



Dover District Council  
**Homelessness and  
Rough sleeping  
Strategy 2020-2024**

Updated June 2021



# Our Vision

Dover District Council is committed to giving access to affordable housing to those in our district who need it. The Covid 19 pandemic has reinforced how important the link is between access to good quality affordable housing and health.

Dover District Council will continue to strive to:

- End rough sleeping
- Prevent all forms of homelessness
- Improve temporary accommodation and end the use of bed and breakfast
- Provide better housing outcomes for local people

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# Foreword



I am pleased to introduce this strategy to the people and partners of Dover district.

**Ending rough sleeping in the Dover district and helping prevent homelessness is a priority for Dover District Council, and this strategy sets out how we will go about doing this. It is also important that rough sleeping, the worst form of homelessness, has been given such prominence within the document.**

We will work with our partners, stakeholders, voluntary agencies and local people to find innovative ways to improve our response to the problem of homelessness. Our Action Plan lays out our priorities in tackling this issue. The immediate impact of the Covid 19 pandemic was to add additional pressure to provide and meet the costs of temporary accommodation for those sleeping rough in the district. In the longer term there is the possibility of more families losing their homes in the aftermath of the pandemic and that the stress and strain of it may result in greater numbers of relationship breakdowns leading to homelessness. We will need to learn from others and use best practice to respond to these challenges and will continue to work to defeat homelessness and rough sleeping in our area.

Homelessness strategies enable councils to review how they have responded to the issue over the previous five years, and then develop an enhanced response for the next five-year period. Of course, this has to be taken into the context of issues within the wider housing market and general economic conditions at the time.

It is important that we have a plan to deal with this difficult issue, and that we work together to resolve it. I am glad that the strategy in particular notes the essential contribution of local housing and homelessness agencies and confirms that we will only defeat this problem by working in partnership.

I am happy to endorse the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for 2020 to 2024 and I hope that you will support Dover District Council in its efforts to provide local people with the homes that they need.

**Councillor Derek Murphy**

# Introduction

The Homelessness Act 2002 gave all local authorities a responsibility to produce a 5 year strategy on homelessness for their areas, and renew the strategy at the end of each period. For the last 10 years Dover District Council has produced their Homelessness Strategy in partnership with the other East Kent Councils of Canterbury City Council, Shepway District Council and Thanet District Council. This time it has been decided a more detailed focus is required to address local needs and demands. This strategy examines the progress made against actions set out in our previous action plan and the many successes achieved.

In autumn 2019 we consulted with the many partners who help us deliver homeless services in the Dover district. This strategy sets out the priorities that we and our partners and service users believe are important to meet our overarching ambitions.

**The Dover Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is a robust response to the housing issues facing homeless people in the district.**

**Its aim is to better understand the causes of homelessness, to encourage partnership working, and ensure that effective measures are put in place to prevent and reduce the incidence of homelessness in the future.**

# National context

## The last five years have been challenging for those working with homeless people.

There have been important legislative and administrative changes which have had to be implemented across the sector. A new benefit regime has been introduced which directly affects people on low incomes, many of whom are at risk of homelessness. National initiatives have placed an emphasis on preventing homelessness and reducing rough sleeping.

We face a number of significant challenges as we move towards the end of 2020, the full effect of which is difficult to predict. The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic is yet to be fully realised and the temporary suspension of evictions and possession actions could result in a significant increase in the numbers of families losing their livelihoods and homes. The decision to leave the European Union may also impact upon homelessness.

There have however been a number of welcome developments during this period. House building, including affordable housing, has begun to pick up, whilst assistance has been provided to allow families to purchase their own homes. House prices in turn have recently stabilised, making accommodation more affordable. Curbs on the buy-to-let market have put pressure on rents in the private sector, again improving affordability.

## Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

English local authorities faced a major legislative change in how statutory homelessness is managed, through the introduction of The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The Act took effect on 3rd April 2018, and places new duties on councils to work with homeless families to prevent or relieve homelessness before a main homeless duty is accepted. Many local authorities have already been actively helping homeless households in this way, but there is now a statutory footing to ensure all councils comply.

### Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 Main changes to legislation

- Work to prevent homelessness of all eligible applicants likely to be homeless in 56 days
- Work to relieve homelessness of all eligible applicants who become homeless
- Take reasonable steps to secure accommodation for those who approach for assistance
- New 'Duty to Refer' for public bodies working with homeless people, to council homelessness service.

- The numbers of 'statutory homeless' households stood at 56,600 in 2017/18. This compares with 53,930 households accepted in 2013/14.
- From 2013/14, when there were 58,933 families in temporary housing, to 2017/18, the numbers have increased by 37%. By March 2019 the number of families in temporary housing stood at 85,040.

On 31st March 2020, the total number of households in temporary accommodation was 93,000, up 9.4% from 85,040 a year earlier on 31st March 2019. This increase is driven by single households, up 28.5% to 29,390 on 31st March 2020, while households with children were more stable, up 2.3% to 63,610. These figures may reflect people housed in emergency accommodation under the COVID-19 'Everyone in' scheme.

- A total of 68,470 households were owed either a prevention or relief duty during October to December 2019. Between these dates 64,520 homeless families had their duty ended. The main reason for the duty ending was by securing a tenancy lasting at least 6 months in the private rented sector, assisting nearly 11,000 families. The 2017 Act gives councils the power to discharge their duty in this way; prior to the Act they had to secure private accommodation for at least 12 months. This proved difficult due to the standard assured shorthold tenancy offered in the private sector usually lasting for an initial 6 months.

### Households in Temporary Accommodation - England

	No of Households
2013/14	58,933
2014/15	64,710
2015/16	71,670
2016/17	77,220
2017/18	80,720
2018/19	85,040
2019/20	93,000

## Affordability

Affordability is often cited as one of the main underlying reasons for homelessness. Many homeless people are on low incomes relative to the UK average, or rely on state benefits.

Since 2012 there have been restrictions in the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates. These rates determine the maximum amount of Housing Benefit that is payable in a particular locality for each property size. Restrictions in the LHA rates were seen by the UK Government as a tool to reduce the rise in private rents, and therefore the increase in the total Housing Benefit bill.

- For the 4 years up to April 2020, LHA rates had been frozen, making access to the private rented sector difficult for those reliant on help with their rent.
- Rents have continued to rise in the private sector, with the UK outside London seeing increases of between 1.1% and 2.3% annually since 2014.
- The demand continues to be strong for private rented accommodation whilst supply is no longer increasing.
- The total number of private rented properties in England has been falling since 2016, possibly explained by tax restrictions placed on the buy-to-let market making new investment less attractive.

Not only have the changes to the benefits system made private rented accommodation less affordable for many low-income families, there has also been an increase in the number of families becoming homeless from this tenure. Termination of an assured shorthold tenancy is now the reason given for homelessness by 25% of all homeless presentations to local authorities.

The introduction of Universal Credit has had some negative effects to low-income families, but the phased roll-out has not seen the impact that some feared. Modifications to the policy have safeguarded the most vulnerable, but, as with changes to any benefit, confusion with a new policy can lead to payments being delayed or stopped. It is the policy of benefit sanctions, which can be up to 3 times more than Job Seekers Allowance, that some of the worst effects are felt. As the Universal Credit payment now includes the housing benefit element, any restrictions on benefits will impact on the ability of households to pay their housing costs, leading to an increased risk of homelessness.

## Rough Sleeping

The number of people rough sleeping in England has risen dramatically in the last decade.

- Since 2010, rough sleeping figures rose by 141% to a total of 4,266 by the end of 2019.

### Number of Rough Sleepers - England

Year	Rough Sleepers
2010	1,768
2011	2,181
2012	2,309
2013	2,414
2014	2,744
2015	3,569
2016	4,134
2017	4,751
2018	4,677
2019	4,266

The Government announced a new Rough Sleeping Strategy in 2018. Its original aim was to halve rough sleeping by 2022, and to end it by 2027. This objective has now been brought forward two years to 2025.

Councils have received significant funding through the Rough Sleeping Initiative and Rapid Rehousing Pathway to help them meet the target in their areas. Local authorities have also been encouraged to add Rough Sleeping to the title of their Homelessness Strategies, to underline the importance of this area.

In response to the Covid 19 pandemic the Government announced the 'Everyone In' initiative in March 2020, instructing local authorities to bring rough sleepers off the streets and give them access to emergency accommodation. This has presented those who work with rough sleepers the unique opportunity to work with them while they are safely housed to provide support to try to break the cycle of homelessness and rough sleeping. To date 18 rough sleepers have been accommodated by Dover District Council through the initiative and 9 of those have moved onto long-term supported housing and private housing.

With the help of Government funding, the council are continuing to accommodate rough sleepers during the winter of 2020 with the assistance of the Dover Outreach Centre. We will also be purchasing 6 self-contained units for multiple-disadvantaged rough sleepers to access longer term supported housing, which will be available from March 2021.

# Review

Dover District Council's Homelessness Review was carried out late in 2019.

To help inform this strategy we:

- Engaged and consulted with organisations delivering homelessness related services in the Dover district
- Collected data and evidence from them and our own records about services that work well and any challenges we face
- Reviewed data relating to statutory homelessness
- Reviewed our use of temporary accommodation
- Reviewed rough sleeping and sofa surfing in the district
- Reviewed the accommodation and support provided by DDC and partner organisations

The information collected from our review has been used to inform the information provided in the next sections.



**TO LET**

## Local affordability

**Average Dover house price in 2019**  
**£276,091**

The average purchase price for a property in the Dover area in 2019 was £276,091, slightly higher than the neighbouring districts of Thanet and Folkestone & Hythe. Dover house prices are however significantly lower than the average for Kent, at £342,070, and the South East, at £383,324.

Dover area house prices have increased by 38% between 2010 and 2019.

Property prices within Dover district vary considerably, with Sandwich and the north being the most expensive areas, then Deal, and Dover town and the south being the areas where prices are more affordable.

Average earnings have not kept pace with property prices over the last 10 years. The weekly earnings of Dover residents in 2019 were just above the Kent average, at £594.60 per week. Overall, earnings increased across Kent by only 12.7% between 2010 and 2019.

**Average rent in Dover in 2019**  
**£673 per month**

Private rental prices follow a similar pattern within Dover district. The average price of a private rented property in 2018/19 was £673 a month. This compares with £869 for Kent and £980 for the South East.

Dover's Local Housing Allowance rate for a 2-bed home was £498.64 in 2019, significantly below the £658 rent for this property size. This rose to £573.43 in April 2020 when LHA rates were increased.

## The availability of social housing in the Dover district

Total number of social homes let in Dover district

Year	Council Lets	HA Lets
2014/15	237	155
2015/16	280	189
2016/17	264	199
2017/18	217	115
2018/19	221	120
2019/20	170	133

The availability of social housing is a key determinant in projecting homelessness trends, as for many low-income families this is the only housing option available to them. There have been less social homes let to Dover households since 2015. The number of homes let in 2014/15 was 392, but this fell to 303 or a reduction of 23% by 2019/20.

Social housing lets can fluctuate due to various factors, such as:

- the number of new housing association (HA) properties being built
- New build schemes can lead to council tenants transferring to the new homes in greater numbers, therefore boosting the number of council vacancies
- Social housing stock is eroded by Right to Buy sales whilst the number of new builds struggles to bridge the gap.

Every English local authority maintains a waiting list, called a Housing Needs Register, of households wishing to register for housing in their local area. Legal requirements to allow anyone to apply for housing were changed by the Localism Act 2011, which gave councils considerable discretion as to who they would allow onto their registers.

In the Dover area, the council's housing register had 1,559 live applications as of December 2019. This figure has been reducing steadily since 2014, when the number of applications stood at 2,624.

## Statutory Homelessness

Prior to the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018, local councils were required to assess homeless households in relation to 5 key tests, that is:

### Homelessness Tests

- Are they eligible?
- Are they homeless?
- Are they in priority need?
- Are they unintentionally homeless?
- Do they have a local connection?

Councils would only have a 'main housing duty' to secure accommodation for those households who passed these hurdles.

In the year 2013/14 the council accepted 56 homeless households, but by 2017/18 the figure was 173 households. This represents an increase in accepted homeless households of 209% within 4 years.

## Homeless Acceptances in Dover 173 households

There was no direct trend in the number of homeless households accepted across the county. Some authorities, such as Gravesham Borough Council, saw their figures reduce by 50% between 2014 and 2018. However, councils such as Folkestone & Hythe District Council (219% increase), Swale Borough Council (118% increase) and Tonbridge & Malling Borough C (235% increase) also saw dramatic rises in their council homeless acceptance figures during the same 4-year period.

Dover had the highest level of accepted homeless households in Kent in 2017/18, if compared on a local population basis. Dover accepted 3.4 applications per 1,000 households, just above Dartford and Maidstone councils, but significantly higher than Folkestone and Hythe (2.66) and Canterbury (1.05).

The number of homeless households within Dover District Council who have seen their homelessness prevented has risen from 130 cases in 2014/15, to 345 cases in 2019/20. Actions taken by officers to relieve homelessness amounted to 397 cases in 2019/20, where the figures five years before were negligible.

## The use of temporary Accommodation

In April 2019 there were 170 families in temporary housing, compared to just 46 households in April 2014.

### Total Cost of Temporary Accommodation

	Net Cost
2014/15	£208,677
2015/16	£235,034
2016/17	£460,672
2017/18	£965,371
2018/19	£543,406
2019/20	£747,935

The rise in families in temporary accommodation is also reflected in the total cost to the council, as can be seen in the table above. The large reduction in costs in 2018/19 is partly due to housing benefit being brought forward from the previous year.

In Dover, the average length of stay over the last year was between 3 to 4 months for each homeless family.

## Rough Sleeping in the Dover area

Dover District Council and Folkestone & Hythe District Council jointly received £414,000 in 2019 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to tackle rough sleeping in their areas. In early 2020 an extra £469,000 was awarded, securing services for a further 12 months.

This funding has allowed the councils to employ local homeless agencies including Porchlight, Serveco and Sanctuary Supported Living to help people sleeping rough and assist them into accommodation. Other local charities including the Dover Outreach Centre and Emmaus have also made a significant contribution in reducing the overall number of people on the streets.

A further £33,500 funding was awarded late in 2019 to help rough sleepers into emergency accommodation throughout the winter months. This money has allowed the councils to take 35 rough sleepers off the streets of Dover and Folkestone who were unable to gain access to the Winter Shelters.

### Rough Sleeping in Dover

	Number
2015	9
2016	9
2017	13
2018	20
2019	9

## Tenancy strategy

It is a requirement of the Localism Act 2011 that all local authorities have a tenancy strategy in place setting out the expectations of social housing providers operating in the district.

## DDC housing allocation scheme

Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 required the Council to have a published allocation scheme setting out how the authority will allocate social housing. Our scheme uses a banding system to assess priority among applicants on the housing register. The allocations policy ensures that priority is given to those with a reasonable preference and that households who are homeless within the meaning of part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 are given reasonable preference along with others on the register.



## Achievements from Action Plan 2014-2019

In the previous Homelessness Strategy, Dover District Council set out six priorities that they had identified to tackle homelessness within the district. They were:

- Preventing and responding to homelessness before a crisis point is reached
- Preventing and responding to rough sleeping
- Providing high quality housing options advice before a crisis point is reached and appropriate advice, accommodation and support if crisis occurs
- Providing good quality housing that local people can afford and making best use of the housing stock
- Promoting partnership working and sharing best practice
- Delivering excellent homelessness services.

From these six priorities the council identified 23 objectives to achieve the aims of the strategy.



In the intervening five years there has been many successful outcomes resulting from the key actions listed within the strategy. The most important and relevant outcomes are listed below.

### 1. Improving housing options

Introduction of Rent Guarantee Scheme, Local Housing Allowance Top-up Scheme and use of Discretionary Housing Payments to assist homeless families into the private rented sector.

A revised Rent Deposit Bond Scheme introduced in 2015 to make the system more sustainable.

### 2. Reduction in Youth Homelessness

Dover District Council continues to work within the Kent Young Persons Protocol.

10 units of accommodation-based support within the district, helping keep youth homelessness at low levels.

### 3. Mitigate the impact of Welfare Reform

Monthly meetings between Dover Housing Options, East Kent Services (Civica), Department of Work and Pensions and East Kent Housing.

Financial support for team of Benefit and Money Advisors within landlord services.

Triage team within Dover Housing Options to advise on Housing Benefits.

Quarterly meetings between East Kent Councils and Civica.



### 4. Early identification of Potential Homelessness

Pre-Eviction Protocol set up by East Kent Housing, including the use of the Duty to Refer system.

Representation and links to the Dover Anti-Social Behaviour Action Group and the Community Safety Unit.

### 5. Minimise the use of Bed and Breakfast Accommodation

Dover DC has engaged with a number of Privately Managed temporary accommodation providers and now has access to approximately 60 mainly self-contained units for homeless families.

The council no longer place homeless families with children in bed and breakfast accommodation for more than six weeks, adhering to the national legal standard.

## 6. Tackling Rough Sleeping

Working with Folkestone & Hythe District Council and utilising government funding to implement the Rough Sleeping Initiative and the Rapid Rehousing Pathway.

Improved the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) by reducing the number of days of cold weather from three days to one, taking account of severe adverse weather conditions, and using the 'feels like' approach to cold temperatures.

## 7. Providing high-quality Housing Options Advice

Provision of on-line housing advice tools using the Kent Homechoice and Entitled To websites.

Attend Kent Housing Options Group and South East Homelessness Forum.

Housing Options Information Guide produced and given to potentially homeless families.

## 8. Develop Partnership Working Arrangements

Fortnightly case review meetings held with several local agencies to discuss rough sleepers.

Agencies regularly attend housing options meetings and shadow the team.

Have produced joint bids for government funding with other Kent councils including Private Rented Sector Access Scheme, Prison Navigator Scheme, Rough Sleeping Initiative and Rapid Rehousing Pathway.

## 9. Implement Housing Options Review actions

Restructure of Dover Housing Options team and additional funding from the government via Homelessness Reduction Act 2018 New Burdens monies. Three new posts created within the team adding resilience to the service.

# Strategy 2020-24

## Dover District Council is required by the Homelessness Act 2002 to review and publish their Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy every five years.

The strategy should have an action plan which aims to improve the services to homeless persons within the district.

The council already has defined statutory duties to the homeless which are stated in the Housing Act 1996, Part VII as amended by the 2002 Act and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

Dover District Council has involved local partners in the formation of the draft strategy by holding a series of Focus Group meetings to stimulate debate, recognise what works and what could improve, and seek to set meaningful objectives. Members have also been involved at Scrutiny level.

The action plan has been produced to reflect the views of our partners. They have said that we work better if we work together. This also reduces the risk of duplication in services.

We have recognised that we need to reduce the barriers for local people to access housing in the private sector, and to provide more options for people to help them gain housing for their families.

The Focus Groups also identified a need to provide better temporary accommodation for those who the council has a duty to rehouse, and to end the use of unsatisfactory bed and breakfast.

Partners welcomed the increase in resources for rough sleepers but stressed the need for the funding to be maintained. We have also sought in this action plan to ensure that the homeless services available to local people are widely known and easily accessible.

We have sought to identify gaps in current provision, or where services could be improved and enhanced. In conjunction with partners, the council has grouped the objectives of the action plan into five strategic themes. These themes are;

### 1. Tackling Homelessness Together

Partnership working has been identified as the best way to deliver services to homeless people. Working in silos without taking account of the work of other agencies will not produce the best outcomes.

It is by working together that the aims within the action plan will be met.

### 2. Enhanced Accommodation Options

The increase in use of temporary accommodation strongly suggests that councils have been unable to move families onto more permanent arrangements such as a council or housing association tenancy. Local authorities have also been faced with rising costs in temporary provision, as they seek more properties in the private sector to house homeless families.

Reflecting the national picture, the number of homeless households provided with temporary accommodation within Dover has also increased dramatically in recent years.

### 3. Using Resources Effectively

The Council has received substantial grants from central government in the last few years due to the increased focus on preventing and reducing homelessness and rough sleeping.

We can always benefit from more funding so it is important that we use what we have in the most effective ways. By doing so we will improve housing outcomes and help more homeless people.

### 4. Improving Options for Homeless Households

Dover District Council, like many Kent councils, has seen a large increase in the number of families they have accepted as homeless and owe the main housing duty.

Since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018, the emphasis has been on preventing and relieving homelessness, irrespective of whether the homeless person is in priority need. These changes have resulted in more homeless households being assisted by the council.

It is likely that housing homeless families in the private rented sector will continue to increase, as more local authorities make use of the new legislative provisions. In the same way the number of families accepted for the main rehousing duty has fallen by 40% since the 2017 Act was introduced, suggesting less homeless households will be housed in a social rented property in the future.

Families' housing choices are greatly affected by their income levels. With limited access to purchasing their own home, lower income households are disproportionately accommodated in the rented sector, either a private or a social tenancy.

### 5. End Rough Sleeping

A person sleeping in the streets is one of the most visual and distressing forms of homelessness. Dover has not escaped the national increase in rough sleeping, but there are signs that the trend may be improving.

Reasons for the steep rise in rough sleeping are difficult to pinpoint, but many have suggested cuts to local government services has led to less support being made available to vulnerable adults. Other reasons put forward include the introduction of the single room rate for housing benefit for under-35 year olds, and other welfare benefit reductions and sanctions.



# Action Plan 2020-24

## 1. Tackling Homelessness Together

- 1.1 Reinststate regular Homelessness Hub meetings which involve local homelessness agencies.
- 1.2 Action Plan priorities from the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to be monitored by the Homelessness Hub.
- 1.3 Improve websites of council and agencies to ensure they clearly explain local homelessness services.
- 1.4 Support the development of a Hospital Discharge Protocol with Folkestone & Hythe DC and The Peabody Trust.
- 1.5 Support the new Prison Navigator service provided by Canterbury City Council, assisting staff and attending Board meetings.
- 1.6 Work to provide a consistent response to requests for help from homeless people by developing toolkits with partner agencies.
- 1.7 Participate in forums such as the Kent Homeless Officers Group and Kent Homechoice to continue to develop best practice, such as the Young Persons Protocol, and keep up-to-date with homelessness initiatives.
- 1.8 Actively promote services to homeless people in easily accessible areas eg GP surgeries, supermarkets etc.

## 2. Enhanced Accommodation Options

- 2.1 Government guidance is to not use bed and breakfast accommodation for families with children, and 16-17 year olds, for more than six weeks. Our aspiration is never to use this type of accommodation for these groups except in an absolute emergency and then for a maximum of 10 working days.
- 2.2 Reduce the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for all households.
- 2.3 Improve the quality of temporary housing through the provision of council-owned units.
- 2.4 Reduce the use of all forms of temporary accommodation by developing effective prevention measures and move-on options.

## 3. Using Resources Effectively

- 3.1 Regularly review the roles and responsibilities of Dover District Council's Housing Options Team to ensure that staff resources are being used successfully to prevent homelessness, in light of best practice across the sector.
- 3.2 Maintain and manage viable Rent Deposit, Rent in Advance and Discretionary Housing Payment funds to continue to help homeless households secure accommodation in the private rented sector.
- 3.3 Reduce the cost to Dover District Council for temporary accommodation by exploring more cost-effective alternatives. Also ensure that housing benefit claims are processed quickly, where appropriate.

- 3.4 Continue to support and fund homelessness services provided by partner agencies throughout Dover district, and facilitate and assist any grant opportunities that arise.
- 3.5 Fully utilise existing Government grants including the Flexible Homelessness Support Grant, New Burdens Funding and the Homelessness Prevention Grant, which currently contributes to staff resources, temporary accommodation costs and prevention options.
- 3.6 Produce bids for government funding for any new or ad-hoc homelessness initiatives such as the Cold Weather Fund, Housing First or the Private Sector Access Fund.

## 4. Improving Options for Homeless Households

- 4.1 Increase the availability of private rented accommodation to homeless families by exploring rent guarantor schemes, engaging with local landlords and breaking down barriers to rent.
- 4.2 Review the effectiveness of Personalised Housing Plans as required by the Homelessness Reduction Act, and update where necessary to ensure the product is understood by service users, and boosts the prevention and relief of homelessness.
- 4.3 Update and regularly review web services to local homeless people across the sector, to ensure there is clear and easily accessible information that can help prevent homelessness at the earliest possible stage.
- 4.4 Investigate and evaluate innovative ways to increase the provision of housing to homeless families, such as empty homes, home shares, rooms to let and resettlement and relocation schemes.
- 4.5 Work with partners to facilitate shared ownership.

## 5. End Rough Sleeping

- 5.1 Develop a plan with Folkestone & Hythe District Council to provide a Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub for entrenched rough sleepers.
- 5.2 Promote the establishment of a Housing First scheme for rough sleepers in partnership with Folkestone & Hythe District Council.
- 5.3 Continue to support multi-agency rough sleeper case review meetings on a monthly basis.
- 5.4 Work with partners and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to meet the government's target of ending rough sleeping by 2025.
- 5.5 Conduct research to understand the underlying causes of rough sleeping to help inform the 2025 target.
- 5.6 Ensure Dover District Council attracts the maximum amount of grant from the MHCLG through the Rough Sleeping Initiative by developing productive relationships with officials and producing high quality bid documentation.

# Monitoring and Governance

Formal consultation of the strategy will include the publication of the draft strategy on the council's website, and the promotion of this in social media. Stakeholders, service users and local people will all be encouraged to have their say on the direction of homelessness services within the district, prior to development of the final strategy document before approval being sought by the Council itself.

Monitoring, evaluation and review of the Action Plan will be a function of the Homelessness Hub; a Dover-wide group organised by the council, and includes partners, stakeholders and local agencies within its membership.

The Action Plan will be a standing item at Homelessness Hub meetings. Progress on individual actions will be discussed on a quarterly basis. Where necessary, actions will be updated or amended.

The progress of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan will be regularly reported to Members of the Council, and the wider community.