

Housing that works for everyone

Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy
2020-25



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> Foreword

Welcome to Gloucester's new Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy which sets out our plans for ensuring housing in our City works for those that want to live here and meets the needs of our residents.

We see the importance of ensuring the availability of a range of housing options that are affordable, accessible, meet the needs of our diverse City and allow communities to flourish. One size doesn't fit all, and this strategy reflects that.

Work over previous years to develop long term plans for the growth of the City and neighbouring districts such as the Joint Core Strategy and the Gloucester City Plan, has enabled us to be clear about our aspirations for new housing and this has been reflected in the priorities. As part of this work we have reflected on a wide evidence base which has helped us to understand the breadth of housing needs and the changes in our population, allowing us to understand trends and opportunities to meet future demand.

High quality well planned and a range of types of housing is fundamental to the diversity of our City and the health and wellbeing of our communities. Housing can also play a significant role in

underpinning economic growth and ensuring that Gloucester is a place that people want to live, work and play. Our City has a huge amount to offer and this strategy supports us to ensure our City as a whole can prosper.

We value our staff and partners providing housing and related support services here in the City and would like to thank our Councillor colleagues from all parties at the City Council and our valued stakeholders for their input and support in creating what we believe is a well balanced strategy with the potential for huge positive impact for the City'. This strategy has been adopted by Cabinet following an open public consultation, the feedback from which has shaped the final version.

We look forward to the coming years delivering on our ambitions with our partners and residents.



Introduction



Population
129,285

(Mid-2018 population estimates, ONS) and estimated to increase to 138,300 by 2025.

Predicted

70% increase



for 65+ year olds by 2041 (2016-based Subnational Population Projections, ONS)

Median house prices

increased by 43%



from £139,995 in 2009 to £193,000 in 2018 (Median house prices for administrative geographies: HPSSA dataset 9) while median annual earnings increased by 8.6% (Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, ONS)



Pockets of significant deprivation including some areas in the top 10% most deprived in the country

The housing requirement for new homes for the five-year period from 2019/20 to 2023/24 is

3,590 dwellings

(Policy SP1: The Need for New Development)

Gloucester is a dynamic and diverse city with a population that is simultaneously growing and ageing. The population of Gloucester is forecast to increase to 138,300 by 2025, this is an increase of 7% from 2018.

Good quality housing, that is affordable is fundamental to peoples' health and wellbeing and to the communities in which they live. It provides a stable base to enable people to build their lives. Poor or unsuitable housing can have a negative impact on many areas of personal and community life. Improving housing options via the delivery of this strategy is essential to contributing to the improvement of physical and mental health of our residents and to the city as a whole.

The strategy has three key high level priorities. It identifies the outcomes we want to have achieved during its five year lifetime and the actions that need to be taken to get there. The strategy also has a number of cross cutting themes which underpin it and will be fundamental to its delivery.

To respond to the challenges we face we plan to increase the supply of new homes, make better use of existing stock and focus on the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping through proactive interventions.

In July 2019 the Council declared a climate emergency and it will therefore be an underlying principle to ensure that the impacts of this strategy are measured against the Council's objective of becoming carbon neutral.

To deliver these outcomes we will need to work with local communities and be ambitious and innovative whilst ensuring we make best use of resources to deliver sustainable long-term solutions.

We recognise the importance that housing plays in health and life outcomes and this strategy therefore compliments and supports the objectives of the Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019 – 2030.

Our Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy has a strong theme of partnership working. We can only deliver its outcomes through working with our partners. This includes both statutory and voluntary organisations as well as our neighbouring local authorities and the County Council. This is crucial to realising our vision of a housing offer for the city that works for everyone.



In 2017 **10.3% of households**

in Gloucester were considered to be in fuel poverty (Sub regional fuel poverty data, BEIS)

28% of children



are estimated to live in relative poverty once housing costs have been taken into consideration.

A household in poverty is defined as one which has an income 60% below the average income of £28,400. (End Child Poverty Coalition)

1,307

households assessed as owed a homelessness prevention or relief duty 2018/19 (MHCLG live tables)



150 households

in temporary accommodation 2018/19 an increase of 25% since 2012/13 (MHCLG live tables)



4096 households

currently on the waiting list for social housing.

Our vision 'Housing that works for everyone'

Our key priorities

Key Priority

What does this mean?

Outcome



Increasing the number of new homes that are built

Making sure they are built to a high standard of design with the right balance and mix of homes to meet the needs of the local community



Maximising opportunities for regeneration and conversion to create more homes

Through interventions, improving housing quality and standards, enforcing them when necessary

Contributing to improving the health and wellbeing of our communities



Proactively intervening 'upstream' to prevent homelessness by working with our partners to enable people to find the right housing solutions, and responding promptly to immediate homelessness

Creating successful and thriving communities

2. Our cross cutting themes

These themes underpin all of the objectives of the Strategy.

Partnership
working

Promoting
good design
and high
standards

Focusing
on health
and well
being

Responding
to climate
emergency

5. What have we done so far?

Increasing supply



2494
homes
built

built in the period
2014/15 to 2018/19



Of these
545
were
affordable
homes



404
were
for
rent



Worked with stakeholders and partners
to develop the vacant Blackfriars site;
including the delivery of

300 units of student
accommodation

with a further 200 planned homes

Worked with registered
housing providers to
secure more than

£10m
in Homes
England
grants



to deliver affordable
housing in the city

Facilitating the delivery of
key housing sites
in the city centre

including Black Dog Way
and Greyfriars, for private,
affordable and social housing

Adopting the Gloucester,
Cheltenham and Tewkesbury
Joint Core Strategy
(JCS)

2011 to 2031, which sets out the
amount of new homes, jobs and
supporting infrastructure that is
needed to 2031 in these areas.

Developed the Gloucester City Plan, which sets out the city's
policies and proposals for development and use of land up to 2031

Making best use of existing stock

- Tackled poor standards within HMO's.
- Spending over £700,000 in the last 4 years on Disabled Facility Grants to enable people to remain within their own homes.
- Working closely with Gloucester City Homes on developing supplementary planning guidance to enable the regeneration of Matson and Podsmead estates.



Homelessness and rough sleeping

- With partners, securing millions in government funding to tackle homelessness in Gloucestershire, including two further outreach workers, specialist mental health support, specialist drug and alcohol support and landlord incentive schemes;
- "Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub" in Gloucester opened in March 2019 to provide 24/7 assessment and support for rough sleepers;
- ACTion Glos has supported 126 people in Gloucestershire since 2017 who have been rough sleeping or are long-term homeless with complex needs;
- The Landlord Incentive Scheme, set up in November 2018, has had 86 enquiries, 71 arranged visits and 30 properties signed up. This allowed 18 households to be discharged from emergency accommodation with 12-month tenancies;
- Potter's Place, run by the YMCA, is now providing temporary accommodation for homeless people in the city centre;
- Updating the housing service in line with the Homelessness Reduction Act.

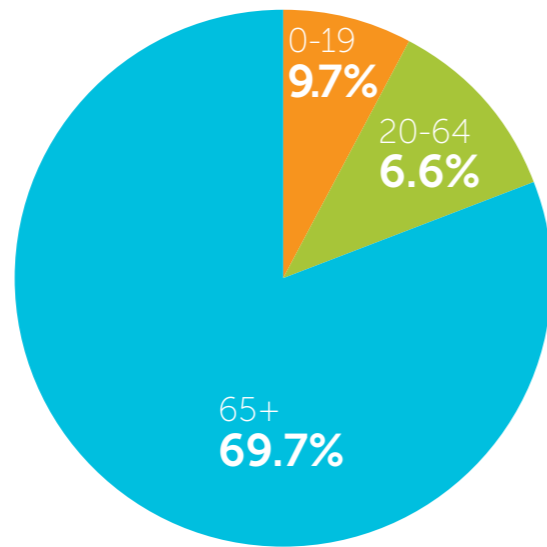
What are the challenges?

A growing population who are getting older

Projected % increase in population by age 2016 - 2041

0 - 19 20 - 64 65+

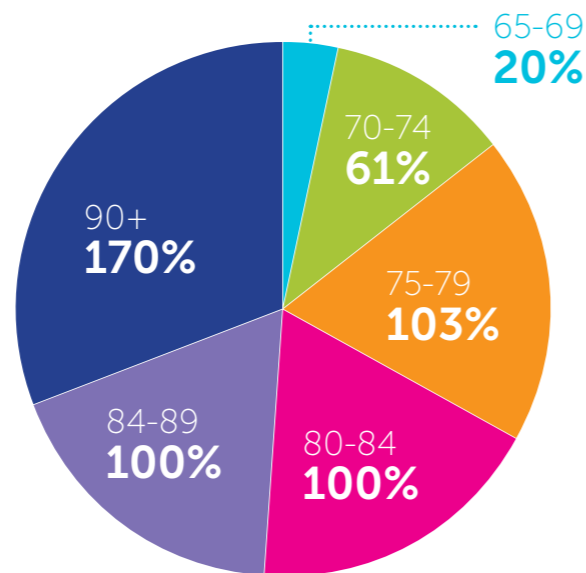
Assuming current population trends continue the population in Gloucester will rise to 138,300 by 2025 and to 150,900 by 2041. This is a projected increase of 17.5%¹.



Projected % increase over 65's 2016-2041

65 - 69 70 - 74 75 - 79
80 - 84 84 - 89 90+

Those in the age group 65 or over are projected to increase from 20,800 in 2016 to 35,400 in 2041, equating to a growth of 69.7%. This increase is greater than all other districts in Gloucestershire and above the national trend for England. It means that by 2041 the proportion of people in Gloucester who are aged 65 or over will have risen from 16.2% to 23.4%².



An increase in those with health and disability issues

Given the projected increase in the population aged 65 and over it is unsurprising that the number of people with health issues and requiring support is also expected to increase.

¹2016 based Subnational Projections, ONS

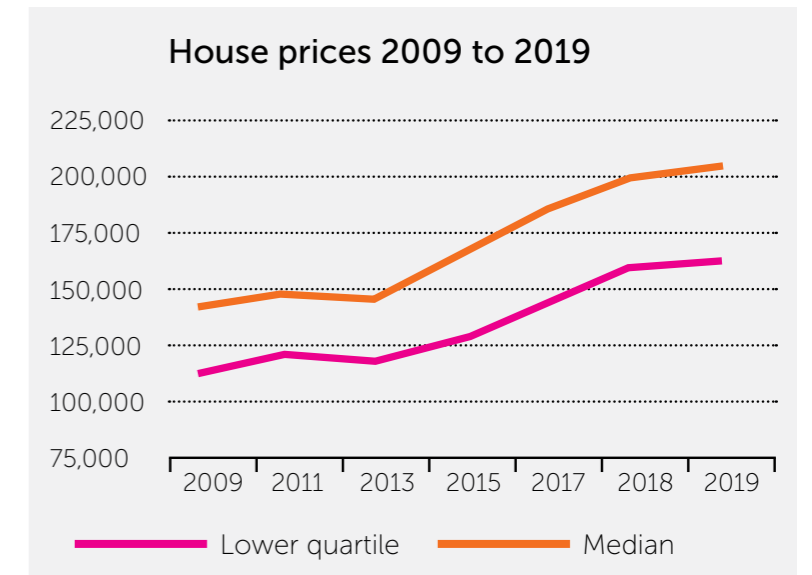
²2016 based Subnational Projections, ONS

House Prices

We want to encourage younger people to live and work within the city, to support economic activity and maintain the city's diversity. However, affordability of housing is a big issue for many residents.

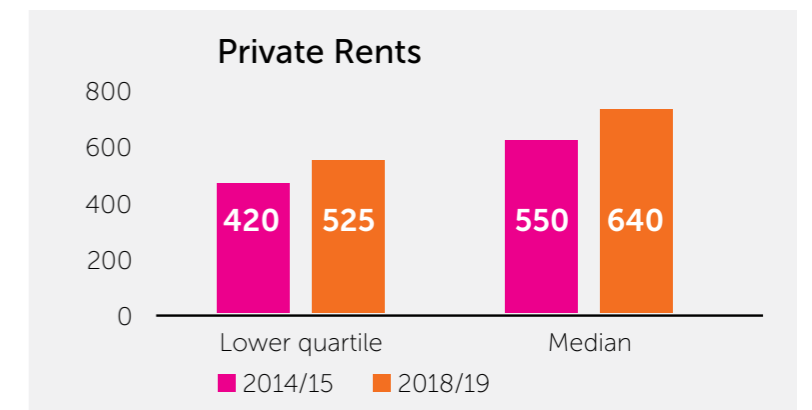
In Gloucester, median house prices increased from £139,995 in 2009 to £197,000 in 2019. Lower quartile house prices increased from £110,000 in 2009 to £157,000 in 2019. An increase of 43% and 42% respectively. Median annual earnings in Gloucester increased by 8.6% over a similar period.⁴

In 2018 a resident in Gloucester with median wages required 7 times their earnings to purchase a median priced property, with a similar ratio for lower quartile earnings to lower quartile house prices.⁵



Rents

Over the last five years median monthly rents in Gloucester have increased from £550 in 2014/15 to £640 in 2018/19, this equates to growth of 16.4%.⁶ This is higher than the County average (6.9%) and the national average (15.8%).



Development of new homes

- Gloucester is a growing city which is constrained by physical boundaries which mean that there is limited available land to develop within the city.
- There is a lack of single-person and large family accommodation.
- There are insufficient attractive housing choices for older people that meet their aspirations and encourages them to move from their family homes, meaning that there are fewer opportunities for families.
- Achieving the right balance between site viability a high standard of design for new developments and affordability.

³ HPSSA Dataset 15. Lower quartile price paid for administrative geographies / HPSSA dataset 9, Median house prices for administrative geographies

⁴ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, ONS

⁵ Table 5c and 6c ratio of median and lower quartile house prices to median and lower quartile earnings by LA

⁶ Valuation Office Agency, Private Rental Market Statistics monthly rents recorded between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2019

²2016 based Subnational Projections, ONS

6. Outcomes and Delivery

Priority 1 - Increasing supply

6. Our Priority

Priority 2 - Making best use of existing stock

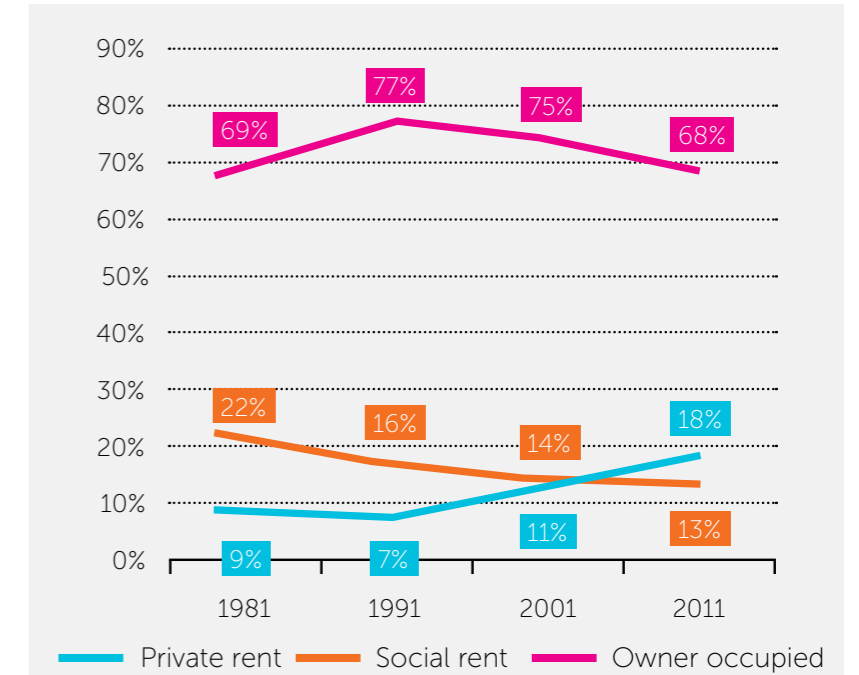
Outcome	Action
The housing supply objectives are meeting the delivery targets of the Gloucester City Plan and Joint Core Strategy (including numbers, size and tenure mix).	Fully implement the planning policies underpinning the Gloucester Plan and the Joint Core Strategy.
	Ensure that good design and layout of housing and associated infrastructure will support and promote health and wellbeing and safety and security.
	Contribute to the Joint Core Strategy Review to ensure the strategic sites contribute to the supply of homes to meet the needs of the city and people of Gloucester.
	Enable the completion of the development of St Oswald's Village through successful land assembly and procurement.
Land/existing buildings that are more difficult to develop and require strategic leadership to deliver are being brought in to use.	Explore the opportunities for joint ventures between the Council and private and public sector to bring forward sites and meet housing need.
	Investigate and explore the options for the Council to directly build new homes and the mechanisms to do this.
Public and private sector Investment into housing and associated infrastructure projects is maximised.	Explore investment opportunities to leverage resources, both through land and funding streams to enable the delivery of more housing.
More larger family homes are being developed.	Work with partners to establish opportunities through new developments to provide larger family homes.
Housing is being designed to meet the changing needs of the population of Gloucester.	Put in place policies, that accord with the Gloucester Local Plan and aim to build at least 50% of new homes to accessible standards to enable them to meet current and future needs.
Specialist housing is provided to meet the needs of those who require it, such as older people and those with disabilities.	Work with commissioners and delivery partners to respond positively to identified specialist housing need to enable appropriate provision.
	Contribute to and assist in the implementation of Gloucestershire County Council Housing with Care Strategy.
	Work in partnership with Barnwood Trust to support the completion of the Manor Gardens Scheme for people with disabilities, and use as an example for further developments.
'Affordable homes' are affordable to more people.	Implement the Gloucester Local Plan to ensure that affordable housing requirements are policy compliant.

What are the challenges?

Increased reliance on the private rented sector

There have been significant changes in the housing market since 2000⁷. By 2011 the private rental market was larger than the social housing sector, with owner occupation in decline. National data shows this trend continuing.

The short term nature of many private rented tenancies can bring instability both to individuals and to the communities in which they live.



Condition of existing housing stock

There is a lack of robust data on the condition of the private housing stock, with the last full survey being undertaken in 2011. This survey showed at the time that around a quarter of homes in the private sector (of all tenures), failed to meet the decent homes standard. This was mainly due to disrepair and thermal comfort. A new stock condition survey is currently underway and the outcome of this will be used to inform this Strategy.

However, it is reasonable to assume with an aging housing stock that meeting modern standards, particularly around energy efficiency and adapting homes for the changing needs of the population will continue to be of concern.

Empty Homes

The number of empty homes in the City has increased since 2016 by 17.6%. These empty homes represent a significant wasted resource which could contribute towards resolving the challenge of meeting housing needs as described under Priority 1.

- 2015 **1,175**
- 2016 **1,160**
- 2017 **1,247**
- 2018 **1,364⁸**

⁷Tenure trends 1981-2011 – UK Census of Population

⁸Council Tax Data- Gloucester City Council

6. Outcomes and delivery

Priority 2 - Making best use of existing stock

6. Our Priority

Priority 3 - Reducing homelessness and rough sleeping

Outcome	Action
Standards in the private sector are raised.	Continue to develop a more robust regime for Houses in Multiple Occupation.
	Explore the opportunity for a landlord licencing scheme.
	Put in place a registration scheme for private landlords to support those offering good quality accommodation.
	Deploy enforcement powers pro-actively to address issues with landlords who are providing poor quality accommodation.
	Conclude the comprehensive review of the Private Sector Housing Service.
	Explore options for the Council, through innovation to assist owners in addressing dis-repair and poor standards within their homes.
Good quality stock condition information is enabling pro-active and targeted intervention in the private housing sector.	Complete Stock Condition Survey and put in place a system to continue to collect and manage data, so that it remains dynamic.
	Analyse outcomes from the Stock Condition Survey and put in place and deliver an implementation plan.
Improved housing conditions are leading to positive health outcomes and contribute to safety and security.	Put in place a system for targeting poor quality properties that pose a high health and safety risk.
	Proactively manage affordable warmth and energy efficiency initiatives.
	Adopt an effective and targeted approach to managing disabled facility grants.
Options to optimise the use of underused space and address under occupation are in place.	Continue the programme of bringing upper stories of heritage buildings into residential use in the city centre, in accordance with the Council's Heritage Strategy.
	Explore opportunities to enable schemes that encourage owner occupiers to rent rooms to individuals such as key workers.
	Adopt a targeted approach to prioritising problem and long standing empty homes.
	Develop a model to enable the identification and response to opportunities that arise to repurpose stock, where its current use is redundant, to meet housing need.
Housing stock meets the housing needs of residents.	Work with private landlords and registered providers to proactively find solutions for those who are homeless and/or with more complex housing needs.
	Ensure housing stock supports us to fulfil our commitments under the Armed Forces Covenant.
Key regeneration schemes are completed.	Support and enable high quality regeneration of the Matson and Podsmead estates.
	Work with land owners and occupiers to explore opportunities for regeneration on Bristol Road to create a mixed use and sustainable neighbourhood.
	Put in place and enable a programme of smaller infill sites for housing (e.g. garage sites) with key partners.

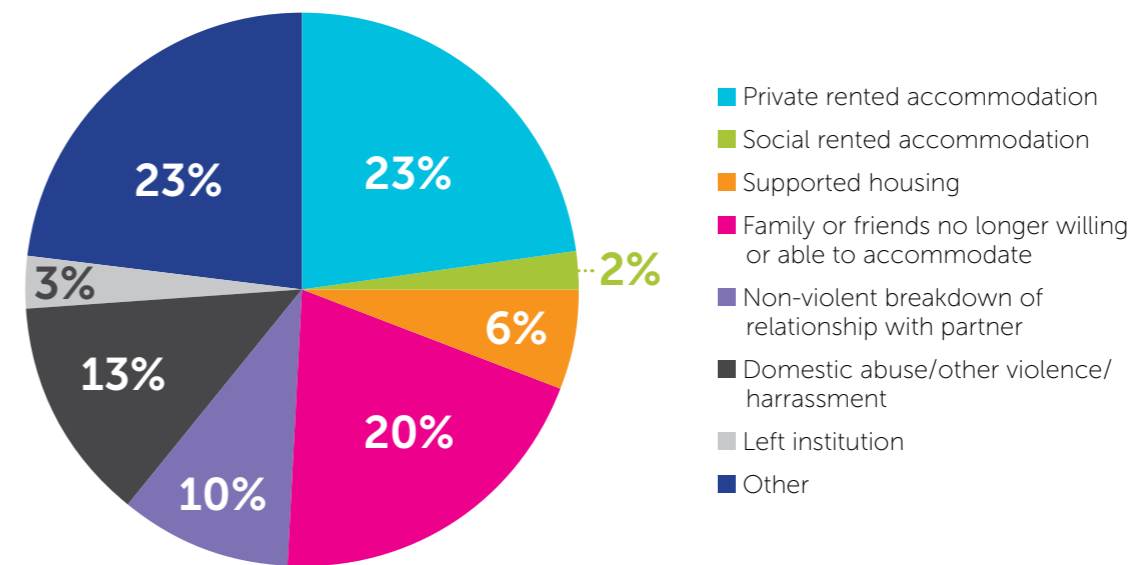
What are the challenges?

Increasing homelessness

The most visible form of homelessness is rough sleeping, but homelessness can take many forms. There has been an increase in the number of approaches for assistance from those facing homelessness.

- There were 1,307 households assessed and owed a prevention or relief duty by the Council in 2018/19;⁹
- There were 392 households assessed as statutory homeless in 2018/19;¹⁰
- There was an increase in statutory homelessness acceptances between 2012/13 and 2017/18 of 15%¹¹

Reason for homelessness



In 2018/19 the most significant cause of homelessness was loss of rented accommodation (31%) followed by parents/other relative/friend no longer or willing to accommodate. Households with dependent children is the main reason for priority need, accounting for 59% % of those who were accepted as statutory homeless followed by those with mental ill health or a disability.

Households aged between 25-44 are the most common group accepted as statutorily homeless.

⁹Table A1 - MHCLG H-CLIC Homelessness returns (quarterly)

¹⁰Table MD1 MHCLG H-CLIC Homelessness returns (quarterly)

¹¹Note comparison is only possible to 2017/18 due to changes in the way data is collected

6. Our Priority

Priority 3 - Reducing homelessness and rough sleeping

Increased use of temporary accommodation

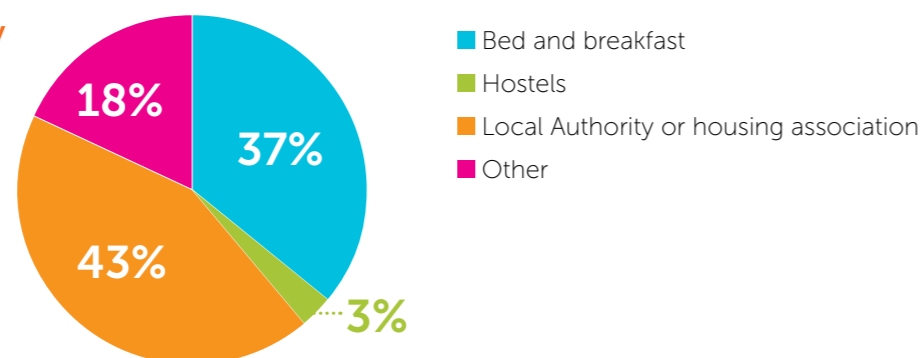
There are increased numbers and length of stays of households in temporary accommodation. A snapshot from 31 st March 2019 showed that there were 150 households in temporary accommodation,¹² representing an increase of 25% since 2013.

Of these, 47% were housed in bed and breakfast accommodation. This is significantly higher than the national average where only 8% are placed in this type of accommodation. This reflects the lack of good quality alternative temporary accommodation locally.

Several factors are also contributing to the increase in homelessness:

- The lack of move on options from temporary accommodation to permanent housing solutions.
- Insufficient preventative outreach work has been taking place;
- Continuity and lack of certainty of funding for homelessness services.

Type of Temporary Accommodation



Rough sleeping

Our approach to rough sleeping has the following objectives:

1. **Prevention:** understanding the issues that lead to rough sleeping and providing timely support for those at risk.
2. **Intervention:** helping those already sleeping rough with swift support tailored to their individual circumstances.
3. **Recovery:** supporting people in finding new homes and rebuilding their lives.

This reflects the government’s Rough Sleeping Strategy published in 2018 which set out sets out the government’s strategy for halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it by 2027. Our ambition is to eradicate rough sleeping within Gloucester by 2025.

Currently we participate with the County Council and the other 5 district councils in Gloucestershire, along with a range of providers in a comprehensive homelessness pathway. This along with our Rough Sleeping Action plan can be found on our website.

<https://www.gloucester.gov.uk/housing/housing-policies-and-strategies/rough-sleeper-action-plan/>

¹²Table TA1 - MHCLG H-CLIC Homelessness returns (quarterly)

6. Outcomes and delivery

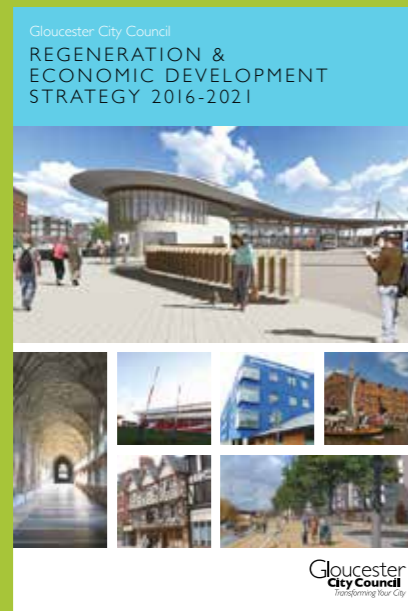
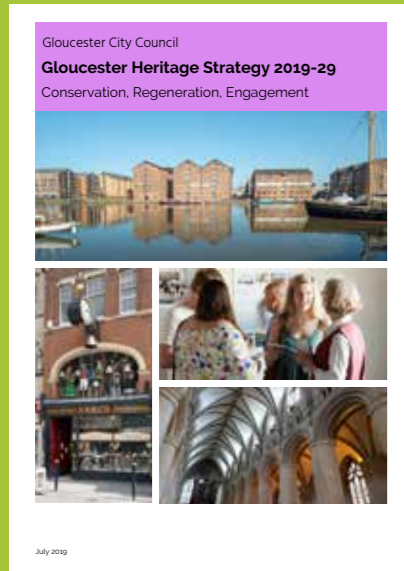
Priority 3 - Reducing homelessness and rough sleeping

Outcome	Action
The occurrence of homelessness is reduced through effective early intervention.	Liaise with landlords and providers at an early stage where homelessness has been identified as likely to occur and try to implement solutions.
	Explore with partners the opportunity to set up a fund to tackle the threat of potential homelessness, through for example a deposit scheme/rent in advance, whilst demonstrating cost effectiveness.
Response to homelessness is pro-active and person centred.	Ensure pathways for homeless people are understood by all partners and agencies.
	Review systems and processes to ensure that they are robust enough to enable consistency of approach, timely advice and earlier referrals and intervention with effective co-operation with partners where appropriate.
	Offer a trauma and ACEs informed ¹ service to support holistic solutions and the building of resilience.
The use of temporary accommodation is minimised, with only good quality appropriate accommodation available. Bed and Breakfast is no longer used.	Identify and deliver new, better quality temporary accommodation options.
	Put a clear programme in place to end the use of bed and breakfast as a form of emergency accommodation.
	Work with partners to ensure that those living in temporary accommodation, such as shelters and hostels, have plans put in place for re-housing.
	Establish options to enable individuals who are homeless or threatened with homelessness to move to directly to permanent accommodation.
	Work with Gloucestershire County Council to develop an understanding of the accommodation needs of survivors of domestic abuse and implement appropriate solutions.
Eradicate Rough Sleeping.	Put in place year-round severe weather provision for rough sleepers as a contingency.
	Continue to support the 'Social Impact Bond' until at least 2022 – which supports entrenched rough sleepers in living independently and assists them into training, education or employment.
	Track experience of rough sleepers, their reasons for homelessness and identify and implement actions needed to break the cycle of homelessness.
	Continue to support the 'Social Impact Bond' until at least 2022 – which supports entrenched rough sleepers in living independently and assists them into training, education or employment.
	Establish means to ensure funding continuity for rough sleeping services post 2022.
	Work with partners to provide place-based provisions, together with personalised support, that satisfies "Housing First" principles.

¹ <https://www.actionaces.org/what-are-aces/>

7. Links to other Strategies

This Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy does not operate in isolation and links to our other strategies and our City Plan.



8. Monitoring and Performance

Monitoring

This strategy is supported by the Housing Service Plan. This contains the detailed actions and tasks to enable the outcomes of the strategy to be delivered and will provide the golden thread between strategic objectives and practical measurable outcomes.

Performance Measures

It is underpinned by key performance indicators. Progress made against the outcomes within this strategy are reviewed annually by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The current Key Performance Indicators are:

- The number of homeless applications where a decision was made
- The delivery of affordable housing units
- The number of homeless households resident in temporary homes
- The number of successful homeless preventions





Gloucester
City Council
Transforming Your City