



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

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HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2025-2028



June 2025

SUMMARY

This is Ribble Valley's 7th Homelessness Strategy, and it follows an annual review of service delivery and priorities. The Homelessness Review is required to cover:

- the scale and nature of homelessness in the Borough and the factors which could affect future levels upon the district;
- an audit and mapping of homelessness services within the Borough, looking at the various provisions for accommodation and support for homeless people, how homelessness can be prevented and where gaps in the service are.
- a review of the resources available for preventing homelessness and ensuring that accommodation and support is available to homeless people in the area;
- a record of the views of stakeholders and service users;
- the links to other strategies which have an impact on the prevention and tackling of homelessness in the Borough.

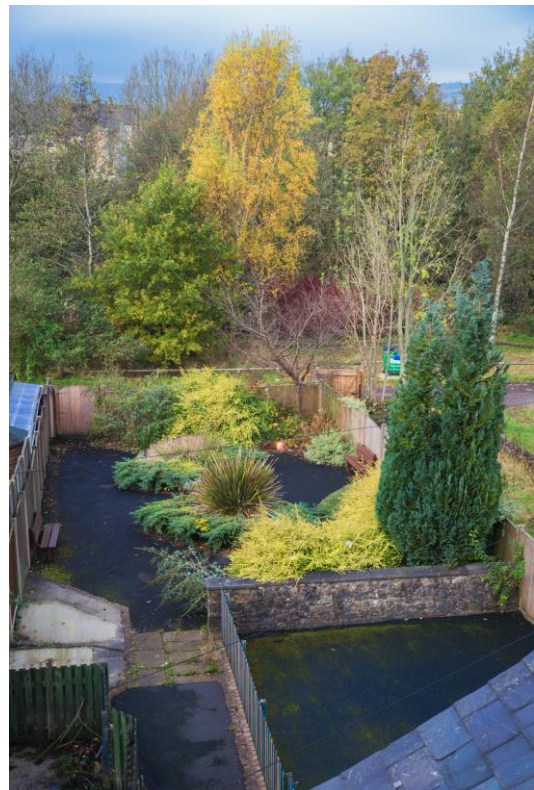
Partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors have been consulted via the housing and homelessness forums. The Homeless Forum took place Sept 2024. These stakeholders, including service users represent a wide range of agencies working with both priority and none-priority homeless groups.

Regular consultations with stakeholders, partners and most importantly service users are vital to success of the strategy. The Strategy will cover a three-year period 2025 to 2028, implementation and action delivery will be monitored regularly throughout the life of the Strategy

Introduction to the Homelessness Strategy

Ribble Valley places a high priority on tackling and responding to homelessness wherever the case is viewed as potentially preventable. The Council retained the homelessness duty in house and housing advice functions have remained with the Council. However Onward Homes continue to be a key partner delivering the homelessness service in that they are commissioned to manage the housing waiting list and housing allocations on behalf of the Council.

The Council recognises that homelessness is an issue that can only be tackled in partnership. Whilst the Council will lead on this work and retain the statutory responsibilities, key partners such as Registered Providers, Support Providers, LCC Social Services and many other agencies and organisations all have an important role to play. It is therefore essential at this time that both the Council and its partners set out clearly the roles and responsibilities of each party to ensure the successful implementation of the Strategy.



The Homelessness Strategy 2025-28 therefore:

- sets out the Council's vision and objectives for services for homeless people;
- examines the national regional, sub regional and local context in which services operate;
- assesses the needs of the Borough's population in relation to homelessness services;
- audits its current service; and
- sets out an action plan for service improvement.

Vision and Objectives

The Strategy must have a clear and concise vision of where it aims to be in the next five years. Through extensive consultation with all stakeholders in the Borough the Council has confirmed that the vision is:

“through partnership working with all stakeholders the Council's strategy sets out to prevent homelessness, provide effective support for households who are or may become homeless and make available sufficient affordable accommodation within the borough.”

The Context

The Ribble Valley Borough is situated in the North East of Lancashire and with an area of 585 square kilometres is the largest district in the County. Over seventy percent of the Borough is in the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a clear reflection of the landscape quality of the area.

Figure 2.6: Population profile (2023) – summary age bands					
	Ribble Valley		Lancashire	North West	England
	Population	% of population	% of population	% of population	% of population
Under 16	10,590	16.4%	17.8%	18.7%	18.5%
16-64	37,772	58.6%	61.1%	62.5%	62.9%
65+	16,107	25.0%	21.1%	18.8%	18.7%
All Ages	64,469	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Ribble Valley is a relatively affluent area and is ranked in the top 50 least deprived English districts in the Index of Deprivation. By far the best ranking in Lancashire. However, six wards within the borough fall within the worst 10% of all English wards under the Access to Housing Services Index. This is due to the rural nature of the borough and the isolation faced by the population in a number of settlements, particularly those within the Forest of Bowland an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The median house price to earnings ratio for Ribble Valley is the highest of the 14 Lancashire Authorities. The district has the highest proportion of housing stock in council tax bands E and above in Lancashire.

There is a low number of employment and support allowance claimants and housing benefit claimant number are low.

Figure 2.11: Change in dwellings (2013-23)				
	Dwellings (2013)	Dwellings (2023)	Change	% change
Ribble Valley	25,370	29,730	4,360	17.2%
Lancashire	525,781	570,247	44,466	8.5%
North West	3,167,212	3,414,087	246,875	7.8%
England	23,247,462	25,396,447	2,148,985	9.2%

The Health Profile for Ribble Valley is in the main far better than that for the region and nation. Life expectancy is in line with national levels but higher than neighbouring areas in Pennine Lancashire.

There are few teenage pregnancies and GCSE achievement is good. It is estimated that far fewer adults smoke than the national average and less than five per cent of the population reported their health as “poor” which is much lower than the regional and national average.

Within the Housing Strategy delivery plan the main focus is development of affordable housing. The homelessness objectives within the document lifts the main priorities from this strategy. The diagram below shows where this document sits corporately and the links with other strategies.



National Context

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 introduced on 3rd April 2018. The HRA saw the biggest change in legislation affecting homelessness services since the Housing Act 1996.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA) was implemented on 3 April 2018, and the act puts duties on local housing authorities to take reasonable steps to prevent homelessness at an early stage regardless of whether the households is considered in priority need. As well as 'upstreaming' homelessness prevention, the HRA seeks to ensure all households are adequately assisted when they first contact services dealing with homelessness, as the assistance greatly varied between local authorities especially for non-priority households. The changes due to the HRA are summarised as follows:

- The threatened with homelessness period applies for 56 days, increased from 28 days, and includes valid s.21 notices with 56 day or less remaining.
- All households will receive written advice tailored to their circumstances, all households (if eligible) will have their case assessed and be given a Personalised Housing Plan.
- There is prevention duty for 56 days to assist all households threatened with homelessness, there is a relief duty for 56 days for all households who are homeless.
- Under prevention and relief duties the Council must 'help to secure' accommodation that is suitable, duties can be ended if the applicant refuses to cooperate.
- The applicant is able to ask for a review of decisions made relating to new duties under the HRA, from October 2018 other public authorities (eg health services, social care, offender related) have a duty to refer to the local housing authority.
- Care leavers are awarded a local connection to the local housing authority in which they receive care as well as the social services authority that provides care.

Sub- Regional Context

East Lancashire has a well-established sub regional working group to assist in the development of strategies and shared best practice. The lead offices and officers working groups continue to meet and provide valuable opportunity to work in partnership, co-ordinate shared procedures and to network.

The most recent successful joint bid is the Accommodation for Offenders Scheme which became operational September 2021 and continues to cover RV and Burnley are the lead authority.

The rough sleeper initiative is a bid by Blackburn that allows RV to access this service for any rough sleepers.

Resettlement Schemes

The situation in Syria, Hong Kong, Afghanistan, and Ukraine, has mobilised the Government to set up schemes to support refugees from these countries to settle in the UK. The Homes for Ukraine scheme saw the largest resettlement programme for Ribble Valley with over a 100 Ukrainians being offered sponsorship in the borough. The majority of these families now live in their own rented accommodation either social or private rented.

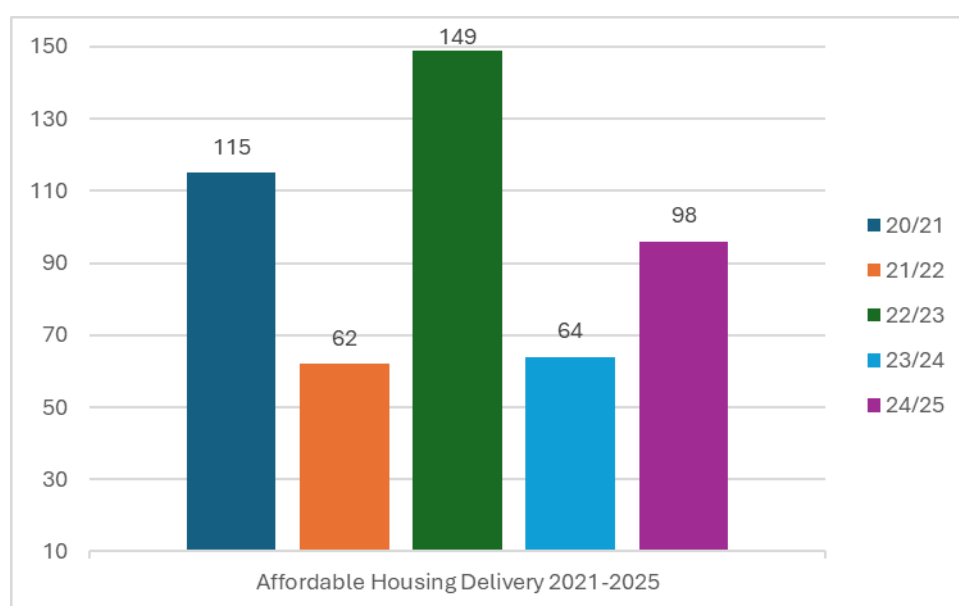
LCC have secured properties for ARAF and UKRS through the private rented sector. Asylum seekers are temporarily housed through SERCO stock in the borough whilst their right to asylum is assessed.

Affordable Housing Needs Assessment for Ribble Valley

A borough wide assessment of affordable housing needs was commissioned in Nov 2024 and the report published in May 2025. This valuable report has provided upto date information about the affordable needs in the borough, this information will feed into the Local Plan and any future affordable housing provision will be in line with these findings.

Housing Strategy

The availability of affordable housing is one of the most important needs for families and communities in the Ribble Valley. Developing affordable housing is a corporate ambition of the Council to meet the identified 'local housing need'.



The tenure choice in the borough is limited; the borough has one of the lowest percentages of social housing stock in Lancashire. The situation was further exaggerated since the introduction of the Local Housing Allowance. Ribble Valley is no longer considered a 'locality' in its own right. The majority of the borough is in a locality with Blackburn, reducing the housing allowance to be paid to Ribble Valley occupants. This authority was in the top five nationally for being most affected by the introduction of the new housing allowance. The introduction of LHA rates being calculated from the 30th percentile from April 2012 again reduced the LHA rates in the borough.

Figure 2: Tenure (2021)					
	Ribble Valley		Lancashire	North West	England
	House-holds	% of house-holds	% of house-holds	% of house-holds	% of house-holds
Owns outright	11,654	43.6%	37.8%	33.3%	32.5%
Owns with mortgage/loan	8,938	33.4%	31.0%	29.7%	29.8%
Social rented	2,151	8.0%	12.3%	17.6%	17.1%
Private rented	4,004	15.0%	18.8%	19.4%	20.6%
TOTAL	26,747	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Policies introduced to address the situation include:

- addressing Housing Needs Policy 2012 required 30% of all new development sites to be affordable and 15% to be housing for older people;
- grant initiatives for development of private rented properties with affordable rent levels;
- regular contact with RP's to encourage development;
- a protocol to work closely with planning to advise developers and enable development at pre application stage.
- Regular contact with RP's.

Partnership Working with Onward Homes

In 2008 stock transfer took place, further change was formalised on 1 October 2017 when Ribble Valley Homes amalgamated with Liverpool Housing Trust, Hyndburn Homes and Peak Valley Housing Association to become Onward Homes Limited.

The housing needs service within the Council carry out the main duties in respect of homelessness:

- Making enquiries and/or decisions on homeless applications.
- Providing general housing advice.
- Reviewing homeless decisions upon appeal.
- Carrying out periodic review of homelessness and publish a homeless strategy.
- Monitoring the service provided by RVH as per service level agreement.
- Manage and maintain the homeless temporary accommodation provision.

Onward deliver the following roles on behalf of the Council, these include:

- maintaining the housing register;
- securing permanent accommodation to discharge homelessness duty;
- allocating the Registered Provider stock as properties become available;
- nomination to Housing Associations as their stock becomes available.

The Council have maintained strong connections with Onward Homes and have established a monthly monitoring meeting to discuss nominations and procedures between the organisations.

Partnership Working with Neighbouring Authorities and Lancashire County Council

The following funding streams made available to support the new demands on the service on a sub-regional footprint. All grant opportunities supported joint bids and working on a sub-regional footprint. The following lists the current grant streams;

Rough Sleeping Initiative – This grant stream funds navigators to support rough sleepers in providing emergency accommodation and support those rough sleeping. The support staff are based in Blackburn but cover RV when needed. The additional funding also covers any additional costs for temporary B & B or hostel costs. Blackburn are the lead authority.

Accommodation for Offenders – This scheme was a joint bid across East Lancs to provide a support scheme for ex-offenders to assist individuals with rehousing on release from prison. There was also a grant award for individuals of £10,000 per authority.

Resettlement Schemes- LCC lead on the resettlement schemes, specialist housing, supported accommodation and all Upper Tier statutory responsibilities.

There is considerable partnership working required with LCC in delivering this homeless role with Children and Family Wellbeing, Adult Social Care, Domestic Violence commissioned services, OT services and social prescribers.

Partnership with Registered Providers

Our key registered provider partners in the delivery of new affordable housing and management of existing stock are:

Onward Homes
Jigsaw Homes
Great Places Housing Association
Mosscaire St Vincents

Other Key Partners

HARV, Homewise, Victim Support, Inspire, Homestart, Olive Branch, Food Bank, CAP, St Vincent De Paul, CAB, NHS and GP services, and many more.

Engagement with the Council's Partnership Officer ensures we stay connected in local groups.

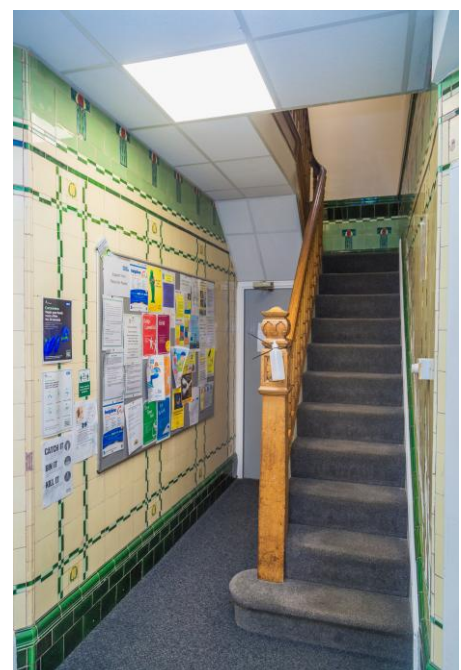
We have worked closely with all the above partners for many years and we are proud of the achievements we have delivered in partnership.

A bi-annual meeting of all registered providers ensures we keep all our partners involved and informed.

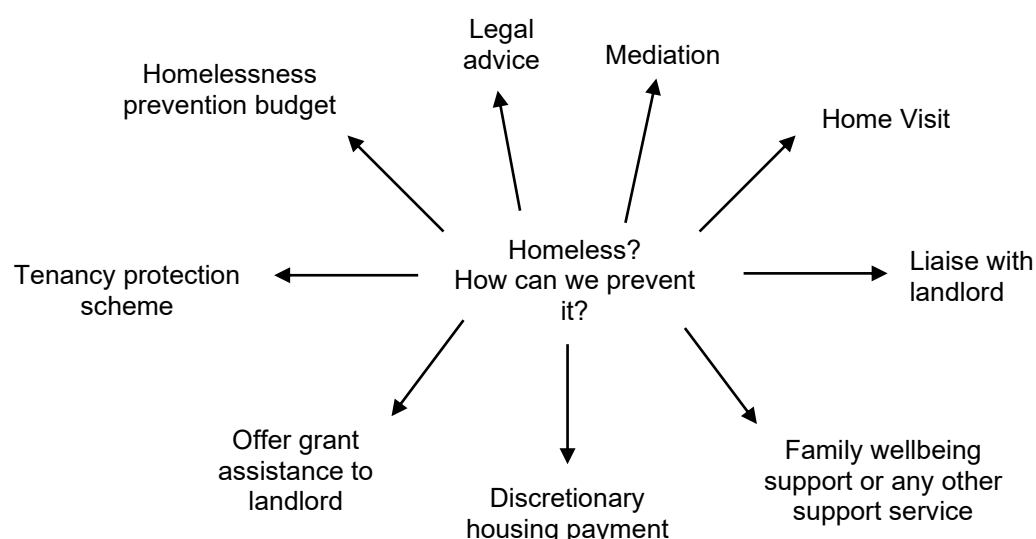
Achievements during the past 5 years

In the past 5 years there have been many significant achievements in Ribble Valley's response to tackling homeless and the Council has:

- The service is focused to deliver a housing advice approach and focus on homelessness prevention.
- Delivered 604 affordable new build properties across the borough including both affordable rent and shared ownership units.
- Reviewed the Allocations policy in light of the Localism Bill and a full review in 2024.
- Undertaken a borough wide Affordable Housing Needs Assessment in 2025.
- Maintained a successful and well attended homeless forum;
- Maintained a low use of families being placed into bed and breakfast, under 2 families in any year.
- Carried out consultation events with homeless households;
- Worked with supporting people and Places for people to develop a support service that covered both the hostel and the sidings to share resources.



- Significantly improved temporary accommodation facilities at the hostel with renovation of communal space and improved fire and smoke detection throughout.
- Introduced a new homelessness database to more accurate record keeping Locata.
- Worked in partnership with the Olive Branch to support households struggling to feed their family.
- Undertaken a review of all RP stock in the borough and produced an up to date leaflet listing all affordable properties.
- Removed the award for time on the list and gave homeless families priority in 2024.
- Secured an additional self-contained temporary accommodation unit in Clitheroe and an additional unit in Longridge increasing the total number of Temporary Accommodation units to 11.
- In partnership with East Lancs authorities delivered various schemes , Accommodation for Offenders and Rough Sleeper support.
- Employed a temporary Homeless Prevention Officer with a focused role on preventing homelessness.
- Commissioned HARV to provide 2 days a week DV service dedicated to support RV residents .



Ribble Valley Borough Council's Homeless Vision

Ribble Valley Borough Council's vision for homelessness is that every homeless case would be treated as preventable. We will respond in a supportive and advisory role and work with households to ensure that homelessness is prevented or that other appropriate and sustainable accommodation is found.

By 2028, Ribble Valley Borough Council aims to:

- ensure all households in the borough are aware of the provision of the housing needs service;
- ensure all new housing schemes reflect the housing needs of the locality;
- ensure services are in place to prevent any rough sleeping in the borough;
- provide temporary accommodation that suitably meets the needs of households.
- completely eradicate the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for all homeless households;
- sustain our levels of homelessness presentations and acceptances;

- continue to ensure that homelessness is prevented wherever possible and to prevent reoccurring;
- reduce the length of time in temporary accommodation to an average of 7 weeks;
- meet our corporate ambition of delivering 75 affordable homes per year and ensure they address the identified need of the borough.

All of the actions contained within the Strategy sit under one of the above strategic priorities. The Strategy is broken down into four key areas detailing current performance in gaps in service against each strategic priority heading.

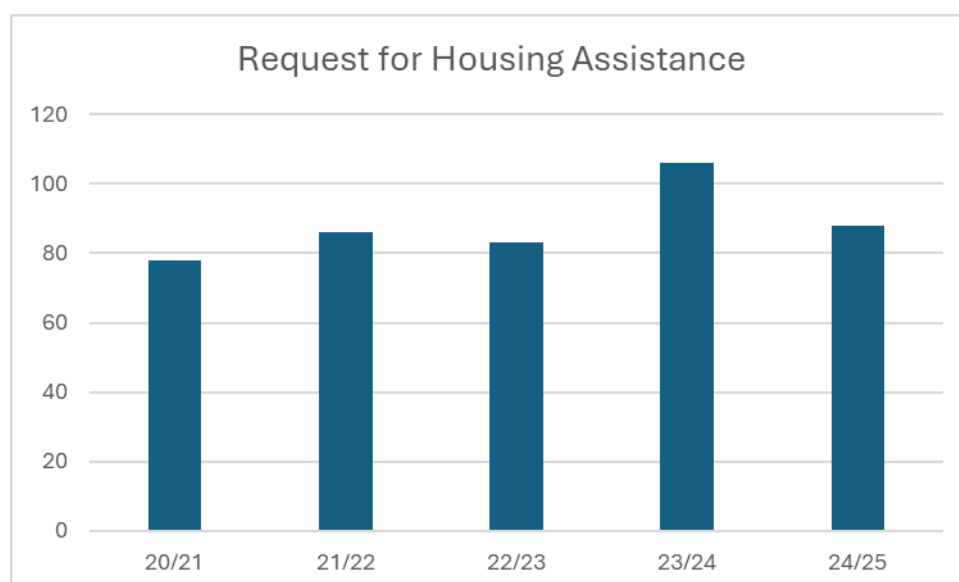
The Homelessness Form will monitor the implementation of the Action Plan appendix 1. The Action Plan has been developed in consultation with the Homelessness Prevention Form and the full Strategy document will be sent to all stakeholders and the wider public for consultation prior to formal adoption of the Strategy.

Review of Current Scale and Nature of Homelessness in Ribble Valley

The graph below allows us to identify where our prevention measures should be concentrated. The main reason households approach the council is seeking affordable accommodation.

Loss of private rented accommodation is the main cause of homelessness. Therefore raising awareness of early intervention, landlords' renovation grants and a floating support service. We will approach the landlord on the tenant's behalf to try to prevent the eviction and where possible resolve the issues. Relationship breakdown is the next most common cause. Therefore, it is limited as to how much assistance can be offered other than advice as to the individual's rights, mediation, signposting to support services.

The graph below shows the number of households accepted as homeless where the Council has a full statutory duty to rehouse. The numbers have remained low over the years and only in the last year gone over the 10 households. This is only a small part of the picture as the main aim of the service is to prevent households reaching this point.



Once we have provided households with temporary accommodation. The decision of the homeless duty will be made within the next 56 days. The next challenge is finding those households wherever are a duty, secure suitable accommodation. This can often take many weeks, and this is an agreed priority for the Council to reduce this time period.

The supply of new affordable housing stock, through securing affordable rental units on sites and also ensuring that we have a nomination agreement and an allocation policy that reflects this need is essential.

The nomination agreement and allocation policy have been fully reviewed in 2024, this was undertaken in partnership with Onward, all applicants on waiting list and all RP's in the borough were consulted. The review completely changed how points are allocated. The most significant change was the additional priority given to homeless households the review increased the priority given to HLN families a duty and removed points accrued by time on waiting lists.

The data above demonstrates the number of households that are assisted by the housing needs service each year and reflects the amount prevention work undertaken in order to reduce the households that are placed in temporary accommodation.

This is a difficult challenge as the housing options for households are limited. The private rented sector provides very little for the households seeking assistance. The private sector market in Ribble Valley is high demand so landlords can demand high rents, high deposits and charge credit check fees. The introduction of new legislation should reduce a lot of this issue and so we may see some improvement in being able to access this sector.

Number of Households in Temporary Accommodation

The average length of stay has increased in the 2 past years. Please see table below. Despite all the initiatives introduced to assist moving on the limited social stock and low turnover make finding secure accommodation a difficult task. Accessing private rented sector is very difficult without a homeowner as a guarantor.

Temporary Accommodation – The Current Situation in Ribble Valley



At the Joiners Arms 90 Whalley Rd Clitheroe, the temporary accommodation in Clitheroe, there is 7 units of accommodation, four are fully self-contained units, three units have toilet and wash hand basins, and share bathroom facilities.

There is one additional self-contained flat in Clitheroe and in Longridge, therefore proving 9 temporary units in total for families and single households.

The facilities have been continually improved and since taking back the management there has been an intensive programme to improve the fire protection and communal area. The accommodation now has on-site laundry facilities, a communal meeting room, access to IT facilities and a garden and play area. The aim is to continue to improve the accommodation through the annual works programme.



There is an on-site warden service every weekday.

Support is provided by Places for People and they support clients in the hostel on a daily basis. This is provided through a contract awarded by LCC.

Young persons accommodation The Sidings also provides 7 self contained flats for 16-19 yrs olds. The scheme gives priority to referrals from Children's Social Care and for those referrals that

have no priority then they are given a 56 day licence. This is to ensure 16/17 year olds are placed in the supported accommodation and given priority.

Appendix 1 lists the main areas of improvement service users have identified.

Prevention of Homelessness against the Main Causes

Current Situation in Ribble Valley

The housing need service is completely focused on prevention. This is reflected in the steady reduction in the number of decisions made. For each cause of homelessness there is a preventative tool available. For the two main causes in the borough relationship breakdown and parental / family eviction there is a limited amount of intervention, however early advice is always helpful.

Whilst this is a huge achievement, the homelessness strategy seeks to build upon this achievement. The homeless review has identified a number of weaknesses in the existing services and identified potential increases in homelessness in certain areas. The strategy seeks to ensure that these gaps are responded to through an effective action plan. It will also be important to safeguard the



existing prevention budgets particularly the tenancy protection scheme to ensure we can respond to the ongoing demand. It is a key priority to ensure that housing advice is available to all the homeless households or those threatened with homelessness throughout Ribble Valley regardless of priority need.

One of the most successful preventative initiatives is the tenancy protection scheme, which has enabled over 350 households into private rented accommodation since being established. However, landlords are becoming more reluctant to accept the bond as there is always

high demand for property without taking a higher risk tenant. It is essential to ensure that these households have access to support and advice and do not become homeless either as a result of the end of their assured shortfall tenancy or due to arrears.

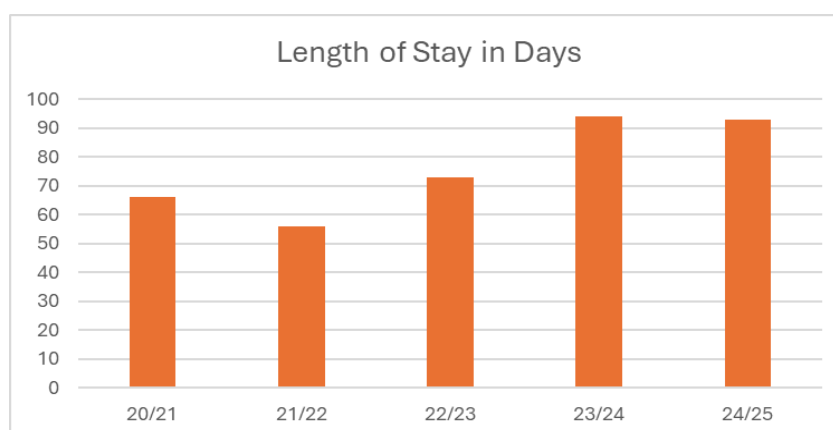
The Floating Support Service provided a crucial service for 6 years in ensuring that households at risk of losing their property within the private rented sector. Unfortunately, now there is no support available for households in this position. The lack of this provision was identified as a key area that needed addressing at the homeless forum, particularly in light of the fact that the homelessness review identified that the main causes of homelessness in Ribble Valley is family and friends evicting.

It will be necessary to identify the real reasons for these evictions in order to be able to respond effectively with a range of prevention mechanisms. Whilst home visits are available to establish the real reason and mediation is always offered, we identified a need to develop a prevention package in partnership with a range of services specifically targeted at young people this is delivered by YNOT. The package includes early intervention signposting and referrals to floating support, mediation, supported accommodation and identified planned moves from the family home. This early intervention may help young people to return to the family home after a cooling off period. All this will improve relations resulting in family support where this is not possible.

Non-violent relationship breakdown is the second highest cause of homelessness in the Ribble Valley. Our preventative input is somewhat limited in personal relationships. However, a new information leaflet has been produced which provides legal advice and general guidance on this matter and mediation is offered where appropriate. Loss of assured shorthold tenancy is the third highest cause of homelessness. This cause again has seen a significant reduction. The repossession prevention scheme offers financial assistance for households facing repossession where there are dependants, and the reason is ill health or loss of income. There have been considerable resources introduced to initiate this reduction. The grant initiatives available are a powerful communication mechanism for engaging landlords. The nomination rights attached to grants ensures we remain in regular contact with landlords and the condition that the landlords accept the tenancy protection scheme.

The availability of affordable private rented properties through the landlord grant scheme is another invaluable resource. Through this scheme homelessness can often be prevented removing the use of temporary accommodation for many households. The 3 house share properties made available through partnership with Castlegate, YMCA and RVH Home visits are another valuable preventative measure particularly in family relationship breakdowns again reducing the use of temporary accommodation.

Length of time in temporary accommodation



PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE ACCOMMODATION

Meeting the housing needs of people in the Ribble Valley is a corporate objective of the Council. This objective has been identified as one of the four key ambitions of the Authority. The importance of this cannot be over emphasised. Some key statistics for the borough with regard to affordability include:

- Ribble Valley has the lowest proportion of social dwellings in the northwest with 8.0% of units in 2021. Compared to Lancashire at 12.3% and the Northwest at 17.6%.
- March 2024 the median house price in Ribble Valley was £250,000, this is above the median price for Lancashire and Northwest but is 13% below national average. Prices have risen significantly rising by 40% (£71,000) over the decade.
- As of mid-2023 the population of RV is 64,500 and since 2013 the population has grown by 12% which is faster rate of growth to that seen at county , region or national level.

This affordability issue has a massive impact on all aspects of the homelessness service and is at the root of all obstacles in homelessness prevention.

Affordability has always been a key barrier in Ribble Valley.

The actions taken to address the problem have been wide spread and many have been achieved corporately:

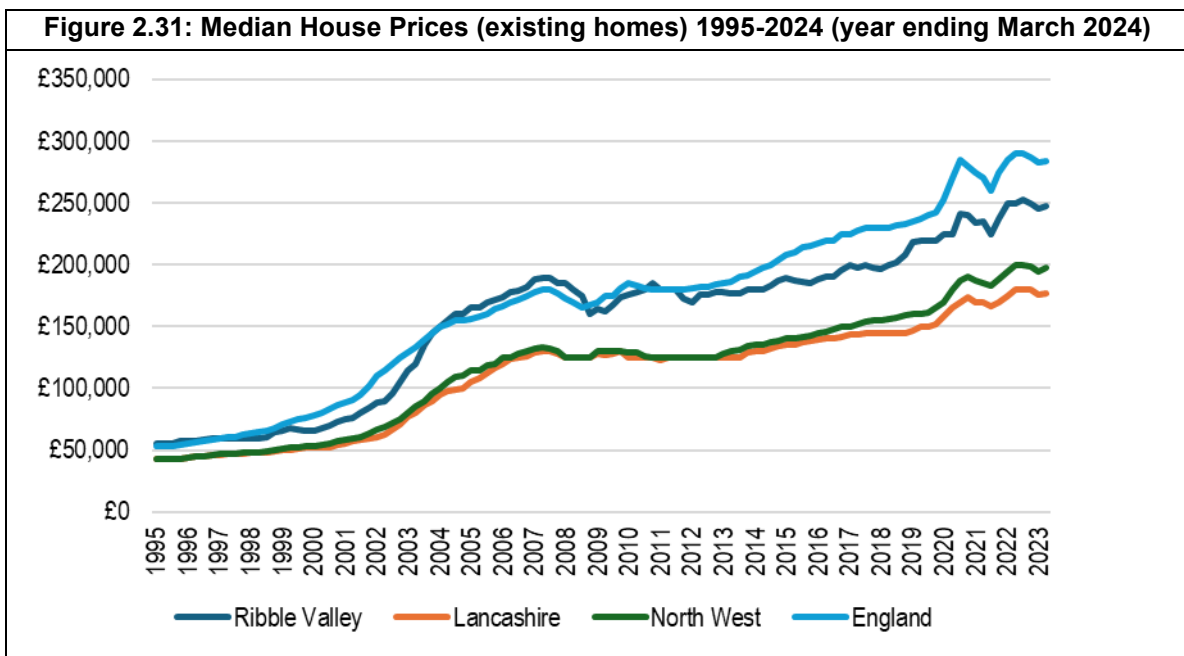
- Housing strategy delivery plan: the main focus is delivering affordable housing and addressing the identified needs.
- The Council set a target of delivering 75 affordable homes per year and this has been achieved annually.
- The Council approved an Addressing Housing Needs Policy to secure 30% affordable housing on all developments and 15% to be for older people through Section 106 agreements on new build sites;.
- The Council invests over £100,000 of capital funding every year for development of private rented sector properties through the landlord tenant grant;
- Affordable housing need report commissioned 2024, published May 2025;

The landlord/tenant grants available to landlords to renovate private rented property to a high standard is an initiative that has been fundamental in achieving a reduction in the length of time families stay in temporary accommodation. The scheme has gradually evolved into the initiative we have today but has existed for over ten years.

Landlords are offered grant aid of up to £10,000 per flat and £20,000 for a house. This is a 50% contribution towards renovation costs and is, therefore, match funded. In exchange for the grant the conditions are that the property must be let for up to five years; that the landlord must accept nominations and the rent level is set in line with central lancs local housing allowance.



Cost and Affordability of Housing



- Although house prices are generally above regional averages, it is notable that the Borough typically sees lower private rental costs, with the mean private rent for a 2-bedroom home standing at £700 per month in November 2024 (around £800 across the North West and over £1,200 nationally). Rents overall are around 44% below the national average (compared with 13% when looking at median house prices). Over the past decade, rents have increased by around 30%, slightly lower than the increase in house prices over the same period.
- In contrast with national trends, affordability in the Borough has improved over the past few years. The workplace based median affordability ratio in Ribble Valley stood at 6.07 in 2023, having been at 8.63 some 19-years previously. Nationally over the same period the ratio has gone from 6.60 to 8.26. These figures are based on the ratio between median house prices and full-time earnings.

- Overall, the data points to Ribble Valley as an affluent area with higher house prices and large proportions of households living in owner-occupied housing. The Borough also sees a housing mix of larger and detached homes. The analysis points to relatively high levels of housing demand. This can be seen in analysis of house prices and strong levels of delivery. That said, there are clearly issues suggested by the data. In particular, the relative lack of social rented housing means it will be difficult for the Council to meet affordable housing needs when they arise.
- The analysis also looked at how key data varied across different parts of the Borough. There are some differences between areas with Clitheroe in particular showing a younger population, higher proportions of social rented housing and higher levels of overcrowding – although in a national context all locations appear to be relatively affluent.

Future Timetable for Homelessness Strategy

This strategy has been approved by Health & Housing Committee. Updates on the delivery of the action plan set out in the document will be reported bi-annually to the Homeless Forum and annually to Health and Housing Committee.

Strategic Aim – IMPROVE THE HOUSING ADVICE, INFORMATION AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE

<u>INITIATIVE</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>DATE TO BE IMPLEMENTED</u>	<u>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</u>	<u>PARTNERS</u>
Ensure service is accessible as possible via IT, telephone or face to face	All households can access advice online. Continue to improve online information and keep upto date. Improve IT access at Joiners.	Continual process	Within existing resources	HLN Steering Group Housing Needs Officer
Develop and maintain a good communication with all relevant organisations	Engage with partners and keep upto date with new providers in the borough.	Continue procedure	Within existing resources	HLN Steering Group Ribble Valley Strategic Partnership
Ensure best use of the Locata database	Make best use of Locata and continue to offer staff training to make best use of the system.	Keep updated with any developments with the system and training opportunities.	Within existing resources	Housing Strategy Officer IT Section Housing Needs Officer Locata support
Collate information on all services relevant to HLN in Ribble Valley and neighbouring authorities	Ensure all the information is on the Council's website. Attend East Lancs events to keep upto date with services.	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Housing Needs Officer Housing Strategy Officers
Ensure up to date and relevant HLN information is accessible	Update and maintain housing section information on the Ribble Valley website and front line staff have basic housing rights knowledge	Monitored quarterly	Within existing resources	Housing Strategy Officer Housing Admin Officer
Utilise support services wherever , RSI ,AFO ,CAB ,Olive Branch	Refer all potential homelessness households to the most appropriate support provider	Monitored quarterly	Within existing resources Report the need for additional	Lancashire Wellbeing Service Children and Family Wellbeing Service Transforming Lives
Improve communication with clients	Use text messages/email where client prefers ,offer home visits and face to face appointments.	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Housing Needs Officer Homeless Prevention Officer

<u>INITIATIVE</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>DATE TO BE IMPLEMENTED</u>	<u>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</u>	<u>PARTNERS</u>
Ensure staff are kept up to date with homelessness case law.	Provide regular access to training options for housing needs staff. Utilise NHAS where appropriate.	Ongoing	Training costs for staff.	Housing Strategy Officer NHAS Shelter
Establish a baseline of satisfaction and identify where improvements can be developed	Undertake customer satisfaction research	Exit questionnaire as households leave TA	Within existing resources	Housing Strategy Officer Places for People
Improve accessibility of service outside of Clitheroe with a focus on Longridge	Demonstrate use of service from households outside of Clitheroe. Member of staff to attend Longridge food bank.	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Homeless Prevention Officer
Respond to any 'duty to refer' requests	Review if the route of receiving DtR and if they can be improved	Sept 2025	Within existing resources	Housing Strategy Officer IT service.
Support the rough sleeper initiative across East Lancashire	Continue to support the bid to provide support/prevent rough sleepers across East Lancashire	Ongoing	Bid to be submitted to MHCLG and Blackburn to manage the scheme.	All East Lancs Authorities.

Strategic Aim – PREVENT HOMELESSNESS IN THE BOROUGH

<u>INITIATIVE</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>DATE TO BE IMPLEMENTED</u>	<u>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</u>	<u>PARTNERS</u>
Increase the discretionary housing (DHP) payments budget to prevent homelessness.	Advise and support households to make discretionary housing payment claims	Monitored annually	Utilise DHP monies annually Top up the DHP budget using the Homeless Prevent Grant monies by £20,000.	Housing Benefits Housing Prevention Officer
Maximise the use of 'Spend to Save' Policy across the homelessness service	Consider all available funding streams which may prevent homelessness at each interview	To be monitored	Homelessness Prevention Grant budget.	Housing Committee Housing Strategy Officer
Reduce eviction from private rented.	Improve communications link with DWP and improve flexibility when dealing with vulnerable households	Ongoing	Within existing resources.	Housing Strategy Officer Housing Benefits Manager Homeless Prevention Officer
Raise awareness of the importance of early intervention	Utilise all available support services and the requirements of the new act.	On going	Within existing resources	Homeless Prevention Officer Housing Needs Officer Communication Officer
Prevent homelessness through loss of social housing tenancy	Ensure early warning system in place with each RP's in the borough. Develop good working relationship with all RP's	Jan 2026	Within existing resources	RSL's Housing Strategy Officer Homeless Prevention Officer
Update list of all temporary and permanent housing providers in the borough	Produce a leaflet and distribute to all service providers		Within existing resources	Housing Strategy Officer Housing Needs Officer
Annually undertake a full review of the homeless strategy	Utilise HLN forum to consult with all service providers	Sept 2026	Within existing resources	Housing Strategy Officer HLN Steering Group

<u>INITIATIVE</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>DATE TO BE IMPLEMENTED</u>	<u>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</u>	<u>PARTNERS</u>
Maintain homeless forum group to regularly monitor performance of initiatives	Meet once a year to review progress and update the action plan	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Homeless Forum
Prevent homelessness precipitated by health issues support the transforming lives meetings	Develop joint working protocols for hospital discharge.	June 2025	Better care fund	Health & Wellbeing Group Health & Housing Committee
	Improve referral pathways between agencies to enable access to supported accommodation	On going		
Employ a dedicated staff member for Homeless Prevention	Appoint a member of staff to be dedicated to prevention cases	May 2025	Homeless Prevention Grant fund	All relevant support services

Strategic Aim – IMPROVE PROVISION AND SUITABILITY OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION AND REDUCE THE LENGTH OF TIME SPENT IN TEMPORARY

<u>INITIATIVE</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>DATE TO BE IMPLEMENTED</u>	<u>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</u>	<u>PARTNERS</u>
Maintain close working relationship with Onward	Organise bi-weekly meeting with a standard agenda item of temporary accommodation	On going	Within existing resources	Onward Housing Needs Officer Strategic Housing Officer
Improve access to work for households in temporary accommodation	Ensure IT access at the hostel in Clitheroe and support presence		Using ODPM monies	IT Section Housing Strategy Officer
	Work with Job Centre and Connexions to provide IT support for completion of job applications online	Jan 2026	Within existing resources	Job Centre Connexions Housing Strategy Officer
Reduce length of time spent in temporary accommodation	Move on housing plan to be part of support plan	ongoing	Utilise Homeless Prevention Fund	Onward Housing Strategy Officer Places for People
Reduce the length of time spent in temporary accommodation	Ensure all housing options considered and maximised for every household. Weekly updates on each household with support worker.	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Onward Housing Officer Places for People Homeless Prevention Officer
Improve general environment within the hostel and utilise garden room at hostel	Ensure room is kept clean and there is access for all. Give reception area of Joiners a refresh.	April 2026	Within existing resources	Homestart LCC Adult Education Housing Officer DWP
Improve services for households with mental health needs	Ensure engaging in support is part of housing plan Ensure support services and information is easily accessible.	June 2026	NHS funding	Mental Team Manager Housing Strategy Officer
Consult service users of their experience in temporary accommodation	Carry out an exit questionnaire with each user. Present the feedback to the homelessness forum.	Twice each year		Homeless forum Places for people

<u>INITIATIVE</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>DATE TO BE IMPLEMENTED</u>	<u>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</u>	<u>PARTNERS</u>
Increase supply of affordable housing and maximise use of existing	Work with partner RP's to deliver maximum number of rented units on Sect 106 sites and grant aided sites.	On going	Homes England Funding Sect 106 contributions	Developers RP's Homes England
Ensure all temporary accommodation is affordable for working families	Cap rent at LHA rate for working families to ensure it is affordable.	Aug 2025	Rent costs to be supported with HPG monies.To be considered on a case by case basis .	Housing service

Strategic Aim –INCREASE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR HOUSEHOLDS AND TYPES OF AFFORDABLE SECURE HOUSING OPTIONS.

<u>INITIATIVE</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>DATE TO BE IMPLEMENTED</u>	<u>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</u>	<u>PARTNERS</u>
Prevent the loss of any social housing available for homeless households	Secure the maximum amount of social rent through Section 106 Agreements Prevention conversions of social rent where possible	Ongoing through regular market engagement	Development dependent	Housing Strategy Officer Registered Social Landlords
Increase the amount of private rented affordable housing available for homeless households	Engage with private landlords and agents to encourage them to accept households on benefit and the TPS	On going	Landlord/tenant grant funded	Local estate agents Housing Needs Officers
Set affordable secure rent levels and nomination rights	Promote grant available to encourage landlords to invest in private rented sector.Improve the landlord offer.	January 2026	Private sector grant budget	Housing Strategy Officer Health & Housing Committee
Improve Tenancy Protection Scheme	Improve the TPS offer , increase the value and the option to increase the length of time covered.To run a pilot scheme to test the success.	Sept 2025	Utilise the HP Grant funding	Housing Strategy Officer
Increase the number of affordable private rented properties available for homeless households.	Maintain the funding available for landlord tenant grants in 2025-2028		Annual budget of 100k transferred into landlord tenant budget	Housing Strategy Officer Health & Housing Committee
Ensure all partners aware of level of need in borough and kept fully informed of demand	Arrange regular RSL forums and Housing Forums	Agreed with RP's to meet twice a year	Within existing resources	Chair of Health & Housing Housing Strategy Officer RP's

<u>INITIATIVE</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>DATE TO BE IMPLEMENTED</u>	<u>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</u>	<u>PARTNERS</u>
Improve single low income earners access to affordable housing	Work with developers to secure young person's accommodation	September 2027		Developers Development Control RP's
Agree one bed accommodation is developed as a priority.	Encourage private landlords to consider one bed accommodation.	April 2025	Utilise social rent grant	Housing Strategy Officer Housing Officer
Accommodation for Offenders Programme	Refer whenever relevant and make best use of service	Oct 2025	Use £1k per offender for rehousing	Calico East Lancs Authorities Probation

Policy ownership

For any queries about this policy, please contact the plan owner.

Department	Economic Development and Planning		
Owner	Rachael Stott	Rachael.stott@ribblevalley.gov.uk	01200 413235
Committee	Health and Housing		

This policy is maintained and published on behalf of Ribble Valley Borough Council. A copy of this policy will be published on the Council Intranet and will be reviewed and updated as stated below.

Version control and review date

Version	Date	Reason for Publication	Approved by Committee / Date	Review Date
V1.1	28/25	Approved by H & H	28 th August 2025	August 2026
V1.2				

This policy will be reviewed, as a minimum, on an annual basis. However, consideration should be given to reviewing the policy should there be any changes in legislation or guidance. The policy/procedure owner will ensure the document is reviewed as stated.

Equality implications

	Action	Yes / No
	An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed	Yes
EIA Hyperlink		

Supporting documents or legislation relating to this policy

Please include any supporting documents / legislation	
1.	Homeless Act 2002
2.	
3.	
4.	