Tackling Homelessness: National Strategies, Local Solutions.

OECD Expert Workshop on Homelessness and Affordable Housing Policies

Wednesday 27 November 2019
The number of individuals recorded on the annual rough sleeping snapshot fell for the first time in 8 years in 2018 to 4,677 (Source: Homelessness statistics, MHCLG).

This was down by 74 people or 2% from the 2017 total of 4,751, and was up 2,909 people or 165% from the 2010 total of 1,768.

The snapshot shows people sleeping rough in a single night. In England over the course of 2018, we estimate that 51,000 individuals slept rough.
A lack of affordable housing and a high level of support needs amongst rough sleeping cohorts

- **A lack of affordable housing**
  - This graph shows the percentage of private rental properties in an area that would be covered by the Local Housing Allowance (LHA).
  - Rising rents in the private rental sector, combined with the LHA freeze, has resulted in fewer private rented properties being affordable in areas where homelessness is more prevalent.

- **Individuals who sleep rough often have support needs**
  - 80% of individuals who sleep rough report at least 1 support need.
  - 50% have mental health issues, over 40% have drug or alcohol support needs.
  - 36% have served a prison sentence
  - 60% of individuals that rough sleep each year are new to rough sleeping – highlighting a need for a preventative approach

Support needs amongst rough sleepers

- UK Armed Forces
- Care Leaver
- Served a prison sentence
- Drug support
- Not in employment or training
- Alcohol
- Mental health

Source: analysis of VOA & DWP data
Since 2017 there has been an increased focus on reducing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping, and in August 2018 the government published its Rough Sleeping Strategy. The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government has established a Homelessness Advice and Support Team, and in April 2018 the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 came into force. In June 2018, the Rough Sleeping Initiative Year 1 was announced, with £30m allocated to LAs for 2018/19. In September 2018, the Rough Sleeping Strategy Delivery plan was published. In October 2018, the Duty to Refer came into effect. In December 2018, the Final Rapid Rehousing Pathway was announced. In November 2019, £34m was allocated to LAs for 2019/20. In September 2019, Cold Weather Fund 2019 and the Rough Sleeping Initiative Year 2 were announced. In May 2019, the Final Rapid Rehousing Pathway was published. In Next year?, RSI/RRP Year 3 was announced. In September 2019, the Cold Weather Fund 2019 was announced. In 2017, the Conservative Party committed the government to halve rough sleeping on England’s streets by 2022 and end it altogether by 2027. Since then, we have:
The Rough Sleeping Strategy
The Government’s strategy to halve rough sleeping on England’s streets by 2022 and end it altogether by 2027.

Prevent, Intervene, Recover

- Ambitious package with £100 million over the two years;

- Built around three core pillars:
  - preventing rough sleeping before it happens,
  - intervening at crisis points, and
  - helping people to recover with flexible support that meets their needs.

- Includes a shift to a rapid rehousing approach for people at crisis points to be supported into homes, appropriate to their needs.

- Committed to annual public updates to:
  - highlight progress; and
  - identify new cross-government contributions to reduce rough sleeping
Our Stakeholders
How we engage with our key stakeholders and delivery partners

Central MHCLG Team

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Implementation Taskforce

The Homelessness Advice and Support Team

The Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel

The Rough Sleeping Advisor Team
Outcomes and Lessons

What impact are our interventions having and what lessons are we learning

The impact of our interventions

- The number of individuals recorded on the annual rough sleeping snapshot fell for the first time in 8 years in 2018 to 4,677
- The RSI evaluation showed a 32% drop in the overall number of people sleeping rough, compared to what it would have been had the initiative not been in place. This is equivalent to a net reduction of 1,321 people.

Upcoming evaluations include:
- HRA Review due in March 2020.
- Somewhere Safe to Stay evaluation due in 2020, and
- Housing First Evaluation due in 2022.

Some Lessons

- Local Leadership is key to successful delivery, national targets and government commitments are useful but if senior leaders in local areas e.g. Local Authority CEO’s, are not signed up then any change is difficult to deliver.
- Local Authorities that invest time and resource into collaboration and building effective partnerships both locally with service providers, other government agencies and central government achieve better outcomes.
- Building Workforce Capability is vital for sustainable services, aside from accommodation, most funded interventions need good people to deliver them. Investing to develop a talent pipeline of professionals is key to a sustainable system.
- Housing. Ultimately without a solution to housing affordability pressures it will be extremely difficult to meet our targets.
Where next?

Where do we go next and what are the challenges and issues to be resolved if we are to meet our targets?

• Through Spending Round 2019 we achieved an additional £54m funding for 2020/21 we are planning how we will use that funding….but

• General Election and Brexit, causing some uncertainty around future government policy and priorities.

• Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020 – a move to a more preventative approach and widen the focus to all forms of homelessness

• Localism v Centralism – how do we link up local strategies with a wider national strategy effectively? How do we create feedback loops that enable the identification and dissemination of best practice at a local level?

• Creating a truly cross government strategy – how due we ensure our strategy is truly cross government with colleagues from other departments committed to prioritising our shared objectives?

• A streamlined funding process that simplifies our funding arrangement, creates clearer accountability and reduces our administrative burden on LAs.

• Improve our data collection making it more reliable, consistent and robust. Use this improved data to build our evidence base of what works.