

## **CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date: Thursday 5 February 2026

Time: 5.30 pm

Venue: Civic Centre

Members are invited to attend the above meeting.

If you have an enquiry regarding any items on this agenda, please contact Liz Smith, Democratic Services Officer (Committees) on 01392 265425.

Entry to the Civic Centre can be gained through the Customer Service Centre, Paris Street.

### *Membership -*

Rees (Chair), Cookson (Deputy Chair), Begley, Fullam, Holland, Hussain, Payne, Pole, Read, Snow and Wardle

## **Agenda**

### **1 Apologies**

To receive apologies for absence.

### **2 Declarations of Interest**

Councillors are reminded of the need to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests that relate to business on the agenda and which have not already been included in the register of interests, before any discussion takes place on the item. Unless the interest is sensitive, you must also disclose the nature of the interest. In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, you must then leave the room and must not participate in any further discussion of the item.

Councillors requiring clarification should seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer prior to the day of the meeting.

### **3 Local Government Act 1972 - Exclusion of Press and Public**

It is considered that the Committee would be unlikely to exclude the press and public during the consideration of any of the items on this agenda but, if it should wish to do so, then the following resolution should be passed:-

**“RESOLVED** that, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the particular item(s) of business on the grounds that it (they) involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraph(s) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.”

#### 4 **Questions from the Public under Standing Order No. 19**

Details of questions should be notified to the Democratic Services Manager via the [democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk) email by 10am at least three working days prior to the meeting. For this meeting any questions must be submitted by 10am on Monday 2 February 2026.

For details about how to speak at committee, please click the following link - <https://exeter.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/councillors-and-meetings/public-speaking-at-meetings/overview/>

#### 5 **Questions from Members of the Council under Standing Order No. 20**

To receive questions from Members of the Council to the relevant Portfolio Holders for this Scrutiny Committee. The Portfolio Holders are:-

Councillor Bialyk	– Leader of the Council
Councillor Asvachin	– Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Customer Services
Councillor Vizard	– Climate, Ecological Change and Communities
Councillor Williams	– City Management
Councillor Wright	– Deputy Leader, Corporate Services, Community Safety and City Centre

Advance questions from Members relating to the Portfolio Holders should be notified to Democratic Services via [democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk)

#### 6 **Portfolio Holder Report from Councillor Asvachin, Portfolio Holder for Housing Homelessness Prevention and Customer Services** (Pages 5 - 28)

To receive the report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Customer Services, Councillor Asvachin.

#### 7 **Six-monthly update on Homelessness Strategy** (Pages 29 - 54)

To receive the report of the Strategic Director People and Communities.

#### 8 **Scrutiny Work Plan and Proposals Received** (Pages 55 - 58)

Please see for noting a link to the schedule of future business proposed for the Council which can be viewed on the Council's web site. This on-line document is a source for Members to raise issues at Scrutiny on forthcoming Executive agenda items:

[Browse plans - Executive, 2026 - Exeter City Council](#)

Also attached is a draft work plan of future scrutiny items. Should Members wish to raise issues in respect of future business please notify Liz Smith in advance of the meeting.

#### **Date of Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting of the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee will be held on **Thursday 19 March 2026** at 5.30 pm in the Civic Centre.

**Individual reports on this agenda can be produced in other formats on request to Democratic Service on 01392 265425 or [democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@exeter.gov.uk)**

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## REPORT TO CUSTOMER SERVICE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026

### PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S REPORT TO SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

#### COUNCILLOR MARINA ASVACHIN – HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

##### **1. Issues relating to achieving the Council's published priorities**

###### **Housing Need**

The service continues to strengthen homelessness prevention by providing assessment and tailored support, including access to temporary accommodation where required. A report provided to Scrutiny on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026 provides significant updates on the amount of change underway nationally with the publication of the Plan to End Homelessness (Dec 2025) and the extensive preparation underway locally to address our entrenched city-wide problems.

###### **Social Housing**

Tenant satisfaction and neighbourhood engagement remain key priorities, with visible improvements delivered through a range of activities including a Tenant Voice Spotlight on damp and mould which is improving communication and engagement with tenants and response rates to proactive and reactive repairs. Our monitoring of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures shows steady improvements in most areas

###### **Customer Services**

The modernisation of our Customer Services continues through the delivery of the aims of the Digital Customer Strategy.

##### **2. Update or commentary on any major ongoing programmes of work**

Considerable work is underway, detailed in the 5<sup>th</sup> February Homelessness Prevention Strategy update to Scrutiny, aiming to shift the focus from crisis response to preventing homelessness occurring in the first plane. This is requiring a transformation of the way we are commissioning temporary and supported accommodation and respond to the needs of rough sleepers. It is also requiring significant changes to the way we organise and deliver services ourselves. Preparations are also underway to meet the new duties of the Renters Rights Bill and the Supported Accommodation Act.

Significant work continues to enhance the quality of council housing through investment in energy efficient homes and a responsive approach to repairs and maintenance. **The attached presentation shared with the Regulator for Social Housing at our first annual visit provides an overview of our current performance.** A revised Social Housing Asset Management Strategy is being developed by officers which includes plans for more frequent tenant engagement and this will include a survey of tenant experience of living in Passivhaus standard homes.

Customer Services led the successful implementation of a new telephony system with enhanced customer relationship management technology which is now being deployed. This includes call back and enhanced call waiting data. The introduction of MyExeter account has progressed well with over 21,000 signups since April.

We anticipate a rise in new accounts from March when Council tax data will be included in MyExeter. The enhanced data available from the new telephony system (CX1) is providing detailed intelligence about call handling and response times and plans are underway to address service areas with the longest waits e.g. Housing Repair: Housing Need and Council Tax, by better integration through the main customer services centre.

### **3. Issues that may impact services delivery/financial performance/future budget requirements**

The introduction of three-year funding settlement especially in relation to Homeless Prevention Grant is welcomed however the ring-fenced grant included is less than anticipated. Funding for temporary accommodation is excluded from the ring-fenced grant and the notional amount allocated within the wider formula is also less than anticipated however the overall funding allocation for the council is higher than anticipated and can address this shortfall and is addressed in the budget being put forward for member approval in February.

A public consultation will begin later in the year on Customer Service Standards and the outcome from this consultation will be brought forward in due course. This will include any increase in staff resources anticipated to meet proposed Customer Service Standards.

### **4. Potential changes to services/provisions being considered**

The council is exploring enhanced digital pathways through the MyExeter platform to streamline customer interactions and reduce delays.

Consideration is being given to the potential relocation or redesign of the Customer Service Centre to improve accessibility and create a more welcoming and functional environment for residents.

There is ongoing work to expand tenancy sustainment and early intervention services to reduce homelessness presentations and reliance on temporary accommodation.

Key service policies, including those relating to safety, tenancy and safeguarding, are being reviewed and updated in response to regulatory requirements and resident feedback.

### **5. Other matters the Portfolio Holder wishes to raise with the Scrutiny Committee**

Tenant satisfaction has risen to 76%, and maintaining this positive trajectory remains a central focus.

Engagement is being strengthened through initiatives such as Tenant Focus Week and wider co-production activities across neighbourhoods.

Workforce capacity pressures continue to affect homelessness services, customer contact operations and maintenance teams.

The council continues to work closely with voluntary organisations, support providers and housing partners, recognising that collaborative approaches are essential to sustaining effective homelessness prevention and support services.

# Annual Engagement Meeting with Regulator of Social Housing

January 2026

# Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Setting the scene
3. Our Governance
3. Overview
5. Priorities for 2026/7
7. Regulator reflections on the first year of regulation of the Consumer Standards
8. Regulator update



# Setting the Scene: Key Messages

## Bindu Arjoon Chief Executive

- Senior Leadership Restructure aims
- LGR already seized the opportunity to focus on ensuring our housing services in the best possible condition for the new unitary
- Better outcomes for residents through investment and service transformation is at the heart of our LGR proposal for 4 unitary councils for Devon
- Housing is key



***Edwards Court our award-winning Extra Care Housing***

*LGR offers exciting opportunity to resolve long standing under provision of Extra Care Housing in Exeter*

# Governance – Council/ HRA

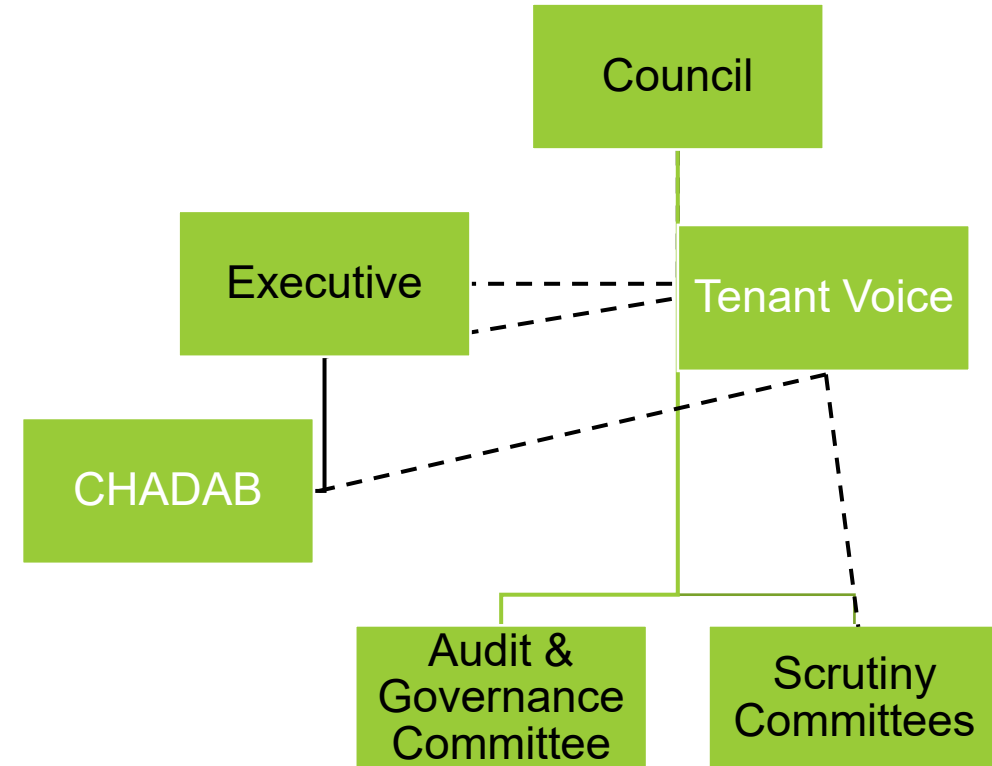
## **Cllr Marina Asvachin**

Portfolio Holder for Housing,  
Homelessness Prevention and  
Customer Service

## **Cllr Philip Bialyk**

Leader of the Council and Portfolio  
Holder for Council Assets

**Council Housing & Development  
Advisory Board** made up of tenants,  
portfolio holder, Councillors and  
external sector experts



# Overview Our Homes

## Tenant Services

Jo Yelland, Strategic Director People and Communities  
James Turner, Interim Head of Service, Housing

## About Exeter



### Our Homes

- Population: 120,309 (2021 census) and @55,600 homes
- ECC the largest social landlord
- 4,737 homes and a further 1,094 leaseholders and 13 shared ownership houses
- 10.5% of the total homes in the city

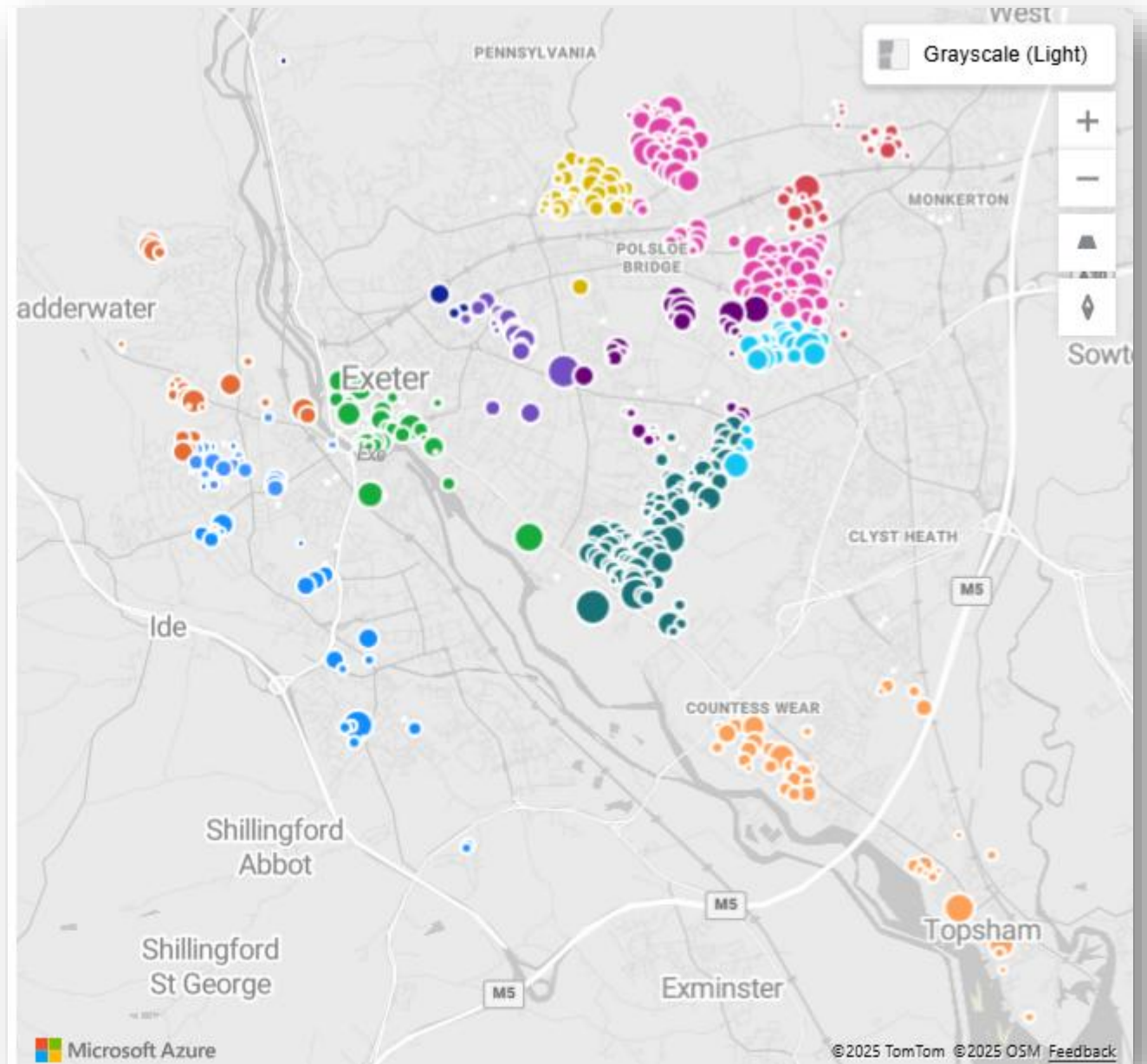
### Our Tenants

- 21% are under 40
- 35% are aged 40-60
- 44% of our tenants 60 + (22.4% 70+)
- Need profile is changing, younger single people



# Our homes are distributed across the city

Ward	Places
Alphington	195
Duryard and St James	29
Exwick	237
Heavitree	324
Mincinglake and Whipton	1069
Newtown and St Leonard's	212
Pennsylvania	253
Pinhoe	164
Priory	1058
St David's	385
St Loyes	316
St Thomas	146
Topsham	349
<b>Total</b>	<b>4737</b>



## Corporate Approach: Consultation & Engagement Strategy

1. Ensure decisions reflect the voices, experiences, and priorities of our communities.
2. Describe how we will listen, involve, and build trust with residents and stakeholders, embedding inclusion, transparency, and collaboration into everything we do.
3. Provides a consistent framework or delivering meaningful, effective, and accountable consultation and engagement.

## Corporate Approach: Digital Customer Strategy

1. A culture of excellent customer and digital service
2. Digital equality
3. Excellent customer and digital services
4. Prioritised, joined-up channels
5. One front door
6. Accessible information
7. Efficient Processes
8. Fit-for-purpose ICT infrastructure and systems
9. Well-maintained and secure data
10. Digital collaboration

# What this means in Housing

- Great track record to build on (LGA Peer Review 2023)
- Greater emphasis on targeted approaches
- More frequent pulse and opinion surveys
- Focus on diversity
- Investment in IT, Digital and Data
- Better integration across whole council: triangulation of data; getting more holistic view of the customer
- Introduction of My Exeter
- Tenant Portal linked to wider customer account
- More opportunities to self serve
- Work with Wellbeing Exeter to address Digital Inclusion



# Performance Benchmarking Headlines 24/25

- Overall, cost profile in line with peers
- However, due to contractor costs maintenance management, responsive repairs, and void works are relatively costly: **improved contract monitoring is in place**
- Repairs service operating well, with relatively high volumes completed, completion times in-line with peers, and high completions within target.
- Housing management function is relatively well-resourced; **this is being kept under review to ensure VFM:**
- Specialist rent & arrears team has delivered good outcomes and current arrears are low. **Director receives monthly rent arrears performance report**
- Number of vacant but available to let properties remains low and re-let times hover around peer and sector medians. **Spotlight on this as there are some long outliers.**
- Complaints volumes have risen but are now more in-line with sector averages, and resolutions within target are high. However, TSM score on complaints has fallen **corporate spotlight on complaints in 26/27.**
- ASB volumes remain roughly in-line with peers and TSM score has improved. **We have refreshed policy and training and will be reviewing workforce skills and competencies in this area in 26/7**
- Overall tenant perceptions have improved, with only 2 TSMs showing a marginal decline on last year.



# Performance – TSMs Annual Data 24/25

(National Median figures in brackets)

Measure Code	Description	2023/24 (%)	2024/25 (%)
TP01	Satisfied with overall service from ECC as their landlord	70% (71%)	76% (72%)
TP02	Satisfied with overall repairs service	75.2% (72.3%)	78.2% (73.6%)
TP03	Satisfied with time taken to complete most recent repair	72.4% (67.4%)	80.9% (69.5%)
TP04	Satisfied that home is well maintained	73.0% (70.8%)	77.7% (71.5%)
TP05	Satisfied that home is safe	79.2% (76.7%)	80.6% (77.6%)
TP06	Landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	64.6% (60.0%)	61.6% (61.6%)
TP07	Landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter	69.5% (70.3%)	73.3% (72.0%)
TP08	Landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect	80.3% (76.8%)	81.2% (77.9%)
TP09	Complaints handling satisfaction	34.8% (34.5%)	30.0% (35.5%)
TP10	Communal areas clean and well maintained	53.5% (65.1%)	62.9% (66.7%)
TP11	Landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood	50.0% (63.1%)	66.8% (64.6%)
TP12	Satisfaction with landlord's approach to handling ASB	53.4% (57.8%)	55.5% (59.5%)

## Improvement Actions TP06 Listening & Acting

- 'You said, we did' actions in the Tenant Annual Report 2024/25
- Increased the number of housing outreach surgeries
- Held a Tenant Focus week
- Improved feedback from tenants using transactional surveys
- Co-produced the content for the Tenant Magazine with Resident Communications Panel

## Improvement Actions TP09 Complaint Handling

- Refreshed staff training
- Held complaints clinics to improve learning from complaints
- Increased the frequency of tenant-led Complaints & Performance Group
- Updated the Complaints policy in response to a review by the Housing Ombudsman
- Completion of Housing Ombudsman Self-Assessment Report
- Monthly report for Strategic Director and PFH as Member Responsible for Complaints
- Learning is feeding into new approach to complaints council wide

# Overview Our Homes

## Asset Management

Adrian Pengelly, Strategic Director Operations

Michelle Davidson Head of Service, Asset Maintenance

# Our Homes - Asset Management Approach

1. Enhance and use our asset data to make better decisions
2. Reduce the carbon footprint of our assets
3. Invest in our assets, neighbourhoods and estates to create thriving communities where people are proud to live



Edwards Court

Southlands  
Community Hub



## Our homes – Stock Profile

Places by type and no. of bedrooms

Type (grouped)	0	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Bedsit	143						<b>143</b>
Bungalow		137	107	10	1		<b>255</b>
Flat		1311	877	8			<b>2196</b>
House		4	517	1341	85	8	<b>1955</b>
Maisonette		3	104	81			<b>188</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>1455</b>	<b>1605</b>	<b>1440</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4737</b>

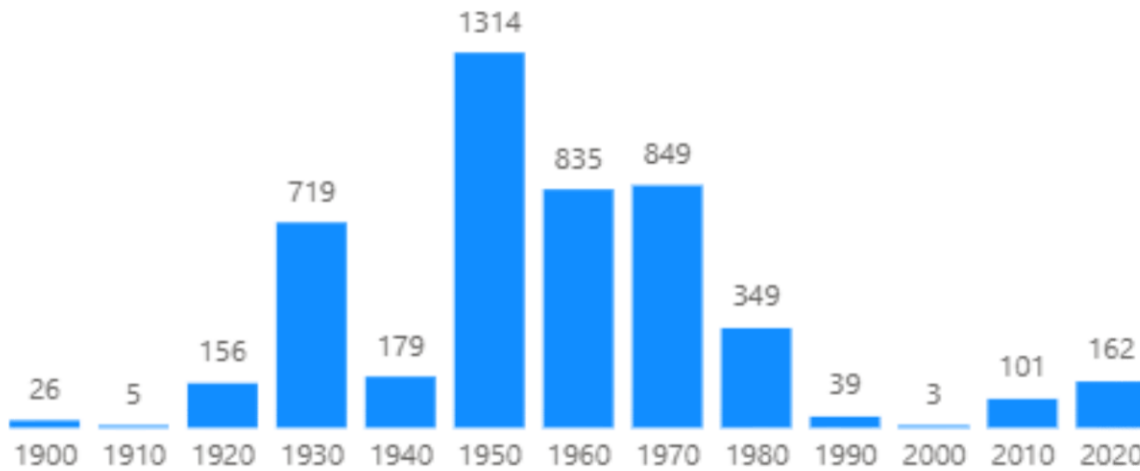
Attributes

Provision	Places
Extra Care Accomodation	53
General Needs	4079
General Needs (Over 55)	18
Shared Ownership	13
Sheltered	574
<b>Total</b>	<b>4737</b>

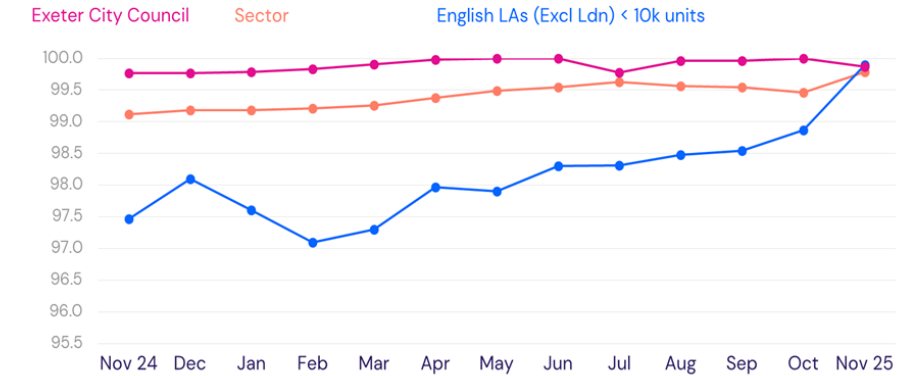
- 82% General Needs & 12% off overall stock is sheltered with an additional 53 properties (Extra Care Scheme)
- No high-rise blocks
- 6 blocks of flats over 11m
- 1074 leasehold properties
- 198 new builds-all to Passivhaus Standards

# Stock Viability

Places by build date decade



Properties with EICR certificates up to 5 years old (%)



- Average SAP rating across all properties is 75.3
- Built 198 new low energy Passivhaus Council homes across 12 sites over 15 years
- 21 homes completed at Brook House, Hamlin Gardens in 24/25
- 35 new homes completed at Cherry and Damson Houses, Vaughan Road in 25/26
- Phase B Vaughan Road to commence in 26/7 ( general needs 1 bed flats)

1 Bed	
1170	62%
2 Bed	
334	18%
3 Bed	
252	13%
4 Bed	
133%	7%
Total	
1889	



## New builds

Page 23



Brook House, 21 Passivhaus flats  
completed September 2024



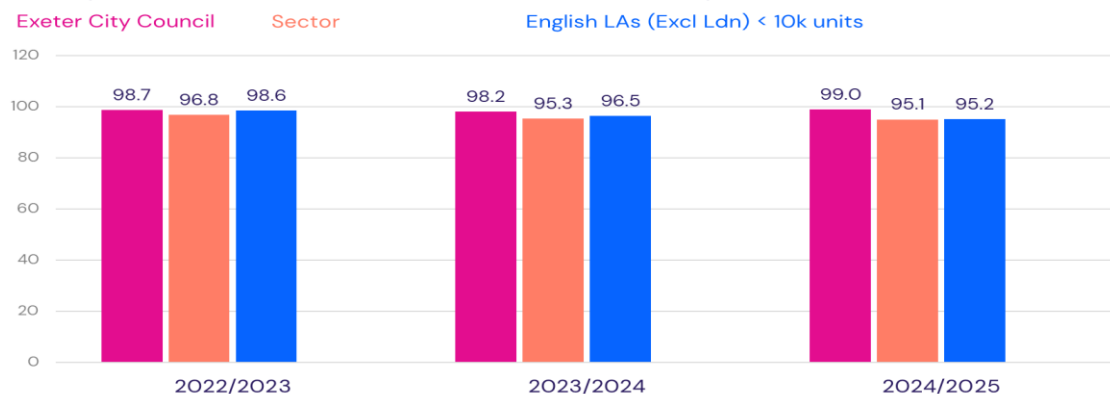
Cherry/Damson Houses completed  
November 2025, 35 flats for older people  
built to Passivhaus standards

# Performance – TSMs Annual Data 24/25

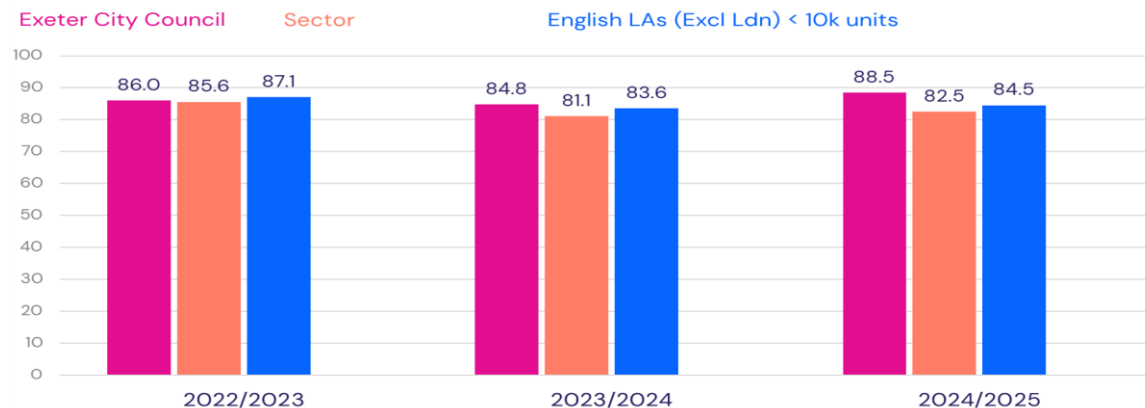
(National Median figures in brackets)

Measure Code	Description	2023/24 (%)	2024/25 (%)
BS01	Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out.	99.90% (99.9%)	99.90% (100%)
BS02	Proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out.	100% (100%)	100% (100%)
BS03	Proportion of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out.	100% (100%)	100% (100%)
BS04	Proportion of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out.	100% (100%)	100% (100%)
BS05	Proportion of homes for which all required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out.	100% (100%)	100% (100%)

Emergency responsive repairs completed within target (%)



Non-emergency responsive repairs completed within target (%)



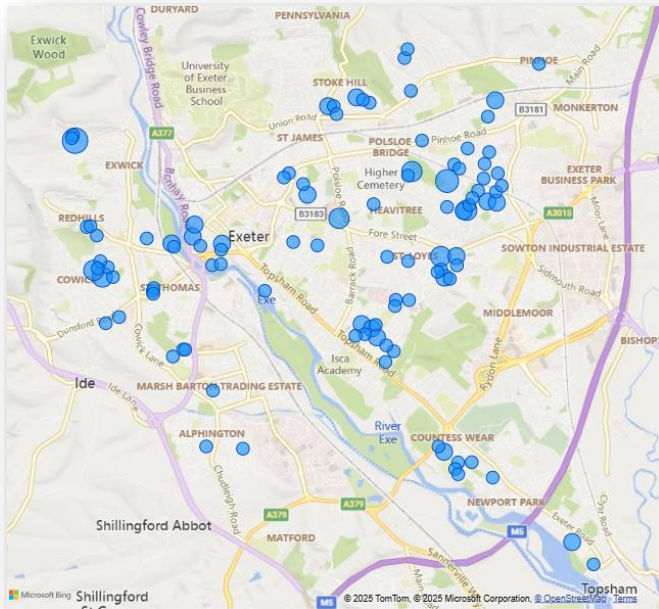
**Maintained our performance on completion of repairs**

**Housemark 24/25**



# Performance – TSMs Annual Data 24/25

(National Median figures in brackets)



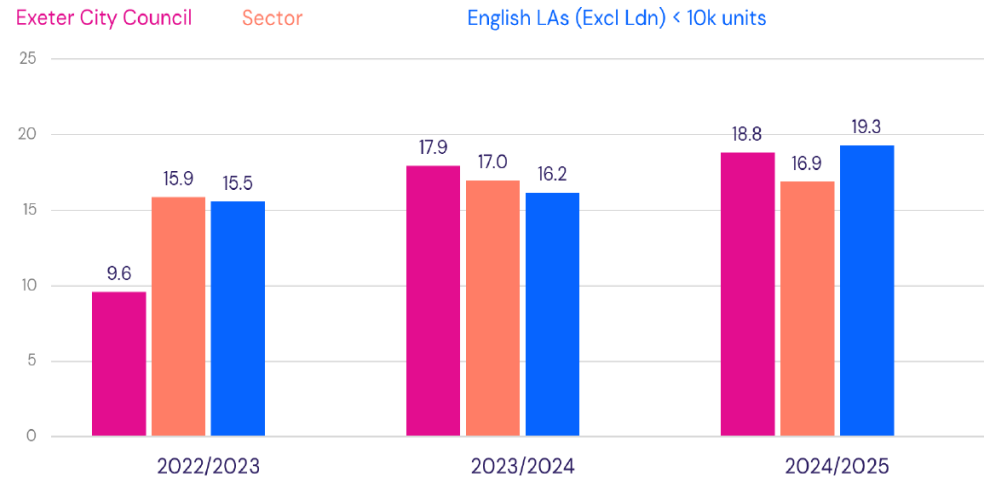
## Decent Homes Standard

- 4.5% (142 homes) of our stock has been identified as non-decent.
- Actively using data to record & monitor the condition of homes.
- Planned programmes are in place to address non decent stock & work with tenants who are refusing works.
- Cat 1 hazards are promptly addressed through existing contractors.
- 1250 homes (25%) modernised through the Retrofit Programme
- Further 320+ in current 2-year programme

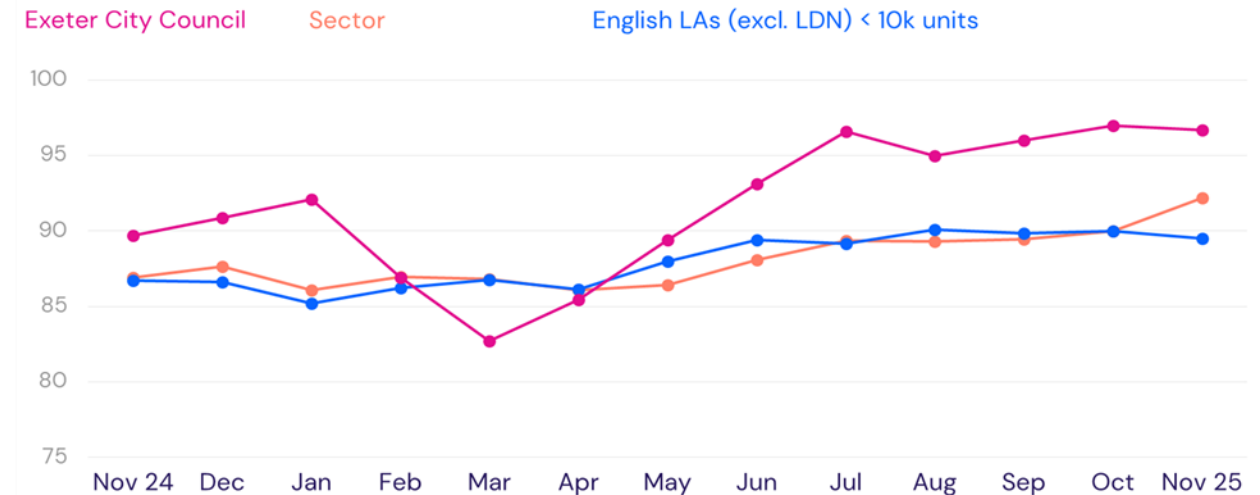
# Benchmarking Performance Repairs

## Repairs speed

Average number of calendar days taken to complete repairs



Responsive repairs completed within target (%)



Measure Code	Description	2023/24 (%)	2024/25 (%)
RP01	Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard.	4.10% (5%)	4.50% (5%)
RP02(1)	Proportion of non-emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale (days)	84.80% (81.5%)	88.50% (82.5%)
RP02(2)	Proportion of emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale (hours)	98.30% (95.3%)	99.00% (94.9%)

Housemark 24/25

## Priorities for 26/27

Jo Yelland, Strategic Director People and Communities

Adrian Pengelly, Strategic Director Operations

## Corporate Plan 25/28



**Exeter**  
City Council

# Homes

We will expand our own council housing. We will do all we can to tackle homelessness, and we will engage communities, the city's key partners and developers in delivering the homes which Exeter needs, whilst protecting our valuable green spaces.

Corporate Plan 2025-2028

### Intended Outcomes

- Better quality, energy efficient and more affordable homes to buy or rent.
- New housing developments that are well integrated into existing communities.
- Fewer people will be homeless or in temporary housing.
- The number of people on the social housing waiting list will reduce.

To achieve this our strategic efforts will focus on working in partnership to deliver the Exeter Plan and Liveable Exeter sites. We will secure investment for building more social housing and reduce rough sleeping and the number of people in temporary accommodation, enabling more people to find sustainable housing.











**Exeter**  
City Council



## REPORT TO CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Report of: Jo Yelland, Strategic Director People and Communities

Title: Homelessness Strategy and Housing Needs update

### 1. What is the report about?

This report is an update requested by Scrutiny on progress towards addressing the 5 priority areas in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2023 – 2027, in the context of the national Plan to End Homelessness, new government legislation and funding arrangements and operational work underway to meet the new requirements.

### 2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 For members to note progress made on the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2023 – 2027.
- 2.2 For members to note the need to revisit the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy during 2026 in response to the National Plan to End Homelessness (2005) and new legislation.
- 2.3 For members to note the organisational and commissioning work already underway to start to address the new requirements.

### 3. Reasons for the recommendation:

Officers request that the above recommendations be noted by the Scrutiny Committee.

### 4. What are the resource implications including non-financial resources

As it stands there are no additional specific resource requirements not already included in the 2026/27 budget setting process.

### 5. What are the legal aspects?

The Council has a duty under Section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002 to adopt and publish a homelessness strategy and renew it every five years. The Homelessness Prevention Strategy sets out new requirements for this highlighted in this report and due to be detailed by the publication of new Government Guidance during 2026.

### 6. Report details:

The report provides an update for members on:

1. Strategy progress
2. The National Plan to End Homelessness and its implications for the council
3. Homelessness strategy review
4. Current organisational and commissioning changes underway intended to meet the challenges and opportunities in the new national plan.

#### 6.1 HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY: PRIORITIES

The council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2023 – 2027 has five main priority areas:

- Ending Rough Sleeping – by end 2024
- Increasing Homelessness Prevention
- Progressing Health, Wellbeing & Recovery

- Growing Inclusion and Enablement
- Optimising Systems and Partnerships

## 6.2 HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY: DATA OVERVIEW

The table below sets out the monthly data returns on key metrics for Homelessness Prevention for the full year 24/25 and 25/6 to date. The highlighted data show the there is a swing towards people coming to us in a crisis (relief so already homeless) over coming to us earlier in prevention stage.

Performance Indicator	Q1 24/25	Q1 25/6	Q2 24/25	Q2 25/26	Q3 24/25	Q3 25/26	Q4 24/25
<b>Homeless Application - Prevention Duties</b>							
Number of new Prevention applications taken during month (B)	130	106	110	72	93	81	80
Total number of open Prevention applications (end of month snapshot) C	308	233	306	191	278	189	217
Number of Prevention applications successfully discharged during month (D)	63	39	48	24	63	26	42
Number of Prevention duties moved on to Relief during month (homeless) E	21	24	29	16	19	29	26
<b>Homeless Application - Relief Duties</b>							
Number of new Relief Applications taken during month (F)	151	83	117	152	119	108	121
Total number of open Relief applications (end of month snapshot) C	323	269	333	350	317	313	296
<b>Homeless Application - Main Duties</b>							
Number of Applications moving to main housing duty (J)	35	44	42	55	32	62	27
Total number of Main Duty applications (end of month snapshot) C	189	162	241	189	237	186	207
Main duties successfully discharged (K)	35	31	36	32	40	35	35
<b>Accommodation</b>	<b>Q1 24/25</b>	<b>Q1 25/6</b>	<b>Q2 24/25</b>	<b>Q2 25/26</b>	<b>Q3 24/25</b>	<b>Q3 25/26</b>	<b>Q4 24/25</b>
Total Number of households in TA (end of month snapshot)	398	335	425	358	392	328	368
(Of the above) number of households accommodated under a Power	11	0	2	0	2	1	4
Number of families	101	38	135	53	107	53	135
Number of people in spot purchase (Commercial B&B / Hotel) including GWH.	22	43	30	31	28	32	18



## 6.3 STRATEGIC OVERVIEW : NATIONAL CONTEXT

In December 2025 Government launched its new National Plan to End Homelessness. This sets out a renewed focus on responding to growing and entrenched homelessness issue across the UK. This sets out that the best way to end homelessness and rough sleeping is to prevent it before it happens. The focus of the plan is on:

- building more homes that are affordable,
- raising living standards,
- supporting individuals through crises, and
- reforming public services to put prevention at their heart.

In Appendix 1 an extract from the Plan to End Homelessness is attached as Member Briefing paper 1 providing members with information about the national context. Member Briefing Note 2 provides a summary of the Plan to End Homelessness. Member Briefing Note 3 provides a summary of new Housing Related Legislation

The Plan to End Homelessness is built on 5 pillars:

1. **Universal Prevention:** Tackling the root causes of homelessness
2. **Targeted Prevention:** Support for people at higher risk of homelessness
3. **Preventing Crisis:** Helping people stay in their homes
4. **Improving Emergency Responses:** Improving temporary accommodation and making people's experiences better if they do become homeless
5. **Recovery and Preventing Repeat Homelessness:** Ensuring people don't experience homelessness more than once and halving long-term rough sleeping

The Plan outlines immediate action intended to help councils address the most unacceptable forms of homelessness and rough sleeping which are:

- Eliminating unlawful Bed & Breakfast (B&B) use for families,
- Tackling poor-quality temporary accommodation more widely
- Halving the number of people experiencing long-term rough sleeping

As the briefing note sets out a raft of new strategies and investment plans will be brought into play at a national level intended to bring about long-term sustainable change to address the root causes of homelessness including:

- Building 1.5 million homes, including a generational increase in new social and affordable homes backed by £39 billion investment.
- Making sure that social homes go to people who need them, by updating social housing allocations guidance and making best use of the current stock.
- Reforming the private rented sector via the Renters' Rights Act, banning Section 21 evictions and improving security for tenants.
- Tackling poverty and boosting living standards by scrapping the two-child limit, increasing the National Living Wage and increasing the standard rate of Universal Credit.

The Plan will also mean significant changes to councils approaches to tackling homelessness and will have a renewed focus on councils being able to:

- Demonstrate effective local "place" based governance
- A shift in homelessness strategies from reactive crisis responses to a culture rooted in prevention.
- Publish and regularly update action plans (Autumn 26)

- Include targets against the metrics in the new National Outcomes Framework (to be published) and a description of how, working with partners those targets will be achieved
- Identify further bespoke targets using local data

Government also sets out that council should expect increased involvement from MHCLG for areas that have a significantly high homelessness and rough sleeping population including strong local governance to effectively scrutinise actions plans and targets, and to be open to challenge and support.

Among the targets Councils will have to set and strive for (new National Outcomes Framework: priority Outcome: To Prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping ) are to reduce rates of:

- Households with children in Temporary Accommodation
- Families in B&B over 6 weeks
- People sleeping rough on a single night
- People sleeping rough over the month who are long term
- Preventing and relieving homelessness
- Preventing and relieving homeless for those experiencing multiple disadvantages

In practical terms this will mean a shift in culture and practice through:

- Prioritisation of single homelessness to stop people entering the cycle in the first place
- Maintaining focused, long-term engagement with people who have been sleeping rough for long periods.
- Greater focus on prevention: housing crisis should primarily be addressed through homelessness legislation and statutory duties rather than through rough sleeping services.
- Personalised support tailored to individual needs not the situation (i.e. rough sleeping) promoting a more inclusive and needs led approach
- Closer collaboration with partners to manage street activity and reduce harm
- Prioritisation of resources according to assessed need rather than solely on an individual housing or rough sleeping status
- Targeting support and resources including outreach delivery towards people who are less likely to seek help or engage with services

## **6.4 STRATEGIC OVERVIEW: LOCAL PREPARATION**

Local data analysis undertaken in 2025 identified systemic challenges faced in Exeter in relation to homelessness and an evidenced based rationale for a new approach to the way the council delivers its statutory services and how it commissions essential frontline support services for those in need.

Following an initial 2-month snapshot review of the data a longer-term analysis was undertaken to assess whether the issues raised in the snapshot analysis were more entrenched. This more in-depth analysis confirms that earlier insights were not anomalous, but reflective of deeper, ongoing systemic challenges in Exeter's homelessness landscape.

The findings and conclusions reached from our own analysis are largely reflected in the new national Plan to End Homelessness as are the plans we have started to implement to transform the local system and reduce homelessness. This includes a fundamental transformation of both our commissioning of services outside of the council and a



fundamental restructure of the way we organise ourselves and deliver services. Along with the strategic review of performance data our plans have been informed by :

- Gov's Fair Funding Review will provide 3-year funding settlement from 1/4/26
- Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023
- Renters Rights Reform Act 2025
- National Plan to End Homelessness December 2025

The slide set in Appendix 2 provides an over view of the commissioning and internal restructure work underway

## 6.5 THREE YEAR FUNDING SETTLEMENT

In 25/26 ECC received the following Government Grants.

Grant	Amount £
Homeless Prevention Grant allocation	1,431,078
*Homeless Prevention Grant Top up	99,985
Rough Sleeping Prevention and Recovery Grant allocation	1,393,547
*Rough Sleeping Prevention and Recovery Grant Top up	407,054
Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme Next Steps	422,850
MHCLG new burdens funding for Accommodation based DA	36,218
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,790,732</b>

### Funding 26/27

Using the national calculator provided by MHCLG we estimated Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse consolidated ring-fenced grant for 26/27 at **£3.1m: £691k** less than the 26/27 total. Our actual allocation confirmed in January 2025: ring-fenced Homelessness, Rough Sleeping, Domestic Abuse grant in 26/27 is £2,675,706. ***This is a shortfall of £1.1million against 25/26 budget.***

Within the funding formula the notional Temporary Accommodation element is £729,850 (£385,176 less than we were expecting), overall, the funding formula provides a gross increase over previous years @ £1m. Therefore, members will be asked to allocate this amount to housing needs budgets to make up the shortfall in the HPG grant from General Fund resources. Note gross expenditure (including Temporary Accommodation and Externally Commissioned Services) will be in the region of £7.3 million some of which is offset by income from Housing Benefit .

Devon County Council (DCC) have confirmed funding (ex: Supporting People Funding) for Exeter of £161,021 for the next 2 years, which previously went directly to providers of Supported Housing. Whilst we await confirmation of exact details and outcomes expected from this short term grant our initial intention is to include this on our commissioning of Supported Accommodation along with a smaller Homeless Prevention Grant of £31k.

In addition, there is further New Burdens Funding to support mobilisation of the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 and the Renters Rights Reform Act 2025 which will cover, for the next two years the direct cost of employing 3-4 full time equivalent staff to undertake the new statutory duties detailed in Appendix 1 Member Briefing Note 3.

**7. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?**

The strategic outcome we are aiming to achieve is that "fewer people will be homeless or in temporary housing" (ECC Corporate Plan 25-28).

**8. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?**

This report is for information only; no proposals are being made

**9. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)**

No potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act because the report is for information only

**10. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

No direct carbon/environmental impacts arising because the report is for noting only

**11. Are there any other options?**

Not Applicable: Scrutiny as report is for information only

Strategic Director: People and Communities , Jo Yelland,

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)**

Background papers used in compiling this report:

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2023 – 2027

New National Plan for Ending Homelessness December 2025

## Appendix 1

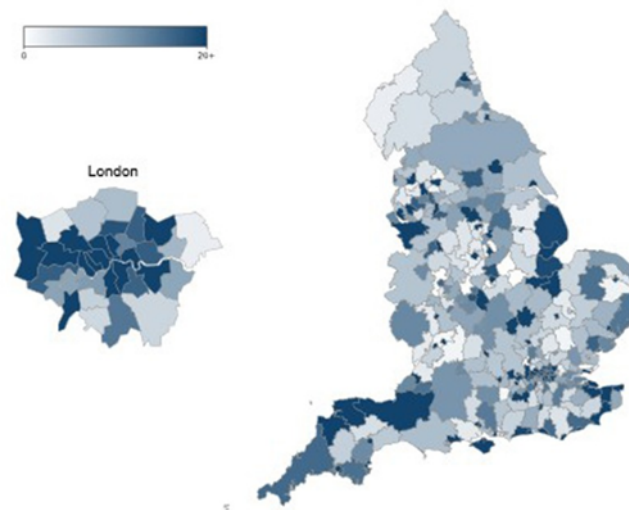
### Member Briefing Note 1.

#### National Context Homelessness (Extracted from Gov sources)

Government report that every day last year, 900 households, including almost 300 families with children, were made homeless or threatened with homelessness. The number of people sleeping rough is at near-record levels, up by over 150% since 2010.

Over a third of all those sleeping rough each month are also long-term homeless, and this number has increased by almost 30% over the last two years. Around 13% of all people sleeping rough have returned to the streets after moving into settled accommodation, often when their underlying needs, such as poor health, lack of support networks or difficulty managing a tenancy, have not been properly addressed.

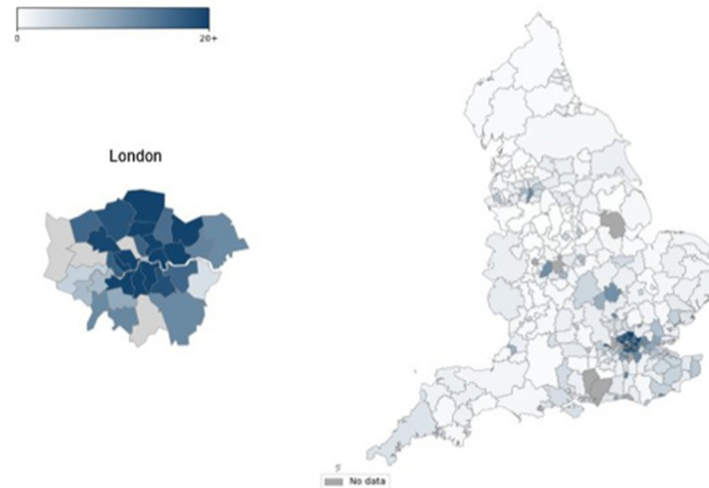
**Figure 1.1c Estimated number of people sleeping rough over the month per 100,000 people in the population, September 2025**



Alongside rough sleeping, temporary accommodation pressures are also rising at a record rate. As of 30 June 2025, 132,410 households were living in temporary accommodation, of which 84,240 were families, including 172,420 children. Whilst a significant proportion of temporary accommodation is relatively stable and self-contained, this is not the case universally. B&B accommodation – often insecure, poor quality and hugely expensive – is meant only for emergencies. However, in the latest statistics, 2,070 families had been living in this type of accommodation for longer than the 6-week statutory limit. Government is clear this practice is unacceptable and must stop.

Whilst homelessness affects every part of the country, temporary accommodation pressures are concentrated in London, the South East and South West, as well as major cities such as Manchester and Birmingham. Almost two thirds of all families in temporary accommodation live in London – 20 households in 1,000, compared to 3 in 1,000 across the rest of England.

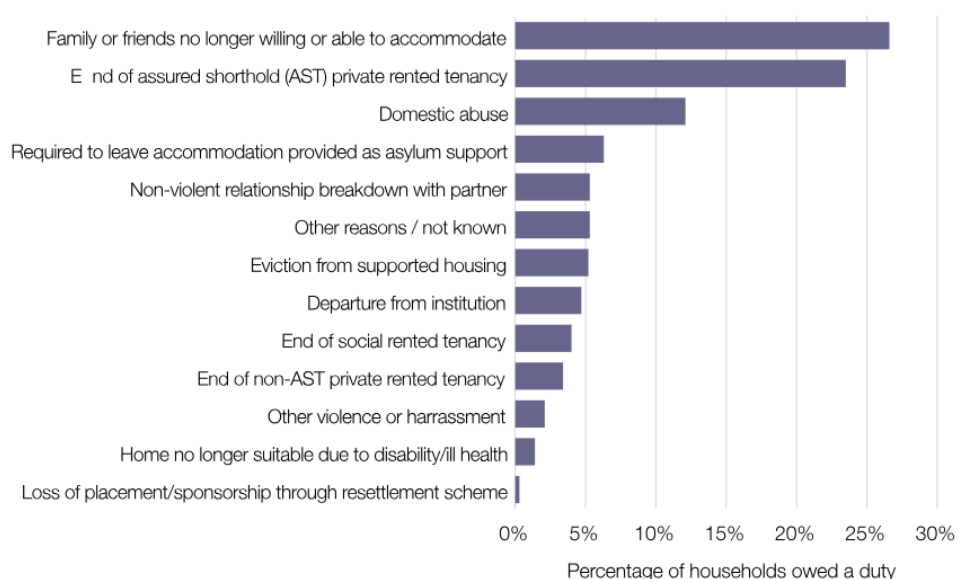
Pressures on temporary accommodation can lead to households being placed in accommodation outside their local area – sometimes away from support networks, jobs and schools. Over 42,000 households are currently placed in a different area, with 81% of these from London boroughs. While most out-of-area moves are within the same region, they still disrupt children's education and parents' jobs, adding to the stress and instability faced by families.



Poverty, housing availability and affordability are the root causes of homelessness and rough sleeping. 4.5 million children are living in relative poverty, a 900,000 increase since 2010/11. For generations, not enough homes have been built and there has been too little investment in social and affordable housing. One in three households lived in social housing in the 1980s, now it is closer to one in six.

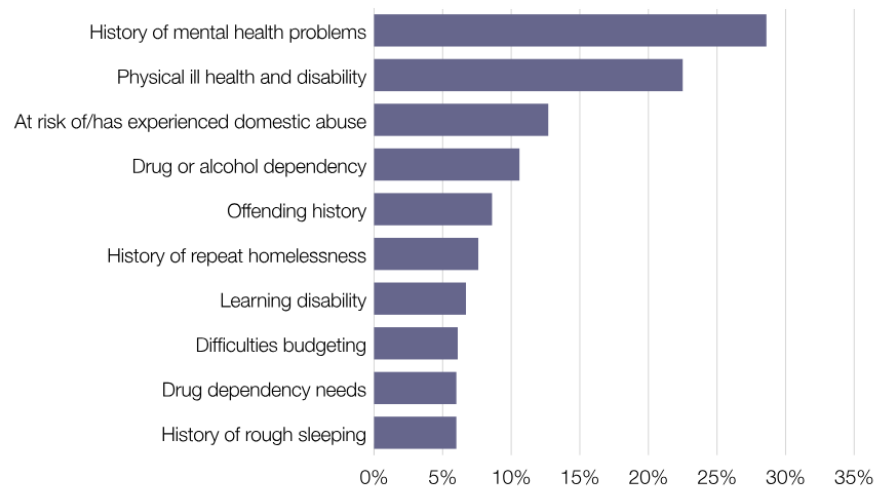
This shortage has left many people on low incomes struggling to afford rising rents in an increasingly insecure private rental market. The end of a private rented tenancy is currently the second most frequently cited reason for homelessness, after friends/family no longer being willing to accommodate an individual. Private renters in England spend far more of their income on housing in comparison to homeowners; particularly those on the lowest incomes, 71% of whom spend more than 30% of their income on rent. People who are privately renting also have not had the same stability as others, with over 6,500 households threatened with homelessness and owed a prevention duty as a result of “No Fault” Section 21 eviction notices between April – June 2025.

**Figure 1.3a The percentage of households owed a prevention or relief duty by reasons for homelessness or threat of homelessness, April to June 2025**



People who sleep rough are more likely to have complex and overlapping support needs. 84% of women and 65% of men who reported having slept rough within the last year had had three or more of the following experiences: homelessness, substance (either drugs or alcohol) use problems, mental health issues, domestic abuse, and interaction with the criminal justice system.

**Figure 1.3b The percentage of households owed a prevention or relief duty by the top 10 support needs of households in April to June 2025**



## Member Briefing Note 2.

### National Plan to End Homelessness (Dec 2025) Summary

The best way to end homelessness and rough sleeping is to prevent it before it happens. The focus of the plan is to:

- building more homes that are affordable,
- raising living standards,
- supporting individuals through crises, and
- reforming public services to put prevention at their heart.

Although government funding for homelessness and rough sleeping has increased consistently since 2018, the number of people in temporary accommodation and on the streets has continued to rise. There are many reasons for this, including:

1. **A lack of affordable housing** – without enough genuinely affordable homes, prevention efforts can only go so far.
2. **Rising poverty** – making it harder for households to meet their basic needs and housing costs, pushing more people to the brink of homelessness.
3. **Over-emphasis on crisis response** – recent government activity has focussed on crisis relief rather than longer-term prevention or the causes of homelessness. Efforts have centred on responding to immediate need and getting people off the streets quickly, often into expensive, short-term accommodation, rather than long-term solutions we know work, such as Housing First. In many areas it is only possible to get help once you have been verified as sleeping rough.
4. **Reduced prevention activity** – attention and resources have been diverted away from genuine prevention activity, resulting in less early intervention and more families stuck in unsuitable temporary accommodation.
5. **Poor coordination across public services** – the NHS, prisons and asylum system each trying to manage their own pressures has led to vulnerable people falling between the cracks without getting the help they need.

Government intends to give councils greater freedoms and accountability to make changes locally.

#### Long-term sustainable change to address the root causes of homelessness:

- Building 1.5 million homes, including a generational increase in new social and affordable homes backed by £39 billion investment.
- Making sure that social homes go to people who need them, by updating social housing allocations guidance and making best use of the current stock.
- Reforming the private rented sector via the Renters' Rights Act, banning Section 21 evictions and improving security for tenants.
- Tackling poverty and boosting living standards by scrapping the two-child limit to lift 450,000 children out of poverty, increasing the National Living Wage by 4.1% from next April and making a sustained, above inflation increase to the standard rate of Universal Credit.

#### Medium-term change to shift away from crisis and put prevention at the heart of public services:

- Setting a new national target to prevent homelessness for more households and to help more people into stable homes quickly, this parliament.
- Investing £3.5 billion in homelessness and rough sleeping services over the next three years, supporting over 300,000 households each year via new, more flexible multi-year funding arrangements that enable councils to invest more in prevention.

- Placing new legal duties on public services to identify, act and collaborate to prevent and address homelessness.
- No one should leave a public institution into homelessness – something that happened to almost 34,000 households last year – underpinned by new cross-government targets to reduce homelessness from prisons, care and hospital.
- Ending the perceived need to sleep rough before getting help supporting areas to develop plans that move away from verification towards assessment based on need.

**Immediate action on temporary accommodation, particularly B&B use:**

- Setting a new target to eliminate the use of B&Bs for families, other than very short-term use in emergencies, by the end of this parliament.
- Increasing the supply of good-quality temporary accommodation, both through the £950 million fourth round of the Local Authority Housing Fund, and through exploring options for partnerships with social impact and institutional investors.
- Improving experience for people living in temporary accommodation, including action on standards, schooling, healthcare and out-of-area placements.
- Supporting local models via updated guidance, toolkits and expanded £30 million Emergency Accommodation Reduction Programme.

**Action to address rough sleeping, focussed particularly on those who have slept on the streets the longest:**

- Setting a new national target to halve long-term rough sleeping ( by the end of this parliament.)
- Launching a £124 million supported housing programme, reaching over 2,500 people, both to prevent homelessness and to help people off the streets and into more stable housing.
- Launching a £15 million programme to tackle long-term rough sleeping, working with targeted areas to test innovative approaches and spread learning.
- Providing £37 million for the Ending Homelessness in Communities Fund, working with the voluntary, community and faith sector to improve support given to people experiencing long-term rough sleeping.
- Working with councils and wider public services to define consistent expectations on effective and proportionate engagement and enforcement to address persistent anti-social or harmful behaviour in a rough sleeping context, where necessary.

**Government intends to hold themselves and partners to account by:**

- Introducing new national targets for this parliament, as outlined above.
- Requiring every council to publish an action plan to accompany their local homelessness strategy and setting a new requirement that these should include local targets aligned with the new Outcomes Framework for local government.
- Calling on Mayors to ensure real ambition across their regions on these outcomes, giving them funding to drive coordination and collaboration between local councils, services and other partners.
- Strengthening oversight and support for councils on delivery – including closely monitoring areas with particular challenges, providing targeted expert support and taking action to strengthen improvement when progress is not good enough.
- Funding a new National Workforce Programme to provide essential training, expert housing and homelessness advice, and skills for the homelessness and rough sleeping workforce.
- Publishing progress reports at least every two years to track progress at a national level against our actions and targets, overseen by the Inter-Ministerial Group, which will continue to meet to drive action and learn lessons from frontline delivery.

- Continuing to convene the national Lived Experience Forum and Expert Group to help monitor impact on the ground
- Continuing to build on our high-quality data and evidence, adopting a test and learn approach, and where local areas trial innovative practice, roll it out where it is effective and share learning.

## 5 Pillars to the Strategy

1. **Universal Prevention:** Tackling the root causes of homelessness
2. **Targeted Prevention:** Support for people at higher risk of homelessness
3. **Preventing Crisis:** Helping people stay in their homes
4. **Improving Emergency Responses:** Improving temporary accommodation and making people's experiences better if they do become homeless
5. **Recovery and Preventing Repeat Homelessness:** Ensuring people don't experience homelessness more than once and halving long-term rough sleeping

The Plan outlines immediate action intended to help councils address the most unacceptable forms of homelessness and rough sleeping:

- Eliminating unlawful Bed & Breakfast (B&B) use for families,
- Tackling poor-quality temporary accommodation more widely
- Halving the number of people experiencing long-term rough sleeping



## Member Briefing Note 3

### New Housing Related Legislation

#### Context and Background:

Exeter City Council has an existing statutory duty under the Housing Act 2004 to keep the housing conditions in their area under review. These duties are currently delivered through the Private Sector Housing Team, integrated within the Housing Department. These duties are currently carried out through:

- Operation of Housing in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) Licensing Scheme
- Responses to Private Sector Tenant complaints in relation to property condition

There are essentially three new challenges via the introduction of the Renters Rights Act 2025, licensing of Supported Housing, and central government's policy in relation remediation works to tall buildings in response to the Grenfell disaster.

#### The Renters Rights Act 2025

This Renters Rights Act (Oct 25) places new duties on Council's to enforce "the landlord legislation in its area". This legislation is specified and relates to The Protection from Eviction Act 1977 and Part 1 (Tenancy Reform) and Part 2 (Residential Landlords) of the Renters Rights Act 2025.

New powers of investigation become live on 27 December 2025, and the tenancy reform offences will become live on 1 May 2026. More details will emerge through the implementation of secondary legislation however, the focus of the government is on the tenancy reform measures being brought in without delay and **local authorities will have a new duty to enforce, and a new duty to report.**

The first stage of offences and changes to tenancies will occur on **1 May 2026**. New tenancy related offences created and to be enforced for the first time will include.

- Breaches of the fair possession ground
- Trying to let a property on a fixed term
- Trying to end a tenancy orally or by service of notice to quit
- Acting outside the section 8 grounds
- Failing to provide the tenant with adequate notice
- Rental discrimination
- Breaching rental bidding rules
- Not providing a written statement of terms of tenancy

By late 2026, once the national database of private rented properties and landlords has been established, there will be offences of:

- Failure to register a rental property on the database or providing false information
- Failure to register as a landlord on the database or providing false information.

In 2028 it will become mandatory for landlords to sign up for the Private Rented Sector Ombudsman, and there will be a new offence of:

- Failure to comply with the directions of the new Landlord Ombudsman, or failure to be a member of the Landlords Redress Scheme.

Long term (between 2035 and 2037) the Decent Homes Standard and Awaab's Law will be integrated into the Renters Rights Act 2025 for privately rented dwellings, and there will be new offences for:

- Having a category 1 hazard present in a rented property (HHSRS Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004)
- Failure to meet a Type 1 requirement (not meeting the Decent Home Standard).
- Failure to attend/inspect quickly enough in relation to certain nominated hazards
- Failure to undertake works in relation to nominated hazards.
- Failure to provide alternative accommodation in emergency situations

Overall, the introduction of the Renters Rights Act 2025 will place significant new burdens on Local Authorities. The Central Government have provided new burdens funding of £49,677.18 for the 25/26 financial year, with the same amount expected for the following financial year.

Central government has clearly stated in relation to the Renters Rights Act 2025 (and private sector housing more broadly) that it expects local authorities to have a far more robust enforcement approach than in the past. One estimate from the organisation Justice for Tenants, puts the increase in Civil Penalty use by local authorities to be between 5 and 10 times more under the Renters Rights Act. In the 24/25 financial year 3 Civil Penalty Notices were served in Exeter.

### **Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023**

The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 introduces a licensing regime for supported housing. Consultation on implementing the Act happened in 2025, and it is anticipated that the implementation will be October/November 2026. Supported Housing is for vulnerable people and is exempt from standard Housing Benefit rules, allowing higher rents to cover significant care, support or supervision provided by housing associations, charities or councils. The Act will place a responsibility on local authorities to review, **survey, license and inspect supported exempt accommodation** in their area.

The licensing scheme will be essentially modelled on the Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) licensing scheme. Each property will require an application with fee, inspection, assessment and determination by council officers and an approval or refusal of license. During the term of the license a further inspection will likely have to be carried out. It is important to note that the inspections will have to be carried out by multi-disciplinary teams as the National Supported Housing Standards apply to not only the building and facilities, but the care given. It is estimated there are more than 100 properties likely to be subject to the scheme in Exeter.

### **High Buildings Enforcement Policy**

Following the Grenfell Fire central government started initiatives to first survey each Local Authority to identify buildings over 18m and how many had potentially dangerous Aluminium Composite Material cladding. Subsequent building owners surveys done by the building owners were required to return surveys to MHCLG and then sign up to remediation schemes.

December 2024, the government launched the Remediation Acceleration Plan, which expects remediation works will start by the end of 2025, and by the end of 2029 all 18+ metre buildings in government schemes will be remediated. According to the information currently available from **MHCLG, there are 21 buildings between 11 and 18m high, and 4 higher than 18m in Exeter**. Inspections and remediation works will be delivered by National Remediation

Teams appointed by central Government. Our current understanding is that government expects local authority officers to inspect high buildings (11m to 18m) as necessary and take statutory action to enforce remediation works but no further details are yet available on how it is expected that Local Authorities would undertake this new role.

## **Housing Needs System Transformation**

A programme of work is already underway to address systemic challenges faced in Exeter in relation to homelessness. This includes delivery of an evidenced based approach to the way the council delivers its statutory services and how it commissions essential frontline support services for those in need. This follows a strategic review of our performance data which highlighted significant operational and systematic issues including Private Rented Sector (PRS) evictions that remain underrepresented at the prevention stage but more visible at the relief stage, suggesting a persistent pattern of late-stage intervention for PRS tenants.

Included in this work is the creation of a new division the **Early Intervention and Prevention Service** which will specialise in targeted early interventions to prevent homelessness. It will provide brief and intensive outreach support to people experiencing housing difficulties, which if not addressed, may lead to them becoming homeless. Key outcomes for this service will be to reduce PRS evictions by engaging tenants and landlords earlier to prevent escalation and evictions.

This service will introduce new prevention functions such as:

- PRS Landlord incentive scheme, rent guarantee and bond, repairs micro-grants, and same-week mediation with the aim of giving landlords alternatives to eviction and creates a reason for landlords/tenants to make early contact with the council
- PRS Tenancy health checks and visits: triggered support after first arrears, ASB warnings, or health/crisis flags, with practical help (budgeting, repairs advocacy, pest control) with the aim of tackling solvable issues before notice is served.

This service will deliver new legal functions such as:

- The council's new duties under the Renters Rights Act (2005) and the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023.
- New offences under the Decent Homes Standard and Awaab's Law for the private sector.

This service will also continue to deliver

- The Housing in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) Licensing Scheme including registration, inspection, resident complaints and enforcement actions
- Responses to Private Sector Tenant complaints in relation to property condition
- Oversight of the Warm Homes Loan Scheme
- Responses to ad hoc information about Empty Homes
- Disabled Facilities and Home Adaptation Grants (excluding Social Housing)

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# Housing Needs and Homelessness System Change

## Briefing for Devon CEX Group 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025

Page 45

# This Presentation sets out:

- Case for transformation
- New commissioning approach
- Organisational change
- Where we are now



# Housing Needs and Homelessness

## The Case for Transformation

- Strategic review of performance data has highlighted significant operational and systematic issues.
- Gov's Fair Funding Review and 3-year funding settlement provide a welcome opportunity to take a more strategic view of needs and outcomes.
- Renewed focus on the transformation of our local system including the delivery of statutory services.



# Strategic Data Review

Highlights that Exeter's homelessness crisis is ***structural, complex, and fast moving, driven by public system failures*** rather than private evictions

Our local system is characterised by:

- Revolving door of placements and evictions from supported housing
- People (inc care leavers) exiting institutions into homelessness
- Fragmented service delivery
- Young males with overlapping needs
- Culture of entrenched street attachment /rough sleeping
- Late engagement with the Private Rented Sector therefore missing opportunities to avoid escalation
- Low client trust and engagement

# Transformation Opportunity

The conditions are right for transformative action focusing on preventative housing support, early outreach, data sharing, integrated services, and specialist housing interventions as urgent priorities to reverse trends and prevent repeat homelessness

## **The new system must:**

1. Meet people early, hold them through volatility, and make every pathway frictionless.
2. Have a greater focus on prevention and early intervention.
3. Target institutional discharge planning and supported housing failures.
4. Ensure targeted and early Private Rented Sector engagement.
5. Be trauma informed with multi-agency support to manage the high vulnerability profile.
6. Have a sufficient mix of Temporary and Supported Accommodation.

# New Commissioning Approach

- Separating out personal support from buildings: so that support stays with the person
- Maximises ability individuals to claim Housing Benefit, reducing local subsidies
- Increases the number of Housing First and Next Steps Accommodation Units from HRA.
- Encourage other Registered Social Landlords to do the same
- Allows for “off the streets” accommodation for rough sleepers including those without eligible statutory needs
- Incentivise stability and minimise the cycle of repeated evictions
- Stepping away from “compensatory” commissioning on health and care services
- Proactive solution planning with Private Rented Sector
- Move to integration and away from disintegration
- Reward Outcomes

# Organisational Change

## Re-structure of the Housing Needs and Homeless Service

The aim is to build a **Homelessness and Housing Needs service** that prioritises **prevention**, especially for care leavers and single homeless individuals, within a system that is proactive, integrated, and trauma informed.

To reduce crisis presentations, the service will be built on:

- early intervention and prevention,
- integrated person-centred pathways,
- partnership working,
- robust contract and performance monitoring, and
- continuous improvement.

# Design Principles

1. **Prevention First** - as default Intervene at first sign of housing stress rather than waiting for statutory duty.
2. **Corporate parenting duty** - Align with the Homelessness Code of Guidance: housing teams must uphold care leavers' best interests and support their transition to independence.
3. **Trauma-informed and person-centred** - Recognise care background, build trust through lived-experience mentors and flexible engagement.
4. **Integrated multi-agency working** - Co-locate housing, children's services, adult social care, health and voluntary sector under one gateway.
5. **Person centred** – Tailored support to individual pathways

<b>Early Intervention and Prevention Service</b> Specialises in targeted early interventions to prevent homelessness.	<b>Outreach Service</b> Specialises in identification and engagement with individuals rough sleeping in public spaces and Street Link referrals.	<b>Case Work Service</b> Specialises in assessments and management of homelessness applications from individuals under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996	<b>Case Work (Institutional Pathways) Service</b> Specialises in assessments and management of homelessness applications from people leaving institutional care under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996	<b>Accommodation System Service</b> Specialises in ensuring safe, legal and effective temporary accommodation provision and overall system management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides brief and intensive outreach support to people experiencing housing difficulties, which if not addressed, may lead to them becoming homeless.</li> <li>Licensing, advice and enforcement with Private Sector Housing (Landlords)</li> <li>Development, administration, promotion of ECCs Private Sector Access Offer: (Renters Rights Bill)</li> </ul>	<p>Move on and resettlement into identified housing pathways or “off the street” offer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reconnection – assists individuals into returning to areas where they came/ where they have support.</li> <li>Service navigation – connect people with other services (healthcare, benefits)</li> <li>Statutory assessments – undertaking homeless applications for individuals during engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implements the prevention and relief duties introduced by the Homelessness Reduction Act</li> <li>Decisions about interim and main housing duties, requests suitable temporary accommodation, conducts inquiries into priority need and intentionality, coordinates multi-agency referrals under the duty to refer,</li> <li>Supports applicants through reviews and appeals,</li> <li>Safeguards vulnerable adults and children (including victims of domestic abuse),</li> <li>Records and monitors case outcomes to ensure compliance with the Homelessness Code of Guidance and statutory obligation</li> </ul>	<p>Same functions as Case Work service, but with a focus on working proactively with statutory/ voluntary agencies to house people leaving institutional care including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young People leaving care</li> <li>Discharge from hospital</li> <li>Prison release</li> <li>Resettlement from armed forces</li> </ul> <p><b>Welcome secondment of DCC staff into this team to participate in the action learning model</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commissioning effective temporary accommodation by understanding needs, forecasting demand, shaping supply and monitoring system delivery and performance .</li> <li>Procurement, contract and performance management of commissioned services across Directorate</li> <li>Delivering effective operations of temporary accommodation (including Council owned stock):ensuring compliance with legislation and statutory guidance; controlling void periods, overseeing repairs and maintenance maximising occupancy overseeing rent collection.</li> </ul>

# Where we are now

- Served notice on all external contracts to end in March '26
- Soft market engagement 17th December in preparation for procurement Jan '26 and new contracts in place for Jun '26
- Commenced organisational design and restructure for full implementation by April '26
- Working with DCC on seconding staff to new Case Work Team (Institutional)



**WORK PLAN FOR CUSTOMER FOCUS SCRUTINY ITEMS 2025/26***Working Draft for February 2026*

<b>Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Director</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Origin of Business</b>	<b>Status</b>
5 February 2026	Portfolio Holder's Report (Cllr Asvachin)	Strategic Director for People and Communities	Portfolio Holder for Housing, Homelessness Prevention & Support Services		
5 February 2026	Tenants Energy Review of our Passivhaus Council Homes	Strategic Director – People and Communities (JY)	Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Support Services (Cllr Asvachin)	Scrutiny proposal Cllr Atkinson	Deferred – to be timetabled
5 February 2026	Six-monthly update on Homelessness Strategy	Strategic Director – People and Communities (JY)	Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Support Services (Cllr Asvachin)	Proposed by Councillor Denning – half yearly report	
19 March 2026	Portfolio Holder's Report (Cllr R Williams)	Strategic Director for Operations (AP)	Portfolio Holder for City Management		
19 March 2026	Portfolio Holder's Report (Cllr Foale)	Strategic Director for Place (IC)	Portfolio Holder for Arts, Culture & Tourism (Cllr Foale)		
19 March 2026	Update on Street Cleansing and Bin Collection –	Head of Operations (CC)	City Management (Cllr R Williams)	Yearly report	

	Recycling and Food Waste Collection				
19 March 2026	Eton Walk Refuse bin – Petition	Strategic Director for Operations (AP)	City Management (Cllr R Williams)	Petition	Deferred from September 2025
18 June 2026	Quarter 4 Budget Scrutiny	Strategic Director for Corporate Resources (DH)	Leader (Cllr Bialyk)		
18 June 2026	Medium Term Financial Plan	Strategic Director for Corporate Resources (DH)	Leader(Cllr Bialyk)		
18 June 2026	Evaluation of the Commercialisation Strategy			Proposal from Councillor Moore (Dec 2025)	
18 June 2026	Scrutiny Annual Report	Strategic Director for Corporate Resources (DH)	Corporate Services & City Centre (Deputy Leader, Cllr Wright)	Statutory Duty	
24 September 2026	Six-monthly update on Homelessness Strategy	Strategic Director – People and Communities (JY)	Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Support Services (Cllr Asvachin)	Proposed by Councillor Denning – half yearly report	
24 September 2026	Reducing the number of empty homes in Exeter	Strategic Director People and Communities (JY) Strategic Director for Operations (AP)	Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Support Services (Cllr Asvachin)	Proposal from Councillor Moore (Dec 2025)	
12 November 2026	Quarter 2 Budget Scrutiny	Strategic Director for Corporate Resources (DH)	Leader (Cllr Bialyk)		

Updated 27/01/2026

12 November 2026	Medium Term Financial Plan	Strategic Director for Corporate Resources (DH)	Leader (Cllr Bialyk)		
12 November 2026	Portfolio Holder's Report (Cllr TBD)				
11 February 2027	Key People Activity Across the Council	Strategic Director – People and Communities (JY)	Corporate Services & City Centre (Deputy Leader, Cllr Wright)	Scrutiny proposal Cllr Palmer	

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