

The system providing services to help and end rough sleeping in ND and T is significant and highly integrated. It works to good effect in an area where the need for these services is widely acknowledged to be high. The services form part of the local infrastructure which provides a pathway for people with complex needs to take them from being street homeless to being accommodated in settled accommodation.

The housing support commissioned by this contract provides unique and critical infrastructure i.e. 3x hostels: Maples Barnstaple 9 beds, Alexandra House Barnstaple 4 beds and Charris House Bideford 9 beds. Other elements of the local system include a drug and alcohol specialist, a general practitioner, physical health nurse, mental health nurse and specialist housing officers. Further types of accommodation are also available: 'pods', Housing First units and shared accommodation for individuals whose needs are less complex.

The local demand for these services is increasing and this mirrors the SW and national picture set out in DLUHC's Official Statistics which were published on the 28th February 2023, which is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-snapshot-in-england-autumn-2022/rough-sleeping-snapshot-in-england-autumn-2022>.

NDC recognises services should not be solely focused on one particular disadvantaged population, but does consider that the scale and intensity of the current system is in accordance/ commensurate with local need.

It considers that any proposals to reduce the level of access to supported housing would, therefore, be acting contrary to the guiding principle of addressing health inequalities and would limit this cohort's opportunity to lead healthy lives in settled accommodation.

Maximising the positive outcomes from the current system is likely to provide better value for money by limiting future health and social care costs.

The effectiveness of the current system has encouraged/ stimulated inter professional and intra-agency collaboration. A decommissioning of any part of the system runs the risk of losing the opportunity to work in this way.

It is of course appropriate, however, to challenge the way the wider rough sleeper services are delivered when financial challenges and increasing demand are impacting on all of our organisations. NDC would recommend the commissioning of a new Homelessness Prevention 18+ Needs Assessment and the continuation of the current arrangements until the findings have been considered.