

Meeting our Homes for Cathy Commitments

As a Homes for Cathy member, Hightown strives to meet the nine Homes for Cathy commitments, nine pledges developed in consultation with the charity Crisis. We deliver an annual homelessness action plan and report to our board on progress.

In 2021/22 this included:



Playing a key role in influencing and designing homelessness strategies in our three biggest local authority operating areas of St Albans, Dacorum and Buckinghamshire.



Operating a flexible allocations and eligibility policy that recognises the histories and unique circumstances of homeless applicants: homeless applicants are automatically referred to our Director of Housing.



Offering constructive solutions where homeless applicants do not meet lettings criteria, for example working closely with our local authority partners to fund rent in advance through Discretionary Housing Payments.



Avoiding evictions into homelessness through our financial inclusion and tenancy sustainment work: we doubled our flexible welfare fund and appointed two new tenancy sustainment officers (TSOs).



Supporting vulnerable tenant groups including victims of domestic abuse and those experiencing mental or physical health challenges to remain in their homes or transfer to a more suitable property if necessary.



Building over 600 affordable homes to meet the needs of the local communities we serve and delivering new supported housing provision for single homeless people.



Ensuring properties offered to homeless households were ready to move into – our TSOs and housing resettlement team sourced furniture, white goods and other essential items through charities and grant funding.



Playing a part in ending migrant homelessness through our supported housing scheme for unaccompanied asylum seeking minors and converting a property into a home for a refugee family under the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme.



Our senior leaders contributing to industry events and research projects to share best practice around homelessness prevention and inspire others to do more.

More information about the work of the Homes for Cathy group can be found [here](#).