

## **South Nottinghamshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Consultation Results Summary**

Thank you for those who participated in the South Nottinghamshire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy consultation.

### **Introduction**

This consultation was undertaken to help Broxtowe Borough Council, Rushcliffe Borough Council and Gedling Borough Council develop a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to help shape how homelessness services will be delivered over the period 2022 to 2027. Councils are required to undertake a consultation when a new strategy is developed.

The Council is required to consult with a range of key partners and service users, including statutory, voluntary, and third sector organisations, This can include agencies specialising in homelessness and service users operating and living in the local area.

### **Methodology**

The consultation was carried out in the form of an online survey that was available on each of the South Nottinghamshire Borough's websites.

The survey asked for views on the main themes and issues identified in the homelessness review and that informed the proposed priorities of the homelessness strategy. Individual respondents were able to give their views on certain issues that surround the issue of homelessness and also select or choose what factors contribute and what areas we could improve.

The following questions were asked requiring either a yes/no response, the selection of statements or options for free text :

*The strategy raises 6 main strategic priorities, these are;*

- 1. Early Intervention through effective partnership working*
- 2. The provision of an accessible, agile and responsive homelessness service*
- 3. Access to affordable and quality accommodation across all sectors*
- 4. Tackle rough sleeping by developing and improving pathways*
- 5. Linking health, well-being and housing together to improve the life chances and aspirations of those affected*
- 6. Delivering long term support solutions to sustain tenancies for the most vulnerable*

*Do you feel that the South Nottinghamshire Councils are right to prioritise these areas?*

*Do you think the Council does enough to prevent homelessness in South Nottinghamshire?*

*What do you think contributes to homelessness in South Nottinghamshire? Select 3*

- *The cost of renting privately (rent levels)*
- *The upfront costs of renting privately (deposit, rent in advance)*
- *The availability of social housing*
- *Welfare reform and Universal Credit*
- *Lack of security of tenure in the private sector*
- *House prices*
- *The availability of affordable housing*
- *The availability of supported housing*
- *Lack of employment opportunities*
- *Lack of support for vulnerable people covering multiple and complex needs such as mental health and substance misuse*
- *Other*

*The Government's target is to end rough sleeping; do you think this target is achievable in South Nottinghamshire?*

*What do you think the Council could do or what contribution could be made by partners or other agencies to help end rough sleeping in South Nottinghamshire?*

*Do you think that enough support is offered to help people to keep their accommodation and to avoid homelessness?*

*What extra types of support could be made available to help people avoid becoming homeless?*

*Please choose the 3 most important priorities for the Council to address in preventing and managing homelessness in South Nottinghamshire over the next 5 years?*

- *Targeting services to prevent homelessness*
- *Provide more social and affordable housing*
- *Improving access to the private rented sector*
- *Improving support for vulnerable people and groups*
- *Supporting non-statutory agencies, such as charities and voluntary groups*
- *Improve the quality of quantity of temporary accommodation*
- *Helping rough sleepers access the right support and reduce visible rough sleeping*
- *Helping people to access employment that allows them to afford a home*
- *Building more homes across all tenures*

*Do you have any other comments about the housing or homelessness situation in South Nottinghamshire, or any suggestions about what could be done to improve things?*

The consultation was promoted through inter agency forums and through social media releases and through visiting the website of the South Nottinghamshire Borough's.

The consultation lasted 8 weeks from 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021 until 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

Surveys were anonymised to ensure impartial views were obtained.

Documents were made accessible and information was available on request in different formats.

## Survey Response and Results

A total of 40 responses were received to the consultation.

In response to whether the six themes within the strategy were correct , the responses were broadly supportive, with 85% of respondents being in favour (Chart 1)

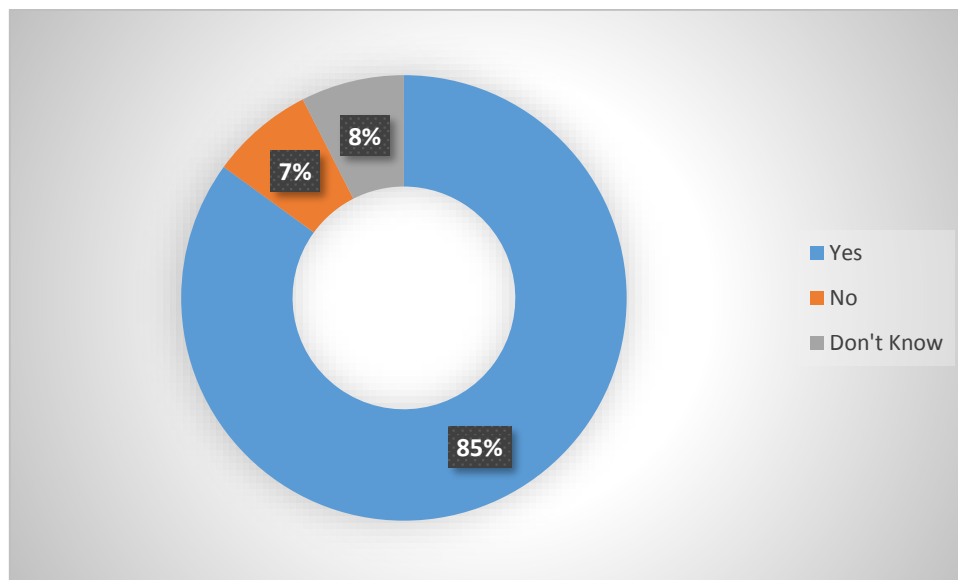


Chart 1

In response to whether South Nottinghamshire Council's do enough to prevent homelessness, 63% of respondents advised that they were unsure (Chart 2).

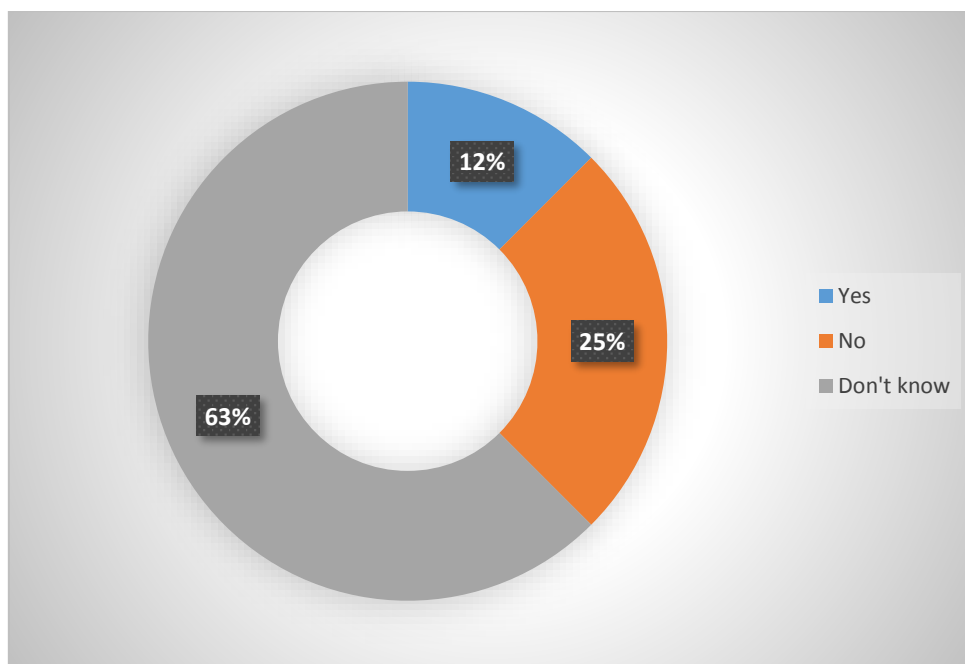


Chart 2

In response to whether the Government targets to end rough sleeping are achievable in South Nottinghamshire, the responses were more balanced. This highest proportion of respondents (45%) agreed this was the case (Chart 3)

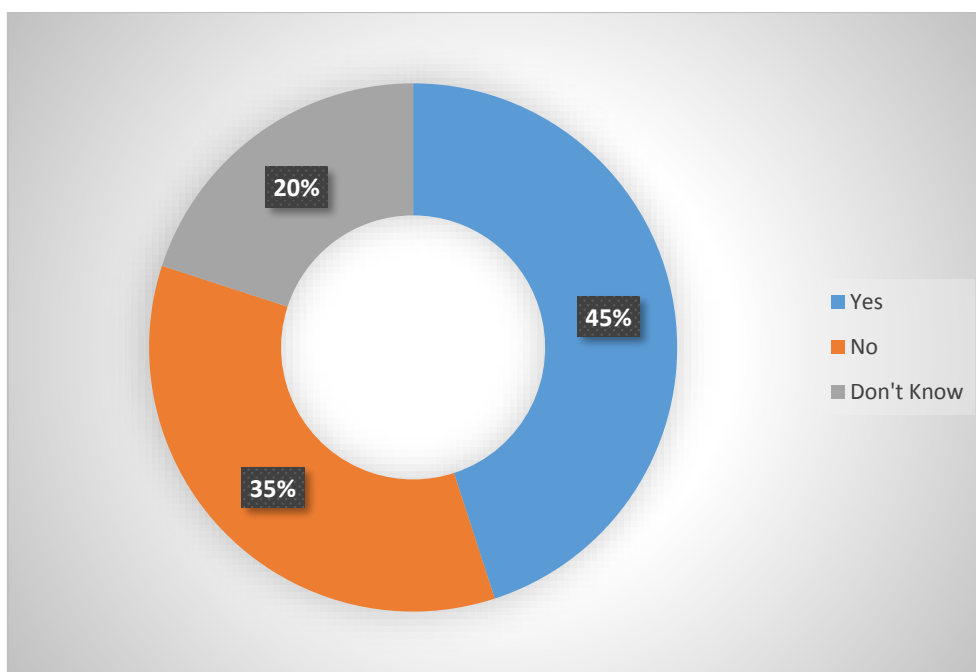


Chart 3

In response to whether sufficient support is offered to help people keep their accommodation and avoid homelessness, the respondents thought that more support should be offered, only 7% in agreement (Chart 4)

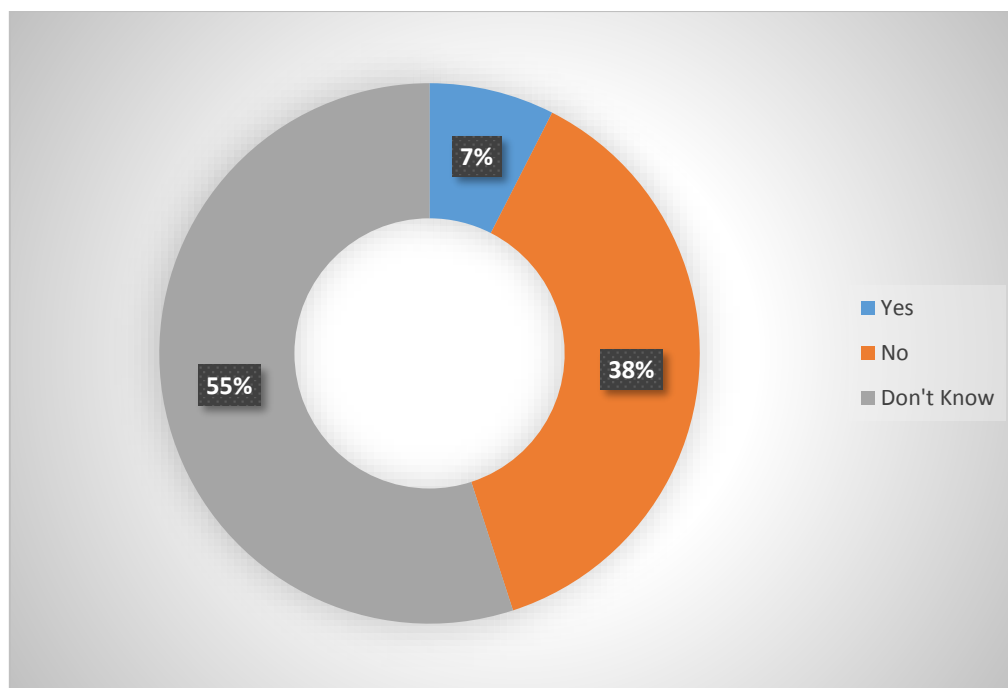


Chart 4

When asked what 3 things contribute to homelessness in South Nottinghamshire, the most prevalent factors included;

1. The lack of availability of social housing
2. Lack of support for vulnerable people with multiple and complex needs
3. The upfront cost of renting privately

A close fourth was the high cost of private rented accommodation which was a prevalent theme across the consultation responses.

When asked which were the 3 most important priorities for the Council to address in the next 5 years, the most prevalent responses were;

1. Improving support for vulnerable people and groups
2. Provide more social and affordable housing
3. Targeting services to prevent homelessness

It is clear from the responses above that support for and concerns surrounding the provision of support for vulnerable people is a key consideration for the residents of South Nottinghamshire.

A broad selection of the comments made by respondents are shown below:

In response to the strategy themes:

*“it’s nice to see these priorities written up”*

*“good targets”*

In response to whether South Nottinghamshire Council’s do enough to prevent homelessness:

*“Homelessness is on the increase, which is clear acknowledgement that current prevention is not enough”*

*“There is not enough social housing being built and the little existing stock is quite literally falling apart.”*

*“I would like to see more resources devoted to short term lets in empty properties”*

*“We should see more detail on what Councils do to prevent homelessness”*

In response to what the South Nottinghamshire Councils could do or what contribution could be made by partners or other agencies to help end rough sleeping:

*“Increased support and advice that is easy to access from a central point”*

*“Ensure sufficient social housing and mental health support is available”.*

*“Enable people to be housed as quickly as possible and provide support to ensure they can keep their home”*

*“Good communication with the services who provide support for homeless people and also the people who provide housing. Knowledge of where rough sleepers are and what they need”*

A full summary of the comments and Officer responses can be found at the end of this document.

### **How the consultation feedback has helped to shape the strategy:**

The consultation responses have informed the strategy and action plan in the following areas:

- An action has been added for reviewing good practice and utilising peer reviews. This is within the ‘provision of an accessible, agile and responsive homelessness service’ strategic aim
- An action has been added to publicise the outcomes achieved and actions taken to tackle homelessness. This is within the ‘provision of an accessible, agile and responsive homelessness service’ strategic aim
- An action has been added to work to bring empty properties back into use for those homeless or rough sleeping where possible. This is within the ‘access to affordable and quality accommodation across all sectors’ strategic aim

Summary of comments made by respondents	Officer Response
More supported accommodation or support to stay in accommodation should be provided, to stop people rough sleeping - 10 similar comments	<p>The Councils have over recent years increased units of supported accommodation within South Nottinghamshire with the expansion of Elizabeth House and through successful Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP) funding bids in partnership with Framework a further 16 units of additional supported accommodation, targeted at rough sleepers will be available</p> <p>Improving the access to supported accommodation is included within the action plan</p> <p>Improving “move on” arrangements for those leaving supported accommodation is included within the action plan</p>
Provide more support for rough sleepers - 8 similar comments	<p>The Councils are committed to ending rough sleeping across South Nottinghamshire</p> <p>Tackling rough sleeping by developing and improving pathways is a key strategic aim</p>
Understand and respond to specific groups facing homelessness - 7 similar comments	<p>Improving pathways for specific groups is a key strategic aim</p> <p>The use of Rough Sleeper Action Groups enables a more targeted approach to tailor support and meet the needs of rough sleepers</p>
Agencies/Partners need to work more closely together - 6 similar comments	<p>Early intervention through partnership is a key strategic aim within the strategy</p>

Social housing stock is in low supply, not enough being built and/or is of low quality - 5 similar comments	Improving links with Registered Providers and ensuring homeless clients are prioritised through allocation schemes is part of the 'access to affordable and quality accommodation across all sectors' strategic aim
More empty homes/buildings need to be brought back into use - 5 similar comments	This suggestion has been added into the strategy and action plan following the consultation
Housing advice support can be difficult to access/make services more accessible - 3 similar comments	<p>The provision of accessible, agile and responsive homelessness services is a key strategic aim</p> <p>There is an action ensuring homeless clients are able to access housing options and advice services and customer journeys and experiences are understood</p>
Difficult to tackle the issues at a local level - 2 similar comments	<p>The DLUHC lead on national homeless policy</p> <p>The DLUHC provide funding to all local authorities to discharge their statutory duties and to develop a Homelessness &amp; Rough Sleeping Strategy. The model requires a local response to local homelessness and rough sleeping issues within local authority areas</p> <p>Council's are required to develop local solutions to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping including the provision of homelessness and housing advice services</p>
We should see more detail on what Councils do to prevent homelessness- 1 similar comment	This suggestion has been added into the strategy and action plan following the consultation
Ensure adequate funding, ensuring that money is spent in the right way on the right priorities - 1 similar comment	Maximising the funding available to assist homeless clients is an action within the action plan within the 'early intervention through effective partnership working' strategic aim
More investment in front line staffing would improve response	The provision of accessible, agile and responsive homelessness services is a key strategic aim, therefore resources and service quality are under regular review in each area



Clear pathways for clients would improve and speed up responses	Improving pathways and improving accessibility to housing options services are within the key strategic aims
Housing developers ignore the needs of the community and the Council doesn't hold them to account	The Council has a statutory duty to assess local housing needs and can influence the type and size of affordable housing delivered on new sites. Developers and Registered Providers are required to adhere to the provisions within the Section 106 Planning Agreement
Temporary accommodation needs to be accessible and appropriate	Ensuring that temporary accommodation is of a high quality is within the 'access to affordable and quality accommodation across all sectors' strategic aim
Ensure that other practice is reviewed	This suggestion, specifically around peer review, has been added into the strategy and action plan following the consultation
People who are "sofa surfing" need to be sought out	It is intended that improving partnerships with partners and improving pathways for those accessing services will improve information on 'hidden' homelessness
Private rent needs to be more accessible	Enabling swift access to the private rented sector is within the 'access to affordable and quality accommodation across all tenures' strategic aim
Ensure that local people are helped first	Local connection and eligibility are key parts of assessing any persons housing, whether they are threatened with homeless, or seeking to join the housing waiting list.

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