

## Introduction

Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council continue to recognise the value of 'housing related support' services in helping people to address their support needs earlier, and therefore diverting them away from needing higher level care and support services.

In helping those in need of support to develop and sustain their capacity to live independently in their accommodation, housing related support services can provide stability and ensure that people have the skills and support to secure and manage appropriate accommodation, allowing them to address other presenting needs more effectively.

This strategy sets out Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council's approach to the future commissioning of Housing Related Support (HRS) Services across both council areas.

## Vision

The vision for housing related support services in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is; *'To provide accessible, good quality and cost effective housing-related support that promotes independence, social inclusion, complements other services and reduces or prevents the need for access to crisis and high cost statutory services.'*

## What is Housing Related Support?

A wide range of people may need 'housing related support' to prevent a loss of tenancy, to develop skills to move into and manage their own home, to increase their capacity for independent living or to prevent them moving to residential or institutional care. Housing related support services can offer long or short term support options, with the support activities tailored to a person's specific needs.

'Housing related support' activities may include:

- Assistance with housing and welfare benefits
- Tenancy management and sustainment
- Managing finances and accessing debt advice
- Advice, advocacy and liaison with other agencies
- Peer support and befriending
- Monitoring health and well-being
- Developing social and life skills
- Emotional support and mental wellbeing
- Resettlement when setting up and managing a new tenancy
- Assistance to access education, training and employment

While housing related support is different from social care, or housing management<sup>1</sup> and advice<sup>2</sup>, it is able to effectively complement existing Health, Housing and Social Care provision through enabling a person to maintain stable accommodation so that they can effectively engage with other services, and ensuring they have effective support networks in place to continue to meet ongoing needs.

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<sup>1</sup> Tasks carried out by landlord in relation to things such as rent payments, tenancy paperwork, neighbour disputes etc

<sup>2</sup> Statutory function of Housing Authorities – advice is provided to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and assistance provided where eligible.

Housing related support services can be used to support a wide range of people within the community who have support needs, including older people, adults, young people and families who are homeless, teenage parents, those fleeing domestic abuse and those who may also have social care needs such as people with learning or physical disabilities, mental health problems, or sensory impairments.

In 2010, Central Government removed the 'ring fence' for the 'Supporting People Grant', which was being used to deliver non-statutory Housing Related Support services. This funding then became part of the core funding for local authorities. Since this change there has been a steady decline in the amount being spent on housing related support services, particularly for groups such as single homeless people. In some cases, authorities have ceased to fund any HRS services in their area, using the funding to deliver savings or putting the funding towards the delivery of statutory services.

In Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, HRS budgets have been retained, but like most other Council budgets, the level of funding has reduced in response to the need to realise savings and make efficiencies.

### **Current position**

A review of all Housing Related Support services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough was undertaken in 2018. This review provided a good understanding of what services deliver and client needs and has helped in achieving the following;

- Identification of current gaps in provision
- Development of a Housing Related Support Commissioning Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
- Established a Housing Related Support provider forum
- Identification of some opportunities for savings to Cambridgeshire services
- Delivery of £454k of savings for Cambridgeshire County Council
- Identification of opportunities for re-designing services for homeless adults and young people
- Identification of opportunities for joint working or joint service delivery with partners
- Wider research undertaken to look at 'Homelessness Transformation' across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has been carried out by Arc4
- A successful bid to the Government's Rough Sleeper Initiative Fund for funding to develop a countywide Housing First offer with district housing partners
- Starting to develop 'Cost Benefit Analysis' tool for housing related support services in partnership with CHS group
- Established a multi-agency Redesign Working Group in Cambridge to facilitate redesign of homeless services for young people in Cambridge City
- Established a member reference group to facilitate engagement with members on the proposed delivery models.

The Covid 19 pandemic has significantly impacted on progress in relation to service redesign work, and as we move out of Covid 19 we will ensure that we;

- Offer meaningful opportunities for engagement with partners, providers and clients to enable us to collaboratively develop new models of service delivery
- Allow sufficient time for feedback to be provided on the HRS Commissioning Strategy and the arc4 Research Report
- Undertake an effective and robust procurement exercise

- Allow providers to be able to focus adequate time and resources on Covid Recovery
- Re-instate the Member Reference Group

## Strategic Context

### National Strategic Context

The importance of housing-related supported was recognised some time ago by Central Government, who stated that;

*“For people experiencing or at risk of social exclusion, housing-related support plays an essential part in preventing or dealing with a crisis situation and restoring independence in a sustainable way.”<sup>3</sup>*

Housing related support is rooted within the government’s promotion of prevention, social inclusion and choice, and has the potential to support both the Transforming Adult Social Care agenda and ‘Think Communities’ approach.

**Estimating Housing Need** (CLG, 2010), a piece of research commissioned by the Department for Communities and Local Government, also highlights the need to consider how housing related support services may impact on housing need when undertaking Housing Needs Assessments.

The **Care Act 2014** requires local authorities to ensure provision of preventative services and also introduces the Wellbeing Principle: *“The general duty of a local authority, in the case of an individual, is to promote that individuals wellbeing”*.

The Act also sets out a number of key duties for local authorities including the provision of information and advice services to all people in the local authority area and to co-operate with other organisations and internal departments which have a function relevant to care and support (e.g. housing and public health).

The **Welfare Reform** changes that have been implemented over recent years have had a significant impact on homeless and other individuals with support needs. The introduction of the ‘shared room’ local housing allowance rate for those under 35yrs old has made it increasingly difficult for single people and couples in this age bracket to obtain affordable accommodation. ‘Benefit sanctions’ have also led to some of the most vulnerable benefits recipients losing significant levels of income and becoming at risk of homelessness again. ‘Universal credit’ has left some families struggling to manage their incomes and expenditure, resulting in greater numbers seeking advice as they are faced with potential homelessness. As further changes are implemented (e.g. extending universal credit to supported housing residents) it is anticipated that these will present new challenges for delivering and managing supporting housing services.

The **Homelessness Reduction Act 2017** introduced a greater focus on homelessness prevention and placed a new duty on public sector agencies, such as Health and Social Care Teams, to refer individuals or families who may be at risk of homelessness to local housing authorities. In Cambridgeshire and Peterborough this early intervention work is supported by the Homelessness Trailblazer. The Trailblazer project has encouraged agencies to work together collaboratively to address early signs of difficulty and prevent

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<sup>3</sup> *Creating Sustainable Communities: Supporting Independence: consultation on a Strategy for Supporting People*, ODPM, 2005

homelessness wherever possible, in order to improve outcomes for clients and reduce public sector expenditure.

The **Children and Social Care Act 2017** is intended to improve support for looked after children and care leavers and promote the safeguarding and welfare of children. The Act introduces Corporate Parenting Principles which requires the local authority to 'have regard to the need' to take certain actions in their work for children in care and care leavers, including preparing them "for adulthood and independent living". The Act also introduced the requirement to publish a 'Local Offer' for care leavers, informing them about statutory services provided and anything else that may assist them in preparing for adulthood and independent living, including information around accommodation options.

The new **Domestic Abuse Bill** is currently going through parliament and is expected to become law from March 2021. This will place a statutory duty on Tier 1 Local authorities to provide safe accommodation and support (including some housing related support) for victims of domestic abuse.

### **Local Strategic Context**

Housing Related Support services provide support to over 2,000 people across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, including people who are homeless, older people, people with mental health problems, young people, ex-offenders and people who have substance misuse issues. This means that Housing Related Support services are able to contribute to a wide range of local strategic priorities and objectives relating to homelessness, offending, health, social care, prevention and wellbeing.

**Homelessness System Transformation** work is being undertaken jointly with the Cambridgeshire district councils and Peterborough to explore the potential for innovative future delivery, including opportunities for shared services and joint commissioning. This will also consider how we embed the early homelessness prevention work of the **Trailblazer** service, which works with partners, agencies and individuals across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The County Council and partners are developing a '**Think Communities**' approach to delivering public services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. This will fundamentally change the relationship between the Public Sector and Communities and transform the way the public sector delivers services. It will require a 'change in the system' so that partners work together with each other and communities – listening, engaging and aligning services with the strengths and needs of each local community.

**Rough Sleeping** is a particular challenge for Cambridge, Fenland and Peterborough, although for Fenland this is a more recent issue, like Peterborough, their rough sleepers include a significant number of nationals from Eastern European countries. East Cambs, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire have also identified rough sleepers in their areas, but numbers remain very low.

Local priorities around homelessness are captured in the **Homelessness Strategies and Action Plans** for each of the districts in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Whilst the focus differs across areas to match local needs, 'prevention' of homelessness is a common theme across all of them. There is also a focus on addressing rough sleeping for Cambridge City, Fenland and Peterborough.

Cambridgeshire County Council have also made a clear commitment to address homelessness and wider housing issues that affect its staff and communities. This includes a specific priority around homelessness which was endorsed by the Communities and Partnership Committee in January 2020;

Supporting victims and educating re-offending are key aims set out in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough **Police and Crime Plan (2017-2021)**. The plan seeks to ensure that “victims have access clear pathways of support” and that “all agencies coming in to contact with offenders are ensuring they address the causes of criminality”.

A recent inspection by HM Inspectorate of Probation - **Accommodation and support for adult offenders in the community and on release from prison in England** (July 2020) - highlights the links between homelessness and offending and the importance of having access to stable accommodation for those leaving prison. It also identifies that significant numbers of offenders and young offenders have drug, alcohol and mental health issues.

The draft framework (2017) **Working together for Mental Health in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough** focuses on;

- Prevention; promoting mental health and preventing mental illness
- Community-based care: developing an integrated approach to community-based person-centred care, focused on intervening early.
- Specialist care: timely acute, crisis and inpatient care when it’s needed. Paying particular attention to admission and discharge processes,

The **draft Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2019 – 2024)** has 3 priorities that which housing related support service can contribute towards;

- Places that support health and wellbeing
- Helping children achieve the best start in life
- Staying healthy throughout life

The **Cambridgeshire Older People’s Strategy** includes a focus on ‘helping people to help themselves’ and ‘preventing crisis and helping people to recover from crisis.

Cambridgeshire County Council is also undertaking an internal programme of work, **Adults Positive Challenge**, which is focused on managing demand, improving outcomes for people and enabling more people to be supported in and by their communities.

The **Cambridgeshire Single Equality Strategy (2018 - 2022)** includes a specific objective to “Promote equality and inclusion through fair and accessible services.”

## Current Services

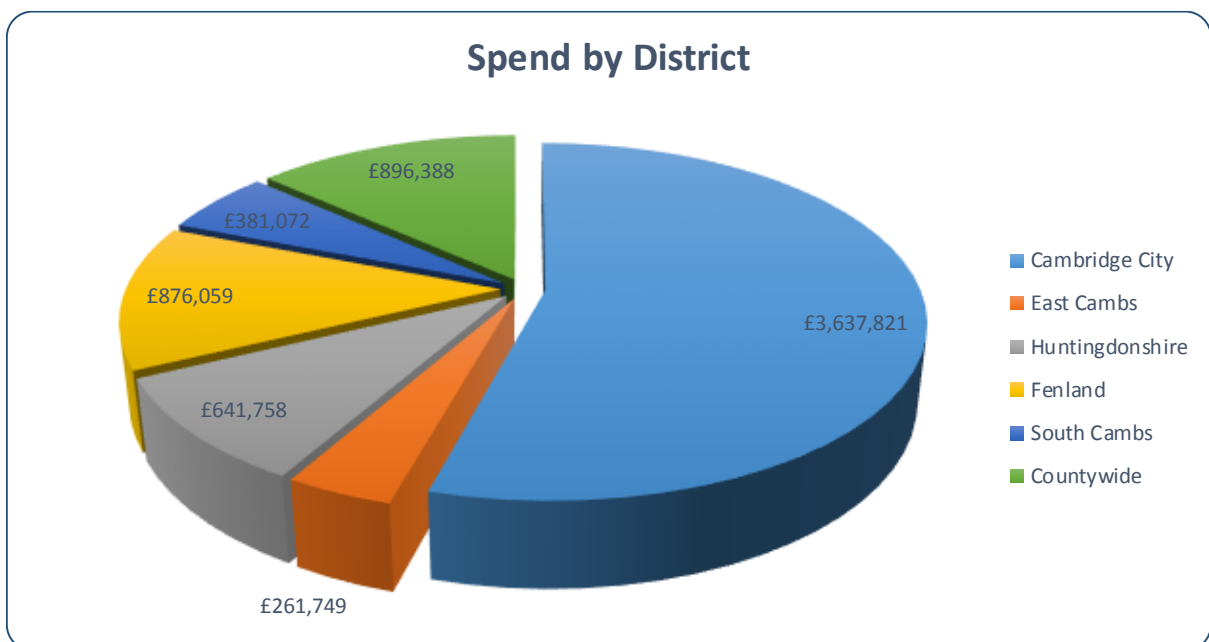
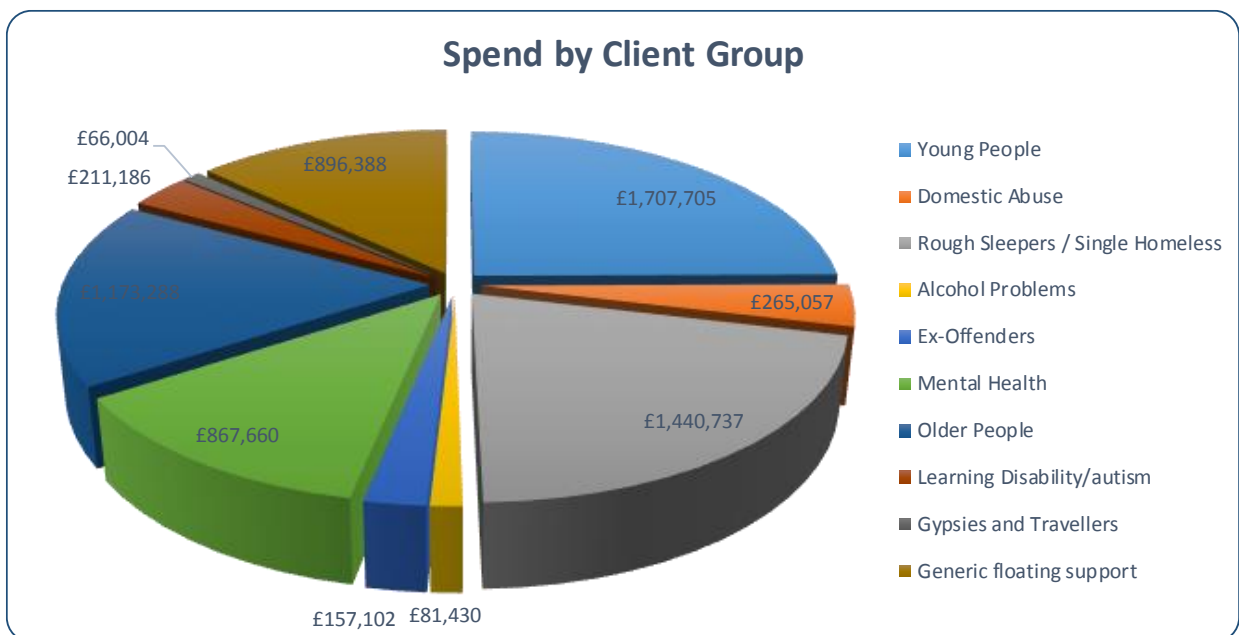
### Cambridgeshire:

Service	Provider	Units	District	Client Group
Cambridge Youth Foyer	Riverside Group	32	City	Young People
Queen Anne House	YMCA Trinity	78	City	Young People
Whitworth House	Orwell Housing Assoc	13	City	Young People
Wisbech Foyer	Axiom (Longhurst Group)	19	FDC	Young People
Paines Mill Foyer	Axiom (Longhurst Group)	25	HDC	Young People
Kings Ripton Court	Salvation Army	36	HDC	Young People
Castle Project	Richmond Fellowship	14	City	Young People
Peter Maitland Court (young parents)	CHS Group	8	City	Young People
Railway House	CHS Group	12	City	Young People
Ely Young People's Project	CHS Group	15	EDC	Young People
The Staithe	CHS Group	21	FDC	Young People
Cambridge Refuge	Cambridge Women's Aid	11	City	Domestic Abuse
Hunts refuge	Refuge	9	HDC	Domestic Abuse
Fenland refuge	Refuge	11	FDC	Domestic Abuse
Extra Care	Multiple suppliers	variable	All Cambs	Older People
HRS OP South Cambs	SCDC	variable	SDC	Older People
HRS OP Fenland, Hunts & East	Age UK	variable	FDC / HDC / EDC	Older People
HRSOP	Cambridge City	variable	City	Older People
An Lac House	Abbeyfield Cambridge Vietnamese Society	10	City	Older People
Controlled Drinkers Project	Jimmy's	6	City	Alcohol Problems
Jimmy's Assessment Centre	Jimmy's	20	City	Rough Sleepers / Single Homeless
Abbey Street Move-On	Jimmy's	4	City	Single Homeless
222 Victoria Road	Riverside Group	54	City	Single Homeless
Willow Walk	The Riverside Group	20	City	Rough sleepers / Complex Needs
Housing Related Support Service	Cambridge Cyrenians	73	City	Single Homeless
Princes Walk	Futures HA	9	FDC	Single Homeless
The Ferry Project	Luminus	45	FDC	Single Homeless
Corona House	CHS Group	6	City	Single Homeless
Cambridge Cluster, Vicarage Terrace & Fern Court	Sanctuary Housing	147	City	Mental Health



Green Road	Suffolk Mind	14	SDC	Mental Health
Offender Accommodation	Luminus Group	12	HDC and FDC	Ex- Offenders
Jubilee Project	Cambridge Cyrenians	10	City	Ex- Offenders
Russell Street	CHS Group	21	City	Learning Disability / Physical Disability
Fenland Traveller Sites	FDC	64	FDC	Gypsies & Travellers
Hunts Traveller Site	Luminus	20	HDC	Gypsies & Travellers
Countywide Floating Support *	P3 (People, Potential Possibilities)	variable	All Cambs	Generic & specialist

The current funding for the delivery of these services is £6.9m. The diagrams below provide a breakdown of spend by client group and by district.



## Peterborough:

Service	Provider	Units	District	Client group
Fair View Court	Longhurst Group	30	PCC	Rough sleepers / Complex Needs
New Haven	Longhurst Group	19	PCC	Single Homeless
Peterborough Foyer	Longhurst Group	54	PCC	Young People at Risk
Temporary Hostel provision	Cross Keys Homes	75	PCC	Homeless Families
Mayor's Walk	Futures HA	26	PCC	Single Homeless
Eastlands	Home Group	14	PCC	People with Mental Health Problems
Time Stop	YMCA Trinity Group	22	PCC	Young People at Risk
The Cresset	YMCA Trinity Group	89	PCC	Single Homeless
Women's Refuge	Peterborough Women's Aid		PCC	Domestic Abuse
Cambridge & Peterborough Floating Support *	P3	variable	PCC	Ex-offenders, substance misuse, mental health and chronically excluded

\* These are elements of a single service jointly commissioned by CCC & PCC

The current funding for the delivery of these services is £1.1m.

## Population Information

### Population and ethnicity:

Both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have seen significant population growth in recent years, and this is predicted to continue, with the greatest level of growth being in the over 75 age group.

In Cambridgeshire overall, natural change (e.g. births and deaths) accounts for more population growth than migration (61.2% compared to 48.4% respectively), whereas in Peterborough, migration accounts for slightly more population growth (47.2%) than natural change (42.5%).

Whilst the largest ethnic group across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is White British, both Cambridge City and Peterborough have much greater levels of ethnic diversity than the other areas.

Local Authority	% White British population
Cambridge City	66
East Cambridgeshire	90
Fenland	90
Huntingdonshire	90
South Cambridgeshire	88
Peterborough	71

Further information regarding population and demography can be found [here](#).



## Deprivation:

Cambridgeshire overall has relatively less deprivation than England, but Peterborough has relatively more deprivation than England.

Across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough there are 62 Local Super Output Areas (LSOA's) which fall in to the 20% most relatively deprived nationally;

- Three in Cambridge City
- Two in Huntingdonshire (in Huntingdon predominantly)
- Eleven in Fenland - four of which are in the 10% most relatively deprived nationally (in Wisbech predominantly)
- Forty Six in Peterborough - sixteen of which are in the 10% most deprived nationally

## Homelessness and Rough Sleeping:

In terms of homeless presentations, data shows that all local authorities have seen an increase in demand following the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act.

The main causes of homelessness across local authorities (LA's) are ending of private rented tenancy and family/friends evicting.

The table below shows the percentage of clients assessed as being owed prevention<sup>4</sup> and relief<sup>5</sup> duties.

Local Authority	% owed Prevention Duty	% owed Relief Duty
Cambridge City	48%	52%
East Cambs	78%	21%
Fenland	59%	41%
Huntingdonshire	61%	39%
Peterborough	40%	60%
South Cambs	68%	32%

(April 2018 to March 2019)

All of the LA's have seen an increase in the number of single people approaching the service, which mirrors the national picture.

Single households are significantly over-represented at relief stage and are more likely to approach the service once they are already homeless. This is particularly acute in Cambridge City, where over 70% of those owed a prevention or relief duty are single people, as illustrated by the table and chart below.

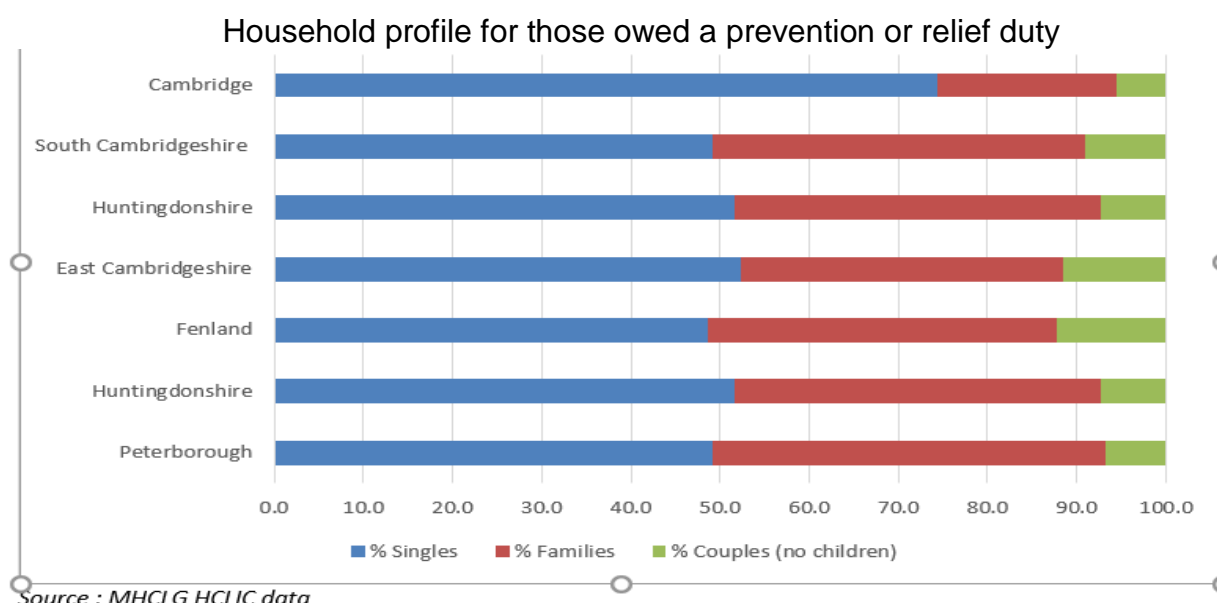
Local Authority	% single households owed a duty	% single households owed a relief duty
Cambridge City	74%	81%
East Cambs	52%	69%
Fenland	48%	67%
Huntingdonshire	52%	67%

<sup>4</sup> If someone is owed a 'Prevention Duty', their Local Housing Authority will try and help them find a solution to prevent their homelessness – if it can't be prevented then they may be owed a 'Relief Duty'.

<sup>5</sup> If someone is owed a relief duty then their Local Housing Authority will provide assistance to secure suitable accommodation to resolve their homelessness.

Peterborough	49%	55%
South Cambs	49%	58%

(April 2018 to March 2019)



Services may also find it harder to prevent homelessness for single people due to availability of accommodation and affordability thresholds.

Local Authorities are seeing an increase in the complexity of need that homeless clients are presenting with, most notably very poor mental health, care needs and dual diagnosis (substance misuse and mental health). In all geographical areas, mental health is identified as the most prevalent support need.

Rough sleeping is a particular challenge for Cambridge, Fenland and Peterborough. Whilst numbers are similar across the 3 areas, the profile of rough sleepers is distinctly different, with a significant number of nationals from Eastern European countries identified within Peterborough and Fenland.

Local Authority	No. rough sleepers	
	2017	2018
Cambridge	26	27
Fenland	9	23
Peterborough	31	29

Source: MHCLG, *Rough Sleeping Statistics (England)*, 2018

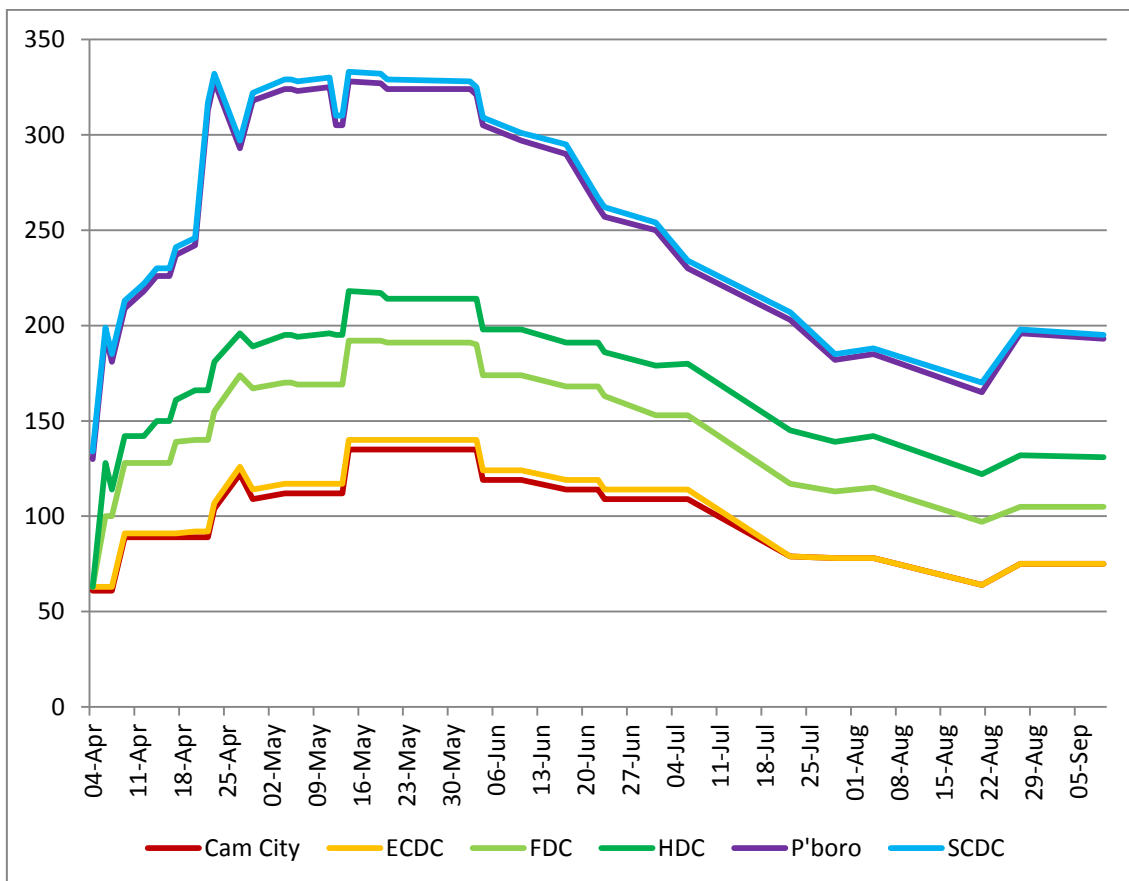
There is a view that rough sleepers from other parts of Cambridgeshire migrate to services in the City, but whilst there is evidence of some migration, numbers are very small.

In 2020 the number of people identified as rough sleeping increased dramatically as a result of the Covid 19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. The government's directive to accommodate all rough sleepers, and those at risk of rough sleeping, resulted in large numbers being accommodated across the area. Figures recorded for 14 May 2020, identified that 333 people were being accommodated in response to Covid 19, with the majority of these in Cambridge, Peterborough and Fenland, at the peak.

Local Authority	Number accommodated 14 May 2020
Cambridge City	135
East Cambridgeshire	5
Fenland	52
Huntingdonshire	26
South Cambridgeshire	5
Peterborough	110
<b>Total</b>	<b>333</b>

The majority of those accommodated, were identified as having a range of support and health needs, with a significant number presenting with complex needs, including dual diagnosis, and around 50% having substance misuse needs.

The graph below shown the cumulative use of emergency covid accommodation. As of 9th September 2020, 195 people were still being accommodated across the region.



### Mental Health:

Prevalence data for mental health estimates that there are significant numbers of people with common mental health disorders in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and these will rise as the population increases;

- 88,000 adults in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough aged 18-64 years have a common mental health disorder – by 2021 this figure will be 95,200, and by 2026 it will be 97,500
- 7% (50,417) of adults in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough were recorded by GP's as having depression in 2014/15

- 775 self-harm hospital admissions in people aged 10-24 years in 2014/15 (this rate is significantly higher than the England average)
- 7,048 patients registered in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have a serious mental illness

### Key links with Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA Core dataset 2018/19)

The rate of under 18 conception in Cambridgeshire as a whole is significantly lower than the England average, except in Fenland where it is comparable to the national average. In contrast, for Peterborough, the rate of under 18 conception is significantly higher than the England average.

Birth rates to mothers aged under 18 are statistically similar in Cambridgeshire compared with the national average, but again in Peterborough they are significantly higher than the national average.

Within Cambridgeshire, Cambridge and Fenland have significantly worse child poverty rates than the Cambridgeshire average, while Peterborough's percentage of children aged under 16 living in poverty is significantly higher than England, but with a decreasing recent trend.

Within Cambridgeshire, 72.4% of 15 year olds are recorded as 'ever had an alcoholic drink', which is significantly higher than the England average, whereas in Peterborough the figures is 54.3% which is significantly better the England average.

Level of 'regular drinkers' for Cambridgeshire are similar to levels nationally, although Cambridge and Fenland have significantly higher rates of alcohol-related hospital admission episodes than England.

Level of 'regular drinkers' for Peterborough are significantly better than levels nationally, and rates of alcohol-related hospital admission episodes are similar to England, however Alcohol-specific mortality in Peterborough is significantly higher than the national rate.

In Cambridgeshire an estimated **33,500 people** were recorded as having **used drugs** at least once in the last year, with around 7,800 using them more than once a month. As of April 2020 there are 2369 adults in Cambridgeshire in structured treatment for substance misuse and 151 young people aged 12-18 in treatment.

In Peterborough an estimated **10,400 people** were recorded as having **used drugs** at least once in the last year, with around 2,400 using them more than once a month. As of April 2020 there are 1485 adults in Peterborough in structured treatment for substance misuse and 159 young people aged 12-18 in treatment.

Between 2016 and 2018 a total of 96 people were recorded as dying from drug misuse across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (*source: ONS figures*).

Self-harm appears to be a particular issue across all of the Cambridgeshire districts and Peterborough with sustained high rates of emergency hospital admissions.

The rates for self-harm are also higher in females than males.

Significant numbers of children and young people experience mental health problems. One in eight (12.8%) 5 to 19 year olds had at least one mental disorder when assessed (equivalent to approx. 14,480 children and young people in Cambridgeshire and 4,860 in Peterborough). Emotional disorders were the most prevalent of these disorders.

In 2017/18 there were 4,453 children's social care referrals from Cambridgeshire and 2,618 from Peterborough. The table below shows numbers being supported on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018;

	Cambridge City	East Cambs	Fenland	Huntingdonshire	South Cambs	Peterborough
No. Childrens Social Care referrals	810	471	942	1107	745	2618
No. Children in Need being supported	592	333	675	754	522	1651
No. open Child Protection plans	93	59	117	88	61	228
No. Looked After Children	139	60	163	165	98	370

## Recent Review and Research

A review of all Housing Related Support services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough was undertaken in 2018.

Wider research to look at Homelessness Transformation across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough was undertaken by Arc4 in 2019/2020. This research was carried out in partnership with the District Housing Authorities across the area.

The key findings of the review and relevant findings from the wider Homelessness Transformation work are summarised below;

- The majority of Housing Related Support services being commissioned were being well utilised, were strategically relevant and were contributing positively towards the priorities of the County Council, Peterborough City Council and other statutory partners.
- The contribution that housing related support services made to the prevention agenda was clearly recognised
- Whilst current services were valued, it was acknowledged that changes were needed to ensure services are providing the right support for clients, including those with multiple complex needs.
- A variety of service delivery models are needed, including both accommodation based services and floating / visiting support.
- Services are supporting an increasing number of clients with higher or more complex needs and the most commonly identified need was around mental health
- There are gaps in the provision of support for those with poor mental health and/or dual diagnosis - many clients struggle to access these provisions and therefore supporting them effectively can become an even greater challenge.
- The increasing need profile of clients is impacting on clients length of stay, with significant numbers remaining in short term services beyond the expected 2 year maximum stay.
- Access to wrap around and welfare services such as mental health support, substance misuse services, education, training, and counselling are essential

elements of the support pathway, along with effective resettlement preparation to enable them to retain a tenancy going forward.

- The majority of those moving on from services will likely need some ongoing support at the point of move on, and a small number will need longer term, rather than transitional, support.
- Access to timely, appropriate and affordable move-on accommodation is a big challenge, and compounded by a lack of access to affordable private rented accommodation (particularly in Cambridge), and competing market pressures.
- Delays in moving people on mean that those in need of are not always able to access the support they require when needed, and this can result in needs escalating.
- Customer expectation and aspiration can be a barrier to prevention and relief work.
- Data suggested there are a significant number of clients moving between different supported housing/hostel services, rather than moving on to independent living.
- A number of clients do return to homeless services as a result of losing the accommodation they move on to - the reasons for this vary, but anecdotal evidence suggests that one of the reasons is clients transitioning from high to very low, or no support, when they move-on from supported housing/hostel services.
- Accommodation pathways need to be flexible, particularly in Cambridge City, to ensure that they respond to individual client's support needs
- Consideration should be given to undertaking a more detailed 'Supported Housing Needs Assessment' to include modelling that identifies future need based on client group and area - this would need to be an in depth piece of work.
- Rural issues in some parts of the County can reduce the available housing options.
- One year grant funding of Peterborough HRS services presents challenges to providers around staffing and long term service planning and is a barrier to longer term investment in services
- There is a need to encourage clients to seek assistance from Housing Options/Advice Services at an earlier point to ensure opportunities for prevention and early intervention can be maximised.

### Identified gaps:

- Access to move-on accommodation
- 'Step down' support / transition support
- Long term visiting support<sup>6</sup> / support placements
- Supported accommodation and community support for those with complex and/or enduring needs, including those with substance misuse issues
- Additional floating support<sup>7</sup> capacity (in some areas)
- Access to mental health support
- Need for services that can actually prevent people from sleeping rough in the first place, including an emergency offer of accommodation for anyone sleeping rough to ensure there is always access to a bed

### Other Emerging Needs and Challenges:

The list below identifies other factors that will, or could, impact on Housing Related Support services, and therefore need to be considered within this strategy;

- The Covid 19 Pandemic has impacted dramatically on services and resulted in large scale changes to the way support has been delivered to clients, and presents

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<sup>6</sup> Open ended (no time limit) support that is delivered to the person in their own home

<sup>7</sup> Short term/ time limited support delivered to the person in their own home

a unique opportunity to consider how some of the positives from these changes can be used to influence future delivery models and commissioning decisions

- Rough sleepers being identified in rural areas – low numbers at present, but increasing
- ‘County Lines’ continues to pose a significant risk to young people across parts of Cambridgeshire
- A number of the current services for rough sleepers and other homeless individuals are being provided by time limited funding from Central Government which is due to end in April 2021
- Significant numbers of people in some areas are ineligible for services due to their immigration status - whilst this status may not be a barrier to accessing HRS funded support, it can severely limit the interventions and support that can be offered as a result of being unable to claim benefits or not meeting eligibility criteria
- Effectiveness of the current Protocol for 16/17 year olds
- ‘Duty to Refer’ (Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) is not currently working well.
- An increase in TB cases (particularly in Cambridge City and Peterborough) – public health analysis identifies homelessness as being an increased risk factor both in contraction and potential spread of this disease
- The Government have indicated that they will be reviewing funding for supported housing/housing related support, however as yet there is no timescale for this

## Commissioning

### Commissioning Principles:

The housing related support services we commission should be focussed on ensuring that those using them have access to the information, tools and opportunities they need to enable them to live as independently as possible and enjoy a good quality of life.

To enable us to realise this aim the services we commission need to be;

- client led and allow individuals to have choice and control over the support they receive
- focussed on an individual’s strengths and the goals that are important to them
- providing people with the tools and confidence they need to live independently and manage in their own accommodation
- helping people to avoid access to crisis or higher need statutory services for as long as possible
- innovative and responsive to changing needs and demands
- delivered in partnership with providers to ensure that the best outcomes can be achieved for people in our communities
- inclusive and meet the needs of our diverse population
- contributing positively to the priorities of Cambridgeshire County Council, Peterborough City Council and their partners
- providing value for money and delivering added social value
- sustainable and financially viable to deliver

These commissioning principles will underpin Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council’s approach to the future commissioning of Housing Related Support Services across both council areas.



### **Commissioning Approach:**

Our approach to commissioning will be;

#### Transparent:

- The HRS Strategy forms a basis for future commissioning decisions.
- Proposals and decisions are evidence based, set out clearly and are developed in collaboration with partners and providers.
- Commissioning and decision making processes are openly shared and followed consistently.

#### Collaborative:

- Partners, providers and clients will be involved in service planning, service design and procurement
- Wherever possible, services and solutions will be 'co-produced'
- Regular input/attendance at partnerships and key meetings/groups will ensure good lines of communication are maintained
- Joint commissioning and joint working to support delivery of shared priorities and mutually beneficial services

#### Outcomes focussed:

- Services will be commissioned to deliver shared outcomes
- Service effectiveness will be demonstrated by outcomes achieved
- Outcomes will be proportionate, meaningful and achievable

#### Innovative:

- Service design and procurement will take account of local and national best practice
- Openness to exploring new ideas, new models and new ways of working
- Encouraging services to transform and adapt in order to continue to deliver the best outcomes and meet people's changing needs

#### Strategically aligned:

- Commissioned services contribute to relevant local strategies, priorities and approaches e.g. 'Think Communities'.
- Commissioned services support delivery of recognised good practice models.

### **Commissioning Priorities – 2020 to 2022:**

Since the conclusion of Supporting People in 2010 there has already been some remodelling of housing related support services;

- Support for older people in Cambs moved away from just delivering support to specific sheltered housing tenants, to delivering visiting support through district wide services, enabling any older to access the support, wherever they live.
- Mental Health Supported Living and support services are transforming to ensure that they are delivering support and accommodation that meets current needs.
- The Countywide Floating Support service was re-tendered in 2018 enabling a new approach focussed on providing short, targeted, time limited support to people who are at risk of losing their home or need help to set up a new home, as well as 'drop-in' sessions to enable people to access ad hoc support for 'one off' issues.
- Domestic Abuse services have been recommissioned and continue to provide a safe environment and deliver essential support to those who are experiencing domestic abuse.

Our focus over the next few years will be on ensuring that services we commission for homeless adults, rough sleepers, offenders and young people at risk of homelessness are able to evolve to ensure they continue to effectively meet the needs of current and future customers.

Our aim is to move away from a predominantly hostel focussed approach and to commission a mix of provision that is better able to meet a range of support needs, is reflective of other established models of good practice and will enable us to meet some of the gaps in provision that have been identified.

Successfully delivering new service models across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will mean;

- Working with providers, customers and partners on redesigning services to enable them to meet some of the gaps identified by the HRS Review and arc4 Research
- Being able to explore new, innovative and good practice service delivery models
- Ensuring services are as accessible as possible and that pathways work for customers and professionals
- Ensuring that new services are designed flexibly to enable them to respond to changing needs and demands
- Allowing opportunities for services to evolve during the contract period in order to maximise service potential and opportunities for development and innovation
- Ensuring that commissioned services operate in harmony with other local services to avoid duplication and maximise support opportunities for customers
- Ensuring there is a partnership approach to implementing changes that takes account of wider plans, policies and priorities
- Developing a monitoring framework which is meaningful and where success is measured on the basis of what has been achieved for customers and the positive impacts of the service
- Moving away from annual grant funding of HRS services in Peterborough and adopting a contracts based approach
- Adopting more innovative approaches to commissioning

We have already begun to work with our partners to expand the Housing First pilot developed by Cambridge City. Work is now underway to introduce this model across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough using short term funding secured through the Government's Rough Sleeping initiative Fund.

Housing First aims to support those with the most complex needs who are rough sleeping or have a history of repeat homelessness. Housing First provides individuals with access to stable accommodation so that they can then be offered intensive support to begin to address their other needs and issues in a way that is manageable for them.

There is also still a need to continue to invest in more traditional service models, such as hostels, to ensure that there are a range of services available to support those who are homeless and in need of support. Whilst HRS funding may contribute to the longer term delivery of Housing First, other sources of funding would also need to be identified to sustain the current model being developed.

Work has also started on looking at an alternative service model for young people who are experiencing homelessness. This work has been based around the St. Basil's Pathway, an established good practice model, which aims to provide a clear framework to better

prevent young people aged 16 – 25 from becoming homeless. It also sets out the sort of services and support needed to help young people who do become homeless to build a more positive future.

## Implementation of this strategy

This strategy will be delivered by the Adults Commissioning Team with oversight from the following;

- Cambridgeshire County Council Adults Committee
- Cambridgeshire County Council Children and Young Peoples Committee
- Peterborough City Council – Cabinet Member Decision
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Housing Board

An agreed Delivery Plan will be developed and regularly monitored and reviewed.

Where there is an identified need to remodel, redesign or develop services, this will be undertaken collaboratively with district housing partners, providers, clients and other key stakeholders. This will include exploring opportunities for joint delivery or commissioning of services.

Given the level of change we are seeking to deliver through this strategy, there are a number of risks and challenges which also need to be acknowledged, and mitigated. These are highlighted in the table below;

<b>Risk/Challenge</b>	<b>Mitigations</b>
<p><b>Communication:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing public expectations and responding clearly and consistently to public concerns around the changes</li> <li>• Ensuring local members are fully involved in the process for delivering change</li> <li>• Ensuring partners are fully involved in the process for delivering change</li> <li>• Ensuring partners are fully involved in the process for delivering change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public statements and briefings developed proactively and timely responses made to all public enquiries</li> <li>• Member Reference Group established, timely member briefings</li> <li>• Links with key groups such as Housing Board</li> <li>• Range of engagement opportunities for partners and stakeholders</li> </ul>
<p><b>Funding:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced HRS budget</li> <li>• Need to make existing funding go further</li> <li>• Limited alternative funding sources available</li> <li>• Long term funding of ‘Housing First’ across all areas</li> <li>• Short term nature of some supporting funding streams e.g. Rough Sleeper funding</li> <li>• Still awaiting further information from Central Government on changes to the funding for supported housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of new delivery models to enable service to be delivered differently</li> <li>• Work with partners to identify alternative funding sources to address gaps</li> <li>• Continue to monitor for Central Government updates</li> <li>• Identify potential implications of Central Government changes as early as possible</li> </ul>
<p><b>Remodelling &amp; Redesign:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New models will be also need to generate the required savings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investing adequate time in service re-design</li> <li>• New service delivery models that generate a wider range of provision</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New models need to be flexible so they can engage with a range of clients and provide appropriate levels of support</li> <li>• Long term funding of 'Housing First'</li> <li>• Ensuring that new models are robust and financially viable</li> <li>• Ensuring that services can evolve to continue to meet the needs of clients and take account of local and national changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robust procurement process</li> <li>• Robust evaluation of initial 'Housing First' delivery to demonstrate value</li> <li>• Flexibility within contracts to enable fine tuning of services during contract period</li> </ul>
<p><b>Procurement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing providers exiting the market with their expertise and accommodation</li> <li>• No bids or no suitable bids</li> <li>• Unrealistically low cost bids submitted to secure the contract</li> <li>• Delivery of the accommodation elements of the contracts</li> <li>• Ensuring that we can work collaboratively but still meet the requirement for a fair and competitive process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear opportunities for local providers to influence service re-design</li> <li>• Seek 'Expressions of Interest' prior to full tender</li> <li>• Use of 'Soft Market Testing' to enable market to help shape models</li> <li>• Robust pricing evaluation that will consider low and high outliers</li> <li>• Provision of expert advice and guidance from Procurement Team</li> </ul>

A risk log will be developed alongside the Delivery Plan to capture all known and emerging risks and any potential mitigations. This will then be regularly monitored and reviewed.

The Strategy and Delivery Plan will be reviewed annually by Cambridgeshire County Council, Peterborough City Council and partners.