



East Cambridgeshire  
District Council

# Homelessness And Rough Sleeper Strategy 2025 - 2030

---

Written by Housing and Community Advice Manager

---

Published in January 2025

---

Revision due in December 2027



# Contents

1.	Our support service	page 6
2.	The 2020-2025 Strategy	page 7
3.	The current housing and homelessness approach	page 10
4.	Preparing for the 2025-2030 Strategy	page 11
5.	Applying the 2025-2030 Strategy	page 16
6.	Objectives for the future	page 21
7.	Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2025-2030	page 23



## Foreword

At East Cambridgeshire we are proud of our proactive and motivated Housing and Community Advice Service. Over the last 5 years we have transformed our service with a focus on preventing homelessness and providing a holistic and accessible community advice team.

The service has taken back management of the housing register, ensuring that residents do not have to wait to join the housing register, and they can access advice and assistance via our drop-in services.

The service boasts a team that is focused and dedicated to ensuring that everyone has a decent home to live in. In addition, the service engages with other partners, both voluntary and statutory; this ensures that other organisations share in our passion and ambition to deliver the best possible service to our community. We have excellent relationships with local housing associations and our partner agencies.

The service now holds 'drop-in's' 5 days a week from 10am to 4pm, ensuring access to the general public for housing and community advice at the first opportunity.

I am proud to say we are still continuing to avoid the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for families with children and have done so since August 2012.

A home environment is the hub of life. Health, well-being, education and employment are mainly dependant on someone having a place they can call home. To become, or be at risk of, homeless is one of the most frightening experiences imaginable. At East Cambridgeshire District Council we are determined to do everything we can to prevent this happening to our residents.

I would like to thank all those agencies that have worked positively with the council to help us deliver a truly holistic service that is focused on homelessness prevention and community advice. We must continue to give this issue our absolute focus as families and individuals face even more challenging financial and personal circumstances following the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis.

Julia Huffer

Chair of Operational Services Committee

# 1. Our support service

The most visible form of homelessness involves residents that are seen living on the streets, however, the issue is far wider. Including people living in overcrowded, unsuitable and temporary accommodation, or any resident that may be threatened with homelessness or eviction.

Issues resulting from homelessness often lead to poor physical and mental health, alcohol and substance misuse, relationship breakdowns and unemployment. Not only does this impact our residents but also our partner agencies and other services such as the NHS.

The council continually strives to make East Cambridgeshire the best possible place to live, work and visit. This ambition is embedded in both the councils Corporate Objectives and the Corporate Plan. All residents should have access to a home that is of a good standard which they can afford and are able to sustain and maintain.

All residents have access to a community advice service with specialist trained officers either face to face through our drop-in service, over the phone or in some cases within the community they live.

The service has identified that in the last 5 years there has been an increase in complex cases including dual diagnosis of drug and alcohol issues leading to rough sleeping. The service has now launched the 'Housing First' project and funded a Housing First Navigator to ensure we work towards ending rough sleeping and working to house and provide wrap around support for residents that have exhausted all types of previous accommodation.

## Background

Sections 1 to 3 of the Homelessness Act 2002 requires all councils to produce a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy every five years. The purpose of the Strategy is to:

- address the causes of homelessness in the councils area
- introduce initiatives to prevent homelessness wherever possible
- ensure measures are in place for sufficient temporary accommodation for those households that are or may become homeless
- ensure that appropriate support is available for people who have previously experienced homelessness in order to prevent it happening again
- end rough sleeping in the district

The council recognises the devastating effect that homelessness can have on households and families and that good quality housing that provides a stable and secure home environment contributes to the health and wellbeing of our residents and communities.

The council also has a duty to take reasonable steps to make sure that accommodation continues to be available for someone who is threatened with homelessness and is likely to have a priority need under the terms of the homelessness legislation. The Code of Guidance that accompanies the homelessness legislation goes further, in that it states that councils should offer a broad range of advice and assistance and not wait until homelessness is a likelihood or imminent before acting.

## 2. The 2020-2025 Strategy

The council's Homelessness Strategy was to focus on prevention, encouraging clients to seek advice at the earliest possible opportunity.

Key successes of the 2020-2025 Homelessness Strategy:

- silo approach to homelessness prevention eradicated as a result of close partnership working with relevant agencies
- introduction of Housing First project
- Homes for Ukraine Scheme
- Changing Futures Partnership
- Armed Forces Covenant
- partnership working with all relevant internal and external agencies
- Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation (DAHA)
- in-house independent domestic abuse advisor (IDVA) sharing office space
- housing and community advice daily drop-ins

The Housing & Community Advice Team has continued to focus on early intervention and prevention and have consistently maintained zero families with children in bed and breakfast accommodation since August 2012.

### **Approaches the council took to achieve this**

#### **Drop-in Services**

The Housing & Community Advice drop-in sessions were Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm. Residents have access to advice and assistance 5 days a week without the need to book appointments.

#### **Community Advice**

Offering residents free advice 5 days a week which addresses issues that may lead to homelessness if not resolved. Specialist officers able to assist with debt, employment and family law to name a few.

#### **Prevention Fund**

Increased our prevention budget to £35,000; thereby enabling the officers much more flexibility to secure a tenancy with ad hoc one-off payments.

#### **Hostel Voids**

We continue to sub-let our hostel accommodation when needed; savings in this area are reinvested back into preventing homelessness.

#### **Relationships**

Better working relationships; internally and externally and adopting a multi-agency approach. This has gone from strength to strength and some great networking is now happening across the sub-region with our partner authorities and agencies.

## **Homelessness Prevention Grants and Loans**

The council considers making these types of payments where homelessness can be prevented and existing accommodation maintained for a minimum of 6 months. This provides the best outcome for the family and can be used in many different situations, to prevent or resolve homelessness.

## **Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's)**

Helping clients to apply for top up payments where there may be a shortfall between their rent and housing benefit payments. This can be used to make a property more affordable enabling the families more time to secure more affordable housing.

## **Housing First Project**

Funding a specialist housing navigator working with us to offer wrap around support in accommodation provided by a registered landlord to enable residents that have exhausted all other housing tenures, have multiple complex needs to sustain their own independent accommodation.

## **Funding P3 Outreach support**

A joint bid with South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdon District Council for Rough Sleeper Initiative Grants has enabled us to fund rough sleeper support workers covering all 3 districts.

## **The Domestic Abuse Act 2021**

We have taken steps to work with a pro-active multi-agency approach to supporting survivors of domestic abuse. We have implemented staff and residents domestic abuse policies, trained staff to become specialist domestic abuse champions. All of our staff have been trained in understanding domestic abuse and our front-line staff have been trained to recognise signs of domestic abuse. A clear and consistent pathway is available for all survivors of domestic abuse. Staff have also been trained to support the perpetrators of domestic abuse with a view to offering support, guidance and housing options.

## **Homes for Ukraine Scheme**

The Service's resettlement officers have successfully rolled out this scheme, working closing with all hosts and guests and representing the district nationally at various forums and meetings. They have successfully moved many guests onto their own independent accommodation. Support across all areas including, education, welfare, employment to name a few is offered to all guests, there is no time limit to this. The Service also works within the sub region on the Asylum dispersal, keeping up to date with the Government Schemes and legislation.



## **Armed Forces Covenant Signed**

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise that together we acknowledge and understand that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, should be treated with fairness and respect in the communities, economy, and society they serve with their lives.

Its two principles are that, recognising the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces:

- **those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services**
- **special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved**

The examples above are not an exhaustive list of the prevention measures ECDC has taken, and we continually review and adapt our service to meet the changing needs of our community.

Earlier interventions, as opposed to attempting resolutions at the point of crisis; this will always increase the chances of being more successful in preventing homelessness.

This consistent approach to housing and community advice means that the council is continuing to lead the way, in the sub-region, for preventing and reducing homelessness and rough sleeping.

### 3. The current housing and homelessness approach

Officers currently see all residents face-to-face so they can work with the household to resolve the issue, whatever it may be, and try and help them to stay in their current home. Every client is issued with a Personal Housing Plan which is client centred with tasks for both client and officer. This could be by:

- negotiating with family and friends; this includes acting as a mediator
- negotiating with private landlords and agents; or
- assisting with maximising income, for example help with applying for benefits and demonstrating effective budget management
- working with our Rough Sleeping Outreach Team provided by P3 to engage with our rough sleepers and work towards an ending rough sleeping with a multi-agency approach addressing the needs of each individual

Where homelessness cannot be prevented, different housing options are considered. Each option is tailored to suit the individual household and is detailed in their own Personal Housing Plan. Advice is provided on the different tenures available including private rent, low-cost home ownership, social rent and supported accommodation.

The Housing and Community Advice Service is run in-house by the council and includes management of the housing register. The council works closely with The Lighthouse Centre (a local church) and we provide annual funding for 'No Second Night Out' and SWEP provision.

Due to the complex needs of some rough sleepers, we have also provided funding to update the CCTV and security at the Lighthouse and have provided staff with personal alarms.

The council has continued to sustain zero families with children in Bed and Breakfast accommodation since August 2012.

Since bringing the rent deposit scheme in-house we have a consistent collection rate averaging 86% annually and are able to use these funds to assist more people in private rented accommodation. Additional support is provided by Rossendale's Debt Recovery, who work on behalf of Anglia Revenues Partnership. Rent deposit collection rates for 2020 to 2025 have consistently been between 85% and 100%.

One of our biggest challenges is working with entrenched rough sleepers with multiple complex needs. We work in partnership with our outreach workers, drug and alcohol services, social care and social prescribers. Rough sleepers will not always engage with the local authority but will build relationships with other services.

It is vital that we continue to build on these relationships to end rough sleeping by providing the right accommodation and the right support to enable residents to sustain and maintain independent accommodation.

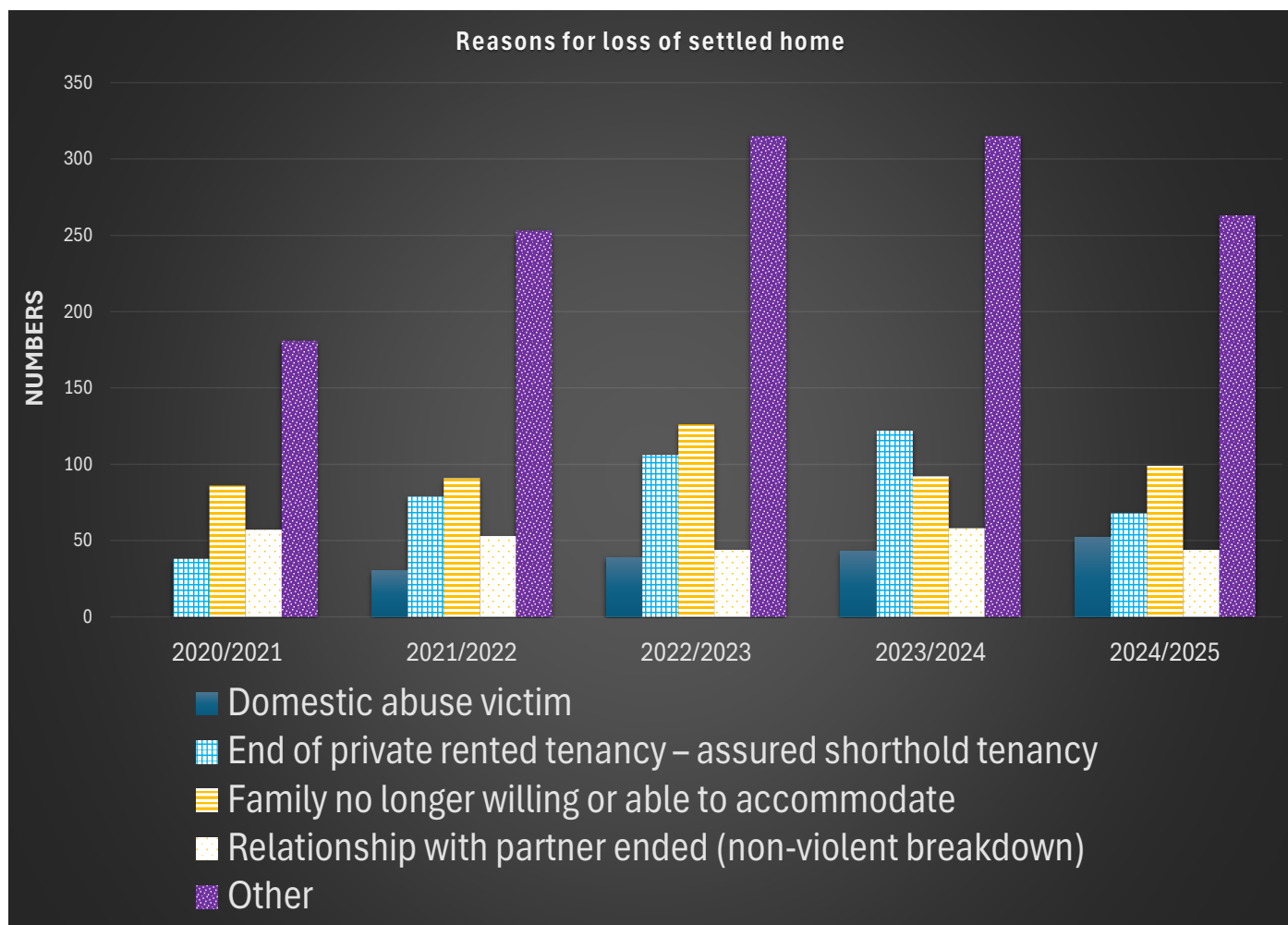
## 4. Preparing for the 2025-2030 Strategy

### The national picture

Nationally the number of households approaching local authorities for assistance has increased significantly. In 2019/20, councils in England accepted the duty for 288,470 households compared to accepting the duty to 324,990 households in 2023/24.

Although the growth of homelessness has been most significant in London with a 91% growth in this period, the rest of England experienced a 34% increase in the number of households accepted as homeless over the same time period.

The most significant factor contributing to this trend is the number of households being evicted from private sector tenancies through no fault of their own.



## **The local picture – a review of homelessness in East Cambridgeshire**

The trend in homelessness in the district has been similar to national trends. As with the national picture, homelessness as a result of households being evicted from the private rented sector through no fault of their own is now the single biggest cause of homelessness.

The wider impact of the welfare reform programme will continue with the full rollout of Universal Credit which is likely to be the next major event that may impact on housing implications for households in receipt of benefits. Evidence considered by the Parliamentary Work and Pensions Committee suggests that where roll-out has already taken place claimants are facing problems with increasing debt and a rise in rent arrears. This has in turn led to the threat of possession action by landlords as households struggle to make their rent payments due to delays in the receipt of their Universal Credit.

The recent Renters Reform Bill will without doubt have a major impact on the private rented sector, this may cause many portfolio holders and private landlords to sell-up due to the fear of removing the 'no fault evictions' mechanism and the possibility of landlords no longer being able to ask for rent in advance.

The main cause of homelessness within the district is consistent with the national picture; eviction by parents, other relatives and friends and relationship breakdowns (violent and non-violent) continue to be significant causes. As at the national level, the end of private sector tenancies is now the single cause of homelessness and has been since 2010/2011.

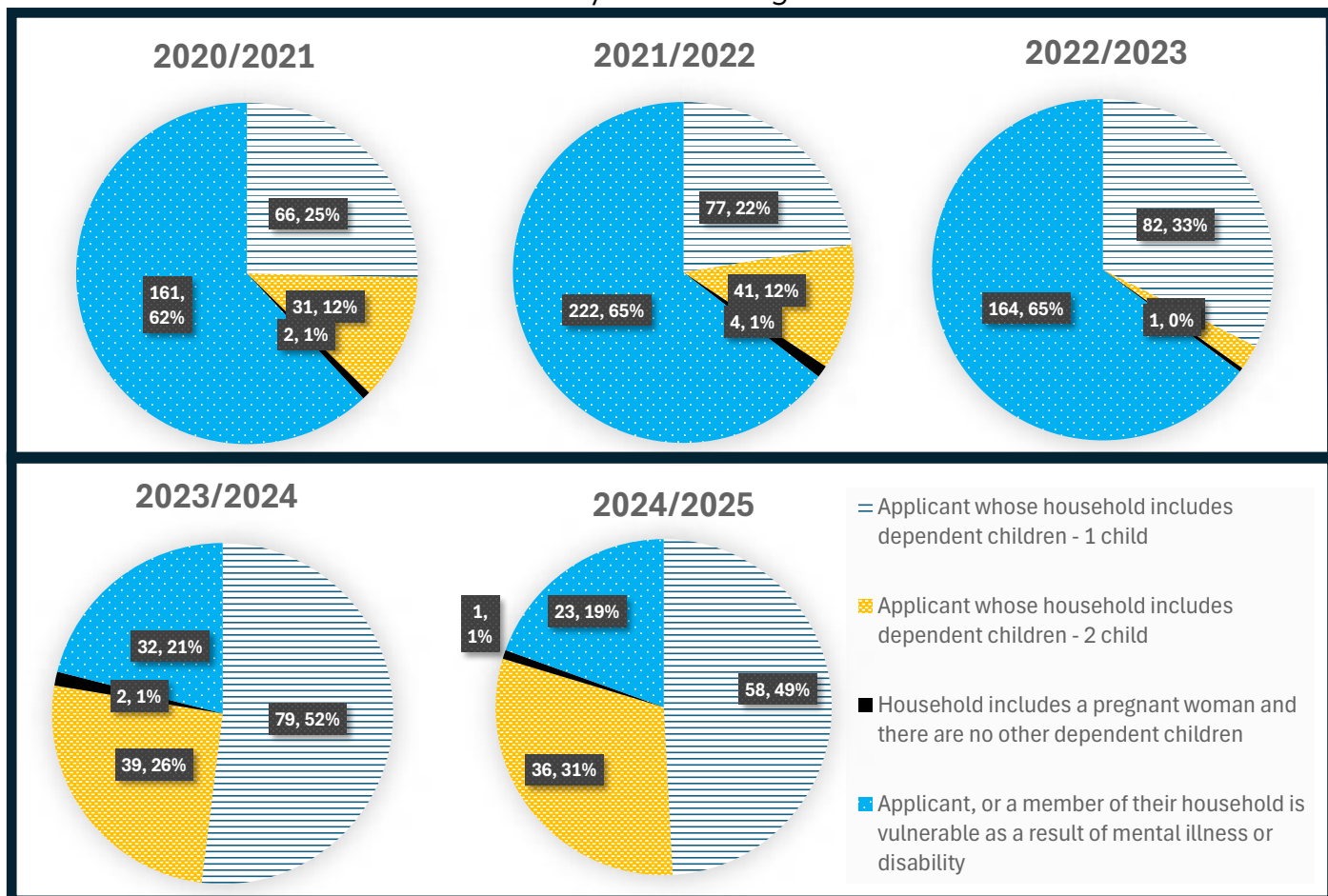
In terms of the type of households facing homelessness, both nationally and locally approximately 70% are families either with children or where they are expecting their first child. This may lead to family upheaval with children being placed into temporary accommodation.

Single people with significant, multiple complex issues has increased rapidly over the last few years, both nationally and locally. However, evidence locally shows that although there is an increasing number of young people facing the threat of homelessness, our homeless prevention work with them has helped them secure appropriate specialist supported accommodation or provided support to enable them to move to other appropriate accommodation.

From 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2025 the council has assisted 3,506 households with matters related to the threat of homelessness, becoming homeless or community advice leading to early intervention.

- the council was able to assist 1,062 households to remain in their own home using mediation, prevention initiatives and funding and resolving housing benefit or income issues
- the council was able to assist 484 households into alternative accommodation including supported housing & private rented
- the council provided advice and ongoing support to 1,697 residents with community advice
- the council responds to reports of rough sleepers within 24hrs, off the street accommodation will be offered along with a homeless application
- the council is mindful that we cannot always engage with everyone, however, officers will continue to try and engage anyone considered to be rough sleeping

### Priority needs categories



## **Continuing Prevention Initiatives**

Homelessness prevention grants and loans: The council considers making payments through its homelessness prevention funds, where homelessness can be prevented for an additional 6 months. It can be used in many different ways for example, to help clear arrears to prevent court action, or to help a household with upfront costs to secure accommodation.

## **Discretionary Housing Payments**

These can be used for helping clients to apply for 'top-up' payments where they have a shortfall in their rent whilst more affordable accommodation is sourced.

## **Housing and community advice officers**

Our officers provide help with income, maximising benefits help with health, debt, employment etc. They also work closely with our temporary accommodation providers to ensure that households are ready to move into long term accommodation. They will work with families to set up tenancies, utility's, housing benefits, doctors and schools to give people the best possible start in accommodation.

## **Negotiation and mediation with family and friends**

We have 5 specially trained mediation officers, allowing them often to prevent homelessness and resolve breakdowns in relationships within the family, often including ongoing support to maintain these relationships.

## **Rent deposit scheme**

The council is able to provide an interest free loan to households threatened with homelessness to help with costs that may be preventing them to access the private rented sector. Affordability tests are carried out to set up affordable payment plans, of which we have a collection rate of 86%. This enables us to lend future rent deposits, to other homeless households and those threatened with homelessness, to secure private rented accommodation in the local area.

## **Free landlord resolution service**

This is offered to all landlords and agents regardless of whether we have placed the tenants with them, allowing us to build better relationships with landlords in the district and advocating on behalf of our residents if needed.

## **Daily drop-in services**

Enabling client's immediate access to advice and assistance from a housing, HomeLink or community advice officer.

## **Housing & community advice hubs across the district**

Enabling clients in our more rural areas access to services without the need for extensive travel at a cost to our clients.

## **Resettlement advice officers**

Offering advice and assistance in line with the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and the asylum dispersal programme.

Early intervention is invaluable; reaching out to communities before crisis not only saves the council money in the long term but delivers a service that the community deserves. None of this could be achieved without the excellent relationship that the council has with partner agencies.

The council's success has meant that we have also been able to let out void rooms in our temporary accommodation hostels to other authorities within the sub region to assist in reducing their use of bed and breakfast accommodation.

## **Gaps in service**

Historically, in East Cambridgeshire we have low numbers of rough sleepers; averaging figures of our rough sleeper estimate are always around 1 or 2. Consideration has been given to whether a night shelter is necessary, however, with such a low average, at present it is not considered necessary This will be kept under continuous review.

There is little to no support in the district for dual diagnosis of mental health and drug/alcohol support and for complex high-risk cases.

There is a lack of temporary accommodation for residents who are considered to be high risk, suffering from complex needs such as drug/alcohol and mental health issues.

Working with our partner agencies, our Homelessness Forum continues to meet regularly to identify any vulnerable rough sleepers in the district.

## **Long-term**

With the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act and the rollout of Universal Credit within the district we need to be mindful of ongoing monitoring and the impact this may have on homelessness in the district.

We are also mindful of the Renters Reform which could change the private rented sector considerably, possibly leading to an increase in homelessness due to the impending removal of no-fault evictions.

The Housing & Community Service has regular catch-up meetings with the DWP and our local Job Centres. This has resulted in more stringent referral processes between our registered housing providers to refer vulnerable tenants at threat of homelessness to the council at the earliest possible opportunity.

## 5. Applying the 2025-2030 Strategy

The council will continue to focus on early intervention prevention, encouraging clients to seek advice at the earliest possible opportunity.

While those residents from vulnerable households, to whom the council owes a statutory duty (being mainly those with children), are a significant part of our work, there are many single non-vulnerable people who have difficulty in securing affordable accommodation in East Cambridgeshire. This strategy seeks to ensure that their needs are also considered and, where appropriate, ensure that advice, options and support are made available to all applicants that approach us.

### **Working with landlords and letting agents**

There has been considerable success to date resulting in landlords wanting to work proactively with the council to enable clients to be housed in private sector housing.

We offer tenancy paperwork and tenancy sustainment to all landlords and renters. We have trained officers that can carry out property inspections and officers that can offer tenancy sustainment if needed.

Officers will continue to work with private landlords to ensure that private renting is a viable option for clients.

We are now in a position to offer landlord incentives up to £1,000 and a guarantee of 3 months rent upfront (pending the renters reform) to encourage more landlords work alongside the housing and community advice team.

We continue to provide a free landlord resolution service. This enables landlords to work with us to resolve tenancy issues and reduce potential evictions.

Our dedicated Court Officer continues to successfully prevent evictions within the social housing sector.

- 2020/2021 – of 19 cases 14 were prevented and 2 contact was lost
- 2021/2022 – of 20 cases 18 were prevented
- 2022/2023 – of 37 cases 28 were prevented and 8 contact was lost
- 2024/2025 – of 15 cases 8 were prevented and 6 awaiting court dates

The Court Officer has also successfully prevented 3 mortgage re-possession.

### **Temporary housing**

The council has a duty to provide certain homeless households with temporary housing whilst it attempts to help them resolve their housing difficulties. As with many areas, the limited number of social rented properties available for letting and the increasing demand on these properties leads to homeless households having to spend longer than would be desirable in temporary accommodation.



Temporary accommodation, and in particular Bed and Breakfast, is recognised as being unsatisfactory for households, especially those with children. In many cases it provides accommodation with shared facilities, away from support networks at a cost to both the council and the household. It is estimated that temporary accommodation for homeless family's costs approx. £24,000 per year which is a significant cost to the public purse.

Temporary accommodation is currently provided in three hostels within the district with accommodation available for 24 households.

The council has seen a large increase in single people with multiple complex needs which are considered to be too high risk for our general needs temporary accommodation.

Currently we are placing high risk clients into bed and breakfast accommodation which is at a cost to us.

We are currently in the early stages of negotiations with a housing provider who have identified a building we could explore for temporary accommodation which is more supported for clients with multiple complex needs.

### **No second night out**

The principles supporting no second night out are outlined within the Government Strategy Vision to end rough sleeping.

New rough sleepers will be identified and helped off the streets immediately, so they do not fall into the entrenched rough sleeper pattern. They will be helped to a place of safety where their needs can be quickly assessed, and they can receive advice on their options.

Access to emergency accommodation and a network of services if required.

Anyone found rough sleeping in the district with no local connection should be reconnected back to their local community unless there is good reason why they cannot return.

East Cambridgeshire recognises the vulnerabilities of people who are faced with rough sleeping and will work with our partner agencies to assess and provide suitable accommodation within 48hrs.

Working in partnership with our Housing First Navigator we can ensure that entrenched rough sleeping due to exhausting all housing options, have an offer of housing with a full wrap around support service.

## **Offering a fully comprehensive and holistic advice service.**

Early intervention is proven to reduce homelessness and avoid crisis situations.

The council is using government grant funding to expand and upskill the Team to provide the best and most accessible advice service to all residents in the district, including advice on:-

- **benefits including tribunals and appeals**
- **debt management (including bankruptcy and debt relief orders)**
- **pensions**
- **employment law**
- **consumer advice**
- **relationship advice**
- **education**
- **legal advice**
- **immigration advice**
- **travel and transport**
- **family law**

## **Introduction of Women's Wednesday**

Funding has been provided by the Domestic Abuse funding to hold this at The Lighthouse Centre on a weekly basis.

A group ran by women for women in partnership with the lighthouse centre where you can get support with a range of issues including domestic abuse, mental health, substance misuse, wellbeing & confidence, and social isolation.

We can help to:

- **support you to access services around housing, employability, training, and debt advice**
- **signpost you to appropriate services for dependency and recovery**
- **support you to explore healthy relationships**
- **explore groups and social activities that meet your needs**
- **work with you to access domestic abuse and sexual abuse services**
- **clothes and/or food bank referrals**

Agencies signed up for this new project include drug and alcohol services, family centres, DWP, Job Centre, Impact (domestic abuse services), Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership (DASV), the Lighthouse Centre and our Housing and Community Advice Team.

## **Awareness campaigns are run in line with issues arising**

We hold awareness campaigns for local residents to make them aware of any important issues that may affect them, or be beneficial to them, such as:

- **Ask for ANI our domestic abuse campaign**
- **household support fund to advise residents that if they are experiencing hardship they can apply for a one-off payment**
- **winter fuel payments**
- **pension credits**

Our 'Ask for Ani' campaign - every person who works at the council, from reception staff and waste collectors through to office staff and our parks and open spaces team, has received domestic abuse training, so we are prepared and able to support someone when they feel able to approach us.

"This reinforces our Ask for Ani initiative, where a resident can approach anyone who works at the council and ask for help."

We will continue to promote and raise awareness for residents.

We also attend events within The district to promote our services such as

- **Aquafest**
- **community appointment days**
- **Youth Fusion events**
- **Burwell carnival**
- **Haddenham Warm Hub**
- **Littleport Library**
- **Soham Foodbank**

Officers will continue to work on the prevention programme to ensure that the number of people in temporary accommodation is kept as low as possible

This will include negotiations with registered providers to secure self-contained temporary accommodation offering more appropriate temporary accommodation for families with children and for our high-risk clients.

## **Potential challenges implimenting the Strategy**

### **Universal Credit migration**

The Universal Credit (UC) migration has been ongoing in East Cambridgeshire. Vulnerable people and households will be paid all of their benefits in one monthly lump sum. It is anticipated that the threat of homelessness may increase as a result of these changes.

- **claimed UC - 673**
- **did not claim uc - legacy benefit closed - 254**
- **in progress - 106**
- **total - 1034**

The council is aware that the next 12 months will be crucial as the impact on homelessness becomes more apparent. Through the measures that have been identified in this strategy, the Service is committed to ensuring that as few people as possible suffer a negative impact.

The council is working with Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) and the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) to protect vulnerable client rents by enabling rent to be paid directly to landlords.

We are regularly meeting with the DWP, job centre to identify our vulnerable residents and to ensure they get all the support available.

We are working with our communications team to make sure residents are aware of what to do and where they can access support once they receive notification of their UC migration.

The council is also providing budgeting and digital assistance to all new applicants that approach this us, we have also part funded a customer services roll to assist with this.

### **Gypsy & Traveller Provision**

The council currently manages 2 sites within the district and offers support to all of our gypsy and traveller communities through our Housing & Community Advice Team.

We work with the sub region and our partner agencies to identify any risks and to be up to date with relevant legislation and training.

Officers continue to explore all avenues of government funding for potential new sites and/or refurbishment of existing sites, this will be ongoing depending on future needs.

## 6. Objectives for the future

There are a number of key drivers that have informed our strategy:

Demand for the service – our statistics show the demand for the service is increasing for housing and community advice. Below are the statistics for our drop-in services and phone queries (no drop in services throughout the Covid Pandemic):

### Community Advice

- 2021/22 assisted 899 residents
- 2022/23 assisted 1713 residents
- 2023/24 assisted 4703 residents
- 2024/25 assisted 5623 residents (as at 24/01/2025)

### Housing Options

- 2021/22 assisted 1089 residents
- 2023/24 assisted 1222 residents
- 2024/25 assisted 1402 residents (as at 24/01/2025)

The Service will continue to review demand and resources, so they are fit for purpose.

### Increase in complex, high-risk cases

To continue the good working partnerships and referrals to our drug, alcohol and mental health services. To ensure the Service trains all officers in relevant drug, alcohol and mental health support.

### Increase of Domestic Abuse

The service will continue to implement the DAHA accreditation working practices and policies and to continue to work in partnership with Cambridgeshire County council in offering a hot desk to and independent domestic abuse advisor (IDVA).

### Cost of living Crisis

The service will continue to provide a fully accessible drop in service to respond to further pressures arising from the cost of living crisis.

The council recognises the significant social hardship that homelessness has on affected households. It also recognises that there is a significant monetary cost to households as well as the council as a result of its statutory duties towards the homeless.

Prevention of homelessness, or where prevention is not possible, minimising the detrimental effects of homelessness, remains at the heart of what the council aims to achieve for the residents of the district.

Understanding the future challenges and setting objectives around these challenges enables the council to take a holistic view of the demands and pressures that it faces and facilitates the provision of a proactive service that seeks to tackle these issues.

The following objectives have been developed to address homelessness in East Cambridgeshire:

- maintain no families with children in bed and breakfast accommodation
- expansion of the Free Landlord Resolution Service, introduction of landlord incentives and guaranteed rent in advance to encourage more landlords to work with the council in using private rented accommodation
- increase the collection of rent deposit loans which will enable increased recycled funds to assist more clients
- provide residents with a fully comprehensive and holistic support service with accessibility for assistance as soon as they approach this authority
- ensure that information and advice on housing and homelessness prevention is widely available and that our customers are seen at the earliest possible opportunity
- continue to manage the impact of Universal Credit Migration and the Renters Reform changes
- to embed the Housing First Project to ensure we eradicate entrenched rough sleeping, funding for a further year has been agreed
- to continue to manage the housing register in line with policy to provide our residents full access to social housing

## 7. Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2025-2030

### Objective 1 – Maintaining no families in B&B accommodation

Action	Target date	Comments and Officer responsible
Ensure clients are seen at the earliest opportunity to enable prevention of homelessness and to offer community advice	Ongoing	Housing & Community Advice Team
Work with social housing providers to reduce the risk of homelessness, ensuring referrals for tenants at threat are made and early intervention with our court officer to prevent any court fees	Ongoing	Housing & Community Advice Team
To work with social housing providers to provide temporary accommodation for complex needs and high risk clients	2027	Housing & Community Advice Manager

### Objective 2 – Expansion of our Landlord Resolution Service

Action	Target date	Comments and Officer responsible
Work with Private Landlords and Letting agents to encourage them to work with us, enabling us to house more clients into the Private Rented Sector	Ongoing	Housing & Community Advice Team
To continue to work with landlords in setting up Houses of Multiple occupation to house single non priority clients	As and when required	Housing Officers & Environmental Health
To host a yearly landlord forum for all private sector landlords	June 2024, then annually	Housing & Community Advice Team

**Objective 3 – Increase the collection of rent deposit loans which will enable increased recycled funds to assist more clients**

Action	Target date	Comments and Officer responsible
Increase collection rate to 95%, ensuring more recycled funds are available to help new clients	April 2026	Income & Recovery Officer & ARP Debt Recovery

**Objective 4- introduction of the Landlord incentive Scheme and guaranteed 3 months rent**

Action	Target date	Comments and Officer responsible
Encouraging more private landlords to work directly with us	April 2025	Housing and Community Advice Team

**Objective 5 – To provide a fully accessible holistic support service for all residents in East Cambridgeshire and to work with our partner agencies to streamline referral processes**

Action	Target date	Comments and Officer responsible
Ensure all officers within the Team have had relevant training	Ongoing	Housing and Community Advice Team (To work with multi agency approach)



**Objective 6 – Ensure that information and advice on housing, homelessness prevention and community advice is widely available and that our customers are seen at the earliest possible opportunity**

Action	Target date	Comments and Officer responsible
To keep all leaflets up to date to reflect services provided by the council	Ongoing	Housing & Community Advice Team
Ongoing development of our website, ensuring relevant and up to date information is shown	Completed with new website and will be updated as required.	Housing & Community Advice Team

**Objective 7 – To continue to explore funding for provision of new Gypsy and Traveller sites.**

Action	Target date	Comments and Officer responsible
Officers to explore government funding	Ongoing	Housing & Community Advice Manager

**Objective 8 – To continue negotiations with registered providers to secure self-contained temporary accommodation**

Action	Target date	Comments and Officer responsible
Negotiations have started with a housing association	April 2027	Housing & Community Advice Manager

**Objective 9 – to offer funding to charities and organisations to assist preventing homelessness and rough sleeping**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Target date</b>	<b>Comments and Officer responsible</b>
We have funded the Housing First Project, P3 Outreach for rough sleepers is funding by government with a joint bid by East Cambridgeshire District Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Huntingdon District Council.	December 2025	Housing & Community Advice Manager

End of document.