



EAST SUFFOLK
COUNCIL

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

2025 - 2030



“All homes in East Suffolk are safe, suitable, and sustainable, in communities where residents are proud to live”.



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Foreword from Cabinet Member

It has been five years since we published our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and while developing this strategy we have reflected on the challenges, opportunities and changes that can be implemented to meet the needs of people in East Suffolk.

Since the last strategy, we have seen some of the most challenging cost of living conditions on record with homelessness and rough sleeping being at an all-time high not just locally but across the UK. Rising rents, mortgage rates and lack of suitable affordable housing puts a huge amount of pressure on families and single applicants, leaving them with very little choice and in some cases at threat of homelessness.

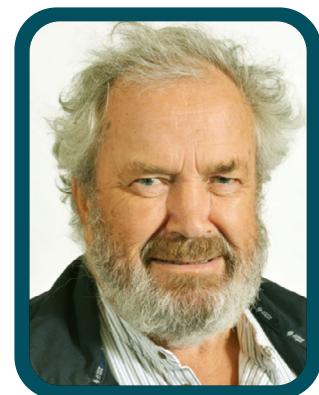
The impact of homelessness can have a devastating impact on both families and individuals. Mental and physical health can be impacted along with education, employment access to services and support networks. The Council is committed to ensure that we deliver the right housing based in our communities' need, with more affordable homes including social rent and better first-time buyer opportunities.

Our focus is to ensure we reduce and prevent homelessness alongside supporting people who are homeless back into suitable accommodation.

This strategy aims to deliver early interventions by tackling the root causes of homelessness and provide personalised solutions. In doing so the Council will ensure to improve health and wellbeing of applicants placed in temporary accommodation and further developing collaborative working with key partners that play a key part in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable.

We will continue to offer assistance with accessing the private rented sector, a person-centred model of supported accommodation and initiatives that make the best of our resources and available funding delivering cost effective services. East Suffolk is a large and diverse district and through this strategy the Council will deliver a strong housing offer that provides accessible, safe, suitable and sustainable housing in communities where residents are proud to live in.

Councillor David Beavan
Portfolio Holder for Housing



Our strategy in summary

East Suffolk's vision is to work in partnership to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping wherever possible, maintaining and improving people's quality of life and offering them a free and fair future.

Our six priorities are:



Early intervention to prevent homelessness and providing personalised solutions



Tackling the root causes of homelessness



Meeting the health and wellbeing needs of all households in temporary accommodation



Increasing access to accommodation that is suitable, sustainable and affordable



Making rough sleeping brief and non-recurrent



Developing robust partnerships and collaborative working

Early intervention to prevent homelessness and provide personalised solutions.

We will continue to ensure homelessness services are as accessible as possible, through clear information on the Council's website, offering housing advice in community settings and pop-up hubs, publicising and offering training around Duty to Refer and offering person-centred and trauma-informed support. We will increase our focus on work with private landlords with small portfolios and ensure that all landlords and East Suffolk staff are confident around changes being brought about by the forthcoming Renters Rights Act.



Tackling the root causes of homelessness.

We will continue to prioritise homeless households with significant additional needs via Gateway to HomeChoice. We will seek to improve private sector access via the East Suffolk Lettings Scheme and private sector conditions via Safe Suffolk Renters. We will work with the Private Sector Housing team to bring empty homes back into use and will also support digital inclusion and anti-poverty work.

We will use recommendations from our strategic review of Temporary Accommodation (TA) to address supply issues and physical standards and will work with partners to support homeless households into work and to improve their career prospects.

Meeting the health and wellbeing needs of households in temporary accommodation.

We will use recommendations from our strategic review of Temporary Accommodation (TA) to address supply issues and physical standards and will work with partners to support homeless households into work and to improve their career prospects.

Increasing access to accommodation, which is suitable, sustainable and affordable.

We will expand floating support and explore opportunities to provide intensive short-term support for first time tenants and longer-term floating support. We will work with social and supported housing providers to ensure best practice around evictions. We will seek to expand Housing First to include young people with complex needs and other vulnerable groups. We will seek to develop our response to cuckooing and data collection systems, to accurately forecast future need for supported housing in East Suffolk.

Developing robust partnerships and collaborative working.

We will develop the transition pathway into Adults Services for care leavers and work with partners to develop a training and employment pathway for young homeless people. We will develop treatment pathways for people with substance misuse issues and explore how to enhance work with perpetrators of domestic abuse. We will also work with East Suffolk's PRS Licensing team to develop a licensing framework which aligns with the new National Supported Housing Standards, develop training for Housing Needs and Adult Social Care frameworks / pathways and service offers. We will review and develop multi-agency referral and casework arrangements.

Making rough sleeping brief and non-recurrent.

We will review demand for rough sleeper services and how these can be continued after the expected end of RSI funding in 2026. We will seek to recruit a mental health worker, to increase access to mental health services and will also explore recruitment of an embedded social worker within the outreach team.



Introduction

This new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy covers the period 2025 – 2030. It sets out East Suffolk Council's (ESC) aims and actions to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping in the district, utilising its statutory powers and partnerships with Suffolk County Council, other local authorities and statutory, voluntary, and community sector organisations in East Suffolk.

The Strategy comes at a time of increasing pressures on affordable housing and homelessness services, changes in the policy and legislative context, including the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 and the Renters Rights Bill and the need to respond to a national cost of living crisis.

East Suffolk, along with other district, borough and county councils in Suffolk, is likely to be impacted by changes arising from local government reorganisation, which would see Suffolk's six district, borough and county councils replaced by a new unitary authority. This change may impact on future resources and activities available to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping and require the Strategy to be reviewed to reflect these changes.

The strategy will be delivered through a reducing homelessness action plan and will work in tandem with the council's Strategic Plan: Our Direction 2028.

East Suffolk's vision is to work in partnership to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping wherever possible, maintaining and improving people's quality of life and offering them a free and fair future.

To achieve this vision the Strategy is formed around the following priorities:

- Early intervention to prevent homelessness and providing personalised solutions
- Tackling the root causes of homelessness
- Meeting the health and wellbeing needs of households in temporary accommodation
- Increasing access to accommodation that is suitable, sustainable and affordable
- Making rough sleeping brief and non-recurrent
- Developing robust partnerships and collaborative working.

The Strategy will be delivered through a reducing homelessness action plan.

The new Strategy has been developed through a review of available data relating to homelessness and rough sleeping in East Suffolk and engagement with a range of local stakeholders from the Council, local statutory partners, housing providers and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) services working with homeless people and rough sleepers.

The wider strategic context

Recent changes mean that veterans, care leavers and people escaping domestic abuse no longer have to demonstrate a local connection when seeking access to social housing.

The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 seeks to improve the quality of supported exempt accommodation, regulation and oversight of supported housing. The new legislation will require local authorities to review local supported housing in line with a set of National Standards and to set up licensing schemes for local supported housing providers. The Act also proposes that in future only schemes licenced by councils will be able to claim higher rates of Housing Benefit available to claimants living in supported housing.

The Renters Rights Bill seeks to make changes to private renting. These include ending Section 21 'no fault' evictions, applying the Decent Homes Standard to the private rented sector, removing fixed-term assured shorthold tenancies and giving tenants the power to challenge unreasonable rent increases.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 created a statutory definition of domestic abuse, which includes emotional and economic, as well as physical abuse. It places a duty on local authorities in England to provide accommodation-based support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation and provides that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse have an automatic priority need for homelessness assistance. It also strengthens requirements for social tenants who have experienced domestic abuse to receive secure lifetime tenancies.

The Government's early release prison scheme is increasing the number of prisoners who require housing and support. The recent review of sentencing policy looks to reduce the number of shorter sentences and increase the use of community orders, thus increasing demand for housing and community support.

The closure of Home Office-funded accommodation for former asylum seekers in 2024 has also increased the number of people seeking support from the Council around their housing needs.

The Government has created a multi-departmental homelessness task force and plans to launch a new homelessness approach that is focused much more clearly on homelessness prevention. The Government is also consulting on proposals to refocus the Homelessness Prevention Grant more towards homelessness prevention activities from 2026/27 onwards.

The proposed Sizewell C nuclear power station will create thousands of jobs and contribute significantly to the local economy. However, the influx of construction workers from outside the area is pushing up demand for housing and significantly increasing rental prices in some parts of East Suffolk. This risks reducing the supply of affordable housing for low income households.

To address this issues East Suffolk Council prepared a Private Housing Supply Plan. This will support people at risk of homelessness by expanding the East Suffolk Lettings scheme, increase the supply of accommodation through grant-funded incentives, bring back into use under-utilised accommodation and develop high quality houses in multiple occupation. The approach in the Plan is underpinned by drivers from Our Strategic Plan Our Direction, including around providing sustainable housing, enhancing environmental impact and tackling inequalities.

East Suffolk Council is also offering grants to assist residents to get rooms or properties up to lettable standard to accommodate Sizewell C workers. Eligible works include: redecoration, electrical improvements, additional heating and secondary glazing.

The Suffolk Health and Housing Needs Assessment highlights the key links which exist between housing and health. These include: the need to reduce damp and cold and to improve energy efficiency; the provision of suitable housing for older people and addressing the need for affordable housing and preventing homelessness. The Assessment's recommendations include retrofitting homes with poor energy efficiency, prioritising affordable housing within housing developments, auditing health hazards in housing, enhancing data sharing and intelligence with health, Public Health and Communities to inform housing interventions.

'Ending Rough Sleeping for Good' set out a vision and cross-Governmental strategy for tackling rough sleeping. This involves preventing rough sleeping wherever possible and ensuring that where it does occur, that it is rare, brief and non-recurring. The strategy included £2bn investment between 2022 – 2025, including spending for the Rough Sleeping Initiative programme, Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme, Housing First, additional support for prison leavers, young people and people with substance misuse issues. The strategy also focused on joining up systems to support people sleeping rough, stronger partnerships between statutory, commissioned and non-commissioned services, use of a new data-led framework to measure rough sleeping and a Test and Learn programme to trial innovative approaches to reduce homelessness. Pending the publication of a new homelessness and rough sleeping by the government the funding for the above has been continued for 2025/26.

Partnership working

East Suffolk Council works closely with the other four councils in Suffolk (West Suffolk, Babergh, Mid Suffolk and Ipswich) and with Suffolk County Council, through the Suffolk Housing Board (SHB) and Suffolk Housing Officers Group (SHOG). The Council also participates in the Suffolk Housing Board (SHB) Members Board, which is chaired by the Cabinet member at East Suffolk.

Through participation in these groups, ESC contributes to the development of joint approaches which tackle housing and homelessness issues across the county. These have recently included: The SHB Members Board's joint vision around homelessness and rough sleeping, which commits partners to preventing rough sleeping and ensuring that any rough sleeping which occurs is rare, brief and non-recurring; via SHOG, a joint Housing Protocol and Leaving Care Housing Protocol with Suffolk County Council Children and Young People's Service and other Suffolk local authorities around work with young people and care leavers.

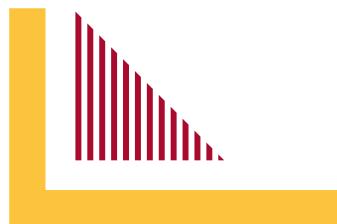
East Suffolk is a member of the Suffolk Channel Panel, part of the national Prevent programme, which seeks to safeguard people and communities from the threat of terrorism. Through the Panel, ESC provides early intervention to support and divert people away from potential risks of being drawn into terrorism. ESC also works with community groups and social enterprise projects who support vulnerable people, local schools, industry and partner agencies through engagement, advice and training around these issues.

The Gateway to Homechoice Partnership involves East Suffolk, Babergh, Mid Suffolk, Ipswich, Colchester, Maldon and Braintree councils, working together to rehouse homeless people into social housing. East Suffolk influences policy through its membership of the Gateway to Homechoice board.

The Safe Suffolk Renters initiative works to increase understanding of the pressures and problems in the private rented sector and to improve physical standards. It also works to build relationships between tenants, landlords, property managers and local councils. – building understanding of roles and responsibilities, helping to maintain everyone in the sector and to supply safe and healthy private rented homes.

Stepping Home assists people to return home from hospital and to prevent hospital admissions. The project works by addressing housing issues that may place people at risk, including hoarding, disrepair, inadequate heating, food and fuel poverty and loneliness. Support is built around each patient, to address their unique non-medical circumstances. The project also has four units of temporary accommodation in Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds, where patients can stay free of charge whilst their home is being made ready for their return. Support provided by the project also helps ease pressure on health and social care services across Suffolk.

How our strategy links with other Council priorities



Our Direction is the overarching document that highlights the Council's priorities, including the Council's priorities for housing. It sets the strategic aim of promoting a bright, green, open, free and fair future for all East Suffolk residents, focusing on Environmental Impact, Sustainable Housing, Tackling Inequalities and a Thriving Economy.

Priorities relating to Sustainable Housing include:

- reducing and preventing homelessness
- adding to, improving and making use of existing housing stock
- delivering housing to match community needs and tackling fuel poverty.

As well as implementation of the East Suffolk Housing Pathway there are envisaged outcomes in terms of:

- reduced numbers of rough sleepers and households in Temporary Accommodation (TA), increased positive homelessness prevention/relief outcomes and increasing properties secured within East Suffolk Lettings.

The Tackling Inequalities strand of the programme recognises the value of prioritising early help, improving digital access, reducing health inequalities, using local data to design and deliver services and partnership working to better understand the needs of rural and other communities in East Suffolk.

Tackling Poverty Together – Inspiring a Future Way of Working Together (Healthwatch Suffolk). This work highlighted the negative impacts of living in TA on people's health and the need to address barriers around language and digital exclusion, to improve access to local systems. It recommends further development of pathways around mental health, disability and maintaining employment, addressing gaps in tenancy support, changes in local connection criteria for people with experience of domestic abuse, increasing co-production and greater engagement with and support for community groups, including developing community hubs and spaces. These themes have informed Suffolk's Tackling Poverty Action Plan.

The themes of **Tackling Poverty in Suffolk Strategy (2022)** focus on Emergency Support, Increasing Incomes, Mitigating the Impacts of Poverty and Preventing Poverty. Alongside a £2.5m investment to improve people's health and wellbeing, the programme includes actions to: tackle food insecurity, develop a financial hardship model, improve data-sharing between national and local government to enable targeting of support before people reach crisis, increase opportunities to improve energy efficiency, poverty awareness sessions for professionals and financial education training for children and young people.

The East Suffolk Tenant Engagement Strategy 2024 aims to create an environment where every tenant feels valued, heard and is involved in shaping their future. This includes: providing training for tenants, expanding communication channels to foster dialogue between tenants and the Council and improve responsiveness to tenants' concerns, involving tenants in designing new service specifications and implementing user-friendly data collection tools to streamline tenant input.

Preparing for the Future is the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2027. This focuses on the wider determinants of health, asset-based approaches and collaborative working, around the themes of Prevention, Reducing Inequalities, Collaboration and System Working and Connected, Resilient and Thriving Communities. The strategy provides opportunities for more joined up working across all partner organisations, greater targeting of services at the most vulnerable and investment in services to encourage independence and reduce service demand. It also seeks to promote poverty reduction work within all Suffolk strategies and a stronger role for VCSE organisation and community views in decision-making

The Homelessness Review and the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030 has been developed in line with the ambitions and objectives set out in the above strategies.



East Suffolk's population

East Suffolk is made up of coastal and rural areas. Approximately 115 square miles of East Suffolk's total 487 square miles are designated National Landscapes.

The population of East Suffolk in 2024 was approximately 250,000. The average age of our population is growing, with 15.5% of East Suffolk residents currently 19 or under and 27.7% 65 or over. Between the two most recent censuses (2011 – 2021), the average age of East Suffolk residents increased by three years, from 46 to 49. During this period, the number of East Suffolk residents aged 65 - 74 increased by 2.4%, while the number of residents aged 35 - 49 years fell by 15.8%.

53% of East Suffolk's working age population are employed, 32% are retired, 4.5% are students, 4.3% are looking after family, 2.1% are unemployed and 4% are sick or disabled. The average gross disposal household income was £21,069, slightly higher than the England average. The median gross weekly wage for employees living in East Suffolk is £654, compared with an England average of £732.

East Suffolk is the second most deprived area in Suffolk after Ipswich, with greatest deprivation being around Lowestoft. In total, 11.4% of East Suffolk residents are income deprived - slightly above the Suffolk average of 10.2%. There are some stark contrasts in health outcomes, with the gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas in East Suffolk being almost 15 years for women and almost 11 years for men.

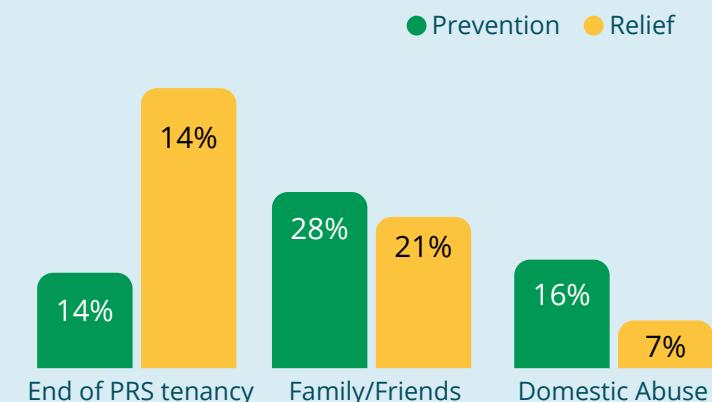


The picture of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping in East Suffolk

Statuary homeless trends



The proportion of households owed a relief duty compared to those owed a prevention duty has increased. This means that more households than before have already lost their homes when they come to the council.



A leading reason for homelessness is loss of private tenancies, followed by family and friends no longer being able to accommodate households, and then domestic abuse.



Rough Sleeping Trends

23.6

in every **100,000** people sleep rough over the course of the month.



East Suffolk has the **second-highest monthly rate** of rough sleeping in Suffolk, behind Ipswich.

Temporary Accommodation

+109%

rise in new monthly placements from **11** to **23** per month.



This includes a higher proportion of people being placed in nightly let accommodation.

Housing affordability

4,000

active applications to Social Housing.

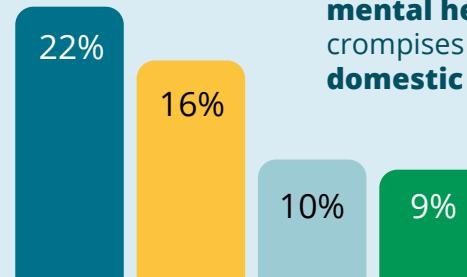


Private sector rents have risen by around **10%** since **2023/24**, and most properties are unaffordable on low incomes.

Support needs

50%

of households owed a statutory homelessness duty have some form of support need. This figure is rising.



The largest group with support needs have a history of **mental health** problems. The next largest group comprises those with **physical ill health**, a history of **domestic abuse**, and drug and/or alcohol **dependency**.

- Mental health
- Physical ill health
- Domestic abuse
- Drug and alcohol dependency



Building on our success and strengthening our offer

The previous Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy (2019 – 2024) focused on four strategic priorities:

The actions identified in this strategy have the four strategic priorities at their core.



That Strategy was written before the Covid-19 pandemic and sought to address a range of challenges, including providing accommodation and support for rough sleepers with complex needs, increasing access to affordable housing for households on low incomes and responding to duties and expectations within the Homelessness Reduction Act as they relate to single homeless people.

In 2025, many of these challenges remain and, in some cases, have been exacerbated by the pandemic and its aftermath. Homelessness amongst single people continues to grow in East Suffolk.

Following the invasion in Ukraine, East Suffolk saw a significant number of Ukrainian nationals being hosted and subsequently rehoused locally within the District. East Suffolk also supports refugees via the Afghan Resettlement Programme. A significant number of arrivals are expected in East Suffolk under the Afghan Resettlement Programme during 2025/26 and this is likely to increase housing pressures. East Suffolk will be participating in a regional plan to manage this emerging need. East Suffolk receives Asylum Dispersal Grant funding via the Home Office to help cover some costs of supporting asylum seekers.

The Council is also facing the impact of the national cost-of-living crisis, continuing increases in private rented sector rents and increased demand for homelessness and rough sleeping services, including temporary accommodation (TA). Due to demand and supply, the cost of nightly lets is rising, which is having a financial impact on budgets.

There are also responsibilities on ESC to support Sizewell C to ensure there are sufficient accommodation options available for workers, who are helping to build the new Nuclear Power Station. All of these factors will be addressed in the new strategy.

Despite these challenges, the Council has made progress in many areas since 2019. Some key successes and achievements are set out below.

Our progress since the 2019 - 2024 strategy

Preventing Homelessness

- Strengthened **duty to refer**
- Employed **housing needs officer**
- Delivering in-house **family mediation** and one to one **multidisciplinary support** to young people
- Employed a **domestic abuse officer** to promote access into safe accomodation
- **Tenancy support**, training and sustainment
- **Financial support** initiatives

Supporting Vulnerable Households

- Established **Communities Team** to support marginalised and vulnerable households and provide accommodation pathways
- **Domestic abuse**: refuges, free local advice, and an approach focussed on removing perpetrators to enable families to stay in their homes.
- **Probation**: housing triage and clear post-release housing plans
- **Children and young people**: housing, leaving care, and pre-eviction protocols

Increase Available Accommodation Options

- Supported lettings officers providing a route in to accommodation for non-priority households
- Private landlord liaison
- East Suffolk Lettings established to increase access to Private rented accomodation via financial incentives for lower rent

Reducing Rough Sleeping

- 'Safe to Stay' hub to provide rapid access to off the street accommodation
- Employed 2.8FTE new frontline staff, including:
 - Outreach officer
 - Navigator
 - Rough sleeper coordinator
- Case reviews and personalised plans for long term rough sleepers
- Introduction of a Housing First scheme

Theme I: Preventing homelessness

We have strengthened our Duty to Refer processes with Probation and other services, to enable earlier intervention and support to people at risk of homelessness.

Within Housing Needs, we employ a dedicated Housing Needs Officer for single applicants funded under RSI.

Our in-house family mediation service enables young people to stay in the family home or to find suitable alternative accommodation before they become homeless. We offer one to one and multi-disciplinary support to young people with the support from other key services.

Our specialist Domestic Abuse officer acts as a single point of contact and has access into safe accommodation for people fleeing domestic violence. This has improved the coordination of our response. We also practice target-hardening in local authority-owned housing.

We provide Rent in Advance to both priority and non-priority need homeless households and additional support towards housing and other costs via Discretionary Housing Payments. Through our partnership with Citizens Advice we provide access to debt advice and support with a CAB Officer seconded to the Housing Needs Team offering advice to all active cases working with the team.

We employ two Procurement and Tenancy Sustainment Officers, for both singles and families, providing tenancy support for qualifying customers. We offer access to tenancy training to our RSI customers, through our partnership with the Stone Foundation. We have recently recruited an in-house Sizewell Project officer, working to mitigate the impact of the Sizewell C programme on housing need in East Suffolk.

Theme 2: Increasing available accommodation options

Our Supported Lettings Officers ensure that single homeless people assessed as not being in priority need for housing from the Council are offered alternative private rented or supported accommodation. This has significantly improved housing outcomes for this group.

The Supported Lettings Officers and Procurement and Tenancy Sustainment Officers liaise closely with private landlords and through a range of upfront incentives, landlords are drawn into offering tenancies to homeless households.

The East Suffolk Lettings service, launched in 2023, has also increased access to private rented tenancies for both single people and families. In return for charging a rent lower than the market rate, landlords are offered a comprehensive financial incentive, as well as having their rent guaranteed via upfront monthly rent payments. The council offers a number of other services to landlords, to meet their individual requirements, including: deposit bonds, assessments of potential tenants, viewings, inventories and property inspections. A dedicated Tenancy Support Officer also supports people to manage their tenancies through regular home visits, help with benefit claims and managing utilities.

Theme 3: Supporting vulnerable households

We have strengthened our relationships with Adult Social Care and commissioned support providers.

The Communities Team provides valuable support to marginalised adults and families across a range of issues and has achieved good outcomes around homelessness prevention.

Our accommodation pathways support a range of groups of people at risk of homelessness, including care leavers and other young people, offenders, people with mental health needs and learning disabilities and people leaving hospital. These pathways help prevent through clear referrals processes, providing suitable accommodation and support options.

East Suffolk Council created a new model following the decommissioning of Housing Related Support by the County Council at the end of March 2025. The decision to decommission this service was agreed in January 2024 and since that time ESC has worked in the development of a model that can provide a single pathway of accommodation for adult and young people.

East Suffolk Housing Pathway will focus on:

- Support to minimise repeat presentations, making best use of limited resources and ensure that services are available for the most chaotic and vulnerable.
- Services that are flexible, person centred and build on the strengths of the individual to enable them to achieve the outcomes that matter to them.
- Access to support services, skill development, education and training.
- Resettlement- Officers will work with providers and monitor progress to enable a smooth transition into step down or move on into independent living.
- A single pathway will enable providers and the Council to work with individuals, irrespective of what 'cohort' they fall under at the time of accessing supported accommodation recognising that people can be both vulnerable and with multiple needs, which will vary throughout their lives.

East Suffolk Housing Pathway will deliver 139 bed spaces for adult and young people with low, medium and high support needs and will offer a step up/down approach as needs are assessed and progress is made.

This is an innovative model offering crash beds for 16/17-year-olds to be offered under the Council's statutory duties, some provision for couples and applicants with pets. Identifying gaps in service that will enable the Council to support those most in need.

In addition, there will be a floating support and resettlement service available during and after move on for a maximum of 12 weeks. This will support with managing repeat presentations, access to services, resettlement and sustainability. Hours of support whilst in supported accommodation will be between 3-7 hours per applicant per week depending on need.

We provide refuge accommodation for people fleeing domestic abuse in Lowestoft and additional dispersed units. Our work around target hardening helps to remove perpetrators and supports families to stay in their existing homes. We offer pro bono legal advice via our partnership with the Centre for Domestic Abuse. Our local MARAC meetings facilitate joint action planning with other partners.

Our Housing Needs triage officer provides a single point of contact and oversight of processes for pre-release clients. We have developed our relationship with the Probation service and now hold monthly meetings with prison and probation teams to discuss release planning. Housing Needs staff visit two local prisons every six months to publicise support offered by the Council and are involved jobs fairs held at the prisons.

Through the joint Housing Protocol we ensure that Housing and Children's Social Care practitioners consistently apply housing and social care legislation and guidance across the county for young people. This is improving young people's experience and accommodation options, safeguarding and helping prevent homelessness. The Protocol facilitates 16/17 year olds being reunified with their families where it is safe to do so, or a route into temporary accommodation and suitable housing, care and support, to avoid homelessness.

The county-wide leaving care joint housing protocol helps young people to transition smoothly from their care placement to independent living – through resettlement planning, accommodation pathways and support to develop independent living skills. Young people are empowered to make informed decisions about housing options, including staying in their care setting through the Suffolk Staying Put and Staying Close offer.

We also operate a pre-eviction protocol and second chance scheme for young people and joint decision-making process for homeless care leavers found to be intentionally homeless. Through regular meetings with Children and Young People Services and the Leaving Care Team, we ensure provision of advice and early intervention.

Theme 4: Reducing rough sleeping

Our Safe to Stay hub, has improved rapid access to off the street accommodation for people aged 18 and over, helping them leave the streets.

We fund (via RSI) 3 .8 full-time Outreach officers, Navigators and a Rough Sleeper Coordinator. We previously funded a Mental Health Support Worker for two years. The Housing Needs Team are in the process of using some RSI funding to create a role that will offer support within mental health services with the hope that it could be a joint funding solution for housing and health services.

We have a Target Priority Group of long-term rough sleepers, hold regular case reviews and provide additional funding for welfare to support with move-on accommodation. An Outreach Officers is dedicated to this cohort providing specialist intensive support. Each applicant under this group has an individual plan which changes and evolves as they progress through the housing pathway, and this is monitored by the Rough Sleeper Coordinator and Outreach Officer.

Our monthly Interventions meetings involve Adult Social Care and other statutory partners working together to find solutions for rough sleepers and other single homeless people at risk of homelessness.

Our Housing First scheme includes our Housing Needs and Housing Services teams, Suffolk County Council Leaving Care Team and a registered provider. It provides long-term housing for people with a history of entrenched rough sleeping and/or accommodation placement breakdown and additional needs, such as substance misuse, mental health, learning disability, challenging behaviour, poor educational attainment and contact with the criminal justice system. The scheme currently involves seven tenancies. In its first year, all tenancies were sustained and no notices were served.



Priorities for our 2025-2030 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

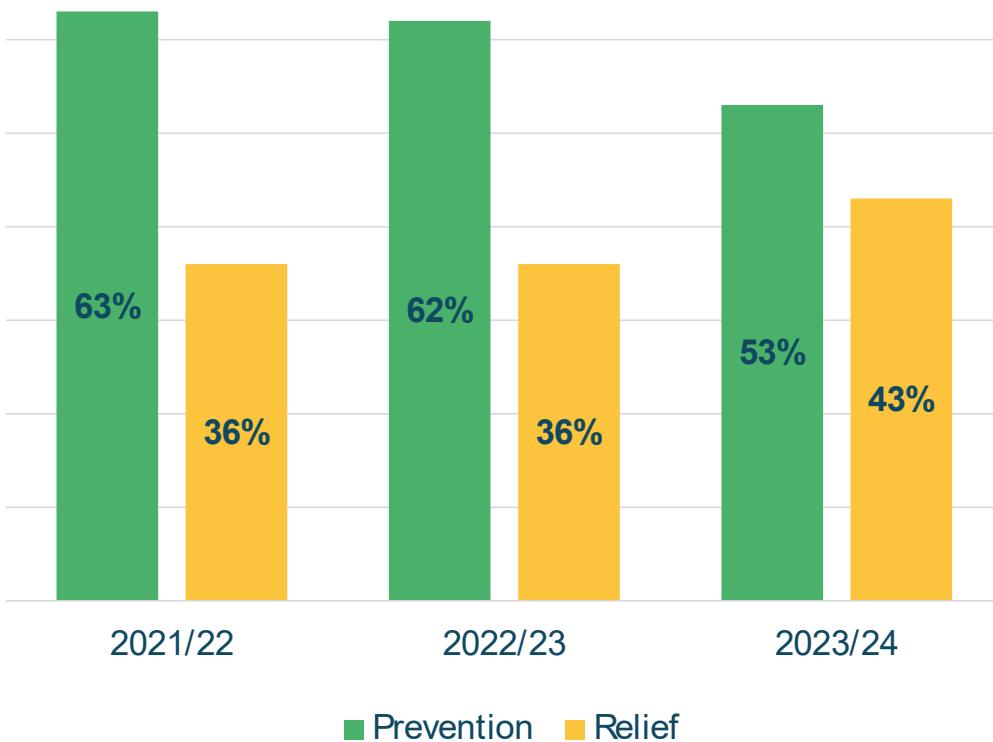
We will aim to build on the work we have done in the previous strategy, focussing on our six core priorities of:

- Early intervention to prevent homelessness and provide personalised solutions
- Tackling the root causes of homelessness
- Meeting the health and wellbeing needs of households in temporary accommodation
- Increasing access to accommodation that is suitable, sustainable and affordable
- Making rough sleeping brief and non-recurrent
- Developing robust partnerships and collaborative working

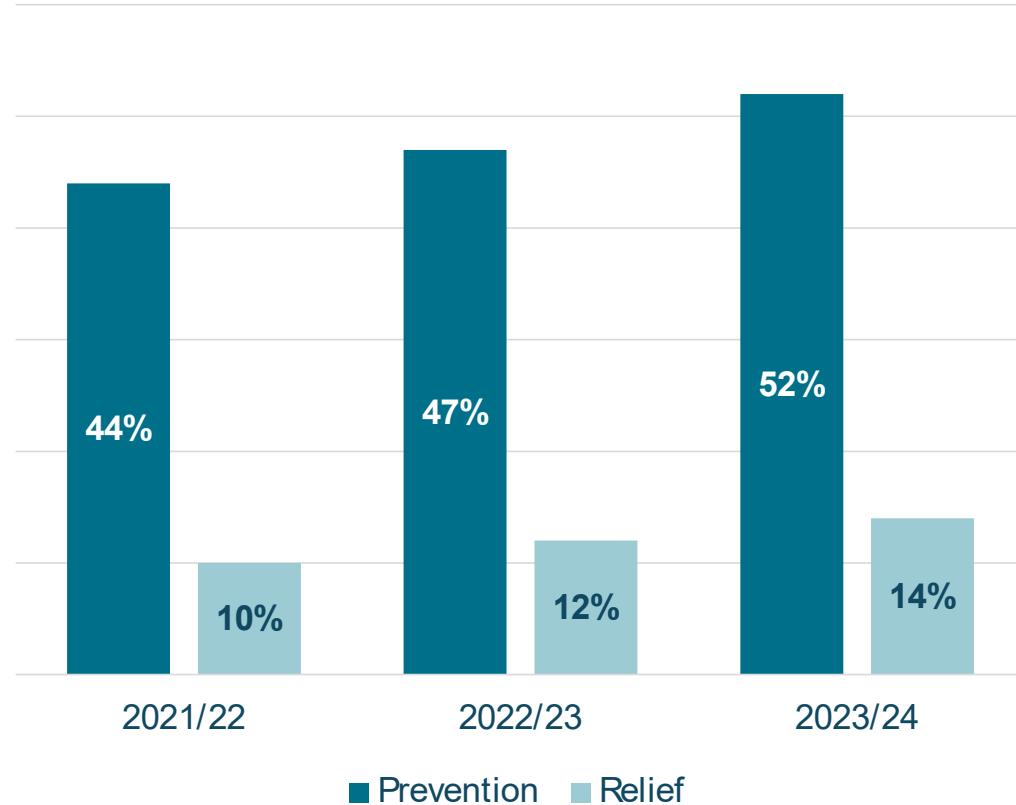
Our activities for each priority area are set out below and form the basis of our action plan to address homelessness and rough sleeping.

Priority One: preventing homelessness through early intervention and personalised solutions

Proportion of Prevention and Relief duties owed as a proportion of all duties in East Suffolk, 2021/22 to 2023/24.



Proportion of all duties owed as a result of loss of Private Tenancy in East Suffolk, 2021/22 to 2023/24.



The number of households approaching Housing Needs has been stable over recent years. However, we are seeing more single people and young people under 45 years old.

A growing proportion of people owed a homelessness prevention or relief duty from the Council have support needs – around 50% in 2023/24. The most common support need is around mental health, followed by physical ill-health and disability. There are also more people with experience of domestic abuse – including people with children and some male and transgender victims.

The number of main homelessness duty acceptances has risen significantly – from 101 in 2021/22 to 200 in 2023/24 – with around half of these households including children.

The proportion of households owed a prevention duty has decreased - from 63% of all those owed a duty in 2021/22, to 53% of those owed a duty in 2023/24. This suggests that households are presenting to the council later in their homelessness journey, or that people affected by the cost-of-living crisis are becoming homeless for the first time and being unsure how the Council can assist them or where to seek help.

The leading cause of homelessness amongst households owed a prevention duty has consistently been loss of private rented sector (PRS) tenancy - making up just over half (52%) of this total in 2023/24. The next most common reason has been family and friends no longer being willing or able to accommodate, which rose from 15% to 21% of prevention duty cases between 2021/22 – 2023/24.

The leading causes of homelessness amongst households owed a relief duty in 2023/24 were family and friends no longer being willing or able to accommodate (28% of total) and domestic abuse (16% of total). Loss of PRS tenancy represented only 14% of this group, suggesting the Council's prevention interventions in this area are effective.

Around half of households owed a prevention duty found secure accommodation (for 6+ months), with a growing number moving into the private rented sector (32% in 2021/21 to 47% in 2023/24). It is becoming more challenging to accommodate people owed a relief duty. Of those households accommodated, around two thirds move into social housing and around a quarter move into private rented housing.

The number of Duty to Refer referrals has increased since 2021/22. In 2023/24, the largest proportion came via the National Probation Service, with Adult Social Services, Jobcentre Plus and Children's Services also referring regularly. However, referrals from hospital A&E and in-patient services have been lower.

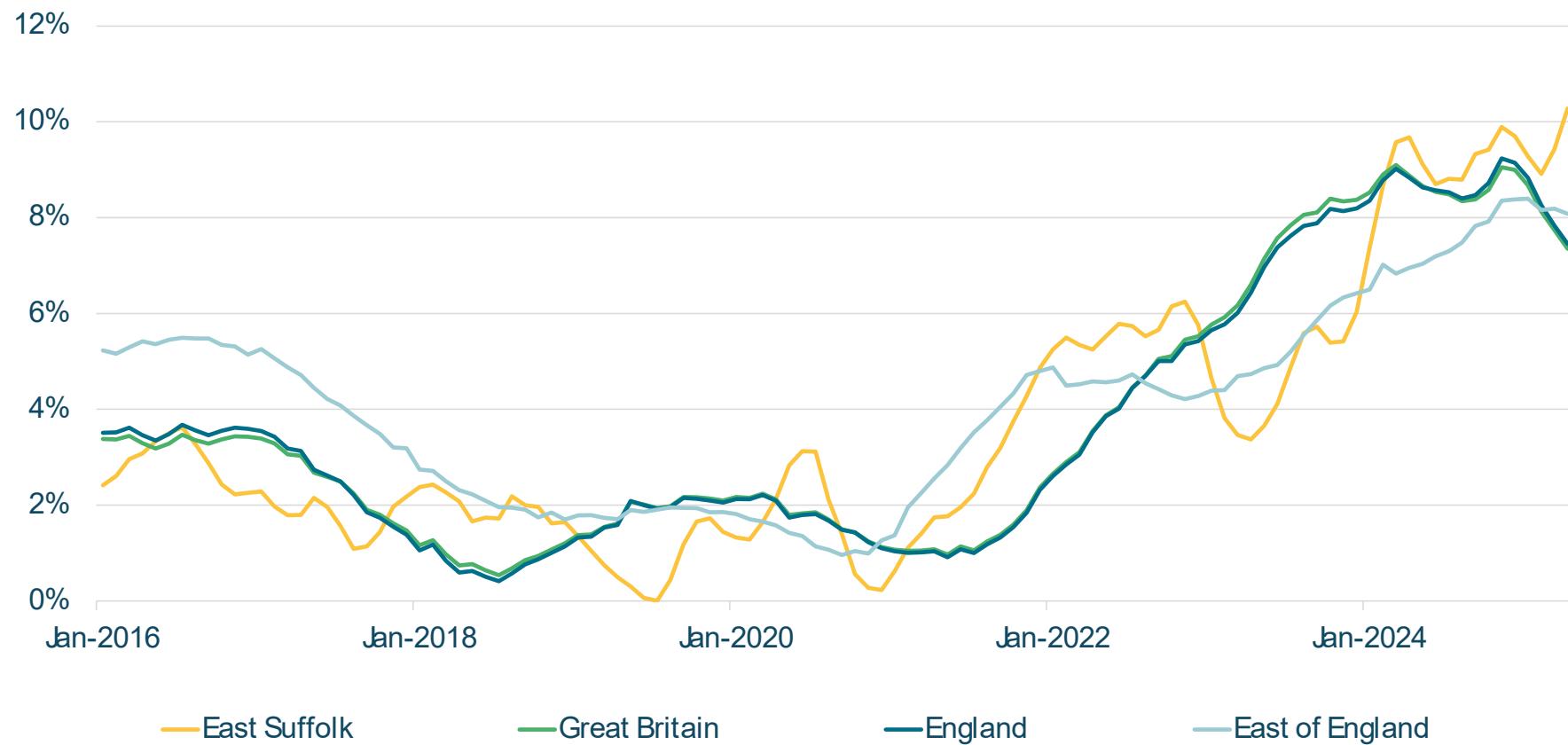
To address these issues, we will:

- A) Increase our focus on preventing homelessness due to loss of private rented tenancies. This will include: further relationship-building with landlords with small portfolios, continuing use of Discretionary Housing Payments for short-term management of rent arrears and financial inclusion training for tenants.
- B) Update the Council's website, to ensure there are clear explanations of our duties around homelessness and the support we offer to households in housing need.
- C) Continue to publicise the work of Housing Needs to relevant professionals, Council members and MPs.
- D) Review relief cases to build understanding around accommodation outcomes and lost contacts.
- E) Monitor the proportion of prevention and relief outcomes and link this to indicators in the Strategic Action plan.
- F) Explore how to increase access to housing advice from the Council. This will include: extending drop-ins in community resources, proving easy to understand information around housing advice and support in community settings, such as health centres, libraries, community hubs and supermarkets and setting up pop up hubs.
- G) Seek to increase referrals from Duty to Refer partners who are not currently making significant use of this route. This will include publicising Duty to Refer and offering training to relevant services, if needed.
- H) Ensure all housing advice support provided by Council and non-Council services is person-centred and trauma-informed, so staff can engage effectively with all homeless people – especially those with chaotic lifestyles due to traumatic backgrounds. This will include offering training to all relevant staff, to increase knowledge of psychologically-informed and trauma-informed approaches.
- I) Work with East Suffolk's Private Rented Sector team to ensure landlords understand changes being brought about by the forthcoming Renters Rights Act around issuing of notices to end tenancies and eviction procedures and to ensure that all relevant Housing Needs staff are confident in working with landlords around these issues, with the overall aim of preventing homelessness wherever possible.

Priority Two: tackling the root causes of homelessness

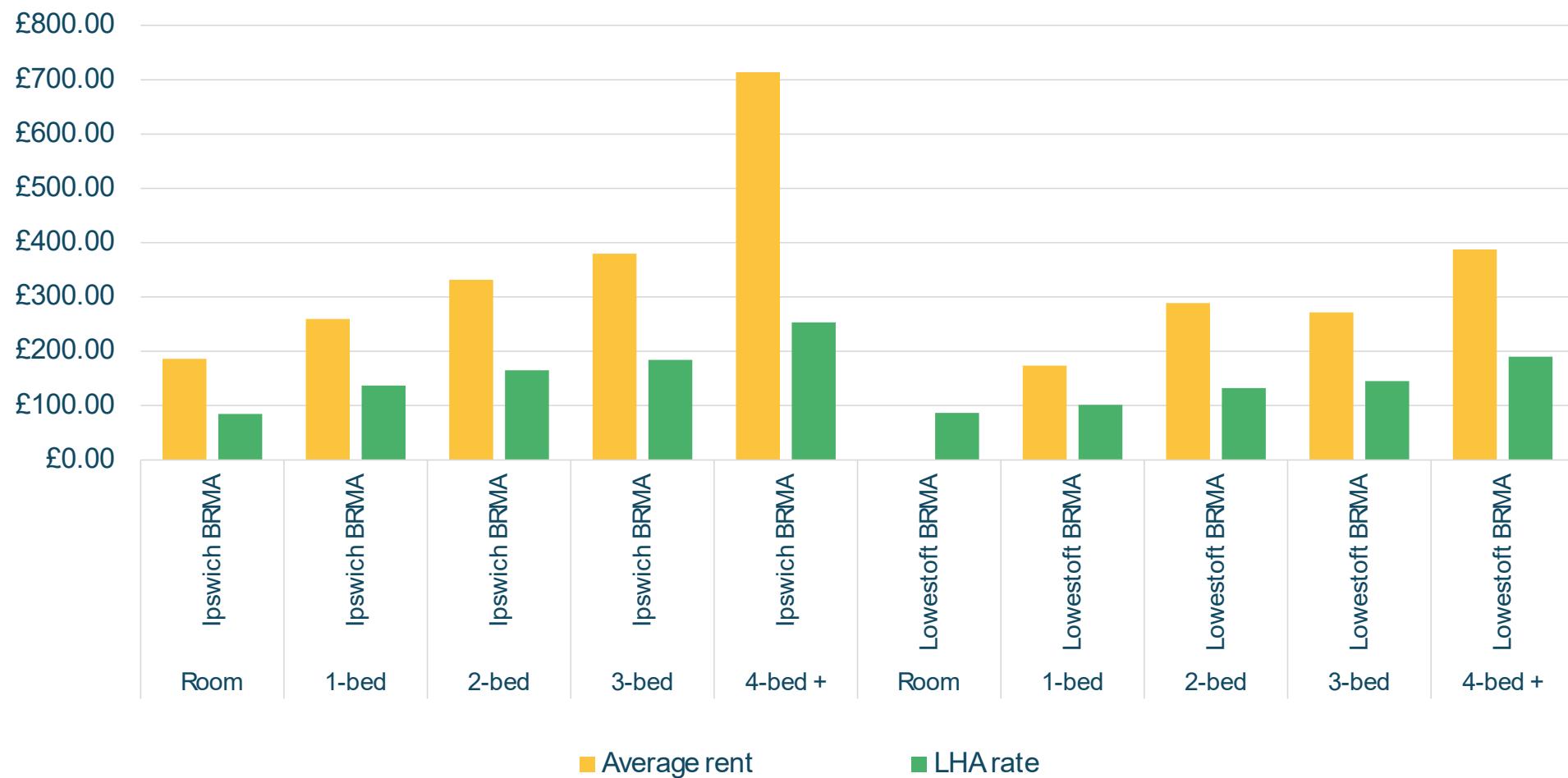
Annual change in rents in East Suffolk

Private rental price annual inflation, East Suffolk, January 2016 to April 2024



Snapshot LHA rate affordability in East Suffolk

Average private rental price against LHA rates



Many households in East Suffolk have good quality housing that meets their needs. However, in recent years housing has become less affordable for an increasing number of people.

The number of homes being built in East Suffolk, including affordable housing, is not keeping pace with demand.

At the end of 2024, the average house price in East Suffolk was £292k. High house prices make home ownership out of reach for many East Suffolk residents, including young families and newly forming households. This means that more people are renting in the private sector – this is now 16% of total households. However, private sector rents are rising significantly, partly driven by increased demand. During 2023/24, the average increase was almost 10% - up from £701 to £769 per month. In East Suffolk, 18% of PRS tenants are on low incomes and 12% are in fuel poverty.

East Suffolk private rented accommodation Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates are set within two Broad Rental Market Areas (Ipswich BRMA, and Lowestoft BRMA). Local Housing Allowance rates have failed to keep pace with market rents, meaning that LHA rates now cover only a very small proportion of available properties in East Suffolk. As of early 2025, the gap between local rents charged and the LHA reached as high as £60 per week in shared accommodation, £103 per week for three-bed properties and £112 per week for four-bed homes.

There has been a significant reduction in the availability of private rent properties for low-income households in recent years, with more second home ownership and holiday lets, especially in coastal areas and in the south of the district.

East Suffolk has a low proportion of social rented accommodation (8% registered providers and only 4% local authority-owned). Over recent years, approximately 4,000 people on average at any one time had active applications for social housing in East Suffolk. During this time, total social rented and affordable rented lettings ranged between 805 - 981 a year. In December 2024 the waiting time for a one-bedroom property was almost one year. Waiting time for a two-bedroom property was almost 14 months and for a three-bed property was more than three years. At present, there is a shortage of supply of ground floor properties which are adapted to meet people's physical health needs.

This combination of increasing rents and housing costs, reducing social and private rented lettings, LHA shortfalls and general cost of living increases, as well as the housing pressures created by the Sizewell C development is creating significant pressures on housing in East Suffolk and these factors are contributing to homelessness.

We know that some vulnerable households are at risk of homelessness due to poverty and digital exclusion.

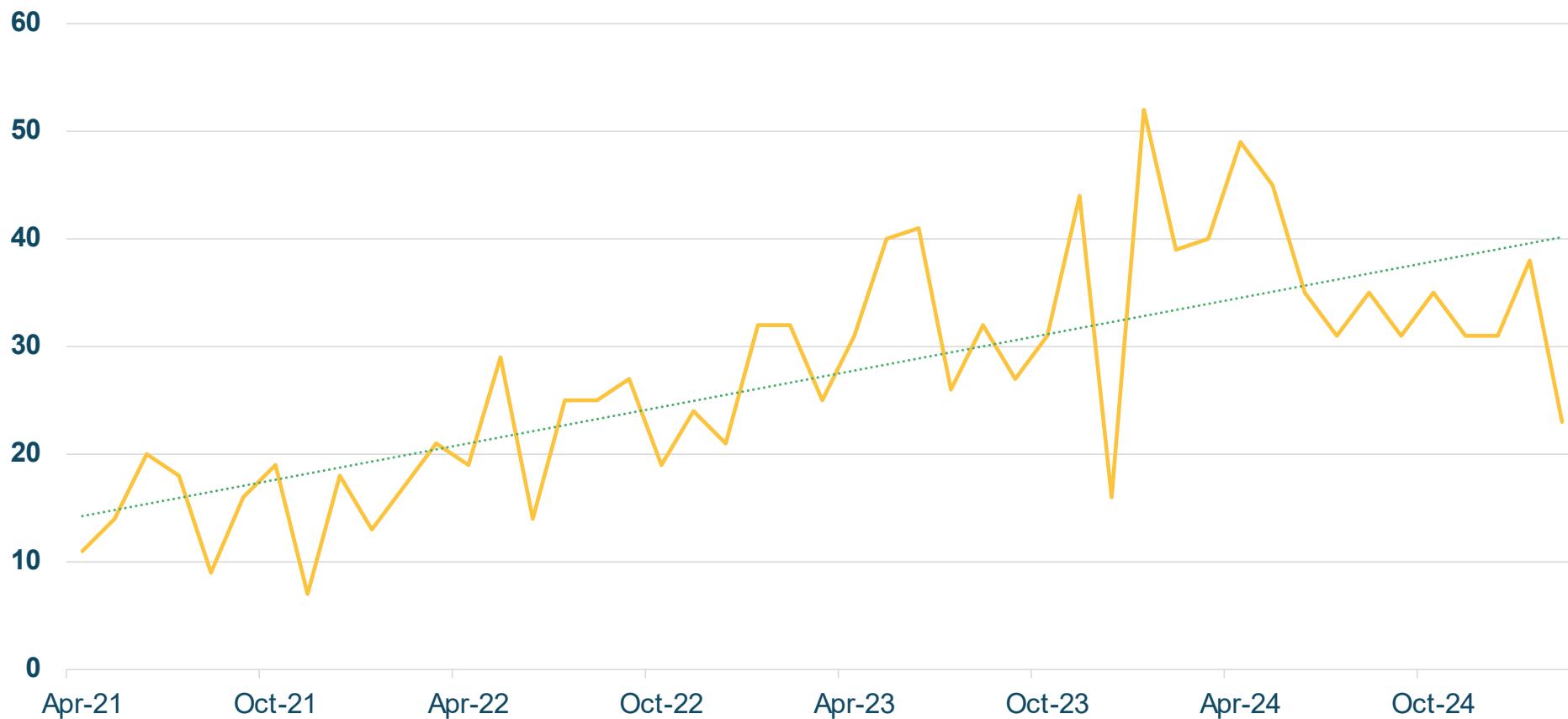
There is also a need to increase provision of permanent and transit sites for Roma people, designed through consultation with communities, in line with the Suffolk Health Needs Assessment carried out in 2023.

To address these issues, we will:

- A) Continue to prioritise homeless households with significant additional needs via Gateway to HomeChoice.
- B) Continue to improve access to the private rented sector for homeless families and single people via the East Suffolk Lettings Scheme, building relationships with landlords via Supported Lettings Officers and our Tenancy Sustainment Officers and building on our financial incentives, to attract and retain landlords who offer tenancies to homeless households.
- C) Continue to work with the Private Sector Housing Team to bring empty homes in East Suffolk back into use.
- D) Work to address unmet need for pitches for gypsies and travellers: three in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan area and 11 pitches in the Waveney Local Plan area.
- E) Continue to support digital inclusion, to encourage earlier engagement with Council and other services in East Suffolk, to enable people to find the information and support they need to avoid homelessness.
- F) Explore how anti-poverty work within the Council can complement Housing Needs' work and prevent homelessness.
- G) Work with partners to develop employability measures that can support homeless households into work and to improve career prospects, for those already in work who are at risk of homelessness or in living in TA.
- H) Work with partners to develop a training and employment pathway for young homeless people.
- I) Continue to work to improve living conditions in private sector accommodation via Safe Suffolk Renters.

Priority Three: meeting the health and wellbeing needs of households in temporary accommodation

All placements in Temporary Accommodation in East Suffolk, April 2021 to December 2024.



Since 2021/22 the number of TA placements made each month has risen 109%, from 11 – 23 per month. In 2024/25, total households placed in TA ranged from 40 -57 households per month. Single households now make up more than two thirds (68%) of TA placements. The number of children living in TA is also rising.

Growing demand means East Suffolk is spending more on TA. In 2024/25, this reached £1,055,677. More people are being placed in nightly-let accommodation, such as hotels and B&Bs and out of East Suffolk. We know that living in TA can be detrimental to people's health and wellbeing. Out of area placements can disrupt people's social/support networks.

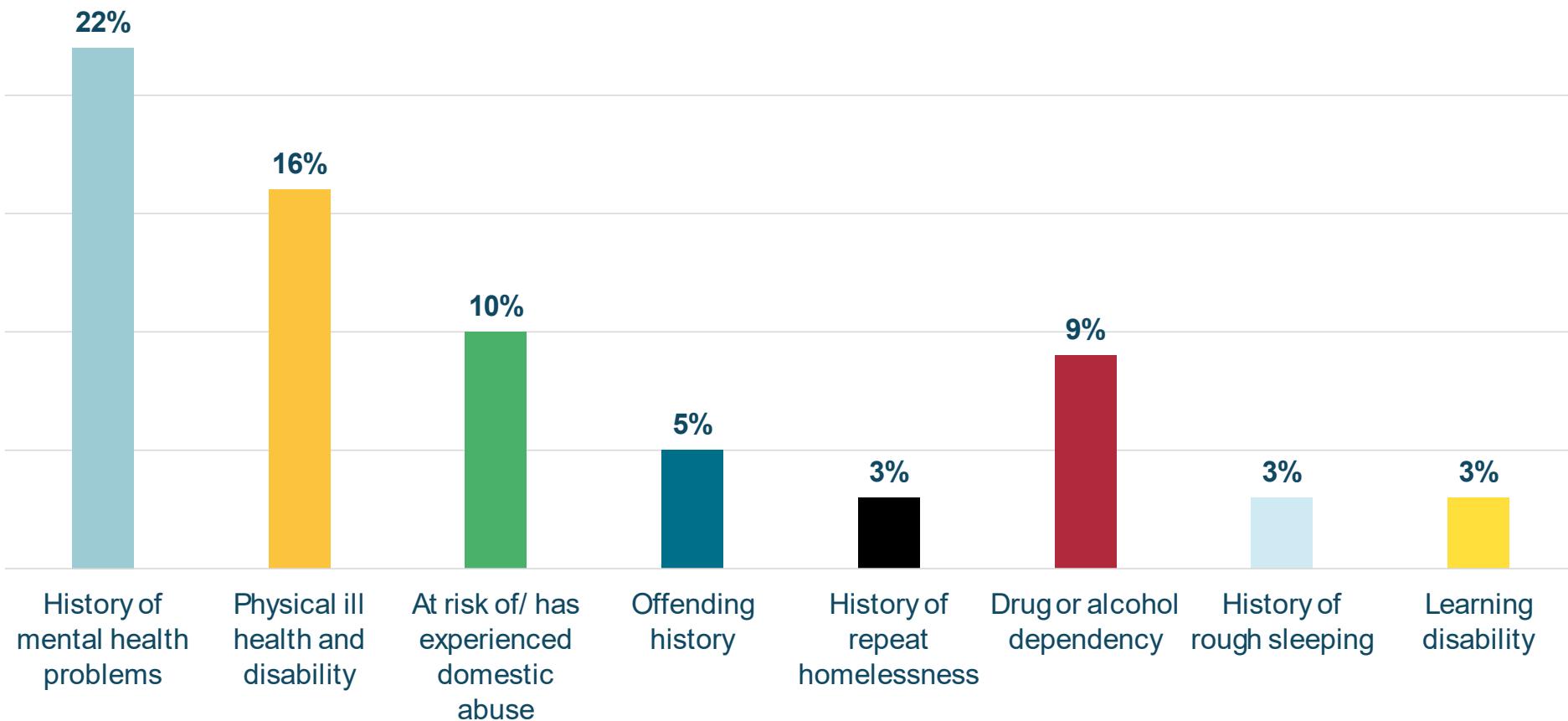
Currently, almost all East Suffolk's TA is in the north of the district. There are also some issues with the quality of nightly-let TA, especially for the out of area placements.

To address these issues, we will:

- A) Implement recommendations from the current strategic review of TA, which is due to report later in 2025. This will seek to address supply issues, including in the south of the district, physical quality standards in TA which is not owned by East Suffolk and achieve better value for money for the Council through re-procuring nightly let accommodation.
- B) Link outcomes to indicators in the current homelessness and rough sleeping strategy and the Strategic Action Plan around supply of TA, numbers of households in TA and time spent in TA placements.
- C) Work with colleagues in health to ensure a mental health specialist worker is embedded in the Housing Needs team.
- D) Work with partners and East Suffolk Housing Pathway providers to promote health and wellbeing initiatives in all homeless provision.

Priority Four: increasing access to accommodation which is suitable, sustainable and affordable

Support needs of all households owed a prevention or relief duty, East Suffolk, 2023/24



Support needs within the single homeless population are becoming more complex and East Suffolk has an increasing number of marginalised young people who have support needs but are below the threshold for care. Some young people also need specialist support around work and training to help them move away from homelessness in the long term. Some care leavers require support around their complex needs or tenancy support, to prevent build-up of rent arrears when they move into long-term accommodation for the first time.

The Government's early release scheme for prisoners is resulting in some high-risk offenders in the community. CAS3 is unable to accommodate some groups of offenders, such as those with convictions for arson. It is also challenging to find accommodation for registered sex offenders, due to restrictions on living in shared housing and close to schools. Some offenders are placed out of East Suffolk on release, potentially disrupting their support networks and negatively impacting on their engagement with community services.

Cuckooing is an emerging issue for vulnerable people living in independent tenancies.

We know there are a small number of people with complex needs, including substance misuse issues, who are currently not moving successfully through our service and who require specialist housing-related support to reduce their risk of repeat homelessness. Some of these people are not able to re-access supported accommodation because of previous evictions or perceived on-going risks related to their support needs or previous criminal behaviour.

The increase in single people with support needs means our current accommodation pathways are not able to successfully support all groups of vulnerable people. We also need to increase our provision of floating support, to help people maintain their accommodation – including those moving into an independent tenancy for the first time.

The new East Suffolk Housing Pathway, commencing in July 2025, will provide accommodation and support for a wide range of vulnerable homeless people in East Suffolk, including offenders, people with mental health problems, learning difficulties and substance misuse issues, people with complex needs, couples and people with pets, vulnerable gypsies and travellers.

All the Pathway's 139 bed spaces will be ringfenced for applicants working with East Suffolk's Housing Needs Team. The Pathway will be supported by six new staff, sitting within the Housing Needs Team and managing those beds commissioned with providers in East Suffolk.

The Pathway will help people prepare for independent living, ensure a joined-up approach for people with complex needs – minimising evictions and avoid repeating homelessness - and reduce service pressures around care leavers in TA. People using the Pathway will also have access to at least 12 weeks resettlement support after they are rehoused. The Pathway will also support East Suffolk Council to meet requirements of the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 and offer opportunities for districts/boroughs to align allocations policies, share contract management and develop reciprocal arrangements.

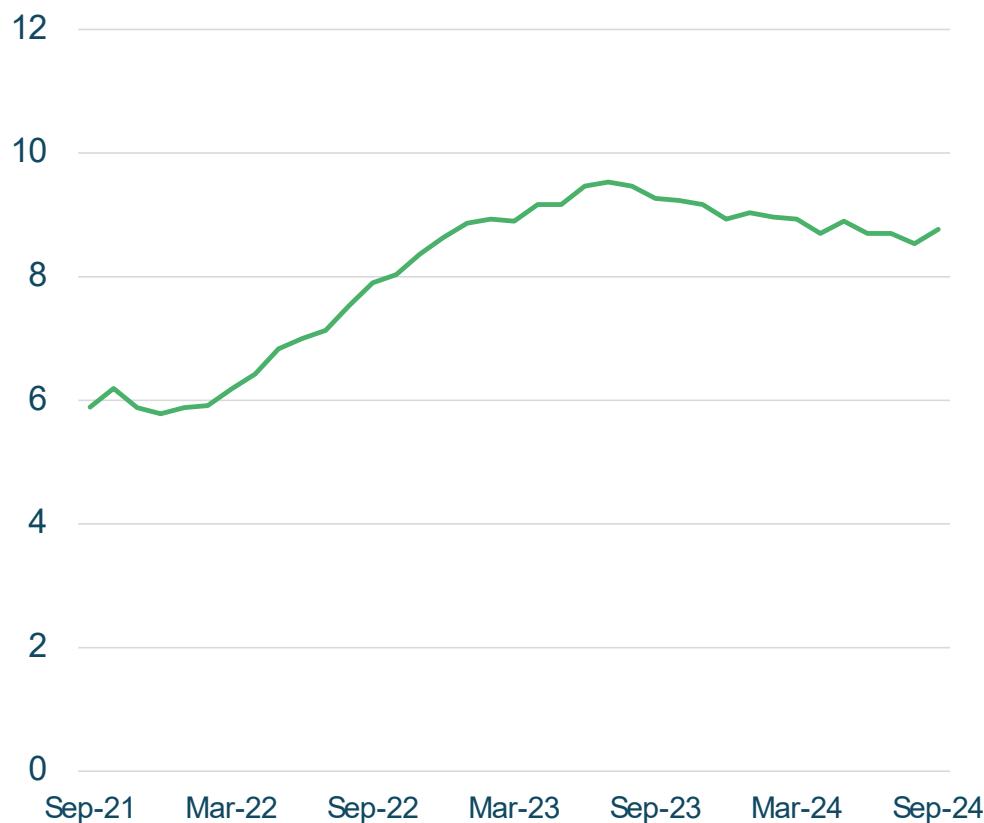
To address these issues, we will:

- A) Expand floating support for young people with support needs below the care threshold and for care leavers moving into long-term accommodation for the first time.
- B) Explore opportunities to provide intensive short-term support for people moving into independent tenancies for the first time and longer-term floating support to help people maintain this accommodation.
- C) Liaise with social and supported housing providers around eviction practices, ensuring that any eviction protocols are being used, reviewing outcomes around evictions and seeking to share good practice to further reduce evictions in the future.
- D) Explore if Housing First can be expanded to include other groups of vulnerable people. This could include young people with complex needs who are below the care threshold but require accommodation with higher support – building on current work with Suffolk's Children and Young People Services. We are already seeking to identify properties which will allow young people to be accommodated. We are aiming to recruit a third Housing First officer, supported with funding from Suffolk County Council. As our Housing First stock is owned by East Suffolk, we will explore whether we can better accommodate people with a history of arson in the future.
- E) Review our approach to cuckooing and develop a response which offers victims a pathway into alternative accommodation and support.
- F) Ensure the Council's data collection systems are fit for purpose in terms of current supply and forecast of future need for supported housing in East Suffolk.

Priority Five: making rough sleeping brief and non-recurrent

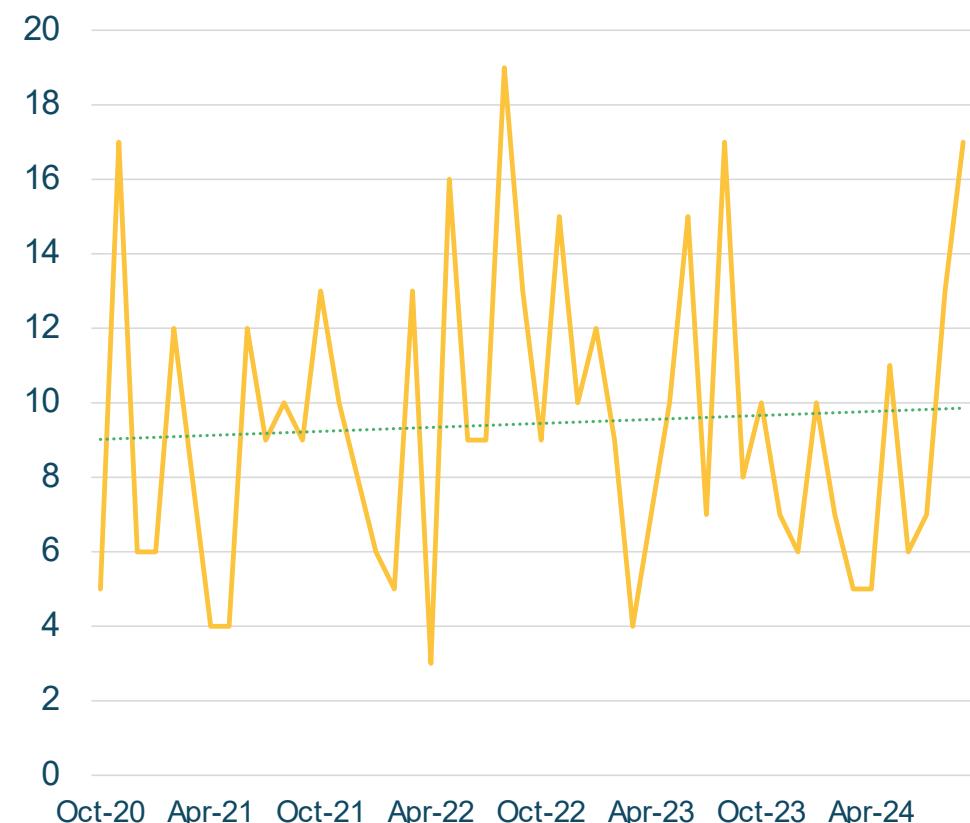
Rate of people sleeping rough over the course of the month

Rolling 12 month average per 100,000 people, East Suffolk, September 2021 to September 2024



New rough sleepers

Total number over the course of the month who are new, East Suffolk, October 2020 to July 2024



Rolling 12-month average rough sleeping figures show a sharp increase from autumn 2021 – peaking in summer 2023, before declining and rising again from summer 2024.

The pattern of people new to rough sleeping has also fluctuated, with similar peaks in summer 2023 and early autumn 2024. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some individuals are arriving from the Norwich and Ipswich areas and that there is an increase in people with higher support needs.

On average there are two rough sleepers under the age of 25 each month in East Suffolk. The number of long-term rough sleepers has remained relatively stable in recent years, at around five individuals each month.

The increasing flow of rough sleepers and their changing profile means that additional outreach resources are needed to ensure adequate coverage of the whole of East Suffolk. We have therefore recently recruited a third outreach worker, to enhance opportunities for face to face work and to focus on supporting entrenched rough sleepers and the Target Priority Group.

East Suffolk performs well in achieving accommodation outcomes for rough sleepers, with around a third of rough sleepers transitioning from emergency to medium- or long-term housing each month. However, some rough sleepers with mental health and other support needs, find it more difficult to access current services. It has also become more challenging for Adult Social Care to provide a rapid response to referrals of rough sleepers, due to caseload and funding pressures.

To address these issues, we will:

- A) Continue to monitor rough sleeper numbers, as indicated in the Strategic Action Plan.
- B) Review demand for rough sleeper services and how current emergency accommodation and other services can be continued after the expected end of RSI funding in March 2026.
- C) Utilise current RSI to recruit a mental health support worker or NHS-funded practitioner, with a focus on increasing accessibility to mental health services for rough sleepers and joint support planning between services working with rough sleepers. The post will initially be funded for 12 months in 2025/26 via RSI. We will explore the possibility of longer-term funding for the role, or similar support, via Homelessness Prevention Grant for 12 months in 2026/27.
- D) Explore the value of recruiting an embedded social worker in the outreach team, to enhance capacity for work with rough sleepers who may have additional care needs.
- E) Expand the Housing First programme to 17 tenancies – ten in the north and seven in the south of East Suffolk; recruit a third Housing First officer, to increase capacity for tenancy support in the south of the district.

Priority Six: developing robust partnerships and collaborative working

East Suffolk Housing Needs and Adult Social Care staff work within different legal frameworks. This means there can be disputes in relation to decisions made in relation to some homeless households. We will continue to work collaboratively to understand and respect each other's legal duties and responsibilities.

Some of our accommodation and support pathways require further development to fully meet service users' current and emerging needs.

At present, not all partners are consistently attending and sharing information at multi-agency meetings.

The new Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 will require additional partnership working to ensure the Council is meeting all legislative requirements.



To address these issues, we will:

- A) Work with partners in Children's Services and SHB and SHOG, to build on the young person's protocol and develop the transition pathway into Adults Services for care leavers.
- B) We will continue to participate in safeguarding work and serious case review meetings.
- C) Work with RPs and other housing providers, hospitals (Emergency Departments and inpatient wards), and the Ambulance Trust, to improve pathways into treatment for people with substance misuse issues.
- D) Work with Turning Point, our commissioned drug and alcohol provider and Council partners to address the housing needs of people with substance misuse issues and vice versa, ensure that homeless people, or those at risk of homelessness with substance misuse issues have a route into treatment and recovery and support around harm minimisation. This will include providing housing needs assessments in a timely way, to prevent homelessness and support move-on into suitable stable housing.
- E) Explore approaches to enhance work with perpetrators of domestic abuse, such as perpetrators being offered advice from the Housing Needs service and linking with the Domestic Abuse Forum, which discusses issues related to perpetrators.
- F) Work with East Suffolk's PRS Licensing team to develop a licensing framework which aligns with the new National Supported Housing Standards.
- G) Develop training for Housing Needs and Adult Social Care staff, to build mutual understanding of statutory frameworks/pathways and service offers.
- H) Offer training to Housing Needs' officers to build understanding of Probation's role and resources.
- I)
 - Review multi-agency referral and casework arrangements, to ensure that:
 - Relevant membership and information-sharing processes are in place and understood by partners.
 - All partners are committed to delivering a person-centred, multi-agency and risk-sharing approach to supporting service users.
 - Case by case risk assessment takes place for people with arson and other 'risky behaviour' groups, to ensure they get all the support they need to maintain accommodation.
 -
- J) Work with people with a history of arson will be supported through partnership work - with the Fire Service, who can ensure fire safety through fitting sprinkles and fire-retardant bedding.
- K) Local Government Reorganisation gives us the opportunity to redesign services, so we will ensure we are actively engaged as these proposals are developed.

Action plan

Priority One: preventing homelessness through early intervention and personalised solutions

	Action	Key Stakeholders	Lead	Timescale	Activities	Outcome
A	Increase our focus on preventing homelessness due to loss of PRS tenancies and ensure Housing Needs staff are trained and confident to work with landlords around the Renters Right Act requirements	East Suffolk Lettings Private Rented Sector Team Housing Needs Staff Landlords	Housing Needs	Year 1-2	Build more relationships with landlords with small portfolios Continue use of DHPs for rent arrears and provide financial inclusion training for tenants Ensure landlords understand the new Act and Housing Needs staff are able to challenge landlords not complying	More East Suffolk residents are able to access and sustain tenancies in the PRS
B	Update council website with clear information on homelessness duties and support available and publicise Housing Needs work to relevant professionals and others, including development of training for housing needs and adult social care staff to build understanding of each other's frameworks, including the role of probation	East Suffolk Comms, adults and children's social care, health, VCSE and other partners as relevant	Housing Needs	Year 1-2	Create information that is easy to find and navigate	East Suffolk residents and professionals understand what help they can receive from Housing Needs

	Action	Key Stakeholders	Lead	Timescale	Activities	Outcome
C	Explore how to increase access to housing advice from the Council. This will include extending drop-ins in community resources, providing easy to understand information across community settings and setting up pop up hubs. Also increase Duty to Refer referrals from partners not referring currently	East Suffolk Comms, adults and children's social care, health, VCSE, and other partners	Housing Needs	Year 1-2	Identify community venues for drop in and hubs Liaise with community settings to publicising information and provide them with leaflets etc. Provide information and liaise with Duty to Refer agencies	People at risk of homelessness have access to information at a variety of settings
D	Monitor prevention and relief outcomes and build an understanding of accommodation outcomes and ensure indicators are linked to Strategic Action Plan	Housing Needs	Housing Needs	Year 1-2	Analysis of data to identify trends Identify and agree suitable KPIs	Improved understanding of performance and insight into trends
E	Ensure all housing advice and support is person-centred and trauma informed	Housing Needs, other council staff, Supported housing providers	Housing Needs	Year 2-5	Provide training and guidance on working in a trauma informed way and what that means for staff practices/approaches and for people at risk of homelessness and/or with chaotic lives	People are treated with respect and the right solutions for each person are found

Priority Two: tackling the root causes of homelessness

	Action	Key Stakeholders	Lead	Timescale	Activities	Outcome
A	Continue to prioritise homeless households and those with additional needs through Gateway to HomeChoice	Gateway to HomeChoice	Housing Needs	Ongoing	Monitor data on homeless households supported and outcomes	Waits for accommodation are reduced and targeted at those most in need
B	Continue to improve access to PRS for homeless households through use of incentives to landlords	East Suffolk Lettings, Supported Lettings Officers, and Tenancy Sustainment Officers	Housing Needs	Ongoing	Identify landlords, publicise package available	The pool of PRS landlords housing homeless households is increased
C	Work with Private Sector Housing Team to bring empty homes back into use	Private sector housing team, landlords	Private Sector Housing Team	Ongoing	Identify empty homes, identify owners, agree action to bring back into lettable condition	More housing is available for letting and empty homes are reduced

	Action	Key Stakeholders	Lead	Timescale	Activities	Outcome
D	Support digital inclusion and work with partners on anti-poverty measures including employability measures for homeless households and for young people develop a training and employability pathway	JCP, DWP, VCSE, employers, colleges Supported Housing Providers	Housing Needs	Year 1-3	Ensure homeless households and young people are made aware of employability support and career development opportunities and are supported to access these	Homeless households and those at risk due to poverty and unemployment are able to maximise their income
E	Work to improve living conditions in PRS accommodation	Safe Suffolk Renters Environmental Health and Enforcement	Housing Needs	Ongoing	Support Safe Suffolk Renters and liaise with relevant owners/landlords and EHS/enforcement officers	PRS accommodation meets decent homes and fire safety standards
F	Address unmet need for pitches for gypsies and travellers	Gypsies and Travellers, officers responsible for increasing housing supply	Housing Needs	Year 3-5	Identify land suitable for pitches ensure correct infrastructure is put in place to support pitches	There are sufficient pitches in east Suffolk to meet needs

Priority Three: meeting the health and wellbeing needs of households in temporary accommodation

	Action	Key Stakeholders	Lead	Timescale	Activities	Outcome
A	Implement recommendations from the strategic review of TA, to address supply issues, physical quality standards and achieve better value for money for the Council. Monitor TA performance – length of stay, number and type of households in TA	Housing Needs	Housing Needs	Year 2-3	Develop action plan based on recommendations Work with procurement colleagues to create the specification required Continue to provide performance reports on number and types of households in TA, length of stay and onward housing and align with indicators in Strategic Action Plan	Council has access to good quality TA at reasonable cost
B	Work with colleagues in health to ensure a specialist mental health worker is recruited and embedded in Housing Needs team	ICB, Mental Health Trust, supported housing providers	Housing Needs	Year 2-5	Develop role profile and recruit Discuss with ICB and Mental Health Trust options for joint funding	Homeless people with mental health issues receive appropriate assessment and interventions
C	Work with partners and East Suffolk Housing Pathway providers to promote health and wellbeing initiatives in all homeless provision	ICB, Public Health, GPs, VCSE, supported housing providers	Housing Needs	Year 1 -3	Work with partners to develop the approach to health and wellbeing within Pathway services	People experiencing homelessness are supported to have good health and wellbeing

Priority Four: increasing access to accommodation which is suitable, sustainable and affordable

	Action	Key Stakeholders	Lead	Timescale	Activities	Outcome
A	We will expand floating support for young people with support needs below the care threshold. We will also explore opportunities to provide both intensive short-term floating support for those who have a tenancy for the first time as well as provide longer term floating support to assist people to sustain tenancies where they need it	Housing support providers, Pathway providers, leaving care team, Children's Services, social and PRS landlords	Housing Needs	Year 2-5	Create specifications for floating support service(s)	People in East Suffolk who need support to establish or sustain a tenancy will receive it
B	Ensure eviction protocols are being used, review outcomes and share good practice to reduce	Social and supported housing providers	Housing Needs	Year 1-2	Regular liaison with social and supported housing providers Share good practice with SHOG	Evictions are further reduced and people are supported to sustain their tenancies
C	Explore options for expanding Housing First provision especially for young people below the care threshold and explore the feasibility of providing Housing First and/or other housing support approaches for those with a history of arson. Identify units in the south of East Suffolk	Suffolk County Council	Housing Needs	Year 1 -3	Work with Suffolk County Council to secure funding	Young people and people with a history of arson have access to intensive support and housing

	Action	Key Stakeholders	Lead	Timescale	Activities	Outcome
D	Review approach to 'cuckooing'	Police, landlords, pathway providers	Housing Needs	Year 2-5	Evaluate current approach and identify gaps in practice Identify good practice from other areas Work with partners to develop more robust approach	All partners work together to reduce instances of 'cuckooing' and victims are supported into alternative accommodation where needed
E	Ensure the Council's data collection systems are fit for purpose in terms of current supply and forecast of future need for supported housing in East Suffolk	Pathway providers	Housing Needs	Year 2-5	Carry out a supported housing needs assessment	The council has insight into how much and type of supported housing is needed in East Suffolk

Priority Five: making rough sleeping brief and non-recurrent

	Action	Key Stakeholders	Lead	Timescale	Activities	Outcome
A	Continue to monitor rough sleeper numbers and review demand for services, including emergency accommodation, in preparation for RSI5 ending in March 2026	Housing Needs Outreach team Pathway providers	Housing Needs	Year 1	Evaluate demand and need through review of data on rough sleeping	East Suffolk's rough sleeping resources meet needs
B	Recruit a mental health support worker (see also Priority 3 b)	NHS/mental health trust, ICB	Housing Needs	Year 1-3	Use current RSI funding to recruit a post Hold discussions with NHS partners regarding joint funding and explore use of Homelessness Prevention Grant from 2026/27	Rough sleepers with mental health needs are assessed and able to access mental health services
C	Explore value of recruiting a social worker to be embedded with Housing Needs Team	Adult social care, Pathway providers	Housing Needs	Year 2-5	Evaluate need and develop a case for the role	Rough sleepers requiring care assessments and social care services are able to receive them

Priority Six: developing robust partnerships and collaborative working

	Action	Key Stakeholders	Lead	Timescale	Activities	Outcome
A	Work with partners in Children's Services and SHB and SHOG, to develop the transition pathway into Adults Services for care leavers	Children's Services, SHOG	Housing Needs	Year 2-5	Map transitions pathway and identify actions for each partner	Care leavers will transition smoothly from children's services without risks of homelessness increasing.
B	Work with partners to improve pathways into treatment and into housing for people with substance misuse issues so that those entering or leaving treatment do not become homeless	Emergency Departments, inpatient wards, Ambulance Trust, Turning Point, Public Health, Pathway providers	Housing Needs	Year 2-5	Map current pathways and identify gaps and blockages Identify routes into treatment for rough sleepers and homeless people including assessment and treatment plan Provide resources and training on harm minimisation Ensure housing needs assessments are carried out in a timely way for those leaving treatment and requiring housing	No one with a substance misuse issue should become homeless as a result of going into treatment, and anyone who is rough sleeping and needs treatment should be able to access it.
C	Work with East Suffolk's PRS Licensing team to develop a licensing framework which aligns with the new National Supported Housing Standards	PRS Licensing Team Supported housing and Pathway providers	Housing Needs	Year 2-5	Develop licensing of supported housing approach, policies, fees, processes in partnership	All supported housing in East Suffolk is appropriately licenced and meets required standards

	Action	Key Stakeholders	Lead	Timescale	Activities	Outcome
D	Review multi-agency referral and case work arrangements to ensure information sharing and a person-centred approach is adopted to those whose behaviours create risk	All partners, including fire service for people with history of arson	Housing Needs	Ongoing	Review membership of multi-agency work groups Ensure all partners understand processes and protocols Ensure all partners understand what working in a person-centred way requires of them Ensure all partners adopt a risk sharing and problem solving approach	People whose behaviour challenges services are provided with the right support and interventions by all relevant partners and homelessness is avoided
E	Actively engage with Local Government Reorganisation plans for Suffolk	All partners	Housing Needs	Ongoing	Stay up to date with developments and identify opportunities to redesign services	Re-organisation leads to a positive service offer for people at risk of homelessness

Glossary of abbreviations and terms

Affordable housing	Social rented, shared ownership, intermediate housing and starter homes for households who cannot afford to meet their housing needs through the market.
Applicant:	An individual who approaches the Local Authority for homelessness assistance.
Approaches:	Contacting the Local Authority to ask for homelessness assistance.
Benchmarking:	Compare performance against other Local Authorities to share best practice.
Care leavers:	A person aged 25 or under, who has been looked after by a Local Authority for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14; and who was looked after by the Local Authority at school leaving age or after that date.
Children and Young Peoples Services (CYPS)	Provides a range of services for young people including family support, social care, education, skills and youth justice, early years services, mental health, and child protection services.
Choice based lettings:	The system through Gateway to Homechoice enabling applicants for housing to choose from a range of vacant properties on the social housing register to "bid" on (register an interest in).
Community Safety team:	Improve the quality of life and work to keep our residents, visitors, and employees safe
Cuckooing:	The practice of taking over the home of a vulnerable person in order to establish a base for illegal drug dealing, typically as part of a county lines operation.
Data insight:	Valuable information obtained from analysing data.
Decent Homes Standard:	A minimum standard that requires a reasonable state of repair, modern facilities and services, and thermal efficiency.
Dependent child:	A person aged 0-15 years old in a household, or a person aged between 16 and 18 in full-time education and living in a family with their parent(s) or grandparent(s). This definition excludes anyone aged between 16 and 18 with a partner/spouse or living with a child.
Deposit Scheme:	Offers a deposit in the form of a bond that landlords can claim against at the end of the tenancy, if required.

Digital exclusion:	Unequal access and capacity to use digital technology
Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP):	An extra payment to help people who claim housing benefit and are struggling to pay the rent.
Duty to Refer:	Under section 213B of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018, specified public authorities are required to notify a housing authority of service users they consider may be homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days. Specified public authorities include prisons, youth offending teams, probation, job centres, child and adult social care, emergency departments, hospitals, and the secretary of state for defence. However, all agencies, including those not on the list, are able to use the duty to refer mechanism, and it is good practice to do so.
Eligibility (for homelessness assistance):	Depends on immigration and residence status. There are different rules for British and Irish nationals, and for people from abroad.
Empty home:	A home with no permanent occupier or where the main resident lives elsewhere. Empty homes that have remained unoccupied for over six months from the moment of being informed are regarded as long-term empty. Houses that have been empty for six months or less, second homes and unoccupied exemptions fall into the wider definition of having no permanent occupier.
Equalities Act 2010:	brought together various anti-discrimination laws into one single act, applying to any unlawful treatment (discrimination, harassment, or victimisation) relating to one of the Equality Act protected characteristics.
Equalities data:	is used to assess the comparative situation of a specific group at risk of discrimination due to protected characteristics, to ensure public policies promote equality.
Fuel poverty:	A household is in fuel poverty if: they have required fuel costs that are above average and were they to spend that amount they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.
Gainful employment:	Steady paid work that allows for self-sufficiency.
Gateway to Homechoice bands:	Once an applicant has registered on the social housing register and the application has been assessed the applicant will be placed into one of five bands (Bands A-E), depending on assessed level of housing need. A is the highest need and E is the lowest level of housing need.

H-CLIC (The Homelessness Case Level Information Classification):	Is the homelessness data collection system, which was introduced in April 2018 to collect case level data, which will provide more detailed information on the causes and effects of homelessness, long-term outcomes and what works to prevent it.
Health inequalities:	An extra payment to help people who claim housing benefit and are struggling to pay the rent.
Homelessness acceptances (statutory homeless):	Are households for whom the Council has accepted a duty to rehouse / accepted the main duty.
Household Support Fund (HSF):	A government funded scheme that can assist with rent and service charges if you are struggling with housing costs.
House of multiple occupation (HMO):	House occupied by more than two people who are not all members of the same family.
Housing association:	Nonprofit organisations that provide low cost “social housing” for people in need of a home. Any trading surplus is used to maintain existing housing and to help finance new homes.
Housing Needs team:	Provides an effective housing advice service to the public. Where customers are homeless or threatened with homelessness the officers determine statutory duties owed under the Housing Act 1996 Part VII (as amended) and prevent and relieve homelessness using a range of methods and interventions. The Housing Needs team includes specialist officers lending expertise to areas including welfare rights and income maximization and domestic abuse.
Homelessness assessment:	An assessment of an individual’s circumstances and any duties owed to assist them under part 7 of the Housing Act 1996.
Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG):	A government grant to support Local Authorities to deliver services that prevent and tackle homelessness.
East Suffolk Housing Pathways:	The Council’s Housing Needs Team is working with local partners, including Sanctuary Housing, Anglia Care Trust and Access Community Trust, to provide a range of supported housing options across East Suffolk. These include provisions for single homeless men and women, and young people aged 18 to 24.
East Suffolk Lettings:	Project developed by East Suffolk Council to increase access to good quality homes in the private sector for anyone living in East Suffolk faced with losing their existing accommodation.

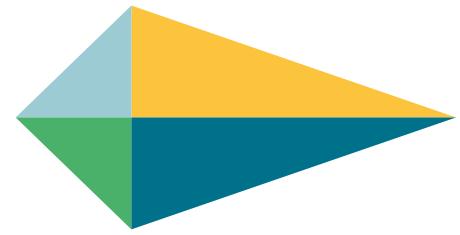
Gateway to Homechoice team	Manages applications to the housing register under a Choice Based Lettings Scheme, operating in partnership with authorities across Suffolk and Essex as part of the Gateway to Homechoice Scheme.
LGBTQIA+	Ttands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer, and Asexual. The '+' represents minority gender identities and sexualities not explicitly included in the term LGBTIQ.
Local connection:	A connection to an area that fulfils the specified criteria relating to previous residence, employment, family associations, or special circumstances.
Local lettings scheme:	In exceptional circumstances, the Gateway to Homechoice may decide to let properties on a slightly different basis from normal: in the interests of building a strong and sustainable community or to deal with particular local issues. The set of criteria where this applies is called a "local lettings scheme."
Main duty:	A duty to provide temporary accommodation until the duty is ended, usually by an offer of settled accommodation. The main duty will be owed when the relief duty has ended and the Local Authority is satisfied that the applicant meets the other criteria of being eligible, homeless, in priority need, and not intentionally homeless.
Marginalised and vulnerable adults:	Lack of access to resources, opportunities and rights which leads to relegation to the edge of society. Some marginalised adults may also be vulnerable for a reason and may be unable to take care of or protect themselves from harm or exploitation.
Mediation:	A flexible and confidential process used to settle a dispute between two or more people.
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)	The UK government department with responsibility for housing, communities, and local government in England. Previously called Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).
Money advice:	Provides debt advice and financial guidance.
Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC):	A local, multiagency victim focused meeting where information is shared on the highest risk cases of domestic violence and abuse between different statutory and voluntary sector agencies.
National housing crisis:	Describes the shortage of housing across the country, particularly social and affordable housing, leading to increasing rents and house prices.

No recourse to public funds:	People who are subject to immigration control and have no entitlement to welfare benefits, to home office asylum support for asylum seekers, or to public housing. Other household types: multi-family households, two or more unrelated adults.
Pathways:	Routes into accommodation or for seeking assistance from the Local Authority for specific groups of people such as care leavers and individuals moving on from supported housing.
Prevention duty:	Is owed when a Local Authority is satisfied that a person is threatened with homelessness within 56 days and eligible for assistance. It requires an authority to take reasonable steps to help the person to secure accommodation.
Priority need:	A priority for accommodation given to specified groups of people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness under part 7 of the Housing Act 1996.
Private rented sector:	All rented property other than that rented from Local Authorities and housing associations.
Private Sector Housing team:	Offer advice and support to tenants, homeowners, and private landlords to ensure that homes are safe and a healthy environment for everyone.
Protected characteristics:	Defined by the Equality Act 2010 as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
Registered Provider (RP):	Provider of social housing registered with the Homes and Communities agency.
Registered Social Landlord (RSL):	Housing association
Relief duty:	Where a Local Authority is satisfied that someone is homeless and eligible, it must take reasonable steps to help them secure accommodation for at least six months.
Rent arrears:	Debt owed for rent to a landlord. Rent deposit: a sum of money paid by the tenant to the landlord which the landlord retains as security against loss or damage or rent arrears. Landlords are required to register their deposits in a government approved scheme.
Rent Guarantee Scheme (RGS):	Rent is set at Local Housing Allowance rates, and the Council guarantees the rent is paid to the landlord.

Rent in advance:	Landlords can require tenants to pay rent in advance. Ring-fenced funding: separate funding for a specific purpose
Rough sleeping:	Defined by the government as 'people sleeping, or bedded down, in the open air (such as on the streets, or in doorways, parks or bus shelters); people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, station).'
Rough Sleeping Project / Initiative / funding:	A government funded initiative that has supported Local Authorities in delivering local and tailored rough sleeping services to give those in need the best chance of a safe and sustainable life off the streets.
Safe Suffolk Renters	A Suffolk-wide project funded by MHCLG, Housing and Communities, aimed at improving the private rented sector for both landlords and tenants.
Section 188 interim accommodation/emergency accommodation:	Short-term accommodation provided for eligible homeless households with a priority need, whilst enquiries and prevention and relief duties are carried out.
Section 193 temporary accommodation:	Accommodation provided to homeless households who have had the main homelessness duty accepted.
Severe weather emergency protocol (SWEP):	Activated when there is a risk to life due to weather conditions.
Sheltered housing:	Accommodation for sale or rent exclusively to elderly or vulnerable people, often with estate management services, emergency alarm system and warden service.
Shortlisting:	The process of determining the position of applicants who bid on properties on the social housing register (Gateway to Homechoice) based on their banding for rehousing and their time spent on the register.
Single family households:	Married, civil partnership and cohabiting couples with and without children, as well as lone parents.
Single people:	One-person households.

Sizewell C:	Is a planned nuclear power station, currently under development. It is designed to be a large-scale power plant with a generating capacity of 3.2 gigawatts (GW). Once operational, it is expected to provide electricity for around six million homes, contributing significantly to the UK's energy needs and helping to reduce carbon emissions.
Social housing:	Housing owned and managed by Local Authorities and housing associations.
Social housing register:	Gateway to Homechoice/Choice Based Lettings (CBL) system.
Statutory duties:	Duties owed by the Local Authority to assist individuals who are homeless or threatened with homelessness under part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (prevention, relief, and main duty).
Statutory homelessness:	Local Authorities in England have a statutory duty to secure accommodation for households who meet the specified criteria for being eligible, homeless, in priority need, unintentionally homeless and have a local connection to the Local Authority area if prevention and relief activities have been unsuccessful. There is no duty to secure accommodation for all homeless people.
Staying Close Offer:	Pilot project designed to support young people transitioning out of residential care homes. It focuses on providing continued support and guidance to help them move towards independent living, addressing areas like independent living skills, education, employment, and emotional well-being. This support extends until the young person reaches the age of 25.
Suffolk Homelessness Officers Group (SHOG):	Managers from each Local Authority Housing Options team within Suffolk meet regularly to share learning and ideas.
Suffolk Housing Board:	Suffolk Local Authorities working together collaboratively on housing related issues.
Suffolk Channel Panel:	The Suffolk Channel panel is a multi-agency group that assesses and supports individuals vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, operating within the Prevent strategy.
Suffolk Stay Put:	It is a scheme designed to ensure young people do not experience a sudden disruption to their living arrangements, that education and training are promoted and that all young people can make gradual steps from care to independence or to an Adult Service.
Supported exempt accommodation	Housing that provides support and supervision to enable vulnerable adults to live independently.

Supported housing:	Accommodation where residents receive support, supervision, or care.
Supported Housing Regulatory (Oversight) Act 2023:	A UK law designed to improve the quality of supported housing, particularly in the “exempt accommodation” sector. It aims to tackle poor-quality housing and support services by introducing national standards, a licensing regime, and strategic planning requirements for local authorities. The Act also establishes a national expert advisory panel to monitor the sector.
Target Priority Group:	Group of individuals experiencing homelessness who are considered to be furthest from having their rough sleeping resolved, with complex needs, and who require intensive, multi-agency support to achieve stable housing.
Temporary accommodation	Provided by the Local Authority to homeless households pending.
Universal Credit:	A benefit designed to support people who are on a low income or out of work. It replaced six previous benefits and is based on a single monthly payment, transferred directly into a bank account.
Upstream prevention:	Act early to identify and support at-risk groups.
Welfare reform:	Changes to the rules concerning several benefits offered within the social security system. It was enacted by Parliament on 8 March 2012.



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