



# **North Derbyshire Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020- 2021**

## **Introduction.**

Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council and North East Derbyshire District Council (the Councils) already have a joint North Derbyshire Homelessness Strategy. This is due to be reviewed and updated in 2021.

Due to the ever increasing importance of tackling rough sleeping it was agreed that the Councils would develop this standalone Rough Sleeping Strategy with the intention being to merge both strategies into one comprehensive Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy following the review in 2021.

Rough sleeping is the most visible and acute form of homelessness. The life expectancy of long-term rough sleeper is 47 compared to 77 for the general population. Two people who were known to have slept rough in North Derbyshire have passed away in the last 12 months with their deaths, whilst not all on the street, being linked to them rough sleeping.

## **Definition of Rough Sleeping**

The government defines rough sleeping as being a person who is 'bedded down' (sleeping/trying to sleep) or 'about to bed down' in the open air or another place not designed for habitation. This will include being on the street, in a doorway, park, car, derelict building, bus/train station, tent or car. A person's housing status is not relevant; the key criteria is that they have been found 'bedded down'/'about to bed down' in a place that someone ordinarily wouldn't try to sleep in.

The government expects each local authority to carry out a formal count/make a robust estimate of rough sleeping numbers in the authority area every November. A count should be carried out between 2a.m. and 5a.m. (when people are likely to be bedded down) and try to cover every place that rough sleepers are likely to be found.

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## Number of Rough Sleepers in North Derbyshire

The number of people sleeping rough in North Derbyshire has risen substantially in recent years based upon the November headcounts:

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>BDC</b>	2	1	2	4	2	4	7	5	2	3
<b>CBC</b>	6	4	3	9	8	0	10	12	18	13
<b>NED DC</b>	0	1	5	0	2	3	2	3	3	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>16</b>

There has been a 65% increase in rough sleeper numbers in the period 2010 to 2017. The number reported represents the number of people found sleeping rough on a single night; rather than the number of people who will sleep rough at some point over a three or six month time period. It's believed that there are three to four times more people who might sleep rough over a three or six month period than who are found sleeping rough on a single night.

Data collected from the Winter Nightshelter in Chesterfield recorded 117 different people using the shelter across a 4 month period between 1<sup>st</sup> December 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019.

Chesterfield has had a higher level of rough sleeping than Bolsover and North East Derbyshire Districts.

It is believed that unless the councils take a different approach to tackling rough sleeping that the numbers of people sleeping rough, and the adverse effects of doing so on them, will continue to rise.

A key priority will be to improve our intelligence on the profile of people who are sleeping rough over a period of time including numbers, frequency of rough sleeping, gender, ethnicity, nationality, support needs and contact with other services including the criminal justice system and health.

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## **Core Existing Services**

There are a whole host of services working with rough sleepers in the North Derbyshire area and the following is not designed to be exhaustive but to give readers an idea of the current available services in the sub-regional area:

**Street Outreach Service:** The service is managed by Pathways of Chesterfield, a specialist homelessness support charity. This service is commissioned by the three Councils. Pathways provides an outreach service to find rough sleepers and to help them come off the street thereafter. The service attempts to engage with rough sleepers and support them into engaging with other statutory and non-statutory services as appropriate.

**The North Derbyshire Single Persons Homeless Pathway:** The pathway comprises of a **Homelessness HUB**, a single point of contact where all referrals for single homeless people are sent from key agencies such as Probation, Hospitals & Prisons. The service is commissioned by the Councils and provided by Pathways of Chesterfield who, upon receipt of a referral, tailor a bespoke package of support and interventions for clients in partnership with the council's homelessness prevention teams. Clients benefit from the in-house health and support workers there are a number of activities people can access as well as training and education opportunities. In cases where there are more serious blockages to housing a **Multi-Agency Panel Meeting** can be called to develop a person centered action plan around the individual aimed at securing accommodation.

**Derby City Mission Winter Nightshelter:** Provides an emergency accommodation service for rough sleepers in the area. The Nightshelter operates on a rolling bases utilizing 7 different Church buildings that have volunteered one night per week. This provides a bed for up to 15 guests and includes a hot evening meal and breakfast in the morning. This service operates between 1<sup>st</sup> December and 31<sup>st</sup> March.

**Newbold Court:** This is supported accommodation for medium to high level vulnerable adults including rough sleepers and single homeless people. It is a 17 bed unit managed by Action and is commissioned by the Council. NB, at the time of writing the property is undergoing extensive refurbishment and is expected to be

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operation in January 2020. The Newbold court project in its new form will feature a 24hr concierge service to meet the needs of more vulnerable clients and the project will combine effectively with the winter night shelter provision and street out-reach teams. The increased capacity of Newbold Court will increase much needed accommodation supply in the area and other services including Actions Sustainable Tenancies Project will serve as move on option for clients needing reduced support towards independent living.

**Platform For Life:** Provides 8 units of supported accommodation for young people aged 18 to 25. This is provided by Action Housing.

**Sustainable Tenancies Project:** Provided by Action and provides floating support to vulnerable adults who have a history of failed tenancies for a variety of reasons. The project involves the Council leasing properties to Action who offer tenancies with support to enable people to become “tenancy ready”. The property with tenant in situ is handed back to the council as a secure tenant. The STP project has also been rolled out in North East Derbyshire where properties have been procured from the private rented sector. There are currently

**County Wide Rough Sleeper Outreach:** A team of 5 rough sleeper outreach workers covering the Derbyshire County area. Funding was secured from MHCLG to establish the service which will target hot spot areas to reduce rough sleeping. P3 have been awarded the contract to provide this much needed service. P3 are experts in the field. The outreach team will provide a high level of intervention and engagement to the rough sleeping population that will lead to more people being taken off the street.

**Rough Sleeper Co-ordinators:** Consists of a team of 2 specialist strategic co-ordinators covering Derbyshire County as a whole. They are funded via the Rapid Rehousing Pathway Fund and aim to carry out a review and gap analysis of service across the County. One of the co-ordinators is based within the Homeless Prevention team at Chesterfield Borough Council.

**Call B4 You Serve:** A unique and innovative service designed with landlords in mind to prevent homelessness and increase housing supply in the private rented sector. Delivered by DASH Services, Call B4 You Serve provides a support, problem solving and advice service for landlords who are considering giving notice to their

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tenants. The philosophy of the service is to solve issues including debt and rent arrears without a notice being served. The service currently spans 16 local authority areas and is set to expand even further. The service also acts as an informal PRS lettings service and procurement vehicle. Strong links and partnerships have been forged with landlords and letting agencies across Derbyshire and this has increased the supply of accommodation for people that need it. For those who are considering giving up being a landlord or looking to sell properties the service can connect landlords with supported housing providers who will lease properties to rent as supported accommodation. This in turn increases housing supply in the homeless sector. Significantly, this service has a role in preventing rough sleeping. The project has established a strong partnership with the Chesterfield Job Centre Plus team. Here, work coaches who identify clients at risk of homelessness from private rented accommodation contact CB4YS for intervention. Likewise, landlords who make contact with the Job Centre with Universal Credit housing element queries are directed to CB4YS.

**Derbyshire Law Centre PRS Prevention Service:** Funded via a successful bid to the PRS Access Fund the service compliments Call B4 You Serve by offering support for tenants renting privately who are experiencing difficulties with the tenancy. A team of three prevention workers based across Derbyshire & Chesterfield providing support and practical solutions to reduce homelessness from the private rented sector.

## **National Rough Sleeping Strategy**

The government published its national rough sleeper strategy in August 2018. The Councils decided to produce a Rough Sleeping Strategy as a supplemental document alongside the existing joint Homelessness Strategy 2016-2021. This was in response to the national strategy being published and to ensure that this strategy reflected and responded to the national approach. The national strategy includes the targets to halve rough sleeper numbers (from the 2017 baseline) by 2022 and to end rough sleeping by 2027. The national strategy is rooted in three 'pillars':

- To **prevent** new people from starting to sleep rough
  - To **intervene** rapidly when people start to sleep rough to help them off the street
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- To promote a person's **recovery** once they are off the street to build positive lives and don't return to rough sleeping

This North Derbyshire Rough Sleeper Strategy will therefore be based upon the same **three 'pillars' of prevention, intervention and recovery**.

The national strategy emphasises the importance of local authorities forging strong partnerships with other public services, the third sector, the business sector, community groups, the general public, people with lived experience of rough sleeping and current rough sleepers to tackle rough sleeping. Strong partnerships will be the basis of everything we do in North Derbyshire.

The national strategy highlights the importance of the role of health services in tackling rough sleeping because of the high proportion of rough sleepers who suffer from mental ill-health, physical ill-health and addiction issues, the challenges rough sleepers face in accessing mainstream health services and the adverse health outcomes of sleeping rough including reduced life expectancy. This strategy will set out our plans to promote the importance of health interventions in tackling rough sleeping and demonstrate the importance of developing recovery pathways rather than solely housing pathways.

## **Government Funding**

The government announced a funding pot of £30m for 2018/19 via the Rapid Rehousing Pathway and Rough Sleeper Initiative Funds. Joint applications were submitted on behalf of all housing authorities in Derbyshire and we were successful in acquiring funding totaling just over £408,000.

The government has announced an equivalent funding pot of £45m for 2019/20 and we will be expected to bid for a share of the funding. It is likely that there will be competition for this money and that preference will be given to the authorities with the highest number of rough sleepers and those who have made a commitment to deliver the most significant reduction in numbers.

The national rough sleeping strategy refers to a number of funding pots that could be available to tackle rough sleeping and we will

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make sure that we submit bids, as appropriate, for available funds.

## **Health and Rough Sleeping**

The national strategy on rough sleeping emphasises the importance of health services in tackling rough sleeping. This principle very much applies in North Derbyshire given the number of rough sleepers who suffer from acute mental ill-health, physical ill-health and addiction issues. These support needs lead to people starting, staying and going back to rough sleeping. All of these challenges have been exacerbated by the rise in the use of substances such as Spice/Mamba.

There are some key structural actions and ambitions, which are recommendations in the national strategy, to promote joint working:

- The Derbyshire Health and Housing Systems Group leading on the development of a county wide Rough Sleeping strategy to make the health needs of rough sleepers a strategic priority.
- A review of every death of a person known to sleep rough to be carried out, ideally by the Adult Safeguarding Board, to look at opportunities for improved working including between health and housing services.

We would like to bring health services directly to rough sleepers on the street: '**Street Medicine**'. Having mental health professionals and addiction support workers, attached to the Street Outreach Service/wider Street Support Service, is one of our commitments to explore and develop where possible. The aim being for mental health/addiction support workers delivering support on the street and helping people access mainstream health services thereafter.

**Primary Health Care** is another commitment of this strategy to explore the commissioning of specialist rough sleeper General Practitioners. Whilst we acknowledge that this is an extremely ambitious commitment, we firmly believe that this would be an essential service for rough sleepers.

'Street Medicine' and Primary Health Care should include community or street based prescribing including detox from substances such as Spice. We are looking at how this successfully works in other areas such as Worksop. It will rely on the Street Outreach Service and Clinical Commissioning Groups working in

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partnership.

We need to look at how health services can promote recovery and help keep people off the street. A key service will be the Community Mental Health services that will provide people with support to come off/stay off the street and also help people access wider health services.

**North Derbyshire Homelessness Forum:** Re-established in 2017 the homeless forum now plays a pivotal role in bringing together services and organisations from across multiple sectors to network, share information, learn about new legislation and form partnerships to reduce and prevent homelessness. From 2020 we will be holding forum on a quarterly basis to serve demand. Over the last few years we have used the forum as a primary vehicle for consultation. The single persons' pathway took shape via the forum from the feedback and advice given by attendees and over the course of 2020 and 2021 it will help us to deliver the rough sleeper action plan and the next homelessness & rough sleeping strategy.

### **Community Groups**

There are a number of community-based groups that are active in trying to help rough sleepers in the area. Some of the groups provide outreach services and others focus on trying to keep people as safe as possible on the street (provision of food/clothes/bedding/tents). Some groups pro-actively engage with the Council whilst others do not. The strategy recognises the positive role that community groups can play and statutory services want to positively engage with all the community groups. We recognise that some rough sleepers, who have had negative experience of statutory services, might prefer to engage with the community groups more than the council. Engagement with these important services will be driven the homelessness forum and through our continued commitment to reach out to as many services as possible. One of the areas for engagement we want to take forward with community groups is the role they can play in supporting people in their tenancies and tackling community isolation/loneliness under the banner of promoting recovery.

### **Engagement with the General Public**

Most local authorities have developed communication plans around

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rough sleeping, begging and street based living that have been somewhat negative in the messages conveyed. For example, discouraging people from giving to people on the street because it sustains rough sleeping and substance misuse that could lead to more harm. Overwhelmingly such communication approaches have been negatively received by the public.

The strategy recognises that telling people not to do something, when they meet a person who is in need, is the wrong approach to take. Rather we need to do more about highlighting the positive things that services do and the positive ways that people can help. One of the best ways we can do this is to give an increased voice to people with lived experience who have come off the street so that they can tell their story on what worked for them.

### **'Pillars' of Rough Sleeping**

**Prevention** – One of the key actions is to better understand the trigger points (such as leaving prison/falling into rent arrears) that lead to rough sleeping and to put in place timely interventions to prevent rough sleeping thereafter. A key part of this work will be the **'duty to refer'** on all public bodies, that came into force on 1 October 2018, to refer people who are homeless/threatened with homelessness to the housing authority for assistance. We need to develop comparable information sharing arrangements with housing associations and third sector partners.

**Intervention** – The intervention pillar is about rapid action to help people get off the street as quickly as possible. We believe that the need is more complex than this with services often having to engage with people on multiple occasions before they decide they are ready to accept help. Therefore we need to ensure that, when this window of opportunity arises, we are ready to put in place housing and support options on an immediate basis. It may well be that people need to receive health related services before they are willing to engage on housing options. The offer of health care/other support may well build up trust with the person so that they are more willing to engage on the offer of housing. It may also be that the person is willing to engage with a specific service, including community groups, and therefore this service should take the lead on offering help.

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## Appendix A

### Table of Commitments.

#### Prevention:

1.	Improve data intelligence base/profile of people sleeping rough in North Derbyshire
2.	Explore early interventions such as education in schools
3.	Provide a programme of training to ensure all public bodies understand the 'duty to refer' in respect of rough sleeping
4.	Request that the Clinical Commissioning Group and Health & Wellbeing Boards make the health needs of rough sleepers a strategic priority
5.	Strategic co-ordination of funding applications to include Rough Sleeper Initiative, Cold Weather Fund and any other available funding under national Rough Sleeper Strategy
6.	Better understanding of how to help people with no recourse to public funds coming out of hospital/prisons

**Recovery** – the conventional model of tenancy sustainment (housing related support/help with property furnishing) is, whilst important, not going to be enough to promote recovery and keep people from returning to the street. Discussions with people with lived experience of rough sleeping has highlighted that isolation, loneliness, boredom and inactivity are reasons why people leave their tenancies and gravitate back to the street. We need, under the banner of recovery, to put in place a package of measures to help build their lives in their new homes.

We need to come up with a package of measures that the Council can cover the cost of that help former rough sleepers stay in their new homes.

#### Targets

Our main target is in keeping with the National objective which is:

Halve the number of people sleeping rough by 2022

To have no people sleeping rough by 2027.

#### Our Table of Commitments:

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7.	Develop a range of Move on options including PRS accommodation.
8.	Strategic co-ordination and increase in provision of appropriate supported accommodation options
9.	Develop provision of 24/7 supported accommodation.
10.	Look at positive ways of engaging and communicating with the general public about helping rough sleepers
11.	Build in-reach services with hospitals/prisons to ensure no one is discharged to the street
12.	Review and update hospital discharge policies.
13.	Ensure provision of services for priority groups including Veterans, LGBT+, BAME, same sex couples and families, DV, MH and physical disabilities, care leavers, ex-offenders, Gypsy and Travellers
14.	Build working relationships with the DWP including 'Homeless Champions' in every Job Centre Plus
15.	Ensure we offer the right services to people who have been victims of trafficking or modern slavery
<b>Intervention:</b>	
16.	Increase and expand the provision of local outreach work to include quick intervention to prevent people from becoming entrenched
17.	Develop a 'Street Medicine' model including community prescription
18.	Improve access to emergency accommodation including crash pads
19.	Future commitment to the provision of a winter nightshelter including integration of health services into the services offered.
20.	Explore provision of storage facilities for rough sleeper's possessions.
<b>Recovery:</b>	
21.	Work with partners to build a programme of recovery options to help people stay off the street
22.	Work with partners to develop a needle exchange
23.	Explore provision of specialist mental health support from within housing options services.
24.	Develop provision of intense support for individuals with high level and multiple needs
25.	Implement a panel cross sector panel of experts for individuals with high level and multiple needs.
26.	Engage with Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

**Chesterfield Borough Council Priorities:**

8.	Strategic co-ordination and increase in provision of appropriate supported accommodation options
9.	Develop provision of 24/7 supported accommodation.
16.	Increase and expand the provision of local outreach work to include quick intervention to prevent people from becoming entrenched
23.	Explore provision of specialist mental health support from within housing options services.
25.	Implement a panel cross sector panel of experts for individuals with high level and multiple needs.