

## **Councillor Call for Action into Homelessness**

Tragically, homelessness is a national crisis and North Norfolk is not immune. Far too many of our residents are affected. There are certain unique factors to homelessness in North Norfolk and we request that NNDC take a deep dive into the causes and relief of homelessness in our district.

We have prepared this Councillor call for action into homelessness so that the drivers of rising demand, causes of diminishing existing stock and the pace of delivery of new stock is fully understood and so that these can inform the development of a range of remedies wholly, or partly, within the gift and influence of NNDC.

The statistics of homelessness in North Norfolk are heartbreaking. As of 30th November 2023, there were 2495 households on the council waiting list, with 562 having the most urgent housing needs. Houses let from 1st April to 31st October 2023 were 155. As of 30th November, there were 141 households either homeless or at threat of homelessness, and 66 households in temporary accommodation. Of these latter group, 45% had dependent children. The majority of households are in temporary accommodation for 3 months or more, at maximum up to 2 years. The emotional, mental and physical toll this takes on households is beyond comprehension.

The forecast cost to NNDC for homelessness accommodation for 23/24 is £1.2mill, net of subsidy £910,000.

The principal reasons for homelessness in North Norfolk are the end of a private rental tenancy, friends and family no longer able to support the household, and domestic violence. However, other reasons include the end of social rented tenancy, eviction from supported housing, fire, flood or other emergency, and relationship breakdown (non-violent).

To better help our residents, we need to understand the drivers of rising demand, causes of diminishing existing stock and the pace of delivery of new stock. We need to explore initiatives to find our own local remedies.

We propose that a detailed examination of the causes of homelessness in North Norfolk be undertaken. This would be evidence- and best practice-based and include a review of possible Interventions by NNDC to reduce and prevent homelessness, and to develop practical solutions for implementation by NNDC to relieve homelessness.

We suggest this could be achieved by setting up a task and finish group of councillors, working together with officers, to investigate and develop remedies for consideration by O&S, and thence make recommendations to Cabinet in the shortest possible timescale. Such a group would allow for best use of capacity limited officers' time.

This report will give us the tools we need to provide better outcomes for our households at risk of homelessness or who have become homeless.

We urge you to support this Councillors' Call for Action.