

Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy

2024-2029 (Amended October 2026)

Melton Borough Council

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Introduction

The Melton Borough Council homelessness and rough sleeper strategy has been developed in partnership with our stakeholders based on data and their experiences.

The strategy informs of the current position and challenges for homelessness across the Borough, sets out the priorities and actions that together aim to prevent homelessness and reduce rough sleeping. Homelessness is not just a term for someone that is rough sleeping, but covers those that are in temporary accommodation, are at risk of losing their home, are in unsuitable accommodation or cannot afford to remain in their current home.

This plan will be delivered during a period of uncertainty and change, with the region progressing through Local Government Reorganisation and transitioning to new unitary authorities and geographical footprints. Actions and delivery areas have therefore been prioritised with this in mind, and the plan is deliberately practical and selective.

As the term homelessness covers a wider range of factors and many are caused by no fault of their own, tackling rough sleeping and preventing homelessness is a challenge for all local authorities. Many of those that are rough sleeping or homeless are vulnerable and have underlying root causes such as mental health issues, complex needs and substance misuse, all of which need to be considered when planning to accommodate their needs.

Adding to this is the impact of many economic and social factors including availability of accommodation, cost of living, housing affordability and individual circumstances which change over time. Whilst this is the strategy for the Melton borough it also recognises the challenges faced in Leicestershire and nationally. To address these, we recognise the need to work collaboratively with stakeholders and partner authorities.

Homelessness is not just about the provision of accommodation but is caused by many other factors, so partnership working is key to responding to these challenges. Government policy focuses on the prevention of homelessness and increasing funding available to tackle homelessness. It drives and enables services to be more proactive rather than reactive at the point of homeless crisis.

The rise in the cost of living is now presenting new difficulties, especially around sustainment and availability of accommodation. The council recognises the need to continue to work together to maximise the impact of limited resources.

This strategy aims to tackle these issues in a practical and effective way, recognising our roles and opportunities in working together. We believe this strategy demonstrates that we are committed to the Government's vision that homelessness should be rare, brief and non-recurring.

Developing the Strategy

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires that all Local Authorities carry out a review of homelessness in their areas, formulate and publish a strategy based on the findings of this review, keep the strategy under review and consult with other local or public authorities and voluntary organisations before modifying or adopting a strategy.

The strategy should:

- Assess the levels of homelessness now, and the factors likely to impact on future levels of homelessness.
- Ensure that there is sufficient accommodation available for people who are, or may become, homeless.
- Provide services that help to prevent people becoming homeless.

- Ensure that through effective partnerships, support services can be accessed for those people who are, or who may become, homeless – or to prevent them from becoming homeless again.
- Promote a cultural change so that homelessness is viewed in a wider context than just a lack of accommodation.

This strategy has been formulated following our strategy review, but with particular emphasis on the consultation with stakeholders. A shared consultation event collated vital feedback, which will enable this strategy to meet the aims of the borough.

This strategy will be supported by a more detailed action plan that can evolve should new pressures arise. To allow a collective and robust approach to homelessness, this strategy incorporates the council's Rough Sleeper Strategy.

Legal Framework

Homelessness cannot be tackled in isolation. This is shown in key legislation:

- **Housing Act 1996 (as amended) Part 7**
  The overarching piece of legislation used by councils in determining the way in which they respond to homelessness. The Act has been amended by:
- **The Homelessness Act 2002**
  Included notable changes in the way Councils use temporary accommodation, with greater emphasis on the role of prevention.
- **The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017**
  Brought new legal duties to Councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to support, irrespective of their priority need status, if they are eligible for assistance.
- **The Domestic Abuse Act 2021**
  Introduced to address the needs of people experiencing domestic abuse, the act imposes a duty on local authorities to provide support in safe accommodation.
- **The Care Act 2014**
  Sets out a wider framework with the expectation that agencies would work together to protect children, young adults and people with care and support needs
- **The Armed Forces Bill 2021**
  Places a new Duty of Due Regard on statutory authorities to recognise the Armed Forces Covenant in their policies as well as the delivery of front-line services.
- **Children's Wellbeing and Schools legislation**
  The Children's Wellbeing and Schools legislation introduces important changes for children's social care, safeguarding, education and support for care leavers. The strategy will need to reflect strengthened expectations around corporate parenting, improved support for care leavers to secure suitable accommodation and access services, closer multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, and the role of education settings in identifying and responding to risk. These changes reinforce the need for housing, children's services, schools, health, youth justice and voluntary sector partners to work together to prevent youth homelessness and improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

Melton's current picture and challenges

Melton's current homelessness picture has changed significantly since the strategy was first developed. The legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic remains important, particularly in the way services work with residents at an earlier stage and through more integrated community support. The Community Support Hub continues to provide a key point of contact for residents who may be at risk of homelessness, hardship, debt, poor health, domestic abuse, social isolation or other pressures that can make housing less secure.

Homelessness in Melton is increasingly linked to wider cost-of-living, affordability and housing supply pressures. The most common cause of homelessness remains the loss of private rented accommodation, often because a landlord has decided to sell or leave the market and the household is unable to secure another affordable private rented home. This means some residents who are working, or who previously would have resolved their own housing situation, now require advice, prevention support or temporary accommodation.

The local housing register and social housing supply are under sustained pressure. The 2022 housing allocations policy changes helped ensure that households with the greatest housing and homelessness need are prioritised, but the register can no longer be relied upon as a quick route into settled accommodation. Limited social housing turnover, rising private rents, mortgage pressures, fuel poverty and wider household financial pressures mean that prevention work, realistic housing advice and planned move-on options are increasingly important.

Temporary accommodation demand and cost have become a more significant challenge. The council has seen increased reliance on non-MBC temporary accommodation, including bed and breakfast and nightly paid accommodation, at the same time as local supply has reduced. Recent scrutiny of homelessness and temporary accommodation pressures highlighted that spend on non-MBC temporary accommodation was £241,668.00 in 2025/26 reflecting reduced council-owned temporary accommodation, limited supported accommodation and a shortage of available homes in the borough.

These pressures mean that prevention must remain the main focus of the strategy. Residents do not always understand the homelessness process or the limits of what can be achieved at the end of the statutory prevention period. Clear communication, early engagement with landlords, practical help to sustain existing accommodation, realistic advice about housing options and stronger support for people in temporary accommodation are therefore essential.

Melton remains part of the countywide Rough Sleeper Initiative led by North West Leicestershire, which has improved the range of services available to people sleeping rough and strengthened the shared understanding of local need. Rough sleeping numbers in Melton remain low compared with larger areas, but the impact on individuals is significant and the position can change quickly where housing options, support or move-on accommodation are limited. The council will therefore continue to work across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland on rough sleeping, prison release, hospital discharge, leaving care, domestic abuse and other multi-agency pathways.

The council's resettlement function remains an important part of the Communities Directorate, helping households arriving through government resettlement and humanitarian schemes to settle in a planned way. This work has expanded the council's support offer and housing portfolio, but it also needs to be balanced alongside wider local housing pressures so that resettlement, homelessness prevention and community support are coordinated.

Overall, Melton's challenges are consistent with national and countywide trends, but they have specific local impacts because of the size of the borough, the limited supply of affordable and supported accommodation, and the importance of keeping residents close to local employment, schools, support networks and services. The strategy therefore needs to remain flexible, evidence-led and focused on preventing homelessness earlier, increasing suitable accommodation options, reducing reliance on expensive emergency accommodation and improving outcomes for households with complex or multiple needs.

Rough sleeping

The Homelessness Code of Guidance sets out that "in districts where there is evidence that people are sleeping rough, the homelessness strategy should include objectives to work toward eliminating rough sleeping."

The number of rough sleepers is always fluctuating and cannot be predicted accurately due to the nature of homelessness and the variety of causes. Melton typically doesn't have a huge number of rough sleepers with the average being 3 recorded every year for the last 4 years. In 2023 a

0 count was recorded. However we recognise that we need to work with other districts across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland to reduce rough sleeping to reduce any potential impact this may have on our borough. If options are reduced for people, then rough sleeping numbers will increase and so it is important this remains a key priority in our strategy and why it has a dedicated section.

The issue no matter how small needs to be addressed, and Leicestershire has tackled this head on with a rough sleeper initiative which operates across the county.

As part of the rough sleeping initiative funding, we are required to develop an annual ending rough sleeping plan through co-production with our rough sleeping advisor and we will continue to do this however there are several key actions that interrelate with the wider objective of this strategy.

We have adopted a definition of ending rough sleeping in keeping with the DLUHC publication "Ending Rough Sleeping for Good." Our end goal is for rough sleeping to be prevented wherever possible but when it does occur, it must be rare, brief and non-recurring. Achieving this is the final priority of this strategy.

Affordability

The council has seen an increase in numbers to the household support fund which has helped households access money for energy bills and food. This is where there has been a shortfall in their household income to manage and pay for the essentials. Rents and mortgages have risen and proposed changes in legislation – The Renters Reform Bill has started to see landlords leave the housing market putting tenants at risk.

Budgets and use of expensive emergency accommodation

The use of this form of accommodation is because of households approaching the council in a crisis. This places more demand on the service in terms of finance and resource. It is for this reason we need to ensure we concentrate on prevention. The Homeless Reduction Act 2017 put a focus on early intervention and introduced a requirement for statutory partners to refer people for assistance.

This change has brought closer working with public agencies and has meant that homelessness has been brought to everyone's agenda to come together to resolve it.

Leicestershire has created several protocols to ensure they work together for groups of people. The prison leaver, young people and care leavers protocols demonstrate the willingness to work together. Whilst the focus remains on preventing homelessness, there are instances where it cannot be prevented, and a crisis arises. An assessment would then take place to access appropriate accommodation and support.

Strategic Context

The council is actively involved with other Leicestershire districts and Leicestershire County Council as well as other housing and support providers to ensure we can plan and prevent homelessness. A new corporate strategy was agreed in 2024 with a 4-year corporate delivery plan which underpins and supports the long-term vision statements. Our Helping People priorities of:

"Healthy communities and neighbourhoods" and "High quality council homes and landlord services" mean this homeless strategy is directly linked to helping achieve the wider aims of the council.

In 2022 the Council also established a Communities Directorate. The Communities Directorate has brought together the Community Support hub, resettlement function, community safety, housing register and homelessness and enabling and empowering communities, healthy and active communities to deliver an integrated people offer to ensure teams are not working in isolation but working together.

Melton is unable to resolve homelessness and the issues causing it on its own. This is why we are joined up with other county and district colleagues in various protocols to simplify the way we deal with our customers and to prevent homelessness where possible. Our partnership approach is discussed in Partnerships.

During the life of this strategy, the council will also need to respond to Local Government Reorganisation across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Government has confirmed its intention to replace the current two-tier arrangements with new unitary councils from April 2028. As these arrangements develop, the council will work with partners to protect service continuity, maintain clear homelessness prevention pathways, and ensure that local knowledge, relationships and accountability for residents in Melton are retained through any transition.

Meeting the Needs of Particular Groups

Section 179 of the Housing Act 1996 set out an obligation on the local housing authority to provide advice around homelessness to people in the district.

Section 179(2) sets out particular groups the service must be designed to meet the needs of:

a. people released from prison or youth detention accommodation.
b. care leavers.
c. former members of the regular armed forces.
d. victims of domestic abuse.
e. people leaving hospital.
f. people suffering from a mental illness or impairment.

We should consider any other group identified as being particularly at risk of homelessness in the district.

When developing the evidence base for this homeless strategy we have specifically looked at each key group to determine what the demand is and what existing service provision looks like. Our consultation work has then identified any gaps in provision and opportunities to improve support which we have then sought to include as potential actions under our identified priorities.

People Released from prison or youth detention accommodation

Only 1% of homeless cases in Melton are identified as homeless due to leaving custody. However, there are significantly more who have an offending history, but this may not be their primary reason for approaching the council. This could suggest that the impact of offending goes far beyond the initial homelessness that occurs for some on release from prison.

Most referrals that are received through the duty to refer, a statutory requirement for certain agencies to refer homeless households to the local authority are for those within the criminal justice system.

What we are currently doing

Melton Borough Council currently takes a sub-regional approach to those released from prison and youth detention being a signatory to a protocol shared with the City Council, the other Leicestershire districts and Rutland.

The protocol has been reviewed and one of the emerging issues is the fact that because of the structure of the criminal justice system, prisoners may be released from several prisons and courts across the region.

We are involved in fortnightly prison release meetings to identify those due for release and the options and pathways available to them.

What we need to do

Look at improving reporting methods and identifying secondary reasons for homelessness.

It was also identified that ensuring that prisoners can access the right advice and services in a timely manner whilst still within prison was key to positive outcomes.

Care Leavers

Only 1% of applications are identified as having support needs as having been in care (within the age group 18-20) and a smaller proportion again as older care leavers. The County Council are subject to the duty to refer in terms of children leaving their care. On average we received 2 referrals a year. As Melton takes a proactive approach to supporting care leavers access accommodation before their care placement ends, we can keep the number of homeless cases low.

What we are currently doing

The Leicestershire Districts work closely with the County Council leaving care team to ensure positive pathways for young people leaving care in the County.

As well as reviewing and updating a county wide leaving care protocol, we are also working with Children's social care to understand current accommodation options and how we can jointly better meet needs and enable a more appropriate set of transition options. This will be consistent with our district, borough and county colleagues across Leicestershire. The Children's Wellbeing and Schools legislation strengthens the focus on care leaver support, including expectations around local offers, Staying Close-style support, transition to adulthood and suitable accommodation. Melton will therefore continue to work closely with Leicestershire County Council and partners to ensure care leavers receive earlier housing advice, planned move-on support and access to wider wellbeing, education, employment and health services.

What we need to do

Whilst wherever possible we work jointly to ensure young people transition into settled accommodation in a controlled way there are occasions where this does not happen. Also, several people leaving care will not settle effectively in their accommodation and require further assistance after moving into independence. Anecdotally people who have been in the care system are particularly prone to repeat instances of homelessness within a relatively short period of time.

In light of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools changes, the action plan should include a specific review of the care leaver pathway which is ongoing, including early identification of housing risk, joint planning before a young person leaves care, access to suitable accommodation, tenancy sustainment support, links with education and employment, and escalation routes where accommodation or support arrangements are at risk of breaking down.

Former members of the regular armed forces

The Melton Borough has 2 MoD estates within the district. The council was awarded the gold standard for Armed Forces Covenant reinforcing our strong support to veterans who approach us for support. We have champions in our staffing and elected member structure who signpost any potential cases of homelessness to the right team.

Less than 0.5% of cases are because of leaving HM Forces but again, we recognise there are more cases unidentified that have support needs because of leaving HM Forces.

What we are currently doing

As a council we have signed up to the armed forces covenant. We have also framed our allocations policy to offer additional preference to former members of the armed forces. Our armed forces champions amongst our officers and members mean that this vulnerable group have multiple routes into services to access support when needed.

What we need to do

The support available to veterans and agencies working in the district has changed in recent years and we need to ensure all frontline staff are aware of the current offer.

Furthermore, we have incorporated “serving members of the armed forces and veterans as an additional consideration through “other socially excluded groups” within our Equality Impact Assessments.

To understand the wider offer within the community for veterans and work with this to expand our support offer.

Victims of domestic abuse

Around 9% of cases approached where domestic abuse is the cause of homelessness.

What we are currently doing

We have identified the advantages of taking a pro-active multi-agency approach to supporting victims of domestic abuse. The council undertook a self-audit exercise and has implemented a domestic abuse policy for tenants and residents as well as staff. All front-line officers are trained on how to recognise and respond to disclosures of domestic abuse.

Changes to legislation, in particular the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 have widened the responsibilities toward victims of domestic abuse. It is a particular challenge then to ensure we are working effectively with other statutory partners as well as the voluntary sector to ensure that our response is suitable, sustainable and sensitive.

Work to develop a multi-agency pathway for victims of domestic abuse to ensure a clear and consistent offer to those seeking support. Because several key partners work across the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) area and because on occasions those fleeing domestic abuse will want to move away from their existing localities for safety reasons this work is being carried out at a sub-regional level. This will need take account the work around Local Government Re-organisation.

What we need to do

Continue to be involved in in the process of commissioning additional accommodation services, and we will work with them to support the delivery of those services.

People leaving hospital

Available Evidence

Whilst most people leaving hospital will have safe and secure accommodation to return to, a small number will have lost accommodation because of their medical situation or no longer have a home to return to which is suitable to their needs.

A lack of suitable accommodation to discharge into, to continue recovery, is a significant drain on health resources and so effective joint working is key to making the best use of scarce resources across the public sector. Less than 1% of cases approaching as homeless are recorded as homeless due to leaving hospital.

What we are currently doing

We are part of a sub-regional partnership with our local authority peers and the local NHS services to provide pro-active support to patients who face barriers to discharge from hospital (Lightbulb).

The service provides both practical support to allow those with accommodation to return home as well as assistance with accessing alternative housing options where this is not an option.

What we need to do

Continuing to work to identify the advantages that having appropriate step-down accommodation for people leaving hospital would make and the importance of having appropriately trained staff within housing teams.

People suffering from a mental illness or impairment

People with a mental health illness or impairment is the biggest support need of people approaching as homeless in Melton. Anecdotally this group is the one that have the greatest difficulty securing, and maintaining appropriate accommodation whether that be emergency placements, short term supported accommodation or longer-term housing options.

They are also disproportionately represented within the rough sleeping community group that are the most excluded from many services.

What we are currently doing

As part of a collaboration with Leicestershire Partnership Trust, Melton Borough Council have a Senior Mental Health neighbourhood Lead focused on bringing together an integrated mental health offer that meets the needs of residents in Melton

The council have agreed a Community Health and Wellbeing Plan which aligns and contributes directly to the delivery of the Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The establishment of a Community Health and Wellbeing Board (previously Helping People Partnership Board) is responsible for monitoring progress against the aims & priorities specified within the Community Health & Wellbeing Plan.

What we need to do

The overwhelming feedback from consultation was the need for more specialist accommodation for this client group. This mirrors the conclusion of other work within the County.

Other Groups

The Act encourages us to consider whether there are other groups within the locality who would benefit from a focussed homelessness response. During our consultation, we have identified that although the numbers are low for Melton, those settling in Melton through the Government's VPRS/Refugee schemes may face a disproportionate impact in integrating and accessing community services.

We have also identified that groups with multiple needs find it particularly difficult to secure appropriate services to meet their complex needs.

Supporting those with complex needs

As part of the homeless assessment, officers must identify both the accommodation needs of the household but also any support needs.

Recorded cases with more than one identified support need may be low but they require intensive resource to achieve a positive outcome. The resource needed is disproportionate to those with 1 support need identified. It is also those with multiple support needs that are at a higher risk of repeat homelessness and often require a disproportionate amount of resource to secure positive outcomes.

The Rough Sleeping Initiative has introduced the concept of the Target Priority Group. This involves an assessment to identify those individuals at particular risk of rough sleeping and with additional needs. We are then encouraged to monitor the housing situation of these clients and identify when they are at risk of further homelessness.

The council currently operates a multi-agency meeting called “Adults at Risk” for those with complex needs that require intensive support. It is here where we can hope to look at different approaches and reach out to our partner agencies to share information and produce successful outcomes for our client group.

Melton is now part of a programme called “Complex Needs Accommodation Board” with health and colleagues in adult social care. Individuals with complex needs whose accommodation needs are not being effectively met can be escalated to a panel of senior staff to unblock barriers and seek creative solutions. We will continue to support this programme and use the learning to improve services more widely.

As a result of the challenges those with multiple needs face, we have included a priority in this strategy to better meet the needs of this group.

Partnerships

Homelessness cannot be resolved by one organisation. The causes and complexities of the issue need active partnership working. There are several issues such as health or domestic abuse which require specialist agencies and knowledge, so it is imperative the council continues to work hard to maintain a multi-agency approach. Preventing homelessness is also not a “one size fits all” and different approaches are required for preventing incidents of first time homelessness but also preventing incidents of recurring homelessness.

District Councils along with County Council, Housing Providers, Probation service, voluntary sector and health professionals work together across homelessness. Many partnerships underpin this wider network which ensures we have a robust approach to tackling the challenges Melton faces together. Melton Borough Council has a team of mentors to assist our residents in helping themselves through support and signposting to more specialist services should it be required. With our community support hub, the council can link into and work together with many different agencies. The agencies within the hub offer support and assist people to engage with many different needs which include domestic abuse, access to employment and education, mental health, drug and alcohol treatment. Within the Community Health & Wellbeing Plan, there is also a priority to integrate the Community Support Hub services more effectively with the local primary care networks.

The Children’s Wellbeing and Schools changes also place greater emphasis on corporate parenting and multi-agency safeguarding. This means the council will strengthen links between homelessness services, children’s social care, schools, further education, youth services, health, police, probation and voluntary sector partners so that housing risk is identified earlier for children, young people and families. Particular attention will be given to care leavers, 16 and 17 year olds, young people not in education, employment or training, children not in school, families affected by poverty or domestic abuse, and young people with additional needs.

Support

The Community Support Hub offers support services to residents of Melton. To those most vulnerable in our community, who face multiple barriers. The hub has also launched the Rural

Food Hub network which aims to support residents living in our rural areas with emergency food and other essential items. All partners are listed in Appendix A

Voluntary and Community Sector

The council actively works with our partners in the voluntary and community sectors to align services and signpost accordingly. The council are linked into several forums which have multi agency attendance. These are strategic, operational and/or task focused groups. A representative from housing options is linked into these groups.

Protocols

Over the last 5 years, Melton Borough Council has worked with partners to create and embed protocols. This is aimed at linking agencies together and working proactively to prevent homelessness for our most vulnerable groups. The protocols are currently designed at the following groups:

- 16/17 leaving social care
- Homeless Care Leavers post 18
- People homeless in severe weather emergencies
- Prison leavers

The Future – Priorities and Actions

Looking forward our aim is that homelessness should be rare, brief and non-recurring. There are many challenges which will affect this strategy. This includes changes in government policy and the constant changes in the social and economic landscape. This strategy sets out our 5 areas which will allow us to deliver our aims and objectives for prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping over the next 3 years.

Preventing and reducing homelessness

Preventing and reducing homelessness and rough sleeping is a difficult issue to address due to the many factors that can cause people to become homeless. Every individual has different circumstances and needs which prevents a one size fits all approach and it could take a period to understand a person's circumstances to assist them in the right way. Predictability of homelessness is also an issue as numbers fluctuate but do not follow any trends due to the main factors that contribute to someone becoming homeless.

Priority One: To reduce demand for emergency homeless action through proactive support

To achieve more sustained outcomes for people approaching the council as homeless we need to be more proactive earlier and focus on prevention. We need to keep people in their homes where possible making long term housing more attainable. Where this isn't possible, we need to be assisting people to move in a planned way so they can move into their best possible home to meet their needs.

We need to:

- Ensure that the homeless service provided by MBC is fit for purpose.

- Adopt a commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all council services and with wider stakeholders including landlords (social and private), criminal justice agencies, police and health services.
- Develop a communications plan for private landlords and letting agents to keep them informed of the support the council can offer for tenants that may be having difficulty.
- Work closer with our community services to improve advice and support.

Priority Two: Increase the number of positive outcomes for homeless households

We are seeing an increasing number of households where there are no appropriate options for them. Closure to supported accommodation projects in the county, changes to housing benefit entitlement and an unaffordable private rented sector have made it difficult for people to obtain accommodation. We are also finding that pressures on supported accommodation in the borough mean more issues and emergency situations for the providers. We aim to:

- Actively pursue any opportunities to work proactively with the private sector.
- Explore the use of supported accommodation available to Melton residents and work with the providers to ensure it meets the needs
- Explore a regional approach to prison release protocols and pre-release assessments
- Develop multi-agency sub-regional approach to domestic abuse
- Identify pathways into appropriate support for veterans in relation to issues such as PTSD
- Explore options for care leavers, those released from hospital, ex-offenders which negates the need for emergency temporary accommodation.

- Reflect the Children's Wellbeing and Schools changes by strengthening the care leaver housing pathway, improving links with education and children's services, and ensuring corporate parenting responsibilities are considered in homelessness prevention and move-on planning.

Priority Three: Reduce the need for expensive nightly paid emergency accommodation

Whilst we have reduced the spend on nightly paid accommodation in the last 2 years, the use

of bed and breakfast accommodation is expensive and takes resource and finance away from other homeless resources. Emergency accommodation can often take people away from their employment, schools, support which can have a detrimental impact on a person/family's mental and physical well-being. Emergency accommodation should be for as short a time as possible and should be a time used to move people forward in a positive manner. We aim to:

- Undertake an exercise to establish the best use of emergency accommodation in the Melton area
- Explore emergency accommodation options which are best value for money for the council and residents of Melton
- Introduce a formal support offer for those people who are in emergency accommodation.

Priority Four: Better meeting the needs of those with complex needs

Resolving homelessness for people with complex needs cannot be resolved by the council alone. Achieving positive outcomes for this group of people can have additional successes in the neighbourhood and community if done correctly. This group will have the highest number of repeat approaches and it's important we take every opportunity to resolve the difficulties our customers face.

We aim to

- Consistently monitor and evaluate the demand to all our council services and explore opportunities for positive engagement for people with complex needs
- Work with Leicestershire County Council to help roll out a homeless mental health service in the district
- Agree a definition of “complex cases” and ensuring cases and individuals are identified and outcomes monitored.

Priority Five: End Rough Sleeping

No one should have to suffer living a life deprived of shelter, warmth and basic necessities. Although rough sleeping numbers in the borough are low the impact on the individuals is high. Tackling rough sleeping requires a dedicated and thoughtful response to engage and support people with often complex reasons for ending up sleeping rough. We aim to:

- Work with our Leicestershire district and Leicester City colleagues to explore opportunities.
- Work with providers of supported accommodation in Melton to increase the support available to rough sleepers.
- Promote the street link service through internal and external teams so that the public can effectively report potential rough sleepers.

Alignment with the Local Plan to End Homelessness Performance and Accountability

This strategy will be delivered in line with the national expectations set out in the Local Plan to End Homelessness performance and accountability toolkit. This means strengthening the link between the homelessness strategy, the supporting action plan, local governance arrangements and measurable outcomes so that progress can be understood, scrutinised and improved over time.

The existing priorities remain the right strategic framework for Melton: prevention, positive housing outcomes, reduced reliance on expensive emergency accommodation, better support for people with complex needs, and ending rough sleeping. The action plan will now be realigned so that each priority has clear measures, accountable leads, delivery milestones and review points.

Strategy priority	Local performance focus	Accountability approach
Prevent and reduce homelessness	Increase early help, prevention activity and successful prevention outcomes before crisis point.	Monitor prevention activity through the homelessness action plan and report progress through agreed council and partnership governance.
Increase positive outcomes for homeless households	Improve access to suitable accommodation, support and planned move-on options for households at risk of homelessness.	Assign named service and partner leads for each pathway, including care leavers, prison leavers, domestic abuse, hospital discharge and veterans.
Reduce reliance on expensive emergency accommodation	Reduce use and duration of nightly paid and bed and breakfast accommodation through earlier intervention and planned accommodation options.	Review temporary accommodation demand, cost, suitability and move-on activity through regular operational and strategic reporting.

Strategy priority	Local performance focus	Accountability approach
Better meet the needs of people with complex needs	Improve identification, multi-agency case coordination and sustained outcomes for people with multiple and overlapping needs.	Use Adults at Risk, the Complex Needs Accommodation Board and relevant health and social care partnerships to unblock barriers and monitor outcomes.
End rough sleeping	Ensure rough sleeping is rare, brief and non-recurring, with a focus on prevention, rapid response and sustained accommodation.	Align local delivery with the annual ending rough sleeping plan, countywide Rough Sleeper Initiative arrangements and any future partnership plan requirements.

Alignment with A National Plan to End Homelessness

Melton's five priorities will be delivered in line with *A National Plan to End Homelessness* and the accompanying local performance and accountability toolkit. The national plan requires local areas to shift from crisis response to prevention, publish a clear action plan alongside the homelessness strategy, set local targets that support the national outcomes framework, strengthen partnership accountability, reduce the use of unsuitable temporary accommodation, eliminate inappropriate bed and breakfast use for families, prevent people leaving public institutions into homelessness, involve people with lived experience, and maintain a clear focus on making homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring.

National Plan requirement	Melton response	Action plan requirement
Shift from crisis response to prevention	Priority One focuses on earlier advice, proactive support, landlord engagement and stronger links with the Community Support Hub and partners.	Include targets for prevention, relief, repeat approaches, landlord engagement, successful sustainment and planned moves before crisis point.
Local plan, targets and accountability	The strategy will be supported by a refreshed action plan with clear governance through council and partnership arrangements.	Set baselines, trajectories, named accountable leads, milestones, reporting frequency, risks and escalation routes for each priority.
Eliminate inappropriate bed and breakfast use for families	Priority Three addresses rising temporary accommodation demand, cost and suitability, including reliance on nightly paid and bed and breakfast accommodation.	Develop a local temporary accommodation and B&B reduction plan covering supply, suitability, length of stay, move-on, cost control and support for families.
Prevent homelessness for people leaving public institutions	Priority Two and the particular groups section cover prison leavers, care leavers, hospital discharge, young people, domestic abuse, veterans and people with support needs.	Refresh protocols with partners, monitor duty to refer activity, improve pre-release and pre-discharge planning, and reduce crisis presentations from institutional pathways.
Halve long-term rough sleeping and make	Priority Five retains ending rough sleeping as a core priority and links	Include outreach, rapid response, severe weather arrangements,

National Plan requirement	Melton response	Action plan requirement
rough sleeping rare, brief and non-recurring	Melton to the countywide Rough Sleeper Initiative and annual ending rough sleeping planning.	StreetLink promotion, sustained accommodation, move-on support and monitoring of repeat rough sleeping.
Lived experience, evidence and continuous improvement	The strategy is evidence-led and partnership-based, but delivery should be strengthened through feedback from residents with lived experience of homelessness and temporary accommodation.	Build lived experience feedback, complaints learning, case reviews, equality impacts and performance data into annual review and scrutiny arrangements.

The main strengthening points for the action plan are therefore to convert each priority into a delivery plan with clear baselines, measurable targets, accountable leads, milestones and reporting arrangements. This should include a local B&B and temporary accommodation reduction plan, a long-term rough sleeping partnership plan, refreshed pathways for people leaving public institutions, and a stronger evidence and lived experience feedback loop. This will demonstrate that Melton's local priorities are consistent with the national plan and capable of being monitored, challenged and adapted as pressures change.

Action plan realignment

The supporting action plan will be reviewed and updated so that it meets the requirements of the National Plan to End Homelessness and the local performance and accountability toolkit. It will include clear baseline information; measurable targets aligned to the national outcomes framework; delivery milestones; named responsible officers or partner leads; resource implications; risks and mitigations; equality and lived experience considerations; and the reporting route for each action. This will help ensure that delivery is transparent, proportionate and focused on outcomes for residents.

Where performance indicates that homelessness pressures are increasing, actions are not progressing, or outcomes are not improving, the council will use its governance arrangements to identify barriers, agree remedial action and escalate issues to the appropriate partnership or decision-making forum.

The realigned action plan will also reflect the Children's Wellbeing and Schools changes by including actions on care leaver accommodation pathways, corporate parenting responsibilities, education and safeguarding links, and early identification of housing risk for children, young people and families. This will help ensure that new duties and expectations are translated into practical local delivery arrangements.

The action plan will also include specific local plans or workstreams for temporary accommodation and B&B reduction, long-term rough sleeping, prevention for people leaving public institutions, and improved support for children, families, care leavers and people with multiple or complex needs. Each workstream will include clear ownership, performance measures and arrangements for escalation where delivery is off track.

Governance and partnership accountability

Delivery of the strategy will remain a shared responsibility across the council and its partners. The council will use existing governance routes, including senior leadership oversight, scrutiny arrangements and relevant partnership boards, to monitor delivery and maintain accountability. Partnership arrangements will be reviewed to ensure that the right organisations are involved in prevention, accommodation, support and rough sleeping responses.

This approach will ensure that the strategy remains consistent with national guidance, local evidence and emerging pressures, while retaining a clear focus on making homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring in Melton.

Local Government Reorganisation will be treated as a key delivery risk and opportunity within the action plan. The council will keep governance, partnership accountability, data sharing, commissioning arrangements and customer pathways under review so that homelessness prevention, temporary accommodation, rough sleeping and support services remain coordinated before, during and after transition to any new unitary arrangements.

Review and Progress

This strategy sets out a 3-year plan and whilst we cannot predict what will happen, it is important we are flexible in our approach to the delivery. Changes may need to be made for us to meet our aim of tackling homelessness.

Actions from the strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis and will be published to our partners.

To make sure the delivery of the strategy is monitored and scrutinised and that work is progressing as it should, an annual update will be provided to our Senior Leadership team and to our Scrutiny Committee.

Appendix A - List of Partners within our Community Support Hub

Provider	What they offer
Armed Forces Community Covenant	**Armed Forces Covenant** is a promise from the nation that those who serve or have served in the armed forces, and their families, are treated fairly. Due to the mobility of service personnel and their families, they can often be disadvantaged in the provision of commercial products and services compared to other citizens, we call this commercial disadvantage. Addressing the commercial disadvantage experienced is a priority for the government and for the Ministry of Defence. The Armed Forces Covenant team is working closely with organisations that provide commercial services to ensure the armed forces community have fair access to commercial products and services.
CitAL – Citizens Advice Bureau Leicestershire	**CitAL** LeicesterShire CAB offers practical, up-to-date information and advice on a wide range of topics including debt, benefits, housing, legal, discrimination, employment, immigration, and consumer.
Crisis Café's	**Welly's Workplace with Sunny Skies Enterprise C.I.C & Peppers – a Safe Place** Crisis Cafes offer local support to people who need immediate help with their mental health. They are from the NHS's Long-Term Plan which aims to provide more support for mental health and wellbeing closer to home and more relevant to local communities' needs. They were also supported by the NHS's local mental health consultation in 2021 called Step up to Great Mental Health.
Early Help Services (0-19 Family Support)	The new **Early Help Services** provided via Leicestershire County Council 0-19 service focuses on providing support to the most vulnerable families. It aims to help families to function effectively, ensure that children are safe and prevent issues needing to involve the police or social care. Bringing together four services – SLF, Children's Centres, Youth Offending Service (YOS) and Community Safety, Early Help Information, Support and Assessment (EHISA)
EMH Care & Support	**MYST Lodge:** Provide temporary housing and support for young homeless people (16-25 yrs.) so they can regain their independence and get their lives back on track. Provide tailored support to individuals with low-to-medium level support needs and equip them with the skills they need to realise their potential. **Westbourne House:** Provide temporary, affordable housing to families together with support tailored to their needs so they can eventually move into permanent housing.
FreeVa	**FreeVa -** are a registered charity working towards reducing domestic violence, rape and sexual assault in Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland. Their vision is to aspire to live in a society where everyone is free from violence and abuse.
Grantham College	Level 1 in Customer Service & Level 1 in Retail Knowledge provided as a distance learning qualification. Customers can be in or out of employment and must be 19+ years old. Other eligibility as follows:

Provider	What they offer
Home-Start Horizons	Home-Start Horizons helps families with young children deal with whatever life throws at them. Supporting parents as they learn to cope, improve their confidence, and build better lives for their children.
Melton Jobcentre Plus	Jobcentre Plus - The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) provides a programme of intensive support for all 18- to 21-year-olds making a new claim to Universal Credit. This is known as the Youth Obligation Support Programme. It aims to encourage and support all young people into employment, workrelated training, or an apprenticeship. If you are 18 to 21 years old and are making a new claim to Universal Credit, you will receive a programme of intensive support, based on evidence of what works, tailored to your needs and job goals. Jobcentre plus also provide support to claimants in receipt of UC who are not part of Youth Obligation but need support to Job search or access their UC online.
Leicestershire Adult Learning Service	**LALS** offer help with upgrading computing and ICT skills, English and Maths skills, Languages, Courses for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities, learning for wellbeing and learning for work.
Leicestershire County Council – Employment Hub	The Employment Hub is working to support economic growth in Leicestershire by enabling employers to create and fill traineeships, work experience, volunteering, apprenticeship opportunities. Working with local employers to create local opportunities that are then referred to the relevant partners.
Leicestershire County Council – Local Area Co-ordinators	Local Area Co-ordinators help with: • Individuals: thinking about how to make life better and looking at what you have to offer • Connecting with others: linking people together and being part of a community • Information: finding out about what's happening in your area and getting the right help from services Taking action: making positive changes
Leicestershire Recovery College	**Leicestershire Recovery College** is an NHS college offering a range of recovery-focused educational courses and resources for people with lived mental health experience, along with their friends, family and Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust staff. The college offers a range of courses designed to contribute to wellbeing and recovery, supporting people to recognise their own resourcefulness and skills in order to become experts in their own self care and achieve the things they want to in life.
Melton Learning Hub	**Melton Learning Hub** work with challenging young people aged up to the age of 25yrs living in the Melton Borough to improve their life chances and help them to lead productive lives, contributing to their local community.

Provider	What they offer
	This includes young people who have special educational needs, behaviour problems, family problems, a lack of confidence and self – esteem or those who find themselves not in employment, education or training. Courses on offer include mechanics, construction, beauty therapy, animal care, fishing, exercise, cookery, child care and more.
Melton & District Money Advice Centre	**Melton & District Money Advice Centre** aim to provide a free, confidential and impartial advice service for the people of Melton Mowbray and District concerning money and debt problems. This includes – Debt management plans, Insolvency Solutions, Budgeting advice, Relevant social groups and activities, Relevant focus groups for changing local and national policy.
Melton Vineyard	Melton **Vineyard** is a registered charity and part of the Vineyard family of churches. It was planted in 2006 by Neal Swettenham and Eluned Owen. There are age-appropriate activities in Young Vineyard for baby's right up to 14-year-olds, plus a group for older teens. The morning includes contemporary worship, an informal slot for sharing news, interviews and personal stories, a message aimed at adults and prayer. Storehouse at The Fox is also managed by Melton Vineyard; it supplies food, clothes, and other items to those in immediate need in the borough of Melton. Clients are referred by local agencies.
Mental Health Matters	**MHM**s fully trained, dedicated, experienced and caring staff work with partner organisations to deliver comprehensive services to meet a full range of personal needs in a seamless manner to help vulnerable people to develop, 'recover' and move on to independent living whenever possible. MHM also seeks to strengthen the voice, rights and independence of our users, their carers and their friends and families and to challenge the stigmas and negative attitudes that are still associated with mental health, learning disability and addiction. Supporting people in Leicestershire, and Rutland.
Prince's Trust	**The Prince's Trust** Team Programme is a full time 12-week personal development programme. This programme is free to anyone aged 16-25 and unemployed. Each team is usually made up of between 12-15 young people with different skills and backgrounds, allowing participants to mix with new people and make new friends. The programme includes team-building residential, projects in the local community, team challenges and support with applying for further education or employment.
WEA Adult Learning	**WEA Adult Learning Within Reach** - We are committed to removing any barriers, so that individuals can improve their own life chances and have a positive impact on their communities and society as a whole.
Wing Training	**Wing Training** delivers unique and bespoke course interventions for; Adult customers furthest from the workplace, adult clients with clear, identified and entrenched barriers, adult clients with a range of profound mental health and wellbeing issues, adult clients requiring support, both moving into, and in work.

Provider	What they offer
The Royal British Legion	**The Royal British Legion** - The Legion was founded by veterans after the First World War. A century on from the start of that conflict, we're still helping today's Service men and women, veterans, and their families in almost every aspect of daily life. We also champion Remembrance, safeguarding the memory of those who have given their lives for our freedom through Remembrance education and events.
Rutland Adult Learning	**The Rutland Adult Learning and Skills Service (RALSS)** provides opportunities for adults to improve their skills through a wide range of academic and vocational courses. Qualifications gained through adult learning play an important role in seeking employment and some of the Community Learning courses, such as maths and English, are FREE.
Sustainable Land Trust	**Sustainable Land Trust's** mission is to provide land-based training and experience of the countryside to vulnerable and/or hard to reach groups. Provide meaningful, green, community-based job opportunities for our trainees. To undertake environmentally, considered land management projects to improve wider ecosystem health and local habitats and through actions, generate a sustainable enterprise which utilises arising by-products
Turning Point	**Turning Point** is a leading health and social care organisation with over 50 years' experience of supporting people with complex needs including substance misuse, mental health issues, learning disability, unemployment, housing needs and offending behaviour. The aim of the service is to provide integrated community drug and alcohol treatment for young people, adults and their families. The service will increase opportunity to access support in the community; improve completion rates so more residents leave treatment having achieved their goals; reach out to client groups who are currently under-represented currently; and respond quickly to changing drug and alcohol trends.
The Venue	Social Youth Hub. The Venue is a unique facility that provides activities, entertainment, and a safe space for young people in Melton Mowbray.
Vita Health Group	**Vita Health Group** works in partnership with the NHS to provide mental wellbeing services to support local residents in various districts throughout the UK **– Vita Minds** is a talking therapy and provides psychological assessment and treatment for mild to moderate common mental health problems, such as Anxiety, low mood/depression, stress, OCD, trauma and Phobia's.