

# Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Delivery Plan 2020-25

## Update for 2020-21

Aim 1: Increasing access to accommodation and providing settled homes					
Challenge	Action	Outcome	Timeframe	Who will deliver?	Update for 2020-21
Create opportunities for accessing housing of the right kind and quality, to prevent people from becoming homeless	Implement and sustain the private rented sector (PRS) access scheme – “Bond Assure” and the Homestep scheme	PRS access scheme is implemented, and more people are helped to access accommodation in the private sector. An increase in Landlords signing up to Homestep.	2021	CBH Accommodation Team	In the last year (April 2020 – March 2021) CBH used the Homestep scheme (which provides rent deposits) to prevent homelessness and accommodate 144 households in the private rented sector
Evaluate how well the Homelessness Reduction Act is working and what difference it is making to preventing homelessness in Colchester	Set up a monitoring system to measure the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act	Monitoring in place and outcomes identified. More households prevented from becoming homeless	2021	CBH Housing Solutions Team/CBC Housing Strategy Team	Monitoring is in place and during 2020-21 the number of households prevented from becoming homeless was 187 and homelessness was relieved for 136 households.
The current demand for supported accommodation outweighs the need.	Influence the future commissioning of services to ensure that the need for this type of accommodation is met	Waiting lists for supported housing are reduced and demand for supported accommodation in Colchester is met	Throughout the life of the strategy	CBC Housing Strategy Team	Essex County Council (ECC) Homelessness accommodation with support services contract has been recommissioned. As a result of this a Service Level Agreement (SLA) has been agreed between CBC and Peabody to

					ensure access for homeless households nominated by CBC is maintained to temporary accommodation. ECC Commissioning of young people's services and mental health services has been put on hold due to the public health pandemic Covid 19.
Ensure people are not discharged from services such as Prisons, Mental Health, care, armed forces and hospitals in an unplanned way which could result in them ending up on the street	Set up/improve release/discharge protocols for people leaving Institutions.  Work with Social Care to ensure that Care leavers have a move-on pathway	Protocols set up and agreed. Planned move-on pathways created. Fewer people leaving institutions end up on the streets.	2021	ECC – (Essex Vision work) CBC – Housing Strategy Team CBH – Housing Solutions Team/Phoenix Futures - Horizon Project/Adult Social Care	CBC are signed up to a Prison Release Protocol which has been set up by ECC and quarterly monitoring is in place. CBC are working with the Clinical Commissioning group (CCG) and Tendring District Council to set up a Hospital Discharge Protocol for North Essex using learning from the protocol in South-Essex
Increase homelessness prevention for people suffering domestic abuse.	Work with providers of DA services to ensure that the model commissioned does not create a barrier to settled accommodation and a move on pathway is identified. Ensure that refuge	Reduction in homelessness for people experiencing Domestic Abuse	Throughout the life of the strategy	CBH Housing Solutions Team/Next Chapter	CBC and Colchester Borough Homes (CBH) are working with ECC and other Essex Local Authorities around the requirements of the new Domestic Abuse Bill to ensure the best access, support and outcomes for Colchester residents

	provision is protected. Continue to promote the Sanctuary scheme. Ensure continued housing representation at MARAC				suffering Domestic Abuse.
Increase and support housing options for people moving on from supported housing to reduce the reliance on social housing	Identify, support and promote access to alternative housing options in the private rented sector including shared houses	Increase in alternative housing options and planned move on routes	Throughout the life of the strategy	Supported Housing Providers/Housing Solutions Team/Beacon House/CENS	CBC/CBH continue to work with supported housing providers to encourage move on into the Private Rented Sector (PRS).
Identify accommodation opportunities for rough sleepers to help with transition from living on the street	Work with local landlords to increase accommodation opportunities for this group. Use positive outcomes from 'Housing First' approach to encourage other organisations to adopt a similar scheme.	Move-on options identified Increase in number of Landlords signing up to the scheme Decrease in number of rough sleepers  Increase in organisations willing to adopt Housing First approach	Ongoing	CBH Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator/CBC Housing Strategy Team	Funding was secured by CBC in partnership with Peabody from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) Next Steps Accommodation Pathway (NSAP) to provide 7 units of self-contained move-on accommodation with support, by reconfiguring one of Peabody's Supported Housing schemes.

**Aim 2: Helping people to sustain their accommodation**

Challenge	Action	Outcome	Timeframe	Who will deliver?	Update for 2020-21
Ensure tenants in the social rented	Encourage the take up of tenancy	Increased take up of support	Ongoing	CBH Housing Management	Due to the national ban on evictions no CBC

<p>sector at risk of homelessness are provided with more intensive tenancy support including that provided by floating support</p>	<p>support including floating support to vulnerable tenants moving into accommodation including temporary accommodation</p>	<p>services – increase in tenants sustaining tenancies – reduction in number of evictions for rent arrears and ASB</p>		<p>Team/Peabody</p>	<p>tenants were evicted during 2020/21. CBH have used partial closure orders to help tenants sustain their tenancies whilst also addressing (Anti-Social Behaviour) ASB. CBH Tenancy Sustainment Team have supported 15 vulnerable tenants to sustain their tenancies. CBC/CBH fund Catch 22 and Open Road to work with CBC tenants to help them sustain their tenancies. CBH partners with Citizens Advice and Christians against poverty who have supported tenants in rent arrears. The number of Colchester referrals to the Peabody (Floating support) Outreach Team during the year was 598 and of these, 189 clients were supported to help sustain their tenancies.</p>
<p>Ensure the provision of debt and welfare rights advice is targeted at those at risk of losing their accommodation</p>	<p>Provide support and advice to tenants on managing debt and welfare benefits including organisations</p>	<p>Reduction in the number of evictions for rent arrears Increase take up of welfare benefits</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>CBC Benefits Team/CBH Financial Inclusion Team/Private Sector Landlords</p>	<p>During 2020/21 CBH Financial Inclusion Team (FIT) supported 16 tenants to open bank accounts. 509 tenants have arrangements to</p>

	<p>working with single homeless</p> <p>Increase the take up of debt advice in the Borough and promote existing services.</p> <p>Work with private rented sector and social landlords to establish new approaches to reduce evictions.</p>				<p>pay their rent directly to CBC. 143 tenants received Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP). During 2020/21 the value of welfare rights awards to CBC tenants = £106,715</p> <p>CBH worked in partnership with Citizens Advice and Christians Against Poverty (CAP). CAP have run life skills training virtually for tenants to help them make positive changes. Citizens Advice have supported 57 CBC tenants to help them sustain their tenancies with debt and finance support.</p>
Reduce the number of owner occupiers losing their properties through mortgage arrears	Provide advice and support services to homeowners threatened with repossession at an early stage so that homelessness can be prevented in a sustainable way	Reduction in homeless applications due to repossession	Ongoing	CBH Housing Solutions Team	No information available.
Develop services that will support young tenants to maintain their tenancy and	Develop early intervention initiatives for young people under 25 including pre	Reduction in young people in temporary Accommodation and supported	2020-2025 with regular reviews	Supported Housing Providers/y.e .s/CBH Housing Management Team	<p>Pre – tenancy panels are currently not operating.</p> <p>Due to the national ban on</p>

prevent unnecessary evictions through ASB and arrears	eviction panels/pre tenancy workshops with some tailored 1:1's as and when they are identified through New Tenant Visits.	housing being evicted			evictions no young people were evicted during 2020/21
Provide advice and support to tenants/residents affected by the welfare cap, removal of the spare room subsidy etc	Promote the availability of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) Work with the Job Centre Plus to help assist tenants to access employment Promote mutual exchange to encourage tenants to move including via Mutual Exchange fairs Review existing policies to encourage tenants to move and make better use of housing stock Identify and support tenants with managing budgets	Increase in the take up of services. Better use of housing stock.	Ongoing	Colchester Borough Council/Colchester Borough Homes/Job Centre Plus	143 CBC tenants received DHP awards during 2020/21  CBH are currently supporting 14 households who are subject to the Benefit Cap.  There are 214 households that are under occupying their Council property – The Tenant Transfer Incentive scheme is being promoted annually.
Develop a strategic approach with Children's Services to meet the	Work with commissioners so that a broad range of high to low supported	Level of support provided meets the needs of clients	2022	ECC Adult Social Care/CBC Housing Strategy Team/Suppo	The Housing Strategy Team are working with ECC on the Essex Young People's Pathway

<p>housing needs of Care Leavers.</p> <p>Care leavers need to have a better understanding of the responsibilities of being a tenant</p>	<p>accommodation is provided. Develop training to ensure that clients are made aware at an early stage about the consequences of being evicted and the skills required to maintain a tenancy.</p>	<p>accommodated. Training developed so that clients have the skills to maintain a tenancy.</p> <p>To be considered as part of the new young person's contract</p>		<p>rted Housing Providers</p>	<p>review and recommissioning. However, the recommissioning process was put on hold due to the Covid 19 Public Health pandemic.</p> <p>CBH are working with DePaul on a Nightstop scheme in partnership with Chelmsford City Council and ECC. The scheme will provide short term accommodation for young people from Colchester whilst the Housing Options Team try to get them back home or into supported housing.</p>
<p>Minimise isolation so that single people that have been homeless/rough sleeping have less chance of reverting to their former lifestyle once housed</p>	<p>Encourage organisations to provide outreach tenancy support to their clients once housed. Set up a peer mentoring scheme/navigator roles</p>	<p>Support provided. Reduction in repeat homelessness</p>	<p>2020-21</p>	<p>CBH Rough Sleeping Team/Beacon House/CENS/Health in Mind</p>	<p>The Rough Sleeper Team Navigators provide initial tenancy support to ensure clients are settled into accommodation and have specialist support provided if needed.</p> <p>CBH provide Homelessness Prevention Funding to Beacon House for a Tenancy Sustainment Officer for clients that are accommodated.</p>

### Aim 3: Improving the health and wellbeing of people who experience homelessness

Challenge	Action	Outcome	Timeframe	Who will deliver?	Update for 2020-21
Increase in service provision for clients who are entrenched in substance misuse. The referral process to access services needs to be less complicated for clients to navigate. There is a gap in service provision for clients with Dual Diagnosis	Information needs to be provided to influence commissioners and statutory services. Commissioners need to have a better understanding of gaps in service provision.  Navigators/Phoenix Futures Horizon Project may help with this	Better services provided Referral processes improved with better access to services	Ongoing	Open Road/Supported Housing Providers/Beacon House/CBH Rough Sleeper Team/CBC Housing Strategy Team/CBH/Phoenix Futures	Funding secured by CBC from MHCLG via the Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) has provided funding for a Drug and Alcohol Support Worker from Open Road to be seconded to the Rough Sleeper Team to improve the referral process and access to services.
Improve access to employment, volunteering and training opportunities for people that are or have experienced homelessness	In partnership with the Work Coach Programme and DWP identify how to overcome the barriers to employment faced by homeless people. Research good practice. Develop an action plan.	Better access to employment, volunteering and training opportunities for people that are or have been homeless	Ongoing	CBC/DWP Work coach programme/Peabody//CBH - Peer mentoring	CBH explored peer mentoring opportunities including Peer mentoring and Expert by experience panels.
Statutory services need to be more joined up when commissioning Mental Health services to	Proactively encourage joint working and shared budgets as part of the recommissioning process - to be	More joined up approach to commissioning mental health services	2020-21 (or in line with the new contract)	ECC/CBC/CBH/Supported Housing Providers	ECC recommissioning of Mental Health Services has been put on hold due to the Covid 19 Public Health Pandemic.



make better use of the options available including personal budgets. This would provide a more efficient and cost-effective service	considered as part of the new contract.  Help to provide a better understanding between organisations of mental health services.	More efficient, cost effective service			A Mental Health nurse seconded from EPUT to CBH provides support and better access to mental health services for single homeless clients.
Drug use has increased and drug dealers are more organized. Specific areas where there are vulnerable clients are being targeted	Continue to work with the Police to identify and support clients that are being targeted.	Reduction in tenants evicted due to drug related crime	Ongoing	CBH/CBC ASB teams/Essex Police	Partial Closure Orders have been used to enable victims of cuckooing to remain in their homes. These measures have been promoted through social media sites and the press. The CBH Tenancy sustainment team have worked with vulnerable tenants and made referrals to Open Road.
Households and individuals that are eligible but not in priority need or are in temporary accommodation can have greater public health needs than the rest of the population.	Promote the integration between health and housing to meet the indicator around homelessness in the Public Health Outcomes Framework: Improving the wider determinants of Health for homeless acceptances and households in	Better joined up working. Identified outcomes in the framework met	Ongoing	ECC Public Health Team/CBC	The Covid 19 Public Health Pandemic has resulted in improved joined up working between Health and Housing and provided a better understanding of the roles. Weekly meetings set up by ECC with Health and Essex Local Authorities has provided a joined-up approach to Homelessness and Rough Sleeping across the county.

	temporary accommodation				
Identify the support needs of different types of rough sleepers including entrenched rough sleepers, young people that are 'new' to the streets and people suffering from mental health to provide a better understanding of gaps in support services	Research the possibility of conducting a health needs audit (using the Homeless Link toolkit) for single homeless/rough sleepers.	Support needs Identified and met	2021 - ongoing	CBH Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator/CBC Housing Strategy Team	Identifying and assessing the support needs of rough sleepers' forms part of their support plans. Access to services is identified by the Navigators and/or via the Colchester Homeless Action Panel (CHAP).
Ensure that all discharges from hospital, in-patient mental-health services, and drug and alcohol detox treatment are planned, with continuity of support where needed so that no-one is left homeless.	Work with partners in health and the voluntary sector to research best practice and set up discharge protocols/policy to provide a planned accommodation and support pathway for clients.	Discharge protocols/policy in place  People are not discharged from hospital as homeless.	Ongoing	NHS CCG /CBC/CBH/ECC	The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), CBC and CBH are working on a Hospital Discharge Protocol for North Essex. Funding is being explored through the CCG for a Housing specialist based at the hospital.

**Aim 4: Improving Communication and challenging the perception and culture of homelessness**

Challenge	Action	Outcome	Timeframe	Who will deliver?	Update for 2020-21
Provide advice and information to support	Improve communication of services provided	Statutory and Voluntary organisations and service	Throughout the life of the strategy	CBC Housing Strategy Team/	Restrictions in place because of Covid-19 meant that information

people to access services that could prevent them becoming homeless. Raising awareness about realistic housing options and homelessness in Colchester	by the Council to statutory and voluntary sector organisations through Information days. Identify gaps in information and publish and promote information on the website on the Council's homelessness and housing service for partner organisations.	users more aware of housing and homelessness services and have more realistic expectations.		CBH/Project Group Members	days could not take place in 2020-21
Improve access to advice and support around welfare benefits for single clients that are homeless to prevent delays in receiving benefits and to avoid sanctions which cause reductions in the amount of benefit they receive	Work with the DWP and advice services to explore the best way to improve access to benefit advice for single homeless clients	Improved access to advice for single homeless clients	2021	CBH Housing Solutions Team/DWP/CAB	CBH Housing Solutions Team continue to work with the Department of Work and Pensions to help reduce delays in accessing benefit advice for single homeless clients.
Develop early intervention and prevention options for Young People at risk of becoming homeless in the Borough	Provide basic strategies and signposting to support families to resolve conflict. Continue to work in partnership with Schools in the	An increase in homelessness prevention for Young people.  A decrease in homeless applications for young people	Ongoing	CBH Housing Solutions Team/ECC Social Care Teams/ y.e.s	The Youth Enquiry Service (y.e.s) has employed a family mediator who will work with young people and their families to try to prevent parental eviction.

	Borough to educate young people and their parents of the risks of leaving home in an unplanned way				
Identify people at risk of homelessness at an earlier stage, and interventions that need to be put in place to prevent them being threatened with or becoming homeless.	Develop local protocols and referral arrangements with public bodies and other appropriate agencies to assist with early identification of people at risk of homelessness	Referral process in place. An Increase in Homelessness prevention at an earlier stage – ‘Duty to refer’ fulfilled.	Ongoing		<p>The Duty to Refer is improving and a Prison Release Protocol across Essex has been adopted.</p> <p>CBC and CBH are working with Health colleagues to set up a hospital discharge policy across North Essex.</p>
Promote a person-centred approach to people that are homeless by creating structures which encourage voluntary sector services to work better together and share good practice	<p>Multi agency working group</p> <p>Community of Practice – Homeless link</p>	Better joined up working/reduction in duplication of services	Ongoing	Project Group members	<p>Colchester Homeless Action Panel (CHAP) is a multi-agency and person-centred approach to rough sleeping which provides a support and move-on pathway for those clients verified as rough sleepers in Colchester. CHAP is currently working with 12 Rough Sleepers. 2 Community of Practice events have been held by Homeless Link online (due to the Covid 19 pandemic) and have been well attended by local organisations.</p>

Provide better communication to the public and organisations about how they can play their part in helping to prevent homelessness and support those that are homeless	Promote Colchester's Homelessness Charter – providing information about how people/organisations can pledge their support to help people that are homeless	More people/organisations signing up to the Charter.  Better understanding around homelessness prevention	Throughout the life of the Strategy	CBC Housing Strategy Team/CBH Housing Solutions Team	CBC and CBH have been working with an organisation called 'Greater Change' to look at an alternative giving pilot to help provide funding for Rough Sleepers or those at risk of sleeping rough to help them move on.
To educate the public on the difference between rough sleepers and street beggars that are not homeless to discourage them from giving money to people that are begging on the street	Work on a 'behaviour change' project to educate the public on the best way to help rough sleepers in Colchester and to discourage them from giving money to street beggars.	Increase in public awareness between the difference in rough sleeping and street begging.  Increase in funds for local charities who support people that are homeless	Ongoing	CBC Housing Strategy Team/Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator/CBC Research Team	The Town Centre Action Panel (TCAP) has helped to identify and support those that are Rough Sleeping as well as tackling ASB issues around the town caused by street begging. A project has been identified through 'Greater Change' to provide an online fundraising platform for rough sleepers to assist with funding needed to help them move-on. CBC and CBH are looking to set up a pilot.
Involve people that have experienced homelessness in designing services to ensure they are relevant and accessible and to continue to inform the development of the strategy.	Hold focus groups/drop in sessions with different groups of clients i.e. homeless families	Better understanding of services for people that are homeless.	Throughout the life of the strategy	CBC Housing Strategy Team/Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator/Project Group members	This action has not been progressed due to the Covid 19 Public Health Pandemic

## Rough Sleeping Action Plan

Challenge	Action	Outcome	Timeframe	Who will deliver?	Update for 2020-21
More assertive approach to rough sleepers needed in order to help them access support services and accommodation	Funding awarded by MHCLG Rough sleeper Initiative funding to provide a more assertive street outreach, especially out of hours provision and reconnection.	Outreach Team set up within CBH and more rough sleepers helped to access support services and into accommodation	2018-19 2019-20	Housing Strategy Team/Housing Solutions/Rough Sleeper Team	Funding from MHCLG Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) was secured by CBC for 2019-20 and 2020-21 to continue the initiatives already in place provided by the Rough Sleeper Team based within CBH. During 2020-21 the Team provided advice, support, and assistance to 161 rough sleepers or those at risk of rough sleeping and accommodated 101 people. This included those in emergency accommodation under the government's 'everyone in' initiative.
Accommodation with wraparound support needed for entrenched rough sleepers to help them move from the streets into settled	Funding awarded by MHCLG Rough sleeper initiative funding to provide an opportunity to pilot a 'Housing First' Registered Provider that provides	Entrenched rough sleepers move on from the streets into settled accommodation	2018-19 2019-20	Housing Strategy Team/Housing Solutions/Rough Sleeper Team/Sanctuary Housing	The Housing Led scheme accommodation provided by Sanctuary Housing and funded using MHCLG (RSI) funding secured by CBC continues to be successful in providing accommodation

accommodation	supported housing.				with wraparound support to rough sleepers with chaotic lifestyles. During 2020-21 there were 11 referrals to the scheme via the Rough Sleeper Team. 3 clients have successfully moved on during the year and only 1 client has returned to the street. Funding has been secured by CBC from MHCLG Next Steps Accommodation Funding (NSAP) in partnership with Peabody to provide 7 units of self - contained accommodation for Rough Sleepers at a Supported Housing scheme - this forms part of the rough sleeper move-on pathway.
Colchester has a night shelter that attracts people that are homeless from neighbouring boroughs that don't have emergency provision and reduces the number of emergency bed spaces for people that have a local connection to Colchester	Funding awarded by MHCLG Rough sleeper initiative funding to increase bed spaces and support staff capacity at Colchester Night Shelter, specifically for Colchester people at risk of rough sleeping.	Better access to emergency beds at the night shelter for people that have a local connection Colchester	2018-19 2019	Housing Strategy Team/Housing Solutions/Rough Sleeper Team/Colchester Emergency Night Shelter	Due to the Covid 19 Public Health Pandemic the Night Shelter was forced to close in line with legislation. It is due to reopen as a 24/7 hostel (Colchester Engagement and Next Steps) providing 17 single rooms with en-suite facilities.

<p>During severe weather such as high wind, heavy rain, snow and heatwaves, emergency accommodation with support is needed to ensure that rough sleepers have somewhere to stay</p>	<p>Funding awarded by MHCLG Rough sleeper initiative funding to provide proper continuous Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP) from October - mid March, with specialist support staff to prevent people moving back to the street once the provision ends.</p>	<p>SWEP set up, accommodation and staff identified and trained. Provision available for rough sleepers during severe weather</p>	<p>2018-19 2019-20</p>	<p>Housing Strategy Team/Housing Solutions/Rough Sleeper Team</p>	<p>SWEP continues to operate during severe weather with funding secured from MHCLG RSI funding.</p>
<p>Dedicated duty line required to support SWEP and outreach Team</p>	<p>Set up a dedicated duty line for the Rough Sleeping team so that people on the street that need emergency accommodation can be identified and provided with somewhere to stay and help to access support services</p>	<p>Duty line set up</p>	<p>2018-19</p>		<p>A Duty line has been set up which enables people who need support and emergency accommodation easier access to the Rough Sleeping Team</p>
<p>Rough sleepers who are facing multiple disadvantage and experiencing a combination of problems need more intensive support to</p>	<p>Funding awarded by MHCLG Rapid rehousing Fund for 2 Navigator roles to work within the rough sleeping Team to provide more intensive</p>	<p>Consistent support provided to rough sleepers with complex needs to gain access to services and help to break down barriers to housing by</p>	<p>2019-20</p>	<p>Housing Strategy Team/Housing Solutions/Rough Sleeper Team</p>	<p>Funding secured from MHCLG RSI funding for 2 Navigator roles to provide consistent support to Rough Sleepers with complex needs to help them access housing and</p>



access services	support to rough sleepers identified by Outreach who have complex needs including substance misuse, mental ill health and contact with the criminal justice system.	establishing good working relationships with services across Colchester.			specialist support needs.  Funding has also been secured via RSI for a Drug and Alcohol Support Worker (seconded to the Rough Sleeper Team from Open Road) and a Trauma Informed Counsellor. These posts can provide specialist support to Rough Sleepers who require it.
Enable more robust sharing of information about rough sleepers by setting up a system between the Rough Sleeper Team (CBH) and the voluntary sector organisations	Research the viability of using a system i.e. inform to identify and provide information on rough sleepers in Colchester	Research undertaken. System in place to 'track' rough sleepers	2021-22	CBC – Housing Strategy Team/CBH Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator	Information on Rough Sleepers is being shared via CHAP.  A system to track rough sleepers is currently being researched with Homeless Link
Seek to improve the availability of day services for rough sleepers/single homeless by exploring the viability of extending the opening times of agencies	To be progressed with CENS/Beacon House	Opening times extended – more places for rough sleepers to go during the day	2021	CENS/Beacon House/CBH Rough Sleeper Team	The Colchester Night Shelter is due to reopen in July 2021 as a 24/7 hostel (see update above) therefore clients will be able to remain in the building during the day.