

North Devon Council's Enhanced Rough Sleeper Service

Mental Health Specification

Rough Sleeper Definition:

People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on / in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on streets, in tents (inappropriate use of tents), doorways, parks, bus shelters or in encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or "bashes").

Service Description

The Rough Sleeper Service has been delivered in North Devon District Council's (NDC's) area since 2008. NDC currently employs a full time Rough Sleeper Outreach Worker and has contracted with the voluntary sector to provide additional resource in the form of a second Outreach Worker.

Clients are usually those who are currently experiencing rough sleeping, have a history of periodic rough sleeping or, those that are imminently facing rough sleeping. Last year, NDC provided services to 156 new rough sleeper cases.

Those rough sleeping in NDC on any one night are estimated to be 12, in accordance with our DCLG submission returns.

The majority of these individuals are single homeless individuals (over 18 years old). They can often have multiple issues and/or complex needs but may still fall outside statutory thresholds meaning they have not met statutory homeless definitions thus categorising them as 'non-statutory' individuals.

Accommodation needs are mainly resolved with access to the private rented sector, existing supported housing projects or social housing.

The Northern Devon Hub (a multi-agency group consisting of NDC, TDC, Together - Drug & Alcohol specialists, Probation, the Police, the voluntary sector and supported accommodation providers) coordinates access to specialist supported accommodation for those with multiple issues and/or complex needs. The range

of accommodation provides a pathway to prevent or alleviate homelessness. There are currently 35 rooms over multiple houses across the two districts.

The main aims of the enhanced Rough Sleeper Service are:

1. To provide effective outreach services to prevent the flow of rough sleepers
2. To identify mental ill-health and substance misuse and to offer practical therapeutic support to clients to effectively address this
3. To provide enhanced outreach services to street rough sleepers to enable access to specialist supported accommodation pathways or alternative appropriate accommodation
4. To provide enhanced multi agency interventions in specialist supported accommodation to allow additional support gaps to be filled to prevent failed tenancies
5. Increase the accommodation range with a further 2 units of specialist Housing First accommodation for some of our most complex clients
6. To work alongside the Northern Devon Hub to ensure that the needs of the client group are understood and best met within available resources
7. To follow NDC vision which is to reduce rough sleeping, not to sustain it

Defining the Mental Health service role within the Enhanced Rough Sleeper Service

1. To reduce the flow of new rough sleepers to the streets
2. To deliver a holistic and flexible service to meet the needs of rough sleepers
3. To establish and maintain strong, effective relationships with rough sleepers and health and welfare professionals from a range of statutory and voluntary sector organisations
4. To support clients to build trust with wider health professionals allowing them to be linked into mainstream provision
5. To oversee continuity of care during the transitional period between homelessness and settled accommodation until clients are linked in with the necessary mainstream services, offering ongoing support as required.
6. To provide relevant therapies such as counselling, talking therapies etc

7. To manage a case load of clients, some of whom may have multiple and complex needs
8. To work with an emphasis on preventative work, in order to prevent heavy use of crisis intervention services
9. To undertake a comprehensive assessments of each client using the Northern Devon Hub assessment form and additional agency specific forms to understand and identify how specific stated needs can be met
10. To secure access to accommodation with support through the Northern Devon Hub and NDC's temporary accommodation provision
11. To facilitate multi agency meetings where appropriate
12. To undertake as required (weekly at minimum) 'street work' alongside NDC's Rough Sleeper Outreach Workers and Together Recovery Worker
13. To refer to additional support services for specialist support
14. To offer advocacy support where appropriate, such support to include court appearances, medical assistance, benefit support etc
15. To provide advice and assistance in accordance with various relevant policies including NDC Homelessness Prevention policies
16. To deliver services in accordance with current legislation and guidance

Minimum Requirements of the Mental Health Service Role

The further enhanced Rough Sleeper Outreach team will commence on the 1st April 2021. The minimum requirements of the role are:

1. To be able to provide the service for a 14 month period (01/04/2021 to 30/06/2022)
2. To provide a Community Psychiatric Nurse (as detailed below) for 37 hours per week to meet the Rough Sleeper Service demand, which at times will require very early morning starts (approximately 6.00am)
3. To receive service requests from NDC's Housing Officers and/or Rough Sleeper Outreach workers
4. To respond to service requests in a timely manner allowing appropriate time allocation for crisis cases

5. To meet Rough Sleepers at appropriate locations including outreach on the street/in the community, at Lynton House, Ilfracombe Town Centre Offices, the Freedom Centre and the Encompass Diner.
6. To work with an integrated and inclusive approach
7. To provide cover in times of planned and unplanned absence
8. To accurately record case-details and outcomes, sharing these in agreed format and periodic intervals with the Northern Devon Hub
9. To attend weekly tasking meetings for the Enhanced Outreach service
10. To attend the fortnightly Northern Devon Hub meeting
11. To attend quarterly monitoring meetings and provide updates on the project as required to enable improvement and monitoring
12. The Rough Sleeper Mental Health Outreach Staff:
 - Must be physically able to cope with 'street work', including accessing remote and rural locations and regular early morning starts
 - Must have relevant experience of working with Rough Sleepers
 - Must be a qualified CPN holding relevant registrations
 - Will have experience of assessing clients' needs and working with adults with multiple issues and/or complex needs who may be isolated or withdrawn
 - Experience of organising and chairing multi agency meetings
 - Experience of dealing with moderate exposure to health and safety risks associated with meeting the client group
 - Will have an enhanced DBS check

NDC's Support

1. NDC's Rough Sleeper Outreach workers will continue to assess new potential / actual rough sleepers using the Devon-wide adopted Homelessness Risk Impact Assessment (HRIA) matrix
2. NDC will offer reasonable access to interview room facilities at Lynton House, Barnstaple

Recording Requirements

1. Capture baseline data via quarterly reports and such reports should include at minimum; clients name, date work started, matrix scores on a monthly basis, types of interventions used, other agencies involved and level of engagement
2. Consider project impact and cost savings to inform future funding
3. Consider project approach to design future service delivery

Targets and Intended Outcomes:

1. To work with 60 rough sleepers per year requiring support to engage in pathways into and through sustainable housing
2. To reduce the flow to rough sleeping
3. To reduce the number of new rough sleeper cases
4. To reduce the time rough sleepers spend on the street
5. To improve access to appropriate accommodation
6. To improve waiting times to access appropriate accommodation
7. To improve the numbers assisted through specialist supported accommodation
8. To increase move-on
9. To reduce revolving door clients through clear identification and client focused solutions
10. To improve the extended health outcomes of rough sleepers and as a consequence reduce access to A&E and wider health services
11. To increase community safety by reducing criminal justice and other court costs
12. To share knowledge and best practice surrounding work with rough sleepers.