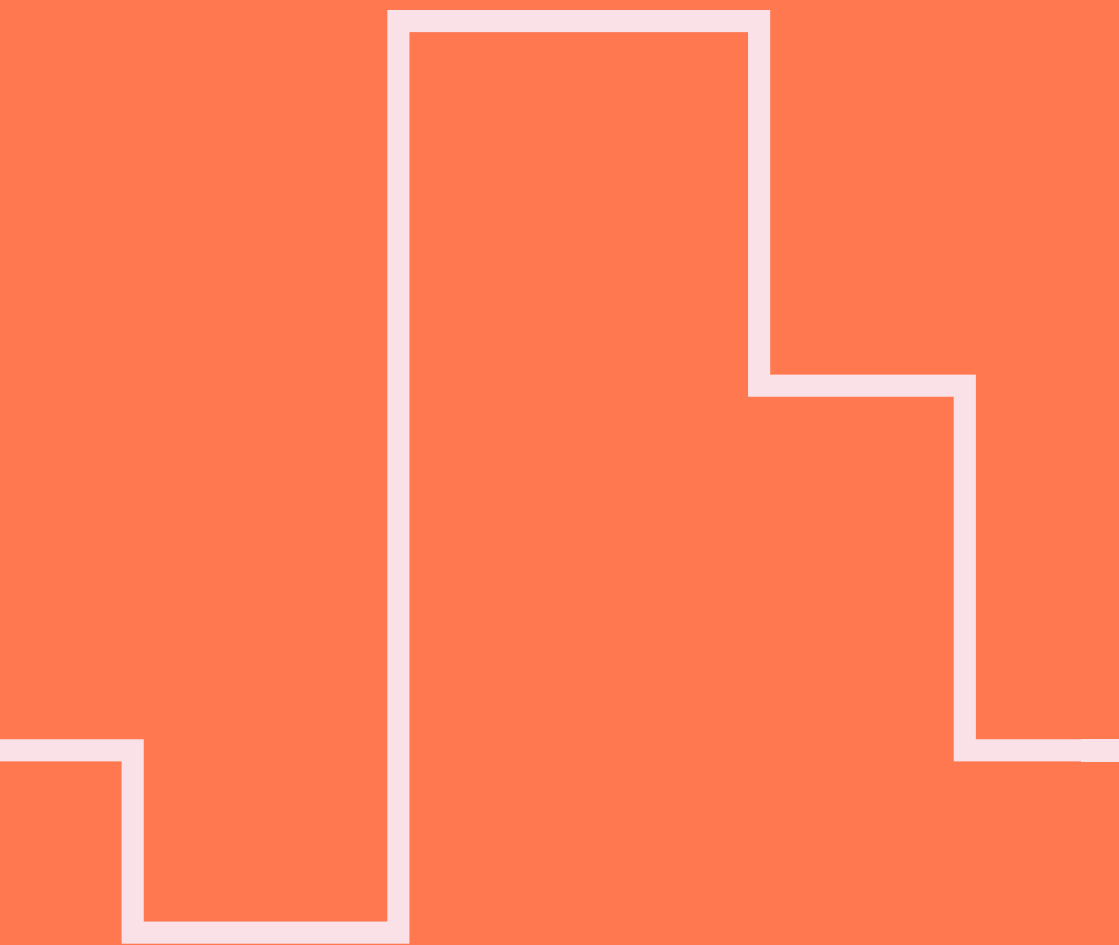


local action plan



homewards
sheffield



**ROYAL
FOUNDATION**

OF THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS
OF WALES

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Executive summary



Homewards is...

A five-year, locally led programme, launched by Prince William and The Royal Foundation of The Prince and Princess of Wales in June 2023.

The aim of Homewards is...

To demonstrate that together, it is possible to end homelessness – making it rare, brief, and unrepeated.

Homewards will do this by...

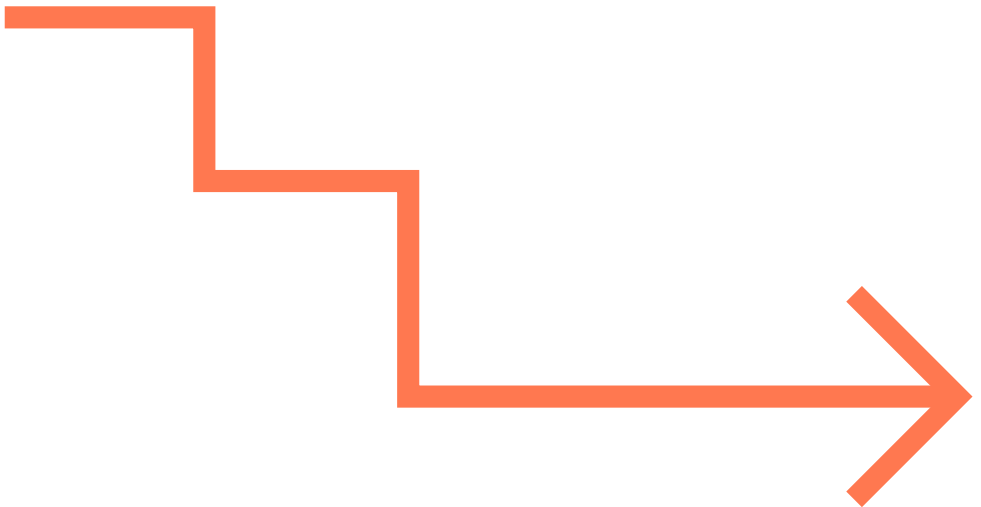
Preventing homelessness for at risk groups, whilst challenging stigma, inspiring optimism and ensuring this work is sustainable and replicable.

The six Homewards flagship locations are...



Success looks like...

- Each flagship location will be on a trajectory to end homelessness for target groups – making it rare, brief and unrepeated,
- The flagship locations will have an increased focus on sustainable prevention and collaboration,
- Communities will feel optimistic that it is possible to end homelessness and will recognise that it is beneficial to do so,
- The impact of Homewards will reach beyond the six flagship locations, with learnings being used to adopt tried and tested models in other areas.





Coalitions of organisations and people, from the public, private and voluntary sectors – have come together across the six flagship locations, committed to demonstrating that it's possible to end homelessness.

Each local Coalition has created its own Local Action Plan. They're delivering initiatives to support at-risk groups, identified by each location, where Homewards can help most.

Each Local Action Plan encompasses solutions. From housing to data to employment – and aims to make the prevention of homelessness 'business as usual'.

The Homewards Partnership, brought together by The Royal Foundation, creates an unprecedented network of individuals and organisations – including top experts and leading homelessness organisations. It continues to support the Coalitions to deliver their Local Action Plans, and to galvanise national and international momentum.

‘By demonstrating what is working to prevent homelessness with these groups and across these key areas, Homewards will demonstrate it is possible to end homelessness, together.’


Homewards
National Expert Panel

All the Local Action Plans will be reviewed every year...

To reflect on progress and capture new opportunities. Activities in the Local Action Plans vary, from testing a new scalable pilot, to fundamentally changing how people in the location work together.

These are ambitious plans. As delivery progresses, some elements may need to be adjusted or updated, so the Local Action Plans are agile documents, growing alongside our Coalitions. This ensures that the Local Action Plans remain focused on delivering tangible change, with maximum impact.





The Royal Foundation is supporting each of our six flagship locations to achieve this with...

Additional capacity

a Local Delivery Lead and project management support in each location.

Homewards fund

£500,000 in seed funding to back each Action Plan.

Expertise

access to a cutting-edge network of global experts, business and more.

The Royal Foundation is also supporting our flagship locations,

in the areas that we know are the most crucial to preventing homelessness, so that they can:

- Unlock impactful projects,
- Build strategic partnerships,
- Establish sustainable connections,
- Harness data to prevent homelessness,
- Test new ways of improving access to homes, for those who need it the most,
- Create employment pathways,
- Unlock appropriate finance to support homelessness prevention.

A note from Homewards Sheffield SSG Chair, Adam Brady:



This latest iteration of Homewards Sheffield's Action Plan sets out the actions we'll take over the next 12 months – and beyond – to prevent homelessness for families and young people.

By 2028, Homewards Sheffield will have demonstrably increased a sustainable focus on prevention and collaboration.

We will have delivered successful projects, or tested innovative approaches, that prevented our cohorts of focus from experiencing homelessness. Communities will feel optimistic that it is possible to end homelessness, and will recognise that it is beneficial to do so. The impact of Homewards will reach well beyond the six flagship locations.

By delivering this ambitious Local Action Plan, the Sheffield Coalition aims to reduce the number of families presenting as homeless. This approach reflects places such as Finland who have already demonstrated that it is possible to end homelessness through sustained, incremental reductions, by focusing on specific cohorts.

Whilst this reduction is critical, it is not the only way we will measure success with groups of focus. Our work with young people will embed prevention, and strengthen existing support pathways. This will enable long term, sustainable change – which means we are unlikely able to quantify the total impact by 2028.

Over the past six months, the Homewards Sheffield Coalition has taken bold and meaningful steps towards our shared ambition: to demonstrate that it is possible to end homelessness for families and young people in our city.

I'm proud to say that with our focus on prevention and collaboration, a significant proportion of our initial Action Plan has moved from paper to practice.

Together, we've launched Upstream – a pioneering, schools-based early intervention programme. It identifies young people who are at greater risk of homelessness, and ensures that they and their families receive timely, tailored support. Our first partnership – with Meadowhead School – is already underway, and children are accessing support. We have recently expanded this project to two more schools.

We've also mapped existing prevention work across Sheffield's community-based organisations – and that lays the foundations for deeper collaboration, better resource use, and more integrated support.

Schools are receiving resources and training, in order to boost resilience and ambition among young people.

And our Coalition is helping to raise awareness of the realities – and solutions – around homelessness.

We've also begun putting our collective resources to work. Over half of the local Homewards Fund has already been awarded, to four promising projects led by Coalition members. These include efforts to:

- Reduce the time young people spend in temporary accommodation,
- Open up routes into employment for those in supported housing,
- Embed homelessness prevention roles in trusted community settings, such as nurseries and neighbourhood organisations.

Crucially, the first families have now moved into homes created through our Innovative Housing Project. Fully furnished by Homewards partners and supported by a dedicated Service Navigator, these homes allow families to begin new chapters. They also have access to the services, employment pathways and community connections that will help them stay securely housed.

Looking ahead, the next 12 months offer even greater opportunity.

We will explore how data can help us identify at-risk families sooner. We'll work to engage more private landlords in offering homes to those who need them most. We'll build an employment offer for young people, and a shared learning forum for

culturally informed practice. We'll ensure that people with lived experience of homelessness are represented across all strands of the Coalition's work. Representation will reflect the local community – and will include families, young people and community-based organisations.

We have much still to do. But we are building momentum, and making a difference.

Thank you for your ongoing belief in this work, and in the power of local partnership to drive lasting change. I look forward to continuing this journey with you.





1.

Supporting families at risk of homelessness

Local context

A positive start in life is crucial, with experiences in your early years directly linked to your ultimate likelihood of homelessness.

Homewards has already bolstered homelessness prevention for families in Sheffield, by resourcing specialist roles in different settings – including Firvale Community Hub, Reach Up Youth and Meadows nursery.

Homeworks Sheffield will prevent homelessness now, and reduce the likelihood of families experiencing homelessness in the future, by:

- Identifying those at risk at an early stage,
- Designing a dedicated family pathway,
- Building on our work that supports families to access (and sustain) tenancies in the private rented sector.

What are we going to do over the next 12 months?

1.1 Data insights project

Rationale: By analysing existing data across council services, we can identify patterns and risk factors that often precede homelessness. This insight allows for earlier, more targeted interventions that can prevent homelessness before it happens.

Activity: Homewards Sheffield will support a Data Insights Project by sharing best practice, insight and sector expertise. It will develop a proof-of-concept, exploring the best use of local data sets to deliver preventative support services.

Measure: Based on the analysis, we will identify people we think are at risk of homelessness and consider if this could be used to target support.

Who is leading this work? Sheffield City Council, The Royal Foundation

1.2 Design a homelessness prevention family pathway for Sheffield

Rationale: Learning in Sheffield has indicated that a dedicated homelessness prevention pathway for families would be helpful in preventing homelessness.

Activity: Homewards Sheffield will work with stakeholders across the system, to design such a pathway. It will focus on early prevention, as well as identifying opportunities for tenancy sustainment (by addressing concerns promptly). We will also consider existing evidence-based

interventions, as recommended by the Centre for Homelessness Impact.

Measure: This work will result in a report, setting out recommendations for a pathway.

Who is leading this work?
The Royal Foundation

1.3 Innovative housing project

Rationale: Homewards has committed to delivering an Innovative Housing Project in each location. They are all designed to test new ways of making more homes available, at scale, for those at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Activity: Homewards Sheffield will build on the progress of the last 12 months, by continuing to work with several private and social landlords. They have all committed properties already, to provide a pathway for families out of temporary accommodation. To furnish the homes, we will work with The Multibank and retail partners. Families need support to settle in, navigate local services and sustain their tenancies – we will work with SOAR to provide that support.

Measure: This project aims to deliver 33 homes for families in Sheffield.

Who is leading this work?
Sheffield City Council

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2.

Strengthening collaborative approaches to supporting young people

Local context

800

Sheffield


young people being supported
because they are homeless,
or at risk of homelessness



In 2023/24, the council supported 800 young people (aged 16-24) because they were homeless, or at risk of homelessness. This included advice and support to secure accommodation.

There are several reasons why young people may experience homelessness, including:

- Poverty
- Family breakdown
- Experiencing abuse
- Not doing well in school, college or university.



In Sheffield, significant work is underway to support young people to prevent (and exit) homelessness. Homewards' aim is to bolster this approach, by testing innovative models which – if successful – could be scaled and replicated elsewhere.

We're also strengthening existing pathways and partnerships, so as to ensure that prevention is embedded in the city's approach. So far, we have supported a project run by Guinness and YWCA, which aims to break down barriers to employment for young people in supported housing. We have also resourced a role at Roundabout, with the goal of reducing time spent in temporary accommodation.

Homewards Sheffield is supporting young people to access employment. And for young people in education, we're identifying risks at an early stage. These actions aim to reduce the likelihood of young people experiencing homelessness – both now and in the future.

What are we going to do over the next 12 months?

2.1 Increased sustainable job opportunities

Rationale: Keeping a home and having a job are inextricably linked.

Activity: Homewards Sheffield will work with partners to create inclusive, sustainable jobs for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness, with a focus on young people. Target sectors will be guided by local labour market analysis, including insights from Hays. We will support four Sheffield-based employers to begin hiring 18 to 25 year olds, who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Measure: Our target is for four new employers to ring fence roles for, and hire from, this group – creating a minimum of four new starters in total. We also aim for 60% of these new starters to sustain employment for at least 12 months – a target that will be measurable in 26/27.

Who is leading this work? The Royal Foundation, Opportunity Sheffield, Sheffield Pride of Place Board

2.2 Strengthen local employability pathways

Rationale: Young people at risk of homelessness can need extra support to get (and to keep) a job. Employers often don't know where to turn for well-supported candidates, or for support in inclusive hiring – even though there are various employability charities and public sector agencies.

Activity: We will bring together local employability providers, so that Homewards Sheffield can identify (and build on) the most effective routes into sustained work. Working with a range of Coalition partners, we will build strong collaborations, create effective communication and share best practices. This work will include support for individuals and employers, both pre-employment and post-employment.

Measure: Local employers will be equipped to hire young people at risk of homelessness, and to support them in these new jobs. The hiring will be underway. The employers will be connected to the local support that's required to sustain the jobs – including support for themselves, and for the young people they hire.

Who is leading this work? The Royal Foundation, Opportunity Sheffield

2.3 Upstream early intervention pilot in schools

Rationale: Upstream is modelled on the Australian Geelong Project, which saw a 40% reduction in youth homelessness and a 20% reduction in the number of young people leaving school early.

Activity: Three secondary schools in Sheffield are piloting Upstream. After a simple survey to identify pupils at risk, the schools work with local partners to ensure that targeted support is provided before crisis hits. The Royal Foundation is working closely with the UK Governance Group for Upstream, to explore how it might be embedded and scaled across the city and beyond.

Measure: Homewards Sheffield will mobilise Upstream across three schools.

Who is leading this work? Centrepoint, Roundabout, The Royal Foundation and Sheffield City Council

2.4 New resources for schools and other youth settings

Rationale: Building resilience in young people helps to protect them from homelessness. It strengthens their ability to cope with challenges, maintain relationships and navigate setbacks – all without losing housing stability or support networks.

Activity: With the support of Twinkl, and of The Royal Foundation as part of the Homewards programme, the High Performance Foundation will launch Secure Futures. It is a targeted initiative, which provides free, transformative resources for young people at risk of homelessness.

Secure Futures combines inspiring video content and interactive activities to build resilience, confidence and life skills.

It ensures that vulnerable young people are supported around three core themes:

- Harmful coping mechanisms,
- Unemployment,
- Long-term cycles of hardship.

Measure: The content will be developed in collaboration with Homewards Sheffield Coalition and piloted in the location.

Who is leading this work? High Performance Foundation


3.

**Supporting
community-based
organisations
to strengthen
and embed
homelessness
prevention**

Local context

The page features a decorative graphic consisting of thick, stylized lines. An orange line starts from the left edge, moves horizontally, then turns 90 degrees down, then 90 degrees right, and finally 90 degrees down again. A yellow line starts from the top edge, moves vertically down, then turns 90 degrees right, then 90 degrees down, and finally 90 degrees right again. These lines create a series of nested, stepped rectangular frames around the text.

To prevent homelessness, it's crucial to provide joined up and accessible support to those who are at risk. Many organisations can be involved in working with someone who is at risk, from statutory bodies to community-based organisations.



Homewards Sheffield Coalition believes that more could be done to support these organisations, so that they can work better together. This will help to make sure that families and young people get the right support, at the right time.

The Homewards Sheffield Coalition will work together, to ensure everybody gets the support they need – with a particular focus on those groups who face additional barriers to getting help. In Sheffield, people from Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic groups are over-represented in the homelessness population.

To better understand this community-based activity, the Homewards Sheffield Coalition has conducted interviews, system mapping and a workshop. This has informed our plan, which aims both to increase collaboration and to better resource these organisations.

The Sheffield Race Equality Commission Report 2022 highlighted racial disparities in access to housing, both nationally and locally and is referenced in the city's Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Many community-based organisations in Sheffield already support these groups, as well as other groups shown by research to be at higher risk.

What are we going to do over the next 12 months?

3.1 Develop a set of culturally informed principles for organisations in Sheffield

Rationale: When Homewards Sheffield researched homelessness prevention by community-based organisations, this work was one of the recommendations.

Activity: Homewards Sheffield will develop a new working group, bringing together community-led organisations. We'll share insight and best practice on culturally informed working and co-produce a set of cultural competency principles for the city. Culturally informed services recognise and respect the values, beliefs, customs and inherent strengths of different cultures and embed them when offering support.

The learning and principles produced will be shared with organisations across Sheffield. This will help them to understand the barriers that prevent specific groups from accessing support, and to expand culturally informed services for their local communities.

Measure: A set of co-produced principles for culturally informed services in Sheffield

Who is leading this work? Community Working Group

3.2 Launch a fund for community-based organisations, to resource homelessness prevention activity

Rationale: When Homewards Sheffield researched homelessness prevention by community-based organisations, this work was one of the recommendations.

Activity: We will work with local partners to launch a new place-based philanthropic fund. It will specifically support community-based organisations, so that they can do more homelessness prevention work. This fund will enable Homewards Sheffield to scale evidenced-based practice, and to sustain the work of the programme beyond 2028.

Measure: The fund launches in 2026. The first round of grants has been made to community-based organisations.

Who is leading this work? The Royal Foundation, South Yorkshire Community Foundation

3.3 Convening businesses to share expertise and strengthen community-based organisations

Rationale: When Homewards Sheffield researched homelessness prevention by community-based organisations, this work was one of the recommendations.

Activity: Homewards Sheffield has identified gaps in resources for community-based organisations. We will convene local businesses, via a citywide summit, to share skills and support the work of community-based organisations. This could include:

- Refurbishing community infrastructure,
- Digital or marketing skills,
- Business development and fundraising.

Measure: The number of community-based organisations that are connected to new avenues of support.

Who is leading this work? Henry Boot, The Royal Foundation

3.4 Supporting community-based organisations with data collection

Rationale: When Homewards Sheffield researched homelessness prevention by community-based organisations, this work was one of the recommendations.

Activity: Homewards Sheffield, supported by The Royal Foundation, will engage new partners in supporting community-based organisations with data. This will involve:

- Understanding how they currently collect and use data (including data about homelessness prevention),
- Identifying ways this could be made easier.

Those organisations will then be able to build an evidence base, which will help with securing resources. We will also gain a better understanding of the true scale of hidden homelessness in the city, and of any opportunities for preventing it.

Measure: Community-based organisations will develop a shared data-led evidence base on the scale of hidden homelessness in their communities.

Who is leading this work? Homewards partners, Community Working Group & The Royal Foundation

What are we going to do over the next 12 months?

3.5 Increasing collaboration between community-based organisations and statutory housing services

Rationale: When Homewards Sheffield researched homelessness prevention by community-based organisations, this work was one of the recommendations.

Activity: This collaboration has been identified as a gap by Homewards Sheffield. The Coalition will build on existing collaborative working in community hubs and will establish closer working relationships between local authority housing services and community-based organisations. This will tie in with the work of Sheffield City Council's Communities Strategy 2025-35, which includes a commitment to build stronger relationships with community groups and organisations.

We will develop a shared understanding of the role that community-based organisations can play in preventing homelessness and consider any potential funding opportunities for community-based prevention.

Measure: Homewards Sheffield will evaluate whether collaboration between community-based organisations and statutory housing services has increased.

Who is leading this work?
Community Working Group

Strategic initiatives

As these activities are developed into location specific projects, they will be aimed at Sheffield's cohort of focus.

Lloyds Banking Group partnership

Support the deployment of £50 million of new lending to help small and medium-sized housing providers and charities. This new lending is being committed by Lloyds Banking Group, helping to increase local funding streams across the Homewards locations, including Sheffield. Investment readiness support, where required by the housing provider or charity, is also available.

Data

Homewards, in partnership with LandAid, are establishing the Homelessness Data Lab. It's a new taskforce, deploying innovative data sources and the latest technology to prevent homelessness. The projects will be developed in partnership with our flagship locations. Solutions will be implemented on the ground in the flagship locations and will target the cohorts we have chosen.

Changing the narrative

Access to proactive communication tools

In partnership with CHI, The Royal Foundation is creating bespoke language guides and image banks for each location, expanding CHI's existing assets. The intention is to broaden understanding of homelessness, to encourage empathy and to inspire optimism that homelessness can be ended. The Royal Foundation is also building relationships with local media partners in each flagship location, to showcase the progress and impact of that location's work.

Establish a changing the narrative forum

Forums of communications professionals (and like-minded people) will try to change the narrative around homelessness. Convened by The Royal Foundation but locally led, they will meet regularly to align on strategic priorities and to elevate each other's work.

Get in touch

If you are a business or organisation that wants to find out more about working with Homewards, please contact homewards@royalfoundation.com and one of the team will be in touch.

If you are worried about someone experiencing or at risk of homelessness, you can support them by:

- Connecting them with local support services
- Donating food, clothing, and other supplies
- Giving your time volunteering in your local community

For more information on homelessness across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, please visit the following link: <https://homewards.org.uk/help-resources/>

If you would like to donate, please consider supporting one of the Homewards Sector Partners, who can be found listed here: <https://homewards.org.uk/partners/>

Source list

Information in this Local Action Plan is based on data collected by Sheffield City Council about people who are experiencing or on the brink of homelessness, as well as the following sources:

Office for National Statistics, Census 2021, June 2022

<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/your-city-council/population-in-sheffield#:~:text=The%20latest%20Census%20was%20held,55%2C500%20individuals%2C%20in%2023%2C000%20households>

Sheffield City Council, Tackling Poverty Strategy 2015-18

<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/your-city-council/tackling-poverty#:~:text=Around%20one%20in%204%20Sheffield,all%20the%20people%20of%20>

Sheffield City Council, Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28, 2022

<https://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=3342>

Local Authority, Statutory Homelessness: Detailed local authority-level tables, October 2024

https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fassets.publishing.service.gov.uk%2Fmedia%2F66fd32a8e84ae1fd8592ec8d%2FDetailed_LA_20232024.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, Statutory Homelessness in England, Financial Year 2023-24, October 2024

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statutory-homelessness-in-england-financial-year-2023-24>

Sheffield City Council, Race Equality Commission, June 2022

<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/sites/default/files/docs/planning-and-development/sheffield-plan/Citywide%20Options%20for%20Growth%20to%202034.pdf>

Sheffield City Council, The Sheffield Plan, 2015

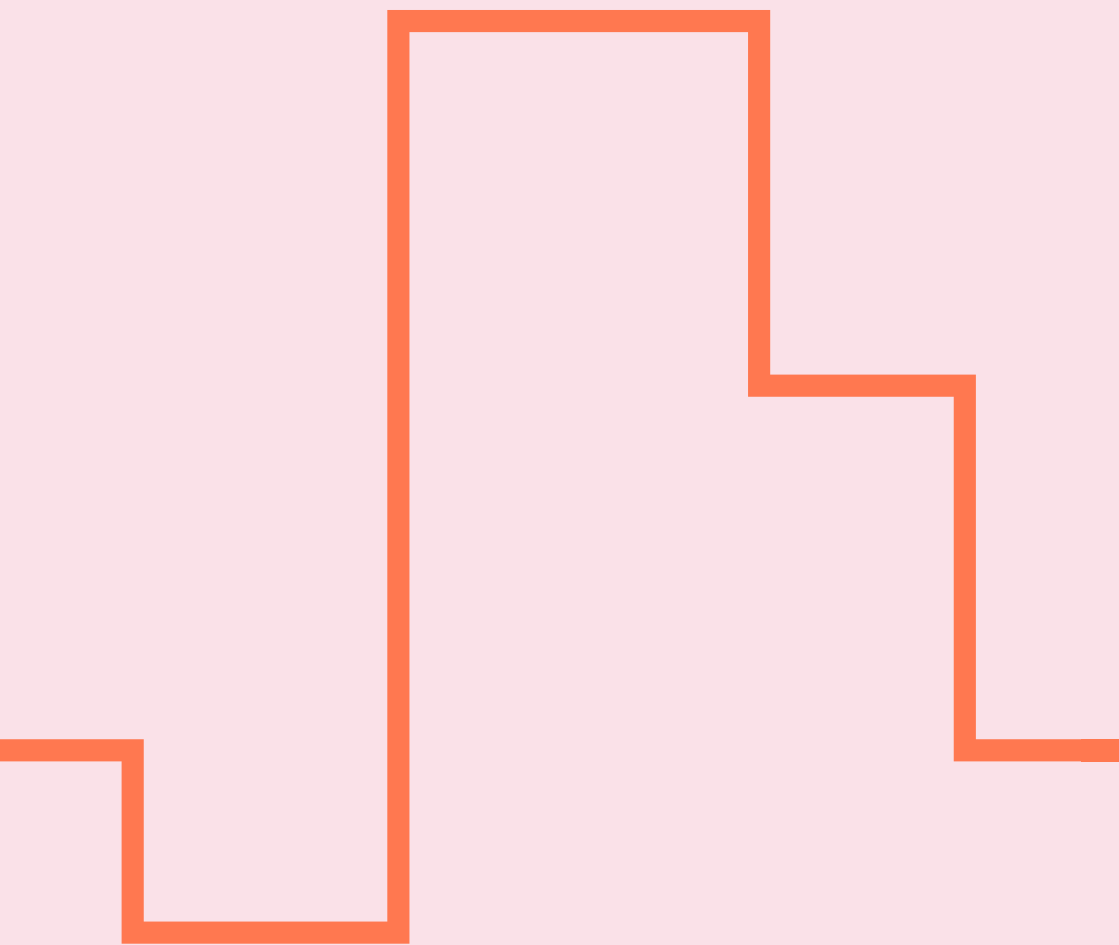
<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/sites/default/files/docs/planning-and-development/sheffield-plan/Citywide%20Options%20for%20Growth%20to%202034.pdf>

Local Authority, Statutory Homelessness:

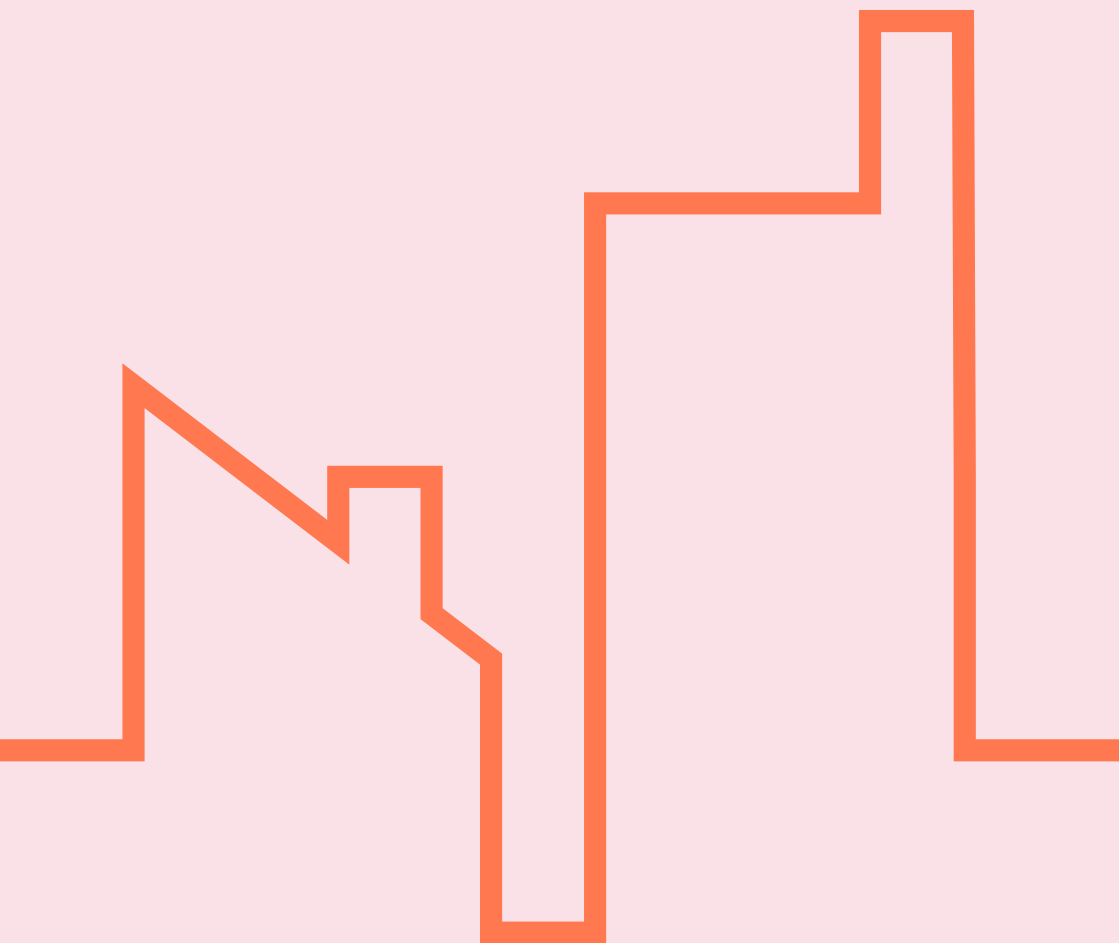
Detailed local authority-level tables, October 2024

https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fassets.publishing.service.gov.uk%2Fmedia%2F66fd32a8e84ae1fd8592ec8d%2FDetailed_LA_20232024.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK

Homeless Link, South Yorkshire Homelessness Research. An evidence base for South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority [yet to be published]



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OF WALES