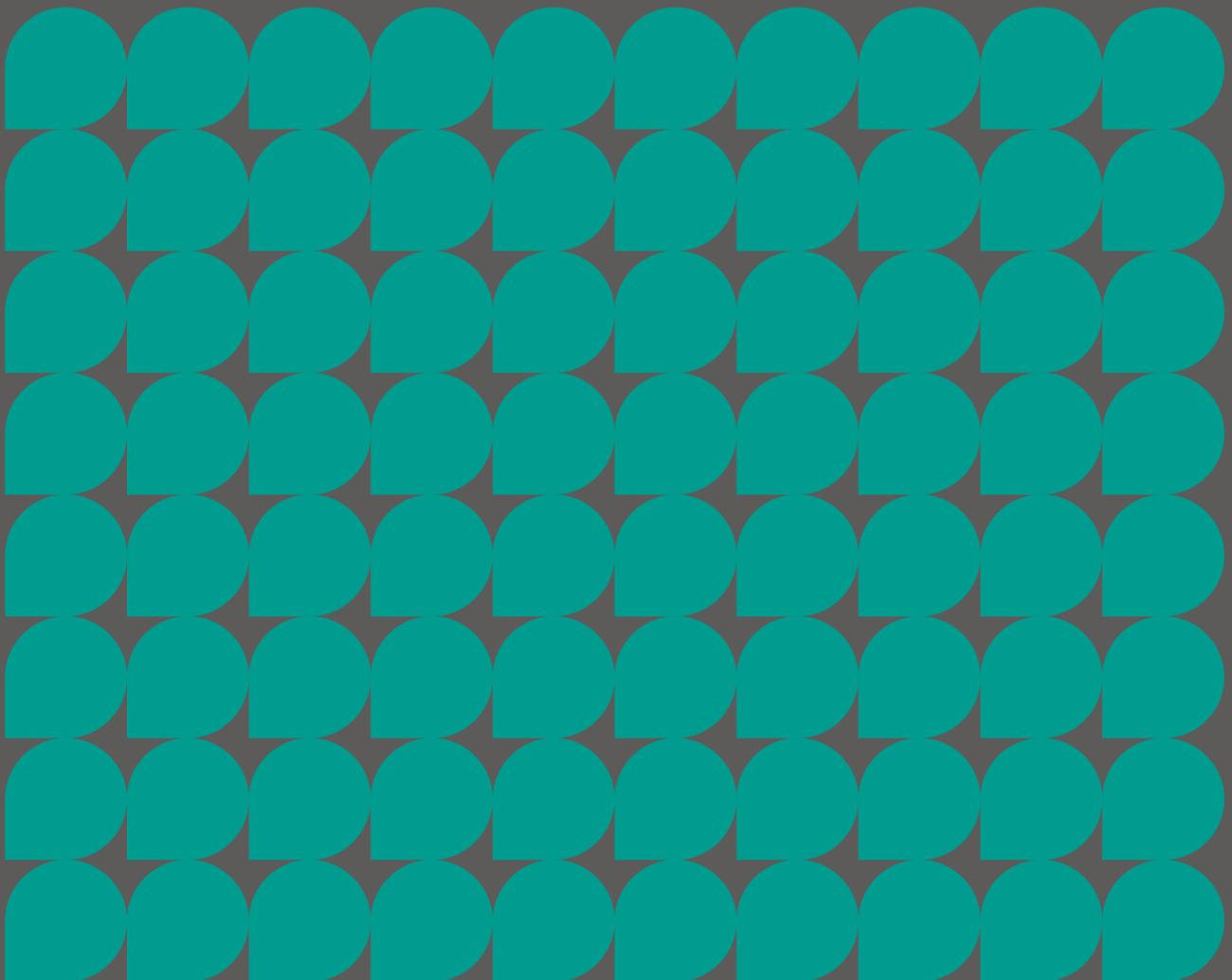


# Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2021-2026

Draft for Consultation

May 2021



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# 1. The Greater Manchester Vision

- 1.1 Greater Manchester aspires to be the best place to grow up, get on, and get old.
- 1.2 A safe, affordable and decent home is critical to this vision, as one part of what matters to people to live a 'good life'. Other key areas are:
  - **Education and Skills**
  - **Power, Voice and Participation**
  - **Income and Employment**
  - **Connectivity, Access to Care and Support**
- 1.3 Housing cannot be seen in isolation; other parts include good relationships with friends and family, optimal health, your ability to work in a good job, in a healthy environment, to contribute to society and participate in decisions that affect you.
- 1.4 The challenge of preventing homelessness in Greater Manchester is about enabling people to live 'good lives' with what matters most to them.
- 1.5 Greater Manchester has committed to creating 50,000 new affordable homes, 30,000 of which at social rent, by 2037. Supply of good affordable housing is critical to preventing homelessness but on its own it is not enough. This strategy captures the all-encompassing challenge to preventing homelessness in Greater Manchester that is as much about proactively building wellbeing and participation as it is about taking steps to respond effectively when people need help.
- 1.6 We see five core objectives that will help achieve the overall challenge of preventing homelessness in Greater Manchester. These are:
  - Everyone is able to sustain **a home** that is safe, decent and affordable

- Everyone leaves our **places of care** with a safe place to go (care, health facility, prison, asylum)
- Where people are at imminent risk of homelessness they are able to access **quality advice, advocacy and support**
- No one is forced to sleep rough and temporary accommodation supports **respite, recovery and re-connection**
- Homelessness is **not an entrenched or repeat experience**

1.7 We will achieve this with three shared commitments that guide the way all necessary sectors and stakeholders will act:

- To work with **People**; being truly person-centred, building wellbeing and addressing inequality
- To build **Participation**; where people participate in decisions that affect their lives and lived experience is highly valued
- To embed **Prevention**; ensuring public services create the conditions for success

## 2. Introduction

2.1 The term 'homelessness' is often considered to apply only to people 'sleeping rough', however homelessness means that someone has no home in the UK or anywhere else in the world, that is available and reasonable for them to live in.

2.2 The definition of homelessness prevention can be interpreted differently nationally, regionally and locally. The Government definition of "homelessness prevention' means providing people with the ways and means to address their housing and other needs to avoid homelessness."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-data-notes-and-definitions>

2.3 The purpose of the Strategy is set out a clear path for joint action to prevent homelessness in Greater Manchester. It is for all residents of Greater Manchester regardless of the type of household, nationality, or 'priority' they fall into.

2.4 In Greater Manchester we have a strong track record of innovation and collective action to tackle homelessness. This has been backed by strong political and community will to end the need for rough sleeping and pioneer new ways of doing things.

## **Housing First**

- Greater Manchester is one of three regional pilots testing large scale delivery of Housing First. Housing First is a truly person-centred partnership model and uses housing as a platform to enable individuals facing multiple disadvantage (defined as anyone experiencing three or more of the following: homelessness, domestic abuse, mental health issues, substance misuse and/or contact with the criminal justice system) to begin recovery and move away from homelessness.
- We are developing an evidence base to inform how Housing First can be integrated into Greater Manchester services to reduce long term and repeat homelessness.

## **Entrenched Rough Sleeper Social Impact Bond (SIB)**

- Greater Manchester took an early opportunity to run a Social Outcomes Contract to relieving entrenched rough sleeping.
- Alongside access to a stable place to live participants received intensive support to sustain accommodation and build other areas of their life that mattered to them.

## A Bed Every Night (ABEN)

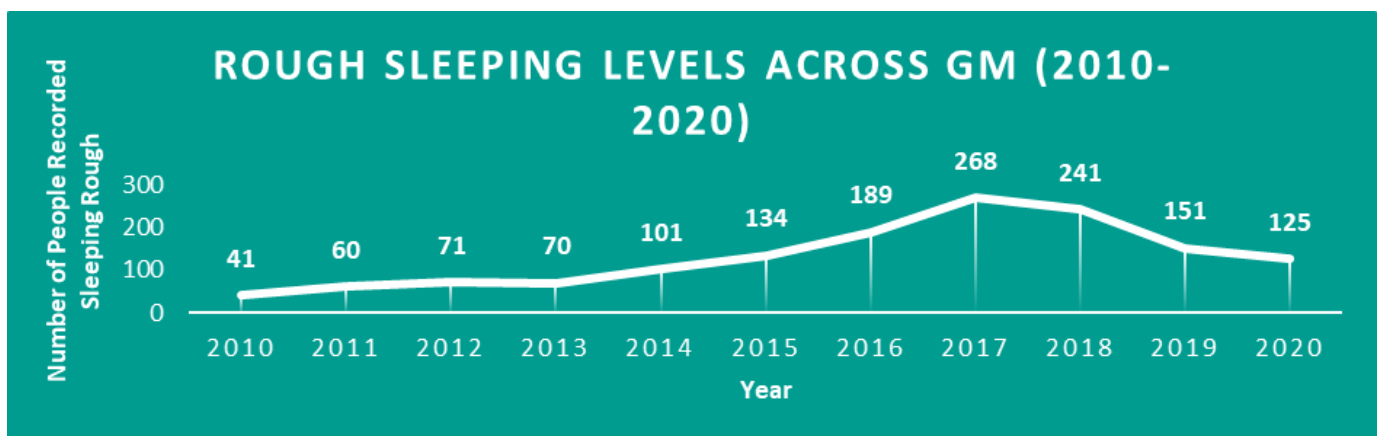
- A pioneering regional approach that supports all people rough sleeping or at imminent risk (in spite of statutory eligibility) to have somewhere safe to stay with a focus on respite, recovery and reconnection.
- ABEN is both a service and a philosophy that commits us to 'leaving no one behind.'

2.5 The distance travelled towards this goal has been considerable, both in radically reducing rough sleeping and developing our learning of what is required to sustainably prevent homelessness.

2.6 This has brought us to where we are now and a drive to prevent homelessness is both the necessity of ending rough sleeping and also recognising the harm that any experience of homelessness does to an individual, a family, and to society.

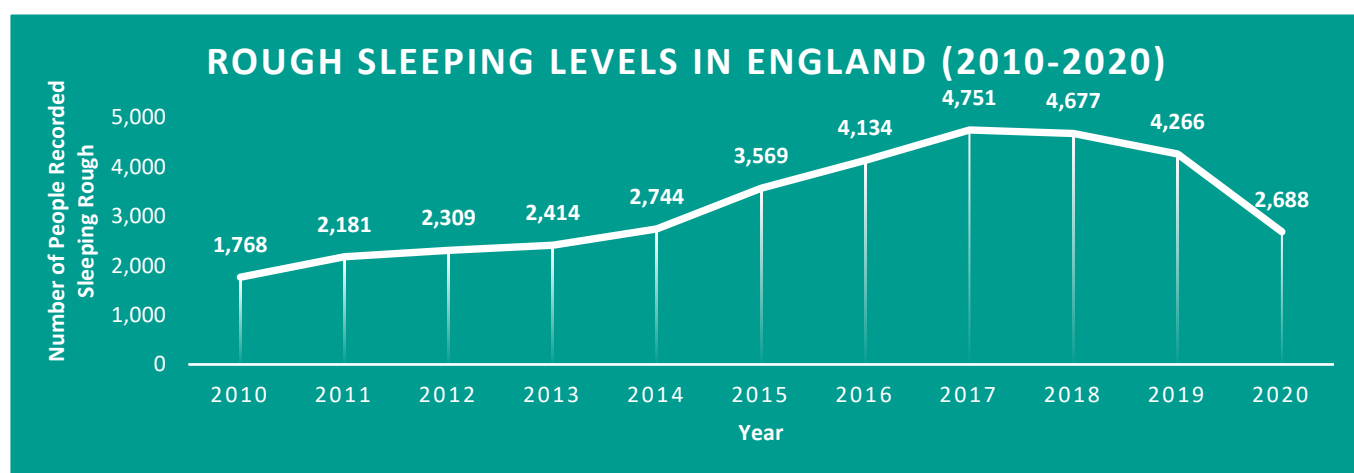
2.7 From 2010 to 2017, all forms of homelessness in England and in Greater Manchester increased at an alarming rate.

2.8 Between 2010 and 2017, the number of people sleeping rough on a single night in Greater Manchester increased dramatically. 41 people were recorded on a single, typical night in Autumn 2010, compared to 268 in 2017 – a 554% increase.

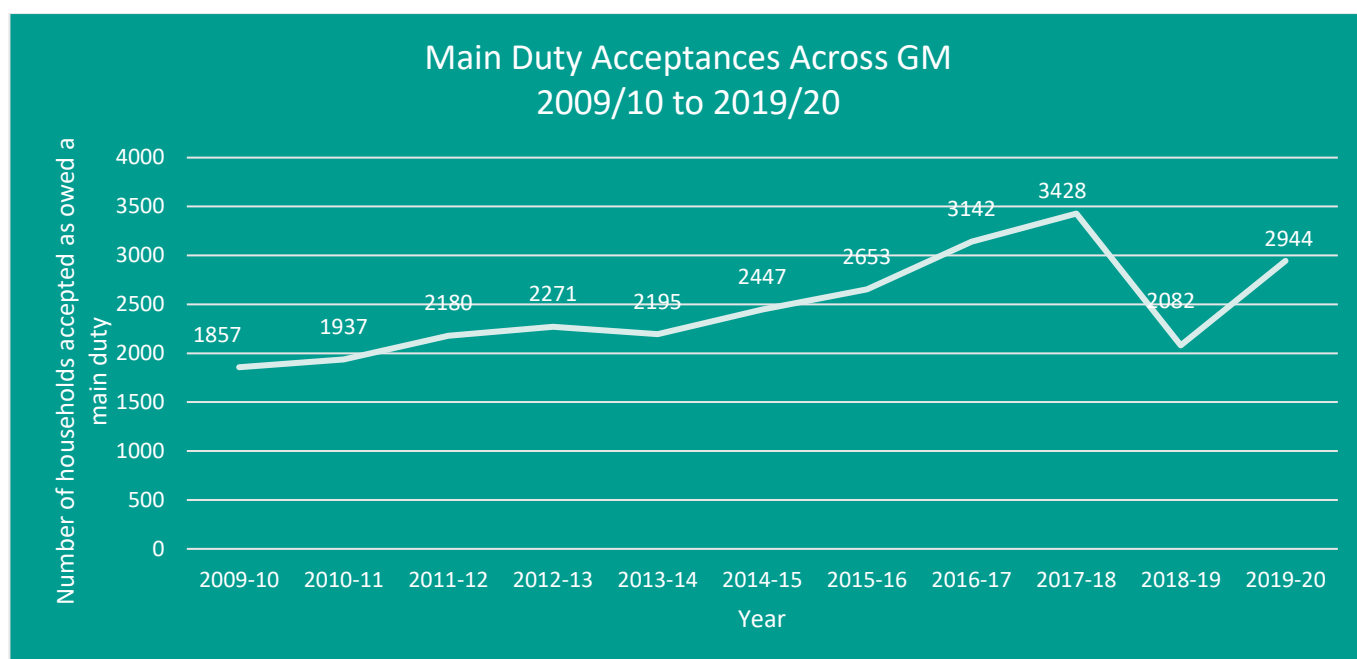


2.9 Since 2017 this number has begun to decline, with 125 people recorded as rough sleeping on a single night in Autumn 2020. Whilst this represents a 53% decrease from the 2017 peak, this still three times as high than 2010.

2.10 The trend in the level of rough sleeping across Greater Manchester is mirrored at the national level, albeit the rise in homelessness was comparatively much steeper in Greater Manchester. In England as a whole, the number of people recorded as sleeping rough rose 169% from 1,768 in 2010 to a peak of 4,751 in 2017. Since 2017, the number of people recorded as sleeping rough nationally also fell, to 2,688 in 2020. This is a decrease of 43%.



2.11 Homelessness in all forms has increased in Greater Manchester since 2010. In 2009-10, 1,857 applications were accepted by local authorities as a 'main duty' of re-housing being owed under provisions of the Housing Acts. This increased by 85% to a peak of 3,428 in the 2017-18 financial year.



**2.12** The enactment of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 expanded the duties owed by local authorities to those who are homeless (the relief duty) and those at risk of becoming homeless within 56 days (the prevention duty). The drop in main duty acceptances in 2018/19 indicates displacement to these new prevention and relief duties. Despite this change, the steep increase in main duty acceptances has continued with another significant rise into 2019/20.

**2.13** Under the new legislation, across Greater Manchester 6,927 households were initially assessed as being owed a prevention duty and 9,673 households as owed a relief duty in 2018-19.<sup>2</sup> In 2019-20 these figures increased by 8% to a total of 17,933 duties owed at initial assessment; 7,569 (42%) prevention duties and 10,364 (58%) relief duties.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> MHCLG Statutory homelessness: detailed local authority-level tables: April 2018 to March 2019.

<sup>3</sup> MHCLG Statutory homelessness: detailed local authority-level tables: April 2019 to March 2020, supplemented with quarterly returns.



## **Temporary Accommodation**

**On the March 31 2020, 3,304 households were in temporary accommodation across Greater Manchester. Of these, 2,089 (63%) were households with children. In total, 4,299 children were in temporary accommodation across Greater Manchester on this date.**

**Reference: MHCLG Statutory Homelessness: detailed local authority level tables January to March 2020.**

## **Referrals**

**In 2019/20, 1,377 households across Greater Manchester were assessed as a result of a referral. Of these, 957 (69%) referrals were under the duty to refer.**

**Hospitals and Adult Secure Estate were the main referrers under this duty, making 258 (19%) and 148 (11%) of all referrals respectively.**

**Reference: MHCLG Statutory homelessness: detailed local authority-level tables: April 2019 to March 2020.**

## Outcomes

**In 2019-20, across Greater Manchester 51% of prevention and 35% of relief duties were ended successfully, with accommodation secured for 6+ months. This compares to 58% and 40% nationally, which suggests more can still be done to prevent and relieve homelessness before further duties are owed.**

**Reference: MHCLG Statutory homelessness: detailed local authority-level tables: April 2019 to March 2020, supplemented with quarterly returns.**

- 2.14 This strategy considers how we truly prevent homelessness, as well as mitigating the risks of homelessness when they occur. It is about re-framing homelessness prevention to be as much as about proactively building wellbeing and participation, as it is about taking steps to respond effectively when people need help.
- 2.15 Preventing homelessness can feel like a mammoth task, too big and too complex to tackle. If we hold these objectives up together, with shared commitments as to how they will be achieved, we have the opportunity to radically change what is possible
- 2.16 The last 12 months has posed unprecedented challenges to people and organisations in Greater Manchester, and across the world, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The response to protect people through joint community, public and private action demonstrated the power of acting together, with urgency, around a common goal.
- 2.17 In the same way that our Covid-19 response required wide ranging activity from stakeholders in Greater Manchester, the country and beyond, so too will the goal of preventing homelessness. This strategy does not attempt to list these activities, indeed it is likely that some of the actions necessary will not yet be imagined. Instead, we provide a clear framework for all people and organisations who have a stake in preventing homelessness to be able to

contribute to this challenge by pulling in the same direction and holding one another to account.

- 2.18 We are proud of pioneering new methods of co-production to produce and co-design this strategy. This has involved a range of activity since 2019 including Legislative Theatre, a creative process for people with lived experience of homelessness to explore and enact their experiences, followed by policy discussions and co-produced commitments with those who hold power. Policies and activities that have been developed through this process are marked (LT).

## Our commitments

The commitments to working with people, building participation and embedding prevention are the common approaches for all stakeholders to adopt that will help us reach our homelessness prevention goals. The following sections describe what these commitments mean.

# 3. People

- 3.1 Everything starts with people. We have heard from people from all over Greater Manchester who have experienced homelessness, who run community groups, work in frontline services, researchers and academics, and the outstanding insight is people need to be treated as individuals, to have their unique situation, aspirations, and personal challenges recognised, in order to succeed.
- 3.2 Being person-centred means seeing and responding to people as individuals who have different things in their lives that they value and give them wellbeing. A home is something that everyone needs and values, but what that home looks like, how it is sustained, and the other aspects of someone's life that are important to them are unique.
- 3.3 What matters to people changes through their lives and with changing circumstances. We heard from people who expressed what mattered most to them – the importance of family and good work were common themes.

- “I want to be able to support my children, and stop them from going through the things I had to.”
- “I want to have good work, something that feels good and means I have enough each month.”
- “I want to be near my mum and be able to support her as she gets old.”
- “I want to be able to live without fear of being evicted.”
- “I want to be able to cook for my child and eat the food that we like.”

Quotes adapted from Legislative Theatre forums.

**3.4** Risks of homelessness start to occur when people are not able to achieve or sustain what matters most to them; for many people in Greater Manchester this relates to relationship breakdown with friends, family or partners, and intersects with a housing market that isn’t working for people – lack of renting security and affordability challenges.

**3.5** This variation and complexity are rarely captured through headline data from statutory homelessness services. This relies on a person ‘presenting’ for homelessness support with their local authority Housing Options service. Whilst this is a limited view, it does provide some insight into the experiences of people who are at risk of homelessness. Table 1 below presents the given reasons for ‘loss of last settled home’ for those owed a prevention or relief duty.

**3.6** Family or friends no longer being willing or able to accommodate was by far the most common reason given, accounting for 27% of cases overall. For those owed a prevention duty, a landlord wishing to sell or re-let (19%) and rent arrears (12%) were also significant. For those owed a relief duty, domestic abuse and the non-violent breakdown of a relationship with a partner were more common, accounting for 13% and 10% of reasons respectively.

*Table 1. Reason for loss or threat of loss of last settled by duty owed in Greater Manchester (MHCLG Statutory homelessness: detailed local authority-level tables: April 2019 to March 2020).*

Reason for loss or threat of loss of last settled home	Prevention cases (at risk of homelessness)	Relief cases (actually homeless)
Family or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate	1,718 (24%)	2,900 (30%)
Landlord wishing to sell or re-let	1,386 (19%)	222 (2%)
Rent arrears	890 (12%)	491 (5%)
Domestic abuse	354 (5%)	1,264 (13%)
Other violence or harassment	89 (1%)	329 (3%)
Left institution with no accommodation available	95 (1%)	407 (4%)
Required to leave accommodation provided by home office as asylum support	371 (5%)	658 (7%)
Non-violent relationship breakdown with partner	319 (4%)	932 (10%)
Totals	7,122	9,686

**3.7** Housing circumstances are directly impacted by people's lives and what matters to them, but people's ability to achieve and maintain this is not equal. Being person-centred must come with a deeper recognition and proactive response to how inequalities impact people's lives. For demographic, socio-economic, or geographic reasons people face unequal barriers to living their 'good life.'

**3.8** In order to prevent homelessness, we must centre on the experiences of people who face inequalities and discrimination that put them at higher risk of homelessness. To not do so will fail to remove the barriers that stop people from living good lives and drive homelessness.

**3.9** The following groups are commonly at higher risk of homelessness because of the inequalities they face, due to their experiences or demographic status.

**People who have:**

- **Underlying health conditions, including poor mental health**
- **Low paid and/or insecure work**
- **A disability**
- **Caring responsibilities**

**People with experience of:**

- **Human trafficking and / or modern slavery**
- **Childhood trauma**
- **The criminal justice system**
- **Sleeping rough**
- **Sex work**

**People who are:**

- **Under 35, in particular care leavers**
- **From ethnic minorities**
- **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and other sexual orientations and identities**
- **Migrants or asylum seekers**

3.10 Further analysis of the demographic information of those owed a prevention or relief duty across Greater Manchester in 2019/20 shows that:

- 27% of households known to be at imminent risk of homelessness were single females with dependent children. Single females with dependent children accounted for 17% of households who were actually homeless in 2019/20.<sup>4</sup>
- Of all households owed a duty because of risk of homelessness or actual homelessness, 20% were aged 18-24. A further 1.1% were aged 16-17.<sup>5</sup>
- Of all households owed a duty because of risk of homelessness or actual homelessness, 25% were in either full- or part-time work.<sup>6</sup>

3.11 The table below shows that the homelessness duties owed are distributed unevenly between different ethnic minorities. Where the ethnicity of those owed a homeless duty was known (96% of cases), 67.3% of main applicants were white compared to 79.6% in the population. Black individuals were most over-represented, accounting for 12.9% of duties owed but only 3.5% of the population.

*Table 2. Ethnicity of main applicant in households owed a prevention or relief duty, compared to the Greater Manchester population (References: MHCLG Statutory homelessness: detailed local authority-level tables: April 2019 to March 2020; ONS*

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<sup>4</sup> MHCLG Statutory homelessness: detailed local authority-level tables: April 2019 to March 2020, supplemented with quarterly returns.

<sup>5</sup> MHCLG Statutory homelessness: detailed local authority-level tables: April 2019 to March 2020.

<sup>6</sup> MHCLG Statutory homelessness: detailed local authority-level tables: April 2019 to March 2020.

*Population denominators by broad ethnic group and for White British, local authorities in England and Wales: 2019).*<sup>7</sup>

Ethnicity of Main Applicant	% of Households owed a duty (where known)	Percentage of GM Population
White	67.3	79.6
Black	12.9	3.5
Asian	10.3	12.5
Mixed/Multiple Groups	2.8	3.2
Other Ethnicity	6.7	1.3

**3.12** Data which helps us understand these interactions and the interplay between different forms of inequality and homelessness is limited because of the way we currently record people's support needs and experiences. What we do know is that of the 17,933 households assessed as being at risk of homelessness or actually homeless, 43% had identified support needs. Notably, 25% of people had two or more support needs, highlighting the need for person-centred and integrated provision which accounts for the complexities underlying homelessness.<sup>8</sup>

**3.13** Of the households with identified support needs, the most common needs were:

- A history of mental health problems (51%),
- Physical ill health and disability (30%),
- At risk of or having experienced domestic abuse (21%).
- History of offending behaviour (20%)

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<sup>7</sup> See Data Note.

<sup>8</sup> MHCLG Statutory Homelessness: detailed local authority-level tables April 2019 to March 2020, supplemented with quarterly returns.



- A history of repeat homelessness (16%) or rough sleeping (14%) were also commonly identified as support needs.<sup>9</sup>

**3.14** Being person-centred means that we recognise the inequalities and the disadvantages that people face and seek to work through these in order to prevent homelessness. This can be as little as ensuring we ask about literacy and help people fill out forms who need it, to commissioning specialist support so that migrant women can speak with someone who has the relevant cultural literacy.

**3.15** Communities are good at being person-centred; knowing people and using their strengths for the benefit of others whilst also supporting their challenges. This gives people belonging, motivation and the ability to reach for their 'good life' by looking to trusted others for mutual help and support. Homelessness prevention happens in the community in this way and this value should be recognised and invested in.

**3.16** A person-centred approach is harder to see when we look to our public services, which are traditionally structured in siloes and increasingly resourced at point of crisis. When someone looks for help because they risk becoming homeless, they might want a conversation about their experience, to be seen and heard and helped, but they often get a series of assessments on their legal entitlement to specific elements of support. Assessment is critically important to allocate resources, meet legal duties, and safeguard but too often they are barriers and not enablers to being seen and heard as an individual.

**3.17** Helping people to get what matters most to them, being person-centred, is a significant challenge within current underfunded public services, often designed to look at the single issues (health, safeguarding, housing, work). Public services that are truly person-centred will not only prevent people from developing risks of homelessness by helping them access the things that

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<sup>9</sup> MHCLG Statutory Homelessness: detailed local authority-level tables April 2019 to March 2020, supplemented with quarterly returns.

make up their 'good life', but it will support the ability to mitigate risks if they do occur. The more that our public services work within and through local communities and build strong community infrastructure, the more we will enable people to prevent the risks of homelessness.

- 3.18 Good practice (see Appendix 1) of this kind is happening across Greater Manchester in a wide range of service areas and is codified in the Greater Manchester Unified Model for Public Services. Progress is being made, and this must go further faster to prevent homelessness.
- 3.19 We know that attachment patterns and complex trauma play a role in the lives of the majority of people who experience homelessness. We need to be trauma informed (knowing) and then trauma responsive (doing).

## **Environment matters**

Our past and present surrounding affect how we respond to what is in front of us. We know that no one is 'hard to engage' if they have a sense of safety and the environment is right. This is both the physical environment in which people live, meet and are supported, and the psychological environment where consistency, boundaries, trust and personal acknowledgement are key.

The language that we use is important – we describe people as 'experiencing homelessness', not as 'homeless people.' This simple change enables homelessness to be understood as both an individual experience and state of transition, not a personal characteristic or permanent state.

## Choice and control matter

People succeed when they hold responsibility and have agency over their lives. Choice can seem out of reach where there are limited resources, the lack of social housing being critical. Choice and control can be introduced meaningfully within these constraints. Housing First has shown the power of choice and control over support and re-housing on personal success. The traditions of support focused on 'fixing issues' for people is deeply rooted in homelessness sector. Providing choice and control are the opposite of this.

## Relationships matter:

Between a person's environment, their thoughts, feelings and behaviours are complex. Often, we are unaware of an individual's history which informs behaviour. Moving away from judgement towards awareness and understanding can open up new possibilities based on safety, value-based working and reconnection. This may create uncertainty in processes, in turn creating organisational anxiety. However, with training and an importance placed on collective care, we can work within the tensions and limitations of our roles to achieve the best possible outcomes for individuals who experiences homelessness.

- 3.20 Data is part of the solution. The data we collect and use should maximise the quality of support and should enable us to truly understand the prevalence and nature of homelessness across Greater Manchester, to measure progress, and to maximise the quality of support offered to prevent and relieve homelessness. Improving the completeness and quality of data is essential to this, as the current picture is imperfect and incomplete.
- 3.21 A group of people with lived experience of homelessness have developed (GMTHINK) principles that highlight the need to balance privacy with not needing to tell your story multiple times. Re-working data management and governance to be person-centred is a significant and critical task. By analysing data at the individual level, we can better understand the underlying complexity for those facing multiple overlapping needs and better understand

how homelessness is experienced unequally between groups and across Greater Manchester.

## 4. Participation

- 4.1 We know that people thrive when they have choice and control over their lives, from having basic freedoms and choosing how to interact with services, to understanding and influencing the decisions that affect them. This is at the heart of a person-centred approach.

This strategy commits to **building inclusive and democratic participation as a means to prevent homelessness**.

- 4.2 Homelessness is stark evidence of the level and breadth of inequality in society. Inclusive participation ensures that people who face inequalities have a greater say in how society, their community, and their local services need to work better for them. Greater Manchester has a proud history of social participation and has demonstrated that our democratic functions are made stronger and more equal if they have rich forms of participation around them.
- 4.3 When we think about participation to prevent homelessness we typically look to two key democratic functions in national government and local government, both of which allocate resources in ways that directly impact society and what people can access to help them live the life that they want. We should also look to businesses as places of power whose investment and corporate governance affects us all, most notably when it comes to resources for land and housebuilding.
- 4.4 This strategy notes that national government has the most significant power in preventing homelessness and we suggest in the Prevention section how it should use its powers to create the conditions needed to systemically prevent homelessness through policies that look to both the public and private sector.
- 4.5 Local government also holds powers that are relevant to preventing homelessness through the allocation of resources across local public services and administration of the Homelessness Reduction Act duties. It does not

always have control over many aspects of these resources, but it is the job of elected councillors to make decisions on how and where they are best spent to serve local communities. Public meetings, scrutiny forums and clinics are all vital means of participation with local councillors.

- 4.6 Ensuring that the interests of people who face the risk of homelessness are effectively heard in our democratic structures is critical to ensuring that the decisions made prevent homelessness for all. This means amplifying and valuing spaces for participation that are inclusive. This can and should include activity that looks to involve, challenge, scrutinise, imagine, reflect, and develop.
- 4.7 Greater Manchester is starting from a good place but can go further to sure up the resource and infrastructure that enables participatory activities, forums and networks to exist. We must value people's lived experience more fully within infrastructure for ongoing co-production and joint decision making, where people's expertise is paid for and facilitated through investment in personal development.
- 4.8 Some of these spaces and activities already exist, some will grow and evolve from what we already have. The details below highlight some of these spaces, which rightly will continue to evolve and change.
- Elected local authority executive, portfolio holders and Scrutiny Panels – accountable for services that prevent homelessness in the broader sense (education, employment, built environment etc.) and for preventing homelessness within the legal definition of the Homelessness Reduction Act, support under statutory Homelessness Prevention and Relief Duties.
  - Elected Mayor of Greater Manchester, Combined Authority portfolio holders (local authority Leaders and City Mayors) and Greater Manchester Scrutiny Panels – directly accountable for some services and statutory functions with an impact on homelessness and rough sleeping, including policing, transport, some skills and employment services and some elements of

spatial planning. However, also able to wield ‘soft power’ and exert influence outside of these specific domains through collaborating around shared priorities, using their political profile to lobby for change, and using the resources at their disposal to take action in areas beyond their direct statutory responsibility (e.g. establishing the A Bed Every Night programme)

- Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership, Clinical Commissioning Groups, NHS Trusts and others involved in planning and overseeing health care – directly accountable for delivering NHS services in Greater Manchester (including additional local delegation not available elsewhere in England) and for ensuring these meet the needs of diverse communities and vulnerable groups (including people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing homelessness).
- Collaborative networks, forums and groups; Local Homelessness Partnership Boards, Greater Manchester Homelessness Action Network, community and voluntary networks, Greater Manchester Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Board/Leader’s Group, community groups and communities of interest such as tenant’s unions and migrant women’s’ groups.

**4.9** Preventing homelessness by reducing inequalities and the drivers of homelessness requires us to build participation in these places, to strengthen the democratic process and hold leaders to account for delivering what matters to people.

**4.10** Homeless prevention continues to have a specific meaning contained within local authorities’ powers and legislated within the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. Statutory responsibilities and associated decisions regarding homelessness and related functions are wholly the responsibility of local authorities and sit within each individual authority’s democratic governance arrangements.

- 4.11 Greater Manchester Local Authorities are committed to working collaboratively to achieve the vision of this strategy. Priorities that involve statutory duties must be actioned through democratic decision making.
- 4.12 Business must also be a focus for greater participation and transparency to ensure that social value is accounted for. Certain forms of governance show the social value commitments of different kinds of businesses (such as social enterprises, co-operatives, registered housing providers) but we also need to engage for-profit business to better create the conditions for good lives and homelessness prevention. This includes employment practices and pay, land ownership and housebuilding, investment and intellectual property.
- 4.13 It is essential that Greater Manchester values inclusive participation to strengthen, influence, and inform decisions that enable a better society and homelessness prevention through the channels of power in government and business.

## 5. Prevention

- 5.1 We already carry out homelessness prevention activity, but we don't do it systematically. The aim is to embed prevention as a systematic approach through all Greater Manchester services with a specific focus on the stages at which people may be at risk of homelessness or repeat homelessness.
- 5.2 The goals we have set build on these stages as set out in a homelessness typology framework that follows:

# Mission

Everyone is able to sustain a home that is safe, decent and affordable.

Everyone leaves our places of care with a safe place to go (Care, Health Facility, Prison, Asylum)

Where people are at imminent risk of homelessness they are able to access quality

No one is forced to sleep rough and temporary accommodation supports respite, recovery and re-connection

Homelessness is not an entrenched or repeat experience

# Typology

## Universal

Preventing or minimising homelessness risks across the population at large e.g. poverty reduction across the whole population.

## Targeted

Upstream prevention focussed on high risk groups such as vulnerable young people, and risky transitions, such as leaving local authority care, prison, or mental health in-patient treatment e.g. transition pathways and support for prison leavers.

## Crisis

Preventing homelessness likely to occur within 56 days, in line with legislation across Great Britain on 'threatened with homelessness' e.g. provision of temporary accommodation.

## Emergency

Support for those at immediate risk of homelessness, especially sleeping rough e.g. provision of temporary accommodation.

## Recovery

Prevention of repeat homelessness and rough sleeping e.g. Housing First to prevent recurrence of homelessness.



5.3 As a core commitment that sits alongside working for people and building participation; embedding prevention is about how we structure and manage resources. We have a specific focus on how this works across Greater Manchester.

5.4 Greater Manchester's Model of Unified Public Services is strong blueprint for us to use to enable prevention to be embedded systematically. This means:

- Services are **geographically aligned** so that they are accessible, and joined up within a neighbourhood.
- Leadership and accountability is for place and system, as well as organisation and profession.
- There is the **look and feel of one workforce functioning together**, unrestricted by role titles or organisational boundaries – working for the place and people.
- Financial resources are shared through **joint commissioning** at different spatial levels, with a transparent understanding of full public spend.
- All strategic plans and programmes of work move in the same direction, and towards a common goal of integrated service delivery.
- There are **formal mechanisms to identify and remove blockages and barriers** to reaching our shared goals, and we use devolution to deliver on this.

5.5 These key features have already been agreed by Greater Manchester public services and this strategy highlights the critical role in embedding them to enable homelessness prevention. In reality the successful embedding of these key features will present in different ways.

5.6 On the ground, at the neighbourhood level, we would expect the prevention of homelessness at the universal and targeted levels to be a core function of

Integrated Neighbourhood teams. Expertise around housing and a range of interrelated issues would be part of the day-to-day work of these teams.

**5.7** At a locality level we would expect prevention of homelessness at the crisis and emergency levels to be a core function of single/integrated functions for triage, assessment, tasking and coordination. Both of these functions would work closely together and be able to pull on and deploy specialist and targeted support.

**5.8** Beyond the 'operating model' we would expect leadership for homelessness prevention fully connected and coordinated with wider work to tackle a range of social issues, the homelessness workforce working seamlessly with other disciplines beyond their traditional boundaries, the pooling of resources across services and communities and all coming together to understand and address blockage and system level barriers.

A completely new approach to public service delivery.

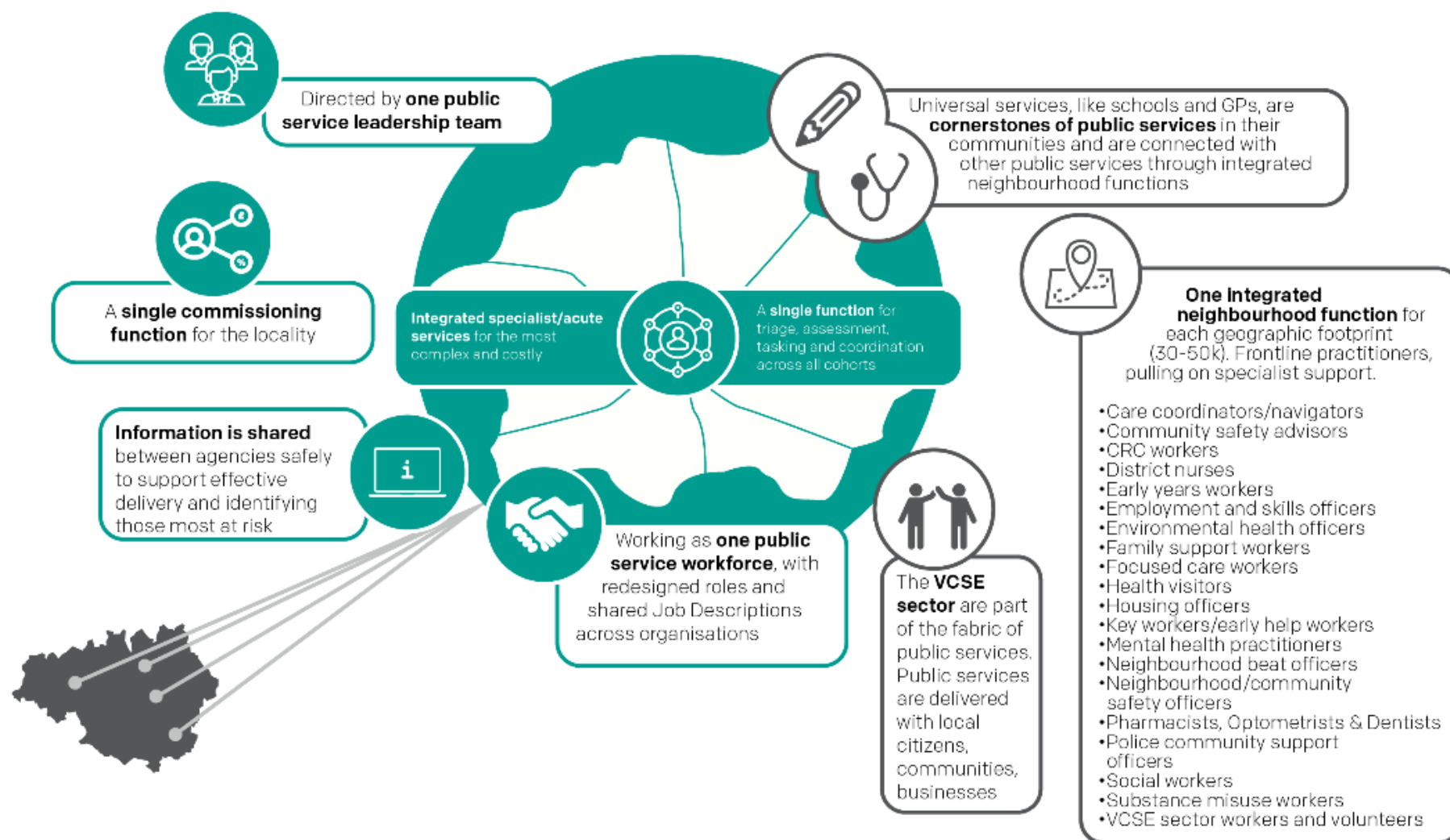
Breaking down the silos between public services, collaborating on prevention rather than individually picking up the pieces.

Promoting a model of public service delivery that is truly preventative, proactive and person-centred.

A single programme of transformation and reform across all disciplines

Further devolution, policy change, new regulatory environment

Supported by place-based pooled budget



5.9 A series of Legislative Theatre events helped us imagine what they would mean for people at risk of homelessness. The following recommendations were developed by Greater Manchester residents who have experienced homelessness and wider stakeholders, through performance, improvisation and dialogue with policy makers:

- Improve holistic training for frontline staff (mental health, addiction, trauma and client rights) that is designed and delivered by people who have experienced these services.
- Increase the number of people with lived experience employed across the sector including opportunities for peer advocates to enable redefining success criteria to be customer defined.
- Commissioning designed collaboratively rather than competitively which includes opportunities for bids developed by service providers and service users together in order to improve access to public services and inclusive health services such as dual diagnosis.
- Ensure smaller networks/specialist organisations are supported and adequately funded to enable them to deliver vital and culturally competent support to marginalised groups to reduce inequalities.
- Being truly inclusive and using participatory practises such as Legislative Theatre to support and design system change across Greater Manchester.

5.10 The devolution enabler leads us to how we work with national government. As explored above, the drivers of homelessness are impacted by economic trends and policy decisions well beyond our borders. For that reason, we must work with government if we are to deliver the ambitions we set out here.

5.11 There is a solid joint ambition to build on with government here: with shared commitments to end rough sleeping and tackle the root causes of

homelessness. There are also some challenges which need facing head-on, including national policy which we believe directly contributes to the homelessness we see in our city-region. We need a strong partnership with government: one which allows us to maximise the impact and efficiency of services on the ground with greater flexibility about how we use funding, one which allows for fair and constructive challenge in both directions and where we are clear about the specific policy changes we need to see nationally, and one which sees homelessness as the systemic issue it is and not as the siloed responsibility of a single Department or Minister nationally.

## **We will prioritise:**

- Securing the longer-term, more flexible funding we need to invest in prevention at scale
- Boosting housing supply
- Changes to welfare policy which drive people into homelessness
- Changes to asylum and immigration policy which drive people into homelessness
- Enabling an approach to health that tackles inequality
- Reducing homelessness and repeat offending for people in the criminal justice system

## **6. The Next Five Years**

- 6.1 This is no small challenge to set and how we organise ourselves and take responsibility for achieving these objectives will be critical to meeting them.
- 6.2 As with all big objectives, there is necessary complexity in what the response will need to be. This will take the form of policy change, specific projects and programmes, new or emerging technology, changes in governance arrangements, and much else. It will depend on partnerships, investment and risk-taking by stakeholders, and not everything will work.

- 6.3 It is with this context in mind that we set out a **mission plan** structured under the preventing homelessness challenge and the objectives that have been set beneath it.
- 6.4 We highlight priority areas for key activity that will be built upon to create solutions to bring about change. These will necessarily develop and change over time.
- 6.5 The ambitions under each stage of prevention, and the key activity within it, requires collaboration and partnership with all stakeholder to deliver. Many will require local democratic processes to interpret, adopt and embed them. It is the role of Greater Manchester Homelessness Prevention Strategy and the membership of Greater Manchester Homelessness Programme Board to ensure meaningful and committed buy in from across the strategic partnership.
- 6.6 Legal accountability falls on local authorities for specific functions to prevent and relieve homelessness under statutory criteria. It will be crucial that local authorities determine how they will take forward and deliver specific actions to implement the shared commitments within this strategy where they hold statutory functions and manage this within individual authority's governance arrangements.
- 6.7 All stakeholders should respond to the mission plan by mapping their contributions and their activity, embedding it in their strategies and business plans, and developing implementation plans. Stakeholders will detail activities across different spatial levels across and jurisdictions. The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) will play a central role in bringing this together to build **accountability through visibility**.

# Preventing homelessness in Greater Manchester

Everyone is able to sustain a home that is safe, decent and affordable

Everyone leaves our places of care with a safe place to go

People have access to quality advice, advocacy and support

No one is forced to sleep rough and temporary accommodation enables respite, recovery and re-connection

No experience of homelessness is entrenched or repeat

Stakeholders/  
Partners

Local Government, National Government, Social Housing Providers, GM Health and Social Care Partnership, Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Sector, DWP Job Centres, Private Business.

People

Participation

Prevention



## 7. Appendix 1 – Greater Manchester Good Practice Case Studies

**Everyone is able to sustain a home that is safe, decent and affordable**

### **Adverse Childhood Experiences**

Greater Manchester recognises the need to significantly **develop capability in the workforce** so that we are better at reducing, **preventing and mitigating the consequences of trauma, including Adverse Childhood Experiences.**

Research by Public Health Wales reports that the odds of homelessness are increased by 16 times for those who have experienced four or more Adverse Childhood Experiences. Understanding, recognising and being able to appropriately respond to trauma to prevent homelessness is critical. The need for a consistent standard of training in this area across organisation is key and in-line with our one workforce approach. An e-platform has been secured to provide training with unlimited licenses across health, local authority, VCSE, housing, police and probation to deliver training in trauma responsiveness to all frontline staff. This is currently being rolled out and forms part of the wider Greater Manchester Trauma, Adverse Childhood Experiences and Resilience Delivery



## Integrated neighbourhood teams

Wigan Council has developed a **place-based approach in each of its neighbourhoods** focused around seven 'Service Delivery Footprints'. This enables services to work together in a multiagency environment to **respond holistically** to the needs of individuals, families and the community at earlier stage. This approach works across a range of levels of needs, starting at universal but with a focus on targeted and crisis typologies. Frontline teams have developed **asset-based approach** to working with residents and communities, this meant that they were able to **respond to underlying issues** and change the nature of their relationship with residents and communities leading to better outcomes.

The full range of services for the public, including the VCSE sector collaborate at a neighborhood level by organising themselves around service delivery footprints and using regular 'huddles' to share information, using their combined skills to design their response around individual needs. They are able to work together to **identify and resolve barriers in the system** which get in the way of doing the right thing for each person, family or community.

## Everyone leaves our places of care with a safe place to go (care, health facility, prison, asylum)

### **Criminal Justice joint working**

The Justice Devolution Memorandum between the Ministry and Justice and GMCA affords us the strategic opportunity to shape probation reform to benefit the lives of Greater Manchester residents and their communities. The Probation Service is to be reunified June 2021 providing opportunities to enhance the offer incorporating learning from the SIB and Housing First programmes. We have worked with Greater Manchester colleagues across probation, local authority and VCSE to understand how we can create better outcomes for individuals who leave prison with potentially no fixed abode. A new service to support individuals to access accommodation will be co-commissioned which focuses on the transition from custody to the community and provides support for individuals to sustain their accommodation to prevent homelessness and reduce likelihood of reoffending. The service will provide tailored strength-based support and draw on the experience, innovation and skill within the private and voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors (VCSE) to achieve sustainable outcomes for individuals.

### **Supporting young people**

The Young Persons Prevention Pathfinder is a one-year pilot aimed at preventing homelessness in young people aged between 18-35 years old and learning what works. The development of core design principles for the programme has been informed by analysis of data and a partnership approach through discussions with local authorities and engagement with local VCSE organisations.

The principal outcomes for the young people referred to the Pathfinder will be to prevent them becoming homeless, by interventions (e.g. mediation) to keep them in family homes / current accommodation provision or through accessing and sustaining suitable alternative stable housing. Short and long term ambitions for the Pathfinder focus on linking young people into the opportunities and offers that are available to them in Greater Manchester such as employment and training support, health services in addition to specific initiatives designed to support care leavers.

## Where people are at imminent risk of homelessness they are able to access quality advice, advocacy and support

### **An integrated response to helping homeless families**

Rochdale Borough Council have a policy of not placing families in temporary accommodation outside of the borough, unless there is a requirement for emergency accommodation. As soon as a family presents as homeless links are immediately made to early help via the Early Help and Safeguarding Hub (EHASH) enabling the early identification of family support if it is required.

A specific housing triage role placed in Strategic Housing acts as a first point of contact to check if families are already open at Early Help/Social Care and can then get an immediate link into the work/issues being presented. The Housing triage officer is also the first point of access for all early help practitioners to ask questions, problem solve and get the right support for families – it's the “one stop shop” for housing issues and means that staff always have access to someone who has up to date knowledge on housing policy. Quick access to the service is key, so “referrals” can be made via phone or email and are turned around within 24 hours. Importantly the triage service is able to look at range of information and data to help clarify or verify information and analyse available options. In some cases, the service then brokers a solution between a range of different service providers.

This officer also regularly delivers training in localities to early help and school staff and attends social care team meetings. Due to the links with Housing triage and early help the work to help homeless families becomes preventative and allows issues to be identified and support put in place earlier.

## **No one is forced to sleep rough and temporary accommodation supports respite, recovery and re-connection**

### **Supporting people on the streets**

The Street Engagement Hub, Manchester, is a multi-agency service supporting people facing multiple disadvantage who are engaging in street activity. People are able to find consistent and trusted help within their local neighbourhood and where needed they can draw down upon specialist support.

Street activity can include begging, anti-social behaviour, rough sleeping, drug consumption and sex work. The Hub is a mobile outreach service with a regular physical hub that includes a range of traditional public service responses working together as one team and pooling resources around the individual. This joint service response includes policing, homelessness, drug and alcohol support, voluntary and community responses, immediate medical care, prison and probation, mental health, welfare, social care, and employment.

The Hub works inclusively to support people's immediate needs, focus on safeguarding, and supporting people to get the help they want from services in a coordinated way. This helps people who are in an emergency and need support to recover from repeat homelessness.

### **Safeguarding families**

Greater Manchester has come together to review and improve the experience of families in temporary accommodation through a Homeless Families Task and Finish Group. This group is focused on four key areas of activity aimed at reducing harm and supporting family wellbeing. They have been worked up through collective understanding of the experiences and issues that families face in temporary accommodation, with a multi-agency and multi-sector appreciation of risk, responsibility, and opportunity. The activity areas are: Greater Manchester Code of Conduct and Minimum Quality Standards for Hotel Accommodation used as temporary accommodation for families, agreed early help and children's support offer, inclusion health approaches for homeless families, and use of VCSE sector support networks.

## Homelessness is not an entrenched or repeat experience

### Non-conditional support

Housing First is an internationally recognised model based on clear principles of non-conditional and person-centred support. It is a housing led service supporting individuals experiencing multiple disadvantages where types of housing and support has been ineffective at sustaining recovery from homelessness. Individuals have access to intensive support based on 1:7 caseloads and are offered accommodation without usual conditionality. Housing is the first stage of the journey to recovery, not the last.

Housing First brings services together around an individual and takes a person-centred approach to support them at their pace and on their priorities. This supports individuals to break the cycle of repeat homelessness. Current success shows that 88% of individuals are sustaining their tenancies preventing recurring experiences of homelessness. Moreover, individuals on the programme have gone on to reconnect with their family, reduce substance use and take up voluntary or paid work. There is no single model of housing and support that is likely to be effective for all individuals experiencing homelessness, however, there are universal learnings from housing as an intervention designed to be trauma informed, strengths based and informed by those with lived experience.

## **No Wrong Door approach**

Inspiring Change Manchester (ICM) is an 8-year Fulfilling Lives Programme, led by Shelter, in partnership with Community-Led Initiatives, Self-Help Services and Back-On-Track. ICM works with people experiencing multiple disadvantages, who face barriers to accessing support and may be isolated within society. ICM follow a No Wrong Door approach, supporting people through a multi-agency partnership that strives to be asset focused, psychologically informed and Person-centred. Through a motivational ladder of engagement, the focus is for people to identify their own strengths, to feel empowered to develop within and beyond the programme. Support is not time-limited and can be offered for as long as is needed for the person to help move forward. This is embedded through the ICM membership model, which supports people through creative engagement to be part of the ICM community in different ways over time, breaking down the dichotomy of 'user' and 'worker'. Recognising community approaches of peer support, co-production and involvement in systems change as an important part of someone's journey.

## **Community and peer support**

A KeyRing network offers support through a trained team of staff and volunteers. It builds peer and community support options. The network makes use of existing resources in the area and connects people into them. This means better outcomes for the people they support and better value for money. Each network has nine or more network members (people they support) who live close by.

The KeyRing approach, Oldham, is based on designing services around individuals and communities, their connections, their skills, and their ambitions. They work with people who have experienced homelessness and those who struggle to maintain a tenancy due to physical/mental health problems, addiction, or struggle due to a learning disability.

KeyRing connects people with their local community, so that they can be more involved and even better connected. They believe that the more connected a person is with friends, neighbours and other people in their community ensures there are lots of different people who can support you when you need it. This also helps people on their journey from reliance to independence.

## 8. Appendix 2 - Data Notes

- 8.1 This note provides additional information about the data used to produce many of the statistics presented in this strategy. In particular, it highlights key information about where data is missing, and the use of non-official statistics. It is intended to provide additional context for the data used, rather than a full explanation of the data's limitations.

The data sources used are presented below.

- 8.2 MHCLG H-CLIC Data - The MHCLG H-CLIC data for 2019/20 is incomplete. At the Greater Manchester level, some information for Wigan is missing from the nationally published statistics. Where the yearly dataset for 2019/20 is used, this means that Wigan is excluded from any statistics.
- 8.3 Where possible, missing information from the 19/20 yearly data has been supplemented with the published quarterly returns, such that only information for Wigan between July and September 2019 is missing from statistics. It is indicated in in-text references when this is the case (see MHCLG Statutory homelessness: detailed local authority-level tables: April 2019 to March 2020, supplemented with quarterly returns).
- 8.4 Population and Ethnicity Data - These population statistics are estimates, based on the 2011 Census, and are not official ONS statistics. They provide a broad view of the GM population by ethnicity but should be treated with caution. As no data was available for Wigan for the breakdown of duties owed by ethnicity, this Local Authority has also been excluded in the population estimate.
- 8.5 **For Rough Sleeping Information:** MHCLG (2021). Annual Rough Sleeping Snapshot in England: autumn 2020 (25/02/2021).
- 8.6 **For Main Duties Owed 2009/10 to 2017/18:** MHCLG (2018). Table 784: Local authorities' actions under the homelessness provisions of the 1985 and 1996 Housing Acts: Financial years 2004/05 to 2017/18 (Revised) (13/12/18).

**8.7 For Main, Prevention and Relief Duties Owed 2017-18 Financial Year:**

MHCLG (2020). Statutory homelessness: Detailed local authority-level tables: April 2018 to March 2019 (01/10/2020).

**8.8 For Information from 2019-2020 Financial Year:** MHCLG (2020). Statutory homelessness: Detailed local authority-level tables: April 2019 to March 2020 (01/10/2020).

Supplemented (where possible) with:

- MHCLG (2020). Statutory homelessness: Detailed local authority-level tables: April to June 2019 (19/03/2020).
- MHCLG (2020). Statutory homelessness: Detailed local authority-level tables: July to September 2019 (21/05/2020).
- MHCLG (2020). Statutory homelessness: Detailed local authority-level tables: October to December 2019 (20/08/2020).
- MHCLG (2020). Statutory homelessness: Detailed local authority-level tables: January to March 2020 (October 2020).

**8.9 For GM Population by Ethnicity: ONS (2020).** Population denominators by broad ethnic group and for White British, local authorities in England and Wales: 2019 (26/08/2020).