

## North Yorkshire Wider Partnership Conference 2019

### Notes from Workshop 2 – Homelessness

**Presenters:** Heidi Richardson and Darren O'Connor (Harrogate Borough Council); Kate Barnett (Foundation UK)

HR provided context for the workshop:

There has been a national increase in homelessness and Harrogate Borough has seen a higher rise than the national and regional rates. However, the HBC service has prevented more than 50% of those approaching the service from becoming homeless.

Key piece of recent legislation – Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 came into force on 3/4/18. Focus on preventing homelessness. Local authorities have a duty to prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness, regardless of priority need and to relieve homelessness for all eligible homeless applicants, regardless of priority need. People can now receive support for 56 days before they are likely to become homeless (previously 28). LA will work with customer to develop a personalised housing plan setting out reasonable steps for both Council and customer to take. Prevention duty is about stopping person becoming homeless by helping them stay in current housing or finding an alternative and relief duty requires Council to help person obtain accommodation possibly by helping with a deposit or with debt advice or advice on tenancy rights or to find accommodation to keep someone from rough sleeping. This can include input from other organisations.

From October 2018 certain other public services have a duty to refer someone to the local authority if they think the person may be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The person must consent to the referral.

The Government also produced a Rough Sleeping Strategy in 2018 intended to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end it by 2027.

DO'C provided more information about rough sleeping. Rough sleepers have much lower life expectancy (average age 44) and much higher suicide risk than the general population. Harrogate Homeless Project provide a range of services to help people move away from rough sleeping including Springboard day centre which has washing facilities, food, IT access, drop in services; an emergency refugee (no second night out) and a 16 place hostel with support pathways to move into independent living. The SAFE project is working with longer term rough sleepers with complex needs. People are being supported to move into independent living more quickly. As people move on from temporary accommodation they have tended to move into LA or registered social landlord provision but this year the number going into private rented accommodation is increasing supported by government subsidy.

The number of rough sleepers is likely to increase at this year's count. Although most rough sleepers are in the 20-30 age band, numbers of older people are increasing. Support for young people (16-25) is through the hub model.

KB Foundation work collaboratively across North Yorkshire to support adults, families, young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. They support people with mental health issues; victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse; offenders; people with substance misuse issues; people with complex needs. Run hostels; dispersed accommodation; therapy project for children who have witnessed or experienced domestic abuse.

Current concerns include the rising impact of county lines and cuckooing and modern slavery. Some positive success stories where partners eg Job Centre Plus have raised concerns.

Participants then broke into smaller groups to consider how collaboration might help address some major challenges:

### **Rurality and Access to Services**

Find ways to work differently and collaboratively to join up services eg reduce number of times customer has to tell their story.

New partners – Fire and Rescue Service; community libraries; home library service; community banking.

Spread information through VCSE – churches; Age Concern; Carers Centres; Alheimers Society.

Parish Council noticeboards; bus stops; North Yorkshire Connect website.

### **Rough Sleeping and Begging**

Address at young age – target right groups

Generational

Educate – schools; teacher referrals; visit youth clubs

### **Complex Needs**

Early intervention. Involve additional charities to agree approach.

Wellbeing services

### **Funding**

Access alternative funding pots

Break down into services

Tax grants/relief for local companies

Endowments shortfall

**Suitable and affordable accommodation**

Landlord – give 6 months support to customer

S21 – forced to move

Employment/zero hours contracts

Community led housing – buy and refurb

Appeal for landlords – Community First Yorkshire; jobcentres

Mentoring schemes – young people / NEETs (Island in York)