

Adur & Worthing Housing Strategy - EIA Stage 1 Strategy Development (Consultation and Engagement)

An Equality Impact Assessment or EIA is a way of considering how changes to a policy, service or process might impact differently on different groups protected in law by the Equality Act 2010. It's not about completing a form, it's about developing an approach to planning, delivering and evaluating our services so they are both accessible and actively address inequality. We use EIAs therefore to find and remove barriers in services which might stop people knowing about the service, using it, and getting the best from it. EIAs also help us to open services up to new groups and make services better. They stop us from making decisions that might negatively affect some communities and also help us get services right the first time, saving money and time.

EIAs therefore are a practical way in which we can deliver on Our Plans principle of 'participation' where we have pledged to improve our services and make them accessible to everyone.

Our Equality Impact Assessment Approach

To support the development of a new Housing Strategy for Adur and Worthing we will undertake a 2 stage EIA process:

- **Housing Strategy Development EIA** - An EIA to support and guide the consultation and drafting of the strategy.
- **Housing Strategy EIA** - An update to EIA to ensure the final draft of the strategy is adequately supported and informed through the EIA.

In general terms, who are the people/groups affected, what is the intended change or outcome for them and who are the key customers?

Housing is a basic need for all people and therefore the Housing Strategy has potential to impact all current and future residents in Adur and Worthing, across all of the protected groups. The Housing Strategy will be focussed on creating a positive impact on residents, housing availability, current housing stock conditions, quality of new build homes and housing related support and other services provided by the Council and others, helping to lever in funding to do so.

The strategic aims of the Housing Strategy will aim to be inclusive, to ensure that the housing needs of various sections of the community are identified and services are designed

to ensure that they are accessible for all. The strategy will seek to take into account the diverse needs of current and potential residents across all tenures and types of housing.

Key groups, partners and customers that will be consulted and where possible engaged with in the strategy's development process include:

- General public, those unable to access the housing market due to high property prices and rents.
- Key groups that are able to represent people and communities with protected characteristics.
- People presenting themselves as homeless or potentially homeless.
- Those applying for grants to improve their homes.
- Key partners involved in the delivery of the strategy include housing associations, developers, landlords and letting agents, Worthing Homes, Turning Tides, the Royal British Legion, CAB's, West Sussex County Council, the Community safety Partnership and Parish Councils.
- Other stakeholders include the Homes England, the Housing Regulator and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Home Office.
- Internal customers and partners in the delivery of the Strategy outside of Housing Services include Environmental Health, Planning Policy, Revenues and Benefits, Building Control, Property Services and Development Control.

The EIA and Housing Strategy development process will be informed by the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Assessment (HRSA) data and recommendations.

In general terms, how will this work advance equality of opportunity between different groups

In seeking to meet the Equality Duty we need to consider how the strategy development process and the final strategy ensures the intended outcomes promote equality of opportunity for users who have protected characteristics.

Our consultation and engagement will be through general consultation on the main strategy with representative groups and forums. More focused consultation will then be undertaken with key groups on the work programmes themes.

The approach is designed to promote equality of opportunity between different groups by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages for protected groups of people
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people

- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in the consultation processes and in broader public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

In general terms, how will this work foster good relations between different groups (tackling prejudice and promoting understanding).

In seeking to meet the Equality Duty we need to consider how the strategy development process and the final strategy contributes to good relations or to broader community cohesion objectives.

The housing strategy development process sets out steps to better understand housing needs across all groups and tenure and will promote actions to meet them across various supporting policies and plans. It is expected to directly help contribute to better community cohesion by widening community understanding of local housing needs.

It is designed to promote equality of opportunity between different groups by:

- Building services around people and communities and involving them.
- Considering if there are strong and positive relationships between groups/communities affected by the strategy development process
- Undertaking the strategy development process in such a way that it brings together groups of people not used to interacting with each other.
- If the service is seen as unfair by certain groups work will be undertaken to tackle the myths and communicate this.

Who are the people/groups affected by the strategy and the strategy development process that we need to better understand and engage?

<p>Protected characteristic groups from the Equality Act 2010</p>	<p>What do you know? Summary of data available</p>	<p>What does this mean in planning and undertaking the strategy engagement and development work? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential).</p>	<p>What can we do to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
<p>Age</p>	<p>Young People: As identified in the HRSA there are particular issues with young people and homelessness. It can be difficult to allocate tenancies to people under 18. Young people seeking housing advice may not want to access information from Council offices. Young people in need of temporary accommodation, ideally need to be placed close to their</p>	<p>The engagement of young people and children in the strategy development process needs to be an area of priority.</p> <p>Areas of focus to consider for younger people include access to appropriate temporary and emergency accommodation,</p>	<p>General engagement with the themes and areas of focus of strategy will be required with this group.</p> <p>Targeted engagement may be required with young people and families with the various action plans, through for example, partnerships with the third sector, the health sector and the West Sussex County Council. Similarly engagement with older people will need to be sought, for example through third sector groups such as Age Concern, social care providers in the private sector, West Sussex Adult Social Care and NHS providers.</p> <p>Areas of engagement focus to include the following action plans</p>

	<p>support networks and education.</p> <p>Unaffordability of accommodation disproportionately impacts young people who are increasingly priced out of most housing options (home ownership, private rental market, social housing landlords now refusing nominations for YP on affordability grounds). Specifically this makes it difficult for support services to move young people on from supported housing, resulting in them getting “stuck” as move-on options are inaccessible.</p> <p>There has been an increase in the number of young people affected by poor mental health, some of whom will require additional support to be able to live independently. The pandemic also caused high levels of disruption for young people, impacting their education,</p>	<p>affordability, support for young people with complex needs and ensuring children's needs are considered appropriately when considering family accommodation. For older people the connection with social and health care providers is key, ensuring people can be safely supported in their own homes and have access to additional supported accommodation pathways as appropriate and required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Single homelessness ● Wider homelessness - understanding the drivers of homelessness and prevention ● Existing accommodation - ensuring it remains suitable, safe and sustainable where appropriate ● Housing register and allocating social or affordable housing - does the current model work ● Complex needs and mental health ● Ability to access and navigate services.
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	<p>social connection, and emotional wellbeing. Long waiting lists for YP supported housing means vulnerable young people spend longer periods in unsuitable housing, such as sofa-surfing arrangements or temporary accommodation. Through the HRSA Stakeholders expressed that there will be an increased need for services focused on sustaining tenancy and preparation for independent living. This is due to changing population trends within the homelessness cohort as increasingly young people are appearing as hidden homeless.</p> <p>With regard to supported accommodation the HRSA identifies provision as being 'too generic' and 'low level' for the complex and challenging needs of the cohort. For example, stakeholders noted that although there is supported accommodation for young people, it is not</p>		
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	<p>equipped to manage challenging behaviour. People with lived experience emphasised the importance of tailoring support to different cohorts of people and support needs. This was because concern was expressed about people commonly being housed in unsuitable accommodation. For example, one person shared that it was common for young adults to be housed with ex-offenders and people with substance use challenges. Stakeholders in the HRSA report stated that there is limited provision for individuals under the age of 25, and that a lack of suitable housing interventions for this age group can lead to instability and trauma.</p> <p>People aged under 35 were reported in the HRSA to be a key priority group due to a growth in complexity and intensity of need, specifically mental health needs. Emergency</p>		
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	<p>and temporary accommodation for young people is limited, while young people also face unique challenges in finding stable housing and support. Young people have particular difficulties when trying to transition out of homelessness due to a lack of preparedness for independent living, and a lack of support tailored to their age group. Stakeholders also commented that there is a growing subgroup of young people 'sofa-surfing'.</p> <p>Limited specialist homelessness prevention support for young people was identified by the HRSA report as an issue and that the lack of suitable housing interventions for this age group can lead to instability and trauma.</p> <p>Children: To consider the needs of children whose families are in housing need</p>		
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	<p>or who become homeless and the particular impact that this can have on the immediate and future wellbeing of the child; if temporary accommodation is needed, this can separate children from the wider support network around the family - extended family, friends, and even schools. Some children will have to travel long distances by public transport to school or have to move to a new school, nearer to their new accommodation. Impact of TA on a child's welfare - lack of space to play, learn, develop, lack of privacy. Witnessing distress and stress of parents facing housing issues including homelessness.</p> <p>Older people: Older people form a significant and important part of housing provision in Worthing and to a lesser extent in Adur. Worthing for example has a significant number of older people, supported housing</p>		
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	<p>and care homes.</p> <p>The population of older people is set to increase.</p> <p>The HRSA reports identifies a decrease of 10% in Adur and 7% in Worthing in the proportion of people under the age of 25 between 2018 and 2043; while there is an increase of 37% and 42% respectively of people 75 and older.</p> <p>The LGA estimates that between 2014 and 2039, over 70 per cent of projected household growth will be made up of households with someone aged 60 or older. The suitability of the housing stock is of critical importance to the health of individuals and impacts on public spending, particularly adult social care, and the NHS. Significant issues for older people include ensuring homes are the right size and able to be sustainably maintained, availability of care</p>		
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	<p>and support, ensuring appropriate adaptations are put in place as needs and impairment change and there are pathways to additional support as required, for example sheltered housing, extra care housing and nursing and care home facilities.</p> <p>The HRSA identifies a growing concern about the ageing population within the homeless cohort, with stakeholders noting that as individuals “bounce” in and out of the system it is likely their needs will become increasingly complex. Older individuals often have additional health issues, which can make it more challenging to find suitable, long-term accommodation. Mainstream temporary and supported accommodation does not cater for the needs of older people. In general, the needs of older homeless people seem less well understood compared to</p>		
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	<p>other groups, and therefore there is a need for more focus on supporting this demographic.</p>		
Disability	<p>The HRSA report identifies physical ill health and disability as the second most common support need for applicants owed a duty in Adur and Worthing. The report also identifies mental health challenges and physical disability/ill health as the two top support needs in Adur and Worthing for residents at risk of homelessness.</p> <p>In general terms, people with disabilities are more likely to live in social rented and experience multiple disadvantages and be excluded from work and accessing public life.</p> <p>Shortage of accommodation for people requiring disabled units- purpose built or adapted. Not all the supported housing schemes are</p>	<p>The engagement of disabled people in the strategy development process, including those experiencing mental health problems, needs to be an area of priority.</p> <p>Areas of focus to consider include: consideration of the impact of multiple deprivation, access to appropriate accommodation including temporary and emergency accommodation, hospital discharge and the relationship with Adult Social Care and the development and provision of more supported accommodation. The</p>	<p>General engagement with the themes and areas of focus of strategy will be required with this group.</p> <p>Targeted engagement will be required with disabled people (a diverse and wide ranging community) with the various action plans, through, for example, partnerships with the third sector, NHS partners including mental health and the West Sussex County Council. Also mental health charities and support services.</p> <p>Areas of engagement on the following action plan areas to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Single homelessness ● Wider homelessness - understanding the drivers of homelessness and prevention ● Existing accommodation - ensuring it remains suitable, safe and sustainable where appropriate ● Housing register and allocating social or affordable housing ● Delivery - how are we supporting the delivery of the homes our residents need ● Complex needs and mental health ● Ability to access and navigate services.

	<p>accessible to those with physical disabilities. Disabled Facilities Grants are only available to those individuals who are registered or capable of being registered as disabled.</p> <p>Lack of accessible temporary accommodation for people ready to leave hospital but who cannot return home due to changes in health/mobility, leading to delayed discharge and placement into unsuitable temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Action to better understand and provide sheltered and supported housing and housing support will disproportionately positively impact disabled, vulnerable and older people who are the primary end users of such accommodation</p> <p>Provision of more housing that is accessible and adaptable should increase choice in all tenures and help mitigate existing identified</p>	<p>provision of mental health services and support, including for those with complex needs.</p>	
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	<p>shortfall and barriers.</p> <p>With regard to mental health the HRSA report identifies a history of mental health problems as the most common support need in both Adur and Worthing for applicants owed a duty. Stakeholders consulted reported that there has been a substantial increase in mental health challenges following the COVID-19 pandemic, especially for young people and individuals already experiencing mental health challenges. Mental health can be both a contributing factor to homelessness as well as a consequential need following homelessness. Complex emotional needs and personality disorders were raised by stakeholders as specific mental health needs of concern.</p> <p>Mental health challenges were described by people with lived experience as the</p>		
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	<p>most acute and widespread issue experienced by homeless people. Mental health challenges were also seen as the cause of other issues, such as substance use.</p> <p>The HRSA report outlined that homeless people often have complex needs, such as mental health issues, substance misuse, and/or a history of trauma. Stakeholders consulted mentioned that there has been an increase in complex and multiple needs across the system, and that it is increasingly common for people with housing needs to have a combination of one or more other support needs. The level of additional needs for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness was discussed by stakeholders, and a number reported that it has become increasingly common to see people with high-level needs, which require support from</p>		
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	<p>multiple services. High-level needs were reported to act as a barrier in themselves for people trying to access support, as services may deem their needs as 'too-high' and therefore be unable to provide the required level of support.</p> <p>In addition the HRSA report noted that stakeholders reported that there are high thresholds for many services that this cohort need, such as mental health support. People are therefore unable to access services because they are not currently in crisis and/or their needs are too 'low level'. As a result, people are unable to access the services that they need, or they are referred to alternative services that are unable to provide the required support.</p> <p>The HRSA report identified difficulties transitioning people out of supported accommodation. Once individuals enter the</p>		
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	<p>homelessness sector, it is often challenging for them to transition out. Complex living environments with substance misuse issues and mental health challenges can exacerbate their situations, leading to prolonged stays within the temporary or supported accommodation.</p> <p>With regards to support services the HRSA report identified that many services are stretched and have limited capacity. Mental health support was mentioned most frequently and stakeholders reported that it is under-resourced, with long wait lists, lengthy assessments, and challenging transitions between primary and secondary mental health services. Stakeholders reported that housing needs to be accompanied with a range of support, recognising that homelessness often coexists with mental health issues. The focus is not just on providing physical housing</p>		
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	<p>but also on helping individuals maintain their tenancy and rebuild their lives. Some reported that this could be achieved by transitioning away from hostel-based models towards smaller accommodation options, to make it easier to support people effectively.</p> <p>The report went on to say that stakeholders reported that current provision of support is not reflective of everyone in the community it aims to serve, and that support is not always suitable for minority groups, particularly ethnic minorities and neurodivergent people.</p>		
<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<p>Trans people are amongst the most excluded groups, experiencing severe discrimination. A common theme is people who – because of discrimination or a lack of acceptance around</p>	<p>The engagement of the Trans Community in the strategy development process needs to be considered.</p> <p>Areas of focus to</p>	<p>General engagement with the themes and areas of focus of strategy will be required with this group.</p> <p>Targeted engagement is required with the trans community, through partnerships with the third sector and NHS gender services..</p> <p>Areas of engagement on the following action plan areas to include:</p>

	<p>their identity – have not been able to get a job to support themselves to get secure housing.</p> <p>The trans community is overwhelmingly affected by housing insecurity, ranging from rough sleeping to couch-surfing, to young people in insecure housing positions because their families do not accept them.</p> <p>In some studies Trans people are less than half as likely to own a home and about 20% more likely to rent privately.</p> <p>Stonewall survey indicates that 25% of trans people have experienced homelessness at some point.</p>	<p>consider include: consideration of the impact of multiple deprivation, housing insecurity and homelessness, access to appropriate accommodation including temporary and emergency accommodation, links to community safety and wellbeing services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Single homelessness ● Wider homelessness - understanding the drivers of homelessness and prevention ● Existing accommodation - ensuring it remains suitable, safe and sustainable where appropriate ● Housing register and allocating social or affordable housing ● Complex needs and mental health ● Ability to access and navigate services.
<p>Pregnancy and maternity</p>	<p>If a woman is pregnant and homeless, they qualify for emergency housing from the council as long as they meet immigration and residence conditions.</p> <p>Priority housing needs are</p>	<p>The engagement of this group in the strategy development process needs to be considered.</p> <p>Areas of focus to consider include: how</p>	<p>General engagement with the themes and areas of focus of strategy will be required with this group.</p> <p>Targeted engagement is required with this group with key action plan areas, through partnerships with the third sector, West Sussex County Council and the health community.</p> <p>Areas of engagement on the following action plan areas to include:</p>

	<p>extended to residents where children and the children are dependent on them.</p> <p>Shortage of in-borough temporary accommodation means that pregnant households may have to be placed in out-of-area temporary accommodation, far from their families, support network and services.</p>	<p>we managing priority housing needs for this group (see section on children above) and the provision of appropriate local temporary and emergency accommodation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Single homelessness ● Wider homelessness - understanding the drivers of homelessness and prevention ● Existing accommodation - ensuring it remains suitable, safe and sustainable where appropriate ● Housing register and allocating social or affordable housing ● Ability to access and navigate services.
<p>Race</p> <p>Including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers</p>	<p>People in need of housing related services may have English as a second language. BME families can require larger dwellings and there is a shortage of this size of affordable/social housing.</p> <p>The census data indicates a growing ethnically diverse population and in <u>Adur</u> just over 6.5% of residents are from Black, Asian, multiple or having non white ethnicity and in <u>Worthing</u> this figure is just over 8.5%.</p> <p>The HRSA report says that compared to the 2021</p>	<p>The engagement of minoritised ethnic communities in the strategy development process needs to be considered.</p> <p>Areas of focus to consider include: consideration of the impact of multiple deprivation, larger accommodation needs and the requirements of children, multi generational families, community safety and the specific needs of Gypsy and Traveller</p>	<p>General engagement with the themes and areas of focus of strategy will be required with this group.</p> <p>Targeted engagement is required with this group with key action plan areas, for example through third sector and faith groups, Gypsy and Traveller Liaison officers, Traveller health and education workers, and planning enforcement officers.</p> <p>Areas of engagement on the following action plan areas to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Single homelessness ● Wider homelessness - understanding the drivers of homelessness and prevention ● Existing accommodation - ensuring it remains suitable, safe and sustainable where appropriate ● Housing register and allocating social or affordable housing ● Complex needs and mental health ● Ability to access and navigate services.

	<p>Census, ethnic minorities were overrepresented within housing applications by 10% in Adur and 8% in Worthing. The report went on to say that the current support offer for those at risk for experiencing homelessness was not suitable for everyone. Stakeholders reported that current provision is not reflective of everyone in the community it aims to serve, and that support is not always suitable for minority groups, particularly ethnic minorities and neurodivergent people. It was suggested that this may be because there is a lack of diversity at the strategic level and this may lead to services to be inherently focused on western cultures and values, thereby introducing systemic barriers for individuals from other countries and cultures. Stakeholders reported that services need to be flexible and provide different approaches to support, depending on the client's</p>	<p>communities.</p>	
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	<p>background and needs.</p> <p>Asylum and refugee seeking people were seen as a priority group by a small number of stakeholders who took part in the HRSA report, as a vulnerable cohort that has increased over the last few years due to the global political climate. There is a growing concern that individuals who have been granted asylum may no longer be offered accommodation, rendering them homeless.</p> <p>There is a shortage of Gypsies and Travellers sites. They suffer from some of the worst levels of exclusion and health amongst minority groups.</p>		
<p>Religion or belief</p>	<p>Particular faith groups report in national studies lower incomes, larger family sizes and increased experiences of ASB and other forms of discrimination.</p>	<p>The engagement of faith groups in the strategy development process needs to be considered.</p> <p>Areas of focus to</p>	<p>General engagement with the themes and areas of focus of strategy will be required with this group.</p> <p>Targeted engagement is required with this group with key action plan areas, through partnerships with the third sector, faith groups and the community safety partnership.</p>

	<p>Suitable cooking, food storage and preparation areas are required for faiths and this needs to be considered for shared, EA and TA.</p>	<p>consider include: consideration of the impact of multiple deprivation, larger accommodation needs and the requirements of children and multi generational families, community safety and the provision of suitable temporary and emergency accommodation linked to, for example, the storage and preparation of food.</p>	<p>Areas of engagement focus to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider homelessness - understanding the drivers of homelessness and prevention • Existing accommodation - ensuring it remains suitable, safe and sustainable where appropriate • Housing register and allocating social or affordable housing • Complex needs and mental health • Ability to access and navigate services.
<p>Sex</p>	<p>Female: The HRSA report has identified that the in Adur, the most common type of household owed a prevention duty was a single female parent with dependent children (41%). Most single parent headed households are female, and single income households are more likely to face poverty and challenges in accessing and affording housing particularly private rented homes if in need of</p>	<p>The engagement with different genders in the strategy development process needs to be considered.</p> <p>Areas of focus to consider include: consideration of the impact of multiple deprivation, the requirements of children, Domestic Abuse and community</p>	<p>General engagement with the themes and areas of focus of strategy will be required with this group.</p> <p>Targeted engagement is required with this group with key action plan areas, through partnerships with the third sector (including DV and violence against women and girls), community safety partnership, and key institutions including hospitals and prisons.</p> <p>Areas of engagement focus to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single homelessness • Wider homelessness - understanding the drivers of homelessness and prevention • Existing accommodation - ensuring it remains suitable, safe and sustainable where appropriate

	<p>housing benefit assistance and more likely to live in social rented housing and be impacted positively by housing strategy aims to expand and improve these sectors.</p> <p>In a survey carried out by Crisis the reasons for homelessness most often cited by female participants, were physical or mental health problems and escaping a violent relationship.</p> <p>Women suffering domestic violence require temporary refuge or secure home accommodation. They need rapid intervention and access to support services and safe accommodation.</p> <p>The HRSA report identified that individuals fleeing domestic abuse, particularly women, are a significant subgroup of clients in need of emergency and temporary accommodation. Stakeholders reported that</p>	<p>safety, links to addiction, mental health and discharge arrangements from hospitals, prison and other institutions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Housing register and allocating social or affordable housing ● Complex needs and mental health ● Ability to access and navigate services.
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	<p>many women experiencing homelessness have histories of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is also linked to other issues experienced by this cohort, such as substance misuse. The report identified concerns raised by stakeholders that existing temporary accommodation is not always suitable for specific groups, such as people with experience of domestic abuse.</p> <p>A person experiencing domestic abuse may need rapid intervention and access to support services and safe accommodation. If the perpetrator is not able to be removed, then other options will need to be considered for finding somewhere to stay. This could be a temporary option, to allow time to consider their rights to remove the perpetrator and move back in. In other cases, the survivor and their children might want or need to find somewhere new to live</p>		
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	<p>permanently.</p> <p>Men: The HRSA report has identified that in Worthing, the most common household type owed a prevention duty was single adult males (30%). For households owed a relief duty, more than half of household types were single adult males in Adur (52%, n=98) and Worthing (56%, n=211). Stakeholders also reported that the size of this cohort has been consistent for a long period of time, and that single adult men are often overrepresented in local homelessness statistics, particularly within the street homeless cohort. It was reported that this cohort can often feel marginalised and excluded from services. Stakeholders reported in the HRSA report that there is a gap in support for single men, aged 35 and over.</p> <p>A number of studies indicate single men are at significant risk of homelessness and</p>		
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	<p>make up a disproportionate number of rough sleepers. The most frequently reported reasons for male participants in a Crisis survey experiencing homelessness were relationship breakdown, substance misuse, and leaving an institution (prison, care, hospital etc).</p>		
<p>Sexual orientation</p>	<p>The HRSA report identified that Four-fifths of homeless applicants in Adur (85%) and Worthing (86%) were heterosexual.</p> <p>National research indicates that young LGB people, especially young people experience high levels of homelessness as a result of the homophobia they experience. Being homeless makes people even more vulnerable to other risks and to mental health problems.</p> <p>Research from Stonewall shows that almost one in five LGBT people have experienced homelessness at</p>	<p>Consideration of sexual orientation in the strategy development process needs to be considered.</p> <p>Areas of focus to consider include: consideration of the impact of multiple deprivation, vulnerably housed young people, community safety, links to health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>General engagement with the themes and areas of focus of strategy will be required with this group.</p> <p>Targeted engagement is required with these groups with key action plan areas, through partnerships with the third sector, community safety partnership, Children's Services West Sussex County Council and health partners.</p> <p>Areas of engagement focus to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Single homelessness ● Wider homelessness - understanding the drivers of homelessness and prevention ● Housing register and allocating social or affordable housing ● Complex needs and mental health ● Ability to access and navigate services.

	some point in their lives.		
Marriage and civil partnership	No specific issues identified.		
<p>Other relevant groups:</p> <p>Low literacy, digital excluded, offenders, care leavers, ex forces personnel, affected by DV, rough sleepers etc</p>	<p>Care Leavers: West Sussex County Council's new policy is to extend 'protected characteristics' to include care leavers due to the particular challenges faced by these young people in transitioning from childhood to adulthood, as a result of lack of family support and their experience of having been a looked after child; this experience can impact their ability to find and to maintain housing, with limited support network to protect them from changes in circumstances.</p> <p>The HRSA study identified that the number of approaches due to be served notice or evicted from supported housing in 2022 in Adur was small with a total of 7 and 3 were care leavers. In</p>	<p>Consideration of these key groups will need to be undertaken in the strategy development process..</p> <p>Areas of focus to consider include: consideration of the impact of multiple deprivation, service accessibility, community safety, links to health and wellbeing (including mental health and addiction). .</p>	<p>General engagement with the themes and areas of focus of strategy will be required with this group.</p> <p>Targeted engagement will be required with these groups with each key action plan areas, as appropriate.</p> <p>Engagement through partners as appropriate, including the third sector (including DV and violence against women and girls), community safety partnership, and key institutions, including hospitals and NHS Hospitals, Veterans UK, RBL and prisons.</p> <p>Areas of engagement focus to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Single homelessness ● Wider homelessness - understanding the drivers of homelessness and prevention ● Existing accommodation - ensuring it remains suitable, safe and sustainable where appropriate ● Housing register and allocating social or affordable housing ● Complex needs and mental health ● Ability to access and navigate services.

	<p>Worthing the total figure is much higher at 69 22 on these were care leavers.</p> <p>Low Income: Entry level home ownership is inaccessible to most newly forming households. Housing needs are most acute amongst those on low incomes, and particularly those with poor skills. Help may be required with completing application forms etc.</p> <p>Homelessness applications and requests for housing advice are most common from people on low incomes. Worklessness tends to be high amongst RSL tenants. People on low incomes are most likely to experience Fuel Poverty.</p> <p>The HRSA study identified that local wages have not risen in-line with the housing market. This has made it increasingly difficult for residents in Adur and</p>		
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	<p>Worthing to afford to rent in the area or buy property. Between 2013 and 2022, median annual incomes have increased by 17% in both Adur and Worthing (see Figure 54); whereas median house prices have increased by 41% and 39% respectively, and median rents have increased by 32% in both Adur and Worthing.</p> <p>The HRSA study commented that an increased focus on prevention was needed and stakeholders unanimously agreed that there needs to be a shift in focus towards prevention. There is a need for services that are resourced to identify and support people with the causes of homelessness, including poverty and deprivation. Currently there is</p> <p>limited support available for people with lower support needs, and as a result, level of need is escalating.</p>		
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	<p>The HRSA report identified that financial challenges have increased in prevalence and complexity within the cohort. Stakeholders noted that due to the current financial climate and cost-of-living crisis, more households are struggling to afford basic amenities and housing. It has also become more common for people to present with complex, financial challenges that go beyond the scope of advice and support services.</p> <p>Low literacy, digital excluded: Low literacy and digitally excluded people pay a 'poverty premium', lacking the same access and information about accommodation options, advice and support and access to cheaper utility options and unable to "shop around" or compare different services. Research by HATC identifies the top three negative impacts of digital poverty on a person's life as the ability to access</p>		
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	<p>education, to claim benefits and to access employment opportunities. Other impacts noted were the ability to access health and wellbeing support , affordable energy bills and affordable food , and the ability to connect with the local community, family and friends. These factors mean people with low literacy and digital skills are less able to afford and sustain their homes.</p> <p>Prison Leavers: People often lose accommodation when they enter custody. On release they can struggle to find accommodation with a private landlord or get the housing element of Universal Credit quickly enough. As a result people often quickly become ‘hidden homeless’ (living in unsuitable temporary accommodation, sofa surfing or squatting) or sleep rough. Research indicates that around a third of people about to leave prison don't have anywhere to stay. Significant</p>		
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	<p>proportion of people rough sleeping have had a custodial sentence and people leaving prison are known to re-commit crime to avoid homelessness. Links to addiction and mental health are significant. Having stable accommodation can reduce the risk of re-offending by 20%.</p> <p>Complex Needs: Homeless people often have complex needs, such as mental health issues, substance misuse, and/or a history of trauma. Stakeholders in the HRSA report mentioned that there has been an increase in complex and multiple needs across the system, and that it is increasingly common for people with housing needs to have a combination of one or more other support needs. It can be challenging for people with multiple needs to access the support they need from services, as each service is predominantly designed to provide support for one need</p>		
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	<p>and has its own criteria. This means that people who do not fit a set of criteria can get lost in the system or disengage. Many stakeholders noted that the pathway to homelessness or housing support is too generic and does not take into consideration that certain needs require specific support, particularly complex needs</p> <p>The level of additional needs for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness was discussed by stakeholders, and a number reported that it has become increasingly common to see people with high-level needs, which require support from multiple services. High-level needs were reported to act as a barrier in themselves for people trying to access support, as services may deem their needs as 'too-high' and therefore be unable to provide the required level of support.</p>		
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	<p>The report also identifies that service cutbacks have particularly affected the provision of wraparound services that supplement the generic housing provision and which are often more appropriate for individuals with multiple, complex needs.</p> <p>In addition the report identified that current supported accommodation is often 'too generic' and 'low level' for the complex and challenging needs of the cohort. This was a repeated sentiment from stakeholders across the sector and who are serving various demographics. For example, stakeholders noted that although there is supported accommodation for young people, it is not equipped to manage challenging behaviour.</p> <p>Once individuals enter the homelessness sector, it is often challenging for them to transition out. Complex living</p>		
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	<p>environments with substance misuse issues and mental health challenges can exacerbate their situations, leading to prolonged stays within the temporary or supported accommodation.</p> <p>Stakeholders noted that housing support is often not considered or delivered in parallel to the other support needs that a person is experiencing. This means that people at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness are required to access different services for each of their support needs, resulting in people having to retell their story multiple times, which can be retraumatising and contribute to disengagement.</p> <p>The HRSA report also states that housing services do not always follow a trauma informed approach. Stakeholders highlighted a gap in trauma informed practice within the current housing support and across</p>		
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	<p>the system more broadly. As one stakeholder noted, any service interacting with people experience homelessness are interacting with clients who are vulnerable and traumatised. Therefore, it is essential for service workers to be trained and trauma informed to prevent further harm.</p> <p>Substance and alcohol misuse: The HRSA study identified substance and alcohol abuse as a prevalent need among the homeless cohort. Substance and/or alcohol misuse when co-occurring with mental health challenges, or 'dual diagnosis', can act as an additional barrier to people in need of support, as fragmented care can lead to people falling through service gaps. Stakeholders reported that there is a gap in support of appropriate and flexible interventions.</p>		
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	<p>Rough sleepers: Rough sleeping is the most visible, extreme and damaging form of homelessness. People who sleep rough often have complex physical and mental health needs and may be struggling with addiction. They are often very vulnerable. People who sleep rough are more likely to face physical and emotional abuse. Long-term exposure to the elements can lead to severe medical conditions. The reasons why people sleep rough demands complex solutions. Most of the time there's no quick fix. The provision of a home does not always solve a person's issues or long-term housing situation. Instead, the solution involves a comprehensive assessment of the individual's other needs and life skills. Also, there is a need to consider what support is needed to successfully maintain accommodation. This can range from intensive</p>		
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	<p>onsite help in supported accommodation to lighter touch tenancy sustainment support through floating support services.</p> <p>The HRSA report noted that Stakeholders noted that Adur and Worthing councils rely on out-of-area emergency accommodation due to the limited stock and availability of temporary accommodation within the county. As well as this being very costly, clients placed in out-of-area accommodation may lose their local support system, and this can lead to disengagement. This is viewed as a particular concern for people with experience of street homelessness as they often have highly localised social links. Furthermore, stakeholders were concerned about potential negative impacts when people with low-support needs are placed with people with high-level and complex</p>		
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	<p>support needs.</p> <p>There is a lack of step-down, semi-supported accommodation for people that are not ready for independent living, which means people can become 'trapped' in emergency and temporary accommodation. Stakeholders reported that people may be moved to independent living before they are ready and without the appropriate level of support in place, and this may lead to people subsequently being evicted or becoming voluntarily homeless. This cycle exacerbates the pressure placed on emergency accommodations and limits further choice for independent living as evictions may lead to lifetime bans from social housing.</p> <p>Armed Forces: The Armed</p>		
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	<p>Forces Covenant Duty sets out requirements for local authorities with regard to housing and housing allocations policies. Some veterans and their families struggle to find appropriate housing, often complicated by other difficulties associated with employment, physical and mental injuries, or difficulties with relationships.</p>		
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Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations:

The above data gives a high level picture of housing, homelessness and rough sleeping needs for people and communities with protected characteristics. The issues are wide ranging and the key message from the analysis is that many groups are affected and that the issues and characteristics are interrelated / intersectional and shouldn't be considered in isolation.

Data collected from the consultation will be used to further update the EIA and a second iteration of the EIA will be developed and used to shape the Housing Strategy and the associated action plans.

