

Draft Homeless Review

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Introduction

What is homelessness?

The term homelessness can describe many ways that a person or family may find themselves without a secure place to live.

It is not always about whether they actually have a roof over their head.

“You don’t have to be living on the street to be homeless. You may be legally classed as homeless if you are sleeping on a friend’s sofa, staying in a hostel, suffering from overcrowding or other bad conditions”. Shelter

Why do we do a homelessness review?

Hastings Borough Council has to produce a homelessness review by law. The findings in the review help us develop a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, which will form part of our Housing Strategy.

The review shows the support that is available for homeless people and how this may develop in the future.

The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has said that all local authorities must develop new homelessness strategies. This is to take account of the changes introduced by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

Summary of review findings

Homelessness Presentations

The number of people presenting to the council as homeless has remained relatively stable over the past 3 years. People aged 35 or under account for over half of all presentations. In 2018/19, 18% of people presenting as homeless had a mental health support need. The most common reason for homelessness is eviction from the private rented sector.

Social housing

There are 5990 units of social housing in Hastings. The largest social landlord is Optivo who own approximately 4 times the number of homes owned by the next largest association, Orbit. Turnover of social housing is substantially lower than was once the case and accounts for around 0.92% of the total social housing stock.

There are currently 1743 households waiting for social housing in Hastings, and waiting times are very long. The average waiting time is 537 days. Waiting times for family accommodation are much higher; families searching for a 2 bedroom house can wait up to 3 years for a property, even with the highest priority banding.

Private rented sector

The private rented sector is comparatively large and accounts for 38% of all housing stock in Hastings. There are currently 13,342 units of private rented accommodation in the town. The size of this sector increased by 99% between 2001 and 2019, and in some wards of the town accounts for over half of the total housing stock. This growth looks set to continue, at least in the short term. However, in the longer term new energy efficiency requirements for rented properties and changes to tax incentives for landlords may create volatility in this sector. Despite the growth in the sector, the market for private rented accommodation has become increasingly competitive and unaffordable for homeless households. Rents have increased faster in Hastings, compared to the rest of East Sussex and national trends. The quality of accommodation on offer can also vary considerably.

Emergency accommodation

Consequently, there has been a very significant increase in the number of people living in emergency accommodation. People are also spending longer in emergency accommodation before moving on to long term housing. This trend negatively affects the quality of life of households in emergency accommodation and has a significant financial impact on the council. The council has plans to reduce its use of emergency accommodation, but these will take at least another year to fully implement.

There is also a lack of supported accommodation locally, which often means that individuals with multiple and complex needs are placed in mainstream emergency accommodation.

Local Housing Allowance

Local Housing Allowance has failed to keep pace with rising rents locally, and is now typically 40% lower than median rents in the private sector. As a result, there is a growing affordability gap for households, particularly those with larger families.

Funding reductions to the council and its partners

Funding reductions to partner services, particularly social care, has contributed to the rising demand for homelessness services. For instance, people who would previously been able to access supported accommodation are now accessing emergency accommodation in the first instance.

Short term funding

The council is heavily reliant on grant funding to enhance its homelessness services. Much of this funding is short-term which creates challenges developing a strategic approach to reducing homelessness.

National Context

Homelessness Legislation

The services the council has to provide by law to prevent homelessness and help people who are threatened or already homeless are set out in Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996.

In 2002, the Government amended the homelessness legislation through the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002 to:

- Ensure a more strategic approach to tackling and preventing homelessness, in particular by requiring a homelessness strategy for every housing authority district.
- Strengthen the assistance available to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness by extending the priority need categories to homeless 16 and 17 year olds; care leavers aged 18, 19 and 20; people who are vulnerable as a result of time spent in care, the armed forces, prison or custody, and people who are vulnerable because they have fled their home because of violence.

Local councils use a number of definitions for different types of homelessness:

Priority Need the council must provide emergency accommodation if it has reason to believe a homeless person has priority need. Someone may have priority need if:

- Children live with them
- They are pregnant
- Aged 16 or 17
- A care leaver aged 18 to 20
- Classed as vulnerable (for example because of old age, physical and learning disabilities, mental health problems, fleeing domestic abuse or violence, time spent in care, prison or the armed forces)

Statutory homelessness refers to those people who have made a homeless application to their local authority and have met the necessary criteria set out in legislation to be accepted as eligible for assistance, homeless and in priority need. A household may be accepted as statutorily homeless if they are going to be evicted or are living in unsuitable accommodation.

Non-statutory / non-priority homeless people tend to be single people or childless couples who are not assessed as being in priority need. They are entitled to advice and assistance from their local authority. Many single homeless people can be described as 'hidden homeless', if they are sofa surfing, staying with friends or family and not accessing mainstream homelessness services. Estimating the levels of hidden homelessness locally and nationally is extremely challenging.

Rough sleepers are people who are literally roofless, bedded down on the street or in other locations. This group are a minority of the much larger population of non-priority homeless people.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 gives local housing authorities new duties to intervene earlier to prevent homelessness. The Act aims to improve the quality of the support provided to people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness.

Some of the key requirements of the new Act are:

Advice

Providing free information and advice on preventing homelessness and the rights of homeless people to all residents.

All councils need to make sure the advice and information they provide is designed to meet the needs of groups who are particularly at risk of homelessness. These groups might include care leavers, people leaving prison, people who have left the armed forces, survivors of domestic abuse and those suffering from a mental illness.

Personalised Housing Plan

People presenting to the council as homeless work with their housing options officer to develop a holistic plan of actions they will take, and the council will take, to help them resolve their housing situation. The plan must be reviewed regularly.

Prevention Duty

The length of time a household is considered to be threatened with homelessness was increased from 28 days to 56 days, meaning that housing authorities are required to work with people to prevent homelessness at an earlier stage.

Relief Duty

A new duty for those who are already homeless. Housing authorities will support households for 56 days to relieve their homelessness by helping them to secure accommodation. The relief duty also expanded the requirements for local authorities to provide emergency accommodation.

Duty to Refer

Since 1 October 2018 certain public bodies have been required to refer people who they think may be homeless, or at risk of homelessness, to a local housing authority for advice and support.

The agencies subject to the new duty are:

- prisons
- youth offender institutions
- secure training centres
- secure colleges
- youth offending teams
- probation services (including community rehabilitation companies)
- Jobcentre Plus
- social service authorities
- emergency departments
- urgent treatment centres
- hospitals in their function of providing inpatient care
- Secretary of State for Defence in relation to members of the regular armed forces.

Rough Sleeping Strategy

In August 2018 the government published the national rough sleeping strategy.

The strategy sets out the government's commitment to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end it completely by 2027.

The strategy sets out key areas of work around prevention, intervention and recovery. A key feature has been to highlight the importance of collaboration between statutory and community sector partners.

Welfare reform

The government has introduced a number of changes as part of its welfare reform programme, through the Welfare Reform Act 2012. These changes include the introduction of Universal Credit, which went live in Hastings in December 2016.

Universal Credit brings together a range of working age benefits into one payment, including housing benefit and Personal Independence Payments (PIP) (which replaces Disability Living Allowance for people aged 16 to 64). New rules were also introduced which restrict the amount of housing benefit working age housing association tenants can claim if they are deemed to be under occupying their home. The sanctions regime for Job Seekers Allowance has also been reviewed and updated.

Welfare reform continues to have an impact on those receiving benefits. Nationally, statistics show that 67,000 families (63,000 housing benefit, 4,000 Universal Credit) have had their benefit capped as at November 2017.

In April 2008 the Government introduced the local housing allowance which set a maximum rent that housing benefit can cover for private tenants. The local housing allowance is the rent figure which a set percentage of all of the rents in the market fall below (currently 30th percentile), ensuring that the same percentage of homes is affordable to low income households. In April 2013 the link with local market evidence was broken with local housing allowance rates being uprated by the consumer prices index (CPI) or a lower figure set by the government. From April 2014 for two years the uprating index was capped at one per cent and from April 2016 Local housing allowance rates were frozen for four years. Rents tend to rise faster than prices (CPI) and these changes have negatively impacted access to the private rental sector to the extent that, according to a report by Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH, August 2018), private renting has become unaffordable for most low income households.

Decision to leave the European Union

The impact of the decision to leave the European Union impact is hard to predict; depending on the deal we could see a number of EEA nationals with uncertain statuses with regard to employment, benefits and housing rights.

Local Context

Progress against our last strategy

We set three priorities in our last strategy, which was in place from 2016 to 2018. By working with our partners we've made progress towards achieving them:

Prevent and minimise homelessness

- We have successfully implemented the legislative changes brought about by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018, including the new prevention and relief duties
- Secured additional funding for the Hastings and Eastbourne Rough Sleeping Initiative and the Rapid Rehousing Pathway, to improve access to statutory services, temporary accommodation and long term housing for rough sleepers
- Sussex Rough Sleeping Prevention Project successfully delivered. The project achieved 282 interventions and successfully prevented rough sleeping in 94% of cases.
- Piloted the co-locating of housing options officers within the i-rock service, a drop in mental health service for young people aged 14 to 25.
- Committed the first round of investment in council-owned emergency accommodation

Improve access to good quality, well managed accommodation in the private rented sector

- Continued to lease private sector housing through our Social Lettings Agency
- Continue to ensure standards are maintained through our Selective licensing scheme
- Bring long term empty homes back into use as social housing through our Coastal Space Partnership. Phase 2 completed and phase 3 underway
- 209 new affordable homes created
- 508 long term empty homes (2 plus years) brought back into use
- Brought 884 private sector dwellings in line with the required standard
- Secured additional funding through the Accessing the Private Rented Sector Scheme to support households living in emergency accommodation to find a new home
- Given interest-free loans for rent in advance and deposits provided to homeless households to access new accommodation in the private sector

Work jointly to deliver quality housing and support services

- New street community partnership formed to improve co-ordination between support and enforcement services
- Regular meetings of the Hastings and Support Services Group (HASS) to monitor progress against our strategic priorities
- Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) delivered in partnership with voluntary and statutory agencies, including implementing an emergency night shelter at Christ Church, St Leonards
- Hastings Borough Council lead work across the five local housing authorities and statutory partners to develop new protocols for the duty to refer, which was introduced in October 2018
- New referral process agreed for community based support services
- Utilising funding from Hastings and Rother Clinical Commissioning Group's programme to reduce health inequalities, to improve services for rough sleepers
- New Care Leaver Pathway developed and implemented
- Regular meetings of the Landlords Forum

Corporate Plan

The council's corporate plan includes a key programme of work to tackle homelessness and disadvantage. The work package states that we will continue our work to minimise homelessness in the town and develop a new homelessness strategy.

Impact of Austerity

Local authorities are experiencing growing financial pressures as a result of changes to funding arrangements. Rising demand for homelessness services, particularly emergency accommodation, have a significant financial impact on the council.

The council is continuing to review all areas of expenditure to see if services can be delivered more cost effectively, as well as exploring opportunities to generate additional income.

East Sussex County Council is doing the same at a countywide level, likewise other public services are having to review their financial commitments. This may impact on the delivery of support services, which many vulnerable households in housing need rely on, meaning in some cases a loss of service or prioritisation so that only the most in need can access services.

Partnership working

East Sussex Housing Options Officers Group (ESHOG) - Hastings, Eastbourne, Lewes, Rother and Wealden councils are members of ESHOG, a strategic group reporting to the East Sussex Chief Executives Group on the delivery of housing and homelessness services across the county. ESHOG is responsible for reporting to the East Sussex Chief Executives Group on the delivery of housing and homelessness services across the county. ESHOG is chaired by Hastings Borough Council's Assistant Director for Housing and Built Environment.

Rough Sleeping Initiative Strategic Board - the strategic board brings together senior level representatives of health, mental health, social care, substance misuse and housing professionals. The board meets every six months and is chaired by the Assistant Director for Adult Social Care at East Sussex County Council. The purpose of the board is to ensure that learning from the rough sleeping initiative informs the design of future service delivery for vulnerable groups. The strategic board also plays a key role in identifying and securing alternative sources of funding, to ensure the long term sustainability of these activities.

Hastings Street Community Partnership - co-ordinates work across statutory and voluntary sector partners to address issues facing the street community, including rough sleepers. The meetings enable partners to identify any gaps in provision and avoid duplicating activities.

Housing and Support Services (HASS) - a multi-agency board including statutory and voluntary sector partners, which is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and action plan.

East Sussex Better Together – the East Sussex Better Together Alliance is a partnership of organisations working together to plan and deliver health and care in Eastbourne, Hailsham, Seaford, Hastings, Rother and surrounding areas.

Working with the voluntary sector

Hastings has a strong voluntary sector presence and the council is working collaboratively with these groups, to improve services for homeless households and rough sleepers. These include:

- Citizens Advice
- Seaview Project
- Fulfilling Lives
- Hastings Voluntary Action
- Snowflake Night Shelter
- Hastings Advice and Representation Centre
- Brighton Housing Trust

Many of these organisations are members of the Housing and Support Services (HASS) group.

Accommodation in Hastings

Table 1 below shows the tenure of accommodation in Hastings:

Table 1

Tenure	Number of units in 2011	% of total stock	Number of units in 2019	% of total stock
Owner occupier	22,706	55%	15,636	45%
Social housing	6,181	15%	5,990	17%
Private rented sector	11,863	29%	13,342	38%

When compiling this information, Shelter used census data as well as the latest information from the YouGov survey.

Social Housing

There is a limited supply of social housing in Hastings and the size of this sector has shrunk slightly over recent years. Turnover of social housing units is also low, at 0.92% of stock.

There are currently 1644 households on the housing register (the waiting list for social housing).

The council operates a choice-based lettings approach to allocate social housing. This means that people on the housing register can bid for suitable properties when they are advertised.

How people on the housing register are prioritised is set out in the Homemove Allocation Scheme. Households on the housing register are given a priority banding from A – D, depending on their circumstances.

The average waiting time for social housing has increased from 341 days in 2016/17 to 537 days in 2018/19. However, waiting time for some types of housing can be much longer. Table 2 below sets out the number of properties that were let between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019:

Table 2:

Size	Band A		Ban B		Band C		Band D	
	No. waiting	No. of lets						
1 bed	147	56	198	4	149	3	200	6
2 bed	108	78	173	12	185	2	88	7
3 bed	37	32	76	0	150	1	0	0
4 bed	21	5	39	2	49	0	0	0
5 bed	5	0	17	0	2	0	0	0

The council carried out an interim review of its allocation scheme in 2018 to ensure it reflected the requirements of the new Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. However, we will need to carry out a full review in 2019/20.

Given the limited availability of social housing, it is often not a viable solution for homeless households.

Private Rented Sector

The private rented sector has grown considerably over recent years. Table 3 below shows a breakdown of private rented sector properties by ward.

Table 3:

Ward	No. of private rented properties	% of housing stock
Braybrooke	1021	48%
Castle	1898	53%
Central St Leonards	2433	53%
Gensing	1666	54%
Old Hastings	691	34%
Ore	675	36%
Tressell	730	36%
Ashdown	409	25%

Baird	361	20%
Conquest	465	32%
Hollington	390	20%
Maze Hill	571	32%
St Helens	442	29%
Silverhill	637	35%
West St Leonards	512	32%
Wishing Tree	441	21%
Total	13,342	38%

It is expected that growth in the private rented sector will continue in the short term. However, changes to the energy efficiency standards for rented properties and tax incentives for private landlords may lead to increase volatility in this sector in the longer term.

Although the size of private rented sector has increased, it has also become increasingly competitive for homelessness households to access. Some of the reasons for this are:

- Affordability – local housing allowance have not kept pace with rising rents in the private rented sector
- Tenancy sustainment – landlords are increasingly reluctant to accept tenants, who they perceive to be high risk, including people with a poor history of tenancy sustainment.
- Low turnover – as house prices have increased in Hastings, people are renting for longer in the private sector, which has reduced turnover of stock.

Supported Accommodation

There are currently 150 units of supported accommodation in Hastings. There are different types of supported accommodation, such as:

- providing the support older people need to maintain their independence
- providing emergency refuge and support for victims of domestic violence, helping them to stabilise their lives and engage with other services
- working with homeless people with complex and multiple needs to help them make the transition from life on the street to a settled home, education, training or employment
- supporting people with mental health needs to stabilise their lives, recover and live more independently
- supporting people with learning disabilities in the longer term to maximise their independence and exercise choice and control over their lives.

Supported accommodation in Hastings is delivered by SAHA, Refuge, YMCA, Sanctuary Supported Living and Brighton Housing Trust. Approximately half of the supported accommodation units in Hastings are commissioned by East Sussex County Council. During the last round of funding reductions to adult social care, the number of supported accommodation units was reduced by 12 beds.

Supported accommodation is usually temporary. It can often be difficult for people leaving supported accommodation to find a new home, particularly in the private rented sector. This reduces the turnover of units and restricts access for people who require a higher level of support.

Supply of new accommodation

Table 4 below shows the number of new market and affordable homes completed over the past 3 years.

Table 4:

	Year					
	2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	Market	Affordable	Market	Affordable	Market	Affordable
Hastings	191	0	189	70	184	64
East Sussex (excluding Hastings)	645	167	655	120	720	266

Supply of new housing in Hastings has not kept pace with rising demand. It is therefore essential that the council continues to explore new ways to increase the supply of new accommodation and make the best use of existing stock.

Affordability

Table 5 below shows the median private rents for different types of private rented accommodation in Hastings:

Table 5:

Number of bedrooms	Median private rents (per month)			% increase
	2016	2017	2018	
Room	£385	£459	£450	17%
1 bed	£450	£475	£495	10%
2 bed	£580	£650	£650	12%
3 bed	£750	£825	£850	13%
4 or more bed	£998	£995	£1,125	13%

Median private rents in Hastings have increased by 8% between 2016 and 2018, compared to a 7% increase across East Sussex and a 4% increase nationally.

Increases in private rent have widened created an affordability gap for benefit dependent households. Table 6 below shows the gap between local housing allowance and current median rents in the private sector.

Table 6:

Number of bedrooms	Local Housing Allowance (2019)	Median Private Rents (2019)
Room	£302	£368
1 bed	£411	£525
2 bed	£537	£675
3 bed	£714	£875
4 or more beds	£873	£1,100

This trend is particularly important in Hastings due to the size of the private rented sector. Not only are low-income and benefit dependant households more likely to be priced out of the private rented market, they have fewer options to secure alternative accommodation.

Who uses our homelessness services?

The number of people presenting to the council as homeless has remained relatively stable over the past 3 years. In 2018/19, slightly more females presented to the council as homeless (51% of presentations).

However, the number of presentations resulting in a placement in emergency accommodation has increased sharply. In part, this is due to the legislative changes introduced by the Homelessness Reduction Act, which expanded local authorities duties to provide emergency accommodation. However, it also suggests that homeless households are finding it more difficult to access alternative accommodation.

Over half of homelessness presentations are by people aged 35 or under. This age range is over-represented in homelessness presentations, compared to the community as a whole. Typically, people in this age range present as homeless following eviction by a family member or friend.

Loss of accommodation in the sector continues to be the most common reason people present as homeless.

People are also presenting with more complex needs. In 2018/19, 18% of people presenting as homeless had a mental health support need. While reported levels of anxiety and depression amongst homeless households are much higher.

The council has not received any homelessness presentations by members of the gypsy or travelling community over the past 3 years.

Why are people homeless?

Table 7 below shows the 5 most common reasons people presented as homeless to the council in 2016/17, as percentage of the total number of presentations.

Table 7:

Presentation Reason	% of presentations
Loss of rented or tied accommodation due to: Termination of assured shorthold tenancy	28%
Other relatives or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate	17%
Parents no longer willing or able to accommodate	16%
Violence : Violent breakdown of relationship, involving partner	7%
Loss of rented or tied accommodation due to: Reasons other than termination tenancy	6%

Table 8 below shows the 5 most common reasons people presented as homeless to the council in 2018/19, as percentage of the total number of presentations.

Table 8:

Presentation Reason	% of presentations
End of Private Rented Sector Tenancy	21%
Family no longer willing to accommodate	20%
Relationship with partner ended (non-violent breakdown)	9%
Domestic Abuse	7%
Friends no longer willing to accommodate	5%

In 2018/19, around 72% of the individuals who presented as homeless after their friends were no longer willing to accommodate them were male.

Age range

Table 9 below shows the number of people presenting to the council for homelessness advice by age.

Table 9:

Age range	Number of presentations	Number of presentations	Number of presentations

	in 2016/17	2017/18	in 2018/19
16 to 25	472	336	399
26 to 35	490	323	393
36 to 45	332	230	268
46 to 55	242	193	204
56 to 65	118	91	127
66 to 75	53	37	45
76 to 87	15	5	20
Total	1722	1215	1456

Homelessness Acceptances

Table 10 below shows the number of cases the council accepted a homeless duty to.

Table 10:

Year	Number of acceptances	As a proportion of homelessness presentations
2016/17	230	13%
2017/18	260	21%
2018/19	108	7%

It should be noted that the reduced number of decisions in 2018/19 is due to the new prevention and relief duties which were introduced by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, which must be completed before a homelessness application can be accepted.

Emergency Accommodation

The number of people living in emergency accommodation has increased by 192% over the past 3 years, from 51 at the end of 2016/17 to 149 at the end of 2018/19.

Across East Sussex, the number of people living in emergency accommodation has increased by 90% over the same period. This trend has been particularly acute in urban areas, Eastbourne has seen a 214% increase in the number of households living in emergency accommodation.

The average length of stay in emergency accommodation has also increased to 111.4 days in Hastings, compared to 87.99 across East Sussex.

The profile of placements has also changed, with an increasing number of families living in emergency accommodation and now account for around half of our total placements.

Rough Sleeping

The number of people rough sleeping on a typical night in Hastings has increased by 85% over the past 3 years, from 26 people in 2016 to 48 in 2018. This compares to a 13% increase nationally, and a fall of 2% in the South East over the same period.

The number of people rough sleeping can vary considerably throughout the year, with some rough sleepers also spending time sofa-surfing or moving between other towns.

Around 14% of rough sleepers in Hastings are women and 58% have a local connection to the town, which is similar to other areas. The average age of rough sleepers in Hastings is higher than other parts of East Sussex, with just 4% aged 25 or under.

Impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

The council has been monitoring the implementing the new Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 since it came into force in April 2018. Below is a summary of performance for the new duties.

Prevention Duty

The council accepted a prevention duty to 292 people in 2018/19, achieving a positive outcome in 121 cases.

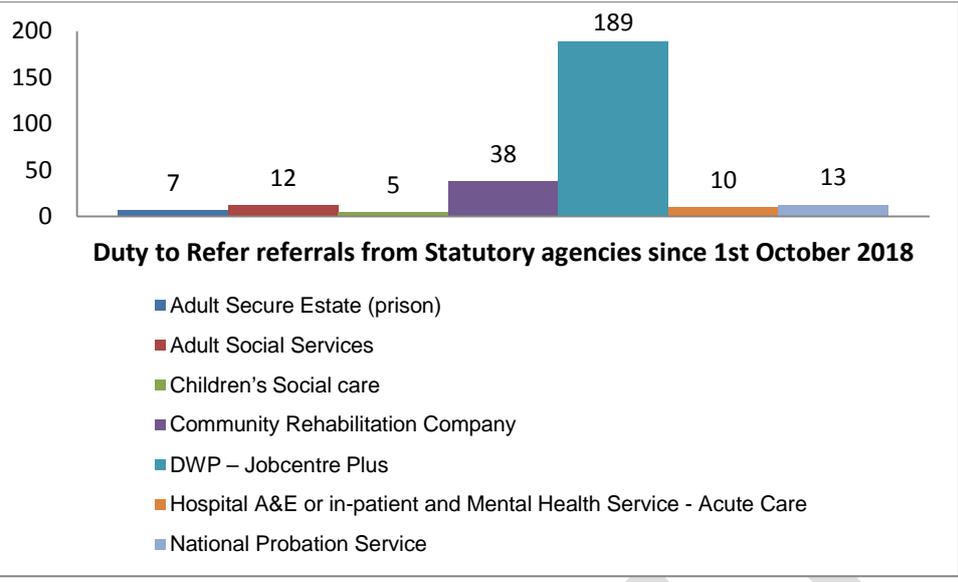
Relief Duty

The council accepted a relief duty to 166 people in 2018/19, achieving a positive outcome in 86 cases.

Duty to Refer

Hastings Borough Council has led work across the 5 local housing authorities in East Sussex to develop a consistent approach to the new duty to refer. We have worked with partners to make it as straightforward as possible for them to identify people at risk of homelessness and refer them for advice and support. Joint protocols are now in place between the agencies and the housing authorities. The council has introduced an online form for professionals to use when they have identified someone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The chart below sets out the number of referrals received by Hastings Borough Council since the duty was introduced in October 2018.



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Services for homeless people

Housing Options

The council's housing options service currently comprises one housing options manager post, two team leaders and nine housing options officers.

Housing options officers work with homeless households throughout the process from initial advice, through the prevention and relief duties until a decision is made on their case. The team issue decisions in accordance with the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by subsequent Acts).

The Housing Options team also provides financial support to homeless households to secure new accommodation or keep their existing tenancy, if possible. This support includes interest free loans for:

- Rent in advance and deposits
- Tenancy sustainment (for example, clearing rent arrears)

Emergency Accommodation

The council has a duty to provide emergency accommodation to homeless households who have priority need and meet the relevant immigration and residence conditions. Under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, councils must also provide emergency accommodation to homeless households who they believe may have priority need.

The council's temporary accommodation team are responsible for securing accommodation and work closely with the housing options officers to manage the placements.

Social Lettings Agency

The council established a Social Lettings Agency in February 2015. The purpose of the Social Lettings Agency is to improve access to good quality, well managed accommodation in the private rented sector. The Social Lettings Agency currently leases 32 properties from the private rented sector.

The Social Lettings Agency also provides property management services for council-owned emergency accommodation and a property owned by Hastings Housing Company.

Services for rough sleepers

Outreach – the council part funds a rough sleeper outreach service, which is delivered by the Seaview Project. The outreach service ensures the council has

accurate information about the number of people rough sleeping in the town and individual rough sleepers are linked with appropriate services as soon as possible.

Specialist Housing Options Officer – the council has appointed a specialist housing options officer to working with rough sleepers. The officer is based at the Seaview Project part-time and also carries out street engagement. The role is responsible for ensuring rough sleepers are able to access homelessness advice.

Sever Weather Emergency Protocol - the council has a Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) with statutory and voluntary sector partners, in accordance with national guidance from Homeless Link. This protocol, which is reviewed each year, has two key aims:

1. To ensure that no one dies on the streets due to extreme weather
2. To ensure that every effort is made to engage with individuals during the extreme weather period so that they can access appropriate services

The council has lead successful work across the county to secure additional grant funding to enhance services for rough sleepers. Recent projects include:

Housing and Wellbeing Hub at Seaview - open access service with different agencies present every Thursday morning, including housing advice, St John's Ambulance, CGL substance misuse worker, street triage mental health team and HomeWorks. Rough sleepers can access these facilities in one place if needed. Breakfast and lunch is available, as well as washing facilities. The project is funded as part of the Clinical Commissioning Group's programme to reduce health inequalities.

Sussex Rough Sleeping Prevention Project (March 2017 to March 2019) Hastings Borough Council led a partnership project across the five local housing areas to deliver intensive homelessness support to people at high risk of rough sleeping. Often these individuals had experienced a traumatic life event or had identified mental health or substance dependency needs. The project carried out 282 interventions and successfully prevented rough sleeping in 94% of cases.

The project team was co-located within the Job Centres, local food banks and charities which enabled direct referral routes for people at risk of rough sleeping. Project officers also had a relatively small caseload, which enabled them to deliver quick responses and an intensive level of support.

The project was funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Hastings and Eastbourne Rough Sleeping Initiative (June 2018 – March 2020) Hastings and Eastbourne Councils developed a joint project to improve access to statutory services, temporary accommodation and long term housing solutions for

the most entrenched rough sleepers in both towns. The project is funded by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, until 31 March 2020.

The project has provided accommodation for 44 former rough sleepers, as at August 2019, and is continuing to deliver intensive wrap around support.

Rapid Rehousing Pathway (March 2019 – March 2020) Hastings Borough Council lead a successful bid on behalf of the five East Sussex Housing authorities for a project working with rough sleepers with low / medium level and support needs and people at high risk of rough sleeping to access new accommodation. The project is based on a supported lettings model and the team provide ongoing support to individuals to help minimise the risk of them returning to rough sleeping in the future.

The project has achieved seven successful relief interventions for rough sleepers, and a further five preventions.

Young People

The council also part funds a Youth Homelessness and Accommodation Manager, in partnership with the five local housing authorities in East Sussex and the county council's children's services. This role provides strategic oversight of homelessness issues for 16 to 17 year olds and care leavers, and co-ordinates partnership work to prevent homelessness and secure new accommodation options for young people.

Community Based Support

East Sussex County Council commission a community based support service for homeless households, providing additional advice and support to help people secure new accommodation.

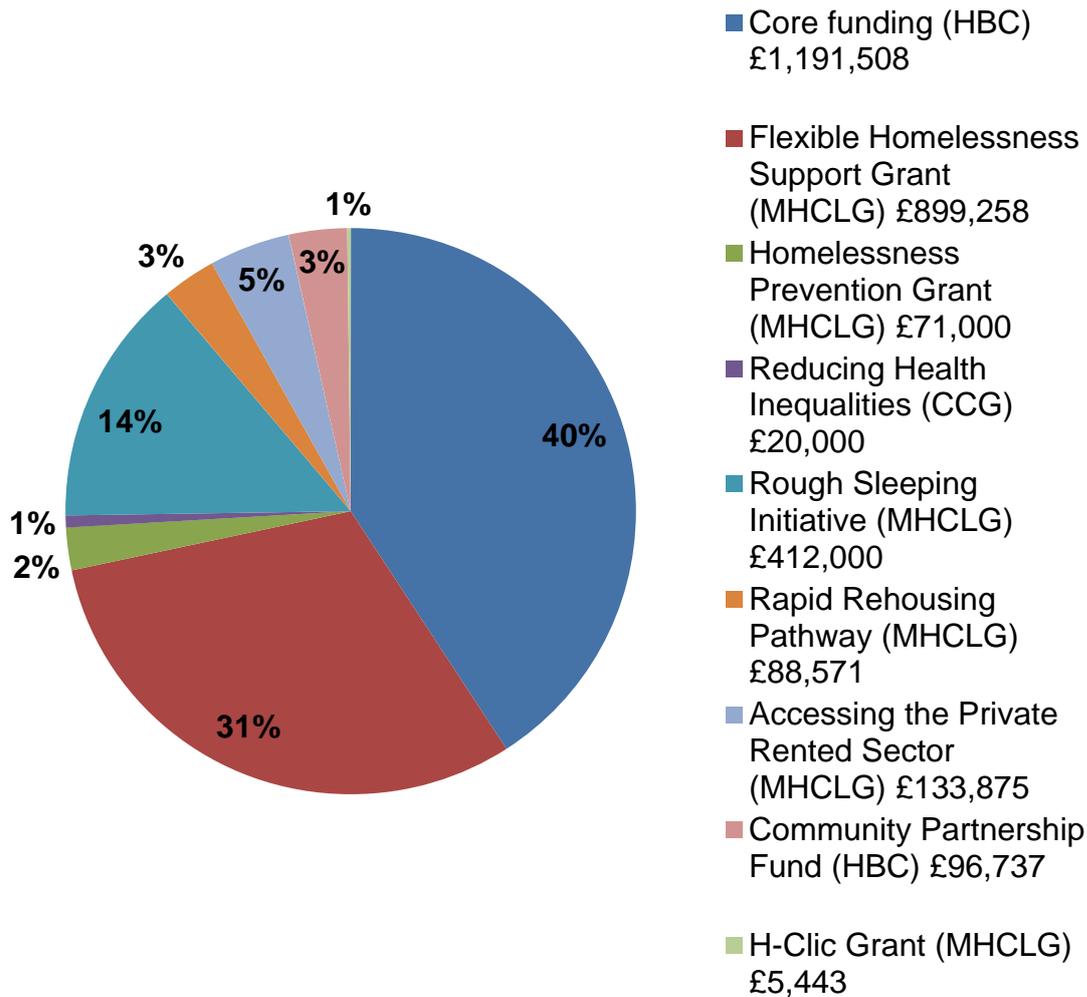
Syrian Resettlement Programme

The district and borough councils within East Sussex have collectively offered to assist the government in resettling between 200 and 260 Syrian Vulnerable Persons (SVPs) by 2020 through the Syrian Resettlement Programme (SRP). 40 individuals will be resettled in each local authority area in East Sussex. Hastings Borough Council has further committed to resettle an additional 60 people if possible.

Across East Sussex SRP has now settled a total of 192 people since the beginning of the programme.

How are the council's homelessness services funded?

The pie chart below shows the make-up of funding for our homelessness and rough sleeping services in 2019/20:



Our housing options and temporary accommodation team deliver the services we have to provide by law. Around 60% of the staff team are funded through the council's core budget, with the remained funded through grant programmes.

We have enhanced our homelessness prevention activity using our Flexible Homelessness Support Grant funding. Without these additional resources the council would not be able to meet its statutory duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The grant has also been used to add to the tools we have to prevent homelessness, for example through rent in advance and deposits. If this funding was no longer available, our successful preventions would reduce and the cost of delivering homelessness services would increase.

Population of East Sussex

The population of East Sussex is projected to increase by more than 55,000 between 2017 and 2032, to 607,000. The number of households is expected to increase by 14.4%, while the population is projected to increase by 10.0%.

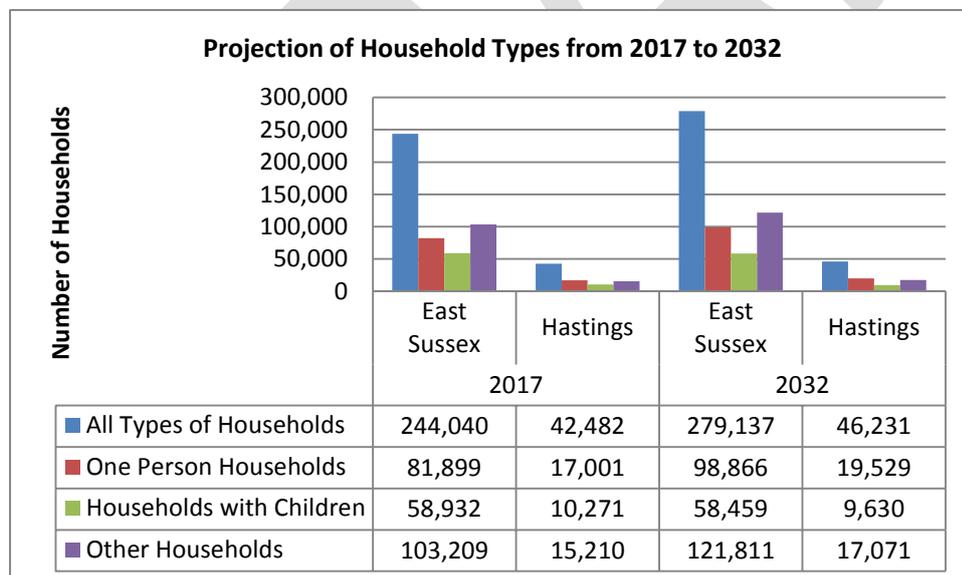
The over 65s now represent a quarter of the county's population and are projected to make up nearly a third of all people by 2032. All elderly age groups are expected to increase in size, with the number of very elderly people aged 85 and over expected to increase by 73%, from around 21,800 in 2017 to 37,800 in 2032.

It is projected that there will be a marginal decline in the working age population (18-64) of 0.7%, from 305,700 to 303,700 people in 2032.

The number of older households (aged 65 and over) is projected to increase by 40% by 2032, while middle-aged households (aged 35-64) will barely change in number (up 1%), and the number of households headed by younger people aged 15-34 is expected to fall by 10%.

Population projections between 2017 and 2032

This dataset shows the 2017-based population projections (dwelling-led) for the period 2017 to 2032. These population projections (previously called policy-based projections) are constrained to reflect the number of extra dwellings being planned for future years by local authorities in East Sussex, using the most up to date housing provision figures available as in April 2019, provided by each borough and district. They are also based on the latest 2017 data on population estimates, births, deaths and migration released by ONS in June 2018.



Source: East Sussex County Council, Research and Information Team, April 2019.

Strategic Priorities

The findings of the homelessness review, together with our ongoing work with partners have helped inform the priorities for the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

The 3 priority areas are:

- Reduce rough sleeping
- Minimise our use of emergency accommodation, by improving access to housing solutions
- Adapt our services to meet local needs

DRAFT