

Achievements & Progress

2020-2021

Cornwall's Strategy sets out how organisations in Cornwall, led by the Strategic Homelessness Forum, aim to tackle homelessness over the next five years by building on existing successful partnerships and service provision and by developing new and improved ways of working

Introduction & Context

Cornwall's new Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy approved by Cornwall Council's Cabinet in March 2020.

Since the approval of the Strategy, Cornwall has seen exceptional times in terms of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on homelessness – with significantly higher numbers of residents finding themselves at imminent risk of rough sleeping. This situation has continued throughout 2020 and into 2021 and at this current time shows no sign of abating and returning to more 'normal' levels.

Across the board it has been a difficult eighteen months for all working in this sector. From having to find creative solutions to physically house residents due to lockdown restrictions and social distancing to maintaining the level of support that our more vulnerable residents need.

What we can all agree on is that the learning gained from the pandemic response has been significant and every effort is being made to make sure we embed this learning into 'business as usual'.

The Strategic Homelessness Forum is pleased to publish its first annual report, setting out how organisations in Cornwall have responded to the challenges faced over the last eighteen months and highlights some of the amazing work that has been undertaken under each of the Strategy's Priorities.

Key Facts

The current housing market in Cornwall is in crisis - and this crisis mainly relates to the availability and the affordability of homes - and generally affects residents that are unable to exercise a reasonable degree of choice about their housing.



It is those residents facing homelessness that are most adversely impacted by the housing crisis.

If you would like this information in another format please contact:

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Working in partnership with

Prevention

We will deliver creative and personalised services that help people sustain their homes and ensure they receive early support when they are at risk of homelessness.

1. Deliver a range of solutions so that no one in Cornwall needs to sleep rough

- During the pandemic Cornwall Council made an offer of accommodation to anyone at imminent risk of or rough sleeping. 530 people were accommodated as part of 'everyone in'.
- Cornwall is one of 17 areas chosen to pilot new projects to help people experiencing homelessness after leaving hospital - including funding to provide temporary accommodation, job support and drug treatment to break the cycle of discharge and readmission
- Homeless Hospital Discharge: LiveWest offers 2 services – 3 flats in Newquay and Outreach service across mid-Cornwall in partnership with Stay at Home and Harbour Housing.
- The Council is working with CHL, Harbour Housing and Konnect on a pilot project for ex-offenders and has funding to support 4 workers and cover rent guarantees and any damages
- The Protect Programme works to better understand why some offers of housing have been refused and bespoke solutions for everyone have been identified (although may not all have been resolved)



A Poem on Homelessness

2. Work together to ensure that there is 'no wrong door' for people at risk of homelessness and that they only 'tell their story once'

- Social Landlord Partners pledged to evict no resident in rent arrears due to the pandemic who were actively working with their landlord to resolve their situation
- Prevention & Engagement Services have been reconfigured which has provided an enhanced and faster needs and homelessness assessment at the First Point of Contact and better case management across the wider teams
- Together for Families keyworkers within landlord teams have been working with families to support them in a multitude of ways as the following case study demonstrates:

Case Study [Ocean]

Family A was referred to the TFF keyworker by the Lettings Team. The tenant, a single mother of one, was identified as at high risk of financial exclusion, domestic abuse, mental health and drug issues. At the time, a child protection plan was already in place.

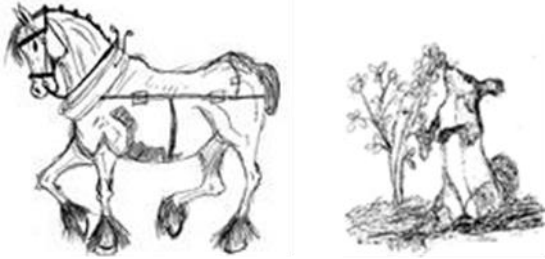
Interventions:

- ♣ Mother referred to The SUSIE Project (agency supporting survivors of Domestic Abuse)
- ♣ Whilst waiting for a placement, the TFF keyworker conducted one to one sessions to better understand the dynamics of the domestic abuse, patterns of behaviour and the impact of abuse on her son
- ♣ Worked in partnership with social workers, school, and mental health professionals to identify gaps in service provision
- ♣ The mother has completed a ten-week Adverse Childhood Experiences programme
- ♣ The son is due to start an eight-week Adverse Childhood Experiences programme

Outcomes:

- ♣ Successful completion of therapy sessions
- ♣ No further domestic abuse callouts for police
- ♣ Finances stable and debts being addressed
- ♣ Mother clean from illegal drugs

- A new single database is being implemented that will hold the temporary accommodation history for homeless households and allow them to make rent and service charge payments.



Drawings by TR, Bosvean, Launceston

- Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (DASV) services have delivered more early intervention through:
 - Developing the DASV/A housing pathway
 - Supporting social landlords to adopt the principles of the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance and work towards gaining accreditation
 - Instigating a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference pilot to address issues raised around referral due to escalation of harm
 - Implemented a sexual violence recovery programme for victims as part of the wider recovery pathway
 - Developed a service response to those less likely to report and hard to reach groups, including assertive outreach approaches

Customers at St Nicholas House have been busy collecting crisp packets to help save the hedgehogs! They've now been taken to Prickles and Paws Hedgehog Rescue in Newquay where they are recycled. The money made from this helps to buy important things for the hedgehogs like food and blankets.



3. Champion early 'upstream' preventative work with households at risk of homelessness and, where appropriate, empower and enable households to find their own solution to prevent their homelessness



- Through Rough Sleeper Initiative funding an Early Prevention Manager has been appointed and undertook a 3-year review of Nos Da Kernow which has led to a relaunch of the partnership with new governance, case and performance management. The project is now being extended to support families at risk of eviction as well as single people

Slow Cooker Brazilian Coconut Chicken

- 1 Red Onion – sliced
- 100g Peanut Butter
- 1 Lime - zest and juice
- ½ tsp Chilli Flakes
- 10g Garlic - crushed
- 1 tsp Turmeric
- 15g Cornflour
- 1 Chicken Stock Cube
- 400ml Light Coconut Milk
- 1kg Chicken Breast (cut into large chunks)

Place all ingredients in the slow cooker on low for 5 hours 😊 [LiveWest]



The stigma of homelessness

- The Together For Families role within Ocean Housing has played an important part in transforming the lives and wellbeing of our most vulnerable families. 'Having Jo come and see us and helping us to move has improved our life massively and we are all so much happier and feel safer in our home'



Intervention

When people fall into crisis, we will act swiftly to give them targeted support to get them into accommodation or off the streets.

1. Deliver a suitable and appropriate alternative to Bed & Breakfast placements

- The Council has set aside £39m to acquire 250 units of accommodation for use as temporary accommodation
- The Council funded the furnishing of 80 empty properties for use as temporary accommodation during lockdown



Harbour Housing

- No 16-or 17-year-old young persons have been placed in B&B in 2020-21 despite the significant increase in homelessness and numbers of families with children being placed in B&B has remained low
- The Council secured funding to add additional items into temporary and emergency accommodation that only provided residents with a kettle so residents could cook and clean for themselves and maintain social distancing
- Successfully bidding for Next Steps Accommodation Programme and Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme funding has enabled an additional 40 units of accommodation to be purchased, the refurbishment of Morrab Cottage, the renovation of Trevoise and Stoke House and a new development at Cowlins Mill is on-site. Plus we also have funding for 2 further modular schemes and a further 50

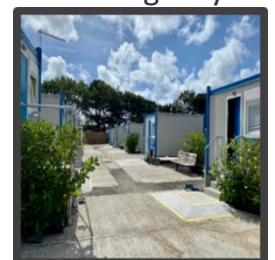
acquisitions via a joint venture with Resonance.

- For those emergency accommodation units with just a kettle provided,
 - Food banks were funded to provide 'kettle packs' of items to ensure residents could have some hot food during the day for the short term
 - A hot food delivery service to residents has been funded and is delivered through local community kitchens

[Poem by Client in Temporary Accommodation]
 'Our lives can be compared to a passage across the open seas
 It may take us through calm and tranquil waters
 Or can cast us a drift, marooned and isolated on an island of our own making
 The islands loneliness brings with it debilitating mental and physical consequences
 With the delivery of hot meals from [Name] comes the confirmation that someone out their cares
 To quote the 17 Century poet John Donne 'No man is an Island'
 [Name] demonstrates this statement perfectly
 With grateful thanks to all those who are involved in this community project'

2. Continue to deliver a range of housing solutions such as the Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub to ensure that nobody has to spend a first or subsequent night on the streets

- Prior to Covid-19 single people and childless couples were not generally made an offer of accommodation – this group has benefitted through the commitment made to offer everyone accommodation if at imminent risk of rough sleeping
- Cornwall Council provided 6 emergency sites for use during lockdown, including the award winning '[Carrick Cabins](#)', with



the support of Partners

- Multi-agency working relationships and practices improved at the emergency Covid-19 sites and new ways of working added to learning, for example, the development of a new Drugs & Alcohol Protocol
- Cornwall Council commissioned supported accommodation that supports different tolerance levels across Cornwall
- Coastline applies a psychologically and trauma informed environment in its Chi Winder accommodation
- St Petroc's purchased individual B & B placements for up to 10 people each night through Cold Weather funds
- Cornwall Council leased the Escape Surf Lodge to accommodate up to 12 people each night in single rooms (72 people supported in total) as Cold Weather Provision – recognised as the most Covid-safe provision in the country
- Live West's work with young people and young parents has continued to make good progress despite the pandemic – lots of cooking, crafting and some outings. Face to face indoor support sessions



changed to outdoor activities and on-line learning. Father Christmas still made an appearance at

the young parents' schemes armed with donated presents for the children. Football academy started in the Carn Brea area for young people in the services and from outside. An apprentice is due to start

with the projects soon and other apprentice opportunities will be explored.

- The Council is converting Chough House in Truro into its new Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub and this is due to open early in 2022

3. Develop the housing market, intervening where necessary, to ensure a supply of suitable accommodation to meet identified needs

- The Council's Housing Development & Delivery Team works on behalf of the Council & with other Partners to provide affordable homes that meet needs
- Partners provide move-on accommodation as part of a step process for residents between supported accommodation and full independent living
- The Council has just used part of New County Hall to provide twenty-one 1 bed bunkabins on a discreet site, including two with wheelchair access



- The Cowlins Mill development is on site with the intention to deliver 10 modular pods which should be operational by the end of March 2022



[Chaos TV – Housing Crisis;](#)
[Dan's Story;](#) [Anna's Story;](#)
[Abbie's Story;](#) and [Jenn's Story](#)

Recovery

We believe that ending homelessness is about more than a roof over someone's head and we will support people to live independently and lead meaningful, quality lives

1. Work to deliver effective and enhanced provision for people with complex needs

- Reducing drug related deaths is a key priority in Cornwall and one of the strategies to do this is through the use of naloxone following an opiate overdose. Naloxone is an opiate antagonist that temporarily reverses the effects of an opiate overdose and gives additional time to ensure access to emergency services. Since 2009 naloxone has been used in some supported housing projects in Cornwall. This work has included the roll-out of naloxone across all emergency sites ensuring a supply of naloxone at each site and training for all staff and residents through We Are With you (WAWY).

Dave's Story

Dave, a 49-year-old male, was primarily a daily drinker. There was a deterioration in his mental health and he started buying Methadone. He overdosed one afternoon at the weekend and was discovered by a security guard who delivered 2 x Naloxone syringes (10 doses) at the request of the call handler on 999. Paramedics delivered additional Naloxone and client was conveyed to hospital where he stayed for a few days. He made a full recovery and was moved to another site where more intensive support was delivered. Dave successfully accessed and completed a rehabilitation programme.

- Partners provide supported accommodation of different tolerance levels to support residents with complex needs throughout Cornwall

Customer wrote to me in June last year as they wanted to let me know the difference their support workers had made to their life. Quotes from the letter - "I felt sincerely listened to.", "I felt understood for the first time in ages about my finances, mental health and bad experiences at various jobs since moving here." They appreciated the practical support including help getting to and support in appointments and praised the step-by-step guidance and explanation of processes and the reassurances "really eased my mind and gave me hope". They are now on benefits they were not aware of previously and are no longer categorised as a job seeker due to their disabilities.

- The Covid emergency sites provided by Cornwall Council, managed by CHL and supported through a range of agencies provided more than a 'roof' and have enabled many people with complex needs to rebuild their lives. For example, 4 former rough sleepers from Carrick Cabins undertook a therapeutic gardening course at the Eden Project supported with a programme of strength-based coaching. Whilst it's difficult to ensure consistent attendance and focus as these clients continue to tackle the complex challenges that kept them on the streets for so long for some individuals this course can be life changing. One has continued to attend Eden as a volunteer and is enrolling in the Royal Horticultural Society level course there



N had no way of contacting his family and friends. With Home Group's support he has a new tablet from the personalisation fund in Cornwall. He is now able to engage digitally with his friends and loved ones.

It's made a huge difference being able to contact family and friends and see their faces. I can also access the information for my health needs again

- LiveWest New Horizons: providing dispersed units across Cornwall and housing those who have fled domestic abuse and have complex support needs:
 - Expanded our safe accommodation provision including refuge and dispersed units so that it is equipped to support those with complex needs. The provision includes a new specification for our two women's refuges, one male refuge, 17 dispersed units accepting complex needs and 12 units providing specialist support for women with complex needs fleeing DASV/A.
 - Upskilled the workforce on complex needs within different accommodation units

2. Build resilience against future homelessness crises by working together to ensure there every opportunity is taken to move individuals and families towards and into settled accommodation that they can sustain

- Together for Families, CHL and other agencies have been working together on a number of actions to support young people living in supported accommodation that were at risk of exploitation, county lines and/or modern slavery in Cornwall
- Together for Families have worked with DWP Work Coaches around better supporting and encouraging more young people in supported accommodation into training and employment



It's the small things

Customers have been creating meals from scratch, choosing what they would like to cook and research the recipe. 'W' [Home Group] enjoyed cooking his choice - a Vegetarian Tikka Masala Curry:



Ingredients

1 aubergine
1 onion
1 yellow pepper
1 x punnet of mushrooms
1 x packet coriander
1 x bag of Quorn
3 x handful of rice
1 x bottle Tikka masala sauce
Cut up all vegetables and fry until golden brown. Add your

Quorn and fry for 10 minutes on a low heat. Add your Tikka masala sauce and slow cook for 15 minutes. Cook rice on a low heat for 10 minutes. Rinse starch off your rice and put in a casserole dish. Add your curry on top and serve with a sprinkle of Coriander



Monkey Tree

This emergency covid site brought agencies and staff together to support residents. CHL's Prevention & Engagement outreach, navigators, housing first and tenancy sustainment officers continued to deliver from day 1 of the pandemic. Callum was furloughed and decided to volunteer for us at Monkey Tree and did the food run for us to DISC every day to collect and distribute the food supplied. Marcus from our Repairs & Maintenance team kept us supplied with Personal Protective Equipment. Cornwall Council loaned us a library van as our internet was poor and it also gave us a private covid safe space for outside agencies such as Harbour to come in and assess clients.

