

Eden District Council Homelessness Strategy 2019 – 2024

July 2019

Eden District Council

Eden District Council is a non-unitary local authority area founded in 1 April 1974, its headquarters are in Penrith. The Council's leadership consists of a Chairperson and a Leader, the Executive has no overall control. The total area of the district is 827 square miles, the total population is 52,564, with 99.6% being of a white ethnic origin. Parts of the Lake District National Park and Yorkshire Dales National Park are in the district.

Neil Morland and Co

Neil Morland and Co are housing consultants, working throughout England, Scotland and Wales. Formed in 2011, we provide advice and assistance to local authorities, housing associations, voluntary organisations and others. Our ambition is to reduce housing inequalities by improving social policies. We use authoritative evidence and our unique expertise, to create better outcomes for people in housing need.

Acknowledgement: This strategy was commissioned and funded by Eden District Council. Our thanks go to Louise Jeffery from Eden District Council and Stella Eggleston from Eden Housing Association, for providing invaluable assistance. We are grateful to local stakeholders who generously gave their time and materials to contribute towards this strategy, and especially those persons who had experienced homelessness.

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Foreword

As the new Housing and Health portfolio holder, I am delighted to present Eden District Council's Homelessness Strategy for 2019-2024.

Since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018, and the subsequent growth in the number of households to whom we owe a duty, the Council has taken many steps to improve and enhance the service offered to our residents; including the creation of a new Housing Options team, and increasing our supply of temporary accommodation.

The provision of good quality advice and support services are essential when enabling people to stay at home, maintain a tenancy and/or manage financially when a crisis occurs. By providing an early intervention, and delivering the right help and support when needed, we hope to prevent homelessness occurring in the first place.

Homelessness has increased across the Country, and Eden has not escaped the effects of the Welfare Reforms and austerity. Delivering homelessness services in a rural area is particularly challenging; where we fear the levels may be under-reported, and for that reason the Council commissioned a review into its Homelessness Service prior to developing this Strategy and action plan.

We recognise the importance of partnership working in delivering the actions, and we are very grateful of the support of our partners and customers, both in contributing to the production of this Strategy; by sharing their knowledge and experiences, and in committing to support us with the delivery.

Councillor Judith Derbyshire

Housing and Health Portfolio Holder

Eden District Council

1.0 Introduction

The approach taken to formulating this Homelessness Strategy, complies with the obligations found in the Homelessness Act 2002.

This Strategy seeks to tackle all forms of homelessness, including those owed a statutory duty (typically families with dependent children, or vulnerable adults), but also people who are single, sleeping on the streets, or in other transient arrangements (eg sleeping on a friends' sofa).

When formulating this Strategy, regard was had to the conclusions of the recently published review¹, which assessed the levels and patterns of homelessness in Eden, plus identified local gaps in knowledge and services.

Whilst the review paints picture on homelessness locally, this Homelessness Strategy sets out how to ensure everyone has a home.

When formulating this strategy, other local and national plans for ending homelessness was taken account of. As was the local Housing Allocations Scheme and Tenancy Strategy, plus other relevant regional housing strategies.

The results of the review have helped to frame the following objectives for this Strategy:

- Reduce the current and future levels of homelessness.
- Prevent homelessness^[SEP].
- Ensure there is enough accommodation for people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.
- Ensure there are adequate services support to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, or were previously homeless to prevent a reoccurrence of homelessness.
- Suitably resource the delivery of the homelessness strategy

A range of actions have been identified for the Eden District Council, along with other public bodies and voluntary organisations involved with tackling homelessness. Specific actions have been included for people who are more at risk of homelessness. The actions contained in this Strategy have had regard to how Eden Housing Association discharges homelessness functions on behalf of the local authority. The functions exercised by Cumbria County Council in respect of children and adult social care services, have also been taken account of when deciding priorities for this Strategy. The Strategy promotes working across organisations and policy boundaries, to ensure social inclusion and equality of access to services. Prior to finalising this Strategy, a broad range of organisations have been consulted, including people have experienced homelessness.

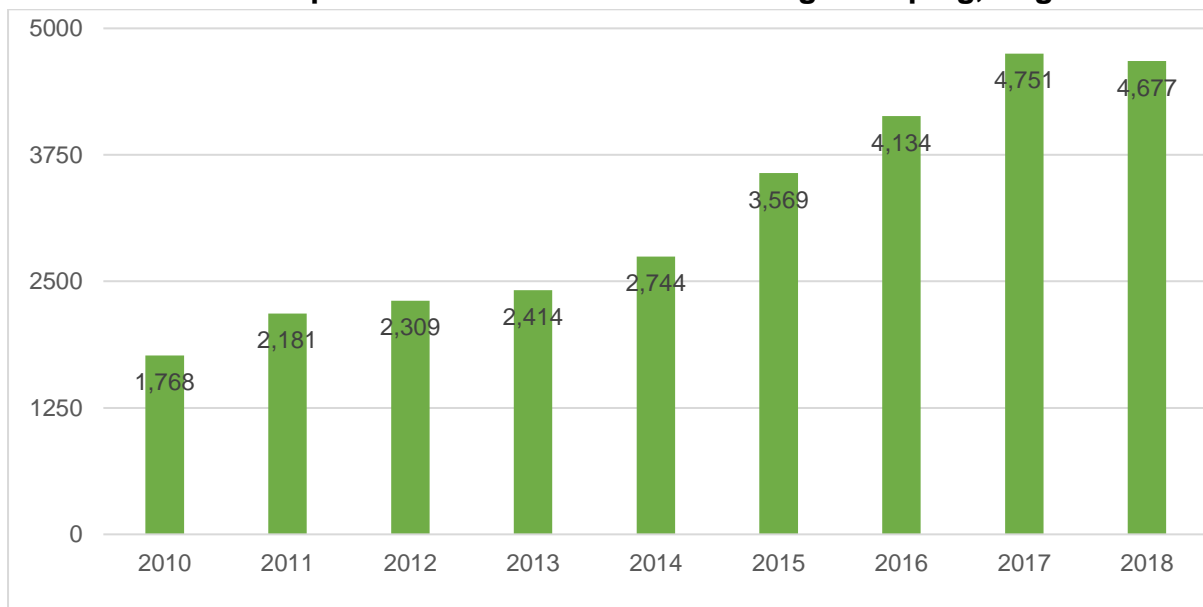
¹ Morland, N., Griffiths, L. (2019). A review of homelessness in the local, authority district of Eden. Eden District Council. Penrith.

2.0 National Homelessness Context

The UK Government is responsible for making decisions about homelessness law and strategy for England. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Governments (MHCLG) is charged with leading on policy formulation and programme delivery.

The UK Government's central focus of its homelessness policy, is an ambition to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and to end it by 2027². The adoption of this commitment was preceded by a rise in rough sleeping to a record high, from a baseline of 1,768 people counted or estimated to be sleeping rough on a given night in 2010, up to 4,134 in 2016. The most recent statistical release shows the number of people sleeping rough to be 4,677³. MHCLG published a £100m plan to end rough sleeping in England, focusing on prevention, intervention and recovery, in August 2018⁴.

Chart 1: Annual snapshot count and estimate of rough sleeping, England.



Source Ministry of Communities and Local Government

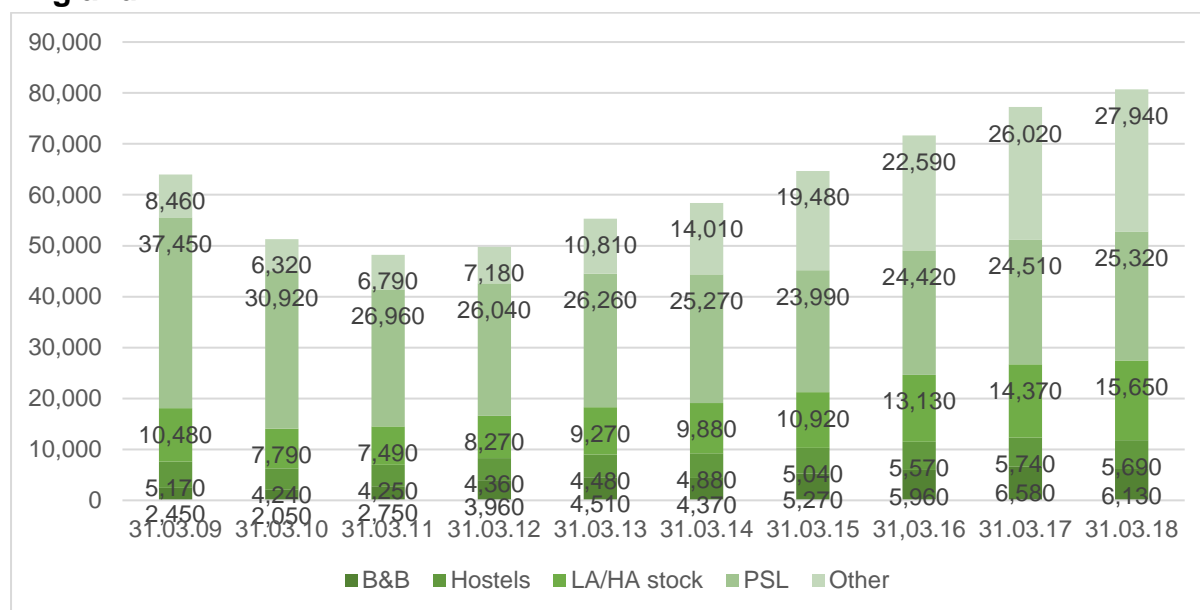
There has been an increase in the number of households living in temporary accommodation. Levels reduced by 50% over a five-year period to a record low to 48,240 on 31 March 2011. Subsequently, usage has climbed upwards by 41% to 80,270 at 31 March 2018.

² Conservative and Unionist Party. (2017). Manifesto 2017: Forward, Together: Our plan for a stronger Britain and a prosperous future

³ White, J., Maguire, E. (2019). Rough sleeping statistics Autumn 2018 , England (revised). Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. London.

⁴ Ministry of Communities and Local Government (2018). Rough sleeping strategy

Chart 2: Annual snapshot of households in temporary accommodation, England.



Source Ministry of Communities and Local Government

Changes to homelessness law has afforded more people who are at risk of homelessness, extra rights to assistance, at an earlier stage, over a longer period. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017⁵, has resulted in local authorities having extended duties to prevent and relieve homelessness. A new duty to refer cases of homelessness to local authorities, came into force for specified public authorities from October 2018⁶. This new obligation aims to ensure people at risk of homelessness are able to get advice and assistance at the earliest stage possible.

In conjunction with the new legislation, the MHCLG published updated statutory guidance in February 2018 (last updated February 2019), to aid local authorities in the performance of their homelessness functions⁷. Separate guidance was also published joint with the Department of Education, on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 years-olds who may be homeless and/or require accommodation⁸.

⁵ The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (Commencement and Transitional and Savings Provisions) Regulations 2018

⁶ The Homelessness (Review Procedures etc.) Regulations 2018, Part 1, section 3; Part 4; Schedule, Specified public authorities

⁷ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. (2018). Homelessness Code of Guidance for local authorities

⁸ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Department for Education. (2018). Prevention of homelessness and provision of accommodation for 16 and 17-year old young people who may be homeless and/or require accommodation. Guidance to children’s services authorities and local housing authorities about their duties under Part 3 of the Children Act 1989 and Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 to secure or provide accommodation for homelessness 16 and 17 year old young people

Alongside the new legislation and statutory guidance, MHCLG has allocated local authorities extra funding to assist with the administration of homelessness duties, this has included:

- £72.7m new burden funding⁹;
- £20m access private rented accommodation¹⁰;
- £76m for initiatives to reduce rough sleeping^{11 12};
- £28m to pilot the Housing First approach¹³;
- £50m capital grants, via Homes England, to help people move on from hostel and refuge accommodation¹⁴;
- £24m for a Rapid Rehousing Pathway programme, to introduce rapid assessment hubs, navigators, supported lettings, and local lettings agencies^{15 16 17};
- £38m to support an enterprise, named Capital Letters, which will help to reduce the expense to local authorities of obtaining temporary accommodation¹⁸;
- £1m to support veterans who have become homeless, or are at risk of becoming homeless¹⁹.

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-reduction-act-new-burdens-funding> Home

¹⁰ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. (2018). £20m private rented sector access fund: Bidding prospectus

¹¹ Ministry of Communities and Local Government (2018). Press release: James Brokenshire announces £30m immediate support for rough sleepers

¹² Ministry of Communities and Local Government (2018). Press release: James Brokenshire confirms funding to help people off the streets

¹³ Ministry of Communities and Local Government (2018). Press release: Housing Secretary James Brokenshire awards funding to reduce rough sleeping

¹⁴ Homes England (2018). Move on fund prospectus

¹⁵ Ministry of Communities and Local Government (2018). Press release: James Brokenshire announces £5m for new network of rough sleeping hubs

¹⁶ Ministry of Communities and Local Government (2019). Guidance: Additional 42 early adopters

¹⁷ Ministry of Communities, Housing and Local Government. (2019). Rapid Rehousing Pathway: 2019 to 2020 funding allocations

¹⁸ Ministry of Communities and Local Government (2018). Press release: £38 million to boost accommodation for London's homeless

¹⁹ Ministry of Communities and Local Government (2018). Press release: Brokenshire announces funding boost for homeless veterans

- £1.9m to improve access to healthcare for people sleeping rough with mental ill health and are misusing substances²⁰.

MHCLG published a number of independent evaluations of pilot programmes it funded. This has included:

- Skills, Training, Innovation and Employment (STRIVE) pilot, which saw Crisis and St Mungo's help people who had experienced homelessness in to employment²¹;
- Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer programme, which saw local authorities pilot approaches to preventing homelessness²²;
- Fair Chance Fund, which saw Social Impact Bonds and use of a payment by results (PBR) approach, to improve accommodation, education and employment for people aged 18 to 24 years, who were experiencing homelessness²³.

MHCLG launched a consultation on local accountability and deliverability of homelessness services²⁴, which included a proposal to introduce Homelessness Reduction Boards in local authority areas.

MHCLG published independent research on the causes of homelessness and rough sleeping^{25 26 27}. This concluded that poverty, a lack of social housing, relationship breakdown, mental health and substance misuse were the causes of homelessness. For single persons there was strong evidence that were the cause. In terms of rough sleeping, the strongest causes identified was relationship breakdown. Structural factors were more likely to cause homelessness for families, whereas, individual factors caused singles persons to sleep rough.

²⁰ Public Health England (2019). Guidance for applying to Rough Sleeping Grant: Testinf Community Based Models of Access to Health Services

²¹ ICF Consulting. (2018). STRIVE Evaluation: Final report. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. London

²² Knight, T., Purdon, S., Lloyd, R., Bryson, C. (2018) Evaluation of the Homelessness Prevention Trailblazers, Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government. London

²³ ICF Consulting. (2019). Fair Chance Fund: Final Evaluation. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. London

²⁴ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019). Tackling homelessness together a consultation on structures that support partnership working and accountability in homelessness

²⁵ Alma Economics (2019). Homelessness: causes of homelessness and rough sleeping rapid evidence assessment. Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government and Department for Work and Pensions. London

²⁶ Alma Economics (2019). Homelessness: causes of homelessness and rough sleeping review of models of homelessness. Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government and Department for Work and Pensions. London

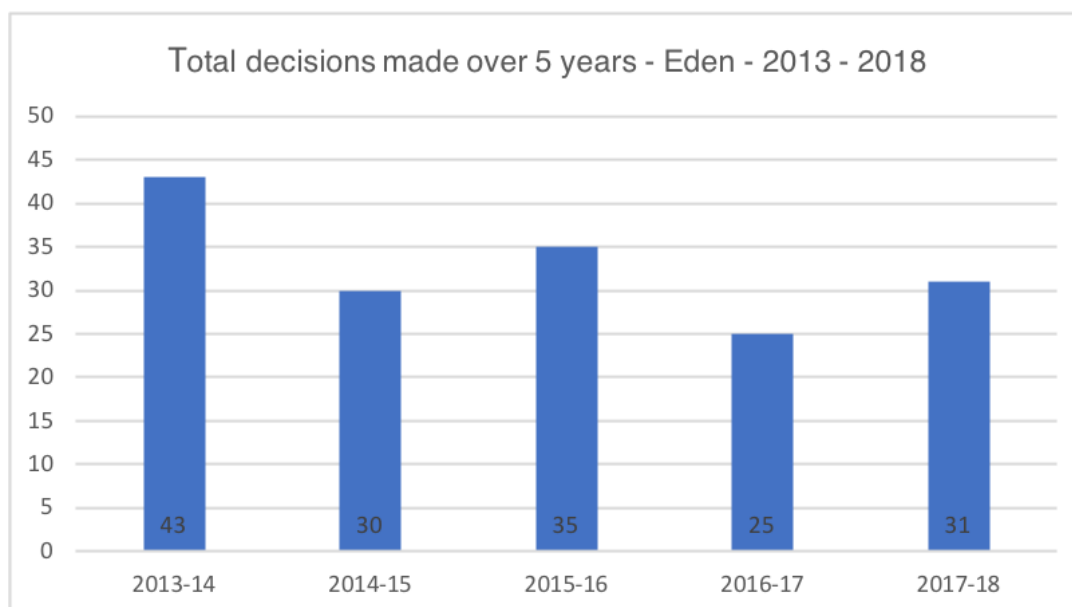
²⁷ Alma Economics (2019). Homelessness: causes of homelessness and rough sleeping feasibility study. Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government and Department for Work and Pensions. London

3.0 Local Homelessness Context

The information in this section of this Strategy is a summary of the evidence found in the recent review of homelessness in Eden²⁸.

3.1 Levels of Homelessness

The number of decisions made by Eden Housing Association (EHA), about whether the local authority has a duty to assist a person who is homeless or threatened with homelessness, has reduced. The majority of decisions taken over the last five years concluded that applicant households were eligible for assistance, but were not homeless as defined in law. The ethnic origin of all applicant households was predominately white and aged between 25-44 years. One-person male households were the majority household type that, following inquiries as to what duty of assistance was owed, was found to be eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and having a priority need for accommodation.



Source: Eden District Council. P1E.

The number of households placed in temporary accommodation is low compared to elsewhere, however has been a steady increased from a low of 2 in 2014, to a high of 7 in 2018. One-person male households made up the majority of all households placed in temporary accommodation.

The levels of rough sleeping in Eden has remained consistently low with no recorded rough sleepers for 3 of the 5 years, the exception is 2015 and 2017 recording a total of 4 persons as sleeping rough on any given night.

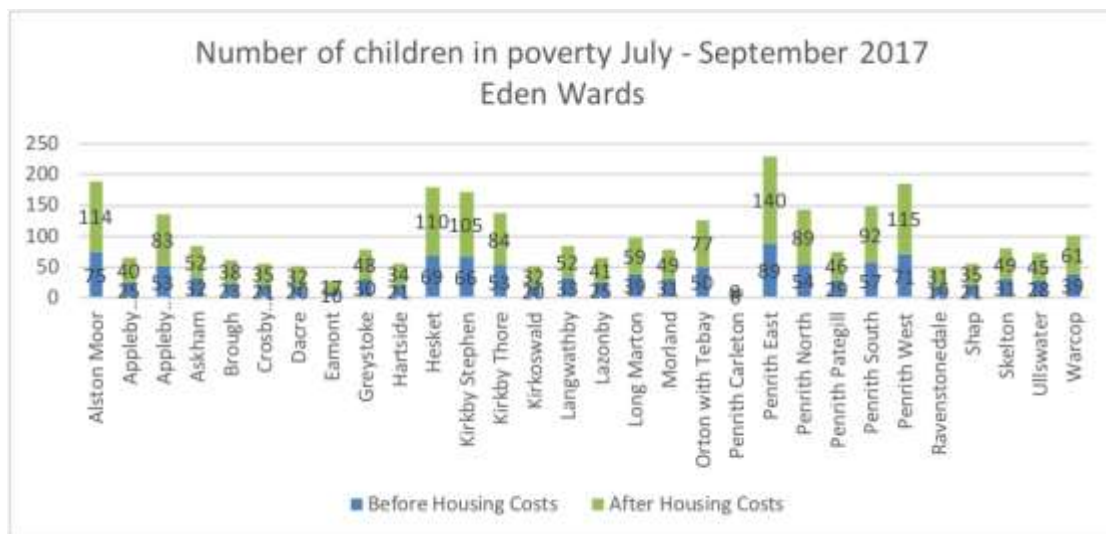
The relative rate of homelessness, temporary accommodation usage and rough sleeping for Eden is lower than of Cumbria, North West England and the whole of England. A reduction in homelessness decisions was seen across Cumbria, but

²⁸ Morland, N., Griffiths, L. (2019). A review of homelessness in the local, authority district of Eden. Eden District Council. Penrith.

increases occurred across the North West of England and the whole of England. Temporary accommodation and rough sleeping numbers have remained steady in Cumbria, whereas numbers increased significantly across North West England, and the whole of England.

To forecast future levels of homelessness, child poverty rates, labour market statistics, and house price data has been analysed.

At a local level, before housing costs are deducted, 11% of children living throughout the 30 Wards in Eden were identified as living in poverty. This increases to 19% when housing costs are included, an increase of 60%. Penrith East is the electoral ward with the highest child poverty rates. The number of children in poverty in Eden is the lowest in Cumbria, and lower than that of North West England and the UK.



Source: Child Poverty Action Group. End Child Poverty.

The percentage of 16-64-year-olds in employment in Eden is higher than compared to

Cumbria, North West England and the UK. The percentage of 16-64-year-olds recorded as economically inactive is lower compared to elsewhere. Gross weekly pay is on average lower in Eden compared with Cumbria, the North West England and the UK.

Of the Eden population aged 16-64, 6% claim ESA and Incapacity benefits. A further 4% claim out of work benefits. Overall 6% of the local population are in receipt of welfare benefits. All of these rates are lower than compared to Cumbria, North West England, and the UK.

Median house prices in Eden are higher compared to Cumbria and North West England, but lower than that for the whole of England. In recent years average house prices in Eden have decreased, whereas there have been increases across Cumbria, North West England and the whole of England.

Median gross annual earnings in Eden are equal to Cumbria and lower compared to the North West and England. Earnings in Eden have decreased, whereas earnings have remained static in Cumbria, but increased across the North West and

England. A ratio of 7.49 times median gross annual earnings for Eden, is above average compared with Cumbria and the North West but lower compared with England. House price to earnings ratio has increased in Eden and elsewhere.

3.2 Preventing Homelessness

A dedicated online referral form is available on Eden District Council's (EDC) website, plus a specific email address, is available for public authorities and other organisations to use when contact is made with someone who might be at risk of homelessness. To-date there has been 52 referrals, of which 17% have come from public authorities, a further 75% have come from housing associations. Almost all housing associations of that hold stock in Eden have signed up to the National Housing Federation's voluntary Commitment to Refer²⁹.

EDC has contracted out the administration of some homelessness functions (along with those pertaining to the allocation of social rented housing) to EHA. Responsibilities performed by EHA include:

- Providing Housing advice,
- Taking applications for homelessness assistance,
- Determining eligibility for assistance,
- Providing accommodation for an interim period to people who might be homeless, eligible for assistance and have a priority need,
- Completing assessments and formulating personalised plans,
- Fulfilling duties to prevent and/or relieve homelessness, provide accommodation to people who are unintentionally homeless and have a priority need, plus provide advice and accommodation for a reasonable period to people who are intentionally homeless and have a priority need,
- Making referrals to other local authorities for persons who do not have a connection to Eden,
- Completing reviews of decisions made about entitlements to assistance,
- Ensuring suitability of accommodation offered, protection of persons property, working with children services when cases involve children, receiving referrals from specified public authorities, and
- Detecting fraudulent applications for assistance.

EDC retains legal culpability for all decisions made about entitlements to homelessness assistance (and also in respect of housing allocation).

²⁹ National Housing Federation. (2018). Commitment to refer: guidance for housing associations

EHA's website has a specific homelessness page which includes details about how to access the service, plus information about:

- Specific emergency protocol that comes into force during periods of severe weather,
- Efforts being made to ensure nobody sleeping rough has to spend a second night out,
- Dedicated support for victims of domestic abuse,
- Preventing the main causes of homelessness (eg parental eviction),
- Specific advice for those most at risk of homelessness (eg people leaving the care of children services),
- Initiatives that can prevent homelessness (eg landlord incentives that can assist to secure private rented sector (PRS) accommodation), and
- Facts about people's rights to assistance when homeless.

EHA's homelessness service has enhanced the range of prevention activities, procured additional temporary accommodation and increased the number of more staff.

EDC also offers a range of information about homelessness, including:

- The duty of specified public authorities to refer cases of homelessness to a local authority,
- Specific facts for refugees, gypsies and travellers and asylum seekers,
- Rights to make an application for homelessness assistance,
- Provision of temporary accommodation, and
- Entitlements to seek a review of a homelessness decision.

Cumbria Law Centre operates a housing possession court duty scheme, plus assist with housing rights issues, including reviews and appeals of homelessness decisions.

Carlisle and Eden Citizens Advice Penrith office operates a drop-in service three days per week. Advice is available via self-help, telephone, email webchat, and video link.

Carlisle Key operates a week-day is piloting a weekly three-hour drop-in service in Penrith, providing advice on housing, money, welfare benefits, employment and other matters for young people under 25 years of age.

As needed, an officer from EHA's Homelessness Service attends local Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement meetings. There is a joint working protocol in place between EDC (and other Cumbrian local housing authorities), and the Cumbria and Lancashire Community Rehabilitation Service, in relation to people being supervised in the community who may need advice and/or assistance about homelessness.

Cumbria County Council (CuCC) works alongside EHA to assist children aged 16 or 17 years, plus young adults aged 18, 19, or 20 years, each fulfilling any relevant duty owed. CuCC facilitate the organisation of a personal adviser for each person leaving care, to provide support until their 21st birthday (or 25th if they remain in full time education). CuCC have established a comprehensive protocol with EDC/EHA, to enable successful joint working between all councils in respect of young people leaving care³⁰. There is substantial information about how EDC and other housing services will collaborate and compliment the work of CuCC. This includes:

- joint casework between EDC/EHA and CuCC for 16/17-year old care leavers,
- EHA providing advice to 15/16-year olds who are preparing to leave care,
- Pre-tenancy learning certificate, and
- A range of supported accommodation for young, which includes a foyer and supported lodgings.

Home Group housing association have a designated armed forces accommodation in Cumbria, although located outside district of Eden, in Maryport. EDC (alongside Carlisle City Council (CaCC) and potentially others) are jointly funding a new armed forces community support hub and outreach pilot. Hosted by Cumbria Voluntary Service, the three-year project will provide support to ex-service personnel and their families in Eden, plus Carlisle. This initiative has potential to provide specific homelessness prevention activities to veterans.

Cumbria Domestic Abuse Partnership³¹ (CDAP) is a consortium of local authorities, other public authorities, and voluntary organisations, which includes EDC and EHA, helping to meet local priorities for tackling domestic abuse. Founded in 2016, CDAP operates across the whole of Cumbria, including Eden. Funded by an initial circa £700k revenue grant awarded by MHCLG, CDAP coordinates preventative and crisis response support, as well as an accommodation service for victims of domestic abuse. As needed, an officer from EHA's Homelessness Service attend the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences, to reduce the risk of domestic abuse.

There are no specific accommodation or support services in Eden to prevent homelessness at the point of discharge from hospital.

There are no specific accommodation or support services in Eden to help homeless mentally ill people.

The extent and prevalence of homelessness prevention activities for other persons likely to become homeless are unclear. There are no apparent specific

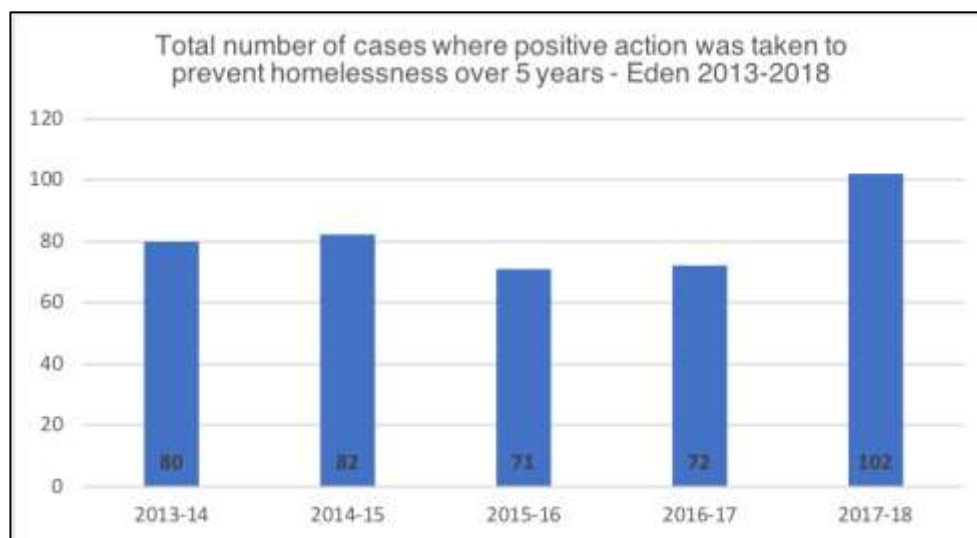
³⁰ Cumbria County Council. (2018). Care leavers protocol: Eden

³¹ <https://www.carlisle.gov.uk/Residents/Housing-and-Homeless/Cumbria-Domestic-Abuse-Partnership>

homelessness prevention initiatives to respond to the common characteristics of adults who experience homelessness, such as alcohol dependency, street drinking, use of hard drugs, begging, injecting drugs, being charged with a violent criminal offence, abuse of solvents/gas/glue, engaging in sex work, being a victim of a sexual assault³².

Pre-crisis homelessness prevention activities are primarily carried out by EHA's Homelessness Service.

Between 2013/2014 and 2017/2018, the number of cases prevented by EHA increased by 34%. The number of prevention cases across Cumbria, North West England and the whole of England has increased. The relative rate of homelessness prevention casework is lower in Eden than compared to Cumbria, North West England and the whole of England.



Source: Eden District Council. P1E.

Between 2013/2014 and 2017/2018, EHA helped more households to obtain alternative accommodation, than to remain in existing accommodation. Nationally there is almost an equal split between the two methods. Common methods used to help people remain in their existing home included home visits for family/friend threatened exclusions, resolving housing benefit problems and providing emergency support. Action taken to assist households in finding alternative accommodation, focused around securing social housing, finding PRS accommodation, or accessing supported accommodation.

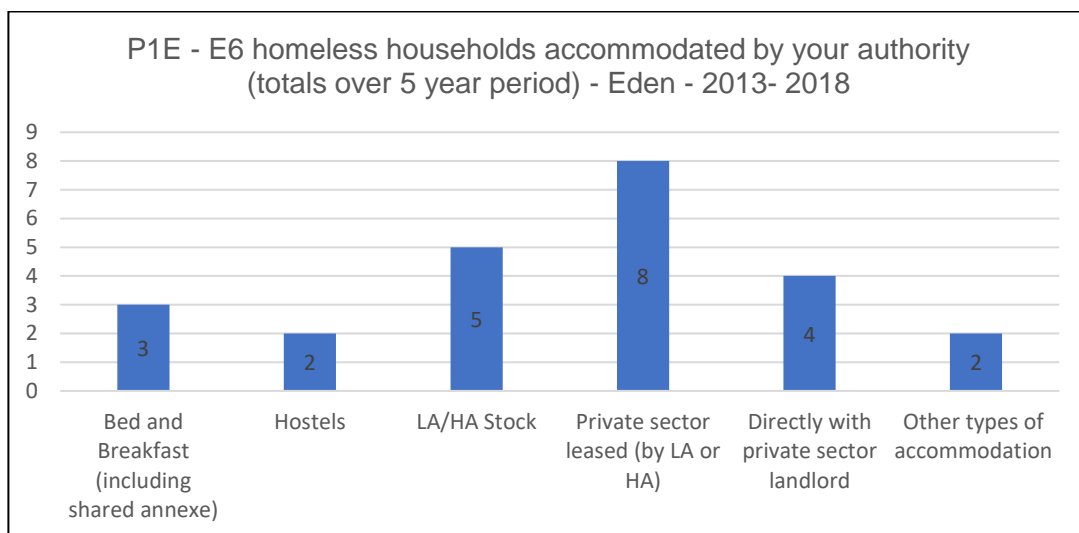
EDC affords EHA a budget to pay-off rent arrears, where this disqualifies a person from Cumbria Choice, for rental deposits, spot-purchasing of mediation where parents, other relatives or friends are unwilling or unable to accommodate a person, and security enhancements for victims of domestic abuse.

³² Professor Suzanne Fitzpatrick, Dr Sarah Johnsen, Dr Michael White (2011), 'Multiple Exclusion Homelessness in the UK: Key Patterns and Intersections', *Social Policy and Society*, 10(4), p501-512

3.3 Securing accommodation

EDC have five units of temporary accommodation located in Penrith and is seeking to increase this portfolio. During the past five years, temporary accommodation usage has increased across Eden, North West England, and the whole of England, but reduced in Cumbria. The relative and actual usage of temporary accommodation is lower in Eden than all comparator areas.

Most households to whom EHA decide are owed a duty of assistance because they are eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and have a priority need for accommodation are provided with temporary accommodation for the foreseeable future, or the household voluntarily agrees to remain in their existing accommodation for a temporary period of time. Private sector leased accommodation is the most common method used to accommodate homeless households both nationally and locally in Eden. EHA relied on private sector leased accommodation, LA/HA stock and private sector landlords to accommodate 71% of homeless households.



Source: Eden District Council. P1E.

The demographics of households provided temporary accommodation by EHA are as follows:

- 77.5% women were present, either living with children or alone;
- 50% children were living with couples, or lone male or female parents;
- 50% were either male or female one-person households;
- 29% were couples with dependent children.

Over the five years 8% of households accommodated by EHA have been from a black or other minority ethnic origin. Proportionally, this is much higher than the 2% of acceptances that are from black or other minority ethnic origin. All households had moved on from temporary accommodation with 6 months.

Homelessness relief activities are typically carried out by EHA's homelessness service, on behalf of EDC.

57 cases were recorded by EHA of positive action taken to relieve homelessness, with levels increasing over the past five years. The number of relief cases across Cumbria decreased. For North West England and the whole of England, numbers have remained consistent. There are three common forms of accommodation used to relieve homelessness, locally and nationally: (i) supported housing; (ii) private rented sector accommodation; and (iii) social rented housing. Demand for all types of accommodation exceeds the supply available.

EDC have adopted the use of discretionary powers to make a suitable offer of PRS accommodation to households who are homeless³³. EHA are working with EDC housing benefit administrators to arrange discretionary housing payments to cover rent in advance and/or rental security deposits. EDC, jointly with CaCC, published an Empty Homes Strategy, in 2010, whereby financial assistance will be provided, via loans of up to £15k.

EDC, jointly with SLDC, published a Tenancy Strategy, covering the period 2012 – 2017. Housing associations are asked to provide an early warning to local housing authority homelessness services, so action can be taken to prevent homelessness.

EDC has common housing allocation scheme, named Cumbria Choice, with the other five Cumbrian local housing authorities, plus with seven housing associations, one of which is EHA. During the past five years, the number of households on local housing authorities' housing waiting lists has reduced locally, sub-regionally, and nationally.

21% of Eden's active housing applicants are homeless or threatened with homelessness. 45% of these had been asked to leave their current accommodation, a further 23% were recorded as having had chosen a homeless prevention option, but only 18% had made an application for homeless assistance.

Separate to its membership of Cumbria Choice, EDC has contracted out the administration of its public law housing allocation responsibilities to EHA, which includes:

- Determining which applicants are eligible and qualify for an allocation of social rented housing,
- Notifying applicants of decisions made to the about their application for social rented housing,
- Providing advice, information and assistance about making an application for social rented housing,
- Determining which applicants have priority for an allocation of social rented housing,
- Determining if an applicant has a local connection that qualifies them for an allocation of social rented housing,

³³ Eden District Council and South Lakeland District Council, Tenancy Strategy 2012 – 2017

- Providing a summary of the how the Cumbria Choice scheme operates, and,
- Detect any fraudulent application made for an allocation of social rented housing.

The current contractual arrangements between EDC and EHA are due to end early 2020.

The Cumbria Choice policy was last altered in 2016³⁴. The scheme prioritises applicants across five bands, people with the most urgent housing need are placed in Band A, persons with lowest need are placed in Band D. Band E includes applicants whose circumstances conflict with specific aspects of the scheme qualification criteria. Less than 1% were in Band A.

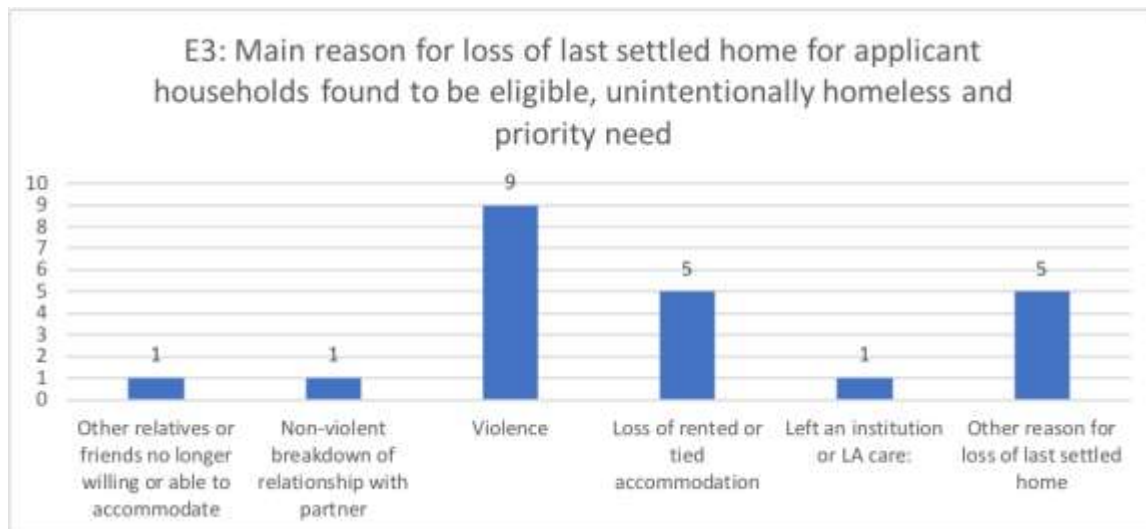
Band A includes applicants who are not intentionally homeless, eligible for assistance, and have a priority need for accommodation, plus those who are threatened with homelessness. Band B, includes applicants who homeless, such as those whom a local housing authority believes might have a priority need for accommodation. The awarding of the preference for an allocation of social rented housing is limited for a period of three months, following which applicants are moved to Band C. Band C, for people with a medium housing need, includes applicants who are homeless. Band C also includes those persons being reduced from Band B, who had been awarded that level of preference more than three-month ago. Band D includes no homeless applicants. Band E could include homeless applicants who are intentionally homeless, or have no local connection.

The Cumbria Choice policy is framed to restrict applicants who are homeless, or owed a homeless duty, to six-weeks choice of the social rented dwelling they are allocated. Some aspects of the Cumbria Choice policy appear to mis-interpret housing allocation and homelessness law.

3.4 Providing Support

50% of households found by EHA to be eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and having a priority need for accommodation had dependent children. Of all homeless households 41% lost their last settled home as a result of violence, 23% due to loss of rented or tied accommodation and 23% recorded as 'other reason'. When compared to national statistics, locally, there is a much higher rate of household becoming homeless due to violence, and a much lower rate of households becoming homeless due to families and friends no longer willing or able to accommodate.

³⁴ Cumbria Choice Allocation Policy with revisions (2015/16 policy review)



Source: Eden District Council, P1E

UK nationals currently residing in the UK, has consistently been the main type of nationality of person to whom the local authority has accepted a duty of assistance.

Eden District Council works in a collective countywide partnership, managed by CuCC, to deliver housing related support. The membership of the partnership also includes the other five Cumbrian local housing authorities, plus other public authorities, voluntary organisations, housing association and others. 5% of all referrals made to CuCC for support are for people in the Eden local authority area. People requiring supported housing can make an application via a central access point, which is managed by CuCC. Feedback from stakeholders about the central access point was mixed. CuCC commission for the Eden area:

- EDC/EHA to provide generic support for people who are homelessness,
- Impact Housing (part of Riverside housing association) to provide the accommodation-based support in the Eden district, specifically for young people aged 16-24 years,
- Depaul UK to provide Nightstop,
- Turning Point to support people of any age,
- Richmond Fellowship to support adults experiencing mental illness, and
- Specific support for victims of domestic abuse.

Presently, information, advice and assistance for people experiencing street homelessness is provided by EHA on an ad-hoc basis. During a period of severe weather (when the temperature drops below zero) additional provision is made available. EDC, together with the other five Cumbrian local housing authorities, have successfully won funding from MHCLG, to establish a countywide rough sleeping initiative. Three workers will operate across six local districts (including Eden) co-ordinate activities to help people found to be rough sleeping or at risk of street homelessness.

Penrith Building Society (PBS), in partnership with EDC reintroduced from April 2019, an equity loan scheme to help people from the local area to buy a home, by reducing the size of deposit they need. A Salvation Army church, located in Penrith, provides support with searching for jobs, advising on welfare benefit entitlements and other support, advice about qualifications. The Upper Eden Food Bank provides food parcels to people within the specified areas of Eden. The Eden and South Lakeland Credit Union helps its members to manage their money, by providing fair loans and simple ways of saving. Age UK Carlisle and Eden, provide support to older persons, including advice and information on housing and welfare benefits.

3.5 Resources

Alongside the money committed from EDC's own budget to fund homelessness services, additional funding has been awarded by MHCLG:

- £500k – Homelessness Grant
- £128k – Flexible Homelessness Support Grant (FHSG)
- £18k – HRA17 New Burdens Fund

EDC has received a Homelessness Prevention Grant since 2003. The funding can be used for initiatives carried out by the local authority or invested into projects operated by voluntary organisations.

FHSG replaced the Temporary Accommodation Subsidy regime previously administered by the Department for Work and Pensions³⁵. The new grant system enables flexibility to spend the funding on preventing homelessness, in addition to assisting those who are homeless. The UK Government has made the new burdens grant available to help meet the requirement of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017³⁶. An example is the homelessness service upgrading their data system to allow a better understanding of how the new legislation is changing homelessness prevention in the area.

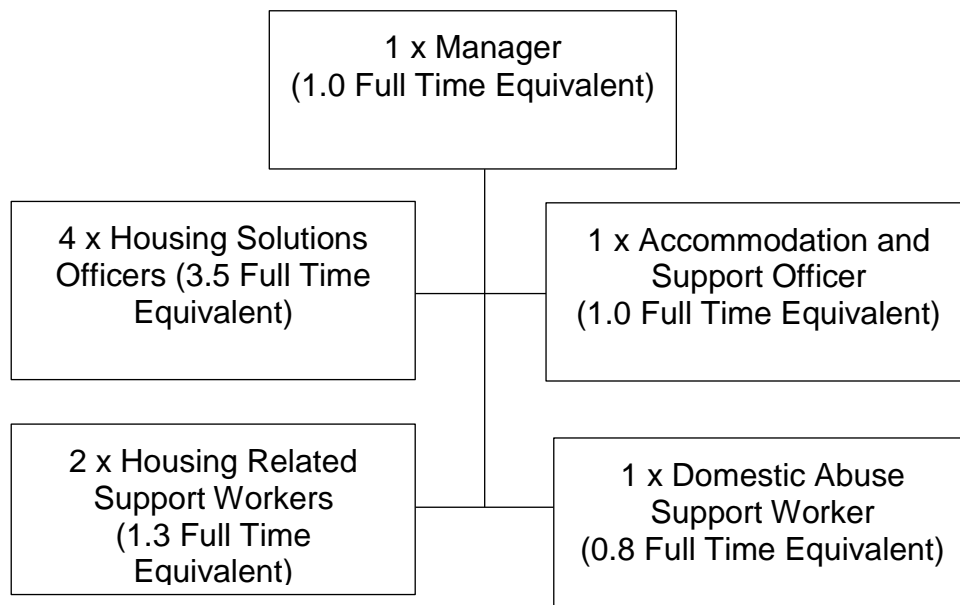
EDC supported Impact Housing, to make a successful bid to the Homes and Communities Agency securing £150k to create three additional units of accommodation at the Eden Rural Foyer. Eden District Council, together with the other five Cumbrian local housing authorities, submitted a successful bid to MHCLG's Victims of Domestic Abuse Support Fund, to resource the CDAP activities. Looking ahead to 2019/20, the six Cumbrian local housing authorities have been able to successfully make joint bid for funding to deliver a countywide response to rough sleeping. Additionally funding from the third round of MHCLG's Rapid Rehousing Pathway fund, for helping people out of street homelessness has also been allocated to Cumbria.

³⁵ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. (2017). Flexible homelessness support grant – funding allocations formula explanation

³⁶ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. (2017). Homelessness Reduction Act: allocation of new burdens funding

EDC funds EHA to administer homelessness (and also housing allocation) functions, which employs a total of eight people (7.5 full-time equivalent). Additional posts have been created following the enactment of the HRA17, to ensure there is sufficient capacity to cope with the new burdens. Officers receive training on homelessness law and practice from the National Homelessness Advisory Service and other independent providers of training.

Diagram 1: Eden District Council Homelessness Service Staffing Structure, March 2018



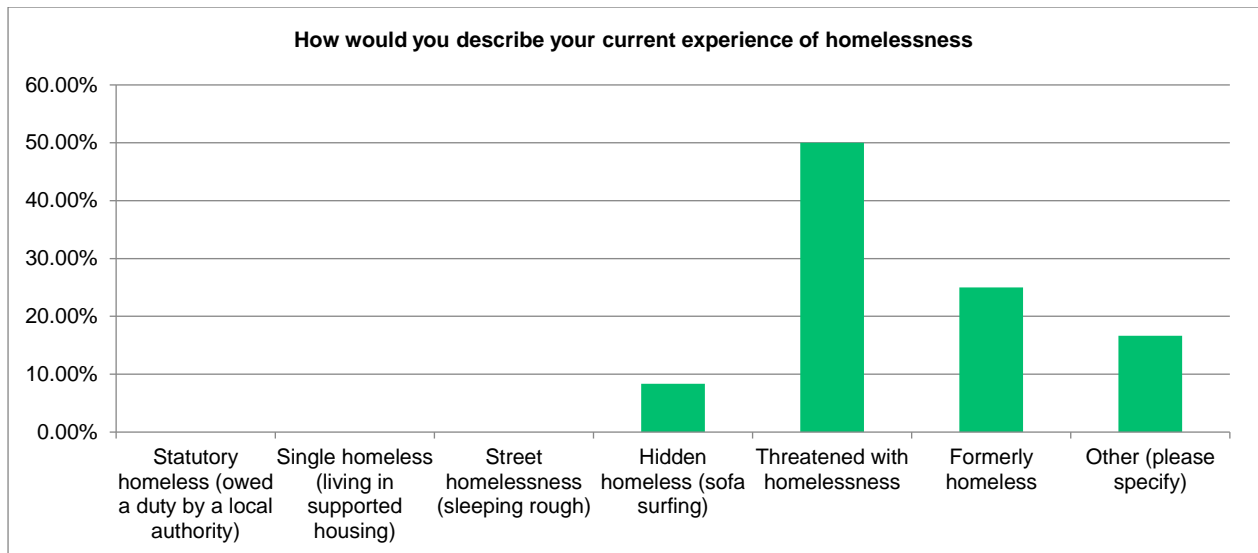
Eden District Council employs one officer to commission and monitor EDC’s delivery of homelessness (and housing allocation) functions, plus oversee the implementation of the local homelessness strategy.

A new IT system that delivers a range of automated efficiencies, has helped Eden Housing Association to discharge all duties arising, receive referrals and compile statistical reports.

3.6 Consultation

Two online surveys were made available, one for service users, another for stakeholders.

A total of 12 responses were completed by people who had experienced homelessness, half described themselves as being threatened with homelessness.



Most service users stated that they believed homelessness had increased over the last five years. Half believed being helped early on would prevent homelessness.

One-third thought that the best housing option when homeless or threatened with homelessness was private rented sector housing. Two-thirds felt that when homeless or threatened with homelessness, the most important matter to get help with was to find a house. Three-quarters of service users agreed that homelessness funding should be prioritised. Three-quarters of service users completing the survey were female, half were aged between 25-44 years, almost half lived alone, all were of a white ethnic origin.

A total 15 responses were received from stakeholders, a 47% response rate. Just over two-thirds of respondents stated that they believed homelessness had increased over the last five years. Four-fifths believed levels would increase over the next five years. Stakeholders agreed that children leaving care of children's services, people escaping domestic abuse and vulnerable adults should all be priority for preventing homelessness. Help resolving rent arrears and housing benefit problems were identified as the most helpful method to prevent homelessness. Housing support services were seen as the best housing option for someone who is or is threatened with homelessness. Respondents identified that dealing with issues around poverty, reintegration and personalisation as the most important factor when supporting those who are or have been homeless. Half of respondents ranked prevention initiatives as the highest priority for funding. Almost all of respondents were dealing with cases of single or hidden homelessness.

4.0 Delivering this Homelessness Strategy

4.1 General Principles

Housing services at Eden District Council, plus adult social care services, children services, which are located CuCC are required in law to take responsibility for delivering this Strategy.

Social landlords have regulatory responsibilities to assist local authorities with their homelessness functions. Therefore, these organisations are also expected to play an active role in the implementation of the strategy.

Throughout the duration of this strategy, EDC will seek to build stronger relationship between departments and agencies, to foster a multi-agency commitment to deliver the strategy. EDC is especially keen to ensure involvement from the voluntary organisations, along with co-operation with wide- range of other public authorities (eg criminal justice agencies and NHS bodies). EDC will frequently confer with people who have experience of being homeless, to get their views about what works, any barriers to service and any suggestions for improvements.

4.2 Corporate Commitment

Progress towards tackling homelessness and achieving the objectives of this strategy will be reported to the Eden District Council's Executive. Annual corporate plans will have clear responsibilities for tackling homelessness, linked to chief officers, and progress will be discussed at meetings of the corporate management team. An elected councillor will be selected to champion the issue of homelessness across all of EDC's business.

A committee of elected councillors will scrutinise the delivery of the homelessness strategy once every 12 months. The chairpersons of the Homelessness Strategy Steering Group and the Homelessness Forum, will jointly provide a report on (i) levels of homelessness, (ii) activities on preventing homelessness, securing accommodation and providing support, (iii) resources for tackling homelessness.

4.3 Homelessness Strategy Steering Group

A Homelessness Strategy Steering Group will be formed to oversee the delivery of the EDC's Homelessness Strategy Action Plan. The Group will meet every three months to (i) review the levels of homelessness, (ii) consider the activities for preventing homelessness, securing accommodation and providing support, and (iii) coordinate the resources for tackling homelessness. The Group will be responsible for annually updating the Plan, to ensure it remains relevant. The Group will be chaired by the Chief Officer with responsibility for local housing authority functions. Chief or principal officers responsible for public law functions and/or funding of services that affect homelessness will make-up the membership of the Group, from the following business areas:

- Adult social care
- Child social care
- A representative of private registered providers of social housing

- One voluntary organisation will be invited attend meetings of the strategy steering group. This will be in the capacity of observer only, with no decision-making responsibilities or rights.

Homelessness Strategy Task and Finish Groups will be established as and when needed, to accomplish specific tasks from the Eden District Council Homelessness Strategy Action Plan. Any group formed will be chaired by a member of the Eden District Council's Homelessness Strategy Steering Group, with outputs being reported back to the Steering Group. Membership will consist of any relevant local authority, public authority, voluntary organisation, housing association, or other person that attends the Homelessness Forum. These groups will be for a fixed term of no more than 12 months. Specific action plans will be formulated to control the work of any such group.

4.4 Homelessness Forum

A Homelessness Forum will be formed to have an overview of progress being made to deliver the EDC's Homelessness Strategy Action Plan. The Forum will meet every year to receive updates on (i) the levels of homelessness, (ii) activities being carried out to prevent homelessness, secure accommodation and provided support, and (iii) how resources are being used to tackle homelessness. The Forum will also be the vehicle to recruit interested parties to participate in Homelessness Strategy Task and Finish Groups. The Forum will be chaired by the elected councillor champion for homelessness. Membership of the Forum will include all agencies represented at the Homelessness Strategy Steering Group, plus:

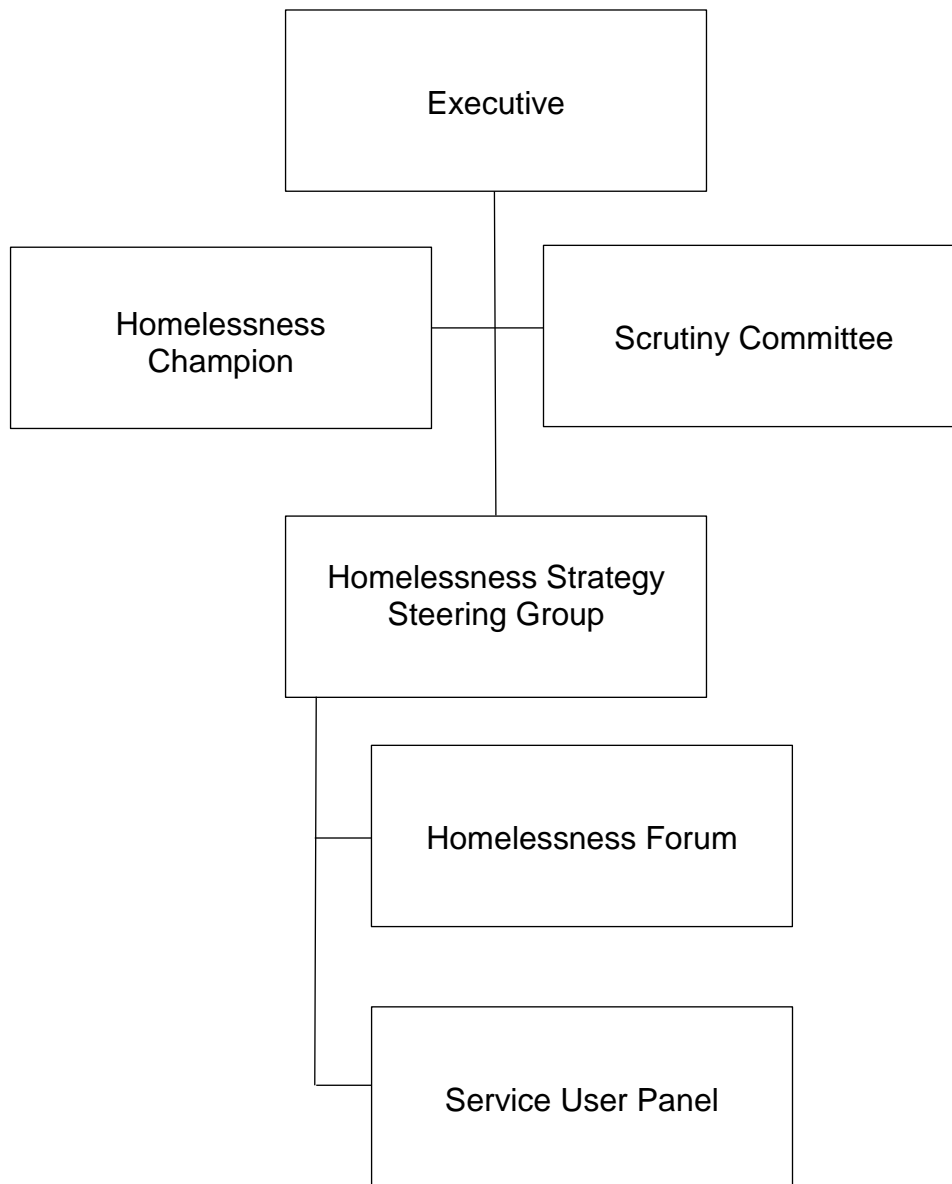
- Any other local authority
- Public authority
- Voluntary organisations
- Housing association
- Any other interested persons (including those with experience of being homeless)

4.5 Service User Involvement

A panel of service users will be assembled annually to review the progress of delivering the EDC's Homelessness Strategy Action Plan, plus be consulted about the priorities for the year ahead. Their know-how will be used to ensure the activities carried out will have a relevant impact on the lives of those who it is intended to benefit.

Additionally, an annual service users survey will be carried-out, to seek views of what's working well and what could better in respect of the advice and assistance they receive to prevent or relieve homelessness.

Diagram 2: Eden's Homelessness Strategy Governance Structure



5.0 Action Plan

Objective 1 – Reduce the current and future levels of homelessness

Progress measures: (a) Number of homeless applications (b) Number of rough sleepers.

No	What	How	Who	When
1.1	Publish an annual report explaining the current levels of homelessness, to aid elected councillor and chief officer decision making.	Carry out an in-depth analysis of data collected by the Homelessness Case Level Information Classification monitoring system.	Local housing authority.	September 2020
1.2	Undertake periodic external audit of the Homelessness Service to ensure it represents best value, is efficient in the administration of statutory duties and offers quality advice and assistance.	Arrange for inspection against the following themes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Accessibility 2) Diversity 3) Homelessness prevention, housing advice and options 4) Homelessness applications 5) Temporary accommodation 6) Resources 	Local housing authority.	September 2021
1.3	Introduce a homelessness impact assessment for any policy adopted by public authorities in Eden local authority area.	Encourage all local plans activity contribute to the reduction of homelessness, by way of tackling poverty, labour market problems and housing market factors.	Local housing authority. Public authorities. Housing associations.	September 2022

No	What	How	Who	When
1.4	Prevent today's six-to-eight-year olds from becoming homeless at 16 -18 years.	Undertake targeted early prevention work during the decade ahead in the wards with the highest levels of child poverty.	Local housing authority. Public authorities. Housing associations. Voluntary organisations.	September 2023

Objective 2 – Prevent homelessness

Progress measures: (a) Number of homelessness cases referred by public authorities and other organisations; (b) Number of homelessness cases prevented; (c) Number of people homeless when leaving prison/young offenders institute, care, armed forces or hospital.

No.	What	How	Who	When
2.1	Continue to improve the quality and effectiveness of homelessness assistance and housing advice service.	Benchmark the range and success of activities in place to prevent homelessness with other Cumbrian local housing authorities.	Local housing authority. Public authorities. Private registered providers of social housing.	December 2019
		Introduce a new monitoring system to capture homelessness prevention outcomes achieved by all local stakeholders.	Local housing authority. Public authorities. Housing associations. Voluntary organisations.	March 2020
		Review all operational policies, procedures, and paperwork associated with administering the homelessness service should be reviewed in light of the new duties arising from the HRA17.	Local housing authority.	June 2020

No.	What	How	Who	When
		Carry out a comparison of administering homelessness and housing allocation duties in-house compared to contracting out, prior to next recommissioning the service, to have assurance that continuing to contract out is the best thing to do.	Local housing authority.	September 2019
		Carryout regular customer satisfaction consultation and publish the results.	Local housing authority.	September 2020
		Carry out an options appraisal on which location the homelessness service should be delivered from.	Local housing authority.	December 2020
		Establish a housing advice service forum, to foster better exchange of information on policies and practice between all agencies providing housing advice in Eden.	Local housing authority. Housing associations. Voluntary organisations.	March 2021

No.	What	How	Who	When
2.2	Increase the range of early homelessness prevention activities.	<p>Agree a joint pathway with criminal justice agencies to prevent offenders becoming homeless following release from secure estates.</p> <p>Publish a case study of the joint work being done to prevent care leavers from becoming homeless.</p> <p>Commission an external evaluation of the Armed Forces Hub, to ensure it is suitably preventing homelessness.</p> <p>Review the existing arrangements to prevent patients from becoming homeless when leaving hospital, against guidance promoted by Department of Health.</p>	<p>Local Housing Authority.</p> <p>Governors/Directors of a prison, youth offenders institute, secure training centre.</p> <p>Principal of a secure college.</p> <p>Youth justice service.</p> <p>Probation services.</p> <p>Local Housing Authority.</p> <p>Children Services.</p> <p>Voluntary organisations.</p> <p>Local Housing Authority</p> <p>Public authorities</p> <p>Voluntary organisations.</p> <p>Local Housing Authority.</p> <p>Social Services Authority.</p> <p>NHS Trusts.</p> <p>Private registered providers of social housing.</p>	<p>June 2020</p> <p>September 2021</p> <p>June 2021</p> <p>September 2020</p>

No.	What	How	Who	When
		<p>Aim to secure continuation funding for CDAP, as part of adopting a single strategy and pool budgets for tackling domestic abuse.</p> <p>Agree a range of collaborative activities that can both prevent social care needs arising and homelessness occurring.</p> <p>Develop a range of activities to prevent homelessness for people who have poor health outcomes, especially people who misuse alcohol and/or drugs and have mental ill health.</p>	<p>Local Housing Authority.</p> <p>Police and Crime Commissioner.</p> <p>Private registered providers of social housing.</p> <p>Local Housing Authority.</p> <p>Social Services Authority.</p> <p>Private registered providers of social housing.</p> <p>Local Housing Authority.</p> <p>Social Services Authority.</p> <p>Private registered providers of social housing.</p>	<p>March 2020</p> <p>December 2020</p> <p>March 2021</p>
2.3	Improve the range of pre-crisis homelessness prevention activities.	Introduce new initiatives, plus improve existing ones, that help people to remain in existing accommodation.	<p>Local Housing Authority.</p> <p>Social Services Authority.</p> <p>Children services.</p> <p>Jobcentre Plus.</p> <p>Housing Benefit administrators.</p> <p>Voluntary organisations.</p> <p>Private registered providers of social housing.</p>	December 2021

Objective 3 – Ensure there is enough accommodation for people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness

Progress measures: (a) Number of homelessness cases relieved; (b) Number of households in temporary accommodation, including bed and breakfast hotels; (c) Average time homeless applicants wait to be allocated social rented housing.

No.	What	How	Who	When
3.1	Carry out case file audit of homelessness cases to learn what more could be done to prevent homelessness and ensure decisions are made rationally and lawfully.	Check rationality, legality and adherence to public law procedural requirements.	Local Housing Authority.	June 2020
3.2	Undertake a strategic review of temporary accommodation to ensure the provision is suitable.	Carry out an options appraisal into future TA arrangements that ensures temporary accommodation is dispersed across the local authority area in a suitable mixture of locations, with suitable property types, and suitable numbers of bedrooms, that take in to account charges and rules for claiming help with housing costs. Update policy for how temporary accommodation will be procured and allocated.	Local Housing Authority. Housing Benefit administrators. Jobcentre Plus. Voluntary organisations. Private registered providers of social housing. Local Housing Authority.	September 2020 December 2020

No.	What	How	Who	When
		<p>Carry out an options appraisal for extending the current private sector leasing arrangements, to ascertain if more PRS accommodation could be obtained to discharge interim, prevention, relief and main homelessness duties.</p> <p>Publish a case study showing the positive practices used to help households in temporary accommodation, move on within six months.</p>	<p>Local Housing Authority.</p> <p>Local Housing Authority.</p>	<p>March 2021</p> <p>June 2021</p>
3.3	Better demonstrate the impact of social landlords on tackling homelessness.	<p>Introduce a peer led benchmarking scheme for social landlords to evidence activity against the following themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Board member commitment to tackling homelessness, and evidence of spend to tackle homelessness. 2) Prevention of evictions due to rent arrears. 3) Actions for tackling homelessness featuring in organisational strategy. 	Housing associations.	September 2021

No.	What	How	Who	When
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4) Involvement of tenants in activities to prevent homelessness. 5) Prioritisation of homeless applicants when letting homes. 6) Prevention of homelessness due to anti-social behaviour and neighbour nuisance. 		
3.4	<p>Refocus local housing enabling role to focus on increasing housing supply and making best use of stock.</p>	<p>Formulate a housing strategy that prioritises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. increasing the supply of affordable one-bedroom accommodation. 2. maximise the potential of the PRS, especially in respect of improving standards of accommodation. 3. Bringing empty homes back into use. 4. how the supply of social rented housing will be increased 	<p>Local housing authority.</p> <p>Housing associations.</p> <p>Others.</p>	December 2021

No.	What	How	Who	When
3.5	Introduce new initiatives to relieve homelessness	<p>Ensure there is a comprehensive range of initiatives to help people who are homeless to obtain accommodation.</p> <p>Collect statistical and empirical evidence about the case work outcomes achieved from carrying out homelessness relief activities.</p>	<p>Local housing authority.</p> <p>Social services authority.</p> <p>Jobcentre Plus.</p> <p>Voluntary organisations.</p> <p>Housing associations.</p> <p>Local housing authority.</p>	<p>March 2022</p> <p>June 2022</p>
3.6	Increase access to suitable private rented sector accommodation	Carry out an options appraisal for whether a social lettings agency and/or a private sector leasing scheme should be created.	Local housing authority.	September 2022

No.	What	How	Who	When
3.7	Build on existing cooperation with housing benefit administrators.	<p>Ensure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is a named officer based in the housing benefit team who can provide a same day response to EHA's homelessness service. 2. A protocol has been agreed on how discretionary housing payments can be used to prevent and relieve homelessness. 3. The housing benefit team provide an annual training update on housing benefit regulations. 4. EHA's homelessness service is able to verify evidence submitted for a housing benefit claim. 	<p>Local housing Authority.</p> <p>Housing benefit administrators.</p>	December 2022
3.8	Appraisal of early warning systems used to prevent homelessness when tenancies are coming to an end.	Review of the local Tenancy Strategy, then carry forward the findings to formulate a new tenancy strategy.	<p>Local housing authority.</p> <p>Housing associations.</p>	March 2023

No.	What	How	Who	When
3.9	Review arrangements for administering public law duties to allocate housing accommodation.	<p>Alter the performance measurement and monitor the housing allocation scheme, to improve the understanding of how housing register applicants who are homeless are allocated social rented housing.</p> <p>Carry out an options appraisal on whether to continue having a common housing allocation scheme via Cumbria Choice.</p> <p>Review housing allocation scheme, to ensure procedures reflect current law and statutory guidance. To consider whether current priorities for allocating social rented housing, are enabling those whose needs cannot be met by the commercial housing market, to be given preference for an allocation.</p>	<p>Local housing authority. Housing associations.</p> <p>Local housing authority. Housing associations.</p> <p>Local housing authority. Housing associations.</p>	<p>September 2019</p> <p>March 2020</p> <p>December 2019</p>

Objective 4 – Ensure there are adequate services to support people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, or were previously homeless to prevent a reoccurrence of homelessness

Progress measures: (a) Number of repeat homelessness cases with the past two years; (b) Number of homeless people supported to maintain independent living.

No.	What	How	Who	When
4.1	Align the work of early help services with that of homelessness services to support families who are, or might be homeless.	Explore options for some homelessness officers to be involved with locality-based working alongside early help services.	Local housing Authority. Social services authority. Children services.	December 2019
4.2	Prevent youth homelessness.	Teach homelessness awareness in primary and secondary schools.	Local housing Authority. Children services.	March 2020
4.3	Increase support for victims of domestic abuse.	Commission an external evaluation of CDAP, to identify outcomes and inform future commissioning decisions. Commission research to understand why homelessness due domestic abuse is more prevalent locally than compared to national rates.	Local housing Authority. Social services authority. Children services. Police and Crime Commissioner. Local housing Authority. Social services authority. Children services. Police and Crime Commissioner.	December 2019 June 2020

No	What	How	Who	When
		Align the commissioning of housing support for victims of domestic abuse, with CDAP, and other domestic abuse funding, as part of a local strategy for tackling domestic abuse.	Local housing Authority. Social services authority. Children services. Police and Crime Commissioner.	September 2020
4.4	Improve commissioning and delivery of housing support services.	<p>Complete a supported housing needs and gap analysis, to better understand whether current provision reflects needs of actual and potential users who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The conclusions should be carried forward to formulate a new supported housing strategy.</p> <p>Alter monitoring of service provider and user outcomes regarding support for people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness to better understand performance. Review of central access point, to understand how, if any, improvements can be made.</p>	<p>Local Housing Authority. Social Services Authority. Jobcentre Plus. Housing Benefit administrators. Voluntary organisations. Housing associations.</p> <p>Local Housing Authority. Social Services. Jobcentre Plus. Housing Benefit administrators. Voluntary organisations. Housing associations.</p>	<p>December 2020</p> <p>March 2021</p>

No.	What	How	Who	When
		<p>Agree a method for carrying out performance inspections of housing support services that benefit people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.</p>	<p>Local Housing Authority.</p> <p>Social Services Authority.</p> <p>Jobcentre Plus.</p> <p>Housing Benefit administrators.</p> <p>Voluntary organisations.</p> <p>Housing associations.</p>	<p>June 2021</p>
4.5	<p>Support people to stop sleeping rough.</p>	<p>Commission an external evaluation of the new initiative to support people who are experiencing street homelessness, to inform future policy and funding decisions.</p> <p>Publish a local directory of information, advice and assistance available for people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.</p>	<p>Local housing authority.</p> <p>Local housing authority.</p>	<p>September 2021</p> <p>December 2021</p>

No	What	How	Who	When
4.6	Commission specific information, advice and assistance for people experiencing hidden homelessness.	Develop a series of prevention, relief and support initiatives that will benefit people who otherwise would remain in unsupported temporary accommodation or 'sofa surfing'.	Local Housing Authority. Social Services Authority. Children services. Jobcentre Plus. Housing Benefit administrators. Voluntary organisations. Private registered providers of social housing.	March 2022

Objective 5 – Resource Activities to Tackle Homelessness

Progress measures: (a) Percentage of Council funds spent on homelessness; (b) Working days spent on receiving training.

No.	What	How	Who	When
5.1	Make best use of national and local government funding for tackling homelessness, to drive-up quality, value and effectiveness of outcomes in tackling homelessness.	Introduce more comprehensive performance monitoring of homelessness grant expenditure, to evidence the outcomes being achieved from this funding.	Local housing authority.	March 2020
		Ensure that spending on administering its homelessness duties is aligned to the levels of homelessness.	Local housing authority.	June 2020
		Aim to commit that MHCLG funded initiatives will be maintained by the Council for the lifetime of this strategy, should these funding streams cease or be reduced after 2020.	Local housing authority.	September 2020

No	What	How	Who	When
		Review countywide working arrangements, to maximise opportunities for successfully bidding for additional revenue funding from MHCLG and other national funding bodies.	Local housing authority.	December 2019
5.2	Ensure adequate staffing levels to administer statutory homelessness duties.	<p>Review the existing staffing levels and structure within the next five years, or immediately after any further legislative changes, to ensure it remains fit for purpose.</p> <p>Ensure all staff receive an annual update on homelessness law, along with facilitating opportunities to learn and enhance skills and knowledge to provide housing advice and homelessness assistance.</p>	<p>Local housing authority.</p> <p>Local housing authority.</p>	<p>December 2020</p> <p>March 2021</p>

No.	What	How	Who	When
		Have a specific post to oversee the delivery of the local homelessness strategy, plus housing allocation policy and tenancy strategy.	Local housing authority.	September 2019
5.3	Update IT hardware to allow more agile working.	Provide homelessness officers with tablets/devices so that the homelessness service can be taken to key locations where other public authorities or voluntary organisations provide services to those who are likely to be at risk of homelessness.	Local Housing Authority.	June 2021
5.4	Carry out an annual consultation exercise with people who have experienced homelessness to ensure their knowledge helps to shape policy and practice.	Hold an annual 'speak-out' event, at which users of homelessness services are invited to put questions to key decision makers about what works well and what could work better.	Local Housing Authority. Social Services Authority. Children services. Director of Public Health Police and Crime Commissioner. Voluntary organisations. Housing associations.	September 2020

No.	What	How	Who	When
5.5	Harness stakeholder enthusiasm and resources for tackling homelessness.	<p>Establish a Homelessness Strategy Steering Group to help deliver the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan.</p> <p>Establish a Homelessness Forum to share good practice and have oversight of progress being made on delivering the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan.</p>	<p>Local housing authority.</p> <p>Social services authority.</p> <p>Children services.</p> <p>Director of Public Health.</p> <p>Police and Crime Commissioner</p> <p>Housing association representative.</p> <p>Voluntary organisations representative.</p> <p>Local Housing Authority.</p> <p>Social Services Authority.</p> <p>Children services.</p> <p>Governors/Directors of a prison, youth offenders institute, secure training centre.</p> <p>Principal of a secure college.</p> <p>Youth offending team.</p> <p>Probation services.</p> <p>Police and Crime Commissioner.</p>	<p>April 2020</p> <p>June 2020</p>

No.	What	How	Who	When
			Jobcentre Plus. Housing benefit administrators. NHS Trusts. Director of Public Health. Private registered providers of social housing. Voluntary organisations.	