

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 (NDDC's) area since 2008. NDDC currently employs a full time Rough Sleeper Housing Specialist, a full time Anti-Social Behaviour Officer (ASB), a full time Community Safety Officer and a Service Lead, Housing Vulnerable Persons and Community Safety who oversees the Rough Sleeper Service.

Clients are usually those who are currently experiencing rough sleeping, have a history of periodic rough sleeping, those in rough sleeper temporary accommodation, or, those that are imminently facing rough sleeping. Last year, NDC provided services to 246 new rough sleeper cases. Those rough sleeping in NDDC on any one night are estimated to be 15, 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 initially with specialist rough sleeper temporary accommodation and following this 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, NHS Physical Health, DPT Mental Health, Devon & Cornwall 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.

In addition to this there are other supported accommodation options available across Northern Devon but these fall out of the remit of any commissioned / ring-fenced / accommodation with nomination rights.

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 either be supporting or to quickly re engage with clients who are likely to lose their accommodation (returners)
3. To quickly identify accommodation solutions to those faced with rough sleeping (prevention)
4. To identify, mental ill-health, physical health needs and substance misuse and to either offer practical therapeutic support or signpost clients to effectively address this
5. To provide enhanced outreach services to street rough sleepers to enable access to specialist supported accommodation pathways or alternative appropriate accommodation
6. To provide enhanced multi-agency interventions in specialist rough sleeper accommodation to enable faster and more sustainable move on, offering accommodation to a greater number with less waiting time
7. To show a commitment to following any agendas set by MHCLG in relation to Rough Sleeper Prevention & Recovery (RSPRG) and flexing services to meet current service demands
8. To show a commitment to provide flexible specialist accommodation to meet current service demands for some of our most complex clients to

improve flow rate through the existing provision and prevent a revolving door scenario

9. To follow NDC's vision, which is to prevent rough sleeping, and where this is not possible reduce the length of time somebody spends on the streets and make it non recurrent.

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

1. To engage with clients who have rough slept for a number of months or are revolving door clients and who are considered to be complex in order to where possible effect sustainable long term change
2. To deliver a holistic and flexible service to meet the needs of rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping working within a person centred approach, demonstrating creativity and innovation
3. To establish and maintain strong, effective (not exclusive) relationships with rough sleepers, those in TA etc and health and welfare professionals from a range of statutory and voluntary sector organisations
4. To provide continued and consistent contact with clients ensuring they are supported 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 facilitate multi-agency meetings where appropriate
10. To undertake weekly (at minimum) 'street work' alongside NDC's Rough Sleeper Outreach Workers and additional Enhanced Rough Sleeper Service team members

- 11.To refer to additional support services for specialist support
- 12.To provide advice and assistance in accordance with policy including NDC Homelessness Prevention policies
- 13.As and when required assist the Housing Officer to gather evidence and information as part of their homeless assessment enquiries and with colleagues to prevent and relieve homelessness
- 14.To support the delivery of the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol in accordance with local policy and national guidance

Minimum Requirements of the Mental Health Service Role

The Mental Health role will commence on the 01/04/2025. The minimum requirements of the role are:

1. To be able to provide the service for a 12 month period (01/04/2025 to 31/03/2026). Should further funding be made available from Central Government a service delivery review will take place to determine whether it is appropriate and still relevant to extend service delivery
2. To provide Assertive Outreach / In-Reach Services (as detailed below) for three days per week to meet the Rough Sleeper Service demand. The service will require very early morning starts on some occasions and in addition some evenings / weekends during times of crisis and in agreement with Management
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 clients at NDC approved locations including outreach on the street/in the community, at Lynton House, Barnstaple, Ilfracombe Outreach office locations and the Freedom Centre
6. To work with an integrated approach
7. To provide cover in times of planned and unplanned absence (where this is not achievable, this must be declared and conversations must immediately take place)

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
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11. To attend weekly tasking meetings for the Enhanced Outreach service
12. To attend quarterly monitoring meetings and provide updates on the project as required to enable improvement and monitoring
13. 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

Recording Requirements

1. Capture baseline data via quarterly reports and such reports should include at minimum; clients name, date work started, 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

Desired Outcomes of the Service:

1. To work with rough sleepers, clients vulnerably housed, in rough sleeper temporary accommodation and / or supported accommodation who are requiring support to engage in pathways into and through mental health support services
2. To prevent clients rough sleeping where possible
3. To reduce revolving door clients through clear identification and client focused solutions
4. To reduce the flow to rough sleeping through prevention activity
5. To reduce the time rough sleepers spend on the street
6. To improve the numbers assisted through specialist supported accommodation
7. To improve sustainable move-on
8. To collectively look at personalised, person centred interventions for rough sleepers, those at risk of rough sleeping
9. To respond to the changing needs of rough sleepers and those faced with rough sleeping
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.
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