

# Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

## **Consultation Response Report**

Including appendix of all redacted comments and survey

Produced by Mark Simons  
for **Dorset Council**

**May 2021**

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# Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

## Consultation Response Report

<b>What was the consultation about?</b>	Councils must publish a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy every 5 years. Dorset Council have developed a new homelessness and rough sleeping strategy. The purpose of this strategy is to shape the way advice and assistance is provided to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness over the next 5 years.
<b>What did we need to find out</b>	The council needs to understand whether our draft strategy met the requirements of the public, service users, partners and other organisations.
<b>Over what period did the consultation run?</b>	The consultation originally lasted for 6 weeks, between Monday 22 March until midnight on 30 April 2021. It was then extended for a further week closing on 7 May 2021.
<b>What consultation methods were used?</b>	The consultation involved an online and paper consultation survey. This included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online survey. This included set questions and free text section for people to explain their answers.</li> <li>• Paper surveys available direct from Dorset Council</li> </ul>
<b>How many responses were received overall?</b>	106 overall responses were received. 75% of responses were from members of the public. The other replies came from a variety of respondents including services users, service providers, private and social landlords and community organisations
<b>How representative is the response to the wider population?</b>	The response size is fair for a council consultation of this type. As this was an open survey it is not possible to define a statistically valid sample size. The response from residents was reasonably representative of the Dorset population. There was an uneven balance between males and females with 52% of responses from females and 37% from males. This is not unusual in consultation responses. Responses came from a wide range of ages but 34% came from respondents aged 65 or older. This compares well to 29% of the population being in this age band in the wider Dorset population. This age group is often overrepresented. With 74% of the respondents saying their ethnic group was White British this is fairly typical of the wider population. Responses from disabled people were above average at 15.1% of responses compared to a Dorset figure of around 5% based on those claiming either Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payments or Attendance Allowance.
<b>Where will the results be published?</b>	Results will be published on the council's website <a href="http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk">www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</a>

<b>How will the results be used?</b>	Councillors will make the final decision on adoption of the final strategy in Dorset having regard to the feedback received during this consultation.
<b>Who has produced this report?</b>	Mark Simons, Consultation Officer, Dorset Council May, 2021

## Executive Summary

- Fair response for a technical strategy consultation, with 106 responses
- Good mix of responses by respondent type and well spread over the Dorset Council area and beyond
- Nearly 70% of respondents thought the Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy wholly or partially identified the key issues affecting homelessness.
- The support was across both individual and organisational responses
- There was over 80% who totally or partially supported the proposed actions in the strategy
- There were a range of issues highlighted including:
  - Support for the use of an evidence base
  - The basic need of building more houses needs addressing
  - Concern that funding might not meet the ambition of the plan
  - The important link between health and homelessness

## Background

### The council explained in the consultation:

*In November 2020 Dorset Council commissioned a review of homelessness in Dorset. Councils must publish a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy every 5 years. Dorset Council have used the information gathered to develop a new homelessness and rough sleeping strategy. The purpose of this strategy is to shape the way advice and assistance is provided to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness over the next 5 years.*

### **Homelessness Review**

*The review carried out by Neil Morland & Co Housing Consultants examined what is currently available to people who are homeless or may become homeless in Dorset. It considered: ~ Current and likely future levels of homelessness in Dorset ~ What we do to prevent homelessness ~ The accommodation available for people who are or may become homeless ~ The support available to people who are homeless, may become homeless or have been homeless ~ The resources available to the Council, other public authorities, voluntary organisations and others providing these services You can read the review [here](#).*

### **Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy**

*Dorset Council has produced a draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to: ~ Prevent homelessness in Dorset ~ Ensure enough accommodation is and will be available for people in Dorset who are or may become homeless ~ Ensure there are adequate services to support people who are or may become homeless ~ Ensure there are adequate services to support people who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again. A draft action plan has been developed that details how work will be carried out by Dorset Council, other public authorities, housing associations, voluntary organisations, and others to achieve the aims of the Strategy. To monitor our progress in delivering the strategy, the action plan will be reviewed each year. You can read the draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy [here](#) (link on survey)*

## The Consultation

*This purpose of this survey is to tell us what you think about homelessness in Dorset, the proposed aims and actions outlined in the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and draft action plan. This consultation will last for 6 weeks, between Monday 22 March until midnight on 7 May 2021. If you would prefer to complete a paper survey, please download it [here](#). Please return your survey to The Housing Service, South Walks House, South Walks Road, Dorchester, DT1 1UZ Please contact us by email [customerservices@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk) or phone 01305 221000 if you need the survey in another format or would like to respond in a different way."*

No questions were compulsory. A copy of the survey is available in the appendix.

**Analysis Method:** Questions were considered on an individual basis. Overall responses were examined and specific responses of respondents who said they had a disability.. The official organisational responses were looked at separately. The main method of analysis was looking at the percentage of respondents who expressed a view on each question.

For each open question the text comments have been studied and “coded” depending on what issues were raised. The coded comments are then reported on based on the amount of times those individual issues have been raised. Total redacted comments are provided in an appendix.

Note: some figures may not sum due to rounding.

## Response Method

Overall, 106 responses were received. All of these were electronic responses.

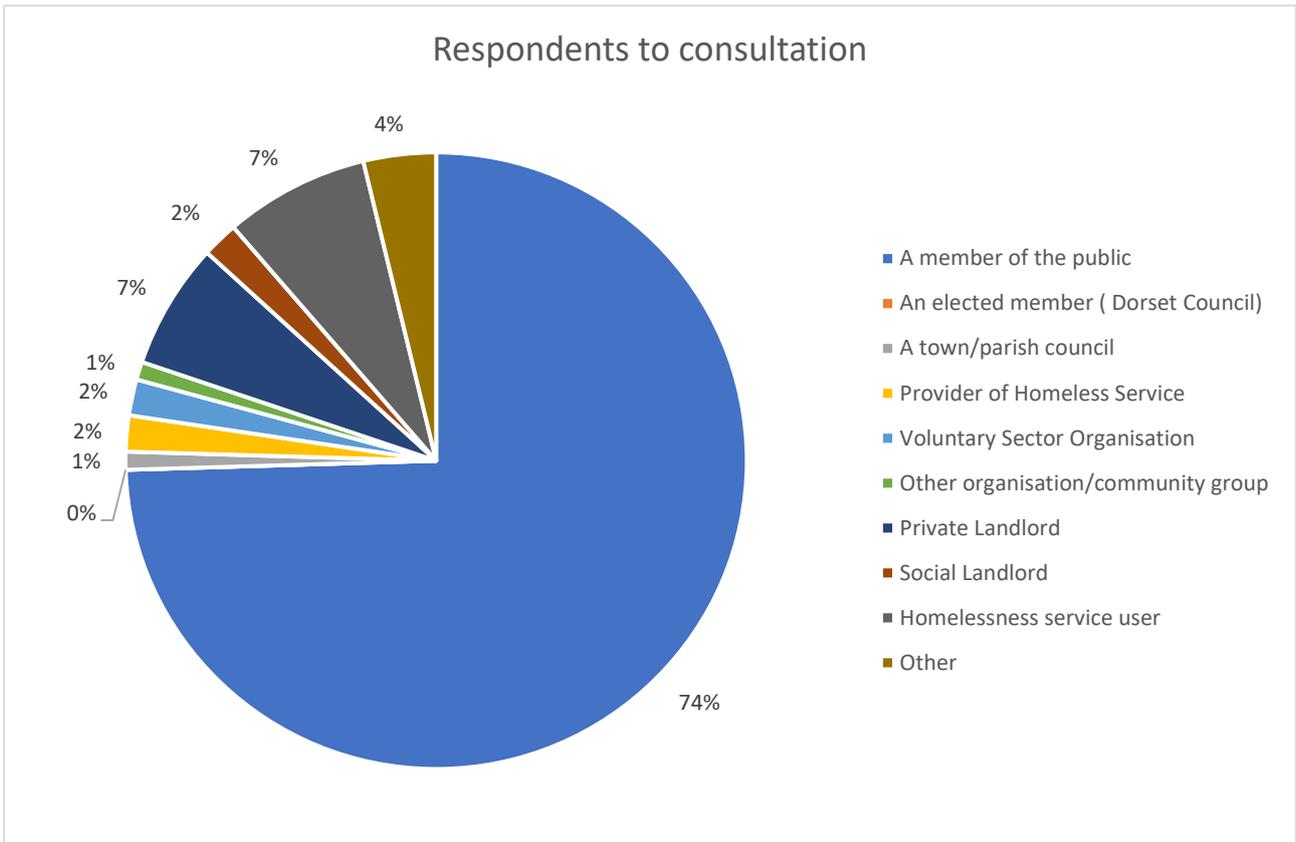
## About respondents

106 overall responses were received.

### Q Are you responding as:

#### Respondents:

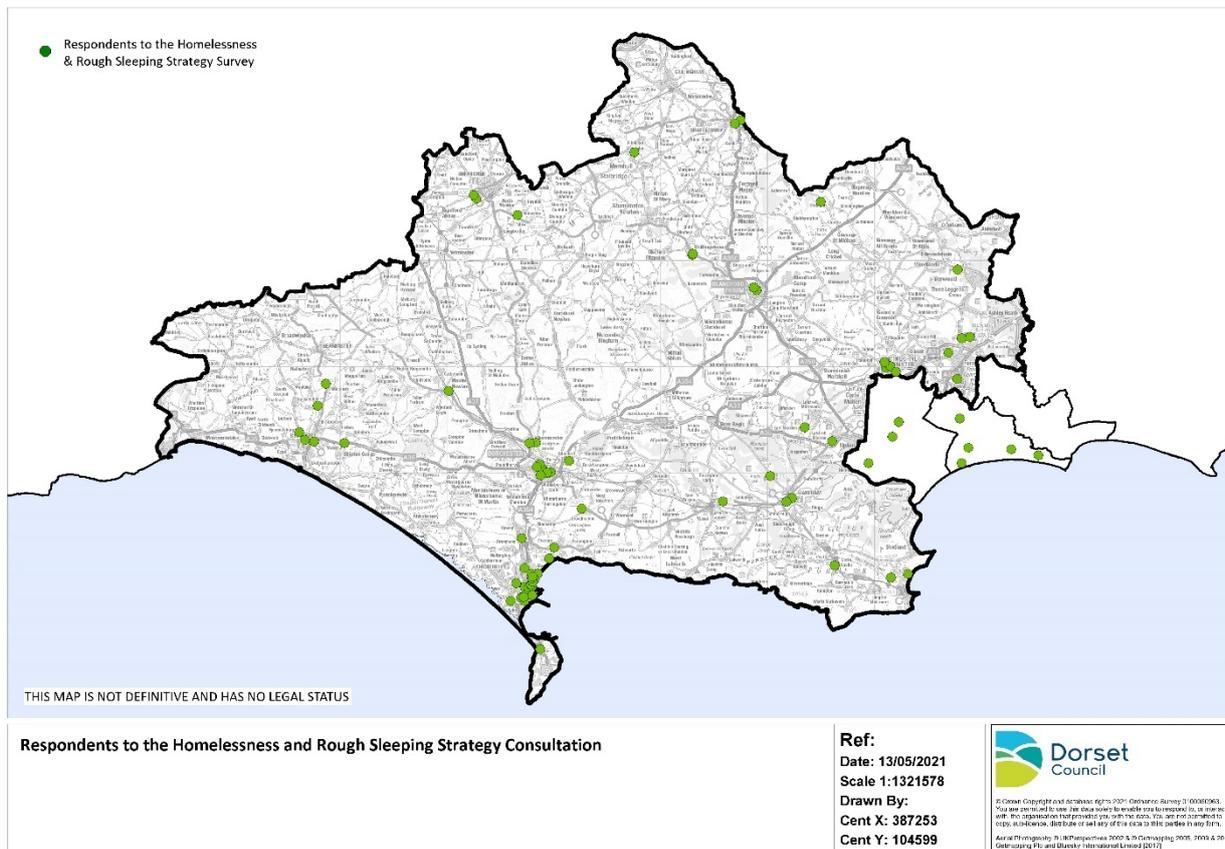
	% of all respondents	Number
A member of the public	74.5%	79
An elected member ( Dorset Council)	0.0%	0
A town/parish council	0.9%	1
Provider of Homeless Service	1.9%	2
Voluntary Sector Organisation	1.9%	2
Other organisation/community group	0.9%	1
Private Landlord	6.6%	7
Social Landlord	1.9%	2
Homelessness service user	7.5%	8
Other	3.8%	4



75% of respondents were responding as members of the public. Other responses came from a wide range of people and organisations. The second highest group was homelessness service users (with 8 responses) closely followed by private landlords with 7 responses. The rest of the responses came from across community groups, homeless service providers, voluntary sector and social landlords. There were 4 respondents who specified “other”. They were from someone who was a “Retired Manager of Rough Sleepers Hostels in London”, “A family that is to be evicted in July” and “Parent of a homeless person” and one other.

# Map of responses to the consultation

Postcodes were supplied by most of the respondents with the majority of those living in the Dorset Council area. The map shows the distribution of overall responses to the consultation demonstrating a good spread across the geographical area. Promotion of the consultation appears to have been successful across all areas.



## Parish/Town Councils

1 response came back saying they were responding on behalf of a parish/town councils. This was from: East Stoke Parish Council. This wasn't their official response.

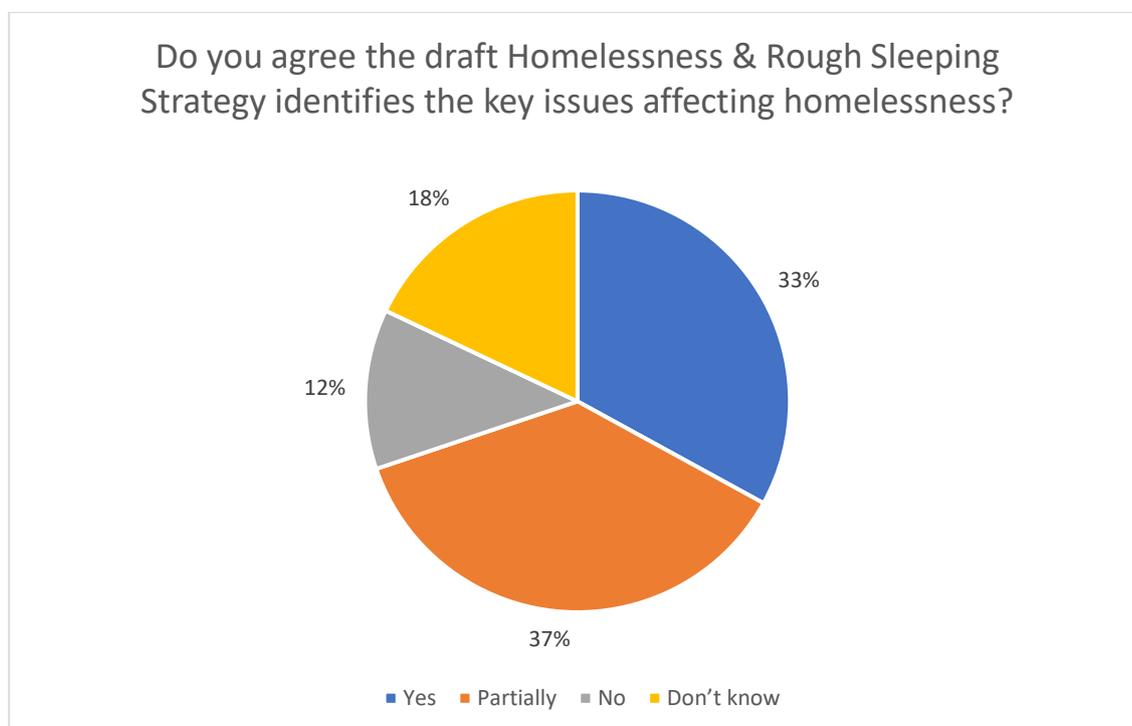
## Official Organisational Responses

There were 17 organisational responses with 11 of those providing the official response of the organisation. These included:

Organisation
Homeless Health Service for Dorset ( NHS)
Bridport Local Area Partnership
Sovereign Housing Association
Citizens Advice in Dorset (CAiD)
Alastair and Davina Mackay
Self employed
Ian Bruce Associates Ltd
KEN ROEBUCK
Unspecified
Magna Housing Ltd

## Question 1- Do you agree the draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy identifies the key issues affecting homelessness?

Overall	% of all respondents	Number
Yes	33.0%	35
Partially	36.8%	39
No	12.3%	13
Don't know	17.9%	19



Overall, there is strong support suggesting that the rough sleeping strategy has identified the key issues affecting homelessness. 33% gave an unqualified yes to this question and a further 37% suggested it had partially identified them. Only 12% said it failed to identify them and 18% were not sure.

Looking at responses specifically from key partner organisations we find support for the identification of the key issues. **Sovereign Housing Association** say the issues are partially identified and say *“We think that the strategy does highlight the majority of issues ... What is less clear from the strategy is actions to address these, with a lot of actions in the plan around doing further work to understand possible solutions, given the pandemic and the expected increase in homelessness some of these time frames seem very long given that there would be a significant amount of work to then put the solutions in place.”* **Magna Housing Association** thought the issues were identified saying *“The draft strategy*

is based on a comprehensive evidence base and is well thought out in terms of draft recommendations & actions.”

**Homeless Health Service for Dorset ( NHS)** said they thought the issues were identified and that *“To address homeless for the long term, need to prioritise sustainable accommodation that is person centred.”*

**Dorset Healthcare** said they thought the issues were identified and said *“Detailed report with good evidence identifying factors impacting homelessness.”*

**Private Landlords** were much less sure, with some saying the issues were partially identified or that they didn’t know.

**Homelessness Service Users** were equally unsure with only one yes and most saying they thought they were partially, or they didn’t know.

Looking specifically at responses from **disabled people** there was no significant deviance from the overall response. 39% agreed the strategy identified the key issues.23% felt it partially identified them and 15% said it didn’t address them. There were no comments that suggested disabled people felt the strategy discriminated against them in any way and on the contrary a number of respondents stressed the importance of the link between mental health and homelessness.

### Q1 Comments from those saying the strategy **hadn’t identified** the key issues of homelessness

Looking firstly at those who said the strategy didn’t identify the key issues affecting homelessness. Thirteen respondents replied in this way. This was made up from:

- Members of the public 10
- Provider of Homeless Service 1
- Private Landlord 1
- Homelessness service user 1

Issues raised
Current allocation system doesn’t work and leads to homelessness
Council does what it wants anyway
Concerns that the strategy doesn't link homelessness and LBGT+
Need to build the right sort of homes to avoid homelessness
Need action and results not a talking shop
Poor local insight into the issue
Not enough innovation
Private Rented sector has a poor record
Council staff training welcomed
As an attractive area we will draw people adding to the homelessness issue
The strategy needs to be closely linked to a comprehensive mental and general health support system

## Q1 Comments from those saying the strategy **partially identified** the key issues of homelessness

Looking now at those who said the strategy partially identified the key issues affecting homelessness. 39 respondents replied in this way. This was made up from:

Members of the public 26  
 Voluntary sector organisation 2  
 Private Landlord 3  
 Other 3  
 Social landlord 1  
 Homelessness service user 3  
 A town/parish council 1

### **32 respondents made comments**

Full comments are available in the appendix.

## **Summary of issues raised**

Issue	Mentions
Need to closely link homelessness and health care etc	4
The lack of homes and how that is going to be dealt with needs better explanation	2
Need more local analysis	2
Difference between differing types of relationship breakdown ... Some are abusive	2
Complicated subject	2
Homeless people solution is not private rented	2
Bringing empty properties back into use - how in strategy	2
Cost of temporary accommodation	2
Private tenants are not well protected from being made homeless	1
Don't believe the council will address the problem	1
Method used probably undercounts homeless	1
County is varied and large impacting response needed	1
Monitoring vital	1
Need to be more reactive to avoid people becoming homeless	1
Plan acks ambition but meets requirements	1
Small sample in interview	1
Private accommodation unaffordable	1
Language in report - "ensure" is too woolly	1
Using outside consultants	1
Homeless people with learning disabilities are not considered	1
Causes of rough sleeping need expanding	1
Need safe accommodation for homeless	1
Needs more focus on solutions e.g. Use of B&Bs	1

Use of temporary accommodation in local areas important and need more on this	1
Single homeless people - not just the causes listed	1
Weymouth problem of incoming rough sleepers not addressed	1
Aggressive begging needs a solution	1
People need right solution for circumstances	1
How are hidden homeless being dealt with	1
All people should work or volunteer	1
Doesn't focus enough on issues of high rents and rogue landlords causing homelessness	1

Analysis of the comments showed most issues raised were individual items and not consistent and repetitive themes. The above table shows some themes emerging but the only main one being the important link between homelessness and health.

### **Q1 Comments from those saying the strategy **did identify** the key issues of homelessness**

Looking now at those who said the strategy identified the key issues affecting homelessness. 35 respondents replied in this way. This was made up from:

- Members of the public 30
- Other 1
- Social landlord 1
- Homelessness service user 1
- Other organisation/community group 1
- Provider of Homeless Service 1

### **10 respondents made comments**

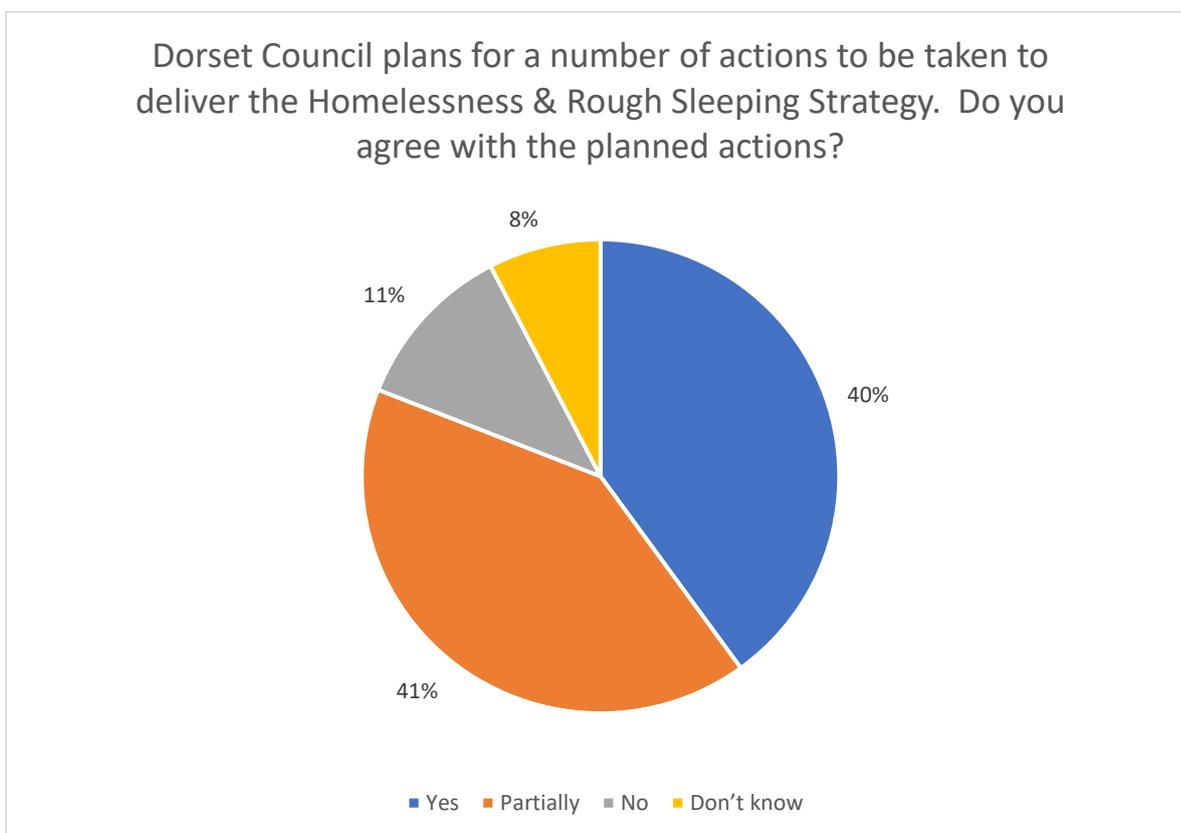
Full comments are available in the appendix.

Issue	Mentions
Good evidence base informing strategy	4
Simple and clear	3
Needs to be done	2
Improvement on previous situation	1
Think outside the box	1
Think long term	1

Those who felt the issues had been identified generally backed this up in the comments.

**Question 2 - Dorset Council plans for a number of actions to be taken to deliver the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy. You can see them here. Do you agree with the planned actions?**

Overall	% of all respondents	Number
Yes	40.0%	42
Partially	41.0%	43
No	11.4%	12
Don't know	7.6%	8



The table above shows strong overall support for the actions proposed in the strategy, with 40% fully agreeing with the actions and a further 41% partially agreeing with them. Overall, only 11% disagreed. A further 8% were unsure.

Looking at responses specifically from key partner organisations we find support for the identification of the key issues. **Sovereign Housing Association** say they partially agreed with the strategy actions and comment *“As already mentioned the action plan has a lot of references to mapping, reviewing and evaluation with limited commitment around new services, initiatives etc, and whilst we are sure that Dorset will look to use the information it collates to do this in the future this would be a few years away and given the expected rise in homelessness as a result of the pandemic there may be a need to be taking action much earlier. With regard to specific actions there are a few things we would flag. Given*

*that Housing Associations play a key role in meeting the housing need, providing support and signposting to those who do not qualify for social housing potentially will not solve their long-term housing need. We appreciate there are other references around making people more tenancy ready (pre-tenancy training) which will help but is there a challenge back to social landlords (including ourselves) around our criteria and exclusions. When looking at TA services it talks about accommodation standards which we would fully support and about the potential of private sector leasing, we appreciate that there is a need to offer a range of options and solutions and would encourage you to explore what TA arrangements can be provided by your social landlords. These can often be more cost effective bring added value of access to employment and training services and tenancy support. We have a number of services in place with other LA's. We like the idea of the placement policy but would like to understand how this will work in practice, we presume it is around giving choice and control back to clients which we would fully support but we equally recognise the challenges this may bring in terms of allocations and occupancy rates. The pre-tenancy training have you got by in from landlords and will this give those how complete it any priority for housing? There are references to health issues and working with mental health teams and we wondered whether joint commissioning of services had been considered?"*

**Magna Housing Association** agreed with the actions saying, *"The actions identified and the implementation structure is comprehensive and inclusive, ensuring that the relevant interested agencies and partners are involved at relevant stages & in relevant work."*

**Homeless Health Service for Dorset ( NHS)** said they agreed with the actions and said that *"There is a need to address homeless at the point that is occurring or about to occur, and to liaise in collaboration with all key agencies"*

**Dorset Healthcare** said they partially agreed with the actions and said *"Need to bear in mind the mental health homeless service is approx 3 WTE for the entire county - so a very small resource currently. We should be considering the opportunities linked to the MH integrated community care programme and the development of MH hubs in primary care over the next 3 years arising from the long term plan. Also - Could not see mention of challenges around forensic mental health client group (or reference to working with the Dorset Forensic Team in the action plan) or those with history of arson - this remains a key challenge. Also need to link with the new Operation Courage service launching for veterans in 2021. The proposed demand analysis of supported accommodation is absolutely key for MH - please involve Dorset HealthCare. Linking with MH hospitals around processes for people leaving hospital potentially at risk of homelessness key - not just acute hospitals."*

**Private Landlords** were much less sure, with equal numbers saying they agreed, partially agreed and disagreed with the actions.

**Homelessness Service Users** were generally in support of the actions with 4 agreeing, 1 partially agreeing, 1 disagreeing and 1 don't know.

Looking specifically at responses from **disabled people** there was no significant deviance from the overall response. 39% agreed the strategy actions. 31% partially agreed them and 23% said it didn't agree them. There were no comments that suggested disabled people felt the strategy discriminated against them in any way and on the contrary a number of respondents stressed the importance of the link between mental health and homelessness.

## Q2 Comments from those saying they **didn't agree** with the planned actions in the strategy

Looking firstly at those who said they didn't agree with the planned actions in the strategy. 12 respondents replied in this way. This was made up from:

Members of the public 8  
Private Landlord 3  
Homelessness service user 1

### **The following issues were raised:**

Issue	Mentions
Too complicated/difficult to understand	4
Failure of HAs	1
Misses main issue- shortage of properties	1
Not specific enough	1
Too slow	1
Dorset issue	1

The main concern was over how complicated the issue and/or the supporting documents were.

## Q2 Comments from those saying they **partially agree** with the planned actions in the strategy

Looking now at those who said they partially agree with the planned actions in the strategy. 43 respondents replied in this way. This was made up from:

Members of the public 34  
Private Landlord 2  
Homelessness service user 1  
Other 1  
Social landlord 1  
Other organisation/community group 1  
Provider of Homeless Service 1

### **The following are the main issues from the 36 comments made.**

Full comments are available in the appendix.

Issue	Mentions
Build affordable housing	7
Is the budget sufficient to deliver	6
People need to help themselves	3
Need to give people life skills	3
Want action on Weymouth rough sleepers	2
Too complicated	2
Need faster action/more ambition	2
Important working with partner organisations	2

Nothing will change	2
Community support available	2
Link to healthcare important	2
Big question about how stock will be increased	1
Can't help everyone	1
Need to work better with disabled people	1
Follow other good practise	1
Key issues not addressed	1
More older people's housing	1
Mental health support a big issue	1
Emphasis on prevention	1
Detailed response on housing system	1
Issues over the benefits system	1
Issues over benefits tourism	1
Rural county needs different solutions	1

The most consistent concerns were around the need to build more affordable housing together with concerns over the whether the budget was sufficient to achieve the aims of the strategy. Also, people felt the need for imparting life skills (e.g. budgeting etc) vital.

## **Q2 Comments from those saying they agree with the planned actions in the strategy**

Looking now at those who said they **agree** with the planned actions in the strategy. 43 respondents replied in this way. This was made up from:

Members of the public 31  
Private Landlord 2  
Homelessness service user 4  
Other 3  
Social landlord 1  
Provider of Homeless Service 1  
Town/Parish Council 1

### **The following are the main issues from the 15 comments made:**

Issue	Mentions
Actions sound appropriate	4
Anything new would be better	2
Private landlord/council collaboration essential	1
Partnership working is commended	1
Must be adequately funded	1
Life skills important	1
Prevention is important but landlords need support too	1
Re-using empty properties is a good idea	1
Needs to fit with other strategies	1
Link to Planning for new homes	1
Village locations not so easy	1
Prevention is so important	1

Most comments related to individual issues other than general support for the proposed actions

## Further Comments

There were 61 further comments. The table below pulls out the key issues raised. Whilst some people had nothing further to add, there was positive support for the process and output. Whilst some people felt the solution was simple (build more accommodation), others felt the issues were geographical (particularly Weymouth). Some felt the issues of mental health dominant and this was where the help was needed. In contrast some felt we shouldn't help homeless people and rough sleepers as much as we do. Several commentators felt the documentation was too complicated

Issue	Mentions
Good/thoughtful/well-structured etc.	6
Create/build accommodation	6
Nothing further	6
The Weymouth problem	5
Stop helping them/encourages people in	5
Mental health issues are paramount in the solution	4
Needs simplification	4
Urgent problem requiring more funding	3
Other	3
Problem of co-location of homeless people	2
No one should be homeless	2
Lip service/need more ambition	2
Temporary accommodation needs to be a decent standard	2
Not Dorset specific enough and bland	2
Local Community could help	1
Empty properties important in solution	1
Need to help ex-military	1
Social housing must be included in developments	1
Difficult issue	1
Hidden homeless	1
Make it work	1
Shouldn't use consultants	1
Partnership with social housing providers is very important	1
Important work with partners CA, BLAP etc.	1

# Demographic Information

## Age

The tables below show the profile of people taking part in the consultation. The consultation is slightly dominated by responses from those in the older age groups, with those aged 65+ making up 34% of respondents compared to only being 29% of the Dorset population. Compared to many other council surveys the response is reasonably spread across the age groups.

12.8% of respondents preferred not to disclose their age group.

	Under 18	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-and over	Prefer not to say
<b>% of responses in age group</b>	0.0 %	4.7 %	5.8 %	9.3%	15.1 %	18.6 %	33.7 %	12.8 %

## Gender

The current profile of the residents of Dorset show 49.8% male and 51.1% female. As the table below shows the responses from females, does vary considerably from the Dorset profile but this is not unusual in this type of survey.

	Male	Female	Prefer to self describe	Prefer not to say
<b>What best describes your gender?</b>	36.5%	51.8%	0.0%	11.8%

There was a slight uneven balance between males and females with 52% of responses from females and 37% from males. This gender imbalance is a common feature of council surveys.

## Disability

15.1% of respondents considered they had a disability. This equates to 13 people. Responses from disabled people were above average at 15.1% of responses compared to a Dorset figure of 5% based on those claiming either Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payments or Attendance Allowance. The data has been used when analysing the responses to all the questions to see if people who have a disability had a different view to the majority on the key questions in the consultation.

	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
<b>Do you consider yourself to be disabled as set out in the Equality Act, 2010?</b>	15.1%	74.4%	10.5%

When looking at the specific disabilities of the 13 people responding 5 said they had a physical disability 4 had a longstanding illness, 8 had a mental health condition, and 2 a sensory impairment.

The vast majority of the disabled people responding were replying as members of the public, but 2 were responding as users of the homelessness service.

## Ethnic Group

	What is your ethnic group?
White British	74.1%
White Irish	3.5%
Gypsy/Irish traveller	2.4%
Any other white background	2.4%
Asian/ Asian British - Bangladeshi	0.0%
Asian/ Asian British - Chinese	0.0%
Asian/ Asian British - Indian	0.0%
Asian/ Asian British - Pakistani	0.0%
Any other Asian background	0.0%
Black/Black British - African	0.0%
Black/Black British - Caribbean	1.2%
Any other black background	0.0%
Mixed ethnic background – White and Asian	0.0%
Mixed ethnic background – White and Black African	0.0%

Mixed ethnic background – White and Black Caribbean	0.0%
Any other mixed background	0.0%
Prefer not to say	15.3%
Any other ethnic group	1.2%

With 74% of the respondents saying their ethnic group was White British this is fairly typical of the wider population, particularly with 15.3% preferring not to respond to this question.

# Appendix - Comments

Comments are identified by respondent type according to the following code included at the end of the individual comment:

- Members of the public (unspecified)
- Private Landlord (PL)
- Homelessness service user (HSU)
- Other (O)
- Social landlord (SL)
- Other organisation/community group (CG)
- Provider of Homeless Service (HS)
- Town and Parish Council (TP)

## Question 1- Do you agree the draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy identifies the key issues affecting homelessness?

### Q1 Comments from those saying the strategy **hadn't identified** the key issues of homelessness

Response
1.last private landlord issued no fault eviction and stated she would give a negative reference despite never missing payment and returning property ready to let .private renting rejected since. 2.99% of Dorset 1 bedroom social properties only available for aged 50/55 plus and or sheltered.1% that are not are several hours by bus to sherborne where my children live with their mother.,the bus fair is not affordable.many also subject to local connection that I don't have. 3.the 2 bed properties stating single person occupation considered i have applied for have been let to people as low as bronze level for 2weeks while I have been on silver from December 2019 rising to emergency currently. (HSU)
Because you only ever talk about and put money to what you want to not what needs it !!
I can't see anywhere that someone has suffered homophobic or transphobic abuse. Nationally 1 in 4 people how are homeless are LGBT+ - many of whom have been rejected from their families

I think there are different types of homelessness but people are treated the same. As the treating everyone the same, human rights policy is understandable on the overall scheme of things, things have changed...Covid wasn't an issue 5yrs ago but it has changed and taken many lives. My husband and i were both working earning decent money and living in beautiful private rented accommodation in a very good neighbourhood. We enjoyed a peaceful private existence, doing our garden, and having grandchildren fulfilling our lives. Now ...we are broke due to having lost jobs, have only one car that keeps breaking down, a notice to quit because the landlord has also been affected and has to sell. We have had to sell some of our furniture knowing we are going to be homeless in a couple of months. We have two pets, a 11yr old jack Russell and a 7yr old cat, and have been told we have to rehome them!! My anxiety has gone through the roof and we are both devastated. We cant find another private rent because no decent landlord wants to touch universal credit. We are dreading living in a flat having to share entrance doors, no garden and no privacy but we are apparently no different to anyone else and thats what we will be given. My family lives in wareham so thats where i want to be now, as i had a diagnosis of macula degeneration 2yrs ago so could go blind at any time. Please build more sheltered accommodation for the not so elderly that do not want to be living without the sunshine at the door to walk out onto and a garden to retire to and a feeling of being trapped in a flat!! I know its a roof and somewhere to live but not all of us have got to this position expecting it.

It does nothing to reduce the number of homeless and rough sleepers except to form a very large panel which may just be a talking shop

Poor local insight (HS)

Poor representation of prs, lacks innovation. The council has a poor record of simple customer homeless service. I do welcome the staff training. (PL)

We are fortunate to live in a very attractive country and county . If you make facilities available for people to move here they will in ever increasing numbers. That is just a fact of life

Without linking the Strategy to a comprehensive mental and general health support system, any strategy would fail. Homelessness is inextricably linked to a range of health and 'dependency' issues. Successful 'intervention' is directly attributable to the provision of not just housing options but a range of health and social care support as well. Primary and secondary local health services are currently being 'reconfigured' ( effectively placing them even further out of reach of homeless people. This 'dissonance' is a major contributor to homelessness and rough sleeping as is joblessness.

## Q1 Comments from those saying the strategy **partially identified** the key issues of homelessness

Comments
all they need is a house or flat no middle accommodation is needed just compulsory purchase unused shops and convert to accommodation
I am not sure enough attention is paid to the single homeless, especially following relationship breakup. The lack of social housing in comparison to those in need must be addressed.
I have a friend living in Australia whose Brother is homeless in Weymouth, she flew over 13months ago and got him into a rented room where he stayed till recently when he couldn't cope with a new boarder so made himself homeless again. He is paranoid with people in authority who he thinks are out to get him which is impossible to deal with.....
I observe that there are empty properties, boarded up even! Why are these places not put to use?
I saw nothing re the provision of new housing, either by the Council or in support of those who do. (Sorry later in the survey I found something - shows how difficult it is to get your head round something like this.)
I think that the mental health affects of homelessness need to be prioritised more. Thankyou

I think the document does not give sufficient weight to a major cause of homelessness being the steady decline of social housing, steep rise in rents (although it does mention very briefly a 'lack of social housing' and 'unaffordable' housing). Also the rise in 'rogue' landlords being too willing to evict if someone complains about poor conditions, problems with discrimination towards people on benefits, perhaps the move from paying rent direct to landlord so leading to eviction, the behaviour of letting agents, ie the whole culture of private housing that has developed, or that has been endemic. It also does not give sufficient attention in the initial analysis to the huge costs of temporary accommodation even where it is very poor quality, although it does put as one action {3.2} 'ensure temporary accommodation is appropriate ... in quality and cost..". How will you bring the overblown costs of temporary down?

I think you should give everyone a "job" instead of the support for "hanging around" and "sitting" on the street. There's a lot of volunteer work in the area to do. Even they have some disabilities - for cleaning, clearing or other jobs the council has a lot of job's to do. How they the buddism: teach the people to angle and give it not the fish, or similar. Also the companies are involved have to "save" their job as well, so this mean they can't be interested in to "release" the homelessness otherwise they "loose" their jobs.(O)

I was seeking information within the draft that detailed how the number of empty properties would be brought back into use as accommodation and was unable to spot this within the resources section? I feel this is a key element to a successful strategy, and will also contribute to a less derelict appearance of local neighbourhoods/town centre. What incentives have been considered to persuade those Landlords of empty properties, especially in the town centre to be part of the solution - even it it is just for move on accommodation?

I would be interested to know about how you will find and engage with those that are risk of homeless and how you will work with the hidden homeless

I wouldn't really agree that homeless people should seek private rented accommodation. Landlords want people who are working and earning enough to pay the rent. I think some sort of basic emergency accommodation should be provided by the Council. No one should sleep out on the pavement Begging for money as well is wrong and reduces the quality of a town centre experience for all I think you should look at placing them appropriately. If mentally ill, a bed at Mental Health Hospital If capable of work, somewhere with work, like on a farm Under 18, with Foster parent Vulnerable woman, in a woman's refuge Drink and drugs, into a rehab (PL)

If Homelessness is through no fault of the persons concerned then I think those persons should be helped and assisted. If as is the norm and the Beggars who harass persistently passer bys then these persons need a separate course of action. i.e. to take them off the Streets and put them out of harms way. I feel very vulnerable when I go shopping alone and these Beggars aggressively approach me!!

It doesn't address one of the causes of homelessness and rough sleepers in my town of Weymouth. That is the inbound rough sleepers who come from other areas some are career beggars who live outside of the town and come in to beg. This is detrimental to the town and also genuine homeless people who need help.

It looks comprehensive to me but I'm very aware that there are many uncertainties about the coming year(s) and it would be foolish to be overconfident.

It states on P.8 'For single persons there was strong evidence that relationship breakdown, mental health and substance misuse were the causes.' This reads as though they are the only possible cause. Other factors are debt, job loss through redundancy. A better wording would be For single persons there was strong evidence that relationship breakdown, mental health and substance misuse were the MAIN causes.

It was good to read the detailed description of how the Strategy and Action Plan would be delivered and monitored, with a clear indication of how statutory and voluntary groups would form various groups, forums and panels to give feedback and contribute to its development. The Strategy contains a great deal of facts and statistics about homelessness nationally and in Dorset, but it doesn't make many judgements about any particular homelessness issues that the Council faces in Dorset or any indications of how it might focus its approach in dealing with them. For example, we know that there's a particular issue with the high level of B&B being used for temporary accommodation, although this isn't highlighted or commented on in the Strategy. In the Strategy document, we would have liked to have read more about the strategic thinking behind some of the actions given in the Action Plan. Temporary Accommodation: The Strategy doesn't give information on the geographical suitability of the temporary accommodation it offers. For example, our experience is that an issue for people in Bridport is being relocated to Weymouth. The areas where temporary accommodation is set up creates problems for some clients and we feel that the Council could try to establish temporary accommodation in more towns, so homeless individuals do not have to travel and can continue to make use of local resources and support. The Draft Strategy does not mention the highly relevant information on temporary accommodation given in the paper by Dorset's Corporate Director Housing, at the Dorset Cabinet meeting on 8 September 2020. The paper states: • The Ministry of Housing Community and Local Government (MHCLG) had advised Dorset Council that its use of B&B placements for temporary accommodation is disproportionately high compared to other local authorities, including families in B&B over the six-week statutory limit. MHCLG had said that the Council's over-reliance on B&B placements is due to the lack of property under its ownership and control. • Additional grant funding from MHCLG has been made available to provide long term accommodation solutions and ease the pressure on B&B. • Dorset has already made plans for putting this funding (Next Steps Accommodation Programme Longer Term and Move on Accommodation Capital Funding) towards refurbishing a hostel and increasing the number of beds, converting an ex-refuge to single unit accommodation and purchasing suitable street properties. We think that the Strategy should include this information because it covers some key issues affecting homelessness. (VSO)

It's a good overview and probably does as much as it can given the problems collating information during the pandemic although I should have liked to have seen more local detail although the reference to national trends is very useful.

More effort needs to be made to secure long term decent accommodation for homeless people they are vulnerable and must feel safe when they are given accommodation

My particular interest is the rough sleeping aspect and I would have liked more information about the issue in this county, commencing with the causes, the services available and the prevention of repetition. Fraudulent applications for accommodation is mentioned. I managed a hostel which we operated on behalf of the local authority and this was a serious problem because we had a quota of local authority accommodation. (O)

Not particularly considered the additional issues related to disability and homelessness. There have been people with learning disabilities homeless in Dorset and no integrated strategy.

Not sure it fully covers, or separates out the difference in relationship breakdown between abusive - physical, emotional and sexual and issue of young people who are not in any danger but simply not prepared to accept reasonable house rules of family home or respect those who pay the bills. Not sure if it affects Dorset as opposed to BCP but there are also those who leave homes elsewhere and travel and stay as simply wish to come to an area near the beach, better weather etc

Not yet read the draft report but from the pre-amble it seems the Council who have an excellent and experienced housing team are resorting to outside consultants instead of reporting themselves. (PL)

<p>Rather than use the word 'ensure', it would be more appropriate, in terms of measuring performance against meeting objectives, to insert the word 'guarantee'. The Council will unequivocally know when/if it has not met its objectives. Ensure, as a term, is a bit woolly. (HSU)</p>
<p>substance and alcohol misuse, and mental health conditions plays a significant part in why people may become homeless, with targeted drug and alcohol and better mental health support services and funding needed to better support individuals to retain and stay in accommodation.</p>
<p>The consultation only interviewed 22 people so it probably does not reflect people's lived experience. The lack of accessible private rented accommodation is a significant factor in homelessness in the area, it is unaffordable, with too many constraints on who will be accepted by landlords. There is not enough social housing for single people under 50, (HSU)</p>
<p>The document presents a lot of statistical analysis of the current understanding of why people are homeless, there appears to be no information in the strategy to identify early on those who may become homeless. In effect it appears to be a reactive rather than proactive application of the current legislation. To my thinking this is more of a plan that responds to the government requirements to implement a strategy every 5 years or so. It lacks ambition and wider thinking of dealing with homelessness. (TPC)</p>
<p>The Strategy along with its Action Plan identifies and proposes to tackle the most pressing issue i.e. lack of suitable accommodation. The solutions to overcome absence of a home, along with the inevitable problems for the homeless, lack explanation and must be explained in greater detail, remaining at the forefront of decision and allocation. There needs to be a drive to source more private accommodation, especially for those with mental health issues. The shortfall must be better publicised to alert potential landlords to the need. The majority of underlying issues and complications challenging homeless people lie in related agendas. The Strategy cannot look at homelessness in isolation and must address the overlaps between housing/homelessness and health care, social services, public transport provision, education, welfare services, job training and opportunities etc. Has study been made of the demands on Bridport's homeless not occurring in say Weymouth? Consultants working on the Strategy interviewed some of the support organisations who are members of the Bridport Local Area Partnership's (BLAP's) working group and this was encouraging. However BLAP understands that statistics quoted in the strategy are based on the annual street count. Over time, rough sleepers may move in and out of that particular category e.g. when sofa surfing. Hence these numbers are at variance and there is the potential to understate the scale of the issue in the Bridport area alone. The numbers known to associated agencies appear to bear this out. Annual monitoring to review progress and generate transparent reports is important to ensure the effectiveness and relevance of the Strategy and its Action Plan. Dorset is a large and varied county; access to support services is frequently harder in outlying rural locations. The collection of monitoring data and subsequent analysis of patterns within and across the county is needed to inform and make best use of Outreach. (VSO)</p>
<p>There has always been a problem that councils ignored until Covid when central government told local councils to act. I do not believe that local councils will do anything to address the problems apart from lip service</p>
<p>There is little or no security for private tenants who can on a whim be made homeless within a number of month's, consequently putting extra strain on the limited resources available.(O)</p>

<p>There is obviously issues with homelessness in a seaside town. However, the homeless are not the only vulnerable. When housed in a small area together, their chaotic lifestyles cause local residents anti social behaviour and feeling intimidated, scared and wanting to move from their homes. These local residents need to be as important as those needing to be housed. For someone that has been homeless, this does not mean that you have to act in such a way you cause problems for others. Currently the systems in place allow people in Dorset to declare themselves homeless easily and then can be housed with others that have problems, allowing them to build a web as a drug dealing and making those vulnerable, more vulnerable. There is nothing here put in place to help these individuals, they don't need hand outs, they need self esteem. By being allowed to sit around and then mixing with others to get them in trouble they sink lower and lower. There needs to be projects where homeless arrive daily at 10am, they are helped to see how to pay bills, write CV's, prepare meals, learn a trade. If they don't arrive at this type of project then they don't want help, just hand outs. Everyone is one step from being a victim or a survivor in these situations. Dorset Council should be making them all survivors.</p>
<p>There needs to be a proper look at why someone becomes homeless. Also look at the negativity around the homeless particularly in relation to drink and drugs. Such as which came first is their addiction due to their situation.</p>
<p>We think that the strategy does highlight the majority of issues we would expect to see and we appreciate that there has been a significant amount of research completed to understand national and local issues. What is less clear from the strategy is actions to address these, with a lot of actions in the plan around doing further work to understand possible solutions, given the pandemic and the expected increase in homelessness some of these time frames seem very long given that there would be a significant amount of work to then put the solutions in place. Given the pandemic and the potential impact on unemployment and poverty which in turns links to homelessness, we would suggest that it might be useful to address these in the strategy around prevention. (SL)</p>

**Q1Comments from those saying the strategy did identify the key issues of homelessness**

Comment
Any strategy will be an improvement on current policies.
Detailed report with good evidence identifying factors impacting homelessness.
Has simple clear aims and goals (HSU)
Homelessness and rough sleeping in modern-day Britten should have been eliminated by now. This is an area of government / local authority duty that has been poorly addressed, if was can not help these people what sort of society are we?
I am not experienced in this area but the strategy seems to identify the reasons why someone finds themselves homeless.
I feel more council houses need to be built or bought back by the council to help with the demand for cheaper housing. Some of the redundant office space could be used for community warden led apartments, made available for single homeless people keeping them off the streets at night for an affordable rent. If person is receiving benefits any rental payments should be taken at source. The people living in the warden led homes will be given jobs eg window cleaners, gardeners, path sweepers, litter pickers, keeping bin area clean and tidy, IT help, repairs, teaching to read, to help with costs for the affordable rents they will paying.
S0mething has to be done
The Draft Strategy explains this very concisely and as far as I can judge comprehensively.

The draft strategy is based on a comprehensive evidence base and is well thought out in terms of draft recommendations & actions.(SL)

To address homeless for the long term, need to prioritise sustainable accommodation that is person centred. (HS)

**Question 2 - Dorset Council plans for a number of actions to be taken to deliver the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy. You can see them here. Do you agree with the planned actions?**

**Q2 Responses from those saying they **didn't agree** with the planned actions in the strategy**

**The following are the comments made:**

Comment
The planned actions are of such a length, couched in such language and containing so many jargon terms/titles that only a paid official would plough through them. Almost appears a job creation scheme/tickbox exercised. Certainly an almost bottomless pit of spending looms. Whatever happened to the KISS principle.
For £20,000 I could write a better and more relevant report. Why when decades ago Housing Associations were set up to deal with social housing they have failed to do so. In Dorset Housing Associations have been selling off at low prices properties which have been subsidised by the tax payer and other new build developers. This is particularly true of one bed properties which are the most suitable for those who end up as rough sleepers.(PL)
Just a load of paid staff filling out forms, nothing will actually change. (PL)
Looks like a very complicated and expensive way to focus on monitoring and tracking facts and figures with a longer term view as an after thought of addressing the real problems of general shortage of properties and fair none discriminatory allocation that could be addressed now. not in 2or 3 years time.New built housing stock appears to be mostly 2 beds which which policy makes them not available to single people. single properties then mostly excludes under 50 year olds .together these policies will lead to homelessness in under 50s. (HSU)
Not specific enough in action planning. Some odd actions, lacks detail specific to dorset issues (PL)
Takes to long (HSU)
We are fortunate to live in a very attractive country and county . If you make facilities available for people to move here they will in ever iincreasing numbers. That is just a fact of life

**Q2 Responses from those saying they partially agree with the planned actions in the strategy**

The following are the 36 comments made:

Comment
3.1 - 'Increase supply of affordable housing and make best use of stock'. This is a crucial point but gives no indication of how this will be done. It is supposed to be done 'within existing budgets', so is unlikely to be very effective. There is huge opportunity for local government to both enhance its asset base and help local people by going into partnership to build or obtain more social housing so creating truly affordable accommodation. In the past few years, the words 'affordable housing' mean little as it only means it is slightly less than local market rates, which remain much too high for many low income people - leading to the taxpayer shouldering burden of excessive housing benefit, or leaving people in extremely poor housing as the only truly affordable option. Another issue would be to stop developers getting around - or totally ignoring - requirements to include a percentage of 'affordable' units (and as I said often this "affordable" is not really affordable) in their new developments. Again, reverting to payment of housing benefit rents direct to landlords rather than to recipients of the benefit. I used to work in social housing and we were horrified at this change, which we knew would lead to higher arrears, and meant we could not use our efficient systems of rent payments.
Action is not adequate and more supervision ought to be carried out especially at the railway station area.
Again put a program in place to help these people develop in to individuals that can have self respect. Art projects, understanding money, daily activities that they need to attend, learning to cook, make things, repair things, help people. Then they help themselves. Don't empower the cycle of benefits, drug / alcohol abuse - get them believing with activities that they can improve their lives. Talking from experience, they are the only ones that can make the change, not the Council or charities, the individuals needs to want to improve their lives. This they will do if they have something to work for. Everything handed on a plate is not the answer, it is just easier to find a bottle of alcohol or drugs, crime, asb as they don't have any respect for themselves, belongings or others.
Again, I think we have to do everything to support the people, but this should be so individual as the homeless person is. There's a reason why they are in this situation. Here has the support to start and to find out what went "wrong" in the past. When I see that the people under 65 are homeless - then I ask myself - why? what on earth have they done "wrong"???? Important is to have a perspective in the next day and not weeks, months, years. They need to do something what makes "sense". Just to give them everything and do everything for them is too less. They have to learn again responsibility for themselves and for the community. (O)
All of these actions are common sense and although some will be helped others slip thru the net
all to complicated just build some more single persons housing you have been given 1.8 million i know how many houses that equates to its it is more than is needed
As above

As already mentioned the action plan has a lot of references to mapping, reviewing and evaluation with limited commitment around new services, initiatives etc, and whilst we are sure that Dorset will look to use the information it collates to do this in the future this would be a few years away and given the expected rise in homelessness as a result of the pandemic there may be a need to be taking action much earlier. With regard to specific actions there are a few things we would flag. Given that Housing Associations play a key role in meeting the housing need, providing support and signposting to those who do not qualify for social housing potentially will not solve their long-term housing need. We appreciate there are other references around making people more tenancy ready (pre-tenancy training) which will help but is there a challenge back to social landlords (including ourselves) around our criteria and exclusions. When looking at TA services it talks about accommodation standards which we would fully support and about the potential of private sector leasing, we appreciate that there is a need to offer a range of options and solutions and would encourage you to explore what TA arrangements can be provided by your social landlords. These can often be more cost effective bring added value of access to employment and training services and tenancy support. We have a number of services in place with other LA's. We like the idea of the placement policy but would like to understand how this will work in practice, we presume it is around giving choice and control back to clients which we would fully support but we equally recognise the challenges this may bring in terms of allocations and occupancy rates. The pre-tenancy training have you got buy in from landlords and will this give those how complete it any priority for housing? There are references to health issues and working with mental health teams and we wondered whether joint commissioning of services had been considered?(SL)

Became I don't believe you will do what you say,

Dorset needs to demand developers build at least 35% of affordable or social housing every time the Planning Dept approve any new development

Ensure the skills in homelessness services to communicate effectively with people with disabilities and or communication challenges. This needs to be at the beginning of engagement with individuals. If this is not possible use the skills of others in the Council or other support services. Needs to be immediate

I believe the UK should follow the Finland 'Housing First' strategy that is solving this problem. Dorset could lead the way.

I don't see any expectation that central government will be lobbied to provide sufficient funding.

I fear these plans will become diluted as pressure to save money is applied, I do not trust councils or government to make this issue the priority it should be.

I wonder if there is more you could do to help those living with precarious finances. Perhaps a partnership with a credit union that could support budgeting etc? And is there a way of utilising some of the under-occupied homes?

In objective 3.1 you need to mandate the Council Planning dept to adhere to the affordable housing targets rather than cosying up to developers by continually reducing the targets for them. Vearse Farm started with a pledge for 35% affordable homes but already has dropped to 16% or less. There are 400+ local families seeking accommodation and they should be housed before any incomers are permitted to purchase property at Vearse Farm. The Council needs to join up the dots and apply some intelligence to departmental working in conjunction

Key issues remain not addressed (PHS)

More sheltered 1bed houses/ bungalows for over 55

Need to bear in mind the mental health homeless service is approx. 3 WTE for the entire county - so a very small resource currently. We should be considering the opportunities linked to the MH integrated community care programme and the development of MH hubs in primary care over the next 3 years arising from the long term plan. Also - Could not see mention of challenges around forensic mental health client group (or reference to working with the Dorset Forensic Team in the action plan) or those with history of arson - this remains a key challenge. Also need to link with the new Operation Courage service launching for veterans in 2021. The proposed demand analysis of supported accommodation is absolutely key for MH - please involve Dorset HealthCare. Linking with MH hospitals around processes for people leaving hospital potentially at risk of homelessness key - not just acute hospitals.(CG)

Need to lobby for children to be given comprehensive lessons on budgeting and finance whilst at school

No apparent plan to increase level of social housing of all sizes.

No mention of Rough Sleepers who have all been sent to Weymouth and are a cause of significant Anti Social Behaviour which affects visitors perception of the Town

no use of social media, advertising with bloggers that youngster follow, sponsorship of film regarding budgeting, homemaking skills, paying bills, homelessness. Actors in school, school plays More to educate secondary school pupils to prevent H/L

Objective 1 Reduce the current and future likely levels of homelessness: We are pleased to see that throughout the Action Plan, there is an emphasis on preventing homelessness. The opportunity of using the Housing waiting list as an early prevention tool as stated in Section 1.2 is particularly welcome with its requirement of mandatory identification of applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, and automatic referral to Homelessness Services to provide prevention/relief support to those identified. Section 1.1.3. We think that the programme to educate children on homelessness awareness should be far wider to cover budgeting, debt, benefits, managing household bills, tenant responsibilities/rights, and how to search for accommodation, with the scope of the programme being graduated according to age. East Dorset and Purbeck Citizens Advice have previously run some small-scale training initiatives for secondary-age children in school and at a successful lunchtime youth club. A programme like this should be part and parcel of educating our young people for an independent life. Objective 2 Prevent Homelessness: Actions in Section 2.2 seek to continually improve the range and quality of homelessness assistance and housing advice services across Dorset. The Council's duty to give information and advice on homelessness is owed to all. Our advisers say that the questions on the online Housing Assistance referral form are geared towards those already homeless and are not so suitable for those threatened with homelessness, especially beyond 56 days. So, we feel that the Action Plan should include a review of how people can more easily access advice from the Council, including a re-wording of the questions in the Housing Assistance referral form so that even if a duty of assistance is not owed to those threatened with future homelessness, advice on preventing homelessness can become more accessible to them. We find that Clients who are not owed a main housing or interim accommodation duty by the local authority struggle to find private rented accommodation, especially if they rely on benefits to pay their rent. We find that clients seem to be offered little guidance about what to do when they are unsuccessful in their housing search. We acknowledge that the Council has four Resettlement Officers who will assist in building relationships with private landlords. We believe there needs to be further support in helping homeless people find private rented accommodation. Section 2.5.1 The Action Plan mentions 'rough sleepers' in this paragraph. The Next Steps funding provided by the government to rehouse homeless individuals in emergency accommodation during the pandemic will come to an end. We would like clarification on how the Council plans to mitigate the impact on previously homeless people of this support ending. Objective No. 3. Arrange for suitable accommodation to be available for everyone: In Section 3.2.1 of the Draft Action Plan, there is mention of a strategic review of temporary accommodation and an updating of the policy, but nothing is stated about projects that have already been started or might be planned. We feel that the Action Plan should include details of those projects that have been planned but not yet completed or started, such as Portland YHA -Phase 2. The Dorset Cabinet meeting on 8 September 2020 approved the allocation of £3.13m 2020/21 and a further £1.65m 2021/22 to purchase and refurbish accommodation to support the homeless and rough sleeper households, but the plan the Council has already made on this is not mentioned in the Action Plan. Objective No. 4. Support households to retain their accommodation: This objective is relevant to the two Housing Projects currently run by East Dorset and Purbeck Citizens Advice where a Housing, a Benefits and a Debt Caseworker work with clients over a 6 -12 month period. This is a

holistic approach taken to prevent future homelessness. These holistic sorts of projects could be replicated across the County. We know that the Council recognises the value of Housing First and housing support principles and has provided funding under an Integrated Prevention and Support contract to provide housing support. It would be helpful if an evaluation of the effectiveness of these services could be included to inform the strategy and action plan. Para 4.2.1 mentions the need to understand whether the Council's current provision reflects the needs of actual and potential users who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Some of our clients are digitally excluded and we have seen how the current provision does not meet their needs, especially as they relate to homelessness. Digital exclusion, for whatever reason, impacts housing applications, access to support and welfare benefits, and becomes a significant barrier in becoming re-established and independent. This is particularly an issue during the pandemic and lockdowns as people who are IT literate may also be disadvantaged due to being unable to access public computers at public locations such as the library, the Jobcentre, and the Lantern. Likewise, getting registered to be on the housing list is an online process that may not be accessible to all homeless individuals. We feel strongly that there should be better provision of non-digital assistance and that this issue needs to be addressed in the Strategy Document and Action Plan. (VSO)

One issue is the benefits system. 1. There is a worrying trend for younger women to have babies in order to climb the waiting list for housing. I have become aware of many single mothers who have children with 2 or more men who do not take any responsibility for their actions. This issue is a national one that needs to be addressed by DWP & local Councils. 2. Benefits tourism-my impression is that people come to the seaside and Dorset to claim benefits here putting more pressure on Council tax payers. We have one of the highest council tax rates in the country, this partially because of our high unemployment rate and comparatively high crime rate caused in part by this and drug problems. I think there should be a moratorium on benefits tourism by imposing a rule that someone cannot move to an area of higher unemployment than their own town/city. Inbound benefits tourists jsut put more pressure on the local residents.

Plans to build more affordable social housing are not clear.

same as before

The first priority must be to understand how they became homeless in order to give them hope for the future

The majority of the funding listed under 'Resources Required Budget' in the Action Plan is referred to as "to be considered; within existing resources/budget" and 'to be identified' implying that financing may not be forthcoming or is indeed inadequate, therefore clarity on and extent of resources is required. The strategy is in line with the Government's 'councils must publish a homelessness and rough sleeping strategy every five years' Different councils have different priorities; to be meaningful, Dorset's Strategy must take into account the uniqueness of our county; tailoring action to cater for the variance in type of population, job access and availability. Without for example training, qualifications, regular transport how can adults find and remain in employment? How can they generate an income and savings to find the 'deposit', meet the costs of living in 'affordable' housing let alone start families? Digital exclusion and gaps in adequate support impede early homelessness prevention, especially in rural locations. The focus on early preventative measures, 'so that (for example) high risk children receive good support and do not become the homeless of tomorrow' facilitates in-school and in-service delivery of a 'comprehensive training programme'. Understanding, tolerance of and empathy for homelessness can only be raised through enhanced, cohesive education of all sectors of the population, regardless of age. Publicity dedicated to raising the profile of homeless people would do much to reduce tension and negative imagery. To ensure better self-support for 16–18 year olds are there resources to address inequality of educational/social opportunity amongst peers i.e. IT and broadband access ensuring that all can fully access and respond to the curriculum; is there automatic inclusion on school trips for everyone; outside of bus timetables is there transport home from after school activities / to and from works experience / places of further education. Isolation and ignorance of ways of life further afield do limit developmental horizons.

The plan should be more ambitious than to "reduce" homelessness. The metrics are not easily measurable. Many of the timescales are too long.
The word 'review' appears a lot in the action plan with few new initiatives. There appears to be a lack of blue sky thinking which may affect future strategy. As someone who has never engaged with the problem formerly but always supported the homeless community by offering donations etc, I've become keen to help if I can. I've always felt that if someone came to me and said can this person borrow your spare room otherwise they will be sleeping outside, the answer is of course yes. I think more could be done to actively engage the local community so that spare rooms, garages etc can be used to give these people shelter at the very least. If someone stayed in my spare room, they'd get breakfast in the morning and an offer of a shower. As a business owner, I might be encouraged to help that person obtain a job. That's just me, what about everyone else? I feel that the community can be part of the solution. Is awareness an issue? More awareness can be brought to highlight the issues via local events. As an event organiser I'd be happy to help.
There are some good measures. there. I agree with bringing empty homes back into use You mention discharge from Hospital is a problem. Why have we closed so many Community Hospitals? And reduced mental health beds. Also seeing the long term affects of selling off council houses (PL)
There is a lot of advice and support mentioned but little else. Advice and support is USELESS if there is no action that people can take to secure somewhere to live. The rules on homelessness are complex and difficult to navigate and the uncertainty of knowing if you will be helped is unbearable and stressful. My daughter became homeless when her shared accommodation was sold and she was unable to rent privately - we didn't know if she would be helped until the day she was on the street and that is wrong. It seemed that council officials were not able to help until they absolutely had to, even though she was classified as a vulnerable adult as she is disabled. Stopping the endless building of retirement flats and starting building homes for local people would be a start - integrating planning policy with homelessness strategy - is the homelessness strategy even considered when reviewing planning applications?
There seems to be a genuine will to prevent homelessness, but is there a budget to support this? We know that there are very vulnerable individuals and families, but without enough housing and personnel about to support and lead initiatives, then good will is meaningless
ultimately, more funding and resource is needed in all areas as well as more affordable homes locally
Use of pharmacies for signposting would be a useful benefit

## Q2 Responses from those saying they agree with the planned actions in the strategy

Comments
Actions are identified as a way to provide solutions and prevent a person becoming homeless.
Again, any plans to improve the current situation will be essential.(O)
as a private landlord I have found it very helpful having support of the council when I take on tenants receiving benefits.(PL)
Bringing together all relevant organisations is a good strategy if open and transparent and fairly funded
Existing resources are inadequate - so reviewing the budget within existing resources is surely going to limit action. More money needs to be diverted to the issue. As a council tax payer, I would rather see my money spent on local people.

I agree strongly with the plan to try to prevent homelessness before it happens but landlords should also be protected, the rental of their property might be their income, if that is taken away because a client is not paying the rent then a new problem has been created - which is why I think rents should be taken at source if people are on benefits. Ask banks to run free money skills days to teach people to understand the importance of budgeting and what is important/sensible to spend their money on. Follow up session to draw up a plan. Face to face sessions not online - not everyone has access to a good computer or even a computer.

I am particularly pleased to see that bringing empty properties back into use has been identified as an action. And that support for people who have or are in danger of becoming homeless is prioritised. I am concerned that there may be insufficient support available for all those who require it. I am also interested in how this Strategy fits with other strategies including those related to housing and building - to ensure that sufficient homes are built / made available to support this Strategy, prioritising the needs of homeless and rough sleepers. This may of course include encouraging those who can afford to buy their own property to move out of social housing to free it up for those who can not afford to buy. I am also interested in how the sale of social housing can be reduced to ensure that social housing does not fall into private ownership - or that if it does, it is quickly replaced by additional social housing units. Additional units, not ones which the council / housing associated was going to build anyway.

it's a good start. Very good but I would like to add a couple of caveats/suggestion; I live in a large village with quite a number of empty properties suitable for families of say two adults three children and this village would be a good location having a primary school, shops, doctors' surgery and a railway station but there is next to nothing for teenagers to do and there is no longer a bus service so unless people have their own transport getting to work is tricky. I think more thought should be given to placing homeless people where they can access services, work education otherwise there will be unhappiness on all fronts.

The actions identified and the implementation structure is comprehensive and inclusive, ensuring that the relevant interested agencies and partners are involved at relevant stages & in relevant work.(SL)

The planned actions that aren't included in the strategy document itself appear to be the actual strategy. (TPC)

The prevention of homelessness must always be preferred to helping those made homeless, and the Strategy rightly prioritises this. I am pleased to see that there are plans to include those with lived experience of homelessness in the Strategy's delivery mechanisms.

There is a need to address homeless at the point that is occurring or about to occur, and to liaise in collaboration with all key agencies (PHS)

They appear to be the logical progression, personally I could not see any reason to amend or add to them. Referring to my previous answer, those issues would be addressed in one of the forums.(O)

They are definitely an improvement.(O)

They seem to be sensible (HSU)

# General Comments

## Responses from:

Comments
A really thoughtful useful stat. good luck implementing it.
Adding to what I put on the previous page, software could be developed which gave the local community an ability to highlight what resources they could offer to help the initial homeless problem. Vacant spare rooms, garages, farm buildings etc could be highlighted. The offer of breakfast, or any meal etc. This could be communicated to individuals directly or via the local support groups.
As before with my previous comments I am fully supportive of coordinating resources across the various organisations but feel resolving the multiple empty properties, even if it is for temporary accommodation must be considered. It is appalling that properties lay empty causing staff to waste time chasing and dealing with repeat queries from the same individuals and families.
As I understand it many homeless people are ex-military suffering mental problem as a result of there service to this country, if this is so then it is a scandal. Anyone in such difficult situations should be helped, no I should say must be helped and if that means taxes rise then so be it.
Be kinder
By housing lots of those with problems, issues and homeless in small areas makes the area deprived and then other's become vulnerable and therefore the Council have just increased the number of those seeking mental health support and actually making more homeless. The directive everyone In increased homeless numbers not decreased it.
Develop brownfield sites for housing
Developers should be made to provide a high proportion of social housing within new developments (whether on or off site). This should be non-negotiable and compulsory (no lame excuses accepted re profitability, especially after the development has started). Brown-field sites should be prioritized including abandoned and derelict buildings and sites. No-one should have the 'right to buy' social housing as it results of units being lost to the social housing register whilst allowing those privileged individuals who were lucky enough to be allocated accommodation to profit massively in the long-term at the expense of others.
During Covid many were grouped together in local B&Bs and the Riviera Hotel in Osmington. I have spoken to some who are genuinely looking for work etc. Their had their belongings stolen and were subjected to abuse. The Park District area of Weymouth became a crime hot spot caused by a handful of alcoholic drug users who cause no end of anguish locally. They congregate on the Promenade and harbourside during the day using abusive language in clear earshot of young children. This is a huge issue but the Police seem powerless to deal with it longer term. One solution is not to allow people to move to Weymouth to claim benefits in the first place.
Far too many words masking fact that very little improvement is likely to flow from all this process-lovers' approach. No understanding of the scale and immediate urgency of the problem. A fatal flaw is the ubiquitous use of the phrase "within existing resources" which says it all about the strategy's cynicism
Homelessness is very sad for those who have no control over what has made them homeless. It's good to learn a plan is in place to help people in this situation.
I am pleased to see that the issues of homelessness is being taken very seriously, and I am impressed by the depth of analysis and planning that appears to be going into this. There appears to be care taken to provide accountability structures built into the Strategy, and this should prevent, or ameliorate, "lessons learned" reviews and other such sorry attempts at remediation down the line.

I assume all the 18no rough sleepers in 2019 were located in Weymouth as there are at least that number here currently? Need to provide studio-flats or hostel placements for young single persons Need to discourage rough sleepers travelling to the county from other areas Need more social housing. Private developers should not be allowed to get away with rescinding on commitments to include social housing within their developments pleading non- profitability/ high costs following the granting of planning permission. A reasonable element of social housing (whether on or off-site) should be a mandatory feature of all new developments. The use of brown sites should be the preferred option and retail premises changed to housing. More accommodation should be provided for older single persons who do not have children.

I m not sure if this was in the document but I don't agree with always moving homeless people off the seafront in Weymouth .

Is there more that could be done for those who find living in shared housing difficult, because of mental health issues?

It is a reasonable plan but it must be implemented with kindness care and no judgements

it should be fixed in law that people have a right to have a place to live. There should be no homeless children or families.

It will depend on how the plan progresses. Will it actually happen in full.

It would be great for Dorset Council to receive continued funding for this area.

It's almost impossible for a reasonably intelligent person (as I rate myself) to read, digest and understand reports of so many words and quite a bit of jargon without a tremendous amount of time and effort. Hence why I discovered after my comment re housing stock that it had been addressed. Any hope of some summaries that ordinary people can understand?

just get on with building them housing asap

More single person accommodation needed - Perhaps you could use the properties in Wimborne such as Pippins & the court house

Most of the options were of the sort: information gathering, advice giving, training, educating, monitoring, referring, ie what might be termed 'soft' actions, so although this is crucial as a starting point, I feel that the strategy and action plan seems to be only a first stage of truly tackling homelessness and rough sleeping, and gives the impression that Dorset wants to show activity in this area, but is not really committed to helping people in housing need or tackling abuses in the private sector.

Much more mental health support and understanding of people living with mental issues when they can't cope with a situation instead of writing them off

My concerns as a resident of Weymouth is that you seem to house a disproportionate amount of rough sleepers and homeless in Weymouth, why is that? We are a tourist destination and yet alot of them are housed in B&Bs in and around the seafront and so they naturally gravitate to the seafront and hang around the shelter there. As they drink throughout the day they become noisier and often abusive to passers by. I know because i've been at the end of it when walking our dogs. I've not seen it myself but alot of people i know personally have said they have seen some of them relieve them selves on the beach. I'm sure you have been made aware of the amount of trouble that occurs during the evenings in the summer around Lennox St. and the B&B at the top of that road on the seafront, there are security guards in the summer outside 24/7 but it doesn't stop it all kicking off most evenings. All very unpleasant, and not nice if you live around here or take a holiday in Weymouth. It's great Councils try to help the homeless but what about the law abiding residents, what about our lives?

<p>My daughter became homeless and the team was brilliant but constrained by the 56 day rule, which caused a lot of stress. They would/could not offer accommodation right up until the day she was evicted which was very frightening, even though it was clear she had not been able to secure accommodation. There was no temporary accommodation that would accept a dog - which caused more stress and upset. The temporary accommodation provided (in Weymouth) was very low in quality, and the landlord clearly making a fortune. There were families in one room who had been there for months, there were people passed out on the stairs and it was a scary place to be. There was no wi-fi, meaning accessing services was very difficult. With the council's increasing turn to digital, it should be mandatory that temporary accommodation provides wi-fi for people housed there. Temporary accommodation should be of a much higher standard and families housed separately from street homeless and people with drug/alcohol problems. After my daughter was housed, (in Dorchester) someone who had been street homeless was moved into her block of flats, allegedly with full support from the voluntary sector. This person did not get the support they needed and the housing association has been struggling to deal with destruction of property, aggressive begging, parties and groups of drunk people trying to gain access to the building. Adequate support needs to be put in place and followed up when people with obvious problems are housed.</p>
No
no
no
Not necessary to keep helping people who are druggies or alcoholics with the public purse
Not wanted here.
Rough sleepers should be sent back to their own localities to be housed. Locals should not be paying for people who decide to move away from their own locality to use taxpayer services
Send people back where they came from if they do not have a job or reason for being here
The housing market is far too expensive for the average wage in Weymouth. There are too many poor standard of accommodation in the private sector. Too many properties being turned into holiday and second homes.
The strategy is sound as to be adequate if it can be made real. Funding is my concern and surely this should be funded from central funds and not be another burden put upon local authority budgets
Too long, too full of statistics and a myriad of titles/organisations mentioned. How do you expect any unpaid member of the public to wade through the "Strategy" and have the time or commitment make sensible comments on it. You probably don't, but are required to ask for comments in order to tick a process box.
Would have been helpful perhaps to have just been given the main points rather than the full detailed report as it's very long and not sure people will take the time, or have the time, to read all that information and may put people off from completing the survey!
Yes put your money where your mouth is and do better than your doing and way moor than you plan on, Build temperery housing for all riff sleepers and money into getting them back into Society
Yes the problems are when children in care are not looked after properly then are left to fend for themselves at 18 snd end up in the hands of unscrupulous people
The document focusses on those eligible for duty of prevention or relief, there is no data on those homeless who are found ineligible. Any strategy must deal with all homelessness otherwise it is just a plan to implement council legislation. The implementation document states under objective 1 that prevention of 6 to 8 year olds in schools becoming homeless at 16 to 18 is part of the action plan, this clearly looks out 10 years, which is the minimum a strategy should address. Overall, the implementation plan is good, the strategy document itself poorly written, does not identify the key strategic direction of addressing homelessness and parrots back Government legislative requirements as its aims. (TPC)
It needs to much information for u to help (HSU)
Keep it simple and focus on the long known issues right now.not kicking it down the road. (HSU)
Listen to where people need to be homed in terms of jobs and transport links (HSU)

No (HSU)
You should do more than the basic legal requirement. (HSU)
I think I have made my comments in previous answers. I am retired now but having spent 15 years working with rough sleepers I still take a great interest in the issue.(O)
Make sure this new strategy works. There are too many people sleeping rough with no support. This should not be happening in this day and age. A good percentage of homeless people do not get support. I was told my son was not a priority for several reasons, he was sleeping in disused buildings, sometimes sleeping in a car, I could go on. Unless he was deemed as being close to death, confirmed by a Doctor, then he wouldn't be considered for housing. When you are living in the gutter and so depressed you consider taking your own life, tell me how you get the courage to ask for help, you feel unworthy. I have several emails between myself and housing officials which confirms the above statement.(O)
Of course there is a lot to say about the homelessness people - living on the road. Bu I said basicly roughly what I have to say and what is in my view the start for effectiveness to "reduce" the homelessness and not to "encrease". (O)
We should all try harder to avoid this happening to anyone. (O)
no (OCG)
Get a grip. (PL)
Give officers more responsibility for this work, using consultants does question the credibility of an important issue. The portfolio holder knows this issue well, this poor quality doc surprised me (PL)
Noto specifically but I feel more landlords could be encouraged to offer their properties to what I believe is still known as 'DSS' applicants. I believe over the years landlords have felt it 'a risk' to take tenants on benefits and my experience is that the department who helps support landlords and their tenants works very well. My experience with several extremely challenging tenants made me very wary who I offered my property to but your department has been very supportive. (PL)
Usual tedious long drawn out drivel designed to employ lots of advocates for people who are often just inherently chaotic and antisocial. Usual bestowing of victim status which makes them hero's because the concept of self responsibility is so derided by the many who sign up to the guff and/or make their living from it. (PL)
No (PHS)
Poorly representation of issues. This could be any councils strategy. What makes it dc (PHS)
As one of the main social housing providers in Dorset we have a key role to play in implementing this strategy and action plan. We have a significant stock of social rented homes for single people, families and older and vulnerable people and a development pipeline of new social rented homes that will be utilised effectively to help deliver this strategy. We have a strong existing working relationship at both strategic and operational levels with the Councils Housing options and homelessness team. While we are not a specialist provider of temporary homeless or rough sleeper accommodation, we do work in partnership with other Dorset based organisations ( such as the You Trust) & the council itself , who then provide the specialist management & support in Magna owned homes and housing schemes. We are always keen to explore new opportunities to meet the needs of those who find themselves homeless.(SL)
The strategy has been developed on some very solid prework and we recognise the time and effort Dorset has put in to be inclusive in this.(SL)

In the Strategy document 4.2 Preventing Homelessness page 15, there is a reference to Citizens Advice, particularly the Dorchester branch offering face to face triage, five days a week. We would like to highlight that Citizens Advice in Dorset provides information, advice and guidance (IAG) on housing and homelessness from the three Local Citizens Advice offices; Bridport and District, Central Dorset and East Dorset and Purbeck Citizens Advice. IAG can be easily accessed through multiple channels, including face to face, phone and email. There is a good coverage of physical locations across the County to enable access face to face services which are being phased back in as recovery from the pandemic continues. We believe it is vital people experiencing homelessness, who are amongst some of the most vulnerable, have adequate access to face to face advice. We welcome the Dorset Council funding that East Dorset and Purbeck Citizens Advice and Central Dorset receive to help provide much-needed housing and homelessness advice services and casework support. In addition, we have funding for a County-wide project which supports people to represent themselves at Court, including housing casework such as possession hearings in conjunction with several partners, including Shelter. Finally, we would like to ask to what extent the strategy has considered significant changes that are looming, specifically factors such as the lifting of the eviction ban on 31 May and the reduction to the Discretionary Housing Payment budget. (VSO)

Why is 2.2.1 repeated in 2.2.3 apart from the inclusion of a homeless officer service manager for housing strategy; review start 20.10.2022? Reviews of successful practice in similar areas of the country should be included and where appropriate put forward for inclusion in the Strategy. The Bridport Local Area Partnership's role is to work with Town and Parish Council's, community organisations and individuals to improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the Bridport and surrounding areas. This includes encouraging organisations, authorities and volunteers providing support to work together to meet local needs more effectively. Since 2017, BLAP has convened a Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Working group. Meetings are hosted every 2 months and members from supporting agencies including Pilsdon, Julian House, Age Concern, representatives of the various food banks in Bridport, the Police, Bridport CAB, Town & Parish council's and individuals with an interest also attend. Due to Covid-19 restrictions we have received updates from members which have been circulated via a monthly newsletter to keep members of the group up to date. The working group have also held virtual meetings. Once the Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted the Working Group will go back to face-to-face meetings. Information is also sent out through a fortnightly BLAP Bulletin to inform all members of the partnership. This comprises of 14 Parish Councils, Bridport Town Council and over 90 organisations hence reaching the wider public. The Strategy should celebrate the value of BLAP's outcomes, along with those of similar collaborations and the use outcomes as input to the Strategy Objective's Plan and Progress'. (VSO)

## Introduction

In November 2020 Dorset Council commissioned a review of homelessness in Dorset. Councils must publish a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy every 5 years.

We have used the information gathered to develop a new homelessness and rough sleeping strategy. The purpose of this strategy is to shape the way advice and assistance is provided to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness over the next 5 years.

## Homelessness Review

The review carried out by Neil Morland & Co Housing Consultants examined what is currently available to people who are homeless or may become homeless in Dorset. It considered:

- ~ Current and likely future levels of homelessness in Dorset
- ~ What we do to prevent homelessness
- ~ The accommodation available for people who are or may become homeless
- ~ The support available to people who are homeless, may become homeless or have been homeless
- ~ The resources available to the Council, other public authorities, voluntary organisations and others providing these services

**You can request a copy of this report from Dorset Council or access it online at [www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/homelessness-strategy](http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/homelessness-strategy)**

## Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy

Dorset Council has produced a draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to:

- ~ Prevent homelessness in Dorset
- ~ Ensure enough accommodation is and will be available for people in Dorset who are or may become homeless
- ~ Ensure there are adequate services to support people who are or may become homeless
- ~ Ensure there are adequate services to support people who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again.

A draft action plan has been developed that details how work will be carried out by Dorset Council, other public authorities, housing associations, voluntary organisations and others to achieve the aims of the Strategy. To monitor our progress in delivering the strategy, the action plan will be reviewed each year.

You can request a copy of draft **Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy and also the draft Action Plan** from Dorset Council or access it online at [www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/homelessness-strategy](http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/homelessness-strategy)

## **Consultation**

This purpose of this survey is to tell us what you think about homelessness in Dorset, the proposed aims and actions outlined in the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and draft action plan.

This consultation will last for 6 weeks, between Monday 22 March until midnight on Friday 7 May 2021.

The information you provide will be stored safely according to our data protection policy. available at <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/homeless-survey>

Please return your survey to The Housing Service, South Walks House, South Walks Road, Dorchester, DT1 1UZ

Please contact us by email [customerservices@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk) or phone 01305 221000 if you need the survey in another format or would like to respond in a different way.

## **Help when homeless or threatened with homelessness**

The Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy will not make any changes to the rights people have to get advice, information and assistance from Dorset Council when homeless or threatened with homelessness.

Help for anyone who might be homeless or at risk of homelessness, can be found on our website at [www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/homelessness](http://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/homelessness)

# The Survey

**Are you responding as...?** (Choose one category please)

- A member of the public
- An elected member (Dorset Council)
- A Town/Parish Council
- Provider of Homeless Service
- Voluntary Sector Organisation
- Other organisation/community group
- Private Landlord
- Social Landlord
- Homelessness service user
- Other (please specify)

**What is your postcode?** (or local area if no postcode) (mandatory field)

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**For organisational responses only. Otherwise continue to page 4**

**Name of your organisation**

- Yes
- No

**Are you providing your organisation's official response?**

**Your name** (as a member of the public or service user you may respond anonymously if you prefer)

**Your contact email/phone if responding on behalf of an organisation** (optional)

**Question 1- Do you agree the draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy identifies the key issues affecting homelessness?**

- Yes
- Partially
- No
- Don't know

**Please explain**

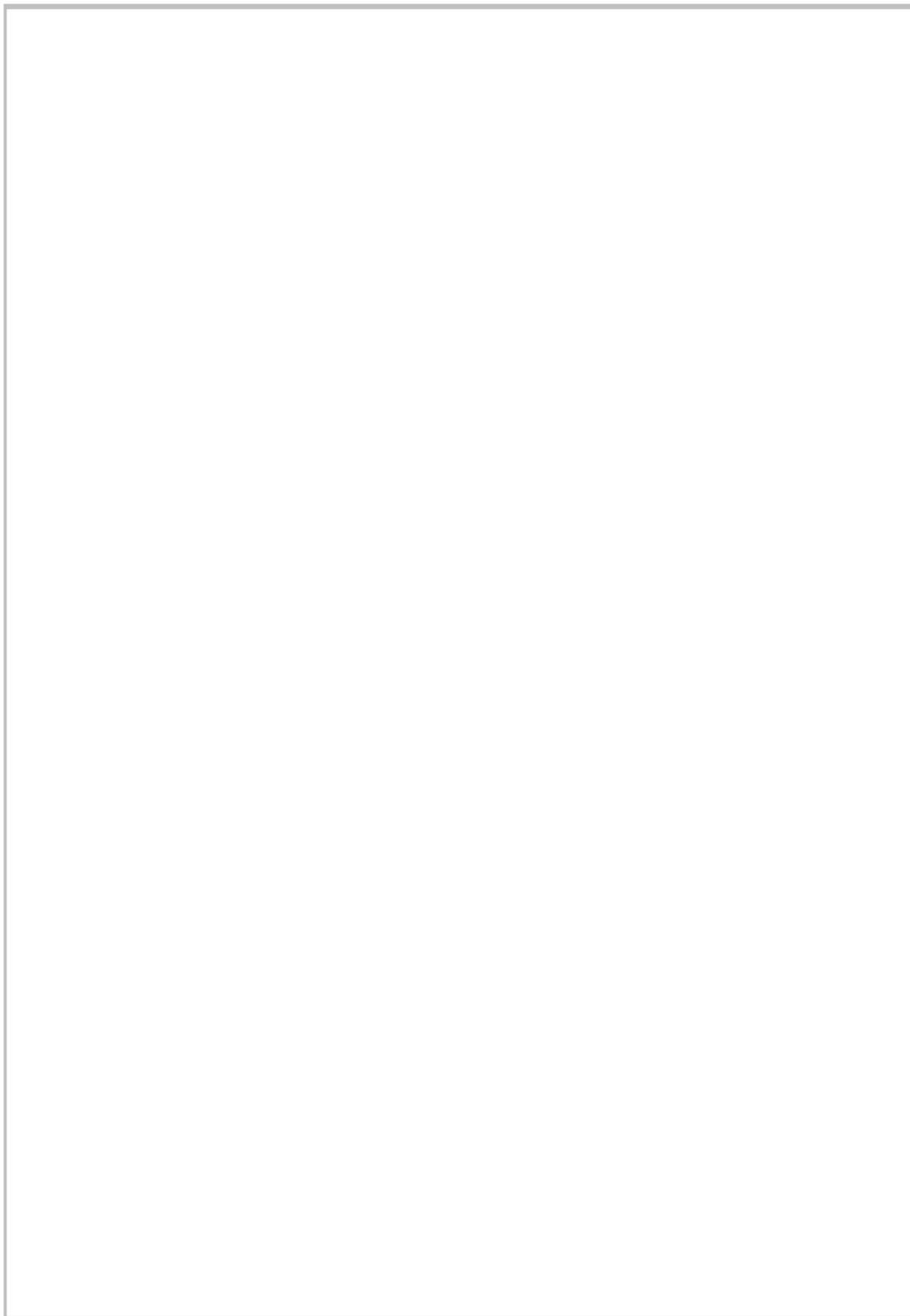
**Question 2 - Dorset Council plans for a number of actions to be taken to deliver the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy. These are shown in the draft Action Plan**

**Do you agree with the planned actions?**

- Yes
- Partially
- No
- Don't know

**Please explain**

**Question 3 – Do you have any other comments about Dorset Council’s draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy?**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin grey border, intended for the user to provide their comments on the draft strategy.

# About you

We collect diversity information, not only to ensure any changes do not unfairly impact on specific sectors of the community, but also to try to make sure our consultation response comes from a representative sample of local residents. We would appreciate if you can complete the following details.

## Which age group do you belong to?

- Under 18     35 - 44     55-64  
 18 - 24     45 - 54     65 or over  
 25-34     55 - 64     Prefer not to say

## What is your gender?

- Male                                     Prefer to self describe  
 Female                                    Prefer not to say

Please self describe below

The Equality Act 2010 describes a person as disabled if they have a longstanding physical or mental condition that has lasted, or is likely to last 12 months; and this condition has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. People with some conditions (cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV/AIDS for example) are considered to be disabled from the point that they are diagnosed.

## Do you consider yourself to be disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010?

- Yes     No     Prefer not to say

**If yes, please tell us which type of impairment applies to you.** You may have more than one type of impairment, so please select all the impairments that apply to you

- Physical disability  
 Learning disability / difficulty  
 Long-standing illness or health condition  
 Mental health condition  
 Sensory impairment (hearing, Sight or both)  
 Prefer not to say  
 Other (please specify)

**Please specify your ethnic group?**

- White British
- White Irish
- Gypsy/Irish traveller
- Any other White background
- Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi
- Asian/Asian British - Chinese
- Asian/Asian British - Indian
- Asian/Asian British - Pakistani
- Any other Asian background
- Black/Black British - African
- Black/Black British - Caribbean
- Any other Black background
- Mixed ethnic background - White and Asian
- Mixed ethnic background - White and Black African
- Mixed ethnic background - White and Black Caribbean
- Any other mixed background
- Prefer not to say
- Any other ethnic group (please specify)

**What best describes your religion/belief?**

- Buddhist
- Christian
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- No religion
- Other (please describe)
- Prefer not to say

Thank you for your time completing this consultation. Please return your survey to The Housing Service, South Walks House, South Walks Road, Dorchester, DT1 1UZ by 7 May 2021