

North Yorkshire Council

Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

10 June 2026

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030 – Progress Update

Report of the Corporate Director Community Development

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the committee with an update on progress being made during the first 6 months of the 5-year Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Local authorities are required to publish a homelessness strategy setting out their approach to preventing and relieving homelessness. The update provides an overview of delivery since the strategy was approved in November 2025.
- 2.2 The Strategy (Appendix A) is supported by a five-year action plan. Progress against Year One is set out in Appendix B.
- 2.3 Progress will also be reported through the North Yorkshire Homelessness Partnership to support transparency and partnership accountability.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Homelessness and rough sleeping remain significant and complex challenges nationally, with sustained increases in both visible and hidden homelessness driven by housing supply pressures and wider economic factors.
- 3.2 Key drivers include reduced access to affordable housing, pressures within the private rented sector, and constrained support services.
- 3.3 North Yorkshire reflects these national trends, alongside specific local challenges including:
- A large and rural geography
 - Increased demand for services
 - Limited housing supply
- 3.4 The Strategy review ensures the Council's approach remains evidence-led, responsive, and aligned with national policy.
- 3.5 Nationally, Government has set an ambition to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring, supported by housing investment and reform, alongside increased system pressures including record use of temporary accommodation.
- 3.6 The national framework focuses on:
- Prevention
 - Intervention
 - Recovery

- 3.7 Local authorities are responsible for delivering against these priorities through local strategies and partnership working.
- 3.8 Key challenges reflected locally include:
- Increased use and cost of temporary accommodation
 - Limited availability of social and private rented housing
 - Ongoing drivers such as evictions and domestic abuse
- 3.9 While demand remains high, prevention activity is having a positive impact, reducing acceptances and supporting better outcomes. Continued delivery of the action plan is essential to sustain this.
- 3.10 The government recognises that we are best placed to understand the drivers of homelessness and are therefore responsible for developing local strategies, targets and action plans that reflect local need while contributing to national goals. Local authorities must publish and regularly update action plans, including targets to improve performance against the Outcomes Framework metrics, working in partnership with health, criminal justice, housing providers and the voluntary sector.
- 3.11 While considerable progress has been made to date, homelessness remains a challenge in North Yorkshire with sustained levels of presentations. This places increased demand on temporary accommodation and subsequently increases financial pressures to the Council. Furthermore, the individual impact of homelessness can be substantial, often resulting in long term consequences such as diminished opportunities and greater inequalities. Efforts to prevent homelessness are showing positive results through reductions in the number of households accepted as statutorily homeless. It is essential to build upon these achievements by implementing identified actions.

4.0 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 4.1 In 2025/26, 5,559 households were supported with housing advice and homelessness prevention—a 3% increase on the previous year.
- 4.2 Of these, 2,641 households made a homelessness application (5% increase, +123 households).
- 4.3 Prevention and relief outcomes increased to 1,121 households (42% of assessments), contributing to a reduction in full homelessness acceptances from 716 to 630 (-86 households).
- 4.4 Prevention is increasingly challenging due to reduced access to both social and private housing. Services are prioritising earlier intervention and strengthening partnership working.
- 4.5 **Emergency and temporary accommodation**
- Total households in temporary accommodation as of 31 March 20-26: **267** (+4%, +11 households)
 - Emergency accommodation increased by 27% during the year
 - 78 void units in temporary accommodation currently impacting capacity
 - Work is ongoing to reduce voids and reliance on bed and breakfast and other high-cost placements.

5.0 HIGHLIGHTS OVER THE YEAR 25/26

- 5.1 MEAM Pilot
The Harrogate Making every adult matter, MEAM pilot launched in April 2026, bringing together housing, health, social care and outreach services to better support individuals facing multiple disadvantage.
- 5.2 Registered Provider Homelessness Partnership
Three partnership meetings, have strengthened collaboration with Registered Providers, focusing on:
- Strategic alignment
 - Housing allocation processes
 - Temporary accommodation pressures
 - Joint training opportunities
- 5.3 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Partnerships
Two forums (East and West) engaged 62 attendees, including 27 partners. Key topics included safeguarding risks, migration, housing access, and partnership initiatives.
- 5.4 Combined Authority Funding
Funding awarded to the CA includes:
- £100,000 (2025/26) Rough Sleeping Prevention and Recovery Grant
 - £142,912 annually (2026–2030, provisional)
- 5.5 This supports a coordinated regional approach and development of a joint action plan (due Autumn 2026).
- 5.6 Young People's Accommodation Pathway
- Recommissioned service launched February 2026
 - 171 supported units across North Yorkshire
 - 375 young people assisted during 25/26; 132 moved into supported accommodation
 - 67 currently on waiting list
 - The focus remains on preventing homelessness and supporting independence.
- 5.7 Rough Sleeping North Yorkshire
The team continue to work hard to identify those customers rough sleeping across North Yorkshire developing robust pathways to get them off the streets. Whilst numbers have increased in all areas, we have seen greater pressures in Scarborough with an influx of rough sleepers from out of area. Unauthorised encampment procedures adopted December 2024, which utilise a multi-agency approach between the rough sleeper team, police and enforcement has seen a positive reduction in numbers in Scarborough and enables a more robust management with bespoke support for those displaced.
- 5.8 The rough sleeping pathway allows the team to consider innovative solutions to resolving issues in the short, medium and long term and we have seen a positive increase in the numbers moving into alternative accommodation options. Positively the nightly rough sleeper count for North Yorkshire 25/26 saw a reduction in numbers by 11 people, this reflects the consistencies of recording being carried out across all areas and a continued robust approach in both identifying and assessing applicants.
- 5.9 Severe weather protocol (SWEP)
SWEP is a dedicated provision offered by authorities to prevent death on the streets during extreme weather and allows additional support from the rough sleeper team through engagement to determine alternative appropriate accommodation provision. This was activated throughout North Yorkshire between November 2025 and March 2026 reflecting the extreme cold temperatures and during this period 143 placements were made in both Bed and Breakfast and bespoke SWEP placements across North Yorkshire. These

numbers reflect an increase on last year's figure and highlight's the need for additional assessments by the team utilising a multi-agency approach to identify those most at risk prior to activation. Additionally, November 2025 saw ministerial guidance reflecting the need to include Rough Sleepers in our safeguarding protocols and the need to consider the additional needs of the group.

5.10 Ending Homelessness in Communities Fund

In February 26, a new MHCLG grant was announced, the Ending Homelessness in Communities Fund (EHCF). This is a grant from central government designed to support local voluntary, community and faith sector organisations to develop better support to those experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping in their local areas. While these bids are primarily conceived and structured by these organisations, require local authority endorsement in the application process.

5.11 The Council supported eight bids from voluntary and community organisations, strengthening partnerships and aligning local provision with strategic priorities.

6.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

6.1 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sits below.

Housing Strategy Theme - Our People: The Housing Strategy has identified the following priorities for this theme:

- Preventing and tackling homelessness
- Recognising the needs of our population at different life stages
- Meeting supported housing needs and the needs of specific groups

7.0 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

7.1 Delivery is overseen through Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Forums and the North Yorkshire Partnership, ensuring consistent and high-quality service delivery.

7.2 The service submits regular statutory returns to Government and monitors local performance through ongoing reporting.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Council will receive £3.5m in 26/27 in homelessness prevention and rough sleeping funding.

8.2 From 2026/27, funding will be consolidated into a single grant with revised allocation formulas reflecting local pressures.

8.3 Key changes include:

- Greater focus on prevention
- Direct allocation to councils
- Restrictions on use for temporary accommodation costs

8.4 Temporary accommodation will be funded separately through the Local Government Finance Settlement, with ongoing financial pressures remaining.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 As stated above, it is a legal requirement for the Council to have an up-to-date Homelessness Strategy. This was the first one for the new unitary authority and as such we

worked with a national charity to ensure we were accessing best practice and input to identify innovative solutions to improve our services for the next five years.

- 9.2 The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025 meets the requirements set out in the legislation and guidance.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment was completed as part of the strategy.

11.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 A Climate Change Impact Assessment was completed as part of the strategy.

12.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 The Council has met its statutory duty to have a strategy in place by 2025, covering until 2030.

13.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 13.1 The Committee is asked to note the progress made against the Year One Action Plan.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: none

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030
Appendix B - Year One Action Plan

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.