

# **East Herts District Council**

## **Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy**

### **2026-2031**

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## Section 1 – Foreword

Welcome to the Council’s new Preventing Homelessness Strategy for 2026-2031. This is East Herts’ fifth Homelessness Strategy, setting out our approach for tackling homelessness and rough sleeping within the district.

Homelessness and poor housing conditions blight lives, damage health, and reduce opportunities. This Strategy aims to continue the work to prevent and relieve homelessness as early as possible, ensure suitable and sustainable temporary accommodation is available to meet emergency needs and that the needs of our most vulnerable customers are met. Underpinning this work is a continued drive to maximise the availability of affordable housing in our district as the most sustainable way of supporting our current residents and future generations.

I am confident that this Strategy establishes key objectives and provides a comprehensive framework, clearly outlining the Council's approach and commitment to addressing homelessness over the next five years.

The Strategy will concentrate on 5 key objectives:

1. Continue to prevent and relieve homelessness at the earliest opportunity
2. Increase temporary accommodation options to improve suitability and sustainability, reducing the use of bed and breakfast accommodation
3. Continue to improve the pathways in and out of supported housing and the support available to vulnerable single people
4. Maximise the availability of affordable housing
5. Continue to provide support to reduce rough sleeping and where this occurs, ensure it is brief and not re-occurring

I would like to extend my thanks on behalf of the Council to everyone who has been involved in developing this Strategy. Your dedication and hard work are greatly appreciated as we strive to make East Herts a place where everyone has the opportunity for safe, stable housing.

## Section 2 - Executive Summary

The objective of this Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is to enable early intervention to prevent homelessness and, when prevention is not feasible, to assist homeless households and those in housing need obtain appropriate help. The data and research enables understanding of the scale of the problem and the specific drivers for homelessness in the district, which is crucial for tailoring our response.

The data between 2020/21-2024/25 show an increase in homeless households approaching the council for help, with 2023/24 representing the highest level of homeless approaches since the adoption of the Homeless Reduction Act in 2018. This increase related to in households being made homeless due to their private sector tenancy ending by way of a 'no fault eviction' and an increase in households fleeing their previous home due to domestic abuse.

Since 2020/21 there have been increases in the support needs of homeless households. Nearly half of the households approaching for homelessness assistance have support needs and 90% of those households have support needs in more than one area. This tells us that homeless households are more vulnerable than ever and providing a 'bricks and mortar' solution alone is not enough. To address this, we need to focus on supported housing pathways and how specialist support can be provided in a coordinated way for these clients.

Our response needs to address these challenges, and therefore the following priorities have been identified for the period 2026-31:

- Continue to prevent and relieve homelessness at the earliest opportunity
- Increase temporary accommodation options to improve suitability and sustainability, reducing the use of bed and breakfast accommodation
- Continue to improve the pathways in and out of supported housing and the support available to vulnerable single people
- Maximise the availability of affordable housing
- Continue to provide support to reduce rough sleeping and where this occurs, ensure it is brief and not re-occurring

An action plan has been developed to address these strategic aims.

It is recognised that much of this work needs to take place in partnership with others; other services, the Voluntary and Community Sector and our customers. Consultation has taken place with these partners to ensure this is a strategy which reflects the views of partners and provides a shared vision to respond to homelessness in East Herts.

## Section 3 – Review of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024

The council's previous Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy set out the following priorities:

- Strong and effective partnership working
- Early targeted intervention and advice to prevent the loss of accommodation
- Effective action to relieve homelessness and sustain tenancies to prevent repeat homelessness
- Protect and increase local housing options

It is important to recognise the achievements of the previous strategy so that these are factored into work in the upcoming period. The key accomplishments of the previous strategy include:

- Successfully secured funding through the Government's Rough Sleeping Initiative to provide a full-time Rough Sleeping Coordinator to assist clients with securing long-term accommodation
- The development of 1,130 affordable new homes for rent and 525 for shared ownership, totalling 1,655 new affordable homes
- Secured Next Steps Accommodation Programme funding to convert two council-owned properties into six self-contained units for rough sleepers.
- Additional revenue funding enabled the employment of a Single Person Support Officer to help residents develop independent living skills
- Developed a "Duty to Refer" portal on the East Herts website, allowing partners to easily alert the Housing Options Team about customers at risk of homelessness
- Created a single pathway for residents and support agencies to request housing advice and assistance via the East Herts Council website
- Agreed on a county-wide protocol to assist homeless 16/17-year-olds, care leavers, and intentionally homeless families, ensuring consistent support across the region

- The Council procured new temporary, self-contained accommodation for 16 households, reducing reliance on Bed and Breakfast options.
- Increased the staff resource to support residents in temporary accommodations and facilitate their transition to permanent housing
- Collaborated with partners, including Hertfordshire County Council, Change Grow Live (CGL), Probation, Registered Providers, and MIND, in monthly MDT meetings to support single residents at risk of homelessness.

## Section 4 – Review of Homelessness Data 2020-2025

To identify the priorities for 2025-2030, data from 2020-2025 has been examined to understand:

- the demand for homelessness support
- the customer profile in terms of age and household composition
- the support needs of households and how these impact on priority need
- the reasons for homelessness
- the households placed in temporary accommodation, and the type of accommodation used
- the outcomes for the households supported

### Definition of Homeless Duties

When examining homelessness data between 2020-2025 terminology taken from homelessness legislation is used. An explanation of these terms is shown below:

**Prevention Duty:** Owed to individuals and households who are threatened with homelessness within 56 days. The local authority must take reasonable steps to help them remain in their current accommodation or secure alternative accommodation for at least six months.

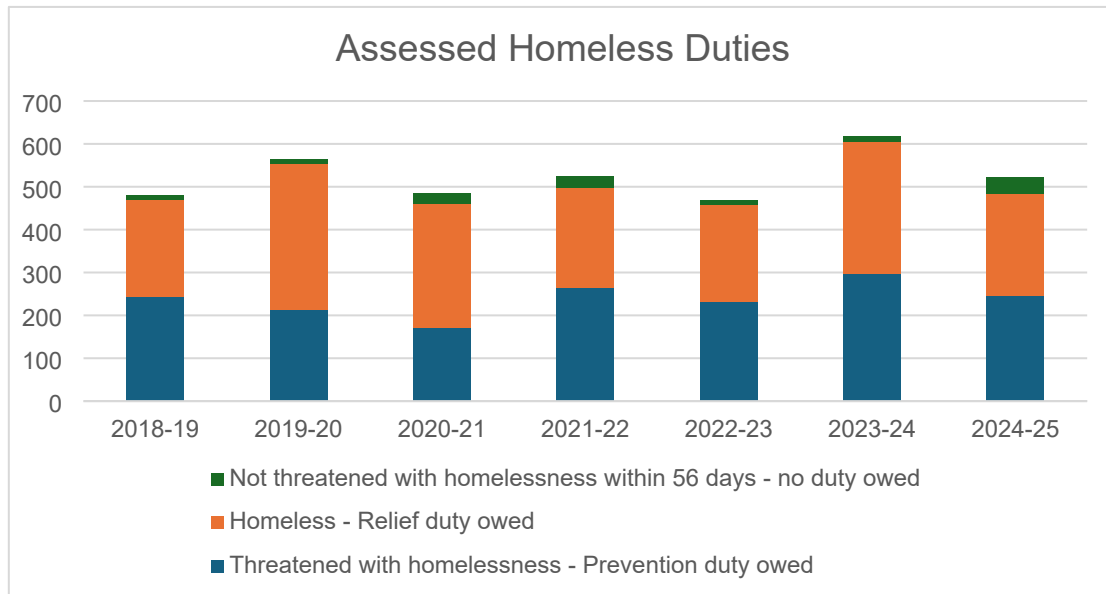
**Relief Duty:** Owed to individuals and households who are already homeless. The local authority must take reasonable steps to help them secure accommodation for at least six months.

**Main Housing Duty:** Owed to households in priority need and unintentionally homeless after the relief duty has ended without securing accommodation. The local authority must ensure that suitable accommodation is available for the household until the duty ends under specified conditions.

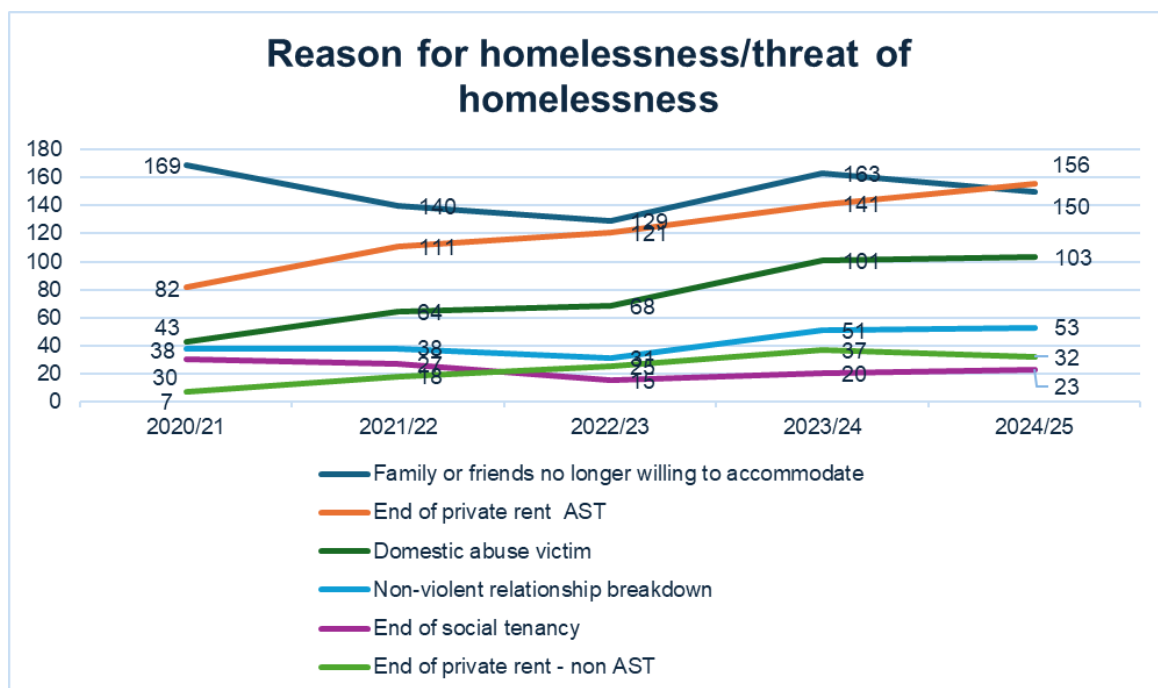
**Priority Need:** In homelessness law, a priority need determines the legal obligation for emergency accommodation, while a support need (or vulnerability) is a factor used to determine if a priority status may exist. Priority need mandates immediate interim housing. Priority need groups include households with dependent children, pregnant women, and individuals vulnerable due to old age, mental illness, or physical disability. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 provided that those fleeing domestic abuse would have priority need.

## Demand for Homelessness Support

The year 2020/21 saw a reduction in homeless approaches due to measures introduced during the coronavirus pandemic which prevented evictions from social and private sector tenancies. Figures for 2023/24 show a considerable increase presentations, higher than pre-pandemic levels. The percentage of customers presenting at the 'relief stage' (already homeless) in 2023-24 was 52% so also higher than previous years outside of the pandemic period. 2024-25 saw a reduction in approaches but a continuation of a higher percentage of approaches at the relief stage.



## Reasons for Homelessness



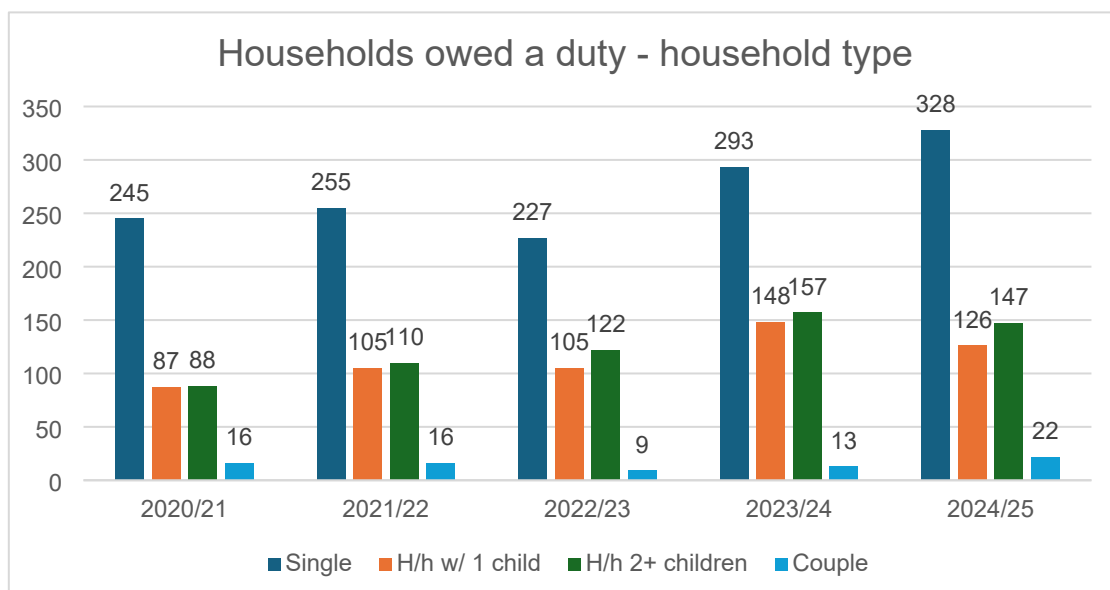
The primary reasons for homelessness or the threat of homelessness in 2024/25 were:

- End of a private rented tenancy AST (30%)
- Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate (29%)
- Domestic abuse (20%)
- Non-violent relationship breakdown (10%)
- End of a non-assured shorthold rented tenancy (6%)

Presentations from households due to their private rented tenancy coming to an end was the single highest reason for homelessness in 2024/25 and on a steady upward trajectory since 2020/21, with 74 more presentations in 2024/25, representing an increase of 90%. This increase was related to instability in the private rented sector caused by interest rate increases and concerns about legislative changes (including Renters Rights) resulting in landlords leaving the sector. This resulted in the supply of private rented accommodation reducing and rental prices increasing sharply.

The highest percentage increase in presentations in this period was from households homeless due to domestic abuse which increased 139.5% between 2020/21 and 2024/25. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 was enacted in April 2021. This legislation provided that those fleeing domestic abuse had priority need and introduced a range of other protections around security of tenure and removing local connection requirements.

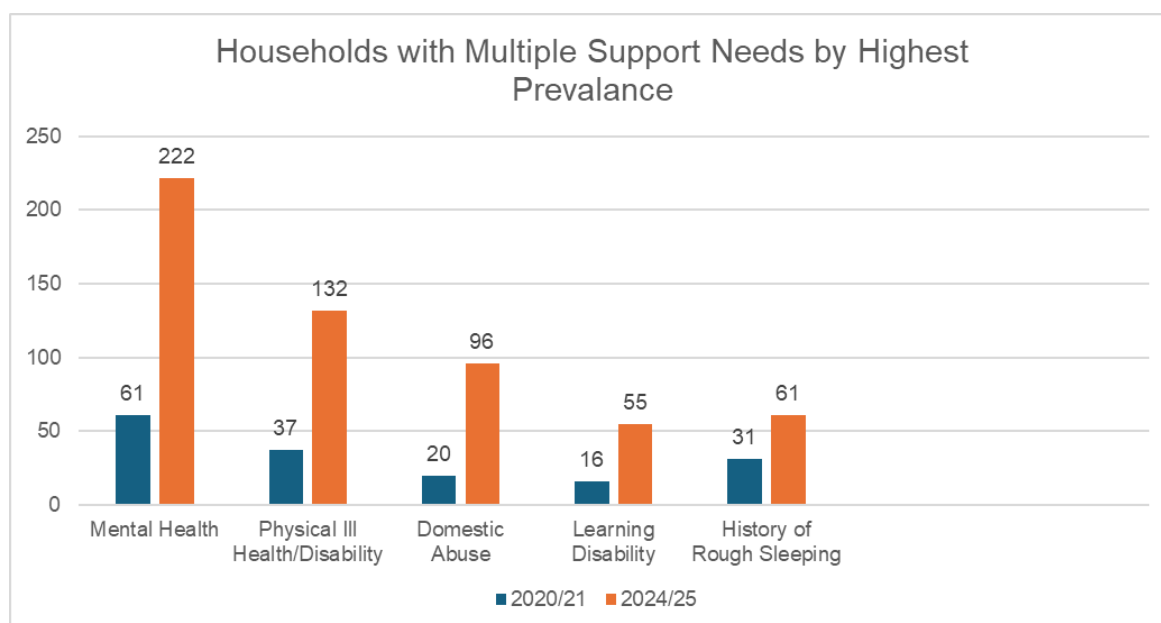
## Customer Profile



Almost half (48%) of households owed a duty are single person households (33% male and 15% female) a further 33% are single parent households (2% male and 31% female). While the largest cohort is single males (33%), single females with or without children account for 46% of all households owed a duty.

Homeless households are far less likely to be in employment than other households. The employment rate for East Herts in June 2023 was 81.9%. By contrast, only 30% of main applicants owed a duty in 2022/23 were in employment and 19% were unemployed. 55% of applicants owed a duty are between the ages of 25 and 44

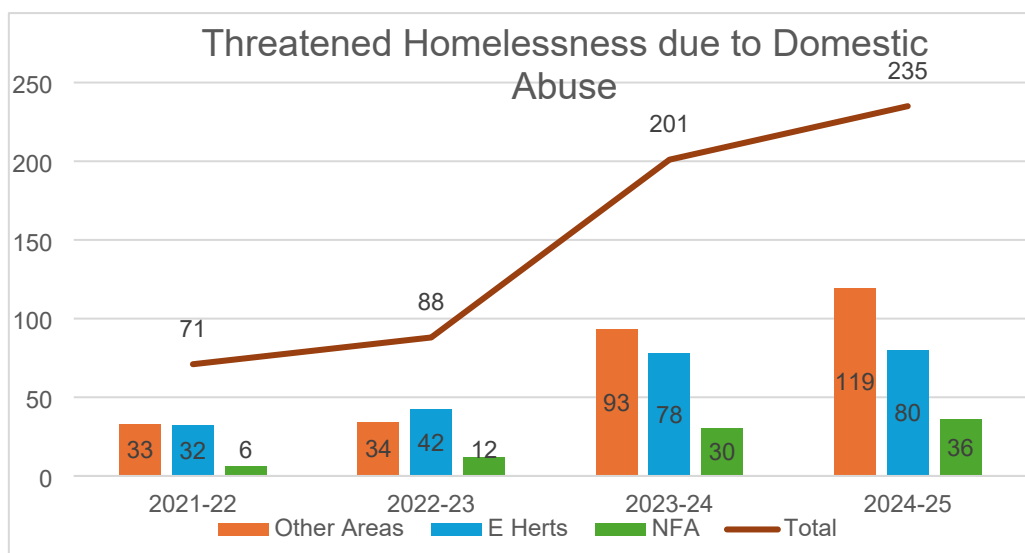
## Support Needs



An increasing proportion of households are presenting with support needs. Around 19% of homeless households in 2020/21 had support needs, which increased to 49% of applicants in 2024/25. Alongside this, there is significant growth in the number of households with more than one support need. 90% of homeless households with support needs in 2024/25 had needs in more than 1 area.

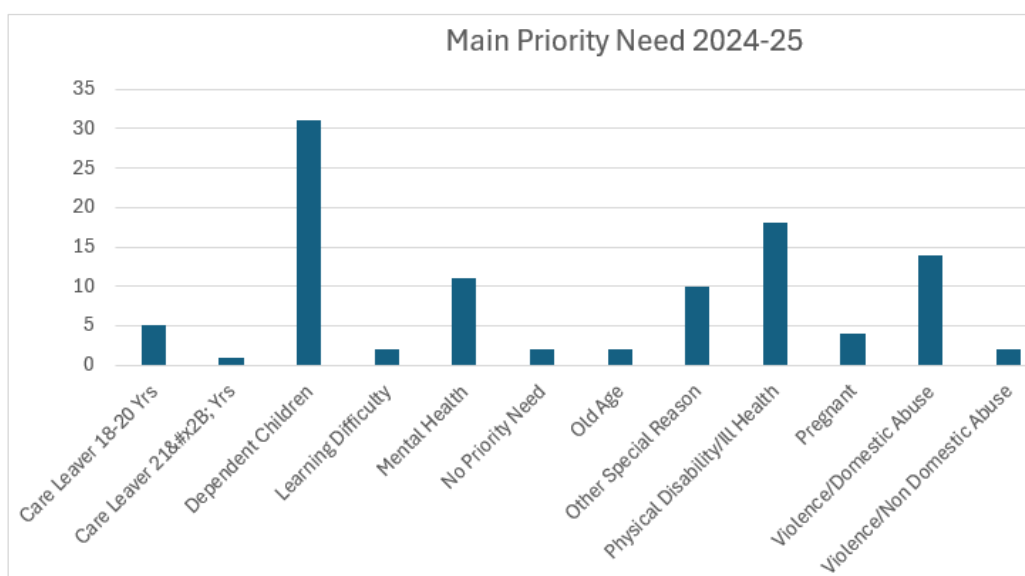
The most prevalent support needs were mental health problems, physical ill health and disability and domestic abuse. The most significant percentage increase between 2020/21-2024/25 was for support needs due to domestic abuse which increased by 380%, but there were also substantial increases in all support needs with mental health increasing by 264%, physical ill health and disability increasing by 257%, learning disabilities increasing by 243% and a history of rough sleeping increasing by 97%.

The increase in domestic abuse is more significant when examining all cases where domestic abuse was a feature of the case, not just the principal cause of homelessness. When looking at all cases where domestic abuse was a feature shows a 231% increase in homelessness where domestic abuse as the primary or secondary cause in the period between 2021/22 and 2024/25. The most substantial increases were from applicant households who were either not previously living in East Herts (260% increase) or those who were previously of no fixed abode (500% increase) usually customers leaving refuge.



## Priority Need

As explained previously, support needs are not exactly the same as a priority need but can indicate that a priority need should be considered. When looking at those provided with temporary accommodation in 2024-25 the main priority need categories were:

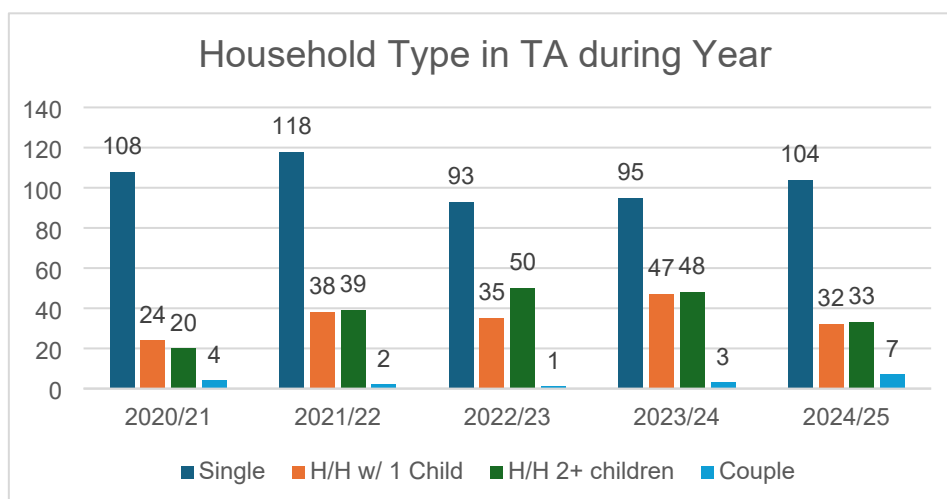


As can be seen from this data most household's primary priority need in this period were dependent children (30%), physical disability (18%), domestic abuse (14%) and mental health (11%). 70% of homeless households had a priority need other than dependent children, which translates into a high homeless need from single homeless households.

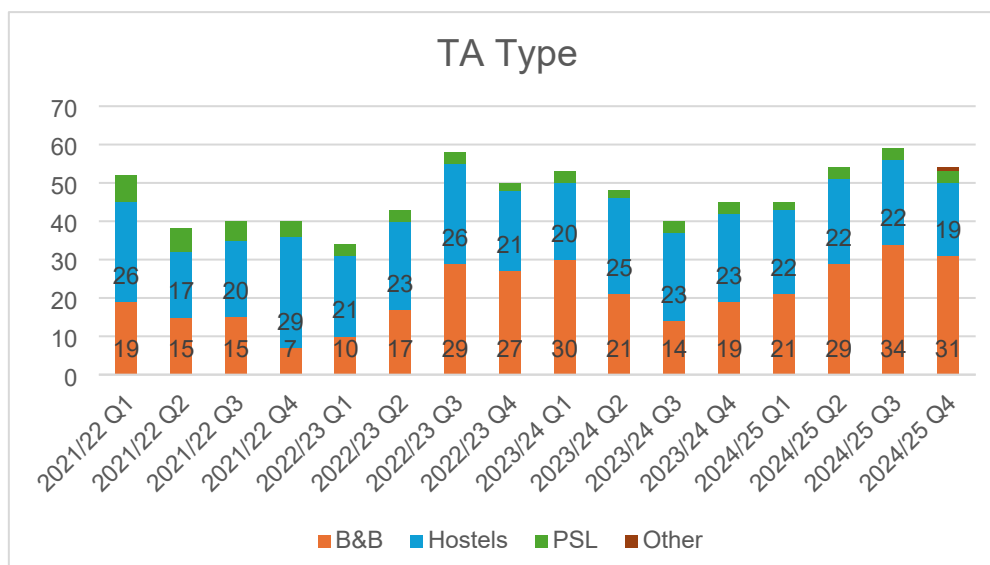
## Temporary Accommodation

If prevention efforts for households who are eligible for assistance and in priority need fail and the household becomes homeless, the council has a statutory duty provide temporary accommodation. The average number of households requiring temporary accommodation per year since 2020/21 is 180, with 156 households accommodated in 2020/21 and 176 households accommodated in 2024/25. The highest number of households in temporary

accommodation was 2021/22 when 197 households were accommodated. Most households in temporary accommodation are single person households.



The below chart shows a snapshot of the number of people in temporary accommodation and the type of accommodation they were in at the end of the quarter since 2021/22. As can be seen from this data East Herts is heavily reliant on bed and breakfast accommodation, usually commercial hotels, to meet its accommodation duties. This 'gap' in accommodation is an average of 21 units of temporary accommodation per quarter, as can be seen from the below:



## Rough Sleeping

In 2022 the previous government published a cross-party Rough Sleeping Strategy. The Strategy set out a vision for ending rough sleeping, which is that it is prevented wherever possible, and where it does occur it is rare, brief and non-recurrent. It emphasised three aspects of its approach:

- Prevention
- Intervention
- Recovery

In March 2020 the government launched the 'Everyone In' initiative, to house rough sleepers in response to the pandemic. Over 35 people were accommodated by East Herts in this period primarily in a hotel procured with two other local authorities. When the initiative ended in June 2020 most applicants were enabled to move into more settled accommodation.

Every year local authorities report the number of people rough sleeping in their area on a typical night. This is a chosen night between 1 October and 30<sup>th</sup> November. Each year the date is coordinated with the 9 other districts in Hertfordshire.

|                                                    | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|----------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Number of people recorded by East Herts & partners | 9    | 15   | 6    | 5    | 5    | 7    | 7    | 5    |

Significant efforts have been made to ensure rough sleeping in the district is kept to a minimum as can be seen from the annual snapshot data.

## Homelessness Outcomes

Between 2018 and 2025, 46% of households who were owed the prevention duty had their homelessness prevented with 37% of applicants continuing to the relief stage, so becoming homeless and requiring further support.

Of those owed the relief duty 43% had their homelessness relieved and 57% remained homeless after 56 days.

The prevention or relief of homelessness is predominantly achieved through an offer of social housing. This can be shown by the below:

### Accommodation secured at end of prevention duty

| Year       | Social rented sector | Private rented sector | Staying with family |
|------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 2018-19    | 74                   | 12                    | 4                   |
| 2019-20    | 54                   | 15                    | 4                   |
| 2020-21    | 31                   | 17                    | 3                   |
| 2021-22    | 110                  | 28                    | 12                  |
| 2022-23    | 269                  | 72                    | 23                  |
| 2023-24    | 122                  | 27                    | 1                   |
| 2024-25    | 126                  | 23                    | 10                  |
| <b>All</b> | <b>786</b>           | <b>194</b>            | <b>57</b>           |
|            | 75.79%               | 18.71%                | 5.5%                |

### Accommodation secured at end of relief duty

| Year    | Social rented sector | Private rented sector | Other |
|---------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| 2018-19 | 68                   | 8                     | 15    |
| 2019-20 | 153                  | 19                    | 12    |
| 2020-21 | 109                  | 48                    | 10    |
| 2021-22 | 68                   | 22                    | 33    |

|                |            |            |           |
|----------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| <b>2022-23</b> | 110        | 26         | 7         |
| <b>2023-24</b> | 129        | 23         | 12        |
| <b>2024-25</b> | 109        | 20         | 10        |
| <b>All</b>     | <b>617</b> | <b>143</b> | <b>87</b> |
|                | 72.85%     | 16.88%     | 10.27%    |

## Section 5 – Our Priorities 2026-2031

### **Priority 1: Continue to prevent and relieve homelessness at the earliest opportunity**

Preventing homelessness as early as possible continues to be a priority, as this provides the best outcomes for homeless households and the council. The council aims to prevent homelessness by ensuring that households at risk are identified as soon as possible and that high quality help and advice is deployed to maximum effect. When a homeless application is made the council will draw on partners to provide specialist support to customers, to aid this. We have identified that to meet the demands of our customers we need to support more customers to access accommodation in the private sector and will work with our customers and the private sector to ensure this is an affordable and sustainable option.

To continue to prevent and relieve homelessness at the earliest opportunity the council will:

- work with key partners to ensure there is an effective early intervention service and referral pathway for households at risk of homelessness. This work will be concentrated on the areas which result in the most homelessness in the district, so those leaving private rented tenancies and those who have experienced domestic abuse
- refine and improve the approach to Personal Housing Plans, including developing effective multi-agency interventions with the full participation of key partners
- work to ensure an ongoing supply of private sector accommodation is available for customers
- review the housing and homelessness information, advice and guidance available to local people making sure that applicants have information to help themselves and retain their independence

This will be measured by monitoring the:

- Homeless presentations by duty owed
- Homeless prevention case outcomes
- Homeless relief case outcomes

### **Priority 2: Increase temporary accommodation options to improve suitability and sustainability, reducing the use of bed and breakfast accommodation**

The council wants to ensure that where temporary accommodation is necessary this is of an acceptable standard and, wherever possible, is within the district, or as near as possible. The costs of procuring temporary accommodation will be reduced to provide maximum value for money to local taxpayers.

The council will achieve this by:

- minimising the use of bed and breakfast and spot purchased nightly-paid accommodation  
increasing the level of hostel and other in-house temporary accommodation provision, developing a range of solutions including hostels, modular homes, self-contained units and leased properties to meet demand
- maximising the collection of rents, and maintaining adequate controls in arrears cases
- maximising the throughput into permanent accommodation by ensuring that where suitable accommodation is available for a homeless household this is offered
- maximising and optimising the use of specialist accommodation such as refuge and other supported housing for customers who need this support

This will be measured by monitoring:

- Total net cost of temporary accommodation
- Total number of households in temporary accommodation
- If the temporary accommodation is in or outside East Herts

### **Priority 3: Continue to improve the pathways in and out of supported housing and the support available to vulnerable single people**

It is clear from our analysis of homelessness data that East Herts has high numbers of homeless approaches from single adult households with multiple support needs, particularly mental and physical ill-health, disabilities and life experiences that have caused trauma. The council will seek to ensure that there are clear pathways into and out of supported housing and that this support prepares residents for independence.

The council will achieve this by:

- improving the supported housing options available for customers who require this
- increasing support delivered through partnership work reflected in Personal Housing Plans
- creating a clear pathway which provides intensive and step-down support for the most vulnerable customers, to decrease repeat homeless presentations
- assist customers with engagement with partner agencies to help them sustain this engagement
- provide tailored personal support to the most vulnerable applicants

This will be measured by recording:

- repeat homeless presentations
- the number of households moving to independent living

### **Priority 4: Maximise the availability of affordable housing**

The council will maximise the delivery of affordable homes and ensure that these are available for local people to meet local housing need.

The council will achieve this through:

- work with providers to deliver more housing at social rent level, particularly larger homes where affordability is the most challenging for customers
- ensuring the new District Plan reflects the needs and challenges faced by homeless households by considering options for affordable housing as 40% of habitable rooms rather than of units, to encourage the provision of more family sized homes
- continuing the work with providers to deliver homes that meet local housing needs in terms of design
- reviewing the Housing Register and Allocations Policy to ensure that local housing needs are met, specifically those of homeless households in the district
- work with Environmental Health, Trading Standards and others to ensure that East Herts has a private rented sector which is legally compliant and provides a viable housing option

This will be measured by:

- recording the number of new affordable homes per quarter, including those let at social rent

**Priority 5: Continue to provide support to reduce rough sleeping and where this occurs ensure it is brief and not re-occurring**

The council remains committed to ending rough sleeping but where this occurs ensures this is brief and not repeated. The council will maintain effective support and continue to improve rehousing pathways for rough sleepers. Single homeless people will be able to access the advice and support they need and have viable rehousing options which do not require individuals to sleep rough to receive support.

The council will achieve this by:

- continuing to fund the winter night shelter and support their work through the development of Personal Housing Plans which aid the rehousing of night shelter guests
- ensuring that all partner agencies and other stakeholders understand and use the 'duty to refer'
- continuing to provide bespoke services to those rough sleeping to ensure sleeping rough occurs for as short a time as possible
- support the implementation of a countywide approach to rough sleeping including information exchange protocols and severe weather protocol activations to ensure consistency of service offer
- maintaining relationships with external providers to ensure single homeless cases can access move-on support, so do not have to start rough sleeping

This will be measured by recording:

- the number of rough sleepers who have been supported on a quarterly basis
- the number of 'long term' rough sleepers not in accommodation

## Section 7 – Action Plan and Monitoring

| Priority                                            | Actions                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Key Performance Indicators                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Continue to maximise homeless prevention and relief | Collocate with a specialist domestic abuse service to provide good quality support at point of homeless approach                                                                                                  | Homeless prevention case outcomes- % increase of those successfully closed at prevention |
|                                                     | Work with Environmental Health, Trading Standards and others to ensure tenants and landlords are compliant with the Renters' Rights Act and opportunities under this legislation are used to prevent homelessness |                                                                                          |
|                                                     | Make best use of Personal Housing Plans to encourage engagement with support services at the earliest opportunity                                                                                                 | Homeless relief case outcomes- % increase in those successfully closed at relief         |
|                                                     | Increase the opportunities to get housing advice and assistance through Healthy Hubs and other                                                                                                                    |                                                                                          |
|                                                     | Work with colleagues across Hertfordshire to develop eviction protocols to ensure that all opportunities are taken to prevent eviction, particularly from supported accommodation                                 |                                                                                          |
|                                                     | Review homelessness IAG on website to include changes under RRA and to enable residents to get tailored advice as early as possible                                                                               |                                                                                          |

|                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                        | Establish project to expand private rented sector supply                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                            |
|                                                                                                                        | Work with Healthy Hubs to improve the partnership response to homeless prevention                                                                                                                                                |                                                                            |
|                                                                                                                        | Establish the Renters Rights Coordination Group to provide a partnership response focused on improvement to sector driven by RRA                                                                                                 |                                                                            |
| Increase temporary accommodation options                                                                               | Work with registered providers to identify TA opportunities                                                                                                                                                                      | Total net cost of TA                                                       |
|                                                                                                                        | Apply to LAHF4 for provision of additional TA units                                                                                                                                                                              | Total number of households in temporary accommodation                      |
|                                                                                                                        | Change of use of council asset for further hostel accommodation                                                                                                                                                                  | Temporary accommodation in/outside East Herts- reduction in out of area TA |
|                                                                                                                        | Develop further leased accommodation options                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                            |
| Continue to improve the pathways in and out of supported housing and the support available to vulnerable single people | Develop a Local Supported Housing Strategy, needs assessment and delivery plan                                                                                                                                                   | Reduction in repeat homeless presentations- % decrease                     |
|                                                                                                                        | Develop intensive supported accommodation offer for customers with complex needs                                                                                                                                                 | The number of households moving to independent living- % increase          |
|                                                                                                                        | Encourage partner engagement through the re-establishment of an East Herts Homeless Strategy Monitoring group focused on reducing homelessness                                                                                   |                                                                            |
|                                                                                                                        | Encourage partner engagement in supporting homeless applicants through Personal Housing Plans, with issues around engagement and support fed into East Herts Homeless Strategy Group                                             |                                                                            |
|                                                                                                                        | Review the staffing resource for hostels, to ensure this is sufficient to meet the needs of customers with more complex needs                                                                                                    |                                                                            |
| Maximise the availability of affordable housing                                                                        | Contribute to the development of the new Local Plan, to ensure that the needs of homeless households are reflected specifically in terms increasing the supply of social rent level properties of the required size to meet need | The number of new affordable homes per quarter                             |
|                                                                                                                        | Review the Housing Register and Allocations Policy to ensure this addresses local housing need, balancing the need to prevent and respond to homelessness                                                                        | Number let at social rent                                                  |
|                                                                                                                        | Continue to deliver against the Housing Strategy Action Plan                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                            |
|                                                                                                                        | Continue to use the planning process to ensure that this is effective in ensuring new developments address local housing needs                                                                                                   |                                                                            |

|                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Continue to provide support to reduce rough sleeping | Establish mechanisms to identify any long-term rough sleepers to provide intensive support for this cohort                                                                      | The number of rough sleepers who have been supported on a quarterly basis |
|                                                      | Work at a Hertfordshire level to establish consistent practices around SWEPP activation                                                                                         |                                                                           |
|                                                      | Work at a Hertfordshire level on the eviction protocol and referral process, to reduce those entering rough sleeping via eviction                                               | The number of 'long term' rough sleepers not in accommodation             |
|                                                      | Continue to support the Voluntary and Community Sector to deliver services to ensure support is available across the district and reflects the needs of local people            |                                                                           |
|                                                      | Ensure VCS organisations providing direct support to rough sleepers are included in the East Herts Homeless Strategy Monitoring Group and have opportunities to inform strategy |                                                                           |
|                                                      | Contribute to providing a Hertfordshire wide Accommodation for Offenders Programme to ensure there are robust plans around those who are most likely to sleep rough             |                                                                           |

## Section 8 – Consultation

Consultation on this strategy has been undertaken in 2 ways:

- Consultation with partners, residents and businesses through East Herts consultation portal in May 2026
- Consultation with customers of the homeless service in May 2026 to discuss their experience and to identify any changes to service provision would have had a positive impact on their experience and feedback on the actions proposed in the plan

### **Feedback**

41 responses to the online consultation were received, with the highest respondents being from residents who live in East Herts who had not personally experienced homelessness.

83% of those who responded agreed with the priorities to reduce homelessness. A range of suggestions were made to improve interventions to prevent homelessness and increase the supply of temporary accommodation, and these have been considered when developing the actions outlined in the plan.

Consultation with homeless customers took place through telephone and face-to face contact and was more focused on the specific actions which they felt would have either made their experience better or would have resulted in their homelessness being prevented or relieved sooner. This feedback identified that customers agreed with the priorities proposed. The issues which impacted customers most were the location and type of temporary accommodation available and the supply of affordable housing. Customers were also asked to identify if there were interventions which could have prevented their homelessness. Customers identified that services to support their wellbeing, particularly around mental health may have prevented homelessness as would services to support with benefits and financial management. This feedback has been included when developing the actions around improving prevention, specifically around improving the homelessness advice available through Healthy Hubs.

## Section 9 – Links to Other Strategies and Frameworks

Under the Homelessness Act 2002, all housing authorities must have a homelessness strategy renewed at least every five years. East Herts District Council operates alongside many strategies, policies, and frameworks nationally and locally which have been considered when developing this strategy:

- A National Plan to End Homelessness (December 2025): the strategy outlines 5 pillars- universal prevention, targeted prevention, preventing crisis, improving emergency responses and recovery and preventing repeat homelessness
- The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023): The framework emphasises sustainable development, ensuring sufficient affordable housing supply, and promoting efficient land use. It mandates up-to-date local plans that address housing needs, encourages healthy and safe communities, and prioritises climate change mitigation. These principles guide local authorities in creating strategies to prevent homelessness, increase housing availability, and foster sustainable, inclusive communities.
- The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017: Ensures that all homeless people receive advice and assistance from their council, with a focus on preventing homelessness.
- Health and Social Care Act 2012: Obligates local authorities to take steps to improve the health of people in their area, including those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- Homes England Strategic Plan 2023-28: Ensures affordable and sustainable homes are built in areas of greatest need and supports broader regeneration and community well-being
- Renters' Rights Act 2025-

East Herts District Council specific strategies:

- **Corporate Plan 2024-2027:** Focuses on themes of transparency, environmental focus, community engagement, and inclusivity.
- **Climate Change Strategy 2022-2026:** Addresses reducing carbon emissions, improving air quality, and enhancing the natural environment.
- **Local Plan 2018-2033:** Guides development and land use in the district. Review getting under way.
- **Annual Plan 2023-2024:** 2024-25 Outlines specific initiatives and goals for the year.
- **Vision and Corporate Priorities:** Updated periodically to reflect current objectives and community needs.

Hertfordshire County Council's influencing Strategies and Policies:

- **Corporate Plan 2022-2025:** This outlines the council's vision for creating a cleaner, greener, and healthier Hertfordshire, focusing on environmental leadership, healthy lifestyles, and inclusive communities.
- **Healthy Housing Strategy:** Part of their broader health initiatives to ensure residents live in safe, secure, and healthy environments.
- **Climate Change Strategy:** Embedded in various plans, including the Corporate Plan, which aims for carbon neutrality in council operations by 2030 and promotes sustainability throughout the county.
- **Economic Growth and Development:** Plans like the Integrated Plan (budget) 2024-2025 detail the financial strategies to support sustainable growth, infrastructure investment, and economic development.
- **Digital and Technology Strategy 2023-2027:** Focuses on leveraging digital technologies to improve council services and resident engagement.
- **Local Transport Plan 2018-2031:** A comprehensive plan for improving transport infrastructure to support economic growth and meet housing needs.
- **Live Well Strategy:** Initiatives under the Healthy and Fulfilling Lives priority aim to promote healthy lifestyles and support for those in need, aligning with a broader "Live Well" ethos.

- **Housing Strategies and Policies:** These include the Market Sustainability Plan and the Adult Disability Service Accommodation Strategy, which ensure that housing needs are met, particularly for vulnerable populations.