



Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2027-2032 (DRAFT v2)

April 2027



Buckinghamshire
Council

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Foreword

A safe, secure, and stable home is fundamental to people's wellbeing, opportunity and independence. It provides the foundation for good physical and mental health, supports access to employment, and enables individuals and families to thrive. We know in Buckinghamshire we start from a strong base but that there are inequalities, that drive avoidable and unfair differences in accessing affordable, accessible and sustainable places to live, across all of Buckinghamshire.

People living in more disadvantaged circumstances in Buckinghamshire are more likely to experience poorer housing, lower incomes, reduced access to green space, and fewer opportunities for education and employment. These disadvantages accumulate over the course of their life, leading to poorer physical and mental health outcomes and shorter healthy life expectancy. Addressing these inequalities requires a strong and sustained focus on prevention, acting early on the building blocks to reduce risk, and create the conditions for long-term housing sustainable housing for all.

Homelessness is often driven by a combination of rising housing costs, financial pressures, and complex personal circumstances. As a Council, we recognise that homelessness can affect anyone, and we are committed to ensuring that support is available at the earliest opportunity to prevent people from reaching crisis point. Tackling homelessness is a key priority for Buckinghamshire Council and requires a compassionate, coordinated, and long-term response. The council plays an important statutory role in ensuring that support is available for those at risk of homelessness and to respond with appropriate measures to those who reach crisis point. We are committed to breaking the cycle of recurring homelessness.

This Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2027-2032 sets out how we will deliver our shared ambition to reduce the occurrence of homelessness in our county and how the council will work with partners to improve outcomes for those experiencing it. It focuses on strengthening prevention, reducing rough sleeping, improving access to early support, and helping people move into safe, suitable and sustainable housing. We recognise that addressing homelessness requires more than providing a home; it also means working together across partners and across the council to address wider support needs such as training and employment so individuals can maintain independence and feel part of their community.

We would like to thank all those who have contributed to the development of this strategy and who continue to support some of the most vulnerable people across Buckinghamshire. By working together, we are determined to make a lasting difference, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to live safely, securely and with dignity.



Mark Winn – Cabinet Member for Housing and Regulatory Services

1. Introduction

Buckinghamshire Council, together with key local partners, is committed to reducing and relieving homelessness.

Homelessness is the lived reality of not having a place that is safe, secure, and truly your own, far more than just sleeping on the streets. This can include experiences from rough sleeping with no shelter at all, to staying in temporary accommodation or hostels, to hidden homelessness such as sofa-surfing or facing eviction.

This strategy sets out Buckinghamshire's approach to preventing and reducing homelessness and rough sleeping by ensuring that residents are supported to sustain their current housing, or access suitable alternative accommodation, and is aligned with Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) requirements. It outlines ways in which services work together to break the cycle of recurring homelessness. These objectives are embedded throughout the strategy and underpin the strategic priorities. It fulfils the council's statutory requirements under the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

The strategy places prevention and tenancy sustainment at the centre of Buckinghamshire's response. It has been developed with partners ranging across internal and external services including but not limited to housing, social care, health, commissioning, environmental health, community safety, probation and the criminal justice system, customer services, the Department for Work and Pensions, housing providers, and the voluntary and community sector.

It is also informed by the perspectives of people with lived experience of homelessness, recognising that effective services must be shaped by those who use them. Their insight and expertise are invaluable in influencing how services are designed and delivered.

Homelessness is influenced by a range of underlying factors, including poverty and deprivation, health inequalities, insecure employment, other housing affordability pressures, and can often be triggered by significant life events.

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Evidence Base (Annex 1.1) has informed this strategy. In summary, the evidence base highlights a growing and increasingly complex picture of housing need across Buckinghamshire. While the county remains relatively affluent overall, recent data indicates that there are growing pressures across the county with wider economic pressures increasing financial insecurity for many households. Demand for homelessness support has grown in recent years with residents impacted by a range of issues including poor physical and mental health, domestic abuse, family breakdown, alcohol or substance use, debt, and other complex support needs. The evidence base demonstrates that homelessness in the county affects a broader range of households than ever before.

In response to the evidence, the strategy has set out a clear framework around three priorities:

- **Early and Targeted Prevention** – Identifying those with multiple and complex needs and supporting at risk households with a rapid and effective response to stop homelessness before it occurs
- **Management of Temporary and Support Accommodation Pathways** –provide accessible temporary accommodation that is safe, suitable, and used for the shortest time possible
- **Long Term Housing Sustainment** – Support individuals to transition from homelessness and rough sleeping into settled, affordable homes with the long-term support needed to thrive

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan (Annex 1.2) sets out the road map for delivery against these priorities to achieve the aims of this strategy. It sets out what the council will do, when it will be actioned, the partners involved in achieving the outcomes and how the Housing Service will monitor progress and measure its success.

2. Vision Statement

A place where homelessness and rough sleeping are prevented, crisis is quickly resolved, and individuals and families can thrive in safe and secure homes.

3. Background to the Buckinghamshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

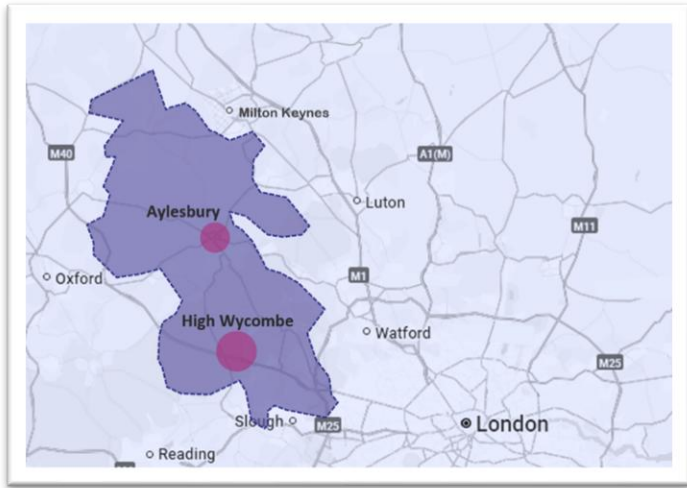
Housing is one of the most fundamental building blocks of a person's life. No one in Buckinghamshire should experience homelessness or be forced to sleep rough.

Homelessness is not just a housing issue, it is a human one. It can happen suddenly, often linked to a crisis such as relationship breakdown, loss of income, poor health, or other trauma. Issues can quickly escalate, and the consequences can be severe. Homelessness and housing insecurity can take many forms, including rough sleeping, temporary accommodation, sofa-surfing, or other housing which is not stable, safe or secure. For children in particular, homelessness issues can disrupt education, affect health and wellbeing, and limit life chances long into adulthood.

The council has a legal duty to respond when people become homeless, including providing advice, support, and, where necessary, temporary accommodation. This strategy sets out how services will work together to make that happen. Ending and preventing homelessness cannot be achieved by one service alone in isolation. It requires a shared commitment across housing, health, social care, criminal justice, registered providers, housing providers, employment support, and the voluntary and community sector.

4. The County of Buckinghamshire

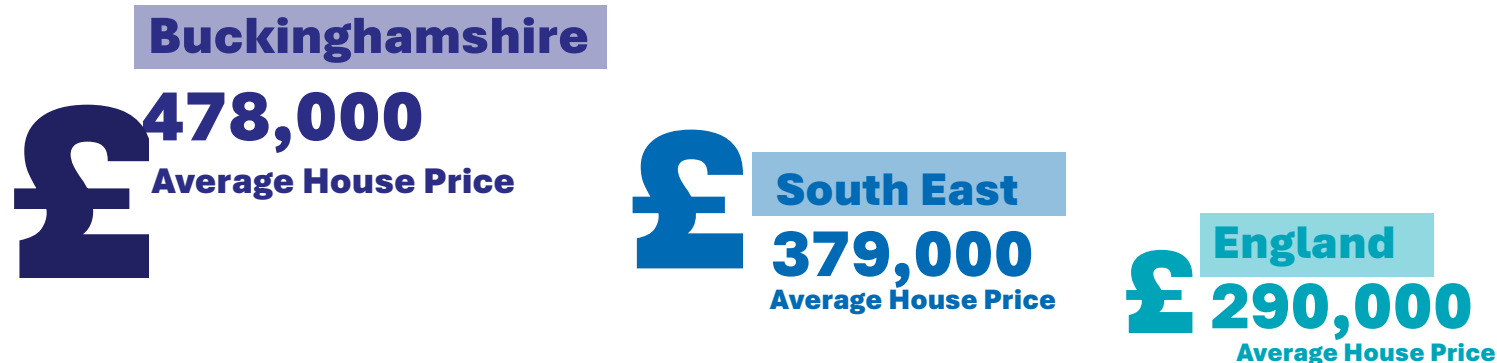
Buckinghamshire is a diverse and well-connected county located within a wider region of growth and opportunity, with strong links to London and surrounding areas. It includes a mix of rural communities, market towns and urban centres, offering a range of living environments. Buckinghamshire Council is the unitary authority responsible for local government across the county and is home to over half a million residents.



Blue dashed line represents the Buckinghamshire County border; purple bubbles represent scaled population density in the county's two largest towns.

House prices and private rents

In February 2026, the average house price in Buckinghamshire was around £478,000, while average private rents reached £1,467 per month in March 2026, following annual growth of 4.7%. The area includes a range of housing markets, reflected in Broad Rental Market Areas (BRMAs) such as Central and South Buckinghamshire, which inform Local Housing Allowance rates and highlights variations in local housing costs.



Sources: Census 2021 population and ethnicity data; Office for National Statistics housing price and rental statistics; Buckinghamshire Council's Housing and Homelessness JSNA 2024; Buckinghamshire Housing Strategy 2024 to 2029; local deprivation evidence; and the council's Homelessness strategy 2023

Census and population trends

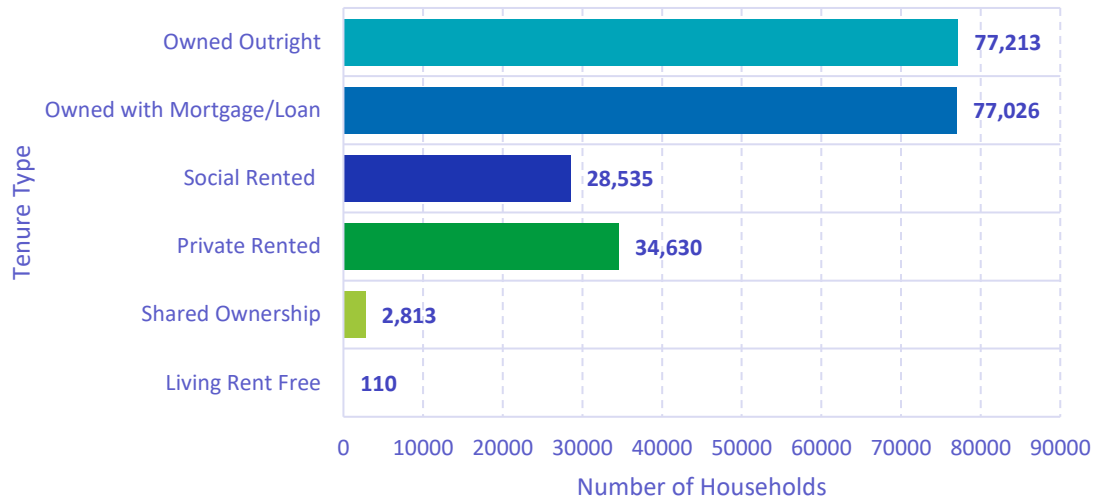
Census 2021 data shows Buckinghamshire has experienced steady growth, with a resident population of around 553,100, an increase of approximately 47,800 people, or 9.5%, since 2011. This growth exceeded both the South East and England over the same period.

Buckinghamshire's age profile also affects homelessness demand and prevention. Around 23.2% of residents are under 18, 57.8% are of working age and 19.0% are aged 65 and over. The median age increased from 41 to 42 between 2011 and 2021. Growth in older age groups means housing need is likely to intersect more often with health, disability, care and support needs.

Census data also shows increasing diversity within Buckinghamshire's population. In 2021, 77.2% of residents identified as White and 22.8% identified with ethnic minority groups, including 12.4% Asian, 5.0% Black, 3.7% Mixed and 1.7% from other ethnic groups. These patterns vary across the county.

Buckinghamshire has high employment levels, with unemployment below regional and national averages and resident earnings above average. In the year ending December 2023, the employment rate for residents aged 16 to 64 was 81.2%, compared with 79.3% across the South East, while the unemployment rate was 2.9%.

Housing Tenure in Buckinghamshire (Census 2021)

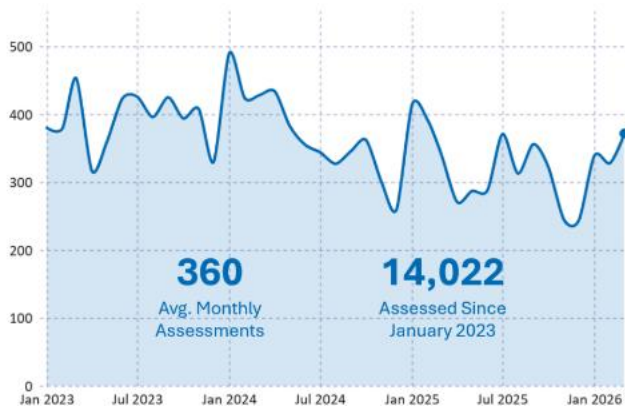


Source: Buckinghamshire Census 2021

Applications received

Homelessness demand in Buckinghamshire can be understood through a combination of statutory homelessness approaches, local temporary accommodation use and wider indicators of hidden homelessness.

Homelessness Assessments Completed by Month 2023 - 2026



360
Avg. Monthly
Assessments

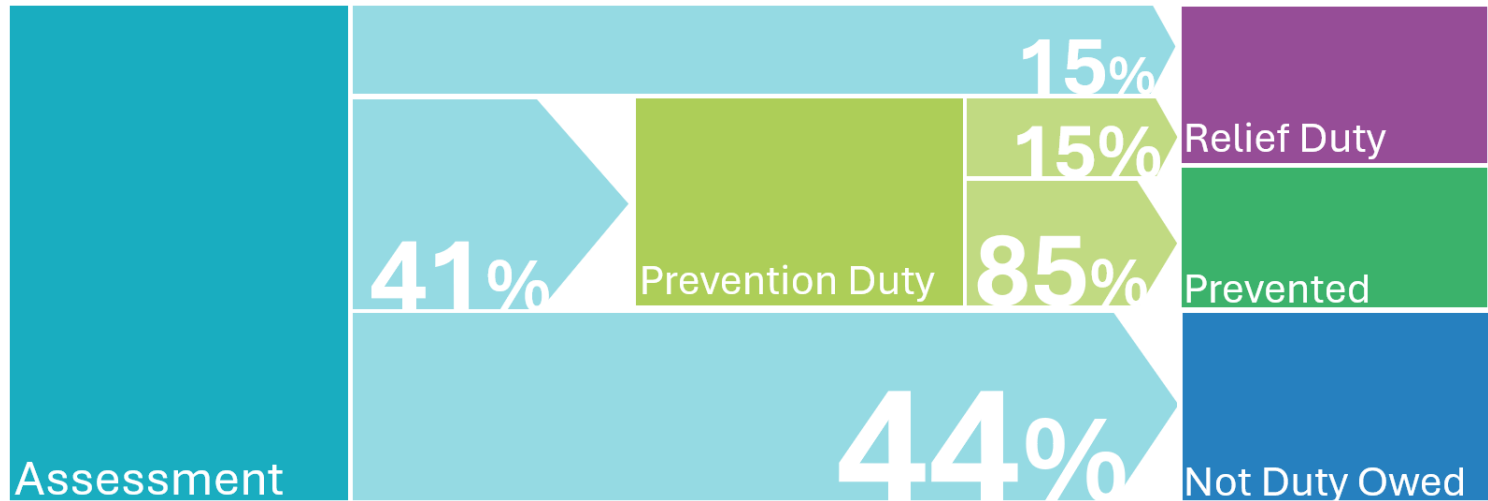
14,022
Assessed Since January
2023

Source: Locata – Buckinghamshire Council's Housing Service Internal Data

Since March 2023 over 14,022 applications to the Homelessness Service, have been assessed. This local picture sits within a wider national context in which statutory homelessness demand remains high and the use of temporary accommodation continues to rise. For Buckinghamshire, this reinforces the importance of intervening as early as possible, both to prevent crisis and to reduce pressure on emergency and temporary accommodation pathways.

Homelessness Case Flows

2023 - 2026



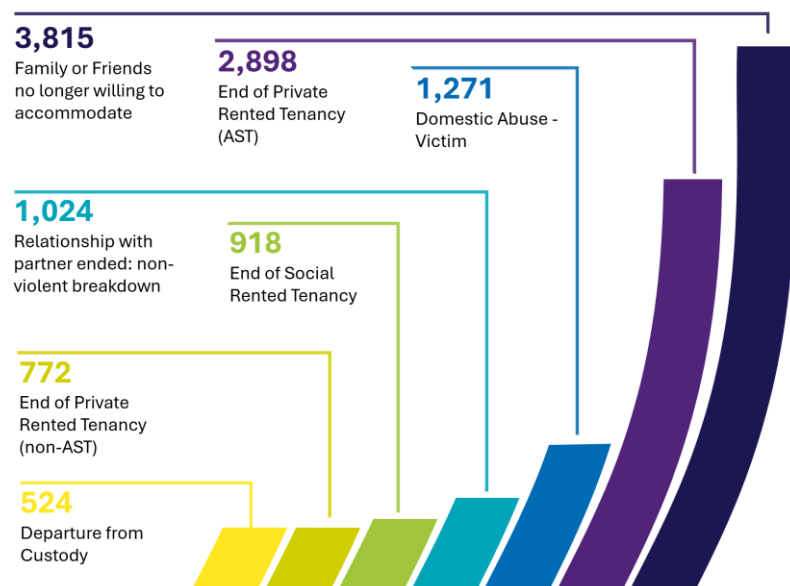
Source: Locata – Buckinghamshire Council’s Housing Service Internal Data

Reasons for Homelessness

The main reasons for homelessness given by current applicants in Buckinghamshire include family and friends no longer willing to accommodation, the end of private rented tenancies (Assured Shorthold Tenancies AST), and Domestic Abuse. Other reasons for homelessness include non-violent relationship breakdowns, end of social rented tenancies, end of non AST private rented tenancies, and departure from custody.

Homelessness Assessment Outcomes

2023 – 2026



Source: Locata – Buckinghamshire Council's Housing Service

Main reasons for homelessness – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Evidence Base 6.2 – Annex 1.1

Additionally, affordability pressures are amplified by the gap between market rents and the support available through Local Housing Allowance, which limits the options available to many low-income households in both the private rented sector and temporary accommodation pathways.

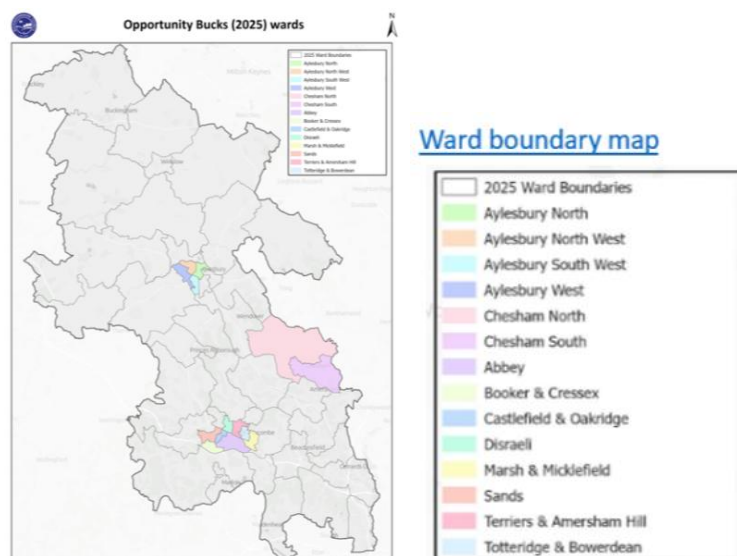
The cost of essentials such as food and energy has also risen with homelessness and housing accounting for 14% of food bank referrals between June-August 2021¹, creating wider cost of living pressures locally in Buckinghamshire, where high housing costs mean many lower income households are particularly exposed to financial insecurity. These challenges have increased the numbers of people facing homelessness in Buckinghamshire, a pattern which is also reflected nationally.

The complexity of need reflected in homelessness data is also recognised through the development of targeted responses for residents facing multiple and complex disadvantages through initiatives such as Opportunity Bucks and Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) approach, recognising the interaction between homelessness, health inequalities, alcohol or substance use, mental health needs and social exclusion. The council is committed to tackling homelessness by

¹ [Opportunity Bucks – Succeeding for all](#)

taking a place-based prevention and partnership working approach with particular focus on individuals experiencing complex needs, repeated homelessness, rough sleeping and social exclusion.

[Opportunity Bucks](#) are a flexible, person-centred resource used across key Buckinghamshire localities, including Aylesbury, High Wycombe and Chesham, targeting areas where people are experiencing the greatest levels of hardship and risk of homelessness (as indicated on the map above). They focus on practical interventions such as securing accommodation, improving health and wellbeing, building financial resilience, supporting access to employment and skills, and strengthening social connections. By funding small but critical needs, such as travel, ID, deposits, or essential household items, they enable rapid, targeted interventions that prevent homelessness or support swift moves off the street.



Source: Opportunity Bucks: Your quarterly update 14.10.2026

Aligned with the Financial Insecurities team inclusive of [Making Every Adult Matter \(MEAM\)](#) which is a national network led by a group of charities focused on improving outcomes for people experiencing disadvantages and looking at systemic barriers that impact on them. Efforts to address homelessness in Buckinghamshire focus on supporting people in Opportunity Bucks wards who experience repeated homelessness or long-term rough sleeping, frequently seek financial assistance, or have complex needs with limited engagement in adult social care services

With coordinated, trauma-informed casework across these priority areas, practitioners have the flexibility to respond quickly and creatively to individual needs, strengthening engagement and supporting more sustainable housing and recovery outcomes.

5. Delivering in Partnership

Preventing and reducing homelessness in Buckinghamshire requires coordinated action across council services, statutory agencies, housing providers, and the voluntary and community sector. Different partners bring distinct responsibilities, from prevention and safeguarding to accommodation, health support and recovery. This strategy has been developed in consultation with statutory and non-statutory services and voluntary sector community enterprise (VSCE).

Delivery Partner	Specific Role and Responsibility	Early and Targeted Prevention	Management of Temporary and Supported Accommodation Pathways	Long Term Housing Sustainment
Buckinghamshire Council Housing Service	Coordination and delivery of the statutory and non-statutory duties including: • Strategic Planning including publishing a Homelessness Strategy and reviewing housing needs and tenancy strategies • Prevention Duty – provide a free, accessible advice and information service on preventing homelessness and securing housing. Assessment for Homelessness and providing securing suitable accommodation (including temporary accommodation) • Managing the social housing register and maintaining an allocation scheme • Private Rented Sector Enforcement			
Buckinghamshire Council One Council Approach	• Cabinet Working Group, consisting of Housing, Planning, and Adults & Children Cabinet Members			
Registered Providers / Housing Associations – more than 70 Registered	• Key driver for providing long-term social and affordable housing • Tenancy sustainment and preventing tenancy breakdown			

Delivery Partner	Specific Role and Responsibility	Early and Targeted Prevention	Management of Temporary and Supported Accommodation Pathways	Long Term Housing Sustainment
Providers deliver over 35,000 social and affordable tenancies in Buckinghamshire.	Proactively manage, maintain, and assess their properties to ensure they are safe, complaints and decent.			
NHS Integrated Care Boards & Trusts	- Commission and deliver primary care, mental health support, and alcohol or substance use services (this is commissioned by PH) for those sleeping rough. - Health protection			
Buckinghamshire Council Adult and Children Social Care (including Make Every Adult Matter -MEAM)	- Statutory safeguarding assessments in line with Section 42 of the Care Act 2014. - Provide care packages for vulnerable adults in line with eligibility criteria set out under the Care Act 2014. - Corporate Parenting responsibilities for Children in care and care-leavers - Delivers intensive, person-centred support and brings services together to improve outcomes and systems for people facing multiple disadvantage			
Buckinghamshire Council Public Health	- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) - Housing & Health Working Group - Public mental health and suicide prevention - Health improvement (including One Recovery Bucks (Drug and Alcohol service) and smoking cessation) - Health Protection			

Delivery Partner	Specific Role and Responsibility	Early and Targeted Prevention	Management of Temporary and Supported Accommodation Pathways	Long Term Housing Sustainment
	• Healthy planning network • Health Checks			
Buckinghamshire Council Enforcement (Environmental Health)	• Renters Rights Act implementation enforcement including illegal evictions • TA framework partnership working (TA and PRS placement checks etc) • Residential regulatory enforcement/standards/House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licencing • Public health interventions and prevention through HHOP • Supporting successful hospital discharge to home through Healthy Homes on Prescription (HHOP) process and enforcement			
Homeless Charities and Voluntary Sector Community Organisations including: Connection Support, Wycombe Homeless Connection, Aylesbury Homeless Action Group (AHAG), Amicus Trust, Youth Concern, Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme, Community Impact Bucks, One Recover Bucks,	• Frontline and 'street' outreach (including for rough sleepers) • Delivery of service and support access • Delivery of emergency winter shelters • Other community support for those at risk of homelessness (i.e. food, hot drinks, showers, and other advice and wellbeing activities) • Support service assisting those in TA explore their housing options, often outside the Local Authority Area. Supporting domestic abuse clients, social tenants, overcrowded, under occupying, refugees, over 55s and those with accessibility needs			

Delivery Partner	Specific Role and Responsibility	Early and Targeted Prevention	Management of Temporary and Supported Accommodation Pathways	Long Term Housing Sustainment
Citizens Advice Bucks, Homefinder				
Buckinghamshire Council Community Safety	• Safety and Crime in the community • Crime and Antisocial behaviour via street wardens and partnership working with the Police and Outreach • Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls commissioned services			
Local Police and Probation Services	• Support multi-agency risk assessments • Assist with housing pathways for ex-offenders			
Lived Experience Advisory Panel	• Represent the voices of individuals who have experienced homelessness and/or received homelessness services • Ensure that service design and delivery reflects the best approach and achieves the best outcomes			
Supported Accommodation Providers including: Connection Support, Sanctuary Supported Living, Amicus Trust, Youth Concern, One YMCA, The Orders of St John Care Trust, Fremantle Trust, SeeAbility, Hightown	• Provide a housing pathway between immediate crisis management and long-term independent living • Deliver placements utilising support services delivered on-site to address the underlying causes of homelessness (such as mental health support and/or addiction recovery) • Offer diverse housing options for placements which are dependent on the support needs (i.e. low/medium/high) of an individual			

Delivery Partner	Specific Role and Responsibility	Early and Targeted Prevention	Management of Temporary and Supported Accommodation Pathways	Long Term Housing Sustainment
Housing Association, and Response				
Local Government and support agencies delivering financial and employment advice – Financial insecurity inclusive of Helping Hand and MEAM (Buckinghamshire Council), Department of Work and Pensions, Buckinghamshire Council Skills Strategy Board	• Emergency Relief for acute housing insecurity issues • Emergency support for housing insecurity including case by case assistance with rent arrears. • Emergency help (where a financial shock has occurred) with basic living costs or essential household items to reduce financial pressure and prevent housing issues such as rent arrears or eviction. • Provides intensive, trauma-informed support and coordinates multi-agency responses for adults facing multiple disadvantage, while driving system change through shared learning • Aligning skills provision with employer needs and targeted employment support (training, skills bootcamps, one-to-one guidance) • The Buckinghamshire's Work Plan • Best Employment Support Tool (BEST) • Connect to Work – supporting people who may face more complex challenges in finding or staying in a job, provides on going personalised support to find a job, boost confidence and succeed at work • Horizon Employability Programme			

A Stronger, More Integrated System

Delivery is supported through established partnership and governance arrangements across the council and with external agencies, ensuring a coordinated, system-wide approach.

Complex Case Panels: Adult CRM and Children's Panels such as the Children and Families complex case meeting, are monthly multi-agency arrangements, led by Housing, which bring together Social Care, Health, safeguarding teams and specialist partners to review high-risk or challenging cases, escalate concerns, unblock barriers, and agree clear, accountable multi-agency action plans. In addition, there are monthly case resolution meetings.

Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), Serious and Organised Crime Group: Targeted arrangements are also in place for prison leavers, facilitated through the Police service bringing together professionals strategically for stronger information sharing arrangements and a cross-border partnership meeting including local authorities across surrounding boroughs, with police, prison and probation services included.

Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination: (MATAC) which is a strategic, multi-agency initiative used by police and partner organisations such as local authorities, housing associations and health services, to target and manage serial and high-risk perpetrators of domestic abuse. A **Local Authority Focus Group** has also been set up with neighbouring authorities and the police and prison services, to focus on prison released and better working across partners.

Homelessness Discharge pathway meetings: take place with local hospitals, to encourage a joined up, planned approach to hospital discharges back into the community.

Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference: (MARAC) is a local regular meeting between professionals to share information and risk concerns to protect victims and survivors of domestic abuse who are at the highest risk across Buckinghamshire, supporting a coordinated multi-agency safety plan to reduce the risk of harm to victims and survivors and children.

Corporate Parenting Panel: brings together a strategic committee of councillors, council staff, and partner agencies responsible for championing and overseeing services for children in care and care experienced people. This is done through partnership working and direct engagement with children and young people to understand their experiences

Armed Forces Covenant and Civilian Military Partnership Board: alongside the Veterans' Gateway, work to ensure commitments to veterans in Bucks are translated into practical support, including access to housing and employment.

These are complemented by a range of strategic and operational forums.

The Homelessness Forum: Chaired by charities and coordinated by the council, this Forum brings together services supporting residents at risk of homelessness to share intelligence and improve coordinated responses. The forum oversees and monitors the delivery of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Registered Provider Housing Development Forum and Registered Provider Forum: support collaboration on affordable housing delivery and allocation processes. This is further supported by the RP Compact, which underpins partnership working arrangements, through improved collaboration and information sharing.

The Landlord Forum: strengthens engagement with the private rented sector.

For strategic oversight of the strategy and its associated action plan, the council will operate a Cabinet Working Group, consisting of Housing, Planning, and Adults & Children Cabinet Members, to ensure strong cross-portfolio leadership, clear accountability, and coordinated decision-making in addressing the complex and cross-cutting drivers of homelessness.

Proactive Prevention and Early Intervention (Pre–Front Door)

An ongoing commitment is identifying and supporting households at risk of homelessness before crisis point, through a joined-up, partnership working arrangement, that enables earlier intervention and improves outcomes with a key focus on preventative approaches.

Proactive prevention through collaboration brings together Council services and partners to share data, insight and community intelligence, allowing for the early identification of risk of homelessness or housing insecurity, better understanding of needs of different population groups, prompt and effective support and reducing the need for emergency accommodation.

This is delivered through:

- 1) Joined and proactive data analysis across council departments and with stakeholders. This includes developing new tools and innovative ways to forecast need such as using and sharing data held in the housing system (Locata), the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT). LIFT identifies households in current or at risk of future poverty, enabling proactive intervention to address issues such as homelessness, food and financial insecurity.
- 2) A “no wrong door” approach, ensuring services such as the Customer Service Centre and Community Health and Wellbeing Workers (CHWWs) identify housing need early and connect residents quickly to housing support.
- 3) Community-based outreach and prevention, working with Street Wardens and community safety partners to identify risks linked to anti-social behaviour, rough sleeping and alcohol or substance use, and engage households who may not otherwise access support.
- 4) Targeted, multi-agency support for complex needs, including the council’s Financial Insecurity Team which delivers the Helping Hands service and Making Every Adult Matter Approach. The Environmental Health service play an important front line role in identifying housing risks such as damp and mould and hoarding.

By strengthening early identification, partnership working, and coordinated intervention, Buckinghamshire Council aim to prevent homelessness before it occurs rather than responding in crisis.

6. Priority Vulnerable Groups

Some groups face significantly higher homelessness risks and require a focused and coordinated response. This includes groups such as rough sleepers, households impacted by domestic abuse, young people and families, care leavers, individuals experiencing multiple disadvantage, and those with accessibility and health needs. For these groups, housing instability is often driven by a combination of factors, and a one-size-fits-all approach is not effective. This strategy has been developed in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The Evidence Base (Annex 1.1) highlights a need to ensure that effective coordination is in place and that service provision responds consistently. It is essential that services actively solicit feedback from service users and take an active engagement approach for service design considering the service user experience.

The council has looked to place lived experience at the forefront of its work with these vulnerable cohorts. For care leavers, this meant engaging young people through the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel, Care Leavers Takeover events, and targeted other targeted engagement and workshops. These opportunities ensure care-experienced young people can directly influence services, shaping support to better reflect their needs, experiences, and aspirations as they transition into independent living.

Lived experience has been captured from those engaging with homelessness and rough sleeping charities across Aylesbury and Wycombe as well as those currently in temporary accommodation arrangements, to support the development of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Rough Sleeping

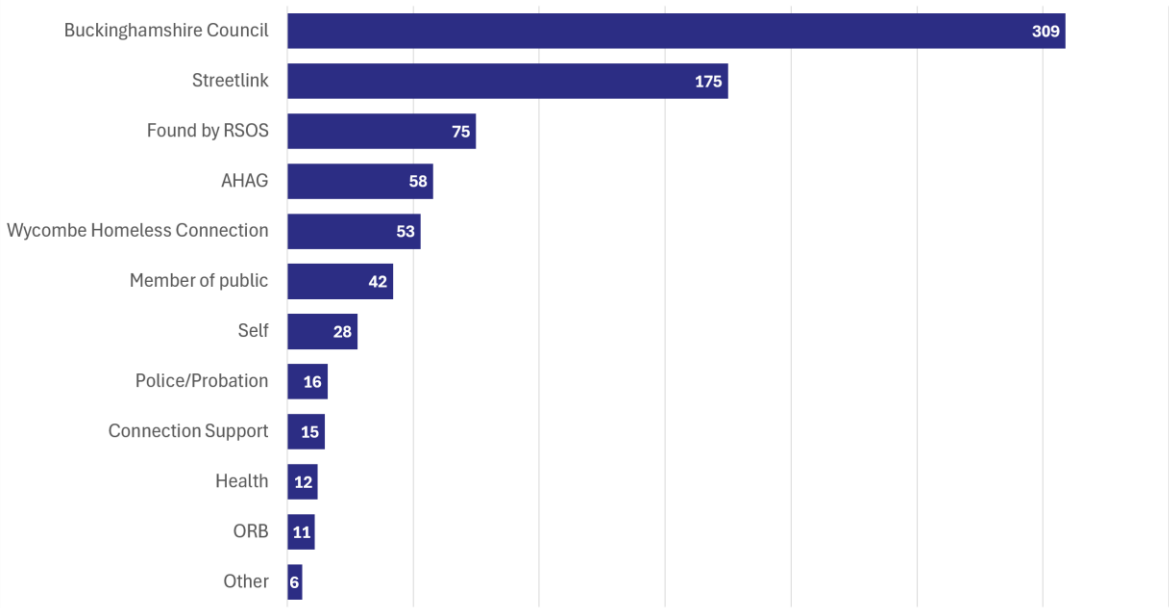
Rough sleepers are defined as people sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). It also includes people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation such as stairwells, barns, sheds, cars or car parks, derelict boats, stations or bashes. The definition does not include people in hostels or shelters, those on campsites such as squatters, or travellers ².

² [Homelessness data: notes and definitions - GOV.UK](#)

In November 2025, 22 individuals were identified as sleeping rough in Buckinghamshire. The number of rough sleepers overall is rising nationally, and this is reflected within Buckinghamshire. Recognising that rough sleeping populations vary from month to month, it's important to acknowledge that the numbers captured are from a snapshot single night count. Over the last year (2025/2026) rough sleeping figures showed the following; 14 in January, 20 in April, 16 in July and 22 in October.

Rough sleeping referrals come from a number of sources, as outlined in the following graph:

Source of Referrals to Buckinghamshire Rough Sleeping Outreach Service
2025/2026



Source: Connections outreach data, compiled through outreach activity and internal case management.

Rough sleeping remains one of the most visible and complex challenges with many individuals struggling with complex needs. Evidence nationally shows that rough sleeping is often linked to relationship breakdown, discharge from institutions, poor mental health, trauma, alcohol or substance use and insecure accommodation.

This strategy recognises the need for a persistent, coordinated and flexible approach. The Housing Service will continue to strengthen collaborative working across housing, health, alcohol or substance use services, criminal justice and the voluntary sector, ensuring responses are joined-up and person-centred. This includes a focus on prevention, earlier intervention, and sustained support beyond the point of accommodation, alongside Housing First and MEAM approaches for those with the highest most complex needs.

Emphasis is also placed on improving tenancy sustainment while addressing the wider community impact that can happen as a result of visible rough sleeping. Services are delivered with a sensitive and flexible approach targeted at addressing the underlying issues which contribute to the revolving door of repeat rough sleeping.

Rough Sleeper Initiative Coordinator – This council role is central to coordinating the council’s response to rough sleeping, ensuring a clear and timely pathway from identification through to accommodation and support. This officer oversees the process from initial identification of a rough sleeper, through assessment of eligibility and priority need, and into appropriate accommodation, including emergency placements as they become available. The role ensures that support is effectively coordinated around the individual, convening multi-agency meetings where required, and leading on the delivery of key initiatives such as Housing First and Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP).

In addition, the role is responsible for maintaining oversight of performance and compliance. This includes collecting and reporting data to Government, submitting housing benefit applications to maximise available funding, and chairing fortnightly rough sleeper meetings to drive accountability and service effectiveness. Through this coordination and oversight, the role helps ensure that services operate efficiently, consistently, and with a clear focus on moving individuals away from the streets and into sustainable housing.

Making Every Adult Matter Approach – capacity is provided for this as part of the Opportunity Bucks Programme, providing a coordinated, person-centred response for individuals facing multiple disadvantage. This approach has been successful in rehousing a number of entrenched rough sleepers through enhanced support around particularly complex cases.

Connection Support (Outreach) – This outreach service operates in the community engaging rough sleeping individuals. Outreach workers conduct early morning visits to known sleep sites to verify rough sleeping and make initial contact, offering immediate support and working to bring individuals into appropriate services as quickly as possible. They maintain accurate, real-time records to inform service coordination and ensure that housing officers carrying out statutory duties have up-to-date information.

The outreach team also gathers detailed information to support assessments.

Connections Support (Tenancy Sustainment) – Tenancy Sustainment Workers provide targeted support to individuals with a history of rough sleeping who are placed in emergency accommodation or moving into longer-term housing. Their focus is on preventing repeat homelessness by supporting people to sustain tenancies, whether in supported accommodation or the private rented sector. This includes facilitating referrals, working closely with the Wycombe Rent Deposit Scheme, and supporting access to appropriate housing options. Regular visits, welfare checks, and ongoing engagement help maintain stability, while active participation in multi-agency meetings ensures a joined-up approach to each individual's journey.

Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) – This initiative strengthens the pathway out of rough sleeping and responds to immediate needs of those in crisis. This includes emergency bed spaces (E-Beds), as well as additional support in winter months through expansion of further options. This is in place in partnership with Registered Providers and local charities including faith groups and churches.

Support is also provided to ensure access to the private rented sector. This includes the Wycombe Rent Deposit Scheme which helps individuals secure self-contained accommodation and other incentives for landlords.

Drug and Alcohol Outreach (One Recovery Bucks) – Specialist drug and alcohol outreach workers operate across the county to engage individuals sleeping rough. They provide assertive outreach, linking people directly into treatment services, supporting attendance at appointments, and delivering ongoing support both on the street and within emergency accommodation. They maintain up-to-date records to ensure all partners are informed of progress, enabling a coordinated, consistent response to individuals who are affected by their use of alcohol or drugs.

Aylesbury Homeless Action Group – Housing Support – A dedicated Housing Support Worker provides early intervention for individuals with lower support needs who are at risk of homelessness or currently rough sleeping. The role focuses on practical support and advocacy, helping individuals navigate housing options, access accommodation, and sustain tenancies. This targeted, preventative approach reduces escalation and supports quicker resolutions for those who do not meet statutory thresholds.

YMCA – Housing First Support – Housing First support workers deliver intensive, person-centred support to individuals with complex needs transitioning into Housing Led accommodation. They begin engagement prior to move-in to build trust and establish relationships, and continue providing high-level, flexible support once individuals are housed. This includes support with health needs, attending appointments, medication compliance (including depot injections), and maintaining personal safety and wellbeing. The aim is to enable individuals to sustain their accommodation long-term and support recovery through stable housing and consistent, trusted relationships.

StreetLink – plays a key role in identifying and responding to people sleeping rough in Buckinghamshire, providing a vital route for members of the public and partner agencies to alert local outreach services. These alerts enable timely verification and engagement, ensuring individuals are quickly connected to support

and accommodation pathways. The council will continue to promote effective use of StreetLink and strengthen its integration within local outreach and partner responses, supporting a proactive and coordinated approach to reducing rough sleeping.

New Provision of Bespoke Accommodation – Accommodation for people transitioning from rough sleeping needs particular consideration. The council with partners looks to bring forward schemes which are designed with this cohort in mind including modular.

Embedding lived experience is essential to shaping effective services, ensuring that provision and responses are informed by real insight and continuously improved through meaningful engagement and feedback. Gaining vital feedback from individuals is essential as they are the most appropriate people to identify crucial barriers to support, based on their own personal experiences.



Recent example of a modular rough sleeping accommodation scheme delivered in partnership between the council and a Registered Provider in Aylesbury

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is one of the most urgent and complex drivers of homelessness and is recognised as a form of violence against women and girls (VAWG), rooted in gender inequality. It disproportionately affects women and girls, while also impacting men, LGBTQ+ people and families, particularly those with dependent children. Buckinghamshire Council is committed to ensuring that all victims and survivors of abuse can access safe accommodation and the right support at the right time, grounded in a trauma-informed, person-centred approach that prioritises safety, dignity and recovery.

Buckinghamshire benefits from a strong and established network of domestic abuse and sexual violence services. This includes refuge provision, a 24/7 access point, outreach support, specialist advocacy, and dedicated services for children and young people (Annex 1.1 Evidence Base pages 49 and 50). Preventative approaches, such as the Sanctuary Scheme, enable victims and survivors to remain safely in their homes where appropriate, while in-house Domestic Abuse Caseworkers provide vital early intervention, strengthen safeguarding, and improve coordination across services. This also includes working with partners to address perpetrator behaviour and reduce repeat harm.

However, demand pressures are evident for this cohort, with refuge spaces under significant pressure. The council takes a proactive approach to prevention and recovery, including exploring an integrated, multi-agency pathway for households impacted by domestic abuse, ensuring access to safe accommodation, addressing gaps in provision, and improving move-on pathways for victims and survivors.

Embedding a coordinated, multi-agency response across housing, health and community safety will strengthen referral pathways, improve information sharing, and ensure a more consistent and effective response to domestic abuse.

Care Leavers

The council has clear statutory responsibilities to ensure that care leavers are supported into safe, suitable accommodation. These duties span children's services, housing, and corporate parenting responsibilities.

In Buckinghamshire there is a commitment to addressing housing needs for care leavers. The council works collaboratively across services, under an agreed joint protocol, to prepare care leavers for independence, focusing on tenancy readiness, life skills and confidence-building.

Pathways include supported and regulated accommodation for young people aged 16+, 'staying put' arrangements for those aged 18+, and higher priority access to housing through Bucks Home Choice and the private rented sector. These pathways aim to provide a structured transition from care to independent living.

Young People and Families

The council is committed addressing housing insecurity issues faced by young people and families. This entails effective joint working between the council's housing and children's services, expanding family mediation, embedding youth-specific accommodation, and improving links to education, employment and training.

There is a Homeless protocol for the 16 & 17 year old cohort which is utilised by the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Housing Service for urgent and complex cases. Voluntary partners such as Youth Concern work directly in the community to provide vital early intervention and crisis support.

Families and children affected by homelessness are of particular concern. The council aims to reduce the number of children in temporary accommodation for longer than 12 months as a key performance indicator.

Multiple and Complex Needs

Many individuals at risk of homelessness experience a range of overlapping and interconnected needs, including mental ill health, those impacted by their drug and alcohol use, experience of trauma, and contact with the criminal justice system. Early intervention and prevention remain critical. Identifying risk factors at the earliest opportunity and providing coordinated, person-centred support can help prevent escalation, reduce crisis presentations and improve longer-term outcomes. Current provision across Buckinghamshire includes outreach, Housing First, supported accommodation and specialist services, which together offer support at both crisis and recovery stages. The Opportunity Bucks programme targets service provision to complex cases in need of high-level specialist support and intense interventions when necessary.

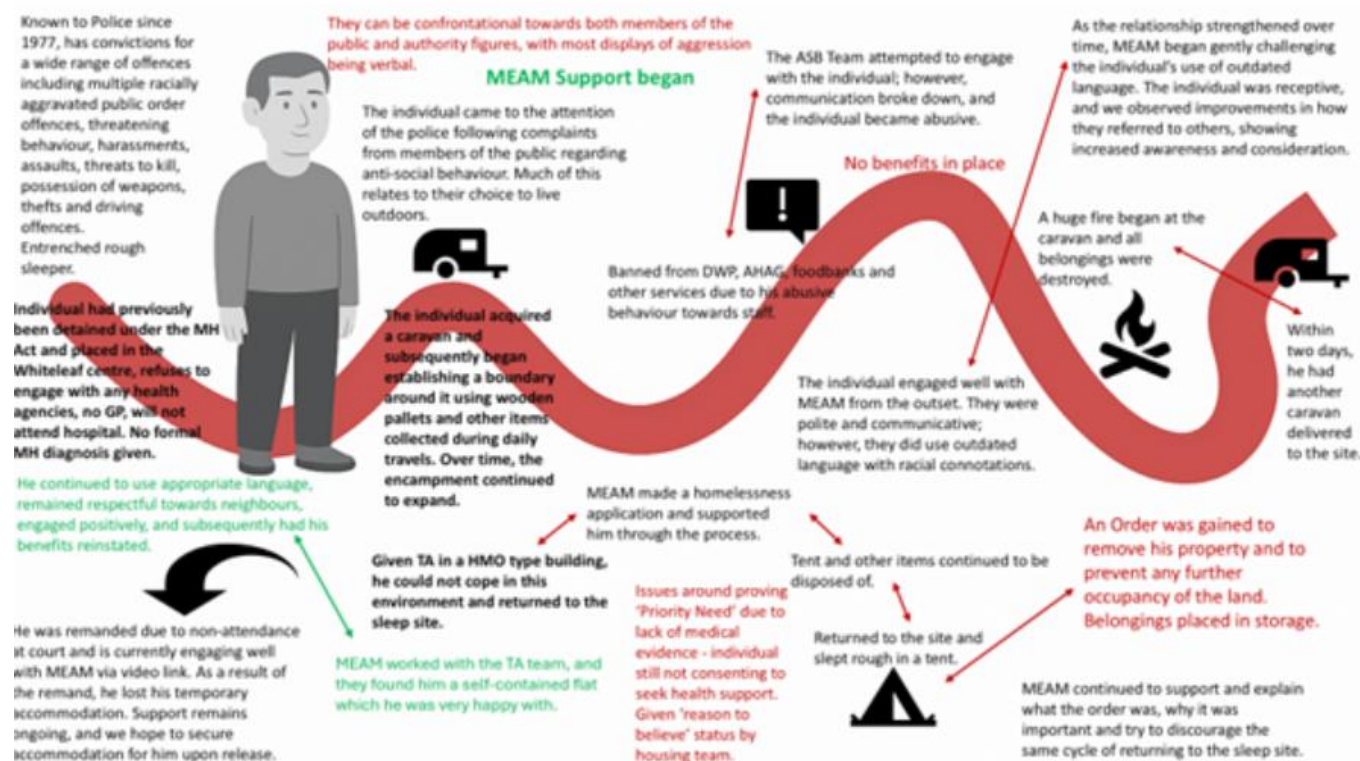
People also may need particular support when leaving hospital. The council work closely with NHS partners and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) to support housing within discharge planning process. Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) play an important preventative role in supporting residents to remain safely in their homes, delivering adaptations such as level-access showers, stairlifts and ground floor living solutions. In 2025/26, 271 grants were delivered from over 340 referrals, demonstrating strong demand and effective delivery. DFGs support independence, reduce demand on homelessness services and contribute to safe hospital discharge.

Partnership working is central to this approach. The council works closely with health, wellbeing, community and voluntary sector partners, including through established arrangements such as the Housing and Health Working Group, to support integrated responses. This reflects the strong relationship between housing and health, as recognised within the Buckinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), and supports improved data sharing, joint planning and a more coordinated response to the wider determinants of homelessness.

Targeted support for those experiencing multiple disadvantage is provided through the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) approach. MEAM works with a cohort of individuals facing some of the most complex challenges, many of whom are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The service provides intensive, coordinated, multi-agency support, working alongside statutory and voluntary sector partners to address a range of needs, including access to drug and alcohol services, healthcare through outreach GP provision, TB screening, and wider community support networks such as faith and voluntary organisations.

Those with complex needs often require flexible, trauma-informed support and consistent relationships to build trust. MEAM plays a key role in supporting individuals to navigate services and support, through proactive and sustained engagement.

The strategy emphasises the need to continue to strengthen multi-agency coordination, improve early identification and prevention pathways, expand access to ongoing 'wraparound support', and develop more flexible, trauma-informed responses to better meet the full spectrum of need and improve long-term housing stability.



The MEAM support journey – providing focused interventions

7. Wider Policy Context

This strategy is developed in line with national legislation and policy, including the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA), fulfilling the council's statutory duty to publish a homelessness strategy based on a review of local need, and setting out how Buckinghamshire Council will prevent and relieve homelessness, secure suitable accommodation, and ensure appropriate support for people who are homeless or at risk, in accordance with the Homelessness Code of Guidance. The HRA 2017 extends the period someone is threatened with homelessness from 28 to 56 days and further places a duty on names public services to notify the local housing authority of potentially homeless households, via a Duty to Refer. Local authorities are required to carry out holistic assessments of an applicant's housing need and produce a Personal Housing Plan (PHP) for each applicant.

The legal definition of homelessness is that a household has no home in the UK or anywhere else in the world available and reasonable to occupy. Homelessness does not just refer to people who are sleeping rough³.

National Homelessness/Housing Policy

The strategy has been developed to align with the Government's National⁴ Plan to End Homelessness (December 2025). It incorporates the core pillars as set out in the Government's plan including universal and targeted prevention, early intervention to prevent crisis, improved emergency responses, and support for recovery to prevent repeat homelessness. There is a national priority to reduce and ultimately end rough sleeping, with ambitious local targets, which will require sustained outreach, robust accommodation pathways, and the prevention of repeat homelessness in Buckinghamshire.

The strategy is further aligned with the Local Outcomes Framework⁵, a core mechanism underpinning the National Plan to End Homelessness. Under this national strategy, every local council is required to publish an action plan with local targets directly aligned with the Local Outcomes Framework. The national plan combines long-term structural change with medium-term system reform and immediate action at the point of crisis. Its headline commitments include increasing housing supply, improving affordability, reforming renters' rights, shifting services towards prevention, strengthening accountability across government and local systems, prioritising improved prevention and relief outcomes, achieving reductions in homelessness and rough sleeping, and decreasing reliance on temporary accommodation.

Alongside this strategy, Buckinghamshire will work closely with MHCLG and partners to actively implement a Long-Term Rough Sleeping Partnership Plan, encompassing the national target of halving rough sleeping. The plan will focus on target priority groups of rough sleepers across Buckinghamshire, aiming to eliminate rough sleeping. The Partnership Plan will be a collaborative exercise involving a wide range of partners, including commissioned and non-commissioned support providers, and partners from health, social care, housing and community safety. The plan sets out how Buckinghamshire along with its

³ [Housing Act 1996](#)

⁴ [A National Plan to End Homelessness - GOV.UK](#)

⁵ [Local Outcomes Framework - GOV.UK](#)

partners will deliver a meaningful system change and improve how long term rough sleeping is managed, including enhanced and tailored support for individuals with complex needs, effective prevention approaches and enhancing partnership working to improve the outcomes for those at risk of, or experiencing, long-term rough sleeping.

Council Strategy and Policy

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy will complement Buckinghamshire Council's corporate direction. It contributes towards other strategies and policies including the Buckinghamshire Corporate Plan, which sets out the following priorities:



[Buckinghamshire Housing Strategy 2024-2029.pdf](#) - The Housing Strategy 2024–2029 aligns closely with the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy by focusing on increasing affordable housing supply, improving housing quality, and supporting those in greatest need. Together, they provide a coordinated approach to preventing homelessness and enabling access to safe, sustainable housing across Buckinghamshire.

[Buckinghamshire Council's Housing Allocations Policy November 2024](#) - The Housing Allocations Policy sets out how affordable housing is prioritised, ensuring those in greatest need, including people who are homeless or at risk, can access suitable accommodation. It supports the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy by enabling timely move-on from temporary housing and providing a key route to settled, sustainable homes.

[Tenancy Strategy \(2013\)](#) – Sets out Buckinghamshire Council's expectations for Registered Providers in delivering affordable housing, tenancy management, and allocation.

[The Local Plan for Buckinghamshire | Buckinghamshire Council](#) - Buckinghamshire Council's emerging Local Plan sets out a long-term strategy for housing growth, infrastructure and sustainable development across the county, including a requirement to deliver around 90,000+ total homes, underpinned by evidence on housing need, affordability and population growth. The housing and homelessness strategies align closely with this, using the Local Housing Needs Assessment and Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment to highlight significant affordability pressures, the need for more affordable and specialist provision, and the importance of increasing housing supply to reduce homelessness and housing instability.

[Renters Rights Act 2025](#) – Represents one of the most significant reforms to the private rented sector in England for decades. The major tenancy reforms take effect from 1st May 2026; with its central changes including the abolition of section 21 notices (no fault evictions etc), the end of assured shorthold tenancies, and the move to an approach in which most private tenancies are periodic. It has reformed possession grounds, limits rent increases to a statutory process, restricts rent in advance, prohibits rental bidding wars, strengthens protections against discrimination towards households with children or who are in receipt of benefits and gives tenants a stronger basis to challenge poor practice without fear of retaliatory evictions (Annex 1.1, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Evidence Base, Chapter 10).

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment ([JSNA](#)) – Housing, homelessness and rough sleeping are closely linked to wider health and wellbeing outcomes, with access to safe and stable housing essential for maintaining health, employment and independence. The JSNA provides the evidence base for understanding the scale, drivers and impacts of homelessness in Buckinghamshire, identifying key needs and risk factors across the population. It directly informs the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy by ensuring priorities, interventions and services are data-led and targeted to those most at risk.

Other related strategies include:

- Draft Local Housing Needs Assessment (emerging Local Plan)
- Safer Buckinghamshire Partnership priorities
- SEND and Inclusion Strategy
- Buckinghamshire All-Age Autism Strategy 2025

The strategy aligns with duties arising from safeguarding, social care and public health legislation and ensures that safeguarding, wellbeing, and equality considerations are embedded throughout and the following are considered:

- Care Act 2014
- Children's Act 1989 and 2004
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (and the Buckinghamshire Domestic Abuse & Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2024–2027)

- Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 (SHROA)
- Opportunity Bucks Programme
- Equalities Act 2010

8. The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Priorities

The vision of the strategy is: A place where homelessness and rough sleeping are prevented, crisis is quickly resolved, and individuals and families can thrive in safe and secure homes. Underpinning this vision is a set of three priorities.

The priorities within the strategy, have been shaped by a comprehensive assessment of local housing need and a robust evidence base, drawing on the findings of the evidence base and housing review, statutory homelessness data, service intelligence, partner engagement and the lived experience of people affected by homelessness. This evidence has provided a detailed understanding of the changing local picture, enabling us to identify where the greatest challenges and opportunities exist. In response, a set of strategic priorities have been developed and an accompanying action plan that are focused on areas where intervention will have the greatest impact.

The approach is centred on preventing homelessness as early as possible, responding effectively to local need, improving outcomes for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping, and ensuring that resources are directed towards evidence-led actions that will deliver meaningful and sustainable change for communities.

These priorities will provide a clear framework for partnership working over the lifetime of the strategy, ensuring collective efforts remain focused on delivering the greatest benefit for residents and responding proactively to emerging needs. The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy priorities are:

Early and Targeted Prevention:

Identifying those with multiple and complex needs and supporting at risk households with a rapid and effective response to stop homelessness before it occurs

Management of Temporary & Supported Accommodation Pathways:

Provide accessible temporary accommodation that is safe, suitable, and used for the shortest time possible

Long Term Housing Sustainment:

Support individuals to transition from homelessness and rough sleeping into settled, affordable homes with the long-term support needed to thrive

Priority One: Early and Targeted Prevention

Preventing homelessness at the earliest stage is the most effective way to improve outcomes for residents and reduce demand on public services. Access to sustainable and accessible housing, is often linked to a range of building blocks. These building blocks include the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age: surroundings, education, employment, social connections, and access to services. Addressing these requires a strong and sustained focus on prevention, acting early on these building blocks to reduce risk and create the conditions for long-term housing sustainable housing for all.

Priority One focuses on identifying risk earlier, strengthening front-door services and ensuring households receive timely support before they reach crisis point. Through a housing-led approach and strong partnership working, the housing service will help people address the underlying causes of homelessness, maintain stable housing and access the foundations for long-term wellbeing, including good health, employment, financial resilience and strong community connections.

Targeted interventions will support groups at greater risk of homelessness, including people sleeping rough, those experiencing multiple disadvantage, victims and survivors of domestic abuse, young people, families with children, care leavers and people leaving institutions.

The strategy commits to the following statements for early intervention and targeted prevention:

Our Focus	Commitments (We Will)	KPI / Critical Success Factors
Early intervention and first approaches	• Maintain a clear, accessible, and visible 'front door' for housing advice, prevention, and support • Operate an effective triage function at the first point of contact which identifies case need, statutory duty, and urgency • Utilise specialist support officers such as debt advisors and explore sustainment opportunities at the earliest point • Work closely and effectively with landlords and Registered Providers (RPs) to sustain tenancies, particularly those who have been rough sleeping • Signpost eligible households to available benefits appropriately and promptly, to mitigate cost-of-living crisis • Take proactive steps to move towards earlier engagement points, for example at points of discharge	• % of households whose homelessness is prevented or relieved • Reduction in the proportion of prevention cases that later require TA • Numbers about the repeat approach rate with 6 or 12 months • % of approaches made at prevention stage • Tenancy sustainment rates at 6/12/24 months

Our Focus	Commitments (We Will)	KPI / Critical Success Factors
	• Work closer with families to mitigate homelessness to enable people to stay with family networks whilst longer-term housing solutions are identified • Maximise current resources to provide tenancy sustainment support to those at risk of losing their tenancies	
Housing led prevention approach	• Focus on housing solutions from first contact • Proactively manage Bucks Home Choice for prevention cases • Identify options to use Crisis and Resilience Fund using them proactively and prevention funds strategically • Match housing solutions to individual need and risk such as those fleeing domestic abuse, rough sleepers, young people and children • Expand the number of landlords and properties on the Bucks Let Scheme, with a particular focus on housing models for complex clients and rough sleepers	• % of households prevented through CRF Housing Payments or lease negotiation • DFG KPI (delivery and prevention outcomes achieved) • Reduction in evictions from social tenancies
Joined-up working across the council and with Partners	• Build and maintain strong referral pathways between housing and other key Council and public sector partners (ASC/CSC/Health) • Commit to managing high-risk and complex cases collaboratively • Ensure homelessness prevention interventions link clearly to health, alcohol or substance use, domestic abuse, and priority at risk groups such as veterans, people leaving institutions(prison/asylum/hospitals), care leavers, families and young people • Collaborate with benefits services to prevent tenancy breakdown • Strengthen working relationships and engagement with RPs, private landlords, and homelessness charities • Proactively engage with regulatory partners (ex. Environmental Health and audit) to tackle poor housing conditions and fraud • Engage in open and active information sharing with internal/external partners; adding in particular around rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, health indicators and prison release	• Number of early referrals generated by partner agencies • Fraud prevention activity and outcomes • Review effectiveness of the Homelessness Forum on an annual basis • Quarterly meetings • Tracking action plan outcomes

Our Focus	Commitments (We Will)	KPI / Critical Success Factors
	information, working closely with partner agencies to identify households at risk and intervene earlier with targeted support • Operate a Cabinet Working Group, consisting of Housing, Planning, and Adults & Children Cabinet Members, to ensure strong cross-portfolio leadership, clear accountability, and coordinated decision-making	
Responding effectively when people are in crisis	• Deliver flexible, person-centred and trauma-informed support that takes a holistic approach to individual needs • Ensure staff are trained to respond confidently to complexity and vulnerability • Protect life and dignity through activation of Severe Weather Protocols (SWEP) • Work with MEAM service to respond to some of the most complex cases. • Monitor repeat homelessness to support ongoing self-sufficiency • Targeted support including life skills and transitions into employment • Work in partnership with voluntary community sector organisations to achieve shared outcomes • Revisit the Housing First approach in Buckinghamshire to expand provisions for rough sleepers, keeping it under review in partnership with RPs • Ensure that individuals who are already homeless receive a rapid, coordinated response that prioritises immediate safety, stabilisation, and swift access to appropriate accommodation and support to prevent further harm and enable a pathway out of homelessness	• Reduction in repeat homelessness and repeat rough sleeping • % of staff who have completed training • Engagement rates and sustained outcomes from MEAM cases • Outcomes achieved through grants to voluntary and community partner • % of successful housing first placements (rough sleeping data dashboard)

Key Challenges

Strengthening triage and early, data-driven intervention

Enhancing triage and use of data and insights from all key services to identify households needing early support, including before presentation, enabling earlier, coordinated pre-prevention responses.

Maximising resources quickly in response to rising demand and complexity

Deploying resources efficiently to respond to increasing demand and complexity, ensuring prevention activity is targeted for the highest impact within limited capacity.

Maintaining an accessible front door and coordinated prevention pathways

Sustaining a visible “no wrong door” approach while ensuring cases are managed through prevention pathways, with the right support from the right agencies at the right time.

Priority Two: Management of Temporary & Supported Accommodation Pathways

Requiring temporary accommodation can be a challenging experience, often at a time of crisis and uncertainty in people’s lives and can have significant impacts on a person’s health and wellbeing. When people are homeless and need statutory services, the housing service provides effective and reliable support.

This priority focuses on ensuring that temporary and supported accommodation is both safe and suitable, and used for the shortest time possible, while enabling effective progression into settled housing. It aims to reduce temporary accommodation use, strengthen the overall efficiency and quality of accommodation pathways, improve service flow, and provide appropriate support for individuals and families based on their needs and level of risk.

Delivery will be focused on making best use of available accommodation, improving move-on opportunities, and ensuring placements contribute to longer-term housing stability rather than becoming a prolonged solution. Emphasis will be placed on reducing reliance on crisis emergency accommodation, improving outcomes for households in temporary accommodation, and ensuring supported housing pathways are clearly defined and outcome-focused. Placements will comply with the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 2012, including location, affordability, and household needs.

Reducing the number of families and children living in temporary accommodation, including nightly paid provision, remains a key priority for the council and its Housing Service. For many families, the experience of living in temporary accommodation can be unsettling and disruptive, with children facing uncertainty, instability, and environments that can significantly affect their wellbeing, health, and educational outcomes. It is recognised that prolonged stays in such accommodation can have lasting consequences, which is why there is a commitment to minimising both the number of families affected and the length of time they spend there. Alongside this, steps are being taken to improve the quality, suitability, and support available within temporary and nightly paid accommodation to reduce the impact on children and families while more stable housing solutions are secured.

Temporary Accommodation

Homelessness cannot always be prevented and a duty is owed, therefore Buckinghamshire Council provides temporary accommodation to ensure households have a safe place to stay while longer-term housing solutions are secured. This includes a mix of council-owned provision and additional accommodation

secured through external providers and partners. The council maintains a strong focus on suitability and compliance, ensuring all placements meet statutory requirements, minimising the use of bed and breakfast accommodation, and avoiding the placement of families in shared housing wherever possible.

Supported Accommodation

Buckinghamshire has an established supported accommodation offer, across the county for single people with varying levels of need. Provision ranges from medium support (typically around 4 hours per week) to high support (around 8 hours per week), supporting individuals aged 18–70, including dedicated services for young people.

This provision plays a critical role in supporting people with complex needs to move out of temporary accommodation and progress towards independence. Recent improvements to commissioning arrangements have strengthened clarity around outcomes and service expectations, contributing to a reduction in single households in temporary accommodation. Strong partnership working between housing, providers and support services continues to underpin delivery, although demand remains high and ongoing development of provision and move-on pathways is required.

The strategy will be delivered through the following commitments:

Our Focus	Commitments (we will)	KPI / Critical Success Factors
Ensure all placements are short-term	• Actively monitor all placements with weekly reporting • Establish and actively manage 'move-on' plans • Work closely with internal and external partners through an integrated 'move-on' pathway • Identify the long-term cohorts and households with complex needs ensuring tailored action plans are in place • Maintain clear expectations with households around engagement, behaviours, and outcomes in line with Personal Housing Plans (PHPs) • Align placement decisions with recovery and independence outcomes • Ensure that placements that include families and children are prioritised	• Number of placements in TA • Length of stay in TA • 'Move-on' rates by month • Number of long-stay TA placements (i.e. 12+ or 24+ months) • Reduce the number of children in TA for 12 months or more to zero

Our Focus	Commitments (we will)	KPI / Critical Success Factors
Developing more move-on options and increasing move-on activity	• Increase access to the Private Rented Sector (PRS) through effective use of the Bucks Let offer and active landlord engagement • Set clear move-on expectations and timeframes for placements • Operate transparent targeted pathways for people who are current or former rough sleepers with suitable accommodation and appropriate support • Maintain a strong pipeline of suitable accommodation options including supported housing, private rented homes, social housing and other affordable housing • Work proactively with Registered Providers to identify solutions for TA options	• Number of 'move-ons' into settled accommodation • Number of temporary accommodation units secured through RP partnerships • Reduction in the use of B&B accommodation • Number of PRS tenancies secured through schemes

Our Focus	Commitments (we will)	KPI / Critical Success Factors
Temporary accommodation and supported accommodation are cost-effective whilst meeting standards	• Work closely with RPs to bring forward specialist and supported accommodation • Explore options to expand Council-delivered temporary accommodation and supported accommodation • Manage temporary and supported accommodation units effectively to reduce void times • Apply robust contract management to all temporary accommodation (owned and leased), ensuring services are effective and efficient through regular contract and performance reviews	• Average void turnaround time • Cost per placement

Placements are made appropriately and effectively

- Minimise the use of B&B, particularly for families with dependent children
 - Jointly review commissioning opportunities with Adults and Children Social care to develop more specialist supported accommodation
 - Ensure that all placements are used appropriately through robust suitability assessments, checks and monitoring
- Number and proportion of households placed in B&B.
 - Number of families with children in B&B/shared accommodation placements for longer than 6 weeks
 - Fraud or non-occupation referrals identified

Key Challenges

Responding to high and fluctuating demand while ensuring suitable placements

High and changing demand creates pressure to provide rapid temporary accommodation while maintaining sufficient capacity and securing placements that meet both immediate and longer-term needs.

Meeting increasingly complex needs within a pressurised service

Households often present with overlapping needs, making it challenging to balance tailored support, statutory duties and service capacity while ensuring safe and sustainable placements.

Supporting effective move-on and maintaining system flow

Delays across housing pathways could restrict timely move-on from temporary accommodation, impacting system flow and limiting the availability of suitable placements.

Priority Three: Long Term Housing Sustainment

This priority focuses on supporting individuals and families to move from homelessness and rough sleeping into settled, affordable homes and providing the support needed to sustain those tenancies over the long term. Central to this priority is preventing homelessness from reoccurring by ensuring people have

access to stable accommodation, appropriate support, and the tools, opportunities and community connections needed to maintain their housing and independence. It emphasises housing stability, effective move-on from temporary and supported accommodation, and reducing repeat homelessness through sustainable, long-term housing solutions.

Delivery will centre on strengthening housing pathways into secure accommodation, improving access to appropriate support, promoting community integration and cohesion, and working with partners to ensure individuals and families can maintain independence and stability. A key focus will be ensuring that housing solutions are sustainable, appropriately supported and connected to local services and communities, contributing to long-term positive outcomes rather than short-term resolution.

Long Term Housing Sustainment will be delivered through the following commitments:

Our Focus	Commitments (We Will)	KPI / Critical Success Factor
Partnership Working to deliver long-term housing stability	• Strengthen partnerships with RPs, developers, and private landlords through structured forums and engagement • Collaborate with partners to address wider support needs, including mental health, alcohol or substance use, physical health, employment, and skills • Secure clear, ongoing commitments from RPs to support tenants with a history of homelessness over the long term • Proactively addressing the challenge of rough sleeping by providing consistent pathways off the streets and preventing repeat rough sleeping through sustained support • Support community cohesion by fostering understanding, reducing stigma and strengthening partnerships to help people experiencing homelessness or rough sleeping feel safe, included and connected within their local communities.	• % of cases with identified support needs that have multi-agency involvement • Compliance with PHP review timescales • % of cases that have been referred from registered providers (RPs) that have been successfully prevented • Number of RPs who sign up to the Partnership Compact • % of rough sleepers supported into accommodation • % of rough sleepers who return to rough sleeping • Reduction in reports of community tensions linked to rough sleeping hotspots
Keeping tenancies stable with the support in place to thrive	• Improve access to employment, training, health, and community services by working closely with the Connect to Work programme,	• Rate of repeat homelessness within 12/24 months

Our Focus	Commitments (We Will)	KPI / Critical Success Factor
	skills network and the skills board to enhance employment support opportunities • Maintain a holistic whole-household approach beyond short-term housing outcomes • Continue tenancy support to build readiness and sustainment • Value and learn from lived experience and commit to ensuring there is a proactive approach and feedback pathway for service users and children with lived experience • Strengthen post-accommodation support to sustain tenancies and reduce repeat homelessness and support tenants to thrive • Supporting tenants with gaining life skills to help them sustain tenancies and to secure employment	• Tenancy sustainment rates at 6/12/24 months • Number of tenancies supported to prevent breakdown • Engagement rates with employment services (referral rate and success) • Track prevention outcomes • Tenancy sustainment rates for former rough sleepers • Proportion of 'move-ons' into PR, social rent, and/or other AH • Reduction in repeat homelessness presentations

Key Challenges

Increasing housing demand and constrained supply impacting service flow

High demand and affordability pressures limit access to settled housing and slow move-on, increasing pressure across the service.

Meeting complex needs while supporting long-term housing sustainment

Overlapping needs and wider life pressures make sustaining tenancies more challenging, requiring coordinated and ongoing support.

Improving stability and long-term outcomes through targeted support and insight

Housing instability impacts long-term outcomes, particularly for families and those recovering from rough sleeping, highlighting the need for targeted support and stronger use of data to drive improvement.

9. Resources

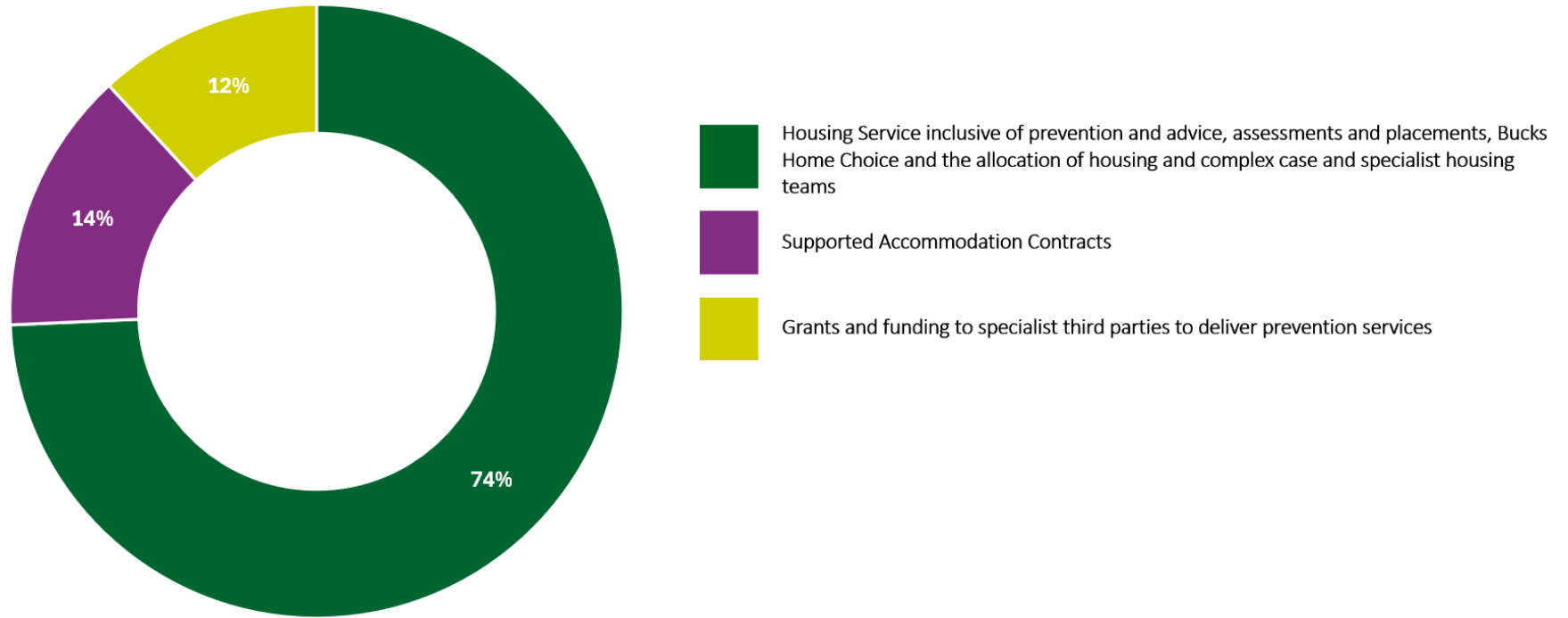
Delivery of homelessness and rough sleeping services in Buckinghamshire is supported through a combination of government grant funding, council investment, and strong partnership working arrangements. National funding streams, including targeted homelessness and rough sleeping grants, are complemented by council resources to commission and deliver services such as outreach, prevention, accommodation support, and access to the private rented sector. Key partners contribute significantly to delivery, bringing specialist expertise, frontline staff and additional capacity to support residents.

The Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant awarded to Buckinghamshire is to support multiyear funding to enable the council to deliver against national aims.

Year	Homelessness, Rough Sleeping, Domestic Abuse Grant TOTAL	Funding for homelessness and rough sleeping	Funding for Renters' Rights Act 2025 New Burdens	Funding for Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Grant
Financial year 2026/27	£5.4m	£4m	£240k	£1.1m
Financial year 2027/28	£5.5m	£4.1m	£120k	£1.2m
Financial year 2028/29	£5.6m	£4.3m	£0	£1.2m
Total Allocation Financial Years 2026–29	£16.5m	£12.5m	£360k	£3.7m

Housing Service Spend

2026/2027



10. Implementation and Monitoring

This strategy will be delivered through structured implementation supported by strong governance, clear performance management, and a data-driven approach to monitoring progress and impact. Together, these elements will ensure that delivery remains coordinated, transparent and responsive to changing need.

The statutory delivery of this strategy is operationalised through a detailed action plan. The Action Plan translates the strategic priorities into a clear programme of activity, setting out roles and responsibilities, delivery timescales across the short, medium and long term, and key performance indicators aligned to each priority. Progress will be monitored on an ongoing basis, enabling services to track delivery, respond to emerging challenges, and maintain focus on outcomes. The action plan has been written from the perspective of the end user to ensure it is practical and addressing the factors identified by their lived experiences.

Effective governance arrangements will support oversight and accountability. Delivery will be monitored through established service, corporate and partnership structures, including multi-agency forums that bring together partners across housing, health, and the voluntary sector. These arrangements will ensure a coordinated approach to addressing homelessness and rough sleeping. Regular updates will be provided to senior leadership and elected Members, including Cabinet, to maintain transparency and provide appropriate scrutiny of progress, performance and risks. The Action Plan will be overseen by a Cabinet working group that will include Housing, Children's, Adults and Planning.

Performance and accountability will be supported through a range of established reporting mechanisms. This includes regular internal performance reporting through service and corporate management processes, alongside updates on progress against key priorities and outcomes. The service will continue to meet statutory reporting requirements, including Homelessness Case Level Information Collection (HCLIC) returns on a mandatory quarterly basis, inclusive of homelessness approaches, assessments, prevention and relief duties, decisions, main duty, outcomes, TA placements, support needs and household makeup. In addition to this a single-night estimate for rough sleepers is reported annually and a non-mandatory quarterly management information return for rough sleeper flow is complete. Specific reporting is undertaken on domestic abuse monitoring and SWEP as well as fulfilling monitoring requirements associated with external funding and grant programmes, including quarterly KPI reporting and quarterly review with providers. This will ensure that delivery remains aligned with both local priorities and national expectations.

A strong emphasis will be placed on the use of data to inform delivery and continuous improvement. Systems such as Locata, alongside internal dashboards and operational reporting, will be used to monitor demand, activity and outcomes across homelessness and rough sleeping services. Data will be reviewed regularly to identify emerging trends, understand system pressures, measure progress and support evidence-based decision-making at both operational and strategic levels.

Risks associated with the delivery of the strategy will be managed through the council's existing Housing Risk Register, ensuring a consistent and coordinated approach to identifying, monitoring and mitigating risk. This enables strategic risks relating to homelessness and rough sleeping to be considered alongside wider housing pressures and escalated where necessary.

The strategy will be formally reviewed on an annual basis to assess progress and reported to Cabinet and the Growth, Infrastructure and Housing Select Committee. This approach ensures that the strategy remains relevant, evidence-led and responsive to the needs of residents over time.

Annexes

Annex 1.1 – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Evidence Base

Annex 1.2 - Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan

Annex 1.3 - Consultation and Engagement

Annex 1.4 – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Glossary