

North Devon Council's Enhanced Rough Sleeper Service

Housing First 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 usually 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, Adult Social Care, DPT Mental Health, 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, social care needs, mental health needs 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 enable faster and more sustainable move on, offering accommodation to a greater number with less waiting time
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's vision which is to reduce rough sleeping, not to sustain it

Defining the service of Housing First

- To manage and provide the Housing First service including the provision of a Support Worker which will be available for the duration of the contract
- To only accept referrals from the Northern Devon Hub and more specifically those with a local connection to North Devon
- To deliver a holistic and flexible service to meet the needs of clients
- To provide housing related support to enable clients to live an independent healthy life by developing skills, knowledge and opportunities to manage their tenure and participate in the community

- To ensure that every client has an effective support plan in place that identifies clear goals and which are SMART whilst being linked to appropriate risk assessments
- To update the Northern Devon Hub fortnightly on client's progress and/or any issues
- To ensure on-going and responsive risk assessment appreciating that risks can rapidly change for this user group
- To offer flexible support with the ability to respond quickly to the diverse range and changing needs as the client achieves goals and backward steps/relapse
- To build and maintain strong working relationships with key partners and stakeholders and share information as appropriate

Minimum Requirements of Housing First

The enhanced Rough Sleeper Service will commence on the 01/04/2021. The minimum requirements of the role are:

1. To be able to provide the service for a 12 month period (01/04/2021 to 31/03/2022)
2. To provide and deliver the Housing First Service (including the provision of a Housing First support worker and Housing First Service Manager) which remains true to the Housing First principles for 6 existing North Devon clients and an additional 2 new units of Housing First for North Devon clients
3. To work with an integrated approach
4. To be committed to developing and maintaining positive relationships with partner agencies and the local community
5. To provide cover in times of planned and unplanned absence
6. To accurately record cases details and outcomes, sharing these in agreed format and periodic intervals with the Northern Devon Hub
7. To attend quarterly monitoring meetings and provide updates on the project as required to enable improvement and monitoring

8. The Housing First Support Staff:

- Must have relevant experience of working with Rough Sleepers
- Will have experience of assessing clients' needs and working with adults with 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

- 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.
- NDC will offer reasonable access to interview room facilities at Lynton House, Barnstaple.

Recording Requirements

- 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
- Consider project impact and cost savings to inform future funding
- Consider project approach to design future service delivery

Targets and Intended Outcomes:

- To successfully continue engagement and support with 6 existing North Devon clients and to house an additional 2 complex rough sleepers in North Devon who are requiring support to engage in pathways to and

through sustainable housing equipping them with the required skills to sustain a tenancy with no/minimum support

- To reduce the flow to rough sleeping
- To reduce the time rough sleepers spend on the street
- To improve sustainable move-on
- To reduce revolving door clients through clear identification and client focused solutions
- To improve the extended health outcomes of rough sleepers and as a consequence reduce access to A&E and wider health services
- To increase community safety by reducing criminal justice and other court costs
- Reduce access to A&E and wider health services
- To reduce criminal justice and other court costs
- To share knowledge and best practice surrounding work with rough sleepers.