

Homelessness Review

Briefing for Environment and Communities Committee

April 2024

Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk



Why did we do a review?

- **Legal requirement** to develop a fresh Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy every five years. (Good practice regardless).
- **Major changes** to the economy, to society and to the housing market in the last five years.
- Strategy needs to be led by **data** and **professional and lived** experience

How did we carry out the review?

QUANTITATIVE DATA

Over 2,600 council records
from four years

...plus partner data

QUALITATIVE DATA

Questionnaire to local
partners

Group sessions

LIVED EXPERIENCE

Group sessions with
people with current / past
lived experience of
homelessness



Key findings

- **Homeless applications doubled** between 2020-2022 due to increases in:

**Private Rented
Sector** tenancies
ending

People fleeing
domestic abuse

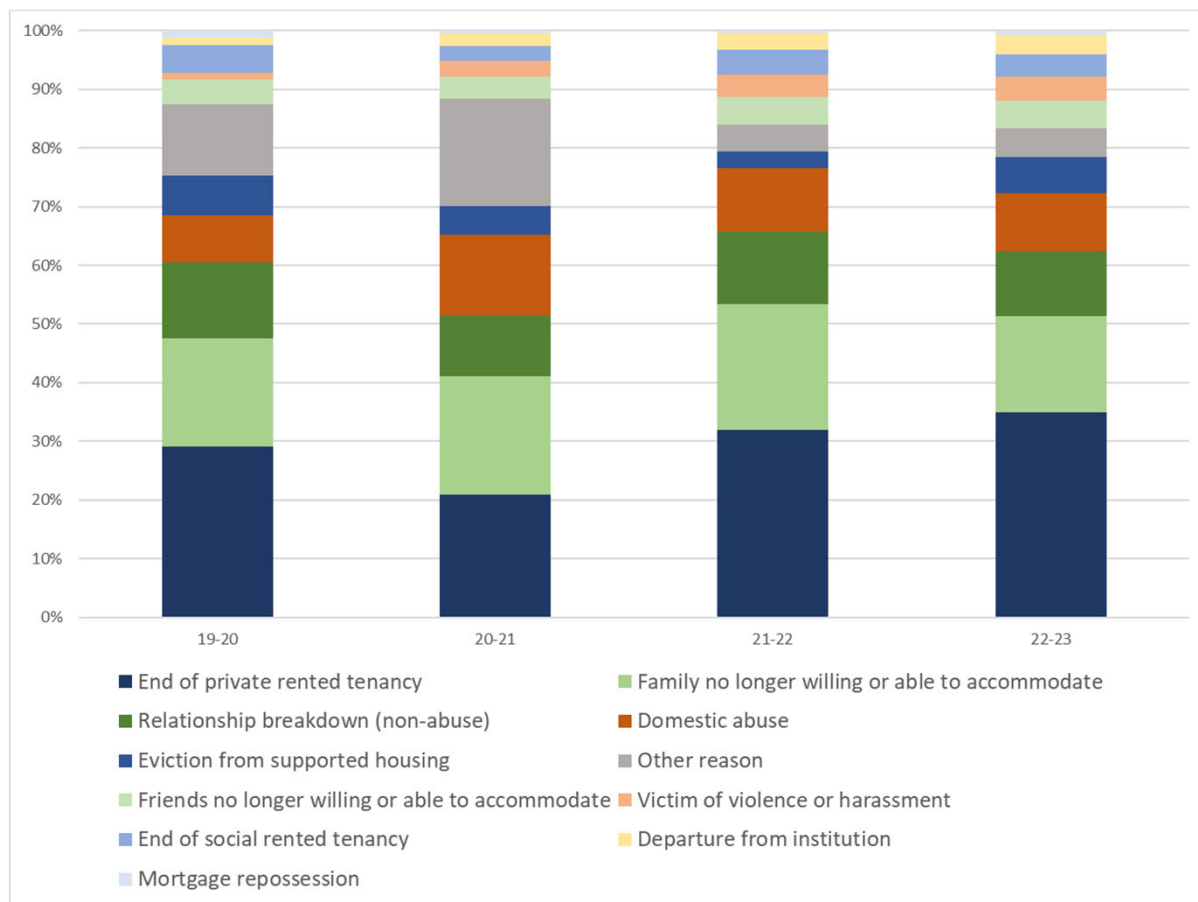
Proportion of
**households with
children**

Proportion of
**working
households**

- A greater number of **applicants with multiple support needs**
- **Rough sleeping reduced** during the term of the last strategy and has remained relatively low (when compared with other boroughs in the region)



Reason for homeless approaches



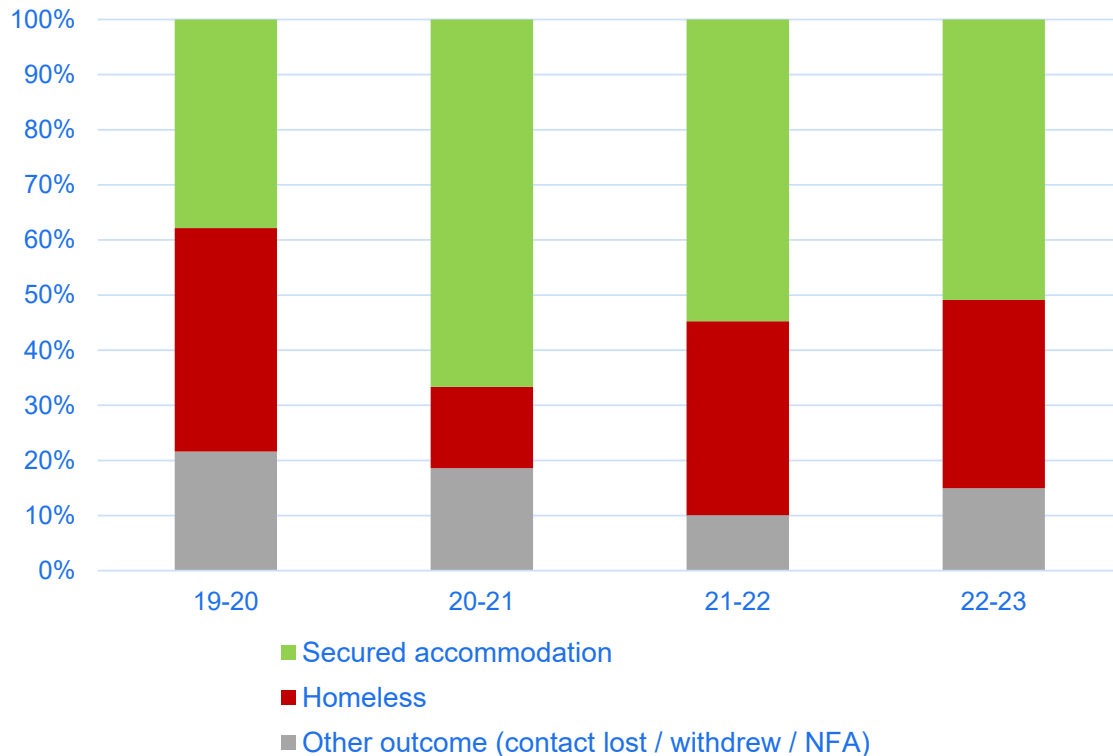
Reason for homelessness approach, by financial year
April 2019 to March 2023. BCKLWN

Key increases:

- **End of PRS tenancy**
 - Demand
 - Supply
 - Accessibility
- **Domestic abuse**

Reduction in relationship
breakdown / family evictions

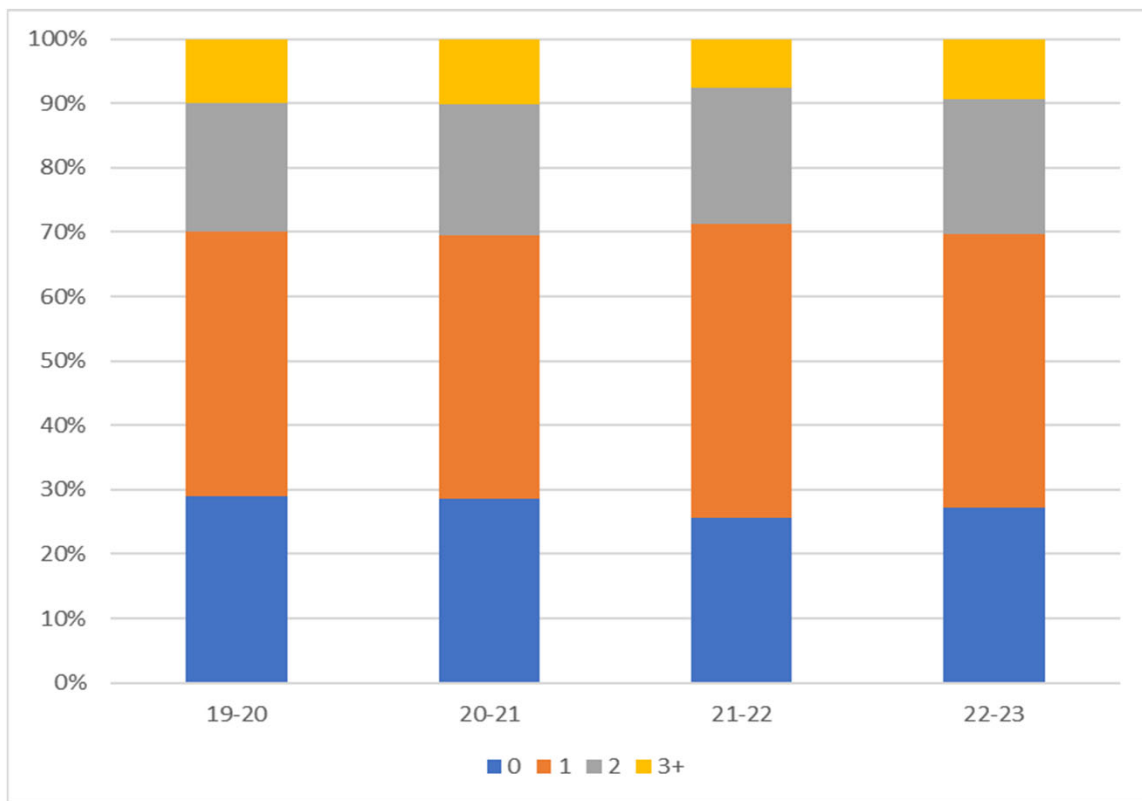
Outcome of approaches



- **Higher proportion of prevention outcomes in 22/23 compared with 19/20**
- **Eroding levels of success since 20/21**

Outcome of Prevention Duty – April 2019 to March 2023. BCKLWN

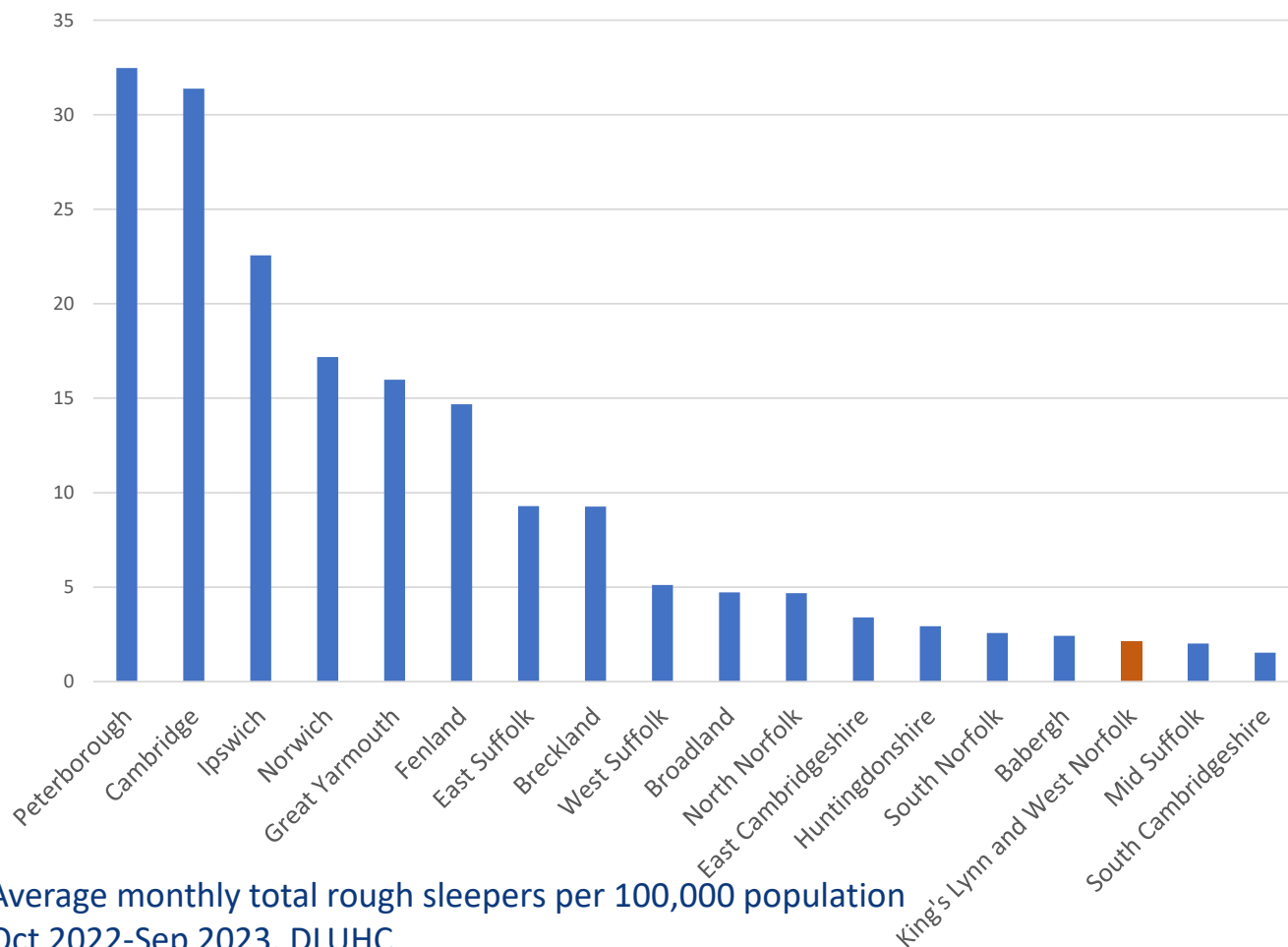
Complexity of approaches?



Number of recorded support needs by application.
April 2019 to March 2023. BCKLWN.

- **Proportion of support needs** relatively stable.
- However, could be due to:
 - Increase in numbers
 - Decrease in support
 - Possible under-reporting?

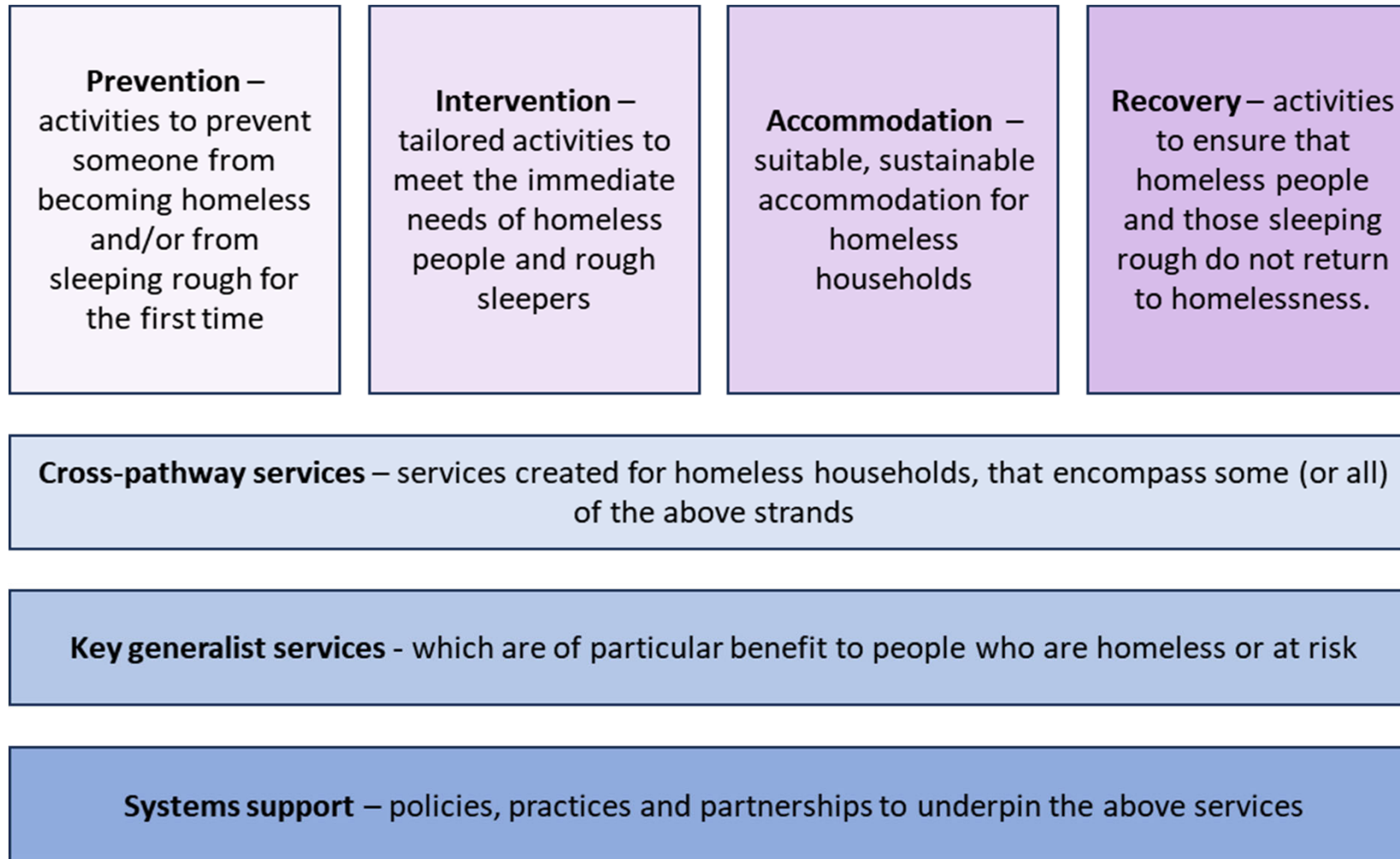
Rough Sleeping



- Compared with other authorities in the region, rough sleeping levels (per 100,000 population) are low.
- Numbers have reduced in lifetime of strategy with some seasonal fluctuations

Average monthly total rough sleepers per 100,000 population
Oct 2022-Sep 2023. DLUHC

Services available



Key findings

STRENGTHS

- Partnership working to prevent homelessness
- Diverse 'off-the-street' offer for people sleeping rough.
- A strong focus on wellbeing.
- A flexible culture with an emphasis on communication

CHALLENGES

- Prevention does not always happen early enough
- Overuse of expensive bed and breakfast / nightly-paid accommodation
- Lack of accommodation, partly due to high levels of void properties

GAPS

- Lack of specialist mental health and substance use outreach
- Access to Private Sector; insufficient high needs housing e.g. Housing First
- Co-production with people with lived experience – also “communication gap”



Service Evaluation – summary

- A **clear focus on prevention** within the partnership, but the effectiveness of the partnership **appears to be ebbing away** due to significant external influences.
- A **strong and varied “off-the-street” offer** to people sleeping rough or at risk, but the **cost of accommodating homeless households** is unsustainably expensive.
- A **clear impact of new services** across the pathway, but many of these services are **vulnerable to future reductions** in central government funding.
- **Strong informal partnerships** between services, but a need for a stronger “whole system” vision with a **wider net of service**.
- **Strong individual outcomes**, but a **clear gap** between some key services and the people that they serve.

Next Steps

April 2024
Presented to E&C

July 2024

- Key themes presented.
- Check-back with partners
- Councillor briefings

**October 2024
(TBC)**
Cross-partnership
launch event

April to June 2024

Development of strategy:

- Partners
- Lived Experience
- “Wider net” of community partners
- Council staff
- Task Group

Autumn 2024 (date TBC)

Formal adoption
by council