

## HOUSING LIN BRIEFING

### ***No One Left Out: Communities ending rough sleeping***

#### INTRODUCTION

This briefing from the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (LIN) summarises the Department for Communities and Local Government's (CLG) Rough Sleepers' strategy, *No One Left Out: Communities ending rough sleeping*<sup>1</sup>, launched in December 2008. The Strategy followed extensive consultation. It acknowledges that getting someone off the street and into their own home, and preventing rough sleeping in the first place, involves more than just finding accommodation. The aim is to end rough sleeping by 2012.

This briefing:

- identifies key themes
- summarises each chapter
- ends with conclusions and sources of further information.

#### Structure and summary of action points

The Strategy has six chapters, and this Briefing follows the same structure and headings:

- Chapter One: *Building on Success* outlines the current position: what is known about rough sleeping, what has been done already, what has worked.
- Chapter Two: *Renewed drive towards zero* makes clear that the aim is to end rough sleeping by 2012 by ensuring that both housing and support are available across the country, both to prevent rough sleeping at the point of homelessness, and to get people off the streets quickly if that is where they end up.

The remaining four chapters discuss issues and set out in detail the Strategy's 15 action points:

- Chapter Three: *The right help in the right place at the right time*

Action 1 - Promoting prevention of rough sleeping.

Action 2 - Supporting best practice in commissioning of services that prevent and tackle rough sleeping.

Action 3 - Positive activities that motivate and empower people to take greater control in their lives.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/roughsleepingstrategy>

Action 4 - Promote and enable opportunities for homeless people to break out of worklessness.

Action 5 - Improving access to health and social care services for people with multiple needs who are sleeping rough or in hostels.

Action 6 - Step up our efforts across Government and with local partners to tackle rough sleeping among new migrant populations, in particular through rollout of the new Local Immigration Teams

- Chapter Four: *Empowering people and communities*

Action 7 -Using the website to promote knowledge of local services and resources.

Action 8 - Making best use of community training.

Action 9 - Promoting more personalised services including testing individual budgets to increase the control people have over the services they need.

Action 10 - A drive forward user involvement in services and active citizenship among people with experience of rough sleeping.

- Chapter Five: *Understanding the problem, finding solutions*

Action 11 - Launching a new approach to help local authorities monitor progress and track people sleeping rough, ensuring that counts are not just an opportunity to identify need but more importantly to do something about it.

Action 12 - Launching a new approach to help local authorities monitor progress and track people sleeping rough, ensuring that counts are not just an opportunity to identify need but more importantly to do something about it.

- Chapter Six: *Making it happen*

Action 13 - Launching a new Champions programme, bringing together experts from across the country to support local areas and other services.

Action 14 - Supporting councils and regions to work strategically to end rough sleeping and will work with the Mayor of London to develop new approaches in the capital.

Action 15 - A focus on driving, co-ordinating and monitoring progress through our specialist advisers and regional resource teams and by working more closely across government.

## **1. BUILDING ON SUCCESS**

Chapter One outlines

- the scale of the problem
- who sleeps rough
- why people sleep rough
- what is being done already.

The Strategy states that “rough sleeping is so unacceptable that we must continue to find ways to reduce and eventually end the problem altogether. Rough sleeping is not an issue which can be solved through one-off initiatives and challenges and risks remain.”

The Strategy summarises what has been learnt about how services can help prevent homelessness and rough sleeping, or help people to move off the streets through assertive outreach. Investment through the Places of Change<sup>2</sup> programme has transformed many hostels and is changing lives across the country. Despite this, the efforts of the last decade have not yet succeeded in stemming the flow of new people on to the streets, though many do not have significant support needs.

### **i) The scale of the problem**

Since 1996, one-night counts of people found “bedded down” have been used to track progress on reducing rough sleeping. The 2005 National Audit Office progress report on homelessness said: “Counts might not capture all of those sleeping rough, but because the methodology has been applied consistently area-to-area and year-on-year, it is the most accurate measure of the relative scale of the problem and change over time.”<sup>3</sup>

The most recent total was 483 (January 2007-June 2008) compared to 498 in the previous period. Counts took place in 74 local authority areas. In 66 areas (nearly 90 per cent) the count found ten or fewer people on the night. In contrast, Westminster with 111 people accounts for nearly a quarter of the total.

Counts track progress over time and maintain focus on the issue. But snapshot counts cannot tell the whole story. From the CHAIN<sup>4</sup> database in London and other sources, we know of a constant flow of people on and off the streets, but most do not stay there long. In London, outreach teams see around 3,000 individuals sleeping rough in a year. A few people have remained on the streets for long periods: for example, in London, around 150 people have been seen over many years but have never come into accommodation.

### **ii) Who sleeps rough?**

London has the fullest data and this shows that people who sleep rough do not reflect the overall population: some groups are more at risk than others.

CHAIN identifies that 87 per cent of people contacted by outreach teams are male. Many have problems relating to drugs (41 per cent), alcohol (49 per cent) and mental health (35 per cent) with around a quarter having a combination of these problems. People who have been in prison or the care system are over-represented.

In recent years, the proportion with British nationality has declined, but they are more likely to have combined problems (mental health and substance misuse). The

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/placeschange>

<sup>3</sup> *More than a roof: Progress in tackling homelessness*, NAO, 2005  
[http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/0405/more\\_than\\_a\\_roof.aspx](http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/0405/more_than_a_roof.aspx)

<sup>4</sup> The Combined Homeless Action and Information Network (CHAIN) is a database to record all interactions between homeless services and people sleeping rough in the capital

proportion from Central and Eastern Europe has increased, with up to 20 per cent of rough sleepers being “A10 nationals” (ie people from the 10 accession countries that recently joined the European Union).

The proportion of ex-Service personnel has fallen. In 1997, studies suggested between one quarter and one fifth of rough sleepers had been in the Armed Forces at some stage. In London in 2007-08, seven per cent of people contacted by outreach teams had been in the Armed Forces, including non-British military service (CHAIN data). The improvement may be attributed to better accommodation advice (for those leaving the British Armed Forces) and closer working between Government and the charitable sector (including supported housing).

Some respondents to the Strategy discussion paper argued that certain groups are more likely to seek out of the way places to sleep rough, particularly people from black and minority ethnic communities, and women. If so, they may not be counted and statistics may not reflect the full diversity of people who experience rough sleeping.

### **iii) Why do people sleep rough?**

People end up sleeping rough for many reasons. The Strategy highlights some key risk factors for individuals:

- Poverty, debt and unemployment causing stress and family breakdown
- Health issues: physical or mental health, addictions or a combination of them
- Leaving care or prison or hospital (trigger points)
- A difficult childhood leading to inability to sustain relationships
- A combination of events that lead to homelessness.

As well as individual factors, wider structural issues can increase the risk of homelessness and rough sleeping, such as local shortages of affordable housing and patterns of migration. Migration is a significant factor in some areas, particularly London, as discussed above.

Most people sleep on the streets for a short time and may find their own way off. Those on the streets for longer will need extensive support to help them. Rough sleeping is detrimental to health, setting in train a downward spiral with the potential for severe consequences in terms of morbidity (illness) and mortality (premature death).

### **iv) What is being done already?**

The Strategy outlines work over the last ten years to create a system that successfully tackles rough sleeping with services including outreach teams, day centres, hostels, resettlement services, medical teams and floating support. Other services focus on preventing homelessness among those at risk of sleeping rough. Examples include integrated services for people leaving prison, young people’s accommodation projects, housing advice and housing options services. In many places, there is improved joint working with drug, mental health and employment services. Effective partnership working between statutory and voluntary sector agencies has resulted in many areas reducing rough sleeping numbers to close to zero.

Over the next three years, Communities and Local Government is investing £200m through local authorities and voluntary organisations to tackle homelessness, including specialist provision for people sleeping rough. For example, the Places of Change programme is transforming services and since 2005, £90m has been invested in 178 projects in 62 local authority areas.

Over the next three years, a further £80m will go to 80 projects in 54 local authority areas. The programme is supporting innovation in hostels, day centres and other projects that provide training and work experience for people moving away from the streets. New ideas in design and the use of buildings are being explored to help deliver better services. The programme is not just about new buildings; changes in services and developing the staff that deliver them are even more important. This has included investing in:

- Leading Places of Change – a training programme for hostel managers and staff.
- Activating Places of Change – a small grants programme (with additional funding from the Home Office in 2008) aimed at developing meaningful activity, social enterprise and education and training schemes in homelessness projects.
- Spark – a programme to build and inspire social enterprises among homelessness organisations (<http://www.sparkchallenge.org>)

Social exclusion among adults was prioritised in the current spending review period through Public Service Agreement 16. This aims to increase the proportion of socially excluded adults in settled accommodation and employment, education or training. ([http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pbr\\_csr07\\_psaopportunity.htm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pbr_csr07_psaopportunity.htm))

A further £6m has been invested in twelve Adults facing Chronic Exclusion (ACE) pilots, four of which help people who have been sleeping rough. ([http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social\\_exclusion\\_task\\_force/adults.aspx](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social_exclusion_task_force/adults.aspx))

## **2. A RENEWED DRIVE TOWARDS ZERO**

This chapter sets out the focus of the new Strategy: ensuring that housing and other support services are available across the country so no one need sleep rough, whether they are:

- at risk of sleeping rough, or
- actually sleeping rough, or
- in hostels or more settled homes but still need support to reintegrate in the community following a period sleeping rough.

The aim is to work with partners to end rough sleeping by 2012. Reductions are needed not only in the national total, and in every region including London, but also in areas where the number of people sleeping rough is low. Help must be available quickly for anyone on the streets now. Longer term, a shift of focus is needed, from monitoring numbers on the streets to monitoring the speed of response when people face a housing crisis.

Co-ordination and cross-government efforts to find new solutions will be strengthened, but there is a limit to what can be achieved through central

government. The Strategy emphasises the role of communities and the need for them to rise to the challenge. Progress will also depend on close working and co-ordination across a variety of public services, local authorities and the third sector so that no one falls through the cracks.

Another priority is to improve opportunities and outcomes for people who have slept rough, helping them to move on permanently with a particular focus on employment, skills and health.

### **3. THE RIGHT HELP IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME**

Chapter Three identifies the needs and responses for both those with low level needs and with more complex ones. Timing is seen as crucial. The earlier a person gets help, the less help they need. Help to prevent homelessness works best when offered before someone faces a crisis.

The Strategy says that most rough sleepers do not have high needs, although they may have other issues in their lives that need resolving. They are seeking easily accessible accommodation that they can afford. The approach should be to reconnect people to family, friends and community wherever possible and to enable access to housing for those who need it. This approach will save money in the long run, if people get effective help so that they are not left to sleep rough or move to other areas, further away from social networks.

People with higher support needs who are at risk of sleeping rough should get an assessment of their needs, personalised interventions and planned housing pathways. This might include ensuring engagement with suitable local primary care services, supported housing (such as hostels) or in some cases registered care. Leaving an institution such as prison or hospital offers a real opportunity to prevent rough sleeping. Where people need access to hostel services, it is essential that these are readily available. This means *without* the application of local connection criteria, which are prohibited by current Supporting People grant conditions.

Some people who sleep rough are leading chaotic lives and have multiple needs such as substance misuse, poor mental or physical health, low skills. They face chronic exclusion. They draw on a lot of resources but often fail to get effective help. Finding lasting solutions requires intensive and often long-term support from a wide range of partners.

The outcomes identified are:

- people to get the right help at the right time wherever they are.
- clear routes that prevent people sleeping rough in every area.
- an effective safety net for everyone.
- real joined-up and effective services for the most excluded
- more sharing of the knowledge, experience and skills that can make a difference.

These are elaborated upon in the Action Points in this and the following three chapters:

## **Action 1 - Promoting prevention of rough sleeping**

Prevention will be promoted in all areas through effective housing options and a strengthened safety net for those with low support needs. They need little more than help to find suitable accommodation, and perhaps help to rebuild relationships in their new community. People facing a housing crisis who are not in priority need (under homelessness legislation) should receive effective help so that they do not end up on the streets. All local authorities are encouraged to strengthen interventions that prevent rough sleeping, building on the success of work to prevent statutory homelessness. This includes people at risk of repossessions.

This action will be met by:

- Continuing to support those in the third sector such as Shelter and Citizens Advice Bureau
- Working with the Legal Services Commission to ensure that everyone can access free legal advice on housing issues through Court Desks at county courts.
- Promoting access to private rented housing, for example by encouraging local authorities to expand access to rent bond schemes
- Testing the replication of the supported lodgings programme (as used effectively for youth homelessness) for older age groups at risk of sleeping rough.
- Improving support to people in independent housing through the Home Office Mentoring and Befriending scheme
- Establishing best practice through the Enhanced Housing Options Trailblazer programme.
- Considering proposals to reform homelessness legislation, including a stronger safety net for people at risk of sleeping rough.

## **Action 2 - Supporting best practice in commissioning of services that prevent and tackle rough sleeping**

There is great scope for cross-cutting commissioning of integrated services for people with complex multiple needs. In areas where few people require these services, commissioners need to work together (for example at sub-regional level, through Multi Area Agreements).

Rough sleeping is linked to many of the priorities in the new national set of 198 indicators on which the Local Area Agreements are focused. The new LAAs empower local authorities and partners to deliver the best solutions for their areas and to innovate and respond to local needs.<sup>5</sup>

Tools and resources support commissioning include:

The Department of Health's World Class Commissioning website:  
[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Managingyourorganisation/Commissioning/Worldclasscommissioning](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Managingyourorganisation/Commissioning/Worldclasscommissioning)

<sup>5</sup> for further details see Housing LIN briefing, *Transforming the Delivery of Services: the Key Drivers*  
<http://networks.csip.org.uk/IndependentLivingChoices/Housing/Topics/type/resource/?cid=4773>

Improving Practice in Housing for Drug Users – A Partnership Project:  
[www.drugs.homeoffice.gov.uk/publication-search/dip/improving-practice-housing](http://www.drugs.homeoffice.gov.uk/publication-search/dip/improving-practice-housing)

The National Treatment Agency produce a range of good practice guidance on commissioning of services for treatment of drug misuse treatment, which includes links to guidance on accommodation issues:

[www.nta.nhs.uk/areas/treatment\\_planning/treatment\\_plans\\_2009\\_10/adult\\_drug\\_treatment\\_planning\\_and\\_needs\\_templates\\_and\\_guide.aspx](http://www.nta.nhs.uk/areas/treatment_planning/treatment_plans_2009_10/adult_drug_treatment_planning_and_needs_templates_and_guide.aspx)

Homeless Link's website includes Clean Break, MOPP, Older Homeless Persons Needs Analysis and other material on commissioning homelessness services:

[www.homeless.org.uk](http://www.homeless.org.uk)

This action will be met in the following ways:

- Tackling the flow on to the streets is a priority: a new Prevention Mapping Toolkit will help localities to identify routes into rough sleeping, highlight specific groups at risk, and identify opportunities for interventions through joint commissioning or sub-regional services.
- Promoting learning from the ACE pilots evaluation.
- Working with the Homes and Communities Agency (formerly the Housing Corporation) to identify need for new specialist accommodation
- Setting up a new private sector leasing scheme to provide up to an additional 300 units of move-on accommodation in London
- Continuing to support Leading Places of Change and scoping with partners for enhanced training and qualifications for front-line homelessness workers
- Utilising Mov-on Plans Protocols (see box below).

*Move-on Plans Protocol (MOPP)* was developed by Homeless Link, funded by the Homelessness Innovation Fund. Since its launch, local authorities are using it in partnership with local hostel providers and housing associations. MOPP clarifies the need for private rented, general needs and specialist accommodation for people living in hostels and other supported housing. Homeless Link will review how MOPP is being used in different areas and how data produced can link to local housing market assessment, housing strategies and investment decisions. CLG will consider what further action is needed to secure move-on accommodation for hostel residents with medium and high support needs.

### **Action 3 - Positive activities that motivate and empower people to take greater control in their lives**

For many people, getting off the streets into a hostel, or even getting their own flat, will not deal with their underlying problems. Anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, self-harm or challenging behaviour (often exacerbated by misuse of alcohol and drugs) means that people can feel stuck in a life that is damaging to themselves and others. The Strategy wants to increase opportunities for people to take part in informal activities that give hope, build skills, increase confidence and self-esteem and above all strengthen positive relationships. For some, this will be needed before they can take more formal steps towards employment.



This action will be met by:

- Working with Places of Change partners to increase access to facilities to others in their area.
- Considering homeless people's needs in the new Informal Learning Strategy
- Helping the enhanced next step national Careers Strategy advice services and the proposed new Adult Advancement and Careers service to work with people in hostels and day centres.
- Testing approaches to joint work with homeless projects in the prototypes of the new Adult Advancement and Careers service.
- Working with the Learning & Skills Council to ensure that local learning institutions such as Further Education colleges are reaching out to people who have slept rough and promoting good practice.

*Opening the Doors* is a London Libraries Development Group project on improving access to reading, learning and information services for and with vulnerably housed people in public libraries, and ensuring that library services are available for homeless people in a way that is appropriate and meets the needs of service users. [www.llda.org.uk/uploads/OtD%20simple%20summary%20221107.pdf](http://www.llda.org.uk/uploads/OtD%20simple%20summary%20221107.pdf)

#### **Action 4 - Promote and enable opportunities for homeless people to break out of worklessness**

This action builds on what has been learnt about barriers people face in the jobs market as they move away from rough sleeping, including:

- personal barriers such as poor health, lack of confidence or skills.
- external factors such as high rents, low expectations (in some hostels) and lack of information about the financial help people can get once they are in work.

Homeless people give a clear message: the vast majority want to get into work as soon as they can. *No home, no job*, Off the Streets and into Work, (2005)<sup>6</sup>

The goal is for most adults who have slept rough to move into work within a year of coming off the streets. For those who need longer, there should be clear plans that set out how barriers will be addressed and how opportunities will be offered to build confidence, skills and hope. Even so, for some people work is unlikely to be an option because of the severity of their needs.

Through this Strategy, the Department for Work and Pensions, Jobcentre Plus, CLG, and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills will work together to ensure that people moving away from the streets get the targeted and sustained help they need to get the right skills to find and keep a job. There will also be work with colleagues across government to link this to ongoing work with criminal justice services.

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<sup>6</sup> [http://www.osw.org.uk/librarydocs/No\\_Home\\_No\\_Job.pdf](http://www.osw.org.uk/librarydocs/No_Home_No_Job.pdf)

This action will be met by:

- Strengthening joint working between Jobcentre Plus and the homelessness sector as new contracts are rolled out, disseminating targeted information on benefits and work issues, and promoting Local Employment Partnership.
- Investing £2.5m in a second round of the Spark social enterprise initiative.
- Supporting the homelessness sector to employ people with experience of sleeping rough through the GROW programme.
- Developing a 'Working Hostels' model, as part of testing new approaches and pathways including development of a new style of hostel geared towards supporting and stabilising people in employment. These hostels should be a stepping-stone enabling residents to move on from rough sleeping into work or into alternative housing pathways. They will also offer an alternative and quicker route into independent accommodation ensuring that people in less specialised hostels who are nearer to working can benefit from an atmosphere where work is the expectation.

### **Action 5 - Improving access to health and social care services for people with multiple needs who are sleeping rough or in hostels**

Individuals with severe, complex and multiple health and social care needs may not access health and social care services at all. When they do present, it is often in crisis, making a coordinated and effective response difficult to achieve. Doing more to support people to access effective health and care is a key priority in this Strategy.

As well as sustained increases in spending on the NHS, the Government's health policy emphasises reducing health inequalities and reaching out to excluded groups, including adults facing chronic exclusion. The health white paper *Our health, our care, our say*<sup>7</sup>, the green paper *Putting People First*<sup>8</sup> and the more recent concordat, *Health Inequalities – Progress and Next Steps*<sup>9</sup> all underlined this commitment.

Lord Darzi's review of the NHS recommended more integrated and personalised services, especially for the most vulnerable and those in greatest need. The Vital Signs indicators and the statutory Joint Strategic Needs Assessment approach will help local areas identify need and determine priorities in each area.

This provides a strong policy context and there has been a decade of progress in the provision of targeted primary and mental health services. Nevertheless, some homelessness agencies say that it remains difficult for people with multiple needs to access services. Problems include registration with local primary care services or treatment for alcohol dependency or mental health problems.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/ourhealthourcareoursay/index.htm>

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_081118](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_081118)

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_085307](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_085307)

This action will be met by:

- Work with the Department of Health to strengthen the economic case for commissioning better integrated services, and developing the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment process.
- Promoting and evaluating roll out of the Hospital Discharge Protocol. The Housing LIN has commissioned some case studies to look at three areas that have protocols and/or dedicated posts to work with homeless people in hospital.
- Involving the CLG's regional Locality Managers working alongside the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships, strategic health authorities and others in targeted areas to improve targeting of services.
- Working with the regional health observatories and the Department of Health to develop and disseminate tools to support needs assessment and promote good practice through a health and homelessness website.
- Developing effective responses to people with the most chaotic lives and complex needs who have experienced childhood trauma.
- Encouraging hostels and other services to promote healthier lifestyles. The Housing LIN has published a useful guide: *Healthy hostels; healthy lifestyles for hostel residents*. This can help providers to consider how they can improve the health and well-being of service users.<sup>10</sup>
- The Department of Health's health trainers' programme supports excluded people to improve their health.
- Consultation with local services and providers to see if this programme could contribute to improving health of people who have slept rough.
- Joint work with the Department of Health, Home Office and criminal justice services (Police, NOMS, Prison Probation and Court Services) to promote better integration between health, drug treatment, criminal justice services and housing, building on *Improving Practice in Housing for Drug Users – A Partnership Project*.<sup>11</sup>

**Action 6 - Step up our efforts across Government and with local partners to tackle rough sleeping among new migrant populations, in particular through rollout of the new Local Immigration Teams**

Throughout our history, the movement of people into and around our country has placed some people at risk of homelessness, especially those without family or community support, or working in unstable, seasonal jobs or with tied accommodation. Health problems or unemployment can more easily tip them into homelessness. The expansion of the European Union to include central and eastern European countries has resulted in increased immigration from those states. In some areas, especially London, people from central and eastern Europe can, on any given night, make up to 20 per cent of people sleeping rough and a significant proportion of users of day centres and free night shelters. The vast majority who arrive with nowhere to go are able to move away from the streets after a short time.

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<sup>10</sup><http://networks.csip.org.uk/IndependentLivingChoices/Housing/Topics/browse/Homelessness/?parent=980&child=2423>

<sup>11</sup> <http://drugs.homeoffice.gov.uk/drug-interventions-programme/guidance/throughcare-aftercare/HousingandHomelessness/PracticeInHousingPracticePaper/>

This action will be met by:

- Strengthening joint working between Communities and Local Government and UK Border Authorities (UKBA) nationally and regionally, focusing on improved communications, roll-out of UKBA's new Local Immigration Teams, action to tackle anti-social behaviour among migrants and mitigating the risks of the case resolution programme, and
- working with Homeless Link and other partners in London to deliver against the joint action plan.

#### **4. EMPOWERING PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES**

This chapter explores the role of community and faith-based groups and user involvement.

The outcomes identified are:

- People and groups in communities who want to help to be supported to do so
- Communities to be actively involved in planning and provision for vulnerable people
- Community and faith based groups to be equipped to support isolated people.
- People at risk of sleeping rough or on the streets to have more say and control in how their needs are met
- People's own efforts to avoid sleeping rough and improve their lives to be reinforced
- People who have slept rough to move on and enjoy a fulfilling life in the community

#### **Action 7 – using the website to promote knowledge of local services and resources**

The actions will be met by:

- Commission a new web resource for people who want to help tackle rough sleeping, and people who are at risk of or already sleeping rough. The web resource will draw on existing databases and allow people to locate relevant local services. If a member of the public is concerned about someone sleeping rough in their area, they can enter the postcode and get customised information about services, such as local housing options advice or day centre.

#### **Action 8 – Making best use of community training**

We will develop a community training programme to build capacity and skills so that local people can support isolated people to avoid sleeping rough.

Across the country, particularly in areas where levels of rough sleeping have tended to be low, community and faith-based groups have often established volunteer-led initiatives. Many of these groups already reach out to people sleeping rough or help people reintegrate into communities. This action looks at ways to support them, starting by strengthening the skills and knowledge they need.

This action will be met by:

- Commission a new training package that can be delivered locally by a wide range of community bodies.

### **Action 9 - Promoting more personalised services including testing individual budgets to increase the control people have over the services they need**

The strategy proposes to drive a more personalised approach to tackling rough sleeping. It recognises that people at risk of sleeping rough or on the streets have diverse needs and different solutions will work. It also reflects the government's wider agenda across social care where people in receipt of services are expecting, and being given, much greater choice and control over the services they use.

This approach could be effective for some marginalised groups including the small numbers of people who have slept rough for many years and have, up to now, been unwilling to accept the help on offer.

Given that, the strategy looks at seeing how approaches such as self-directed support might make a difference, and drawing on expertise from organisations such as In Control and lessons from the Individual Budget pilots under the government's Supporting People programme.

This action will be met by:

- Encouraging the development of innovative services that meet currently unmet needs: for example, through the Places of Change programme an accommodation model in London designed for older drinkers who are not well suited to standard hostel provision is being developed.
- Work with partners that are exploring this approach with people sleeping rough (such as the City of London) to share lessons from their experience.

### **Action 10 - A drive forward user involvement in services and active citizenship among people with experience of rough sleeping.**

Over the past decade, the best services have put involvement of service users at the heart of what they do. As well as improving services, experiencing participation can be transformative for the individual involved. The Strategy promotes this ethos across all services for homeless people, for example bringing user-led groups together to share experiences, developing support networks or promoting consultation in strategies and commissioning.

This action will be met by:

- Supporting capacity building among organisations to enable them to involve service users more actively
- Testing the potential of a peer advocacy service for people using hostels and other services

## **5. UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM, FINDING SOLUTIONS**

This chapter looks at data collection, to monitor progress and develop new ways to understand and monitor outcomes for people who have slept rough.

The outcomes wanted are:

- A better understanding of who is at risk of rough sleeping and why.
- To ensure that no one is left out, even in areas with low numbers on the street.
- To understand gaps in provision of services that can prevent and tackle the problem.

**Action 11 - Launching a new approach to help local authorities monitor progress and track people sleeping rough, ensuring that counts are not just an opportunity to identify need but more importantly to do something about it**

Changes to data collection will enable more in-depth reporting of the level and nature of need, and a focus on planning action for individuals as much as counting people.

This action will be met by:

- Working with authorities and local agencies in areas where there are low number sleeping rough through the regional Champions, Homeless Link's regional managers or CLG regional resource teams.
- Clarifying some issues around the counts and providing support and guidance to areas undertaking them
- Consulting on the development of a Street Needs Audit.

**Action 12 - Bringing together existing data in new ways to understand and monitor outcomes for people who have slept rough**

The primary goal is that people do not sleep rough at all. But anyone who does must get the help they need as quickly as possible to get their lives back on track. To support this aim, there is a need to gather better data on what happens to people, the journey they take and the outcomes they achieve.

This action will be met by:

- using existing databases and systems can be used more effectively to track and report on housing, training, employment and health outcomes for people moving off the streets in London.

## **6. MAKING IT HAPPEN**

This chapter considers joined-up working at national, regional and local level and the robust arrangements that need to be in place. The outcomes identified are:

- A consistent community-led response.
- Effective solutions to be available across the country.
- A joined-up and comprehensive approach across government to address the most severe forms of social exclusion.
- A new shared sense of urgency and commitment to ending rough sleeping.

**Action 13 - Launching a new Champions programme, bringing together experts from across the country to support local areas and other services.**

This programme will draw on many of the most capable individuals in the sector to support local leadership, partnership and strategies. Over the past ten years valuable learning and expertise has been built up. This action will be met by:

- The lessons learned to be made available across the country through this programme.
- Regional Champions will work alongside Communities and Local Government's regional resource teams and Homeless Link's regional managers.

**Action 14 - Supporting councils and regions to work strategically to end rough sleeping and work with the Mayor of London to develop new approaches in the capital.**

This action will be met by:

- Supporting local authorities to implement their homelessness strategies and promoting strategies which aim to end rough sleeping. CLG's regional resource teams will work with authorities requiring support in implementing their strategy, drawing on support from Homeless Link's Regional Managers and the new Champions teams where appropriate
- Working with the Mayor of London's new London Delivery Board to develop new approaches in the capital. The new board will draw up and oversee the implementation of an action plan for delivery in London, and its pan-London priorities will include:
  - a. Improving commissioning mechanisms.
  - b. Enhancing joint working, in particular by ensuring greater involvement of pan-London strategic bodies such as NHS London and the prison service.
  - c. Maximising move on options for people in hostels, including more effective use of the private rented sector, increased provision of supported housing and better opportunities for work and training.
  - d. Developing better mechanisms to prevent people being drawn to the centre of the city.

**Action 15 - a focus on driving, co-ordinating and monitoring progress through specialist advisers and regional resource teams and by working more closely across government**

This action will be met by:

- Bringing together a Delivery Board comprising of senior officials from all the relevant government departments.
- Launching a small grants programme to support implementation of the strategy
- Publishing an annual summary of progress and outcomes on actions each September.

## CONCLUSION

This Strategy builds on the success of the last ten years but makes clear rough sleeping is not acceptable in our society.

It identifies both low and high level needs and emphasises the importance of prevention. It links to the wider agenda of choice and control for all groups and looks at how this can support those most disengaged with the services. It identifies that many people need more than a home found for them, they need support to get back into training, work and to build links with the local community and rebuild them with their families.

For housing providers there is an emphasis on avoiding evictions and looking at ways to help people maintain tenancies. Homeless agencies and the wider supported housing world need to work more closely together to look at options for people. Supported housing, including for older people, can be part of a pathway to enable homeless people to move off the streets.

There is therefore a key role for commissioners and providers to look at needs in their areas and to work across health, housing and social care and across client groups to develop sustainable outcomes.

## OTHER RELATED HOUSING LIN PUBLICATIONS

*Healthy hostels, healthy lifestyles for hostel residents*

<http://networks.csip.org.uk/IndependentLivingChoices/Housing/Topics/browse/Homelessness/?parent=980&child=2423>

*ECHG: King George's Project - The Gateway Programme*

<http://networks.csip.org.uk/IndependentLivingChoices/Housing/Topics/browse/Homelessness/?parent=980&child=4823>

*The Road to Recovery - feasibility study into homelessness and intermediate care*

<http://networks.csip.org.uk/IndependentLivingChoices/Housing/Topics/browse/Homelessness/?parent=980&child=172>

*Achieving positive shared outcomes in health & homelessness*

<http://networks.csip.org.uk/IndependentLivingChoices/Housing/Topics/browse/Homelessness/?parent=980&child=1726>

*Understanding Homelessness & mental health*

<http://networks.csip.org.uk/IndependentLivingChoices/Housing/Topics/browse/Homelessness/?parent=980&child=2667>

*Getting involved with health - an introduction for homelessness professionals*

<http://networks.csip.org.uk/IndependentLivingChoices/Housing/Topics/browse/Homelessness/?parent=980&child=2467>

*Prevention of homelessness - the role of health & social care*

<http://networks.csip.org.uk/IndependentLivingChoices/Housing/Topics/browse/Homelessness/?parent=980&child=1985>

*Clean Break - integrated housing and care pathways for homeless drug users*

<http://networks.csip.org.uk/IndependentLivingChoices/Housing/Topics/browse/Homelessness/?parent=980&child=2150>

*ICN - Commissioning Housing Support for health and wellbeing*

<http://networks.csip.org.uk/IndependentLivingChoices/Housing/Topics/browse/Housing/HousingSupport/?parent=3694&child=3529>