

# Homelessness Services In Wirral

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*Scrutiny Committee 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2019*

# Introduction

## 20 PLEDGES FOR 2020

"We are setting out a plan to bring about real change - not just about what can be achieved, but in the manner in which we will deliver it."

*Phil Davies*  
Cllr Phil Davies, Leader of Wirral Council

Homelessness means different things to different people – it has many forms and can often be hidden :-



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# Causes of Homelessness

Homelessness rarely has a single cause or explanation and can include multiple underlying problems:-

A number of households present with multiple support needs and are 'complex' – these are the ones which require intensive support and intervention



# Homeless Reduction Act (HRA) 2017

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New Act significantly extends homelessness services and duties and ensures that a greater number of people can make a homeless application

Five key changes :-

1. Improved advice and information to prevention of homelessness

*Government wanted it to be more effective and wider advice to be given*

2. Extension of the period of time to those considered threatened with homelessness from 28 to 56 days

*Extension aims to encourage LAs to act quicker and more time to spend preventing homelessness*

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3. New statutory duties to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible people (regardless of priority need and intentionality)

*previously advice fell outside the statutory framework so single homeless people considered to receive limited information*

*Relief duties now include provision of interim accommodation (homeless and in priority need cases)*

4. Introducing assessments and Personalised Housing Plans

*circumstances and any support needs to keep accommodation*

*PHPs to set out the actions LA and individuals will take to resolve their situation*

5. New 'Duty to Refer' placed on public bodies to work together to prevent and relieve homelessness

*duty for agencies to refer to Housing Options Team anyone they suspect to be threat of homeless within 56 days*

# Homelessness in Wirral

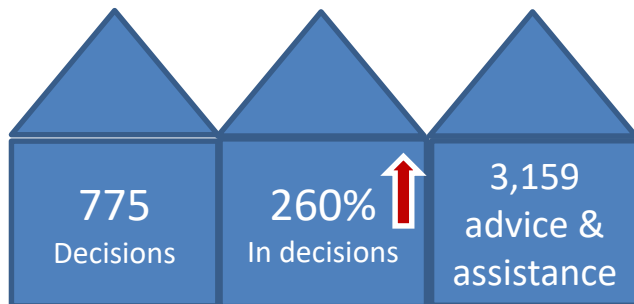
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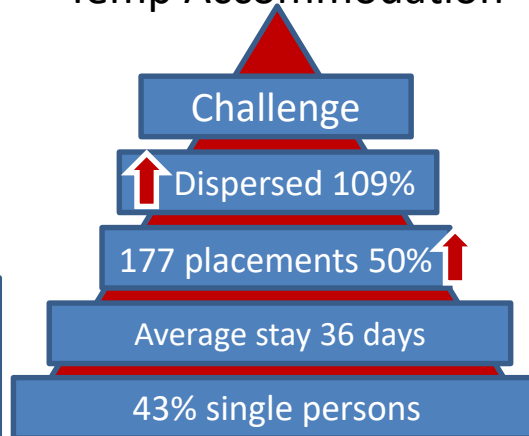
**17%↑**  
**Service Footfall**  
**2017/18-2018/19**

**Average Caseloads**  
**20 to 45** ↑

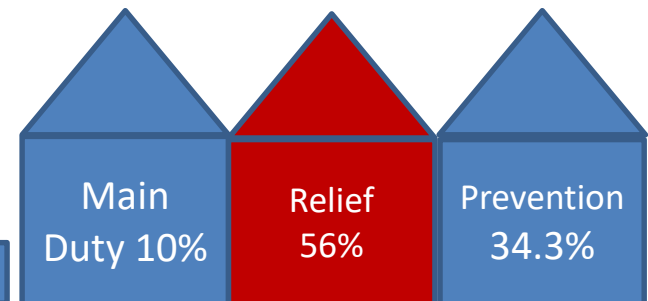


**3,555**  
**Sought out advice and  
assistance**

Temp Accommodation



## DUTY TO REFER



# Homelessness in Wirral

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## Successful Outcomes

### Housing Presentations Demographics

Age 25-44 **50%**

Age 16-24 **25%**

**64%** Single persons

**16%** Lone Parents

**60%**

38% Registered Providers  
36% Commissioned Services  
24% Private Rented Sector

**13%** ↑

In demand for  
commissioned services

Rough Sleeping  
**16 in 2018** ↑

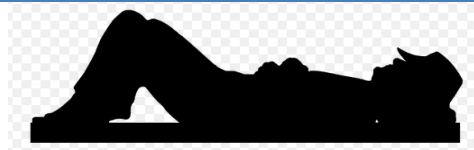
### Main Reasons for Homelessness

30% End of Private Rented Tenancy

14% Parents unwilling/able

12.8% Other i.e affordability, suitability of accommodation

10% Domestic Abuse



# Responses to Homelessness

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- The Council commits £3.9m annually to both meet its statutory obligations and respond to homelessness and has secured specific one off grants totalling £888k
- Housing Options Services 24/7, 365 days a year offering specialist advice and support
- Range of prevention tools including financial
- 388 units of commissioned supported housing services of which
  - 142 Direct access hostel accommodation (including refuge for Domestic Abuse)
  - 159 Supported housing with 24/7 staffing
  - 64 Semi – independent/dispersed accommodation
  - 23 Supported Lodgings
- Up to 155 people supported through floating support services (one specific to mental health)
- Intensive outreach services (complex cases) - rough sleepers/entrenched and/or at threat of disengaging with services or not accessing at all



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- Dedicated web page to support public bodies with 'duty to refer'
- Increased TA offer - offer temporary accommodation to relief cases
- Partnership working – CAB and DWP Community officer (offers debt, budget and employment advice, ensure sanctions not issued if under assessment)
- Part of both the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Panels – contributing to rehousing solutions and options for vulnerable people and serious offenders
- Strategic links to other services
  - Private Sector Landlords, Accreditation, Licensing i.e. link empty property work grants to nominations,
  - CYPD protocols for joint assessments and emergency placements for 16/17 year olds
  - Care Leavers – Accommodation Options/solutions for 16 + and move on 18+

# Next Steps

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- Homelessness Review by end 2019 - inform priorities and the Wirral's next Homelessness Strategy up to 2024 & shape future commissioning requirements for Homelessness Services.
- Combined Authority/LCR Partnerships
  - Trailblazer funding secured £214,518 for 3 posts for 2 years
    - Specialist Debt Advisor – to address affordability issue/Budgeting
    - Private Sector Liaison Officer - Enhance access to Private Tenancies
    - Early Intervention /Prevention – “Homeless Champion “
  - Sub-regional Assertive Outreach Service specifically in relation to the delivery of the 'Housing First' model which will shortly be rolled out across the region.
- Successfully secured Rough Sleeper Initiative funding - Complex Needs/Assertive Outreach Workers to be linked to the Night Shelter – commence end July
- 25% Contact lost Cases - Negative or Positive ? – more understanding of why
- Work with RP's on potential for Shared Tenancies/Reconfiguration of existing stock

# Homelessness Services In Wirral

*Questions and Discussion*