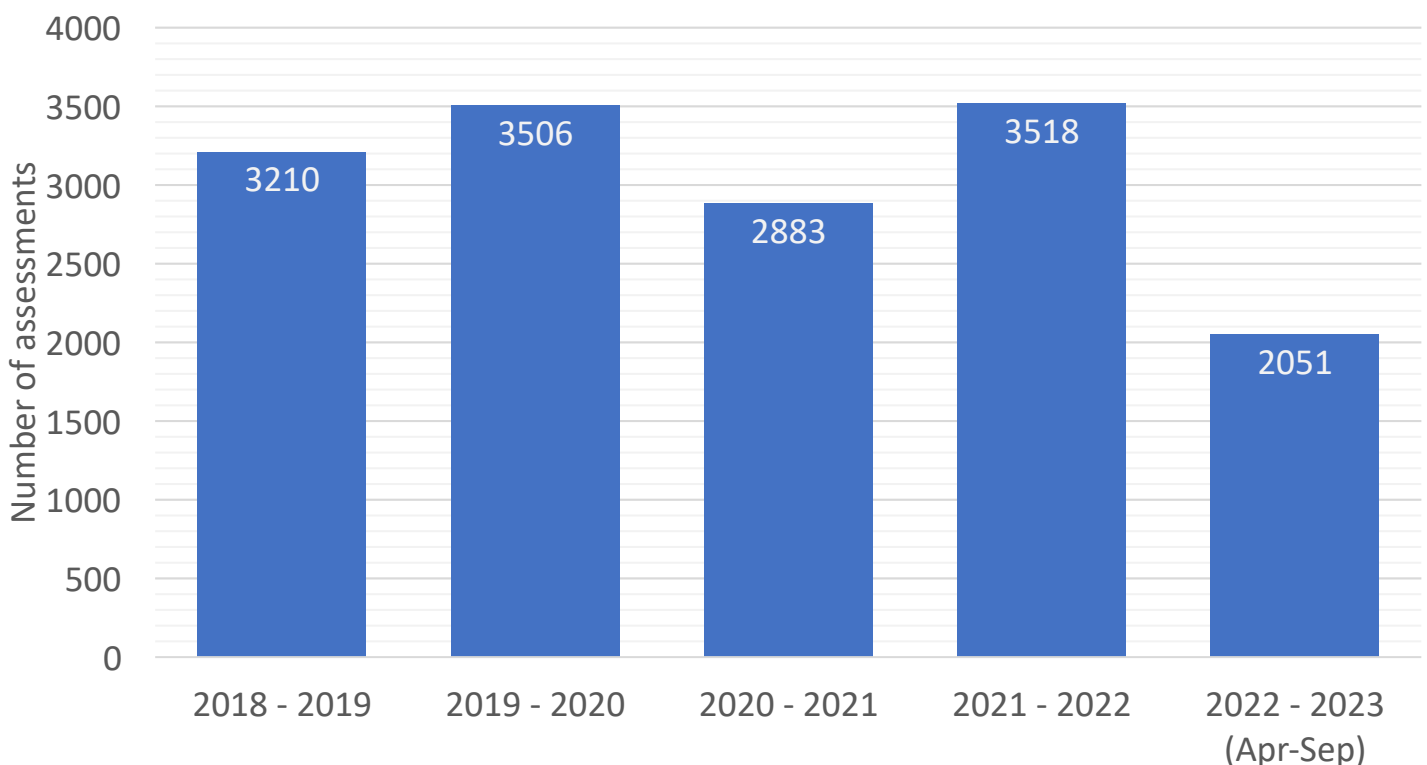
This section of the appendix outlines the trends and observations made of the initial assessment or request for service.

Every household that presents to our Housing Options and Advice service has an assessment to determine their circumstances and what duty under the Homeless Reduction Act, if any, is owed to them.

This assessment will determine whether the customer is owed a duty, their household profile, what their home loss reason was, and what support needs the household has.

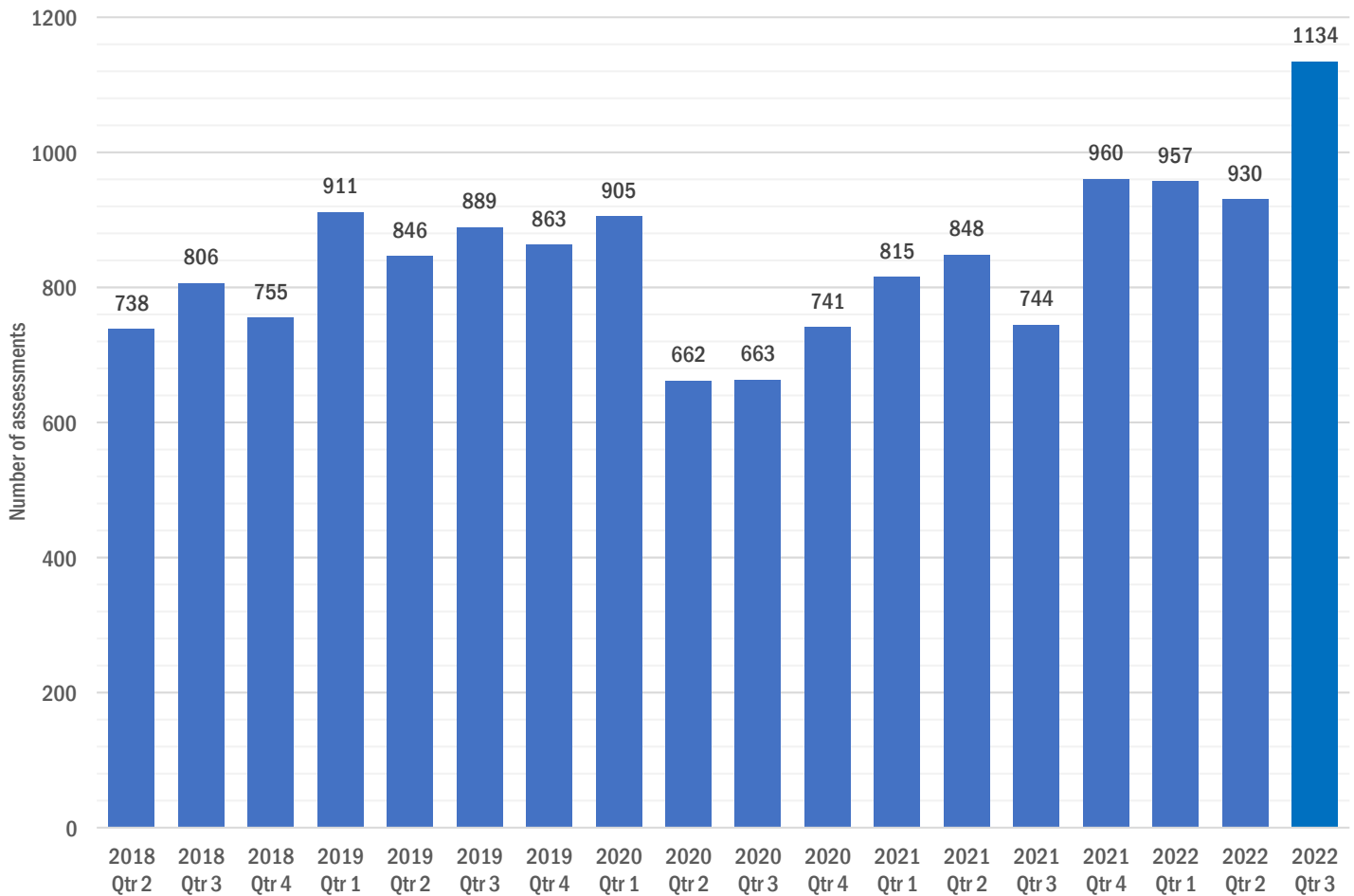
2.1: Homeless assessments by financial year.

Since April 2018, Sheffield Council has conducted 15,516 homeless assessments. The financial year of 2021 – 2022 saw slightly more assessments than 2019 – 2020, the year just prior to the pandemic. Despite having only two-quarters of data, 2022 – 2023 already has more than half of any other year's worth of assessments, suggesting homeless figures are yet again on track to exceed the previous record.



2.2: Homeless assessments by quarter.

Since the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act in April 2018, we have had an average of 843 quarterly assessments. The past year we have had quarterly assessments consistently above this average, with 2022 Quarter 3 acceding our highest ever demand in assessments by nearly 200 assessments.



Source: Sheffield City Council Homeless Statistics – 01st April 2018 to 31st September 2022

2.3: Demographics of homeless presentations.

In these tables we are comparing the financial year of 2018/2019 to the financial year of 2021/2022. 2018/2019 represents our performance before the pandemic while 2021/2022 shows us an overview of the current situation.

| Age | 2018 - 2019 | 2021 - 2022 | Difference |
|----------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| 16 to 17 | 2% | 2% | 0% |
| 18 to 24 | 24% | 21% | -3% |
| 25 to 34 | 34% | 33% | -1% |
| 35 to 44 | 22% | 25% | +3% |
| 45 to 54 | 13% | 13% | +0% |
| 55 to 64 | 4% | 5% | +1% |
| 65+ | 1% | 1% | +0% |

| Ethnicity | 2018 - 2019 | 2021 - 2022 | Difference |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| White or White British | 67% | 60% | -7% |
| Black or Black British | 11% | 11% | +0% |
| Asian or Asian British | 8% | 11% | +3% |
| Other Ethnic Groups | 4% | 6% | +2% |
| Not Known | 5% | 7% | +2% |
| Mixed Ethnic Groups | 5% | 4% | -1% |
| Gypsy and Travellers | 0% | 0% | 0% |

| Household Types | 2018 - 2019 | 2021 - 2022 | Difference |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Single Households | 69% | 67% | -1% |
| Family with Children | 26% | 28% | +2% |
| All Other Households | 5% | 6% | +1% |

| Sex | 2018 - 2019 | 2021 - 2022 | Difference |
|--------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Male | 53% | 52% | -1% |
| Female | 47% | 48% | +1% |

- 2021/2022 saw a greater proportion of its total customers being aged above 35 than in 2018/2019.
- We've seen an increase in the percentage of BAMER households in the latest financial year when compared to 2018/2019. BAMER households represent 32% of all presentations in 2021/2022 compared to 28% in 2018/2019.
- We've seen an increase in the number of households with children in the latest financial year.
- The split between male and female clients has narrowed in the latest year.

2.4: Ethnicity comparison to 2011 Census.

When comparing the ethnicity profile of the latest year's assessments to the profile of Sheffield from the Census, we can see that homelessness is significantly more likely to affect some BAMER communities.

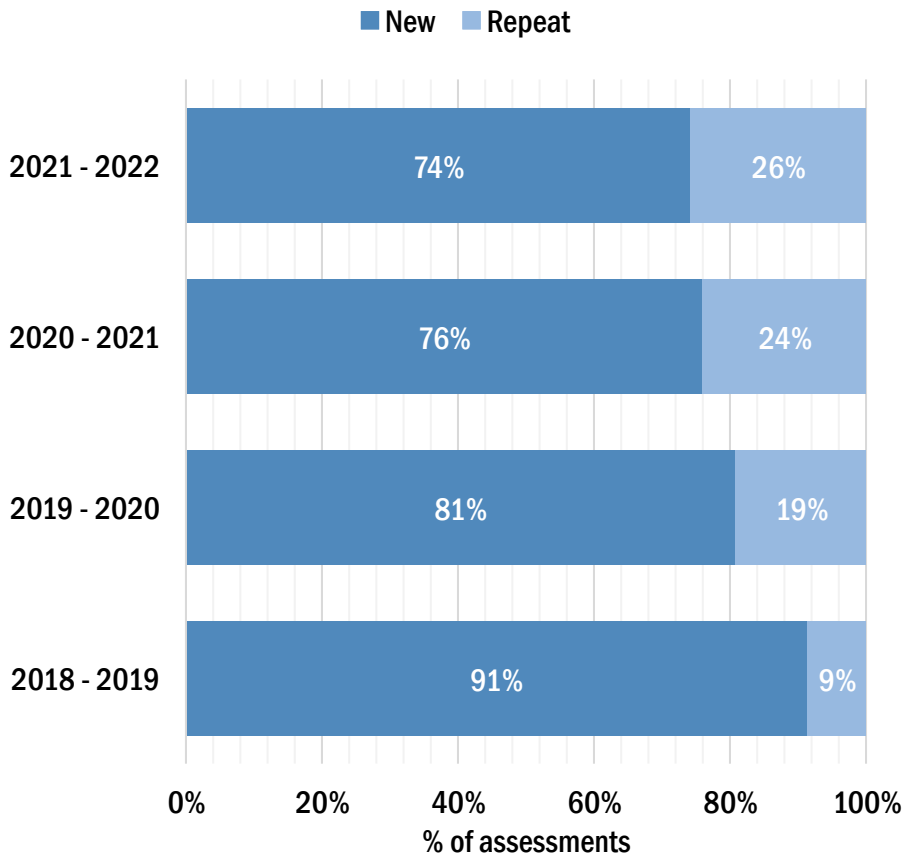
| Ethnicity (Excluding Not Known) | Total Sheffield Population (2011 Census) | 2021-2022 Assessments | Difference |
|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------|------------|
| White | 84% | 65% | -19% |
| Asian / Asian British | 8% | 12% | 4% |
| Black / Black British | 4% | 12% | 8% |
| Other Ethnicity | 2% | 6% | 4% |
| Mixed | 2% | 5% | 3% |
| Gypsy or Irish Traveller | 0% | 0% | 0% |

2.5: Age comparison to 2011 Census.

Presenting homeless is most common with age groups between 18 to 44, though 25 to 34 year olds are the largest age band. They also have the largest over representation when compared to Total Sheffield's profile.

| | Total Sheffield Population (2011 Census) | 2021-2022 Assessments | Difference |
|----------|--|-----------------------|------------|
| 16 to 17 | 3% | 2% | -1% |
| 18 to 24 | 18% | 21% | 3% |
| 25 to 34 | 17% | 33% | 16% |
| 35 to 44 | 16% | 25% | 9% |
| 45 to 54 | 15% | 13% | -2% |
| 55 to 64 | 12% | 5% | -7% |
| 65+ | 19% | 1% | -18% |

2.6: Repeat customers as a % of total assessments.



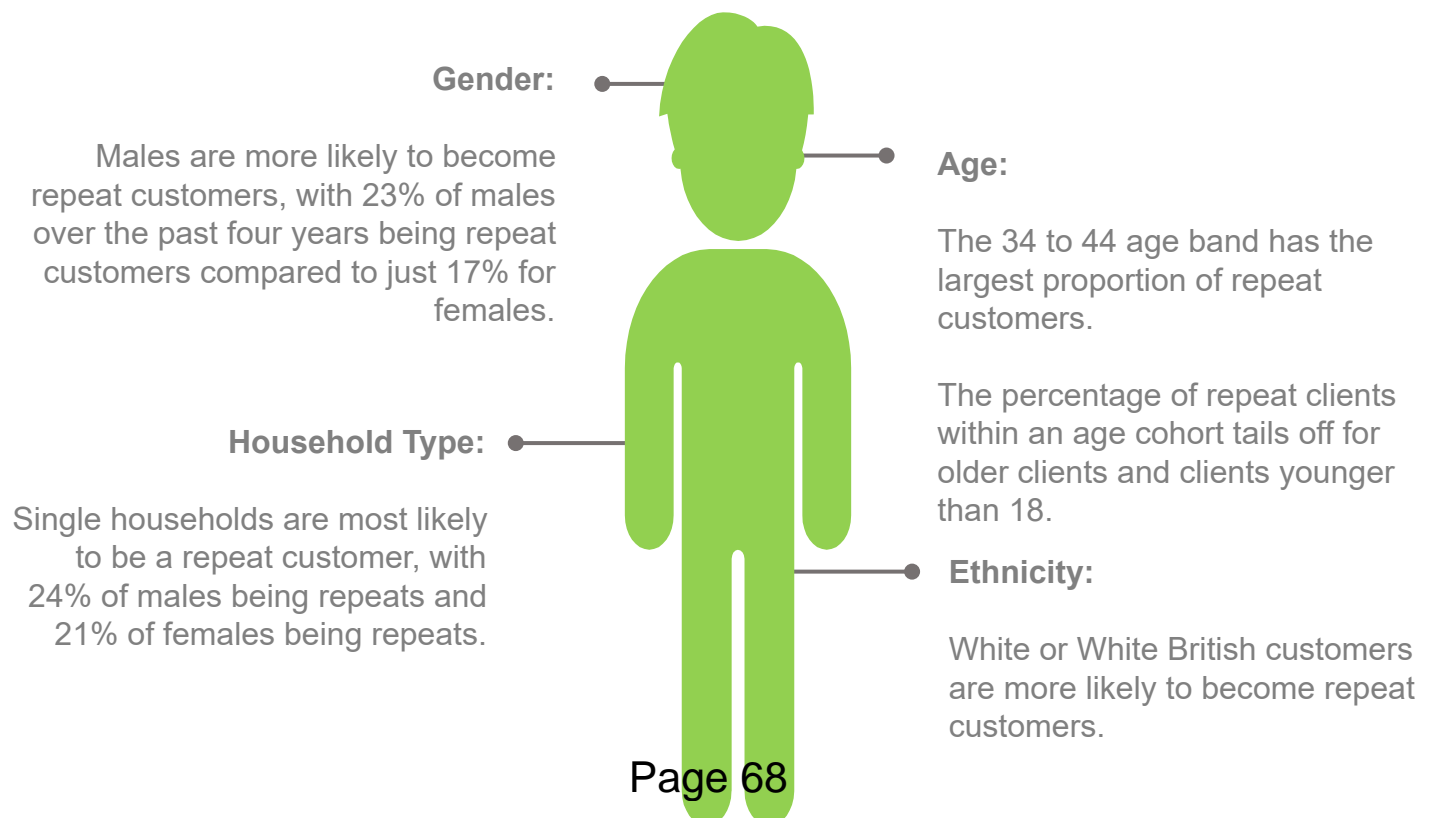
Since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in 2018 we've seen a steady increase in repeat customers year on year.

As of the most recent year, just over a quarter of assessments were with a repeat customer.

Repeat Clients remain at approximately **24%** in the first two full quarters of 2022-2023.

2.7: Repeat customers.

Some demographical cohorts are more likely to become repeat customers.



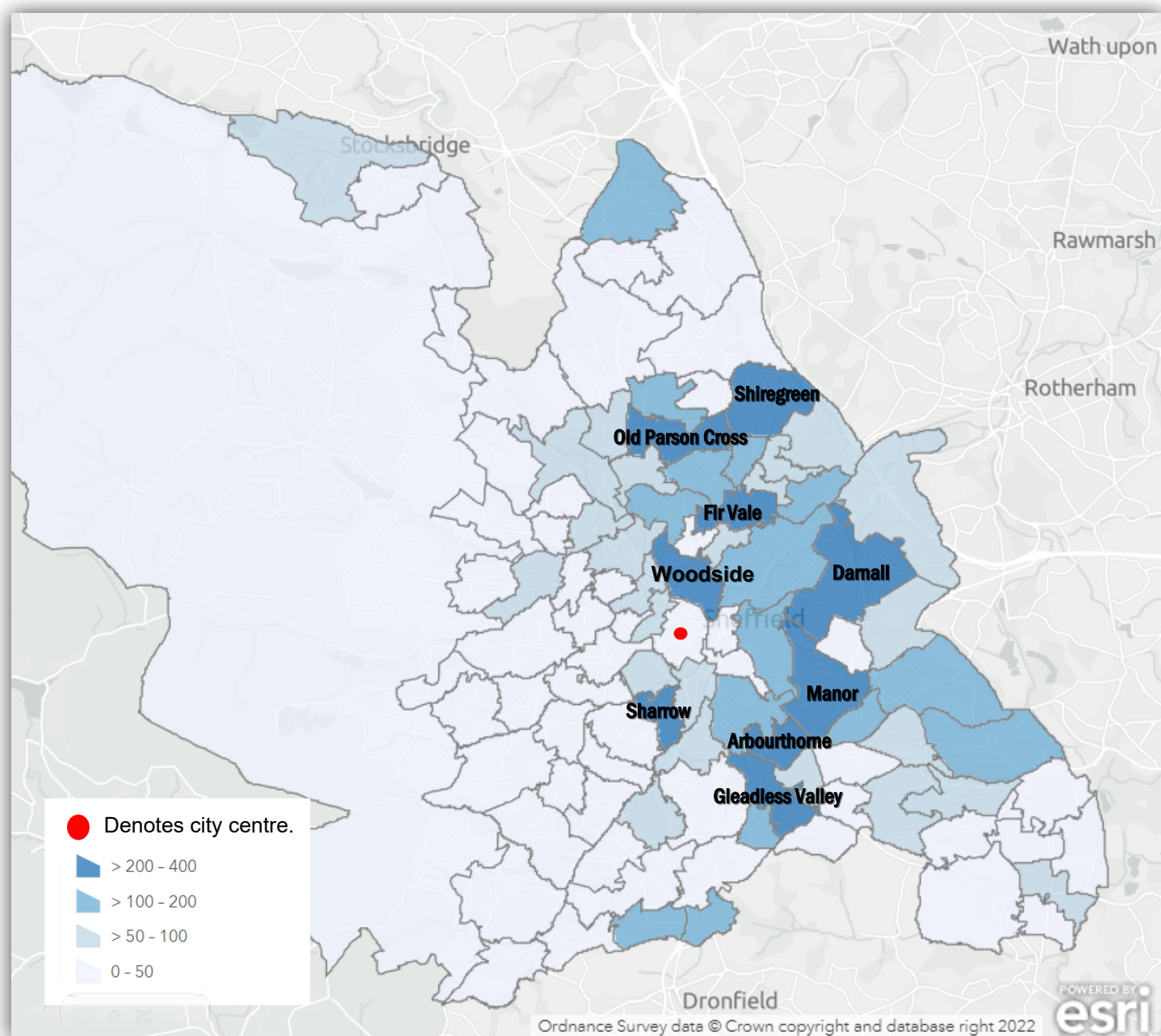
2.8: Map of last settled neighbourhood for all presentations.

This map shows where people lived prior to presenting as homeless or where they lived at the point of becoming at risk of homelessness. This map contains assessments across the periods of April 2018 and March 2022.

The darker blue represents neighbourhoods with greater quantities of matched last settled addresses.

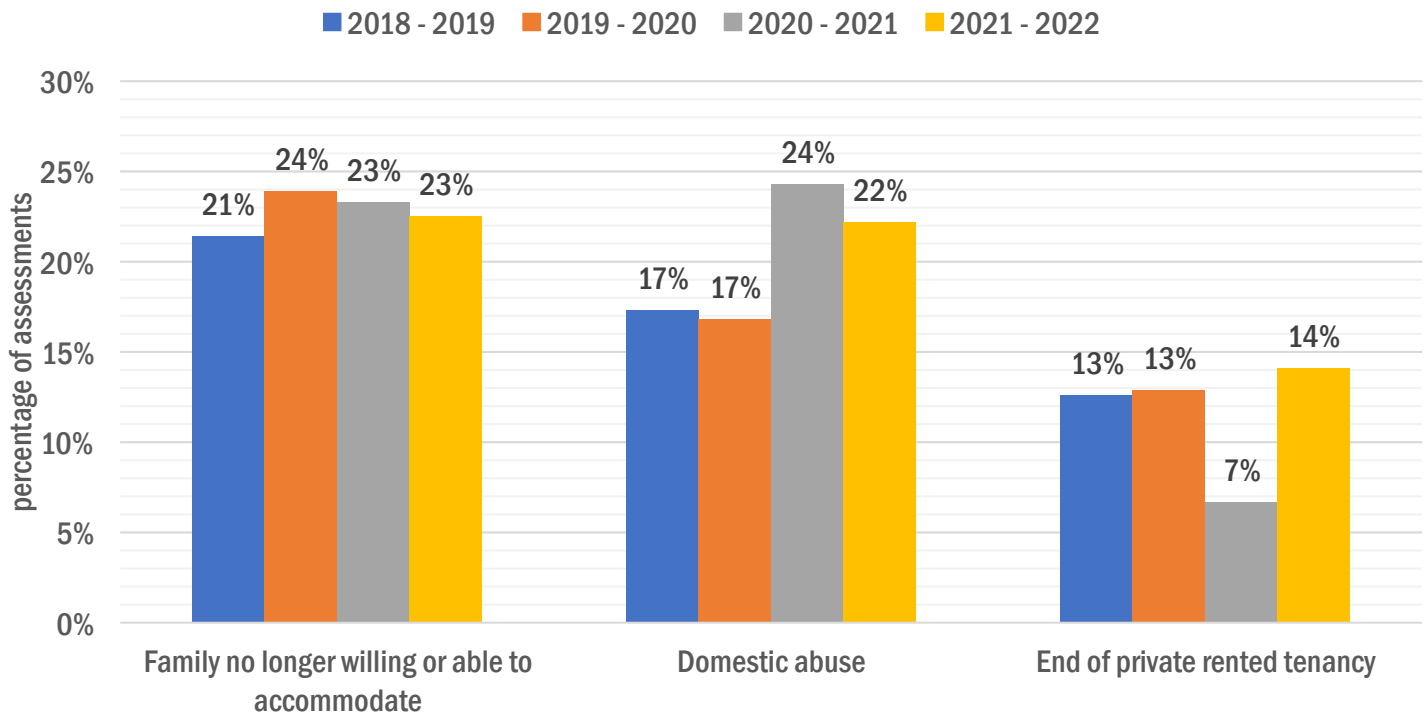
Nine areas of interest include Shiregreen, Manor, Old Parson Cross, Fir Vale, Woodside, Darnall, Arbourthorne, Sharrow and Gleadless Valley.

By understanding which neighbourhoods in Sheffield are affected by homelessness allows us to target prevention schemes in relevant areas, schools or communities.



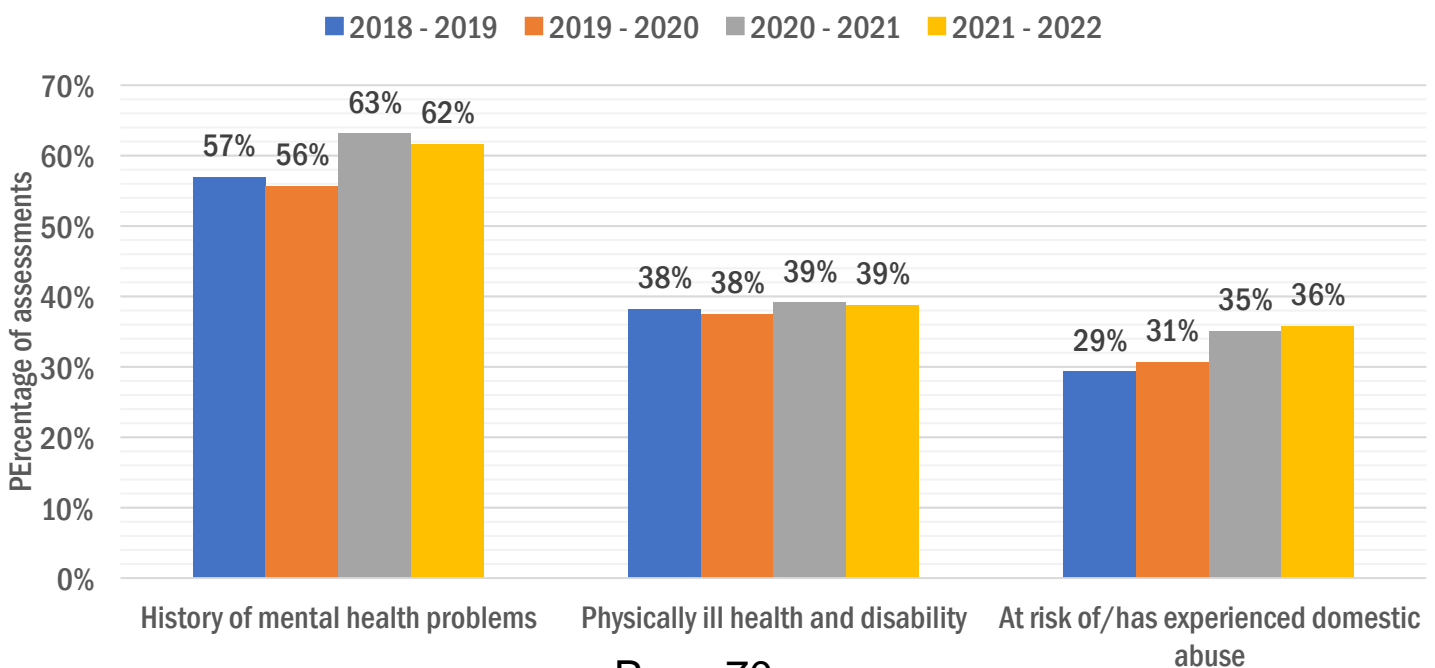
2.9: Top three reasons for settled home loss.

Domestic abuse as a reason for homelessness has increased significantly since the COVID-19 pandemic. It remains a key issue for homelessness, with slight drops since its peak in the first year of the pandemic (2020-2021). In 2022/23 loss of PRS is increasing significantly.



2.10: Top three support needs.

In the latest two years, we've seen the number of support needs increase. Key amongst these is an increase in the number of clients with a history of mental health problems. Further to this, over a third of all clients have been at risk of/has experienced domestic abuse.



2.11: All support needs.

We're able to observe what percentage of support needs our cohort has. Other key support areas include clients with offending history, a history of repeat homelessness and/or rough-sleeping, learning disabilities and drug dependency needs.

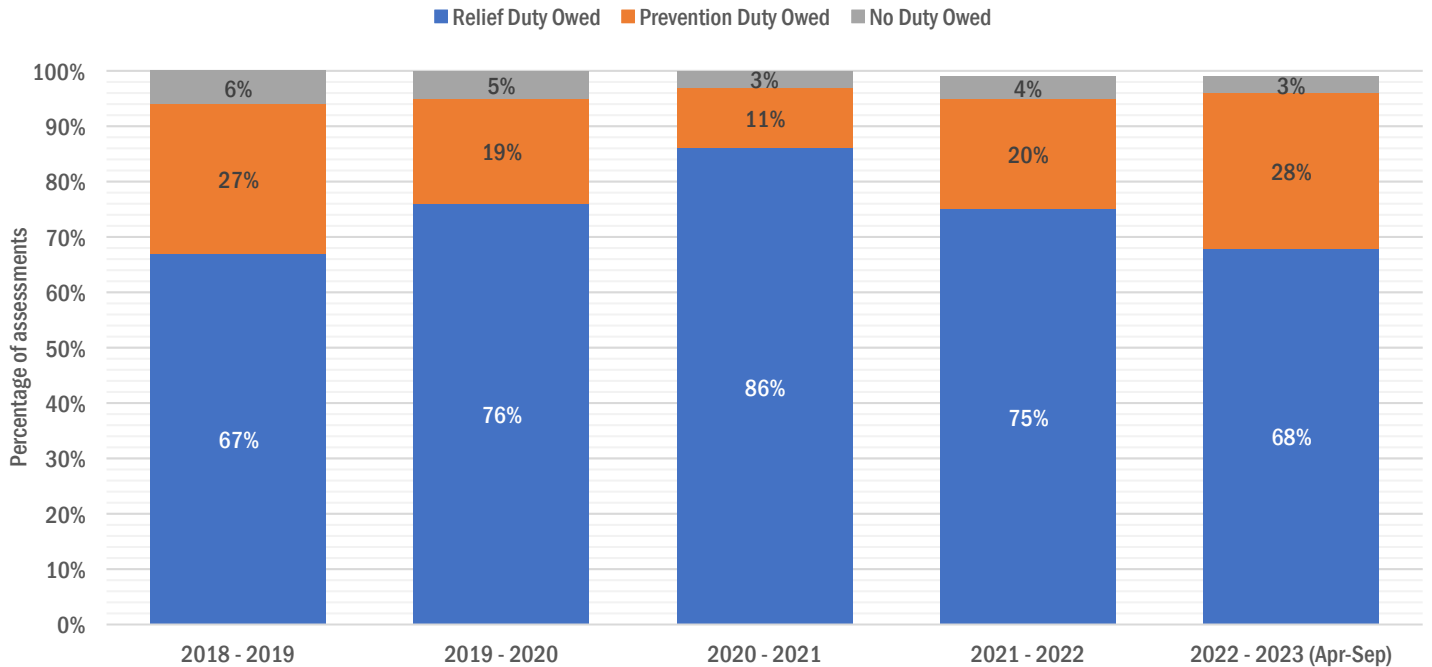
| Support Need | 2018 - 2019 | 2019 - 2020 | 2020 - 2021 | 2021 - 2022 | Grand Total |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| History of mental health problems | 57% | 56% | 63% | 62% | 59% |
| Physically ill health and disability | 38% | 38% | 39% | 39% | 38% |
| At risk of/has experienced domestic abuse | 29% | 31% | 35% | 36% | 33% |
| Offending history | 30% | 31% | 34% | 28% | 31% |
| History of repeat homelessness | 24% | 24% | 24% | 24% | 24% |
| Learning disability | 19% | 20% | 21% | 22% | 20% |
| Drug dependency needs | 20% | 21% | 21% | 15% | 19% |
| History of rough sleeping | 17% | 19% | 19% | 17% | 18% |
| Access to education, employment or training | 15% | 15% | 15% | 16% | 15% |
| At risk of/has experienced sexual abuse/exploitation | 12% | 14% | 13% | 13% | 13% |
| Alcohol dependency needs | 12% | 13% | 13% | 10% | 12% |
| Not stated | 13% | 14% | 9% | 9% | 11% |
| At risk of/has experienced abuse (non-domestic abuse) | 10% | 9% | 12% | 12% | 11% |
| Former asylum seeker | 8% | 11% | 7% | 8% | 8% |
| Young person aged 18-25 years requiring support to manage independently | 10% | 7% | 7% | 6% | 7% |
| Care leaver aged 21+ years | 6% | 7% | 4% | 4% | 5% |
| Difficulties budgeting * | 0% | 0% | 0% | 11% | 3% |
| Young parent requiring support to manage independently | 3% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% |
| Young person aged 16-17 years | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% |
| Served in HM Forces | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% |
| Care leaver aged 18-20 years | 2% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 2% |
| Old age | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| No support needs | 3% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1% |
| Victim of modern slavery * | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1% | 0% |

* new support needs only added in 2021/2022.

2.12: Circumstances on initial presentation over time.

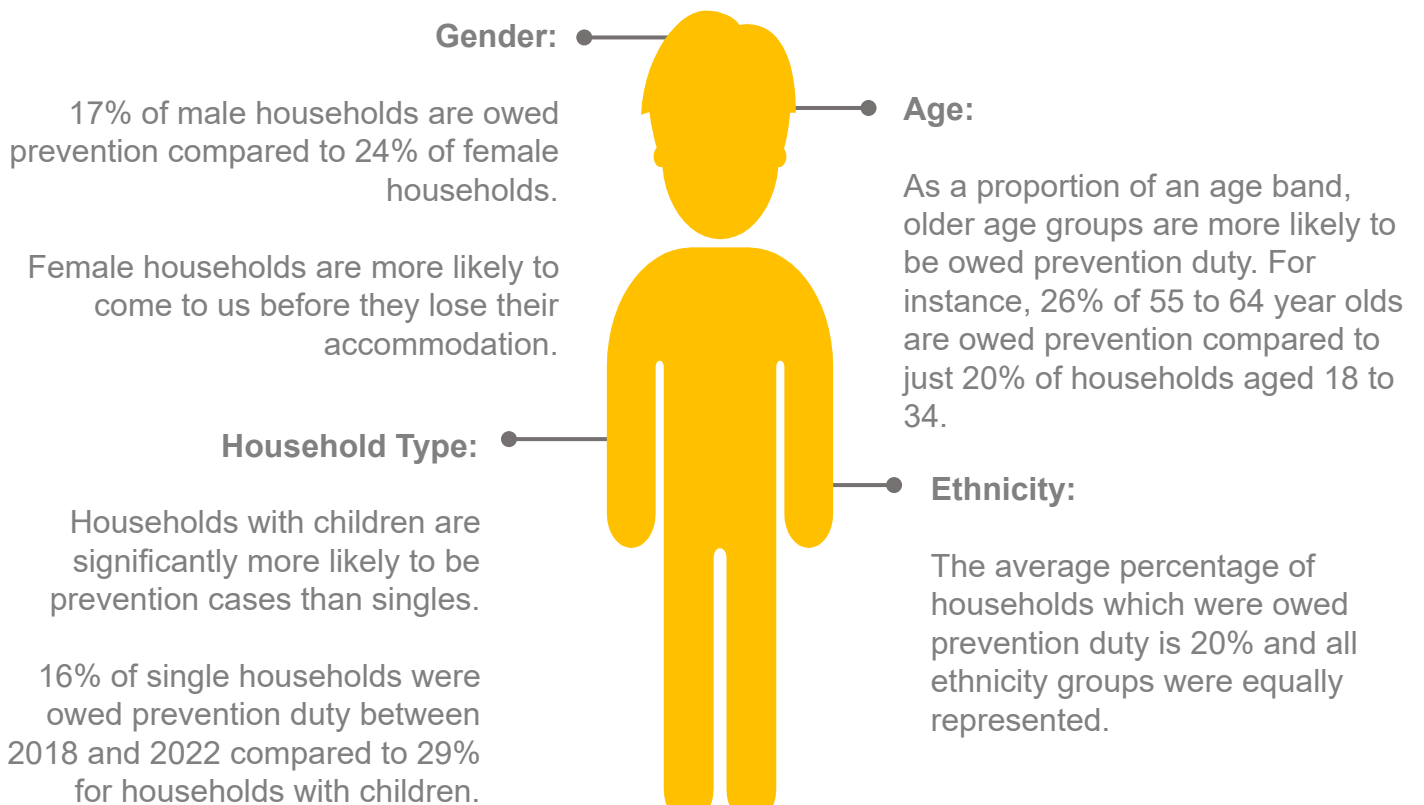
The majority of assessments in Sheffield have resulted in relief duty being owed, reaching a peak of 86% of cases being owed relief in the height of the pandemic.

In the first two quarters of 2022 – 2023 we have observed an increase in prevention duties.



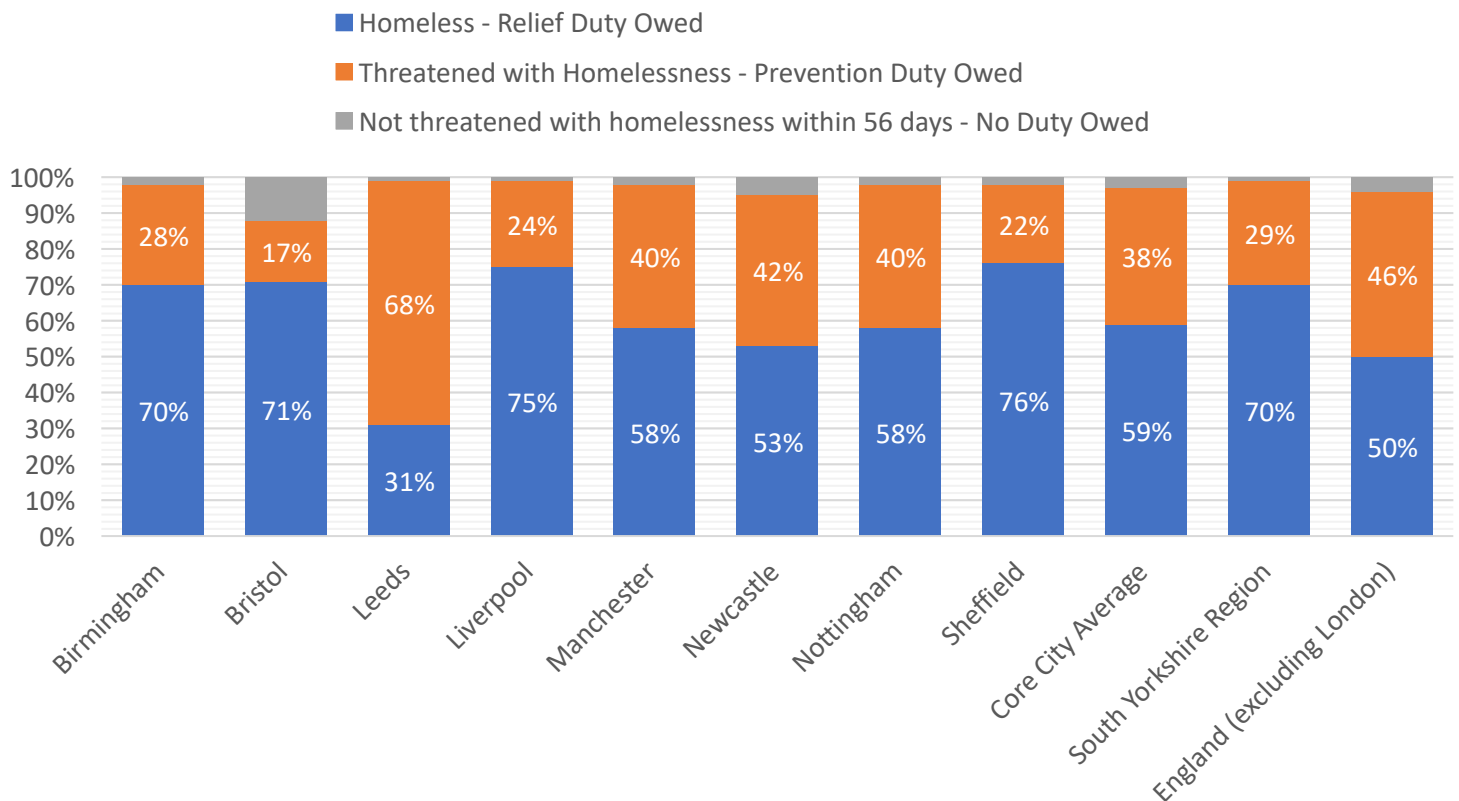
2.13: Demographics of prevention duty customers.

There are observable differences between households owed a prevention or relief duty on assessment.



2.14: Circumstances on presentation by the Core Cities.

Of the core cities, Sheffield has the greatest proportion of customers being owed relief during their initial presentation (76%).



2.15 : Differences between Sheffield & the Core Cities.

There are some notable differences between Sheffield and other core cities.

Household Type:



Sheffield is an outlier for Single Adults entering both prevention or relief. 65% of households owed **prevention** are single adults (compared to 53% at total core cities and 50% nationally). 80% of households owed **relief** are single adults (compared to 68% are total core city and 70% nationally).

Age:



Sheffield has slightly more 16 to 24 years olds being owed a duty as a proportion of all age groups than other core cities. The most common age band, like all other core cities, is customers aged between 25 and 34.

Ethnicity:



28% of households owed a duty in Sheffield are from BAMER groups. This is compared to 27% at total core cities and 23% nationally.

Economic Activity:



79% of Sheffield's customers are not in paid work, compared to the average of 76% for the core city and 74% at the national level.

SECTION THREE:

Outcomes of Prevention Duty.

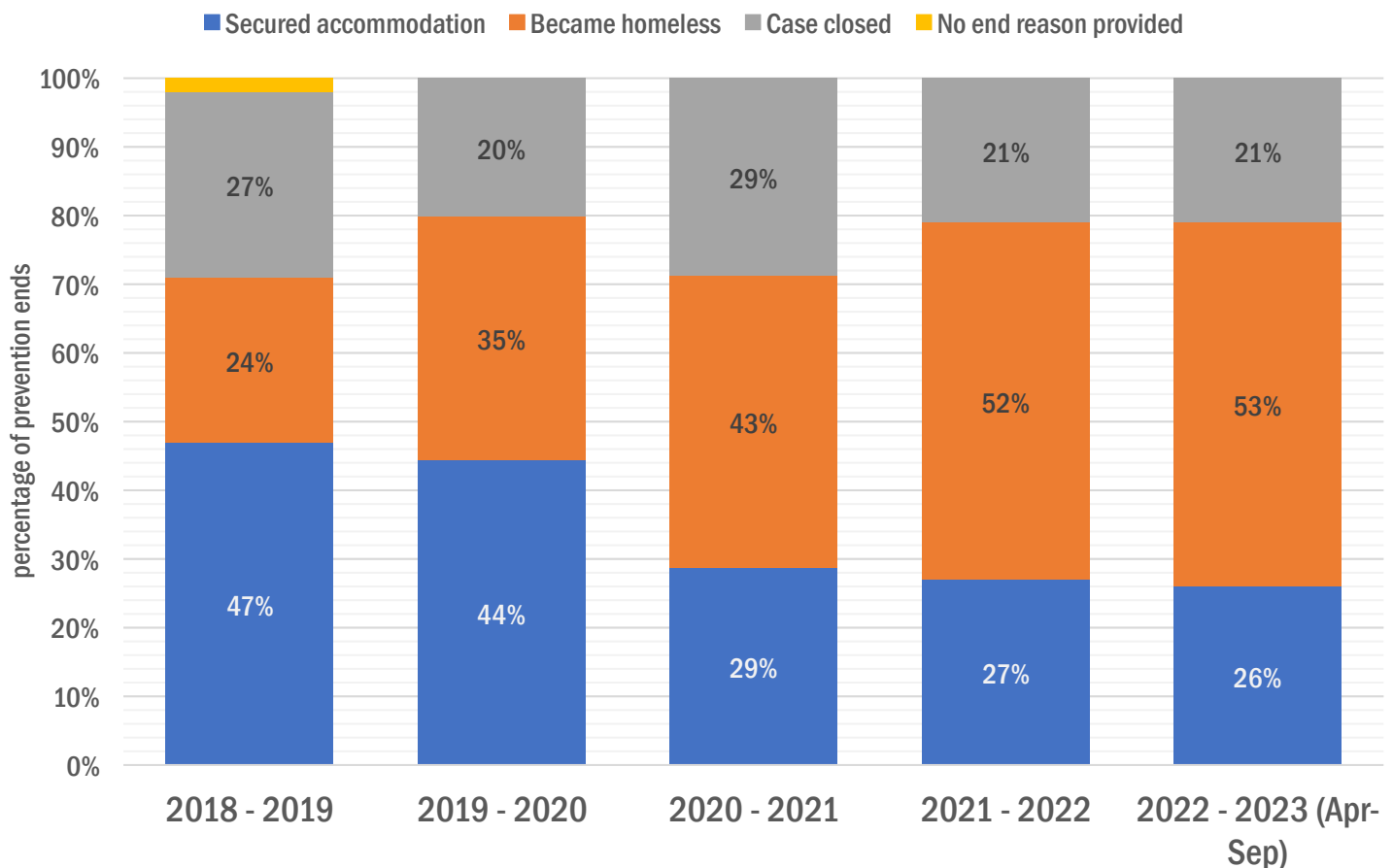
This section of the appendix outlines the trends and observations made at the end of the prevention duty.

Prevention duties can end for a variety of reasons. We've grouped these reasons into four key categories including:

- Secured accommodation – be it new accommodation or existing accommodation
- Became homeless – the household was unable to secure accommodation
- Case closed – this could be for a variety of reasons such as losing contact
- No end reason provided

3.1: Outcomes for Prevention Duty.

Since the pandemic, fewer people have been able to stay in their existing accommodation leading to homelessness.



3.2: % of prevention cases which secured accommodation.

All tables are looking at the percentage of customers in prevention duty who secured accommodation by the end of the duty. We are comparing 2018 – 2019 which represents a average year before the pandemic, to 2021 – 2022, which shows the outcomes post-pandemic.

| Age | 2018 - 2019 | 2021 - 2022 | Difference |
|----------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| 16 to 17 | 89% | 89% | +0% |
| 18 to 24 | 60% | 34% | -26% |
| 25 to 34 | 43% | 21% | -22% |
| 35 to 44 | 31% | 24% | -7% |
| 45 to 54 | 40% | 21% | -19% |
| 55 to 64 | 26% | 37% | +11% |
| 65+ | 40% | 44% | +4% |

| Ethnicity | 2018 - 2019 | 2021 - 2022 | Difference |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| White or White British | 49% | 28% | -21% |
| Black or Black British | 38% | 23% | -15% |
| Asian or Asian British | 46% | 35% | -11% |
| Other Ethnic Groups | 41% | 20% | -21% |
| Not Known | 36% | 29% | -7% |
| Mixed Ethnic Groups | 48% | 6% | Low Sample Size |
| Gypsy and Travellers | 75% | 0% | Low Sample Size |

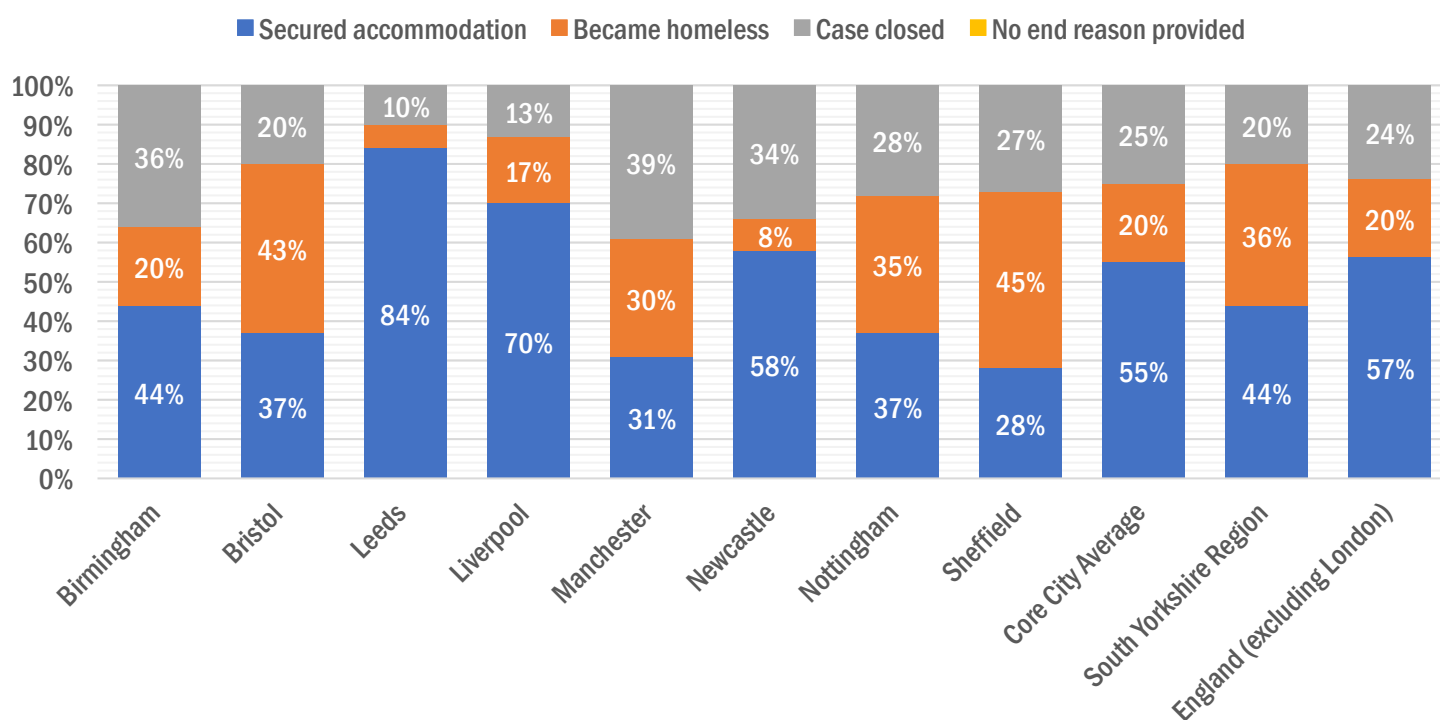
| Household Types | 2018 - 2019 | 2021 - 2022 | Difference |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Single Households | 50% | 34% | -16% |
| Family with Children | 42% | 19% | -23% |
| All other families | 47% | 22% | -25% |

| Gender | 2018 - 2019 | 2021 - 2022 | Difference |
|--------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Male | 45% | 29% | -16% |
| Female | 48% | 25% | -23% |

- In the latest year younger households are less likely to secure accommodation than households aged over 55.
- There has been a fall across all ethnicity groups in an ability to secure accommodation at the end of a prevention duty.
- It is harder to secure accommodation for families, and as such we've seen a larger drop-off in the percentage of families securing accommodation than single households.
- Females are now less likely to secure accommodation compared to 2018/2019 when males were less likely.

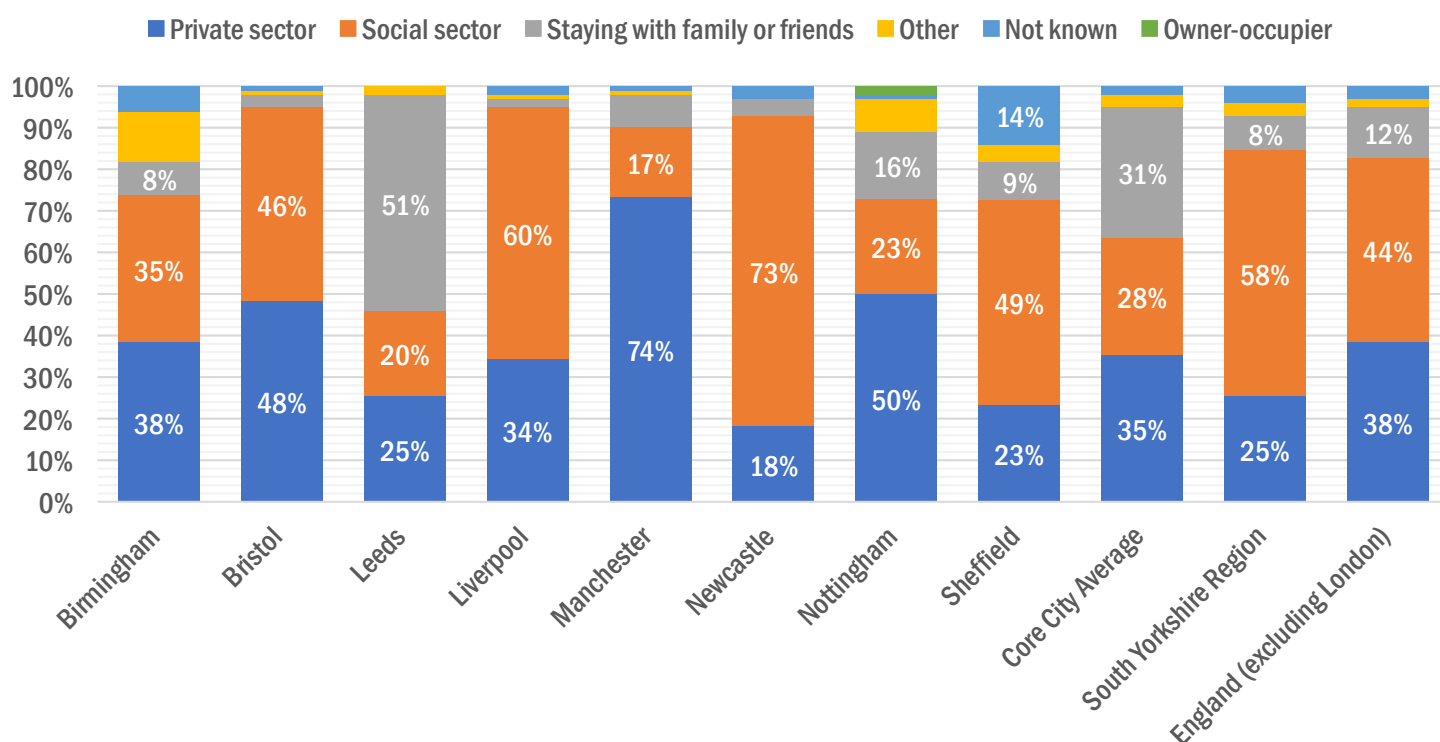
3.3: Outcomes for Prevention Duty by Core Cities – 2021/2022.

Of the core cities, Sheffield sees the highest percentage of prevention duties end in the household becoming homeless.



3.4: Secured accommodation by Core Cities – 2021/2022

Sheffield has the third largest percentages of prevention clients securing social sector tenure at the end of prevention.



SECTION FOUR:

Outcomes of Relief Duty.

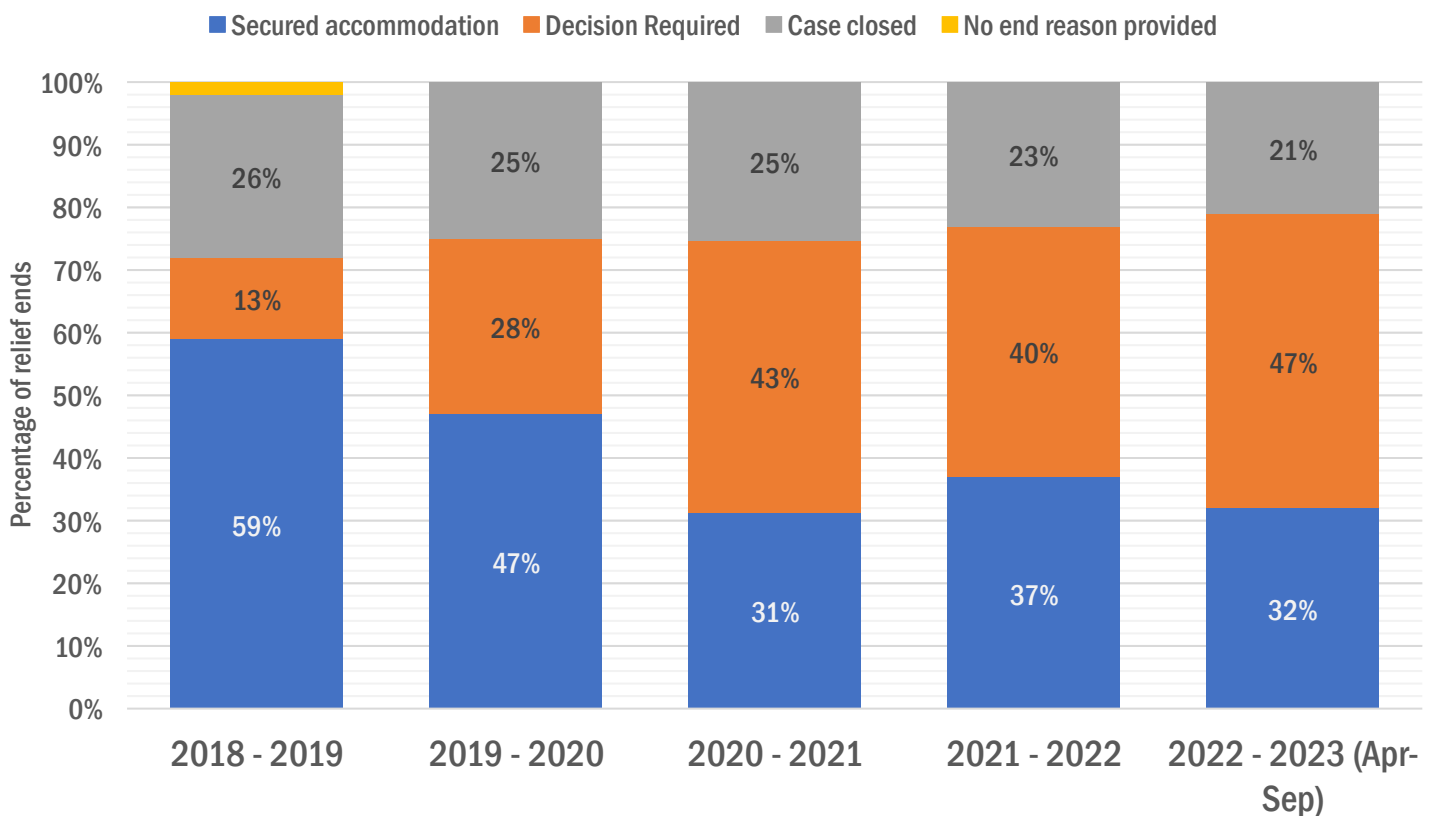
This section of the appendix outlines the trends and observations made at the end of the relief duty.

Relief duties can end for a variety of reasons. We've grouped these reasons into four key categories including:

- Secured accommodation – be it new accommodation or existing accommodation
- Decision Required – when a customer is still homeless at the end of 56 days and we require making a full statutory homeless decision.
- Case closed – this could be for a variety of reasons such as losing contact
- No end reason provided

4.1: Outcomes for Relief Duty.

There has been a drop-off in the number of customers securing accommodation at the end of the relief duty and a greater proportion of cases ending in a statutory homeless decision.



4.2: % of relief cases which secured accommodation.

The tables below show the percentage of customers in relief duty secured accommodation by the end of the duty. By looking at the four year average alongside the post-pandemic averages we're able to see how the pathway has changed.

| Age | 2018 - 2019 | 2021 - 2022 | Difference |
|----------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| 16 to 17 | 91% | 84% | -7% |
| 18 to 24 | 70% | 44% | -26% |
| 25 to 34 | 55% | 31% | -24% |
| 35 to 44 | 49% | 33% | -16% |
| 45 to 54 | 58% | 37% | -21% |
| 55 to 64 | 53% | 47% | -6% |
| 65+ | 82% | 47% | -35% |

| Ethnicity | 2018 - 2019 | 2021 - 2022 | Difference |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| White or White British | 60% | 38% | -22% |
| Black or Black British | 62% | 39% | -23% |
| Asian or Asian British | 56% | 34% | -22% |
| Other Ethnic Groups | 46% | 37% | -9% |
| Not Known | 52% | 31% | -21% |
| Mixed Ethnic Groups | 60% | 38% | -22% |
| Gypsy and Travellers | 17% | 20% | +3% |

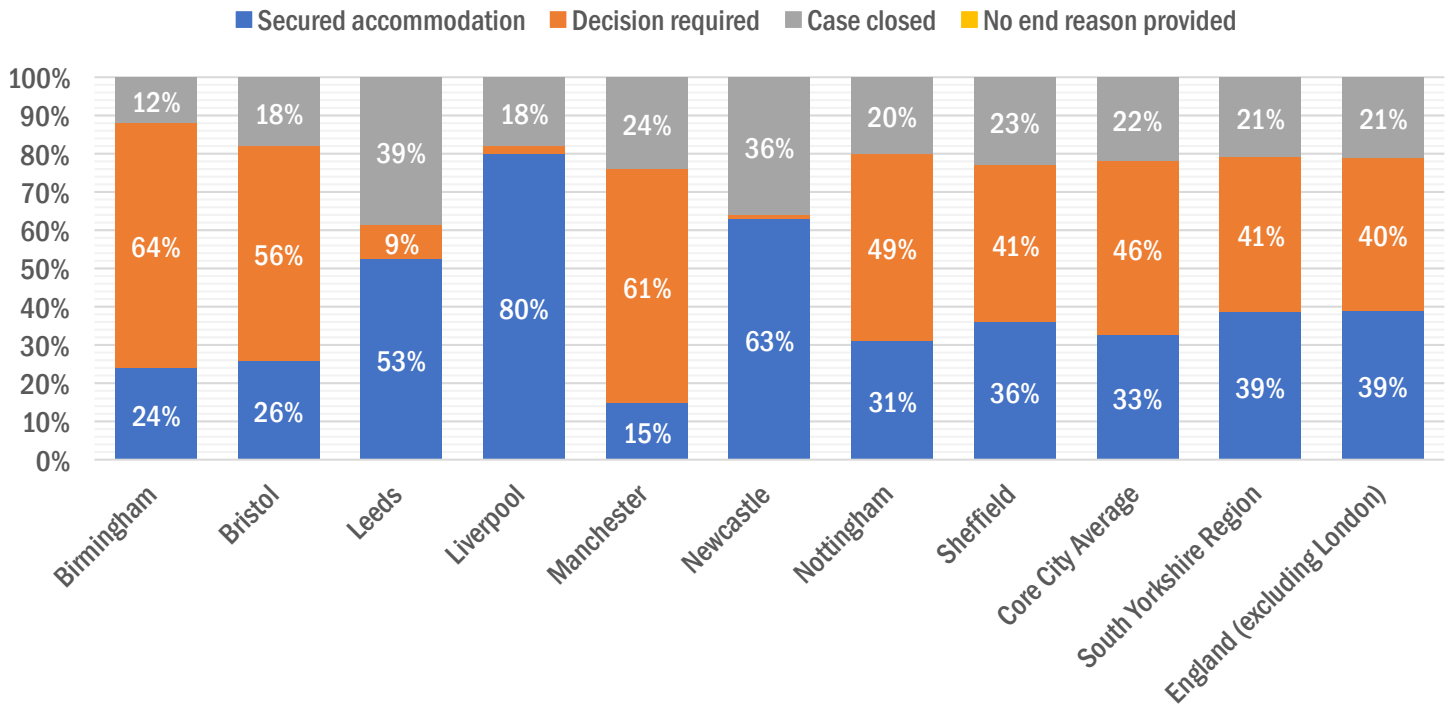
| Household Types | 2018 - 2019 | 2021 - 2022 | Difference |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Single Households | 59% | 42% | -17% |
| Family with Children | 59% | 26% | -33% |
| All other Households | 40% | 31% | -9% |

| Gender | 2018 - 2019 | 2021 - 2022 | Difference |
|--------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Male | 59% | 41% | -18% |
| Female | 58% | 32% | -26% |

- Every age group is seeing less customers securing accommodation at the end of the relief duty when compared to 2018/2019.
- This drop is affecting customers from all ethnicities.
- While both family and single households have seen a drop in securing accommodation, households with children have seen the largest drop. In 2018/2019 family and single households were equally likely to secure accommodation.
- Females are less likely to secure accommodation than males. Female households are also more likely to have dependent children than households with a male lead customer.

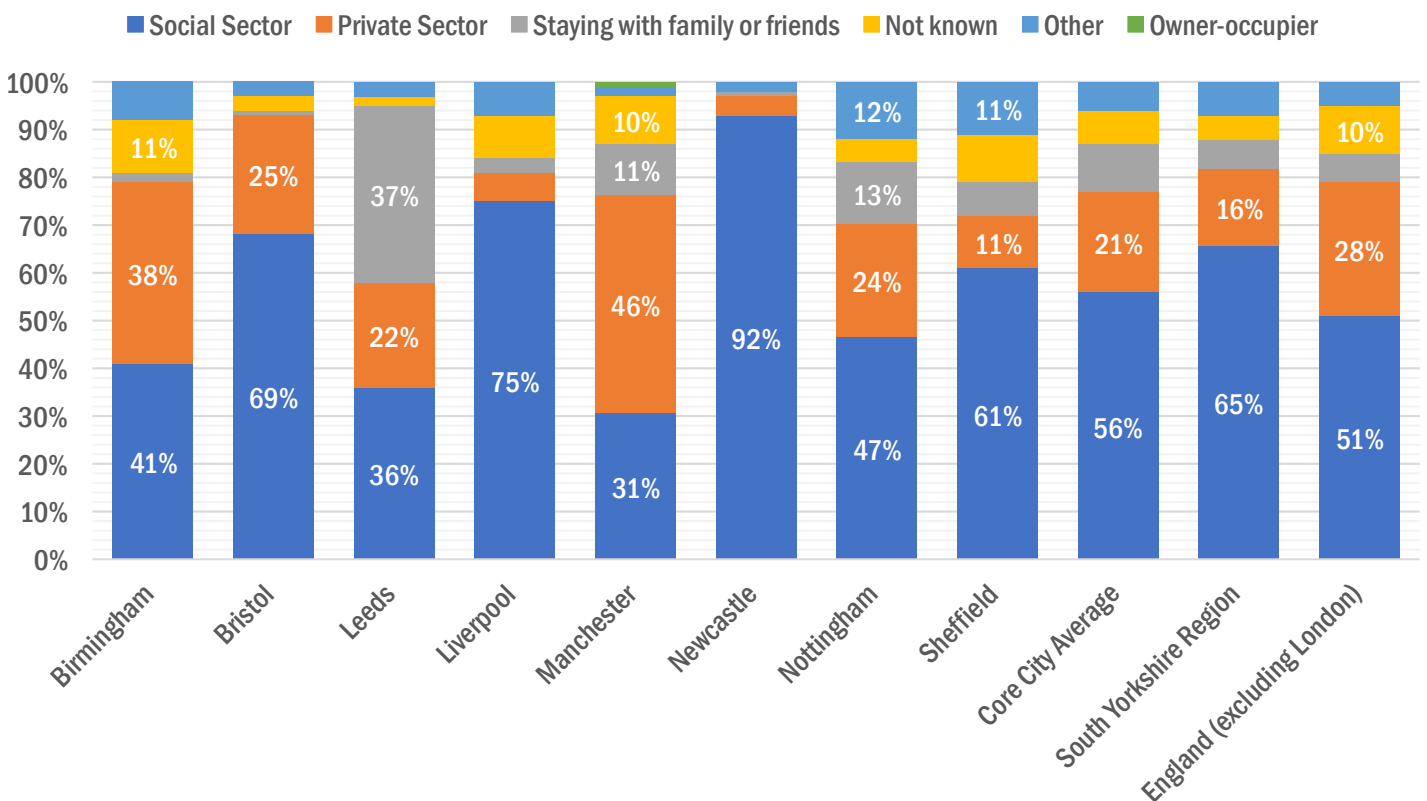
4.3: Outcomes for Relief Duty by Core Cities – 2021/2022.

Sheffield has more relief duty customers securing accommodation than the core city average but below South Yorkshire and national averages.



4.4: Secured accommodation by Core Cities – 2021/2022

Of those who secured accommodation at the end of their relief duty in Sheffield, 61% were housed in the social sector. This is higher than the core city average.



SECTION FIVE:

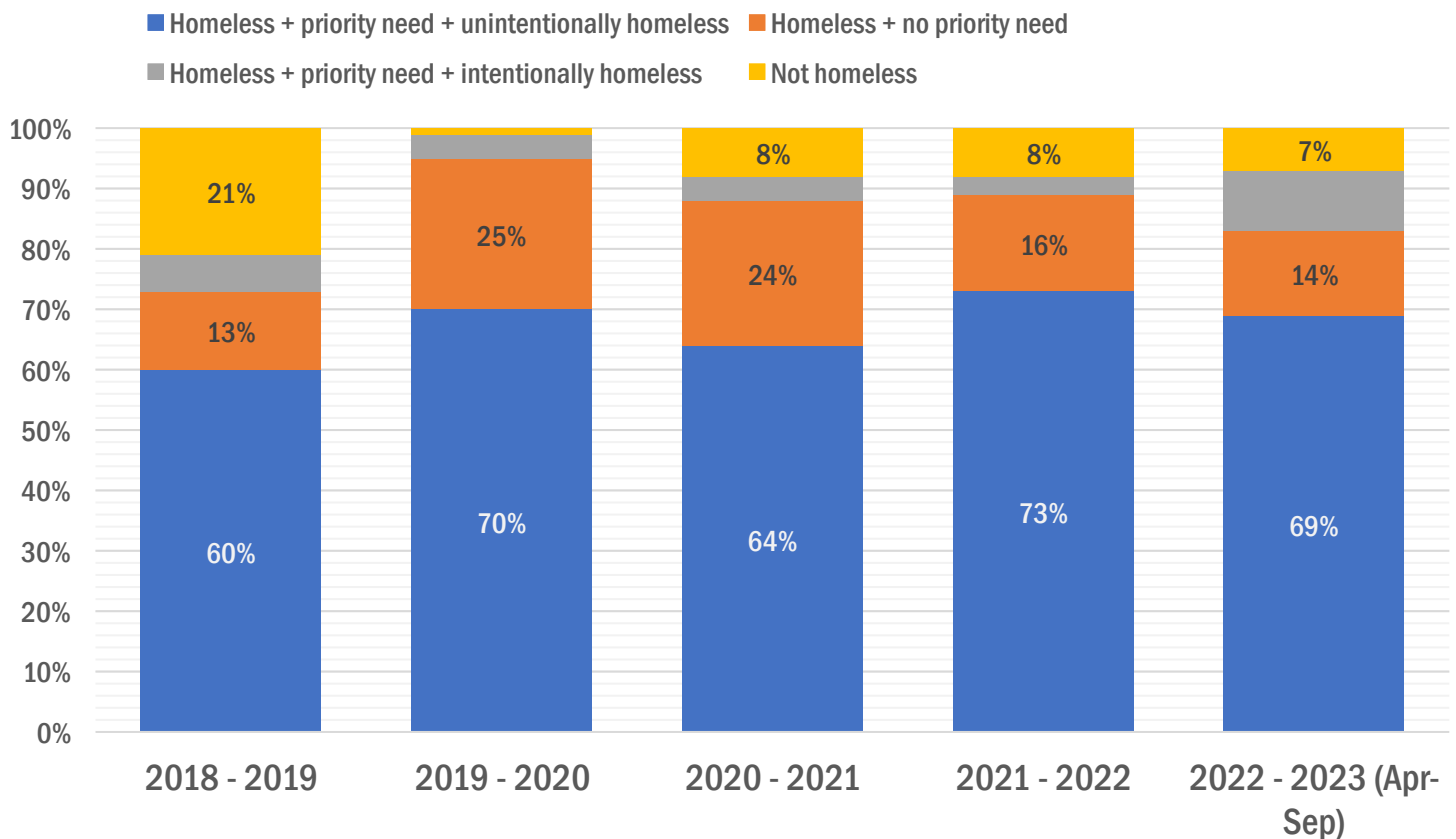
Decisions.

If at the end of the 56 day relief duty we've failed to secure accommodation for a household we are required to make a decision as to what statutory duty, if any, we owe.

This section of the appendix shows the decisions made by Sheffield.

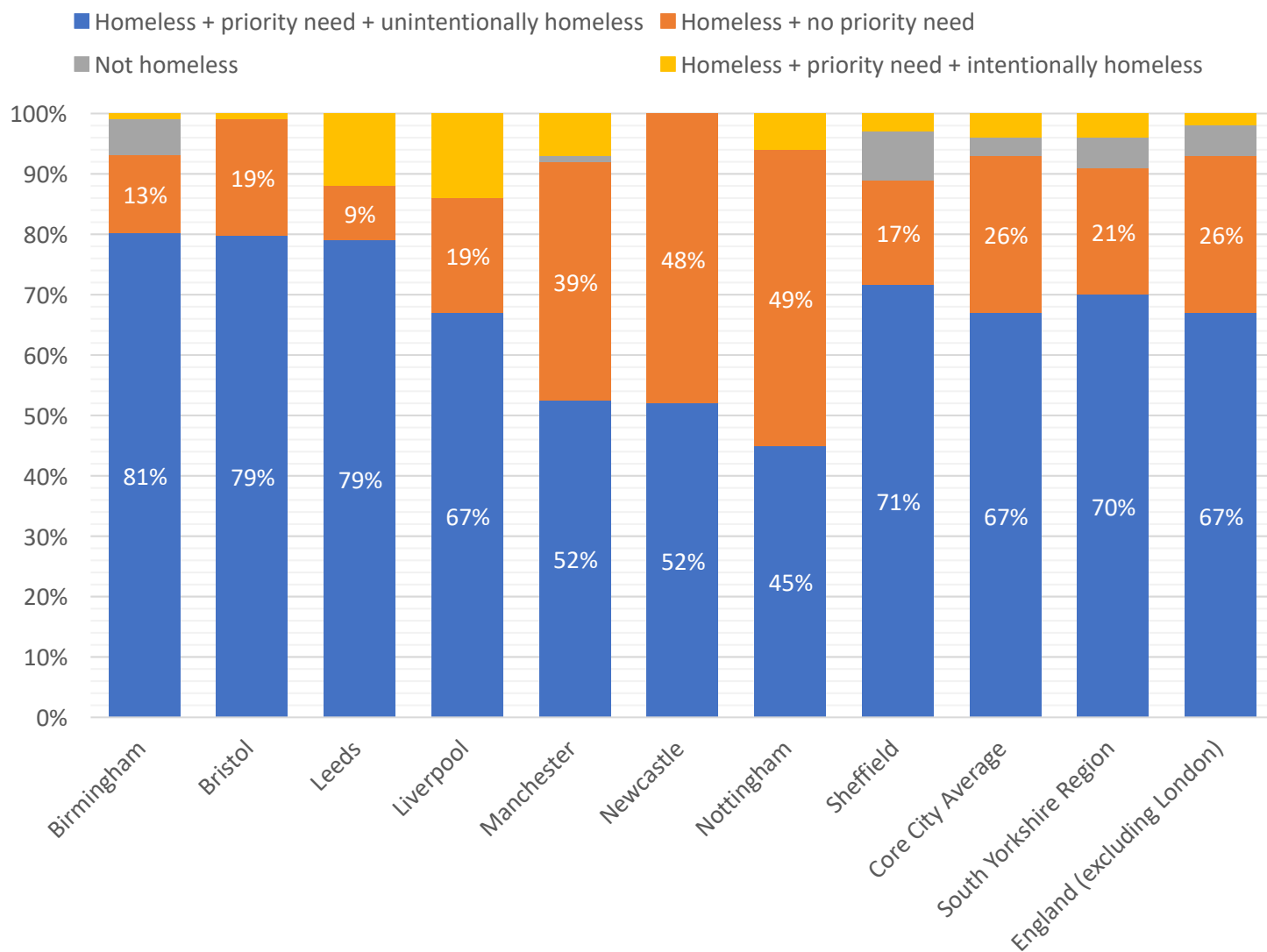
5.1: Decisions.

Of the relief cases which require a decision, a greater proportion are being owed a main housing duty because they are eligible, homeless and in priority need.



5.2: Outcomes for Decisions by Core Cities – 2021/2022.

Sheffield has awarded the fourth highest proportion of full duties, and is narrowly above the core city and national average.



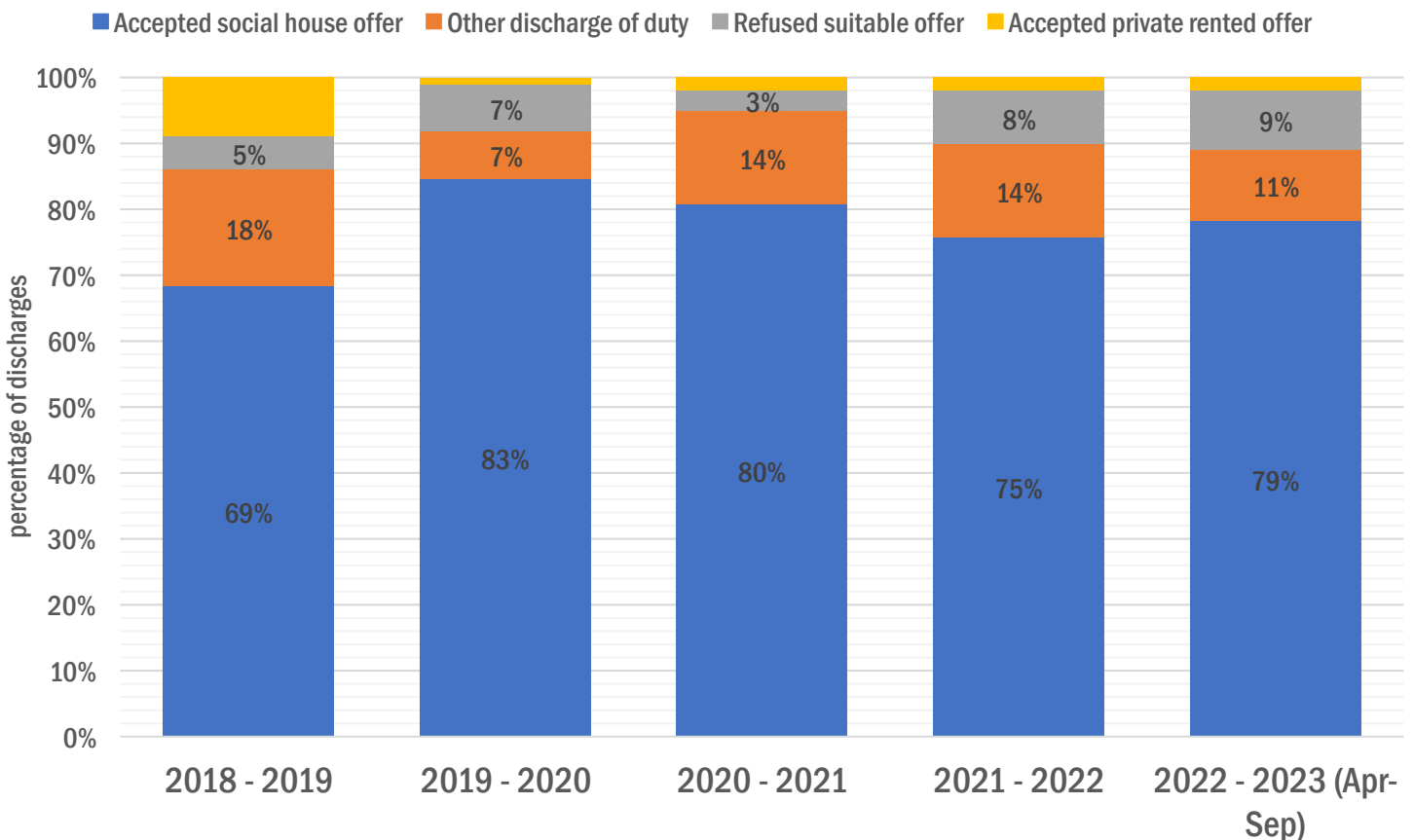
SECTION SIX:

Discharge of Duty.

Discharge of duty is the point when a household secures settled accommodation, or when they cease to be eligible for assistance for other reasons.

6.1: Discharge of Duty.

Most main housing duties are discharged with a social sector tenancy secured.



SECTION SEVEN:

Temporary Accommodation.

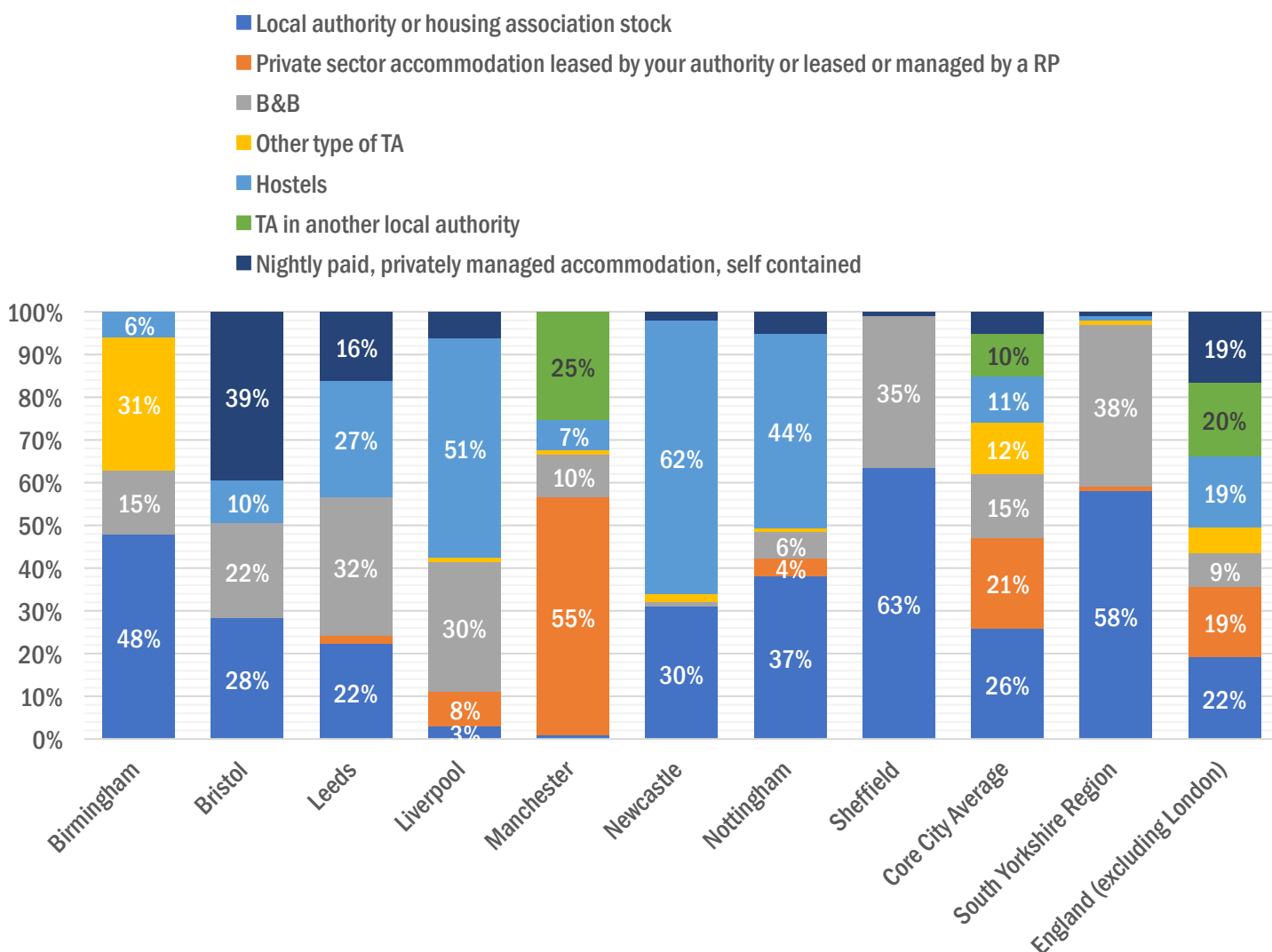
This section looks into:

Temporary accommodation occupancy – how many people are in TA on a given day.

Type of accommodation – what types of TA are being used by Sheffield and other benchmark comparisons.

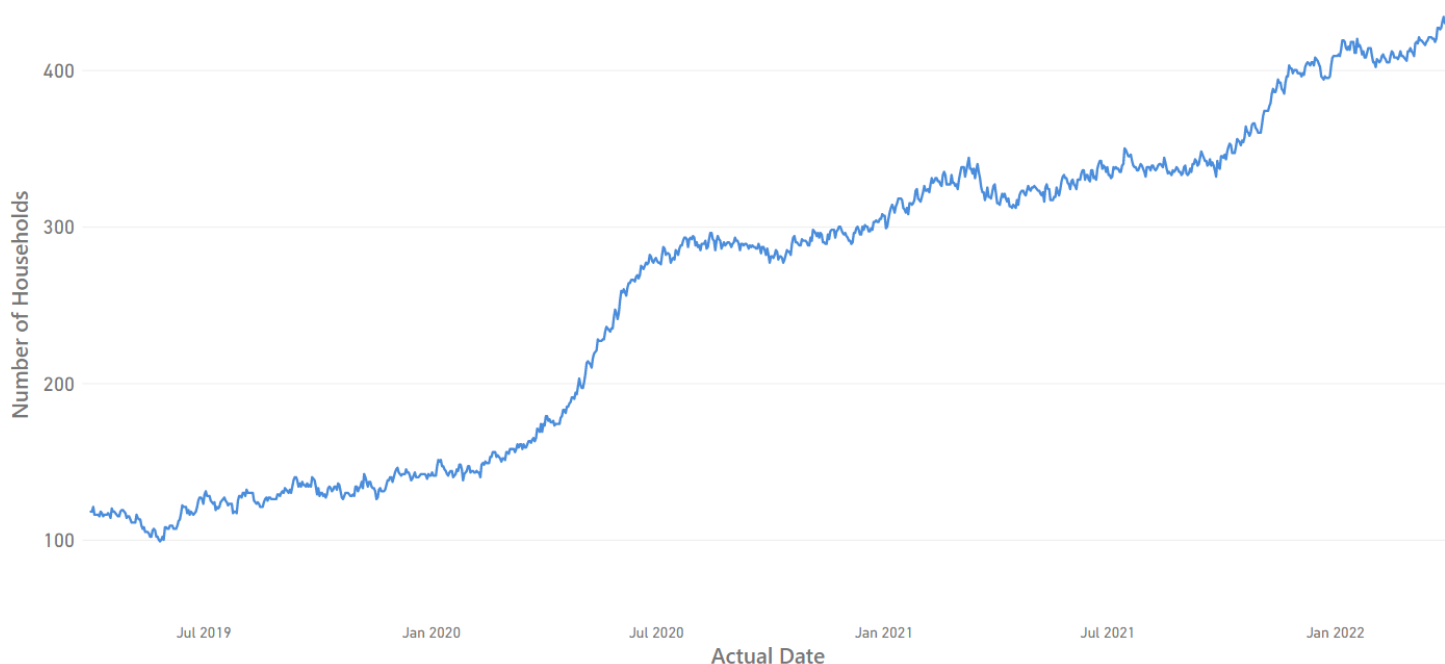
7.1: Type of temporary accommodation provided.

Sheffield nearly exclusively uses its existing social stock to house customers in temporary accommodation. This is unlike most other core cities, which often use the private sector and hostels to help meet demand.



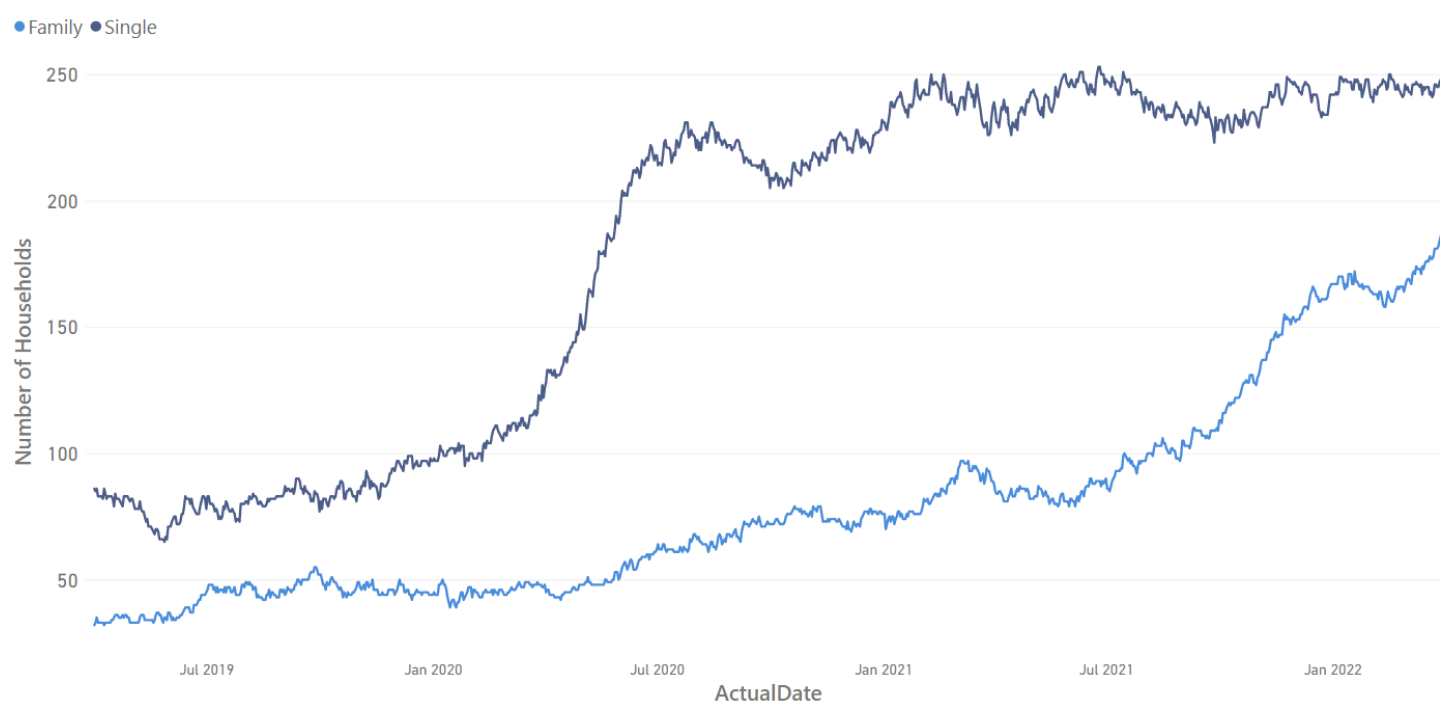
7.2: Occupancy of TA in Sheffield

The number of households in TA began to increase in early 2020 due to initiatives such as Everyone In. Since then we've seen even more households enter TA with record highs seen at the end of 2021/2022.



7.3: Occupancy of TA in Sheffield by Household Type

Single household occupancy saw a sharp increase at the beginning of the pandemic. Families has steadily increased since the same period, however in mid-2021 began to increase more rapidly, pushing total occupancy to record levels.



SECTION EIGHT:

Rough Sleeping.

Each year local authorities conduct an investigation into the number of rough sleepers within their boundaries. Their count is verified by Homeless Link.

The 2020 head-count coincided with a national lockdown throughout November and the tier restrictions in October. This is likely to have impacted people's risk of rough sleeping and should be noted when comparing this year's snapshot figures.

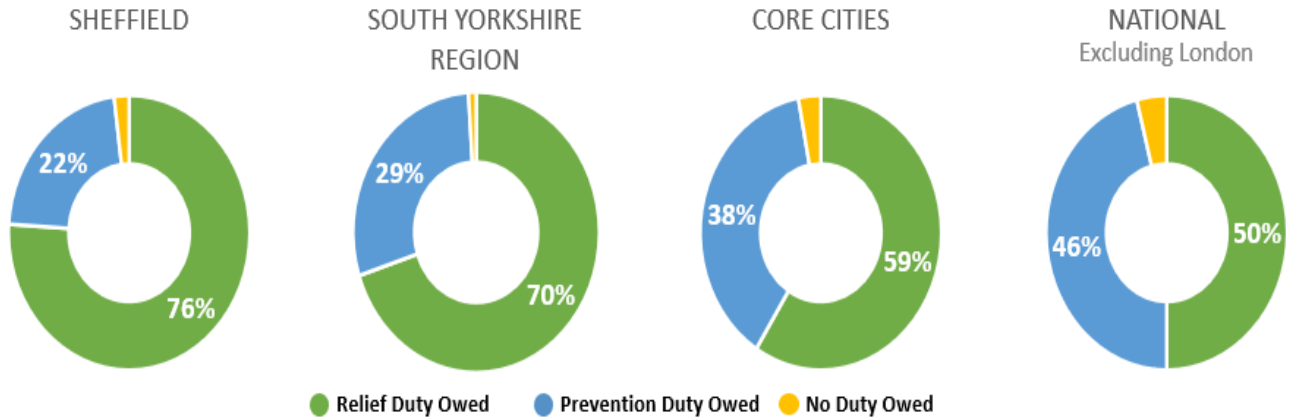
8.1: Yearly headcount for rough sleeping.

Sheffield has seen a decline in rough sleepers as per the yearly headcount each core city is required to conduct.

| Core Cities | 2020 | 2021 | Difference | % Change |
|-------------|------|------|------------|----------|
| Birmingham | 17 | 31 | 14 | 82% |
| Bristol | 50 | 68 | 18 | 36% |
| Leeds | 35 | 25 | -10 | -29% |
| Liverpool | 10 | 20 | 10 | 100% |
| Manchester | 68 | 43 | -25 | -37% |
| Newcastle | 13 | 9 | -4 | -31% |
| Nottingham | 31 | 23 | -8 | -26% |
| Sheffield | 24 | 18 | -6 | -25% |

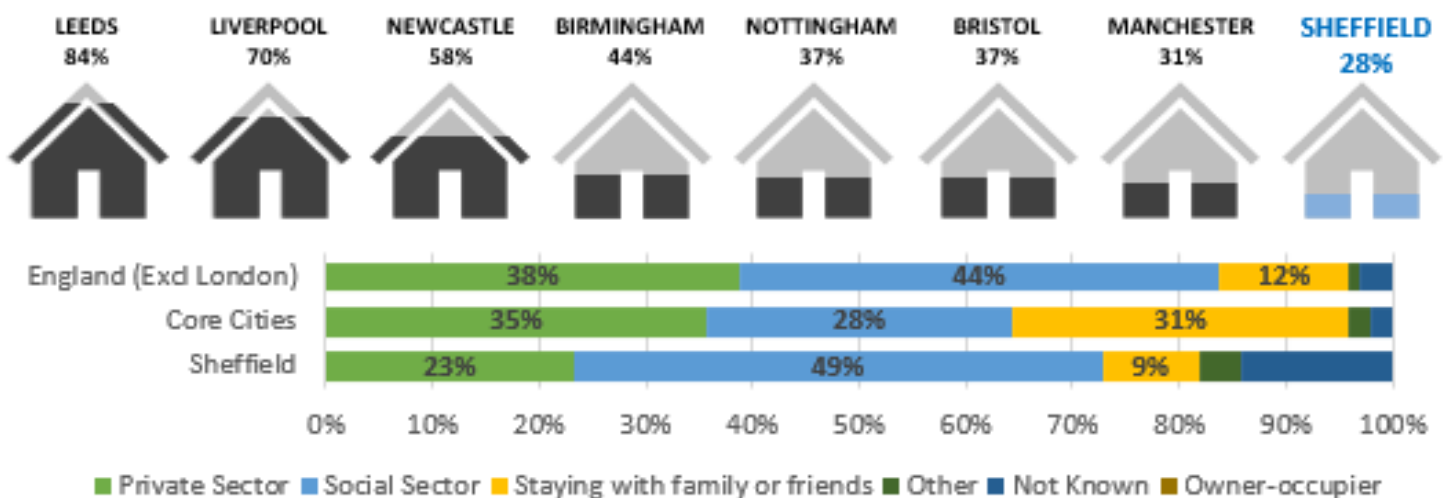
Benchmarking with other Areas

Circumstances upon initial assessment.



Sheffield has less cases opened at the prevention stage when compared to the core city average as well as the national average.

Prevention ends where accommodation was secured for 6+ months.



Sheffield has the least proportion of households securing accommodation amongst the core cities. Of the households which do secure accommodation, nearly half of the secured accommodation is in the social sector. This is above core city and national averages.

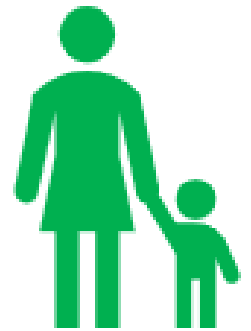
Benchmarking

Household Profile of Prevention and Relief customers.



80% of customers presenting at the relief stage are single adults, compared to 70% at national level. Sheffield is an outlier for having more single households presenting as homeless.

While single households are still the largest household type in prevention customers, we do see a greater proportion of families reaching us during the preventative stages of homelessness.



Percentage increase of main duties accepted between 2018/2019 to 2021/2022.



Sheffield
+270%

Core Cities
+102%

Nationally
+50%

Sheffield has seen one of the largest increases in main duty acceptances in Sheffield since 2018 – 2019.

SECTION NINE: SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL COMMISSIONED SERVICES

| Provider | Service Name | Service Description | Capacity |
|--|--------------------------------|--|----------|
| Adullam Homes Housing Association Ltd | Foundations | Floating support service for clients who need support with their mental health and learning disabilities whilst living in their own accommodation | 146 |
| Cherrytree Support Services Ltd | Cherrytree | Accommodation based service for young people aged 16-25 needing support | 28 |
| Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing | Sevenairs | Accommodation based service for people with high mental health needs, providing specialist support and accommodation | 20 |
| Framework Housing Association | Street Outreach Sheffield | Outreach service supporting rough sleepers | 325 |
| Framework Housing Association | Reconnections | Outreach service reconnecting rough sleepers to move from Sheffield to a place where they have a connection. | n/a |
| Guinness Partnership Ltd | Sheffield Foyer | Accommodation based service for people fleeing young violence, providing support for whom a refuge would not be preferable/ appropriate | 64 |
| Humankind | The Greens | Accommodation based service supporting people recovering from drug and alcohol misuse issues. Abstinence. | 21 |
| IDAS | Safe Zones | Accommodation based service for people fleeing domestic violence, providing support for whom a refuge would not be preferable/ appropriate | 25 |
| Paradigm Psychology Ltd | Psychology Service | Works with a range of HIS commissioned services and staff to create psychologically informed environments | n/a |
| Places for People - Individual Support | Windmill Lane | Accommodation based services supporting families and children | 19 |
| Roundabout Ltd | Mediation Service | Mediation for families and young people with the aim to prevent homelessness by allowing the young person to remain in the home or to return home. | 30 |
| Roundabout Ltd | St Barnabas Road | Accommodation based service for young people needing support | 26 |
| Roundabout Ltd | Roundabout Supporting Tenants | Floating support service for young people needing support with managing tenancies and living independently | 88 |
| Roundabout Ltd | Dispersed - Young People Block | Dispersed accommodation for young people with support | 60 |
| Roundabout Ltd | Dispersed - Young People Spot | Dispersed accommodation for young people with support | 40 |

| Provider | Service Name | Service Description | Capacity |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|----------|
| Salvation Army women's | Salvation Army Lincoln Court | Hostel for women experiencing homelessness | 11 |
| Salvation Army men's | The Salvation Army Charter Row Centre | Accommodation based service for men experiencing homelessness | 57 |
| Sheffield Women's Aid | Sheffield Women's Aid | Accommodation based services supporting women and their children fleeing domestic abuse | 36 |
| Yorkshire YWCA | Peile House | Accommodation based service supporting young women and their children where applicable | 14 |
| Shelter Ltd | HPR Floating | Floating support service which assists people at risk of homelessness to either avoid homelessness or help them resettle in new tenancies | 250 |
| Shelter Ltd | Children & Families, Stable Homes and Resilient Families Specialist Service (DN232212) | To support the most vulnerable households requiring help transitioning from accommodation to a permanent home, and ensuring homelessness doesn't reoccur. | |
| Shelter Ltd | DA Navigator/ Safe Accommodation Service | To provide specialist housing advice for clients in service before they are due to leave, and provide resettlement support to ensure a safe move on | N/A |
| Shelter Ltd | Drug and Alcohol Prevention and Recovery | Floating support service for clients living in their own home/ other supported accommodation who need support and help with managing and tackling drug and alcohol misuse issues | 105 |
| Shelter Ltd | HALT (additional funding linked to DAPR) | To improve support and outcomes for adults who are rough sleeping and /or who are at risk or / who are rough sleeping and who have drug and alcohol dependence needs | 10 |
| Shelter Ltd | OHID money (additional funding linked to DAPR) | To improve support and outcomes for adults who are rough sleeping and /or who are at risk or / who are rough sleeping and who have drug and alcohol dependence needs | |
| South Yorkshire Housing Association | Beaufort Project | Accommodation based service for people with high mental health needs, providing specialist support and accommodation | 18 |
| South Yorkshire Housing Association | Cuthbert Bank | Accommodation based service for families (with children) offering support for both adults and children in service, keeping them safe and helping them to move on safely and be independent in a new tenancy | 38 |

| Provider | Service Name | Service Description | Capacity |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|----------|
| South Yorkshire Housing Association | Living Well in the Community | Accommodation service for individuals and families experiencing poor mental health that will help them develop the skills to live independently in the community | 25 |
| South Yorkshire Housing Association | Live Well at Home | Floating support service for older people living in their own home needing support to remain independent and safe in their own home (prevent emergency hospital admissions etc) | 299 |
| St Annes Shelter & Housing Action | St Annes Bevin Court Hostel and Flats | Accommodation based service for men experiencing homelessness | 66 |
| Target | The Sheffield Project | Accommodation based services supporting people with a history of offending, or who have just left prison | 116 |
| Target | Thrive | Accommodation based service for those with complex needs and a health support focus. Long term provision | 25 |
| Target | Thrive (Interim) | Accommodation based service for those with complex needs and a health support focus. Interim support whilst new service is being developed. | 18 |
| Young Women's Housing Project | Young Women's Housing Project | Accommodation based service supporting young women and their children where applicable | 13 |
| Young Women's Housing Project | Young Women's Housing Project (additional funding) | | 7 |

Appendix 3: Action Plan 2017-2022 summary of actions completed

| | Item from strategy / activity | Progress | Notes |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| Priority 1: Proactively Preventing Homelessness | | | |
| 1.1 | Provide high quality timely advice to all residents on their housing options | Carried forward into the new strategy | Advice updated when HRA. Needs further development to reflect current circumstances |
| 1.2 | Produce written personal plans that sets out the actions they can take and we will take. Review casework management system to monitor progress and report on the outcomes of advice given. | Complete | |
| 1.3 | Develop a culture across organisations to work proactively to prevent homelessness | Carried forward into the new strategy | Strong commitment from partners made – will be built on in action plan |
| 1.4 | Provide tailored advice for people at greater risk of homelessness including single people, those released from prison, care leavers, former members of the armed forces, people leaving hospital, victims of domestic abuse, people with learning difficulties and mental health issues. | Completed | . Advice will be reviewed and improved in new action plan |
| 1.5 | Target earlier prevention work for single people with physical and mental health concerns | Partially completed | Progress made with RACM Panel and Everyone in – to be further addressed in new action plan |
| 1.6 | Provide better information about homelessness and how to deal with housing issues. Improve online communication channels. | Partially completed | This will be further developed. Some improvements made e.g. to website. included in new action plan |

| | | | |
|------|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1.7 | Develop a prevention toolkit, training and advice for organisations to respond to the risk of homelessness at an earlier stage | Complete | Will be reviewed for effectiveness to promote earlier prevention – new action plan |
| 1.8 | Implement clear pathways, referral routes for duty to refer cases, protocols and information sharing agreements between services working with customers at risk of homelessness. | Partially completed | Strong pathways for some groups – e.g rough sleeping, care leavers. Included in new action plan to develop further |
| 1.9 | Use data and predictive analysis to target resources. | Partially completed | Data analysis has identified areas and groups at higher risk of homelessness for different reason. Included in new action plan to target resources |
| 1.10 | Develop community based responses in geographical areas with high levels of homelessness; including specialist advice to locally based universal services. | Carried forward into the new strategy | Included in new action plan- Proactively preventing homelessness |
| 1.11 | Make better use of debt/money advice | Partially completed | Financial inclusion Officer appointed. Will be further resourced in new action plan |
| 1.12 | Develop housing options that support prevention, including private sector tenancies | Partially completed | Included in new action plan some expansion of PRS has taken place but needs to be increased |
| 1.13 | Align assessment processes with statutory services to include exploring housing issues as a key line of questioning. | Carried forward into the new strategy | Included in new action plan- Proactively preventing homelessness. Joint assessment for 16/17 year olds takes place. |

Priority 2.1: Strengthening partnerships to support families and young people

| | | | |
|--------------|---|---------------------|---|
| 2.1.1 | Work closely with Social Care and other services to prevent housing problems and support families with complex issues | Partially completed | Included in new action plan |
| 2.1.2 | Streamline and integrate housing support interventions for families with local services | Partially completed | Work carried with healthcare providers and local community groups to ensure families are linked in to local services. Better communication with Children's services including MAST and fieldwork services. In action plan for new strategy to formulise this work with a shared protocol. |
| 2.1.3 | Work closely with the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub | Completed | All officers trained on what to look for and how to refer to hub. Involved in VARMM and CCM process and service now organising and chairing VARMM's where appropriate. |
| 2.1.4 | Raise awareness of housing issues and the realities of leaving home in schools and young people's services. | Partially completed | Work started in schools and colleges including school open days. Working in partnership with young people's services to have a rolling programme in schools |
| 2.1.5 | Integrate housing advice with young people's services | Partially completed | All young people who present to the service are seen by roundabout prevention service alongside housing options officers. Need to expand this to other young people services which will be Included in new action plan |
| 2.1.6 | Improve identification of the risk of homelessness and target interventions | Partially completed | Joint work and training undertaken with groups working with families and young people. This |

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| | | | needs expanding to all relevant services in the city. |
| 2.1.7 | Develop a Housing Support Pathway for vulnerable people under the age of 25 | Partially Complete | Support pathway in place for 16/17 year olds and care leavers. |
| 2.1.8 | Develop bespoke support and housing options, including trainer flats, supported tenancies and permanent housing options for Care Leavers and looked after 16/17 year olds | Complete | Care Leavers Protocol in place and housing options and support have been improved. Housing and Care Services continue to work together on further developing the offer |
| 2.1.9 | Provide flexible housing support for families and young people, enabling young people to return home where appropriate | Complete | Young people's pathway in place including care leaver protocol. Work with families to offer mediation and support to enable young people to return home. |
| Priority 2.2: Strengthening partnerships to support adults with complex and multiple needs | | | |
| 2.2.1 | Improve earlier identification and information sharing, including for those less visibly at risk; and provide targeted advice and support to enable people to keep their current home. | Complete | Panel set up to provide a multi-agency response to those people with complex and multiple needs. New in-house tenancy support service to target those at risk of losing their home. Links with healthcare providers including mental health to target the needs of vulnerable people |
| 2.2.2 | Jointly commission cross sector innovative and holistic responses for customers with recurring housing instability. Provide more flexible and longer term interventions. | Complete | Changing futures programme established to work with the most vulnerable people in the city including staff co-located in Housing Solutions. |
| 2.2.3 | Develop a joined up plan building on existing key worker and multi-agency models | Complete | Plan in place to include services across the city including the use of trauma informed asset based work . |

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| 2.2.4 | Streamline and improve effectiveness of multi-agency panels | Complete | Terms of reference agreed and panels working effectively. |
| 2.2.5 | Develop initiatives and support funding for voluntary and independent services to more effectively engage | Partially complete | Recent Rough Sleeper Grant bids and funding have included funding to local voluntary sector groups to jointly work with the customer group |
| Priority 2.3: Strengthening partnerships to support domestic abuse | | | |
| 2.3.1 | Improve earlier identification and use DASH | Completed | All housing solutions staff trained and using DASH Included in new action plan |
| 2.3.2 | Review provision for male victims of domestic abuse | Partially completed | Carry forward to new action plan |
| 2.3.3 | Review risk in relation to domestic abuse in family relationships | Carried forward into the new strategy | Included in new action plan- Improving Services to Support Vulnerable Groups- action to work with childrens services and voluntary groups looking at intergenerational violence |
| 2.3.4 | Ensure provision recognises coercive control and patterns of previous behaviour | Complete | All staff trained to recognise coercive control |
| 2.3.5 | Improve understanding when victims feel unable to report to police | Complete | Staff recognise that some people may not want to report to the police, all trained on dealing with this and offer advice to people on where they can get help a |
| 2.3.6 | Review processes and outcomes in partnership with Children and Young People's Services | Carried forward into the new strategy | Included in new action plan- Improving Services to Support Vulnerable Groups |
| 2.3.7 | Review existing powers to enable people to stay in their own home | complete | Implement target hardening to properties and support injunctions |

| Priority 2.4: Strengthening partnerships to support Black and Ethnic Minority households | | | |
|---|---|---------------------|---|
| 2.4.1 | Review Housing Options & Advice Service to ensure accessibility to BMA groups | Partially completed | BAMA reference group set up and joint initiatives taken place to improve options and advice |
| 2.4.2 | Create partnerships to target interventions for BME communities at risk of homelessness | completed | Multi-agency group set up to oversee working in partnership with specific organisations. |
| 2.4.3 | Improve homelessness prevention for refugees leaving accommodation and asylum seekers | Completed | Specific posts resourced within SCC housing solutions team and refugee and asylum team which has now expanded to work with Ukrainian refugees |
| 2.4.4 | Review housing support schemes to ensure the support needs of BME communities are met | Partially complete | Housing Support review completed . Implementing findings to be included in new action plan |
| 2.4.5 | Ensure actions in all priorities are inclusive and consider equality issues for BME groups | completed | Will be Included in new action plan- Improving Services to Support Vulnerable Groups |
| Priority 2.5: Strengthening partnerships to support substance misuse | | | |
| 2.5.1 | Ensure homeless prevention strategies are complementary with Sheffield Drug & Alcohol Coordination Team substance misuse strategy | Complete | Drug and Alcohol coordination team have contributed to homeless prevention strategy and service manager from Housing Options and Advice now sits on Drug and Alcohol strategic board. |
| 2.5.2 | Ensure all homeless people presenting with substance misuse issues are referred to treatment | Partially completed | Staff know where to refer, and signs to look out for. All outreach staff are trained on drug and alcohol issues, how to refer into treatment and can do basic harm reduction work |
| 2.5.3 | Develop support to prevent loss of home and achieve stabilisation and eventual ceasing of substance misuse | complete | New team HALT set up to work with people who are at risk of rough sleeping. Team have direct links into treatment and work on an outreach basis |

| Priority 2.6: Strengthening partnerships to support other vulnerable groups including victims of modern slavery and NRPF | | | |
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| 2.6.1 | Improve awareness of modern slavery's as a cause of homelessness and refer to appropriate support | complete | Staff all awareness trained and this is included in inductions |
| 2.6.2 | Ensure all advice is inclusive and provide targeted information for NRPF | CompleteCarried | Work closely with Assist, Migration Yorkshire and City of Sanctuary to ensure all people presenting have quality advice |
| 2.6.3 | Connect with voluntary services | completed | |
| 2.6.4 | Assist council services to source suitable accommodation | Carried forward into the new strategy | Included in new action plan- Improving Services to Support Vulnerable Groups |
| Priority 3: Tackling Rough Sleeping | | | |
| 3.1 | Work with SY councils to improve the service offer and outcomes in the sub region over the next 2 years (2017-2019?) | Complete | Better understanding of who is sleeping rough from other areas within South Yorkshire, information sharing improved and joint initiatives and bids discussed |
| 3.2 | Integrate statutory, commissioned and voluntary services to coordinate activities, share information and collaborate on initiatives | Complete | Established multi-agency information sharing group . Rough sleeper working group as part of the prevention forum. |
| 3.3 | Develop targeted prevention activity that reduces the number of new rough sleepers | Carried forward into the new strategy | Included in new action plan- Targeting Rough Sleeping |
| 3.4 | Improve access to provision at evenings and weekends | Complete | Funding Framework team to work 7 days a week. Internal rough sleeper team do evening outreach. |

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| | | | On call manager from Housing Options and Advice |
| 3.5 | Improve identification and support of women rough sleepers | Partially complete | Working closely with SWOPP and chocolate box to target women rough sleepers. Recently been awarded money to enable us to have a housing advice worker specifically for this cohort which needs to be implemented. |
| 3.6 | Collaborate to develop holistic approaches for entrenched rough sleepers | complete | All rough sleepers are discussed at information sharing meeting and joint action plans developed |
| 3.7 | Reconnect people back to their local community | complete | Working closely with other services we ensure people have other accommodation open to them and reconnect back to their local community. Have a Rough Sleepers personalisation fund that enables us to do this. |
| 3.8 | Provide good information to the public about rough sleeping | complete | Help us help develop written material, videos and have social media posts telling the public about rough sleeping and what they can do to help. The work help us help does extends to supporting local businesses. |
| Priority 4.1: Improve Housing Options & Housing Support to reduce Temporary Accommodation use | | | |
| 4.1.1 | Eliminate the use of B&B with a new scheme to provide emergency accommodation. | Partially complete | Have opened three new schemes Barnsley Road, Baxter Court and Cross Park Road. Have a business case for new schemes to use as TA this is still in development and will be included in new action plan |
| 4.1.2 | Use dispersed housing and supported housing to complement fixed accommodation | Partially complete | Using dispersed SCC stock as TA , Housing First increased to 50 units, RSAP accommodation for move on provision for people who have slept rough |

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| | | | (47 Units) Supported Housing Review completed , implementation included in new action plan- |
| 4.1.3 | Improve planning and continuity of support for customers leaving TA | Carried forward into the new strategy | Included in new action plan- Improving Housing Options and Support |
| Priority 4.2: Improve Housing Options & Housing Support - Social Housing | | | |
| 4.2.1 | Provide realistic advice about social housing and Choice Based Lettings | completed | Officers manage the expectations of the customer and look at other housing options as part of the personal housing plan |
| 4.2.2 | Prioritise homeless households for social housing and improve pre- tenancy partnership work | Partially complete | Included in new action plan- Improving Housing Options and Support |
| 4.2.3 | Improve tenancy sustainability through targeted support to those at risk | Completed | SCC tenancy support team – START supporting people in tenancies |
| 4.2.4 | Review provision of shared housing and smaller units for single person households | Carried forward into the new strategy | Included in new action plan- Improving Housing Options and Support |
| 4.3.1 | Improve access to private sector housing by supporting tenants and landlords | Carried forward into the new strategy | Reviewing activity of Private Rented Solutions Service and business case to improve access to PRS and working with landlords. Included in new action plan- Improving Housing Options and Support |
| Priority 4.3: Improve Housing Options & Housing Support - Private Rented Housing | | | |
| 4.3.2 | Coordinate work with private sector landlords and developers to maximise use of resources | Carried forward into the new strategy | Included in new action plan- Improving Housing Options and Support |
| 4.3.3 | Focus more on tenancy sustainment to prevent homelessness | Carried forward into the new strategy | Included in new action plan- Improving Housing Options and Support |
| Priority 4.4: Improve Housing Options & Housing Support - Housing Support | | | |

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| 4.4.1 | Explore the expansion of Housing+ social landlords | Carried forward into the new strategy | Included in new action plan- Improving Housing Options and Support |
| 4.4.2 | Commission services progressively aligned with homelessness prevention at an early stage | Partially complete | Review supported Housing completed ,and will be implemented. |
| 4.4.3 | Share information with key workers to prevent duplication of support | Completed | Information sharing meeting, Team around the person and CCM's for households. |
| 4.4.4 | Review effectiveness of housing support pathway | Not complete | Carried forward into new strategy |
| 4.4.5 | Address gaps in single sex accommodation, services for older people with complex needs and young people's services | Partially complete | Review of Housing Related Support covers this. New service for older people with complex needs opening at Bucannon Green. Rapid rehousing service for young people developed with Roundabout using government grant funding. Need to implement findings in review. |
| 4.4.6 | Review dispersed accommodation-based schemes for supporting families within their communities | partially completed | Included in review of supported housing to implement findings Included in new action plan- Improving Housing Options and Support |
| Priority 5: Addressing Health Needs | | | |
| 5.1 | Commission local health services that are inclusive of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness | Partially complete | Street outreach nurse, Mental health nurse as part of the housing first team and HALT team to work with people with substance misuse issues. Vaccination programme, virtual consultations for rough sleepers who would not attend surgery. |
| 5.2 | Improve access to primary health care to reduce hospital admissions and A&E presentations | Partially completed | Worked with 'deep end' GP group and surgeries to support staff to recognise the issues affecting homeless people and also what to do if they do think someone is at risk of homelessness. Still |

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| | | | need to organise training for GP reception staff. Included in new action plan- Improving Housing Options and Support |
| 5.3 | Improve understanding of homelessness and housing services within health services and review referral processes | Carried forward into the new strategy | Briefings and training to be planned in as part of new action plan- Improving Housing Options and Support |
| 5.4 | Provide housing support for those leaving health care | Partially Complete | Housing Health and Care Reference Group established. Health Services represented on Homeless Steering Group |
| 5.5 | Identify which interventions appropriate to promote with health services | Carried forward into the new strategy | Included in new action plan- Improving Services to Support Vulnerable Groups |
| 5.6 | Create partnerships to ensure Health and Housing are linked | Carried forward into the new strategy | Included in new action plan- Improving Services to Support Vulnerable Groups |
| 5.7 | Address health impacts of homeless children | Carried forward into the new strategy | Included in new action plan- Improving Services to Support Vulnerable Groups |
| Priority 6: Improved Access to Employment, Education & Training | | | |
| 6.1 | Develop targeted opportunities for paid and voluntary work | Partially complete | Funded post at DWP Included |
| 6.2 | Include EET within service specifications when commissioning housing services | Complete | |
| 6.3 | Provide practical tailored support, including travel to work costs and work clothes | Partially agreed | Personalisation fund |

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Appendix 4: Consultation

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Council has spent the last year gathering evidence to enable us to write the Strategy. This has included several consultations and meetings with our partners and customers.
- 1.2. Although we as the Council are responsible for writing the Strategy, it is a city-wide document which is for everyone. Involving our partners and customers has therefore been vital to developing a strategy that provides a vision for everyone including actions that are achievable, and will have the most impact on reducing homelessness.
- 1.3. We have conducted much of our consultation online due to the pandemic.
- 1.4. The below details the consultation we have already undertaken and that which is still left to do prior to the committee meeting in November.

2. Initial Consultation

- 2.1. Over the last year we have held a number of consultation sessions around the city with partners, stakeholders and customers. This enabled us to get people's views and buy-in for the city strategy before we began writing.
- 2.2. We have held a number of events with partners over the past year. This has included some specific workshops around what the strategy should include. We have also held bi-weekly steering groups which have covered topics which relate to prevention, and these have also fed into the strategy.

| Done for new strategy | Date |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Online consultation for residents run over two periods of time (98 participants) | 2021 and May 2022 |
| Workshops with our steering groups including two sessions focused on the strategy a workshop with DWP on hidden homeless (combined total of 55 people) and a session on cost of living | July 2021- May 2022 |
| Internal Consultation with housing staff | Nov 2021- January 2022 |
| Workshop with our addressing health and care needs steering group | 1st December 2021 |
| Shelter peer research (12 participants who have a history of homelessness) | May-June 2022 |
| Workshops with 45 Members of SCC staff at a city wide housing event | 18th May 2022 |
| Two workshops held with the changing futures co-production service (10 participants with lived experience) | 08th June 2022 and 5th August 2022 |
| Workshop with South Yorkshire Frontline Network | 13th June 2022 |
| Workshop with young people facilitated by roundabout | 2nd July 2022 |

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| Workshop @ providers forum | 5th July 2022 |
| Meeting with officers at the Probation Service | 11th July 2022 |
| Workshop at the Combined Welfare Reform | 21st July 2022 |
| Meeting with internal Leaving Care service | 20th July 2022 |
| Workshop at weekly Volunteer Action Sheffield meeting | 28th July 2022 |
| Workshop with Registered Providers | 29th July 2022 |
| Workshop @ Health and Wellbeing board | 13th September 2022 |

3. Draft Strategy Consultation

- 3.1. We have gathered evidence from the consultation over the year to develop a draft strategy. We have now circulated the draft to all stakeholders, partners, and those with lived experience.
- 3.2. An initial workshop was held with the Homelessness Prevention forum in November to discuss priority 5-Strengthening Partnerships and Improving Systems and the actions each organisation could take to achieve this
- 3.3. Workshops have been held with internal and external organisations and both have been asked to send comments on the draft to the team.
- 3.4. We have also undertaken an online consultation on the draft with residents. This was advertised through our Facebook and LinkedIn pages. The consultation ran for a period of 3 weeks from 9th-30th November.
- 3.5. Relevant comments have been incorporated into the strategy prior to the December housing committee meeting.

4. Launch of Strategy

- 4.1. Following the December housing committee, we will hold a number of launch sessions with internal and external partners, stakeholders and those with lived experience. We will hold an initial session and follow-on ones based around each priority to discuss how each organisation/service could contribute to formulating the action plan. We will also be circulating proformas for organisations to sign up to the strategy.

Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy
2023-2028

DRAFT

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Appendices:

1. Legal duties
2. Homelessness review
3. Action Plan 2017-2022 summary of actions completed
4. Consultation

DRAFT

1. Introduction

The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out the vision, strategic direction, and priorities for Sheffield for the next 5 years. It has been co-produced with residents, partner organisations and stakeholders. It is a legal requirement of the Homelessness Act 2002 for Local Authorities to publish a new homelessness strategy every five years. The social services authority must provide reasonable assistance.

The strategy supports Sheffield City Council's corporate priorities and is part of the new Housing Strategy 2023/33. It complements other strategies and programmes that support independence and target help at the most vulnerable. It is compliant with key legislation that sets out the Council's duties in respect to homelessness. The strategy must ensure we deliver on the requirements to prevent homelessness, provide support, and ensure sufficient accommodation. These are summarised in Appendix 1.

Information about the local context and the challenges our residents face is provided. The Current Strategy (2017-22) and performance on homelessness has been reviewed to identify our future priorities.

In 2018 the Homelessness Reduction Act gave the Council new duties to prevent homelessness. Other named public bodies are also now required to identify the risk of homelessness and refer people for support. This has significantly increased demand for services. Initially good progress was made on improving homelessness prevention outcomes and our partnership of agencies has been strengthened.

However, since 2020 homelessness has increased nationally and locally. The pandemic has had devastating impacts to our communities, affecting their health, causing social and economic disruption, and widening inequalities in our city¹. More recently, the cost of living has increased steeply, and previous economic downturns suggest the impact of an economic crisis on homelessness presentations will be seen over two or three years.

Over the last ten years Councils have faced a reduction to core funding from the Government of nearly £16 billion². Many of our partners have also experienced cuts to their funding and there is an ongoing need for efficiencies and savings.

When people do need to move, housing options are limited with a shortfall of 902 new affordable homes per annum in the city. Private rents are increasing and are now on average £700 per month³ and there has been a reduction in social housing stock.

Despite this challenging environment we have a very strong commitment across our partnership to make the best use of our resources to refocus on preventing homelessness. We will continue to improve the specialist homelessness services, further strengthen our partnership work and deal with system wide issues that are a barrier to good outcomes. We will continue to provide a strong safety net for people

¹ [\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Sheffield Health and Wellbeing Board, 24/09/2020 15:00](#)

² [5.40 01 Finance publication WEB 0.pdf \(local.gov.uk\)](#)

³ In most cases customers have to pay upfront costs such as a deposit and rent in advance which could cost around £1350- [How much it costs to rent - Citizens Advice](#)

who do become homeless and make sure they have the support they need to move on to permanent and sustainable new homes.

2. Vision and Priorities

In our last Strategy we set out our priorities as

- Proactively Preventing Homelessness
- Strengthening Partnerships to support vulnerable groups
- Tackling Rough Sleeping
- Improving Housing Options and Support
- Addressing Health Needs
- Improving Access to Employment, Education and Training

In reviewing the evidence and progress made, we are confident that the priorities we agreed were correct. However, we now need to update the approach to deal with the context of increases in homelessness, further reductions in public funding, and fundamental system wide issues.

We have developed a vision, 2 over-arching themes and 5 priorities that will be key to transforming the experience and outcomes of those at risk of homelessness, proactively addressing inequalities and dealing with gaps in service provision. Detailed explanations and the commitments we are making with partner agencies to achieve them are set out in Section 7. These will be met by an agreed annual action plan.

2.1 Vision

Everyone in Sheffield should have a place to call home so we will minimise homelessness by focussing on early prevention to help people keep their home or move in a planned way.

We will provide good quality housing advice and options so people can resolve their housing problems in a way that is resilient and long lasting.

We aim to eliminate rough sleeping in the City by improving prevention and making sure everyone has access to suitable emergency housing and a permanent home with the support they need.

Overarching Themes

Our overarching themes will have some specific actions but will also inform all our other priorities.

2.2 Tackling Inequalities

Some of our residents are at a greater risk of homelessness and also face barriers to accessing good quality affordable housing and services. Some Black Asian Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BAMER) communities are over-represented among people who are accepted as homeless and the Race Equality Commission Report in 2022 highlighted inequalities in accessing wider housing in the city. People with mental and physical health issues and disabilities are also at a greater risk of homelessness. Tackling inequality by ensuring fair access to housing, offering appropriate services

and monitoring outcomes for all service users will be critical to the success of the strategy.

2.3 Supporting People through The Cost of Living Crisis

The risk of homelessness has increased due to the effects of the cost-of-living crisis and residents resultant ability to keep or find suitable housing. Most people who become homeless are either staying with friends/family or renting, but we expect to see an increase in problems for people who own their own home and private landlords with mortgages. Making sure our response is inclusive of people who are at risk of homelessness will be essential.

Our Priorities

2.4 Proactively Preventing Homelessness

The homelessness strategy is legally required to prevent homelessness in the district. Many people are already in crisis before they approach a homelessness service, so we are missing opportunities to help them earlier on. We know that some of these people are likely to have been in touch with other services already, so we need to get better at reaching people earlier with the right advice, practical help and support to keep their current home or move in a planned way.

2.5 Improving Services to Support Vulnerable Groups

The homelessness strategy is legally required to secure the satisfactory provision of support for people in the district who are, or may become, homeless or who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again.

From our review we know that there are some gaps in services that will make a real difference to residents to both prevent homelessness but also help them to successfully manage and maintain their home. This includes specialist homelessness services and access to mainstream services that need to be more responsive and adaptive.

2.6 Tackling Rough Sleeping

We want to see an end to rough sleeping in the city. Although we have had relatively low numbers, we have seen an increase over the last year. We are very good at responding to a crisis and now need to put in place earlier interventions. We will be focussing on more effectively addressing entrenched rough sleeping which particularly affects people with complex needs and circumstances.

2.7 Improving Housing Options and Support

The homelessness strategy is legally required to ensure that sufficient accommodation is made available for people who are homeless or at risk. We always try to help people keep their current home but sometimes a move is necessary. We need to further improve the range of housing options available to prevent homelessness and meet immediate and permanent housing duties. We also want to improve the support available to help people in their existing home, or when they move to a new home.

We are committed to providing effective support to those who have been homeless to enable them to resettle, sustain housing, and live independently.

2.8 Strengthening Partnerships and Improving Systems

We rely on strong collaboration between services to make sure people can access the housing advice and other support they need. Over the lifetime of the previous strategy, we have strengthened our partnerships including the establishment of the Homelessness Prevention Forum and our Strategy Steering Group. We now need to build on this further and tackle system-wide issues that are a barrier to homelessness prevention.

3. Homelessness In Sheffield

To set our priorities we have undertaken a review of homelessness in Sheffield. This is set out in Appendix 2. We have looked at trends and considered our performance locally against national data. We have consulted with customers, delivery partners and key stakeholders. We have also completed a self-assessment of our performance on tackling rough sleeping with the government specialist advisers.

A person is legally defined as homeless if they:

- Have no accommodation available in the UK or abroad
- Have no legal right to occupy the accommodation
- Live in a split household due to availability of accommodation for the whole household
- It is unreasonable to continue to occupy their accommodation
- They are at risk of violence from any person
- They are unable to secure entry to their home
- They live in a moveable structure but have no place to put this

Further information on the legislation surrounding homelessness is available in Appendix 1.

Our review shows us that homelessness has increased in Sheffield significantly and the successful prevention of homelessness is low in comparison to other areas. More people are being placed in hotels and dispersed units of accommodation when they are homeless. We are reliant on social housing to meet the duties to provide temporary and permanent homes but there is a shortfall of suitable affordable accommodation. The majority of people are supported to find a sustainable new home but a quarter of people have made more than one homeless application in the last 5 years.

- Since 2018/19 there has been a 9% increase the number of households who approach the Council when they are already homeless and a decrease of 7% in the number approaching when they are at risk of becoming homeless.
- Successful outcomes, where accommodation is secured for at least 6 months, have decreased from 47% to 27%.
- For prevention cases this has decreased by 20% and for relief it is 22%.
- Legal acceptance of the duty to prevent or relieve homelessness has increased by 270% since 2018/19 from 248 to 968 households.
- The use of temporary accommodation (TA) has also increased by 280% - rising from 114 to 430 households.

- The main reasons for homelessness are being asked to leave by friends and family, domestic abuse, and losing private rented accommodation.
- 60% of lead applicants were white British and 30% from BAMER communities.
- 56% of lead applicants were aged 34 or under.
- Rough sleeping numbers in Sheffield are relatively low at 18 in our last official count in November 2021 but we know this fluctuates.

4. Delivery of the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2017-22

To implement the current strategy a plan was developed with partners and progress has been made on many of the agreed actions. In 2020 our plans were disrupted significantly by the pandemic, services remained open but modified, and resources were also diverted to support new activity such as 'Everyone In' and 'Covid Hardship Funds'. A summary of the action plan and status of the activity is contained in Appendix 3.

Actions that have not been completed and are still relevant will be carried forward into the action plan for the new strategy.

Key achievements have included

- 'Care leavers protocol', and '16/17-year-old protocol' agreed
- A prevention tool kit has been developed for agencies
- Shelter 'Fobbed Off' - a women-centred services peer research project
- Homelessness Prevention Forum/Strategy Steering Group established
- Multi-agency 'Rehousing Adults with Complex and Multiple Needs' Panel established
- 'Changing Futures' Programme supporting people with complex needs and address system/service barriers
- Review of Housing Support has been completed
- Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme funding for 47 new properties
- 'Everyone In' provided accommodation and support for 190 individuals
- Opened 31 new units of TA for families and people experiencing rough sleeping
- 'Housing First' 30 homes for people who have experienced rough sleeping
- Safe Zones, 25 properties with specialist domestic abuse support
- Sanctuary Scheme - 600 households a year are offered practical support to be safe in their own homes
- Funding to recommission the city's women's refuges (37 self-contained units of family accommodation plus one crash pad) and support
- Improved access to health services for people at risk of rough sleeping including mental/physical health nurses and drug and alcohol outreach services
- Programme to support access to vaccinations for flu and Covid 19 and virtual clinics
- A post funded at DWP includes early intervention, access to a job coach, and help to find work specifically for homeless people
- 'GROW' (Get Real Opportunities for Work) paid 1-year traineeships at Shelter
- 'Thrive', a new accommodation and support service established, to support people with significant health conditions and additional complex needs.

5. Governance and Delivery

This five-year strategy has been co-produced with our partners and customers. A summary of the consultation that has taken place is attached at Appendix 4. We have asked our key partners/stakeholders to sign up to the strategy and a full list of those organisations who have agreed to deliver the strategy with us will be included in the published version.

Consultation

We have consulted widely throughout the development of the strategy over the last year. This included work with customers, internal services, and partner organisations. We started this process by asking what we should prioritise in the strategy and completed this by sharing the draft strategy for comment:

- Customers told us that better communication is needed and that partners need to work together to support them. They said that we should be prioritising suitable accommodation offers and linking people in with wider support.
- Our partner organisations support the priorities in the strategy. They told us that they are committed to proactively working together to prevent the issues that lead to homelessness, and we needed to make sure all the right agencies are signed up to the strategy and to improve pathways. Their input is also being used to draft the action plan.

We will continue to develop our well-established partnership and support bids for funding as well as commission services and directly deliver them in the Council. Where relevant we will develop initiatives across the sub-region.

We will include people with lived experience in our Homelessness Prevention Strategy Steering Group which will oversee delivery of the Strategy as well as undertake consultations on specific service development. We will work with the national government on tackling broader policy issues, and we will continue to engage with relevant governance boards such as housing, joint commissioning, health, adult social care, community safety, and children and young people services.

Our data tells us that people living in certain neighbourhoods are more likely to present as at risk of homelessness than in other parts of the city. Therefore, community-based responses will be put in place as appropriate.

A draft action plan is being developed with our partners. The action plan will clearly indicate the lead organisation and decision-making routes to be followed where appropriate, for example in securing funding, commissioning services, or making policy changes. It will be reviewed annually.

Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely Targets will be agreed upon, and a performance report will be presented at the Housing and Policy Committee annually. We will be held accountable for strategy delivery through the Performance and Delivery Board.

5.1 Key Targets to be Achieved Within the Lifetime of the Strategy

Priority 1 Proactively Preventing Homelessness

We will see at least 75% of people when they are at risk of losing their home and we can work with them to prevent homelessness. As we will be seeing them earlier we will aim to successfully prevent homelessness for at least 80% of these people.

Priority 2 Improving Services to Support Vulnerable Groups

We will have reduced the number of repeat homeless cases from 25% to 10%

Priority 3 Tackling Rough Sleeping

We will end rough sleeping in the city. By this we mean it will be 'prevented wherever possible and, where it cannot be prevented, it is a rare, brief, and non-recurring experience'.

Priority 4 Improving Housing Options and Support

We will have no one in B&B/Hotel Accommodation

We will have an additional 150 units of Temporary Accommodation

Our private rented offer will be expanded to that of comparable cities, in the region of 600+ tenancies.

We will implement the Housing Related Support Review and improve successful outcomes from 70% to 85%⁴

Priority 5 Strengthening Partnerships and Improving Systems

We will have a fit for purpose information sharing system

We will have increased Duty to Refers made at Prevention Stage from 18% to 60%

6. Links and Interdependencies

Other key strategies, commissioning plans and programmes of work affect how we can effectively address homelessness. It is important that these explicitly recognise and address the risk of homelessness and identify and fill gaps in services.

The following Strategies and Policy reviews will be key:

Allocation Policy Review

We are in the process of reviewing our Allocations Policy. A key driver in this review is ensuring that our Allocations Policy is fit for purpose and supports us in meeting our duties to those in housing need. In doing so we will ensure that people with reasonable preference, including those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, have fair access to social housing.

⁴ A successful outcome is defined as setting up or maintaining a stable home environment, achieving better health and well-being, developing the skills and confidence to be able to live independently and avoid tenancy or other housing problems which can lead to homelessness

Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy and the Domestic Abuse and Safe Accommodation Strategy

Domestic Abuse is one of the top three reasons for someone losing their home and therefore we need to ensure the best customer outcomes and address the issue holistically.

Drug and Alcohol Strategy

Drug and alcohol issues are a key support need for many of our customers which can be key to recovery and tenancy sustainment.

Housing Strategy

The Housing Strategy pulls together all strategic housing work. The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy will be a key sub strategy.

Review of Housing Related Support

Implementing this review will improve the outcomes for those who need support to maintain tenancies.

Specialist Accommodation Assessment

This assessment will determine the needs for specialist accommodation in the city including the type, location and quantity. Identified housing need in the assessment will inform further development plans

SCC Stock Increase Programme

The Stock Increase Programme details the Councils programme of delivery to provide temporary accommodation and general needs housing.

South Yorkshire Housing Prospectus

This prospectus details the commitments from Registered Providers across the city to address homelessness prevention and provide new homes in the city

Adult Health and Social Care Strategy/Children and Families Strategies

Many of the people who are most at risk of homelessness also require support from social care services and it is therefore critical that these are aligned with the homelessness prevention strategy to ensure holistic and appropriate responses.

7. Our Themes and Priorities in Detail

7.1 Theme One: Tackling Inequalities

We recognise that access to the housing market and support services are not equal across the city. Our priorities are intended to be inclusive, but we will ensure we explicitly address equality issues in the action plan that will deliver the strategy. The

homelessness and support services must meet the diverse requirements of our residents. In doing this, we will recognise and address intersectionality for example, where people are affected by inequalities due to race and gender discrimination, so that our responses are effective and appropriate.

We will make sure services are designed and delivered to be accessible and appropriate and this includes ensuring that the workforce at all levels reflects the local community. To get this right we will involve people with lived experience in co-production of services and consult them throughout the lifetime of the strategy on our action plan. We will analyse the data we collect on the different reasons why people with protected characteristics become homeless and whether the outcomes for all groups are comparable or if there are disparities that need to be addressed.

7.1.2 Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugees (BAMER)

The Sheffield Race Equality Commission report 2022 highlighted both national and local racial disparities in access to housing⁵. The census data from 2011 shows racial inequalities in Sheffield with over 38% of Sheffield's Black, Asian, and minority ethnic communities living in areas within the 10% most deprived areas in the country⁶. The commission also highlighted issues of overcrowding and a greater level of Black, Ethnic and minority ethnic people living in the private rented sector (3 times the level of their white counterparts) which is less secure than other tenures. This reflects wider inequalities in accessing housing which needs tackling.

Our data on homelessness presentations shows an over-representation of some BAMER communities compared to their overall profile in Sheffield. We will consult affected communities about what changes need to be made to our services to improve their experience and outcomes. We will increase links with the BAMER community, and raise the profile of homelessness risks, prevention, and support. This will help us to provide a culturally sensitive housing and support offer, remove barriers to accessing this support (including language barriers) and increase positive outcomes for these households.

7.1.3 LGBT+

The LGBT+ community is a diverse group that disproportionately faces disadvantages. We have some local data on this, but we need to better understand the challenges this community faces and tailor our response so that we are not creating barriers to people approaching or accessing assistance. We also know that there are those who are hidden homeless due to discrimination against this group and that there are hidden issues relating to Domestic Abuse from parents for young LGBTQ+ people. Our systems need to be inclusive, and we need to work with the community to ensure that support is accessible.

7.1.4 Mental and Physical Health Issues and Disabilities

People with mental and physical health issues and disabilities are also at a greater risk of homelessness. These are the two highest support needs for people who present

⁵ [504.7 REC Report\(accessible\) \(sheffield.gov.uk\)](https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-07/rec-final-report_1.pdf)

⁶ https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-07/rec-final-report_1.pdf

to us as homeless. In 2021/22 62% of people presenting to us said they had support needs surrounding mental health and 39% said they had needs surrounding physical health or disability. We need to work closely with health colleagues to ensure that our services and support are accessible to these residents.

7.1.5 Care Leavers

Evidence also suggests that care leavers face inequalities including in their access to housing. There are some gaps in the data on the links between the number of people who have experienced both care and homelessness however, the latest data from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) found that nationally 26% of the homeless population had spent time in care (Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2020)⁷. We need to work closely with colleagues to ensure that our services and support are accessible to this group.

7.2 Theme 2: Supporting People Through the Cost-of-Living Crisis

The cost-of-living crisis is one of the greatest challenges currently facing people across the city, with the rise in the cost of fuel, food prices and costs of housing all increasing. Deprivation, poverty, and low income are key barriers to accessing and maintaining affordable and suitable housing. The impact of the crisis will be disproportionately felt by those who are already struggling financially and who are therefore at a greater risk of homelessness. Evidence suggests that those suffering from domestic abuse are being disproportionately affected by the crisis which is preventing them from fleeing⁸ and cases of domestic abuse, including from adult family violence, may increase due to financial struggles. We will ensure that early intervention is in place and that we appropriately utilise the homelessness prevention fund to support people where costs are preventing them from moving. We also expect to see a rise in people affected by increases in mortgage payments and we need to be able to respond to this. We recognise that privately rented tenants are some of the most at risk of homelessness as rents increase and we will target support to them and landlords to prevent homelessness. There is also likely to be an increased risk of people sleeping rough due to rising unaffordability of living costs, we will target support appropriately to prevent the crisis from causing this to happen.

The Council with its partners will implement a coordinated response for communities and our vulnerable groups that need it most. Homelessness services will be involved in planning and delivering this to ensure that the response is inclusive of people who may be at risk of homelessness. This will include supporting people to maximise their household income and address housing problems early.

Good quality and timely advice will need to be readily available and accessible to everyone who needs it. As the cost-of-living crisis evolves it will be a priority to gather data and intelligence on the effects and who is most likely to be at risk, including how this is affecting homelessness levels and reasons for loss of home. This will enable

⁷ [The-care-experience.pdf \(childrensocialcare.independent-review.uk\)](#)

⁸ [With the cost of living crisis preventing women from fleeing abuse, the government must act now to support survivors. - Women's Aid \(womensaid.org.uk\)](#)

the response to be targeted. We will work with other social housing providers to support tenants and local residents with practical help.

7.3 Priority 1: Proactively Preventing Homelessness

To meet our legal duties, our homelessness strategy must deliver on preventing homelessness in the district.

Although we successfully prevent homelessness in many cases, most people who directly approach or are referred to SCC Housing Options and Advice Service are already homeless. This is very stressful and disruptive and negatively affects all aspects of life. As there is such a high demand for housing, people may have to stay in temporary accommodation for long periods and will have little choice about their new home. Furthermore, people who aren't eligible for temporary accommodation from the Council can be at risk of staying in unsuitable housing or situations.

Many people have been in touch with other services and organisations when they are at risk of becoming homeless, but we have not taken preventive action. Most of the work undertaken is about dealing with a crisis and finding short-term and permanent housing.

So, over the next 5 years we want to become one of the best performing cities on homelessness prevention which will mean opening over 75%⁹ of cases at the prevention stage and successfully preventing homelessness in at least 80%¹⁰ of these cases.

We need to embed a preventive approach across the whole system. Our advice must be accurate and timely with a better range of housing options to prevent homelessness occurring. Backlogs of work have built up in services during the pandemic and the funding available has reduced. Therefore, we need to make sure we make every contact count, enable self-service for people who can do this, streamline assessment and information gathering and focus on customer excellence. There is a good network of services that give independent housing advice and should ensure good signposting and referral routes between services to avoid duplication.

Whilst there are many reasons why people can be at risk of homelessness, the main reasons are being asked to leave by friends and family, domestic abuse and losing a privately rented property. We expect this to increase due to the cost-of-living crisis and we must improve our services to help people more effectively in these situations. We will improve our targeted information to groups at a greater risk.

7.4 Priority 2: Improving Services to Support Vulnerable Groups

Our homelessness strategy must secure the satisfactory provision of support for people in the district who are or may become homeless or who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again.

⁹ In 2021/22 Leeds opened 68% of cases in prevention.

¹⁰ In 2021/22 in Leeds 84% of preventions ended in secure accommodation being found.

Some vulnerable groups are at a greater risk of homelessness and we will improve our targeted interventions to meet their needs and improve outcomes. Homelessness legislation recognises some circumstances when a person has a heightened risk of homelessness. These are:

- leaving prison or youth detention accommodation
- leaving care of a children services authority
- leaving hospital
- victims of domestic abuse
- experiencing mental illness
- Armed Forces veterans

Although for some of these groups there are limited numbers in Sheffield, we will review our arrangements to improve our targeted advice and support to them.

There are already excellent examples of joint working in Sheffield, and we want to build on this to be more effective by focussed on earlier prevention rather than responding to a crisis.

We recognise that we will not always be able to prevent homelessness occurring and the services we offer to people at this very difficult time for them must be more effective to prevent repeated homeless applications.

7.4.1 Families and Young People

Sheffield has performed very well in reducing youth homelessness but we recognise the risk of this increasing in the current economic circumstances. Our focus will need to continue to be on helping the family to stay together until the young person can afford to live independently or make a planned move where this is not possible. We will improve early education and information about housing for young people.

However, some young people must live independently at a young age for example care leavers and those at risk of abuse and violence. There are also a small number of 16/17 years old who become homeless and are looked after by the Council. We already have excellent arrangements in place for care leavers and we will continue to work in collaboration with children's services for this group. Our joint protocol will be reviewed annually.

The number of families who become homeless has been increasing and some need additional support, particularly if they have complex needs and a previous history of homelessness. As the number of cases with dependent children is increasing, it is harder to secure accommodation to either prevent, relieve, or meet main housing duty resulting in more families staying in Temporary Accommodation/Hotels.

7.4.2 Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugees (BAMER)

Locally and nationally, BAMER communities are over-represented among homeless people¹¹.

¹¹ Page 5 of appendix 2 shows that

| Ethnicity (Excluding Not Known) | Total Sheffield Population (2011 Census) | 2021-2022 Assessments | Difference |
|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------|------------|
| White | 84% | 65% | -19% |
| Asian / Asian British | 8% | 12% | 4% |
| Black / Black British | 4% | 12% | 8% |
| Other Ethnicity | 2% | 6% | 4% |
| Mixed | 2% | 5% | 3% |
| Gypsy or Irish Traveller | 0% | 0% | 0% |

We must therefore prioritise addressing the disproportionate risk and impact of homelessness by both ensuring fair access to housing and targeting prevention activity.

7.4.3 Domestic Abuse (DA)

Domestic Abuse (DA) has increased as a reason for presenting and becoming homeless particularly during the pandemic. It is currently the second highest reason for people presenting to us as homeless. In 2021 domestic abuse became an automatic priority need¹². We know that it disproportionately affects female households, and we will ensure that suitable support is available to them. We will continue to provide a multi-agency response to prevent DA from leading to homelessness and this strategy will work to complement the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy. We will continue to support victims to remain in their homes where it is safe to do so through target hardening and the Sanctuary Scheme. The Council are in the process of becoming accredited with the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance and in doing so are taking a stand to ensure we deliver safe and effective responses to domestic abuse.

7.4.4 Improving Access to Health Services

Health conditions can be both a causal factor of homelessness and can be affected by the loss of home. Of the people who have presented to us over the last four years, around 59% listed mental health and 38% listed physical health as one of their support needs. 60% of the users of Drug and Alcohol Services report housing problems. It is therefore crucial that we continue to work with all agencies and organisations responsible for health and care services when there is a risk of homelessness or it is the presenting issue. The mental health social work function has been brought back into SCC which will be used as an opportunity to improve assessing and meeting the needs of people with mental health issues.

Our partnership has good representation from health services and there is a strong commitment to work together to increase the number of people accessing health services and receiving appropriate treatment as part of a wider support plan. We work closely with the Health Inclusion Team (HIT) who support families and children in temporary accommodation and asylum seekers.

¹² s.189(1)(e) Housing Act 1996 as inserted by s. 78 Domestic Abuse Act 2021

7.4.5 Other At Risk Groups

There are other people who are particularly vulnerable to homelessness who will need different approaches. We know that these people can either be invisible to services or have limited access to public support. Sheffield is a City of Sanctuary, and it is important that we continue to work closely with agencies to support refugees leaving accommodation and asylum seekers.

7.4.6 Access to Education, Employment and Training

Having the means to pay for housing is one of the major obstacles to resolving problems and increasing choice. We know from case records and partners across the city that there is a high dependence on benefits and low levels of being economically active or being in education or training. Finding work can be difficult, but more so with no settled address, few qualifications, a history of health issues, previous offending history or a poor employment record. Since the previous strategy, we have built close links with the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) and the Lifelong Skills and Learning Service, which has helped with income maximisation and supporting people into training and employment. We will build on this in the next 5 years with regard to both specialist service offers and access to mainstream support.

7.5 Priority 3: Tackling Rough Sleeping

Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) define rough sleeping as:

‘People sleeping in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or “bashes” which are makeshift shelters, often comprised of cardboard boxes).’

A long-term rough sleeper is defined as someone who has been identified as sleeping rough on at least 50 occasions over a 5 year period.

Rough sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness and can have a dangerous, frightening, and isolating impact on people. In comparison to some other major cities of a similar size, Sheffield currently has low levels of people experiencing rough sleeping¹³ however we are fully committed to having zero people experiencing rough sleeping by 2024/25. By this we mean ‘prevented wherever possible and, where it cannot be prevented, it is a rare, brief and non-recurring experience’.

We have a very strong response when rough sleeping has occurred, but we need to do more to focus on prevention. Most people are helped into accommodation very quickly but people with complex needs are more likely to experience longer and repeated periods of rough sleeping. Some people are not included in official counts, but we know they are roofless or staying in unsafe accommodation. This includes women undertaking sex work at night. We want to work across the partnership to ensure that we provide safe spaces for women in this situation to engage with support.

We will plan a three-year programme to co-ordinate the partnership to focus on eliminating rough sleeping by focussing on earlier prevention, maintaining a strong safety net and effective recovery. We will also ensure quick and effective intervention is available to prevent entrenched rough sleeping. We will address gaps in provision

¹³ In 2021's annual headcount Sheffield had 18 rough sleepers. Other core cities of similar size include: Liverpool:20, Nottingham:23, Manchester:43, Bristol: 68

for the most complex and vulnerable groups to ensure mainstream and core service offers are inclusive of those who are at risk of rough sleeping.

With funding from the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme, the Council and other social housing partners are putting in place move on accommodation with support to help people transition smoothly from the streets to settled accommodation. People with lived experience will be involved in the design of all new build elements and the support offered. We will continue to bid for further funding from the newly launched Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme.

We have established a successful Housing First programme working with 30 of the people with the most complex circumstances in the city offering housing and intensive support. We will be expanding this by a further 20 properties and would aim to see this expanded to other social housing providers.

There is a link between rough sleeping and street begging. However, in Sheffield we know that many of the prolific beggars are known to have accommodation. Our “Help us Help” initiative will continue to provide regular information to individuals and the public about what services are available to support people and how they can help.

7.6 Priority 4: Improving Housing Options and Support

Our Homelessness Strategy must secure that sufficient accommodation is and will be available for people in the district who are or may become homeless. It must also ensure that quality and accurate advice and information is given to customers.

We will always try to help people to keep their current home or to have a planned move, but sometimes an urgent move is necessary. We will give realistic advice on housing options in these circumstances.

Housing providers in all tenures are key to improving access to good quality housing to expand choices and provide affordable options. We need to improve the range of housing options available to both prevent homelessness and meet rehousing duties.

To inform this work, we will conclude our Specialist Accommodation Assessment to understand the type and location of specialist housing¹⁴ required. This will be used to inform the Council’s Stock Increase Programme, and work with housing providers and developers to address the housing needs in the City. The provision of new housing will be addressed via capital development programmes and commissioning plans and will not be duplicated in the action plan for this Strategy.

7.6.1 Temporary Accommodation (TA)

Approximately 30% of all presenting households are offered temporary accommodation and the average stay is between 17 weeks. In a snapshot in October 2022, 483 children were living in temporary accommodation¹⁵.

The current range of TA currently provided in schemes and in dispersed properties is not sufficient to meet needs. We therefore rely on hotels to fulfil our statutory duty. The

¹⁴ Defined in point 5.5 of [Policy statement on rents for social housing \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/104444/policy-statement-on-rents-for-social-housing.pdf)

¹⁵ Figures from 28th October 2022

schemes were built as general needs housing, require updating, have limited accessibility and are difficult to manage as short-term housing.

The use of hotels creates significant funding pressures for the Council and creates uncertainty for the households. The use of dispersed Council properties for TA also reduces the number of properties available for those on the Housing Register.

We aim to eliminate the use of B+B type accommodation and to improve the range of TA options by completing a programme of new purpose-built accommodation over the next 5 years. We will also look to provide good quality private sector accommodation for TA to meet the needs of households where we do not have available social housing that meets their requirements.

7.6.2 Social Housing

In Sheffield, we have mainly relied on social housing to meet urgent housing needs, and this will continue to be important. However, there is a shortage of social housing, and it is not available in all areas of the City. There are currently 913 households with a priority need and 8,713 active bidders. There are over 20,000¹⁶ households on the Council register for social housing. For those actively bidding the average waiting time is over 2 years. We will be reviewing the allocation policy and lettings outcomes to make sure that people are being given fair access to social housing and our duties are effectively met.

We are committed to building new homes in the social rented sector, but we know that demand will continue to exceed supply. We have a limited number of properties that are large enough for bigger households. For younger people affected by benefit changes, social housing providers do not offer shared/studio accommodation currently. As homelessness increases it is increasing in difficulty to fulfil all needs via social housing and we will need to make better utilisation of private sector housing.

7.6.3 Private Rented

There is low utilisation of the Private Rented Sector which can be used for TA prevention, relief and discharge of the full housing duty. To address this, widening access to good quality and affordable private sector housing is critical. This will enable us to offer more choice of property type and areas as well as recognising that not everybody is looking for a lifetime home.

The Council and Nomad both have schemes that arrange private rented tenancies, and we will look to expand this type of provision. These schemes have good records of sustaining tenancies but do not have the numbers of properties available that are needed.

Expanding this offer is challenging as the rent levels are increasing and there is a scarcity of private rented properties. We will continue to only use private rented properties that meet all the relevant standards and have been checked by the Council's Private Sector Housing Service.

¹⁶ As at 31/03/2022-20,741 were on the register

Recognising that around 24%¹⁷ of tenancies are in the private rented sector, we also need to improve advice and tenancy sustainment service and work with landlords to support tenants to remain where they are where this is suitable and safe to do so.

7.6.4 Housing Support

The Council commissions housing support services that help people to develop independent living skills in either specialist accommodation schemes or in their own homes regardless of their tenure. We rely on Supported Housing to fulfil both homelessness and care duties.

Reductions in Government funding to local authorities has substantially reduced the budget from £19.7 million in 2010 to £7.5 million currently. Many of the service providers locally combine public funding with significant charitable funding and volunteer input.

The current model was designed when the Council had far more stock and the pathway assumed ready access to social housing on completion of the support plan. This is no longer realistic, and we must change the focus to preventing the loss of home and creating more multi-tenure move on options.

We have reviewed the current model and will be implementing the findings in the next few years. The current arrangements work well for most service users but around 30% have negative outcomes due to the complexity of their circumstances, and gaps in housing provision and wrap around support. We will commission and directly deliver services that are progressively more focussed on prevention and meet customer requirements. We need to have more flexibility to meet individual needs where these cannot be met in schemes or in the current dispersed models.

The Council also provides in-house housing support services to tenants via our Housing+ for low needs, and a Floating Support Service for people with higher needs. We will work with other social Housing Providers to adopt similar approaches so that our limited additional resources can be targeted at those with the most complex needs and private sector tenants.

We will be reviewing the provision of Floating Support Services as part of our review of Early Help across the city.

7.7 Priority 5: Strengthening Partnerships and Improving Systems

We recognise the importance of having a strong partnership in the city across statutory, voluntary, faith and community services. The partnership needs to reflect the complexity and diversity of the needs of people who are at risk of losing their home. A nuanced response is required where there are gaps in the service and we need to capitalise on knowledge and resources in the city. This will enable more upstream work and successful outcomes across the partnership. We are reviewing our pathways with a particular focus on improving access to the Council's Housing Solutions service and the quality of the response to ensure timely advice is given.

¹⁷ Research conducted by BRE using modelled data suggested that 24% of properties in Sheffield are privately rented, an increase from 16% in the 2011 Census.

We will build on the existing partnership to enable effective professional relationships and holistic assessments. This will ensure that people struggling with their housing only have to tell their story once. Sharing of knowledge and information will be key to this approach and we will improve our use of technology and systems to allow better collaboration and communication. We will strengthen the visibility of outcomes by regularly sharing key performance data to review and plan services. Any new initiatives will be aligned and work in synergy with existing provision, with a commitment to effective communication between providers, commissioners, and other partners to avoid duplication and inefficiency.

We will ensure that our strategic and operational responses are planned with the partnership, responding to evidence across the city of what works. We will also continue to work closely with our government national advisors to gain understanding of national good practice. We will use this approach to forward plan what our funding requirements across the city are, to bid for funding, and prioritise resources appropriately.

We will upskill the workforce, building on shared experience across the partner organisations and utilising cross organisational learning, including training on equalities.

Duty to Refer and Protocols/Pathways

It is important that we improve how people can access our service by reviewing and extending our duty to refer system¹⁸ to agencies beyond those with a statutory duty to refer. This will enable a pledge to refer¹⁹ programme for further preventative work.

We will also review our protocols and pathways to improve how we work collaboratively including building on our current trusted assessor arrangements.²⁰

Changing Futures

In 2021 Sheffield succeeded in securing Changing Futures funding to run a programme aimed to improve partnership working to better support individuals who experience multiple disadvantages. The programme will invest significantly in developing and embedding co-production and trauma-informed approaches which will be key contributors to lasting system change. This short-term funding will grow existing good practice, connect systems, and interventions together in a more coordinated way.

¹⁸Section 10 of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a duty on specified public bodies to refer those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, with their permission, to the Local Housing Authority ([Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk))

¹⁹ By this we mean that all agencies are proactively thinking about homelessness risks and referring people appropriately and working with us to develop a holistic support plan around that person.

²⁰

Equality Impact Assessment

Introductory Information

Budget/Project name

The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy

Proposal type

- Budget
 Project

Reference number

1212

Decision Type

- Cabinet
 Cabinet Committee (e.g. Housing Policy Committee)
 Leader
 Individual Cabinet Member
 Executive Director/Director
 Officer Decisions (Non-Key)
 Council (e.g. Budget and Housing Revenue Account)
 Regulatory Committees (e.g. Licensing Committee)

Lead Cabinet Member

Cllr Douglas Johnson

Entered on Q Tier

- Yes No

Year(s)

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 20/21 | <input type="radio"/> 21/22 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 2022/23 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 2023/24 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 2024/25 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 2025/26 | <input checked="" type="radio"/> 2026/27 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|

EIA date

26/07/2022

EIA Lead

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Adele Robinson | <input type="radio"/> Ed Sexton |
| <input type="radio"/> Annemarie Johnston | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Louise Nunn |
| <input type="radio"/> Bashir Khan | <input type="radio"/> Michael Bowles |
| <input type="radio"/> Beth Storm | <input type="radio"/> Michelle Hawley |
| <input type="radio"/> Diane Owens | <input type="radio"/> Rosie May |

Person filling in this EIA form

Danielle Simmonite

Lead officer

Suzanne Allen

Lead Corporate Plan priority

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> An In-Touch Organisation | <input type="radio"/> Strong Economy | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Thriving Neighbourhoods and Communities | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Better Health and Wellbeing | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Tackling Inequalities |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|

Portfolio, Service and Team

Cross-Portfolio

- Yes No

Portfolio

Operational Services

Is the EIA joint with another organisation (eg NHS)?

- Yes No

Brief aim(s) of the proposal and the outcome(s) you want to achieve

The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy replaces Sheffield Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2017-2022

It sets out a vision for Sheffield City Council and where we would like to be in 5 years. It is a city-wide strategy which has been co-produced with partners and customers. It places focus on preventing people reaching crisis and getting help to them earlier. The action plan in the appendices details how agencies working collaboratively will achieve this goal.

The past two years have been extremely challenging for Sheffield. The Covid 19 pandemic has brought with it huge social and economic consequences and it has deepened the inequalities that already existed in Sheffield. Combined with the cost-of-living crisis these two factors mean that homeless presentations have been steadily rising.

We have to assume that with more economic challenges forecast, more people will be at risk of becoming homeless. Urgent action is needed across the city to change this picture

Impact

Under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) we have to pay due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

More information is available on the [Council website](#) including the [Community Knowledge Profiles](#).

Note the EIA should describe impact before any action/mitigation. If there are both negatives and positives, please outline these – positives will be part of any mitigation. The action plan should detail any mitigation.

Overview

Briefly describe how the proposal helps to meet the Public Sector Duty outlined above

This Strategy will focus on:

- upstreaming homelessness prevention in the city at every level
- developing a knowledgeable and well-trained workforce who are equipped to prevent homelessness
- building on a culture of partnership working and collaboration at the heart of everything we do

This will advance equality of opportunity by providing housing and support to homeless people and rough sleepers. We need to work with people throughout their lives to help them build resilience to prevent them from becoming homeless.

This will improve individuals' quality of life and provide them the support they need to move towards more independent living.

This strategy will upstream prevention and enhance support for vulnerable people. Together with partners we will provide responsive services and relevant wraparound support to enable people to gain more independence so that no-one faces homelessness.

Using our data, we will support all people who are in a Protected Characteristic group. We will address issues identified in the Sheffield Race Equality Commission Report 2022.

Impacts

Proposal has an impact on

| | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Health | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Transgender |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Age | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Carers |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Disability | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Pregnancy/Maternity | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Cohesion |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Race | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Partners |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Religion/Belief | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Poverty & Financial Inclusion |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Sex | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Armed Forces |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Sexual Orientation | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Other |

Give details in sections below.

Health

Does the Proposal have a significant impact on health and well-being (including effects on the wider determinants of health)?

Yes No *if Yes, complete section below*

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Losing your home or being threatened with homelessness causes stress, anxiety and poor health. This proposal will bring a positive impact to people who face homelessness/ rough sleeping as it will focus on prevention and therefore reduce the number of people losing their home.

Many people experiencing rough sleeping / homeless people suffer with physical and mental health. By providing housing (whether social or private rented accommodation) and wrap-around support we will improve people's health and wellbeing.

This strategy is aiming to help people to become more independent and enable sustainable tenancies (support will be given when they are ready to move in or for them to transition successfully to another tenancy).

By co-operating with partners and creating more 'joined-up' ways of working people will receive the most appropriate health and social care support which ultimately enhance peoples' independence.

This proposal focusses on educating society by working with external support agencies and community groups to improve their knowledge of the signs of homelessness and support each other within the community at all stages of life.

With the knowledge and expertise of our partners we will work to reduce poverty in the city and tackle inequalities, we will actively promote maximisation of income, as people and their needs will be at the forefront of everything we do.

Comprehensive Health Impact Assessment being completed

Yes No

Please attach health impact assessment as a supporting document below.

Public Health Leads has signed off the health impact(s) of this EIA

Yes No

Health Lead

Age

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

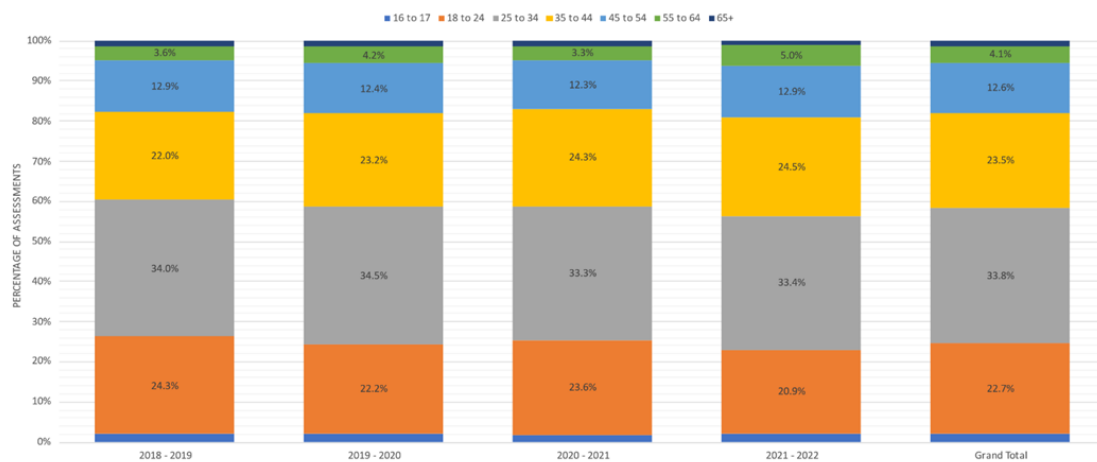
None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Our data shows that the age group who are predominately found homeless are between 25-34, equally followed by the age group 34-44 and 18-24. It is rare to get anyone homeless over 65. Those within the age 18-44 are therefore more likely to benefit from this strategy due to them being more likely to be at risk of homelessness.

1.3: Number of homeless assessments by the age of main applicant.

The most common age band at initial assessment is 25– 34 years of age, which accounts for 33.8% of all assessments. The age profile has remained broadly static across the past 4 fiscal years.



Source: SCC Homelessness Data between 01/04/2018 to 31/03/2022

FOUR YEARS

Disability

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

By co-operating with partners and creating more 'joined-up' ways of working people will receive the most appropriate health and social care support which ultimately enhances peoples' independence. This proposal will ensure that our responses to people are flexible and person centred.

We will improve web offer and communications campaign and ensure that information is provided in alternative formats accessible by all.

We will ensure that people with disabilities are re-housed or offered (social or private) accommodation with relevant adaptations and necessary wrap-around support.

We have anticipated a positive impact on rough sleepers who often have the most complex needs, including poor physical and mental health, history of trauma and are often isolated from society. We will secure dedicated accommodation and relevant support will be put in place to enable individuals feel safe and secure.

Pregnancy/Maternity

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

- None Low Medium High

Details of impact

We recognise that there are various issues which drive homelessness. This proposal will have a positive impact on pregnant women and families with children. Together with partners we are committed to tackling inequalities, this includes person centred wrap-around support around health education and employment and access to affordable housing whether social or private.

This proposal will focus on mediation and conflict resolution, these activities are essential to ensure relationships between family and friends are maintained. Mediation improved relationships can enable people/ pregnant young women to remain in the family home or ensure that people, pregnant young women can sustain their tenancy.

Race

Staff

- Yes No

Impact

- Positive Neutral Negative

Level

- None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

- Yes No

Impact

- Positive Neutral Negative

Level

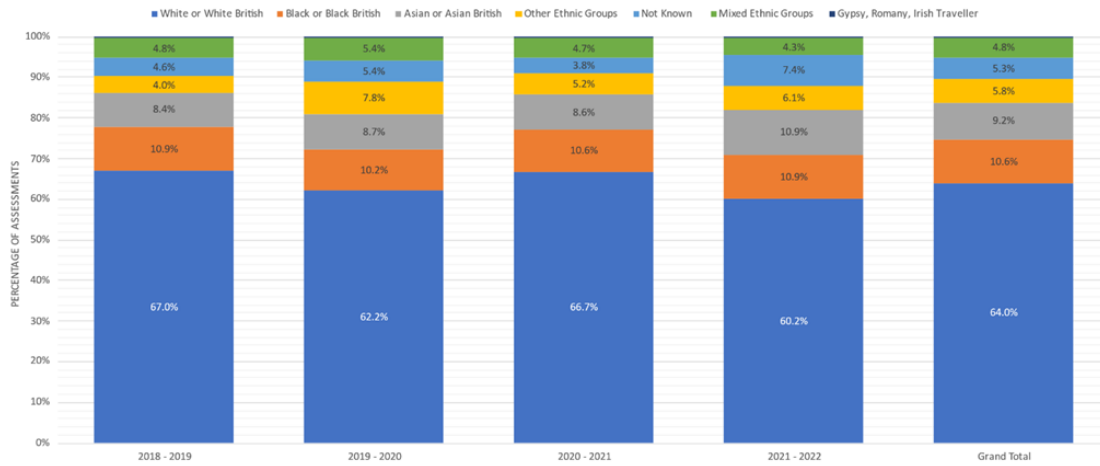
- None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Our data shows that the ethnicity group who are predominately found homeless are *White or White British* followed by *Black or Black British* and *Asian or Asian British* as per chart presented below.

1.2: Number of homeless assessments by ethnicity of main applicant.

BAMER households made up a greater proportion of total assessments in the latest financial year.



Source: SCC Homelessness Data between 01/04/2018 to 31/03/2022

FOUR YEARS

Our data tells us that there are groups of people who are disproportionately more at risk of becoming homeless. BAMER communities make up 30% of lead applicants

We know that people often experience issues early in life long before they may become roofless. Together with partners we need to work with people throughout their lives to help them build resilience to prevent them from becoming homeless.

Religion/Belief

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

This city-wide strategy has been co-produced with partners and customers. It places focus on preventing people reaching crisis and getting help to them earlier.

This plan focusses on targeted prevention. Sheffield has excellent services across the city to support customers who are facing crisis. Our workshops with customers

told us that support is needed earlier on and that our services need to be more accessible. Therefore, we will liaise with faith leaders **and the Voluntary Sector to reach more minority groups around the city.**

We will work with external support agencies, faith leaders and community groups to improve their knowledge of the signs of homelessness to assist them in supporting the community.

With the knowledge and expertise of our partners we will work to reduce poverty in the city and tackle inequalities.

Sex

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Women- Domestic abuse is the second highest reason for homelessness and it disproportionately affects women. They are therefore more likely to benefit from the prevention activities.

Rough Sleepers - The majority of rough sleepers are male. They are therefore more likely to benefit from the prevention activities due to them being more likely to be a rough sleeper.

Hidden Homeless (sofa surfing, often affects women who may be involved in sex work and so not counted within the rough sleeper headcounts)

We will work with external support agencies and community groups to improve their knowledge of the signs of homelessness and support each other within the community at all stages of life.

With the knowledge and expertise of our partners we will work to reduce poverty in the city and tackle inequalities

Sexual Orientation

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

This city-wide strategy has been co-produced with partners and customers. It places focus on preventing people reaching crisis and getting help to them earlier.

This plan focusses on targeted prevention. Sheffield has excellent services across the city to support customers who are facing crisis. Our workshops with customers told us that support is needed earlier on and that our services need to be more accessible. Therefore, we will liaise with faith leaders **and the Voluntary Sector to reach more minority groups around the city.**

We will work with external support agencies, faith leaders and community groups to improve their knowledge of the signs of homelessness and support each other within the community at all stages of life.

With the knowledge and expertise of our partners we will work to reduce poverty in the city and tackle inequalities

Transgender

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

- None Low Medium High

Details of impact

This city-wide strategy has been co-produced with partners and customers. It places focus on preventing people reaching crisis and getting help to them earlier.

This plan focusses on targeted prevention. Sheffield has excellent services across the city to support customers who are facing crisis. Our workshops with customers told us that support is needed earlier on and that our services need to be more accessible. Therefore, we will liaise with faith leaders **and the Voluntary Sector to reach more minority groups around the city.**

We will work with external support agencies, faith leaders and community groups to improve their knowledge of the signs of homelessness and support each other within the community at all stages of life.

With the knowledge and expertise of our partners we will work to reduce poverty in the city and tackle inequalities

Carers

Staff

- Yes No

Impact

- Positive Neutral Negative

Level

- None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

- Yes No

Impact

- Positive Neutral Negative

Level

- None Low Medium High

Details of impact

This city-wide strategy has been co-produced with partners and customers. It places focus on preventing people reaching crisis and getting help to them earlier.

This plan focusses on targeted prevention. Sheffield has excellent services across the city to support customers who are facing crisis. Our workshops with customers told us that support is needed earlier on and that our services need to be more accessible. Therefore, we will liaise with faith leaders **and the Voluntary Sector to reach more minority groups around the city.**

We will work with external support agencies, faith leaders and community groups to improve their knowledge of the signs of homelessness and support each other within the community at all stages of life.

With the knowledge and expertise of our partners we will work to reduce poverty in the city and tackle inequalities

Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

We will work collaboratively with our partners to ensure customers have the best possible start to enable them to respond if a crisis occurs.

We will work with secondary schools and further education establishments so that tenancy sustainment, healthy relationships with families, friends and partners, spotting signs of domestic abuse are part of the curriculum.

We will build on our strong partnerships to improve multi agency work. We will ensure that we are working with people early and that our responses are flexible and person centred

This city-wide strategy has been co-produced with partners and customers. It places focus on preventing people reaching crisis and getting help to them earlier.

This plan focusses on targeted prevention. Sheffield has excellent services across the city to support customers who are facing crisis. Our workshops with customers told us that support is needed earlier on and that our services need to be more accessible. Therefore, we will liaise with faith leaders **and the Voluntary Sector to reach more minority groups around the city.**

We will work with external support agencies, faith leaders and community groups to improve their knowledge of the signs of homelessness and support each other within the community at all stages of life.

With the knowledge and expertise of our partners we will work to reduce poverty in the city and tackle inequalities

Cohesion

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Our data has identified areas of the city which are more affected by homelessness and we will have targeted responses for these communities.

This city-wide strategy has been co-produced with partners and customers. It places focus on preventing people reaching crisis and getting help to them earlier.

This plan focusses on targeted prevention. Sheffield has excellent services across the city to support customers who are facing crisis. Our workshops with customers told us that support is needed earlier on and that our services need to be more accessible. Therefore, we will liaise with faith leaders **and the Voluntary Sector to reach more minority groups around the city.**

We will work with external support agencies, faith leaders and community groups to improve their knowledge of the signs of homelessness and support each other within the community at all stages of life.

With the knowledge and expertise of our partners we will work to reduce poverty in the city and tackle inequalities

Partners

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

Impact Page 137

Yes No Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

This city-wide strategy has been co-produced with partners and customers. It places focus on preventing people reaching crisis and getting help to them earlier.

This plan focusses on targeted prevention. Sheffield has excellent services across the city to support customers who are facing crisis. Our workshops with customers told us that support is needed earlier on and that our services need to be more accessible. We have a homelessness prevention forum and strategy steering group with representatives of all partners across to provide a joined up offer and they have all been consulted on the draft strategy.

We will work with external support agencies, faith leaders and community groups to improve their knowledge of the signs of homelessness and support each other within the community at all stages of life.

With the knowledge and expertise of our partners we will work to reduce poverty in the city and tackle inequalities

Poverty & Financial Inclusion

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Responding to the cost-of-living crisis is an overarching theme of the strategy. This will ensure homelessness is explicitly addressed in specialist services and the overall city response to poverty.

Armed Forces

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact**Customers**

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Homelessness legislation recognises some circumstances when a person has a heightened risk of homelessness. Armed Forces veterans are included within this legislation.

Although there are limited numbers in Sheffield, we will review our arrangements to improve our targeted advice and support to them. There are already excellent examples of joint working in Sheffield, and we want to build on this to be more effective by focussed on earlier prevention rather than responding to a crisis. We recognise that we will not always be able to prevent homelessness occurring and the services we offer to people at this very difficult time for them must be more effective to prevent repeated homeless applications.

We will work with external support agencies, faith leaders and community groups to improve their knowledge of the signs of homelessness and support each other within the community at all stages of life.

Other**Staff**

Yes No

Please specify

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact**Customers**

Yes No

Please specify

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None
 Low
 Medium
 High

Details of impact

This city-wide strategy has been co-produced with partners and customers. It places focus on preventing people reaching crisis and getting help to them earlier.

This plan focusses on targeted prevention. Sheffield has excellent services across the city to support customers who are facing crisis. Our workshops with customers told us that support is needed earlier on and that our services need to be more accessible. Therefore, we will liaise with faith leaders **and the Voluntary Sector to reach more minority groups around the city.**

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With the knowledge and expertise of our partners we will work to reduce poverty in the city and tackle inequalities

Cumulative Impact**Proposal has a cumulative impact**

Yes
 No

| | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Year on Year | <input type="radio"/> Across a Community of Identity/Interest |
| <input type="radio"/> Geographical Area | <input type="radio"/> Other |

If yes, details of impact

Proposal has geographical impact across Sheffield

Yes
 No

If Yes, details of geographical impact across Sheffield

Local Partnership Area(s) impacted

All
 Specific

If Specific, name of Local Partnership Area(s) impacted

Action Plan and Supporting Evidence**Action Plan**

There is attachment regarding Action plan which will be added to this EIA

Supporting Evidence (Please detail all your evidence used to support the EIA)

Action Plan

Consultation

Consultation required

Yes No

If consultation is not required please state why

We consulted with customers and other internal and external stakeholders

Are Staff who may be affected by these proposals aware of them

Yes No

Are Customers who may be affected by these proposals aware of them

Yes No

If you have said no to either please say why

Summary of overall impact

Summary of overall impact

The homelessness prevention and rough sleeping strategy will have a positive impact on addressing equality issues.

Escalation plan

Is there a high impact in any area?

Yes No

Overall risk rating after any mitigations have been put in place

High Medium Low None

EIAs must be agreed and signed off by the Equality lead Officer in your Portfolio or corporately. EIA signed off:

Yes No

Date agreed

EIA Lead

Review Date



Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Dean Butterworth: Head of Housing Investment and Maintenance

Tel: 07947701796

Report of: *Ajman Ali*

Report to: *Housing Policy Committee*

Date of Decision: *15 December 2022*

Subject: *Damp and Mould Update*

| | | | | |
|---|-----|--------------------------|----|-------------------------------------|
| Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>(Insert reference number)</i> | | | | |
| Has appropriate consultation taken place? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:- | | | | |
| <p><i>“The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i></p> | | | | |

Purpose of Report:

Following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak who died two years ago from a respiratory condition caused by damp and mould in his home, both the Secretary of State for The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLHUC) and the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) have written to Sheffield City Council to seek re-assurances that it is fulfilling its legal and regulatory responsibilities in relation to damp and mould, and if not, to outline how it intends to become full compliant.

This report outlines work undertaken to date in responding to DLUHC and the RSH and how SCC is responding to dealing effectively with damp and mould.

Recommendations:

That Members of the Housing Policy Committee

- a) Note the contents of this report and the work being done to address the issues of damp and mould in private rented homes and council housing.

Background Papers:

Appendix A : Letter from the Secretary of State regarding housing standards in rented properties in England

Appendix B: Letter from the Regulator of Social Housing to large Registered Providers regarding Damp and Mould.

Appendix C: SCC response to the letter from the Secretary of State regarding housing standards in rented properties in England

| Lead Officer to complete:- | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1 | I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required. |
| | Finance: <i>Helen Damon</i> |
| | Legal: <i>Stephen Tonge</i> |
| | Equalities & Consultation: <i>N/A</i> |
| | Climate: <i>Nathan Robinson</i> |
| | <i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i> |
| 2 | EMT member who approved submission: <i>Ajman Ali</i> |
| 3 | Committee Chair consulted: <i>Douglas Johnson</i> |
| 4 | I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1. |
| | Lead Officer Name: <i>Dean Butterworth</i> |
| | Job Title: <i>Head of Housing Investment and Maintenance</i> |

Date: 6/12/22

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 Following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak, who died two years ago from a respiratory condition caused by damp and mould in his home, both the Secretary of State for the Department of Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC) and the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) have written to local authorities and registered housing providers to get reassurances that each landlord and council is meeting its legal and regulatory requirements in relation to damp and mould, and if not, to outline how it intends to become full compliant.
- 1.2 The Letter from DLUHC can be seen as Appendix A and the letter from the RSH can be seen as Appendix B.
- 1.3 Sheffield City Council's response to DLUHC can be seen as Appendix C.
- 1.4 A formal response to the questionnaire within the letter from the RSH will be submitted by the 19th December 2022 deadline and will be shared with the Housing Policy Committee in due course.

2. Legal and Regulatory Requirements

- 2.1 In relation to the issue of the existence and management of damp and mould in the cities rented accommodation, the Council has separate responsibilities.

1. As regulator of housing standards for private sector rented properties in the city:

In its capacity as regulator of housing standards the Council has statutory powers and duties of investigation and enforcement under the Housing Act 2004. It is in relation to these that the Secretary of State has written to the Council to seek assurances and information.

2. In its role as a social landlord providing rented homes to Council tenants:

In its capacity as a social landlord the Council is subject to the same legal requirements as private landlords (although it cannot regulate itself) and its obligations to its tenants in relation to damp and mould is set out in the tenancy agreement, Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 (the latter of which is essentially based on the same housing standards required under the Housing Act 2004) and the Defective Property Act 1972.

It is in its capacity as a registered social landlord that the Council has received the letter from the Regulator of Social Housing to seek

assurances and information. As a registered provider of social housing the Council has to comply with the Home Standard set by the Regulator which requires the Council to provide its tenants with a "Decent Home" which essentially means it must comply with the terms of the tenancy agreement and the law referred to above.

2.2 While full details of the numbers of damp and mould cases in council housing will be shared with the Housing and Policy Committee after the 19th December 2022, the current number of cases is as follows:-

- 2.3
- 286 outstanding damp and mould cases.
 - 1112 mould cases requiring halophane treatment.

3. The Way Forward

3.1 Following the publicity around Awaab Ishak's death SCC set up a Damp and Mould Task Group to undertake a full review of how the council deals with damp and mould cases and to oversee any changes to working practices. This Group is Chaired by the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods and is a cross functional team looking at both private rented homes and council housing.

3.2 The terms of reference of the Task Group include: -

- A full review of all current damp and mould cases and to contact customers to provide support and re-assurance.
- A full review of the lessons learned from the Awaab Ishak case at Rochdale Boroughwide Homes.
- A self-assessment against the 26 recommendations within the Housing Ombudsman's October 2021 Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould and to develop an action plan for any areas for improvement.
- In consultation with tenants and residents, develop and seek approval for a Damp and Mould Policy, which will emphasise the importance of dealing with the causes of damp and mould quickly and effectively.
- Review all stock condition data to identify property types where damp and mould is most prevalent and develop an asset strategy to direct investment as appropriate.
- Review the guidance to tenants and residents on minimising condensation in the home, which is the leading cause of damp and mould.
- Review all training and guidance for all staff.
- Where damp and mould is subject to a disrepair claim develop an

access process that allows access to homes to carry out work irrespective of the status of any legal claim.

The first meeting of the Damp and Mould Task Group will take place in December 2022.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

4.1.1 A full equalities impact assessment of how SCC deals with damp and mould cases will be reviewed following the allegation that racism was a contributory factor in the Awaab Ishak case,

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 A review of the five-year Capital Programme will need to be undertaken if it is required to invest resources in particular property architype's which are prevalent to damp and mould.

4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 As per Section 2 above

In relation to the issue of the existence and management of damp and mould in the cities rented accommodation, the Council has separate responsibilities.

1. As regulator of housing standards for private sector rented properties in the city:

In its capacity as regulator of housing standards the Council has statutory powers and duties of investigation and enforcement under the Housing Act 2004. It is in relation to these that the Secretary of State has written to the Council to seek assurances and information.

2. In its role as a social landlord providing rented homes to Council tenants:

In its capacity as a social landlord the Council is subject to the same legal requirements as private landlords (although it cannot regulate itself) and its obligations to its tenants in relation to damp and mould is set out in the tenancy agreement, Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 (the latter of which is essentially based on the same housing standards required under the Housing Act 2004) and the Defective Property Act 1972.

It is in its capacity as a registered social landlord that the Council has received the letter from the Regulator of Social Housing to seek assurances and information. As a registered provider of social housing the Council has to comply with the Home Standard set by the Regulator which requires the Council to provide its tenants with a "Decent Home" which essentially means it must comply with the terms of the tenancy agreement and the law referred to above.

4.4 Climate Implications

4.4.1 Improving the thermal efficiency of homes is one of the main remedies in dealing with damp and mould. SCC will include any recommendations from the Damp and Mould Task Group in the work being undertaken to become Net Zero and the roadmap to decarbonisation.

4.4 Other Implications

4.4.1 None

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 To inform the Housing Policy Committee of the work being undertaken by Officers to respond to the challenges of damp and mould in both private sector housing and council housing in Sheffield.

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Janet Sharpe
Director of Housing
For Housing and Neighbourhood Services
Operational Services
Sheffield City Council
Sheffield Town Hall
SHEFFIELD
S1 2HH
Tel: 0114 27 35493



Our ref JS/ KF/ JS1340

30 November 2022

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP

Secretary of State for Levelling up Housing & Communities
Minister for Intergovernmental Relations

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and
Communities
4th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

housingstandards@levellingup.gov.uk

HOUSING STANDARDS IN RENTED PROPERTIES IN ENGLAND

I would like to provide this initial response to the issues of damp and mould highlighted in your letter dated 19th November 2022 on behalf of Sheffield City Council. We take our responsibilities under the Housing Act 2004 seriously as a Council and recognise the impact that damp and mould can have on the occupants of poor housing in our city. Our response to your initial queries:

1. Have particular regard to high scoring (bands D and E) category 2 damp and mould hazards.

- We are ensuring that reports relating to damp and mould from tenants are prioritised and fast tracked to inspecting officers for investigation. Where we find high scoring hazards we take strong and robust enforcement action including serving significant financial penalties on the most serious offenders.
- We have utilised the financial penalties powers granted by Government as a deterrent to drive out rogue landlords to ensure tenants live in safe, well managed homes.
- Our current process in dealing with complaints acknowledges damp and mould could be a significant hazard and we would highlight the defects/issues to the landlord/managing agent. We allow a reasonable time for an informal resolution



(depending on the work required) and would then look to use enforcement powers if the informal approach is unsuccessful. This is evidenced by the number of prosecutions and financial penalties we have issued (see response to Q4 for figures).

- Following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak we have reviewed our approach to damp and mould and in addition to the above actions enforcement officers have been instructed to have particular regard to category 2 damp and mould hazards.
- We had already instructed officers to consider excess cold and damp and mould this winter period as we had identified the importance of tackling these hazards considering the impact of the cost-of-living crisis.

2. Supply the department with an assessment of damp and mould issues affecting privately rented properties in your area, including the prevalence of category 1 and 2 damp and mould hazards.

- We do not have any city-wide statistics about damp and mould. We have recently completed a stock condition survey for the city, but this survey did not provide any specific statistics for damp and mould. The survey did provide information that could be an indicator of possible damp and mould prevalence, but this was through associated data related to excess cold, low income, low EPC and fuel poverty. We are working with multiple data sets to better understand the range of archetypes in our city and will use this to inform our approach to conducting future individual surveys.

3. Supply the department with an assessment of action you have identified that may need to be taken in relation to damp and mould issues affecting privately rented properties in your area.

- We are investigating whether we can use the data above to identify high-risk areas in the city that have a significantly higher chance of developing damp and mould hazards. We have just started this analysis and therefore cannot advise whether the data will lead to tangible results and an actionable enforcement programme. We will be able to give an update by 27 January 2023 as to the effectiveness of this analysis.
- Our aim is to target areas where damp and mould are more likely through proactive enforcement to tackle the hazards. This aim is, however, subject to having sufficient resources in place to expand our current activities. The team is focussed on reactive work, given the size of the private rented sector in Sheffield, and do not have the capacity to carry out extensive proactive work without additional Government funding. Resources and funding would be required to prioritise this proactive work in any areas identified through our analysis. Without this it is likely that other priority work areas would have to cease to enable this activity to take place.

4. In addition, pursuant to your duties under section 3(3) of the Act, I would like you to provide the following data covering your last three 12 monthly reporting periods for privately rented properties in your area:

- *How many damp and mould hazards you have remediated, compared to your assessment of the prevalence of these hazards:*
 - April 19 – March 20 - 81
 - April 20 – March 21 - 20
 - April 21 – March 22 - 40
- We do not hold data on the prevalence of damp and mould and therefore cannot provide this part of the data request.

- *How many times you have taken enforcement action to remedy damp and mould hazards and the form this has taken:*
 - April 19 – March 20 - 11
 - April 20 – March 21 - 3
 - April 21 – March 22 - 14

- *How many civil penalty notices have been issued in relation to non-compliance with enforcement action over damp and mould hazards:*
 - April 19 – March 20 - 3
 - April 20 – March 21 - 4
 - April 21 – March 22 - 2

- *How many prosecutions have been successfully pursued in relation to damp and mould hazards:*
 - April 19 – March 20 - 0
 - April 20 – March 21 - 3
 - April 21 – March 22 - 0

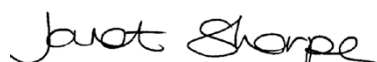
5. Set out how you are prioritising enforcement of housing standards more generally in your authority, across all tenures, including what plans you have to ensure adequate enforcement capacity to drive up standards in the private rented sector.

- We enforce all serious hazards that the local authority identifies and take appropriate enforcement action in relation to those hazards. We continue to use all enforcement tools available and strive to improve our systems and enforcement methods to drive up standards and ensure that we are protecting tenants within Sheffield.
- We have a Selective Licensing scheme designation that was put in place to directly address poor property condition. This demonstrates the Council's commitment to driving up standards across the private rented sector and continue to review the need for future interventions.

- In common with all local authorities, we are facing budgetary challenges. Our focus is on reactive intervention and remediation of significant hazards within the private rented sector within Sheffield. We do want to expand our proactive work and undertake more extensive programmes of private sector prevention but currently our ability to inspect a significant proportion of private rented properties is limited.
- There are challenges in recruiting experienced, competent officers so we have explored how we can address this. This resulted in us working in partnership with Leeds Beckett to introduce a Private Housing Standards apprentice role to create more capacity within the service.
- We have been proactively working with Government about proposed Decent Home Standards to ensure that they are robust and enforceable, and we look forward to continuing to contribute to these invaluable discussions and helping to shape the future of enforcement in this growing sector.
- We will keep the situation under review and continue with discussions as a Council about how we prioritise resources for the residents of Sheffield. We would welcome further discussions with your Department about the availability of additional resources from government to support an expansion of this particularly important agenda.

I hope that this provides sufficient information as an initial response and gives assurance that we continue to take this issue seriously in Sheffield.

Kind Regards



Janet Sharpe
Director of Housing for Housing and Neighbourhood Services



Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
*Secretary of State for Levelling up Housing &
Communities*
Minister for Intergovernmental Relations

**Department for Levelling Up, Housing and
Communities**
4th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

19 November 2022

Dear Local Authority Chief Executive and council leaders,

HOUSING STANDARDS IN RENTED PROPERTIES IN ENGLAND

The tragedy of Awaab Ishak, who died at two years old as a direct result of mould in his family home, has highlighted the urgent need to ensure a decent standard of properties for tenants in all sectors.

I know you will join me in mourning this avoidable loss. I also know, from previous experience, that councils and authorities across the country are already determined to improve housing standards. That is why I am confident you will all be as focussed as my department is on ensuring that no family ever has to experience such a tragedy again. In 21st century Britain, this should not be a high aspiration.

I have today written to social housing providers on this crucial matter. All of us – including my department – need to deliver our responsibility to people living in poor quality housing. That is why I am writing to you to request you do everything in your power to prioritise the improvement of housing conditions for the millions of private and social tenants, in line with existing duties in the Housing Act 2004. This becomes ever more urgent as we go into winter with a cost of living and energy crisis, which may exacerbate damp and mould conditions in some homes.

As you will be aware, local housing authorities have a duty under the Housing Act 2004 (“the Act”) to keep housing conditions in their area under review with a view to identifying any action that may need to be taken by them under the Act (section 3(1)).

Treating damp and mould seriously

Having considered it necessary and urgent to ensure that, as we go into a challenging winter, damp and mould issues are being addressed, I now direct, under section 3(3) of the Act, that all local housing authorities in carrying out their duty to review housing conditions in their area must:

- have particular regard to high scoring (bands D and E) category 2 damp and mould hazards, as outlined in the guidance ‘Housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS) enforcement guidance: housing conditions¹
- supply the department with an assessment of damp and mould issues affecting privately rented properties in your area, including the prevalence of category 1 and 2 damp and mould hazards; and

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-health-and-safety-rating-system-enforcement-guidance-housing-conditions>

- supply the department with an assessment of action you have identified that may need to be taken in relation to damp and mould issues affecting privately rented properties in your area.

In addition, pursuant to your duties under section 3(3) of the Act, I would like you to provide the following data covering your last three 12 monthly reporting periods for privately rented properties in your area:

- how many damp and mould hazards you have remediated, compared to your assessment of the prevalence of these hazards;
- how many times you have taken enforcement action to remedy damp and mould hazards and the form this has taken;
- how many civil penalty notices have been issued in relation to non-compliance with enforcement action over damp and mould hazards; and
- how many prosecutions have been successfully pursued in relation to damp and mould hazards.

If you have not collected this information, please explain why.

Finally, I would also like you to set out how you are prioritising enforcement of housing standards more generally in your authority, across all tenures, including what plans you have to ensure adequate enforcement capacity to drive up standards in the private rented sector.

Alongside this, I have asked social housing providers to make an assessment of their properties and the Regulator of Social Housing will also be writing to them shortly on this matter.

I would like an initial response by the end of the month – this should set out how you are prioritising this work and any other initial information you can provide. I would then like the full response by 27 January at the latest. My officials will work with the Local Government Association and local authorities to agree the process and format for these responses in the coming days. Any questions in the meantime can be directed to housingstandards@levellingup.gov.uk. My department will review these returns and may ask for further information. We may also periodically publish the responses, or a summary, to improve transparency on this important issue. I have focussed here largely on damp and mould to make quick progress on this important area during the winter months, but reserve the right to make further directions and requests in relation to wider standards in the near future as the department deems necessary.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the important work that you do in your local areas to improve housing standards for tenants. It is vital that we all learn from the events that led to the tragic death of Awaab, and my officials and I look forward to working collaboratively with you to improve standards for renters across the country and across all tenures.

With every good wish,



Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Minister for Intergovernmental Relations



22 November 2022

Dear Chief Executive

Assurance on addressing risks relating to damp and mould in tenants' homes

The tragic case of Awaab Ishak, who died of a respiratory condition caused by mould in his home, has rightly focused attention on the responsibility of all registered providers – private and local authority – to ensure that the homes they provide are well-maintained and of a decent standard. It demonstrates the serious effects that having damp and mould in their homes can have on people's health and it has highlighted once again the importance of providers listening to their tenants' concerns, understanding their diverse needs, removing barriers to accessing services and responding promptly.

Damp and mould are potential hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System; failing to address them could lead to failure of the Decent Homes Standard and our Home Standard. All providers should have systems in place to ensure that their homes are free from hazardous levels of damp and mould, and to identify and deal with cases promptly and effectively.

As we move into winter, cases of damp and mould are likely to increase. We are therefore seeking assurance from all providers that they have a clear understanding and strong grip on damp and mould issues in their homes and are addressing risks to tenants' and residents' health. Where we consider providers are not meeting the standards, including the Decent Homes Standard, we will take appropriate action.

To inform this work, please provide:

- Firstly, your approach to assessing the extent of damp and mould issues affecting your properties, including how you assess the prevalence of category 1 and 2 damp and mould hazards
- Secondly, and in the context of that approach, your most recent assessment of the extent of damp and mould hazards in your homes, including the prevalence of category 1 and 2 damp and mould hazards
- Thirdly, given those findings, the action you are taking to remedy any issues and hazards, and ensure that your homes meet the Decent Homes Standard
- Lastly, tell us how you ensure that individual damp and mould cases are identified and dealt with promptly and effectively when raised by tenants and residents

Explanations should be supported with recent data. If data are not available, this should be noted.

Submission of this information should be made through this [MSForms survey](#) by 19 December 2022. We will review all the information provided and may request further information if necessary. Should you identify that your homes do not meet the relevant standards, you should self-refer immediately.

I look forward to receiving your data and working with you to improve conditions for tenants and residents – ensuring they are treated equitably and with respect, there are no barriers to reporting problems, and that their concerns are appropriately addressed.

Yours sincerely

Fiona MacGregor
Chief Executive