



**Homelessness and**  
**Rough Sleeping Strategy**  
**2020 - 2025**



## Document Control

Document Title	Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025
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### Summary

Approval date	
Related legislation / Applicable section of legislation	Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
Related policies, strategies, guidance documents	YNYER Housing Strategy 2015-2021
Joint Policy (Yes / No)	No
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Policy Owner (Name / Position)	Sarah Thompson – Housing & Environmental Health Service Manager
Policy Author (Name / Position)	Hannah McCoubrey – Housing Strategy Officer
Applies to	All Council and Members

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Version	Date	Summary of changes	Name
00.01	19/12/2019	First draft of new template	HM
00.02	03/01/2020	Second draft following JR's comments	HM

## **Contents**

Foreword.....	i
<b><u>1. Setting the Scene</u></b>	
What is homelessness .....	1
The purpose of a homelessness review and strategy .....	2
The wider context.....	3
What we have achieved so far .....	8
<b><u>2. Review of homelessness in Selby - what have we learnt?</u></b>	
Homelessness and rough sleeping .....	9
The Service .....	11
Access to accommodation .....	13
Resources .....	15
<b><u>3. Moving Forward</u></b>	
Our vision .....	17
Priorities for Action.....	18
Delivering the strategy.....	19
 Appendix A – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan 2020-2025	
 Appendix B – Local Services Directory	

## **Foreword**

Our new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 will set out Selby District Council's aim to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping throughout the district over the next five years. It presents a collaborative approach with its partners to tackling homelessness, detailing how the Council will provide effective and straightforward access to a range of housing support services for any resident in the district threatened with or experiencing homelessness, or rough sleeping.

Losing a home can have a devastating effect on a household, potentially resulting in vulnerable individuals and families having to move away from established support networks and amenities. The effects of homelessness are also felt within the larger community, which is why it is also important to tackle homelessness as part of a bigger picture, working with our partners to alleviate the causes of social exclusion and improve access to health and social care services.

The Council and its partners have made significant progress in tackling homelessness throughout the lifetime of our last homelessness strategy (2015-2020), but the landscape we work within can make this a challenge. Economy, welfare reform, housing supply and affordability all play a part in the difficulty faced by local and national agencies in addressing homelessness. Ultimately, this strategy will offer a holistic approach towards homelessness, understanding that its causes and effects are complex and that solutions are often multi-faceted and require multi-agency intervention.

The strategy has been developed by various Council departments and front-line staff, with vital input also received from partner agencies through Selby's Homelessness Forum. Consequently, the plan will be underpinned by a clear Action Plan, monitored internally by relevant Council staff and more widely via the Selby Homelessness Forum. Throughout this time, the strategy shall remain a 'living' document and will be reviewed and refreshed on an annual basis.

# 1. Setting the Scene

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## What is homelessness

Via legislation, the Government lay out who is to be considered homeless or threatened with homeless, as well as providing guidance on how the Council should assess this. Section.175 of the Housing Act 1996 states that a person is homeless if they have no accommodation available for their occupation, in the United Kingdom or elsewhere, which:

- They are entitled to occupy by virtue of a court order, or due to having an interest in the accommodation.
- They have an express or implied licence to occupy the accommodation.
- They occupy the accommodation by virtue of any rule of law which gives them the right to remain in occupation, or restricting the right of another person to recover possession of the accommodation.
- A person is also homeless if they have accommodation but cannot secure entry to it, or the accommodation consists of a moveable structure (such as a caravan or boat for example) but with no legal place to situate it.
- Additionally, a person shall not be treated as having accommodation unless that accommodation is reasonable for them to continue to occupy.

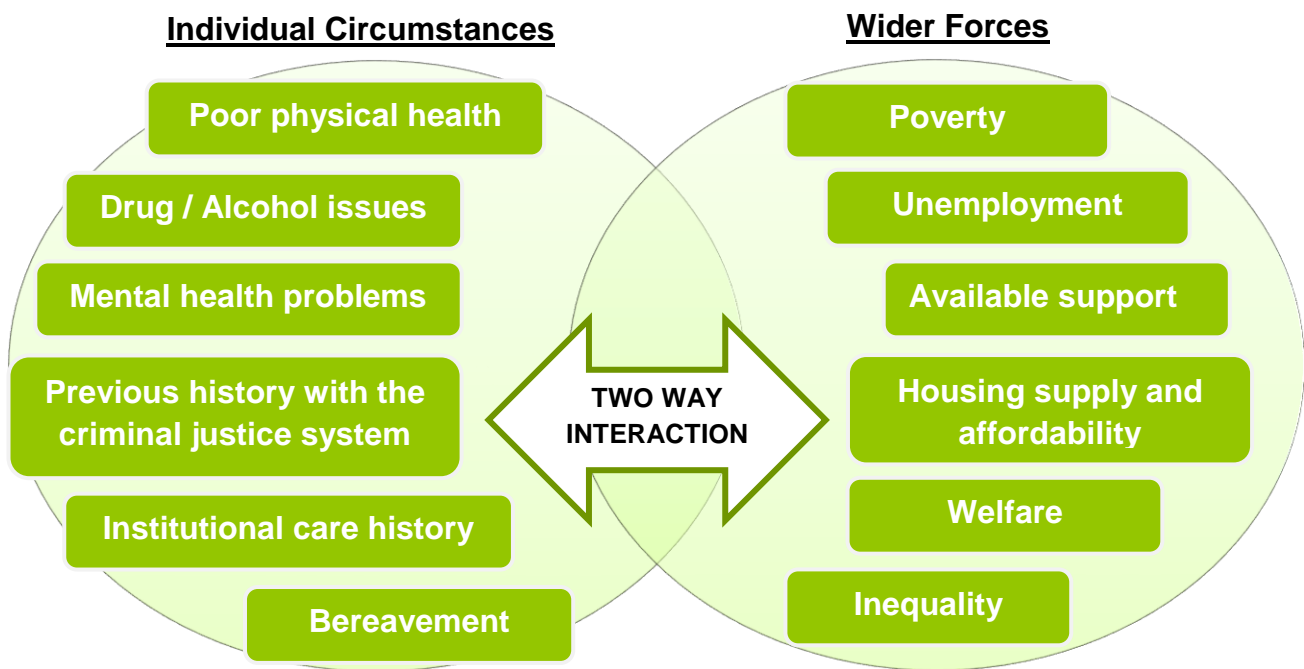
## More recent changes

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 brought with it some of the biggest changes to homeless legislation in decades. Enacted in April 2018, it builds on existing provisions within Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002). Here, a person is threatened with homelessness if it is likely they will become homeless within 56 days. A person is also threatened with homelessness if: *a valid notice has been given to the person under Section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 (orders for possession on expiry or termination of assured shorthold tenancy) in respect of the only accommodation the person has that is available for the person's occupation, and that notice will expire within 56 days.*

## The complexity of homelessness

The pathways to and from homelessness vary for everyone, and a number of personal, social and economic factors can contribute towards people becoming and/or remaining homeless. Potential reasons for homelessness can therefore range significantly, but do tend to interact with each other. Issues such as drug and alcohol addictions, family breakdowns, and mental illness are often compounded by larger structural forces, such as a lack of available affordable housing, low incomes and welfare reform, and insufficient support for various health services. Research suggests that the causes of homelessness are complex and there is no one single issue that triggers homelessness or is necessary for it to occur.

Notably, many people who become homeless are not highlighted by official figures. This concept of 'hidden homelessness' accounts for people who are homeless but who find a temporary solution; either living in temporary accommodation, with family or friends, or living in squats or some other form of insecure accommodation. It is important to acknowledge the hidden homeless, as they too may approach the Council for assistance.



### **The purpose of a homelessness review and strategy**

Section 1(4) of the Homelessness Act 2002 requires housing authorities to publish a homelessness strategy, based on the results of a homelessness review.

The review will acknowledge and consider:

- The national, sub-regional, county and local policy context of homelessness.
- Current and future levels of homelessness and rough sleeping in the district.
- Council activities and associated support aimed at the prevention and relief of homelessness.
- The provision of accommodation available for people who become homeless, both in the short and long term.
- Other resources available to the Council relevant to this process.

This review will provide us with valuable information on the wider socio-economic environment, current demographics, and the local housing market. It will assess homelessness within the district, and consider how the Housing Options service is currently operating, as well as highlight potential service gaps or areas where provision could be increased or improved.

The strategy will consequently generate key priorities for action over the next five years, which will include:

- Working with partners to address the wide range of factors that could contribute to homelessness in the local area.
- Providing sufficient and effective tools in preventing homelessness.
- Providing a coherent approach to tackling homelessness in regards to working with neighbouring authorities, especially as a non-unitary authority.
- Developing an action plans to help ensure that the objectives set out in the strategy are achieved.
- Keeping the homelessness strategy under review and modifying accordingly.

## Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018

Over recent years, homelessness and its impact has worked itself up both the media and political agenda. Public concern is now at such a level that in 2018, the Conservative Government pledged to halve rough sleeping by 2022, and eliminate it altogether by 2027. This coincided with a new 'Rough Sleeping Strategy' which requested all local authorities to review their homelessness strategies by the end of 2019 to include a specific focus on addressing rough sleeping. It expects authorities to provide a strategic approach to tackling the causes of homelessness but understands there is no one single solution.

## The wider context



### National Context

- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018
- Welfare Reform
- Other housing policies

*The Homelessness Reduction Act:* received Royal Assent in April 2017 and became operational in April 2018. The key changes brought about by the Act include:

- Improving access to, and the quality of, advice and information available for residents in regards to homelessness and its prevention.
- Extending the period that a person is considered threatened with homelessness from 28 to 56 days, therefore allowing authorities to intervene earlier.
- Introducing new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible households regardless of priority need, intentionality and in some cases, local connection.
- Introducing the requirement for Personal Housing Plans to be implemented for each individual customer, setting out the actions both the authority and individual will take to try and secure appropriate accommodation.
- Encouraging public bodies to work together in preventing and relieving homelessness through a 'Duty to Refer' which commenced in October 2018.

*The Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018:* was published by Government in August 2018 and sets out its vision to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end it by 2027. The strategy is backed by an additional £100 million and is focused on three key priorities in regards to dealing with homelessness:

- Preventing rough sleeping by providing timely support to those at risk.
- Intervening to help people already on the streets get swift, targeted support.
- Helping people recover, find a new home quickly and rebuild their lives.


*Welfare Reform:* Since 2012 the government has made successive changes to welfare provision, aimed at delivering savings to the public purse of £13 billion a year by 2020/21. These reforms include:

- Local Housing Allowance (LHA) - rates reduced to the 30th percentile of local rents, rather than the previous 50th percentile.
- Local Housing Allowance Caps - introducing a national cap on LHA rates for each size dwelling (since 2016 there has been no increase on LHA amounts).

- Universal Credit - bringing together a range of working age benefits into a single payment, ideally to be managed by the claimant first-hand.
- Personal Independence Payments - replacing Disability Living Allowance.
- Benefit Cap - introducing a cap on the total amount of benefit that working age people can receive.
- Bedroom Tax - in 2013 the government changed Housing Benefit entitlements for working age tenants meaning they will receive less in Housing Benefit if they live in a social housing property deemed to have one or more spare bedrooms (14% for one room and 25% for two or more).

*Other housing policies:* there are a number of recent policy regulations coming into force throughout England which could impact on homelessness, and these include:

- Social Housing Green Paper (2018) - with the main aim of redressing the imbalance between social housing tenants and landlords. The paper sets out 5 core themes: tackling stigma, expanding supply and home ownership, effective resolution of complaints, empowering residents and strengthening the regulator, and ensuring homes are safe and decent.
- Licencing of Homes in Multiple Occupation (2018) – changes to the legislation mean that any HMO occupied by five or more persons who form two or more separate households, and who share basic amenities, will require a licence from their local authority.
- Tenant Fees Act (2019) - this new law aims to crackdown on hidden and unexpected fees faced by private renters, by ensuring that landlords can only charge for rents and deposits. The law also caps the amount of deposit paid before moving in and the maximum amount charged for a change in tenancy.
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act (2018) - revives a clause which exists in the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, requiring all rented homes to be 'fit for human habitation' at the start of the tenancy and to remain so throughout. It also gives tenants a way to take action if they rent a property in poor condition and the landlord fails to do the necessary maintenance.
- Lifting of Council borrowing caps - aimed at facilitating an increase in local authority building of social and affordable properties. Along with grant funding from Homes England, policy is aimed at providing Councils with the tools needed to further the supply of affordable housing throughout England.



**Sub-regional Context**

- York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Housing Strategy 2015-2021
- Joint Housing Investment Plan 2018

Selby District Council regularly works in partnership with North Yorkshire County Council, East Riding and other district authorities. As such, the strategy is influenced by a number of sub-regional policies. The most integral are listed below:

*York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Housing Strategy 2015-2021:* This document is the culmination of close working relations between the North Yorkshire Housing Board and the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP, along with key stakeholders. The strategy sets out the priorities for housing growth and delivery from 2015 to 2020, its key priorities being to:



1. Work with partners to increase the supply of good quality new housing across all tenures and locations (in line with Local Plans/site allocations).
2. Ensure our housing stock reflects the needs of urban, rural and coastal communities.
3. Ensure our housing stock meets the diverse needs of our population at all stages of their lives.
4. Via policy guidance and negotiation, ensure new homes are of good design and environmental quality regardless of tenure.
5. Continue to make best use of our existing stock and ensure it's of a decent quality to meet the needs of our communities.
6. Ensure all homes have a positive impact on health and well-being and are affordable to run.
7. Continue to reduce homelessness.
8. Ensure housing is allocated fairly and on the basis of need.
9. Provide appropriate housing and support.



*Joint Housing Investment Plan 2018:* Responding to the current challenges of the economy and housing markets across the region, the same partnership agreed a significant commitment to deliver a strong pipeline of homes with national exemplar schemes. Core themes include:

- Making the most of Ministry of Defence sites.
- Delivering ‘off-site manufactured’ homes.
- Increasing support for rural housing delivery.



#### County Context

- North Yorkshire Tenancy Strategy
- North Yorkshire Home Choice
- The Young and Yorkshire 2 Plan
- Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015-2020

As a non-unitary authority, Selby District Council works closely with our partner authorities and with North Yorkshire County Council in delivering many of its county-wide policies. Below are some of the most fundamental in regards to housing and homelessness:

*North Yorkshire Tenancy Strategy:* Developed in partnership with all North Yorkshire local authorities to provide an overarching guide for social landlords working in the County. It also provides guidelines for each authority to develop their own separate tenancy policies, setting out what the authorities can expect from each partner.

*North Yorkshire Home Choice:* Selby are partner to this allocations scheme, launched in July 2011. It is responsible for allocating social tenancies throughout the majority of North Yorkshire authorities and the City of York, allowing applicants to move within its boundaries. The scheme works to ensure that housing resources are allocated to those most in need and includes a commitment to provide additional preference to certain vulnerable households.

*The Young and Yorkshire 2 Plan:* Written by the North Yorkshire Children's Trust, this plan aims to improve the lives of children and young people living throughout North Yorkshire and includes the Selby District. The plan is particularly relevant when considering how to tackle youth homelessness and brings together the key priorities for everyone working with children, young people and families; setting out the actions needed to improve outcomes for young people living in the County.

*Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015-2020:* This strategy looks at key factors influential to improving the health and wellbeing of all residents living in the region. It aims to reduce health inequalities, as well as many of the health and wellbeing problems that can lead to homelessness, or arise from it. The focus here is to reduce lifestyle factors that can lead to ill health, improve access to and take up of services, provide support and care services for vulnerable people to increase independence, whilst also trying to break the cycle of poor health and deprivation.



#### Local Context

- Corporate Plan 2020-2030
- Future housing requirements

*Corporate Plan 2020-2030:* This plan describes the long term vision for Selby and notes the Council's priorities in helping to achieve this. The aims are:

#### To make Selby District a great place **to live...**

- Improved housing supply
- Better quality Council homes
- Improved town centres

#### To make Selby District a great place **to enjoy...**

- Improved environmental quality
- Safe neighbourhoods
- More sustainable transport

#### To make Selby District a great place **to grow...**

- More investment in the district
- More well paid jobs
- Higher skills levels

#### To make Selby District a great place **with a Council delivering great value...**

- Digitally enabled customer service
- Good quality services
- Financially sustainable

The Plan sets out our approach to delivering our ambitions:

- We will work collaboratively with others - recognising we are not experts in everything; we will use the best expertise, resources and skills across our partners and communities.
- We continue to be close to our communities - involving more people in decisions about their area and their services.
- We will put the customer at the heart of service delivery - supporting residents to be more self-sufficient and maximising use of digital technology in service delivery.
- We will support the wellbeing of our residents - considering how our decisions impact on healthy life choices and the environment.

*Future Housing Requirements:* Although Selby is one of the more affordable areas within North Yorkshire, affordability remains a significant issue for many residents in accessing the local housing market. As of April 2019, the average house price in Selby district was £193,636, almost identical to the year previous but a 6.7% increase compared with April 2016. This is lower than North Yorkshire's average of £215,205 and below the English average of £245,128. Across North Yorkshire, a person earning average local wages would need 7.8 times their income to buy a property. Selby however, is classed as more affordable, with a rate of 6.4 required.

The Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) completed in February 2019 calculated a need for 365 additional dwellings per annum. However, the requirement for housing need in relation to job growth increases need to 410 additional units per annum; to allow for demographic and economic growth, and to improve local affordability.

Calculations also estimate an annual need of affordable housing at 112 units between 2017 and 2037. This accounts for housing which would be delivered primarily as Social and Affordable Rent, but also acknowledges changes to the National Planning Policy Framework in 2019 which introduced a new category of Affordable housing; widening the definition to include Starter Homes, Discounted Market Sales housing and other forms of affordable home ownership (such as Shared Ownership). A supply of home ownership products must therefore also be secured by the Council when developments are seeking planning approval.

Current planning policy (adopted in 2014) expresses preference towards 2 and 3 bedroom family houses, and expects a tenure split of 30-50% intermediate tenures (such as the home ownership products listed above), and 50-70% rented accommodation. A new Local Plan for the Selby District is also in process, with this expected to take until 2023 to achieve.

## What we have achieved so far

### 1. Continue and improve partnership working to prevent homelessness

- Key partner of the North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership and North Yorkshire Home Choice allocations scheme.
- Increased the number of private landlords and properties available to customers through the Housing Options Development role.
- New and regular multi-agency meetings with North Yorkshire County Council's Adult Social Care teams.



### 2. Improve access to prevention and Housing Options services

- Silver Standard of service awarded by the NPSS.
- Secured Government funding for a new Rough Sleeper Coordinator.
- New Housing Options ICT system.
- Extended Severe Weather Provisions.



### 3. Improve support for Young People

- Continued success of the Young People's Pathway.
- No 16 and 17 year olds placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation.
- School visits by NYCC CYPS Worker to raise awareness.
- Increased move-on accommodation for young people.



### 4. Increase suitable housing options

- Reviewed and updated self-help prevention tools on our website.
- Increased access to the private sector via the Bond Guarantee Scheme and Frontline Prevention Funding.
- Enabled people to remain in their homes via DFGs and Breathing Space Loans.



### 5. Reduce the use of temporary accommodation and improve quality

- Financial investment and refurbishment of our homeless hostel.
- Increased move-on accommodation for general needs customers.
- Sourced more suitable emergency accommodation.



### 6. Identify new and improved opportunities to provide housing and support for households with special needs

- Co-location of NYP at the Civic Centre improving response to complex cases.
- Homelessness Support service in-house and more targeted.
- New Pathway Worker to help support complex cases and work closely with external support agencies.



### 7. Continue the good practice and joint working across the sub region in relation to Gypsies, Roma, Travellers and Showpeople

- Completed Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment in 2018.
- Housing support available for Gypsy and Travellers now available in-house.

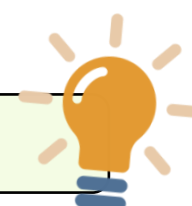


## 2. Review of homelessness in Selby – what have we learnt?

The strategy and subsequent action plan are the outcome of a holistic review of homelessness across the Selby district. This review draws upon data from a wide range of local and national sources, including:

- Internal Council data and reports.
- Homelessness statistics submitted to MHCLG.
- Housing Register data.
- Rough Sleepers Count.
- Anecdotal information from key stakeholders.

### Homelessness and Rough Sleeping



#### WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Selby's Housing Options service saw **530** approaches at year end 2018/19, compared with **596** the year previous.

Of those customers, **54%** were owed some form of duty following initial assessment (**35%** a Prevention Duty and **19%** a Relief duty).

Prevention work has increased as a result of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 legislation:

	No. of Homeless cases	Homelessness prevented	Homelessness relieved
<b>2017/18 (Pre-HRA)</b>	155	25	130
<b>2018/19</b>	154	88	66

More customers are presenting with complex needs, requiring extensive casework and creative solutions, including negotiating alternative housing options in the private sector:

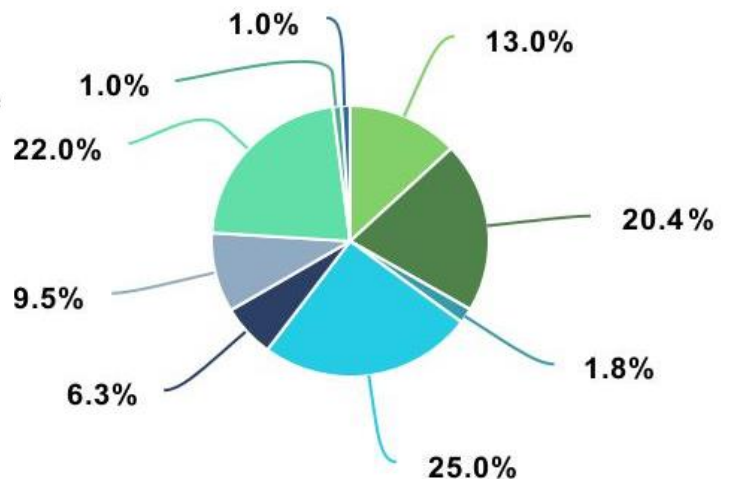
	Accommodation solution	
	Social Housing	Private sector
<b>2017/18 (Pre-HRA)</b>	69	37
<b>2018/19</b>	41	62

In 2018/19, a total of **114** people disclosed at least one or more support needs (**21.5%** of total customers). The most common support need was for mental health issues (**39%**), followed by physical health issues at **25%**.

There has been an increase in single male applicants as a result of the new legislation, but their available housing options remain static. Whilst we work with private landlords to increase the number of HMOs and shared accommodation units available in the district, this has resulted in incidences of rough sleeping beginning to increase.

Where a Prevention or Relief Duty was owed, the main reason for loss of settled accommodation was cited as:

- Relationship Breakdown
- Friends/Family no longer willing to accommodate
- End of non-AST
- End of AST
- Domestic Violence
- End of social tenancy
- Other
- Eviction from supported accommodation
- Other violence/harrasment



In 2018/19, there were **41** Main Duty decisions made:

No. of cases	Decision made
15	Homeless with no priority
14	Full homeless duty
6	Not homeless
5	Intentionally homeless
1	Not eligible for assistance

As of September 2019, there were **594** active applicants on the Council's housing register (North Yorkshire Home Choice). Their banding profile has been summarised below:

Band	Amount of applicants
Emergency	1
Gold	44
Silver	285
Bronze	264

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SELBY?

- We need to continue to monitor the impact of the new HRA legislation on the amount of customers accessing the Housing Options service. Whilst numbers have fallen this year (2018/19), cases are becoming more complex in nature and therefore taking more time for Officers to successfully resolve.
- Almost a fifth of cases seeking Council assistance were immediately owed a Relief Duty and therefore already homeless. The strategy should look to include provisions to better publicise the Housing Options service in order that residents at risk of homelessness present to us at the earliest opportunity, rather than waiting for homelessness to occur.
- Single males are overrepresented in our customer cohort as a result of the new legislation; however, the range of housing options available to them remains static. We should therefore aim to increase the amount of HMOs and shared

accommodation units available throughout the district in order to meet this need and reduce incidents of rough sleeping.

- Rough sleeping is also more likely to be experienced in the Selby district by customers with complex needs where more specialist accommodation is required. Work therefore is needed to support provision of more specialist and/or supported accommodation throughout the district.
- The main reason for homelessness in Selby remains the loss of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST). To combat this, the service should maintain links with private landlords and be well publicised locally. Nonetheless, a range of subsequent reasons follow shortly behind, meaning an assortment of homelessness prevention tools is required in order to prevent and relieve homelessness.
- Almost 10% of customers were facing homelessness due to the end of a Social Rented tenancy. We need therefore to implement an effective pre- eviction protocol arrangement with our partner landlords to ensure that the team are made aware of any impending evictions at the earliest opportunity in order to prevent homelessness.
- Mental health issues remain a significant support issue for many of our customers, likely to impact on their ability to find and maintain suitable accommodation. Staff must be fully trained to support these customers and provided adequate case management time to do so. This also stresses the need for a collaborative approach to case working with the relevant statutory services.

## **The Service**

### **WHAT DO WE KNOW?**



At present, the Housing Options team comprises of:

- 1 FTE Housing Options Supervisor
- 4.5 FTE Housing Options Advisors (2 FTE fixed-term)
- 1 FTE Housing Options Development Officer (0.5 FTE fixed-term)
- 1 FTE Private Sector Housing Administrator (fixed-term)

The service also benefits from 1 FTE Children and Young People's Homelessness Prevention Worker, employed by North Yorkshire County Council and working under the Young People's Pathway.

Selby's previously external Homelessness Prevention Service has now been brought in-house following changes to commissioning arrangements for floating support services by North Yorkshire County Council. This provides additional resource to the Housing Options service via a Homelessness Prevention Service Team Leader and 2 x Homelessness Prevention Support Officers.

In March 2019, the Council were successful in their Government funding bid and were granted £30,000 under the 'Rough Sleeping Initiative' to appoint a specialist

Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator on a 12 month fixed-term contract. This worker liaises closely with local support services in trying to establish a tailored pathway offer for our most complex customers.

The team have a number of successful joint working partnerships with local services, both statutory and third sector (a list of which can be found in Appendix B). The most notable is with the County Council's Children's and Young People's Service, via the development of the Young Person's Pathway.

Whilst the main statutory duty towards homelessness sits with Selby District Council, many of the complimentary services provided locally are funded via the upper tier authority - North Yorkshire County Council. Given the budget restraints experienced by County Councils and the savings they are currently required to make; there are recognised concerns that non-statutory services may be reduced in order to re-prioritise funding to core services.

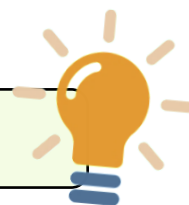
The Housing Options service also facilitates a quarterly multi-agency meeting entitled the Selby Homelessness Forum. All local agencies involved in preventing homelessness in the district are invited to attend, providing an opportunity to share knowledge and good practice, network and collaborate on local projects.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SELBY?

- Staffing must remain at adequate levels to service our diverse customer cohort. This includes continued support for the Young People's Pathway and close working relationship with NYCC. There is a need therefore to raise awareness of issues surrounding service provision and demand at a senior level where appropriate, in order to safeguard services.
- The in-house Homelessness Prevention Service should provide increased scope to target resources specifically at customers where homelessness is potentially imminent, helping to reduce homelessness in the district.
- The new Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator is funded through MHCLG grant funding as a one-off payment. Securing further funding is a priority for the Council; as is seeking any additional Government grant funding available which could assist us in preventing and relieving homelessness and rough sleeping in the district.
- Partnership working is central to the Housing Options service delivering on their goals. We therefore need to continue to forge and extend partnerships with local relevant services. Establishing joint protocols and working arrangements will therefore be a key consideration for the strategy.
- Selby's Homelessness Forum is integral to supporting such a collaborative approach and therefore central in supporting the delivery of the strategy moving forward. Strategic buy-in is therefore required from all partner agencies.



## Access to accommodation



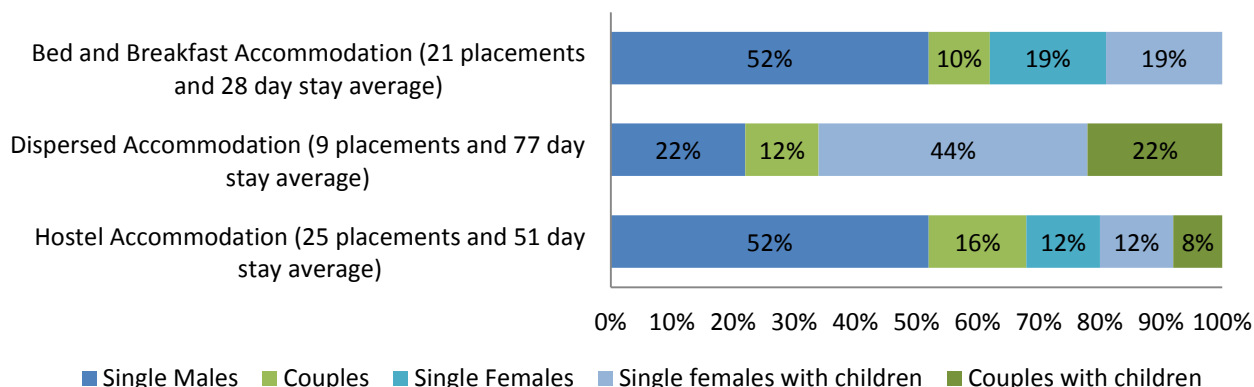
### WHAT DO WE KNOW?

The Council has a legal obligation to provide accommodation to homeless people meeting certain criteria. The Council currently manages one homeless hostel, Ousegate Lodge with 10 self-contained units, and 3 dispersed units located throughout the district. In an emergency, or when these units are full, the Council are able to provide customers with Bed and Breakfast accommodation, potentially located outside of the district.

In 2018/19, the average stay for customers in the Council’s homeless hostel was **51 days**. This increased to **77 days** for dispersed accommodation and **28 days** in Bed and Breakfast accommodation.

One outcome of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 is that customers are likely to require temporary accommodation for longer, increasing use of expensive Bed and Breakfast accommodation. Spending on Bed and Breakfast accommodation has increased significantly since the introduction of the Act, from **£6,739** in 2017/18 compared with **£35,644** in 2018/19.

Single males continue to over-represent placements in both our hostel and Bed and Breakfast accommodation in 2018/19, as shown below:



Supported accommodation is available in the district for young people, via the Young People’s Pathway and managed by Foundation. The move-on process is however difficult, both in finding suitable move-on accommodation, as well as providing adequate support to manage the pressures that come with independent living.

There is also a lack of supported accommodation throughout the district for the remaining customer base, such as offenders, customers suffering with mental and physical health issues, as well as those with complex needs more generally. Much of this more specialist accommodation is outside of the district and ring-fenced for those with local connection.

In terms of social housing, stock modelling completed in July 2017 found there were 39,423 dwellings in the Selby district. **12%** were Social Rented (**17%** being the national average).

Whilst we have a waiting list of almost 600 applicants on North Yorkshire Home Choice, the number of lettings completed in the district over the last three years is:

Year	No. of lettings
2016/17	236
2017/18	311
2018/19	280

Between 2001 and 2011, there has been significant growth in the number of households living in privately rented accommodation in the district (**154%**). Specifically for households under 35, analysis shows a sharp increase in the number living in private rented accommodation, opposed to owning their own homes.

Evidence from the SHMA 2019 found that the average rental price in Selby is significantly lower than that in Leeds and York, likely to be driven in part by student demand in these areas. Anecdotally, the rental market was deemed strong, especially in Selby and the surrounding villages where many renters are young professionals drawn to the area due to good commuting links.

The majority of the Selby district does benefits from LHA rates covered by the ‘York’ Broad Rental Market Areas (BMRA), assisting with affordability. However, a number of smaller towns (listed below) fall within alternative BRMAs and therefore customers may struggle more with affordability in these areas, with rents potentially charged above the relevant LHA rate.

- Leeds: Church Fenton, Barkston Ash, Sherburn-In-Elmet, South Milford and Monk Fryston.
- Wakefield: Fairburn, Brotherton and Byram.
- Doncaster: Womersley, Walden Stubbs and Balne.

Affordability is an issue for single people under 35, eligible only for the ‘Shared Room’ LHA rate. Given the need to increase shared accommodation in the district, many single people are limited to larger accommodation which is more likely to be unaffordable.

	York		Doncaster		Wakefield		Leeds	
	Weekly	Monthly	Weekly	Monthly	Weekly	Monthly	Weekly	Monthly
Shared Room	£67.09	£291.52	£55.12	£239.51	£55.00	£238.99	£62.48	£271.49

Also according to Selby’s SHMA 2019, the Selby district has a slightly larger dwelling stock across all tenures compared with our neighbours. However, the most notable difference is with one bedroom properties, where across all tenures (compared with England generally), the district hold only half the average amount.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SELBY?

- Bed and Breakfast accommodation is required within the Housing Options service, but should only be used when necessary and appropriate given the costs associated with it. We should look to reduce use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation wherever possible with the strategy acknowledging the need to better manage all forms of temporary accommodation in order to do this.

- Single males over-represent those placed in temporary accommodation. These are cases where complex needs are evident. We therefore need to ensure that the package of multi-agency support provided to these customers is sufficient, to reduce the likelihood of temporary accommodation being required.
- To best manage temporary accommodation, we need to ensure adequate numbers of move-on accommodation are available to meet need, as well as providing the necessary package of care to move people through to independence. Support should also continue via Moving Forward training.
- We must also review the Council's temporary accommodation to ensure it is sufficient to meet future demand and provided to an appropriate standard.
- The district has a lack of supported accommodation. As per the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2020-2025, we support the development of new supported housing in the district, in partnership with NYCC.
- North Yorkshire Home Choice remains a significant tool in customers accessing suitable permanent accommodation. There is a need to ensure that the Allocations Policy supports prevention and relief activities and that further provision of social housing is supported in the Council's development plans.
- Work has been done to strengthen relationships in the private rented sector which has increased the housing options available to our customers, as well as helping to reduce demand on social housing stock and on temporary accommodation. Work must continue to ensure our private rented offer is not only maintained, but increased. This includes increasing the number of homeless cases discharged into the private sector.
- Providing affordable accommodation for single people under 35 is hampered by a lack of shared accommodation available throughout the district. More work needs to be done to increase housing options for this group, including sourcing more HMOs and shared accommodation units.

## Resources

### WHAT DO WE KNOW?



On announcing the implementation of the HRA 2017, the government provided additional funds to help meet the costs associated with additional duties. This allocation covers 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20. The Council was provided just over **£30,000** of New Burdens Funding, primarily allocated to additional staffing. It also received a Flexible Homelessness Support Grant in 2018/19 of just over **£66,000**. The grant is to continue for at least a further year (2020/21), with an allocation of **£65,000** in 2019/20 and **£27,711** provided as a Prevention grant.

A proportion of funding is allocated to continuing the Council's 'Frontline Prevention Funding.' This provides financial assistance to households facing homelessness to

enable them to either remain in their existing accommodation or access alternative housing. For example, it can be used for rent in advance or as a deposit for a new property. In 2018/19 **£13,364.10** was provided to customers under this initiative, helping **29** households in preventing or relieving homelessness.

The Council also continues to receive a small amount of funding from what was once the Supporting People grant, relating specifically to the support of customers whilst they are placed in our temporary accommodation. This has reduced significantly over the years, and stands at **£18,056** for 2018/19.

The Council successfully bid for Rough Sleeper Initiative funding to support our work in tackling rough sleeping across the district. This funding (initially for one year) has been used to create a Rough Sleeping Coordinator, aimed at creating a sustainable pathway for rough sleepers. This funding is likely to continue for a further year with an expectation that there will be no further funding from 2021/22 onwards.

The Council are able to provide Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) to customers who claim Housing Benefit/Universal Credit but are struggling to pay their rent. DHPs can also be used to help pay a tenancy deposit or rent in advance for a new home.

The Housing Options team and are also able to access North Yorkshire Local Assistance Funding for customers. This is available for people who are deemed vulnerable, have limited financial resources and are unable to access financial assistance from other services. The funding can supply up to two emergency awards in any 12 month period, or one award for furniture/household items.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SELBY?

- Budgets need to be carefully managed; including any underspend, as cuts in grant funding from the Government are likely to see revenue funded services like Housing Options come under increasing financial scrutiny.
- Homelessness prevention tools are essential to the continued success of the service. Use of the Frontline Prevention Fund for example, can stop a household from having to access temporary accommodation, minimising distress for the customer as well as reducing staff resource.
- The team's Rough Sleeper Coordinator is paid for via limited MHGLC grant funding. Results must be closely monitored and there will need to be consideration as to how this post will be funded in future if shown to be effective.
- The use of DHPs is a key homelessness prevention tool and should continue to be utilised. The allocation of funds should be closely monitored and any unallocated funds used to supplement homeless prevention activities.
- There is again a need to raise awareness as to issues surrounding service provision and demand in order to safeguard services.

# 3. Moving Forward

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## Our vision

*'The Council will strive to ensure that it provides and maintains services which meet the housing and support needs of all people who find themselves in danger of losing, or have already lost their home.'*

Homelessness is not inevitable and in many cases can be prevented. This is not only best for the customer but often more cost effective for the Council. Where prevention is not possible however, we aim to provide an effective service to help households navigate the homelessness process. Working collaboratively with our partners throughout the district, we will:

- Encourage people to seek assistance before they reach homeless crisis point.
- Ensure we offer a holistic approach to any client that approaches our service.
- Identify suitable and personalised housing options for those who cannot remain in their current situation.

## Priorities for action

**Priority One:** Maximise and maintain partnership working to prevent and relieve homelessness

Desired Outcome: Working better together with our partners in a co-ordinated way to prevent homelessness. We will create strong, reliable and durable working relationships, ideally with common assessment and referral processes, information sharing and jointly delivered services; leading to better outcomes for our homeless or at risk customers.

Key Tasks:

- Maintain and advance close working relationships with other North Yorkshire district councils and with partner authorities, sharing resources and best practice.
- Continue to develop a range of services with our partners to ensure all customers facing homelessness are provided with appropriate support.
- Provide appropriate and targeted support to help customers establish and maintain successful tenancies, utilising our new Homelessness Prevention Support Officers.
- Raise awareness of the Housing Options service in the local community and with local agencies; the goal being to assisting more customers before the point of homelessness.
- Where appropriate, we will raise awareness with decision makers on the issues surrounding service demand and provision to safeguard services and funding.

**Priority Two:** Maximise local and appropriate housing options

Desired Outcome: Customers will have secure homes they can afford. Demand for social and specialised housing outstrips supply, increasing pressure on the private rented sector and making it difficult for everyone to access. The Council will work

with our partners to make best use of existing resources, improve access to available options and identify and address any gaps in provision.

**Key Tasks:**

- Not only maintain but increase our private sector offer, ensuring customers have access to the private rented sector and appropriate support to sustain their accommodation.
- Ensure local partner agencies are proficiently supported in order to continue offering their specialist services.
- Ensure customers who want to stay in their own homes are given as much opportunity as possible for this to happen.
- We will support the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Housing Strategy in its aim to increase the supply of affordable housing throughout the region, ensuring Selby's emerging Local Plan appropriately acknowledges the need for affordable housing across the district.
- Make best use of existing social housing stock within the district and ensure that our Allocations Policy effectively supports prevention and relief activity.

**Priority Three:** Improve access to front-line housing options services to prevent homelessness

Desired Outcome: Acting faster to prevent people losing their homes, early identification of issues and the provision of high quality advice and assistance, all ensuring that people have the best chance of staying in their homes.

**Key Tasks:**

- Provide a Housing Options team where the principles of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 are fully embedded and all relevant customers are provided with Personal Housing Plans.
- Ensure appropriate funding remains accessible to customers in order to prevent homelessness, including DHPs, North Yorkshire Local Assistance Funding and Frontline Prevention Funding.
- Continue to increase the number of customers where homeless prevention has been achieved.
- Work with local landlords to develop more options for single people as well as those under 35, specifically looking to increase access to HMOs and shared accommodation.

**Priority Four:** Reduce demand for emergency Bed and Breakfast accommodation by offering affordable housing and more appropriate temporary accommodation

Desired Outcome: effective action to relieve homelessness and the demand for emergency accommodation through strong and effective pathways to ensure that more suitable accommodation can instead be secured.

**Key Tasks:**

- To ensure all Selby residents are aware of the Housing Options service and how to access it, as well as having the ability to access self-help tools where appropriate.

- Whilst acknowledging that emergency Bed and Breakfast accommodation has its use, we aim to only provide such accommodation where it is most appropriate.
- We will increase supply and make best use of temporary accommodation by increasing discharge into the private rented sector, securing appropriate move-on accommodation for customers and providing the necessary support to make move-on a success.
- To review temporary accommodation to ensure it is of a suitable standard in terms of size, type and location.

#### **Priority Five:** Effectively support customers with complex and specific needs

Desired Outcome: providing those with complex needs with the right support and accommodation to increase their resilience and sustain independent living.

#### Key Tasks:

- Ensure relevant information is shared safely with partner agencies and that decisions are made jointly wherever appropriate.
- Look to improve housing and support for vulnerable customer groups by continuing to jointly commission local support services and by working closely with NYCC to increase the range of supported accommodation available across the district.
- Continue to ensure that complex need customers are acknowledged in the North Yorkshire Home Choice Allocations Policy.
- To ensure that vulnerable client groups have a tailored support and accommodation pathway, utilising Government funding and our Rough Sleeper Coordinator.

#### **Priority Six:** End rough sleeping in the district

Desired Outcome: Via multi-agency working and the introduction of a new Rough Sleeper Coordinator, rough sleeping will no longer be experienced by any resident living in the Selby district.

#### Key Tasks:

- Ensure that vulnerable customers, or people operating on their behalf, know how to access the Housing Options service.
- Maintain an Out of Hours and No Second Night Out provision, to ensure that vulnerable customers are provided suitable alternatives to sleeping rough.
- Continue to provide a dedicated Rough Sleeping Coordinator whilst funding is available, and look to secure additional funding wherever possible to maintain this service as well as additional services to benefit our service provision for rough sleepers in the district.

### **Delivering the strategy**

A number of tasks have been identified within this strategy, which form our 'Action Plan' over the next five years and which will need to be completed in order to achieve our ambitions. As identified throughout the strategy, a number of these actions will need to be jointly delivered with our partners if we want to ensure the best possible outcomes for our customers.

This Action Plan will become a tool for both the team and Homelessness Forum to monitor and review progress against key milestones and targets on a regular basis. Consequently, an annual review of the Action Plan will be completed to ensure our approach remains up to date and that new ways of working are integrated into our plans. The mechanisms for review and monitoring are many within the homelessness service, which should ensure the Action Plan is regularly maintained and updated.



## Glossary

<p><b>Duty to Refer:</b> A duty placed on specified public services to refer their customers who they think may be homeless or threatened with homelessness to local authority homelessness teams.</p>	<p><b>NYCC:</b> North Yorkshire County Council. This body oversees the district authorities (including Selby) but remains responsible for core services such as social care and education.</p>
<p><b>LEPs:</b> Local Enterprise Partnerships are voluntary partnerships between local authorities and businesses. They help to determine local economic priorities and lead economic growth and job creation within the local area.</p>	<p><b>IDAS:</b> Independent Domestic Abuse Service supports anyone experiencing or affected by domestic abuse or sexual violence. Their services include refuge accommodation, community based support, peer mentoring, group work and access to a confidential helpline.</p>
<p><b>Affordable housing:</b> Is social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the open market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.</p>	<p><b>MARAC:</b> A Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference is a confidential regular local meeting to discuss how to help domestic abuse victims at high risk of murder or serious harm. Relevant agencies discuss the victim, family and perpetrator, and share information.</p>
<p><b>Prevention Duty:</b> Where a local authority is satisfied that an applicant is threatened with homelessness and eligible for assistance, it must take reasonable steps to help them ensure accommodation does not cease to be available for their occupation.</p>	<p><b>Registered Providers:</b> Can include local authority landlords and private housing providers (such as not-for-profit housing associations and for-profit organisations). To become a Registered Provider, an organisation has to register with Homes England.</p>
<p><b>Relief Duty:</b> Where a local authority is satisfied that an applicant is homeless and eligible for assistance, it must take reasonable steps to help them secure accommodation available for at least six months.</p>	<p><b>NSNO:</b> The No Second Night Out service aims to help people who are sleeping rough for the first time, finding them an immediate alternative so they do not need to spend another night on the streets.</p>
<p><b>SWEP:</b> Severe Weather Emergency Protocol aims to get rough sleepers off the streets during periods of below zero night-time temperatures by providing emergency accommodation.</p>	<p><b>CYPS:</b> Our Children and Young People’s Worker is employed by NYCC but sits in our Housing Options team. They work with young people aged 16-25 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.</p>
<p><b>HRA:</b> The Council’s Housing Revenue Account relies on the rental income from our tenants to fund our entire housing service. Funds can also be used to help develop new properties in the district.</p>	<p><b>Dispersed accommodation:</b> Temporary homeless accommodation managed by the Council, but in the form of flats and houses based in the community rather than hostel style accommodation.</p>

<p><b>MAPPA:</b> Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements are the process through which agencies such as the Police, Probation and NYCC work together to protect the public by managing the risks posed by violent and sexual offenders living in the community.</p>	<p><b>MATAC:</b> Multi Agency Tasking and Coordination is a Police initiative to identify and manage the most harmful domestic abuse perpetrators.</p>
<p><b>IOM:</b> Integrated Offender Management is a cross-agency response to crime/reoffending faced by communities. The most persistent offenders are managed jointly by partner agencies working together.</p>	<p><b>GDPR:</b> The General Data Protection Regulation is a legal framework that sets guidelines for the collection and processing of personal information from individuals who live in the European Union.</p>
<p><b>Moving Forward:</b> classroom based workshops which deliver pre-tenancy training for customer who have been identified would benefit from additional training and support to sustain their tenancies in both the social and private housing sector.</p>	