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# HOMELESS PREVENTION AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY

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2018 - 2023

## FORWARD

I am pleased to introduce Barnsley's new Homeless Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy for 2018-2023. I would like to thank partners from across the Council, Health, Criminal Justice, Housing Sector, Voluntary and Faith based sector that have contributed and supported the development of this strategy.

The strategy sets out our approach for tackling homelessness in the borough. The main focus of the work in the strategy is to prevent homelessness in the first place and helping those who are homeless build a better future. We have made positive progress over the last five years in supporting those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, but more needs to be done. Homelessness is on the increase in the borough and a different approach that drives whole system change is required.

The road ahead will be challenging, increasing pressures on budgets in all sectors, impacts of welfare reforms, the impact of the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 are just some of the issues we face. However I am confident if we work in partnership to tackle these issues we can have a positive impact on homelessness in Barnsley.

Rough sleeping has been high on the national agenda and gained much media coverage, and we are fortunate in Barnsley not to have a big rough sleeping problem. There are many more people in the borough living in precarious housing situations, sofa surfing, temporary accommodation and hostels.

We know that the prevention of homelessness is key to tackling disadvantage and creating sustainable communities. People who do not have access to sustainable accommodation will find it difficult to engage in education, training or to maintain or gain employment. So this must be our focus.

It is important in such times where budgets are reducing and demand for specialist services are increasing, that we work together and pool our resources to ensure people in our communities get the right support, at the right time. No single organisation can solve homelessness alone; we must proactively work together to intervene earlier and prevent it happening.

I look forward to working with you all to deliver this strategy and making the vision a reality.

**Councillor Jenny Platts**  
**Cabinet Spokesperson for Communities Directorate**

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## INTRODUCTION

This strategy has been developed in consultation with key partners following a review of homelessness in Barnsley and takes into account recent developments in relevant legislation and policy.

This strategy seeks to set out a collaborative approach to tackling homelessness in Barnsley over the next five years. An early help approach has been shown to prevent homelessness and must be the foundation of this strategy. Together as partners we can expand on this approach, not only to prevent homelessness but also to achieve wider outcomes such as improved health and well-being and better job prospects.

The Council and its partners have made progress in tackling homelessness over the lifetime of the last strategy, but the landscape we are working in has changed. Austerity, welfare reforms, the economic position, migration patterns, housing supply and the affordability and the growth of the private rented sector have all contributed. In addition to this wider policy and legal changes have had an impact on both the national and local homelessness situation.

This strategy will build on the previous good work; the last homeless strategy had a clear focus on prevention and since 2013/14 2,961 people have been supported to stay in their current property or to find alternative accommodation. Rough sleeper numbers have remained low and different temporary accommodation models have been tested. The strategy will take full account of this changing landscape including the implementation of the Homeless Reduction Act 2017, which came into force in April 2018. It will be underpinned by a clear action plan which will be monitored operationally by the Homeless Alliance and strategically through the Housing and Energy Board.

## HOMELESS REDUCTION ACT 2017

This is the biggest change to homeless legislation in decades. The Act commenced in April 2018 and builds on the existing provisions of Part 7 of the 1996 Housing Act (as amended by Homelessness Act 2002), it extends the councils duties to those who are homeless and has a focus on prevention. The key changes brought about by the Act include:

- Improving the advice and information available about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness.
- Extending the period 'threatened with homelessness from 28 days to 56 days' – introducing new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible households, regardless of priority need, intentionality and (local connection).
- Introducing assessments and Personal Housing Plans setting out the actions authorities and individuals will take to secure accommodation.
- Encouraging public bodies to work together to prevent and relieve homelessness through a Duty to Refer, which commences in October 2018.

## OUR CHALLENGES

Nationally the government recognises that the housing system is 'broken'<sup>1</sup> and recent statistics<sup>2</sup> show that homelessness and rough sleeping is on the increase. Locally there are also a number of pressing issues:

- **A lack of affordable housing** particularly for single people and especially those under 35, who are on low incomes or unemployed. This group is impacted by the under 35 shared room rate. This is the biggest group of people who approach the Housing Options service for assistance.
- The continued **impact of welfare reforms** particularly spare room subsidy, benefit cap, introduction of universal credit and changes to sickness benefits.
- **Changing landscape in the private rented sector** - A tendency for private landlords to be more selective of tenants who are perceived to be low risk. There are also areas of the borough with private sector stock which is of poor quality, with landlords reluctant to invest and manage.
- Deprivation and associated **poverty/low incomes** are key barriers for accessing suitable housing and maintaining stable and financially sustainable tenancies. Access to employment is a key mechanism for preventing homelessness. The average household income in Barnsley is relatively low, so meeting housing and daily living costs is a challenge for some. Linked to this is fuel poverty, The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) estimates there to be 12,550 households suffering from fuel poverty in Barnsley, this equates to 12.2% of households in the borough (2016 data).
- Those on the streets are at greater risk of **cold related illnesses and excess winter deaths**<sup>3</sup>.
- An ongoing **undersupply of social housing** - (social housing in this context means council and registered social landlords) and other affordable housing as recognised nationally in the Housing White Paper (Fixing Our Broken Housing Market, 2017).<sup>1</sup> In the context of an increasingly de-regulated environment, social housing providers are required to be more business minded and this may lead to some reluctance to house people perceived to be high risk in terms of welfare dependency and their ability to maintain a tenancy without ongoing/intensive support.
- The ongoing need for **efficiencies and savings** in local government and continued austerity has led to a reduction in the support and advice services available locally for those who are vulnerable, which can mean people are presenting in crisis.
- The approach to supporting clients has been **too housing focussed**, with an emphasis on securing accommodation at the expense of trying to prevent future homelessness by addressing the underlying causes. We need to do more to recognise the impact and cost that the trauma of homelessness can have on both adult and children's physical and mental health and well-being.
- A number of the people presenting as homelessness have a mixture of **complex needs**, common to these are substance misuse, mental health and offending. Some of these people are spending periods of time rough sleeping and begging, others are in and out of supported housing, prison and hospital and a number are precariously housed, often 'sofa surfing'. The challenge here is encouraging people to engage in the services and accommodation available and ensuring all partners are pulling together for the same aim.
- A limited number of **options for temporary accommodation** and the continued use of B&B out of area, including for families.
- Barnsley is proud to be a Local Authority that welcomes **new arrivals** and, as such, we are an area where asylum seekers are accommodated through the Home Office's contract with a private accommodation provider. However, this has added to current pressures on homelessness and other statutory services, particularly when asylum seekers are given a decision on their claim for status in the UK. We work closely with the Home Office, the accommodation provider, support organisations and with regional Local Authorities to make sure that any pressures are kept to a minimum and that we are involved in all stages of the process with the power of veto, where necessary.

Overall ensuring that people who have experienced homelessness are able to sustain accommodation in the long term requires both the availability and access to suitable housing and the appropriate support structures. Individuals and households also need to have the capacity and resilience to maintain occupation of their home.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fixing-our-broken-housing-market>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cold-weather-plan-cwp-for-england>

## What the data review is telling us

The results of the review indicate that over the last few years the service has been moving in the right direction; in that homeless acceptances (i.e. those we have reason to believe are homeless, priority need, unintentionally homeless and have a local connection), have been reducing and preventions increasing. However 2017/18 has seen a steep rise in the number of homeless acceptances and placements in temporary accommodation. Reflecting the fact that homelessness in Barnsley is increasing and it's becoming more challenging to successfully prevent homelessness. Analysis is ongoing to determine why this is happening but some initial observations are that there is limited move on from supported housing, housing options for some people with a range of support needs can be restrictive, there are not enough supported/emergency housing options available and access to the private rented sector is a challenge. The biggest group presenting are single males between the ages of 25-44, often with a range of complex needs. The new ways of working under the Homeless Reduction Act will inevitably lead to more people presenting to the service for advice, support and accommodation and we need to focus on trying to keep people in their existing accommodation where this is feasible.



This demonstrates some of the challenges that Barnsley faces in that there are potentially a large proportion of people in Barnsley living in precarious housing situations and 'sofa surfing', which is not a sustainable long term option. A high proportion of people, particularly young people, are being asked to leave by parents reflecting the need for earlier identification and support in these families, including mediation. Poverty is impacting on people's ability to manage and maintain their homes. The risk to people on the streets is increased during periods of cold weather. The government's asylum dispersal programme and the need to move people through this programme once they have leave to remain contributes significantly to the reasons for homelessness in Barnsley as does those leaving prison. There is increasing pressure on temporary accommodation placements. The experience of the Housing Options service is that there is a cohort of people who are experiencing the 'revolving door of homelessness' in that they are placed in supported housing or other accommodation, are evicted, rough sleep, prison, B&B; a vicious cycle.

A full review of the data and strategic links is contained in Appendix 1.

## OUR VISION AND PRIORITIES

### “Working in partnership to end homelessness in Barnsley”

This strategy will demonstrate how early intervention and prevention will be framed around five main priorities:

#### PRIORITY ONE - To maximise homeless prevention options, activities and outcomes

Act faster to prevent people losing their homes, early identification of problems and the provision of high quality advice and assistance will ensure people have the best chance of staying in their home.

#### PRIORITY TWO - Supporting those with complex needs

Providing those with complex problems, including rough sleepers, with the right accommodation and support to build their resilience and sustain independent living.

#### PRIORITY THREE - Reduce the demand for temporary accommodation and eliminate the use of B&B

Effective action to relieve homelessness through robust pathways and to ensure that suitable accommodation can be secured at the point of crisis.

#### PRIORITY FOUR - Protect and increase local housing options

Enable people to secure homes they can afford, working in partnership to make best use of existing resources, improve access to available housing options in private and social rented sector, increase supply, promote active move on from supported housing and identify and address gaps in provision.

#### PRIORITY FIVE - Maximise and maintain partnership working

Working better together in a co-ordinated way to prevent homelessness and build resilience; strong relationships, common assessment and referral processes, information sharing, co-location and jointly delivered services will lead to better outcomes for the homeless.

## GOVERNANCE OF THE STRATEGY

The strategy and action plan will be monitored and reviewed annually. A report will be prepared for the Housing and Energy Board on a regular basis and performance will be monitored through the Homeless Alliance. Progress will be monitored through the action plan and the following key performance indicators.

| Performance indicator   | 2017/18 figures                         | Expected outcome   |
|---|---|--|
| Number of homeless approaches split between Housing Advice and Homeless   | Housing Advice - 1295<br>Homeless - 253 | Housing Advice to increase by 10% year on year.<br>Homelessness to decrease by 10% year on year. |
| Number of homeless applications   | 244                                     | To increase year on year   |
| Number of homeless applications where homelessness is successfully prevented  | 677 preventions                         | 80% or above   |
| Number of homeless applications where homelessness is successfully relieved   | To establish a baseline in 2018/19      | 80% or above   |
| Number of homeless applications where the council accepts a full duty   | 41                                      | To decrease by 10% year on year  |
| Number of verified rough sleepers (through counts and outreach work)  | 0                                       | Remain at zero   |
| To reduce the number of people returning to the streets within a 6 month period   | Baseline to be established in 2018/19   | To reduce year on year   |
| Number of homeless applicants who are placed in temporary accommodation placements (Assessment beds, crashpad, B&B & homeless families) | 155                                     | To decrease by 10% year on year  |
| Number of homeless applicants who are placed in B&B (target to end all placements by 2023)  | 67                                      | To decrease by 10% year on year  |
| To reduce the overall expenditure on temporary accommodation by 10% each year   | Spend in 2017/18                        | To reduce by 10% year on year  |
| In partnership, bring back into use 30 empty homes to be used for those who are vulnerable to homelessness                              | 10 in 2018/19                           | 30 in total over 3 years   |
| Work with social housing providers to facilitate the availability of 10 units of temporary/move on accommodation                        | 5                                       | 10 in total over 2 years   |
| Create a minimum of 15 private rented tenancies through proactive work with private landlords   | 5                                       | 15 in total over 2 years   |
| Number of Duty to Refer referrals received (from October 2018)  | Baseline to be established in 2018/19   | To increase year on year   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Those who have a statutory duty</li> <li>Those who do not have a statutory duty</li> </ul>       |   |  |

## SUMMARY

The objectives in this strategy are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, working together to achieve an end to homelessness. Key to delivering the strategy will be continued collaborative working across the council and its partners. However we recognise we need to strengthen these relationships both operationally and strategically. We will seek to improve and build on our existing partnership working to support people to stay in their properties or to find lasting and affordable housing solutions. To be successful prevention and early intervention is key; as is flexibility in service delivery and listening to customers.

The strategy will be underpinned by a robust action plan which will be updated annually and be flexible in responding to any emerging needs, trends and policy changes. Actions and targets will be agreed with partners who will be asked to make specific commitments on their contribution to the strategy.



# ACTION PLAN

## PRIORITY ONE

To maximise homeless prevention options, activities and outcomes - act faster to prevent people losing their homes, early identification of problems and the provision of high quality advice and assistance will ensure people have the best chance of staying in their home.

| Ref  | Action   | Target/Outcome   | Lead   |
|------|--|--|--|
| 1.1  | Implement the Homeless Reduction Act 2017.   | Increased focus on prevention particularly for singles and couples.  | Housing Options  |
| 1.2  | Adopt a commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all council services and with wider stakeholders including landlords (social and private), criminal justice agencies, police and health services. Exploring ways to increase partnership working and building support to tackle homelessness. | Corporate approach to the prevention of homelessness. Provide early support to reduce the numbers of people who present in crisis. Further develop multi-agency working around homelessness. Develop a more co-ordinated approach to homelessness. | Housing Options  |
| 1.3  | Ensure an early intervention approach is adopted by all, referring people earlier for support and advice, ensuring sufficient capacity to respond to referrals.  | To increase the number of early referrals to the service to prevent crisis.  | Housing Options  |
| 1.4  | Raise awareness of homelessness with relevant organisations and stakeholders.  | To raise awareness of the causes and consequences of homelessness and promote what others can do to prevent homelessness.  | Housing Options  |
| 1.5  | Use DHP (Discretionary Housing Payment), as a prevention tool for homelessness, targeting it where it will have most impact.   | To have an agreed process with Benefits, Taxation and Income to ensure that DHP supports the prevention of homelessness.   | Housing Options<br>Benefits<br>Taxation and Income           |
| 1.6  | Develop pre- eviction protocols with both social and where appropriate private landlords.  | To provide early housing options and advice to tenants to try and prevent homelessness or support a managed move.<br>Housing Options<br>Social Landlords operating in the borough  | Housing Options<br>Social Landlords operating in the borough |
| 1.7  | To consider the need to undertake more outreach work in key locations.   | Early intervention approach and ensure a more accessible service.  | Housing Options  |
| 1.8  | Ensure ongoing availability of budgeting, debt and money management advice in support of homeless prevention and the implementation of Universal Credit.   | People can access support to manage their monthly UC payments including rental payments.   | Housing & Welfare<br>DWP<br>CAB<br>Credit Union              |
| 1.9  | Produce and provide high quality housing advice in a number of formats.  | To make advice more accessible and available, with a particular focus on those who are at greater risk of homelessness.  | Housing Options  |
| 1.10 | Work with private sector landlords to reduce barriers to letting to tenants on benefits and develop incentives to attract more private landlords.  | Have a clear offer to private landlords, promoting the impact they can have on reducing homelessness.  | Housing Options  |

## PRIORITY TWO

Supporting those with complex needs – providing those with complex problems, including rough sleepers, with the right accommodation and support to build their resilience and sustain independent living.

| Ref  | Action   | Target/Outcome  | Lead  |
|------|--|---|---|
| 2.1  | Review current service models and procedures to ensure support is available for all rough sleepers/those with complex needs and consider alternative methods of support to engage these individuals.         | Development of a NSNO (No Second Night Out) approach including a swift assessment of accommodation and support needs. Holistic and targeted plans are developed with a range of agencies to address underlying issues. Ensure the people are in the right accommodation type to meet their needs. | Housing Options<br>Communities<br>Commissioning   |
| 2.2  | Provide a resettlement/floating support package for every complex needs individual/rough sleeper moving into an independent tenancy.   | To ensure sustainability of accommodation and prevent/reduce repeat homelessness.   | Housing Options<br>Communities<br>Commissioning   |
| 2.3  | Development of clear pathways for this group particularly at crisis points where the risk of rough sleeping is heightened, i.e. prison release, hospital discharge and evictions.                            | To reduce the risk of rough sleeping, sofa surfing and the revolving door of homelessness.<br>To get commitment from other services to support the wider needs.<br>To ensure health needs are met.  | Housing Options<br>Prisons<br>Probation<br>Secondary Care<br>Health Integration<br>Team |
| 2.4  | Develop joint working arrangements with adult social care, children's social care, safeguarding, primary care, mental health and substance misuse.   | Ensure referrals are in place between services to reduce the health and well-being inequalities of homeless people. To develop a joint assessment and support planning approach to address needs and risks around homelessness.   | Housing Options<br>Public Health<br>CCG<br>Commissioning<br>Social Care                 |
| 2.5  | Conduct at least two rough sleeper counts and continue to undertake weekly outreach to establish accurate numbers.   | To give a clearer picture of rough sleeping and inform service development.   | Housing Options   |
| 2.6  | Ensure there is sufficient capacity and support available to run SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocols) all winter.   | To provide sufficient beds throughout winter for those who are on the streets, including an assessment of their accommodation and support needs. To reduce the risk of cold related illnesses and excess winter deaths.   | Housing Options<br>Homeless Alliance<br>Communities<br>Commissioning                    |
| 2.7  | To deliver the sub regional rough sleepers programme project.  | To evaluate the success of the sub regional approaches and embed any good practice arising from this.   | Housing Options<br>Sub Regional<br>Homelessness<br>Group                                |
| 2.8  | To work in partnership with Community Safety, the Police and other key stakeholders to develop an action plan to tackle begging in the town centre.  | To reduce begging and rough sleeping in the town centre.  | Housing Options<br>Community Safety<br>Police   |
| 2.9  | To develop an ongoing communication programme to educate the public about what support is available for those who are rough sleeping and begging, including the development of an alternative giving scheme. | Raise awareness of services available to rough sleepers/complex needs/beggars.<br>To offer alternative ways the public can support this group.  | Housing Options<br>Public Health<br>Communications<br>(BMBC)<br>Homeless Alliance       |
| 2.10 | To pilot a Housing First model, particularly with the 'revolving door' group to see what lessons can be learnt and whether this approach could be used more widely.  | Reduce the revolving door of homelessness and increase tenancy sustainment.   | Housing Options<br>Communities<br>Commissioning   |

## PRIORITY THREE

Reduce the demand for temporary accommodation and eliminate the use B&B out of area – effective action to relieve homelessness through strong and effective pathways to ensure that suitable accommodation can be secured.

| Ref | Action   | Target/Outcome  | Lead  |
|-----|--|---|---|
| 3.1 | Work with a range of landlords to secure alternative models of temporary accommodation.<br>To work with Berneslai Homes to pilot a Housing First, shared accommodation and family accommodation model. | More local options for temporary accommodation.<br>Sending less people out of area.   | Housing Options<br>Communities<br>Commissioning |
| 3.2 | Ensure that transitional support is available when needed for moving out of temporary accommodation.   | Increase tenancy sustainment.<br>Prevent repeat homelessness.   | Housing Options                                 |
| 3.3 | Review and if necessary re-commission/remodel existing services, including any elements of temporary accommodation.  | Ensure sufficient supply of local temporary accommodation, with the right levels of support to meet needs.  | Communities<br>Commissioning<br>Housing Options |
| 3.4 | Develop effective pathways to and from temporary accommodation, i.e. there are sufficient bed spaces and that move on is timely.   | Prevention of rough sleeping.<br>Prevent bed blocking in supported housing.<br>Gain a better understanding of why length of stay can vary and barriers for move on. | Housing Options<br>Communities<br>Commissioning |
| 3.5 | To stop using B&B out of area.   | To ensure placements are available locally so that customers can access the services they require.<br>To reduce spend on B&B.                                       | Housing Options<br>Communities<br>Commissioning |
| 3.6 | Improve performance monitoring frameworks.   | To provide better intelligence to support commissioning decisions and service delivery models.  | Housing Options<br>Communities<br>Commissioning |
| 3.7 | To review the provision of accommodation and support for 16-17 year olds.  | To mediate home visits if this is a viable option.<br>To ensure that appropriate accommodation and support is available with clear pathways once they turn 18.      | Children's Social<br>Care<br>Housing Options    |

## PRIORITY FOUR

Protect and increase local housing options – enable people to secure homes they can afford. Demand for limited social and supported housing is high and some households have difficulty accessing the private rented sector. The council will work with partners to make best use of existing resources, improve access to available housing options, increase supply and identify and address gaps in provision.

| Ref | Action   | Target/Outcome  | Lead  |
|-----|--|---|---|
| 4.1 | Develop a clear and co-ordinated private sector offer. Improve access to good quality private rented housing to expand choices and provide affordable options. This includes supporting both tenants and landlords and developing new approaches that are attractive to all parties. | Improve options available to customers.<br>Develop strong partnerships with PRS landlords.<br>Co-ordinate resources and how we work with private landlords across the borough to improve efficiency and avoid duplication.<br>Supporting landlords where required to improve property standards and energy efficiency, to reduce the risks of fuel poverty. | Housing Options<br>Housing and Energy                                 |
| 4.2 | Work in partnership to bring empty homes back into use for those who are vulnerable to homelessness.   | Provide more options for those who are at risk of homelessness or who are ready to move on from supported accommodation.<br>Bring back long term empty homes into use as an affordable housing option.  | Housing Options<br>Housing and Energy<br>Communities<br>Commissioning |
| 4.3 | Work in partnership to ensure there is sufficient supported accommodation to meet demand and the needs of groups who are at most risk of homelessness in Barnsley.   | Improve the matching of needs to the supported accommodation available.<br>Development of a Supported Housing Strategy for the borough.   | Communities<br>Commissioning<br>Housing Options                       |
| 4.4 | Increase the supply of affordable housing in the borough.  | Development of new affordable housing for rent/sale/shared ownership. Bringing back long term empty properties into use for affordable rent.  | Housing Growth  |
| 4.5 | Make the best use of the existing council stock and social housing within Barnsley.  | More options for those at risk of homelessness.<br>Potential to use stock to support those with higher needs with the right support.<br>Revise the Council's lettings policy.<br>Review nominations agreements.   | Housing Options<br>Social Landlords<br>Communities<br>Commissioning   |
| 4.6 | Ensure housing is available for families and individuals with no support needs rather than being placed in supported accommodation.  | Minimise the use of temporary accommodation or supported housing for those who do not require it.   | Housing Options   |

## PRIORITY FIVE

Maximise and maintain partnership working – working better together, including with customers, in a co-ordinated way to prevent homelessness and build resilience; strong relationship, common assessment and referral processes, information sharing, co-location and jointly delivered services will lead to better outcomes for the homeless.

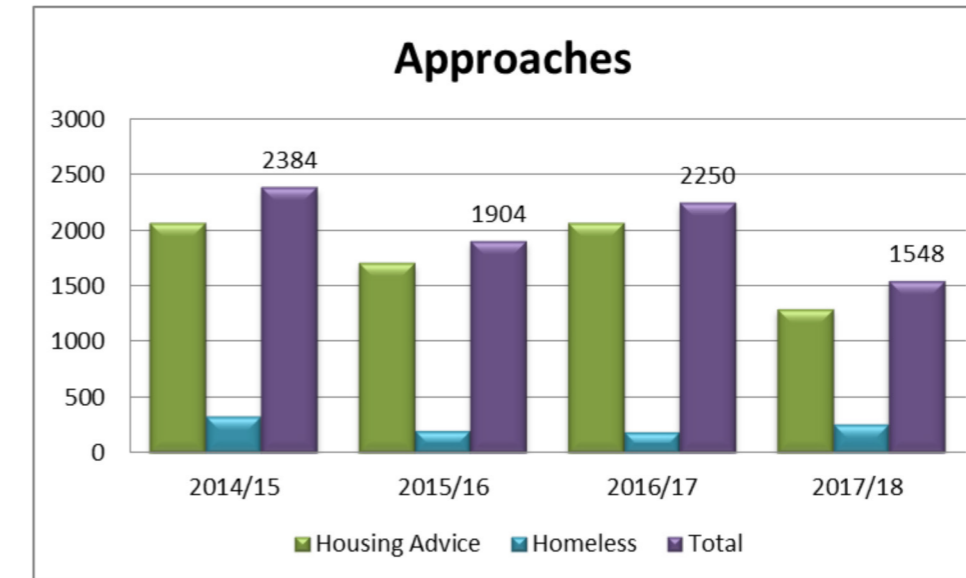
| Ref | Action   | Target/Outcome   | Lead                                      |
|-----|--|--|---|
| 5.1 | Look to co-locate aligned services together to provide a holistic needs assessment and support planning process and a single point of access for customers.  | Better offer to customer, meeting holistic needs.<br>More efficient and effective service delivery model.  | Commissioning<br>Housing Options          |
| 5.2 | Seek to involve services users in the design of services and policies and actively seek feedback from those accessing the Housing Options Team.  | To ensure lived experience is informing service delivery.  | Housing Options                           |
| 5.3 | Work in a way, strategically and operationally, that ensure services are progressively aligned to support homeless prevention at an early stage to help more people stay in their current accommodation or have a planned move rather than end up in crisis. | Development of integrated housing pathways.<br>Make every contact count to support homeless prevention.  | Housing Options                           |
| 5.4 | Develop and implement the Duty to Refer, by October 2018, for all organisations who want to support those who are at risk of homelessness.   | Increase the numbers presenting to the service at an earlier stage. Encourage referrals from all agencies not just the statutory ones. Increase homeless preventions through early intervention work.  | Housing Options                           |
| 5.5 | Further develop the keyworker model to ensure there is no duplication of support between services and that support plans are joined up.  | Working in a holistic way to address the causes of homelessness and increase tenancy sustainment.<br>Maximise resources, skills and knowledge.   | Housing Options                           |
| 5.6 | Enable existing and new partners to work in Barnsley bringing their own expertise, resources and innovative approaches that help to deliver on the priorities.   | Widen services available locally to support those at risk of homelessness.   | Housing Options                           |
| 5.7 | To review the joint protocol and assessment process for young people at risk of homelessness. To contribute to the Council's Local Offer to Care Leavers.  | To ensure it is fit for purpose and identify potential improvements to the process. Ensure housing and homelessness information is available in the right formats and places for the target client group, particularly care leavers.                         | Housing Options<br>Children's Social Care |
| 5.8 | To develop the role of the Homeless Alliance to ensure it is influencing and directing the strategy and the work around homelessness in Barnsley.  | To bring local organisations together to promote a joined up message, pool resources and find new solutions to end the cycle of rough sleeping and homelessness in Barnsley. Raise awareness of support available for those who are at risk of homelessness. | Housing Options<br>Homeless Alliance      |



## APPENDIX 1

### HOMELESS REVIEW DATA AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

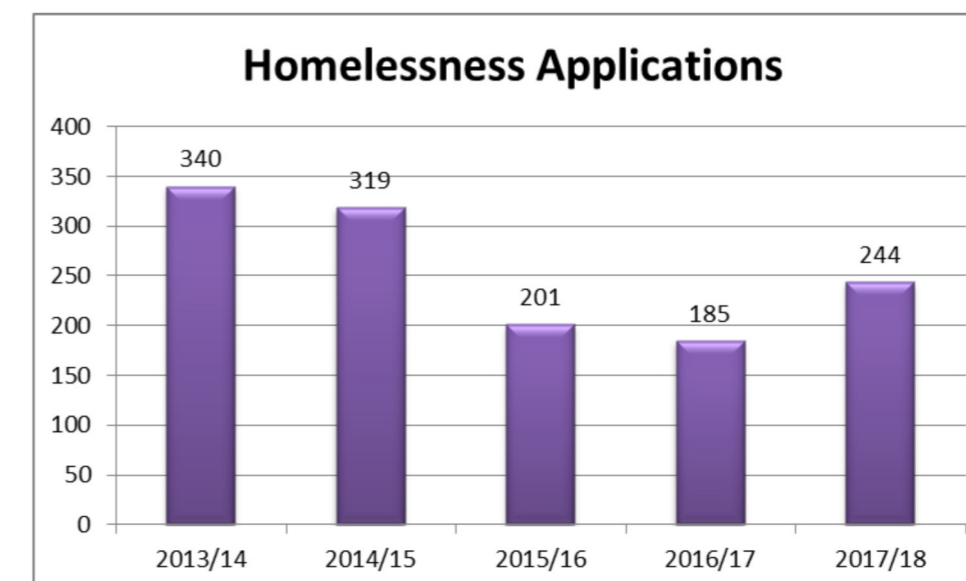
#### Homeless approaches



| Approaches     | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Housing Advice | 2065    | 1703    | 2065    | 1295    |
| Homeless       | 319     | 201     | 185     | 253     |
| Total          | 2384    | 1904    | 2250    | 1548    |

#### Number of Homeless applications

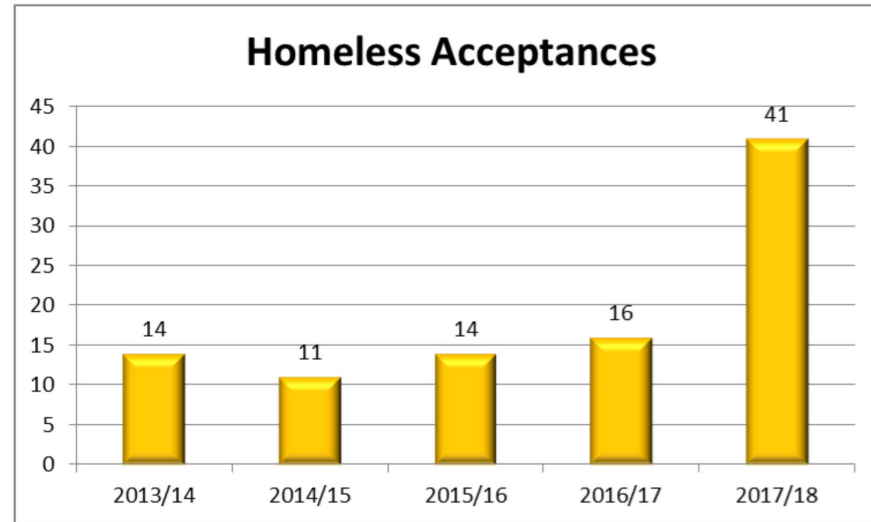
Those we have reason to believe are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 28 days (prior to April 2018) 56 days after this



# APPENDIX

### Number of Homeless Acceptances/Full Duty cases

Those who are homeless, eligible, in priority need, not intentional and have a local connection



### Homeless Decisions/Outcomes

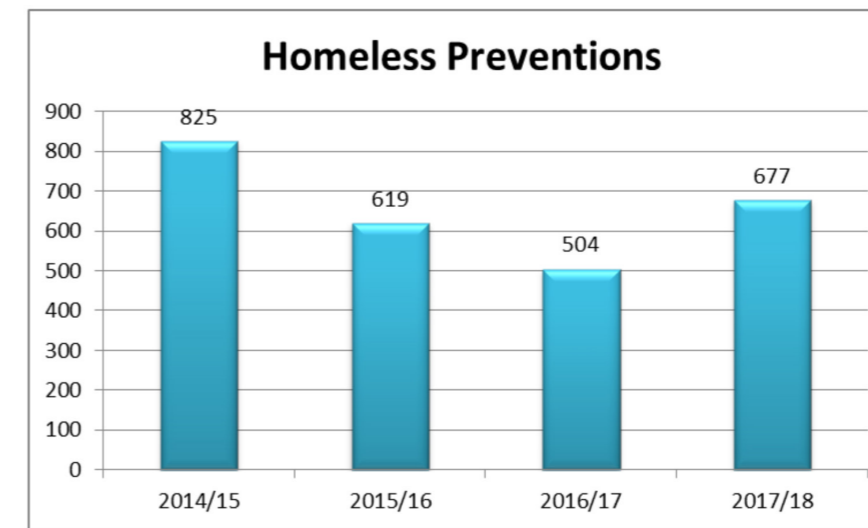
| Homeless Applications & Outcomes | 2013/14    | 2014/15    | 2015/16    | 2016/17    | 2017/18    |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Not Homeless                     | 81         | 127        | 67         | 34         | 30         |
| Homelessness Prevented           | 132        | 140        | 94         | 62         | 99         |
| Not Eligible                     | 3          | 5          | 0          | 3          | 12         |
| Non Priority                     | 10         | 17         | 13         | 1          | 11         |
| No Local Connection              | 0          | 0          | 1          | 0          | 0          |
| Intentional                      | 10         | 4          | 4          | 5          | 5          |
| Homeless Acceptances (Full Duty) | 14         | 11         | 14         | 16         | 41         |
| Lost Contact / withdrawn         | 90         | 15         | 8          | 64         | 46         |
| <b>Total Decisions</b>           | <b>340</b> | <b>319</b> | <b>201</b> | <b>185</b> | <b>244</b> |

### Vulnerability/Priority Need of Accepted (Full Duty) Cases

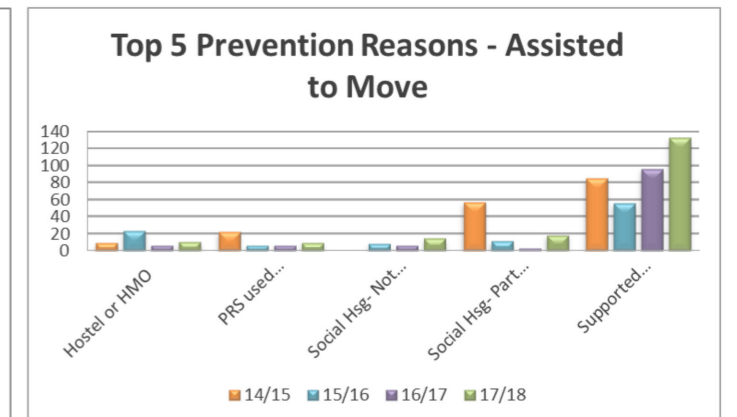
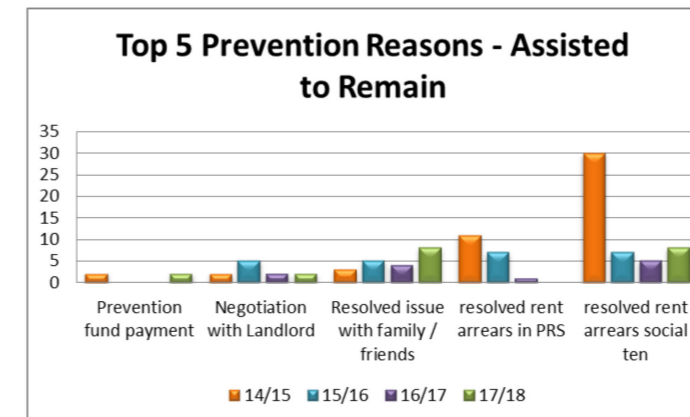
| Priority Need Reasons                  | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Formally in Care and Aged 18-20 years  | 0       | 0       | 1       | 1       | 2       |
| Household Includes Dependent Children  | 13      | 9       | 11      | 11      | 30      |
| Other Special Reason                   | 0       | 0       | 0       | 1       | 1       |
| Pregnant with no Other Children        | 0       | 1       | 1       | 0       | 0       |
| Violence/Threats of (Not Assoc Person) | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 1       |
| Vulnerable Mental Illness or Handicap  | 1       | 0       | 0       | 2       | 3       |
| Vulnerable Physical Disability         | 0       | 1       | 1       | 1       | 4       |

The number of approaches has been relatively stable over the last four years but did decrease in 2017-2018. It is envisaged that through the implementation of the Homeless Reduction Act and particularly the Duty to Refer in October 2018, that this figure will increase. The number of homeless applications (i.e. those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness in the next 28 days) has been steadily reducing over the last four years. However 2017-18 saw a 32% increase, and consequently there was a sharp increase in homeless acceptances (i.e. those who are homeless, eligible, priority need, and not intentionally homeless), of 156%. This is mainly attributed to a rise in the number of families approaching the service. Families with dependent children are also the biggest category of priority need decisions, making up 73% of decisions of full duty cases.

### Homeless preventions

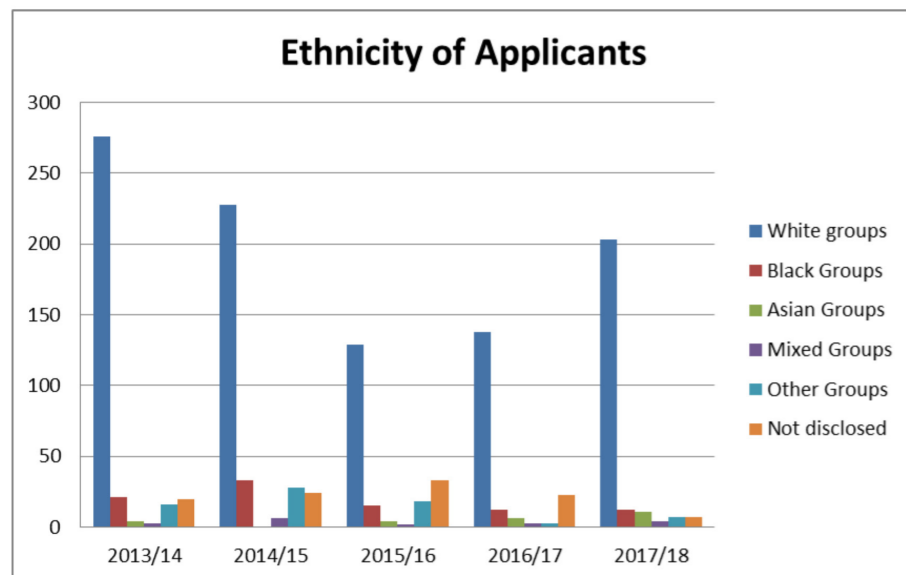


### Homeless preventions – assisted to remain



Homeless preventions have increased year on year indicating the right direction of travel. The slight decrease in 2016-17 was mainly due to capacity issues within the team. The most successful prevention activity remains resolving rent arrears and mediating with family and friends and the most common place people are assisted to move to prevent homelessness is into supported accommodation, usually assessment beds, homeless families accommodation, hostel or crash pad.

### Ethnicity of applicants



| Ethnicity     | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| White groups  | 276     | 228     | 129     | 138     | 203     |
| Black Groups  | 21      | 33      | 15      | 12      | 12      |
| Asian Groups  | 4       | 0       | 4       | 6       | 11      |
| Mixed Groups  | 3       | 6       | 2       | 3       | 4       |
| Other Groups  | 16      | 28      | 18      | 3       | 7       |
| Not disclosed | 20      | 24      | 33      | 23      | 7       |

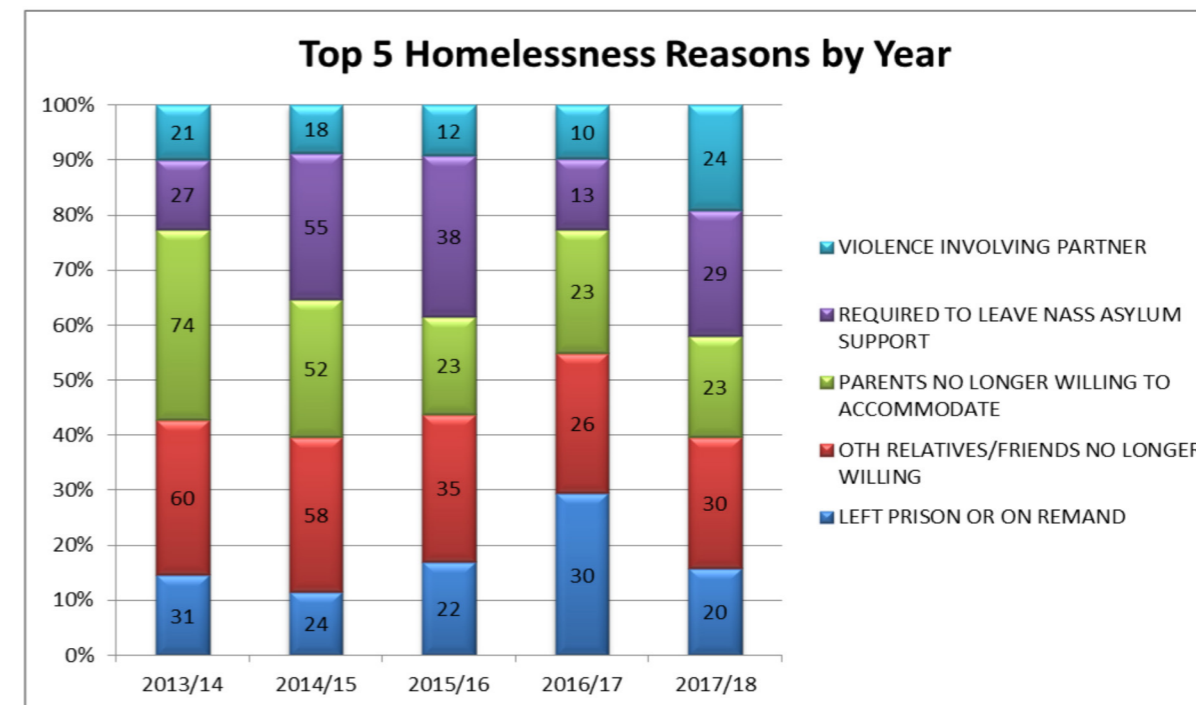
The majority of people accessing the service are white British but there has been a growth over the last 5 years of other groups seeking advice and support. As a service this is recognised and we are working closely with partners to ensure the advice and support is accessible to those groups. This is mainly attributed to the growth in refugees and migrant workers to the borough.

### Age profile of homeless applicants

| Age of applicant | 2013/14    | 2014/15    | 2015/16    | 2016/17    | 2017/18    |
|------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 16 to 24 years   | 124        | 103        | 53         | 47         | 66         |
| 25 to 44 years   | 166        | 164        | 123        | 105        | 135        |
| 45 to 59 Years   | 44         | 43         | 22         | 29         | 30         |
| 60 years +       | 6          | 9          | 3          | 4          | 13         |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>340</b> | <b>319</b> | <b>201</b> | <b>185</b> | <b>244</b> |

Consistently the largest group of people presenting are single people between the ages of 25-44. This cohort are less likely to be priority need and so there is no interim accommodation duty, however we do work with all single people to consider their options around accommodation and support. The challenge for single people is the availability of suitable affordable accommodation as well as supported housing where this is required. Often contained within this group are the individuals with more complex needs who can have limited options in terms of housing due to their previous housing history.

### Top 5 Causes/Reasons for homelessness



### Cause/Reason for Homelessness

| Homelessness Reasons                     | 2013/14    | 2014/15    | 2015/16    | 2016/17    | 2017/18    |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| HARASSMENT - NON RACIAL                  | 6          | 2          | 1          | 0          | 1          |
| LEFT HOSPITAL                            | 1          | 4          | 2          | 4          | 5          |
| LEFT OTHER INSTITUTION                   | 1          | 5          | 2          | 7          | 8          |
| LEFT PRISON OR ON REMAND                 | 31         | 24         | 22         | 30         | 20         |
| MORTGAGE ARREAR/REPOSSESSION, OTHER LOSS | 3          | 6          | 2          | 0          | 5          |
| NO FIXED ABODE, IN HOSTEL                | 6          | 3          | 2          | 2          | 6          |
| NON VIOLENT BREAK WITH PARTNER           | 21         | 24         | 16         | 10         | 13         |
| OTH RELATIVES/FRIENDS NO LONGER WILLING  | 60         | 58         | 35         | 26         | 30         |
| OTHER - ENTER TEXT IN COMMENTS           | 3          | 6          | 4          | 4          | 8          |
| OTHER EMERGENCY                          | 1          | 1          | 3          | 2          | 1          |
| PARENTS NO LONGER WILLING TO ACCOMMODATE | 74         | 52         | 23         | 23         | 23         |
| RENT ARREARS - HOUSING ASSOCIATION/RSL   | 1          | 2          | 2          | 1          | 1          |
| RENT ARREARS - LA /PUBLIC SECTOR         | 12         | 9          | 6          | 3          | 2          |
| RENT ARREARS - PRIVATE SECTOR            | 6          | 12         | 5          | 7          | 7          |
| RENTED/TIED/LICENSE-NOT AST NOSP         | 22         | 8          | 7          | 18         | 26         |
| REQUIRED TO LEAVE NASS ASYLUM SUPPORT    | 27         | 55         | 38         | 13         | 29         |
| SLEEPING ROUGH                           | 3          | 10         | 8          | 11         | 20         |
| TERMINATION OF AST                       | 35         | 16         | 10         | 10         | 11         |
| VIOLENCE ASSOCIATED PERSONS NOT PARTNER  | 3          | 3          | 1          | 2          | 1          |
| VIOLENCE INVOLVING PARTNER               | 21         | 18         | 12         | 10         | 24         |
| VIOLENCE- OTHER FORMS                    | 3          | 1          | 0          | 2          | 3          |
| <b>Total Homeless Cases</b>              | <b>340</b> | <b>319</b> | <b>201</b> | <b>185</b> | <b>244</b> |

The top five reasons for homelessness have been relatively consistent over the last five years. This is in contrast to the national picture where the biggest reason for homelessness is the end of an assured shorthold tenancy. To address some of these reasons requires the preventative approach referred to throughout the strategy, in that we need to be alerted earlier of the 'family stresses' which may lead to homelessness and offer appropriate support.

### Temporary accommodation

Temporary accommodation in Barnsley consists of 6 assessment beds for over 25's, 8 assessment beds plus a crash pad for under 25's, and 8 units of family accommodation and B&B. The table below only includes figures from B&B, assessment beds for over 25's and homeless families' accommodation. The young person's accommodation data is contained separately below.

| Temp Accommodation | Referrals | Placements |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| 2015/16            | 99        | 99         |
| 2016/17            | 197       | 135        |
| 2017/18            | 201       | 145        |

### Breakdown to TA use by age/gender/expenditure for B&B by year

| B&B                     | Referrals |           | Placements |           | Avg stay (days) |            | Avg Age |         | No Children |         |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------------|------------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|
|                         | 2016/17   | 2017/18   | 2016/17    | 2017/18   | 2016/17         | 2017/18    | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | 2016/17     | 2017/18 |
| Female                  | 23        | 20        | 15         | 13        | 3.7             | 8.5        | 34      | 33      |             |         |
| Male                    | 36        | 40        | 23         | 34        | 11              | 6.2        | 33      | 31      |             |         |
| Family                  | 8         | 23        | 9          | 20        | 9.8             | 10         | 30      | 33      | 17          | 22      |
| <b>Total Placements</b> | <b>67</b> | <b>83</b> | <b>47</b>  | <b>67</b> | <b>8.1</b>      | <b>8.2</b> |         |         |             |         |

The majority of B&B placements are out of area due to the limited number of suitable and affordable B&B providers in Barnsley who will accept referrals from the council.

| Homeless Families Accommodation | Referrals | Placements | Move on | Avg stay* |
|---------------------------------|-----------|------------|---------|-----------|
| 2016/17                         | 19        | 19         | 13      | 66.5      |
| 2017/18                         | 27        | 27         | 28      | 77.85     |

| Assessment Beds | Referrals | Placements | % Placed | Avg. Stay | Other Placement |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|----------|-----------|-----------------|
| 2016/17         | 111       | 69         | 62.16    | 24.50     | 13.00           |
| 2017/18         | 91        | 51         | 64.80    | 31.33     | 16.00           |

| Young persons Accommodation 2017/18 | Referrals | Placements | Not Accm  | Avg Age   |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Female                              | 24        | 23         | 1         | 20        |
| Male                                | 34        | 21         | 13        | 20        |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>58</b> | <b>44</b>  | <b>14</b> | <b>20</b> |

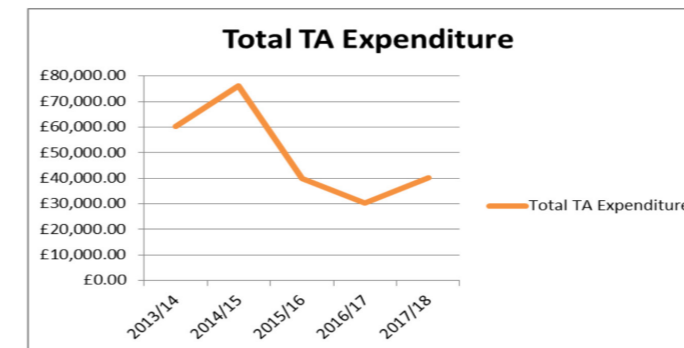
|                 | Young persons Accommodation Avg. Stay (Days) |         |         |
|-----------------|--|---------|---------|
|                 | Males  | Females | Overall |
| 2017/18         |  |         |         |
| Flats           | 127  | 134     | 128.6   |
| Assessment unit | 62   | 111     | 75      |
| Crash-pad       | 15   | 5       | 10.3    |

As the young person's services were re-commissioned in April 2017, we only hold one year's data. This shows that 58% of all referrals were male, and that of all referrals made, 25% were not accommodated. The average age of customers is 20, within the target age range of 16-24.

Move on for households in temporary and supported accommodation has become more difficult and the average stay in assessment beds, for over 25's has increased to 31 days, up 7 days on the previous year; and for families has increased to 77 days, up 11 days on the previous year. There are a number of reasons for this including:

- Affordable and suitable move on accommodation.
- Previous rent arrears/other tenancy related issues leading to exclusions.
- Lack of bond/rent in advance.
- Been asked to leave temporary accommodation.
- Access to support to move on and ongoing resettlement support.
- Welfare benefit issues.

### Temporary Accommodation expenditure per year



| Year    | B & B      | Void Loss for Homeless Families Accom & NSNO | Total Expenditure |
|---------|------------|--|-------------------|
| 2012/13 | £37,592.97 | £81,252.16                                   | £118,845.13       |
| 2013/14 | £16,400.65 | £43,994.53                                   | £60,395.18        |
| 2014/15 | £13,781.94 | £62,246.96                                   | £76,028.90        |
| 2015/16 | £7,782.20  | £32,205.57                                   | £39,987.77        |
| 2016/17 | £17,544.00 | £12,779.59                                   | £30,323.59        |
| 2017/18 | £35,028.60 | £5,287.98                                    | £40,316.58        |

The use of temporary accommodation and spend has been steadily decreasing over the last four years, however in 2017-2018 referrals to and placements in temporary accommodation has risen. Hand in hand with this has been continued demand and high occupancy rates of all supported housing and temporary accommodation, as well as waiting lists for some of the floating support services. This is mainly due to the increase in homeless applications, some changes to commissioned services and the lack of timely move on in the system. The biggest growth is in placements of single males and families.

### Rough Sleeping

Rough sleeping is on the rise nationally, there has been a 169% rise since 2010 and as of autumn 2017 there were an estimated 4751 rough sleepers, which is up 15% on the previous year. However in Barnsley the levels remain low.

### Sub regional rough sleeper data

|           | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Barnsley  | 3    | 2    | 5    | 0    | 3    | 9    | 2    | 0    |
| Rotherham | 0    | 1    | 5    | 5    | 3    | 3    | 6    | 2    |
| Doncaster | 5    | 2    | 1    | 9    | 9    | 9    | 13   | 8    |
| Sheffield | 8    | 11   | 11   | 17   | 10   | 11   | 15   | 20   |

### Barnsley Support Navigator data

| Rough Sleepers | Reports | Rough Sleeping | Begging | Responded | Male | Female | Repeats | Avg. Pcm |     |
|----------------|---------|----------------|---------|-----------|------|--------|---------|----------|-----|
| 2016/17        |         | 51             | 48      | 3         | 51   | 49     | 2       | 8        | 5.7 |
| 2017/18        |         | 110            | 51      | 59        | 73   | 105    | 5       | 34       | 8.2 |

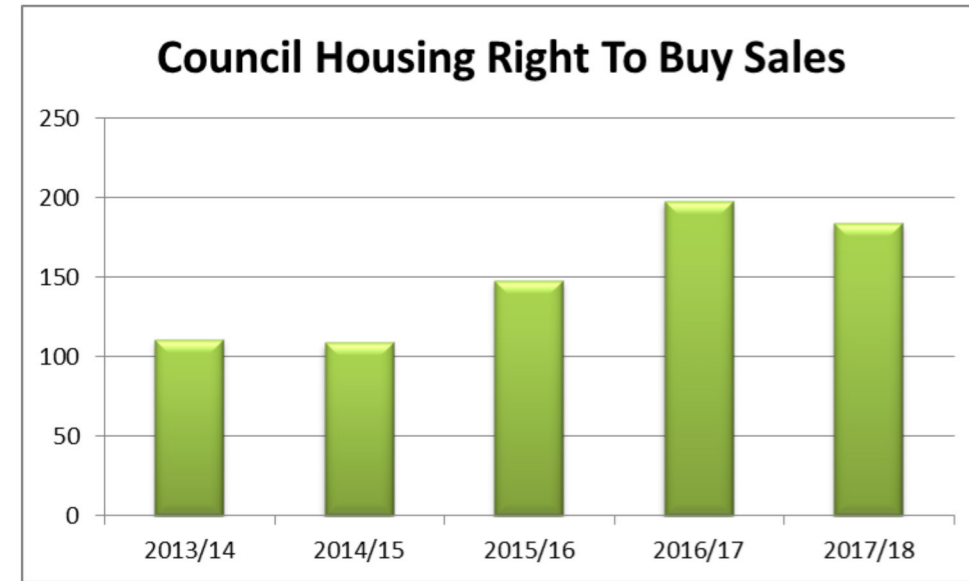
Rough sleeper counts and estimates are a single snapshot of the number of people sleeping rough on a particular night between October and November. Local Authority's choose the night and work in partnership to either undertake an actual count or an estimate. Over the last eight years as the evidence of rough sleeping has been low we have not undertaken actual counts only estimates. 2017 was an actual count.

The Support Navigator post responds to all reported rough sleepers including those which are sent through Streetlink. As can be seen from the table above we receive a number of reports of rough sleepers and make every attempt to find and engage them. A large proportion cannot be found on the day of the referral and a significant proportion are not homeless but begging. Analysis of data and individuals would suggest that in any one year there are around 3 to 4 verified rough sleepers in Barnsley who are out on the streets for a significant period of time, i.e. four weeks or more. More detailed analysis and monitoring needs to take place to establish the true scale of the problem. Begging is a growing and visible issue for Barnsley and is a priority area to tackle over the next couple of years.

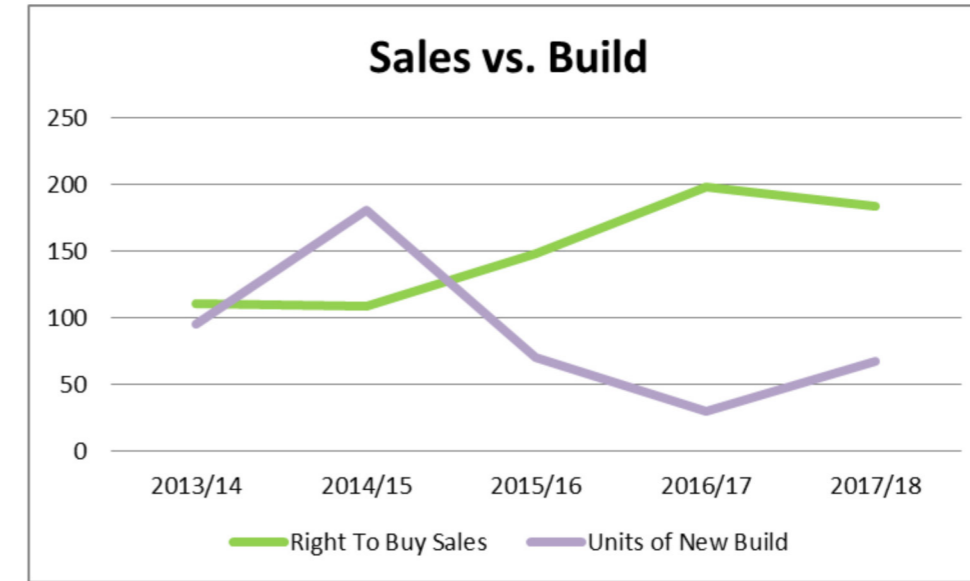
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2017>

### Affordable Housing supply

According to the 2001 census, the stock profile of the borough is made up of 65% owner occupier, 14% private rented and 21% affordable rent (social housing, intermediate rent and registered providers). There are around 18,000 council properties in the borough with 7000 on the waiting list and around 4600 units provided through registered providers. 44% of those registered on the council house waiting list are families, 39% single and 16% couples. Access to an affordable housing option is becoming an issue for people across the borough in all tenures due to the increasing gap between income and house prices/rents. Where housing is deemed affordable this can be in areas of the borough which already has high concentrations of deprivation and poverty, thereby exacerbating issues further. The Housing Strategy for the borough outlines the plans for housing growth for the borough. The tables below demonstrate the gap between right to buy sales and new build affordable housing.



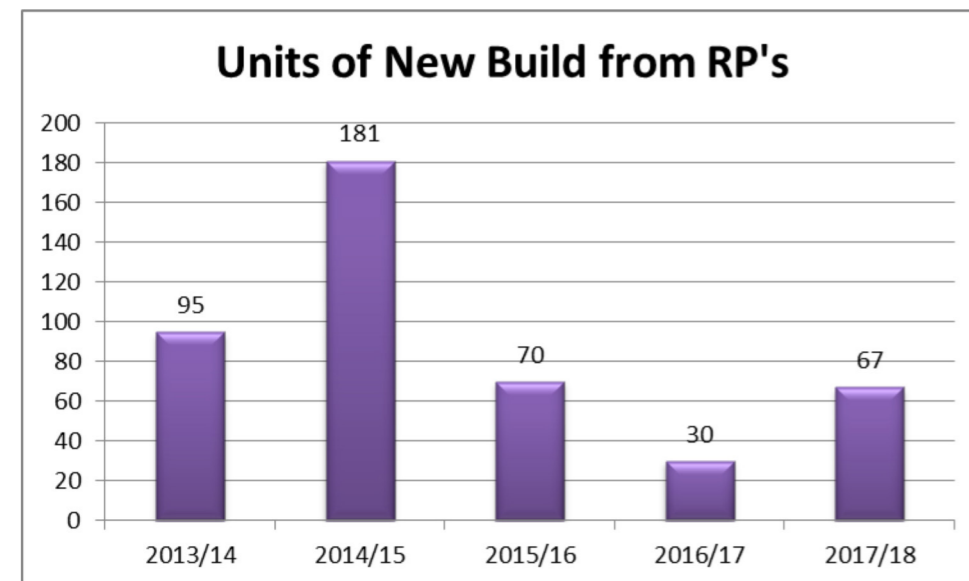
| Year    | Right To Buy |
|---------|--------------|
| 2013/14 | 111          |
| 2014/15 | 109          |
| 2015/16 | 148          |
| 2016/17 | 198          |
| 2017/18 | 184          |



### Council Housing waiting lists data

| Council house waiting list numbers at year end |      |
|--|------|
| 2013-14  | 7164 |
| 2014-15  | 7049 |
| 2015-16  | 6653 |
| 2016-17  | 6759 |
| 2017-18  | 7319 |

### Units of new build from Registered Provider (Housing Associations)



| Year    | Units of New Build |
|---------|--------------------|
| 2013/14 | 95                 |
| 2014/15 | 181                |
| 2015/16 | 70                 |
| 2016/17 | 30                 |
| 2017/18 | 67                 |

| Council house stock |        |
|---------------------|--------|
| 2013-14             | 18,881 |
| 2014-15             | 18,822 |
| 2015-16             | 18,707 |
| 2016-17             | 18,596 |
| 2017-18             | 18,338 |

The Council has recently published Our Borough Profile 2018, which sets out a range of statistics and compares Barnsley at both a regional and national level. There are a number of areas in this report which can have direct links to the causes of homelessness, including education and work, benefits, and health and well-being. The challenge is therefore working collaboratively as a borough to address these wider issues to minimise the likelihood of homelessness.

<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/media/8852/our-borough-profile.pdf>

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

This strategy does not sit in isolation, to truly tackle homelessness we need to focus on the causes' not just deal with the effects. These causes are well evidenced and range from structural issues, such as housing supply and the job market to more personal life events like relationship breakdown or other trauma. This cross cutting nature of homelessness means that this strategy has clear links to other key strategies in the borough including:

### **Barnsley Housing Strategy (2014-2033) - contains five key strategic objectives:**

1. Support new housing developments.
2. Build high quality, desirable and sustainable housing.
3. Make best use of and improve existing housing stock.
4. Develop strong resilient communities.
5. Support younger, older and vulnerable people to live independently.

There are clear interdependencies between this strategy and the housing strategy for the borough, in that we need to ensure there is a mixed economy of housing available in the borough to meet current needs, the future demographic projections and attract new people into the borough to live and work here. The oversight by the Housing and Energy board for both the Homeless Prevention and Housing Strategy will ensure the priorities are aligned.

### **Barnsley Health and Wellbeing Strategy: Feel Good Barnsley (2016-2020) has a vision:**

"That the people of Barnsley are enabled to take control of their health and wellbeing and enjoy happy, healthy and longer lives, in safer and stronger communities, wherever they are and wherever they live."

This strategy focusses on early help and prevention and seeks to tackle some of the underlying issues which are known to contribute to homelessness including poor housing, poor mental health and poverty.

### **All Age Early Help Strategy (2017-2020)**

This strategy is a key enabler of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the borough. It recognises that by adopting an early help approach this minimises the risk of problems becoming more severe and entrenched and ensures that people are supported to their full potential and lead rewarding lives. A part of this early help approach is the identification and support around housing issues in its broadest sense to try and prevent the crisis of homelessness.

### **Employment and Skills Strategy: More and Better Jobs, (2016-20)**

The vision of this strategy is:

"Barnsley Council has a high level of ambition and aspiration to make the borough a thriving and unique place to live and work."

Essentially this has two key strands; working with businesses so that they can access the skills they need to compete and grow – leading to more jobs. Enhancing the skills and competencies of local people to help them gain and progress in work – better jobs. Keeping or securing a job is one of the key building blocks in the prevention of homelessness as is gaining the right skills and education.

### **Anti-Poverty Delivery Plan (2015-18)**

Poverty is an underlying cause of many homeless cases. The Anti-Poverty Plan sets out a multi-agency approach to tackling the causes of poverty across the borough. The focus for the next few years is food access and financial inclusion.

### **Barnsley Community Safety Strategy (2016-2020)**

This is the plan which is developed and managed by the multi-agency Safer Barnsley Partnership. It has three key priorities: protecting vulnerable people, tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, and promoting community tolerance and respect. Homelessness can both be caused and affected by engagement in crime and disorder, a high proportion of the more complex homeless population have been involved in the criminal justice system.

### **Children's and Young People and Families: A Brighter Future (2016-19)**

This plan is about achieving better outcomes for children and young people in Barnsley. Its vision is focussed on:

- Strong Families, Strong Barnsley.
- Every child is in a good school.
- Success in learning and work.

There is also a strong focus on early intervention and prevention. This links directly to the focus of the homelessness and rough sleeping strategy.

## FURTHER READING / REFERENCES

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<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/news/employment-and-skills-strategy-aims-to-bring-more-and-better-jobs-to-barnsley/>  
<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/health-and-wellbeing/child-and-family-poverty/>  
<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/community-safety-and-crime/safer-barnsley-partnership/>  
<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/media/3682/yp-plan2b-print-friendly-version.pdf>



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