



Homelessness review and strategy

Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council

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Strictly private and confidential

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1. Introduction

It is a statutory requirement that every local authority has a strategy for preventing homelessness and rough sleeping. Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council has a strategy which was agreed in 2014 and is due to be updated. MHCLG has also asked all local authorities to update their strategies to reflect new statutory duties that were introduced in April 2018, under the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA). New duties under the HRA include a requirement to provide advice and support to prevent or relieve homelessness for everyone at risk of becoming homeless within the next 56 days, regardless of whether they would be considered 'priority need' under the previous legislation. 'Priority need' is now only considered if the Council has been unable to prevent or relieve homelessness (prevention generally means that the applicants are able to retain their accommodation or achieve a planned move within the first 56 day period, relief means that homelessness cannot be prevented or that the applicant has already lost their accommodation and they are moved to alternative accommodation within a subsequent 56 day period).

The HRA also brought in a new duty to refer which requires specified public authorities to refer any clients who might be homeless or threatened with homelessness to the local authority homelessness/housing options team. The specified authorities include those responsible for prisons, probation, social services and emergency/urgent healthcare.

The HRA has been a significant change but there have been others: welfare reform, including restrictions on Housing Benefit (the local housing allowance rate, on which Housing Benefit entitlement is calculated, has not increased since 2016), the continuing impact of spending cuts on local services, and an increase in the number of households with debts. These have created significant challenges for lower income households seeking secure and affordable accommodation.

This review of homelessness forms the evidence base for the new strategy. The strategy has been developed to reflect and conforms to statutory requirements, including the updated Code of Guidance 2018.

2. Geography

Redcar and Cleveland is the largest borough in the Tees Valley, covering approximately 96 square miles. The population is 135,000 people, comprising 63,000 households. The area comprises of over 20 different towns and villages, each with its own identity. The borough stretches from the Teeside urban conurbation in the west, across coastal communities from Redcar to Boulby Cliffs, and encompasses numerous towns and villages in rural East Cleveland.

The geography creates a number of challenges from a homelessness perspective. Households at risk of becoming homeless in a particular area will often want to remain in that area. While this is true for many local authorities, the differences between the rural areas, coastal towns and villages and urban conurbation are more extreme and likely to impact on the household's ability to sustain a tenancy in a new area.

Some voluntary sector services are also locality-based; this may make it more difficult for those outside that locality to access them.

As with England as a whole, the population in Redcar and Cleveland is ageing. In Redcar and Cleveland, however, the population is ageing at a faster rate than neighbouring boroughs. It is projected that by 2032, 30% of the population will be 65 or older with 10% over 80. The Council is seeking to reduce the number of working age people leaving the area for employment reasons, with ambitious plans to create 20,000 new jobs in the area, in partnership with the Tees Valley Development Corporation.

3. Previous Homelessness Strategy and achievements

The previous Homelessness Strategy (2014 – 2019) had four key objectives:

- Prevention of homelessness
- Developing housing pathways
- Preparing for future challenges
- Improving service delivery

Significant progress has been made against all four objectives.

Objective one – Prevention of homelessness

- Mortgage rescue advice service (MRAS) recommissioned as part of the corporate advice and information service contract. Successful bid from Redcar CAB who were the provider under the previous contract. This allowed for seamless continuation of service provision in partnership with the Housing Advice and Information Team
- Participation in SSI task group, which began in September 2015, to provide early prevention advice and information to mitigate the impact on employees facing redundancy
- Sanctuary Scheme recommissioned as part of one of the LOTS in the range of domestic abuse commissioned services. Successful bid from Foundation UK who were the provider under the previous contract
- The Landlord Charter continues to operate across the borough. Currently there are 305 members with a combined portfolio of 870 properties
- Continued implementation of No Second Night Out (NSNO) to assist rough sleepers into settled accommodation. Rough sleeper notifications remain lower than neighbouring local authorities with larger urban centres. Clients assisted in the borough tend to be sleeping rough as a response to a housing crisis rather than entrenched rough sleepers who are permanently without settled accommodation

- Strengthened links with the Financial Support Team to ensure clients are able to access prevention initiatives such as Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) and universal credit budgeting support
- Additional resources secured to develop prevention initiatives including successful sub-regional bids to MHCLG for DV navigator project and Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer funding. The DV navigator project supports women with complex needs who are unable to access a refuge; they may remain at home or move to alternative supported accommodation

Objective two – Develop housing pathways

- The Keystep project was developed with Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer funding to provide support and housing options to 18 – 35-year olds; funding was time-limited and take-up in Redcar and Cleveland was limited
- Joint protocol with Children’s Services reviewed to ensure that homelessness prevention for homeless 16 – 17-year olds is achieved through early intervention
- Outreach work with care leavers is ensuring successful transition to supported then independent living
- Personalised housing plans have been in place since April 2018 (post HRA)
- Proactive work is undertaken to prevent parental eviction, including mediation where appropriate
- A Sanctuary Scheme is in place and operating successfully to ‘target harden’ the existing home to prevent homelessness for victims of domestic abuse; there is a local purpose-built refuge and a specialist commissioned support service for victims of DA
- Officers are also proactive with those faced with the ending of a private rented sector tenancy, contacting the landlord and working to address any underlying issues
- All homelessness prevention officers are able to give basic advice on HB, including eligibility, and LHA rates; there is a commissioned service from Citizen’s Advice which offers debt and welfare rights advice working in partnership with the Council. Officers will refer those facing eviction for arrears/debt issues to Citizen’s Advice, while continuing to offer support on eviction procedures and rehousing options
- There is a pot of money available for homelessness prevention, which can be used flexibly
- There is a pre-eviction protocol in place with Beyond Housing.

- Regional funding was secured through the Rough Sleeper Initiative (2019/20) and the Rapid Rehousing Pathway to prevent and tackle rough sleeping

Objective three – Prepare for future challenges

- The Council has responded successfully to the HRA legislation, preventing homelessness in the majority of cases
- For most households, homelessness is prevented through a move to another property, usually in the social housing sector but the private rented sector is also used
- There is a good supply of properties in the private rented sector and the Council works proactively with landlords to open up access for those on lower incomes and to improve standards; the housing strategy includes a commitment to review and develop this work
- There is a reasonable supply of social housing properties; the Allocations Scheme has recently been reviewed and a new Common Allocations Policy is being introduced from April 2020 which give increased priority to homeless households

Objective four – Improve service delivery

- Participated in diagnostic peer review of service as part of the CLG's Gold Standard Programme
- A new case management system has been introduced which reflects the requirements of the HRA
- All team members are equipped for mobile working which supports out-reach work; homelessness prevention officers will visit customers at home if it is difficult for them to access the service in other ways and can also carry out assessments in hospitals, or at partner officers, as required
- Increase in staffing resources by 2fte (fixed term) pre HRA introduction

Other significant achievements during the period of the strategy include work with the Troubled Families Programme, Transformation Challenge and work to support households into employment.

3.2 The Troubled Families Programme (now Early Help)

The Council secured funding for both the original Troubled Families programme (2012/15) and the expanded programme for 2015/20. In the original programme, the Council achieved its target of 'turning around' 405 families six months earlier than expected. Almost all families achieved increased school attendance, and almost half demonstrated progress into work. There was also a significant reduction in anti-social behaviour and crime. The expanded programme required the Council to identify and work with 1,290 families over the five-year period. The Council has submitted payment by results claims for

889 families to date, the majority for significant and sustained progress, and around 10% of these for continuous employment.

3.3 Transformation Challenge

The Council successfully submitted a partnership bid in 2015 to secure £1million to transform services for adults with multiple and complex issues. It was recognised that too many adults never achieve their full potential merely 'existing' in society and often falling through the net of complex systems that they are ill equipped to navigate their way through.

The Transformation Challenge project aims to transform the lives of people living within six Priority Place areas. These areas were determined following analysis of life expectancy in the Borough, where the poorest 10% have significantly worse health outcomes and life expectancy than the next poorest 10%. A team of Community Key Workers work intensively with clients to help them improve their lives, by assisting to address the complex mix of issues they face.

Evidence has shown that a highly skilled multi-disciplinary team of Community Key Workers offering intensive support to individuals in the Priority Places results in significant positive outcomes for individuals and demonstrates cost benefits to the council and partners.

3.4 Supporting households into employment

There are two schemes supporting households into employment, the local Routes to Employment Team and a Tees Valley wide initiative called Routes to Work. There are also schemes run by voluntary sector organisations and a separate scheme to support younger people into employment, also run by the Council – The Youth Employment Initiative.

The Routes to Employment Team has been in existence for over 20 years. Its purpose is to:

- Facilitate recruitment and selection for jobs for residents of Redcar and Cleveland
- Remove any final barriers to employment for Redcar and Cleveland residents, eg, transport costs, provision of PPE, provision of suitable training
- Provide appropriate information, advice and guidance to residents of the Borough seeking employment.

5,145 people have been supported into work since 2011.

Routes to Work is a Tees Valley wide initiative funded by Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) and Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) to support those hardest to help, to move towards employment. Routes to Work has been modelled on Redcar and Cleveland Councils initiative highlighted above. This programme tests new ways of collaborative working at a local level that take a person-centred and responsive approach to address the multiple barriers that some people face when trying to access work. The

pilot will test if greater collaborative and person-centred approaches deliver better and more sustainable outcomes for these vulnerable people.

The programme provides holistic support from a range of service providers for those unemployed or inactive individuals across the Combined Authority area, who are deemed to need the most help and support to move back into work. It will run until March 2021.

The two Training and Employment Hubs (East Cleveland and Grangetown) offer a range of services at no cost to residents, providing information, advice and guidance relating to recruitment and training opportunities. In particular, they provide residents with links to specialist providers of advice and guidance, third party training organisations and prospective employers, with a view to reducing unemployment in the region. The Hubs work in partnership with MGT and Sirius as priority clients, as well as a range of employers nationally to upskill, cross-skill and submit candidates to their vacancies as appropriate, as an extension of the client's recruitment function.

The support is for anyone in or out of work looking to take their first steps, change their direction and/or improve their prospects through training and employment opportunities.

Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) is a European Social Fund funded project to support young people aged 15 to 29 into employment, education or training. The project is funded to May 2021 and can work with any resident of Tees Valley but focus on Redcar and Cleveland residents. YEI offer initial face-to-face meeting with the young person to see where they are now in terms of their education and career, where they want to be, and what support they need to get there. This includes the completion of a skills needs assessment and a personalised Individual Action Plan (IAP).

Once young people join the project, they have an allocated advisor who remains with them until they have completed their journey to a positive destination. The YEI Advisors also have access to a flexible fund to remove barriers to progression and can buy-in short training courses, etc, where it would help someone get a job. Experience is also gained through work related learning, volunteering and placements.

4. Key local strategies

4.1. Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The Council is part of the South Tees Health and Wellbeing board, covering both Redcar and Cleveland and Middlesbrough. The latest Health and Wellbeing strategy expired in 2018 and a new one is in development. The previous strategy focused on three key priorities:

- Children and young people have the best start in life
- People in R&C have healthier, longer lives
- More people lead safe, independent lives

Preventing homelessness supports each of these priorities. In particular, the emphasis in the Health and Wellbeing strategy on prevention and on integrated services will be reflected in the new homeless prevention and rough sleeping strategy.

4.2. Corporate Strategy: Our Flourishing Future

The current Corporate Strategy has nine priorities:

- Strong and confident communities
- Prosperity for all
- A brighter future for our children
- Longer and healthier lives
- Attractive and vibrant places
- Good connections
- Clean and safe environment
- Enriching lives through culture and sport
- Enriching the way we work.

Preventing homelessness and securing stable and affordable accommodation contributes to all of these.

4.3. Housing Strategy

The Housing Strategy covers the period 2019 – 2024. The vision for housing in Redcar and Cleveland is:

‘A range of high quality homes across all tenures, at affordable prices and in attractive places; enabling our younger people to meet their needs and aspirations, families to grow and prosper, whilst supporting our older residents and those with specific needs to remain independent for as long as possible, delivering safety, sustainable warmth, comfort and security for all’.

The strategy has three key objectives:

- Building homes to meet the needs of our population
- Improving the standards of existing housing and revitalising neighbourhoods
- Meeting the needs of our ageing population and supporting people to live independently.

The housing strategy is supported by a delivery plan which is regularly monitored. All actions in the delivery plan will contribute towards preventing homelessness; only a small number of key actions are highlighted here:

- Proactive and targeted work with private landlords to improve conditions in the private rented sector
- Evaluation of selective licensing scheme
- Initiatives to tackle fuel poverty
- Initiatives to tackle empty homes
- Work with RP partners to increase accommodation options for single people
- Work with partners to develop appropriate supported housing schemes for vulnerable people
- Develop a comprehensive supported Housing strategy for the Borough.

Some actions in the delivery plan have already been completed and others are work in progress. The Council is on track to complete all in year actions for those with a 2019/20 deadline.

5. Data analysis

In order to consider trends in homelessness in Redcar and Cleveland, it is necessary to look across two sources of data. For 2016/17 and 2017/18 prior to the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the Council maintained information on homeless prevention and reported homelessness data to the government through a P1E statistical return. The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) in April 2018 brought new duties to provide housing advice and support through a new prevention duty triggered when households were deemed to be 'threatened with homelessness within 56 days'. A new government reporting system for Homelessness Case Level Information Collection known as H-CLIC was also introduced. These changes mean that data collected pre and post-HRA is not comparable, though overall trends and patterns can still be seen.

Redcar and Cleveland collects core information on all approaches to the service, including the reasons why people are seeking advice. H-CLIC data includes detailed information on any cases where the 56-day threat of homelessness threshold is met. Both datasets have been used below in order to provide a full picture.

Tables one to nine below show the position prior to the introduction of the HRA. Tables ten to fifteen show the position post-HRA.

Table one: Homeless prevention – all enquiries – pre HRA

Reason for approach	2016/17	2017/18
Family/friend eviction	310	303
Debt/arrears	312	290
Domestic abuse/Sanctuary Scheme	269	312
Ending of AST	135	122
Leaving institution or supported housing	22	27
Harassment	32	31
Other	190	163
Total	1,270	1,248

Source: MHCLG data

Table one above shows the number of households approaching the Council in general for advice and assistance where there is a risk of homelessness. The main reasons for approaches during these two years were:

- Family/friend eviction
- Debt/arrears
- Domestic abuse
- Ending of an assured shorthold tenancy.

This largely reflects the national picture as shown in Table two below.

Table two: Homelessness Prevention – all enquiries – national picture (2017/18)

Reason for loss of last settled home for households owed duty:	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar
Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate	13,820	17,170	15,620	18,150
End of private rented tenancy - assured shorthold	14,910	14,890	12,900	14,700
Domestic abuse	4,820	6,210	5,560	6,000
Non-violent relationship breakdown with partner	4,350	5,640	5,170	5,770
End of social rented tenancy	2,480	3,040	3,380	3,580
Eviction from supported housing	1,650	1,970	2,180	2,400
End of private rented tenancy - not assured shorthold	1,300	1,530	1,420	1,550
Other violence or harassment	1,150	1,520	1,350	1,380
Left institution with no accommodation available	690	1,180	1,280	1,310
Required to leave accommodation provided by Home Office as asylum support	630	920	850	880
Other reasons / not known ⁶	15,830	13,970	13,910	14,710

Source: H-CLIC data

Table three: Prevention outcomes – all enquiries – pre-HRA

Prevention outcome	2016/17	2017/18
Homeless prevented 6 months	492	427
One off advice	571	639
Request withdrawn	56	37
Lost contact	151	145
Total	1,270	1,248

Source: MHCLG data

Table three shows that approximately half of households approaching the Council were assisted through the provision of one-off advice. This might be, for example, help with a Housing Benefit application, a query relating to a housing register application or signposting to other services. This early up-front help can be crucial to securing the best outcome in terms of homeless prevention, and evidences that the Council is willing to engage with all those seeking advice, as required by the HRA. In our experience this is a similar picture to many other local authorities, although it is difficult to evidence this as the data is not collected nationally.

Table four: Household type – all enquiries – Pre HRA

Household type	2016/17	2017/18
Single male	342	351
Single female	236	240
Couple/joint household	61	42
Single parent with children/pregnant	338	398
Couple with children/pregnant	66	81
Unknown	227	136
Total	1,270	1,248

Source: MHCLG data

It is helpful to also look at the types of household who are most in need of advice with housing issues. Table four above clearly demonstrates that nearly half are single people or couples without children and half families with children. There does not seem to be any type of household that was not able to access the housing service.

Table five: Prevention outcome – prevention achieved – pre-HRA

Successful prevention solution	2016/17	2017/18
Remain in existing home – financial advice and support	100	65
Remain in existing home – Sanctuary Scheme	57	77
Remain in existing home – other advice or support	32	20
Alternative accommodation – social housing	207	196
Alternative accommodation – private tenancy	40	32
Alternative accommodation – hostel, HMO or supported housing	52	35
Alternative accommodation – family or friends	4	2
Total	492	427

Source: MHCLG data

Table five shows that the greatest need during this period was for financial, debt and welfare benefits advice as nearly 20% of cases have been resolved through this solution. In addition, the high proportion of over 40% of clients accessing social housing demonstrates that the Allocations Policy is complementing the homeless prevention agenda. It may also reflect the availability of social housing, with much lower waiting times than in areas of higher housing pressure.

Table six: Total homeless application decisions – pre HRA

	2016/17	2017/18
Accepted full duty	38	37
Ineligible	0	0
Eligible but not homeless	12	14
Eligible, homeless but not in priority need	8	8
Eligible, homeless and in priority need but intentionally homeless	4	6
Total	62	65

Source: MHCLG data

Table six above shows the number of homeless ‘full duty’ decisions made across the two years before the HRA came into force. Although the Council would still have been working

to prevent homelessness, the prevention and relief duties were not in place. Table six shows cases where a statutory homelessness application was made, and the outcome.

Table seven: Cause of Homelessness – Accepted cases – pre-HRA

Cause of homelessness	2016/17	2017/18
Violent breakdown of relationship	21	19
Loss of Assured Shorthold tenancy	6	4
Eviction by family or friends	5	2
Harassment/other violence	2	4
Non-violent relationship breakdown	1	2
Other	3	6
Total	38	37

Source: MHCLG data

Table seven shows a slightly different picture to the reason for initial approach with domestic abuse the highest cause of homelessness in accepted cases. This reflects practice at the time which took a ‘victim centred’ approach of accepting a statutory homeless duty for almost all women going into the refuge. By definition, women in the refuge have already left their home and therefore prevention was not really considered as an option.

Table eight below shows the reason for priority need for cases accepted as homeless prior to the introduction of the HRA. The majority of cases accepted were families with children, as would be expected, as these come into an automatic priority need category. For households without dependent children who were deemed to be vulnerable, the most common reasons were as a result of violence or threats of violence and through having mental health issues or a learning disability.

Table eight: Priority need of accepted homeless cases pre-HRA

Priority need category	2016/17	2017/18
Dependent children	18	20
Pregnancy	1	1
Formerly in care 18-21	2	0
Physical disability	5	4
Mental Health/Learning disability	5	3
Violence/threats of violence	6	5
Emergency (fire, flood, etc)	1	0
Other	0	4
Total	38	37

Source: MHCLG data

Table nine below can be compared with table four above which shows household types for all enquiries. A smaller proportion of single men had a duty accepted when compared to single women. The largest single household type for both approaches and acceptances were single parents.

Table nine: Household type of accepted cases pre-HRA

Household type	2016/17	2017/18
Single male	6	6
Single female	11	10
Couple/other joint	3	0
Single parent with children/pregnant	16	21
Couple with children/pregnant	2	0
Total	38	37

Source: MHCLG data

Post-HRA H-CLIC data does not include the number of approaches resolved through one-off advice where there is no threat of homelessness within 56 days and therefore no prevention or relief duty. Table 10 below includes locally held data which shows the total

number of approaches to the service. This shows that the numbers approaching for advice remain at similar levels to previous years. This is in line with national data.

Table ten: All direct approaches to Council – post-HRA

Reason for approach	Total cases 2018/19	2018/19 Prevention or relief duty cases	2018/19 Not threatened with homelessness
Family/friend eviction	171	89	82
Affordability/debt/arrears	43	12	31
Domestic abuse	137	60	77
Ending of AST	134	59	75
Leaving institution or supported housing	52	19	33
Harassment/ASB	49	18	31
Repossession cases – approaching Council	13	6	7
Other	291	108	183
Total	890	371	519

Source: Data provided by R&CBC

Table ten above shows that of the 890 approaches to the Council for advice and support, 371 were assessed as owed a prevention or relief duty. This indicates that households are approaching the service at an early stage and cases are being resolved through early advice and assistance. The pattern is fairly consistent whatever the reason for approach. For example, 171 households approached for advice and support when facing being asked to leave by family or friends. Just under half of these were resolved without progressing to a formal assessment. 89 of these households required a formal assessment under the HRA. Note that these figures do not tally with H-CLIC data as they are based on date of approach.

These figures do not include those who were referred to the Sanctuary scheme.

Table Eleven - Referrals to Sanctuary Scheme and outcomes (2018/19)

Numbers referred to scheme	Number of properties given improved security (target hardened)
112	75

Source: data provided by R&C

The figures also exclude those initial referrals from mortgage lenders and registered providers for their clients/tenants for advice and support on repossession or eviction because of arrears.

Table Twelve – referrals from mortgage lenders and registered providers (2018/19)

Owner occupiers	Private sector tenants	Social housing tenants	Not known	Total
71	9	146	9	235

Source: data provided by R&C

Table thirteen below shows the outcomes for households owed a prevention duty. The numbers in Tables ten and thirteen do not match as some cases will not be resolved within the same financial year, therefore their outcomes will be carried forward into the figures for the following year.

Table thirteen: Reason for ending prevention duty – post-HRA (2018/19)

Reason for duty ending	No.	Percentage
Secured accommodation for six + months	90	77
Homeless (including intentionally homeless)	5	4
Contact lost	5	4
56 days elapsed and no further action	6	5
Withdrew application/applicant deceased	2	2
No longer eligible	7	6
Refused suitable accommodation offer	2	2
Total	117	

Source: H-CLIC data

For the vast majority of prevention cases dealt with by the authority, the outcome is to secure accommodation for more than six months through the efforts of the housing advice and information team, with a minority securing their own accommodation with or without financial assistance from the authority. Of the 90 housed, most went into social housing, with a smaller number going into the private rented sector. The remainder found accommodation with family or friends. This is a significant number of the initial number owed a duty (330) who have had their homelessness prevented through securing alternative accommodation.

Where homelessness cannot be prevented within 56 days, local authorities are then required to support the household through a relief duty. The total number of households who were owed a relief duty in 2018/19 was 182. During the relief stage, the authority is required to continue to seek prevention options for the client, but, at the end of the 56 days if they are still homeless. then a decision should be made whether to accept a full homeless duty. It is only at this stage that consideration should be given as to whether a household is in priority need.

For those 182 households where a relief duty was owed (where homelessness couldn't be prevented) and subsequently ended, the following outcomes are recorded.

Table fourteen: Reason for ending relief duty – post-HRA (2018/19)

Reason for relief duty ending	No.	percentage
Secured accommodation for six + months	113	80
56 days elapsed (and duty ended)	9	6
Contact lost	7	5
Withdrew application/applicant deceased	10	7
Refused final accommodation offer	1	1
Intentionally homeless from accommodation provided	1	1
Total	141	

Source: H-CLIC data

As with the prevention duty, the majority of relief cases are ended where accommodation has been secured. For most households this will be in social housing; a smaller number are accommodated in private rented housing. Again, a mix of practical and financial support has been provided by the authority in order to secure these positive outcomes.

Table fifteen: Provision of temporary accommodation – last three years (pre and post-HRA)

Type of TA	31/03/16	31/03/17	31/03/18	31/03/19
B&B (inc nightly paid)	0	1	8	7
Hostel	6	0	0	1
Registered Provider stock	0	7	6	1
Private Sector Leasing	6	9	8	2
Other	1	4	3	1
Total	13	20	23	12

Source: MHCLG, H-CLIC and local data; figures are a snapshot at year end

The numbers placed in temporary accommodation (TA) by the local authority are often indicative of the scale of the homelessness problem in a borough. The numbers shown are relatively low in comparison with other local authorities. Reducing the numbers following a high of 23 in March 2018 demonstrates effective prevention and management of TA. Although the figures do not yet reflect this, officers believe that the number of households going into TA is increasing; this is being monitored closely, as is the length of time that households are spending in TA.

Although B&B use has increased slightly in the last two years, the increase is not as significant as the figures suggest. B&B use is closely monitored, and numbers remain relatively low.

Table Sixteen: Support needs of those owed a prevention or relief duty (2018/19)

Support need	No.
History of mental health problems	108
Physical ill health and disability	58
At risk of/has experienced domestic abuse	70
Offending history	17
History of repeat homelessness	13
Drug dependency needs	24
History of rough sleeping	6
Alcohol dependency needs	11
Learning disability	14
Young person 18-25 requiring support to manage independently	20
Access to education, employment or training	7
At risk of/has experienced abuse (non-domestic abuse)	9
At risk or/has experienced sexual abuse	1
Old age	5
Care leaver	2
Young person 16-17 years	1
Young parent requiring support to manage independently	4
Former asylum-seeker	4
Served in HM forces	5
Total support needs	379

Source: H-CLIC data

The new reporting system records the support needs of people owed a prevention or relief duty. Of the 330 owed either a prevention or a relief duty, 223 households contained a

person who had an identified support need. Table sixteen above shows the total needs identified (N.B. Many people have more than one support need).

The overwhelming need is for support for mental health issues, followed by domestic abuse and physical ill health and disability. Young people are also presenting with support needs.

Closer analysis of the number of support needs shows that around 50% of households with a support need have only one need while a further 40% have two or three needs. A minority of 10% have four or five needs and present with extremely complex support needs which are proving harder to meet.

The loss of Supporting People funding has meant that there are fewer support services available to do 'early help' preventative work.

Rough sleepers

One of the indicators of acute housing need is rough sleeping. The number of people sleeping rough in Redcar and Cleveland is relatively low and those who are on the streets tend to be recent rough sleepers and not those who are more entrenched.

Table Seventeen: Rough sleepers

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20 (to Dec)
Number of rough sleepers*	7	8	17	21
Of which assisted into accommodation	5	5	11	11

Source: locally held data

**these are whole year figures i.e. during the whole year, X people were found to be rough sleeping.*

Note in Table Seventeen above, the number of rough sleepers shown is the total number found during the year, they are not a snapshot; the snapshot figure would be much lower. During each of the financial years 2016/17 to 2018/19, snapshot figures based on a desktop count show nobody sleeping rough. The Council is now carrying out bi-monthly actual counts in line with conditions for funding for Rough Sleeper initiative and Rapid Rehousing Pathway, secured by the North-East region. A count held in September 2019 found 1 person sleeping rough. The official annual count undertaken in November 2019 was verified by Homeless Link and found no-one sleeping rough.

Where a report is received that somebody is sleeping rough, officers will go out to verify the information and to offer support and reconnection options where appropriate.

In 2019/2020 the North East Region was successful in securing £1 581 958 of government funding from the Rough Sleeper Initiative and Rapid Rehousing Pathway. The aim of the

project is to reduce rough sleeping across the North East using a wide range of tools & interventions by:

- Supporting each local authority to implement initiatives to end rough sleeping
- Improve links and services to rough sleepers, especially for those leaving prisons and hospitals
- Enable those in unregulated hostels to access the correct support needed to sustain tenancies
- Strategic overview of rough sleeping in the North East
- Work with Key Partners across the North East

Interventions vary from across authorities, in order to build on existing provision but include the employment of 2 Rough Sleeper Coordinators to support Local Authorities, Housing First, Tenancy Sustainment, Somewhere Safe to Stay hubs, Outreach provision and dedicated Rough Sleeper Substance Misuse Workers.

Duty to refer

As noted above, the HRA legislation brought in a new Duty to Refer which requires prescribed public sector bodies to identify and refer on those who are homeless or considered to be at risk of homelessness. The prescribed bodies include prisons, probation service, care services (both adult and children’s) and emergency/urgent health care. The Duty to Refer opens up opportunities for more joint working, better communication and a more joined-up service for the client.

Table eighteen below shows the number of referrals made to Redcar and Cleveland housing advice and information team since the introduction of the HRA.

Table Eighteen: Duty to refer numbers

	2018/19	2019/20 YTD
Probation	26	27
Job Centre Plus	22	21
Prisons	15	26
NHS	9	14
Social Services	4	3
Total	76	91

Source: locally held data

The increase in numbers for the current year (all information for 2019/20 is to end November, if current levels of referral continue through to March then in total there will be over 120 approaches) is not untypical for local authorities across England and reflects the

bedding in of the new duty. The pattern of referrals is also consistent with what we have seen in other local authorities, although data for England as a whole is not yet available.

Table Nineteen: Duty to refer initial outcomes

	2018/19	2019/20 YTD
No engagement from client	60	29
Client engagement	14	40
No local connection	2	11
Awaiting response from client	0	11
Total	76	91

Source: locally held data

The high numbers of clients who failed to engage with the service in 2018/19 is also consistent with what we have seen elsewhere. The increase in engagement during 2019/20 may indicate an increased proportion of appropriate referrals as staff are now more familiar with the duty.

Table Twenty: Duty to refer – accommodation outcomes for those who engaged with service

	2018/19	2019/20 YTD
Secured private rented sector tenancy	3	2
Accommodated with family/friends	1	5
Secured social sector tenancy	9	1

Source: locally held data

Table twenty above shows the outcomes for those clients who did engage with the service and for whom an outcome was secured.

Choice-based lettings

The choice-based lettings scheme has recently been reviewed and each authority in the Tees Valley have approved the outcomes of the review. This is a Common Allocations Policy across the Tees Valley, ie, five Local Authorities (Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Stockton on Tees and R&C) and three RPs (Beyond, Home Group and North Star). Thirteen are currently members but have announced they will be leaving before April 2020. The scheme is based on bands.

Redcar and Cleveland and Beyond Housing (to whom the council housing was transferred years ago) use a quota system which increases the opportunities for those in lower bands to access social housing. As of October 2019, there were 2,861 households on the register in R&C, of which 1,998 have little or no housing need (band 4).

Table Twenty-one: Numbers on register by band (October 2019)

Current banding	Number of households
Band one+	0
Band one	289
Band two	367
Band three	207
Band four	1,998

Table twenty-one shows that the shortest waiting times are for those in the highest bands – a little over three months for Band one and around four months for Band two. This means that a move to social housing is a realistic prospect for many homeless households. Those for whom a duty has been accepted are given one reasonable offer, in line with legislation.

Table Twenty-two: Average number of days before tenancy commencement by band

Banding	Average number of days to tenancy commencement date
Band one	102 days
Band two	119 days
Band three	295 days
Band four	2,308 days

Source: locally held data

All homeless households will in future be placed in Band one, whether owed a full homelessness duty, or prevention or relief duty. Domestic abuse cases and those leaving armed forces will also be categorised as Band one. All other housing need is categorised as high, medium or low and banded accordingly (two, three, four).

Very few households in Redcar and Cleveland will be affected by the changes. One advantage of the amended policy is suspension of cases with lower levels of debt or mid-

level ASB, with clear reasons and clarity on steps to address. Previously, these cases could be ‘overlooked’ which led to confusion and a lack of clarity.

There will be new branding and a new website for the scheme (to be renamed Tees Valley Home Finder) from March 2020. There will be nomination rights to some Thirteen properties, and these will be advertised and let through CBL.

Geographic analysis

Table Twenty-three: Geographic analysis – numbers on register (1)

Sub-market area	No properties	No on register	No on register in Bands 1 – 3	Bands 1 – 3 as %age of those on register in that area	Band 1 – 3 as %age of properties in that area
Greater Eston North	11,749	670	186	28	1.6
Greater Eston South	6,165	273	88	32	1.4
Guisborough	8,774	244	64	26	0.7
Redcar	17,522	936	293	31	1.7
Marske/New Marske	5,487	138	29	21	0.5
Saltburn	3,263	101	28	27	0.8
Skelton/Brotton CP	6,001	221	58	26	1
Lockwood CP	1,669	67	18	27	1.1
Loftus CP	3,938	143	38	26	1
Out of borough		176	37	21	
Total	64,568	2,969	839		

Source: locally held data

Table twenty-three above looks at the number of households on the housing register by location. The nine areas shown above are the nine housing market sub-areas identified in the recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The first column of figures shows the number of properties in each area, and the second the number of current applicants on the housing register. The third column shows only those cases which are in Bands 1 to 3, as Band 4 cases generally have no recognised housing need. The fourth column of figures

shows the percentage of cases in that area falling in Bands 1 – 3. 32% of households on the housing register in Greater Eston South and 31% of households on the housing register in Redcar, for example, fall into Bands 1 – 3, while only 21% of cases in Maske/New Maske are in Bands 1 – 3. The final column shows the cases in Bands 1 – 3 in those areas as a percentage of all properties in that area. For example, 1.7% of households in Redcar and 1.6% of households in Greater Eston North are on the housing register with a recognised housing need, whereas only 0.5% of households in Maske/New Maske and 0.7% of households in Guisborough are on the register with a recognised housing need.

This may indicate higher levels of housing need in Redcar, and Greater Eston North and South, though it is only an indication. There may be households who would have a recognised housing need who don't come forward to register.

Table Twenty-four: Geographic analysis – number on register (2)

Sub-market area	No on register	No on register as %age of all those on register	No on register in Bands 1 – 3	No on register in Bands 1 – 3 as %age of all on register in Bands 1 - 3
Greater Eston North	670	22	186	22
Greater Eston South	273	9	88	10
Guisborough	244	8	64	7
Redcar	936	31	293	35
Marske/New Marske	138	5	29	3
Saltburn	101	3	28	3
Skelton/Brotton CP	221	7	58	7
Lockwood CP	67	2	18	2
Loftus CP	143	5	38	4
Out of borough	176	6	37	4
Total	2,969		839	

Source: locally held data, percentages may not sum due to rounding

Table twenty-four also looks at the geographic breakdown of the numbers on the register; this table shows the proportion of all cases from each area. It also shows the same

information for Band 1 – 3 cases. Almost a third of all applicants are currently living in Redcar; the proportion rises to over a third for those in Bands 1 – 3. 22% of applicants are currently living in Greater Eston North. Applicants from those two areas make up over half of the applications on the register, although it must be noted that the number of properties in those two areas make up almost half of the total properties in the Borough.

Table twenty-five below shows the geographic location of those approaching the service for advice and support around potential homelessness.

Table Twenty-five: Geographic analysis – approaches to homelessness prevention service

Sub-market area	No properties	No approaches	No approaches as %age all properties
Greater Eston North	11,749	135	1.15
Greater Eston South	6,165	44	0.7
Guisborough	8,774	62	0.7
Redcar	17,522	294	1.7
Marske/New Marske	5,487	28	0.5
Saltburn	3,263	22	0.7
Skelton/Brotton CP	6,001	46	0.8
Lockwood CP	1,669	10	0.6
Loftus CP	3,938	27	0.7
Out of borough		88	-
NFA/Sofa surfing		73	-
Total	64,568	829	-

This shows a similar pattern – the greatest percentage of approaches (number of approaches divided by the number of properties in the area) come from Redcar and from Greater Eston North. This may also reflect the location of advice services and organisations which will refer people on to the Council.

Audit of homelessness services

An audit of homelessness services was carried out by Tees Valley Audit and Assurance Services in 2019. The audit concluded that appropriate preparations had been made to enable the Council to respond to the HRA. In addition, the audit found a strong control

environment, and made only three minor recommendations to which the service has already responded.

6. Resources

The team currently consists of five FTE posts plus two fixed term FTE posts (the latter reflects short-term funding). The total salary budget is £262,293.

Redcar and Cleveland has received external funding, including:

- New burdens funding (implementation of HRA) – 18/19 and 19/20 £36,870 per year
- Flexible homelessness grant – 18/19 £51,429 and 19/20 £60,797
- Homelessness prevention grant – 19/20 £111,336.

Funding is mostly used to pay staff costs; in addition, £60,500 is used to fund prevention services:

- Mortgage Rescue and Advice Service – £30,000 per annum paid to Citizens Advice which funds a dedicated post three days per week. The service includes budgeting and money advice to those in housing difficulty who are not homeowners
- Sanctuary Scheme up to £45,000 per annum – of which staffing is £15,000 (0.5 post) plus cost of works
- CBL contribution £7,750 per annum

Additionally, there is a small prevention pot which homelessness prevention officers can access and use flexibly to prevent homelessness and secure alternative accommodation. This pot is also used to pay travel costs where a household is returning to an area with which they have a local connection; particularly for the reconnection of rough sleepers.

The regional funding secured for rough sleepers in 2019/20 is in addition to the resources outlined above.

7. Feedback from HAST

The Council invited HAST to make two recent visits, one of which focused on services for young people. HAST recognised significant strengths, particularly joint working, increased understanding, and ambition. They made useful comments about the development of the strategy, which have been taken onboard.

The HAST visit which focused on services for young people made a number of recommendations which will be incorporated into the new strategy, including:

- Greater promotion of duty to refer
- Increased prevention; clearer pathways for young people; update joint protocol

- Multi-agency panel for care leavers who are not yet in settled accommodation; this could identify those with high risk of homelessness. Ensure that housing services are seen as a key partner when looking at accommodation options.

8. Prevention measures in place

8.1 Customer access arrangements

- A lot of initial contact is by phone, though clients can also access face-to-face advice at Belmont House, Guisborough. Clients can also visit customer service points across the area, although customer services officers do not give housing advice, referring people on as necessary. From our limited observation of the service, the footfall would not appear to justify the level of training that would need to be given to customer services officers to enable them to give even fairly basic advice
- There is limited information available on the website for those customers able to self-serve. The service is planning to introduce more information (written and on-line) in the next six – twelve months.

Gaps to address in new strategy:

- More information available on-line for customers who are able to self-serve.

8.2 Triage

- A triage system is in place with Business Support Officers taking initial information. Core information required from the client is embedded into the IT system along with key questions to ask. Some cases can be dealt with at this stage but the majority are referred on to homelessness prevention officers. Triage helps to establish the urgency of the case
- Outcomes of interviews with homelessness prevention officers are confirmed in writing through the Personalised Housing Plan, detailing steps that the client will take and any steps that the Council will take
- All interviews are noted on the system, enabling any officer to pick up on any case if required
- Homelessness prevention officers are encouraged to work with the client and support them to make their own decisions and take responsibility for resolving their housing issues.

8.3 System and procedures

- The Council uses Jigsaw, a specialist case management system. There is some workflow embedded into the system. A recent audit report recommended development of written procedures to support some aspects of the work. This will be completed over the next few months.

Gaps to address in new strategy:

- Clearer pathways for customers with different needs incorporating more written procedures where needed.

8.4 Establishing type of tenure

- Homelessness prevention officers are trained in different types of tenancy and are familiar with the main tenancy types in use locally. Further training may be required if proposed legislative changes to assured shorthold tenancies are enacted.

8.5 Asked to leave family and friends/parental eviction

Currently, homelessness prevention officers will:

- Contact the parent/family member/friend to try to find out the reason for asking the client to leave
- Carry out a risk assessment under the Safeguarding Young People Policy (where appropriate)
- Work with the parent/family member/friend to try to persuade them to allow the client to stay
- Take steps to resolve any underlying issues such as debt or nuisance – this may include a referral to CAB and joint working with RPs/ASB team for nuisance/ASB cases
- Consider whether homeless prevention fund, Housing Benefit or other funding could make a difference
- Persuade them to allow them to stay temporarily, to enable a planned move
- Offer mediation where appropriate
- Refer to supported housing scheme if appropriate

There are a number of supported housing schemes and services for young people, including:

- Coatham House, which offers supported housing for 16 – 25 year olds

- The Junction offers support services for 16 – 25 year olds
- East Cleveland Youth Housing Trust offers accommodation and support towards employment for 16 – 25 year olds
- Nightstop offers overnight accommodation for those over 18 including those who have been rough sleeping

Gaps to address in new strategy:

- Although mediation is available on a spot purchase basis, there are few referrals, need to understand why this is and if changes need to be made to ensure it is effective
- With Children’s Services, explore options for expanding supported lodgings scheme and Staying Put scheme for young people who have been living with foster families

8.6 Domestic abuse

- A commissioned Sanctuary Scheme is in place and operating successfully to prevent homelessness for victims of domestic abuse (DA); this is run by Foundation
- There is a local purpose-built refuge and a specialist commissioned support service for victims of DA; this is run by Foundation
- DA navigators have been commissioned across the region with 1 post allocated to R&C to support households to access the services they need
- Social landlords are alert to DA and have policies and procedures to support victims; most have tenancy clauses which enable landlords to obtain possession where a perpetrator is left in the property, and will seek injunctions where appropriate
- Police will support action to tackle DA including using powers of arrest where injunctions are breached
- Homelessness prevention officers can advise on the range of legal solutions that might be available, although not all are completely confident in doing so
- The council actively participates in the local Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).

Gaps to address in new strategy:

- Review whether further training is needed on the range of potential legal solutions for tackling DA
- Review process of move-on from the refuge to support more planned moves and reduce need for a homelessness application.

8.7 Non-violent relationship breakdown

- Homelessness prevention officers offer advice tailored to the tenure and circumstances of the applicant.

8.8 Ending of an assured shorthold tenancy

Homelessness prevention officers will:

- Contact the landlord to try and find out the reason for ending the tenancy
- Work with the landlord to try to persuade them not to end the tenancy where this might be an option
- Check that the section 21 notice (also known as notice to quit) is valid
- Take steps to resolve any underlying issues such as debt or nuisance to try to prevent a need to move
- If the landlord insists on ending the tenancy, try to persuade them to allow the tenants to remain for longer, to enable a planned move
- Support applicants to find alternative accommodation, where appropriate
- Establish property condition and any outstanding repairs to routinely consider likelihood of a revenge eviction. Cases concerning disrepair are referred to housing standards officers to investigate.

8.9 Welfare benefits, debt and money advice

- All homelessness prevention officers are able to give basic advice on Housing Benefits (HB), including eligibility, and LHA rates
- Homelessness prevention officers have received training and updates on Universal Credit
- Discretionary hardship payment is used to prevent homelessness; although it is not administered by the homelessness prevention team referrals from the team are generally approved
- All staff can carry out basic income and expenditure checks and offer basic budgeting advice
- Staff refer those requiring more specialist advice to other agencies, including commissioned service with Citizen's Advice.

Gaps to address in new strategy:

- Explore whether better use can be made of Jigsaw (case management system) for income and expenditure checks

8.10 Homelessness Prevention Fund

There is a pot of money available for homelessness prevention, which can be used flexibly.

Financial assistance is only provided where it is clear that the customer has no access to funding through other routes, and the assistance will provide a successful and sustainable solution for at least six months.

Financial assistance can include, but is not limited to:

- Full or part-payment of deposit/rent in advance to secure accommodation
- Payment towards rent (or less commonly mortgage) arrears where this will prevent eviction
- Travel warrant to facilitate return to area where accommodation and/or support are available
- Replacing/accessing identification papers, eg, birth certificates, etc
- Furniture storage.

The prevention fund is used flexibly, and officers are encouraged to come up with solutions where they will make a difference. There is no maximum limit for individual customers, although obviously spend has to remain within the annual budget.

Gaps to address in new strategy:

- Ensure team meetings are used to explore trends in presentations as well as capturing and sharing learning on new ways of preventing homelessness.

8.11 Eviction from social housing

Currently there are relatively few evictions from social housing resulting in homelessness presentations. There is a pre-eviction protocol in place which is recognised by partner RPs as helpful. Relatively few RPs are operating fixed-term tenancy agreements.

Where the Council is informed of action to evict a tenant from social housing, homelessness prevention officers will:

- Make proactive contact with the tenant to spell out the consequences of being evicted

- Contact the landlord to find out the reason for ending the tenancy and work with the landlord to try to negotiate with them not to end the tenancy where this might be an option
- Take steps to resolve any underlying issues such as debt or nuisance and negotiate with the RP to allow the tenants to retain their tenancy or to assist in securing alternative accommodation to enable a planned move
- Where appropriate, refer to commissioned CAB service for advice on dealing with arrears and related matters

8.12 Leaving prison

There are relatively few approaches from those leaving prison. A small number of cases have come through the new Duty to Refer. This needs to be monitored so that a more proactive response can be put in place if required.

There is regional funding through MHCLG rough sleeper funding for a specialist post to undertake out-reach work with prisons.

8.13 Leaving armed forces

There are relatively few approaches from those leaving the armed forces. The Council asks a specific question at triage about service in the armed forces in order to ensure appropriate priority is given. The Common Allocations Policy also ensures appropriate priority and reflects statutory requirements over local connection criteria.

No recommendations are being made to strengthen this area of work, although the Council may wish to consider adopting the updated voluntary compact.

8.14 Leaving hospital

There are relatively few presentations from those who have recently been discharged from hospital. Officers have proactively visited local hospitals to raise awareness of the Duty to Refer and the need to provide as much notice as possible where suitable accommodation will need to be secured. Officers will attend hospitals to undertake individual assessments prior to discharge.

DFG funding is in place to enable the existing home to be adapted where this is an appropriate solution.

No recommendations are being made to strengthen this area of work, although the Council should continue to push for early notification where accommodation will be needed upon discharge, and to work jointly with Adult Care Services to find appropriate solutions.

8.15 Finding accommodation in the private rented sector

- There is a good supply of properties in the private rented sector. The council runs a deposit bond scheme (paper bond) and if required, may offer financial support towards rent in advance.

The Housing Strategy already commits the Council to working proactively with private landlords to enable a private sector that works for all, including a review of the existing free borough-wide Landlords Charter.

8.16 Accessing social housing

- There is a reasonable supply of social housing properties. Following a recent review of allocations, homelessness prevention cases and those owed the full statutory duty will be placed in the highest band, with an average wait time of around three months). All team members have an understanding of the local allocations policy and processes.

There are a number of services offered by voluntary sector organisations in addition to the above:

- Doorway provides support into employment for those aged over 18
- Lifeline offers harm reduction services to support those misusing drugs and alcohol
- Richmond Fellowship
- North Star Intensive Housing Management Scheme
- Homegroup supported housing

9. Feedback from consultation events

Consultation has been undertaken with a range of partner organisations and customers. A summary of feedback is provided below.

9.1 Registered Providers

Attended by representatives from Beyond Housing, Thirteen and North Star.

- Tenancy sustainment is an issue for all three organisations. Beyond have carried out a piece of work which measures sustainment for the first 12 months. While 75% do sustain, 25% don't
- All RPs carry out affordability assessments. It is recognised that in the past some people were excluded because of the outcome of the assessment, however RPs are now shifting towards using assessments to identify those households who may need support to manage their finances, rather than a reason to exclude
- RPs would like to encourage people to use the local Credit Union (Community Bank), but it is seen as very old-fashioned. It is not app-based which many younger people now expect

- The pre-eviction protocol used by Beyond helps, some people do engage once the Council has been in touch and explained likely outcomes if people are homeless. RPs have policies in place to try and prevent homelessness when relationships break down.

RPs would like to see:

- Clearer pathways for different household types/issues
- Higher level support available where needed
- More joint working, particularly to evaluate what works and share learning.

9.2 Voluntary and community sector

Organisations represented included Coatham House/Community Campus, ECYHT, EVA, RCDVA and Ethical Lettings. The views of local VCS organisations who met through the Social Inclusion and Employability group have been incorporated into both the review and the emerging strategy.

- Some of those attending had only recently started working in R&C and therefore had less knowledge of services on the ground, though did bring useful examples of what was working well elsewhere
- It was felt that the Council could make more of VCS, share data and get a shared understanding of what is happening. There was some discussion about sharing of data about individuals, whether data could be shared and how. Could PHPs be shared with VCS?
- There is currently no formal structure for sharing information; VCS organisations would like to see a homelessness forum reinstated
- It was noted that significant cuts in other services were having an impact on homelessness. For example, fewer social workers and probation staff meant it was more difficult for those leaving prison to get support
- There was a level of cynicism about the Council from some organisations, but there was also a lot of goodwill, with a feeling that the Council is showing an appetite to change and work differently and an energy to make things happen.

9.3 Employees

- Most employees felt that cases are getting more complex
- A lot of young people fail affordability checks, partly because of the way UC is paid
- Geography of area is quite challenging; people want to be in a particular location to access support from family/friends/existing networks

- Biggest gap is support for those with mental health issues
- Housing for under 35s is a particular challenge – very little in the way of shared housing.

9.4 Customer feedback

General

Information was gathered through short face-to-face interviews and through questionnaires:

- Most customers were very complimentary about the service, felt that customer services officers were very helpful and provided information quickly
- Waiting times were very short – no more than two or three minutes. Comments included ‘great experience, really helpful’ and ‘they’re always good here’
- Most felt they had been listened to and were clear on the immediate next steps but less clear about potential outcomes.

Care leavers

- Target, the service for Care Leavers, has dealt with 93 young people, 90 of whom are in appropriate accommodation. A homelessness prevention officer sits with the team one day a week; this is working well, and the two services are learning from each other
- They are moving to predict those likely to be at risk of homelessness, an example was given of a younger sibling whose older brother had become homeless
- All Care Leavers were happy with their current living situation and the majority were confident or very confident about living independently. Support needs identified by Care Leavers themselves included:
 - Sourcing furniture
 - Budgeting
 - Remaining in education/employment
 - Support to manage their emotions and mental health.

Women fleeing domestic violence

- All were complimentary about the refuge (building and support service)
- Most were happy with the services from the Council although most felt that it took too long to secure permanent accommodation

- Several were not very clear on how the CBL scheme operated
- There is a good working relationship between staff at the refuge and the Council. Having said this, a more proactive approach might help to increase the number of planned moves and reduce the numbers who come through the homelessness route.

10. Possible headlines for new strategy

Taking into consideration all the information gathered above, the possible headlines emerging for the new strategy are:

- Continue to work to prevent homelessness wherever possible, and to respond effectively to homeless households
- Work with partners to tackle underlying causes of homelessness, including sustainment of tenancies across private and social sectors
- Increase housing options for under 35s, including young people leaving care
- End rough sleeping
- Make best use of resources.

These will be taken forward in the new strategy, underpinned by a more detailed action plan.

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