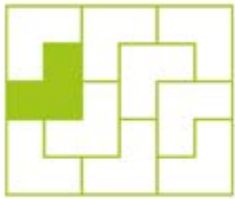




Our 2024 - 2029 plan for:



**Homelessness
and young people**

Date of issue: November 2024





Vision statement

NCHA will be a sector leader in our region for homelessness services, including homeless young people. Our supported housing services will feel like they are a welcoming home, though a temporary one.

Our homelessness approach will be effective; enabling people to achieve their life goals.

We aim to end homelessness through partnership working, particularly with our commitment to Homes for Cathy.

The BIG challenges

1. The East Midlands is currently facing a significant shortage of short-term supported accommodation, which has hindered organisations like NCHA from being able to bid for new services aimed at addressing homelessness, particularly among young people.

Furthermore, there is a lack of available properties for individuals who have previously experienced homelessness to transition into. This issue is intensifying, as highlighted by the Crisis England 2023 Homelessness Monitor, which projects that core homelessness will rise dramatically in the near future, with levels in 2024 expected to be one-fifth higher than those in 2020.

The primary factors driving this increase include inflation, which is impacting real incomes and contributing to rising poverty and destitution, as well as escalating private rental costs, frequent evictions, and a decrease in social rented housing options.

2. The rising number of people experiencing homelessness often comes with complex support needs, yet securing funding for support workers remains a significant challenge. The practice of utilising service charges to finance housing-related support can face scrutiny from local councils, which jeopardises the sustainability of these essential services.

In Nottingham, for instance, data from 2023/24 indicates that 55% of households undergoing homelessness assessments had at least one support need, with 30% of those struggling with mental health issues. Additionally, there has been an increase in the number of pregnant women facing homelessness.

3. In England, Black, Asian and minority ethnic customers are disproportionately affected by tenancy failures. In Nottingham in 2023/24, nearly half (48%) of assessments were for households where the main applicant was not of a white ethnicity. At NCHA 10% of tenancy failures were from Black, Asian and ethnic minority groups, which is a reduction from 2021 and below our target of 21%. However, we will continue to monitor this given the national picture.
4. It can be challenging for applicants to meet the affordability threshold for renting an NCHA home, especially with the rising costs of energy and food. This makes it difficult for people to move on from homelessness accommodation into a settled home with an NCHA tenancy.

Where are we now?

NCHA is a leading provider of good quality homelessness services and has a good reputation with our council partners. We have contracts in Nottinghamshire, Nottingham, Leicester, Leicestershire and Derbyshire for homelessness accommodation and homelessness prevention support.

NCHA is a member of Homes for Cathy, and delivering on their commitments.



We've maintained communication with people as they transition away from our homelessness services, and overall, we have found that they are in a positive situation and effectively managing their new tenancies. This indicates that our team provides strong support during their time with us. These people are aware of how to reach out for additional assistance as needed or know who to approach for further support.

In Nottingham City 10% of families who received statutory homeless assessment had been homeless before. Therefore, good support is crucial for future homeless prevention.

Trauma-informed practice has been adopted across homelessness and young people services which is further improving the quality of support.

We've applied for planning permission to replace our properties in Newark and South Nottinghamshire, and will ensure these are homely and fit for purpose.

We purchased a four bed property in Newark to expand our service to homeless young people. This has worked well and is seen as our 'flagship' home for young people with Nottinghamshire County Council. IKEA funded the improvement of the lounge area at Kings Road, in Newark which has changed the way that the young people use the area for the better.

Key objectives

One year

1. We'll improve the quality of our supported housing so it feels welcoming, calm and friendly.
 - o We'll replace the Newark Branching Out properties in 2025
 - o We'll deliver improvements in each building to promote a psychologically informed environment with the help of an interior designer and the trauma informed checklist.
2. We'll measure the impact of our services on homeless people by carrying out wellbeing questionnaires and keeping in touch after moving on, aiming for >80% positive impact.
3. We'll make at least 5% of general rented properties available to let to people moving on from Care and Support services, especially homelessness services.
4. We'll promote energy saving initiatives to all of our customers. Using volunteer Green Leaders we'll support our customers with a range of initiatives. For example, we'll share information about storage heaters with all customers so that they understand how they can be more efficient.

Two year

5. We'll deliver more homelessness services, work with local authorities to provide more short-term accommodation and bid for new contracts to deliver more great services to homeless people in the East Midlands. We'll aim to implement two new services by the end of 2025.
6. Delivering Homes for Cathy commitment: "To operate flexible allocations and eligibility policies which allow individual applicants' unique sets of circumstances and housing histories to be considered and to monitor acceptances and refusals and benchmark performance".
 - o We'll ensure that all internal applications from people moving on from supported housing are reviewed with input from the support worker before they are assessed.
 - o Consider making offers of housing that are subject to the person's engagement with the Community Support team to ensure that their tenancy is successful.

Delivering the plan

Delivery will be partly through team plans, Homes for Cathy commitments and a delivery plan by the lead for homelessness.

Monitoring and reporting

An annual team action plan is to be developed each year and reviewed every six months by the lead for homelessness.

Homes for Cathy actions are reviewed every six weeks.



We'll create better quality homes for young people that are welcoming, calm and friendly.

Our business delivery strategies

Being the best we can be for our customers and colleagues by always listening and striving to improve, in an environment that is supportive, inclusive and wellbeing focused.

Alongside the Group Corporate Plan sit five **'Business Delivery Strategies'**, which are relevant to all departments. These are:

- Environmental Sustainability Strategy
- Social Impact Strategy
- Value for Money Strategy
- Our Customers Strategy
- Our Places Strategy.



Taken together, these strategies provide us with the opportunity to pause and reflect on what we've been doing, and then to refocus on the future.

Taking inspiration from these five business delivery strategies, this plan sets out our ambitions for customer experience for the next five years.