
Homelessness Services Update

Date of meeting: HSC - 11th November 2025

Assistant Mayor for Housing: Cllr Elly Cutkelvin

Lead director: Chris Burgin

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Julie Turner, Continuous Improvement Manager, Homelessness Services
- Author contact details: julie.turner@leicester.gov.uk
- Report version number: v1.2

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on homeless in the City for 2024/25 and progress in relation to Leicester's Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- 1.2 The rising levels of homelessness reported to Scrutiny in August 2024 have not reduced, indeed, numbers of homeless households have been increasing. This picture is reflected nationally as well as locally, although there has been ongoing significant work over the last year, which has and will continue, to improve services for homeless people.
- 1.3 National picture of rising levels of homelessness:
 - 4,667 people sleeping rough on a single night in Autumn 2024 England. This represents a 20% increase compared to the previous year and a 164% increase since 2010.
 - On 31 March 2025 131,140 households were in temporary accommodation, which is an increase of 11.8% from 31 March 2024. Households with children in temporary accommodation increased by 11.6% to 83,150
 - Singles households increased by 12.0% to 47,990 since 31 March 2024.
- 1.4 In 2024/25, the general fund expenditure was £25.4m with an overspend of £4.2m (compared to a £7m forecast) this was despite a £10m additional budget allocation in 24/25 to meet the statutory homelessness obligations.

2. Background

2.1 Picture of homelessness in Leicester

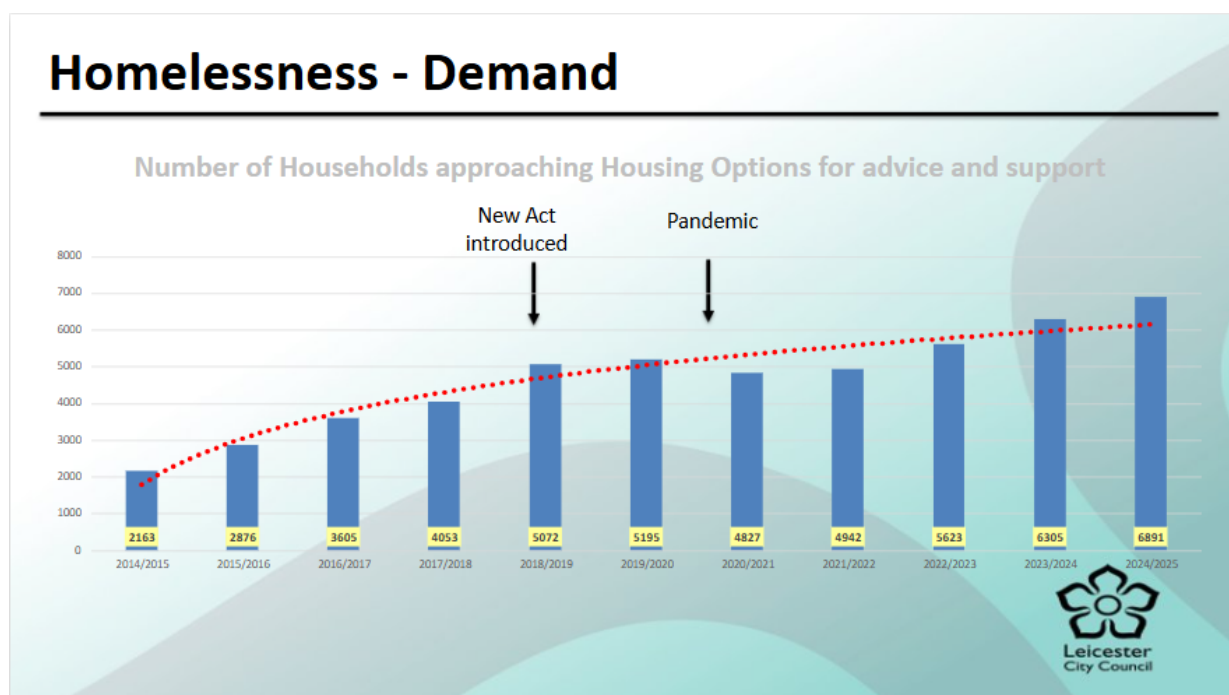
2.1.1 Year on year increases in the number of people seeking support

The number of households contacting homelessness services for help has risen substantially and over the last decade (since 2014/15), we have seen a 219% increase in the number of people contacting the service. There has been a 9% increase when compared to the last two financial years from 2023/24 to 2024/25. The main reason for homelessness remains, the end of private rented tenancies and being asked to leave family/friends accommodation. See graph & table below.

The numbers of unique individuals who are / were rough sleeping has also increased year on year (from last year an 8% increase).

On Leicester's annual verified count, the number of individuals found rough sleeping on a single night increased on the previous year, this was 61 in 2024 (26 in 2023) a 135% increase. The 2024 count occurred when the severe weather protocol was in place, meaning that anyone rough sleeping or saying they were going to sleep rough was provided with temporary accommodation and numbers accommodated as part of the severe weather protocol were included in the verified count figure.

	2023/24	2024/25	% increase
Number of people contacting homelessness services	6,305	6,891	9%
Number of unique individuals rough sleeping	592	640	8%
Number of individuals sleeping rough on single night	26	61	135%



2.1.2 Homelessness key performance indicators

Colour code:

Red: Below National Average

Amber: In line with National Average

Green: Above the National Average

Table 1. Households with children in temporary accommodation per (000)

	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26
Leicester	3.72	3.89	3.74	3.48	3.48
England	3.24	3.33	3.35	3.41	Not published

Table 2. Number of families in B&B over 6 weeks

Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26
247	223	187	39	13

* Bed and Breakfast (B&B) style accommodation includes other nightly paid accommodation with shared facilities.

B&B should only be used for households with children where there is no suitable accommodation available. Placements for 6 weeks or more breach statutory regulations. As the above figures indicate the authority has worked hard to reduce the number of families in B&B over 6 weeks and is working to ensure that no family is in B&B for over 6 weeks.

Table 3. Percentage of duties owed where homelessness was prevented*

	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26
Leicester	25.3%	27.0%	37.8%	32.0%	32.1%
England	22.1%	22.6%	24.6%	22.2%	Not published

* This includes activities to enable an applicant to remain in their current home or find alternative accommodation to prevent them from becoming homeless

Table 4. Percentage of duties ending in accommodation*

	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 25/26
Leicester	37.4%	34.9%	41.9%	34.3%	34.3
England	38.5%	39.3%	40.7%	39.4%	Not published

* This includes activities to enable an applicant to remain in their current home or find alternative accommodation to prevent them from becoming homeless, or accommodation to relieve homelessness that is available for at least 6 months

Table 5. Percentage of main duties owed that ended in accommodation*

	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	Q1 /25/26
Leicester	82.4%	84.9%	82.9%	90.4%	90.4%
England	78.3%	77.5%	79.4	77.7%	Not published

* Main duty is the duty a local authority has towards an applicant who is unintentionally homeless, eligible for assistance and has priority need, and whose homelessness was not successfully prevented or relieved by the local authority. Accommodation can be a private rented or social housing offer.

Table 6. Number of people sleeping rough on a single night

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2025/26	46			
2024/25	26	30	46	30
2023/24	11	32	22	27

Table 7. Number of people sleeping rough over the month who are long term*

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2025/26	19			
2024/25	37	30	26	24
2023/24	17	26	23	46

* Defined as people who have been seen sleeping rough in 3 or more months out of the last year

2.1.2 Further increases in the number of families in temporary accommodation but reduction in the number of single people in temporary accommodation

As of mid-July, there were 600 families in temporary accommodation. This continues to increase and is higher than levels in previous decades. However, positively the council has reduced the number of families in bed and breakfast/hotel accommodation and significantly reduced the number of families in bed and breakfast/hotel accommodation for more than 6 weeks.

There were 12 families in bed and breakfast/hotel accommodation for more than 6 weeks as of July 2025 which compares to 188 in July 2024 which is a 93% reduction. In July 2025, there are a total of 76 households in bed and breakfast/hotel accommodation in general which compares to 262 families in bed and breakfast/hotel accommodation at the same point in the previous year which is a 71% reduction.

The use of hotels in accommodating families and singles is a last resort. It is recognised that hotels are not ideal for families or for the authority in terms of cost. To continue supporting a reduction in hotel usage, the Council are investing in their own self-contained temporary accommodation units to ensure more suitable temporary accommodation can continue be provided for homeless households.

There is a different picture for singles in temporary accommodation compared with June 2024, with a reduction of the total number of singles in temporary accommodation. As of July 2025, there were a total of 415 singles in temporary, of which 88 singles in bed & breakfast accommodation (compared with 552, of which 159 in bed & breakfast accommodation). A 25% reduction in total numbers and a 45% reduction in individuals in bed & breakfast accommodation when compared to the same point in 2024.

2.1.3 Lack of settled accommodation options

Either to prevent homelessness or when it does occur to enable a move-on from temporary accommodation there needs to be a range of affordable settled housing solutions, this could be in the private rented sector, housing association or council housing.

The housing crisis means that there are shortages of settled accommodation options and people are waiting longer in bed & breakfast / hotel accommodation. Currently the average length of stay for a family in temporary accommodation is over 5 and half months. In April 2025, the average waiting time for a 1-bed property on the housing register was 7 months with the highest priority, for a 2-bed property on the housing register was 1 and a half years, 1 year 10 months for a 3-bed property.

2.1.4 Continued investment locally in services for homeless households

Leicester has a wide range of accommodation and other support services for homeless people ([Service Directory | Support for Homeless in Leicester](#)) these include:

- Specialist temporary accommodation for homeless people across the city provided by a wide range of different specialist organisations providing accommodation and support services.
- Outreach and navigator support for individuals sleeping rough
- Specialist primary health care and mental health services provided by Inclusion Health Care and the Homeless Mental Health Service
- Specialist drug and alcohol services provided by Turning Point, Inclusion Health Care (No 5 Recovery Hub) & Dear Albert
- A range of support service provision provided by Leicester YMCA, The Bridge – Homelessness to Hope, Centre Project, Help the Homeless and other local voluntary and community groups.
- Leicester's Homelessness Charter & Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Homeless Alliance coordinating and advocating for services committed to tackling homelessness

2.2 Actions & Improvements in 2024/25

The Council and partner organisation have agreed actions arising from Leicester's Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy. Detailed below is key progress made over the year by each of the four main aims of the strategy.

2.2.1 **Prevention** (wherever possible stop people becoming homeless or rough sleeping for the first time)

- Increased capacity within the homelessness prevention and support teams
- Delivering formal homelessness training to staff
- New domestic abuse coordinator role
- Reviewing prison release pathway and launching dedicated single point of contact for planned prison releases
- Reviewing hospital discharge pathways with housing enablement team (NHS)
- Private rented sector (PRS) incentive of up to 60% above Local Housing Allowance (LHA) now available for homeless households to assist access and affordability in the PRS
- Multi-Disciplinary Centre located at the Dawn Centre. Building work is on-going and is expected to be completed by the end of the financial year.
- Introduced the Ending Rough Sleeper Tool (ERSAT) to assess individuals who do not qualify for statutory homelessness support to provide an additional safety net of support
- Expansion of the PRS team and funding for deposit schemes to enable more homeless households/ households at risk of homelessness to access the private rented sector

2.2.2 **Intervention** (improve early action and support so homelessness is a brief as possible, and that individuals rough sleeping are supported to move off the streets)

- Action Homeless has opened new temporary units funded by Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP) and East Midlands Homes are open their new units shortly.
- Significant reductions in number of families in B&B over 6 weeks
- Ongoing programme of Council acquisitions of self-contained temporary accommodation with the first families due to move in this summer. There will be

over 150 family homes of council owned temporary accommodation reducing the number of families in hotels.

- Inclusion healthcare recommissioned to provide primary care services to homeless families as well as single people & asylum seekers
- Working in partnership with Changing Futures
- Extending the homelessness navigator support role to support people to access the private rented sector. During the initial pilot (3-month period 2024/25) Help the Homeless supported 53 verified rough sleepers, 25 of whom were successful supported into private rented tenancies.
- Strengthening adult safeguarding responses to homelessness & self-neglect to increase access to Care Act assessments

2.2.3 Recovery (enable access to settled housing and support for those who need support, so homelessness doesn't reoccur. Enhance support for those who have slept rough to ensure they don't return to the streets)

- Additional Transitions Support Workers to support families and singles in temporary accommodation
- STAR support available for individuals housed in council owned homes
- Ongoing delivery of affordable housing programme in Leicester
- Easy Move package available for council tenants to 'downsize' freeing up more family homes

Case example of the multi-agency works to help individuals recover from homelessness:

'Dave' (not his real name) moved to Leicester to be near his children in July 2021. His last stay in temporary accommodation broke down in Oct 2023, when he was evicted from temporary accommodation for threatening staff with a crowbar. Since this incident Dave was seen rough sleeping in Leicester.

Dave has learning disabilities and is dyslexic. Dave is a poly user of illicit substances. He has historic offending and poor engagement with all support services.

Dave was refusing of temporary accommodation however during winter 2024/25 we were able to offer alternative accommodation that Dave accepted. After a couple of nights in B&B accommodation Dave moved into the Dawn Centre. On his arrival and for the first few weeks, he displayed erratic, challenging behaviour towards staff and a self-presented at hospital due to his poor mental health.

Dave slowly started to positively engage with his navigator, transition officer and changing futures worker - through joint support sessions, this multi-agency approach was beneficial and enabled Dave to communicate his needs. This resulted in an appropriate move on being identified and facilitated. Dave was accommodated by Adult Social Care at a supported housing project in May 2025.

2.2.4 Working in partnership (enhance partnership working to improve services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness)

- Families summit to bring partners together and agreed an action plan to provide additional support families and children in temporary accommodation. Additional support for homeless families in temporary accommodation include:
- Support to families with meals, activities, essential items and advice about securing settled accommodation
- Support to provide furniture/white goods and other practical support when moving into settled accommodation
- A forum for families; including children's activities, advice and guidance, practical support and a peer support network
- Government funding 25/26 enabling homelessness partners to continue to help tackle rough sleeping locally
- Prison Steering Group Meetings co-ordinated by Homeless Charter

3. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

3.1 Financial implications

The increased presentations of homelessness cases in the city continues to add financial pressure to the council due to grant funding and housing benefit being insufficient to cover the rising costs of temporary accommodation. A further £10m was added to the budget in 2024/25 to ease the burden in this area, however this adds extra pressure to the council's general fund budget and the ability to balance it. With this, for 2024/25, homelessness still had an overspend of £4.2m. This additional budget has been retained for 2025/26 and future years, with current forecasts projecting a £3m overspend this financial year. Finance is liaising closely with the Housing team to monitor the ongoing pressures and offer support to mitigate any challenges as much as possible.

Signed: Jade Draper, Principal Accountant

Dated: 26/08/2025

3.2 Legal implications

As the report identifies, the demands on the Council remain high and the Council struggles to meet its statutory obligations to homeless persons. This is a common picture across the country. In particular, families are being accommodated in temporary accommodation (frequently Bed & Breakfast accommodation) for significant periods of time. The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003 limits the use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation for families and pregnant women to no more than six weeks and then only in exceptional circumstances where no other accommodation is available. An acquisition programme has been operated over the last year to help to alleviate the Council's use of hotels, which is continuing.

Signed: Zoe Iliffe, Principal Lawyer (Property Highways & Planning)

Dated: 27/08/25

3.3 Equalities implications

When carrying out its functions (including decision making, policy and service development, projects and service delivery) the Council must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (Equality Act 2010) by paying due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not.

In doing so, the council/ decision makers must consider the possible impact on those who are likely to be affected by the recommendation and their protected characteristics. Protected groups under the Equality Act are age, disability (including mental health as well as physical disabilities), gender re-assignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

This report provides an update on homeless in the City for 2024/25 and progress in relation to Leicester's Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy. Housing is a human right and the strategy outlines Leicester's commitment to ending rough sleeping and tackling all forms of homelessness. The impacts of homelessness can be devastating for individuals and families. It can affect both physical and mental health, educational and employment opportunities (for both adults and children) and has long term consequences for those affected. The local authority has a statutory duty to secure accommodation for unintentionally homeless households who fall into a 'priority need' category. The Council also provides advice and other assistance to help prevent homelessness and has an enhanced offer to help more households than its statutory duty.

Certain categories of household, such as pregnant women, families with children, young care leavers and households that are homeless due to an emergency such as a fire or flood, have priority need if homeless. Other groups may be assessed as having priority need because they are vulnerable if homeless due to, for example, old age, or physical or mental ill health, or because they are vulnerable as a result of being in prison, or care or as a result of becoming homeless due to domestic abuse. Those affected by homelessness are likely to include individuals from across various protected characteristics. Support provided to homeless people and those facing homelessness helps to develop skills to live independently in their own homes. This includes integration into the community, taking part in leisure activities and support to find education, training or employment. Continued partnership work that strengthens ways of working together across agencies, disciplines and sectors, should lead to positive impacts for people from across all protected characteristics.

Signed: Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh, Ext 37 4148

Dated: 20 August 2025

3.4 Climate Emergency implications

There are limited climate emergency implications directly associated with this report. More widely, housing is one of the largest sources of carbon emissions in Leicester, responsible for 33% of emissions. Following the council's declaration of a Climate Emergency addressing these emissions is vital to meeting our ambition, particularly where the council has a higher level of influence and control. As such projects aiming to provide accommodation should consider opportunities to reduce carbon emissions as appropriate and relevant, for example through ensuring that properties are well insulated and have high-quality and low carbon heating. Improving energy efficiency should also help to ensure that housing is comfortable for occupants, reduce energy bills and help to limit maintenance costs.

Signed: Phil Ball, Sustainability Officer, Ext 372246

Dated: 20 August 2025

3.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

N/A

6. Background information and other papers:

Previous homelessness update to Housing Scrutiny 27/08/2024

Leicester's Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy reported to Housing Scrutiny
19/09/2023 [Leicester's homelessness strategy 2023-2028](#)

7. Summary of appendices: N/A

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)? No

9. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why? No, update report.