

Date of issue: Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2018

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL</b> (Councillors Plenty (Chair), Kelly (Vice Chair), N Holledge, S Parmar, Rasib, Sabah, A Sandhu, Shah and Wright)  <u>Non-Voting Co-Opted Members</u> Paul Fuller (Residents Panel Board) Morris Sless (Residents Panel Board)
<b>DATE AND TIME:</b>	THURSDAY, 1ST NOVEMBER, 2018 AT 6.30 PM
<b>VENUE:</b>	VENUS SUITE 2, ST MARTINS PLACE, 51 BATH ROAD, SLOUGH, BERKSHIRE, SL1 3UF
<b>DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries)</b>	DAVID GORDON  01753 875411

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.



**JOSIE WRAGG**  
Chief Executive

**AGENDA**

**PART 1**

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>	<u>WARD</u>
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**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1. Declarations of Interest

*All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary or other Pecuniary or non pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to the circumstances described in Section 4 paragraph 4.6 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is*



**AGENDA**  
**ITEM**

**REPORT TITLE**

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*discussed. The Chair will ask Members to confirm that they do not have a declarable interest.*

*All Members making a declaration will be required to complete a Declaration of Interests at Meetings form detailing the nature of their interest.*

**CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS**

- |    |  |       |   |
|----|--|-------|---|
| 2. | Minutes of the last meeting held on 6th September 2018 | 1 - 4 | - |
| 3. | Action Progress Report                                 | 5 - 6 | - |
| 4. | Member Questions                                       |       |   |

*(An opportunity for panel members to ask questions of the relevant Director / Assistant Director, relating to pertinent, topical issues affecting their Directorate – maximum of 10 minutes allocated.)*

**SCRUTINY ISSUES**

- |    |  |         |     |
|----|--|---------|-----|
| 5. | Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation | 7 - 10  | All |
| 6. | Homelessness in Slough                     | 11 - 72 | All |

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- |     |  |         |     |
|-----|--|---------|-----|
| 7.  | Slough Real Time Passenger Information   | 73 - 76 | All |
| 8.  | Forward Work Programme                   | 77 - 80 | -   |
| 9.  | Attendance Record 2018 - 19              | 81 - 82 | -   |
| 10. | Date of Next Meeting - 15th January 2019 |         |     |

**Press and Public**

You are welcome to attend this meeting which is open to the press and public, as an observer. You will however be asked to leave before the Committee considers any items in the Part II agenda. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer shown above for further details.

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**Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel – Meeting held on Thursday, 6th September, 2018.**

**Present:-** Councillors Plenty (Chair), Kelly (Vice-Chair), N Holledge, S Parmar, Rasib, Sabah, A Sandhu and Wright

**Non-Voting Co-Opted Members:** Paul Fuller  
Morris Sless

**Also present under Rule 30:-** Councillor Nazir

**Apologies for Absence:-** Councillor Shah

**PART 1**

**16. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Kelly declared his employment by Lynch Hill Primary Academy School.

**17. Minutes of the last meeting held on 25th June 2018**

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018 be approved as an accurate record.

**18. Action Progress Report**

**Resolved:** That the action progress report be noted.

**19. Member Questions**

The term 'Additional Preference' (as applied to key workers housing policy) meant, in some cases, that the 5 year residency rule to qualify was waived. However, this was not the case in all instances; Cabinet had approved the overall policy but the details were now being finalised. The final criteria would be confirmed after dialogue with head teachers.

All schools had been contacted for the trial of the key workers policy, with 6 schools responding. This was then narrowed down to 2 schools after discussions around need and the application of the trial. The mechanisms for the policy would be refined in light of the findings of the trial. Another property had recently become available, and schools would be alerted to this.

Head teachers have been given a significant amount of decision making power in the creation of the criteria; however, it had proved hard to establish a universally-accepted consensus. In addition, it should be noted that the properties were owned by James Elliman Homes Ltd and were therefore not social rents.

**Resolved:**

1. That an agenda item on key worker housing be added to the agenda for 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019.
2. That an item on fly tipping and CCTV be added to the agenda for 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019.
3. That an item for information on Real Time Passenger Information be added to the agenda for 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018.

**20. Five Year Plan - Outcome 4**

A report on regulation of the private rented sector would be taken by Cabinet on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018. This would seek permission to initiate consultation on licensing standards and related issues (e.g. 'fit and proper person' test and the provision of training on legal issues such as eviction). The Panel agreed to return to this matter later in the Municipal Year.

Best use of public housing stock would include both the use of the 6,200 Council homes currently in existence and work on vacant land or garage sites identified as no longer viable. Osbornes had allocated significant funding to this area and use resources accordingly to maximise their potential. Meanwhile, 500 housing units have been identified for building if central Government approve a bid for resources; this bid would be submitted on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

The Homelessness Strategy was currently in draft form. However, the wider context (as with the national picture) was one where the situation was worsening. Consultants had been appointed to review the area and how Slough could mitigate matters whilst regeneration and the housing market continued to add pressure to Slough's housing situation. Slough Borough Council (SBC) were also determined to work with South Buckinghamshire Council on the necessary but contentious plans to expand into neighbouring areas to the North of the Borough.

A delivery group dedicated to Outcome 4 of the Five Year Plan was holding regular meetings on all matters connected to the outcome.

The Panel raised the following points in discussion:

- The Chalvey pilot scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation had not proved to be sustainable. However, relaunching it by applying it across the Borough and with a stronger structure would rectify these matters; this would be discussed by Cabinet as part of its discussion on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Should this be approved, it would become active in the 2019 – 20 Financial Year.
- The proposal to central Government mentioned above could receive funding of up to £100 million. Should this be given the approval to proceed, the majority would be charged at Slough Living Rent rates (around 70% of the market value) with the units to be built by the end of 2022 – 23. Details of the proposal would be circulated to members outside of the meeting.

- At present, the £2.1 million overspend figure for homelessness was a projection based on present numbers remaining static. It had not yet actually been spent and attempts to improve the situation were being made. Any such overspend would be taken from SBC's reserves.
- The 6,200 properties owned by SBC were a mixture of types of housing. The breakdown of this would be circulated to members outside of the meeting.
- The £140 million investment in housing over 10 years was being funded by SBC.
- Information regarding the numbers of homeless people and households living in Slough who were originally from London is held and maintained by SBC. However, notifications of these cases did not always take place, meaning that such statistics were not 100% accurate.
- A landlord insurance scheme was one potential form of incentive to encourage more people to enter the market. However, SBC would need to continue developing training for landlords; some inherited properties and therefore had little background in the area, and needed to be fully conversant with their legal obligations.
- The profiles and motivations of those who downsized was variable (e.g. elderly residents whose family had moved out, those who wanted to avoid under-occupancy charges). Details of these profiles would be circulated to members outside of the meeting.
- Whilst incentivising downsizing could help ameliorate the situation, the numbers involved may be limited; as a result, it was questionable whether this should become a top priority for the Housing Service.
- A future agenda item should be taken on downsizing. This should address questions such as:
  - What number of properties were presently involved?
  - What number of properties is potentially involved?
  - What incentives could be offered to encourage downsizing?
  - If someone downsized and received a new build, would they have the right to buy?

**Resolved:**

1. That an item on homelessness be added to the agenda for 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018.
2. That an item on downsizing be added to the agenda for 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019.

**21. Strategic Housing Services - Scrutiny Overview Indicators**

This was the first such report with housing separated from neighbourhood statistics; as a result, the Panel was requested to comment on how future reports should be presented. The information presented on this occasion covered 2017 – 18 and the first 4 months of 2018 – 19. In particular, the Panel was asked to note the pressure on the homelessness service.

The Panel raised the following points in discussion:

- Arrears which were written off had a variety of causes (e.g. person involved could not be traced, amount spent on reclaiming money greater than amount reclaimed). Such cases were not written off lightly, and were done in tranches to manage the process rather than as a permanent, on-going process. Arvato managed the matter, and also had to bear in mind matters such as data protection in their work.
- SBC were unsure whether their statistics were in line with national averages. This could be assessed.
- The percentage of tenants whose arrears were written off in receipt of full housing benefits was 47%. The percentage receiving no housing benefit was 20%, with the remaining 33% receiving some housing benefit.
- 11 right to buys had been completed, with another 6 currently in the system. It was intended to replace these to maintain the housing stock although work was needed on this; in total, 38 such properties were intended to cover demand.
- Capital receipts were being used to fund development on small sites.
- James Elliman Homes was wholly owned by SBC and bought homes from the private sector (amongst its other responsibilities). Investment was then made on the purchased properties to make them suitable for future occupiers. £18 million had been spent on this, with a £7 million advance requested from the funding allocated to 2019 – 20. This would be focussed on the homelessness issue, with some properties also available for key workers.
- Some nightly paid rates were £80 per night. However, complexities such as the variations in the length of stay, the time taken to process benefits claims and high level of movement made the situation regarding funding and maintaining records complex.

**Resolved:** That an item on the Home Improvements Agency be added to the agenda for 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019.

**22. Forward Work Programme 2018 - 19**

Subject to the additions requested in the previous minutes, the work programme was agreed as taken.

**Resolved:** That the work programme be noted.

**23. Attendance Record 2018 - 19**

**Resolved:** That the attendance record be noted.

**24. Date of Next Meeting - 1st November 2018**

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 7.02 pm and closed at 8.46 pm)

## NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

6<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Minute:	Action:	For:	Report Back To: Date:
20	The Chalvey pilot scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation had not proved to be sustainable. However, relaunching it by applying it across the Borough and with a stronger structure would rectify these matters; this would be discussed by Cabinet as part of its discussion on 17 <sup>th</sup> September 2018. Should this be approved, it would become active in the 2019 – 20 Financial Year.	Housing	NCS Scrutiny Panel 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2018
	The proposal to central Government mentioned above could receive funding of up to £100 million. Should this be given the approval to proceed, the majority would be charged at Slough Living Rent rates (around 70% of the market value) with the units to be built by the end of 2022 – 23. Details of the proposal would be circulated to members outside of the meeting.	Housing	NCS Scrutiny Panel Circulated by email 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2018
	The 6,200 properties owned by SBC were a mixture of types of housing. The breakdown of this would be circulated to members outside of the meeting.	Housing	NCS Scrutiny Panel Circulated by email 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2018
	The profiles and motivations of those who downsized was variable (e.g. elderly residents whose family had moved out, those who wanted to avoid under-occupancy charges). Details of these profiles would be circulated to members outside of the meeting.	Housing	NCS Scrutiny Panel To be covered in report on 3 <sup>rd</sup> April 2019

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**SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Neighbourhood and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

**DATE:** 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Amir Salarkia – Housing Regulation Manager  
(For all Enquiries) (01753) 875 540

**WARD(S):** All

**PART I**  
**FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION**

**LICENSING OF HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION**1. **Purpose of Report**

To provide the Panel with an update on Slough Borough Council's (SBC) strategy for the licensing of houses in multiple occupation.

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

2.1 The Panel is requested to note the update in respect of the policy for licensing houses in multiple occupation (HMOs).

2.2 The Panel is requested encourage their constituents and stakeholders to take part in the consultation that began on 29<sup>th</sup> October and will run for 10-12 weeks.

There is a dedicated consultation page on this subject matter setting out full details of the schemes and includes a Survey Monkey questionnaire through which we are seeking all stakeholders views. We are also organising a number of focus group sessions to take on-board views of residents, Landlord, Managing Agents in slough as well as the local business to design a scheme that help our residents to live in decent homes. Living in decent homes and neighbourhoods is the basic and fundamental element of health and thriving communities.

We would appreciate the Member's support in achieving a meaningful and comprehensive Consultation participation

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**3a **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

The thorough and effective licensing of HMOs directly supports the following priority:

- Housing

### 3b **Five Year Plan outcomes**

The licensing of HMOs is also a key element of the following outcomes of the Five Year Plan:

- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay
- Our residents will live in good quality homes

### 4. **Other Implications**

#### a) Financial

The financial implications of the licensing regime are discussed in the report. There are no implications to the compilation of this report.

#### b) Risk Management

There are no additional risks in addition to the ones listed within the Cabinet report. In addition, after completion of the Statutory Consultation, the result of the consultation and options will be submitted to the Cabinet to make the final decision.

#### c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

The licensing of HMOs will be subject to the Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation Order 2018, which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018.

#### d) Equalities Impact Assessment

The policy has been subject to Equalities Impact Assessments as required during its compilation. No assessment has been necessitated by the commissioning of this report.

### 5. **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 As stated in Section 2.2, new legislation has seen the licensing regime become subject to the Order which became effective last month. As a result, SBC has taken this opportunity to revisit its policy and make a series of alterations which are both in line with the law and also local requirements. This report will outline the situation regarding mandatory licensing, the proposals being made and the pilot scheme to be ran in the Chalvey and Central ward areas.

#### **Mandatory licensing**

- 5.2 The Council has a statutory duty to License Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) within the private rented sector (PRS) under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004. The scope of the Mandatory HMO Licensing Scheme has been extended to cover smaller HMOs. The extended Mandatory Licensing Scheme has come into force from 1st October 2018.

- 5.3 Although the new expansion of the Mandatory Licensing Scheme is welcomed and will cover a greater number of HMOs, but from Slough's point of view will not go far enough to improve conditions of HMOs in Slough. Considering the makeup, condition and impact of the incremental increase in the private rented sector in Slough, through Slough's 5 Year Plan, Members included the introduction of property licensing within Slough's 5 Year Plan under Outcome 4 specifically and Outcome 3 by association. The proposed Borough wide HMO Licensing aims are to help good Landlords better manage their investment and improve housing condition for the residents whilst giving the Council more tools to tackle poor quality rented homes and rogue / criminal landlords.
- 5.4 Councils may also consider introducing Selective Licensing (Part 3,) in one or more wards if they satisfy a certain criteria in accordance with the Act.
- 5.5 The latest analysis of the housing stock in Slough shows that over 33% of the housing stock in Slough is in the private rented sector which is comparable with top quartile of London Boroughs. Considering the current large disproportionate PRS (Private Rented Sector) which is rapidly growing further, we believe at the current level in Slough we have over 3500 HMOs that would require license under the proposed scheme. In addition as it is proposed; if Members agree to approve licensing of all rented homes under the Selective Licensing of 1 or 2 wards, this figure will be between 5500 to 7000 depending on whether both or one of the proposed wards is selected.

#### **Proposals for licensing**

- 5.5 The cabinet unanimously approved and welcomed the proposal recommended by the report and carry out a statutory consultation in respect of the following schemes:
- a Borough wide Additional Licensing scheme for all Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)
  - a targeted Selective Licensing scheme covering all properties rented to single households in Central and Chalvey Wards
- 5.6 The report outlines the key facts of Slough's private rented sector (PRS) in which 1 in 3 residents now live; and sets out the rationale for this proposal which aims to improve the sector which has the lowest quality accommodation as well as limiting the adverse impact of these properties on local residents and communities
- 5.7 Housing is one of the 4 priority areas in the Joint wellbeing strategy. It states 'the links between housing and wellbeing are well documented – where people live can have a significant impact on the quality of their lives. There are strong evidential links between the quality of someone's home and their life chances; including educational attainment for children and young people, employment prospects, social participation and sense of belonging to a local community'
- 5.8 Property licensing can be an effective tool for tackling some of these key priority areas; preventing or controlling overcrowding, improving conditions and reducing ASB. It is well documented that overcrowding, has a serious and lasting impact on health and the psychological well-being of families, especially young people which negatively affects their life chances. Licensing can improve the overall condition of properties and controls the number of permitted persons allowed to occupy a licensed property.

- 5.9 As always, Members' support is crucial in introducing a scheme that improves housing conditions and the overall neighbourhoods in the borough by improving management of private rented sector and removing / reducing ASBs. The scheme aims to support good Landlord and drive out the rogue elements from the market. This is detailed in the Cabinet report which is available as a background paper.

**Chalvey and Central pilot**

- 5.11 Our data analysis shows that around 51.5% of housing stock in Central Ward is made up of PRS and very similar picture in Chalvey Ward where 50% of the Housing stock is PRS. By any standard this amount to disproportionate tenure breakdown which result in range of ASBs and other issues highlighted in the Cabinet report. Through this proposal we intend to effect the condition and management of PRTS which will in turn improve the entire neighbourhood

6. **Comments of Other Committees**

The policy for the licensing of private rented property was an agenda item for Cabinet on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018

This report has not been taken by other committees.

7. **Conclusion**

Property licensing can be an effective tool for tackling some of these key priority areas; preventing or controlling overcrowding, improving conditions and reducing ASB. It is well documented that overcrowding, has a serious and lasting impact on health and the psychological well-being of families, especially young people which negatively affects their life chances. Licensing can improve the overall condition of properties and controls the number of permitted persons allowed to occupy a licensed property. This will also help the Council to concentrate its efforts on rogue and criminal landlords / agents who give the sector bad name.

8. **Appendices**

None

9. **Background Papers**

Agenda Papers and Minutes, Cabinet (17<sup>th</sup> September 2018)

**SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Neighbourhoods & Community Services Scrutiny Panel

**DATE:** 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Colin Moone, Service Lead - Strategic Housing Services  
**(For all Enquiries)** 01753 474057

**WARD(S):** All

**PART I**  
**FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

**HOMELESSNESS IN SLOUGH**1. **Purpose of Report**

This report updates the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel on the challenges faced when managing homelessness in Slough.

2. **Recommendation(s)**

That the Panel note the report and to also note the Homelessness Strategy that is attached in draft to this report.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA, Five Year Plan and Housing Strategy****The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA**

3a Housing is one of the key priorities of Slough's Joint Wellbeing Strategy (SJWS). Mitigating homelessness contributes to reducing inequalities in health through access to housing. There are clear links between housing and the JSNA priorities around improving health conditions, particularly mental health and protecting vulnerable children.

**Five Year Plan Outcomes**

3b Outcome 4 of Slough's Five Year Plan 2017-2021 states: "Our residents will have access to good quality homes". This outcome recognises the critical links between improved health and wellbeing and access to good quality housing.

4. **Other Implications**(a) **Financial**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, indirectly there are very significant financial implications for the Council given the rising numbers of homeless households residing in expensive temporary accommodation. A number of measures are being taken to address the situation and some of these are highlighted in the body of the report.

(b) Risk Management

There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no direct human rights implications arising from this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

An equality impact assessment is not necessary for the compilation of this report.

5. **Background Information**

**The up-to-date Position**

5.1 There are 449 homeless households in all forms of temporary accommodation as at 12<sup>th</sup> October 2018 (this has fallen from a high of 480). There has been a large increase since August 2017, when temporary accommodation numbers were 348.

5.2 There are a number of reasons why homelessness has increased:

- Local Housing Allowance (LHA) caps have meant that the difference between the LHA rate and a market rent has widened, making renting in the private sector unaffordable for many homeless households;
- Ability to discharge our housing duty into the private rented sector is limited by the money available to pay incentives;
- The implementation of the Homeless Reduction Act on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018 has seen an increase in homeless households approaching the Council;
- London boroughs are discharging their housing duty into Slough, which is causing additional housing pressures for the future; and
- Across the Country, homeless numbers are increasing generally.

**Local Housing Allowance (LHA)**

5.3 The Local Housing Allowance (LHA), which sets the maximum amount of rent that can be recovered by housing benefit for private rented sector (PRS) properties, was set at the lowest 30% of the housing market rents. The gap between private sector rents and the amount that LHA will cover continues to widen. Further welfare reforms, which have followed, were meant to reduce government spending and encourage households back to work, have affected PRS supply and increased evictions. Households' LHA entitlement is less likely to cover the full contractual rent due as real rent increases have overtaken the LHA rates in Slough.

**Incentive Payments**

5.4 Incentive payments are paid to the landlord to bridge the gap between the LHA level and the market rent. Currently, £250k is available for incentives, which enables the Council to pay for approximately 38 incentives to landlords, therefore discharging our homeless duties into these properties. Last year the average incentive payment was £9k but that was because this approach had just restarted

after the team was disbanded. Therefore, the current package is offering better value for money, although officers are still driving these costs down.

- 5.5 It is not currently possible to stop these costs because the whole homeless market has been organised around incentive payments to landlords to access private sector supply. Also, London boroughs, among others, are accessing the private sector in Slough by paying far higher incentive payments than we are so if we do not pay these fees, we will not access the supply.
- 5.6 The Council's housing company, James Elliman Homes received £10m last year and £18m this year to buy properties on the open market to rent to predominantly homeless households. Although over 60 have been bought, 13 have so far been let and there are currently 6 under offer. The rest will be coming available within the next 2 to 4 months. After these properties are bought, works are carried out to bring them up to a lettable standard.

### **Implementation of the Homeless Reduction Act 2017**

- 5.7 The main change in homelessness legislation created a 56 day 'prevention period' for households to present themselves as homeless, instead of the previous 28 days statutory period. This meant that local authorities had more time to prevent actual homelessness. If households were not prevented from being homeless within 56 days, they would move to the relief stage, which lasted for a further 56 days, where accommodation could be secured for at least 6 months to discharge the relief duty. However, if relief is not secured within this time, a homeless household would move into the main phase of the homeless duty. Legislation has therefore become more complicated and a homeless household can stay in the system for much longer.
- 5.8 The number of households who approached as homeless in 2017/18 was 506. The number who approached between April and September 2018 was 810. This represents an increase of over 62% in just 6 months. This increase has flowed through into temporary accommodation and from a recent high of 480 households, there are currently 447 households in all forms of temporary accommodation as at 19<sup>th</sup> October 2018. This unprecedented level of households in temporary accommodation is causing significant budget pressure for the Council.
- 5.9 Appendix A shows a snapshot of the reasons for households becoming homeless. The main reasons for homelessness are loss of Assured Shorthold Tenancies and Parental Exclusion.

### **The London Impact**

- 5.10 The Localism Act 2011 made it possible for local authorities to discharge their housing duty out of their home borough into another local authority area. What this means in reality is that when the Assured Shorthold Tenancy ends (after 2 years) that household will present themselves homeless to that borough. Any homeless household presenting to Slough under these circumstances will be the responsibility of Slough.

- 5.11 Although local authorities are meant to notify the receiving borough of these arrangements, figures are vastly under-reported and therefore it is considered that the information is unreliable. However, this is the only information (collated by London boroughs) available on movements into Slough:
- between September 2016 to August 2017 – 178 households were placed in Slough
  - between July 2017 to May 2018 – 74 households were placed in Slough
  - between August 2017 to September 2018 – 66 households were placed in Slough
- note that these periods will have some duplicate numbers
- 5.12 Appendix B is an example of a notification from Hillingdon. It is to be noted that a person household was housed in Slough in to a 2 year Assured Shorthold Tenancy. When the tenancy ends on 14/9/19, this household will present 9 as homeless to Slough, unless their homelessness can be prevented. The landlord will expect Slough to make an incentive payment to keep the household in the home beyond the tenancy period. If this payment is not paid, they will be evicted.
- 5.13 In a limited exercise, 36 cases were looked at. These were homeless cases. 25% of these cases had a Slough and an address, outside of Slough, in the last 5 years. This shows that 25% of homeless households are not indigenous to Slough, although the limited size of the sample must be noted.

### **The National Picture**

- 5.14 The number of homeless families and individuals placed in temporary accommodation jumped to 78,000 last year, an 8% rise on the year and a massive 60% rise since 2012. The number of homeless households placed in B&Bs – which are often cramped, unsuitable and sometimes even dangerous – rose particularly quickly, with a 10% rise on the year. If trends continue there will be 100,000 households living in B&Bs, hostels and other temporary accommodation.

### **Homelessness Strategy**

- 5.15 The Homelessness Strategy is in draft and is going through some final stages of consultation with the voluntary sector and other partners before it is signed off. The Strategy has three distinct areas: general homelessness; single homelessness and rough sleepers. The Strategy is attached at Appendix C.
- 5.16 For single/homelessness, the strategy focuses on the need to obtain better and more affordable housing provision, particularly in the private sector. The Council also has to collectively deal with young people in a more holistic way after a recent visit from the Homelessness Advice and Support Team, a part of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, made a number of recommendations to the Council and the Children's Trust.
- 5.17 The third element deals with rough sleepers. The Council has received £260k this year to make a difference in this area and work has begun to do this. One of the quick wins is to bring Serena Hall back into use as a Winter Night Shelter and the Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP) for the borough in the extremes of winter, although the aim is to open the provision from the middle of November 2018 to March 2019 (7pm until 7am). The general intention of this

work is to create successful housing pathways to enable rough sleepers to leave the streets permanently. It should be noted that the official Rough Sleepers' Count starts at 11.15 pm on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2018 and ends at 5 am on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018. The Count will be co-ordinated from Serena Hall. Councillors are welcome to volunteer to join the Count.

- 5.18 The Wellbeing Board has set up a Task and Finish Group, chaired by Alan Sinclair, Director of Adult Social Care and Communities. This group will be reporting separately on the work it is carrying out to assist Housing with these issues.
- 5.19 This strategy is the Council's response to the challenges currently in homelessness.

### **Homelessness Review**

- 5.20 The issues surrounding homelessness isn't just about households presenting as homeless and the unaffordable private rented sector, among other things. It is also about how the management of resources is used to deal with this work area. It can be easy to be complacent because some of the problems surrounding homelessness can become overwhelming, but the Council must always ensure that it is doing all it can to ensure that the systems used are as effective as possible.
- 5.21 The Council therefore commissioned a piece of work to look at the service and to report on its effectiveness. It was anticipated that a draft of the review would be available for the Panel to consider but the review has become more extensive and is not available as yet.

### **Looking Forward**

- 5.22 Notwithstanding the strategies, action plans and reviews, there are other discussions taking place to help to manage the homelessness concerns. Officers feel that it is important for the Council to consider housing homeless households out of Slough as a full discharge of its housing duty. This would be controversial but we must consider that Slough is importing homeless households from outside of Slough and this is increasing demand for limited resources.
- 5.23 The Council hosted a Housing Options Event at the beginning of October 2018 to introduce homeless households to a voluntary service to relocate them outside of Slough. Whilst the majority of the 80 plus households, who attended, were not interested, over 20 households signed up to receive more information and explore a possible move. Any household moving would be a success but we are unable to compel anyone to move. Officers will continue to promote this scheme, although a survey on the day revealed that a large majority of households who attended the event are prepared to wait in temporary accommodation until they are housed by the Council.

## **6. Comments of Other Committees**

This report has not been discussed by any other committees of Slough Borough Council. The report was commissioned as a result of this Panel discussing the Five Year Plan on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

7. **Conclusion**

- 7.1 There is a significant amount of activity going on in the homelessness area. The government have recognised the rough sleeping concerns across the country and have provided some additional financial help to assist local authorities. This will help the Council Town Centre Team with their approach to managing the Town Centre.
- 7.2 The Council recognises the importance of keeping on top of these challenges and is renewing its homeless strategies and is looking at how services are being delivered. The Council will be looking to refresh its Housing Strategy because although the current one was written in 2017, the housing world has moved on particularly in Slough.

8. **Appendices**

- A - Reason for Homelessness
- B - Hillingdon Homeless Household Notification
- C - Draft Homelessness Strategy

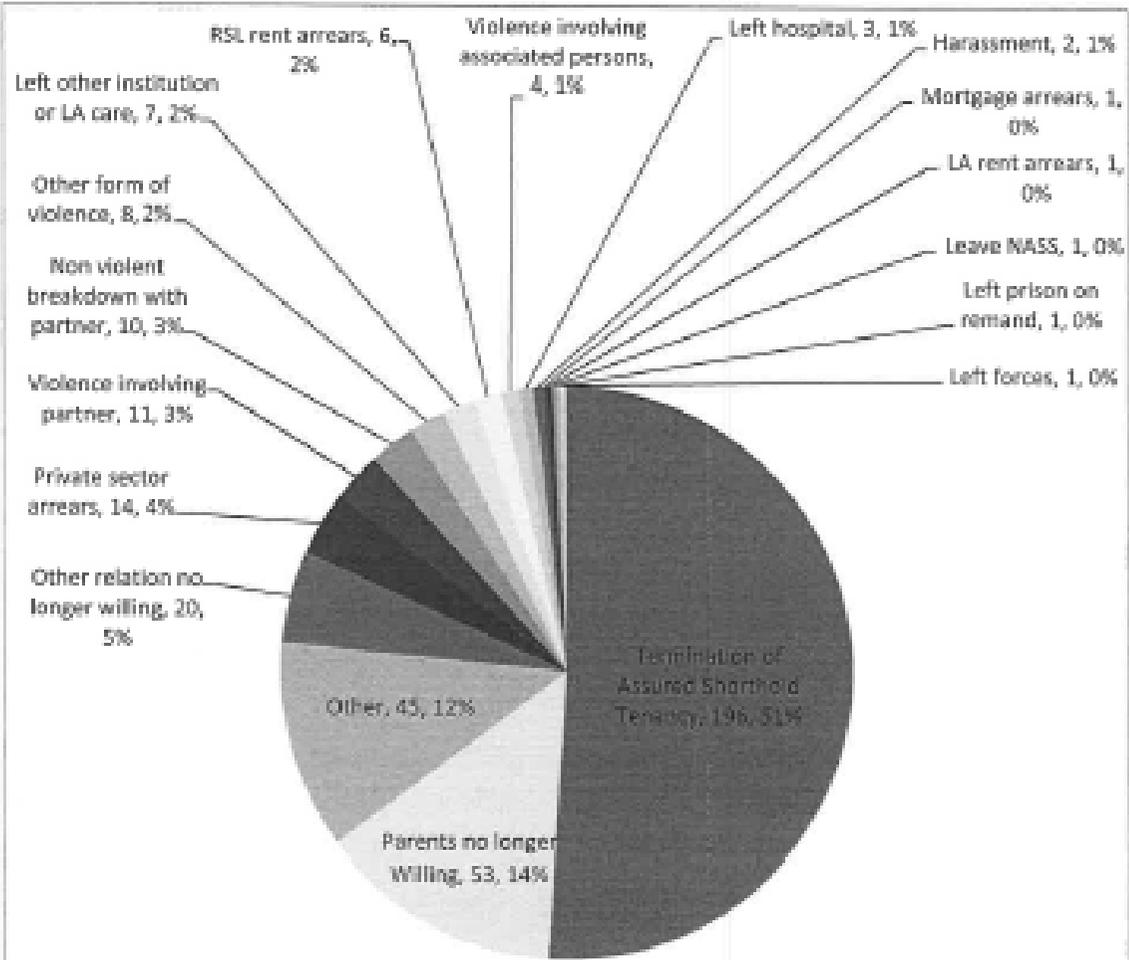
9. **Background Papers**

Agenda papers and minutes, Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel, 6<sup>th</sup> September 2018

**Households in Temporary Accommodation - Reason for homelessness**

Date: 03/09/2018

Total - 3rd September 2018		
Termination of Assured Shorthold Tenancy	196	51.0%
Parents no longer Willing	53	13.8%
Other	45	11.7%
Other relation no longer willing	20	5.2%
Private sector arrears	14	3.6%
Violence involving partner	11	2.9%
Non violent breakdown with partner	10	2.6%
Other form of violence	8	2.1%
Left other institution or LA care	7	1.8%
RSL rent arrears	6	1.6%
Violence involving associated persons	4	1.0%
Left hospital	3	0.8%
Harassment	2	0.5%
Mortgage arrears	1	0.3%
LA rent arrears	1	0.3%
Leave NASS	1	0.3%
Left prison on remand	1	0.3%
Left forces	1	0.3%
Racially mot violence	0	0.0%
Racial harassment	0	0.0%
Loss of tied other than SA	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>100%</b>
Not recorded	65	14% of total



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# HILLINGDON

LONDON

Slough Council  
Housing Department  
Landmark Place  
High Street  
Slough  
SL1 1JL



Ref: 107038

Date: 13th September 2018

Dear Mr Sir/Madam

**Re: Housing Act 1996 - s.208 Notice**

I am writing to advise you that we have secured accommodation for the following applicant within your district.

In securing this accommodation for the household, the London Borough of Hillingdon considers that it has discharged its duty under Section 193 of the Housing Act 1996. The details of this household are as follows:

Name:	DOB:	Relationship:
	10/01/1975	Applicant
	15/01/1986	Wife
	06/06/2014	Son
	23/03/2012	Daughter
	13/06/2010	Daughter
	24/08/2008	Son
	11/03/2007	Daughter
	23/09/2005	Daughter
	17/04/1998	Son

<b>Accommodation Address:</b>	131 Canterbury Avenue, Slough SL2 1BH
<b>Effective Date:</b>	15/09/2017



**HILLINGDON**  
LONDON

If you have any questions on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01895 556666.

Yours faithfully



Nicola Heeran  
Housing Options and Homeless Prevention Officer

Homeless Prevention Team  
Residents Services  
T.01895 556666 F.01895 556457  
homelessprevention@hillington.gov.uk  
www.hillingdon.gov.uk  
London Borough of Hillingdon,  
2N/05, Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW

## Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018 - 2023

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## INTRODUCTION

Slough is in East Berkshire on the western edge of London lying approximately 20 miles from central London. Nearby towns include Windsor to the south, Maidenhead to the west, Beaconsfield to the north and Uxbridge to the northeast. Over the years Sloughs population has expanded greatly, incorporating a number of different villages. Hundreds of major national and internal companies have sited in Slough Trading Estate over the years, with its proximity to London Heathrow Airport and good motorway connections being attractive. Slough has excellent transport links both road and rail to both central London and other parts of the country. Slough according to the 2014 mid year estimates of 2011 census, is home to some 144, 800 people. 65% of the population are aged between 16 - 65. The borough is made up of a significantly younger than average population compared to any of the south east local authorities. 39.2% of all households contain dependent children - this is the third highest proportion across England and Wales. The population has continued to increase with the result of net migration as shown in the 2011 census figures with over one fifth of the population coming into the UK between 2001 and 2011; Slough continues to attract high levels of refugees and asylum seekers. Since 2010 there has been a slight shift towards greater deprivation in Slough relative to the rest of England, in relation to services including barriers to housing and services. In the census of 2011, 18.7% of dwellings in Slough were owned outright by inhabitants: 34.0% were purchased on a mortgage, 1.4% were on owned \on shared ownership schemes, 20.6% were social rented (13.1% from the Council, 7.5% from other social landlords, e.g. housing associations), and 24.3% of dwellings were privately rented, and 1.0%<sup>1</sup> were living rent free. The close proximity to London has meant that London boroughs are also looking to discharge their own homelessness duty in Slough where they can access cheaper rents and afford to pay incentives to private landlords whilst still making savings in comparison to (their) local housing costs. As a consequence, the Council is struggling to match these offers and to secure private rented accommodation for households to whom they have a duty to house. This is in a climate where Private rented housing makes up 24% of housing in Slough, compared to 16.3%<sup>2</sup> in the south east. Slough like most regions has unique problems and as stated in the Slough 5 year plan (2018 -2023) Outcome 4 Slough is experiencing a growth in its population which, combined with the geographically small size of the borough, has put significant pressure on our housing supply.

The Council helped prevent 1196 households from becoming homeless between 2012 to 2017. The Strategic Housing teams used a range of tools to prevent these households from losing their settled accommodation.

Slough has also carried out homelessness relief where help to secure accommodation was provided even though the authority was under no statutory obligation to do so. The

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<sup>1</sup> Table KS402EW, 2011 Census: Tenure, local authorities in England and Wales

<sup>2</sup> Table KS402EW, 2011 Census: Tenure, local authorities in England and Wales

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number of rough sleepers in the borough has increased significantly over the past five years.

As Part of the commitment made in the Slough 5 year plan 2018 - 2023, 'to improve our services to homeless people and work to prevent homelessness' The Council has developed this Strategy to identify long term solutions for affected residents.

The council is currently developing a rough sleeping action plan as a supplementary document. This will look at comprehensive multi agency solutions to the issues of rough sleeping in Slough. There is an agreed community drive to resolve the issue of rough sleeping and single household homelessness' which is the most visible face of homelessness. Slough Borough Council secured funding from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to create a specialist outreach service to coordinate the local rough sleeping reduction drive.

The Council has continued to improve the options available to residents threatened with homelessness despite the increase in numbers requesting homeless assistance.

As Part of the commitment made in the Slough 5 year plan 2018 - 2023, 'to improve our services to homeless people and work to prevent homelessness' The Council has developed this Strategy to identify long term solutions for affected residents.

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires that Local Authorities publish a Homelessness Strategy at least every 5 years. All local authorities in England are also by law required to carry out a homelessness review for their district; formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of that review. This involves consulting with statutory and voluntary partners.

(s.1 Homelessness Act 2002 – <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/7/section/1>)

## **Consultation**

We would like to thank the various partners, service users and members of the public who have worked with us by contributing to the development of this strategy. We would particularly like to thank the members of the Slough Homeless Forum for their contribution in identifying the gaps in service provision.

As the strategy was developed with extensive input from partners, Slough Borough Council will monitor the delivery in line with the action plan . This will make it easier to review and amend the document to reflect local and national changes. The council will review the document periodically in line with section 1(1) of the 2002 Housing Act, to ensure the document is relevant. The implementation of the strategy will be regularly reported to Members and key stakeholder.

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**This document is divided into two parts:**

**Part 1:**

**The Homeless Review** looks at both the national and local picture; it contains information on homelessness in the borough and looks at our current and future challenges. Slough Borough Council is setting out in the review document an assessment of the support, assistance and advice available to homeless and potentially homeless people in the borough. This also involves an input from partners. The outcome of the review of the various forms of homelessness in the borough, will assist the council to develop a strategy which aims to look at facilitating greater integration in the provision of homelessness prevention services.

**Part 2: The Homelessness Strategy** gives an overview of our existing services and the initiatives we have in place to prevent homelessness. It then outlines the risks, challenges and opportunities ahead. This section sets out the priorities and objectives that will guide the council's homelessness service.

This is one of a number of strategies Slough Borough Council has in place to support the delivery of suitable affordable housing. This is a period of significant ongoing change in the delivery of housing services by the local authority, with the continued welfare benefits changes and the introduction and implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act which was introduced in April 2018.

**PART 1 – Homelessness Review**

The causes of homelessness are complex, with rarely one single trigger; there are often a combination of reasons why people come to face the prospect of homelessness.

In order to develop services which provide effective resolution to individual and families facing the prospect of homelessness, it is necessary to understand the interplay between various factors, which can render a person homeless.

These can be categorised as relating to:

- (i) Individual circumstances
- (ii) Relationships
- (iii) Social policies – National and Local

**National Trends**

The national homeless population has changed significantly since the start of the current economic cycle.

Over the past few years, there has been a steady increase nationally, both in the number of households who approached their local authority for homeless assistance and in those subsequently accepted as homeless. There has been a corresponding increase in rough sleeping nationally. **The number of housing need decisions made annually by local authorities has gone from 108,720 in 2011/12 to 115,550 in 2016/17. There was an increase from 43% in 2011/12 to 51% in 2016/17 of households considered to be in priority need.**

To address this growing problem the government's latest national housing strategy "**Fixing our Broken Housing Market**" has set out a clear commitment to tackling homelessness. The approach taken will be to help households currently priced out of the housing market, support people potentially at risk before they reach crisis point, and reduce the number of rough sleepers on the nation's streets. The paper proposes some significant changes which are likely to change the way Local Authorities meet housing need in the future. These changes include:

- Encouraging Registered Providers and Local Authorities to build more homes
- Widening the definition of affordable housing to include starter homes, intermediate rent, discounted housing and rent-to-buy
- A greater focus for Local Authorities to do more to prevent homelessness
- Making renting in the private sector fairer for households.

### **Welfare Reforms**

There are increasing pressures on low income households following social welfare changes affecting incomes and limiting the amounts of benefits payable towards housing. The most significant in recent years include

- **Local Housing Allowance (LHA)**, the reduction and limiting of the LHA caps have had significant effects. The current LHA freeze means that most private renters who need their income topped up by housing benefit will face a monthly shortfall between the actual cost of their rent, and the support available. Between January 2011 and January 2017, private rental prices in Great Britain increased by 14.3%, strongly driven by the growth in private rental prices within London. When London is excluded, private rental prices increased by 10.1% over the same period.<sup>3</sup>
- **Benefit Cap** limiting the maximum benefit that can be claimed per week, is constantly reviewed and adversely affects how much can be paid towards rent via housing benefits.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/indexofprivatehousingrentalprices/jan2017>

- **Universal credit** is the new streamlined payment which rolls most of the benefits residents receive into a single payment to clients rather than to landlords.

### **Localism Act 2011**

This act altered profoundly the way local housing authorities deal with homeless households. It ushered in a range of significant changes to national social housing policy including minimising the role central government plays in housing decisions. The policy's objective is to enable local authorities to better manage both housing demand and access to housing within their areas. The Main changes brought in by the Localism Act include:

- Social housing reform - giving individual landlords new powers to grant tenancies for a fixed term, should they choose to do so;
- Allocations reform – giving councils greater authority over who they admit to waiting lists for social housing in their area;
- Powers granting local authorities the power to discharge their duties to homeless people by placing them into the private rented sector;
- The introduction of a national home-swap scheme in the 1985 Housing Act to enable greater tenant mobility across the social housing sector;

### **The Deregulation Act 2015**

Some of the measures introduced under the Deregulation Act 2015 were designed to increase the rights of Council and Private Tenants:

- Reduction in the minimum length of time before a Council Tenant acquires the Right to buy their home from 5 to 3 years
- Requirement for Private Sector Landlords to provide all new tenants with prescribed information about their rights and responsibilities, Energy Performance and Gas Safety certificates and requirement to protect all tenancy deposits in a Government approved redress scheme

### **The Housing and Planning Act 2016**

There are several measures contained within this Act that have the potential to reduce affordable housing options for low income households:

- Extension of the Right-to-Buy to Registered Providers, potentially reducing the number of existing affordable and social rent homes
- The introduction of Starter Homes as a new affordable home ownership product, widening the definition of affordable housing and leading to the distribution of housing grant funding to home ownership products
- Mandatory use of fixed term tenancies for Local Authority homes, reducing the security of tenure for many low income households.
- A Pledge to ban Letting Agent Fees, which could lead to rental increase

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## **The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA)**

Housing Authorities have a Statutory Duty under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) to provide advice and assistance to all eligible homeless applicants and to secure that suitable accommodation becomes available for eligible applicants who are unintentionally homeless and have a priority need for accommodation. The (HRA) was subsequently introduced to strengthen and increase the duties owed to all eligible homeless applicants, including those who do not have a priority need for accommodation or who may be intentionally homeless. The following new duties have been introduced under the Act:

- Duty to assess the housing circumstances, housing needs and support needs of all eligible applicants who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless within 56 days and agree the steps that need to be taken by the applicant or the authority to ensure that they can remain in their current accommodation or can secure and sustain suitable alternative accommodation
- Duty to assist all eligible applicants who are at risk of becoming homeless within the next 56 days to remain in their current accommodation or secure and sustain suitable alternative accommodation for a period of at least 6 months
- Duty to assist all eligible homeless persons to secure and sustain suitable accommodation for a period of at least 6 months
- Duty on specified public bodies to refer households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness to a housing authority.

### **Local Context**

The Slough Housing Strategy (2016-2021) shows the council's commitment to use all the mechanisms available to create more processes to engage various partners to deliver better outcomes for homeless residents.

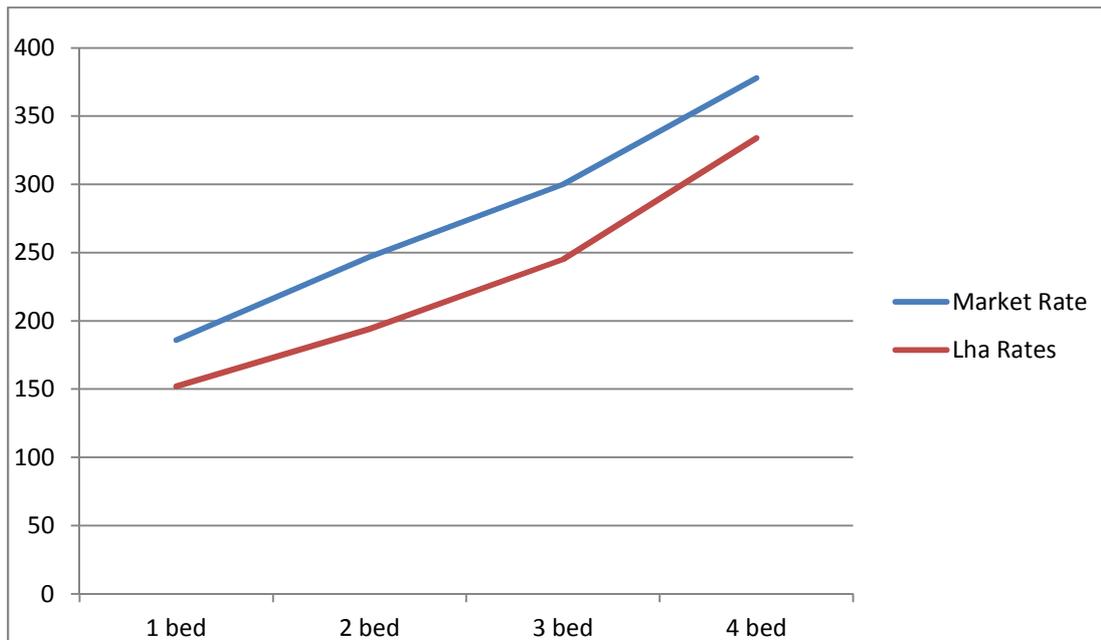
There are contrasting patterns of homelessness in different parts of the country. The South East, especially around the greater London region diverging from the Midlands and the north by having ever increasing homeless numbers. Slough being on the borders of London and sharing London's transport, infrastructural, social and cultural issues has, experienced this divergence.

Between April and November 2017, Slough had over 1680 households approach the council for homeless advice and assistance. The number of households seeking assistance has continued to increase year on year. Between May 2016 (176) and May 2017 (224) There was an increase of over 27% of households approaching the council for housing advice and assistance.

The Local Housing Allowance (LHA), which sets the maximum amount of rent that can be covered by housing benefit for Private rented sector (PRS) properties, was set at the lowest 30% of the housing market rents. The gap between private sector rents and the

amount that LHA will cover continues to widen. The further welfare reforms have followed which were meant to reduce government spending and encourage households back to work have affected PRS supply and increased evictions.

Claimants' LHA entitlement is less likely to cover the full contractual rent due as real rents increases have overtaken the LHA for Slough. With the buoyant PRS in Slough, and the influx of London Boroughs paying increased incentives to access the private rented sector, there needs to be a measured strategy to resolve local homelessness.



Bed Size	Market Rate	LHA Rates	Shortfall
1 bed	186	152	34
2 bed	247	194	53
3 bed	300	245	55
4 bed	378	334	44

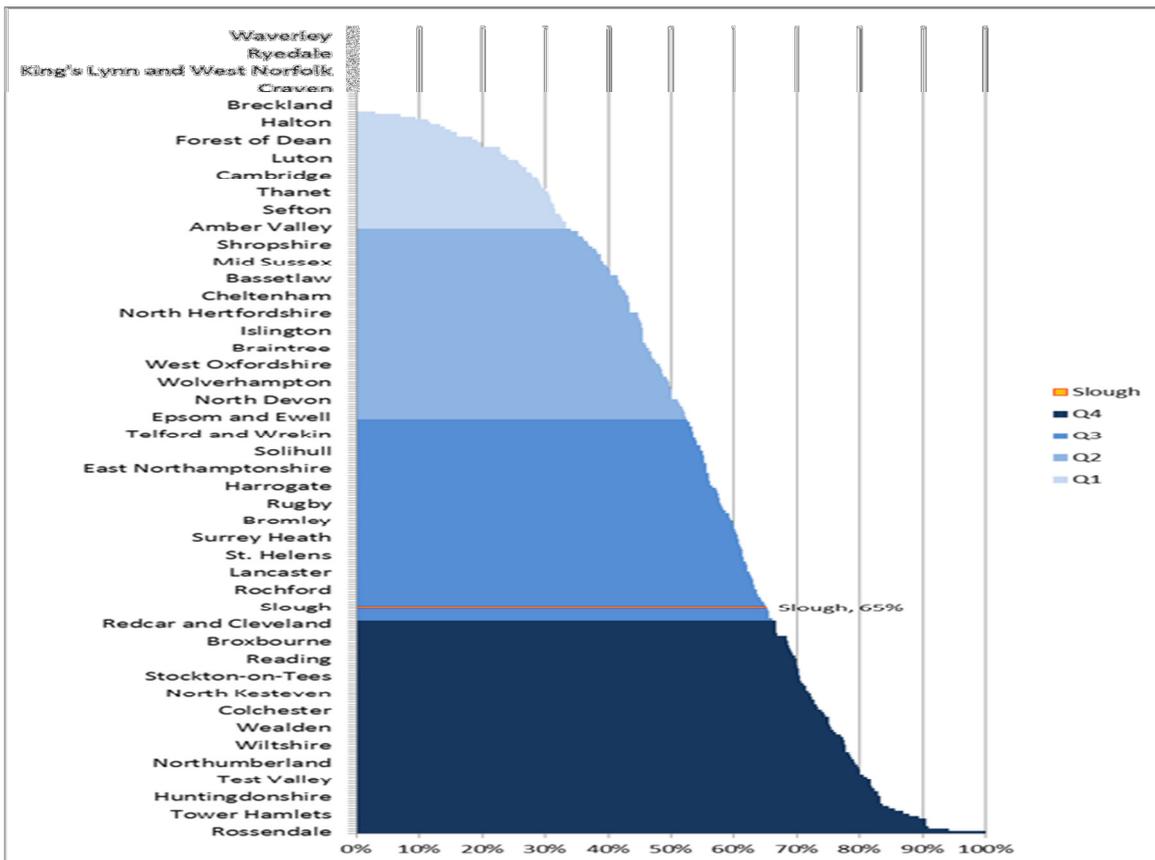
All rates are weekly

**Figure 1**

**Market rent Vs LHA Rates in Slough as at March 20180 (market rent from zoopla.co.uk)**

The shortfall is further exacerbated with welfare reforms which has led to reduction in other benefits, impacting negatively on the ability of households to access private rented accommodation.

**Percentage of homeless decisions made that were agreed - Q2 2017/18**



**Figure 2**

**Number of households agreed as homeless (rate per 1000 households) - Q2 2017/18**

Number agreed as homeless: Rate per 1,000										
Authority	2015-16				2016-17				2017-18	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Brent	1.51	1.53	1.93	1.46	1.66	1.40	0.87	1.12	1.51	1.43
Ealing	1.50	1.03	1.42	1.51	1.57	1.52	1.60	1.22	1.22	1.32
Greenwich	0.82	1.17	1.38	1.32	1.41	1.15	1.56	1.27	1.33	1.40
Hounslow	0.77	1.11	1.69	2.15	0.89	0.76	1.24	1.07	0.99	0.68
Luton	1.47	1.99	1.21	0.66	1.41	1.22	1.20	1.43	0.61	0.87
Redbridge	1.44	1.43	1.26	0.99	1.31	1.16	1.14	1.07	1.29	1.35
Slough	1.02	1.40	1.36	0.97	1.10	1.12	1.18	1.26	1.08	1.54

**Figure 3**

The tables above show that the number of households accepted as being homeless and in priority need in the south East Region against the London Average. The level of homeless acceptances in Slough is fairly reflective of the South East region as a whole. Slough had 506 homeless approaches in the 2017/18 financial year; There were 303 households accepted as homeless. For the same period there were 127 households

housed into social housing tenancies; with another 43 housed in the private sector (PSL).

### Social Housing waiting times and numbers

#### Housing demand 2017-2018

(numbers on the register)

	Band A	Band B	Band C	Total
Over 50	7	39	95	<b>141</b>
1 Bed	7	328	450	<b>785</b>
2 Bed	5	452	356	<b>813</b>
3 Bed	4	332	264	<b>600</b>
4 Bed	2	94	60	<b>156</b>
5+ Bed	0	22	14	<b>36</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1,267</b>	<b>1,239</b>	<b>2,531</b>

#### Average waiting time 2017-2018

(by band in weeks)

	Band A	Band B	Band C	Homeless
Over 50	11	34	54	83
Over 50 2 Bed	no lets	8	65	410
Studio/ 1 Bed	55	154	no lets	64
2 Bed	85	221	no lets	68
3 Bed	80	331	no lets	79
4 Bed	87	451	no lets	231

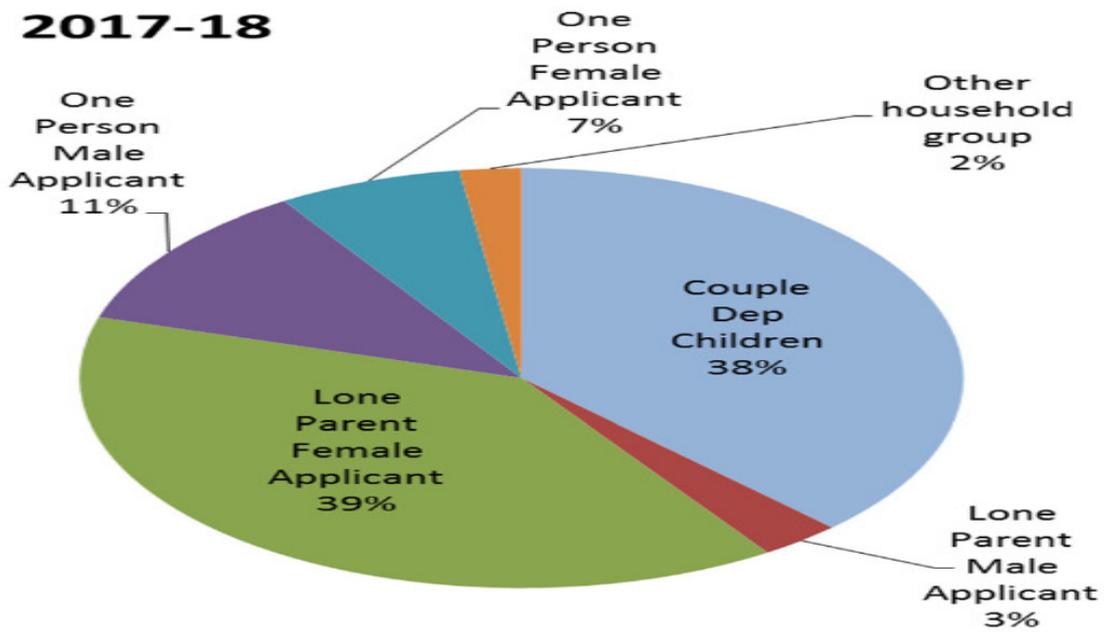
**Figure 4**

The table on the left shows the numbers waiting in the various groups for social housing. The table on the right shows the average waiting times for social housing in weeks.

#### Social/Affordable rented Accommodation

Social housing lettings have been reduced both through re-lets and new build accommodation. Social landlords have highlighted increasing difficulty in gaining sites and anticipate lower levels of new build developments going forward as a result of recent changes in development and housing association finance frameworks.

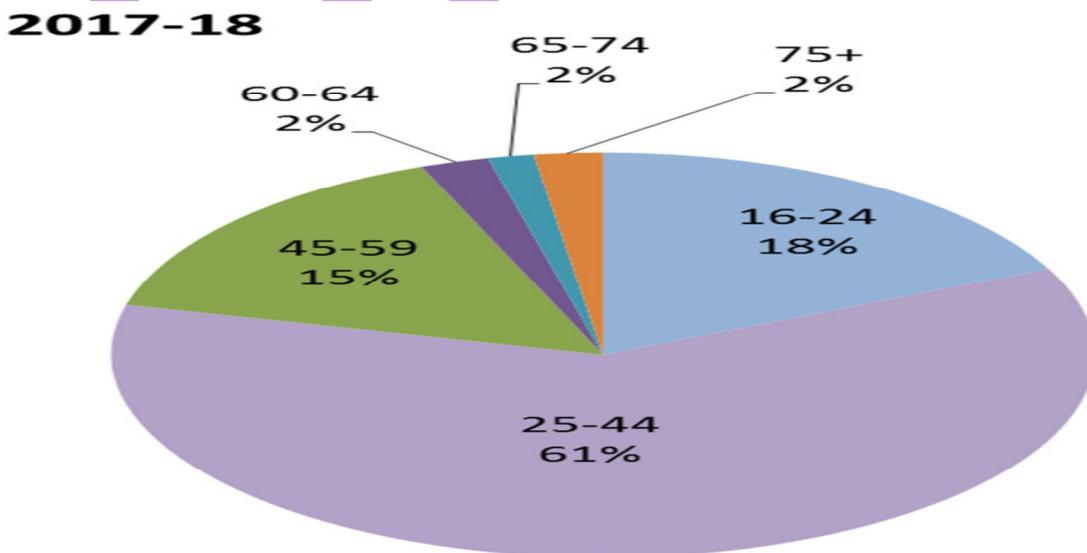
**Households Type and Composition agreed by household type - YTD 2017/18**



**Figure 5**

Families account for the majority of accepted homeless households. 80% of accepted homeless households have dependants. The biggest group was single Female parent households (39%).

**Number of households agreed by age group - YTD 2017/18**



**Figure 6**

61% of accepted homeless households are aged between 25 and 44 years old. This is largely reflective of the main age range of housing benefit claimants in Slough.

### Homeless acceptance by ethnicity 2016-17 by percentage

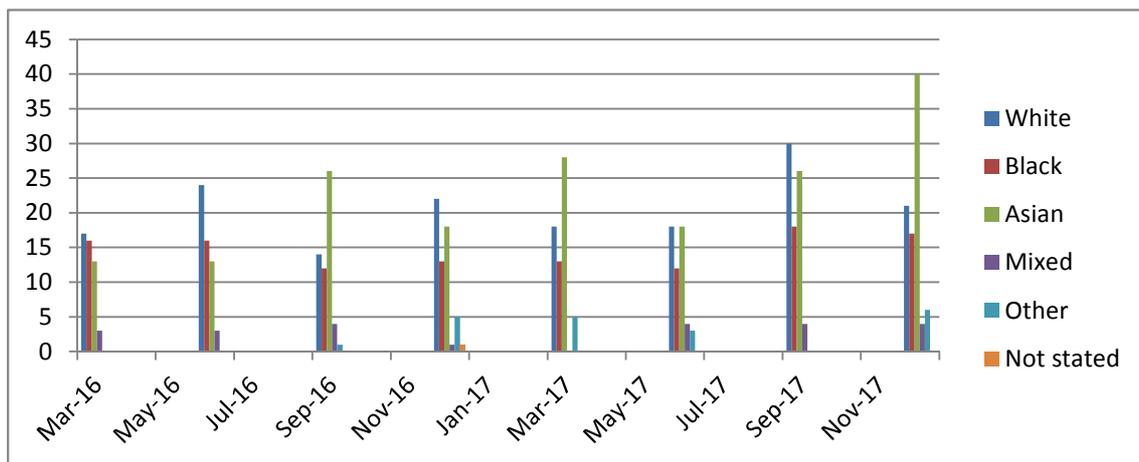


Figure 7

Over the past 4 years the proportion of homelessness acceptances from ethnic groups has increased, this is mainly accounted for by households who identify as Non White or Mixed. Since 2014/17 the number of Black and minority ethnic groups (BAME) being accepted as homeless and in priority need has considerably increased in the Asian Subgroup.<sup>4</sup>

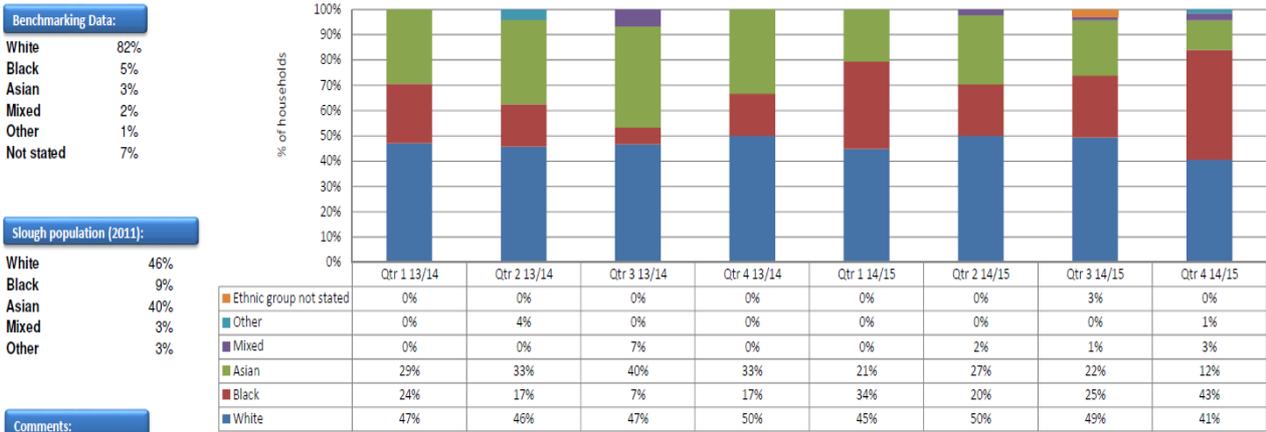
This is not confined to Slough and it is common for Black and minority ethnic groups (BAME) populations to be disproportionately homeless, both regionally and nationally. As of 2016/17 BAME made up 39% households accepted as homeless and in priority need nationally, but only 15% of the total population in England.

In quarter 4 of 2014-15, 41% of applicants accepted as being homeless and in priority need had a White ethnicity (28). There were 43% applicants with Black ethnicity and 12% with Asian ethnicity. This is in comparison to Slough's population; where there are 46% White, 9% Black and 40% Asian.

In comparison to the benchmarking figures, Slough had a relatively low proportion of White applicants and a relatively high proportion of Black and Asian applicants being accepted as being homeless and in priority need in quarter 4 of 2014-16, however in comparison to Slough's population, the proportion of White applications is similar.

<sup>4</sup> MHCLG Slough P1E returns Q3 2017

2.1 Applicants accepted as being homeless and in priority need, by ethnicity



In quarter 4 of 2014-15, 41% of applicants accepted as being homeless and in priority need had a White ethnicity (28). There were 43% applicants with Black ethnicity and 12% with Asian ethnicity. This is in comparison to Slough's population; where there are 46% White, 9% Black and 40% Asian.

The percentage of White applicants has remained steady over the past 7 quarters (average of 47% across the quarters).

In comparison to the benchmarking figures, Slough had a relatively low proportion of White applicants and a relatively high proportion of Black and Asian applicants being accepted as being homeless and in priority need in quarter 4 of 2014-16, however in comparison to Slough's population, the proportion of White applications is similar.

Figure 8

### The London Effect

Slough's location has made it the ideal location for London boroughs to exercise the right to place applicants outside their borders. The introduction of the Localism Act 2011 has had a significant impact on the way in which London boroughs deal with applications for social housing and homelessness applications under Parts 6 and 7 of the Housing Act 1996.

It has been long known that London boroughs have used these powers to discharge their housing duties outside of their respective boroughs. London boroughs were gearing up towards the change in the law in 2012, by creating a number of voluntary schemes backed by large incentive payments to landlords and customers to encourage the success of these schemes. Once the Localism Act in 2011 legitimised these schemes, London boroughs built on the connections made through the work previously conducted on voluntary schemes and sent households into Slough thereby further adversely affecting the supply of private sector homes; and at the same time increasing the demand from these homeless households when their tenancies expire.

Between September 2016 to August 2017 London boroughs placed 178 households in Slough.

### Supporting Homeless Households in Slough

The three main groups to seek homeless assistance over the past five years were those losing long term settled accommodation due to -

- 
- Loss of Private rented accommodation
  - Parental / relative eviction
  - Relationship breakdown/domestic violence.

The pathways in and out of homelessness are multi-faceted. In Slough it is important to support vulnerable groups by providing affordable and safe accommodation as it brings stability and security. The benefits of a clear pathway out of homelessness are endless as it provides a gateway to other services including health, employment and education. Suitable housing enhances social and community inclusion and provides the basis for family life. For those that are considered vulnerable, in poor housing or threatened with homelessness, this can escalate problems, or exacerbate an existing condition.

### **Housing Support**

Housing provides wrap around support to vulnerable clients placed across all forms of temporary and permanent accommodation. The team works with local partners to empower clients to develop, gain or build upon the skills they already possess to sustain their tenancies. The team helps vulnerable clients by helping them gain access to employment training, build resilience and promoting independence. The team provides tenancy sustainment services to clients, helping them remain in their homes. This service works closely with both internal and external partners to ensure the residents have tailor-made support they need.

### **Tackling housing supply issues**

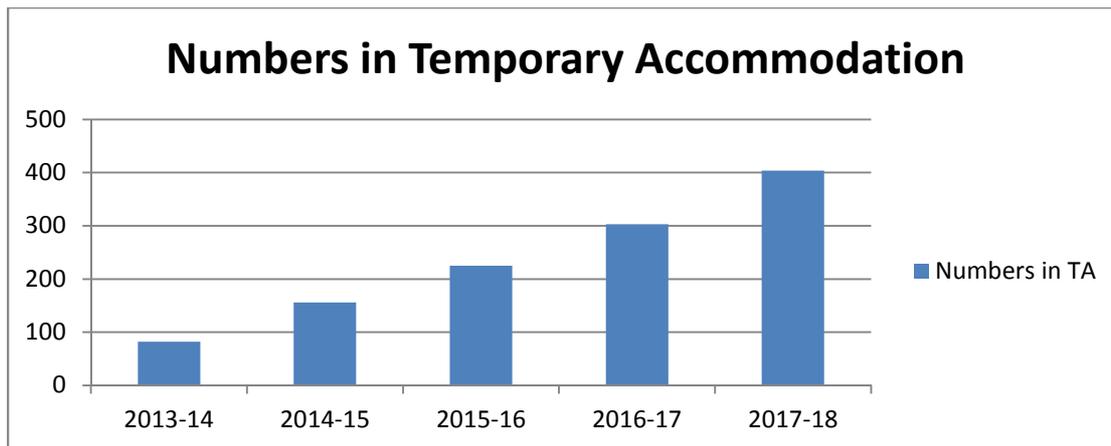
This is a longer term goal which fits in with the Slough corporate 5 year strategy to improve affordable housing stock. This homeless policy will look at possible ways of using central government legislation and guidance to work with housing suppliers both in and outside of Slough to improve the supply of affordable homes.

### **Temporary Accommodation**

The number of households in temporary accommodation (TA) has risen significantly in the past five years due to the marked decline in social housing lettings and a reduction in the supply of private sector accommodation that is affordable.

As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, there were 404 households in temporary accommodation, an increase of over 300% over five years 2013/14 – 2017/18)<sup>5</sup>. During this period there has been a marked reduction in the number of households moving on from temporary accommodation meaning that the net inflow into TA is more than those leaving TA.

**Table showing the rise in temporary accommodation placements over 5 years**



**Figure 9**

Like many local authorities, a large proportion of temporary accommodation(TA), including nightly-paid accommodation is procured within the private rented sector. There is a complex subsidy regime to assist with the cost of TA, however the subsidy arrangements have also become more restricted, and this alongside steep price rises has made it more difficult to secure TA, particularly within the borough. Slough recently secured some extra funding to provide additional accommodation and support services to rough sleepers locally. Rough sleepers who are single person households represented over 20% of agreed cases in 2017/18 financial year<sup>6</sup>

The Council seeks to accommodate people within their respective area as long as it is reasonably practicable, but if this proves impossible they must try to place people as close as possible to where they were previously living. However, there is a serious shortfall of accommodation that can be secured in the borough to meet statutory housing need. It means that it is not reasonably practicable to provide accommodation within Slough to every household to whom the Council owes a rehousing duty.

There is an increasing need to secure accommodation that may be at some distance from the borough. In addition welfare reform has impacted upon the location of

<sup>5</sup> MHCLG P1E Returns

<sup>6</sup> Figure 5

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placements for some households on the grounds of sustained affordability in relation to the benefits they are now entitled to receive towards their housing costs.

Temporary accommodation costs are traditionally funded by central government though the temporary accommodation management fee paid through the housing benefits system. The overheated rented market has made it necessary for local authorities to dip into the general fund to subsidise TA, thereby reducing resources available for other services. In 2017, the Temporary Accommodation Management Fee was replaced by the Homelessness support Grant. The grant offsets the loss in housing benefits subsidy, with some ring fenced for work to prevent or deal with homelessness. Funding is based on each council's proven ability to prevent homelessness at scale.

## **Part 2 – The Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023**

The Homelessness Strategy Review highlighted the increasing number of people who find themselves homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Review also highlighted some of the national and local pressures impacting homelessness. In the Homelessness Strategy Review we examined the three main causes of homelessness in our Borough which are; Loss of privately rented accommodation and parents or friends no longer willing to accommodate and relationship breakdown/domestic violence. This section of the homelessness strategy will look to explain how we will try to eradicate the adverse effects of the main causes of homelessness in Slough.

Through interaction with our Partners, Service users and contributors to the review we have learned about areas people would like to see change, and their main priorities are:

- More accommodation that is affordable
- More support for those considered to be vulnerable in relation to their housing situation

Tackling homelessness through joint work has become increasingly important. Since 'Making Every Contact Count' was published, joint work has been championed as the most effective homelessness prevention method. Nationally, in 'Fixing our broken housing market; there has been an emphasis on collaboration between agencies providing housing, social care, health, employment, and training support. It shows that resolving homelessness is more complex than just putting a roof over someone's head. In order to sustain that roof long term, joint work is imperative. We see the

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Homelessness Strategy and accompanying delivery plan as a great opportunity to build trust and further develop a truly collaborative approach to tackling homelessness.

It is generally accepted that without intervention, the number of rough sleepers and single people living in unsuitable conditions will continue to rise. This will lead to higher demand for resources from other public services and organisations to deal with issues associated with environmental health, crime and health.

**Our strategic objectives for the following five years include**

**Early intervention to prevent homelessness with better partnership working**

**Increase access to more housing options for residents**

**Improving conditions, reducing numbers and length of stay in our TA**

**Providing tools, support and training for staff and partners to improve service delivery and empower residents**

**Support to sustain tenancies and prevent repeat homelessness**

**Positive housing outcomes for single homeless, rough sleepers and young people**

**Early intervention to prevent homelessness with better partnership working**

The homelessness review demonstrated disproportionate levels of homelessness amongst particular demographic and community groups in Slough (Lone parent households) and it is important that we gain an understanding of this in order to tailor services to be as effective as possible.

Early intervention seeks to prevent homelessness by tackling the root causes before they escalate into a housing crisis. In recent years Slough has increased its focus on early intervention and homeless prevention. Given the challenges faced around increasing homelessness it is critical that we continue to put homeless prevention at the heart of everything we do. We believe this will greatly increase the chances of positive outcomes for people at risk of becoming homeless. We have adopted a person-centred housing and support solution which seeks to ensure effective information and advice is available at every stage to maximise the positive outcomes for those who facing homelessness. This requires creating clear and defined referral routes with joined up services and effective pathways leading to better outcomes for those at risk of homelessness.

## Challenges

- Homelessness numbers for all household groups nationally and in Slough are on an upward trend;
- Reduction in funding; Resulting in some groups “falling through the gaps” and being unable to access services;
- Lack of awareness of housing advice of the prevention services available within Slough can mean that households do not access assistance until after they have lost their home;
- House and rental prices have risen steeply in recent years.
- Helping residents and supporting and training staff through the significant changes being introduced by the HRA 2017 and the continued roll out of welfare reform measures and
- People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness may approach and seek help from a range of services at the same time.

## Action

- Making available accessible information services, by exploring and expanding the telephone, internet and face to face sessions to improve options and housing advice provision;
- Working collaboratively with statutory and voluntary partners to create solutions to meet the increased demand on homelessness services; developing early intervention pathways to ensure a consistency in advice and referral routes;
- Reviewing information provided by the Council and partner agencies to ensure effective and consistent housing advice; identify and disseminate good practice in homeless prevention and relief and ensure that prevention continues to target those most at risk;
- Work with partners to prevent incidents of ‘repeat homelessness’ within Slough;
- Providing a coordinated service that tackles the wider causes of homelessness among young single people by working with other bodies like The Children Trust, health and adult social care services to ensure all service users receive appropriate assessments to determine their future housing options;
- Develop effective working relationships between the council and accommodation providers in Slough and neighbouring regions where affordability can be better managed in light of the continued welfare changes.

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## **Increase access to more housing options**

Accessing accommodation that is affordable is the key to both preventing and resolving homelessness. This has become increasingly difficult particularly within the borough as demand is high, costs are rising and social housing stock supply is limited. This means that the Council must look to ensure best use of all available stock while assisting to increase access to a range of accommodation across all sectors of the housing market. Increasingly this also means looking outside its boundaries to meet the current levels of need and identify accommodation that people will be able to sustain.

The main focus of the council is to prevent homelessness occurring in the first place, where homelessness cannot be prevented.

As indicated in the housing review, suitable good quality affordable accommodation is increasingly difficult to secure in Slough. High rents and the inability of the local housing allowance to keep pace have placed a significant burden on the homeless services. There is also the extra external pressure on the market from London boroughs using the proximity of Slough to source accommodation.

The Council is considering a number of new initiatives to increase supply of affordable housing and will continue to consider new strategies to tackle growing demand. There is increased need to seek more innovative schemes and this may include looking further afield in the greater Berkshire region and beyond to provide sustainable and suitable housing solutions. This includes making an increased use of the private rented sector to discharge our homelessness duty.

### **Challenges**

- A reduction in affordable housing both social and PRS becoming available to let;
- PRS landlords and lettings agents reluctant to accept low income tenants or those who claim welfare benefits;
- With reduced funding for new affordable housing for rent, it will be more difficult to meet the housing needs of households who are unable to access home ownership or accommodation in the private rented sector locally;
- Competition for local housing from London boroughs across all tenures and areas; increasing scarcity and driving up costs;
- Limited local move-on supply means households are remaining for longer periods in temporary accommodation;
- Due to high and rising need the Council may have to place households into accommodation outside of the borough in order to meet its statutory housing duties. This is often at some distance from existing support services;
- There is the increase in rough sleeping in the borough;
- The rise in single homeless households and other non priority groups and
- Increase in PRS evictions of low income households.

## Action

- Working to increase the supply of new build Council homes for the people of Slough;
- Improving the supply of new affordable homes by partners for the Slough residents through varied new funding streams;
- Working with neighbouring boroughs to improve cross borough moves for households identified households;
- Improving relationships with private rented sector supplies both within and out of the borough;
- Providing holistic support to households who are placed outside the borough to mitigate the impact of the move. This may include connection to local support services, welfare benefits transfer and a possible resettlement grant;
- Widening our pool of affordable housing supply, making better use of our own assets and building strong relationships with existing and new landlord partners;
- Providing incentives where needed, offering stability to the landlord partners to provide affordable settled housing to the most vulnerable groups;
- Improving the tenancy sustainment support available to both landlords and homeless clients in private sector accommodation;
- Introduce a borough wide house of multiple occupation ( HMO) Licencing scheme to help improve availability of homes to the under 35 group;
- Develop a scheme to work with households who have been in TA the longest to facilitate move on to affordable settled housing;
- More frequent, relevant and inclusive landlords forums;
- Using the powers granted under The Localism Act 2011 and on the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation (England) Order 2012 , the Homelessness Code of Guidance 2006, the Children Act 2004 S.11 to provide affordable accommodation outside the borough;
- Better Homelessness relief provision; the unique location of Slough means there is the need for increased homelessness relief provision. This is when a local authority is unable to prevent homelessness, but helps someone to secure accommodation, despite not being obligated to do so. The provision of this service is important here in Slough as there is a transient community who come in for work and due to various circumstances find themselves at risk of homelessness. This group of borderline cases continue to increase in the local homeless population.

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## **Improving conditions, reducing numbers and length of stay in our Temporary Accommodation (TA)**

Over recent years, Slough Borough Council has continued to see an increase in the numbers of households in Temporary accommodation. Though the numbers in temporary accommodation are about average for the South East, we are seeking to create an improved housing options service and partnership arrangements to prevent homelessness. Where prevention fails, we will seek to provide the best quality temporary accommodation for the shortest possible periods whilst housing options available are explored.

Like many local authorities, a large proportion of the temporary accommodation we use including nightly - paid accommodation is procured within the private rented sector. The current spending restrictions compounded by the current increase in private sector rents means that Slough Borough Council will have to seek different procurement methods to meet the increased demand.

### **Challenges**

- Number of people at risk from homelessness has steadily increased in recent years;
- Limited move-on supply means households are remaining for longer periods in temporary accommodation;
- The risk of increased numbers of homeless households being placed in private rented accommodation in Slough by London and surrounding Boroughs;
- Limited number of affordable PRS accommodation available in the borough for TA use and
- Households in TA not aware of the options open to them

### **Action**

- We will create clear pathways out of TA into settled affordable accommodation;
- We will explore all potential for conversion of vacant and underutilised properties for use as temporary or settled accommodation locally;
- We will continue to free up existing stock through tackling fraud, addressing under-occupation and promoting alternative housing options to all residents;
- We will ensure take-up of quota queues for various groups and move-on from supported accommodation and other similar accommodation to increase through-flow;
- We will endeavour to review methods of communicating the allocations policy, lettings plans, outcomes and waiting times to help people make informed decisions periodically;
- We will continue to improve our working with long stay TA residents to move into affordable settled PRS and

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- We will explore TA procurement options, with other partners like The Childrens Trust and Adults Services.

### **Providing tools, support and training for staff and partners to improve service delivery to provide empowerment to residents**

The continued challenge of growing housing demand has meant that key staff and partners who meet with people who are at their most vulnerable must be properly trained to provide the wraparound service Slough aims for.

With the continued changes to housing and welfare legislation, the need of service providers to be up to speed with these has never been greater. There is an increased need to recruit and retain well trained and experienced professionals. Slough Borough Council will look to develop joined up training and information with partner agencies so they are also up to speed on the changes in their service provision. This will provide the partners with up to date information on the relevant support they provide to homeless households.

We also hope to create a system of empowerment for our partners including our residents which will make homelessness prevention the responsibility of all. This partnership will, whilst working in line with the housing first principle, create an ecosystem where the community as a whole is involved in the homelessness reduction drive. The council will work with local voluntary partners to create a system where intelligence is passed from the community to the relevant teams early so homelessness can be prevented before the situation hits crisis levels.

#### **Challenges**

- Recruiting staff with the specialised skill set;
- Retaining staff with the right skill set due to increased workload;
- Keeping up with the legislative changes particularly HRA;
- Lack of adequate partner training and
- Lack of local resident awareness of the services available.

#### **Action**

- We will support staff with regular and relevant training opportunities;
- We will update all the information available to residents regularly;
- We will seek to create roles and improve the working conditions to attract the right skill sets to meet demand;
- Ensure that all commissioned housing services in the borough can assist people to access education, training and employment opportunities;
- We will ensure the creation and retention and training programmes for partners to ensure a consistency in advice and referral routes;
- Reviewing the organisational structure to reflect current needs and

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- Career development opportunities including secondments and paid professional qualification

### **Support to sustain tenancies and prevent repeat homelessness**

There is an increased need for households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness to be provided with the right support to help them sustain independent accommodation in the long-term.

With the councils move to prevention, there is a need to ensure those who lose their accommodation are supported into sustainable accommodation.

Vulnerable people experience difficulties at periods during an independent tenancy, which can lead to financial difficulties and tenancy failure. The loss of a private rented tenancy is currently the main cause of homelessness in Slough;<sup>7</sup> followed by family and friends exclusion. The focus is on sustaining current housing where practical and preventing housing problems escalating to crisis point. This often means providing a tailored service to help sustain the tenancy or licence. The tenancy sustainment service in Slough, though in its infancy, works closely with accommodation providers, the welfare services and support agencies. The aim of the private sector sustainment is to identify the issues with the individual households and tailor a service to prevent homelessness. Also to develop a person centred approach which targets and resolves the issues identified. The sustainment service sign posts to employment, health and education providers too.

### **Challenges**

- There is demand for more supported accommodation particularly for those who have complex support needs in Slough;
- Increase in private sector rents leading to more Private rented evictions;
- Increase in broken relationships;
- Lack of suitable affordable local move on accommodation for households in temporary accommodation;
- The Government is undertaking a review of supported accommodation funding, which could lead to reduced funding for existing supported schemes in Slough and
- Lack of access to further supported housing, transitional, longer-term and crisis support services.

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<sup>7</sup> MHCLG P1E returns

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## Action

- The council will look at securing bed spaces locally from external sources on a pre-paid base with partners like Look ahead;
- Expand on the range of initiatives to prevent homelessness by PRS evictions;
- Mediate more in broken family relationships and help people stay at home with parents, relatives, or friends reducing family exclusion;
- Work with partners to ensure there are sufficient supported accommodation units to meet demand and to meet the needs of groups who are particularly at risk of homelessness in Slough;
- Provide timely and effective housing advice and assistance to help those in crisis or threatened with crisis to identify the particular homelessness risk so their existing accommodation can be sustained if at all possible; providing intensive casework assistance and assessment as required;
- Develop a separate Rough Sleepers Action plan, with partners to gain greater intelligence on rough sleeping; and implementing the Reconnections Protocol;
- Improve the housing options available to single homeless households in Slough;
- Providing a wrap-around service which ensures that tenants develop, gain or build upon the skills they already possess to sustain their tenancies.

### **Positive housing outcomes for rough sleepers, single homeless;**

**We have developed an in-depth action plan to tackle this most visible face of homelessness it is marked appendix 2**

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## Delivering the Homelessness Strategy

This strategy and the objectives shown form the basis of our engagement with partners and the community.

The key elements of an action plan to deliver the strategy are listed below along with some headline outcomes.

The action plan has been developed from consultations involving a range of stakeholders to support delivery of the commitments set out in the Homelessness Strategy.

Monitoring our action plan in a timely manner will make it easier to update in light of other potential changes to national, regional or local policy and means we will be able to respond appropriately. We will review our action plan as required during the life of the strategy and each quarter we will monitor the actions and measures that have been set out in it. Progress will be regularly presented to Members and key external stakeholders.

### BELOW IS THE ACTION PLAN FOR HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

In line with section 1(1) of the 2002 HOUSING Act, Slough Borough Council as a housing authority can conduct homelessness reviews and publish homelessness strategies more frequently if circumstances in the district change. Therefore, the action plan below is subject to changes and variation in line with the needs in Slough.

Appendix 1: Homelessness Prevention Strategy Action plan

Appendix 2 : Single homeless & rough sleeping reduction plan

Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment

Early intervention to prevent homelessness with better partnership working				
Action	Success /Outcome measure	Lead Agency/ Partner	Resources	Timescales
Delivering accessible information services, by expanding the telephone, internet and face to face sessions to improve options and housing advice provision	<p>Increased take up of advice before crisis hits</p> <p>Reduction in approaches and homeless acceptances.</p> <p>Reduced proportion of households requiring emergency temporary accommodation placements by early intervention</p> <p>Reduced timescales to access advice available to all households threatened with homelessness</p>	Manager Housing Demand Team	<p>Improved Staffing Resources / Expanded funded streams</p> <p>Better self-help schemes and information provided to residents</p>	Dec 2020
Working collaboratively and innovatively with statutory and voluntary partners to create sustainable solutions to meet the increased demand on homelessness services; Developing early intervention pathways to ensure a consistency in advice and referral routes	<p>Better partnership working to identify challenges or gaps in services and potential solutions</p> <p>Develop information packs for partners and clients to be accessed both online and at hubs</p> <p>Explore and identify best pathway for right to refer with associated documents and packs</p>	Manager Housing Demand Team	Joined training and up to date information leaflets	Dec 2020

<p>Reviewing information provided by the Council and partner agencies to ensure effective and consistent housing advice; identify and disseminate good practice in homeless prevention and relief and ensure that prevention continues to target those most at risk</p>	<p>Provide an increased awareness of Housing Options, duties and referral routes amongst partner agencies</p> <p>Provide partners with up to date information to ensure an understanding of the roles and criteria of different services provided</p> <p>Promote local employment and training pathways in collaboration with partners for homeless households</p>	<p>Manager Housing Demand Team</p>	<p>Regular community awareness and engagement events and exercises</p>	<p>Dec 2020</p>
<p>Work with partners to prevent incidents of 'repeat homelessness' within Slough</p>	<p>Develop a reporting system for identifying vulnerable households and getting them on the right support pathway</p> <p>Help vulnerable households who have left supported accommodation successfully sustain their tenancies for at least 6 months – with multi agency action</p> <p>Develop self help facilities both online and otherwise readily available to households</p> <p>Develop better relationships with local private landlords</p>	<p>Manager Housing Demand Manger</p> <p>Social Lettings Manager</p>	<p>More local events to promote partnerships &amp; services</p> <p>Create better online referral tools</p> <p>Empower partners with up-to-date relevant advice and information on service and legislation</p>	<p>Apr 2021</p>
<p>Providing a coordinated service that tackles the wider causes of homelessness among young single people by working with other bodies like children. health and adult services to ensure all service users receive appropriate assessments to determine their future housing options;</p>	<p>Partnership working to achieve best possible outcomes for the young homelessness in Slough</p> <p>Prompt housing and support needs of vulnerable clients assessed and suitable housing and support options identified.</p> <p>Ensure those placed outside of the borough are able to access local services and are provided with a temporary accommodation information pack</p> <p>Training and employment opportunities for single households</p>	<p>Housing demand Manager</p> <p>Local Partners</p>	<p>Extend current schemes like the short breaks scheme and similar to more clients</p> <p>Develop more up to date information packs for clients</p> <p>Regularly update online and</p>	<p>Dec 2020</p>

			other information sheets given out	
Develop effective working relationships between the council and accommodation providers in slough and neighbouring Authorities where affordability can be better managed in light of the continued welfare changes and budgetary constraints.	<p>Ensure good communications with local authorities in which temporary accommodation placements are made and that notifications are provided for all out of borough placements</p> <p>Develop effective steering groups, forums and better marketing of the positives for working with Slough Borough Council</p>	<p>Housing Demand manager</p> <p>Social Lettings Manager</p>	<p>Better out of area placement reporting</p> <p>Regular meetings with local forums and relevant groups</p>	Dec 2020

**Increase access to more housing options**

Action	Success /Outcome measure	Responsibility	Resources	Timescales
Working to increase the supply of new build Council homes for the people of Slough building on our success in this area to date.	<p>Work with planning colleagues to ensure that the affordable housing provision is secured on new developments</p> <p>Increased RSL &amp; Private investment in affordable homes locally</p>	Housing Supply Manager	<p>More pre planning involvement in relevant developments</p> <p>Increase contacts with developers &amp; RSLs</p>	Dec 2020
Working with neighbouring boroughs to improve cross borrow moves for households identified households	<p>Faster cross borough transfer options for households fleeing from one area.</p> <p>Improve the information to households in TA in LHA rates in neighbouring boroughs</p> <p>Improve incentives and assistance available for out of area moves</p>	<p>Housing Allocations Manager</p> <p>Housing Demand Manager</p>	Agree, create and amend related policies, protocols ETC	Dec 2020

Improving relationships with private rented sector (PRS) supplies both within and out of the borough	<p>Better uptake in PRS –non TA placements</p> <p>Less PRS evictions with better liaison</p> <p>Reduced use of long term TA as better PRS Supply</p>	<p>Housing Allocations Manager</p> <p>Housing Supply Manager</p>	<p>More Liaison events and forums</p> <p>Increased publicity partnership working benefits</p>	DEC 2020
Providing a holistic support to households who are placed outside the borough to mitigate the impact of the move. This may include reconnection to local support services, welfare benefits transfer and a possible resettlement grant;	<p>Information Packs and sign posting service for all out of area placements</p> <p>Relevant services informed of households specific needs so no break in service provision</p> <p>After placements support and monitoring to help iron out any issues for up to 3 months</p>	<p>Temporary Accommodation Manager</p> <p>Housing Demand Manager</p>	<p>TA placement agreement in place with responsibilities and processes</p> <p>More tenancy sustainment service for out of area TA placements</p>	Dec 2020
Providing suitable incentives where needed and offering stability to the landlord partners to provide affordable settled housing to the most vulnerable groups;	<p>More funding for PRS prevention for those threatened with homelessness earlier</p> <p>Improved incentives to PRS for low income households reducing long term TA use</p> <p>Mix of incentives available to PRS providers- Financial, bonds insurance ETC</p>	Housing Supply Manager	Improving schemes to get providers on board	Dec 2019
Improving the tenancy sustainment support available to both landlords and homeless clients in private sector accommodation	<p>Tailored support to meet clients' needs</p> <p>Introduce pre tenancy training for vulnerable households before they meet PRS providers</p>	Housing Allocation Manager	Develop both online and face to face support	Dec 2019
	Improved early tenancy sustainment referral pathway open to partners who identify vulnerable households	Housing Demand Manager	Improving referral systems for specialised tenancy sustainment services	Dec 2020
Improving the supply of new affordable homes by partners for the Slough residents through varied	<p>Maximise the use of s106 payments in lieu of contributions for new supply</p> <p>Improved innovative ways to</p>	Housing supply manager		Dec 2020

new funding streams	increase affordable homes like modular homes and infills			
Develop and improve the borough wide HMO Licencing scheme to help improve availability of homes to the under 35 group;	Better working relation with PRS providers  Reduced rough sleeping  Improved standards in e PRS available in Slough  Increased uptake of PRS by the under 35s	Housing Supply Manager  Housing Regulation Manager	Create internal systems where HMOs are first offered to clients on housing register	Dec 2019
			Improve liaison with PRS	Apr 2020
Develop a scheme to Work with households who have been in TA the longest to facilitate move on to affordable settled housing solutions;	Introduce more housing options to households in TA  Reduced length of stay in TA  Empower and inform Residents	Temporary Accommodation Manager  Housing Supply Manager	Develop information on affordability in PRS for TA residents  Develop regular TA tenants information liaison events to highlight benefits of various schemes	Dec 2020
Better Homelessness relief provision;	Reduced homeless application  More prevented evictions  Less use of TA	Housing Demand Manager	Develop new funding for Relief  Improve partnership working with all sectors to improve prevention and relief	Dec 2020
<b>Improving conditions, reducing numbers and length of stay in our Temporary Accommodation (TA)</b>				
Action	Success /Outcome measure	Responsibility	Resources	Timescales
We will create clear pathways out of TA into	Prevention of homelessness and minimising the upheaval for	Temporary Accommodation	Develop a scheme to get	Dec 2020

settled affordable accommodation;	customers Fewer households in TA  More joined up working between partners	Manager  Housing Demand Manager	local accommodation providers to agree affordable rents  Get partners and service users well informed on policies, pathways and policies	
We will explore all potential for conversion of vacant properties for use as temporary or settled accommodation locally;	Reduced costs in providing emergency TA  Value for Money by targeting resources at the most cost effective solution to prevent homelessness.  Reduced TA numbers	Housing Supply Manager  Housing Regulation Manager	Develop good housing supply chains with developers to convert unused office spaces into interim accommodation	Dec 2020
We will continue to free up existing stock through tackling fraud, addressing under-occupation and promoting alternative housing options to all residents;	Increased availability of family sized accommodation to those on the Housing register  Reduced void loss and maximising rental income to the Housing Revenue Account  Reduced use of Discretionary Housing Payment budget for under occupiers will mean budget can be targeted at those in greatest need.	Housing Allocations Manager  Neighbourhood Housing Managers  Housing Regulation Manager	Improved tenancy monitoring and enforcement  Promoting under occupancy schemes to make them relevant	Dec 2020
We will ensure take-up of quota queues for various groups and move-on from supported accommodation and other similar accommodation to increase through-flow;	Prevention of homelessness and minimising the upheaval for customers  Less time in unsuitable TA  Reduced TA Spend	Housing allocations Manager	Improve the monitoring of allocation of all accommodation  Create more flexibility in allocation	Dec 2020
We will endeavour to review methods of communicating the allocations policy, lettings plans, outcomes and waiting times to help people make informed	Households in unaffordable private rented accommodation assisted to move to affordable accommodation  We will create a comprehensive directory of services and resources available online and on demand to	Housing Supply Manager  Housing Demand Manager  Housing Allocations	Regular update both online and other media giving residents current updates to make better	Dec 2020

decisions;	households and all agencies	Manager	choices	
We will improve our working with long stay TA residents to move into affordable settled PRS locally or as close as possible;	Fewer households in in TA More move on support for households in TA into realistic housing options Greater use of DHP budget for rent deposits and rent in advance to reduce costs on homelessness budget Reduced TA Spend	Temporary Accommodation Manager Housing Supply Manager	Regular events to inform advice and educate TA on the benefits of settled PRS accommodation	Dec 2019
We will explore TA procurement options, with other partners like children's and adults services	Improved purchasing power Reduced TA spend Improved housing options as more affordable units can be acquired with the increased power	Strategic Housing Lead	Develop service level agreement to minimise cost Develop joint policies for related services Develop joint working with partners like James Ellirman Homes	Dec 2020

**Providing tools, support & training for staff and partners to improve service delivery & empower residents**

Action	Success /Outcome measure	Responsibility	Resources	Timescales
We will support staff with regular and relevant training opportunities	Improve staff training and supervision regime	Quality Assurance Manager	Regular training to be up to date on changes	Dec 2019
We will update all the information available to residents regularly	Improved updated information available online and contact points	Housing Demand Manager	Improved training for partners including the new JIGSAW system	Apr 2020
We will seek to create	Improve working conditions and	Quality	Regular review of	Dec 2020

roles and improve the working conditions to attract the right skill sets to meet demand	benefits	Assurance Manager	employment contracts and local conditions making them relevant	
Ensure that all commissioned housings services for in the borough can assist people to access education, training and employment opportunities	Reduced use of emergency TA  Reduction in Homeless acceptances	Housing Demand Manager  Commissioning Manager	improve the IT systems to include improved information of available services  Improved information sharing protocols between partners to speed up service	Dec 2020
We will ensure the creation and retention and training programmes for partners to ensure a consistency in advice and referral routes	Update training as required including case law updates for both staff and partners  Improved information available online to make it relevant and current  Improved staff knowledge  More experienced staff	Housing Demand Manager  Housing allocations Manager  Temporary Accommodation Manager  Housing Supply Manager	We will hold training of key partners to educate them on the services we provide  Grant access to key partners on the referral pathways	Dec 2019

**Support to sustain tenancies and prevent repeat homelessness**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Success /Outcome measure</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Timescales</b>
The council will look at securing bed spaces locally from external sources on a pre-paid base with partners like Look ahead	Increased use of pre purchased bed spaces to prevent rough sleeping. Like crash pads during adverse weather  Increased use of tools to purchase accommodation for use as long term TA like suitable leasing schemes	Housing Supply Manager	Get some extra funding for targeted groups  Create short to mid term accommodation available to vulnerable groups	Dec 2020

Expand on the range of initiatives to prevent homelessness by PRS evictions;	Improved personalised prevention tools leading to drop in homeless numbers	Housing Demand Manager  Housing Supply Manager	Develop teams to target PRS trouble cases  Improve support available to PRS landlords and tenants	Dec 2019
Mediate more in broken family relationships and help people stay at home with parents, relatives, or friends reducing family exclusion	Reduced family exclusions  Less rough sleeping  Reduced single homeless applications  More young people encouraged to remain at home  Reduced T.A.	Housing Demand Manager	Create adequate mediation services  Improve and extend short stay and time-out accommodation	Dec 2019
Work with partners to ensure there are sufficient supported accommodation units to meet demand and to meet the needs of groups who are particularly at risk of homelessness in Slough;	Faster move on from unsuitable TA.  Increased housing options open to residents	Housing Supply Manager  Housing Demand Manager	Increase in low level supported accommodation places	Dec 2019
Provide timely and effective housing advice and assistance to help those in crisis or threatened with crisis to identify the particular homelessness risk so their existing accommodation can be sustained if at all possible; providing intensive casework assistance and assessment as required;	Improved tenancy sustainment service  Improved residents resilience in managing all tenancies  Faster resolution of applications  More housing options to open to residents	Housing Supply Manager  Housing Demand Manager	Improve information sharing with partners  Better intelligence sharing with partners	Dec 2019
Develop a financial inclusion approach to minimise the risk of future homelessness;	Fewer PRS evictions  Fewer homeless Households	Housing Supply Manager  Housing Demand Manager	More information on top up payments like DHP	Apr 2020

Develop a separate Rough Sleepers Action plan, with partners to gain greater intelligence on rough sleeping; and implementing the Reconnections Protocol;	Less rough sleepers  Better coordinated multi agency working  Fewer single people making homeless applications	Housing Demand Manager	Creating specialist teams to deal with rough sleeping	Dec 2018
			explore new partners and funding streams	Dec 2018
Develop an action plan to meet the needs of single homeless households in Slough	Fewer rough sleepers  More households in settled accommodation	Housing Demand Manager  Housing Supply Manager	Close working with local partners  More dedicated information targeting the group	Apr 2019
Providing a wraparound service which ensures that tenants develop, gain or build upon the skills they already possess to sustain their tenancies	Faster resolution to homeless applications  Better personalised services to homeless clients More housing options	Housing Demand Manager	Sign posting to local training and employment opportunities  Improving Local enterprise engagement	Apr 2019

# **Homelessness Prevention Action Plan 2018-2023**

## **Appendix 2:**

### **Single homeless & rough sleeping reduction plan**

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## Background

The single homeless & rough sleeping reduction plan is a subsidiary plan of the Slough Borough Council Homelessness prevention Strategy 2018-2023. One of the main objectives of the Slough Homelessness prevention Strategy is to reduce rough sleeping in Slough and to maintain Slough's 'No Second Night Out' stance.

The majority of rough sleepers are single people or couple without children. Any plan to tackle rough sleeping in any area will reduce the incident of single homeless persons.

Of the people who sleep rough across the year, some will be sleeping on the streets for the first time, some all year and some will sleep rough intermittently. The number of people sleeping on the streets is also likely to be influenced by the seasons. Data from the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN), a database used in London by people working in the sector, showed that 60% of the people recorded as sleeping rough in London in 2017-18 were new to the streets.<sup>1</sup> Over half (59%) were seen only once, while only 6% were seen more than ten times.

In the autumn 2017 counts and estimates, 83% of people found sleeping rough were men, while 14% were women (gender for the remaining 3% was unknown).<sup>2</sup> While women and men have been found to be equally likely to experience hidden homelessness<sup>3</sup>, these figures show that men are more likely to experience rough sleeping. People who sleep rough in England tend to be: **(a.)** male; **(b.)** between 25 and 55 years old; and **(c.)** predominantly white.

However, women who sleep rough are more likely to have specific support needs and to have experienced traumas, including domestic abuse, mental ill health, substance misuse, and to have self-harmed.<sup>4</sup> We are told by the sector that when women sleep rough, they make themselves less visible in order to stay safe. This means that we often know less about them and their needs than we do about men who sleep rough.

This document will aim to deliver on key points of central government vision of working in partnership with business, the public and wider society to ensure that no-one has to experience rough sleeping again. Using a Slough specific approach.

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<sup>1</sup> Greater London Authority (2018) 'CHAIN annual report 2017/18'. Available at:

<https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports>

<sup>2</sup> MHCLG (2018)

<sup>3</sup> Bramley, G & Fitzpatrick, S (2017) 'Homelessness in the UK: who is most at risk?' Housing Studies 33:1. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02673037.2017.1344957>

<sup>4</sup> Mackie & Thomas (2014) 'Nations Apart Experiences of single homeless people across Great Britain. Available at: <https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/homelessness-knowledge-hub/types-of-homelessness/nations-apart-experiences-of-single-homeless-people-across-great-britain-2014/>

This plan has prevention at its heart, focusing on stopping people from becoming homeless in the first place and providing them with the right support to find work and live independently. Longer term, those sleeping rough will be housed and offered comprehensive support to ensure their specific needs are addressed so that they can move into suitable permanent accommodation at the earliest opportunity.

## Defining Rough Sleeping

The Ministry of housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) define a rough sleeper as: People or persons sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or 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). Also People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, etc).

This definition does not include people in hostels or shelters, sofa surfers, people in campsites, or other sites used for recreational purposes or organised protests, squatters or travellers.

## Types of rough sleepers

- At Risk rough Sleeper: individuals who are at risk of rough sleeping through their situation (vulnerably housed, sofa surfers) or their support needs (poor mental health, substance misuse, low motivation);
- ‘Flow’ or New Rough Sleepers: people who move onto the streets for the first time; generally regarded as being between one day and four weeks;
- Stock Rough Sleepers: continuing rough sleepers also referred to as entrenched rough sleepers, who have slept rough for more than four weeks;
- Returners: rough sleepers, who have slept rough in the last 12 months and have returned to the streets after a period of accommodation, such as assured shorthold tenancies, licences and supported accommodation.

## Context

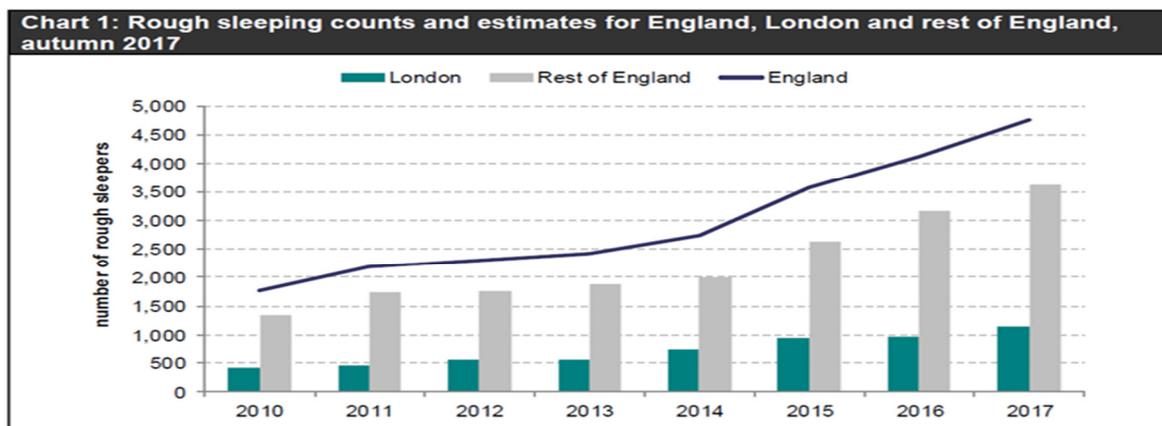
The single homeless and rough sleeping reduction plan is set in the context of increasing numbers of rough sleepers at both a national and local level. Since 2010, the national numbers of rough sleepers have increased by **over 20%**. Here in Slough council and its partners have identified that there has been a significant increase in the incidence of rough sleeping in Slough **(as shown below)**. The numbers of people rough sleeping in slough have been at a considerably higher rate than the average for England over the past few years. This is partly because of Sloughs location and accessibility.

Slough being situated on the borders of London with frequent public transport to central London from Slough high street in about 30 Minutes, has made Slough an attractive location for migrant workers who make up over 50% of the rough sleepers on any given night in Slough<sup>5</sup>. This geographical location also

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<sup>5</sup> Table 2b: Street counts and estimates of rough sleeping, by local authority district, region and nationality of rough sleepers; England autumn 2017 (MHCLG data)

makes housing expensive and private rented accommodation priced at London levels, way above the local LHA rates. There is also the London factor, of London boroughs placing homeless households in Slough creating a further shortage of affordable private rented accommodation locally. When numbers of rough sleepers are collected, Slough is not counted as part of London despite facing the same pressures of all the London boroughs bordering it.



The table shows the continued rise of rough sleeping nationally over seven years . This rise is reflected locally here in Slough.

**Table 1: Rough sleeping counts and estimates for England, London and Rest of England, 2010 to 2017**

	England	% change on previous year	London	% change on previous year	Rest of England	% change on previous year
2010	1,768		415		1,353	
2011	2,181	23%	446	7%	1,735	28%
2012	2,309	6%	557	25%	1,752	1%
2013	2,414	5%	543	-3%	1,871	7%
2014	2,744	14%	742	37%	2,002	7%
2015	3,569	30%	940	27%	2,629	31%
2016	4,134	16%	964	3%	3,170	21%
2017	4,751	15%	1,137	18%	3,614	14%

Local authorities carry out frequent counts and estimates show that 4,751 people slept rough in England on a snapshot night in autumn 2017. This is up 617 (15%) from the autumn 2016 total of 4,134<sup>6</sup>. The rate of rough sleeping per 1,000 households is 0.20 for England, 0.31 for London and 0.18 for the rest of England. This compares to 0.18 for England, 0.27 for London and 0.16 for the rest of England in 2016. To address this growing problem, which is the most visible face of homelessness, Central government has provided some key policies with the view to reduction and prevention of homelessness. Locally, Slough

<sup>6</sup> MHCLG (2018) 'Rough Sleeping Statistics Autumn 2017, England (Revised)'. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/682001/Rough\\_Sleeping\\_Autumn\\_2017\\_Statistical\\_Release\\_-\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/682001/Rough_Sleeping_Autumn_2017_Statistical_Release_-_revised.pdf)

Borough Council has devised this action plan, which as a subsidiary document of the homelessness prevention strategy 2018-2023 will aim to deliver targeted positive results for this highly vulnerable and visible face of homelessness by working with local and regional partners both statutory and voluntary.

Of the 4,751 rough sleepers counted in the autumn 2017

- 653 (14%) were women
- 760 (16%) were EU nationals from outside the UK
- 193 (4%) were from outside the EU.
- Nationality of 402 people (8%) was not known – it suggests that some people may not wish to disclose their non-UK nationality.
- 366 (8%) were 18 - 25 years old.
- 3 persons, or less than 0.1% of the England total, were under 18 years old.<sup>7</sup>

### **Consultation**

As part of the main homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018-2023, we held a consultation which was a day with key partners including members of the Slough Homeless Forum, statutory and voluntary groups. We also sent out a questionnaire by email. The day event involved participants working in groups to identify key challenges, gaps and solutions in tackling homelessness. The scope included rough sleeping and single homeless persons in both the questionnaires and day event. The Slough Homeless Forum meets regularly.

### **The lessons learnt from the consultation include:**

- The high rents charged locally as opposed to local housing benefits levels .
- Alcohol and substance use/dependency was also cited as a major barrier in finding a home;
- 'Rules based housing' has led to some individuals not being able to maintain their accommodation;
- The lack of adequate supported accommodation locally meaning most people in this group are placed into private rented accommodation which clients cannot sustain due to a range of issues including the behaviour of others, rent arrears etc ;
- Lack of targeted joined up long term support to those who are substance/alcohol dependent;

There was also a consultation of sample group of services users and, the response came up with was mainly:

- Lack of street outreach and engagement with entrenched rough sleepers;
- Lack of early targeted meaningful support for people in their own tenancies, to help prevent homelessness;
- Lack of availability of affordable accommodation generally;
- Limited access to facilities, including being able to have a shower and clean clothes, and a limited access to somewhere positive to go in the day time;
- The importance of being treated with dignity so people can improve their self-worth and see a positive future;
- The importance of considering people's individual circumstances when delivering service to them.

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<sup>7</sup> MHCLG Rough sleeping in England - counts and estimates, Autumn 2010 - 2017

## Review

A review of the current overall homeless situation was carried out as part of the homelessness prevention strategy; the review included rough sleeping and single homelessness as the most visible features of homelessness. The review looked at both the national and local picture; it contains information on homelessness in the borough and looks at our current and future challenges. The review document sets out how an in-depth assessment of the support, assistance and advice available to homeless and potentially homeless people in the borough including rough sleepers and single homeless.

The causes of homelessness are complex, with rarely one single trigger; there are often a combination of reasons why people come to face homelessness and rough sleeping.

In order to develop services which provide effective resolution to individuals and families facing the prospect of homelessness, it is necessary to understand the interplay between various factors, which can render a person homeless.

These can be categorised as relating to:

- (i) Individual circumstances
- (ii) Relationships
- (iii) Social policies – National and Local

Professors Fitzpatrick and Bramley recently identified poverty, particularly childhood poverty, as the most powerful predictor of all forms of homelessness. Certain groups are significantly more likely to become homeless than others, and factors such as ethnicity, education, adverse childhood experiences, gender and employment all play a sizeable role<sup>8</sup>. Early trauma and childhood abuse seem to be common amongst homeless people with more complex needs. A 2010 study by Heriot-Watt University surveyed single homeless people with multiple needs in seven UK cities (452 people, 77% of whom had slept rough). The authors found that by the age of 16, 24% of those surveyed had parents or carers with drug or alcohol problems; 22% had experienced sexual abuse, 23% had experienced physical abuse and 27% had witnessed violence between parents.<sup>9</sup> However, homelessness and rough sleeping are not inevitable results of these drivers. Many people who experience them do not become homeless. Specific triggers

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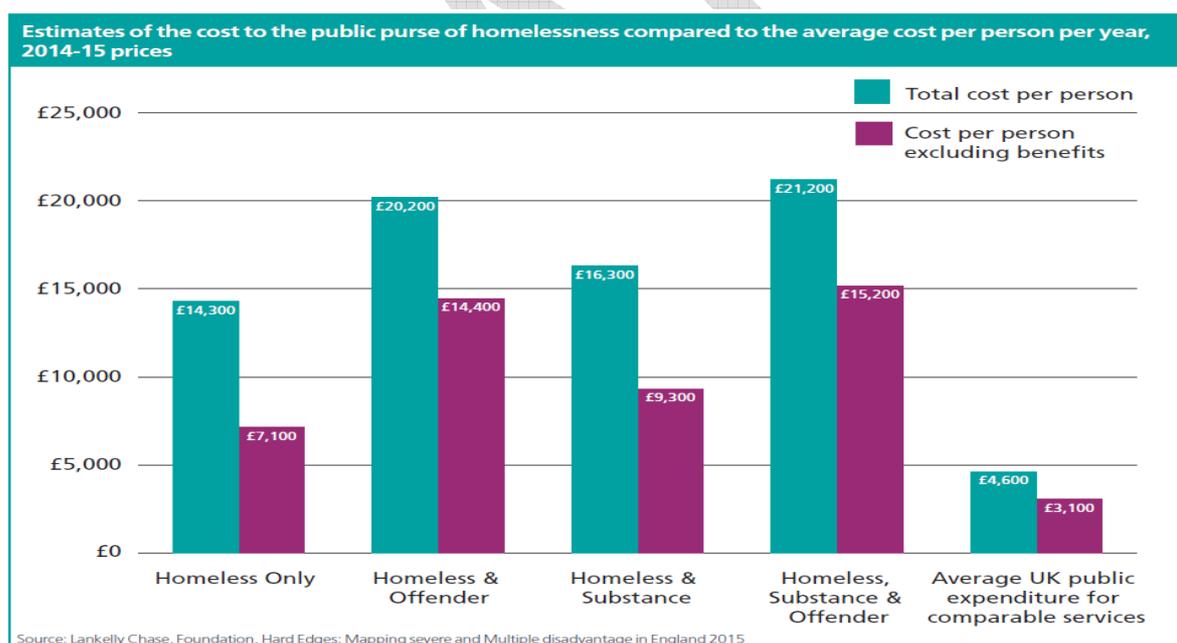
<sup>8</sup> Bramley & Fitzpatrick (2017)

<sup>9</sup> Fitzpatrick et al (2013) 'Pathways into multiple exclusion homelessness in seven UK cities'. Urban Studies 50(1). Available at: <https://pureapps2.hw.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/7456915>

can lead to people rough sleeping, including eviction from rented property, conflict with family, relationship breakdowns and leaving prison.<sup>10</sup>

There is a need for joined up working to tackle rough sleeping due to the multi-faceted needs of rough sleepers. The prevalence of multiple health issues is common and having a joined up multi agency plan to tackle this will help improve the lives of the service users and help reduce the overall cost to multiple agencies. There is a high prevalence of mental and physical ill-health and drug and alcohol dependency amongst rough sleepers. Other common problems include physical trauma (especially foot trauma), skin problems, respiratory illness and infections (including hepatitis).

Helping people before they sleep rough will not only reduce the human cost of rough sleeping; it will also help to reduce costs to the wider public sector. People who sleep rough often have a combination of needs which will mean that they come into contact with a range of public bodies. This includes the costs of providing health care, drug and alcohol treatment, emergency services and costs to the criminal justice system. In the 2015 Hard Edges report, Professor Glen Bramley and co- authors estimated the costs of rough sleeping to the public purse to be between £14,300 and £21,200 per person per year, with the higher cost being incurred if rough sleeping occurred alongside substance misuse and offending. This is three to four times the average cost to public services of an average adult (approximately £4,600). The estimated cost of rough sleeping, excluding the cost of benefits, is therefore between £7,100 and £15,200 per person per year.<sup>11</sup>



There is evidence that suggests the triggers and experiences of female rough sleepers tend to be distinct from those of men. We know that many women avoid rough sleeping by sofa surfing, staying in abusive relationships or living in squats, crack houses and brothels. A higher proportion of women than men will have also had specific traumatic experiences that led to their homelessness such as domestic abuse and perhaps having their children taken into care. Consequently, women who are sleeping rough, though few in numbers, often have higher and more complex needs than men, including mental and physical health

<sup>10</sup> Greater London Authority (2018)

<sup>11</sup> Bramley (2015)

issues, substance use issues, offending histories and involvement in prostitution. Other hidden rough sleepers use woodlands and countryside as bedding down spots. According to a recent report by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, at least 78 homeless people died during the severe winter of 2017/18. The report goes on to say that in the first four months of 2018, 40 rough sleeps have died in the country.<sup>12</sup>

Slough Borough Council already has a range of initiatives that are in place to help prevent and reduce rough sleeping in Slough. This document is aimed at improving and extending these existing services some of which include:

- Extended night shelters (ENS) in Slough have augmented the severe weather emergency protocol (SWEPE) by the use of multiple locations, for a longer period of time. The multi-agency involvement has enabled the continuation of outreach services across Slough, as well providing additional engagement with clients using the various provisions;
- During the winter of 2017/ 2018 outreach services engaged with over XXXXX clients;
- Targeted multi-disciplinary work, coordinated by the Council & partners, to tackle ongoing issues with highly visible rough sleeping in public places in Slough has led to a number of positive outcomes, prior to enforcement action for individuals who otherwise may have been excluded from services and accommodation. The combination of a range of services from various agencies has proved effective in the approach used with the Herschel car park group of rough sleepers;
- Slough has pressed ahead with the delivery of the NFNO (No First Night Out) Project which aims to prevent people from rough sleeping in the first place as well as ensuring that people do not return to sleeping rough after a period of settled accommodation by working with local partners on intelligence based approaches.

Often those who find themselves street homeless will not fall within the statutory borders as prescribed by legislation as qualifying for a full housing duty; Slough council, under the HRA provides advice and assistance to help the applicant (s) secure settled accommodation or prevent.

Both those who fall within and outside the statutory assistance umbrella require a disproportionate amount of time and resource in managing their transition from street life to settled accommodation and it has been identified that better communication and partnership working is required to deliver a straightforward, personalised and meaningful service to this hard to reach group. In order to meet the 'intervention and recovery' part of the rough sleeping reduction strategy as prescribed by central government.

The groups include ex – offenders, People with substance abuse issues and people with multiple medical needs making them unable to manage tenancies. In Slough the main groups outside the statutory umbrella are the Eastern European migrant workers who due to the seasonal nature of their work find themselves sleeping rough or in unsuitable accommodation. These European Economic Area (EEA) nationals end up on the streets before the qualification period for statutory assistance as prescribed by the immigration and residency rules.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/apr/23/at-least-78-homeless-people-died-in-uk-over-winter-figures-reveal>

The challenges presented by rough sleepers with No Recourse to Public Funds are significant and highly contentious. From May 2016, the Home Office designated EEA nationals who were rough sleeping as abusing their rights to free movement under EU Law. The Home Office then sought to deport them, regardless of whether they were working. In December 2017, the High Court ruled that this approach was unlawful.

Central government recently launched a rough sleeping initiative to present a centrally coordinated approach to the issue of rough sleeping in the country. As part of this initiative, local authorities with the highest incidence of rough sleeping were invited to bid for extra funding. Slough was successful in securing some of this funding. With the extra funding, Slough plans to develop an outreach service which not only coordinates the services available to rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping but also the hidden single homeless households. These include at risk groups like sofa surfers and those at risk of losing their homes before they become street homeless. The new service will provide a move on service and the provision of ongoing support into settled long term accommodation. This team will help Slough deliver on the 'Prevention, Intervention and recovery' goals of the homelessness prevention Strategy.

The extra funding will help Slough Borough Council improve on the work currently undertaken in conjunction with partners in the reduction and prevention of rough sleeping. The extra funding will enable the council better provide targeted support to rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping as well as provide a modern Slough specific solution that fits Slough's unique situation. Though Slough is a London borough, Slough faces similar pressures to a London Borough due to location and connectivity.

There will also be the added task for the extended service of working to help new rough sleepers or people at imminent risk of sleeping rough, get the rapid support they need. The aim is to reduce the flow of new rough sleepers to the street through more targeted prevention activity aimed at those at imminent risk of sleeping rough, to ensure they get the help they need before spending a single night on the streets and or to recover and move-on from their homelessness. As part of the rough sleeper prevention initiative programme, Slough will provide information and share all lessons learnt with other local authorities to help improve the services delivered to rough sleepers.

Nationally, it is estimated that the use of inpatient hospital care by people who are sleeping rough or living in insecure accommodation (such as hostels) is eight times higher than in the general population. This cost can be better managed with joined up working. The action plan will seek to create a service which meets the following –

- 1. Effective partnership work to prevent homelessness and offer relief to rough sleepers**
- 2. Provide a joined up early response when people do end up on the streets**
- 3. Provide a targeted outreach service for those with complex or multiple needs**
- 4. Enable the provision of sustainable housing solutions**
- 5. Tackle anti-social behaviour and crime to keep Slough safe**
- 6. Expand the night shelter provision and expand the SWEP**

## **1. Effective partnership work to prevent homelessness and to offer relief to rough sleepers**

The homelessness review carried out for the main homelessness prevention strategy (2018-2023), demonstrated disproportionate levels of homelessness amongst particular demographic and community groups in Slough and some of these groups are single person households, couples without children and rough sleepers. It is important that we gain an understanding of these groups in order to tailor services to be as effective as possible.

For the purposes of this Strategy 'prevention' refers to the use of different approaches to prevent individuals from rough sleeping for the first time, or to prevent a return to rough sleeping after a period of settled accommodation.

The planned approach will enable an appropriate and specific response to people with a variety of needs ranging from those with a basic need for housing, to those who are at risk of rough sleeping as a result of complex needs. Improved tenancy sustainment measures will also play a role in reducing the risk of individuals feeling the need to sleep rough.

Early intervention seeks to prevent homelessness by tackling the root causes before they escalate into a housing crisis. In recent years Slough has increased its focus on early intervention and homeless prevention; this has become more imperative with the introduction of new legislation (HRA).

Given the challenges faced around increasing homelessness and rough sleeping, it is critical that we at Slough continue to put homeless prevention at the heart of everything we do. We believe this will greatly increase the chances of positive outcomes for people at risk of becoming homeless. We also believe in preventing anyone spending a second night rough sleeping with our extended outreach work and improved partnership working. Achieving this will require clear partnership commitment and a coordinated improved intelligence gathering.

### **Challenges**

- Homelessness numbers for all household groups nationally and in Slough are on an upward trend;
- Massive reduction in funding; Resulting in some groups "falling through the gaps" and being unable to access services;
- Lack of awareness of housing advice of the prevention services available within Slough can mean that households do not access assistance until after they have lost their home;
- House and rental prices have risen steeply in recent years;
- Helping residents and supporting and training staff through the significant changes being introduced by the HRA 2017 and the continued roll out of welfare reform measures;
- People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness may approach and seek help from a range of services at the same time, and
- Many agencies working with the same groups in a disjointed manner

### **Action**

**Develop an effective specialist outreach service**

**Better partnership working with creation of forums and charters which partners buy into**

- Develop a No first Night Out approach**
- Increased tenancy sustainment and floating support**
- Improved reconnection services**
- Better intelligence and tracking**
- Increased 'move on' possibilities**
- Extended night shelter provision to supplement SWEP**

**Delivering the Single homelessness and rough sleeping reduction strategy**

This strategy and the objectives shown form the basis of our engagement with partners and the community.

The key elements of an action plan to deliver the strategy are listed below along with some headline outcomes.

The action plan has been developed from consultations involving a range of stakeholders to support delivery of the commitments set out in the Homelessness Prevention Strategy.

Monitoring our action plan in a timely manner will make it easier to update in light of other potential changes to national, regional or local policy and means we will be able to respond appropriately. We will review our action plan as required during the life of the strategy and each quarter we will monitor the actions and measures that have been set out in it. Progress will be regularly presented to Members and key external stakeholders.

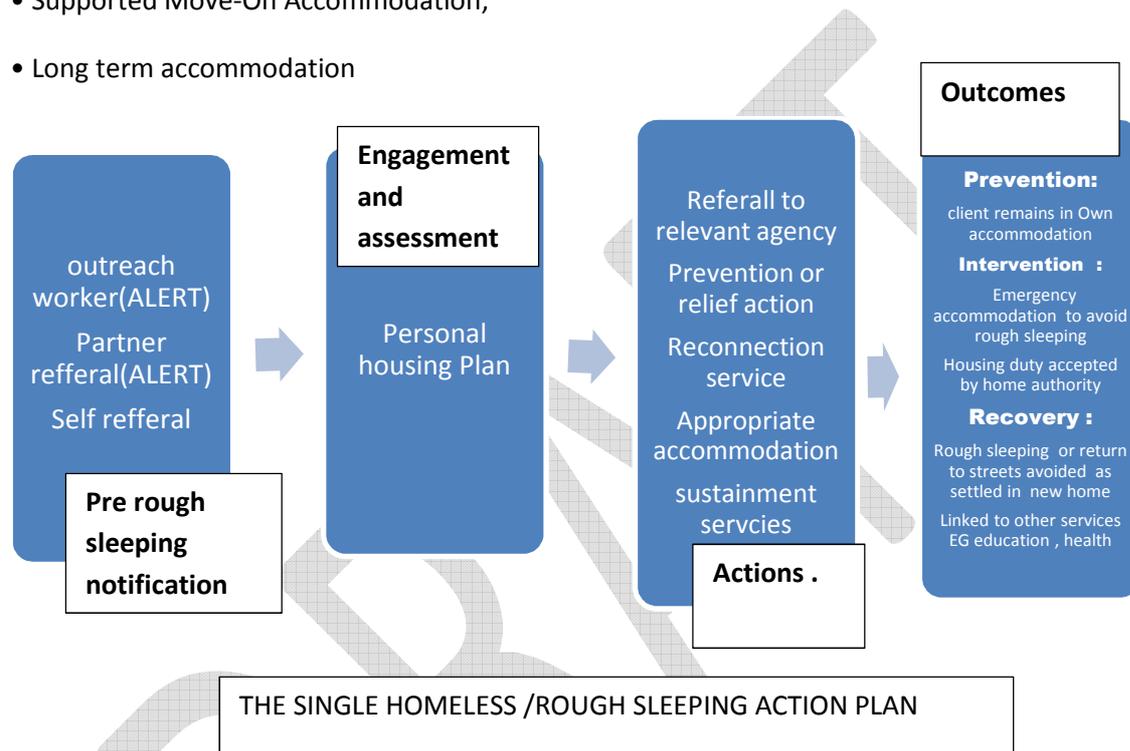
**BELOW IS THE ACTION PLAN FOR HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION STRATEGY  
(ROUGH SLEEPING AND SINGLE HOMELESS )**

**In line with section 1(1) of the 2002 HOUSING Act, Slough Borough Council as a housing authority can conduct homelessness reviews and publish homelessness strategies more frequently if circumstances in the district change. Therefore, the action plan below is subject to changes and variation in line with needs in slough**

**ACTION PLAN -**

The Single Homeless and Rough Sleeping Reduction Strategy Action Plan comprises five main themes, as many of the actions meet more than one of the overarching aims:

- Assertive Outreach Services back by improved intelligence;
- Multi-Agency Support and input;
- Prompt and easily accessible short Term Accommodation;
- Supported Move-On Accommodation;
- Long term accommodation



The action plan ties the resources available with the desired outcomes. These outcomes are all geared to deliver the Prevention intervention and recovery plan. Using a Slough specific approach to achieve these desired results within given time frames.

This document also ties in with the Slough Borough Council housing strategy Key message: **“Reducing rough sleeping through effective partnership work”**

**Appendix 1A : Homelessness charter attached**

Effective action to prevent homelessness and relieve rough Sleeping in



	action;				
	(a)Develop a homeless charter with emphasis on single homeless and rough sleeping;  (b)Develop a rough sleeping forum;	(a)Rough sleeping coordinator  (b)Local Partners	(a)Extra funding for MHCLG  (b) extra support from local partners coordinate by SBC	Sep 2019	(a)Better referral process  (b)Fewer rough sleepers as the joined up services will provide better service
Develop a No first Night Out approach	(a)Improving the 'no second night out' approach to catch people before they become street homeless;  (b)Faster access to emergency rough sleepers and those at risk;  (c) Better intelligence sharing amongst partners in both statutory and voluntary sector;  (d)Effective mediation provision  (e)Explore short term 'respite type' housing solutions  (f)Improved PRS accommodation	(a)Rough sleeping coordinator  (b) Local Partners	a)Local partner involvement  (b)Extra resources as required provided by the rough sleeping coordinator in line with funding rules  ( Strategic Housing Services Sourcing all funding options (private and public)	Nov 2019	(a)Fewer rough sleepers  (b) More single homeless preventions  (c ) Fewer rough sleepers locally  (d)More affordable PRS available for singles  (e)Reduced costs of providing emergency TA

	supply for single persons thorough dedicated campaigns				
Increased tenancy sustainment and floating support	(a) Better multi agency link up and information sharing for early intervention  (b) Better targeted support  (c) More local 'mentoring' service	(a) Strategic Housing Services  (b) Rough Sleeping Coordinator  (C) Local Partners	(a) Local partners  (b) specialist sustainment services  (c) Rough support sleeping team	Dec 2019	(a) Fewer repeat rough sleepers  (b) More singles moving on to long term settled homes
Improved reconnection services	(a) Agree a defined reconnection protocol and referral pathway  (b) Better multi agency working  (c) Better use of local intelligence	(a) Rough Sleeping Coordinator  (b) Local partners  (c) Strategic Housing Services	Resources as required provided Strategic Housing Lead and Rough sleeper coordinator	Oct 2019	(a) Fewer rough sleepers  (b) Faster assessment to determine best pathway
Increased 'move on' possibilities	(a) Better use of allocation policy quotas for homeless households  (b) Better relation with local and regional PRS suppliers  (c) Regular outreach surgeries  (d) Better Working with local support hostels like Look Ahead	(a) Rough Sleeping Coordinator  (b) Local partners  (c) Housing supply Manager  (d) Housing Allocations Manager  (e) Housing Demand Manager	Rough seeping coordinator identifies resources as needed	Dec 2019	(a) Better PRS relationship  (b) More emergency housing units availability  (c) More supported accommodation vacancies
Extended night shelter provision to	(a) More pre paid emergency beds	(a) Rough Sleeping	(a) Pre booked emergency	Jan 2020	(a) No one sleeping rough in

supplement SWEP provision	(b)Securing venues and partners to cover extended SWEP opening  c)More safe spaces for the cohort	Coordinator  (b) Local partners  (c )Strategic Housing Services	beds  (b)SWEP partners agreeing extension of hours		bad weather  (b)Fewer rough sleeping locally  c)Reduced costs of providing emergency TA
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DRAFT

**SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Neighbourhood and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

**DATE:** 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Eric Stevens - Assistant Transport Planner  
(For all enquiries) (01753) 875662

**WARD(S):** All

**PART I**  
**FOR INFORMATION****SLOUGH REAL TIME PASSENGER INFORMATION****1. Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the effectiveness of the Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) system in Slough.

**2. Recommendation**

That the Panel note the information regarding RTPI accuracy rates and expenditure on the system.

**3 The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3a Whilst not directly supporting any of the wellbeing priorities, access to public transport improves accessibility for all residents. This particularly applies to those with limited mobility (e.g. disability, the elderly).

3b Good quality and reliable public transport, with clear information on the availability of buses, supports the following Five Year Plan outcome:

- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay

**4 Other Implications****(a) Financial**

There are no financial implications arising from this report. The expenditure on RTPI is outlined in Section 5.

**(b) Risk Management**

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

**(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications**

There are no legal or Human Rights Act implications relating to the content of this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no identified need for the completion of EIA relating to this report.

**5 Supporting Information**

5.1 At its meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2018, the Panel requested information regarding RTPI accuracy levels and the expenditure on the system. This was with a view to making a recommendation to Cabinet on the matter should concerns remain on the value for money being provided by the system. This report will provide the requested information; members are then asked whether they feel they would like to discuss RTPI in more depth.

**Accuracy Rates (March 2018 – Present)**

Operator	Service	Detected	Total	%
First Group	1	3203	3382	<b>95%</b>
First Group	12	1152	1222	<b>94%</b>
First Group	13	268	286	<b>94%</b>
First Group	3	1417	1514	<b>94%</b>
First Group	4	1389	1436	<b>97%</b>
First Group	6	1772	2034	<b>87%</b>
First Group	7	3852	4058	<b>95%</b>
First Group	X74	1316	1390	<b>95%</b>
Reading Transport Limited	4	232	248	<b>94%</b>
Reading Transport Limited	5	1315	1438	<b>91%</b>
Reading Transport Limited	6	72	72	<b>100%</b>
Reading Transport Ltd	702	955	1004	<b>95%</b>
Reading Transport Ltd	703	609	960	<b>63%</b>

**Annual Expenditure**

£34,158.60

**Improvements to RTPI**

- a. First Bus Berkshire purchased new ticket machines that provide a higher detection rate.
- b. Reading Bus made their SIRI information available on Slough's RTPI system.

**6 Comment of Other Committees**

This report has not been taken by any other committees at Slough Borough Council.

**7 Conclusion**

The Panel is asked to note the report's information and decide if they wish to make any further comment on the matter.

**8 Appendices**

None

**9 Background Papers**

None.

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**SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Neighbourhoods & Community Services Scrutiny Panel

**DATE:** 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Dave Gordon – Scrutiny Officer  
**(For all Enquiries)** (01753) 875411

**WARDS:** All

**PART I**  
**FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION**

**NEIGHBOURHOODS & COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL**  
**2018/19 WORK PROGRAMME**

1. **Purpose of Report**

For the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel (NCS Scrutiny Panel) to discuss its current work programme.

2. **Recommendations/Proposed Action**

That the Panel note the current work programme for the 2018/19 municipal year.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3.1 The Council's decision-making and the effective scrutiny of it underpins the delivery of all the Joint Slough Wellbeing Strategy priorities. The NCS Scrutiny Panel, along with the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and other Scrutiny Panels combine to meet the local authority's statutory requirement to provide public transparency and accountability, ensuring the best outcomes for the residents of Slough.

3.2 The work of the NCS Scrutiny Panel also reflects the priorities of the Five Year Plan, in particular the following:

- Our residents will have access to good quality homes

3.3 In particular, the NCS Scrutiny Panel specifically takes responsibility for ensuring transparency and accountability for Council services relating to housing, regeneration and environment, and safer communities.

4. **Supporting Information**

4.1 The current work programme is based on the discussions of the NCS Scrutiny Panel at previous meetings, looking at requests for consideration of issues from officers and issues that have been brought to the attention of Members outside of the Panel's meetings.

4.2 The work programme is a flexible document which will be continually open to review throughout the municipal year.

5. **Conclusion**

This report is intended to provide the NCS Scrutiny Panel with the opportunity to review its upcoming work programme and make any amendments it feels are required.

6. **Appendices Attached**

A - Work Programme for 2018/19 Municipal Year

7. **Background Papers**

None.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL**  
**WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19**

Meeting Date
<b>15 January 2019</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of first year of Housing Allocations Strategy</li> <li>• Neighbourhoods – performance statistics</li> <li>• Market Lane – Network Rail</li> <li>• Local Plan</li> <li>• Development Initiative Slough Housing</li> </ul>
<b>28 February 2019</b>
<b>Proposed date - Crime and Disorder Reduction Panel</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fly tipping and use of CCTV</li> </ul>
<b>3 April 2019</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing – performance statistics (to be taken as first item)</li> <li>• Downsizing</li> <li>• Key workers' housing</li> <li>• Home Improvement Agency</li> <li>• Review of plans to expand low and medium rise housing</li> </ul>

To be programmed:

- Residents' experiences (first meeting of 2019 – 20)

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## MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE RECORD

### NEIGHBOURHOODS & COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL 2018 – 19

COUNCILLOR	MEETING DATES					
	25/06/2018	06/09/2018	01/11/2018	15/01/2019	28/02/2019	03/04/2019
N. Holledge	P	P				
Kelly	Ap	P				
S Parmar	P	P				
Plenty	P	P				
Rasib	P	P				
Sabah	P	P				
A Sandhu	P	P				
Shah	P	Ap				
Wright	P	P				

P = Present for whole meeting  
Ap = Apologies given

P\* = Present for part of meeting  
Ab = Absent, no apologies given

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