



Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy

2018 – 2022

Vision

Leeds is a compassionate city where people and services work together to prevent and end homelessness.

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Context

Local Housing Authorities are required to formulate and publish a strategy for tackling and preventing homelessness at least every five years. This strategy will replace our Homelessness Strategy 2016-19 and has been developed collaboratively with our Homelessness Forum, key partners and service users.

National Picture

Homelessness is a challenge nationally and regionally, with homelessness acceptances by local authorities 53% higher in Quarter 2 2017 than in 2009/10. 79,880 households resided in temporary accommodation in England at the end of March 2018. During Quarter 2 2017, local authorities prevented or relieved homelessness for 54,270 households, and despite assistance by housing options services including resolving Housing Benefit issues and liaising with landlords, the ending of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy remains the most common reason for homelessness nationally.

In addition to the legislative change of the Homelessness Reduction Act, local authorities including Leeds are experiencing increasing pressure on budgets, and further challenges for staff working in the housing and homelessness sectors, such as the planned rollout of Universal Credit in October 2018.

Definitions

A household is legally homeless, as defined by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

if, either, they do not have accommodation that they are entitled to occupy, which is accessible and physically available to them or, they have accommodation but it is not reasonable for them to continue to occupy this accommodation

The MHCLG define street homelessness as

People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations or “bashes” which are temporary structures often made from cardboard).

Legislative Change

On April 3 2018, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA) came into force. The HRA marks the biggest change in homelessness legislation since 1977. In Leeds we have welcomed the Act as codifying and extending much of the culture and practice we had already embedded. However, the HRA still presents significant procedural change.

The Act places a duty on local authorities to provide anyone threatened with or at risk of being homeless (within a 56 day period) with advice and support to prevent them becoming homeless. It also requires specified public bodies including prisons, Jobcentre Plus and social services authorities to refer (with the person’s consent) anyone they consider to be homeless or threatened with homelessness.

Welfare Reform

A significant proportion of households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness have a low income and need assistance with their housing costs. Welfare reforms in recent years have included an increase in the qualifying age to get Housing Benefit for a self-contained property, meaning most under 35s can only seek a room in a shared house. The Benefit Cap limits the total amount most people can receive in benefits per week, regardless of family size. The mechanism for this is that the amount of Housing Benefit is reduced to ensure the claimant receives no more in total than the Cap level, with a potential point of conflict with housing as claimants are expected to pay large portions of, or potentially all, their rent from their other benefit income.

In October 2018, Leeds will experience the full roll-out of Universal Credit which replaces the range of unemployment benefits and housing benefit previously claimed separately and paid weekly, creating instead a single monthly payment made directly to the claimant. The pathfinder schemes indicated a positive change in the labour market for new claimants, but there have also been delays in payment which have resulted in rent arrears for tenants, with landlords at our forums expressing concern.

Best City

The Best City Ambition for Leeds, set out in our Best Council Plan, is for a strong economy and a compassionate city. Through the Plan, we will tackle poverty and work to reduce inequality. The plan includes among its Best City Key Performance Indicators “Number of homeless preventions and number of rough sleepers in Leeds.”

Leeds Housing Strategy

The Leeds Housing Strategy 2016-2021 has a vision of

Effectively meeting affordable and social housing need, promoting independence and creating sustainable communities to make Leeds the best place to live

This has led to the creation of 6 priorities:

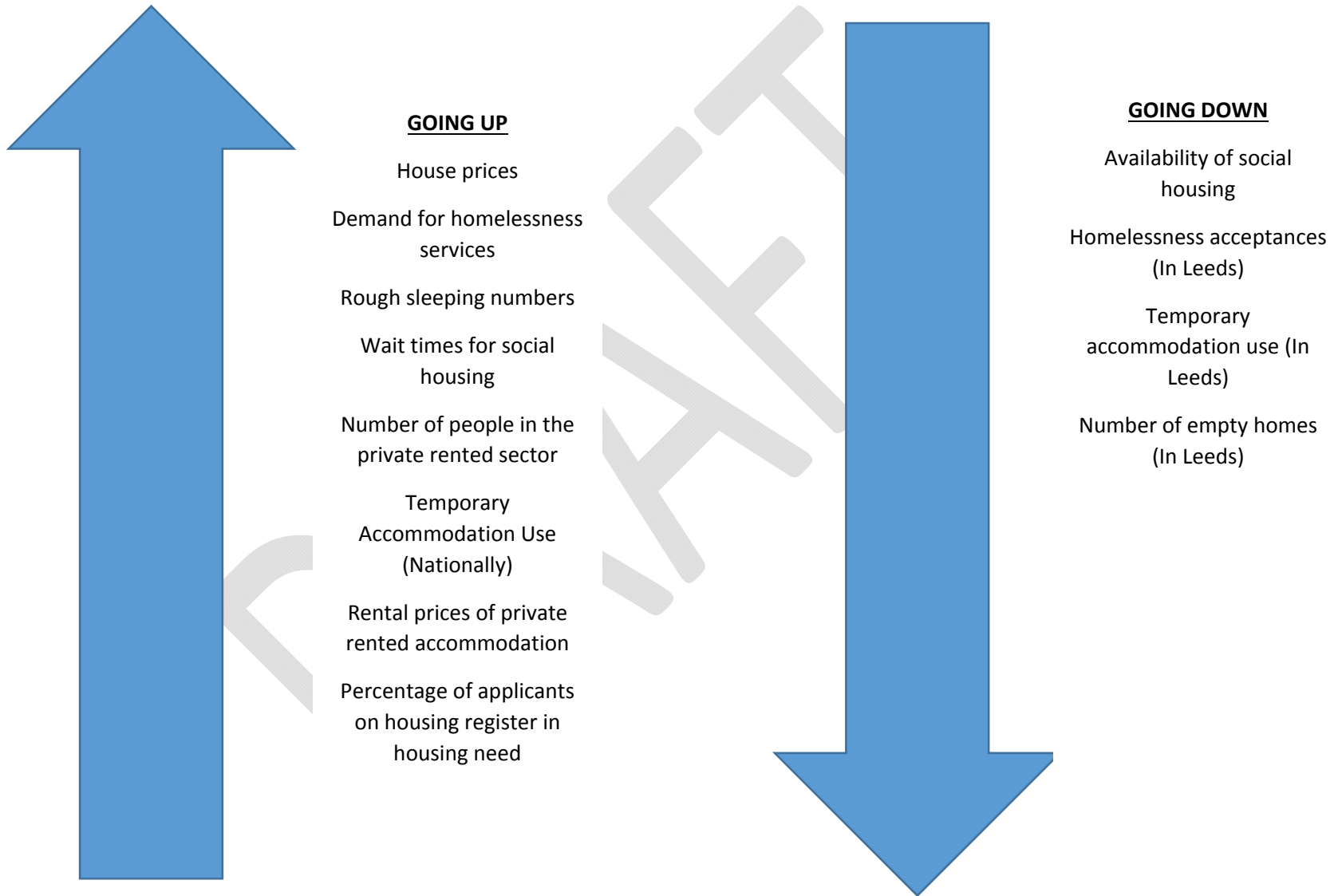
1. Affordable Housing Growth
2. Improving Housing Quality
3. Promoting Independent Living
4. Creating Sustainable Communities
5. Improving Health through Housing
6. Meeting the needs of older residents

Targets within the priorities include ensuring appropriate housing for people released from prison, reducing the number of people whose hospital discharge is delayed due to housing, assisting people in need of support to maintain, achieve and progress towards independent living. These and other targets connect directly to homelessness and rough sleeping.

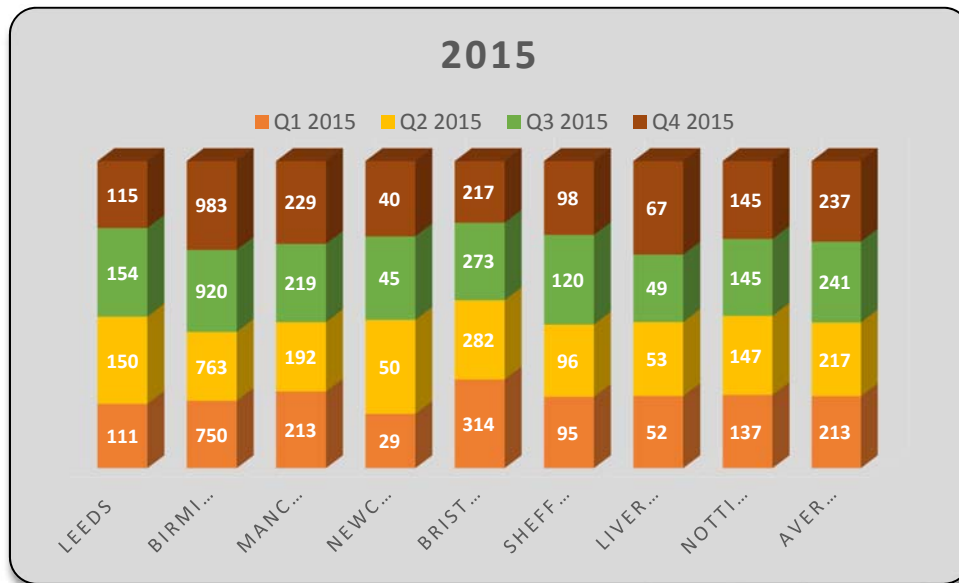
Successes

- 9,180 households had their homelessness prevented in 2017/2018 which is up from 7,070 in 2016/17
- Over 80% of all cases approaching Leeds Housing Options have their homelessness prevented
- Statutory homelessness acceptances around 30% of core city average
- Lowest TA figure per 1,000 of the population of any core city
- Around 550 sanctuary installations last year
- Around 800 private rented tenancies set up via our scheme per year
- No families have been placed into B&B accommodation since 2013
- Weekly outreach surgeries with sex workers at a number of projects as well as street-based outreach
- Developed and published service standards for LGBT+ customers
- Successful implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act with a current prevention rate of 92%
- Successful move to the new City Centre Hub with improved access and facilities for customers
- Increase in number of community based surgeries to 10 per week
- Increased opening times in our City Centre Hub
- Increase in street-sweeps from 1 to 3 per week, and every night in cold weather
- Specialist accommodation services for young people
- Establishment of Beacon and FLAGSHIP
- Co-location with mental health workers, Beacon, Children's Services and Engage
- Staff seconded to the Social Justice Team and DWP
- Daily surgeries at St Anne's Resource Centre
- Development of a specialist panel for those applicants with 'no recourse to public funds'
- Daily surgeries at St George's Crypt
- Introduction of a specialist worker to work with families at risk of eviction due to arrears
- Introduction of housing options surgeries for Engage staff in each wedge
- Sharing of best practice with other West Yorkshire authorities on a regular basis
- Housing Options staff performing prison in-reach on a regular basis
- No increase in wait times despite increase in footfall from around 100 per day to around 160 per day
- Specialist housing options and eligibility workshops provided for EEA nationals in their own language
- Developed partnerships with Howarth Foundation – assisting former homeless persons into employment and training

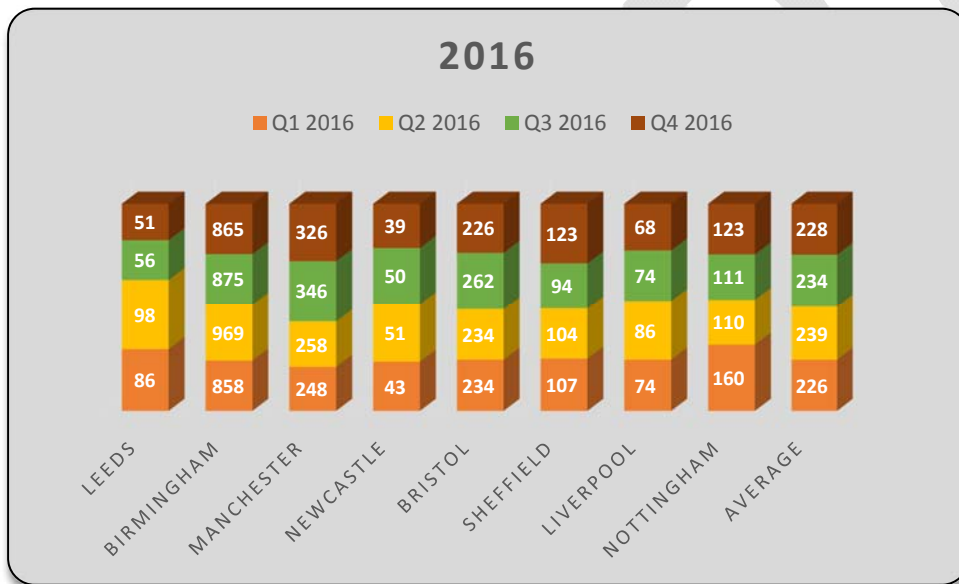
Needs Analysis



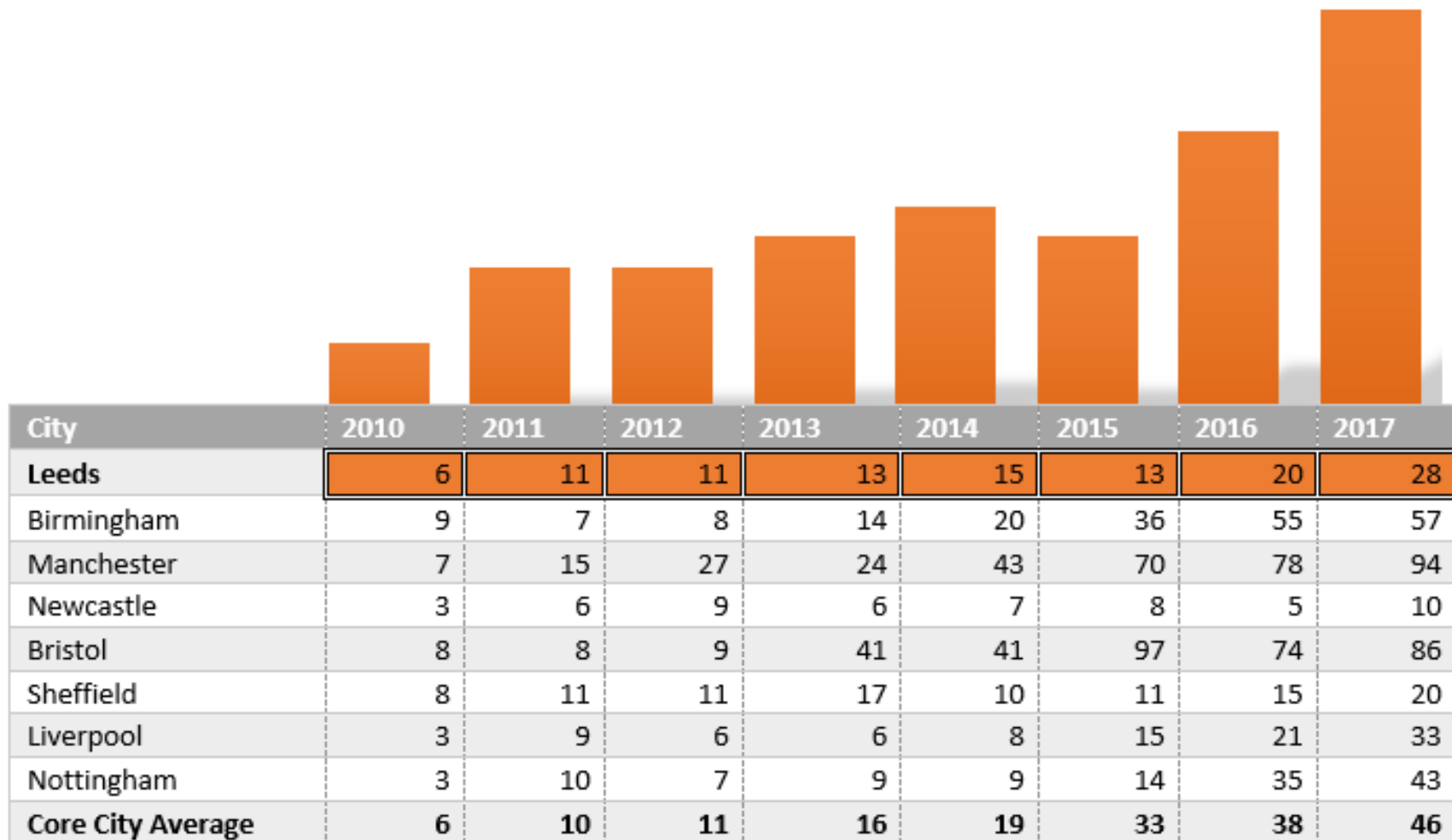
Homelessness Acceptances



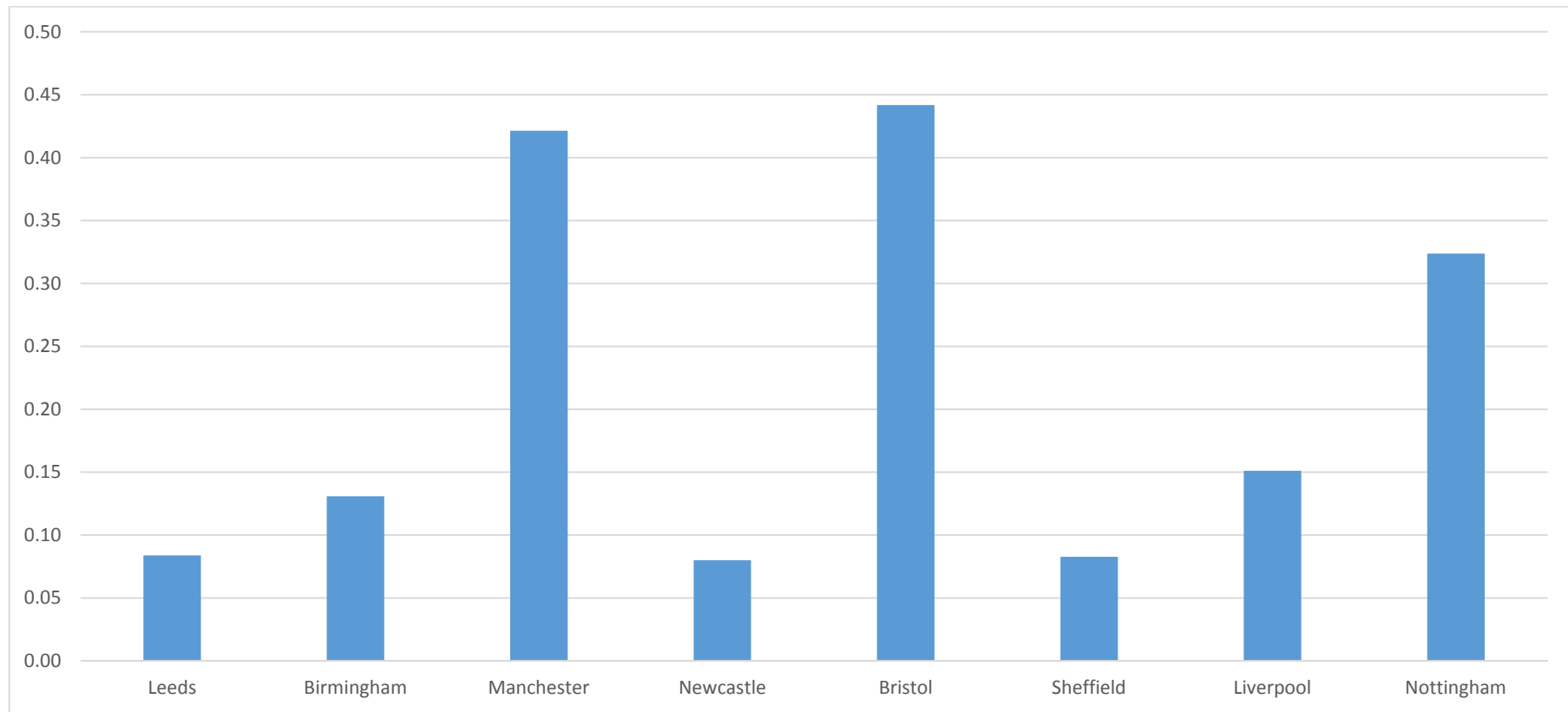
These charts show the number of statutory homelessness acceptances for the core cities. A statutory homelessness acceptance is the result of an applicant making a homelessness application to the local authority and being found eligible, homeless, not intentionally homeless, in priority need and to have a local connection. In 2015, the average acceptances across the core cities was 908 per year. This rose slightly to 927 in 2016 and fell slightly to 910 in 2017. Leeds has demonstrated a slightly different trend going from 530 acceptances in 2015 to 367 in 2017. This is as a result of the increased focus on prevention meaning that more applicants are assisted to prevent their homelessness rather than ending up being owed a statutory duty.



Rough sleeper count



Rough Sleeper Number per 1,000 (2017)



Each local authority is required to submit an actual count or estimated count of rough sleepers in their district to central government each year; the table above shows this reported figure for each of the core cities. Nationally, the number of reported rough sleepers is rising and the chart above demonstrates that this is the same in the core city cohort. Leeds has experienced a rise in rough sleeping from 6 in 2010 to 28 in 2017 (a rise of 466%). The pie chart shows the number of rough sleepers per 1,000 of the population for each of the cities (in 2017). This figure allows a city-to-city comparison as it adjusts for the relative size of each city. Leeds is joint lowest out of the core cities at 0.08 out of every 1,000 with Bristol being the highest at 0.44 out of every 1,000. Rough sleeping has become a pressing priority for all local authorities across the country.

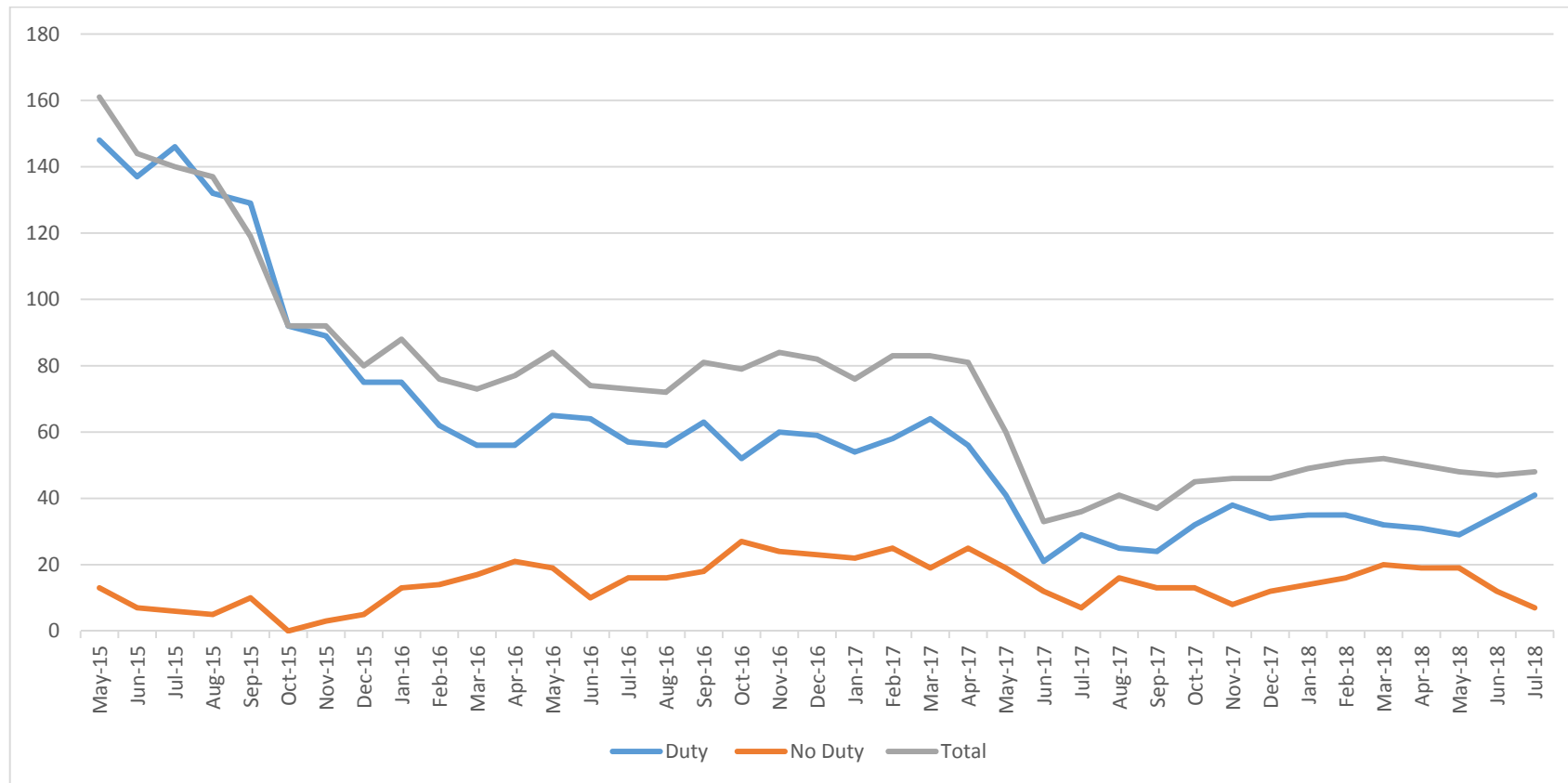
Street based activity in Leeds

There are 151 individuals who have been seen begging, rough sleeping or homeless in the City Centre and who have been spoken to by at least one agency from January to April 2018. The average age of this cohort is 37.8yrs with ages ranging varying from 17 to 61 years old.

Self-Defined Ethnicity	
Unknown	17
Any Other Asian Background	2
Black Caribbean	1
Black African	1
White and Black Caribbean	3
Any Other Mixed Background	1
Not Stated	4
Any Other Ethnic Group	1
White British	117
White Irish	1
Any Other White Background	3
	151

- 72 of the cohort have openly advised officers that they are of no fixed abode.
- Only 56 (37%) of the cohort have confirmed that they originate from the Leeds area, with a further 16 originating from other areas within West Yorkshire.
- The remainder originate from other areas of the UK or from overseas.
- 34 of the 151 cohort are currently LCC tenants, 9 of which are new tenants having been placed in their accommodation in the past 5 months.
- A further 19 street users are in other accommodation including supported and privately rented. Further recent intelligence suggests 2 have left the West Yorkshire area.
- Of the remaining 96 street users 28 are known to be active rough sleepers with no known accommodation and the remaining 68 have unknown accommodation status.

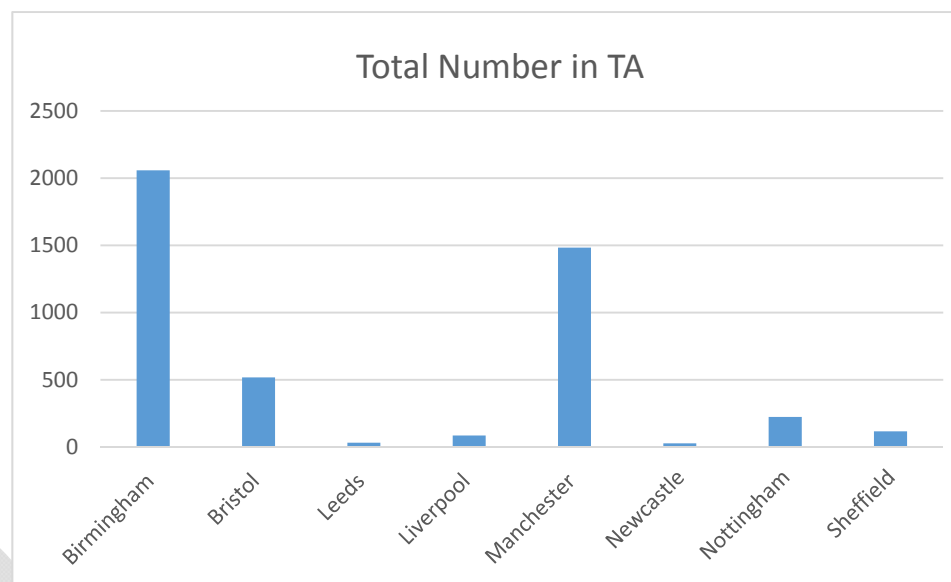
Temporary Accommodation – Number in TA for Leeds



The number of people in Temporary Accommodation in Leeds has fallen dramatically over the last three years – from a high of 161 in May 2015 to 48 in July 2018 (a reduction of around 70%). The fall has taken place in relation to those applicants to whom the council owes a statutory duty – the number of those accommodated under a power (the orange line) has remained stable at 15-20. This reduction in the number of applicants accommodated under a duty is due in large part to: increased prevention activity, a better private sector offering and increased focus on move-on from temporary accommodation once people are placed.

Total in Temporary Accommodation at 31st March 2018 – Core Cities

	Total Number in TA	Of which in Bed and Breakfast	Total in TA per 1000 households
Birmingham	2058	574	4.72
Bristol	517	10	2.66
Leeds	32	0	0.1
Liverpool	85	9	0.39
Manchester	1483	130	6.65
Newcastle	27	0	0.22
Nottingham	223	46	1.68
Sheffield	116	12	0.48



When compared to other core cities, Leeds bucks the trend of increasing numbers in temporary accommodation. Whereas Birmingham, Manchester, Bristol, Liverpool and Nottingham have a year-on-year increase in their TA numbers, Leeds (along with Newcastle) shows a reduction.

Shelter Report on Children in Temporary Accommodation

Authority	No. of children in TA	Rate per children in population	Authority ranking
Birmingham	4028	71	38
Manchester	2051	59	32
Bristol	846	111	50
Nottingham	410	166	73
Liverpool	83	1127	204
Sheffield	68	1716	230
Newcastle	17	3384	204
Leeds	28	5938	273

Shelter has also published research into the number of children in temporary accommodation and Leeds has the second lowest number and the lowest number per children in population. Shelter has identified that Leeds had 28 children in temporary accommodation which equates to 1 in every 5938 children in the city being in temporary accommodation. In comparison Manchester had 2051 children in temporary accommodation equating to 1 in every 59 children in Manchester being in temporary accommodation.

Cost of Temporary Accommodation

Cost in Leeds

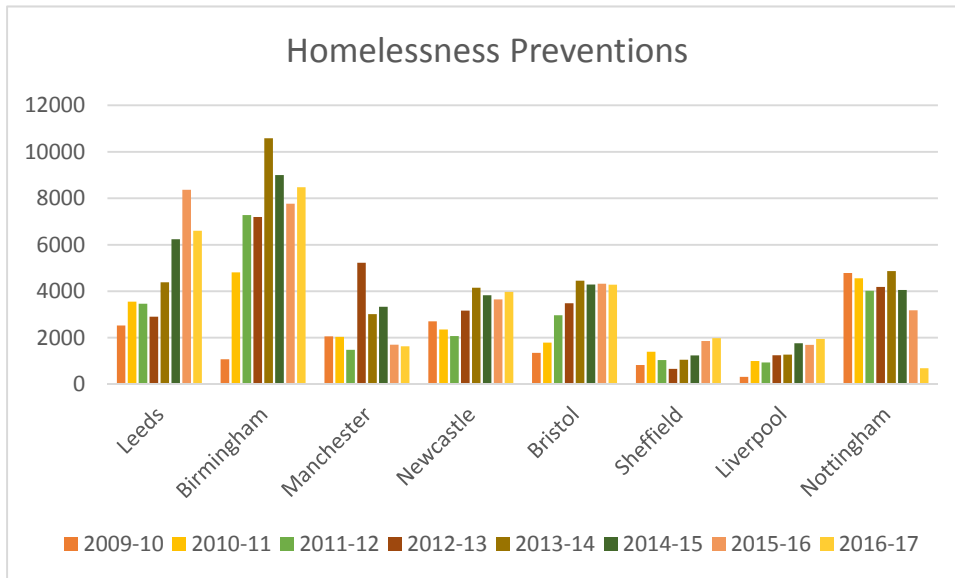
Type of Accommodation	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18
Third sector commissioned supported housing	£2,368,345	£1,951,475	£2,077,904	£2,044,000	£1,958,535
Private Sector leased units	£79,120	£19,107	£16,176	£30,058	£30,000
B&B	£43,425	£765	0	0	0
Total	£2,490,890	£1,971,347	£2,094,080	£2,074,058	£1,998,535

Comparison of cost with other cities

City	Cost of TA 17/18
Leeds	£ 1,998,535
Birmingham	£ 22,978,867
Manchester	£ 20,419,679
Newcastle	£ 633,895
Sheffield	£ 72,033
Liverpool	£ 7,016,500
Nottingham	£ 3,994,337

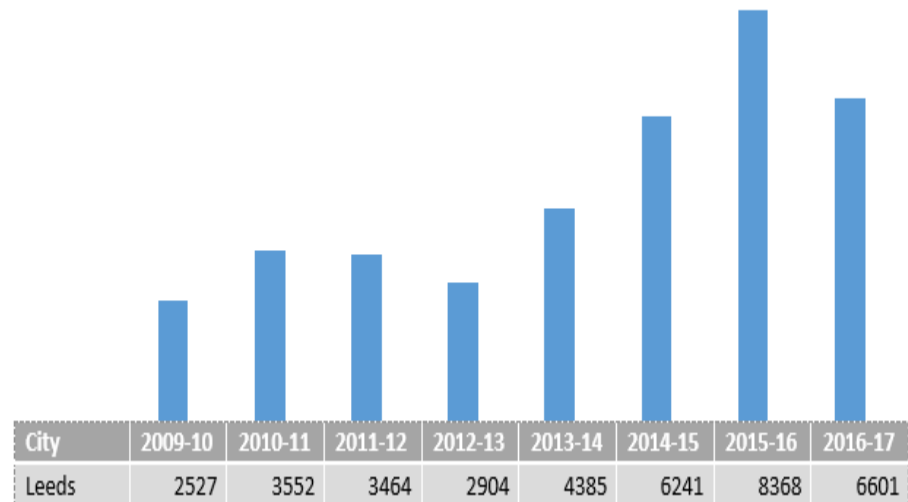
TA costs in Leeds are significantly lower than those of comparable cities. Birmingham is 1.34 times the size of Leeds in terms of population and as Birmingham spent £22,978,867 on TA than Leeds, if its TA spend was in line with Birmingham's, should have spent £17,148,408. Leeds spent £1,958,535 which is £15,189,873 less.

Homelessness Prevention



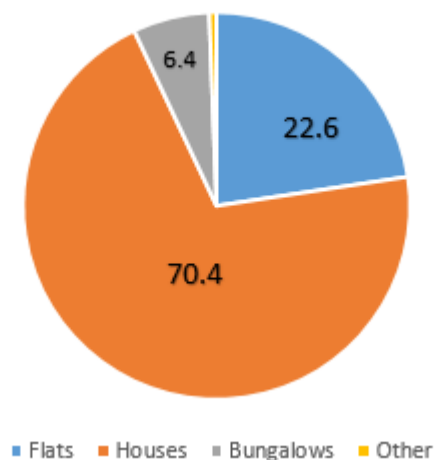
Leeds is second only to Birmingham in terms of preventions achieved by core cities. The definition of a prevention is: “reasonable steps taken by the Local Authority to help the applicant to secure that accommodation does not cease to be available for the applicant's occupation.” and that the accommodation must be available for a period of at least 6 months.

The chart below shows the general trend of increased homelessness preventions in Leeds over the past 7 years.

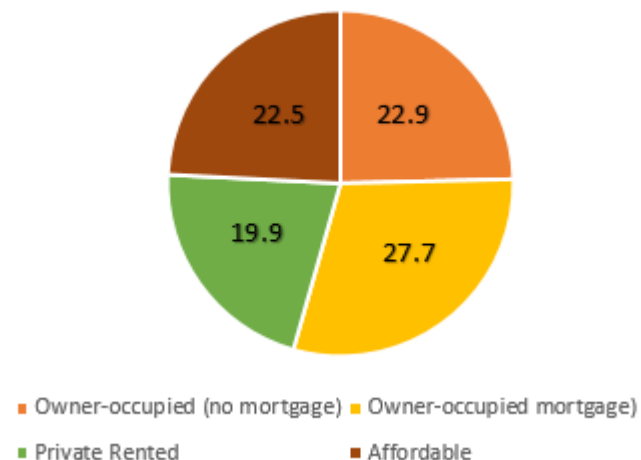


Property Type & Tenure

Type of Properties - Leeds



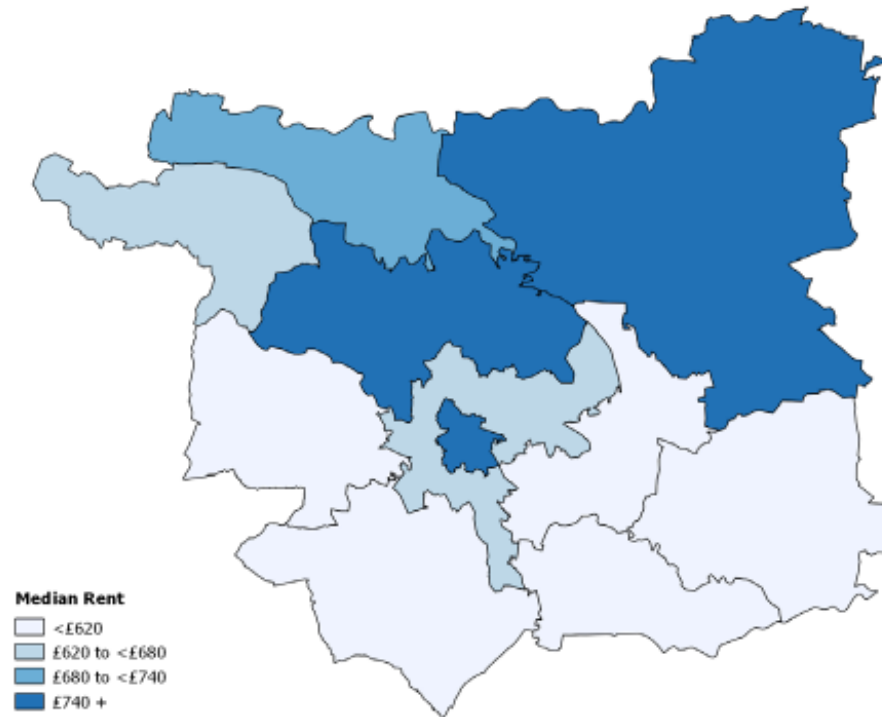
Property Tenure



The private rental market in Leeds has seen a significant change over the last 10 years. The private rented sector has increased from around 13% of the housing market in 2007 to around 22% now - larger than the social housing sector. There has been a significant shift in the lower value markets affecting the supply of affordable homes to buy. Some inner city areas have seen changes from 25% in the 2011 census to over 50% in the level of private rented properties. The concern is the loss of affordable homes for owner occupation, an increase in the rents linked to the LHA which exceeds what would be the market value for such properties, the instability that it brings due to turnover, and community cohesion issues due to different community cultures, the lack of interventions to improve the market, the wellbeing of individuals and families who migrate to these areas with complex issues and needs, and the effect it has on services in general such as impacting on available school places.

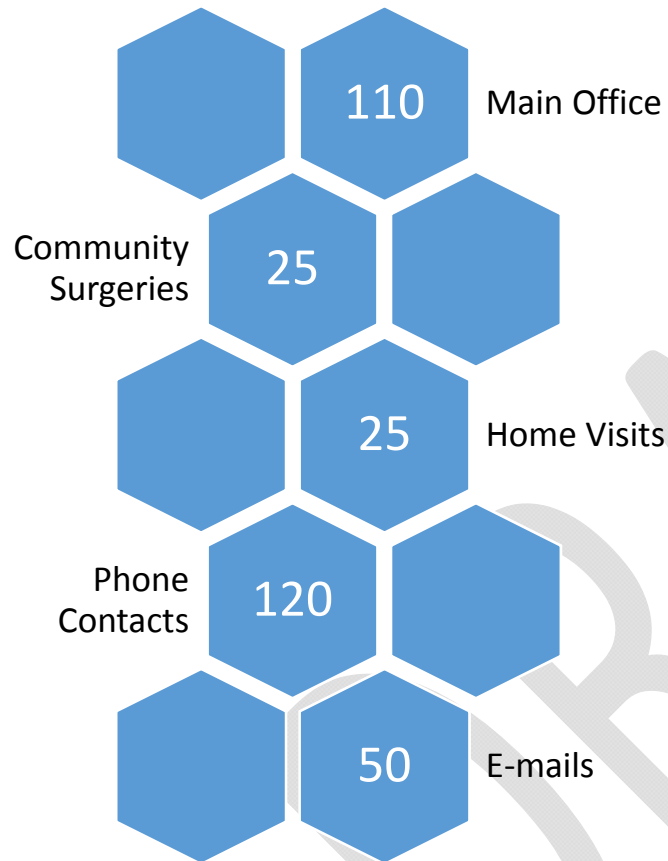
Private Rented Sector

Rented (furnished)	Privately	Rented (unfurnished)	Privately	Tied accommodation	Student accommodation
26,325		37,430		1,435	1,774

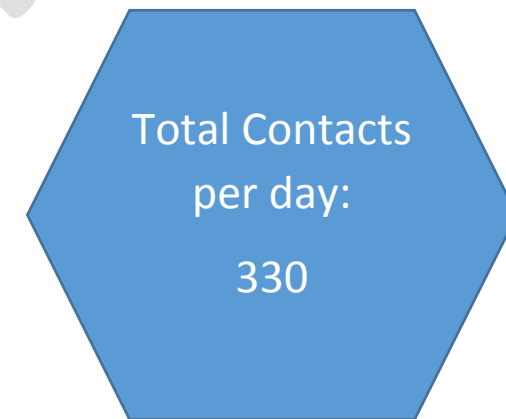


There are estimated to be over 70,000 privately rented properties in the city and it is the only tenure that is growing in size. This is mainly at the expense of the owner/occupation sector. It is present in all areas of the city and is an important part of the housing provision. It provides homes for students, professionals, and the families and individuals who live work and play in the city. Without it the city could not be as economically prosperous. Most of the sector is well managed and standards are determined by the market. There is a significant market in the inner west and city centre which caters for the large and economically important to the city student market. However there are around 15/20000 properties which are of concern due to the poor level of accommodation, levels of benefit dependency, instability and a lack of security. This leads to exploitation and criminal landlords in the market which target vulnerable families and individuals for their own gain.

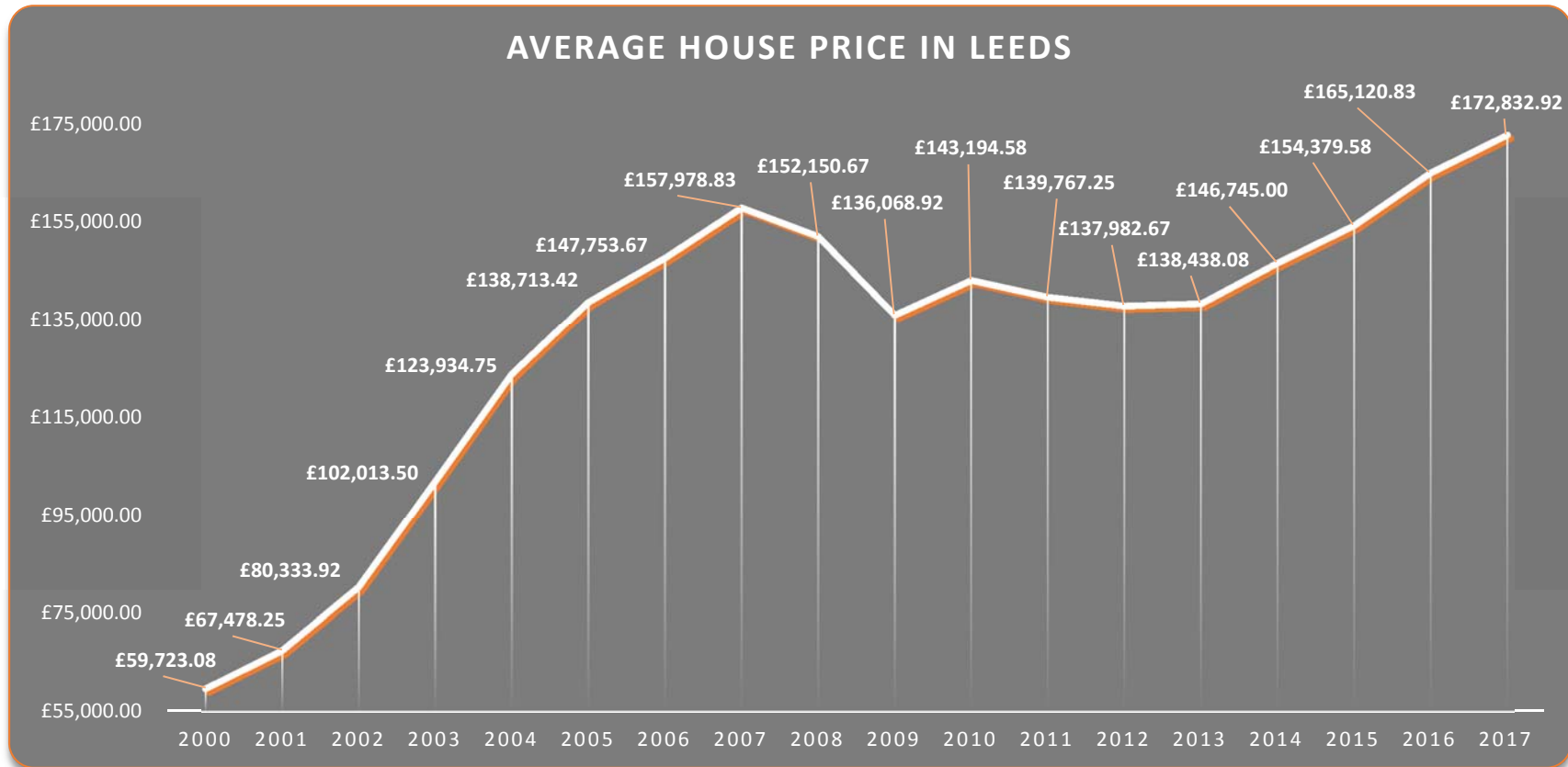
Average Customers Seen Per Day



Demand for homelessness advice and assistance services has increased dramatically over the past number of years, with Leeds Housing Options seeing an average of 160 face-to-face customers per day – supplemented by around 120 'phone contacts per day and 50 e-mail contacts. This is an estimated 330 contacts per day.

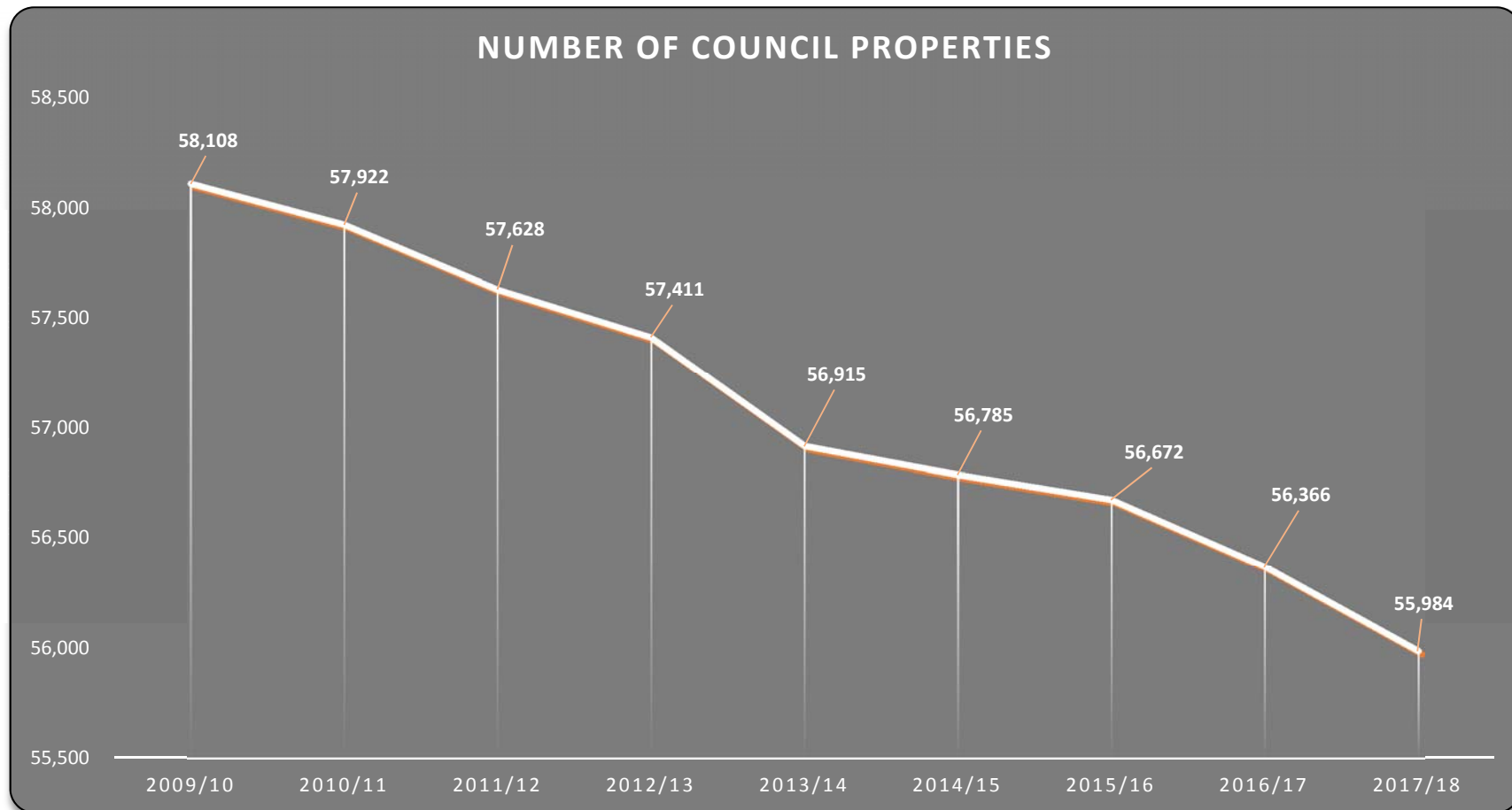


House Prices



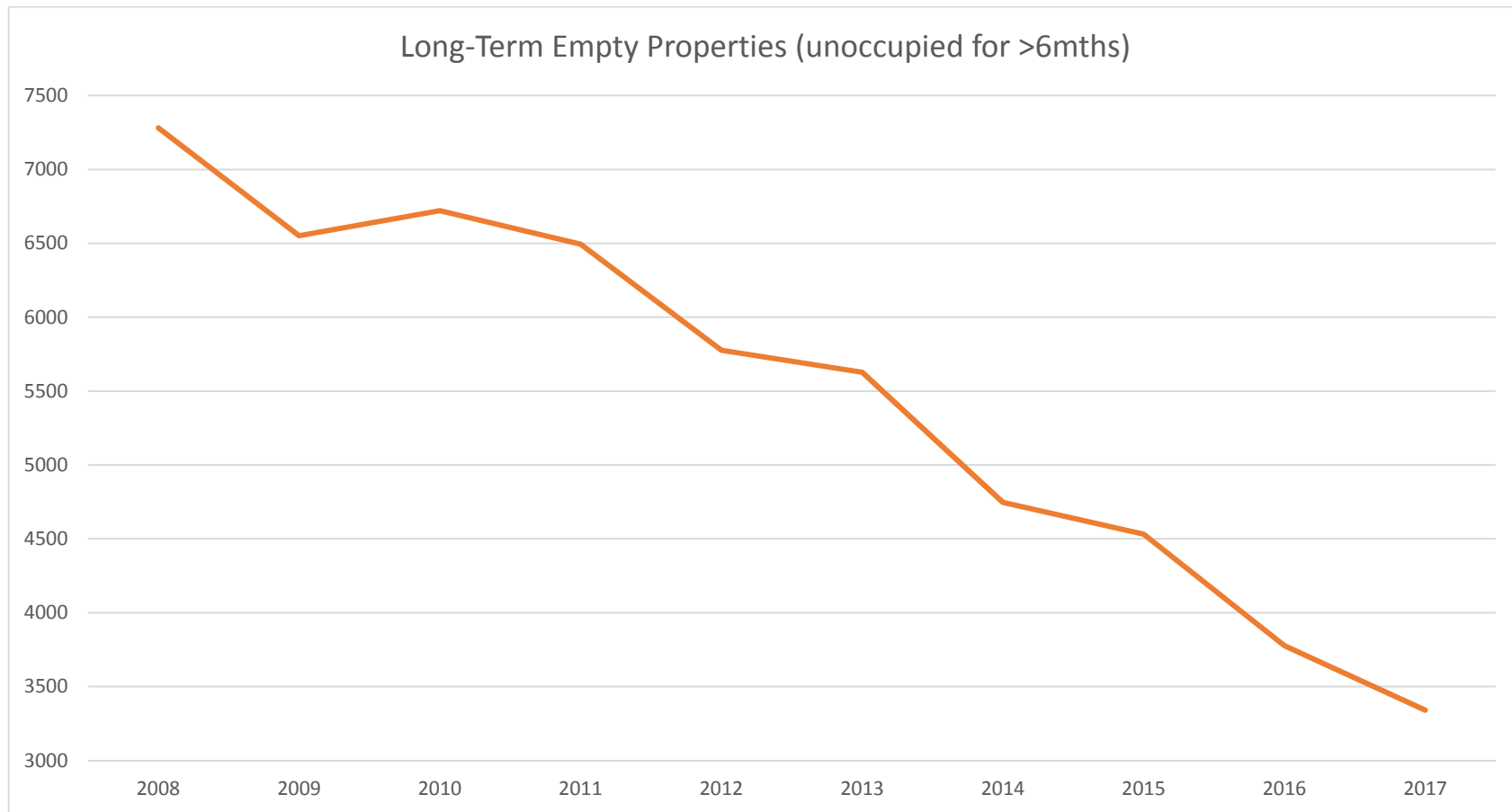
The average house price in Leeds has increased by around 288% over the last 17 years, meaning that many households are priced out of the market and having to rely on the decreasing social housing stock or private rented accommodation.

Number of council properties



The number of council properties has decreased by 2,142 over the last 10 years – putting further strain on an already oversubscribed waiting list.

Empty Properties



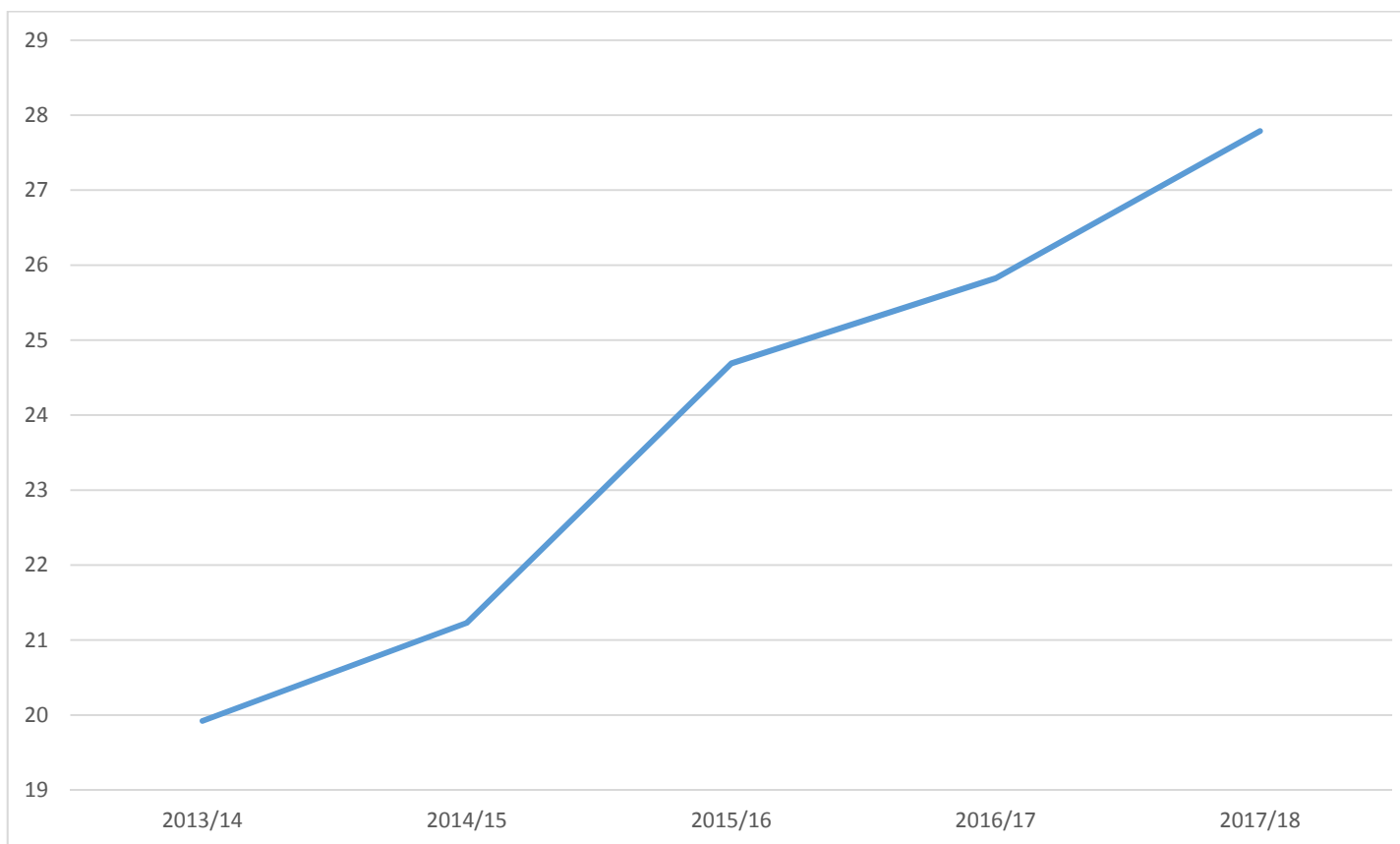
An empty house is a potential home waiting to be occupied and lived in by a family or individual. As part of the Council's Empty Homes Strategy this wasted resource is recognised as a source of affordable homes to help supply much needed homes in the city. As part of the Planning Strategy between 2012 and 2017 the Council's aim was to reduce the net number of empty homes by 2000. This was more than achieved providing over 2300 new homes for families and individuals. The Council continues to target empty homes as part of the drive to increase supply to ensure everyone has access to a good quality, safe and affordable home to live, work and play.

Lettings Data

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
No. lettings	5214	4509	4691	4335	3657
Average time to be rehoused by property size No of weeks	1 bed- 38 2 bed-32 3 bed-27 4 bed-40 5 bed-5 Bedsit-No data Sheltered-21	1 bed-38 2 bed-39 3 bed-30 4 bed-52 5 bed- No data Bedsit-No data Sheltered-21	1 bed- 36 2 bed – 38 3 bed – 33 4 bed – 45 5 bed – 26 Bedsit - No data Sheltered - 23	1 bed – 50 2 bed – 45 3 bed – 37 4 bed – 61 5 bed -71 Bedsit – 48 Sheltered - 21	1 bed – 52 2 bed – 53 3 bed – 36 4 bed – 74 5 bed – 193 Bedsit – 35 Sheltered – 28
Nominations to housing associations – No.	831	1029	659	904	869
Nominations to housing associations – %	64	74	66	74	73
Mutual Exchanges (no.)	585	390	405	464	393
Number of people on Leeds Homes Register	24,793	24,314	23,922	24,665	23,603

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
No. of applicants on LHR by priority award (Band A / B in each stream homeless, medical, housing needs, additional needs)	A Plus-67	A Plus-98	A Plus-127	A Plus-129	A Plus-178
	A Stat Homeless-156	A Stat Homeless-207	A Stat Homeless-265	A Stat Homeless-249	A Stat Homeless-227
	A Housing Conditions-97	A Housing Conditions-97	A Housing Conditions-153	A Housing Conditions-265	A Housing Conditions-321
	A Medical-337	A Medical-424	A Medical-501	A Medical-434	A Medical-492
	A Additional Needs-2026	A Additional Needs-2001	A Additional Needs-2179	A Additional Needs-2479	A Additional Needs-2682
	A Additional Needs Children -67	A Additional Needs Children -80	A Additional Needs Children -77	A Additional Needs Children -86	A Additional Needs Children -81
	B Homeless-942	B Homeless-1052	B Homeless-1051	B Homeless-1064	B Homeless-1049
	B Housing Conditions -460	B Housing Conditions -468	B Housing Conditions -754	B Housing Conditions -752	B Housing Conditions -961
	B Medical- 179	B Medical- 169	B Medical- 237	B Medical- 228	B Medical- 208
	B Additional Needs-574	B Additional Needs-505	B Additional Needs-522	B Additional Needs-626	B Additional Needs-340
	B Additional Needs Children-34	B Additional Needs Children- 61	B Additional Needs Children-40	B Additional Needs Children-58	B Additional Needs Children-20

Percentage of applicants on the Leeds Homes Register who have a priority award



The number of priority awards (as a total) has increased by almost a third since 2013. This is reflective of an increasing number of people who are in housing need. At the same time, the average wait time for 1 – 4 bedroom properties (as an average across all priorities) has increased from 34 weeks to 54 weeks (58% increase). The number of people on the Leeds Homes Register has stayed fairly consistent over the last 5 years although the percentage of these applicants with an assessed housing need has increased from 20% to 28%.

Theme 1 - Minimise Rough Sleeping

Rough sleeping is the most visible and acute form of homelessness. The life expectancy of long-term rough sleeper is 47 compared to 77 for the general population. 6 people who were known to have slept rough in Leeds have passed away in the last 12 months with their deaths, whilst not all on the street, were linked to their rough sleeping.

Definition of Rough Sleeping

The government defines rough sleeping as being a person who is 'bedded down' (sleeping/trying to sleep) or 'about to bed down' in the open air or another place not designed for habitation. This will include being on the street, in a doorway, park, car, derelict building, bus/train station, tent or car. A person's housing status is not relevant; the key criteria is that they have been found 'bedded down'/'about to bed down' in a place that someone ordinarily wouldn't try to sleep in.

The government expects each local authority to carry out a formal count/make a robust estimate of rough sleeping numbers in the authority area every November. A count should be carried out between 2a.m. and 5a.m. (when people are likely to be bedded down) and try to cover every place that rough sleepers are likely to be found.

Number of Rough Sleepers in Leeds

The number of people sleeping rough in Leeds has risen substantially in recent years based upon the November headcounts:

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
No. of rough sleepers	6	11	11	13	15	13	20	28

There has been a 367% increase in rough sleeper numbers in the period 2010 to 2017. The number reported represents the number of people found sleeping rough on a single night; rather than the number of people who will sleep rough at some point over a three or six month time period. It's believed that there are three to four times more people who might sleep rough over a three-six month period than who are found sleeping rough on a single night.

Leeds has had a lower level of rough sleeping than other major cities such as Manchester and Birmingham.

It is also believed that unless Leeds takes a different approach to tackling rough sleeping that the numbers of people sleeping rough, and the adverse effects of doing so on them, will continue to rise.

A key priority will be to improve our intelligence on the profile of people who are sleeping rough over a period of time including numbers, frequency of rough sleeping, gender, ethnicity, nationality, support needs and contact with other services including the criminal justice system and health.

Core Existing Services

There are a whole host of services working with rough sleepers in the city and the following is not designed to be exhaustive but to give readers an idea of the current available services in the city:

Street Outreach Service: the service is managed by Change, Grow, Live (CGL) and commissioned by the Council. CGL provides an outreach service to find rough sleepers and to help them come off the street thereafter. The service carries out a minimum of three late evening/early morning street sweeps per week that increases to a minimum of six per week in cold weather: temperature of 1 degree or below.

St. George's Crypt: provides an emergency accommodation service for rough sleepers and other homeless single people in the city. The Crypt provides 12 separate bedrooms plus up to 24 more communal beds in a 'Hub' provision. An additional 12 Hub beds are provided during cold weather.

Beacon supported housing service: provides 234 units of supported accommodation for homeless people. The service is commissioned by the Council.

Engage floating support service: provides 1500 units of floating housing support to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The service is commissioned by the Council.

Forward Leeds: is the combined drug and alcohol prevention, treatment and recovery service for adults, children and young people for Leeds. Forward Leeds is a consortia of different services operating in the city and is commissioned by the Council and the Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group.

Simon on the Streets: is a street based support service, operating in Leeds, Bradford and Huddersfield, offering emotional and practical support to those in need.

St Anne's Resource Centre: is a central and accessible service in Leeds offering a unique open-door policy for people who are vulnerable within the City, this can include those rough sleeping, vulnerably housed and homeless. The service offered is safe and welcoming and provides individuals with an opportunity to access support in a more flexible manner. St Anne's Resource Centre is the only service in Leeds that offers shower and washing facilities and access to clean clothing and underwear, providing clean towels and toiletries all day within the working week to maintain dignity. Unique also to St Anne's Resource Centre is the provision of a 'safe mail address' that can be accessed by those rough sleeping or vulnerably housed. This enables individuals to make and maintain benefit claims, keep in contact with housing providers as well as family and support agencies.

National Rough Sleeping Strategy

The government published its national rough sleeper strategy in August 2018. Leeds has waited to update its local Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy until the national strategy was published to ensure the Leeds strategy reflected and responded to the national approach. The national strategy includes the targets to halve rough sleeper numbers (from the 2017 baseline) by 2022 and to end rough sleeping by 2027. The national strategy is rooted in three 'pillars':

- To **prevent** new people from starting to sleep rough
- To **intervene** rapidly when people start to sleep rough to help them off the street
- To promote a person's **recovery** once they are off the street to build positive lives and don't return to rough sleeping

The Leeds strategy will therefore be based upon the **three 'pillars' of prevention, intervention and recovery.**

The national strategy emphasises the importance of local authorities forging strong partnerships with other public services, the third sector, the business sector, community groups, the general public, people with lived experience of rough sleeping and current rough sleepers to tackle rough sleeping. Strong partnerships will be the basis of everything we do in Leeds.

The national strategy highlights the importance of the role of health services in tackling rough sleeping because of the high proportion of rough sleepers who suffer from mental ill-health, physical ill-health and addiction issues, the challenges rough sleepers face in accessing mainstream health services and the adverse health outcomes of sleeping rough including reduced life expectancy. The Leeds strategy will set out the city's plans to promote the importance of health interventions in tackling rough sleeping.

Government Funding

The government announced a funding pot of £30m for 2018/19 (of which Leeds received £352,000) to help the 83 local authorities with the highest rough sleeper numbers to substantially bring down their number. Leeds is intending to use its allocation in the following way reflecting the principle of strong partnerships and the pillars of prevention, intervention and recovery.

- **Recruitment of a specialist mental health social worker and nurse:** working alongside the Street Outreach Team providing mental health care/support on the street to rough sleepers and helping them access mainstream services thereafter.
- **Recruitment of a specialist complex needs (addiction) case worker:** employed by Forward Leeds and working alongside the Street Outreach Service to provide a support service on the street to rough sleepers and help them access mainstream services thereafter.

- **Recruitment of an additional Outreach worker for the CGL Street Outreach Team:** helping to find rough sleepers and bring them off the street. The recruited worker has lived experience of rough sleeping.
- **Recruitment of an additional supported housing worker:** employed by the Beacon consortia with a role of identifying supported housing bed spaces and longer-term re-housing thereafter.
- **Recruitment of a Prison In-Reach Worker:** employed by the CGL Street Outreach Team and working in local prisons, alongside other prison based services, to ensure that no person needs to be released from prison onto the streets.
- **Creation of a 'Personal Budget' fund of £120,000 for rough sleepers/those at risk of rough sleeping:** the fund can be used to pay for interventions that help people stay in their existing homes, to get off the street and to stay off their streets. This could include paying off rent arrears, bonds to access private rented accommodation and buying furniture to furnish properties. It is assumed we will be able to help 80 people in 2018/19 at an average cost of £1,500.

The government has announced an equivalent funding pot of £45m for 2019/20 and Leeds will be expected to bid for a share of the funding. It is likely that more than 83 local authorities will be eligible for this money and that preference will be given to the authorities with the highest number who have made a commitment to deliver the most significant reduction in numbers.

The national rough sleeping strategy refers to a number of funding pots that could be available to tackle rough sleeping and Leeds will make sure that it bids, as appropriate, for available funds.

Leeds Street Support Service

The cornerstone of the new Leeds approach will be the establishment of a **Street Support Service**, led by the Safer Leeds Partnership, and bringing together staff from the Council's Housing Options service, CGL Street Outreach Service, Council's Anti-Social Behaviour service, Council's City Centre Warden service and West Yorkshire Police. The service will adopt a joined up, targeted and tailored approach to helping rough sleepers come off the street. The focus will always start with offering support but, if the person refuses to engage with the support offer, then enforcement action, linked to continued support, may well be taken. The service will become fully operational from October 2018. The offer of temporary accommodation/supported housing will continue to be made through St George's Crypt and Beacon.

Housing First

'**Housing First**' is an intervention model that originated in the USA. The essence of the model is that rough sleepers should not need to access emergency accommodation or long-term supported housing as a pre-condition of permanent re-housing and should be fast-tracked to their own tenancies. The swift offer of long-term tenancies should be complemented by help to furnish people's tenancies and a high level of tenancy support. The government has allocated £28m to develop Housing First pilots in Greater Manchester, the West Midland and Liverpool city regions. The national rough sleeper strategy states that the government will review the success of

the pilots and look at wider funding options, for other authorities, to develop Housing First models. Leeds has not waited for this to occur and has developed its own Housing First model. Essentially rough sleepers are being given high priority for re-housing and Leeds Housing Options officers are pro-actively helping people to bid for available council homes. We have helped around 100 rough sleepers to come off the streets through this route since August 2017 and it is taking only a matter of weeks for people to be re-housed. We are using the 'Personal Budgets' fund to help furnish people's new homes. The 'Housing First' model very much reflects the 'intervention' pillar. Some of the tenancies have not worked and community isolation, with a gravitation back to the streets, has been the main cause of tenancy breakdown. We need to consider the opportunities for improving our recovery approach.

Health and Rough Sleeping

The national strategy on rough sleeping emphasises the importance of health services in tackling rough sleeping. This principle very much applies in Leeds given the number of rough sleepers who suffer from acute mental ill-health, physical ill-health and addiction issues. These support needs lead to people starting, staying and going back to rough sleeping. All of these challenges have been exacerbated by the rise in the use of substances such as Spice.

There are some key structural actions, which are recommendations in the national strategy, to promote joint working:

- The Leeds Health and Wellbeing Board to make the health needs of rough sleepers a strategic priority
- A review of every death of a person known to sleep rough to be carried out, ideally by the Adult Safeguarding Board, to look at opportunities for improved working including between health and housing services.

We want to bring health services directly to rough sleepers on the street: '**Street Medicine**'. Having mental health professionals and addiction support workers, attached to the Street Outreach Service/wider Street Support Service, is the start of this work with mental health/addiction support workers delivering support on the street and helping people access mainstream health services thereafter.

Bevan Health Care, commissioned by the Leeds CCG to deliver primary health care to homeless people will play a vital role. Bevan operate in both Leeds and Bradford. A critical point is that Bevan is commissioned in Leeds to deliver a service almost exclusively from the York Street Practice whereas in Bradford the CCG commissions them to provide an outreach 'street medicine' service. We need to consider how we can deliver a comparable service in Leeds. Bevan has, using its existing resources, started to look at developing a 'street medicine' service in Leeds by establishing a mobile health service (Bevan Bus) that will go out and deliver health services to homeless people from the bus provision. We need to consider how we can best assist Bevan to deliver this service including giving permission to station the bus on council owned land where rough sleepers will access the service.

'Street Medicine' should include community or street based prescribing including detox from substances such as Spice. We have looked at how this successfully works in

other areas such as Worksop. It will rely on the Street Outreach Service, Forward Leeds and Bevan Health Care working in partnership and all parties are positive. It will also be important for housing to be provided as soon as a person is ready to start the community detox.

We need to look at how health services can promote recovery and help keep people off the street. A key service will be the Council's Mental Health Homeless Team that will provide people with support to come off/stay off the street and also help people access wider health services.

We need to look at other options for keeping rough sleepers safe from harm if they are using substances on the street. We also want to explore with our partners the feasibility, legality and usefulness of 'consumption rooms' (safe places for people to go to) and the need/demand for street-based needle exchange.

Community Groups

There are a number of community groups that are active in trying to help rough sleepers in the city. Some of the groups provide an outreach service and others focus on providing food outlets. Some groups focus on trying to keep people as safe as possible on the street (provision of food/clothes/bedding/tents) whereas others focus on re-housing. Some groups pro-actively engage with the Council/other services whilst others do not. The strategy recognises the positive role that community groups can play and statutory services want to positively engage with all the community groups. We recognise that some rough sleepers, who have had negative experience of statutory services, might prefer to engage with the community groups. A key element of the engagement will be the development, through Unity in Poverty Action, of a **Leeds Homelessness Charter** that statutory services, third sector, business and community groups can sign up to. The development of the Leeds Homelessness Charter will include giving an increased voice to people with lived experience of rough sleeping. One of the areas for engagement we want to take forward with community groups is the role they can play in supporting people in their tenancies and tackling community isolation/loneliness under the banner of promoting recovery.

Engagement with the General Public/'Big Change' initiative

Most local authorities have developed communication plans around rough sleeping, begging and street based living that have been somewhat negative in the messages conveyed. For example, discouraging people from giving to people on the street because it sustains rough sleeping and money given could be used on substances that could lead to more harm. Overwhelmingly such communication approaches have been negatively received by the public.

The strategy recognises that telling people not to do something, when they meet a person who is in need, is the wrong approach to take. Rather we need to do more about highlighting the positive things that services do and the positive ways that people can help. One of the best ways we can do this is to give an increased voice to people with lived experience who have come off the street so that they can tell their story on what worked for them.

The strategy is also supporting the '**Big Change**' initiative which is an option for people to donate money that can be used to pay for small grants (up to £2,500) for specific rough sleepers or as grants to charities/community groups that want to help a number of people. Grants can be used for a range of options (just needs to be likely to make a difference to a person's life) including furniture, clothes, utility costs, transport costs, help to get to job interviews etc. Groups/services need to register through '**Street Support**' (on-line platform where people can find out about services and how they can help) to make 'Big Change' applications.

'Pillars' of Rough Sleeping

Prevention – One of the key actions is to better understand the trigger points (such as leaving prison/falling into rent arrears) that lead to rough sleeping and to put in place timely interventions to prevent rough sleeping thereafter. A key part of this work will be the '**duty to refer**' on all public bodies, that came into force on 1 October 2018, to refer people who are homeless/threatened with homelessness to the housing authority for assistance. We need to develop comparable information sharing arrangements with housing associations and third sector partners.

Intervention – The intervention pillar is about rapid action to help people get off the street as quickly as possible. We believe that the need is more nuanced than this with services often having to engage with people on multiple occasions before they decide they are ready to accept help. Therefore we need to ensure that, when this window of opportunity arises, we are ready to put in place housing and support options on an immediate basis. It may well be that people need to receive health related services before they are willing to engage on housing options. The offer of health care/other support may well build up trust with the person so that they are more willing to engage on the offer of housing. It may also be that the person is willing to engage with a specific service, including community groups, and therefore this service should take the lead on offering help.

Recovery – the conventional model of tenancy sustainment (housing related support/help with property furnishing) is, whilst important, not going to be enough to promote recovery and keep people from returning to the street. Discussions with people with lived experience of rough sleeping has highlighted that isolation, loneliness, boredom and inactivity are reasons why people leave their tenancies and gravitate back to the street. We need, under the banner of recovery, to put in place a package of measures to help build their lives in their new homes.

For example, we have recently agreed an arrangement with the Council's Sport Service to pay a discounted rate (through homeless prevention funding) for gym membership for former rough sleepers. We will also pay for gym gear for people who take up the offer.

We need to come up with a package of measures that the Council can cover the cost of that help former rough sleepers stay in their new homes. This includes paying for educational and vocational courses. It could also mean engaging with local sports clubs to see how they can help. We need to support initiatives such as the St. George's

Crypt **‘Growing Rooms’** that provides therapeutic group support to help people abstain from re-using alcohol and drugs.

Helping people access employment is going to be vital to helping people build their new lives in their homes. CGL already offers work experience/peer support to former rough sleepers as a precursor to helping them secure employment in the homelessness sector. We need to promote the role of charities such as the **‘Howarth Foundation’** that helps homeless people to secure training and job opportunities with a range of employers.

Targets

Halve the number of people sleeping rough (from the 2017 baseline) by the November 2019 headcount

To have no more than 8 rough sleepers by November 2022 headcount

Commitments

1. Improve data intelligence base/profile of people sleeping rough in Leeds
2. Establish the Street Support service in Leeds including the mobilisation of new staffing resources funded through Rough Sleeper Initiative funding
3. Continue to deliver and develop the ‘Housing First’ model
4. Bid for 2019/20 Rough Sleeper Initiative funding
5. Bid for other potential funding options outlined in the national rough sleeper strategy
6. Develop a ‘Street Medicine’ model in Leeds including community prescription
7. Build in-reach services with hospitals/prisons to ensure no one is discharged to the street
8. Request that the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Board make the health needs of rough sleepers a strategic priority
9. Carry out a review, preferably through the Adult Safeguarding Board, of all rough sleeping deaths in the city
10. Continue to engage with community groups as part of developing a Leeds Homelessness Charter
11. Look at positive ways of engaging and communicating with the general public about helping rough sleepers
12. Develop the ‘Big Change’ initiative
13. Promote the voice of people with ‘lived experience’ of rough sleeping both in terms of communications and employment opportunities
14. Ensure all public bodies understand the ‘duty to refer’ in respect of rough sleeping
15. Ensure services are ready to offer the right housing/support options when people say they are ready to accept help
16. Build a programme of recovery options to help people stay off the street
17. Build working relationships with the DWP including ‘Homeless Champions’ in every Job Centre Plus
18. Build up employment options for former rough sleepers

19. Build up working relationships with the Home Office Immigration Enforcement Service
20. Ensure that a reconnection option is always available for non UK nationals who have no recourse to public funds
21. Ensure we offer the right services to people who have been victims of trafficking or modern slavery
22. Look at how we can best help failed asylum seekers who sleep rough

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Theme 2 – Maximising Homeless Prevention

‘Minimising homelessness through a greater focus on prevention’

What is Homeless Prevention?

We define homeless prevention as being:

- An intervention by a service
- That enables a person who is at risk of losing their home
- To stay indefinitely in their current home providing it is suitable to do so
- Or to make a planned move to alternative suitable long-term accommodation

The Leeds service offer to people who are threatened with homelessness has been focused on homeless prevention for a number of years. This focus has enabled us to achieve the lowest number of temporary accommodation placements out of any of the Core City authorities. To have not placed a homeless family in bed and breakfast since 2013 has saved the Council multiple millions of pounds in avoided temporary accommodation placements. More detail relating to these achievements is set out in the ‘Modernising Supported Housing’ theme. The current Leeds homeless prevention offer is rooted in the principle of ‘invest to save’, investment in prevention delivers substantially higher savings especially relating to avoided temporary accommodation placements. A focus on homeless prevention also generally gives people what they want: a long-term home.

The Homeless Prevention theme will set out how we, as a city, include people threatened with homelessness, so we can then build on what we already do to prevent homelessness. The starting point will be the recent introduction of the **Homelessness Reduction Act** which enshrines the concept of homeless prevention in law. The act separates out **homeless prevention and relief** with prevention relating to people who are threatened with homelessness and relief relating to people who are already homeless.

Homelessness Reduction Act

The 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act, which came into force on 3 April 2018, sets out the following:

- An authority has a legal duty to take reasonable steps to **prevent homelessness** (ensure that accommodation remains available) for an eligible person who is threatened with homelessness
- An authority has a duty to take reasonable steps to **relieve homelessness** (ensure that accommodation becomes available) for an eligible person who has become homeless
- The homeless prevention and relief duties are in place for **56 days**

- The actions, agreed between the authority and the applicant, to prevent or relieve homelessness must be set out in a **Personal Housing Plan**
- Each authority has a legal duty to make available to any person who requires it **information and advice** on preventing homelessness, securing accommodation, legal rights as a homeless person and how to access such help
- Since 1 October 2018 all public bodies will have a 'duty to refer' to the housing authority people known to them who are homeless or threatened with homelessness

Outcomes data for the period April 2018 to June 2018 for applications activated under the Homelessness Reduction Act are as follows:

Outcome	Number
Preventions	700
Reliefs	268
Homeless Acceptance	2
Intentionally Homeless	2
Ineligible	45
Closed	205
Total closures	1,222

- 968 people, out of 1,222, had their homelessness prevented or relieved. This equates to a success rate of 80%. We feel that 80% is a demanding but attainable target that we should set for at least the initial period of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- If we fail to achieve a homeless prevention or relief then we proceed to carry out a homeless assessment to determine whether a long-term temporary accommodation duty, pending re-housing, is owed. A person is owed the duty if they are eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need. This is referred to as a 'homeless acceptance'. The number of homeless acceptances is low for the period because we have to go through the 56 day prevention/relief duty before making the homeless acceptance.
- A person might be owed an interim temporary accommodation pending the relief duty being applied.
- 45 ineligible people is high. This may well be people who have received a negative asylum decision or be an EEA (European Economic Area) national who is not exercising their right to be in the UK as a worker and therefore has no recourse to public funds.
- 205 closed cases is also high. The main reason for closing a case is that the person has not maintained contact with the authority. This would not be a negative if the person had resolved their own housing difficulties as we want to promote personal responsibility. However, it would be a negative if the person

had failed to maintain contact because they are unhappy with the options we had put forward or the progress that had been made on their case. We need to significantly reduce the case closed number.

Our Prevention Offer

Homeless Prevention Fund: The Council administers a fund (with a value of £500,000 in 2018/19) that can be used to cover the cost of a range of interventions that result in a homeless prevention or relief. The most common intervention is to cover the cost of a rent in advance/bond/damage liability payment to help a person secure a private rented tenancy. The fund is a significant example of 'invest to save' given that the cost of not preventing/relieving homelessness, and making a temporary accommodation placement, greatly outweigh the cost of the intervention. We assume that a £500,000 investment in homeless prevention/relief will avoid the need to spend about £10m per year on temporary accommodation placements including expensive bed and breakfast placements.

Private Sector Lettings scheme: the Council works with a number of private landlords to help people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness to secure tenancies. All properties are inspected by the Council's Private Sector Housing Service and no property can go onto the scheme, including a Homeless Prevention fund payment, unless the property passes the inspection. We therefore are ensuring that accommodation is of a high standard and are linking Council investment to quality of service offered. All bond payments need to be deposited, in the name of Leeds City Council, with a nationally recognised Bond Protection Scheme. Bond values, minus deductions for damage/loss, are returned to the Council at the end of the tenancy. A damage liability payment refers to an end of tenancy term payment to cover damage/loss in lieu of an upfront bond payment being made. The standard maximum damage liability payment is the equivalent of four weeks rent. The private rented sector is a growing tenure in Leeds (now exceeding 60,000 properties) and is used as both a long-term and interim housing option, pending council re-housing. We facilitate the use of the private rented sector as an interim housing option by retaining council re-housing priority awards at the point of private rented tenancy sign-up. We helped set up **143 private rented tenancies** in the period April to June 2018.

Youth Mediation: young people becoming homeless after a relationship breakdown with parents used to be one of the three main causes of reported homelessness in the city. We start from the position that young people should ordinarily leave home when they are ready to do so and in a planned way. If there are opportunities to help a young person to return home (even if only to enable them to leave in a more planned way) or to restore some level of positive contact with a parent then we should take these opportunities. The Council runs a youth mediation service that involves two way dialogue between a youth mediator and young person and parent and then sessions with the young person and parent at the same time. The ultimate aim is to help a young person reconcile their differences to the point when they can return home. **65 out of 68 young people**, whose cases were closed between April and June 2018, were able to return home through mediation.

Sanctuary Scheme: the main cause of homelessness in the city is domestic violence. It is common for the perpetrator of the domestic violence to no longer be living in the same house as the victim and therefore an opportunity presents to create a 'safer' living environment for the victim rather than them becoming homeless. The Sanctuary scheme involves the installation of a range of physical security measures to create this 'safer' living environment. Between April and June 2018, **128 people took up the offer of a Sanctuary installation** to help them remain in their current home. It is important to stress that the Sanctuary offer is ultimately the choice of the domestic violence victim. If they do not feel safe in their current home then other options, including temporary accommodation, will be found.

Priority Awards: we use council re-housing priority awards in order to facilitate homeless prevention and relief outcomes. We find that many people, who are living care of family or friends, can remain temporarily living in such options if there is a realistic prospect of relatively swift re-housing. We make council housing priority awards, under the banner of homeless prevention or relief, on the basis that the award will facilitate re-housing and the retention of the current housing option. We also find that many people are willing to take a private rented tenancy, as an interim housing option, providing they can ultimately secure council housing. We therefore permit people to retain their council re-housing priority award when they accept a private rented tenancy. A significant number of the 143 private rented tenancies would not have occurred if we did not permit people to retain their council re-housing priority status.

Prevention through Partnership

The likelihood of achieving a successful homeless prevention is significantly dependent upon the length of time available to put in place prevention options. Essentially the more time we have the more likely we are to succeed. The Homelessness Reduction Act seeks to foster a culture of early intervention by housing options services. The new duty is to take reasonable steps to prevent homelessness when a person is threatened with homelessness with the definition of threat of homelessness changed from likely to lose accommodation within 28 days to likely to lose accommodation within 56 days. An authority now has to take these reasonable steps over a 56 day period.

It is also evident that people who are threatened with homelessness are also working with a range of other services at the point when their housing difficulties first occur. The new '**Duty to Refer**' on public services will therefore be of critical importance to promoting a culture of prevention through partnership and early contact. The public body will have a legal duty to refer people to housing options services for assistance as soon as reasonably practicable after they find out the person is homeless or threatened with homelessness.

The 'Duty to Refer' does not apply to housing associations or third sector organisations. We would like to develop comparable agreements with such services operating in Leeds.

A **Personal Housing Plan** is a joint enterprise between the authority and the applicant with the likelihood of a positive outcome being significantly dependent upon the person

being an active participant in finding a solution. This very much reflects a 'restorative' approach of working with, rather than doing to, people to find solutions. Staff at housing options need to very much see themselves as being facilitators or enablers in the process of helping find the prevention or relief outcome.

A housing crisis often coincides with a person experiencing a number of other challenges. We need to ensure that we work in partnership with a range of other services to deliver joined up and holistic services. That housing options have a good working knowledge of other related service areas, that other service areas have an understanding of housing options issues, that there are effective day to day working partnerships and that all the above are underpinned by effective multi-agency strategic partnership including the city's Homelessness Forum.

The cornerstone of the approach to prevent/end rough sleeping will be the establishment of the multi-agency Street Support Team. Another significant example of multi-agency partnership work is the domestic violence **Front Door Safeguarding Hub**. The recurring point within the 'Focus on Priority Groups' theme will be adopting a multi-agency targeted casework approach to better assisting a range of groups.

The roll-out of **Universal Credit** in Leeds accelerated from October 2018. This presents a significant challenge in respect of preventing/relieving homelessness with potentially more tenants falling into arrears, higher evictions and a likely greater reluctance on the part of private landlords to let tenancies to people in receipt of Universal Credit. We need to ensure that housing staff are working in close partnership with colleagues from the DWP and two officers from the Leeds Housing Options services are part-seconded to work with the DWP and this will be followed by two staff from Housing Management staff doing the same. We need to find out more about the government's plans to introduce **Homeless Champions in every Job Centre Plus**.

Access to Information and Services

We need to create a range of channels through which people can seek help, tailored to the specific needs and characteristics of our population and 'priority groups'. A key part of this will be the provision of localised housing advice services in the city's community hubs, surgeries in other services and home visits. We also will be promoting the availability of telephone and e-mail based developments of personal housing plans over the term of the strategy.

We have noted that a recent survey in the Yorkshire Evening Post highlighted that 68% of respondents stated that they would not know where to go were they to become homeless themselves. People therefore may not approach for assistance until they are in crisis and any delay in approaching could reduce the likelihood of a successful homelessness prevention outcome. We therefore, in line with our new duties under the 'Homelessness Reduction Act', need to look at our provision of information relating to homelessness prevention, securing accommodation, legal rights as a homeless person and how to access help and services.

We believe that the move of the **Leeds Housing Options service to the new City Centre Hub at Merrion House** will promote the likelihood of people accessing

services given that the environment is a more welcoming and supportive one. This is further augmented by our co-location with other services including: the Beacon Supported Housing Service, Leeds City Credit Union, the Job Shop, Victim Support and Council Customer Services.

Part of the information strategy will be emphasising the benefits of both people and services making early approaches. Good quality information will also enable people to resolve their own housing difficulties without needing to approach the local authority. For example, mortgage holders who have lost their employment and are struggling to pay their mortgage should have access to information that encourages them to make early contact with their lender to agree a payment arrangement. During the term of this strategy, extensive work will take place to improve the offer of high quality housing advice provided on our website, ensuring that advice is available to people 24 hours a day.

New Prevention Ideas

The Leeds homelessness prevention package has been in place for a number of years and therefore a priority is to identify whether there are other things we should be doing that perhaps other local authorities are. We need to engage with other local authorities and find out what best practice they are doing. Two important ways of doing this are – the **Yorkshire and Humber Regional Homelessness Forum, and the Core Cities Homelessness Group.**

Prevention by Other Services

The Leeds prevention package is rooted in the provision of housing advice. We need to have a better understanding of the range of prevention work that is being done by other services through the provision of housing related support and proactive housing management. We need to gain a better understanding of this activity and start to quantify success volumes and rates through the Leeds Homelessness Forum.

Between Jan and Sep 2018, over 1500 clients with these identified support needs, have left Engage Leeds with the following outcomes:

- Prevented 96% of clients (no. 488) from making a statutory homeless presentation where they may have done without our support.
- 98% were successfully supported to sustain their tenancy (no. 828).
- 96% were supported to access accommodation (no. 788) and 96% to make a positive move-on (no. 712).
- We also supported 314 clients in to Employment / Training / Education.

Via Engage's weekly community hub / one stop co-location surgeries, they have had 103 early intervention and prevention contacts and the Engage Leeds hub / single point of access received 7000 phone calls.

Homelessness prevention will be linked to other critical service preventative outcomes including preventing children or vulnerable adults from going in to local authority care. We need to work alongside social care partners to help deliver preventative invest-to-

save outcomes without concerning ourselves too much with the issue of who makes the investment and who receives the saving.

Tenancy Law and Prevention

The Government has proposed changes to current law relating to private rented (assured shorthold) tenancies. The current position, in place since 1989, is that a private rented tenant only has security of tenure for the fixed period of the tenancy (usually no longer than 12 months) and that the 'no blame' notice to quit can be issued giving two month notice before the end of the fixed period. The draft proposals are that either a landlord or tenant can end a private rented tenancy after 12 months. After this a tenant can end a tenancy by giving a two month notice while a landlord will only be able to do so by demonstrating that a tenancy condition has been breached.

In Leeds we very much support these proposals and believe that it closely mirrors employment law: an employee can leave a job by giving notice to their employer whereas an employer must demonstrate a breach in the employment contract. We believe that these changes, if implemented, will significantly boost the private rented sector as a homeless prevention and relief option.

Targets

- Prevent or relieve homelessness in at least 80% of completed housing options cases.
- Deliver a minimum of 500 private rented tenancy sign-ups.
- Deliver a minimum of 200 'return home' outcomes via youth mediation.
- Deliver a minimum 400 sanctuary scheme installations.

Commitments

1. Roll out a programme of training on the Homelessness Reduction Act to statutory and third sector partners, focusing on promoting and understanding of homelessness prevention and relief.
2. Ensure that all statutory partners understand their responsibilities under the 'Duty to Refer'
3. Reduce to no more than 10% the percentage of homeless cases closed down due to loss of contact.
4. Identify a range of housing options for homeless households who are deemed to be ineligible.
5. Ensure that our package of information on homeless prevention, securing accommodation, legal rights and service access is as good as possible by seeking out best practice from elsewhere and consulting with homeless people.
6. Maintain homeless prevention fund funding of 500K.
7. Maintain and continue to develop our package of homeless prevention measures.
8. Increase the number of people receiving their housing advice service on a localised or digital basis.
9. Seek out best practice on homelessness prevention initiatives from other local authorities and services.
10. Embed a culture of homeless prevention within all housing management and housing related support services.
11. Through joint work with social care partners, ensuring that no child, young person or vulnerable adult needs to go into local authority care as the result of a homeless situation.
12. Take part in the consultation on the proposed changes to private rented tenancy law.

Theme 3 - Future Role of Housing Related Support in Leeds

The Legal Duty to Provide Emergency Accommodation

Under the provisions of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) Local Authorities are required to secure that accommodation is available for certain classes of applicants. Since the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act (2018) accommodation must be provided for any applicant in the following circumstances:

1. **Interim Duty** (S188) is owed to applicants in the relief duty who are eligible, homeless and in priority need. This duty lasts until a decision is made on the application.
2. **Intentionally Homeless applicants** are entitled to accommodation upon the finding that they are intentionally homeless (S190). This accommodation must be for a 'reasonable period' to allow the applicant to find alternative accommodation.
3. **No local connection applicants** are entitled to accommodation upon the finding that they have no local connection (S199A(2) and S200(1)). This accommodation must be provided until the referral is accepted by the notified authority.
4. **Applicants who have deliberately and unreasonably refused to cooperate** with the reasonable steps set out in their personal housing plan and have therefore had the duty to relieve their homelessness discharged (S193C(4)) are entitled to accommodation until such time as a 'final offer' of a 6 month AST can be made.
5. Applicants who are eligible, homeless, in priority need, not intentionally homeless, have a local connection and for whom the relief period has ended (after 56 days), will be owed a **full housing duty** (S193(2)). This duty exists until a final offer of accommodation is made.

This accommodation must be made available immediately at the point at which the duty arises.

There are also a number of 'powers' under which accommodation can be provided e.g. while a review is ongoing.

A key point is that any accommodation offered must be suitable for the applicant and their household (S206). A decision as to suitability must take account of the individual needs of the applicant and specifically address issues of affordability and any physical and/or mental health needs of the applicant and their household.

The number of people in Temporary Accommodation in Leeds has fallen dramatically over the last three years – from a high of 161 in May 2015 to 48 in July 2018 (a reduction of around 70%). The fall has taken place in relation to those applicants to whom the council owes a statutory duty – the number of those accommodated under a power has remained stable at 15-20. This reduction in the number of applicants accommodated under a duty is due in large part to: increased prevention activity, a better private sector offering and increased focus on move-on from temporary accommodation once people are placed.

This has led to significant saving in the cost of the entire temporary accommodation provision within the city – a comparison with other core cities is shown below:

City	Cost of TA 17/18	
Leeds	£	1,998,535
Birmingham	£	22,978,867
Manchester	£	20,419,679
Newcastle	£	633,895
Sheffield	£	72,033
Liverpool	£	7,016,500
Nottingham	£	3,994,337

What is Housing Related Support (HRS)?

Housing Related Support was formerly part of the Supporting People Programme of grant funding for a variety of services aimed at helping vulnerable people live independently in the community.

Commissioned Housing Related Support services play an integral part in the City-wide contribution to tackling/preventing homelessness.

Housing Related Support in Leeds


In Leeds, the funding has remained within the Resources and Housing Directorate and is commissioned by Adults and Health Commissioning as part of a wider delivery of Public Health, Drug and Alcohol and Housing services.

In 2017 a new model of HRS delivery was implemented which focussed on supported housing and visiting support initially(see below).

There are strategic reviews currently underway and planned to identify current needs and remodelling opportunities for services which deliver support for Young People and People with Mental Health problems.

The work of strategic reviews and remodelling with re-procurement of services has resulted in the following provision:


Core Commissioned HRS Services in Leeds





Housing Related Support Services

Further information on the links below

Assertive Outreach & Drop-in Services


 Street Outreach Service
 0113 2459445


 RAISE at St Anne's
 0113 2455049


 Basis
 0113 243 0036

West Yorkshire Police


Health Services


Prison/Probation Services

Wider Stakeholder Involvement

Leeds Housing Options
0113 222 4412

Emergency Accommodation
St Georges Crypt


Leeds Domestic Violence Service

 Visiting Support & Emergency Accommodation
 24 hour helpline for public & professionals 0113 246 0401




Temporary Accommodation with Support

info@beaconleeds.org.uk
referrals@beaconleeds.org.uk
 0113 378 9396 or
 0113 276 0616

Specialist Accommodation

Wet Hostels:		Mental Health:	
Regents Terrace (Male)	0113 245 8836	Roseville	0113 252 3341
Carr Beck (Female)	0113 271 7295	Makings Close	0113 270 8354
Offender:		Foundry Mill	0113 388 5400
Kirkstall Lodge	0113 275 8710		

Visiting Housing Related Support

Engage Leeds 
 0113 380 7615
referrals@engageleeds.org.uk

Visiting Support   

Supported Accommodation Resource Centre
0113 380 7633

Engage Leeds 
 0113 380 7615
referrals@engageleeds.org.uk

Visiting Support   

Supported Accommodation Resource Centre
0113 380 7633

If you are concerned about someone rough sleeping, begging or involved in street sex work

A person is in a housing crisis, or at risk of domestic violence and may need emergency accommodation

An adult requires supported accommodation to help them live independently

You or someone you know is struggling to manage living in their own home

A young person needs supported accommodation or help to manage living in their own home

* As of September 2018

Service	Capacity	No. supported 2017/18	Key performance measures
Front facing homelessness provision			
CGL – Street Outreach Service	variable according to demand	430	No. of new / returning service users
Raise Resource Centre	variable according to demand	488	No. of tenancies sustained No. rehoused in privately-rented accommodation No. of housing crises prevented
Basis Yorkshire	24		No. who exit / reduce sex working % that have improved their housing situation
Accommodation services (from start of new contracts on 1 st July 2017)			
St George's Crypt	36	638	% of departures which are planned moves
Beacon	234	456	
Regent Terrace	10	24	% of clients who establish their own tenancy remaining settled 4 months after leaving the service
Carr Beck	6	11	
Kirkstall Lodge	9	13	
Leeds Domestic Violence Service Refuge	26	169	% of departures which are planned moves
Visiting support			
Engage Leeds	1,500	3,072	No. with a successful outcome - preventions / early interventions - sustaining accommodation - planned moves

The new model of HRS focussed on 3 areas; '**prevention, sustainment and integration**'. It is also important to develop and evolve this focus of HRS on the 3 pillars of the National Rough Sleeping Strategy of '**prevention, intervention and recovery**' and ensure this is embedded in future service reviews and commissioning.

Commissioned HRS services must be equipped to;

- deal with the underlying issues and needs which clients face to **prevent** these escalating in to homelessness
- be able to **intervene** and provide immediate support, engagement and accommodation at the acute end of delivery
- ensure that where prevention cannot be achieved, support is in place, is holistic and joined up to ensure lasting **recovery** and independence in the community.

An example of this approach is Engage Leeds. They are supporting 'community' and 'recovery' approaches via a number of initiatives – Engage Leeds has employment / engagement and peer support / volunteering arms specifically aimed at increasing personal resilience, meaningful activity and Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) / 3 friend KPI concept. In addition to above, they monitor a range of outcomes around independent living skills, health and wellbeing, recovery support and greater client choice & involvement.

Commissioned HRS services cannot achieve this in isolation and must continue to evolve, collaborate and work closely with all the City's partners and stakeholders to deal with the multifaceted complexities of the City's vulnerable people whose needs invariably consist of some or all of housing, health, substance misuse, meaningful engagement and community integration.

The remodelled commissioned services have recognised this priority through the appointment of staff who are joint located and work alongside Leeds Housing Options staff to promote joint working.

This evolution of HRS will be guided by the themes and future needs identified in the Homelessness Strategy, and it will also reference the wider Leeds strategies and priorities, for example; Health & Wellbeing Strategy, Leeds Housing Strategy, & The Leeds Health and Care Plan.

In order to deliver this Homelessness Strategy, HRS services will focus on meeting 3 emerging **priorities** which were explored at a Provider Forum Workshop in August 2018.

Partnerships, Accommodation, Community.

A number of commitments will ensure we continue to strive towards our priorities.

Priority 1: Partnerships – *Through the development of these key areas below, significant strides can be made to ensure partners can work as effectively as possible and ensure the biggest impact in tackling homelessness.*

1. Partnership work within commissioned HRS services has developed significantly. New longer term HRS contracts, smaller in number but larger in size has enabled greater opportunities to work collaboratively and streamline referral routes and pathways. The HRS review highlighted that a larger number of contracts, services and delivery providers led to confusing client pathways, numerous onward referrals and lack of information sharing.

This does have its challenges however; with single points of contact (SPOCs) and fewer service options, which can lead to a 'single point of exclusion' for clients. This challenge has to be reflected within services' flexibilities and consortia working arrangements to ensure access and opportunities to **prevent, intervene and recover** are not compromised.

Evolution:

- Longer, larger contracts may hinder sector development and innovation. We need to ensure the sector continually innovates and embraces 'new talent', be it staff or ideas to tackle homelessness.
 - Larger services must continue to be 'fleet footed', accessible and capable of being flexible – especially when engaging with complex and chaotic homeless clients. Strong partnerships, co-location and shared outcomes are central to achieving this.
2. A single shared case management system, known as the HRS Gateway, has enabled HRS providers to work closer together, share information more easily and improve the navigation of the client journey. This single system used by HRS providers and LCC support services improves their links with one another and enables the sharing of information and best practice amongst organisations.

Evolution:

- Information sharing needs to be improved, particularly through the proactive use of the HRS Gateway, i.e. 'services to inform Street Outreach Team if they are working with a client known to rough sleep'.
 - We need to keep on top of IT technologies, e.g. Gateway App for professionals, and ensure the HRS Gateway will help foster integrated pathways for clients and services.
 - More services need to have access to the system to benefit from improved information sharing and links with key partners.
3. Central to improved partnership work within HRS services has been the **co-location** and **collaboration** alongside key partners, for example, Leeds Housing Options and Beacon pathway managers, to join up the first point of contact for housing options in Leeds and HRS accommodation services. This has proved invaluable to dealing with the multifaceted complexities of clients and their accommodation needs. The speciality multi-agency work (Forward Leeds & Street Outreach Team) has also been a prime example of how joined up and co-located provision can help reduce barriers to access and engagement for different services. New initiatives such as the Safer Leeds Street Support Team are underpinned through co-location and collaboration, and HRS services are integral within the delivery.

Evolution:

- Improve opportunities to co-locate and collaborate further, developing on the positive examples already made. More co-location within Leeds Housing Options should be pursued, as well as co-location for HRS services in localities and how they could collaborate to create multi-disciplinary teams.
 - Continued development and collaboration of HRS services with the Safer Leeds Street Support Team
4. LCC Commissioning is continuing to become more integrated, with a focus on 'standardising, simplifying and sharing' commissioning processes. HRS commissioning now sits within the Adults & Health Directorate, meaning improved connections with wider Adults & Health and Children's social care services.

Partnerships between HRS services and social care have greatly improved, and successful multi-agency working through the Childrens and Housing Operational Meeting and Vulnerable Adults Group (VAG) meetings have illustrated this. However, more needs to be done to develop social care partnerships, collaboration and joint work and embed these relationships and practices to ensure the best joined up approach can be achieved to tackle homelessness.

Evolution:

- Improved collaboration between the Council and HRS commissioned services will also improve the effectiveness, case management and coordination of multi-agency meetings e.g. Multi-Agency Review Board (MARB) and Vulnerable Adults Group (VAG).
 - The roles and work of social care for Children's and Adults and that of HRS and housing services need to be closer aligned so that joint working, collaboration and co-location becomes service delivery norm, rather than exception.
 - Improved outcomes for vulnerable homeless clients who are eligible for access to Adult Social Care assessments and services.
5. Collaboration with wider Acute and Primary Health Care partners is still in its infancy. The needs and complexities of clients facing homelessness are often intrinsically linked with health needs. Clients are often over represented within Primary Care services such as A&E and acute MH services. To fully address the needs of homeless individuals more collaboration and joint commissioning needs to take place between LCC and the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to provide lasting improvements to their health and wellbeing. Central to this development is the role of HRS services, specifically front line homelessness services such as the Street Outreach Team, St Georges Crypt and St Anne's – RAISE Resource Centre and how these interact with the City's health services.

Evolution:

- Ensure strategic and operational involvement from health partners at key HRS forums and Boards.
- Explore opportunities for improving joint working and referral protocols between partners to bring better outcomes for clients.

Priority 2: Accommodation – *Supported accommodation in an emergency, for a short, medium or longer term is an integral part of the City's approach to tackling homelessness. The right type of accommodation at the right time must be provided to ensure the best outcome for homeless persons.*

Providing **suitable accommodation** for homeless people in the City is crucial to ensuring a reduction in rough sleeping, but it also provides the stable base from which the client can be given support in the community to address support needs and their complexities to prevent people being drawn back in to a cycle of homelessness and rough sleeping.

Providing suitable accommodation has its challenges; the demand for adapted and accessible temporary and longer term accommodation is increasing, alongside the requirement for specialist health accommodation for those with significant long term physical or mental health needs as well as suitable accommodation to meet the specialist needs of sex workers.

Commissioned HRS accommodation services have changed dramatically over the last few years, partly as a result of remodelling and re-procurement but also as a result of changing needs and patterns in homelessness. A new single city-wide provision of temporary accommodation, 'Beacon' has been commissioned and from July 2017 is the main provider of short-term accommodation for complex homeless clients in the City.

Beacon brought together a number of separate services and works alongside the other key partners and commissioned services providing the emergency accommodation offer through Leeds Housing Options and St Georges Crypt. Alongside this is our Specialist Supported Accommodation for clients with enduring mental health issues, offenders and those with entrenched drug and alcohol addiction.

We will remain focused on achieving timely move on from commissioned services to meet the needs of homeless clients. There remains pressure on securing suitable move on accommodation and on-going support which meets the often complex needs of individuals. In order to achieve this, we would like to see improved links between HRS services and the Private Rented Sector offer, as well as closer working with Leeds Housing Options and Housing Management, which will help ensure the best move-on options are available and sustainable for homeless people.

Alongside commissioned accommodation provision, the City also provides non-commissioned short-term accommodation, and to ensure the City-wide offer of accommodation meets client needs we will aim to review non-commissioned short-term accommodation services in the next 2 years alongside our colleagues in Leeds Benefit Service.

Evolution:

- Continue and build on the flexibility and responsiveness of temporary supported accommodation services to ensure accommodation continues to meet the evolving needs of vulnerable people
- Ensure the emergency accommodation offer within the city meets the needs and demands of the City's vulnerable and homeless, specifically reviewing the Private Rented emergency offer, and exploring how we can better meet the specialist needs of those involved in sex working.
- Closer working arrangements between HRS commissioned services and the Private Sector Housing Team and the Private Sector Lettings Team to develop the quality and help shift client expectations. Ensure that the private rented sector can be a realistic, viable and quality move-on option, or a stepping stone to more secure Council accommodation.
- Look at innovative ways to improve the offer of accessible and adapted accommodation for clients with physical impairments in the short and long term.
- Review our current HRS mental health commissioned accommodation city-wide.

- Review non-commissioned accommodation offers in the City to ensure equity and value for money.

Priority 3: Community – *Lasting integration into the community is a crucial requirement to ensure homeless clients maintain their independence and recovery and end the cycle of homelessness. This integration requires a concerted effort in how services work with clients, moving away from traditional ‘service’ models where services are provided ‘to’ a client, and more towards an Asset Based ‘support and challenge’ approach, where the client’s own skills and those of their peers, along with their aspirations and gifts can be pursued and developed and be integral to their ongoing recovery and support plan.*

Integration into the Community is also vital to help counteract the challenges of social isolation and maintaining mental and physical health; too often people who have entrenched rough sleeping or insecure housing histories find the transition to independent living challenging due to concerns of isolation or loneliness. This may increase the pull of returning to their former circumstances.

HRS services now are much more locality focussed and locality based – this needs to continue with greater emphasis placed on core neighbourhoods. Supported housing accommodation services have to consider the community in which they are located, and also the community in which clients wish to settle. A greater composition of consortia working arrangements provide an opportunity for organisations to share knowledge and experience and recognise that our providers all have different footholds in certain communities and areas.

As partners we must utilise these experiences and established connections and share across service and organisation boundaries for the benefit of the client. We must ensure that services ‘fit around’ the needs of the client and where they wish to live in the community.

In Leeds we have a wide variety of community based support offers which focus on volunteering, befriending, peer to peer, and community integration which build on services’ embedded status within localities. Greater joined up opportunities need to be developed across all services and systems working with clients to build on this work and help combat social isolation.

No one organisation or service will offer the complete package to ensure community integration, and there must be a ‘pick and mix’ of options which will best suit the client, be it something focussed around addiction recovery, reducing isolation, peer support and volunteering, or occupation, employment and training.

These **recovery** offers must be brought together with practical offers of support available through Leeds Housing Options, Big Change, Active Leeds, and the community to ensure lasting occupation and engagement where ever our clients settle.

There is so much a client may be able to offer a community, and so much a community may be able to offer a client and it is harnessing these assets which will ultimately make the lasting impact on independence and recovery.

Evolution:

- Greater Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approaches and involvement of the ABCD team in HRS service delivery.
- Creation of a 'Recovery Network' that brings together all available assets and community offers and builds a complete suite of options for client needs and requirements when they re-settle in to a community

Commitments	
1: Partnerships	
a)	Increase and develop co-location of HRS services with key strategic partners, for example Leeds Housing Options between 2018 and 2020.
b)	Increase the awareness and usage of the IT Gateway across partners, and develop the IT Gateway with improved technologies i.e. apps. Bring in new partners on completion of re-procurement of services by 2020.
c)	Information sharing to be improved, particularly through the proactive use of the HRS Gateway. Look to increase service use of HRS Gateway in 2019.
d)	Review and ensure the continued improvement and engagement of multi-agency client meetings to guarantee their effectiveness.
e)	Ensure Health partners represented strategically and operationally within Housing and are integral partner in the review of front line homelessness services over the next 2 years.
f)	Develop greater joint work between social work services and HRS services.
2: Accommodation	
a)	Review private sector offer of emergency accommodation in the City by 2019.
b)	Review the current emergency accommodation and support offer for sex workers by the end of 2019.
c)	Closer working relationships between HRS services and the PSHT & PSLS through joint meetings and awareness raising sessions to be held in 2019.
d)	Develop a panel between the independent living team, casework team and commissioning to look at 'stuck cases' relating to lack of suitably adapted accommodation.
e)	Review Mental Health support housing services in Leeds with wider colleagues in Adults & Health Commissioning starting winter 2018.
f)	Undertake an 'accommodation audit' of commissioned and non-commissioned short term supported housing in Leeds with Leeds Benefits Service to be completed by Summer 2019.
3: Community	
a)	Develop a 'Recovery Network' in 2019 with community champions from commissioned and statutory services to collaborate, share and develop community ideas and best practice for peer/volunteer and recovery services.
b)	All commissioned reviews to seek involvement from Adults and Health ABCD team.
c)	Promote the methods of ABCD with commissioned providers
d)	Ensure commissioned services link in with Public Health initiatives to promote improved physical and mental health wellbeing.

Theme 4 – Youth Homelessness

The Leeds Offer

Improve the life chances and life choices of all young people who are threatened with or experiencing homelessness, and ensure all young people including care leavers have opportunities they need to make a successful transition to adulthood and independence by providing a range of support services most appropriate to their needs and circumstances.

National and Local Policies

At a national level the current government agenda is clearly focused on tackling issues of social exclusion for vulnerable young people. Recent legislation such as the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Children's (Leaving Care) Act 2000 have gone some way to setting the foundations to develop a comprehensive service for vulnerable young people.

The Care Act 2014 puts emphasis on young people transitioning into adulthood and states that person centred assessments should be held at the right time so that local authorities can anticipate the needs of young people as an adult.

Leeds is committed to becoming a Child Friendly City and tackling the complex issues affecting most vulnerable young people in the city. One of the 5 outcomes for the city detailed in the Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2015/19 is to work towards keeping children and young people safe from harm, particularly those who are the most vulnerable.

Number of Young people in Leeds

Leeds has a growing population of which 183,000 are young people aged between 0-19 years old.

In March 2017 there was a recorded number of 1,255 children looked after and 6% of 16/17 years olds not in education, employment or training.

In 2015/16 2,323 young people were recorded as having received housing and/or homelessness support. Leeds has 4 universities and so a high figure in this age group can be expected.

The cohort of young people accessing housing related support services are primarily:

- Young people who are presenting as homeless aged 16-24 years
- Young people who are presenting as a risk to themselves or others; with a history of offending; who have mental health issues or drug and alcohol issues; at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE); require support to live independently.
- Young people who have been looked after by the Local Authority and have reached the ages of 16-21 years
- Children in need (16-17 year olds who are becoming; parent and child placements and / or are new to Leeds).

- Young people who have been remanded into the care of Local Authority by the court.

Leeds has seen a steady increase in the number of Young People approaching the Local Authority for support and housing assistance:

Applicants on Register as at 1 st April of Year	Number of Young People aged 16-25 on the Leeds housing register
2018	3, 228 – 14.5% of total number of people on housing register
2017	3, 939 – 15% of total number of people on housing register
2016	3, 763 – 15% of total number of people on housing register
2015	3, 737 – 15.5% of total number of people on housing register

There are many similarities between Leeds and other authorities who have statutory duties to provide housing support to certain groups of young people who are at risk of homelessness. However, authorities do vary in size and demand, therefore it is difficult to make reasonable comparisons with Leeds.

In addition, Leeds is seeing a high number of young people accessing housing related support services with complex needs. These include:

Safeguarding

The main safeguarding need of young people accessing Housing Related Support is Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). All existing services follow robust processes for reporting any incidents of safeguarding to the council and are required to keep updated with the latest information, attend training and ensure internal policies and practices are adhered to by all staff at all times.

Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence (DV) within young people is increasing, in March 2015, the Crime Survey for England and Wales identified that 6.6% of men and 12.6% of women aged 16 to 19 had experienced domestic abuse in the past year.

In Leeds, it is also the case that the number of instances of domestic abuse involving young people is increasing therefore it is important to be aware of this and ensure that services are aware of and providing support around domestic abuse.

Mental ill health

Homelessness has detrimental effects on both physical and mental health. There is substantial evidence suggesting that young people are particularly vulnerable to poor physical and mental health; and risk –taking behaviour such as self-neglect, self –harm, suicide and substance use. Homelessness or the threat of homelessness can have a negative impact on a young person’s mental health. Evidence shows that depression and anxiety are the most commonly reported mental health disorders among young people.

LBGT+

National figures published indicate that 24% of young homeless people are from the LBGT+ community. Young people report that their sexual orientation or gender identity was a significant factor in them becoming homeless

Existing City Wide Services

Leeds has a number of commissioned and non-commissioned services that deliver a combination of visiting and accommodation based Housing Related Support to vulnerable young people in the city. The primary aim of these services is to enable young people to achieve and maintain independent living. These services work in partnership with the council to ensure the needs of vulnerable young people and care leavers are met via a number of existing services and interventions.

There are a whole host of services working with young people in Leeds. This list is not exhaustive, but gives an idea of the current core services available in the city.

Seacole: A young person's hostel that provides nine units of emergency access accommodation and three assured shorthold tenancies for young people aged 16-25. The accommodation and support is available 24/7, with the focus on assessing initial needs and risks whilst achieving a planned move on to suitable accommodation.

Flagship: A housing related support service for vulnerable young people. Flagship provides 150 units of shared and self-contained accommodation across the City. Young people are assessed and matched to accommodation and a support package to meet their needs for up to six months. The support they receive helps them to develop the independent living skills required to sustain a tenancy and live independently within their own tenancy. Once in their own tenancy Young People can access floating support for a further twelve months to help them sustain their tenancy.

The Leaving Care Team: This service provides housing related support to young people to enable them to make the successful transition from a care setting to independent living. They have 10 units of self-contained accommodation and 66 floating support placements and a weekend leaving care plus service.

Archway: A purpose built resource centre that provides a safe space for young people to access services, activities and education, laundry and shower facilities.

White Rose Framework: Commissioned through Children's Services to give accommodation and support to care leavers. The White Rose Framework provides a range of single unit accommodation and group homes with 247 live-in support with no time limit for move on.

Barnardo's: A national children's charity that provides a 'Nightstop' and 'Supported Lodgings' service. Nightstop Leeds places young people who have nowhere to stay in trained volunteers' spare rooms. Young people receive a private room, a warm meal and somewhere safe to stay for the night, while we look for a more permanent solution. Supported Lodgings is an extension of what is provided by Nightstop and accommodates the most vulnerable young people, in a family setting, on a more longer term basis.

Leeds Youth Offending Services: Work with children and young people aged 10 to 17 years who have offended and help prevent them getting into further trouble.

Forward Leeds: Provides 1-1 support to young people and their families around drug and alcohol issues alongside comprehensive group work and events.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service: A specialist NHS mental health service for children and young people and their families up until the age of 18. CAMHS operate a community based service in 3 wedges, a specialist eating disorder clinic and host an inpatient unit.

Pathways: If you are aged 16 or 17 and not in any education, training or employment you qualify for a Pathways worker who help young people discover a range of education, training, apprenticeships and other employment opportunities in Leeds.

The Market Place: The Market Place offers free and confidential advice and support in a safe place for 11-25 year olds in Leeds. They offer a range of services including one to one support, counselling, group-work and a drop-in.

Getaway Girls: Getaway Girls empowers girls and young women aged 11 – 25 to build up confidence, develop new skills and take positive risks in an environment which offers cooperation and support. It also hosts 'The Safe Space Project' which support young people who have experienced or are at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation.

MESMAC: MESMAC is a sexual health organization offering services to various communities including men who have sex with men, BME people, people misusing drugs, sex workers and LGB&T young people and adults.

Service Review

A detailed and joint review of Housing Related Support Services for Young People is currently being undertaken by the Council. The purpose of this review is to assess current and future need and demand and to inform the commissioning of an improved and integrated model of provision that will meet the needs of young people at risk, homelessness, teenage parents, young offenders, care leavers and looked after children.

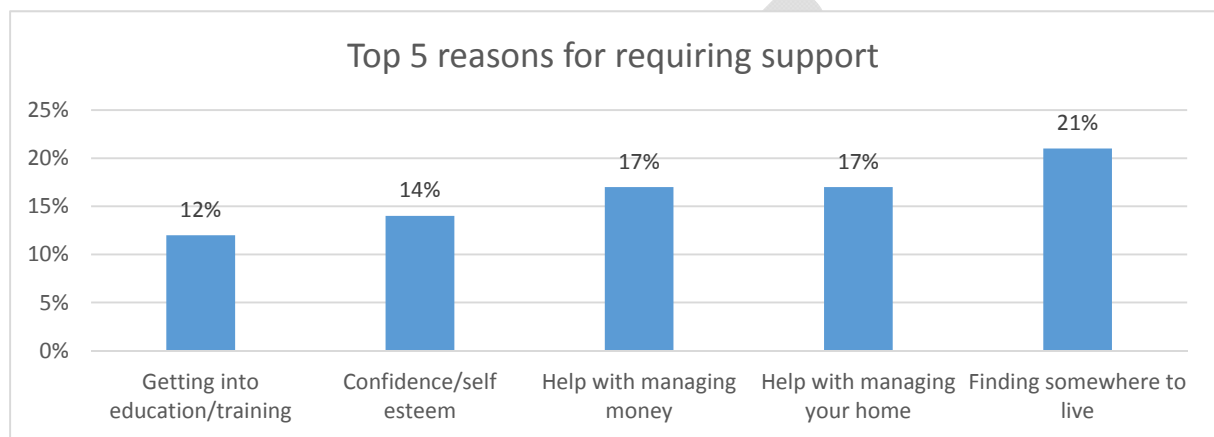
The review is being undertaken in the context of changing needs and demands, changes to wider policy (particularly welfare reform) and interdependencies with other service provision for this client group to ensure the best outcomes for our customers and best use of commissioned resources.

It is envisaged that the new service will be implemented by July 2020.

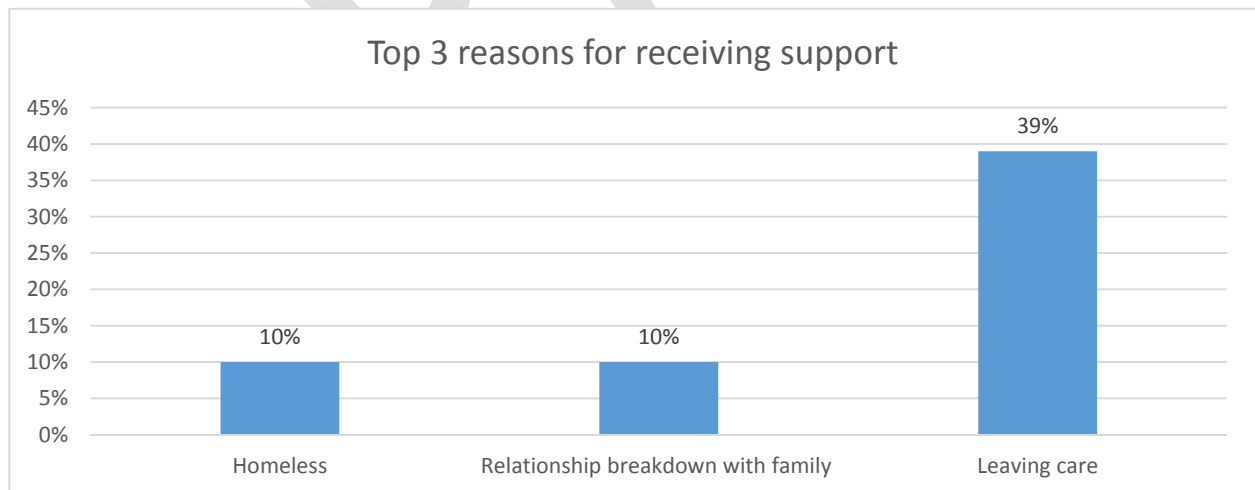
Consultation

To understand the needs of vulnerable Young People and Care Leavers, extensive data analysis and consultation has been undertaken with key stakeholders, service users and partners. This information will be used to design and deliver a more integrated service model ensuring that it continues to minimize youth homelessness and offer appropriate and timely support to young people helping them to live independently.

Recent findings from the consultation highlight the top 5 reasons why young people require support.



The data below shows the top 3 support categories for young people receiving support



Priorities

The review has identified three key priorities that the newly commissioned service will focus on to minimise and prevent Youth Homelessness;

1. Early Intervention and Prevention
2. Health and Wellbeing
3. Sustainment and Integration

Early Intervention and Prevention:

Early Help: In Leeds, Early Help is the term used by agencies to describe our approach to providing support to potentially vulnerable children, young people and their families as soon as problems start to emerge. It is about having the right conversations, with the right people, at the right time.

The purpose of early help is, through prompt and targeted interventions, to prevent issues and problems becoming acute, chronic, and costly to the child, young person, the family and the wider community.

Leeds hosts a fortnightly Children's operational meeting which aims to discuss the most complex of cases with a multi-agency approach to finding a positive solution for the young person. We need to build on this partnership approach that is currently in operation and widen the young people's pathway approach to include relevant agencies.

Education in Schools: Experience tells us that families are more likely to break down at the point a young person reaches 16, the age they become eligible to apply for their own accommodation. With limited life experience and an increased sense of loneliness, this age group is also more likely to fail in their first tenancy. Leeds need to work on better education in schools around youth homelessness, conflict resolution within families and the realities of independent living, so that young people are well informed, can make better choices and are given skills to deal with natural conflict in their lives.

Mediation: Leeds Housing Options currently provide family mediation for any young person approaching as homeless aged 15-21 and there is a more intensive family mediation service located within Archway that support younger people aged from 13 years up. Mediation will be run through all aspects of the new contract, ensuring that a return home and / or support in improving family relationships is offered to young people at any stage of their journey.

Pre-Tenancy Support: By supporting young people as soon as they are referred into services we can help resolve homelessness by addressing the additional needs around income, education, substance misuse and mental ill health. This is a current offer and will continue to be an integral part of the prevention strategy in Leeds.

Improved transition: Better understanding of children's social care and Adults social care is required to improve the transition process through services. Introduce a Young People HUB to co-locate agencies that deliver services and activities for Young People. Have a person centred assessment of need to determine the appropriate support and accommodation options of the young person taking into consideration risk assessment. The assessment of need will be a multi-agency approach that will fully involve the young person, their family and/or external professionals.

Health and Wellbeing:

It is identified that we need to improve joint / multi agency working with CAMHS Tier 1 and 2 services. Also to incorporate Mental Health clinical support worker(s) into Young People Housing Related Support contracts to create clear referral routes and pathways into CAMHS Tier 3 and 4 services, counselling services, occupational therapists and other health and mental health support services. It is important that services are accessible for Young People in a safe environment that they feel comfortable attending, i.e. Young Peoples HUB.

The new contract will have good support staff that are trained in Psychological Informed Environments (PIE) and Trauma Informed Approaches (TIA) and have complex needs workers to support Young People.

Sustainment and Integration:

To prevent failure of tenancies once Young People are living independently, we need to take into account what they have told us through consultation and put prevention measures in place that help them feel supported and able sustain a tenancy .

To prevent Young People feeling isolated and not attached to an area, we need better working with Housing/letting policy makers to increase the percentage of properties allocated to vulnerable Young People within their area of choice. Introducing a tri-party sign up with the young person, support worker and housing officer to help in developing trust, identifying tenancy issues early and reduce failing tenancies.

Sustainment is more than just housing, therefore, to help Young People to integrate in the community support will be available for up to twelve months once they have their own accommodation to make sure they are connected and accessing the relevant services they need, ie health care, education / training. Support will also be available to connect Young People with community activities, other young people and encourage friendship groups. The use of peer mentors and volunteers that have come through the homeless route will have the greatest impact and give the “real picture” of homelessness that Young People can relate to.

Young people will be encouraged and assisted with accessing employment, education and training. Financial advice will also be available for all Young People.

Our Future Commitments:

1. Better and more pro-active sharing of information from Children's Services with Housing Options around young people at risk of homelessness, in line with the new 'duty to refer'.
2. To procure one service that will manage the full range of accommodation and support needs of all Young People in Leeds, regardless of their referral route into the service – to be operational by July 2020.
3. Build on the partnership approach that is currently in operation and widen Young Peoples pathway approach to include relevant agencies
4. Improve the early identification of young people at risk of becoming homeless at the earliest stage possible and through partnerships, be able to offer early interventions such as family and individual mediation, counselling and mental health support.
5. Introduce mediation and family conflict resolution at an early stage to work with Young People and families identified as being at risk of homelessness.
6. Work jointly with Children's Social Care Placement team to increase the Staying Put placements and identify break downs in foster care at the earliest stage
7. Have a building and resources dedicated to Young People that can offer advice, support and education as well as leisure and recreation activities under one roof.
8. Use of peer mentors and volunteers that have come through the homeless route will have the greatest impact and give the "real picture" of homelessness that Young People can relate to.
9. Introduce a Young People HUB to co-locate agencies that deliver services and activities for Young People.
10. Incorporate Mental Health clinical support worker(s) into Young People Housing Related Support contracts to create clear referral routes and pathways into CAMHS Tier 3 and 4 services, counselling services, occupational therapists and other health and mental health support services.
11. Mediation will be run through all aspects of the new contract, ensuring that early intervention is available for all Young People.
12. Introduce a tri-party sign up with the young person, support worker and housing officer.
13. Better transitions between adult and children's social care and mental health services.
14. To have a multi-agency, person centred assessment at the start of the young person's journey that will travel with them and can be built upon in their lifetime in service, by them, their families and the professionals around them.
15. To develop an educational schools project on the realities of homelessness and independent living and to develop young people's skills required to resolve conflict.
16. To offer 'taster' accommodation to young people who are wanting to move out of home with a potential buy in of mediation that offers respite to families with a view of the young person moving back home.

Theme 5 - A Focus on Priority Groups

‘Delivering tailored and targeted services so that no group of people is disproportionately affected by homelessness’

Recurring principles in this theme will be the need to work in partnership with the priority groups and services working as well as the need to have localised services whereby we are going out to people rather than people coming to us.

Feedback on the previous Leeds Homelessness Strategy was that there was insufficient emphasis on the causes and effects of homelessness on specific groups of people. A specific theme of the new Homelessness Strategy is therefore devoted to how we can better assist specific groups of people to prevent and end their homelessness.

The 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act states that housing authorities should pay particular regard to the following groups of people in relation to preventing and ending homelessness:

- Prison Leavers
- Care Leavers
- Former members of the armed forces
- Victims of domestic abuse
- Person suffering from mental ill-health
- Other groups identified as being at particular risk of homelessness by the authority.

The needs of care leavers will be covered in the ‘Youth Homelessness’ theme. All of the other groups will be covered in this theme alongside other specific groups that have been identified by Leeds as being at particular risk of homelessness: LGBT+, sex workers, private rented tenants living in the ‘priority neighbourhoods’ of the city and refugees/asylum seekers and migrants.

Sex Workers

This section will cover female street based sex workers who are homeless. Street based sex workers who are homeless are one of the most vulnerable, disadvantaged and excluded groups of homeless people. The definition of homelessness covers women who are rough sleeping, with no fixed accommodation and others who are vulnerably housed. A woman is homeless if she is subject to violence, harassment, abuse or forced to make desperate choices at or around accommodation she is occupying. Issues such as sex working, homelessness, drug use, family breakdown and poverty will often be inter-linked.

The Leeds Housing Options is committed to working in partnership with two charities that work with female sex workers: **Basis and the Joanna Project**. This partnership will be the platform for identifying how we can help every woman with decent housing options. Putting in place safe and stable housing will help women exercise greater control over their lives.

Staff at Basis and Joanna Project believe that there are currently (August 2018) around 35 female sex workers who would meet the broader definition of being homeless. The first step will be for Housing Options to work with the women and the support services to put in place a **Personal Housing Plan** for each person. This will set out both short-term and longer-term housing options and also other support services as needed. This targeted case management approach will closely approach the Street Support Service model being adopted for rough sleepers. It may well be that the concept of '**Street Medicine**' equally applies to female sex workers as rough sleepers.

Accommodation needs for sex workers are incredibly complicated based on their presenting complex needs, that is why, at times, supported accommodation is not always suitable. Therefore we are working in partnership with services and commissioners to look at and overcome any barriers in to services and identify any gaps in provision. We will explore the Housing First model as a possible approach, to ensure we have suitable accommodation and support options for sex working women.

We also need to reach out to women and go to them to discuss their housing needs. This will include staff from Leeds Housing Options going out with staff from Basis and the Joanna Project on late evening outreach sessions around Holbeck.

LGBT+

Research published in 2017 by the **Albert Kennedy Trust** identified that 24% of young homeless people are LGBT+. **Stonewall Housing** report that two thirds of LGBT+ young people who are homeless state that their sexual orientation or gender identity was a significant factor in them becoming homeless. The government has made a commitment as part of the national rough sleeper strategy to better understand the proportion of rough sleepers who are LGBT+.

Leeds Housing Options has carried out a number of consultation sessions with LGBT+ networks over the last 12 months and as a result we have developed a specific page on the Leeds City Council website devoted to our service offer for LGBT+ homeless people:

<https://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/housing/housing-options/lgbt+-customers>

Leeds Housing Options has a LGBT+ champion, who is a member of the LGBT+ community, and takes the lead on co-ordinating the housing options offer to LGBT+ people. The service has committed to activating a Personal Housing Plan within three working days at a place where the person chooses. The service has a specific email address for LGBT+ people to contact the service, and carries out a surgery at **MESMAC** (gay men's sexual health service) on a monthly basis with a dedicated case worker. The service has also committed to ensuring that any LGBT+ person aged up to 25 would be seen by the specialist young person's worker.

Leeds Housing Options has carried out further consultation with LGBT+ networks as part of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper strategy development. The service offer developments set out above have received a positive response and other proposals

have been made to further improve the service offer to LGBT+ people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness:

- We should look at gaps in service for LGBT+ people aged 50+
- We should have a specialist LGBT+ Young Person's Worker
- Leeds Housing Options should attend the new **LGBT+ Councillors Monthly Surgery** at Queens Court
- We should look at making the City Centre Hub at Merrion House more visibly LGBT+ inclusive including displaying the rainbow logo and staff wearing LGBT+ badges or lanyards with the pride symbol.
- All staff to receive training on LGBT+ issues and specifically relating to homelessness
- Build on the existing MESMAC drop-in surgery by carrying out outreach work with services such as '**Angels of Freedom**'
- Review criteria relating to supported housing services to ensure all are welcoming to LGBT+ and to same sex couples and families, with additional regard being given for the type of accommodation offered to trans or non-binary people
- Leeds Housing Options staff and systems should support a 'tell us once' policy on gender identity throughout the customer's interaction with the service

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy will commit to implementing or reviewing the feasibility of all these proposals. The consultation also highlighted that there may well be gaps in respect of equality monitoring and LGBT+ people. The feedback was that it is difficult to identify trends/gaps in service, such as the proportion of young homeless people who are LGBT+, if we do not have effective equality monitoring in place. This is a wider corporate priority for the Council and the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy will respond to the corporate decision making within the Council.

Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants

The legal position relating to eligibility for housing assistance is complex but, as a general rule, refugees with 'leave to remain' in the UK are eligible, European Economic Area (EEA) nationals who are exercising treaty rights to be in the UK as 'workers' are eligible and asylum seekers are not eligible. If a person is eligible for assistance then the Council has a legal duty, if the person is at risk of homelessness, to take reasonable steps to prevent homelessness and if they are homeless to take reasonable steps to relieve their homelessness. No such duties apply if the person is not eligible for housing assistance. A refugee establishes a local connection to the authority to which they were dispersed when they were asylum seekers.

The housing and support of asylum seekers is the legal responsibility of the Home Office and in the Yorkshire and Humber region the Home Office contracts G4S to deliver the housing and support service through the **COMPASS contract**. 11 out of 15 authorities (assuming that the district councils in North Yorkshire fall under the remit of the County Council) accept dispersals from the Home Office. Leeds is one of the 11 authorities that accepts dispersals.

The current COMPASS contract expires in 2019 and the Home Office is currently re-tendering for a contract up to 2029. At the time of writing (August 2018) no contract has been awarded to a contractor to cover the Yorkshire and Humber region. This uncertainty is of great concern to the Yorkshire and Humber authorities and has implications for the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper strategy. Leeds, in common with the other regional authorities, wants to make sure that there is no relaxation of housing standards in order to make the next contract viable. One example of this would be that Leeds has not agreed for single males to share bedrooms. We will be maintaining this position. Leeds, as a 'compassionate city', is committed to welcoming a proportionate number of asylum seekers to the city who, when they receive leave to remain in the UK, will be eligible to make an application as a homeless person.

Refugees, once they receive leave to remain, are given a 28 day notice to leave the COMPASS accommodation. The Homelessness Reduction Act is rooted in the principle of early intervention and the Act has extended the threat of homelessness definition from 28 to 56 days. The minimum notice period to leave a private rented tenancy is two months. Refugees are therefore at a disadvantage compared to other homeless people and local authorities have less time to find housing options for refugees leaving COMPASS accommodation. We need to lobby the government to extend the notice period to 56 days.

Every refugee leaving COMPASS accommodation is homeless (no opportunity to agree a stay in this accommodation) and we need to start engaging with the person/developing the Personal Housing Plan as soon as we can after the notice to leave has been issued. This is partly dependent on getting decision/notice information from G4S and, in future, the new COMPASS contractor.

Leeds received £100,000 funding from government in 2018/19 through **LAASLO (Local Authority Asylum Support Liaison Officer)** and we have appointed two officers whose role will be to better work with new refugees to develop Personal Housing Plans and to help asylum seekers who have received negative asylum decisions. The funding of the two posts will be mainstreamed within the Leeds Housing Options service in 2019/20.

A key part of the LAASLO officer's role will be effective engagement with refugees/asylum seekers and partnership working with services working with asylum seekers/refugees including **PAFRAS, RETAS and the Red Cross**. There are no straightforward housing options for asylum seekers who have received negative asylum decisions or others with no recourse to public funds. However, through effective partnership and engagement work we are hopeful that we will be able to find improved outcomes. Feedback from the three services is that the partnership working has improved outcomes and that we should consider more availability of outreach appointments rather than asking people to attend the City Centre Hub at Merrion House. It has also been suggested that staff from Leeds Housing Options attend the Leeds Migration Partnership meetings. We will commit to all these proposals.

In December 2017, a bid was submitted by LCC to the **Government's Controlling Migration Fund**. Leeds alongside four other LAs were successful in obtaining funding. Organised crime groups are known to operate in Leeds facilitating modern slavery and human trafficking. Related exploitation identified in West Yorkshire mainly

relates to sexual or labour exploitation. The aim of the bid is to develop accommodation pathways for those victims of modern slavery leaving the **National Referral Mechanism**. To strengthen the transition for victims of modern day slavery leaving care and moving into the community, and help them to integrate into local communities. At a local level two support workers have been funded at **Palm Cove**, a charity providing emergency accommodation for victims of modern day slavery. This will form part of a strong partnership with Leeds Housing Options in supporting the accommodation transition for victims.

A citizen of a European Economic Area (EEA) country has recourse to public funds/is eligible for housing assistance if they are in the UK to exercise a treaty right to be in the UK as a 'worker'. One of the emerging issues is the housing options being secured by people in areas such as Harehills with often multiple families living in overcrowded conditions and in poor standard of maintenance. The issue has primarily come to light because of increased pressures on school places in and around the Harehills area. A person would be homeless if they have no legal interest in occupying a property or if the accommodation was significantly overcrowded or in a poor physical condition. We are partly reliant on other services, who are visiting the family, to alert us to concerns so that we can offer a housing options service to the people and enforcement action against landlords if appropriate. The proposed **selective licensing scheme** for Harehills and Beeston will have a positive impact on the housing experience of migrant communities living in these areas.

Housing Issues for Armed Forces Leavers

Leeds has a proud and long history of association with the British Armed Forces. The Council is committed to a **Community Covenant** which strengthens the partnership between Leeds City Council and the Armed Forces. The Armed Forces Covenant has been established to support the work of the Leeds Armed Forces Covenant Partnership and Armed Forces Members Champion Group.

The Covenant in Leeds will make sure that the local Armed Forces community is not disadvantaged when accessing public services. In relation to Housing there is a very strong commitment to assisting and supporting members of the Armed Forces and so Housing is involved in a number of initiatives to make sure that armed forces personnel are never disadvantaged when it comes to accessing housing. Council housing is allocated in accordance with statutory guidelines however we also make sure that the needs of people in the armed forces are taken into account. Additional priority is given to Armed Forces leavers and Armed Forces Personnel who are in urgent housing need. On local lettings policies for new build council properties, a preference is given for a proportion of the properties to go to members of the Armed Forces. The local connection requirement is applied sensitively when someone leaving the Armed Forces cannot establish a local connection, and will be waived.

Through partnership working with the **Royal British Legion** we have agreed further measures including where the MOD issues a certificate of cessation of entitlement to occupy a service quarter then the Council will backdate the customers priority award to the date the certificate was issued to assist them to secure accommodation as quickly as possible when they are discharged. There is also a dedicated email

address within the council for any armed forces queries and a named contact within housing.

Vulnerable Private Rented Tenants in Priority Neighbourhoods

The private rented sector is now the second largest tenure, after home-ownership, in Leeds with approximately 70,000 properties. We estimate that approximately 15-20,000 properties are problematic in respect of housing standards and housing management. The Council's Private Sector Housing Service has resources to inspect, and where necessary take enforcement action, around 2,500 properties per year. It is believed that many of the most vulnerable people, who have formerly been homeless or at risk of homelessness, are concentrated in poor standard private rented accommodation in areas such as Harehills, East End Park, Beeston, Holbeck and Armley. Private rented tenants have limited security of tenure, compared to social housing tenants, and many people are reluctant to raise issues of concern regarding their tenancy in case this results in an eviction notice being issued. We therefore have the dual challenge of finite resources to inspect all challenging properties and a relative reluctance of tenants to tell us that there are problems with their tenancies.

The Council has identified **6 'Priority Neighbourhoods'**, which are Lower Super Output Areas that are in the 1% most disadvantaged areas in the country. Three of these areas (Nowell/Clifton streets in Harehills, Beverly streets and Stratford Street in Beeston and the Recreation/Barton streets in Holbeck) have a high number of challenging private rented properties.

The most significant action is the proposed introduction of **selective licensing** in the Harehills and Beeston areas. Selective licensing involves landlords having to pay a fee for every private rented property they manage in a specific area with the licence income being used to inspect all licenced properties over a five year term. If the scheme is approved, it is intended that selective licensing will significantly improve the management of private rented housing, and the experience of tenants, over the five year period. The **Leeds Neighbourhood Approach**, which is operating in the Recreation streets in Holbeck, involves a multi-agency partnership approach to improving housing/environmental standards and the wider life experience of residents. The work involves the targeted inspection of properties, to improve standards and eliminate property hazards, and a focus on bringing empty homes back into use. On a wider city level, we need to continue to encourage good landlords to join the co-regulation **Leeds Rental Standard** freeing up resources for us to focus on **Rogue Landlords** and potentially applying **Civil Penalties** of £30,000 for breaches of environmental standards. We also need to encourage services, who can go into properties as part of their roles, to alert us to poor standards of accommodation so we can support tenants and take enforcement action.

Victims of Domestic Violence

The main cause of homelessness in Leeds is domestic violence. Many victims of domestic violence struggle to access services (whether this is due to the controlling coercive nature of abuse or other barriers) so it is vital that we are flexible and work

together with partnership agencies to safeguard vulnerable victims. The Front Door Safeguarding Hub (FDSH) was created in April 2014 and brings together a wide range of partner agencies including Housing, West Yorkshire Police, Children's Social Work Services, Healthcare and Probation. The FDSH provides a rapid response for all high risk incidents of domestic violence that have occurred within the preceding 24 hours – along with any concerns raised by professionals in regards to a victim they are working with. Following the discussion of an incident a robust action plan is implemented, tailored to each individual, to protect the victim from further harm. Housing Options work to enable people to either stay in their current home (e.g. extra security measures via the Sanctuary scheme) or move into alternative safe accommodation (e.g. refuge or a private rented tenancy). Leeds Housing Options are committed to attending the FDSH each day and recognise the importance of this meeting as it allows us to step-in early in the hopes of preventing victims from becoming homeless.

Leeds Housing Options have developed a specific page on the Leeds City Council website devoted to our service offer for people who are fleeing domestic violence:

<https://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/housing/housing-options/leeds-housing-options/housing-options-domestic-violence>

Within Leeds Housing Options there is a Safeguarding team who are specialised in completing risk assessments and working with vulnerable victims. This team is dedicated to providing the best options for victims – empowering them to have choice in where they live with the mentality that everyone deserves to feel safe in their home. The service has committed to completing an assessment in an environment in which the person feels safe – whether this be over the phone, in a public space etc. – and offering the option of a male or female advisor depending on the preference of the approaching person. Leeds Housing Options has developed strong links with domestic violence services across Leeds enabling us to intervene early and provide support to some of the most vulnerable people in the city – these links are something that we intend to continue building.

Mental Health

Mental ill-health is both a cause and consequence of homelessness. Mental ill-health can result in a person losing or being at risk of losing their home and the pressures of being homeless can trigger or compound a person's mental ill-health. Conversely, having a home can be a major factor in promoting good mental health.

The city commissions **Community Links and Touchstone** to deliver specialist housing related support services for people who are homeless and suffer from mental ill-health. The Council has its own **Mental Health Homelessness Team** that provides a housing support service to people suffering from mental ill-health.

Significant progress has been made to develop stronger partnership arrangements between Leeds Housing Options, the key housing support services and services provided, including hospital in-patient, by **Leeds and York NHS Foundation Trust**.

We are providing an outreach housing options service in people's existing tenancies, supported housing services and on hospital wards. Every person has a **Personal**

Housing Plan, in line Homelessness Reduction Act, to prevent and relieve homelessness. We are using the **Homeless Prevention Fund**, to facilitate tenancy sustainment and sign-ups – including to facilitate discharges from hospital. We provide support through the specialist housing support services and **Engage** to help people transition from supported housing, residential placements and hospital to their own independent accommodation. The joint working is underpinned by mental health and housing operational and strategic meetings.

Prison Leavers

Data collection by the **West Yorkshire Community Rehabilitation Company** (probation service responsible for managing low and medium risk offenders) identified that 30% of people receiving probation supervision had an accommodation need. It is known that unmet housing need is a major contributory factor in people re-offending. The **Leeds Reducing Offending Board**, chaired by a senior officer within the West Yorkshire CRC, has included accommodation as one of the key themes within its action plan. **Through the Gate** is an initiative designed to ensure that every person leaving prison has a resettlement plan and that actions have started before a person is released from prison – 12 weeks before release. The resettlement plan is tailored to each person's individual circumstances. Housing is one of seven pathways to be included within each person's plan. The West Yorkshire CRC commissions **Catch 22** and the **St Giles Trust** to deliver the Through the Gate services at prisons in the Leeds locality. A significant number of people fail to attend the first probation appointment after leaving prison and consequently this means they are less likely to get the help they need in respect of health, addiction treatment and housing. The West Yorkshire CRC has set up a **Departure Lounge** immediately outside Leeds prison. People can meet probation staff at the service, comply with probation conditions and get the help that they need. It is believed that having a probation service adjacent to the prison will ease the transition for some people from prison to community living.

We need to understand the parallels between homeless and tackling offending services. Firstly we need to ensure that all staff from the West Yorkshire CRC and Through the Gate services are aware of the 'Duty to Refer' people who will be homeless on release from prison or who are homeless/at risk of homelessness following release. The Through the Gate resettlement plan process commences 12 weeks before release whereas the homeless Personal Housing Plan should start 56 days before a person is likely to become homeless. We will look at the feasibility of commencing the Personal Housing Plan process at an earlier point if this will deliver improved prevention/relief outcomes. The Through the Gate service makes contact with people when they are first placed in custody. Housing services need to be ready to assist if there are opportunities to deliver housing outcomes at this stage. We need to ensure that there is commonality in approach and action between the resettlement plan and Personal Housing Plan.

All of the above actions are underpinned by strategic partnership, operational joint working and specifically housing staff going into prisons and delivering services rather than waiting for people to be released and approach services themselves. Both the **Beacon** service and Leeds Housing Options Service work directly with the Through the Gate services and deliver services in the Leeds prisons. We need to review the effectiveness of these services and see if we need to do anything different in order to

improve the service offer. We also now have a **Prison In-Reach worker (employed by CGL)** who will work with rough sleepers/people at risk of rough sleeping whilst they are in custody to ensure that they have housing options at the point of release and don't need to sleep rough.

Learning Disability

The purpose of the Ordinary Lives project is to offer an alternative to the practice of admitting adults to residential care, and instead use community based ordinary living options that deliver greater choice, control, independence and social inclusion.

The Ordinary Lives project therefore aims to address the reliance on residential care within Leeds with the intention that everyone with impairment or support needs is, should they want to, able to live in an ordinary home and receive the support they need to live independent, meaningful and purposeful lives. Leeds Housing Options is actively working to help a small number of individuals to help them transition to independent living.

Further progress will be developed by being an integral part of the Adult Social Care Learning Disabilities nominations panel, where alongside partners we can identify services which offer suitable accommodation both temporary and permanent for adults with a learning disability.

There is a recognised need for an information resource for social work teams. Many social workers are not aware of the support that is available from Housing Options and more generally the full availability of provision across the city. A series of guides will be developed as a 'Social Workers Guide to Housing'.

Gypsies and Travellers

A person is homeless if they have nowhere to legally station their mobile home. Many Gypsies and Travellers have a 'cultural aversion' to living in conventional housing and some Gypsies and Travellers live a nomadic lifestyle as part of their cultural expression. The Council has committed, through its Core Strategy, to a target of delivering 62 additional 'pitches' (parcel of land sufficient in size to locate a family's caravans, other vehicles and an amenity block) by 2028. This will comprise 28 private pitches, 25 publicly managed pitches and 9 'negotiated stopping' (short term permissions to encamp) pitches. A new council managed site at Kidacre Street, offering 8 pitches, opened in December 2018.

Older People

Leeds has an ambition to be the 'Best City to Grow Old In' and an Older Person's Housing Group: 'Me and My Home' has been established. The housing priorities have to date not focused on homelessness. A focus has been on modernising sheltered housing provision (including the development of new extra provision), new assistive technology to promote independent living, delivery of adaptations, tackling poor housing standards (especially hazards such as excess cold and high risk of falls) and

priority awards for re-housing. It is important to stress that a person is homeless if their current accommodation is not reasonable to occupy because of its condition or a person's capacity to function in the property. There was a national 60% increase in homeless presentations relating to over 60s between 2009 and 2017. A comparable increase has not occurred in Leeds and, whilst this is because of a focus on helping older people to thrive in their existing homes, we cannot be complacent. We will continue to monitor homeless presentations for older people.

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Commitments

1. Produce a personal housing plan for each female street based sex worker
2. Continue outreach surgeries at Basis and Joanna Project, attend the evening outreach sessions in Holbeck
3. Focus on how we can best help LGBT+ people aged 50+
4. Attend the new LGBT+ Councillors Monthly Surgery at Queens Court
5. All staff to receive training on LGBT+ issues and specifically relating to homelessness
6. Review criteria relating to supported housing services to ensure all are welcoming to LGBT+ and to same sex couples and families, with additional regard being given for the type of accommodation offered to trans or non-binary people
7. Commit to wider corporate policy of equality monitoring and support a 'tell us once' policy on gender identity
8. Produce a personal housing plan as soon as notice to leave NASS accommodation is issued, working in partnership with the COMPASS contractor
9. Work with partners to find improved housing outcomes for those with negative asylum decisions or no recourse to public funds
10. Offer increased number of outreach appointments and attend the Leeds Migration Partnership meetings
11. Work with Palm Cove team to strengthen support to community accommodation for victims of modern day slavery
12. Proposed introduction of selective licensing in Harehills and Beeston to significantly improve management of tenancies in those areas
13. Focus on enforcement against rogue landlords particularly in the '6 priority neighbourhoods'
14. Attend Front Door Safeguarding Hub daily and take early intervention actions to prevent homelessness
15. Strengthen partnership working with domestic violence services across Leeds
16. Continue to develop stronger partnership arrangements with key mental health housing support services and the services provided by Leeds and York NHS Foundation Trust
17. Provide an outreach service to those with mental ill health in existing tenancies, supported housing services and on hospital wards
18. Explore feasibility of activating Personal Housing Plan at an earlier point in conjunction with the Through The Gate resettlement plan
19. Review effectiveness of existing prison in-reach services and see how we can improve our approach
20. Develop a series of guides to housing options as a 'social workers guide to housing'
21. Deliver 62 additional pitches for the Gypsy and Traveller community
22. Continue to monitor homeless presentations for older people

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