



Tewkesbury Borough

Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy

2026–28



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Lead Member for Community and Housing



Foreword

Housing and homelessness remain key priorities of our Council Plan 2025–28. The Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy builds on this commitment, providing a clear framework for how we will address housing challenges and opportunities across the borough. It outlines our ambitions not only for building new homes, but also how we will seek to improve housing conditions and standards across all tenures. The strategy places a strong emphasis on the value of prevention work and partnership working, recognising that early support and working together are essential in achieving the best outcomes for residents.

Our vision for the strategy reflects our belief that access to high quality, affordable housing is fundamental to residents' wellbeing, and that the strength of the communities in which homes are located is equally important. We endeavour to support our residents, whether they are new or existing to thrive in every part of the borough. This commitment is illustrated through the objectives and actions in this strategy.

We have identified three key themes to underpin the strategy: increasing housing supply, including affordable housing, making best use of existing stock, including tackling empty homes and improving housing conditions and meeting the needs of homeless households and those with specific housing needs, including rough sleepers and individuals facing multiple disadvantage.

In developing this strategy we have reflected on a wide evidence base which has helped us to understand both current and future housing need while ensuring that this strategy reflects the priorities for our residents borough wide.

This strategy is intended to be a live document which reflects our current priorities and our ever-changing drivers around local government reform. The strategy sets a clear direction of travel, whatever the future may hold and helps us focus our efforts where they are most needed.

We extend our thanks to our partners, housing forum, staff and councillors whose contributions have been vital in shaping this strategy.

“Homelessness is not inevitable and it is solvable”

“Collective action can help to change the systems that allow people to become homeless in the first place. We should be taking action to prevent people from losing their homes in the first place, rather than waiting until people are at crisis point. It’s also important that we find long term sustainable solutions.”

“It is vital that individuals experiencing homelessness are given the right support to meet their needs and aspirations and improve wellbeing. This applies to everyone but particular groups face specific challenges.”

Quotes from: homeless.org.uk

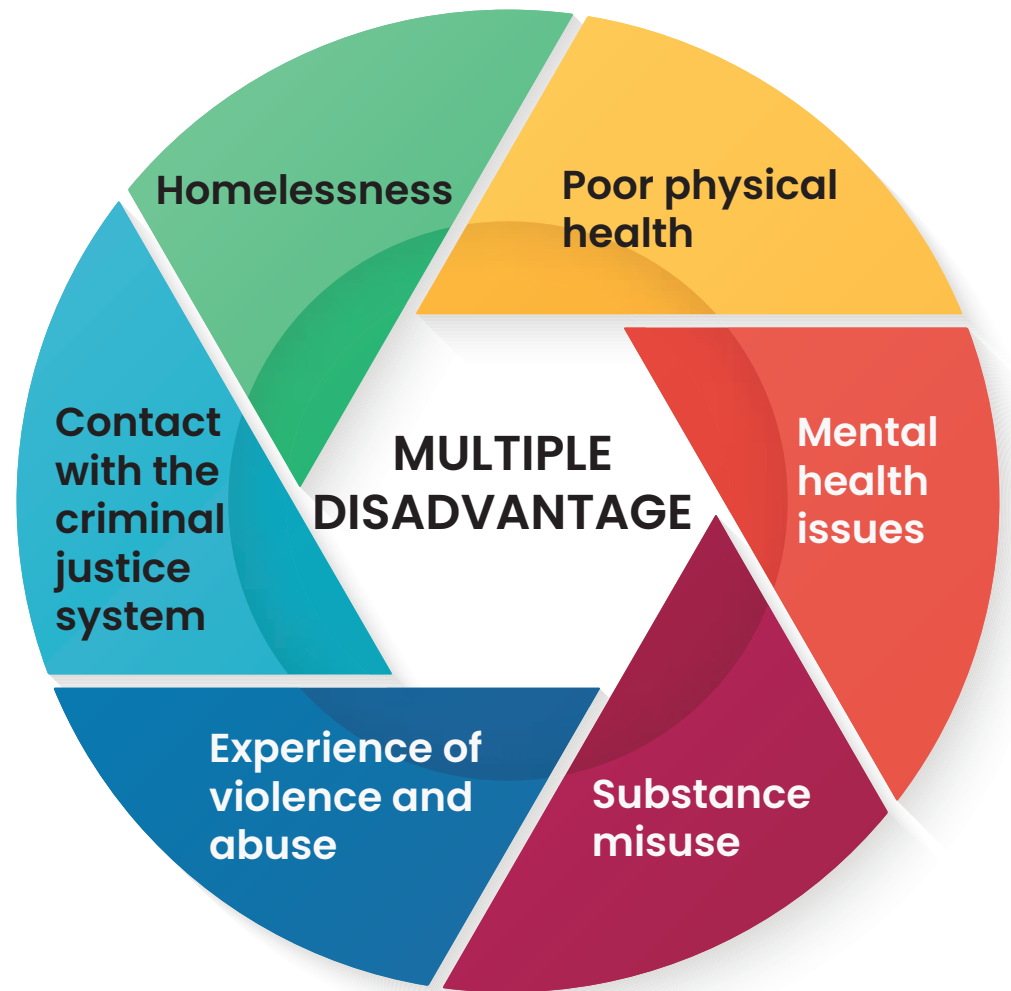
“Recovery and preventing repeat homelessness means more than finding a home; **it is about helping people rebuild their lives with the right support.** A settled home is the foundation, but **lasting recovery requires coordinated help from public services and communities.**

Nearly one sixth of homeless people may experience homelessness more than once, and for some it may be many times, often due to poor health, lack of support or trauma.”

“Housing won’t keep you housed unless you have other things around you to support that.”

(www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-national-plan-to-end-homelessness)

“People facing multiple disadvantage experience a combination of problems including **homelessness, substance misuse, contact with the criminal justice system and mental ill health.** They fall through the gaps between services and systems, making it harder for them to address their problems and lead fulfilling lives.” (meam.org.uk)





Introduction

Housing is about more than bricks and mortar, it's the foundation for health, wellbeing and social inclusion. The quality and suitability of homes, and the communities they are part of is widely accepted as having a profound impact on residents' lives. This strategy sets out Tewkesbury Borough Council's vision and priorities for housing and homelessness from 2026 to 2028, placing people at the heart of our approach.

Preventing and addressing homelessness remains a key priority. While visible forms of rough sleeping is relatively rare in the borough, many residents face hidden forms of homelessness such as those who need to leave their homes due to domestic abuse, households who live in unsafe or insecure accommodation or whose home is not suitable to meet their specific housing needs. This strategy recognises the complexity of these issues and commits to early intervention, prevention and partnership working to resolve them.

Since the last housing strategy was developed in 2020-2021, the housing landscape has evolved significantly including national policies and priorities relating to housing and planning which the strategy needs to consider.

The strategy has been developed to bring us up to date with how we want to treat our residents in a trauma informed way and reflects the Council's commitment to:

- be transparent and honest in our work to ensure housing and homelessness decisions are made in the best interests of our residents.
- be respectful to residents in the decisions we make and will treat residents with courtesy, listen to different points of view and acknowledge diversity of opinions.

- want everybody to feel valued and heard to ensure we deliver an inclusive housing service where individuals, regardless of their backgrounds, disabilities, identities or perspectives are welcomed.

It is intended that the strategy will be sufficiently flexible to accommodate and respond to changes and challenges we may face during its lifetime.

While the aim is to achieve all of our objectives within the life of the strategy, it has been produced with consideration to Local Government Reorganisation which will bring significant change to how services are planned and delivered across Gloucestershire. We have designed this strategy to be flexible enough to remain relevant throughout that transition, and we are committed to maintaining continuity of service for residents whatever form that change takes.

But we think it is important to be honest: delivery will need to adapt as circumstances change, and where that affects what we can do, we will be transparent with our communities and our partners about the choices we face. Throughout this period of change the strategy will provide the foundation for the borough to be a place where everyone has access to a safe, suitable, and sustainable home into the future.



Context and framework

The Homelessness Act 2002 Requires local authorities to conduct a homelessness review and publish a strategy at least every five years. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 further enhanced duties to Prevent homelessness (56-day duty to help those at risk) and Relieve homelessness (56-day duty to help those already homeless). Further to this the Renter Rights Act 2025 will come into force and will dovetail into The UK Government's 'Ending Rough Sleeping for Good' strategy (2022) and the [2025 National plan to end homelessness](#) which set out the following key pillars:



This strategy aims to outline Tewkesbury Borough Council's housing ambitions within this context and framework. Further to this, it strives to work in a prevention focused way in line with the MHCLG prevention agenda in order to maximise grant funding and deliver best outcomes for residents.



A vision for our residents

Our vision is to support people and strengthen communities by ensuring access to quality, affordable housing that empowers individuals and families to thrive. We aim to create places that foster resilience, sustainability, and opportunity, preventing homelessness in a proactive way so everyone can build a secure future. Through collaboration with our housing partners, we will deliver homes that meet today's needs while safeguarding the wellbeing of generations to come.

Our Vision:

"Supporting people and strengthening communities through housing that's affordable, fosters resilience, sustainability, and opportunity for generations to come."



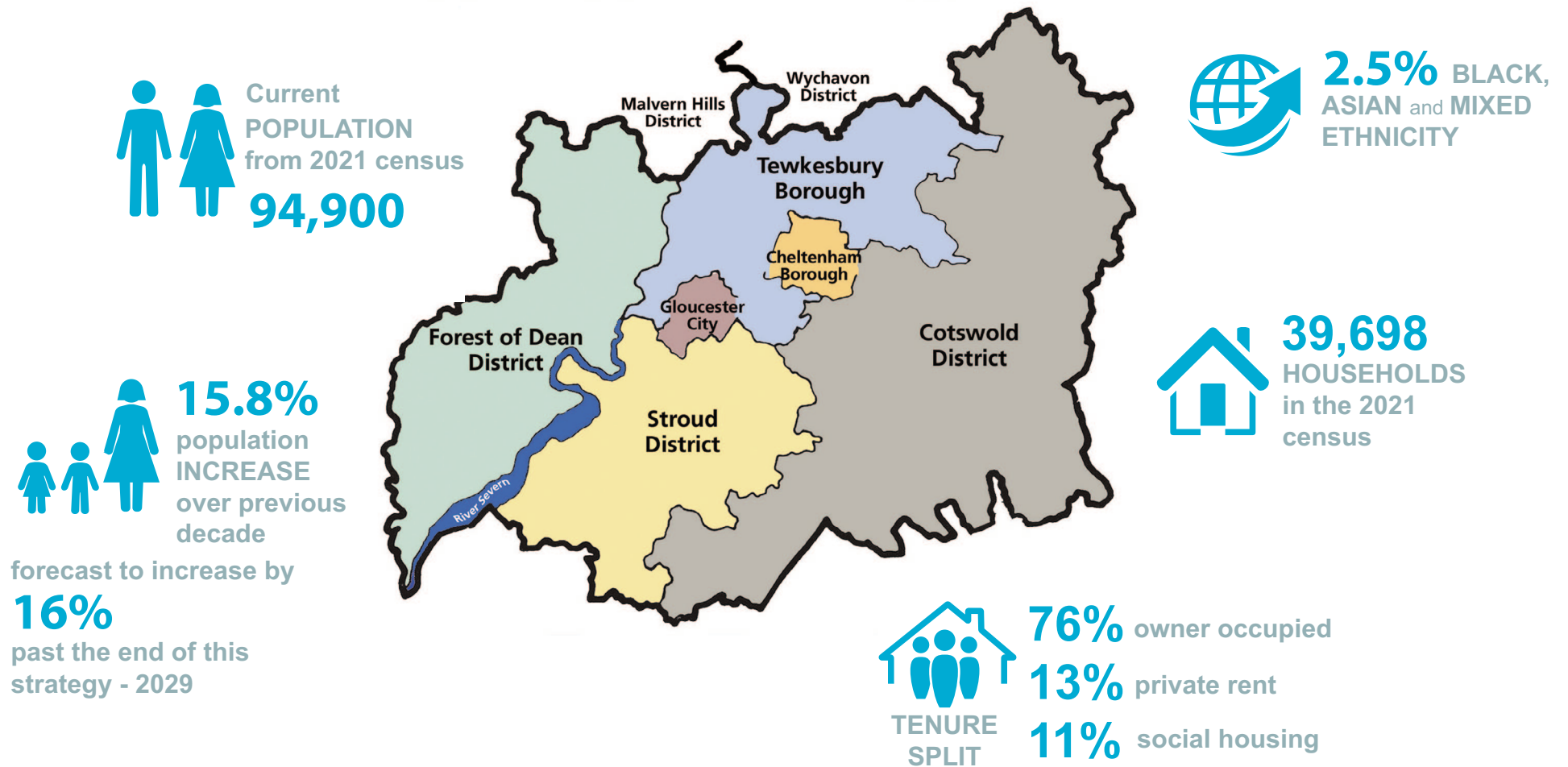
Key themes

This strategy's key themes reflect the insights and priorities identified through engagement with partners and stakeholders:

- Maximise the supply of appropriate affordable housing, giving priority to social rented homes and other tenures that meet our community's need.
- Making best use of existing housing within the borough.
- Providing safe, suitable homes and tailored support for specific groups, including people experiencing homelessness or rough sleeping.

About housing in the borough

Tewkesbury Borough is one of six districts in Gloucestershire and covers an area of 160 square miles. The borough is naturally rural in character, with the population predominantly living in rural settlements and large historic market towns.



Housing affordability



£314,057
average house
price. Median price
is £300,000



HOUSE PRICES
have increased
18.5%
in the last five years.



House prices **8.68x**
average EARNINGS.
(double the position in
2000).

This sustained growth in house prices, combined with the widening gap between earnings and property values, highlights significant affordability challenges for local residents and underscores the need for targeted interventions to improve access to housing across all tenures.

Housing register and homelessness



1796
HOUSING
register applications
as at end Feb 2026



26 households
in TEMPORARY
accommodation Feb 2026



807 housing advice
homelessness inquiries
made in 2024/25



371
households were
housed from the
register in 2024/25.
this is **20%**
of households on
the register. An increase of
3% over the lifetime of the
previous strategy



DOMESTIC ABUSE
main reason 2024/25
for homelessness



Top three reasons for
homelessness:
Domestic abuse **21%**
Family no longer willing
to accommodate **19%**
End of private rented
accommodation **18%**

Percentage of household bedroom need:

1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5+ bed
48%	28%	17%	5%	2%

These figures demonstrate ongoing pressure on affordable housing, with high demand for social rented homes and a significant proportion of households requiring smaller properties, while domestic abuse is now the leading cause of homelessness in the borough.

Housing needs and pressures



3700

HOUSEHOLDS where
long-term illness or **DISABILITY**
affects **housing need** in 2021.
Increasing to 6900 by 2041



11,700

NEW HOMES required
in the period 2021 to 2041



6900

**new AFFORDABLE
HOMES** required 2021-2041



120

EMPTY HOMES
over two years.
(October 2025)



24.9% of households

are OLDER PERSON ONLY

this is one of the highest in the county.

Compared to 21.3% nationally

In Gloucestershire as a whole, the autumn 2024 snapshot recorded 42 rough sleepers across the six districts. Only two rough sleepers were identified within Tewkesbury Borough during the last published count in autumn 2024.

Strategic plans and affordable housing delivery

The Joint Core Strategy (JCS), adopted in December 2017, provides the overarching planning framework for housing delivery across the three districts up to 2031. Since its adoption, Tewkesbury Borough has achieved significant progress in meeting housing targets, including the delivery of strategic sites and the advancement of the Garden Communities programme which represents a key component of the area's long-term growth.

However, while large developments play a vital role, the need for affordable housing within rural areas are equally important. Rural communities face unique challenges, including limited affordable housing, affordability pressures, and the risk of losing younger generations who cannot access suitable homes locally.

Private rent

The Renters' Rights Act delivers significant change in the private rented sector. Its key aim is to enhance security, fairness, and quality of housing for tenants, while holding private landlords to higher standards.

Key changes:

- Abolishing S21 notices
- Rent increase limits
- Rent in advance and deposit limits
- Enhanced rights and standards

This strategy welcomes these changes to security for renters and standards landlords must be held to. End of private rent is a top reason for homelessness within the borough, as part of this strategy, housing services and the environmental health private sector team will work together to deliver for residents of the borough and improve living and health standards.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is a significant driver of homelessness, affecting 26% of households approaching Tewkesbury Borough as homeless 2024-25. New research from the [MHCLG Rough Sleeping Questionnaire 2025](#) shows that nearly 70% of women experiencing rough sleeping in the past year had experienced domestic abuse since age 16. The Government has set a target of halving violence against women and girls within a decade, and tackling domestic abuse will be a vital part of this.

Domestic abuse is often among a number of support needs for people facing multiple disadvantage. It can present different challenges and therefore requires a different response to other presenting housing needs. We are committed to supporting households suffering from, or at risk of, domestic abuse.

Strategic actions and desired outcomes

The challenges described in this strategy and the direction provided by the new national strategy will influence our areas of focus and future activities. The actions on this page align with the Council Plan and a programme of activities will be planned to support the actions.

- 1 Ensure instances of rough sleeping are rare, brief and non-recurrent by reacting quickly to individuals in need.**

Expected outcome: Reducing numbers of rough sleepers and where there are instances, provide a quick response to provide support.

- 2 Maximise the supply of appropriate affordable housing, giving priority to social rented homes and other tenures that meet our community's needs.**

Expected outcome: Maintain delivery of affordable housing units at or above the established need with at least 60% of properties secured as Social Rents.

- 3 Find alternative options to end the use of B&B, unless in an emergency and for a very brief period.**

Expected outcome: By working to prevent homelessness and source alternative accommodation options, we will avoid using options that don't meet our customers' needs and that are usually more costly.

- 4 Complete individual action plans for every property that has been empty for over two years, identifying the options available to the council to bring each property back into use.**

Expected outcome: Reduced number of empty properties and increased housing supply in the borough.

- 5 Ensure appropriate interventions are carried out to ensure that properties are safe and free from significant health risks, for example damp and mould.**

Expected outcome: Tenants will be living in safe, healthy and comfortable environment.

- 6 Explore possible development sites, working with communities and registered providers to develop a community-led approach to delivering affordable housing in rural areas.**

Expected outcome: Identify development options to help meet needs of rural communities by increasing the number of affordable housing in rural areas.

- 7 Deliver affordable housing on the former Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (MAFF) site in Tewkesbury.**

Expected outcome: Increase the number of affordable housing on brownfield land the council owns.

- 8 Work with the Gloucestershire Strategic Migration Partnership to continue to support International Resettlement households.**

Expected outcome: International Resettlement households are safely accommodated, have access to essential services, and are supported to achieve settled, independent lives reducing homelessness and improving wellbeing and community integration.

- 9 Strengthen multi-agency working and workforce development through co-production, so housing services play a central role in the Coordinated Community Response, providing survivor-led solutions to support victim/survivors of domestic abuse.**

Expected outcome: Better links to support agencies, staff equipped to recognise and provide a high-quality response to domestic abuse, services developed with insight from lived experience.



Data Sources

Population forecast	<u>Office for National Statistics Subnational population projections for England: 2022</u>
Household projections	<u>Gloucestershire Local Housing Needs Assessment 2019</u>
Ethnicity	<u>Office for National Statistics census 2021</u>
Tenure split	<u>Office for National Statistics – Subnational estimates of dwellings by tenure, England</u>
House price data	<u>Office for National Statistics</u>
Homelessness data	TBC homelessness records
Number of households in fuel poverty	<u>Sub-regional fuel poverty in England, 2021 (2019 data) (publishing.service.gov.uk)</u>
New supply	TBC allocations records



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