





<h1>BRIEFING</h1>	TO:	Improving Places Select Commission
	DATE:	14/07/2020
	LEAD OFFICER:	Sandra Tolley, Head of Housing Options. RMBC 01709 255619 Jill Jones, Homelessness Manager 01709 255618
	TITLE:	Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019-22. Progress Update including service performance
1. Background		
1.1	<p>The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleepers Strategy 2019-22 was approved by Cabinet in April 2019 and published in May 2019.</p> <p>The Strategy sets out six key aims:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To support people with complex needs 2. To prevent homelessness and offer rapid housing solutions 3. To increase support for young people to prevent homelessness 4. Ending rough sleeping and begging in Rotherham 5. To improve access to tenancy support, employment and health support services 6. To ensure there is enough emergency accommodation <p>This report also provides a summary of key performance within 2019-20 reporting period and the first two months of 2020-2021 (up to the end of May 2020). The performance report has given a much clearer picture about what is happening in the Homelessness Service. Escalation triggers have been introduced to flag business critical areas so that responses and resources can be deployed to implement solutions.</p>	
2. Key Issues		
2.1	Service Performance:	
2.1.1	Homelessness Case Loads	
2.1.1	<p>The table below shows that this year there is more new homelessness cases than the same period last year 1813 compared to 1577 between April 2018 and March 2019. This 15% increase is due to the Act now being embedded and other agencies are now referring homeless people to the service.</p>	

Period	Number of cases	Trend
April 2018 to March 2019	1577	
April 2019 to March 2020	1813	

2.1.2

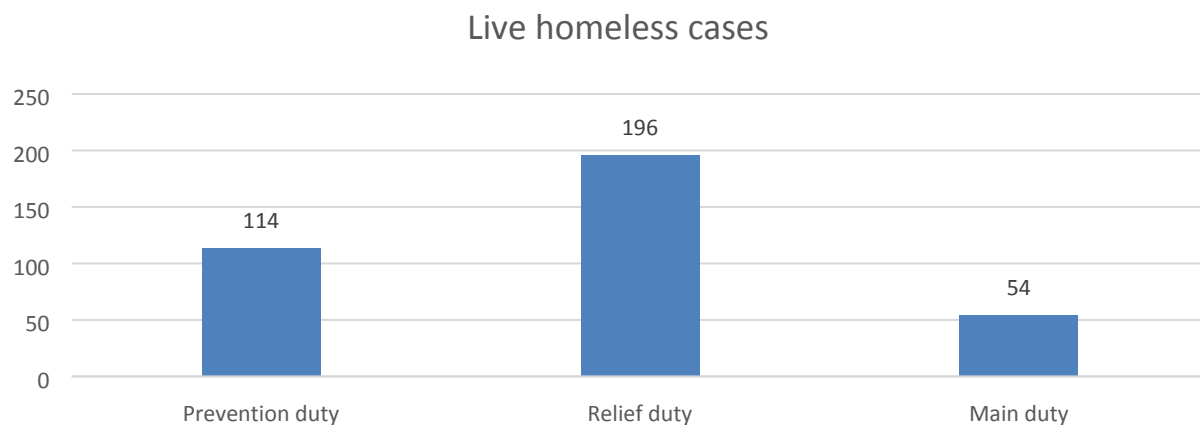
The table below shows that the number of live homelessness and case loads

Month	Apr 19	May 19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug 19	Sep 19	Oct 19	Nov 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20	Trend
Number of Open Cases	368	398	416	319	346	343	389	340	307	299	304	364	
Number of FTE	10	8	8	8	10	10	10	10	10	10	11	13	
Average case load	36.8	49.75	52	39	34	34	38	34	30	30	27	28	

The results in the table above show that the first 9 month period caseloads reduced from 368 to 307 at the end of December 2019, and the average case load per officer from 36.8 to 30, with a spike in June 2019 when total caseload were 416, with an average of 52 cases per officer. (This increase was impacted by 2 officers absent from work due to long term sickness, holidays and vacancies). Caseloads started to increase towards the end of March 2020, however the average caseload reduced due to more staff being recruited to the team.

2.1.3

The chart below shows the stages of the 364 live homeless cases on 31st March 2020.



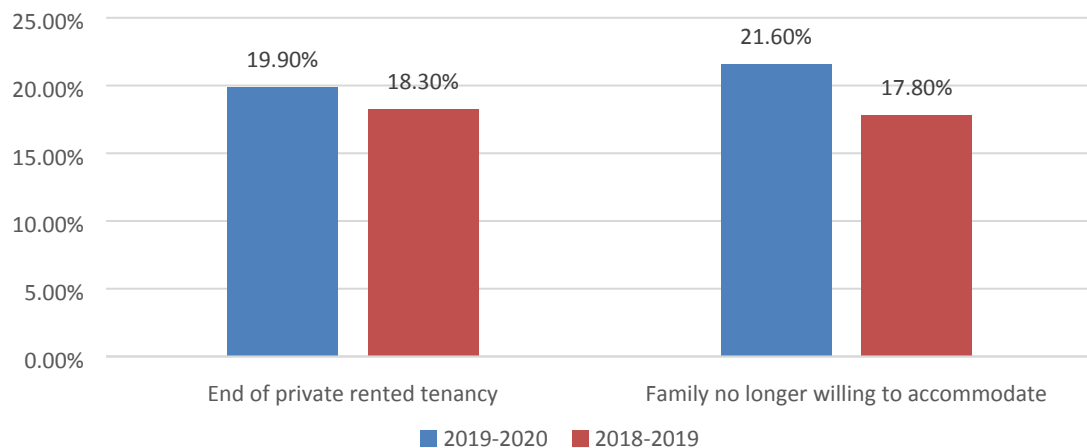
2.1.4 The chart below is the number of households prevented from becoming homeless in the prevention stage - (high is better)

2018/19	2019/20	Year on Year Direction of travel
419	467	↑

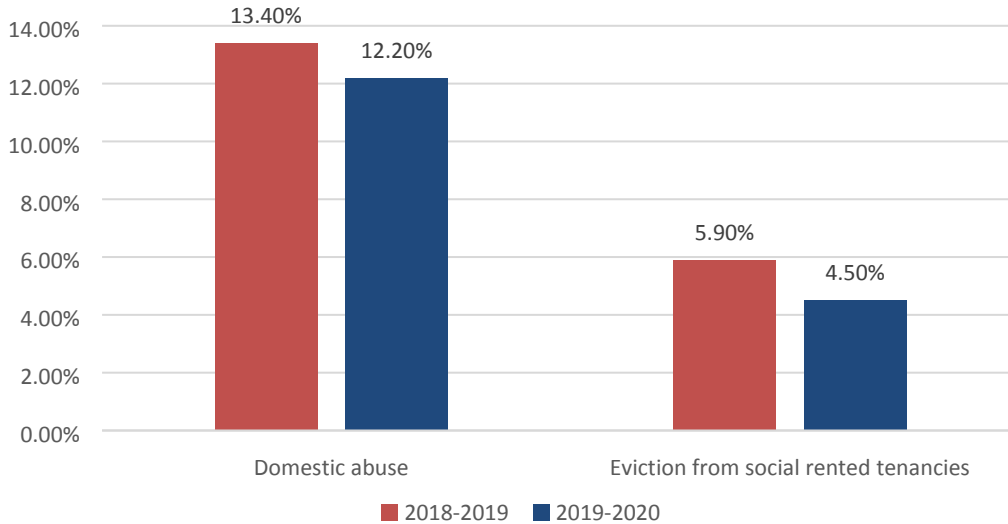
2.1.5 The chart below details the total number of homelessness cases prevented from becoming homeless in all stages (Prevent, Relief and Main) high is better

Annual Performance		Year on Year Direction of travel
2018/19	2019/20	
1106	1680	↑

2.1.6 The chart below shows the top main reasons for homelessness are increasing



2.1.7 Reductions have been seen in cases due to;

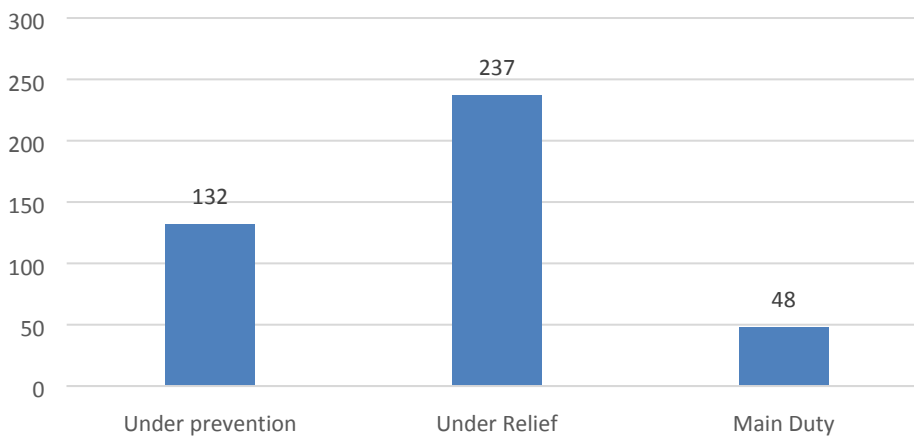


2.1.8 Since April 2020, during the Covid 19 restriction - The team have seen an increase in homelessness presentation and as such have closely monitored demand each day.

Due to the lack of move on options the number of people in the prevention stage is decreasing and those who are owed a main homeless duty is increasing. Households in the relief stage who remain homeless for more than 56 days automatically move into the Main duty stage. The Main duty can only be discharged with a Part 6 offer of Council or Housing Association accommodation or a 12 months Assured Shorthold Tenancy in the private rented sector (this duty can be discharged with a 6-month tenancy in the relief stage). This will create more demand for social housing as it is unlikely that private landlords would be willing to offer 12-month tenancies.

2.1.9 The homelessness live duty stages of case work as at 12 June is:

The total number of open homelessness cases = 417



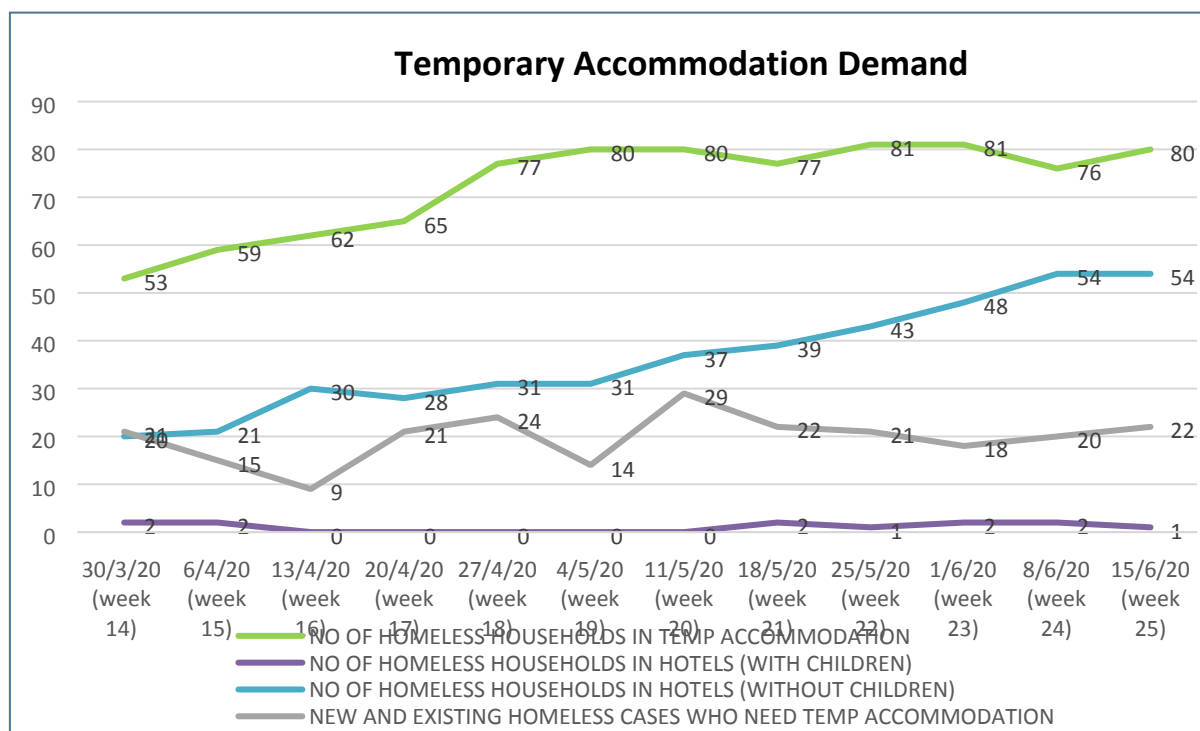
Since the 30th March the team have received 297 new homeless applications, 214 of those needed to be placed in temporary accommodation

2.1.10 Temporary Accommodation usage since 31st March 2020.

The availability of temporary accommodation is not static and is subject to both inward and outward occupancy activity. The Homelessness team are constantly managing new placements as people move out into more permanent housing. However, at the current time we will not be in a position where temporary accommodation is not in use. Temporary accommodation is being closely monitored to ensure that it is being used when requested and made available for further use when it becomes vacant.

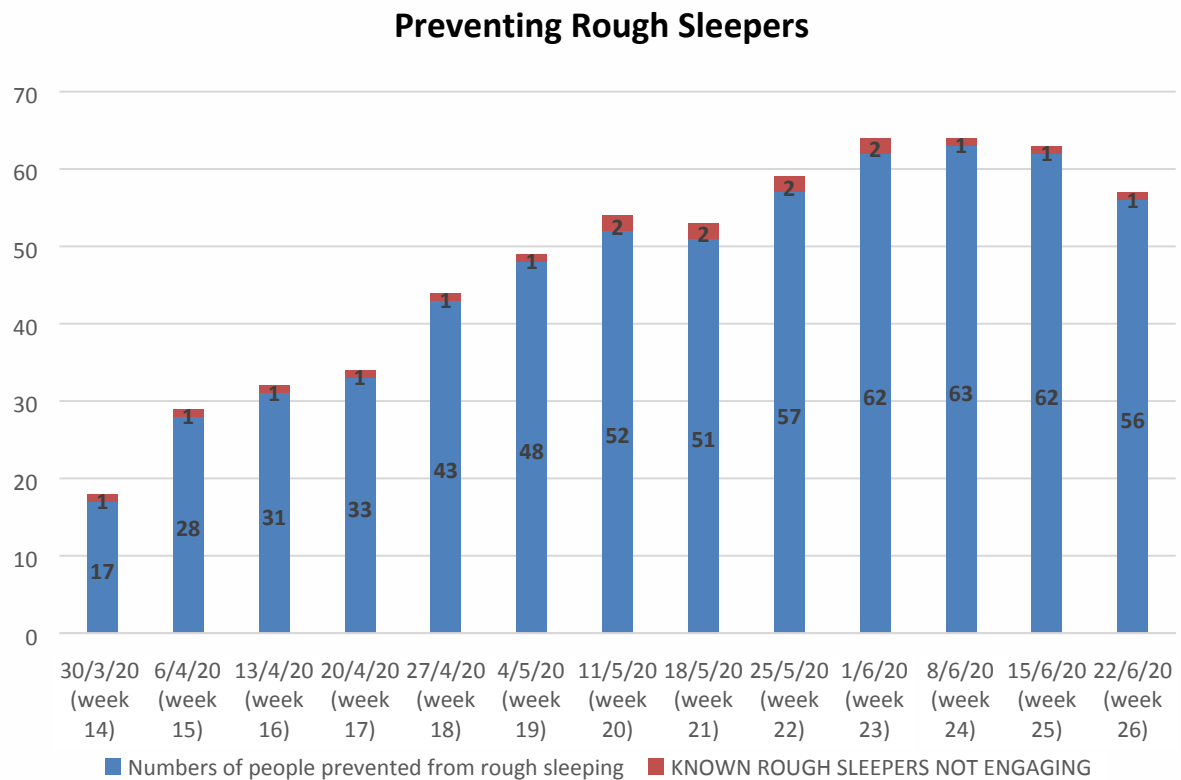
The current fluidity of the Homelessness Service's emergency accommodation provision is as follows.

2.1.11 The chart below shows the Council's Emergency Temporary Homeless demand since W/C 30th March 2020:



2.1.12 Preventing Rough Sleepers

The chart below shows the number of people accommodated on 1 June is 62, this has prevented them from rough sleeping. There is still 1 male who is not willing to engage.



The Government has a campaign “Get Everyone in Campaign” which aims to prevent people from sleeping rough and to try and change their lives for good.

On 26th May 2020, Dame Louise Casey, who is leading the specialist taskforce responsible for implementing the next phase of the Government’s support for rough sleepers during the pandemic, made an announcement, calling for community partners to help with the COVID rough sleeping crisis.

The taskforce will work with councils across the country on plans to ensure rough sleepers can move into long-term, safe accommodation once the immediate crisis is over – ensuring as few people as possible return to life on the streets. Further funding has been announced to provide a budget of up to 6000 units of accommodation to support rough sleepers.

In response, the Homelessness team are starting to put plans in place for those people who we have prevented from rough sleeping who have been accommodated in hotels and temporary accommodation in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

In Rotherham at the end of March 2020 prior to lock down there was 1 known rough sleeper. On 12th June, in accordance with the Government guidelines, the team were accommodating 62 people to prevent them from sleeping rough (46 households in hotels and 16 households in Council’s temporary homeless.) Nationally, there has been 14,610 people being accommodated to prevent them sleeping rough.

2.2

The Homelessness team are have establishing a working group of partners, under the title of 'First Steps Rotherham' which is the name we use for the rough sleeper initiative project, funded by RS13.







The group includes Council Officers, (including homelessness and commissioned services,) Crisis, South Yorkshire Housing Association, Action, Target Housing, Shiloh (our local charity) mental health practitioner working within the rough sleeper team, primary care and the hospital trusts.




This group works together to provide:

- tenancy and specialist support
- provision of food and resettlement support
- o whilst people are in temporary accommodation, and
- o when people move into their own accommodation

The aim of this work is to support clients to sustain their tenancies. As a result of the work of this group there have been 43 referrals for support.

Impact Measures Performance

Indicator	2018/2019	2019/2020	Trend
Reduce the number of homeless people with complex needs awaiting accommodation	471 (30% of new cases)	381 (21% of new cases)	 (positive decrease)
Reduction in repeat homelessness (as % of all new cases)	1.01% of all new cases (16 people)	0.99% of all new cases (18 people)	 (positive decrease)
Reduce the number of rough sleepers	10	1	 (positive decrease)
Increase the number of households supported by the homelessness team who are in the preventions stage	703 (44.6% of all new cases)	615 (33.9% of all new cases)	 (negative decrease)
Increase the number of applicants assisted to move to private rented	30	21	 (negative decrease)
Reduction in the number of young people (aged under 25) requiring the	407	476	 (negative increase)

2.3	Homelessness team's support			
	Reduction in the number of young people (aged under 25) requiring the Homelessness team's support again in 12 months of being accommodated	4	2	 (positive decrease)
	Increase the number of households who are given debt advice	352 (45% of new cases)	398 (46% of new cases)	 (positive increase)
	Increase the number of households who are supported to access employment or training	Not recorded	100 (47 into work and 53 into training)	
	Reduce the number of households accessing temporary accommodation	45	53	 (negative increase)
	Reduce the number of single households accessing hotel accommodation	Not recorded	20	
	Reduce the number of households with children accessing hotel accommodation	Not recorded	2	
2.3.1	Progress against the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Action Plan:			
Aim 1 - To support people with Complex Needs				
Outcome - No one sleeps rough				
Action		Progress		
To work with housing partners to extend the Housing First Model		11.9% of 2019/20 new cases had 2 or more priority needs compared to 6.7% in 2018/19		

2.3.2		As part of the Rough Sleeper funding we have an additional 5 properties which will provide Housing First accommodation – this will increase the number of Housing First properties available in Rotherham to 30.
	Provide a resettlement/floating support package for every person with complex needs to support them in accessing independent tenancies	<p>We have set up a working group of partners, under the title of ‘First Steps Rotherham’ which is the name we use for the rough sleeper initiative project, funded by RS13.</p> <p>The group includes Council Officers, (including homelessness and commissioned services,) Crisis, South Yorkshire Housing Association, Action, Target Housing, Shiloh (our local charity) mental health practitioner working within the rough sleeper team, primary care and the hospital trusts.</p> <p>This group works together to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tenancy and specialist support • provision of food and resettlement support whilst people are in temporary accommodation, and when people move into their own accommodation <p>The aim of this work is to support clients to sustain their tenancies. As a result of the work of this group there have been 43 referrals for support.</p>
	Aim 2 – To prevent homelessness and offer rapid housing solutions to get people in urgent need rehoused quicker	
	Outcome - Homelessness is prevented	
	Action	Progress
	Improve access to information for people including landlords about services to prevent homelessness	Leaflet under development. Progress has been made to improve information on the website
	Provide a digital web-based service to help people find Private Landlords who have available properties	Exploring software sub regionally
	Evaluate the impact of the changes to the Housing	Numbers of households rehoused via the Allocation Policy is being monitored weekly as part of the performance recording.

<p>Allocation Policy for people at risk of homeless</p>	<p>The decision was taken on March 23rd to reduce the Housing Options service to offer lettings only to homeless households including those living in temporary accommodation. This was following on from government guidance issued on March 16th stating that we needed to find accommodation for rough sleepers and those with no recourse to public funds.</p> <p>Since March 23rd 2020 to 12 June 2020, there have been 82 homeless households assisted to alternative Council accommodation.</p> <p>Between 1st April 2019 and April 2020 there have been 491 homeless households assisted to alternative Council accommodation compared to 307 during April 2018 to March 2019</p>
<p>Improve the referral pathway and service for people being discharged from hospital without suitable housing accommodation</p>	<p>Pathway developed with hospital discharge team. Homelessness Officer attending weekly outreach at Swallownest Court (Mental Health) and Homelessness Officer based 1 day per week at the hospital with the discharge team. There is 8 current open cases.</p>
<p>Improve information on how to access to social housing for members of the Armed Forces, Veterans, and their families</p>	<p>90K funding awarded across the sub region which will be used to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an e-learning package across South Yorkshire, specifically about homeless ex-services personnel and their families. This will be done in conjunction with specialist organisations who understand what content is required. This is in the final stages • Commission research to develop good practice - Each local authority has a statutory homelessness duty. The aim of this commission is to produce a strategic approach (es) incorporating good practice on supporting the homeless armed forces community. • £55k funding for the four South Yorkshire authorities to support armed forces community. It could include for example: - housing options through the provision of

2.3.3		bond and rent deposit - provision of furniture / white goods - mental health support
	Monitor the local causes of homelessness to align resources and services	<p>A report has been developed to find out causes of homelessness: The top main reasons which are increasing are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of private rented tenancy – Between April 2019 to end March 2020 19.9% compared to 18.3% during a 12-month periods 2018/19 • Family no longer willing to accommodate between April 2019 to end March 2020 21.6% compared to 17.8% during a 12-month periods 2018/19 • Domestic Abuse - Between April 2019 to end March 2020 12.2% compared to 13.4% during a 12-month periods 2018/19 • Eviction from social rented tenancies - Between April 2019 to end March 2020 4.5% compared to 5.9% during a 12-month periods 2018/19
	Aim 3 – To increase support for young people to prevent homelessness	
	Outcome - Homelessness is prevented	
	Action Progress	Progress
	Provide information for young people on their housing options to prevent homelessness	<p>Prior to lock down Housing Options being undertaken at Chatham Villa's (Leaving Care Team) every 2nd Tuesday</p> <p>Housing Advice Team attend fortnightly outreach for the residents of Eastwood in order to assist them with accessing services.</p> <p>Housing Advice have plans to commence outreach at Fleming Gardens and Roundabout, this along with the leaving care outreach work will fit in with Young Person's Moving on Panel. By doing outreach we can see the young people and their support workers in an environment that they are comfortable and familiar with. Restarting these sessions will be considered as part of our recovery plans</p>

2.3.4	Undertake housing advice sessions in special schools and colleges	Housing Options advice sessions were being held at Abbey and Newman school and also RCAT and Dinnington College. Restarting these sessions will be considered as part of our recovery plans
	Continue to fund a social worker in the Early Help team	Three Early Help Support workers are funded via the Housing Revenue Account to support families in financial distress and at risk of eviction.
	Set up 10 properties as part of the House Project for Care Leavers	2018/19 - 7 people identified for the House Project, Monthly progress meetings held to start to identify housing requirements for the next round.
	Aim 4 – To end rough sleeping and begging	
	Outcome - no one sleeps rough and all people begging will not be homeless	
	Action	Progress
Explore the development of an “Alternative Giving Scheme” which aims to reduce rough sleeping and begging	<p>Alternative Giving Scheme was in the final stages. H.O.M.E. (Helping Other’s Made Easy) is an alternative giving scheme for Rotherham which has been developed with Shiloh and other partners.</p> <p>The scheme is on hold due to Covid 19 and the Governments campaign to get everyone in off the streets. It was intended to be launched in 2 phases, however due to Covid 19 the initiative is on hold:</p> <p>Phase 1 – Digital – Mid March 2020 Phase 2 - Poster – September 2020</p> <p>The scheme is aimed to provide more information to members of the public about services available for homeless people and a quick link to homeless charities for people to donate money as an alternative to giving money to beggars.</p> <p>In summary the scheme provides:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Education on the street begging issues 2. Knowledge of what's being done to support them 3. Details of all local providers working to help them 4. Opportunity to donate directly to any of the providers either online, or by post. <p>Beggars in the town had reduced from 17 to 5. The reduction is due to Operation Carbon, Close partnership working with CPU, the police and homelessness service</p>	

<p>Ensure people have access to ongoing support if required when they move out of temporary accommodation into their own tenancy.</p>	<p>Resettlement and Tenancy Support Officers now patch based with a portfolio of temp accommodation. Each occupant has a move on plan which includes ongoing support to set up their new home if required</p> <p>Attained £380K of funding to support rough sleepers</p> <p>Developing a Rough Sleeper Initiative Team, with additional specialist roles to help improve Coordination and move on effort</p> <p>First Steps Rough Sleeper Ring fenced accommodation already in place</p> <p>Rough sleepers ringfenced short term move on accommodation, has been in place since 3rd April 2020, providing 7 bedrooms and 1 emergency bed space (small box room). Due to staffing levels this can only accommodate 4 people who would have been rough sleepers</p>
<p>Work with partners to ensure continued advice and support for rough sleepers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly meetings held at Shiloh. • Side by Side meetings held quarterly
<p>Conduct quarterly rough sleeper counts and continue to undertake weekly outreach work in key locations to connect people to services</p>	<p>Daily rough sleeper counts being undertaken. Last year's annual return recorded 10 rough sleepers. On 12th June this had decreased to 2 rough sleepers who won't engage. However, 63 people have also been prevented from rough sleeping as they have been accommodated (46 households in hotels and 17 households in Council's temporary homeless.) Nationally, there has been 14,610 rough sleepers being accommodated.</p> <p>Of the 63 people in accommodation we estimate the need for the following types of accommodation and support to move on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing First/Supported Housing with intensive support = 6 • Supported housing or housing led with floating support = 18

2.3.5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRS/social housing tenancy with start-up floating support= 33 • Assistance to reconnect to family and friends/return home= 6 	
	Provide outreach work in key locations	<p>Prior to lock down outreach for rough sleepers was undertaken at Shiloh. During winter, members of the Homelessness Team and South Yorkshire Police step up the work to tackle homelessness.</p> <p>Members of RMBC's Homelessness Resettlement team, Drugs Services and the police actively go out during the early hours to locate any rough sleepers to try and encourage them to connect them to relevant help and support.</p>	
	Ensure there is enough capacity and support available to run SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocols) all winter.	<p>In respect of accommodation the Council has an arrangement with South Yorkshire Fire Service to utilise their training room to provide a winter night shelter for up to 8 rough sleepers. Referrals are made solely by the Homelessness Service.</p> <p>In addition, during the cold weather (not necessary below zero) rough sleepers are offered self-contained temporary accommodation and hotel accommodation.</p> <p>The team can also make referrals into Rotherham's Housing First Scheme which has 30 units for people with complex needs.</p>	
	Aim 5 – To improve access to tenancy support, employment and health support services		
Outcome - Create financial resilience, more options to access work and training			
		Action	Progress
		Provide a planned approach via the South Yorkshire Accommodation Hub to rehousing prior to all offenders leaving prison who have a local connection to Rotherham	Sub regional funding attained for 3 Prevention Officers across the region to work with local prisons. Updates are received from the link officers in prison and the Prevention Officer will undertake a homelessness assessment so that there is a plan in place on release. The current open case load for

		people being released from prison is 33 at 17th June 2020
Ensure all individuals presenting as homeless who have substance misuse issues are referred straight away to commissioned treatment services		All homeless applicants are encouraged to take up services at CGL drug and alcohol services. 24 referrals have engaged with CGL between April 2019 and March 2020
Connect people to employment, training, volunteering		<p>The Financial Inclusion Team has continued to provide advice and support to homeless customers. Since May 2019 the team have provide pre-tenancy support to 1,249 customers.</p> <p>There have also been 314 people supported with claims for Universal Credit and 37 referrals for employment support.</p>
Ensure people have speedy access to money advice, debt services and gambling support when needed		<p>There have been 145 referrals to agencies providing debt and welfare advice since May 2019.</p> <p>Harmful Gambling Training</p> <p>Free training sessions have been organised to increase the awareness of harmful gambling and its impact on families and local communities as well as the individuals directly harmed by it. There have been 135 front line staff have received Awareness training to date, with four more sessions to be planned in the next year.</p> <p>There have been 6 referrals for gambling support</p>
Implement 'Tenancy Health Checks' to prevent problems from escalating and tenancies being jeopardised.		<p>6122 Tenancy Health Check visits were undertaken between April 2019 and March 2020.</p> <p>The outcomes from the visits included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 referrals for affordable warmth • 2 Adult Safeguarding Referrals due to concerns about wellbeing • 127 Referrals for Adult Social Care Assessments • 23 Requests for Assistive Technology • 9 CYPS Early Help Referrals • 11 Employment Support Referrals • 59 Financial Support Referrals

2.3.6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 referral to children’s safeguarding due to concerns about a child • 16 referrals for support with their mental health • 42 referrals/signposting to activities due to loneliness • 4 Drug/Alcohol/Smoking Support Referrals • 2 Make Every Contact Count Further Information Provided • 5 referrals to Rotherham Sight and Sound • 11 South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Fire Safety Advice Referrals • Range of information and advice provided <p>Tenancy wellbeing checks have been undertaken remotely via telephone since the COVID-19 pandemic. 4740 telephone calls have been made to potential vulnerable tenants to date resulting in referrals for support to the community hub, financial tenancy support and adult social care.</p>
	Aim 6 – To ensure there is enough decent emergency accommodation	
	Outcome - Everyone has a safe place to live and nobody is in emergency accommodation without a plan to move on	
	Action	Progress
	Set up 6 “Step-up Step-Down properties” for hospital discharges	6 step-up step-down properties set up.
	Set up 2 assessable temporary accommodation units for people with a disability	3 properties in use
	Set up a dog friendly temporary emergency accommodation	Introducing a dog pack where we provide pet bowls and dog/cat cages for owners of dogs/cats
	Set up 4 dispersed properties for people fleeing domestic abuse	Now in operation
Maintain decency of temporary accommodation	During the last 3 months the portfolio of temporary accommodation has increased from 64 to 89 units of temporary accommodation. Checks are undertaken twice per week; a condition report is provided. Full refresh project planned.	
Carry out a regular safe and well-being checks for all households placed into temporary accommodation	Resettlement officers now in post – they are patch based; all occupants have a move on plan	

3. Key Actions and Timelines	
3.1	<p>Key areas of focus for the next six months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement next steps move on plans for Rough Sleepers • Review of the Housing Allocation Policy (start from July/August 2020) • Housing Service Covid-19 recovery plan • Recruit to new posts • Bid for funding • Working in partnership through the SHP with all stakeholders • Utilising improved data through dashboard • Analysing potential spikes • Amending policies and will be implementing findings of temp accommodation review
4. Recommendations	
4.1	The Improving Places Select Commission continues to receive twice yearly update reports.