

# Homelessness and Rough Sleeping: consultation on proposed strategy for 2020-2025

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There is a legal requirement for Local Housing Authorities to publish a homelessness and rough sleeping strategy every five years that sets out the scale and cause of the problem and how to prevent and tackle it.

Since 2010 homelessness and rough sleeping has risen significantly in England. South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse have not witnessed a similar rise, despite the increasing demands placed upon the homelessness service.

The councils have a proactive approach to tackling homelessness, with a strong focus upon prevention, early intervention and increasing access to sustainable accommodation. These actions have helped maintain low levels of homelessness and rough sleeping in the districts.

The joint Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 retains a clear focus upon early intervention to prevent homelessness; or if prevention is not possible, to end homelessness at the earliest opportunity.

The new strategy increases the support and accommodation available for homeless households and rough sleepers in the districts.

The strategy has been developed following a review of services that included a series of stakeholder engagement exercises with councillors; service users and partner organisations.

The review considered the councils' achievements during the lifetime of the previous strategy; the current demands on the homelessness service, and the ability to meet these demands in the future. The review findings informed the aims and objectives of the new strategy.

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, supported by a detailed action plan, has three **aims**:

- to prevent homelessness whenever possible
- to end incidents of homelessness at the earliest opportunity
- to end the need for rough sleeping



Five **strategic objectives** have been identified to support the achievement of the aims:

1. To improve county-wide partnership working to prevent and reduce homelessness.
2. To minimise the use of temporary accommodation.
3. To further develop our housing needs service to prevent and relieve homelessness at the earliest opportunity.
4. To improve access to emergency accommodation and increase support for rough sleepers.
5. To improve access to sustainable accommodation for households who are at risk of homelessness or who are homeless.

The success of the strategy will be measured against Key Performance Indicators and targets will be set annually.

The strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis and the findings published on the councils' websites.

## **Have your say**

To give your views on the proposed strategy please complete our survey, using this link <https://survey.southandvale.gov.uk/s/Homelessness2019/> by **5pm on Monday 25 November 2019**.

If you have any questions about the survey or require it in alternative format (for example large print, Braille, audio, email, easy to read and alternative languages), please email [haveyoursay@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:haveyoursay@southandvale.gov.uk) or call 01235 422425. If you have any questions for our housing team please email [housing@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:housing@southandvale.gov.uk) or call 01235 422436.

## **More information**

You can find out more by reading the full draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 available on our websites [www.southoxon.gov.uk/housingpolicies](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/housingpolicies) or [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/housingpolicies](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/housingpolicies).

