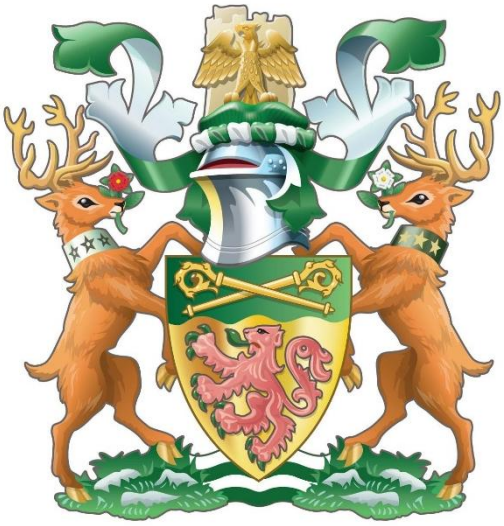


Ribble Valley
Borough Council

www.ribblevalley.gov.uk

ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2026-28

Policy administration

Policy ownership

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

Department	Economic Development and Planning - Housing Service		
Owner	Rachael Stott	rachael.stott@ribblevalley.gov.uk	
Committee	Health & Housing Committee		

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 if appropriate 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
V1.0	October 2026	New Strategy	Health & Housing Committee / 29/10/26	Annually
V1.1				

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		Checklist
EIA Hyperlink		

Supporting documents or legislation relating to this policy

Please include any supporting documents / legislation
1. National Rough Sleeping Programme 2026/20277
2. Ribble Valley Borough Council Homelessness Strategy 2025-2028
3. A National Plan to End Homelessness, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, December 2025.
4. A Local Plan to End Homelessness: Local Performance and Accountability Toolkit, 2026
5. Rough Sleeping Programme Guidance, updated 30 September 2026.
6. Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities: updated 30 September 2026.

Overview

This document is in response to the **National Rough Sleeping Programme 26/27**. The Rough Sleeping Programme aims to offer a route off the street for everyone before Christmas this year, with longer-term settled accommodation and intensive support for people who have experienced long-term rough sleeping.

The programme aims are;

1. Provide rapid support and accommodation options for people sleeping rough or at immediate risk of rough sleeping, moving as many people as possible off the streets and into accommodation before Christmas this year (2026).
2. Deliver targeted wraparound support that supports people experiencing long-term rough sleeping and the most complex needs to move off the streets and sustain their accommodation.
3. Strengthen local systems to prevent and resolve rough sleeping.
4. Increase the supply of suitable, stable accommodation with dedicated support for people experiencing long-term rough sleeping, to reduce repeat and persistent rough sleeping over time.
5. Strengthen local pathways into long-term accommodation, reducing repeat and persistent rough sleeping over time.

Ribble Valley BC received a grant allocation of £50,000 to address the issue and this strategy sets out how the funding will be utilised and the impact monitored. A number of standard indicators will be monitored by MHCLG these are in the table at the end of the document.

1. Our Vision

- **Our vision is that nobody should have to sleep rough in Ribble Valley.**
- Recognition that rough sleeping can be less visible in a rural borough and difficult to tackle when affordability of housing is a key issue.
- Clear commitment to prevention as well as intervention.
- Importance of housing, health, social care, criminal justice and voluntary/ community partners in addressing the issue.
- Listening to people with lived experience.

We will work with our partners to prevent rough sleeping wherever possible and, where it does occur, respond quickly so that it is rare, short and non-recurring.

We recognise that rough sleeping is not simply a housing issue. People may face overlapping challenges involving physical and mental health, trauma, substance use, relationship breakdown, offending, poverty and access to suitable accommodation. Our approach will therefore be person-centred, trauma-informed and based on partnership working.

We will focus not only on providing an immediate route away from the street, but on supporting people to secure and sustain a settled home.

2. Strategic Objectives

Priority 1: Prevent Rough Sleeping before it Happens

Objective: Identify people at risk early enough to prevent them from rough sleeping.

Actions could include:

- strengthen early identification and referral arrangements with all partners; raise awareness of referral pathways and access to services
- improve pathways for people leaving prison, hospital, care and other institutions;
- use homelessness prevention tools flexibly where they can prevent rough sleeping
- strengthen landlord engagement and tenancy sustainment;
- develop clear referral routes between Housing, Lancashire County Council, NHS services, probation, police and VCFS organisations;
- encourage people approaching the Council receive effective housing advice at the earliest opportunity.

Priority 2: Identify and Respond Rapidly to Anyone Sleeping Rough

Objective: Nobody identified as sleeping rough should be left without an offer of some assistance.

Actions:

- establish a clear local reporting/referral mechanism, working with PCSO's ,and the voluntary sector;
- verify reports quickly and make contact;
- undertake person-centred assessment; and make the offer of floating support to the individual
- ensure there is an offer whether the person is in the Clitheroe area , Longridge area or rural area;
- establish an agreed escalation process for individuals presenting significant risks;
- coordinate emergency responses during severe weather and that SWEP is activated,
- maintain contact with people who initially decline accommodation/support;
- work across district boundaries where someone's local connection or support network lies elsewhere.

Priority 3: Provide a Pathway into Settled Accommodation

Objective: Be able to offer sustainable housing outcomes to those at risk of rough sleeping.

Possible pathways:

- Social housing, the recent purchase of 15 single person flats in town centre has increased provision of suitable /affordable accommodation.
- Private rented accommodation; investment in private sector housing through the landlord tenant grant has also increased supply.
- Supported housing; the supported housing needs assessment is due to be completed before March 27 , this will evidence what is required.

- Accommodation with intensive support, to work with LCC as to the needs of the borough.
- Move-on from emergency or temporary accommodation.

Priority 4: Prevent a Return to the Street

Actions could include:

- Utilise holistic needs assessment through floating support offer,
- Improve mental and physical healthcare access;
- Improve substance misuse support;
- Benefits/income maximisation; improved debt and benefits advice offer through CAP. Additional hours is due to start soon.
- Tenancy sustainment; encourage accessing support from Crisis and Resilience fund.
- practical assistance when someone moves into accommodation;
- social connection and community-based support;
- planned step-down rather than support ending immediately when somebody obtains a tenancy.

Priority 5: Develop a Joined-up Local System

- Build on the existing strong partnerships, Health and Wellbeing Partnership.
- Establish clear partner responsibilities.
- Undertake regular multi-agency case discussions for people sleeping rough or at high risk. Utilise Transforming Lives as a platform for discussion.
- Improve appropriate information sharing protocols.
- Review unsuccessful cases as well as successes.
- Report progress through the Council's homelessness reporting to Health and Housing Committee.

Ribble Valley's Homelessness Strategy identifies tackling homelessness requires partnership working and highlights Registered Providers, support providers, Lancashire County Council social services and other organisations as having roles alongside the Council

3. Summary of Current Rough Sleeping in Ribble Valley (Oct 2026)

1. There are currently 3 rough sleepers in the borough.
2. Sleeping in cars and vans is the main issue.
3. Local single males not new to rough sleeping is the typical cohort.
4. The average rough sleeper has been sleeping rough for over 6 mths.
5. Relationship breakdown, lack of employment is the most common cause.
6. Hostel type accommodation, Emmaus referral was offered at first approach.
7. The support needs include, low level mental health support , addiction and job seeking assistance.
8. The main barrier is the affordability of private rents and lack of affordable housing and social housing.

Whilst rough sleeping in Ribble Valley as a rural area is reported as low, there is an understanding that hidden homelessness is common in rural areas.

4. Action Plan 2026-2028

Priority	Action	Lead/partners	Measure
Prevention	Develop early referral pathways for people at imminent risk	RVBC/partners	Referrals and outcomes Monitored Yr 1
Prevention	Raise the profile of services available. Information on website/local press release	RVBC/food bank/salvation army	Jan 2026
Intervention	Agree rapid support response for rough sleeper reports	RVBC/outreach partners/excel Housing	Response performance monitored
Intervention	Commission floating support service to offer 1 to 1 support for those at risk of or experiencing rough sleeping	Excel Housing Solutions	Monitored returns
Accommodation	Map emergency, supported, PRS and settled housing pathways	RVBC/RPs/Landlords and Supported Housing providers	Gaps identified and actions agreed
Accommodation	Secured additional 15 single person flats in the town centre	RVBC/Onward	Full occupancy
Recovery	Introduce tenancy sustainment pathway following rough sleeping	RVBC/support partners/excel housing	Repeat rough sleeping
Rapid response	Review severe weather arrangements	RVBC / salvation army	Monitor SWEP activation over the year
Partnership	Establish multi-agency case review arrangements	RVBC/health/LCC/ probation/VCFS	Cases reviewed and outcomes
Lived experience	Introduce structured feedback from people using services	RVBC Floating Support service	Feedback informs annual review
Data	Maintain a local rough sleeping report on each H & H agenda	RVBC H & H Committee Delta return	Quarterly performance information
Review	Review the strategy	H & H Committee	Annual

5. Success Aims

By the end of the Strategy period, Ribble Valley aims to have a system in which:

- people at risk of rough sleeping are identified before reaching crisis;
- partner organisations understand how to refer someone for housing assistance;
- reports of rough sleeping result in prompt engagement;
- individuals receive an offer of floating support and an appropriate offer based on their circumstances;

- emergency accommodation provides a pathway rather than a destination;
- barriers to settled accommodation are identified and addressed;
- accommodation and support services work together;
- repeat rough sleeping is identified and actively addressed;
- lived experience influences service development;
- local data provides a clear understanding of need and outcomes.

6. Conclusion

Rough sleeping is preventable, but no organisation can end it in isolation.

Ribble Valley Borough Council will continue to fulfil its statutory responsibilities while working with partners to respond rapidly when crises occur and support people towards sustainable accommodation.

Documents Informing this Strategy

- Ribble Valley Borough Council Homelessness Strategy 2025-2028
- A National Plan to End Homelessness, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, December 2025.
- A Local Plan to End Homelessness: Local Performance and Accountability Toolkit, 2026
- Rough Sleeping Programme Guidance, updated 30 September 2026
- Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities: updated 30 September 2026.

Metric	Baseline (Latest data available as of National Strategy Publication December 2025)	Annual Checkpoint 1	Annual Checkpoint 2	Final Target (Annual checkpoint 3before end of Parliament)
Households with children in temporary accommodation.	Enter the number as of September 2025 (HCLIC)	Enter the target number as of September 2026	Enter the target number as of September 2027	Enter the target number as of September 2028
Households with children in B&B over 6 weeks	Enter the number as of September 2025 (HCLIC)	Enter the target number as of September 2026	Enter the target number as of September 2027	Enter the target number as of September 2028
Success at preventing and relieving homelessness	Enter the % as of September 2025 (HCLIC)	Enter the % number as of September 2026	Enter the % number as of September 2027	Enter the % number as of September 2028
Success at preventing and relieving homelessness for those experiencing multiple disadvantage	Enter the % as of September 2025 (HCLIC)	Enter the % number as of September 2026	Enter the % number as of September 2027	Enter the % number as of September 2028

People sleeping rough who are long term	Enter the number as of November 2025	Enter the target number as of November 2026	Enter the target number as of November 2027	Enter the target number as of November 2028
People sleeping rough on a single night	Enter the number as of the snapshot count in Autumn 2025 (Snapshot)	Enter the target number as of the snapshot count in Autumn 2026	Enter the target number as of the snapshot count in Autumn 2027	Enter the target number as of the snapshot count in Autumn 2028