



Rough Sleeping in Brighton & Hove Briefing Pack

Thursday 2nd February
4pm-6pm
Jurys Inn Brighton

1. Outline for meeting

Graham Bartlett, Chair of Adult Safeguarding Board, will provide an overview of the current situation, explaining on the complexity and seriousness of our current situation.

As a group, with the help of expert stakeholders we will examine the following areas:

- What added value can we as BHC/City partners bring? What do statutory agencies need to do to help with this?
- How well do services work together? Is there a case for better coordination?
- What are the most effective interventions for rough sleepers without a local connection and therefore no prospect of being housed locally (approximately 65-70% of total rough sleepers in the city)?
- How well do we publicise what services are on offer and how do we ensure that the business community and the wider community are aware of this?

2. Context/History

The Rough Sleepers Strategy was approved by the Local Authority and signed-up to by Brighton & Hove Connected in June 2016. Extracts from the Strategy:

The issue of rough sleeping has become more acute recently with a visibly increased presence on the streets. This not only impacts on the individual's life chances, but also the city's reputation and costs to public services and business

However, Brighton and Hove has consistently faced the issue of homelessness over decades for a variety of reasons. Following WW2 and thereafter many men returned to no families and no home, which often resulted in a transient lifestyle in order to find work and accommodation. Pressure on public housing made the situation difficult from that time on.

Government action at that time included the development of DHSS Reception Centres, often using the sites of Victorian workhouses. Brighton's reception centre was located at the top of Elm Grove, and was commonly referred to as the Spike. The Spike provided emergency accommodation and by the mid-1980s had developed the function of resettling people into more permanent housing rather than just providing emergency accommodation.

There were a network of Spikes across the country, and they in part helped determine the routes that single homeless men followed. There were spikes in London, Oxford, Southampton, Sittingbourne and Bristol, and all of these towns became destinations for single homeless men by the 1970s, and even today remain hotspots for rough sleeping.

Later, during the 1980s, the policy of Community Care resulted in the closure of a large number of institutions, with the net result of increases in individuals, both men and women, moving into less secure housing and often having mental Health or other complex needs.

Places that already had a history of supporting single homeless men became destinations for this group, often on the advice of the institutions that were closing. Local services responded accordingly in a compassionate way with the emergence of soup runs, day centres and night shelters.

Economic insecurity, the shrinking of welfare state provision and increasing pressure on housing have all contributed to a worsening situation, and by the 1990s the government established the rough sleepers unit, headed by Louise Casey to address the problem. This led to an injection of

resources and development of new models of intervention which are largely in place today – the resources however are not.

The housing market in Brighton and Hove is extremely pressured with a limited supply and high rental costs and this will continue to exacerbate the problem.

Local estimates indicate that there are around 20- 30 new Rough Sleepers arriving in Brighton & Hove/week, giving an annual total of 1000- 1500. These numbers will continue to stretch services and most will not have a realistic chance of being housed locally.

3. Why do people become homeless in Brighton & Hove?

The table below shows the most recent data for why people present as homeless in Brighton & Hove compared to England. The rough sleeping population will display some variance to these more general statistics

Reason for Homelessness	England 2015/16	Brighton & Hove 2015/16
Eviction by parents	14.8%	18.2%
Eviction by Friends or relatives	12.4%	14.4%
Termination of AST	31%	21.4%
Other loss of rented accommodation	6.2%	4.5%
Domestic Violence	11.4%	7.5%
Non – Violent breakdown with Partner	4.7%	5.5%
Other	19.5%	28.6%

Brief over view of recent rough sleeping figures in Brighton & Hove:

Total Estimate for night of 8th November 2016	144
Male	126
Female	18
Under 25	11
Nationality	
UK	119
EU	11
Non EU	7
Unknown at time of estimate	7
2015 Estimate: 78 - Despite the increase we have not seen a doubling of numbers on the street but the 2016 estimate was more robust with more agencies taking part.	

Our most recent data return for Quarter 2 for Rough Sleeper Outreach saw the team work with a total of 295 Individuals . Of new clients in Q2:	
Male	73%
Female	26%
Trans	0.7%
No local connection	68%
Age Range	
19-25	12%
26-54	81%

55-64	6%
65+	0.7%

The main reasons for homelessness for locally connected people are in order:	
Evicted Hostel	21%
Relationship breakdown (family, friends, partner)	18%
Abandoned accommodation	14%
Evicted local authority	6%
leaving prison	6%
Evicted PRS or Landlord Sold Property	5%
We are examining the hostel eviction data; we know that this number of people was not evicted from council commissioned hostels in this quarter. Some of these individuals will have been evicted from hostels in previous quarters and be waiting for accommodation and some will not have been evicted from locally commissioned hostels.	

For non-locally connected people the reasons are:	
Just moved to the area	25%
Abandoned accommodation	12%
Relationship breakdown (family / partner)	10%
Evicted hostel	6%
Fleeing violence or abuse	5%

Current Waiting Lists for all types of Supported Accommodation (inc single homeless (high and low support, young people and mental health)	
Total people waiting	300
Individuals rough sleeping/waiting on the streets for accommodation.	99
People waiting for accommodation while sofa surfing and at high risk of rough sleeping.	45

4. Summary of Equinox street drinking and begging audit July 2016

The Equinox Drug & Alcohol Outreach Team is commissioned within the Pavilions drug and alcohol treatment service to carry out an annual, week long street drinking audit. The audit helps Pavilions identify those in need of engagement and also provides information about changing patterns and demographics. The methodology is identical each year, allowing comparison with previous years.

The main findings this year are

- Increased numbers of street drinkers from 64 in 2015 to 93 in 2016
- Increased proportion of street drinkers who are Rough Sleepers from 28% in 2013 to 50 % in 2016
- 69% of those begging are rough sleepers
- 90% of those begging presented with problematic drug or alcohol use

Breakdown of Street Drinkers by accommodation type (percentages rounded to the nearest whole number):		
Hostels	11	12%
Rough Sleepers	46	50%

Council	4	4%
PRS	5	5%
Sofa surfing	3	3%
Band 3	3	3%
Emergency Accommodation	7	8%
Unknown	13	14%
Housing First	1	1%
Total Street Drinking	93	

Breakdown of those Begging by accommodation type (percentages rounded to the nearest whole number):		
Hostels	7	14%
Rough Sleepers	35	69%
Council	1	2%
Band 3	1	2%
Unknown	5	10%
Emergency Accommodation	2	4%
Total Begging	51	

5. How does Brighton & Hove Compare with other Hotspot areas across the country?

- **Bristol**

The number of people sleeping rough in Bristol has been recorded at 74 during the annual count. Although this represents a drop in the official figure recorded last year, the council and its partners recognises nobody should be forced to sleep rough and remains committed to addressing the problem of homeless and reducing rough sleeping – eventually to zero - in the city.

- **Oxford**

A street count conducted in Oxford at the beginning of November found 33 people rough sleeping, down from 39 in 2015. However, the council and homeless organisations estimate that at least 47 people could be sleeping rough on any given night, down from 56 in 2015.

6. What Resources do we have to combat Homelessness?

- **Rough Sleeping Services**

It is important to remember that we may not be aware of every charity funding stream in the city – for example, church groups may fundraise to support services etc. Specific money allocated to rough sleeping may well not represent the total amount of resource/ service going on rough sleeping as some could be subsumed in mainstream budgets.

- **Council Commissioned Services**

£422,000.00 is for street outreach services, day centre services provided by First Base and St Mungos. The 422k also includes 40K for the SWEP service. These are all provided exclusively to rough sleepers.

£3.8 million includes the young people's housing advice service which works with rough sleepers and a variety of accommodation and support services accessible to locally connected rough sleepers and single homeless people.

This includes externally commissioned hostels and supported accommodation for single homeless people, rough sleepers, young people and those with mental health needs. As well as supported accommodation this also includes support services such as work and learning, and floating support to settle people in independent tenancies and prevent eviction.

The £3.8m is accommodation and associated support, it is not specifically for rough sleepers. Accommodation is accessible for rough sleepers, those with a housing duty in B&B, those referred from prison or discharged from hospital.

Brighton & Hove has recently been awarded a grant to develop an even more effective early intervention scheme focussing on homelessness prevention and contingency planning for potential housing breakdown for those most at risk.

- **Public Health**

Public Health provides approximately £200k (+/- 10%) in Equinox, through Pavilion, to provide substance misuse services for homeless people. Brighton & Hove City Council awarded just over £352k for the last quarter of this financial year and the following two years. Aim of the funding was to target interventions to help new rough sleepers

- Reduce the flow of new rough sleepers
- Provide a safe place to stay
- Help new rough sleepers from the streets to independence

- **Sussex Police**

Sussex Police fund a Street Community Team which currently consists of:

- x1 Police Sergeant
- x2 Police Constables
- x2 Police Community Support Officers.

The aim of this provision is have bespoke intervention and engagement with persistent offenders and offer support to those most vulnerable. This requires a detailed multi-agency approach. The police aims are primarily to protect the vulnerable, reduce offending and ASB, reduce demand on services and maintain trust and confidence of communities in the city.

7. Availability of Supported Accommodation.

Supported accommodation is generally prioritised for those in need with a local connection As of May 2016, the city has 272 hostel beds and 25 mental health hostel beds.

There are also 215 local people on the waiting list for supported accommodation (82 of which are considered a high priority):

- 151 for hostel places with 24 hour support (43 high priority)
- 24 for young people's services with 24 hour support (20 high priority)
- 40 for mental health accommodation (19 high priority)

On average, it costs around £10,000 each year to support someone in a hostel, temporary accommodation or Housing First arrangement.

Information is not available for many of the hidden homeless in our city that may be living in squats, sleeping on sofas, or staying with friends and family.

Breakdown of Rough sleepers currently waiting for Supported Accommodation:

- 3 Young people who are Rough Sleepers currently waiting for 2 high support beds and 1 Barnardos placement
- 1 person with Mental Health issues waiting for self-contained accommodation as MH needs preclude sharing
- 81 people rough sleeping waiting for Band 2 Hostels which are staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- 11 people rough sleeping waiting for Band 3 Supported accommodation with support provided during office hours.

8. The City's rough Sleepers Strategy

The City's Strategic Priorities - To help us come together as a city and deliver the strategic vision, we have focussed our strategy on five priority areas:

1. **Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping** – to provide a consistent message about housing options that helps services prevent homelessness and moves people away from sleeping rough
2. **Rapid Assessment and Reconnection** – outreach to assess the needs of people sleeping rough to plan support, and where appropriate, reconnect people with friends, families and support networks, before they are fully immersed in street life
3. **Improving Health** – to ensure people sleeping rough are supported by health and social care services that help them to regain their independence
4. **A Safe City** – making sure people sleeping rough, residents and visitors are safe and free from intimidation
5. **Pathways to Independence** – making sure supported accommodation offers solutions appropriate to residents needs

There are 5 Homeless Strategy Working Groups are tasked with developing action plans to implement the priorities of the Strategy. These are set out below

- Integrated Support Pathway;
- Work & Learning;
- Youth Homelessness;
- Homeless Prevention;
- Day & Street Services.

These groups are being reviewed to develop stronger links with health and other support services to encourage the shared ownership of actions which relate to improving services and improving the outcomes of service users. This model will include wider representation from service users and be implemented by March 2017

9. Other Local initiatives

- **Sussex Nightstop**

Sussex Nightstop provides a safety net for young people who are at risk of homelessness, providing emergency accommodation in the homes of volunteers. We are affiliated with DePaul UK and work alongside the YMCA Downlink group and social services. Sussex Nightstop provides emergency accommodation for 16-25 year olds. We train and support members of the local community who have a spare room to offer to a young person. Our aim is to catch these young people before they begin rough sleeping and get involved in the many dangers associated with street homelessness. These young people can stay with us for a night or up to a few weeks while their longer term housing situation is addressed.

- **Make Change Count**

The campaign has three main aims:

- Helping rough sleepers to access support services available in the city
- Asking residents to say where they've seen those in need so tailored help can be offered
- Suggesting an alternative giving option to donating on the street at www.localgiving.org/appeal/makechangeount

- **Severe Weather Shelters**

Severe weather shelters are open in extreme weather conditions, acting on information from the Met Office warning when the conditions are due to be harsh.

Also called the SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocols), the severe weather shelters are run by [Brighton Housing Trust \(BHT\)](#). BHT work with our street outreach service run by [St Mungo's](#). When the shelters open, St Mungo's help BHT co-ordinate shelter places and work with other local organisations to tell rough sleepers where to go.

The service is run by staff, including managers, from day services. Due to the complex needs of some clients we only use experienced staff. When the shelters open, staff work very long hours to care for those in need and this is not sustainable long term.

We are always as flexible as possible, and adapt to the needs of rough sleepers. We work hard to make sure vulnerable people on our streets are cared for, not just in extreme weather, but throughout the year.