



## **Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2020-25) Improvement Plan 2020/2025 (end of cycle)**

In developing our Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025, the council consulted widely with stakeholders, partner agencies, service users and the public. This established that the four key priority outcomes that were developed for the previous homelessness strategy remain relevant, as follows:

1. Homeless prevention activity for all households at risk is maximised. (Ref: PO1)
2. Rough sleeping is minimised and tenancy sustainment opportunities for rough sleepers and those with complex needs are increased. (Ref: PO2)
3. Homeless people and those at risk are able to access appropriate housing and support services are targeted effectively. (Ref: PO3)
4. The health and wellbeing of homeless people and those at risk is improved. (Ref: PO4)

These broad priority outcomes helped to inform an annual Improvement Plan, which was inclusive of the multi-agency approach necessary to ensure that homelessness prevention, intervention and recovery is at the very the centre of all work practices.

Through identifying improvement activities for each year, the Improvement Plan underpinned the strategy. At the time that the strategy was written and approved there was no way that partners could have forecast a worldwide pandemic was developing or the impact that would have on the lives of people across the UK and beyond. This changed Herefordshire's response to homelessness and our action plan.

In March 2020 the UK Government introduced several restrictions upon society in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. One of these restrictions was the introduction of the 'Everyone In' initiative. The UK Government made it a requirement that all local authorities had to provide emergency accommodation for everyone who was rough sleeping. Over 280 individuals in Herefordshire were accommodated during the first period of 'lock down'. The individuals being accommodated had a wide range of backgrounds and differing support needs. They were accommodated in a variety of settings across the whole county. Herefordshire called this approach Project BRAVE (Building Resilience Against Enduring Vulnerabilities). Project BRAVE developed three strands: -

1. Meet the needs of accommodated persons during the current period of COVID – 19 emergency accommodation.
2. Post the COVID – 19 emergency accommodation period, provide support for individuals to access mainstream housing: and
3. In the long-term, provide support to sustain mainstream housing and reduce the risks for homelessness and rough sleeping to re-occur.

This approach enabled Herefordshire Council to work with a range of partners from the Statutory and the Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector (CVFS), to develop an integrated approach to working with, for and in support of people who use services, with the intention of making homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring.

Herefordshire Council has also worked across the accommodation landscape to expand access to accommodation through the Private Rental Sector, Registered Providers, as well as develop our own housing stock option to meet these increased accommodation needs.

Since 2024, Project BRAVE has become business as normal and is now referred to as BRAVE. It has developed into a three-strand approach to tackling homelessness and the issues surrounding homelessness. These are a Strategic Group, an Operations Group and the Delivery groups – Breaking the Cycle (for clients that find it hard to engage) and Team Around Me (for engaging clients).

This action plan captures the progress to meet the key priorities set out in the strategy.



No	Strategic Priority	Improvement Activity	Lead Responsibility	Resources	Improvement Outcome	Links to Strategy Priority Outcomes	Progress
1.	<p><b>1. Strategic Priority</b> - We will review and improve our current operational structure to ensure that preventative activity is central to everything that we do. We will do this as part of our improvement activity for the first year of the strategy.</p> <p><b>2. Strategic Priority</b> - We will work with key partners to identify how we can deliver a Housing First project in Herefordshire.</p> <p><b>4. Strategic Priority</b> - Through Team Herefordshire we will support a lead agency to develop a cross-</p>	<b>Improvement Activity</b> - Deliver Covid 19 Housing Exit and Support Recovery Plan – Project BRAVE	HSHPM and All partners	Existing & Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHLG)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further develop the multi-agency ‘blueprint’ for rough sleeping prevention, intervention and recovery.</li> <li>Agency responsibility in the pathway is agreed and clearly understood.</li> <li>Information sharing protocols are put in place.</li> <li>Rough sleeping becomes infrequent, then rare, then non-occurring.</li> <li>Increase access to housing stock being offered to rough sleepers and homeless across Herefordshire.</li> </ol>	PO1, PO2, PO3, PO4	<p>Project BRAVE continues to develop.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governance through Project BRAVE Strategic Board and Operational Delivery Group.</li> <li>Delivery through the Breaking the Cycle (BTC) multi agency / sector case conferencing to deliver strategy. Expanded to include Team Around Me (TAM).</li> <li>Review and re-launch of project BRAVE and pathways – Housing, Health &amp; Social Care, Justice and CVFS. Three key themes to progress: - <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-prevention pathway – to be delivered through Talk Community Hubs. Funding to recruit a post to deliver support to communities.</li> <li>Complex / multiple disadvantage’s pathway – to be delivered through TAM.</li> <li>Rough sleeping pathway – to be delivered through BTC.</li> </ol> </li> <li>Comprehensive Information sharing protocol in place, understood by all partners and incorporated into service user assessment processes.</li> </ol>

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	sector systemic approach that makes rough sleeping and sofa surfing sequentially rare, infrequent and non-reoccurring.						<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Herefordshire successful in joining the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) national network.</li> <li>6. Using DLUHC Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) 2022-25 grant funding employed Rough Sleeping Outreach Team Operational Lead.</li> <li>7. Severe Weather Emergency Protocol developed and in use.</li> <li>8. Emergency Winter Accommodation:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-</li> <li>a. Herefordshire Council provided emergency winter accommodation with support from CVSE charitable partners. (Funded by Herefordshire Council and DLUHC (now MHCLG) Cold Weather Grant Funding, Protect and Vaccinate and Protect Plus Grant and Winter Transformation Grant Funding) in 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23.</li> <li>b. In 2023/24 Herefordshire Council, working with Herefordshire Homeless Forum, provided emergency winter</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

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							<p>accommodation at the Acorn Building, Symonds Street, Hereford - with support from CCP and the wider CVSE charitable sector. (Funded by Herefordshire Council and DLUHC (now MHCLG) Night Shelter Transformation Grant and RSI 2022-25 Grant, Eveson Trust, Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership, St Peter's Open Door (Charity), Ethos (Charity) and Hereford Mayor's fund)</p> <p>c. In 2024/25 Herefordshire Council worked with Herefordshire Homeless Forum to provide emergency winter accommodation, with CCP providing the management and support staff and with support from other CVSE charitable partners. (Funded by Herefordshire Council and DLUHC (now MHCLG) RSI 2022-25 Grant, St Peter's Open Door (Charity), Ethos (Charity) and Hereford Mayor's fund). Additional Support</p>

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							<p>provided through Lee's Place (see additional report by Christine Price).</p> <p>d. In 2023 Herefordshire Council used MHCLG RSI 2022-25 Grant funding to purchase four emergency accommodation pods to augment the provision at the Emergency Winter Shelter and provide a year-round immediate off the street accommodation offer for rough sleepers.</p> <p>e. Herefordshire Council was successful in securing capital and revenue funding from MHCLG and Homes England through the Single Homeless Accommodation Pathway (SHAP) Grant 2024-27 and Herefordshire Council Capital Grant funding. This funded the purchase of 15 one-bedroom units, employed three support staff with a support budget for three years.</p> <p>f. Using MHCLG RSI 2022-25 and RSI additional Burdens Grant Funding 2023-25 and Herefordshire Council</p>

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							Capital Grant funding, Herefordshire Council has been able to purchase a three-bedroom property and convert this and another three-bedroom property into eight units of accommodation for singles. (Blackfriars Street, Hereford)
2.	<b>Strategic Priority</b> - We will develop and broaden our accommodation offer to reduce reliance upon Bed and Breakfast and Hotel Temporary Accommodation	<p><b>Improvement Activity</b> - We will investigate opportunities for entering into a long-term lease with a private landlord to develop bespoke temporary accommodation for vulnerable households.</p> <p><b>Improvement Activity</b> - Further develop monitoring and evaluation of</p>	HSHPM and HSM	Existing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that services are people focused. Ask for and use feedback from service users and providers to improve services.</li> <li>2. Learn from best practice.</li> <li>3. To develop and implement processes and practices that ensure the voice of experts by experience are utilised to their</li> </ol>	PO1, PO2, PO3, PO4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Officer employed (RSI4 Funded) to capture data and analyse trends to inform ongoing service development. Incorporate information to improve services into this action plan.</li> <li>2. Being developed with colleagues in Talk Community – feedback and evaluation processes, co-production / co-design / co-management of services with users of these services (Experts by Experience).</li> <li>3. Secured membership to Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) network.</li> <li>4. Continue to conduct research and identify best practice – nationally and internationally to further</li> </ol>



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		<p>existing services and sharing of learning across organisations</p> <p><b>Improvement Activity</b> - Develop a temporary accommodation (TA) policy. Document to include needs assessment, plan for sufficient supply and TA placement policy.</p> <p><b>Improvement Activity</b> - Work with new and existing accommodation providers to expand range of 'move on' accommodation and related support offer.</p>			<p>fullest in the design, delivery and management of these services.</p> <p>4. Clear assessment of current use of and future need for TA to inform future supply.</p> <p>5. Soft market testing of market for TA to enable greater understanding of market and potential delivery models.</p> <p>6. Clear placement policy to enable people to understand the process that the council applies when placing households in TA.</p>		<p>develop and improve our offer of service.</p> <p>5. Housing Strategy Officer attended several conferences and factfinding visits and the identified best practice from these was shared via Homeless Forum and with statutory partners across the county.</p> <p>6. Temporary Accommodation Policy developed and in use.</p> <p>7. Temporary Accommodation Procurement Framework Policy developed and in operation.</p> <p>8. Temporary accommodation market analysis undertaken and comprehensive list of providers developed.</p> <p>9. Homeless Prevention Protocol agreed with local Registered Providers.</p> <p>10. Using DLUHC RSI 2022-25 grant funding delivered a Trauma Informed Training program to 165 front line staff.</p> <p>11. Referral Pathways in place for placement of former rough sleepers</p>

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					<p>7. Rough sleeping is reduced through enhanced intervention and housing provision.</p> <p>8. Rough sleeping prevention is increased. Those at risk of rough sleeping are supported to maintain their existing home.</p>		<p>with a range of RPs across the county, managed through the BTC and TAM framework.</p> <p>12. Using RSI 2022-25 grant funding and through the grant of a contract to a VCSE sector organisation, develop a Day / Drop-in centre for homeless and rough sleeping individuals – 2022-25 – contract now concluded.</p> <p>13. Developed a suite of accommodation offers to provide 45 units of accommodation for those who rough sleep or are at risk of rough sleeping. Specifically: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Developed 12 units of supported accommodation with Citizen Housing at Whitecross Road.</li> <li>b. Using Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) funding redeveloped six units of accommodation at Blackfriars Street.</li> <li>c. Using Herefordshire Council Grant funding worked with Trustees at Hope Scott House homeless shelter to refurbish,</li> </ul>

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							<p>redesign and extend the accommodation offer to 13 units of en-suite accommodation and two self-contained 'pod' homes. In addition, employed a support worker full-time 2023-25.</p> <p>d. Using DLUHC Rough Sleeper Accommodation Program (RSAP) Grant funding and Herefordshire Council core grant funding purchased six properties of one bedroom accommodation off the open market.</p> <p>e. Using DLUHC Grant funding and Herefordshire Council core grant funding refurbished a Private Rental Property to give seven units of one-bedroom self-contained accommodation. (now discontinued)</p> <p>14. Using Herefordshire Council Grant funding secured the long-term use of a former hotel to give 18 units of self-contained one bedroom accommodation.</p>

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							<p>15. Working with a Private Sector Landlord secured 16 units of accommodation in New Town Road – mix of one bedroom self-contained and one bedroom with shared facilities.</p> <p>16. In addition, using a mixture of Herefordshire Council Capital Grant funding and MHCLG RSI 2022-25 Grant, and RSI 2023-25 Additional Burdens Grant funding, the following are in development / purchase to give an additional 51 units of accommodation: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Eight units of accommodation in two semi-detached houses (HC owned)</li> <li>b. Purchase and conversion of an apartment block to give 28 units of accommodation (HC Owned)</li> <li>c. 15 units of one bedroom accommodation with three support staff (SHAP funding)</li> </ul>

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							17. Finally, funded the Emergency Winter Night Shelter since 2020 and purchased four emergency living pods to provide up to 22 bed spaces if required.
3.	<b>Strategic Priority</b> – We will seek alternative funding to enable the implementation of the homelessness health improvement projects as part of our improvement activity.	<p><b>Improvement Activity</b> - Apply for external funding opportunities to implement projects that meet an identified need.</p> <p><b>Improvement Activity</b> - We will strengthen our ability to provide support to people through our Rough Sleeper Outreach Team and partner agency support services</p>	All partners	<p>DLUHC funding</p> <p>Charitable funding</p>	<p>1. Physical and mental health services are more accessible to rough sleepers and those at risk through outreach provision.</p> <p>2. Expand support available to rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping or homelessness.</p>	PO1, PO2, PO3, PO4	<p>1. Funding secured 2020 to date is £9,674,255 (as a mix of revenue and capital). Breakdown follows: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. RSI3&amp;4 - £1,200,404</li> <li>b. RSI 5 - £2,072,329</li> <li>c. OPCC 2021 - £4,000</li> <li>d. NSAP 2020 - £524,745</li> <li>e. RSAP 2021 - £490,892</li> <li>f. Winter Provision 2021 - £93,913</li> <li>g. Protect Plus 2021 - £20,000</li> <li>h. Protect and Vaccinate 2021/22 - £150,437</li> <li>i. Winter Transformation 2020 - £96,500</li> <li>j. Community Safety 2022 - £20,000</li> <li>k. Night Shelter Transformation Grant 2022/23 - £54,000</li> </ul>

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							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>l. Rough Sleeping Drugs and Alcohol Grant 2022-25 - £894,992</li> <li>m. RSI Funding 2023-24- Additional Winter Pressures - £16,498,</li> <li>n. RSI Funding 2023-25 Targeted Funding - £406,302,</li> <li>o. RSI Funding 2023-24 - Move on and prevention - £47,647,</li> <li>p. SHAP 2023-27 Round 3 &amp; 5 - £2,167,425 (CAP &amp; REV),</li> <li>q. Rough Sleeping Winter Pressures 24/25 Grant - £21,534.</li> <li>r. RSI – Winter Pressures Fund - £43,432.</li> <li>s. Rough Sleeping Prevention and Recovery Grant – £891,014.</li> <li>t. Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Grant - £537,753.</li> <li>u. Rough Sleeper Additional Pressures 24/25 - £42,388.</li> </ul>

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							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>v. RSAP 25/26 - £73,346.</li> </ul> <p>2. Above funding used to fund and recruit (Still in post): -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Rough Sleeping Outreach Team – Tenancy Sustainment Officer.</li> <li>b. Rough Sleeping Outreach Team – Navigator</li> <li>c. Rough Sleeping Team – Prison Release Navigator</li> <li>d. Rough Sleeping Outreach Team – Lead Officer</li> <li>e. Turning Point recruited a range of staff and resources to enhance their service.</li> <li>f. Recruit to a Trauma Specialist to work with people affected by Adverse Childhood Trauma and the effects of it.</li> <li>g. Whitecross Road Hub – 4 x Tenancy Sustainment Officers.</li> <li>h. Hope Scott House – Tenancy Sustainment Officer.</li> </ul>

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							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Early Intervention Officer – working through Talk Community Hubs</li> <li>j. Housing Solutions – Triage – Prevention Officers x 2.</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Also used as funding towards the acquisition of property secured for rough sleepers – details above.</li> <li>4. Project Bright Path initiated for bespoke Mental Health Support for rough sleepers.</li> <li>5. Herefordshire Homeless Forum have been supported to develop a Homeless Charter for Herefordshire and a comprehensive training plan for the work that the Forum and its members undertake.</li> <li>6. Early Intervention Officer has been in post two years and worked with 261 households (in Year 1 – Year 2 not compete) to prevent them becoming homeless and requiring Statutory support.</li> <li>7. Using the Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Grant funding, Turning Point (the commissioned addiction</li> </ol>



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							treatment service in Herefordshire) has been able to secure additional staff and support services to meet work to address the county's needs. This includes a drop in treatment bus to service rural and market town communities and community addiction nurse specialists.

Key:

Housing Solutions & Home Point Manager	HSHPM
Strategic Housing Manager	SHM
Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities – NOW Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government	DLUHC MHCLG

\*The lead may delegate operational responsibility to other colleagues in his/her team.