

Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council's

PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY

2018-2021



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FOREWORD

I am delighted to introduce our Preventing Homelessness Strategy for 2018-2021. This strategy advocates a holistic and integrated response to preventing homelessness and increasing the resilience of vulnerable people to prevent homelessness.

Homelessness has catastrophic effects on the lives of people, and yet homelessness is increasing nationally, sub-regionally and locally. There is strong evidence that homeless people suffer from multiple disadvantages. Homelessness is not just one of the most extreme forms of physical deprivation; it also defines a group that is subject to extreme forms of discrimination and violence.

This strategy reinforces our commitment to prevent homelessness and to intervene at the earliest stage before households reach the point of crisis. It sets out the actions we will take to help prevent even more people from becoming homeless and provide tailored support to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

This strategy has been developed following extensive consultation with our partners. This includes local authority services, elected members, voluntary organisations, statutory partners, people with lived experience of homelessness and members of the public.

Homeless people have been involved in the development of this strategy from the outset and their experiences have shaped the priorities identified. The current challenges are to manage increasing demand for accommodation while implementing the new Homelessness legislation, which brings with it, increased duties and powers.

This Preventing Homelessness strategy promotes working together to identify at an early stage potential risks and intervening at an earlier stage to prevent homelessness. This strategy has the support of all relevant local authority departments and partners. Corporate and partnership involvement was secured in identifying the strategic priorities and this has helped to ensure that all relevant departments and agencies are committed to supporting their delivery.

This strategy also links with other strategies and programmes that aim to address the wide range of factors that could contribute to homelessness in Tameside Borough. These strategies and programmes encompass aspects of local health, justice and economic policy, poverty and Domestic Abuse amongst other factors and are listed in Appendix D.

This strategy has included consideration of the benefits of cross-boundary co-operation and forms part of a coherent approach to tackling homelessness with neighbouring authorities.

This strategy is co-ordinated with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and our review of homelessness informs and is informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

This strategy is based on realistic assumptions and has been developed and is owned jointly with partners who are responsible for its delivery. This strategy will be taken into account by housing and social services authorities when exercising its functions.



Councillor Ged Cooney

“Housing is essential to well-being, even life. It is so much more than a physical space or structure. It’s where we develop our first social relationships, it ties us to our communities, and it’s connected to our livelihoods. Just as housing goes beyond four walls and a roof, homelessness is not about just the lack of a house.”

Leilani Farha (2016)

When thinking about homelessness many think about the most visible form of homelessness which is of people who are sleeping rough on the streets. However Homelessness can include people who are:

- Staying with friends or family
- Staying in a hostel or bed and breakfast accommodation
- Squatting
- At risk of violence or abuse in their home
- Living in poor conditions that affect their health
- Living apart from their family because they do not have a place to live together

There is no single reason why someone can end up without a home. Personal circumstances and wider economic and social factors all play a part in giving rise to this situation. In preparing this strategy the Council has undertaken a detailed review of homelessness in Tameside. This review has provided a clear picture of homelessness within the Borough. The findings of this review have shaped the development of this strategy. As part of the review, extensive consultation was undertaken with services and organisations providing homelessness services and with people with lived experience of homelessness.

This strategy:

- Outlines the key achievements of our previous strategy and provides examples of new evidence-based initiatives which have recently been implemented
- Presents the context of this strategy in terms of national policy and the local context
- Explains how the strategy was developed and its links with other key strategies
- Describes the causes of homelessness in Tameside, the causes and those who may be at risk of homelessness
- Presents our approach to preventing homelessness and our strategic priorities
- States how we will identify homelessness issues and collect and information to measure and monitor progress

This strategy aims to bring about a borough wide cultural change in our approach to tackling and preventing homelessness in Tameside Borough. It advocates a holistic and integrated approach to Preventing Homelessness which tackles the complex issues which can result in homelessness. It also advocates increasing the resilience of vulnerable people and providing targeted support to prevent homelessness. It aims to broaden and deepen constructive collaboration between services, partner organisations, the faith sector, and members of the community. It seeks to foster capacity to cultivate creative solutions to the ever-increasing problem of homelessness and focuses effort and resources to address the specific needs of the Borough. It complies with new statutory requirements which have been introduced through the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. This strategy supports the Council and its partners to deliver Tameside Borough priorities and the Greater Manchester (GM) pledges to prevent homelessness. A strategic action plan is being developed to support this strategy. This action plan will have resources allocated to it and officers assigned to each action.

OUR VISION

Our vision is of a borough wide approach where those living, working and visiting Tameside understand the catastrophic effects of homelessness on the lives of people and the causes behind it, and work together to tackle and prevent homelessness.

At a sub-regional level, Tameside is supporting the GM Homelessness Pledges and working collaboratively to combat homelessness across the sub-region.

THE EXPECTED BENEFITS OF THIS STRATEGY

This strategy will raise awareness of homelessness and enable a proactive and co-ordinated approach to preventing homelessness. Those who live, work and visit the borough will have a better understanding of homelessness, its causes, those at risk of homelessness and how to support the Preventing Homelessness Strategy.

Those at risk of potential homelessness will be identified earlier and there will be a significant increase in the number of early interventions taken to prevent homelessness from occurring.

Broader and deeper collaboration between services, partners and communities will be developed to achieve creative and effective solutions to preventing homelessness.

Untapped resources in the community will be identified, cultivated and empowered to prevent homelessness.

Existing prevention tools will be reviewed and developed to ensure greater effectiveness and new additional tools and methods will be employed.

Gaps in our intelligence about the causes of homelessness and the effectiveness of prevention interventions will be filled to increase learning and promote greater effectiveness.

ACHIEVEMENTS RESULTING FROM OUR FORMER STRATEGY

A range of achievements have been gained from our former Preventing Homelessness Strategy 2013-2018. Examples of these achievements include:

- The successful and ground-breaking Housing First initiatives, for female offenders and also for victims of domestic abuse
- The Hospital Discharge Project which reduces the risk of people being discharged from hospital into homelessness
- Investment in the Sanctuary Scheme. The purpose of the scheme is to assist victims of domestic abuse to remain safely in their own home by adding security measures.
- The Council's investment in services for people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness
- The number of households provided with support to help them to maintain their current home
- Innovative new solutions to provide accommodation for those sleeping rough in cold weather
- Dedicated support staff
- The Tameside Resettlement Scheme

EXAMPLES OF RECENT INITIATIVES TAMESIDE HAS IMPLEMENTED TO HELP PREVENT HOMELESSNESS

Recent evidence-based initiatives which we have put in place to help prevent homelessness in Tameside include:

- A number of developments to increase access to and improve the standards of private sector accommodation. These include an increase in the funding available for bonds to secure private rented accommodation, the appointment of an additional housing standards officer to promote improved standards in the private rented sector, and the appointment of a dedicated support worker to support people rehoused into the private rented sector.
- A housing resettlement support worker, supporting Asylum Seekers who have been given leave to remain in the United Kingdom. This assists Asylum Seekers to make the best use of the housing options that are available to them.
- The provision of Sanctuary measures (security measures to enable the victim of domestic abuse to remain in their home safely).
- Reviewing the staffing structure of the Tameside Housing Advice Service. Developing new generic job descriptions to meet the new requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and recruiting additional staff.
- Providing funding to Ashton Pioneer Homes. Enabling them to pilot an initiative to encourage single people to share in two bedroom tenancies. This will improve the affordability of such homes for single people, reduce pressure on the low supply of one bedroom accommodation and improve the use of available stock.
- Appointing a Preventing Homelessness Project Officer
- Developing partnerships with Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service, faith and other voluntary and community organisations to support cold weather provision for rough sleepers
- Working with Tameside Action Together and other organisations to develop and launch a local version of the Big Change initiative. Rather than giving to people who are begging on the street, this initiative will provide people with an alternative way of providing support to the homeless.

THE STRATEGY SUMMARY

A copy of the strategy summary can be accessed by clicking the link below:

<https://www.tameside.gov.uk/TamesideMBC/media/housing/The-One-Page-Summary-Strategy.docx>

THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

At a national level homelessness is increasing and projections indicate that it is set to continue to rise in the coming years. There is an increased likelihood of becoming homeless due to the lack of availability and affordability of housing, changes to the benefit system through the Welfare Reform, and a range of risk factors. The National Audit Office (NAO) (2017) in their recent report on homelessness has shown that homelessness has increased across all measures since 2010, with many local authorities now seeing it as a risk to their financial sustainability. The report states that the ending of private sector tenancies has overtaken all other causes to become the biggest single driver of statutory homelessness in England.

The Homelessness Monitor annual report (Crisis 2017) has predicted that there will be a surge in homelessness affecting families. This report shows that 70% of local authorities in England are struggling to find any stable housing for homeless people in their area, while 89% reported difficulties in finding private rented accommodation. The private rented sector is the largest rented sector in England, but its ability to house those on low incomes or who are homeless is largely dependent on housing benefit and, consequently, on the Government's programme of welfare reform (Fitzpatrick et al., 2015).

In response to this many councils have had to place even more homeless people in emergency housing. If current homelessness trends continue it is predicted that more than 100,000 households will be living in Bed and Breakfast accommodation, hostels and other forms of temporary housing by 2020 (Crisis 2017).

The National Audit Report 2017 highlighted the limited options which local authorities have to respond to increased levels of homelessness. In the publication "Housing in England: overview" the NAO showed that there has been a significant reduction in social housing over the past few decades. While spending by local authorities on homelessness services such as temporary accommodation has steadily increased since 2010, spending on overall housing services has fallen by 21% in real terms over the same period. The proportion of homeless households in temporary accommodation outside their home borough increased from 13% in March 2011 to 28% in March 2017. Almost 90% of these households are from London boroughs.

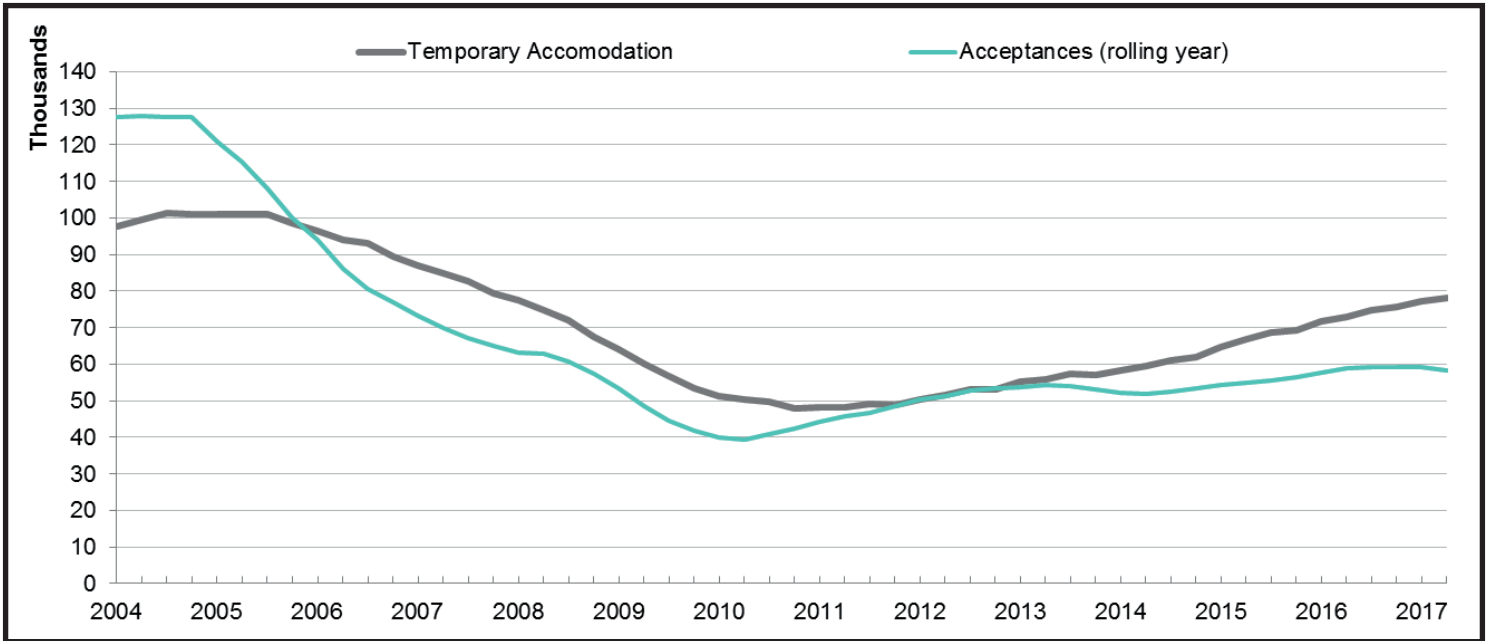
In response to this increase in homelessness, the government has introduced fundamental changes to homelessness legislation and has pledged to end rough sleeping by 2027 and to establish the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Implementation Taskforce.

On 13 August 2018 the government published the Rough Sleeping Strategy which sets out the government's plans to help people who are sleeping rough now and to put in place structures to end rough sleeping for good.

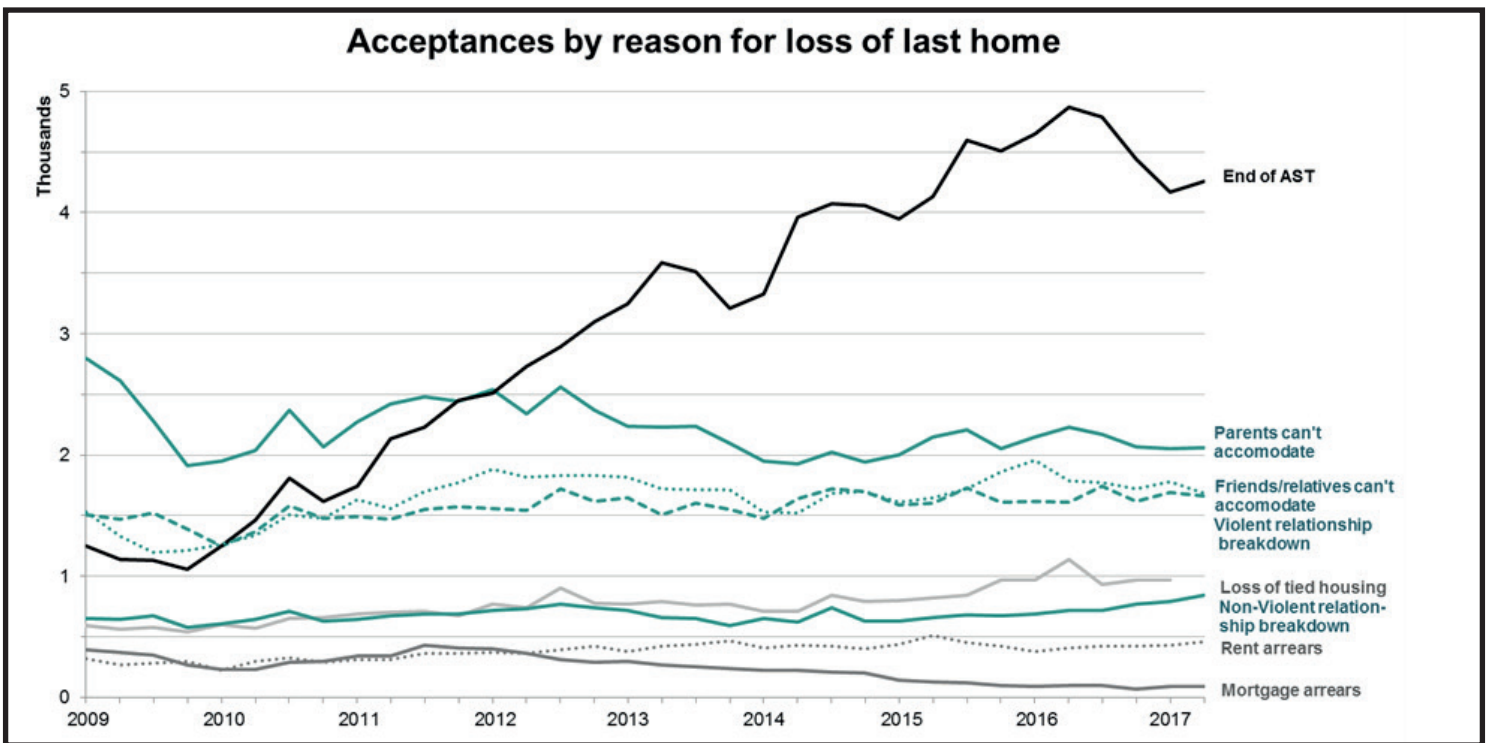
The government has committed to halve rough sleeping in this Parliament and to end it for good by 2027. The government's vision is to prevent rough sleeping from happening in the first place, to intervene to support those who are currently rough sleeping and to promote recovery by ensuring that people have the support in place to enter into sustainable accommodation. The strategy outlines the scale of the problem of rough sleeping, and why we need to act. It also presents the measures they are putting in place and the commitments which they have made to achieve the 2027 vision of Prevention, Intervention and Recovery.

Please find the national and North West trends for the 'Acceptances and households in temporary accommodation' and 'Acceptances by reason for loss of last home' in the graphs below:

Homelessness - National Trends: Acceptances and households in temporary accommodation

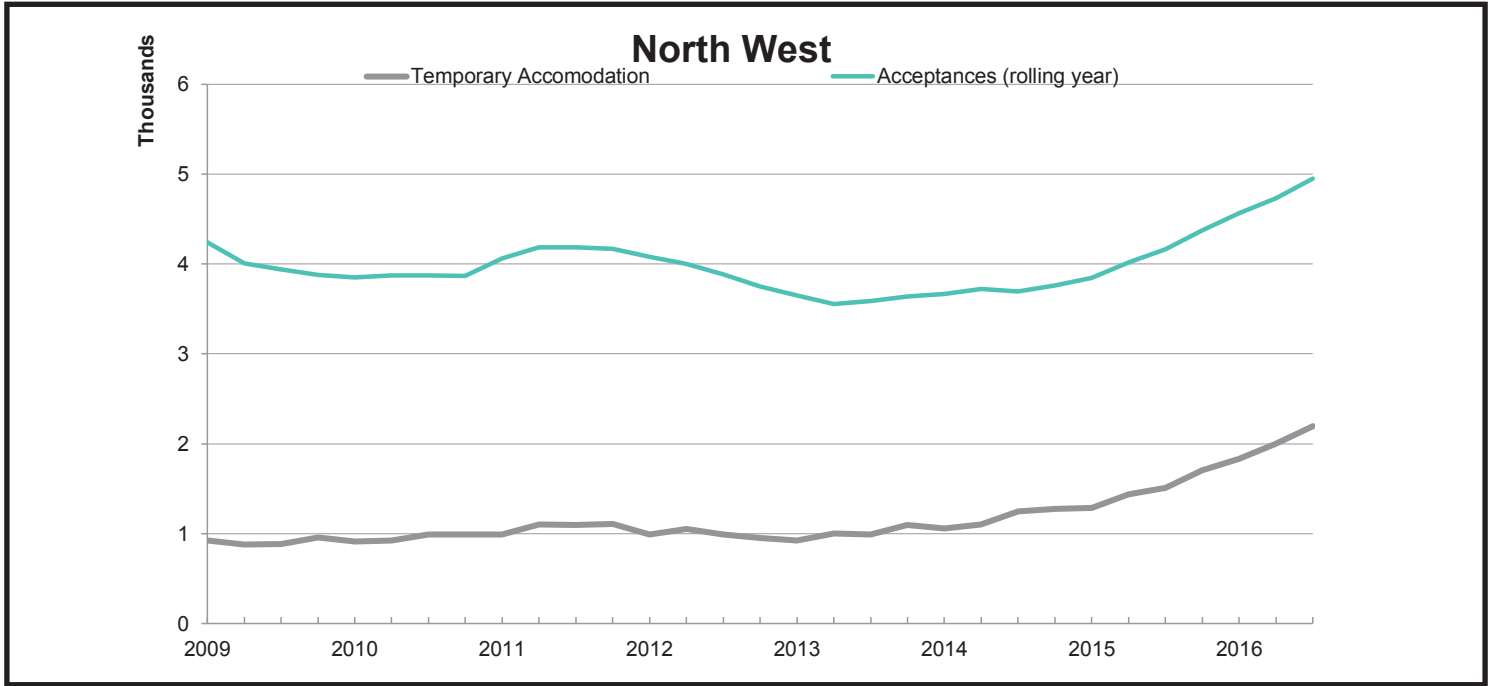


Homelessness - The National Position: Acceptances by reason for loss of last settled home

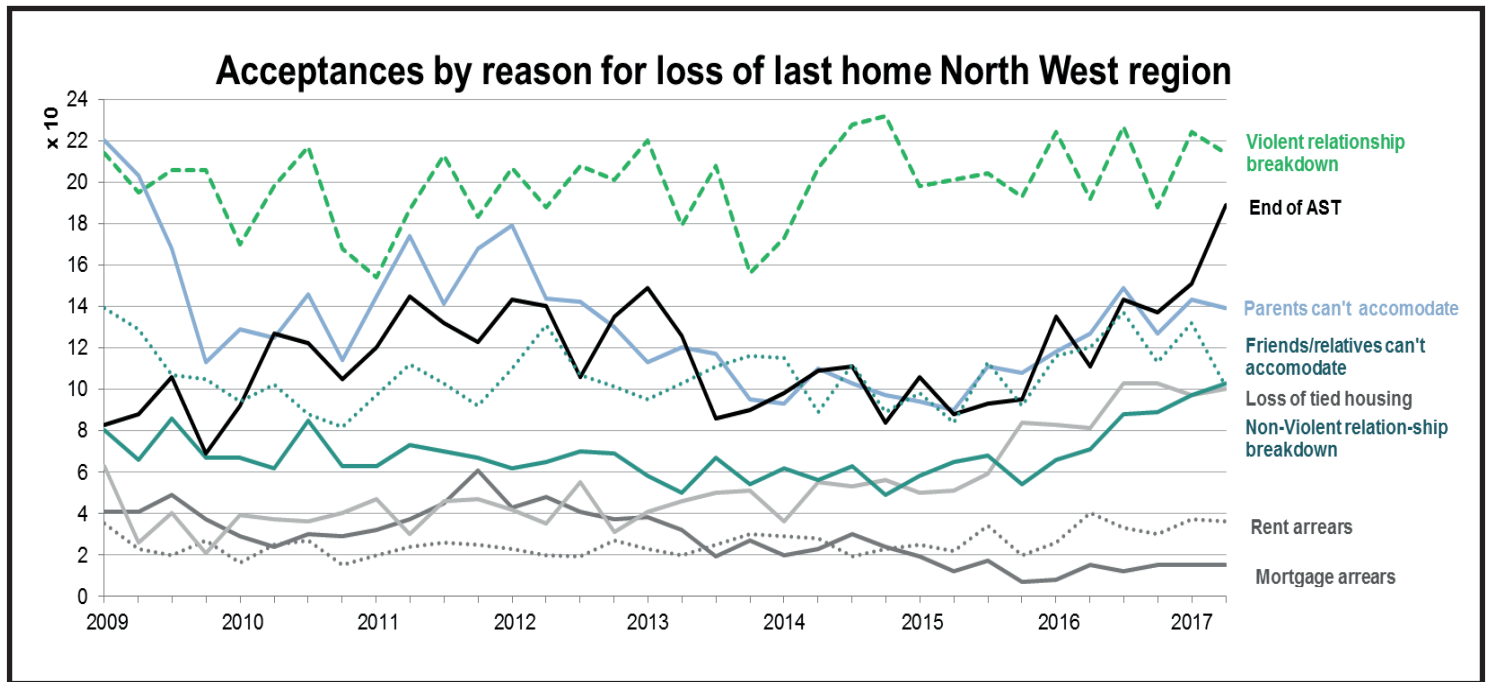


Ending of an assured short hold tenancy continues to be the most common reason for loss of a settled home: 30% of acceptances (34% in London).

Homelessness - The North West: Acceptances and households in temporary accommodation



Homelessness - The North West: Acceptances by reason for loss of last settled home



THE HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION ACT 2017

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 took effect on 3 April 2018 and has introduced fundamental changes. It aims to give local authorities more responsibility for preventing homelessness. It places duties on local authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their areas and requires authorities to provide homelessness services to every household who is homeless or threatened with homelessness and not just those considered to be in priority need. The Department expects that these responsibilities will lead to an increase in prevention cases and a fall in the number of households that qualify for temporary accommodation.

The focus is on helping those at risk of homelessness to avoid their situation becoming a homelessness crisis. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 requires local authorities to take reasonable steps to help prevent any eligible person who is at risk of homelessness from becoming homeless. This means either helping them to stay in their current accommodation or helping them to find a new place to live. The legislation has:

- extended the period for which people are considered threatened with homelessness from 28 days to 56 days before they are likely to become homeless, ensuring that local housing authorities can intervene earlier to avert a crisis.
- extended homelessness prevention so that help is provided at an earlier stage to all eligible households, regardless of priority need status, intentionality and whether they have a local connection.
- introduced a new Public Duty to Refer which came into force on 3 October 2018. This requires public authorities to notify the housing authority of service users they consider may be homeless or threatened with homelessness. Before making a referral, the public authority has to allow the individual to identify the housing authority which they would like to be referred to. Consent is required from the individual for the public authority to make the referral and to supply their contact details to the housing authority. The Homelessness Code of Guidance for local authorities specifies the public services included in the duty. This new duty should engage public bodies to assist with the earlier identification of those at risk of homelessness.

The Local Government Association [LGA] (2018) states that the legislation will, on its own, do little to reduce the root causes of increasing homelessness.

THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Equality Act 2010 provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. This Act covers 9 protected characteristics, making it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of: race, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and partnership.

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires local authorities and other public bodies to have due regard for the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (2016) state that there is strong evidence that homeless people suffer from multiple disadvantages.

NATIONAL RESEARCH

Brief details about research findings of national research in relation to care leavers, young people, and single people are given below:

Care Leavers

Care leavers are particularly vulnerable to homelessness. Around a quarter of those living on the streets had a background in care, and rising demands on social housing have made it increasingly difficult for young people to find suitable accommodation (HM Government, 2013). Although local authorities have a duty to provide 'sufficient accommodation', Barnardo's (2014) found that if a care leaver faces problems with their housing they may become homeless.

Young People and Homelessness

Research undertaken in England has shown that around half of young homeless people are not in education, employment or training (NEET) at the point of becoming homeless and many also lack independent living skills. This may be due to a disrupted education or difficult childhood experiences that also contributed to them becoming homeless. 21% of young people supported by homelessness agencies and 15% of those seen by local authorities had poor literacy or numeracy skills (HomelessLink, 2014).

Young homeless people are finding it difficult to find work due to poor qualifications and high support needs. Due to welfare benefit rules, young people can be no better off in work than on benefits (Centrepoint, 2016).

Single People

Single people and couples without dependent children are also at risk as local authorities do not have a statutory duty to find accommodation if they do not have priority need.

A report for Crisis UK focused on the experiences of single homeless people in Britain, finding that those who become homeless at a young age may become homeless several times and be trapped in a vicious cycle that leaves them vulnerable to violence and poor health (Mackie with Thomas, 2014). In a 2012 survey of transgender people, 19% of the 542 participants who answered questions on their housing reported they had been homeless at some point, while 11% had been homeless more than once (McNeil et al., 2012).

HOMELESSNESS AND HEALTH

The health problems of homeless people are considerable and their life expectancy is well below the national average (Crisis, 2011). For homeless men, the average age of death in 2001–09 was 48 years, compared with 74 years in the general population (a reduction of 26 years in life expectancy), and 43 for homeless women, compared with 80 in the general population (a reduction of 37 years) (Crisis, 2011).

Examples of health problems which have been identified include physical trauma, skin problems, respiratory illness, mental ill-health, infections and drug/alcohol dependence (DH, 2010). There are higher numbers of reported incidents of physical ill-health, depression and substance misuse among those who are sleeping rough or living in precarious accommodation, such as squats, than among other homeless people. In 2010, a national audit of over 2,500 homeless people found that 41% had long-term physical health problems, compared with 28% of the general population; 45% had a diagnosed mental health problem compared with 25%; and 36% had taken drugs in the past month compared with 5% in the general population (Homeless Link, 2014).

Access to Healthcare

Homeless Link (2014) has stated that homeless people use hospital services, including Accident and Emergency, between three and six times that of the general population (DH, 2010). Although, they access GPs between 1.5 and 2.5 times more than the general public, nevertheless, 7% of homeless people said they had been refused access to a GP or dentist within the past 12 months. Furthermore, although 40% said they had sufficient help with their health problems, 42% wanted some, or more, help.

Evidence has shown that homeless people do experience barriers to accessing healthcare. These include poor staff attitudes and the fear of being judged or experience of being passed between agencies and receiving help from none, for example for people with dual diagnosis (substance misuse and mental health problems) (RCGP, 2013).

HOMELESSNESS AND AUTISM

A research study, published on 12 June 2018 in the Autism Journal, has yielded evidence of a link between autism and homelessness. The National Autistic Society has stated that this is the first significant study on autism and homelessness. The research findings have suggested that autistic people may be at higher risk of becoming homeless than the general population. Alasdair Churchard, one of the researchers involved in this study said,

“It is well-known that life for homeless people is extremely mentally and physically hard, and those who are autistic are likely to have additional vulnerabilities which would only make their lives more difficult. Further research is required in this area, and we have been working with professionals in the homelessness field to raise awareness about the potential links between autism and homelessness.”

THE SUB-REGIONAL CONTEXT

The GM Homeless Action Network Strategy, the GM Pledges and the GMCA Programmes for Tackling Homelessness

Tackling homelessness is one of the GM Mayor’s key priorities. A major focus to date has been on rough sleeping. This is the most extreme and visible form of homelessness. The GM Mayor has pledged that there is no need for anyone to sleep rough within GM by 2020 and has developed a GM Homelessness Action Network Strategy. This is a strategy to end rough sleeping by 2020, and to develop a 10-year plan to tackle the issues of wider homelessness.

In the summer of 2018 the GM Mayor introduced a new pledge to further improve GM’s approach to rough sleeping by aiming to provide a bed for every rough sleeper who needs and wants one from 1 November 2018 to 31 March 2019. This initiative has been named “A Bed for Every Night” (ABEN). Tameside Council has signed up to this pledge and has put in place arrangements to take this forward.

The GMCA has developed a range of programmes to support the local authorities work in tackling homelessness and to support the GM Mayor in his commitments on rough sleeping. The three main programmes of work are as follows:

- The Social Impact Bond (SIB) for Entrenched Rough Sleepers
- The GM Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer
- The Housing First Programme

The SIB for Entrenched Rough Sleepers

This payment by results programme is targeted at the most entrenched rough sleepers and aims to:

- find them suitable accommodation
- arrive at positive solutions and obtain support for general well-being (including support with substance misuse and mental health issues)
- help them to enter into education, training or employment

The GM Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer

At a GM level there is a Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer Programme which has received funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government’s (MHCLG). This focuses on the following themes to:

- Deliver a consistent approach to data and systems
- Create a network of Hub provision across GM
- Develop a GM-wide Social Lettings Agency
- Create a GM Homelessness Action Network to support and build capacity in the stakeholder sector
- Deliver a Housing First system across GM
- Develop meaningful and consistent customer pathways
- Develop an integrated health and homelessness offer

Tameside Metropolitan Council is fully engaged in combatting homelessness at a Greater Manchester level. They are represented on, and contributing to, GM strategic groups such as the GM Housing Providers’ Group, the GM Housing Needs Group and the GM Health and Social Care Network.

Tameside Council has also signed up to the GM pledges relating to homelessness which are:

- To identify options that will increase rehousing opportunities for people who are currently in temporary and supported accommodation.
- To develop models of support for those who have experienced homelessness and are moving into a secure tenancy. Additional consideration is to be given to women who tend to be unrepresented within current 'on the streets' services.
- Increase affordable rehousing opportunities to homeless applicants through a shared model of living that works within Local Housing Allowance cost limitations.
- To identify eligible people, including those experiencing homelessness by referring them into the Motiv8 programme. The programme is aimed at helping those people who experience multiple barriers move closer to employment, and improve their life chances.
- To ensure all people working in rehousing and homelessness services have up to date knowledge and skills.
- To support the Manchester Housing First Programme with rehousing provision.

The Housing First Programme

The MHCLG has awarded the GMCA 3 years funding to commission a Housing First programme across all 10 boroughs for people facing multiple needs and exclusion leading to them having difficulties in finding and sustaining suitable accommodation and increasing their risk of recurring homelessness. Housing First is a very innovative programme which has proved successful.

Housing First is designed for people who need significant levels of help to enable them to leave homelessness. This model focuses on the provision of housing as a starting point rather than an end goal.

Pleace (2016) states "rather than being required to accept treatment or complete a series of 'steps' to access housing, someone in a Housing First service leaps over the steps and goes straight into housing. Support is then provided to help Housing First service users to sustain their housing and promote their health and well-being and social integration, within a framework that gives service users a high degree of choice and control."

Housing First service users are actively encouraged to minimise harm from drugs and alcohol and to use treatment but they are not required to do so.

This model is governed by the following 8 core principles:

- Housing is a human right
- Choice and control for service users
- Separation of housing and treatment
- Recovery orientation
- Harm reduction
- Active engagement without coercion
- Person centred planning
- Flexible support for as long as required

Tameside Council is committed to, and actively engaged in, contributing to these programmes. This work will be integrated into the strategic action plan which supports this strategy.

TAMESIDE'S DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Tameside Borough comprises nine towns which include: Ashton-under-Lyne, Audenshaw, Denton, Droylsden, Dukinfield, Hyde, Longdendale, Mossley and Stalybridge. The total population is approximately 220,800¹ and the landscape combines a mix of urban and rural areas.

The population breakdown shows that just over a half of the population of Tameside Borough (50.8%) are women. Almost a fifth (19.6%) of the population are under 16 years old, with slightly less (17.1%) being of pensionable age. The remaining 63.2% of the population are of working age (16 to 64 years old). Forecasts predict that over the next 20 years, the age profile of the population is expected to change significantly. The number of older people; residents aged 65 years and above are projected to increase by 64.9% by 2037 (from 37,000 to 61,000 residents in this age group). The borough is becoming increasingly diverse, with 9.1% of residents from black or minority ethnic groups, of which people of Asian and Asian British heritage make up the largest number.

Appendix B provides details of the health and wellbeing of people in Tameside. The Joint Needs Assessment has shown that the health and wellbeing of people in Tameside is generally worse than the England average, with the exception of a few wards. The data shows that deprivation is higher than the England average, in Tameside with over 10,560 children under 16 years living in low income families. This is a decrease from previous years.

Statistics show that life expectancy at birth for both males and females is lower than the England average (approx. 77.3 years males, 80.7 years females). Life expectancy locally is 10.4 years lower for men and 8 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Tameside compared to the least deprived areas.

HOMELESSNESS SERVICES IN TAMESIDE

In Tameside a range of homelessness services are provided. These include services commissioned by Tameside Council and services provided by other organisations. Details about these are provided in Appendix C.

HOMELESSNESS AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Work is underway in Tameside to promote the accessibility of primary care services to homeless people and to help homeless people to register with GP practices. Examples of best practice in this area are being considered such as the Homeless Friendly GP initiative organised by the not-for-profit social enterprise Beacon GP CARE. This initiative encourages NHS surgeries and other healthcare providers to pledge to become homeless friendly in the way they conduct their business, to share good practice and to offer practical support to the homeless.

In Tameside Borough an intelligence gathering exercise is taking place to ascertain the number of homeless people in Tameside who are registered with GP practices and to develop an approach to facilitating access to flu vaccination for rough sleepers.

The strategic action plan supporting Tameside Borough's Preventing Homelessness Action plan will incorporate actions relating to: promoting the health and wellbeing of homeless people and those at risk of homelessness, and making healthcare services more accessible to them.

HOMELESSNESS IN TAMESIDE

A review of homelessness was undertaken and details of this review are provided in the Appendices. Both quantitative and qualitative data informed this review. Qualitative data was gathered through undertaking extensive consultation with homeless people and with organisations working with the homeless in Tameside. The validity of the data was promoted by ensuring that the individuals interviewed had direct experience of homelessness or of working with homeless people in Tameside. The data gathered was triangulated to ensure its robustness. Respondent validation of the data was achieved by holding a strategic workshop in March 2018 involving over 30 stakeholder organisations and services in discussing, assessing and evaluating the consultation findings. Details of the consultation findings are provided in Appendix A.

¹ Office for National Statistics Mid Year Population Estimates 2014.

The following quantitative data was used to inform the review:

- The national statutory homelessness P1E data returns.²
- National research findings. For example research reports published by the National Audit Office, HM Government, Crisis, Homeless Link, Barnardo's and Centrepont.
- Contract monitoring data of the homelessness services commissioned by Tameside Council
- Tameside services activity data
- Census data
- The Joint Strategic Needs Analysis for 2016/17
- Tameside's Housing Needs Assessment 2017

Key messages from the Homelessness Review are:

- It is difficult to calculate how many people are homeless since many homeless people are the "hidden homeless" and do not appear in the official statistics.
- Many people perceive homelessness to be sleeping rough on the streets and are not aware that homelessness can include people:
 - Staying with friends or family
 - Staying in a hostel or bed and breakfast accommodation
 - Squatting
 - At risk of violence or abuse in their home
 - Living in poor conditions that affect their health
 - Living apart from their family because they do not have a place to live together
- There are increasing numbers of households seeking assistance. Demand for assistance from the Tameside Housing Advice Service has increased by 47% during the year 2017/18 compared to the level of demand in 2016/17.³
- The top reason for homelessness in Tameside during 2017-18 identified in the P1E statutory returns is that other relatives or friends are no longer willing or able to accommodate. However the consultation undertaken in Tameside has revealed a wide range of factors which cause homelessness.
- During the year 2017/18 there was an increase of 11% in the number of placements into all types of temporary accommodation used by Tameside Housing Advice in comparison with the number of placements made in 2016/17.
- The high level of demand for supported housing in Tameside. In the year 2017/18, 151 referrals were received for supported housing commissioned by Tameside Council however, only 57 placements were made.
- There are a wide range of services for homeless people within the borough but not everyone is aware of the services provided. There is a need to raise awareness of these.
- There are examples of numerous initiatives from the faith sector in Tameside to help the homeless and a desire to prevent homelessness. There are a large number of foodbanks in Tameside.
- There are untapped resources in the community which need to be nurtured and empowered to prevent homelessness.
- The Housing Needs Assessment has shown a 3.5% projected increase in the cohort aged 15-29 years and most notably an increase of 7.9% in the cohort aged 80+ years.
- There is a significant increase in the number of households active on the Tameside's housing register. As at 31st March 2018, there were 434 households active on the housing register in comparison to 301 for the same period in 2016/17. In quarter 4 of 2017/18, 421 new applications were received compared with 325 in the same quarter the previous year 2016/17
- The current housing offer in Tameside is focused around 2 and 3-bed properties with very few smaller and larger properties
- There is increasing demand for affordable housing, a very high demand for one bed accommodation and also a demand for housing for large families.
- Access to a wider range of affordable permanent accommodation options is needed. For example an increase in the range of affordable options for:
 - Large families
 - Single people
 - Young people
 - Care leavers

² Each local housing authority is required to consider housing needs within its area, including the needs of homeless households, to whom local authorities have a statutory duty to provide assistance. The purpose of the quarterly P1E form is to collect data from English local housing authorities on their responsibilities under homelessness legislation.

³ Telephone contacts are not included in this statistic.

- There are continuing financial pressures and uncertain circumstances.
- There is a dramatic increase in levels of rough sleeping in Tameside and data collected during the implementation of cold weather arrangements suggests that the number of those sleeping rough is greater than the estimate undertaken on 2 November 2017. (It should be noted that the data collected for the estimate complied with strict national criteria and was verified, whereas the number of those presenting for shelter during cold weather was a count of those who presented.)
- During the period 29 November 2017 to 31 March 2018 cold weather provision was triggered on 37 nights and there were 414 placements made available.

THE CAUSES OF HOMELESSNESS IN TAMESIDE

Statutory data which is collected every quarter through the P1E return has shown that the top 5 reasons for homelessness during 2017/18 were:

1. Other relatives or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate
2. Parents no longer willing or able to accommodate
3. Required to leave accommodation provided by Home Office as asylum support
4. Violent breakdown of relationship involving partner/non –violent breakdown of relationship
5. Termination of assured shorthold tenancy

Tameside Council's Homelessness Team has responded proactively to these findings and has already put in place a range of initiatives and investment in response. These include amongst other things: investing resources in developing a Mediation Scheme; developing an accommodation pathway for young people at risk of homelessness; appointing a housing resettlement support worker to work with Asylum Seekers who have been given leave to remain in the United Kingdom to assist them to make the best use of the housing options available to them; and putting in place a number of developments to increase access to private sector accommodation. Further details are provided in the introduction to the strategy.

The consultation undertaken in Tameside Borough revealed a wide range of factors which organisations and services identified as causes for homelessness in Tameside. Please see the table in the Appendix A. The causes identified include: national policies such as the Welfare Reform, lack of finances leading to accrual of debt, the issuing of a section 21 notice⁴ and eviction, low or no wages and lack of affordable housing, lack of housing options available, the breakdown in family relationships, family and friends no longer able to accommodate the person, substance misuse, poor mental health, people who become disabled and their current house is no longer accessible, a combination of factors, changes in circumstances, anti-social behaviour leading to eviction, people with offending histories, and operational issues experienced by agencies leading to delays in making homelessness decisions.

National policy, i.e. the impacts of Welfare Reform was identified as a key factor which has led to a significant increase in homelessness. This introduced changes such as the introduction of the bedroom tax, the benefits cap, the Housing Benefit limitations on those aged under 25 years and the introduction of Universal Credit.

The lack of finance was identified by agencies as a key reason why people became homeless. It was noted that people have higher expectations and are used to a certain standard of living that they are unable to sustain. The accrual of debts, low wages, the loss of employment, and changes to benefits arising through the welfare reform were identified as key financial factors causing homelessness.

The lack of housing options. The shortage of "affordable" housing. It was noted that even "affordable" housing is not affordable for some people and there are long waiting lists for social housing. The bedroom tax has stopped people from moving into available 2 bedroom properties.

The breakdown in family relationships and negative lifestyle choices leading to substance misuse, mental health issues

A combination of factors which may be interrelated such as mental health problems, drugs, finances etc.

⁴ A Section 21 Notice to quit is a legal tool, which the landlord can use to regain possession from a property which is let under an Assured Shorthold Tenancy. It gives the landlord the right to request you to leave the property, giving you two months of time under the rules of Section 21. This is the first step of the eviction process, but it itself is not considered an eviction.

PRIORITY GROUPS IN TAMESIDE BOROUGH

In Tameside Borough the groups below have been identified as being potentially the most at risk of homelessness. Actions need to be targeted at these groups to prevent this from occurring:

- people released from prison or youth detention accommodation
- care leavers
- former members of the regular armed forces
- victims of domestic abuse
- people leaving hospital
- people suffering from a mental illness or impairment
- people with substance misuse issues
- Asylum Seekers who have been issued with refugee status
- young people on low income
- older people who become disabled and their current home is no longer accessible
- large families on a low income
- single people who do not meet priority need

People Released from Prison or Youth Detention Accommodation

The consultation findings indicated that people with an offending history are a group which is potentially at risk of having recurring homelessness. The consultation findings showed that repeat offenders may experience recurring homelessness.

The consultation undertaken has raised a number of issues in Tameside relating to people with an offending history:

1. Lack of communication when being taken into custody can cause a person to lose their accommodation and become homeless.

The consultation revealed the importance of ensuring that communication is maintained with the individual's landlord and the DWP if they are taken into custody suddenly. Increasingly those with an offending history may be given short custodial sentences when they are in and out of custody and as a result their landlord and the DWP may be unaware of the current status of the individual. The lack of communication with the DWP has led to the cessation of benefit payments which in turn has led to the accrual of rent arrears. This has resulted in the loss of the person's tenancy through eviction.

The consultation findings show that, in the event of a short custodial sentence, it is important that the court picks up housing issues and that a nominated person is identified to raise these issues with the offender's next of kin/contact person. This will ensure that the landlord is informed that the tenant has been taken into custody, and also that the keys to the accommodation are returned to the landlord where appropriate. Arrangements also need to be made to collect the offender's correspondence whilst he/she is in custody. Also the DWP needs to be informed of a change in circumstances.

2. There is a shortage of support for those with an offending history and no accommodation in place for their release

The consultation findings revealed the need for improved communication between the prisons, Shelter (who run the Through the Gate Programme in some prisons), Probation Services, GM and Cheshire CRC and Tameside Housing Advice Service.

The consultation showed that individuals who are released from prison have presented as homeless to Tameside Housing Advice on the day of their release. Consultees suggested that a more effective service could be provided to those being released from prison. For example, if Shelter provide sufficient notice in advance (i.e. more than one week's notice) and send ID to the Tameside Housing Service before the person presents. Appropriate advance notice would enable effective triaging to be undertaken.

The consultation findings showed that there are cases where someone is released from prison but does not present at Tameside Housing Advice straight away. They may stay with family and friends and then present some time later. In this instance they are not seen as a release from prison case. However their background history later reveals this.

3. Barriers to obtaining housing due to committing specific offences

The consultation indicated that there are different types of offenders who experience barriers to obtaining accommodation.

The commission of specific offences appears to exclude some individuals from housing. For example, an official highlighted that sex offenders appear to experience all the barriers to obtaining accommodation and the additional barriers of stigma and risk.

Tameside Council commissions Roots a service for high risk offenders including sex offenders. The Roots service provides an intensive tenancy support and compliance service for a minimum of 10 offenders (at any 1 time). These are offenders who are subject to Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and Prolific and Priority Offender (PPO) arrangements. It provides housing related support to enable service users to successfully manage their tenancy. It facilitates access to appropriate housing for a client group that is typically excluded from housing but for whom appropriate housing is key to successful outcomes and an essential component to avoid reoffending.

The consultation showed that other offenders who have a history of violence, and those who have committed arson, also experience exclusion from accommodation. The consultation revealed that the offence of arson may encompass a wide range of crimes which vary in level of severity and the risk they pose. Some arson convictions could be setting a wheelie bin alight and this could be a one-off event whereas others may be more serious arson convictions. The recording of the offence, its severity and frequency is important. The level of severity of the crime and its frequency should be taken into account when planning the resettlement of those with an offending history.

4. The impact of a history of accruing rent arrears on being able to secure accommodation

The consultation findings showed that it was very difficult for a person who has an offending history and a history of accruing rent arrears to obtain accommodation. This strategy recommends that offenders are given information about Tameside's Resettlement Scheme and other support available to help.

5. Unwillingness to accept certain types of accommodation such as Supported Accommodation

The consultation revealed that some people who have an offending history are unwilling to accept supported accommodation. This issue requires further investigation. It may be that those with an offending history are unaware of the type of supported accommodation which is provided in Tameside. This strategy recommends that action is taken to identify from offenders why they are unwilling to accept supported accommodation.

Do they know what supported accommodation is? The data collected appears to suggest that they may, mistakenly, think that supported accommodation in Tameside is a hostel. Some offenders do not want to go to hostel accommodation on their release from prison due to problems which may be encountered there such as disputes and drug abuse.

6. Poor mental health resulting in the inability to hold down a tenancy

The consultation findings have shown that it can be very difficult for a person to sustain a tenancy if they are a repeat offender, in and out of prison, and have poor mental health. A consultee explained, "The person may have full housing duty but is unable to hold a tenancy and has 'burnt all his bridges'... and Mental Health Services don't know about him." This shows the importance of further developing joint working between Probation Services, Adult Mental Health Services and Tameside Housing Advice Services to develop creative accommodation pathways to enable those with an offending history and poor mental health to obtain and sustain their tenancy.

7. Young offenders aged between 18-25 years finding it difficult to manage a tenancy

The Probation Services in Tameside have observed that young offenders aged 18 to 25 years old may have more chaotic lifestyles and find it very difficult to manage and sustain a tenancy.

Care Leavers

The consultation raised the following issues relating to young people leaving care in Tameside which include the need for:

- a. More integrated working between the Leaving Care Team and homelessness services (e.g. Tameside Housing Advice, Tameside Council's Homelessness team).

To further develop joint working, the Leaving Care Service has recently set up a new Accommodation Panel to discuss the accommodation needs of Care Leavers with representatives of Tameside Housing Advice, Tameside Council's Homelessness Team and other key services. Through closer working arrangements the Leaving Care Service are developing their understanding of Homelessness Services in Tameside and the housing options available.

In addition to this, the Senior Strategy Housing Officer from the Homelessness Service is working closely with the Manager of the Leaving Care Team, the Transition Support Team Manager and Care Leavers to develop appropriate actions to prevent homelessness. These actions will be incorporated into the strategic action plan which supports the strategy.

- b. The Leaving Care Service to undertake earlier resettlement planning with Care Leavers involving the keys services and agencies

Consultees suggested that information about housing issues should be given to care leavers at an earlier stage.

- c. Clear accommodation pathways for young people leaving care

A new Homelessness Project Officer has now been appointed by Tameside Council's Homelessness Team to work with the Leaving Care Service to develop a clear accommodation pathway for young people leaving care.

- d. A holistic response to helping young care leavers to sustain tenancies and prevent the accrual of rent arrears.

The evidence shows that some care leavers have a pattern of losing their tenancies due to rent arrears and therefore becoming "intentionally homeless".

- e. A planned approach to transition from children's services to adult services

Emerging issues identified through the consultation undertaken in Tameside has identified that there are problems encountered during the transition from children's services to adults' services. A successful transition requires advance planning before the person reaches the age of 18 years. Without this a person may find that they lose all services once they reach the age of 18 years.

- f. Affordable supported housing

Former Members of the Armed Forces

The 2011 Census identified that 522 residents in Tameside Metropolitan Borough are employed in the Armed Forces. Of these, 66.7% live in owner occupation and 33.3% live in a property rented from a Housing Association.

National evidence suggests that significant numbers of ex-armed forces personnel face difficulties after returning to civilian life, including financial hardship, poor physical and mental health, and low self-esteem. Housing is a key area where the armed forces community require support; SSAFA –the Armed Forces charity (formerly known as Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association) has found that many working age veterans believe their housing situation has been disadvantaged by military service.

Tameside Council commissioned Salford University to undertake a review of the level of demand for housing and housing related support among the armed forces community in Tameside in 2017. A report was produced in 2017 by Wilding entitled "Meeting the housing needs of the armed forces community in Tameside." The Wilding (2017) review made the following recommendations:

- There needs to be better identification of armed forces applicants, along with more accurate recording and storing of data by all organisations working with the armed forces community on housing related issues;
- Given that ex-armed forces personnel do not always disclose their status and that this can be a sensitive issue, there is some scope for armed forces charities to provide guidance on ways of eliciting this information;
- All housing providers and community organisations providing housing related support should sign up to the Armed

Forces Covenant and pledge to ensure that the armed forces community is not disadvantaged when using their services;

- Housing associations could work more closely with armed forces charities to tap into available support and expertise. One potential way of doing this is through participation in TASC; in order to ensure that ex-armed forces personnel are offered the full range of support available to them, housing providers should include a question on registration forms requesting permission to discuss their case with armed forces charities;
- Ex-armed forces personnel may also be more willing to disclose their status if they are aware of how this affects their housing rights. One way of increasing awareness is by distributing promotional materials through Tameside Housing Advice and the armed forces charities;
- Armed forces charities should look at producing guidance for housing providers in Tameside on the particular housing requirements of the armed forces community;
- There is a case for removing the time limit for prioritising the armed forces community, as many of the issues experienced by ex-armed forces personnel, including mental health problems, can reoccur or be on-going for longer periods of time;
- Supported living networks should be further explored as a means of enabling the armed forces community to support each other whilst living among the wider community.

People with Substance Misuse

The consultation data showed that this group may have very chaotic lifestyles and find it very difficult to hold down a tenancy. There are instances where those with a substance misuse issue have left a tenancy and entered a rehabilitation programme but failed to complete the programme. As a result they become homeless.

Victims of Domestic Abuse

In 2017 domestic abuse resulting in the breakdown of a relationship was the top reason in Greater Manchester for being accepted as statutory homeless. Furthermore, data collected in the North West regarding acceptances of homelessness applications has shown that from 2011 to 2017, violent relationship breakdown was the top reason for loss of the applicant's last settled home. (Please see the relevant graph on page 9).

From 1 April to 31 December 2017, in Tameside borough there were a total of 4,265 incidences of domestic abuse, at all risk levels.

The consultation findings in Tameside indicated that victims of domestic abuse may also be victims of repeat homelessness. There is a range of information targeted to this group, for example by Police and Tameside Hospital. Tameside Council has recently run a campaign on male victims of domestic abuse.

Supporting victims of domestic abuse is identified as a priority in Tameside. Tameside Council has commissioned a range of services which are specifically targeted to victims of domestic abuse. These services include a 24 hour staffed women's refuge, dispersed tenancies in the community, Housing First provision, and a Sanctuary scheme.

The provision of Sanctuary measures (security measures to enable the victim to remain living at home) is one of the single most effective homelessness prevention measures available to local authorities.

People Leaving Hospital

The consultation indicated that people with mental illness who are sectioned in hospital may lose their tenancy due to the accrual of rent arrears. This can occur due to the patient being unable to contact the landlord and DWP to confirm that they were in hospital. This may occur, in particular, to young men with a dual diagnosis.

The consultation undertaken revealed that there is difficulty in finding permanent placements for homeless people who are leaving hospital. Family and friends are relied on as a temporary placement but more permanent accommodation is needed.

People Suffering from a Mental Illness or Impairment

The consultation demonstrated the need for a holistic, multi-agency approach to tackling the needs of tenants with poor mental health to prevent them from becoming homeless. It was suggested that Tameside should have a multi-agency meeting focusing on tenants who are at risk of homelessness.

It was suggested that posters and leaflets about preventing homelessness and the services available are placed in Primary Care Centres and waiting areas and that doctors are asked to give them out to patients. Consultees stated that post cards or business cards are easy to give someone and they could carry them around if needed.

Asylum Seekers Who Have Been Issued With Refugee Status

Asylum Seekers are given support and accommodation from SERCO in Tameside but once they have been issued with refugee status they are given only 28 days' notice before they have to leave the SERCO accommodation. As a result the person lacks accommodation and support and income. They are unable to secure employment or benefits due to the lack of a national insurance number. The consultation revealed that it can take a while for the national insurance number to be issued.

Tameside Council has recruited a housing resettlement support worker to assist asylum seekers who have been issued with refugee status to assist them to secure accommodation.

Young People

The consultation revealed that young people are at risk of homelessness. It should be noted that young people are particularly affected by the Welfare Reform. Young people who are on low wages may not be able to afford housing which is designated as "affordable." Tameside Council is currently developing accommodation pathways for young people and are piloting a shared tenancy initiative with Ashton Pioneer Homes aimed at providing young people with lower cost accommodation.

Families

The Housing Needs Assessment (2017) has shown that over the last 12 months, there has been an increase in the number of families requiring large accommodation. This appears to be due to changes to national welfare policy and the implementation of a cap on benefits.

Families (that is couples and lone parents with children, including adult children living at home) account for around 46.0% of households across Tameside. Of this number, 32.1% are couples and lone parents with dependent children and 13.9% are parents with adult children (2017 Household Survey data).

The Housing Needs Assessment (2017) has shown that the main property type occupied by families was semi-detached properties (around 42.0%). Around half of all family households would like a detached property but only 17.7% expect a detached property. In comparison only 3.2% would like a flat / apartment but 11.9% would expect to move to this type of property.

The evidence shows that families are more likely to live in unsuitable housing or experience homelessness. 60.8% of all families are in some form of housing need, compared with 9.1% across all households in Tameside.

Single People

The Housing Needs Assessment (2017) in Tameside has shown that there is a lack of one bedroom accommodation available but there are increasing numbers of single people seeking this accommodation. The research has shown that young people on low wages are finding it increasingly difficult to obtain accommodation. To help address this problem Tameside Council has commissioned an innovative pilot project from one of our registered providers, Ashton Pioneer Homes, to provide single people with shared accommodation. This enables them to have access to more affordable accommodation. Two bedroom accommodation has been converted to provide two bedrooms which can be locked and a shared kitchen and bathroom.

The homelessness data has shown the single people presenting as homeless at the Tameside Housing Advice Service appear to have more complex needs and lead chaotic lifestyles. They may have received many chances to obtain accommodation but failed to sustain their tenancy. They are at a place where their options are now very limited.

ROUGH SLEEPING

The proportion of rough sleepers in England from GM has nearly trebled since 2010 and the rates of increase in GM consistently and significantly outstrips the increase in England as a whole. In GM overall, 78% of identified rough sleepers are from 4 boroughs - Manchester, Salford, Tameside and Wigan.

Eliminating rough sleeping is a priority for the GM Mayor and extensive activity has been undertaken to tackle this issue. Access to emergency bedspaces has been increased across GM and the response to Cold Weather Provision has been developed to provide a more coordinated approach. During the winter of 2017-2018 there has been an unprecedented number of referrals into accommodation during cold weather. In April 2018, an evaluation was undertaken of the response to winter/cold weather provision and the learning from this will be used to form recommendations for further improvements.

Tameside Council submitted a bid to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in 2018 for additional resources to provide new services to prevent and relieve rough sleeping. This bid was successful and will support the Council to provide the following additional services: a multi-agency assertive outreach service, a Rough Sleepers Co-ordinator Post and more accommodation options for those at risk of rough sleeping.

Who is Sleeping Rough in Tameside? A profile of rough sleepers in Tameside; numbers, support needs and demographics;

CATEGORY	DETAIL		NUMBERS/DESCRIPTION	
Street Count 2017	Estimate undertaken on 2 November 2017		43	
	Previous estimate undertaken on 10 November 2016		19	
Person Specific – at the street count	Gender		Male 39	Female 4
	Ethnicity			
	Age	16-25 4	25-29 30	60+ 0
	Nationality/ Immigration Status	UK 34	EU 4	Other 1
	Entrenched/Revolving Door		Over 40 referred to GM Entrenched Rough Sleepers Project	
	Short term/Intermittent		5	
	Misc. couples, pets etc.		2 Couples	
	Not known (with reasons why)		Age not known of 9 people	
Primary Support Needs of above (as far as is known)	Drugs/Alcohol		7 linked to services	
	Mental Health		10 known to secondary mental health services	
	Other Health			
	Institutional history (Care, Prison, Armed Forces)		7 (offenders)	
Area Connections of above	Local Connection to your LA		39	
	England			
	UK (other than England)			
	Non-UK		4	
Not known				
Service plans for above	How many have a Single Service Plan/Multi Agency Plan in place		Most have been referred to Entrenched Rough Sleepers Project	

<p>In addition to the people identified above, how many additional people slept rough or were prevented from sleeping rough in your local area during September to December 2017?</p>	<p>Cold weather numbers indicate higher numbers of rough sleepers than those captured in estimate.</p> <p>We have collated the data on cold weather placements, referrals to the GM Entrenched Rough Sleepers' Project and all persons identified for the estimate (including those that were not submitted as we could not meet the verification standards per the guidance).</p> <p>This provides a figure of 131 individuals. Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 couples • 13 women • 59 unknown date of birth • 8 aged 21- 25 • 23 aged 23 – 40 • 33 aged 40-50 • 8 aged 50-58 • No over 60s <p>43 referred to GM Entrenched rough sleepers project (SIB)</p> <p>7 have had applications for assistance under local welfare provision approved – this includes 5 who were supported via the SIB</p>
<p>Any other relevant information on rough sleeping in your area (e.g. particular local challenges, causes or concerns)</p>	<p>Cold weather arrangements in place between 29 November and end of March 2018 414 placements made of 84 individuals.</p> <p>Lack of supported accommodation – funding was cut in 2016 by 60%</p> <p>No local assertive outreach</p> <p>Limited targeted resources</p> <p>Limited accommodation dedicated to rough sleepers</p>

A BED FOR EVERY NIGHT

A Bed For Every Night is a GM commitment to provide a bed, welcome, hot meal and support for anyone sleeping rough in GM during the period 1 November 2018 until 31 March 2019. This provision is offered regardless of the temperature. Tameside Council has signed up to this commitment and has put in place local arrangements from 1 November 2018.

TAMESIDE HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT (HNA)

To obtain a clear understanding of Tameside Borough's full housing needs the Council has undertaken a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA). The HNA was produced in September 2017.

The evidence presented in this HNA 2017 suggests that there are three main policy areas that require special attention from both a planning policy and social policy perspective:

- The challenge of enabling the quantity and mix of housing that needs to be delivered;
- The challenge of ensuring that the housing and support needs of older people are met going forward; and
- The challenge of driving up the quality of the private rented sector and increasing the sustainability of tenancies.

Securing Sufficient Accommodation for People in the District who are or may Become Homeless

Tameside Council undertook a 2017 Household Survey and collected a range of secondary data to provide a robust evidence base to assess housing need across Tameside Borough. One way of promoting access to accommodation is by increasing the level of affordable housing and by improving access to good quality private sector accommodation.

The evidence presented in the Council's HNA 2017 shows an annual imbalance of 421 affordable dwellings across Tameside each year. Tameside's Housing Needs Assessment recommends that the Council should seek to reduce this through, for instance, newbuild stock. The data shows variations by ward, designation (general needs and older person) and property size.

**NET ANNUAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING IMBALANCE BY WARD, PROPERTY SIZE AND DESIGNATION
2017/18 TO 2027/28**

Ward	General Needs		Older Person	Total
	1/2 Bed	3+ Bed	1/2 Bed	
Ashton Hurst	20	19	2	42
Ashton St Michael's	69	16	6	91
Ashton Waterloo	86	29	12	127
Audenshaw	30	51	17	98
Denton North East	21	46	12	80
Denton South	46	10	4	59
Denton West	-1	20	7	26
Droylsden East	33	16	10	59
Droylsden West	10	52	11	73
Dukinfield	21	35	2	58
Dukinfield Stalybridge	4	5	2	10
Hyde Godley	30	-86	-6	-62
Hyde Newton	17	-44	-57	-84
Hyde Werneth	-5	38	3	36
Longdendale	0	-12	-3	-15
Mossley	-11	-12	-5	-28
St Peter's	0	-6	-19	-25
Stalybridge North	0	-81	-32	-112
Stalybridge South	-7	-4	-2	-13
Tameside Total	365	93	-37	421

There is a significant increasing demand for assistance to prevent or relieve homelessness in Tameside Borough and to meet the needs of those who are owed the main housing duty. The Homelessness presentation figures show the following trends:

The Strategic Housing Needs Assessment has identified that there are 9,589 existing households in need which represents 9.1% of all households. The reasons for this housing need are provided in the table below:

SUMMARY OF CURRENT HOUSING NEED ACROSS TAMESIDE		
Category	Factor	Tameside Metropolitan Borough
Homeless households or with insecure tenure	N1: Under notice, real threat of notice or lease coming to an end	284
	N2: Too expensive, and in receipt of housing benefit or in arrears due to expense	1,146
Mismatch of housing need and dwellings	N3: Overcrowded according to the 'bedroom standard' model	4,343
	N4: Too difficult to maintain	1,037
	N5: Couples, people with children and single adults over 25 sharing a kitchen, bathroom or WC with another household	1,916
	N6: Household containing people with mobility impairment or other special needs living in unsuitable accommodation	1,457
Dwelling amenities and condition	N7: Lacks a bathroom, kitchen or inside WC and household does not have resource to make fit	158
	N8: Subject to major disrepair or unfitness and household does not have resource to make fit	644
Social needs	N9: Harassment or threats of harassment from neighbours or others living in the vicinity which cannot be resolved except through a move	827
Total no. households in need (with one or more housing need)		9,589
Total Households		104,840
% households in need		9.1%

The HNA 2017 shows that the proportion of households in need varies across all the wards. The proportion is highest in ward of Ashton Waterloo (16.6%) and Denton North East (15.9%) and lowest in the ward of Stalybridge South (3.8%) and Mossley (3.9%).

Tameside Borough's Preventing Homelessness Strategy advocates a holistic and integrated response to preventing homelessness. It reinforces our commitment to prevent homelessness and to intervene at the earliest stage before households reach the point of crisis. It promotes increasing the resilience of vulnerable people and providing targeted support to prevent homelessness. This strategy sets out the actions we will take to help prevent even more people from becoming homeless and provide tailored support to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

This strategy has been developed following extensive consultation with our partners and homeless people. These include our statutory partner organisations such as the NHS, Probation Services, the GM and Cheshire Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), GMP, and the GM Fire and Rescue Service; it also includes Registered Providers of Housing, commissioned and non-commissioned homelessness services, a wide range of third sector organisations including members of the faith sector. Homeless people have been involved in the development of this strategy and their experiences have shaped the priorities identified. The current challenges are to manage current and increasing demand for accommodation while implementing the new Homelessness legislation, which brings with it, increased duties and powers.

This Preventing Homelessness strategy promotes working together to identify at an early stage potential risks and intervening at an earlier stage to prevent homelessness. This strategy has the support of all relevant local authority departments and partners. Corporate and partnership involvement was secured in identifying the strategic priorities and this has helped to ensure that all relevant departments and agencies are committed to supporting their delivery.

This strategy has included consideration of the benefits of cross-boundary co-operation and forms part of a coherent approach to tackling homelessness with neighbouring authorities. This strategy is aligned with the Greater Manchester Homelessness Action Network strategy. A strategy to end rough sleeping by 2020, and develop a 10-year plan to tackle the issues of wider homelessness.

This strategy also links with other strategies and programmes that aim to address the wide range of factors that could contribute to homelessness in Tameside Borough. These strategies are listed in Appendix D.

These strategies and programmes encompass aspects of local health, justice and economic policy, poverty and domestic abuse amongst other considerations.

This strategy is co-ordinated with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and our review of homelessness informs and is informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

This strategy is based on realistic assumptions and has been developed and is owned jointly with partners who are responsible for its delivery. This strategy will be taken into account by housing and social services authorities when exercising its functions.

HOW THIS STRATEGY WAS DEVELOPED

An inclusive and participatory approach was taken to develop this strategy. At the outset, key stakeholders were given the opportunity to shape the development of this strategy. The Preventing Homelessness multi-agency forum and the Registered Providers Forum were at the centre of its development and a project team with representatives from key services, led by the Senior Housing Strategy Officer, was set up.

Extensive consultation was undertaken to develop the strategy and this has included:

- Face to face interviews with senior managers from partner organisations which took place from September 2017 to March 2018
- Two break out groups focusing on the Preventing Homelessness Strategy attended by members of the public and representatives of partner organisations. This took place at the Tameside Partnership Engagement Network (PEN) workshop held on 13 October 2017
- Consulting veterans at the Veterans Breakfast in November 2017
- The Preventing Homelessness Workshop held on 16 November 2017
- A focus group with commissioned and non-commissioned service providers in November 2017
- A focus group with staff at Tameside Housing Advice Service, Ashton under Lyne held on 15 December 2017
- An interview with representatives of the Church of the Nazarene, Ashton under Lyne held on 12 December 2017
- A group interview with the manager and staff at the Women's Centre, Cavendish Mill on 6 March 2018
- A group interview with homeless men living in temporary accommodation at Greystones on 7 March 2018
- An interview with the Commissioning Officer for Supported Accommodation
- Face to face interviews with people with offending histories held on 22 February 2018
- A strategic workshop held on 14 March 2018 representing over 30 organisations and services (these are listed in the Appendices).
- A focus group with the Working Well Board on 23 March 2017
- Focus groups held with service users to inform the commissioning of services during the year 2017-18.

The following wider consultation was undertaken on the draft strategy from June to October 2018:

- The strategy was presented to the Population Health Service managers at their team meeting held in June.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Preventing Homelessness Forum and the Chair of the Registered Provider's Forum in June to discuss the strategy and obtain their comments
- Three workshops on the strategy were held with members of the public and partner organisations at the Public Engagement Network (PEN) Event on 27 June.
- Throughout July the public online consultation on the strategy was live on the Big Conversation Website/Webpage. This was widely publicised by Tameside Action Together.
- All councillors and all those who attended the PEN Preventing Homelessness workshops were informed about the online consultation and sent a link to this.
- On 5 July a Strategic Workshop on the strategy was held with a wide range of services and organisations who deliver services to homeless people in the Tameside Borough.
- On 10 July a focus group on the strategy was held with Social Workers from Tameside Council's Adults Service.

Individual meetings were also held with the:

- Commissioning Officer responsible for monitoring the contracts relating to the Women's Centre and Domestic Abuse
- Officer responsible for implementing sanctuary measures to enable victims of domestic abuse to remain in their home safely once the perpetrator of abuse has left.
- Partnership Manager for Tameside and Oldham from the Department of Works and Pensions
- In August the strategy was sent out to the members of Tameside Borough's Community Safety Partnership for comment
- On 11 September a meeting was held with the Chair of Tameside Adults Safeguarding Partnership Board (TASPB) and the strategy was presented to the Board.
- On 17 October, a presentation on the strategy was delivered to the Hyde Neighbourhood Delivery Group meeting.

OUR APPROACH TO PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS AND OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our approach is a proactive approach to work together to identify those at risk of homelessness at the earliest stage and to prevent people losing their homes.

Eight strategic priorities emerged from the extensive consultation undertaken. These include:

- A holistic and integrated response to preventing homelessness
- Proactive information management and provision of advice
- Raised awareness of the causes of homelessness and services, and a shared understanding that preventing homelessness is everyone's business
- Early intervention before a crisis
- Increased resilience and targeted support
- Preventing rough sleeping
- Access to a wide range of affordable, permanent accommodation options
- Identifying, cultivating and empowering untapped resources in the community

Each strategic priority will be discussed in turn.

A Holistic and Integrated Response to Preventing Homelessness

The consultation undertaken clearly identified the need for more integrated holistic responses to homelessness issues and key to this is effective cross service and multi-agency working in partnership at the outset of the issue. Working in partnership to prevent homelessness is vital in order to address the complexity of issues which may result in homelessness such as: poor mental health, debt, domestic violence, disability, an offending history, leaving care, leaving the armed forces, being discharged from hospital. A combination of factors may lead to a person being homeless, for example a young person leaving care may have substance misuse problems, have poor mental health and be unemployed.

Each factor needs to be addressed. A multi-disciplinary and multi-agency approach to arriving at solutions is needed to provide a holistic response. A range of skills, knowledge and resources need to be deployed to address the factors giving rise to homelessness.

In Tameside, services and organisations identified barriers which are hindering effective partnership working and examples of some of these barriers are:

- Some key services are not fully engaged in the preventing homelessness agenda
- The lack of a named contact for key services
- The difficulty of forging links with key services to obtain referrals. It is vital that the links established are kept in place.
- Some services, which have a significant impact on homelessness, were not fully engaged in this agenda. Is staff turnover and restructuring a factor?

Examples of some actions the strategy proposes to promote a holistic and integrated response to preventing homelessness include:

- A signed Tameside Preventing Homelessness Charter supported by all key stakeholders to reinforce their commitment to working together to prevent homelessness
- Multi-agency protocols and procedures followed by all key services for reaching joint solutions to preventing homelessness
- Early resettlement planning and clear accommodation pathways for those groups at risk of homelessness
- Designated homelessness champions for each key service in the Council and partner organisations.

Proactive Information Management and Provision of Advice

The consultation revealed the need to have a proactive approach in giving and receiving information to ensure that prompt action can be taken to prevent homelessness and timely decisions can be made about homelessness. It also demonstrated the importance of having an effective approach to obtaining a client's consent at the earliest opportunity to prevent homelessness and ensuring that this consent covered all the partners who are engaged in this. Barriers to the sharing of information included:

- Data protection issues. This includes the need to ensure that all partners understand the legislative requirements and the need to develop effective data sharing arrangements and safeguards which comply with the law.
- There are issues around differences in the information sharing protocols, for example between the DWP and Housing Benefit which caused barriers to the sharing of information
- The difficulty of contacting the client to obtain their consent which caused delays
- Long waiting times on the telephone trying to make contact with a key service
- The lack of communication with key services such as the prisons due to the lack of a named contact. This impacted upon the ability to prevent homelessness and to support homeless people being discharged from prison.
- The lack of clear referral pathways for those being released from prison so that these referrals can be supported in the community

Examples of some actions the strategy proposes to promote proactive information management and the provision of advice include:

- Developing information sharing protocols to promote the timely sharing of information between services and partners to prevent homelessness
- Developing a new joint approach to obtaining client consent for sharing data to prevent homelessness
- Having named contacts and direct lines to key services
- Effectively targeting tailored information to those at risk of homelessness
- Providing Preventing Homelessness Surgeries co-located with Health Neighbourhood Teams

Raised Awareness of the Causes of Homelessness and Services and a Shared Understanding that Preventing Homelessness is Everyone's Business.

The consultation revealed the need to raise the awareness of the general public, key decision makers, and strategic stakeholders of who homeless people are, the causes of homelessness and the preventing homelessness services which are available to homeless people. There was a perception held by some that homeless people are people who live rough on the street. There was a lack of awareness of the other forms of homelessness. There was also a lack of knowledge about some of the homelessness services available and a need to raise awareness about the new homelessness legislation.

The consultation indicated the need to work with schools and colleges to target those aged 16, 17 and 18 to provide information about housing, preventing homelessness, and to enable them to develop realistic expectations about the accommodation options which may be available.

Examples of some actions the strategy proposes to raise awareness of the causes of homelessness and services, and a shared understanding that preventing homelessness is everyone's business include:

- The development of a Preventing Homelessness Communication Strategy and targeted training.
- Preventing homelessness sessions integrated into the curriculum of schools and colleges.
- Preventing Homelessness training for GPs and practice staff, the Community Mental Health Team and other key staff.
- Running the Public Health Campaign alongside the launch and implementation of the Preventing Homelessness Strategy.
- A Directory of services.

Early Intervention before a Crisis

The main theme emerging from the consultation was that homeless people are not a priority until they reach crisis point. This could make people lie or put themselves at greater risk to get help. This strategy aims to promote intervention at the earliest opportunity and put in place triggers for the early identification of those at risk of becoming homeless.

Examples of some actions the strategy proposes to promote early intervention before a crisis include:

- Having triggers in place to identify earlier those at risk of homelessness.
- Early referrals and clear referral pathways.
- Forward planning and accommodation pathways.
- Investment in prevention tools such as:
 - Mediation
 - the Pre-Eviction Protocol and the early intervention of the Debt Team
 - Schemes to enable people to remain in their existing home (for example a Handy Person Scheme, and Sanctuary measures).

Increased Resilience and Targeted Support

The consultation suggested that there were gaps in support. For example there were occasions where support was being withdrawn too early and that this can impact upon a tenant's ability to maintain their tenancy. This strategy advocates a targeted approach to support to those who need it and the importance of promoting resilience.

Since 2010 funding from central to local government has been reduced by half and as a result the budgets of all Tameside Council services – including support and provision for people at the risk of homelessness – have been reduced over recent years. One impact of this has been the need to decrease the number of available spaces for placement in supported housing. However while some provision such as this has had to be scaled back other targeted initiatives have continued or newly developed and achieved positive results. Examples include the Housing First initiative for female offenders, women experiencing domestic abuse and for those with other complex problems, the Hospital Discharge Project and the Sanctuary Scheme.

This strategy advocates a targeted approach to support to those who need it and the importance of promoting resilience. Examples of some actions the strategy proposes to increase resilience and provide targeted support:

- Promoting effective move on from temporary accommodation and providing 4 weeks of tailored support to those that need it.
- Providing on-going floating support where required.
- Delivering training on promoting wellbeing, and managing a tenancy.
- Providing training and volunteering opportunities to homeless people to support them into employment.
- Amending relevant external contracts to include employment opportunities for homeless people.

Preventing Rough Sleeping

The intelligence collected for the annual Rough Sleepers Estimate on 2 November 2017 revealed that 43 people were rough sleeping compared to 19 who were estimated to be rough sleeping on 10 November 2016. This is an increase of 126.32%. This data complies with strict national definitions and criteria. The 2017 data has shown an increase in the number of younger people who are rough sleeping, and that there are some couples who are rough sleeping. There also appears to be an increase in the number of rough sleepers becoming entrenched rough sleepers and in the number of rough sleepers who have mental health issues.

Tameside Council have emergency arrangements in place to provide shelter for rough sleepers during cold weather. Cold weather arrangements were in place between 29 November 2017 and the end of March 2018. The data relating to placements during cold weather has shown that a total of 414 placements were made of 84 individuals. This suggests that there is a higher number of rough sleepers in Tameside than the number captured in the estimate on 2 November 2017.

Tameside Council has been successful in a bid to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government for additional resources to provide new services to prevent and relieve rough sleeping. This will enable the Council to provide a co-ordinated and pro-active response to people who are at risk of and who are rough sleeping. This will enable the Council to expand their existing service provision for rough sleepers. Examples of the actions to be taken include:

- Expanding our existing outreach provision by having a multi-agency team to provide assertive outreach.
- Developing our intelligence on those rough sleeping.
- Providing a gender specific Housing First accommodation for 6 female rough sleepers per year.
- Making referrals to the Greater Manchester Social Investment Bond project for entrenched rough sleepers which provides an opportunity for a new approach to rough sleepers.
- Employing a Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator to work with community and faith groups to identify options for winter provision.

Access to a Wider Range of Affordable Accommodation Options

The data revealed that the housing labelled “affordable” was not in fact affordable. It showed the lack of affordable housing, the lack of large houses for families, and the need for longer term accommodation options for single people.

Tameside Council does not have its own housing stock. It was the first council to undertake a total stock transfer around 2000. Jigsaw (formerly known as The New Charter Housing Trust) holds the majority of the housing stock which is around 15000 properties comprising a mixture of stock. Tameside Council has a very small housing register which is managed by the Jigsaw under a contract is targeted to those in extreme need.

Tameside Council is seeking to secure more housing nominations from Registered Providers for its housing register. Innovations have also been undertaken to modify existing housing stock to meet the need of more affordable housing for single young people, for example the Sharing Pilot which is being run by Ashton Pioneer Homes. In addition to increasing access to social housing, we are seeking to increase the number of homes available for rent in the private sector and Tameside Council has appointed an officer within Tameside Housing Advice to promote close partnership working with local landlords. We have also increased the funding available for bonds to secure private rented accommodation, appointed an additional housing standards officer to promote improved standards in the private rented sector, and appointed a dedicated support worker to support people rehoused into the private rented sector.

Examples of some of the actions which the strategy proposes to take to provide access to a wider range of affordable accommodation options include:

- Increasing the range of affordable options for:
 - large families
 - single people
 - young people
 - care leavers
- Extending the Housing First Model with Public Health Investment for single people with additional needs.
- Developing clear accommodation pathways for those at risk of homelessness.
- Evaluating and rolling out shared tenancies.
- Providing greater access to empty properties.
- Increasing access to more private sector properties.

Identifying, Cultivating and Empowering Untapped Resources in the Community

The consultation demonstrated a commitment within the community to prevent homelessness and a desire to provide help but in some instances they lacked the technical skills, contacts and knowledge to take forward initiatives. This strategy aims to identify, cultivate and empower untapped resources and remove barriers which could prevent them from playing a full part in working together to prevent homelessness.

Some examples of some of the actions which the strategy proposes to take to identify, cultivate and empower untapped resources in the community include:

- Undertaking an audit of formal and informal support provided to homeless people in the community.
- Identifying any training or advice required by those providing support in the community.
- Developing a Tameside Preventing Homelessness Network to provide support, training and disseminate best practice to those helping to prevent homelessness

PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

The Preventing Homelessness Strategy will have a strategic action plan and a range of actions aimed at achieving the 8 strategic priorities. This action plan will have resources allocated to it and officers assigned to each action. This is currently under development.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

National research evidence has shown that homeless people suffer from multiple disadvantages. Homelessness is not just one of the most extreme forms of physical deprivation; it also defines a group that is subject to extreme forms of discrimination and violence.

When developing the Preventing Homelessness Strategy for Tameside Borough, an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken. All the equalities issues raised by the EIA and the actions identified to address these will inform the development of the Preventing Homelessness Strategic Action Plan. This will ensure that Tameside Borough's Preventing Homelessness Strategy and its Strategic Action Plan will have a positive impact upon all the protected groups.

IDENTIFYING HOMELESSNESS ISSUES AND COLLECTING MONITORING INFORMATION

Monitoring information is collected each quarter to assess the performance of Homelessness Services against their service specifications. Monitoring information on homelessness and the prevention of homelessness is collected through a national statutory framework. A new system called HCLIC has been implemented from April 2018 to collect a wider range of information relating to homelessness and its prevention.

Homelessness issues will also be identified through:

- the Monitoring of Commissioned Homelessness Services
- conducting focus Groups on specific themes
- the Partnership Engagement Network (PEN)
- the Youth Parliament
- the statutory monitoring of homelessness
- the monitoring of complaints and the review of homelessness decisions
- the Preventing Homelessness Forum and the Registered Providers Forum

We will continue to build on and improve data collection and the sharing of intelligence on homelessness and its prevention between key agencies. We hope to identify any data gaps around the profile of homeless people in Tameside and take action to fill these gaps in order to tackle homelessness more effectively. The information collected will be used to monitor the effectiveness of the Strategy and Action Plan.

The Council has a Homelessness Team which will ensure that any homelessness issue is dealt with appropriately.

Tameside Council has a Preventing Homelessness Forum which meets every two months. The forum's membership includes a wide range of statutory and third sector organisations engaged in activities aimed at preventing homelessness. Homelessness issues are identified and discussed at this forum.

MEASURING PROGRESS

We will use a range of performance indicators to measure our preventing homelessness activity each quarter. Examples are given below.

Indicator Reference	Description
LPI 1	Total number of cases where positive action was successful in preventing homelessness
LPI 2	Number of households able to remain in existing home as a result of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Mediation using external or internal trained family mediators ii. Conciliation including home visit for family/friend threatened exclusions iii. Financial payments from a homeless prevention fund iv. Debt advice v. Resolving Housing Benefit problems vi. Resolving rent or service charge arrears in social or private rented sector vii. Sanctuary scheme measures for domestic violence viii. Crisis intervention – providing emergency support ix. Negotiation or legal advocacy to ensure that someone can remain in accommodation in the private rented sector x. Providing other assistance that will enable someone to remain in accommodation in the private rented sector. xi. Mortgage arrears interventions or mortgage rescue xii. Other xiii. Total number of cases able to remain in existing home

The Homelessness Forum will be measuring progress against this strategy and the annual action plan at their meetings which take place every two months. A bi-annual report on progress will be presented to the Single Executive Leadership Team and the Cabinet.

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AND THE MONITORING AND REPORTING OF PROGRESS

The Preventing Homelessness Forum will oversee the implementation of the strategy and quarterly monitoring reports will be presented to the Forum.

REVIEWING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE STRATEGY AND THE ACTION PLAN

The Strategy and Action Plan will be kept under review and amended as required to ensure that it is effective and meets the set targets.

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THE APPENDICES

The following Appendices are contained in a separate document:

Appendix A: The Consultation Findings

Appendix B: The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Appendix C: Tameside Homelessness Review

Appendix D: Linkages with Key Strategies

Appendix E: Housing Needs Assessment

www.tameside.gov.uk/TamesideMBC/media/housing/HomelessnessStrategyAppendicesPH.pdf

