

# Ending Homelessness Together

Homelessness Strategy **2022-27**  
**Year 2 Action Plan**



**Housing**  
Executive

# Ending Homelessness Together



## Year 2 Action Plan

The Housing Executive published the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 on the 23rd March 2022 alongside its Year 1 Action Plan. During the first year of the Homelessness Strategy some of our key achievements have been;

- We delivered the fourth year of the Homelessness Prevention Fund, which supported 34 projects in 2022/23.
- Raised awareness of homelessness during Homelessness Awareness Week through a range of events and activities organised by our Homelessness Local Area Groups.
- Developed and carried out research including, Health and Homelessness Research alongside Queens University and Business Services Organisation.
- Engaged with and learned from those with lived experience of homelessness to improve our services and aid in the development of a Lived Experience Programme.

We have worked together with our partners across the sector through the various structures, including the Central Homelessness Forum and our Homelessness Local Area Groups throughout the first year of the Homelessness Strategy with our vision of 'Ending Homelessness Together' at the forefront of all of our efforts.

As the Homelessness Strategy enters into its second year, the development of the Year 2 Action Plan has been guided by listening to those with lived experience of homelessness, our partners and the overall achievements and actions delivered over of the course of 2022/23. By working together with our Lived Experience Groups, we have included the following;

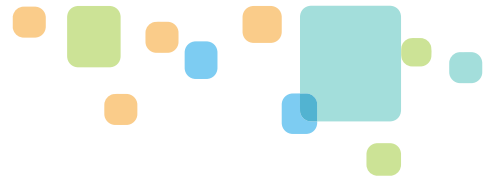
- Action 29- 'We will explore, and seek to develop, methods by which we can raise awareness of homelessness in the Education sector.'
- Action 40 – 'We will support the development of the Tenancy Sustainment team's 'Warm Handover Protocol' for Housing Advisors to identify clients in need of a managed case handover to their Patch Manager and possibly to the Patch Financial Inclusion Manager.'

It is important that we continue to build on the work from Year 1 with those who have lived experience of homelessness and our partners, which leads to the continuation of the following actions;

- Action 14 – 'We will continue to work with our partners to develop a Lived Experience Programme, building on the work carried out as part of the Year 1 Action Plan. This work will seek to complete the outline of a Lived Experience Programme by March 2024, with a view to commencing implementation in 2024/2025.'
- Action 15 – 'As part of shaping the development of a Lived Experience Programme we will continue to host Lived Experience Group meetings over the course of 2023/2024.'

The Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 continues to be guided by the development of annual action plans that will support the Housing Executive and our partners in achieving our vision, aims and objectives.





## Vision and Aim

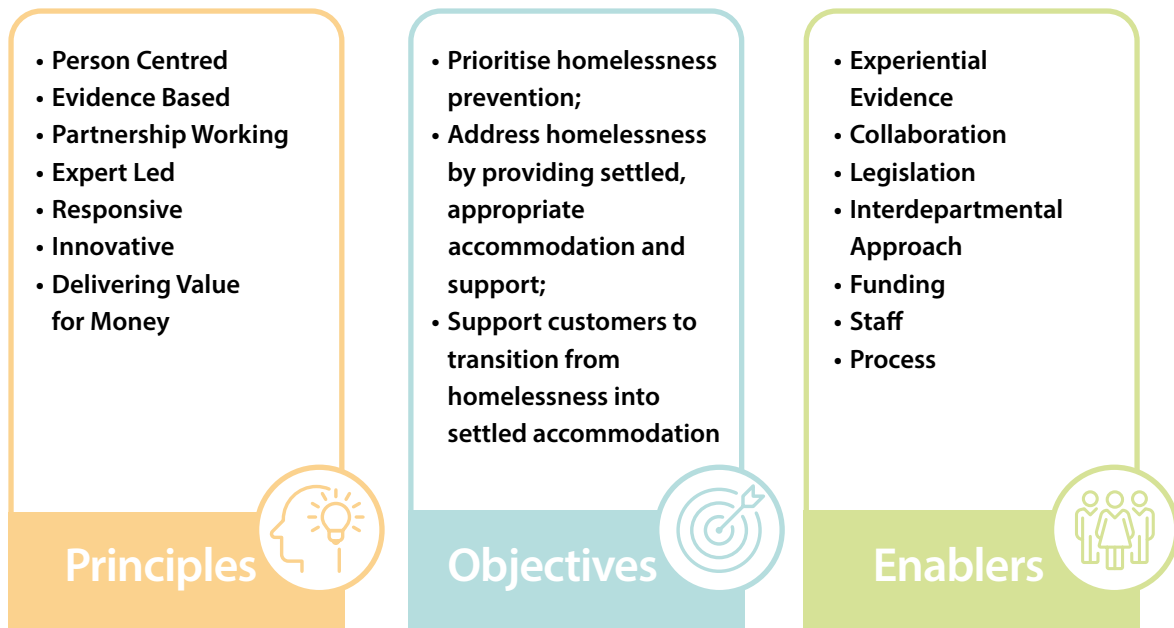
The vision of 'Ending Homelessness Together' and aim of 'Wherever possible homelessness should be prevented, if homelessness cannot be prevented it should be rare, brief and non-recurring' is supported by three key objectives, each with priority actions that will be reviewed on an annual basis.

## Principles, Objectives and Enablers

At the core of this strategy, there are a number of guiding principles that will underpin our approach to both the development and delivery of homelessness services throughout its lifespan. These principles, which are outlined below, have been co-produced with the wider homelessness sector and will be incorporated across each theme to achieve our vision of 'Ending Homelessness Together'.

This strategy has been developed around three key objectives:

- Prioritise homelessness prevention;
- Address homelessness by providing settled, appropriate accommodation and support;
- Support customers to transition from homelessness into settled accommodation.





The Homelessness Strategy will continue to evolve based on experiential evidence, emerging pressures and priorities and it is our intention to work towards the defined success criteria outlined in this document by developing the 'enablers' and pulling all levers available to us. These enablers are as critical to the success of the strategy as the delivery of the objectives themselves.

## Year 2 Action Plan

With the enablers being critical to the success of the strategy, the Year 2 actions have once again been developed around the enablers and the three objectives. The table below outlines actions that the Housing Executive and our partners will seek to deliver over the course of 2023/24.

As part of the consultation on the draft Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 a number of stakeholders noted the need for an easy read version of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 and this Action Plan seeks to provide a concise summary of what we and our partners will do to address homelessness in Northern Ireland.

The Housing Executive recognises the funding challenges associated with delivering some of the actions outlined in the Action Plan below. Therefore to help our partners and those with lived experience of homelessness to understand the challenges that the Housing Executive has in delivering some of these actions, it is important that we highlight the actions that can be and will be delivered, but also the actions that we would like to deliver but are subject to funding. To reflect this, each of the actions under the enablers and objectives have been broken into the two following sections;

- **Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan**- This section includes actions that can be completed without the need for additional funding and/or resources. It is therefore anticipated that delivery of these actions have minimal associated risks.
- **Actions subject to securing funding** – This section includes actions that we would like to deliver during 2023/24 however, they are reliant on securing funding and therefore there are associated delivery risks.

# Year 2 Action Plan

Action	Enablers
<b>Experiential Evidence:</b>	
	<b>Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan</b>
Action 1	We will continue to carry out independent research on a feasibility study for Housing First for Northern Ireland. This research will assist with the scaling up of Housing First and create a Northern Ireland Scale model including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staffing;</li> <li>• Property requirements;</li> <li>• Timescales and;</li> <li>• Associated costs and comparative analysis with existing portfolio, identifying value for money potential as appropriate.</li> </ul>
Action 2	We will continue to work with the Centre for Public Health (QUB) and Business Services Organisation as part of the ongoing investigation, 'Using administrative data to better understand the antecedents, needs and outcomes of people who are homeless in Northern Ireland'.  Furthermore, we will explore the potential to carry out similar investigations using other data sets for client groups who may be adversely affected by homelessness.
Action 3	We will evaluate the delivery of the Homelessness Prevention Fund 2022/23 and where appropriate, use lessons from this evaluation to guide future preventative work.
Action 4	We will work with the Centre for Homelessness Impact (CHI) to develop 'The Ending Homelessness Framework for Northern Ireland'. This will consider how we make best use of data across the homelessness sector in Northern Ireland with initial consideration to be given to Housing Executive data. As part of this work with CHI we will also explore the delivery of a Value For Money exercise in respect of temporary accommodation.
Action 5	We will update on progress as to the ongoing review of Housing Executive policies and procedures relevant to homelessness.
Action 6	We will publish a report on the Street Needs Audits carried out in Belfast, Derry/Londonderry and Newry.
Action 7	We will review the Chronic Homelessness criteria after one year of data collection on the Housing Executive's Housing Management System.
	<b>Actions subject to securing funding</b>
Action 8	We will commission independent research that seeks to provide a comparison of homelessness funding between Northern Ireland and neighbouring jurisdictions.
Action 9	We will commission independent research on local efforts to address chronic homelessness.
<b>Collaboration:</b>	
	<b>Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan</b>
Action 10	We will continue to work on the development of protocols and Data Sharing Agreements with partner agencies across the statutory, voluntary and community sectors including the Complex Lives initiative which will facilitate the development of interagency working and further embed the multidisciplinary approach to addressing the needs of those experiencing chronic homelessness.
Action 11	We will routinely communicate performance, budgetary and trend information to stakeholders in user friendly formats.
Action 12	We will continue to implement the homelessness local area action plans which were developed as part of the Year 1 Action Plan. A key focus of the action plans is to deliver the vision of 'Ending Homelessness Together' at a local level.
Action 13	We will work with key partners to develop an Options Paper on the implementation of a Housing Advice Quality Standard for frontline staff offering housing advice in Northern Ireland.

Action	Enablers
	<b>Actions subject to securing funding</b>
Action 14	We will continue to work with our partners to develop a Lived Experience Programme, building on the work carried out as part of the Year 1 Action Plan. This work will seek to complete the outline of a Lived Experience Programme by March 2024, with a view to commencing implementation in 2024/2025.
Action 15	As part of shaping the development of a Lived Experience Programme we will continue to host Lived Experience Group meetings over the course of 2023/2024.
<b>Legislation:</b>	
	<b>Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan</b>
Action 16	We will continue to liaise with the Department for Communities in identifying and advocating for potential legislative amendments, including considering the benefits of additional duties such as co-operation and prevention.
Action 17	We will continue to support the implementation of the Fundamental Review of Allocations, particularly any actions relevant to homelessness.
<b>Interdepartmental Approach:</b>	
	<b>Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan</b>
Action 18	We will liaise with and support the Department for Communities in the development and delivery of the Inter-departmental Homelessness Action Plan.
<b>Funding:</b>	
	<b>Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan</b>
Action 19	We will support others in accessing funding opportunities. This will involve supporting and publicising those schemes currently delivered by the Community Foundation Northern Ireland, along with relevant schemes that the homelessness sector may be able to access.
Action 20	We will support effective commissioning of services to prioritise funding via structures such as the Homelessness Scheme Assessment Committee.
<b>Staff:</b>	
	<b>Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan</b>
Action 21	We will continue to provide opportunities for staff to input into Homelessness research.
Action 22	We will build upon the collaborative co-location of services and case management approach developed through projects such as the Belfast Complex Lives Project.
	<b>Actions subject to securing funding</b>
Action 23	We will explore options to deliver a rolling training programme for staff across the sector to equip staff to deliver psychologically informed responses.
Action 24	We will consider staff training needs to reflect development in legislation such as the Domestic Abuse Civil Proceedings Act and the impact of this legislation on the nature and demand on homelessness services.
<b>Process:</b>	
	<b>Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan</b>
Action 25	We will continue to develop specification for digital solutions to support implementation of the Common Assessment Framework, provision of bed availability information, producing meaningful measures and data analysis.

Action	Objectives
<b>Objective 1 – Prioritise homelessness prevention</b>	
<b>Actions subject to securing funding</b>	
Action 26	We will seek to continue the Homelessness Prevention Fund.
<b>Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan</b>	
<b>Primary Prevention:</b>	
Action 27	We will target Homelessness Prevention via provision of awareness sessions to the Community Sector.
Action 28	We will seek to deliver a public awareness campaign to shift mind-sets towards, and raise awareness of homelessness prevention. This will include support and promotion of Northern Ireland’s Homelessness Awareness Week.
<b>Actions subject to securing funding</b>	
Action 29	We will explore, and seek to develop, methods by which we can raise awareness of homelessness in the Education sector.
<b>Secondary Prevention:</b>	
Action 30	We will target homelessness prevention initiatives to those at most risk and prioritise funding to projects most strategically aligned.
Action 31	We will seek to work with health partners to develop mental health and addiction support initiatives aimed at homelessness prevention.
<b>Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan</b>	
<b>Tertiary Prevention:</b>	
Action 32	We will consider potential for alignment between homelessness prevention services, tenancy sustainment and financial inclusion activities- including funding of pilots and shared initiatives through engagement with relevant policy areas, functions and internal steering groups.
Action 33	We will implement a homelessness prevention definition within the Housing Executive and we will review the outcomes of homelessness prevention activities in order to support staff in prevention work.
<b>Objective 2 – Address homelessness by providing settled, appropriate accommodation and support</b>	
<b>Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan</b>	
<b>Understanding Customer’s Needs:</b>	
Action 34	We will continue to embed the Common Assessment Framework as the main tool to assess and record needs on an ongoing basis and work with the homelessness sector to further refine understanding and terminology in relation to customer support needs.
<b>Improving Access and Inclusion &amp; Flexible and Responsive:</b>	
Action 35	We will work with all relevant statutory and voluntary agencies in supporting households who are refugees and/or displaced from their home countries for reasons such as war. For example, those supported via the various Ukrainian Assistance Schemes.
<b>Implementing Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation:</b>	
Action 36	We will implement the Year 2 actions in the Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation.
<b>Objective 3 – Support customers to transition from homelessness into settled accommodation</b>	
<b>Actions that will be delivered as part of the Year 2 Action Plan</b>	
<b>Housing Supply:</b>	

Action	Objectives
Action 37	We will seek to expand Housing First provision, including supporting the delivery of the Housing First Task and Finish Group.
<b>Support:</b>	
Action 38	We will continue to support the delivery of the Complex Lives Project.
Action 39	We will continue to support schemes focused on tenancy sustainment, such as Home Starter Packs.
Action 40	We will support the development of the Tenancy Sustainment team's 'Warm Handover Protocol' for Housing Advisors to identify clients in need of a managed case handover to their Patch Manager and possibly to the Patch Financial Inclusion Manager.
<b>Community Integration:</b>	
Action 41	We will work with the Housing Community Network and those Community Groups with whom they work with in order to promote community integration.
<b>Annual Progress Report:</b>	
Action 42	We will publish an Annual Progress Report, which outlines actions in delivering Year 1 of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-27.



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