

Appendix A

Recommendation	Response / Comments	Further Action / Timescales
<p>A. To prevent homelessness The council expands its homelessness service prevention work to undertake such work at an earlier stage along with multi agency support, on an invest to save basis, to seek to reduce the number of people going into temporary accommodation and the costs of that to the council that should include:</p>		
<p>1. increasing the awareness and risks of homelessness in the local communities, on the value of prevention for homelessness and that early intervention requires people to ask for help before it becomes too late</p>	<p>Officers agree with the importance of prevention allowing time to explore potential solutions rather than dealing with households in crisis when options are severely limited, and much of this work is already taking place. Investing in more upstream prevention and also focussing on repeat homelessness are approaches we are interested in. The review of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy presents an opportunity to look at wider interventions and make homelessness prevention a more corporate issue, for example some resources in the Benefits Team have been used to build a Financial Inclusion and Debt Counselling offer but this needs to be more integrated in our homelessness prevention offer. There is concern at any costs associated with this given the financial position of the council.</p>	<p>People Services Review will redesign services with greater focus on homelessness prevention and Community Outreach from 1 April 2025.</p> <p>Further consider as part of review of Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy to align with development of national Homelessness and Rough Sleeper strategy and spending review</p> <p>September 2025</p>

<p>2. increasing its communication work which should include Parish and Town Councils and should also provide support to Councillors to enable them to help signpost those people who need housing help</p>	<p>The Council does much of this work already, but we agree it would be helpful to have a coordinated campaign. In addition to the work the Council's Enabling Officer does attending individual Town & Parish Council (T&PC) meetings, the Council now sends out information to each T&PC on housing need in their parish. This also contains links to further information on homelessness on the council's website and advice on signposting. Articles have been included in the Council's Outlook magazine on this issue and more are planned. We also plan to present to the Town & Parish Council Forum once this is running again.</p> <p>From 1 April 4 of the 6 Community Outreach Officers in People Services will deliver community-based homelessness prevention initiatives.</p>	<p>Housing Flyer sent to all Parish Councils</p> <p>November 2024</p> <p>Community Outreach Officers delivering community-based homelessness prevention</p> <p>From 1 April 2025</p>
<p>3. increasing the range of interventions to help people especially on benefit support and with financial viability assessments</p>	<p>The Financial Inclusion Team, Early Help and Prevention Team and Community Outreach Team will work in a more integrated way to support residents to maximise their income and reduce debt. They will work closely with the Housing Options Team to prioritise cases where there is a risk of homelessness.</p>	<p>People Services Review will redesign services with greater focus on homelessness prevention</p> <p>From 1 April 2025</p>
<p>(B) Managing homelessness</p>		
<p>Explores how it uses partner, charity, and voluntary organisations to create a series of outreach hubs and front-line services in North Norfolk for homelessness to create a network of advice and support including appropriate partner organisation(s)</p>	<p>Officers broadly agree that partner organisations have a strong role to play and should have the information to help support and sign post households. This can be linked to the communications campaign recommendation above. We need to explore how we work with partners as part of the Homelessness & Rough Sleepers strategy review and look to see how we can invest in building a stronger community based network. We also need to move our services nearer to our more vulnerable customers and those with complex needs - physical hubs in local communities should be</p>	<p>Community-based outreach service to be developed with partner agencies</p> <p>From 1 April 2025</p>

	explored but virtual hubs might offer a staged approach. We should not focus on opportunities but base any service remodelling on a strategic plan. Hubs outside of Cromer are likely to be more of a priority as we have the Council Office as a local delivery point for Cromer.	
(C) Housing allocation		
Considers the viability of a support match scheme to match younger residents who need accommodation into a home with an older resident(s) that needs assistance in a similar way to the scheme in Cornwall Supportmatch Homeshare - Cornwall Council	This was considered previously (we advertised for a post to set such a scheme up but had no applicants). This is a complicated and resource intensive and could not be delivered without a dedicated resource. The Benjamin Foundation was funded to deliver supported lodgings a number of years ago, a scheme which shares some objectives with the Home Share scheme, but this struggled to secure willing households to offer rooms in their homes to young people. This scheme was supported by Children’s Services.	No further action – requires additional resources and is not a priority at this time
(D) Increase housing supply		
1. Continues to encourage its Councillors to work within their local communities to seek to find additional plots of land that can be used for new affordable housing schemes	See response to A (1) above Over the last 12 months the Council’s Enabling Officer has visited 20 T&PCs. We currently have a very healthy pipeline for new affordable housing schemes: six sites / 144 homes being built, 15 sites /569 homes with or imminently to obtain Planning permission, a further c.400 homes on sites at earlier stages.	Ongoing
2. As a medium-term solution looks at setting up an investment partnership to provide affordable local housing for local people at social, discount and market rent. We would recommend the model used by Cambridge City Council and Gravesham Borough Council who set an investment	This option has been examined, most recently by EELGA as a way of providing more Council owned Temporary Accommodation. However, a partnership approach is unlikely to be effective in North Norfolk as the council has no land or capital to put into the partnership. However, the current housing strategy action plan includes an action to “Investigate innovative ideas to increase level of affordable housing (e.g. NNDC purchases / obtains option on land,	Housing Strategy/Corporate Plan action June 2026

partnership with the Hill Group on a 50:50 basis	NNDC achieves outline planning permission)". We will continue to work towards this objective	
3. Explores the use of Solo Haus one bed housing where additional temporary accommodation for single people is required	The council has investigated the use of pod type accommodation for single homeless households. However, this was not pursued as the priority was felt to be securing long-term accommodation rather than more emergency accommodation (and the council already has 5 x units of accommodation for ex-Rough Sleepers). We are currently investigating a range of solutions for more TA, including single persons' accommodation. We are also working with a housing association specialising in singles people's accommodation to identify a site for them.	Proposals for expansion of Council's TA April 2025
(E) Increase affordable house building/supply		
1. Undertakes an audit of shop fronts away from primary retail areas and empty units above and behind shops to assess their potential for conversion to residential usage or renting out rooms	Conversion of spaces above retail premises has been considered previously. However, it is a challenging route to delivering more housing and requires owners to want to pursue this route and a willing developer. This is frequently not an economically viable solution, given the expenditure needed and the return from renting. Owners are often reluctant due to concerns re: security and access. We have an empty homes revenue officer but they do not have the capacity to undertake this work.	No further action – requires additional resources
2. An affordable housing conference be set up to encourage Parish and Town councils to create neighbourhood plans that include allocations for community led development for local people and encourages community land trusts to come forward with affordable schemes in rural exception sites	See response to A (1) above The Council's enabling officer who liaises with T&PCs on a very regular basis to make them aware of the need for affordable homes and opportunities to deliver these particularly through CLTs. Additionally the Council's Corporate Plan includes an action "Promote greater take up of Neighbourhood Plans by local communities with the objective of supporting communities to adopt Neighbourhood Plans. However, we are happy to explore a	Housing Strategy and Planning Policy to consider conference September 2025

	conference with CPRE to bring these issues together. Currently adoption of a new Local Plan is the priority for Planning Policy so this could not be considered until this has been completed	
3. Continues to seek from Norfolk County Council a minimum 50% return of the extra Council tax that will be received from the new extra second homes premium and that the money the Council receives is ringfenced for affordable housing	Negotiation of retention of 50% of the Second homes premium with the County Council are ongoing. The current Corporate plan includes an action "Negotiate with Norfolk County Council and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner on the retention of the Second Homes Council Tax premium (subject to appropriate legislation being passed) to finance the delivery of a more ambitious programme of affordable homes developments in the district from March 2025."	Negotiate retention of 50% Second Homes Premium March 2025
4. Responds to the Government consultation on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework on the definition of affordability	The Council Planning policy in the current and emerging local plan clearly favours delivery of rented, rather than low cost homes ownership or intermediate types of affordable housing, requiring that 75% of homes should be rented. Additionally, the Council requires that any new Affordable Rent homes are capped at local Housing Allowance to ensure they are affordable. Where homes are delivered through grant, Homes England funding will govern tenure and rent levels. Whilst we agree homes should be genuinely affordable the implications of lower rent levels need to be understood and could mean affordable homes are less viable - and therefore less affordable homes are delivered	Response completed
5. Explores the potential to use Better Society Capital/National Homelessness Property fund 2 funding for 3-to-4-bedroom properties National Homelessness Property fund 2 Better Society Capital	We are happy to explore this opportunity – either directly (to increase our portfolio of temporary accommodation) or with our partner Registered Providers	Consider as part of review of Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy September 2025
(F) Increase/sustain Private rental tenancies		
1. Explores the model of using a local estate agency to set up a Council letting agency	The Council is happy to investigate this option. Private sector leasing schemes have been investigated by the council previously and	Await further government proposals

<p>and also looks at whether homelessness prevention grant could be used to bring empty properties back into use</p>	<p>rejected due to the cost and challenge of attracting landlords who already have high demand for their homes. We would support a social lettings agency but it seems unlikely this could be delivered by a commercial agent. If we are looking to increase access generally to the private rented market then working with an existing agency might be appropriate but we need to have clarity on what we are trying to achieve considering our limited resource.</p> <p>Cabinet agreed (October 2022) that HPG could be used as small grants to bring empty homes back into use if they could be used for homeless households. No suitable cases have been identified.</p> <p>The Renters Reform Bill may result in landlords exiting the sector which might make a private sector leasing scheme more viable and we will keep a watching brief on the market.</p>	
<p>2. Encourages the new government to continue the previous government's work on introducing an appropriate licencing scheme for all short-term lets</p>	<p>The government is looking again at the impact of short term lets on local housing supply and we have held informal discussions with colleagues at MHCLHG on a range of options. Licencing of short term holiday lets was one of the suggestions in recent government consultation on the impact of holiday and second homes. The Council responded to this consultation and supported this approach. This scheme would require a change in legislation.</p>	<p>Await further government proposals</p>
<p>3. Continues to engage proactively with private landlords and considers whether setting up a Landlords Forum would be beneficial with an introductory conference type session including mortgage brokers, lenders, insurance companies as well as landlords and housing associations to explore solutions to the issues Landlords are experiencing</p>	<p>We agree retention and support of private rental accommodation is key to meeting housing need. The Council works with Eastern Landlords Association who provide support to private landlords. As part of the work of the Countywide Norfolk Homeless Solutions group an event as held to bring PRS landlords, LAs and other agencies together to develop ways of working with PRS. How we work with landlords will be reviewed as part of the review of the strategy – whether through a district landlords' forum or alternatives developed to ensure that the dialogue with landlords is positive and focused on sustaining tenancies and improving standards.</p>	<p>Consider as part of review of Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy</p> <p>September 2025</p>

(G) Reducing Long Term Empty Homes		
1. Continues to have an Empty Homes Officer as a permanent role	Response – agreed, the post has been made permanent	No further action
2. Considers how to increase engagement with the Town and Parish Councils on the number of long-term empty properties in their areas	See response to A (1) above – empty homes data provided to T&PCs. Town & Parish Councils are generally very aware of long term empty properties in their area and the empty homes officer liaises regularly with them.	Ongoing
3. Continues to investigate whether funding could be found to refurbish empty properties for people in housing need	Previously there was Home England grant funding available to bring empty homes back into use but unfortunately this funding no longer exists. The empty homes officer discusses options to bring homes back into use but often an owner does not wish to do this	No further action – requires additional resources
(H) Sustain social tenancies		
1. Continues to investigate with registered providers on the reuse of sheltered housing and to seek fewer age designated homes	Flagship, our largest RP, are currently reviewing their stock of older persons housing. The council has contributed to this review, including providing data on housing need. We recognise the importance of good quality housing for older people, particularly as an option for those older tenants who are under-occupying family homes. However, we need to consider if the balance between general needs and older persons housing is correct.	Ongoing
2. Continues to have a strategic discussion with the registered providers on potential disposals that may occur over the next few years	Flagship is the only RP in the district who has a proactive disposal plan. Flagship’s disposals strategy is under review and, in addition to regular meetings regarding future planned disposal, is due to be discussed at a strategic liaison meeting with Flagship	Ongoing
3. Encourages registered providers to ensure sufficient target hardening is provided in Domestic Abuse cases	Response – RP landlords already do this	No further action
(I) Prevention of/provision for victims of Domestic Abuse		

<p>1. Explores how partner organisations can be used to help with homelessness prevention especially in domestic abuse cases that would include tenancy support by the Registered Providers and spreading awareness to Parish and Town Councils and Councillors</p>	<p>This is an area of work that is developing, the Council has recently attained DAHA accreditation, and we will review what more we can do in this area as part of our strategy review considering that domestic abuse is a significant reason for homelessness.</p> <p>The major Registered Providers across North Norfolk are also in the process of working towards DAHA accreditation, this will improve the support that victims of DA will receive.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>2. Asks the new Norfolk Police and Crime Commissioner whether the offer of scoping out a pilot that moves out the perpetrator in domestic abuse cases rather than the victim is still valid</p>	<p>This is something that needs to be considered on a case by case basis and cannot therefore form part of a pilot</p>	<p>No further action</p>