

HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2026-2029

Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

What is Homelessness?

The legal definition of homelessness is:

A household who has no home in the UK or anywhere else in the world available and reasonable to occupy.

Scope and Purpose

The strategy provides the framework for the Council and its partners to prevent and relieve homelessness, meet statutory duties, end rough sleeping and improve outcomes for people who are homeless or at risk. It covers all forms of homelessness, including hidden homelessness, insecure housing, temporary accommodation and rough sleeping.

Delivery will be supported by a detailed annual action plan, refreshed each year to reflect demand, resources, legislation, national policy and feedback from people using services.



Our vision and principles

Vision

Everyone should have access to a safe, decent and secure home. We will prevent homelessness wherever possible, act quickly when it occurs and support people to sustain accommodation so that homelessness does not recur.

Principles

- **Prevention first:** act at the earliest opportunity and address causes, not only symptoms.
- **Housing-led:** prioritise the quickest sustainable route to a settled home, with support wrapped around the person.
- **No wrong door:** ensure people receive a coordinated response and are not passed between services.
- **Needs-led and trauma informed:** do not require a person to sleep rough or to repeatedly evidence crisis before help is offered.
- **Personalised and inclusive:** recognise different needs, risks and barriers, and make reasonable adjustments.
- **Co-produced:** involve people with lived experience and frontline staff in design, delivery and review.
- **Evidence-led and accountable:** use data, outcomes and learning to focus resources and demonstrate impact.

Corporate Plan

This strategy aligns with the following corporate objective:

‘Work to prevent all forms of homelessness’

Key Priorities and Actions

The strategy identifies six priority themes:

1	Prevent homelessness earlier Identify risk sooner, intervene before crisis and strengthen tenancy sustainment.
2	Make homelessness brief Provide rapid, effective assessment and the quickest sustainable route to settled accommodation.
3	End rough sleeping Use a needs-led, housing-led response so nobody must sleep rough to access support.
4	Improve accommodation and supply Eliminate unlawful family B&B use, improve temporary accommodation and increase settled housing options.
5	Meet complex and diverse needs Deliver trauma-informed, personalised, flexible and coordinated support, including for people leaving institutions.
6	Work as one system Strengthen shared responsibility, lived-experience involvement, data, governance and accountability.



1. Prevent homelessness earlier

We will identify risk sooner and make prevention a shared responsibility. We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring that our services are accessible to all
- Developing referral triggers and protocols with landlords, welfare, health, social care, children's services, probation and voluntary partners
- Strengthening duty to refer arrangements and prepare for the duty to collaborate
- Working collaboratively with partners to identify those at risk of homelessness and address the causes of homelessness
- Providing an effective mediation service to try and prevent homelessness from occurring
- Offering dedicated resource to preventing homelessness
- Responding early to notices and affordability pressures and adapt practice to renters' right reforms.
- Strengthening care leaver pathways and joint planning so the homelessness route is not used as a substitute for planned accommodation
- Promoting tenancy sustainment with targeted casework to prevent avoidable tenancy loss.
- Continuing to flex and develop our services to meet the needs of our customers
- Aligning the objectives of our strategy to other corporate objectives and strategies



2. Make homelessness brief

Where homelessness cannot be prevented, we will respond quickly and secure the earliest sustainable housing outcome. We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring that our services are accessible to all
- Providing accessible and timely assessments
- Providing clear advice and a personalised housing plans focused on practical steps and sustainable outcomes
- Providing planned move-on and follow-up support for households at greatest risk of tenancy failure
- Using social housing, private rented access, supported housing and other suitable options to reduce time without a settled home



3. End Rough Sleeping

We will work towards ending rough sleeping through rapid, assertive and compassionate responses based on need. We will achieve this by:

- Promoting our 'No Second Night Out' service
- Continuing to support an outreach service to provide effective and tailored support
- Developing direct and repaid routes into suitable accommodation with flexi, multi-disciplinary support for people with long-term or complex needs
- Continuing the provision of cold weather and severe weather service during adverse weather episodes, with personalised exit planning after every placement
- Using case review, safeguarding and multi-agency escalation where risks are high or services are not working together



4. Improve accommodation and supply

We will reduce reliance on costly and unsuitable temporary accommodation and increase access to good-quality settled homes. We will achieve this by:

- Maintain an effective landlord offer, including deposit and rent-in-advance support, landlord liaison and tenancy sustainment
- Collaborating with letting agents and local landlords to maximise pathways to accommodation people into the private sector
- Working in partnership with both external and internal stakeholders to pursue opportunities for housing development in the Borough
- Targeting the owner of empty properties within the Borough, to encourage them to rent out their accommodation
- Avoiding the use of bed and breakfast/hotel provision for families, except very short-term emergency use and act immediately where statutory limits may be at risk
- Applying clear standards, regular checks, safeguarding arrangements and placement considerations, including education, health and support needs when households are placed into temporary accommodation
- Delivering the Councils acquisition and development activity, pursuing affordable housing opportunities
- Maximising nominations and letting to social housing available in the Borough and make best use of stock



5. Meet complex and diverse needs

We will deliver personalised responses that recognise trauma, inequality and overlapping support needs. We will achieve this by:

- Agreeing early notification and joint discharge planning so no eligible person is discharged to the street from hospital
- Strengthening pre-release planning, information sharing and links with probation and accommodation services
- Providing co-ordinated, psychologically informed and trauma-informed casework
- Ensuring safe, survivor-centred housing options and effect links between housing, domestic abuse services, social care and safeguarding
- Using timely notifications and specialist pathways
- Continuing to work to ensure that our housing services are accessible to all our customers
- Referring customers to relevant and appropriate statutory and non-statutory services

6. Work as one system

Ending homelessness requires shared ownership, clear governance and resources focused on outcomes. We will achieve this by:

- Establishing a strategic homelessness partnership with senior representatives and operational delivery groups, aligned to wider housing, health and safeguarding governance
- Developing effective relationships with both statutory and non-statutory services
- Working with partners to identify gaps and support those most at risk
- Providing and accepting joint training on prevention, trauma-informed practice, safeguarding, equalities, legal duties and local pathways
- Offering opportunities for people with lived experience to influence priorities, service design and evaluation
- Use case audits to understand missed prevention opportunities

