

HACKNEY ROUGH SLEEPER STRATEGY 2020-22

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1. Introduction

In Hackney, we are committed to preventing rough sleeping on our streets. To achieve this we have in place extensive support and housing options for rough sleepers which we are constantly looking to expand.

Given the impact that prolonged periods of rough sleeping have on someone's mental and physical health, preventing rough sleeping is something we must achieve. Rough sleeping is harmful and dangerous, the average life expectancy of a homeless man is 45 years and for a woman only 43¹. The longer someone spends on the streets the greater the negative impact on their physical health and the increased likelihood of them experiencing issues with their mental health and substance misuse. Rough sleepers are also around 17 times more likely to be victims of violence than the general population. Women are particularly vulnerable, with around a quarter having been sexually assaulted whilst sleeping rough.

In addition to complex personal issues, many rough sleepers have exhausted all available support networks provided by friends, family and the community. Some can find themselves rough sleeping in an area where they have no local connection. This combination of factors makes it very difficult for them to resolve their situation without the help of outreach and support services.

As well as the direct impact it has on people, rough sleeping has a significant financial cost. The estimated annual cost of a single rough sleeper in the UK is around £20,000, including to the NHS and criminal justice system. Rough sleeping is also a highly visible problem, which when unresolved can lead to perceptions that an area is unsafe and undermine confidence in public services. Hackney has a small number of rough sleeping hot spots which are associated with begging and other anti-social behaviour. This behaviour can be of concern to local residents and businesses.

But it does not have to be like this. By identifying those most at risk of rough sleeping and intervening at this point we can reduce the number of individuals who become street homeless in Hackney. Where individuals do rough sleep, through rapid intervention we can make sure individuals receive support to ensure they do not have to sleep rough for a second night. By providing a rapid response which reconnects people to services and support networks and provides clear pathways into secure housing, we can help individuals out of rough sleeping and back to full and rewarding lives. Our target to prevent and eliminate rough sleeping is bold but achievable with the right measures in place.

The Government - as part of its Rough Sleeping Review in August 2018 - mandated all local authorities to ensure that their overarching homelessness strategies include rough sleeping, and must be a combined "Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy". The Council's overarching homelessness strategy is currently being reviewed and once published will incorporate rough sleeping to become a "Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy" with a clear focus on rough sleeping.

This strategy is designed to complement the broader "Homelessness Strategy" and to ensure the issue is given sufficient focus, priority and impact.

¹ ONS deaths of homeless people in England and Wales 2018

This document provides a refresh of Hackney's current Rough Sleeping Strategy, covering 2016 -20. The refresh is an opportunity to:

- Take stock of the progress Hackney has made on reducing rough sleeping in the borough
- Assess the impact of recent policy and legislative changes around rough sleeping
- Reflect on the significant investment in services to prevent and resolve rough sleeping that have been introduced during 2019 and that will progress into 2020.
- Update the action plan

2. Hackney's corporate priorities are:

- Tackling inequality; making Hackney a place that works for everyone, with affordable homes, job opportunities and first-class schools, where no-one is left behind
- An ambitious and well-run Council that delivers high quality services, financial stability, and first class-local facilities
- Prioritising quality of life and the environment; making our streets safer for cyclists and pedestrians, tackling air pollution, protecting our parks and green spaces
- A campaigning Council that speaks up for Hackney and actively intervenes to protect and promote the well-being of the borough and its citizens
- Connecting with Hackney's communities; a visible, engaging, and listening Council, working in partnership with local people to shape services, and promoting community cohesion.

This strategy fits into our corporate priorities ensuring that Hackney remains a place that works for everyone, and that our most vulnerable – those sleeping rough and at risk of sleeping rough - are not left behind; that we will deliver high quality services for our rough sleepers and those who are homeless, and that the Council will campaign and speak up for our rough sleepers, and listen to their needs. Those who sleep on our streets are also our residents, and deserve to be listened to and treated with respect and dignity.

3. Strategic objectives

The overall aim of Hackney's Rough Sleeping strategy is to end rough sleeping in the borough. The priorities for achieving this vision focus on three areas:

1. Prevention - stopping people from becoming homeless and sleeping rough through providing timely information and advice, appropriate accommodation and support options
2. Outreach - delivering services which can engage with all local rough sleepers and assess their full range of needs; ensuring that street activities are responded to in an effective and proportionate way
3. Pathways – providing accommodation options which are sustainable and support rough sleepers to improve their health and wellbeing and employability, develop independence and resilience.

4. Rough Sleeper Definition

Hackney's Rough Sleeping strategy focuses on addressing the needs of local rough sleepers by linking them into holistic support services that provide a pathway from the street to find and maintain a home. For the purposes of this strategy, rough sleepers are defined in the same way as used by the Government for the purposes of rough sleeping counts and estimates. This definition includes:

- People sleeping, about to bed down, ie: sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding, or actually bedded down in the open air, for example on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments
- People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation, eg: stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or bashes (makeshift shelters).²

This strategy also covers Hackney's hidden homeless population. This includes people who are sofa surfing, living in squats, tents or motor vehicles and those sleeping on public transport. Hidden homeless people do not have a fixed place to live, are often not receiving formal support to address their homelessness from a local authority or specialist support service and lack the financial or other resources to resolve their current situation. They are at risk of rough sleeping if their accommodation and other needs are not identified at an early stage. Hidden homeless people are likely to include particular groups: young, single people without dependent children, young LGBTQI+ people and those with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF), especially asylum seekers.

London's hidden homeless population is understood to be much larger than that of rough sleepers. The transience of this group in and out of accommodation, their non-engagement with local services and the incompleteness of existing local authority homelessness data make it difficult to accurately estimate their numbers in Hackney. However, homelessness statistics and other recent data enable the following to be stated in relation to London as a whole:

- On any single night at least 12,500 people may be hidden homeless
- Around 1 in 10 people will experience hidden homelessness in any one year
- 225,000 young people in London have stayed in an insecure or unsafe place because they had nowhere safe to call home.³ In 2014, 20% of 16 - 25 year olds were involved in sofa surfing – for around half, this lasted for more than a month.

This strategy additionally relates to people in Hackney who are involved in street activity and are rough sleeping, or at imminent risk of this. In Hackney, the most significant street activity is begging, but street drinking, drug use, street crime and other activities are also prevalent and considered as anti social behaviour. Street activity is focused around transport hubs and the Mare Street area.

The relationship between rough sleeping and street activity is complex and not always well understood. Most people asking for money on the street are not rough sleepers. However,

² Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2018), *Rough Sleeping Statistics, Autumn 2017*

³ London Councils data

begging or other street activity can follow a period of rough sleeping. Street activity can also increase the risk of street homelessness for people who are in accommodation, especially for those people with substance misuse needs. Hackney homeless and rough sleeping services will work closely with the new Street Population Coordinator in community safety to ensure that all action undertaken is joined up and the services work together.

People in this part of the rough sleeping population are vulnerable. Hackney provides a range of assertive and person-centred support to help change their behaviour. To address the concerns of individuals and local communities about street activity and associated anti-social behaviour, Hackney homelessness services work closely with staff in Community Safety and Environmental Health services.

This strategy does not specifically cover street users, who are engaged in street activity, such as intimidating begging or anti-social behaviour but are securely housed and not rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping - who fall under the remit of Community Safety and Enforcement.

This strategy also does not cover children under 18 who may be sleeping rough – who fall under the remit of children’s services.

5. Our Ethos to Rough Sleepers is Supportive

As a Council we are committed when dealing with rough sleepers to:

- Treat all service users and rough sleepers as individuals, with dignity and respect.
- Promote independence and social inclusion among rough sleepers. The Council should not do things to rough sleepers and service users, but support and help them do things for themselves, making sure they feel valued and have the opportunity to play a full part in society.
- Assist rough sleepers to realise their personal aspirations and abilities, giving them the maximum possible choice to meet their needs, through a strengths based approach.
- Provide a person centric and individualised approach to address the specific and changing needs of the individual rough sleeper
- Acknowledge and respect a rough sleeper’s gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, race, religion, culture and lifestyle, and ensure the needs of minority ethnic groups are considered when delivering services.
- Respect an individual rough sleeper’s right to confidentiality. Consent will be obtained and privacy notices issued before data is recorded and shared on CHAIN.
- Take a preventative and proactive approach– responding to emerging problems and prevent them from escalating.

We will also ensure that consideration is given to residents, visitors and businesses so that any negative impact from rough sleepers is minimised, and that action is taken to mitigate behaviour that causes harassment or distress.

We recognise that many rough sleepers and people at risk of street homelessness have additional needs beyond accommodation and intensive, prolonged support work through relationships of trust are necessary. Accommodation is not solely the solution and is usually the beginning of a very long journey to wellbeing.

Needs may be rooted in traumatic life experiences and/or abusive relationships and also linked to weak family or social networks.⁴ Rough sleepers' support needs most commonly relate to substance misuse and poor mental and physical health, but may also include chaotic and challenging behaviour, limited capacity to address their situation and unplanned use of services – for example, accessing health services through hospital accident and emergency services in a state of chronic ill health, because of a reluctance to access primary or community care before things deteriorate and an inability to attend planned appointments.⁵ All of which can make it challenging for outreach and other workers to build relationships.⁵ A proportion of rough sleepers have multiple and complex needs, which require support from a range of services. In addition, there is a known link between the length of time someone spends on the streets and the intensity of their support needs.⁶

Drug and alcohol misuse accounts for just over a third of all deaths amongst the homeless population. People sleeping rough are seven to nine times more likely to die from alcohol-related diseases and twenty times more likely to die as a result of drug use. Therefore,⁷ providing rapid access to substance misuse services for rough sleepers is essential.

Poor mental health can be both the trigger for people coming on to the streets and make it much harder for them to escape rough sleeping. People with low-level mental health problems are often overlooked by statutory health and housing services; this situation has been exacerbated by funding cuts to mainstream mental health services. Without adequate support, these people may be unable to cope with the stresses of daily life and manage problems, such as rent arrears, unemployment, benefit sanctions and debt. Once on the street, people's mental health problems can make them less likely to engage with outreach services and they may lack capacity to voluntarily make decisions in their best interests. Despite intensive work by street outreach teams, some individuals can still refuse all offers of assistance, support and accommodation, and may not be willing to accept help to leave the streets, even when their health is suffering.

As a Council we recognise that individuals have the free will to sleep rough, and should have their decisions respected. However we also owe rough sleepers a duty of care. Where an individual's health and mental state have declined to the point that they cannot make rational decisions, and/or there is an imminent risk to a rough sleeper's life, authorities should intervene. The council is committed to providing officers working with rough sleepers the skills, knowledge and resources to determine mental health capacity and support to make decisions in the best interest of residents. No one should be left at risk on Hackney streets in these circumstances, and where individuals are unable or unwilling to help themselves action must be taken.

The Council will always request that a Safeguarding Adults Review is undertaken into every rough sleeper death, to ensure any learning is taken on board by all relevant partners and recommendations will be acted upon by the Council and included in future rough sleeping strategies

We know that violence is an all too common experience for people sleeping rough. Crime statistics indicate that rough sleepers are much more likely to be victims of theft and that crimes against them are more likely to go unreported. Research also indicates that rough

⁴ Homeless Link (2017), *Support for Single Homeless People in England: Annual Review*

⁵ No First Night Out Typology of New Rough Sleepers (2015)

⁶ Mayor's Rough Sleeping Plan of Action

⁷ Crisis (2012), *Homelessness Kills*

sleepers are almost 17 times more likely to be victims of violence and 15 times more likely to have suffered verbal abuse than the general public.⁸ A recent survey of more than 200 rough sleepers in Westminster indicated that more than a third - rising to 44% of female respondents - said they had been attacked since they started rough sleeping. In addition, around a quarter of rough sleepers who have died across England since 2010 experienced violent deaths.⁹

Hackney Council and its partner organisations will ensure that services provided to rough sleepers allow them to be treated with dignity and respect.

6. Drivers of Rough Sleeping

There are specific drivers of rough sleeping, which are distinct from the overarching causes of homelessness in the general population.

Research shows that the four main factors which are more likely to exist in individuals before they reach the streets are:

- A traumatic childhood
- Poor mental health
- Problematic drug and alcohol use
- Increased social isolation

Too often people who reach the streets, have suffered trauma at an early age, having been let down by caregivers in a family or social environment over a prolonged period. Rough sleepers are significantly more likely to have a history of suffering physical or mental neglect, witnessing violence at home, and having substance misusing parents. They are more likely to have been in care, and we see increased instances of post-traumatic stress disorder. This trauma causes some individuals to give up on normal support networks and distrust authorities when they need help most, leading to life on the streets.

People who go on to sleep rough are more likely to suffer from poor mental health. In particular this tends to be psychosis, paranoia and delusional beliefs, which causes them to not ask for help, distrust authorities, and stay under the radar. Drugs or alcohol can also be part of a person's spiral into homelessness. Although not everyone who is addicted to alcohol or drugs becomes homeless, it is a key contributing factor particularly when accompanied with other trauma, and weakens coping mechanisms. Levels of drug and alcohol abuse are significantly higher among those who go on to sleep rough.

Finally those who end up on the streets, tend to have suffered from increased social isolation, having a low number of social contacts, and being cut off from normal social networks immediately before becoming street homeless. They often will have had little access to services, community involvement, and little or no communication with friends, family and acquaintances before rough sleeping.

The Council is committed to resolving this not only through trauma informed care, but through early intervention to break the destructive cycle of childhood trauma before it resurfaces years down the line. Schemes such as Pause, that give women the opportunity

⁸ Crisis (2016), *It's No Life At All*

⁹ St Mungo's (2016), *Stop the Scandal*

to take control of their lives, are therefore vital in preventing some of the triggers that lead potentially to rough sleeping in their children.

Hackney Pause works with women who are Hackney residents or have connections to the borough and who have experienced, or are at risk of repeat pregnancies which involve children being removed from their care. Many of these women have complex needs, including issues related to domestic violence, substance misuse, homelessness, growing up in care and involvement with the criminal justice system. Pause seeks to prevent children being taken into care through providing an intensive, bespoke programme of support over 18 months. This includes an integrated package of health, therapeutic, practical and social support. The project is currently funded by Public Health in Hackney.

Between January 2017 and July 2018 Pause worked with 26 women. Evaluation indicates that women's health and wellbeing improved significantly as a result of engaging with the project, as well as their engagement with employment and training services. Women's housing and substance misuse situation also became more stable, and trauma in their children was significantly reduced.

7. Migrants and rough sleeping

European Economic Area (EEA) nationals' access to welfare benefits, homelessness assistance and local authority housing depends on their 'right to reside' in the UK. This status can be complicated to establish and relates to an individual's work history and period of UK residence.¹⁰

Under the Homelessness Reduction Act, EEA nationals with no recourse to public funds (NRPF), but who meet UK residence and immigration conditions, are entitled to receive a full assessment of their housing situation, information and advice about homelessness prevention and alternative support in the local area.¹¹ The Care Act 2014 also makes provision for some NRPF groups: those with mental or physical health problems, older people and people experiencing domestic violence or abuse, to receive support from adult social care services in certain circumstances.¹²

However, the majority of NRPF rough sleepers are unlikely to qualify under this current legislation and will therefore be ineligible for hostel accommodation, temporary accommodation and other local homelessness services. Non-EEA national rough sleepers with a complex immigration status are mostly excluded from Legal Aid, which greatly reduces their ability to sustain housing or find alternative accommodation once homeless. In addition, there is very little specialist mental health, substance misuse and specialist immigration support available.^{13,14} Lack of ID can also act as an additional barrier for migrant rough sleepers in accessing services. Some NRPF rough sleepers who have the right to be in the UK and are allowed to work, but can not access public funds may be able to access private rented accommodation, as long as they do not rely on state help to meet their housing costs.

¹⁰ http://england.shelter.org.uk/legal/homelessness_applications/eligibility_eeau_nationals - accessed 08/08/18

¹¹ <http://www.nrpfnetwork.org.uk/News/Pages/homelessness-reduction-act.aspx>

¹² http://mertoncs.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_no_recourse_pub_fund.html

¹³ Crisis, as above

¹⁴ Mayor of London (2018), *Rough Sleeping Plan of Action*

For some NRPF individuals, the only alternative to rough sleeping may be reconnection to the individual's country of origin, which some people may find difficult to accept. This group including overstayers, failed asylum seekers, and EEA nationals who are not exercising a treaty right are increasingly difficult to support off the streets as they are not able to access public funds, benefits, support or accommodation.

The vast majority of migrant rough sleepers in Hackney do not wish to be on the streets. However, in order to avoid housing costs and send more money back to their families in their home countries, a small number have chosen to sleep rough in vehicles and tents within encampments in the borough. The size and make-up of these encampments reflects the seasonal and short-term work which this group carries out.

The position of migrant rough sleepers is also affected by other recent legal and policy changes:

Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2016. These came into effect in February 2017. The regulations interpreted rough sleeping as a 'misuse of rights' under the 2016 EEA Regulations and meant that administrative removal could be enforced on rough sleepers, even if they had been in the UK for less than three months or were exercising treaty rights. During the following months, several Home Office operations took place targeting EEA rough sleepers, some with voluntary sector street outreach teams present, although none were carried out in Hackney.¹⁵

However, in December 2017 the High Court ruled the Home Office's policy was unlawful and that removal decisions based on not having a right to reside would also be unlawful if they were issued to an EEA rough sleeper as part of such a Home Office operation. This has since led to a change in Home Office policy. Unlike some other boroughs, the London Borough of Hackney did not support this initiative and does not directly work with home office enforcement services that administer removal notices.

UK exit from the European Union. In June 2018, the UK Government published details of arrangements for EU citizens wishing to remain in the UK after Brexit. EU citizens and family members who have been in the UK for five years by the end of 2020 will be able to apply for 'settled status'. Those who have arrived by 31 December 2020, but do not have five years' residence may seek to stay (pre settled status) until they have, at which point they can seek settled status. The application process includes verification of identity and UK residency. This is likely to be problematic for rough sleepers, who often do not have access to a passport or other valid ID document, or the funds to obtain replacements.¹⁶

If the UK leaves the EU without a deal, then individuals will need to apply for either pre-settled or settled status by 31 December 2020. If we leave with a deal then the deadline will be June 2021. Individuals who have not applied by the deadline will lose the rights to:

- work in the UK
- use the NHS
- enrol in education or continue studying
- access public funds such as benefits and pensions, (where eligible)

¹⁵ Homeless Link article, Dec 2017

¹⁶ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-44553225>

- travel in and out of the UK,

and could be at risk of deportation.

There are dedicated phone services to help individuals through the process. Local charities including the East End Citizens Advice Bureau have been grant funded by Central Government to help the most vulnerable to apply for status. The Council is working closely with third sector organisations to make sure that known rough sleepers do not fall through the net, and are supported to prove their identity and length of stay. However supporting this group through the process is challenging due to their specific vulnerabilities and needs.

Reconnection As stated above, under current restrictions placed on councils, for some individuals the only housing option may be through reconnection. Where an individual is not from the UK, and lacks recourse to public funds, meaning they are not eligible to access services in the UK, it may be appropriate for the outreach team to liaise with and nominate to the pan-london service, Routes Home, which can support non-UK nationals, to return to their country of origin. Routes Home is run by St Mungo's. It helps non-UK national rough sleepers by reconnecting them to accommodation and services within the UK or their home country and by offering specialist advice to rough sleepers with complex immigration issues. The team works in partnership with homelessness charities and other organisations in the UK and other EU countries. The staff team has specialist language and culture, legal advice and other skills.

The Council works closely with Routes Home to reconnect non-UK nationals who have a history of rough sleeping to their country of origin, where they will be entitled to support. The Council only ever reconnects with the voluntary agreement and commitment of the rough sleeper, and never forces individuals to leave the UK against their will. The Council does not work with immigration, compliance and enforcement (ICE) teams, and does not provide the home office with details or locations of rough sleepers.

In all cases reconnection must be realistic and achievable and offer a tailored package of support when required, and will never be progressed where the person is at risk in their country of origin. The Council will prepare and agree joint action plans with Routes Home. The rough sleeper will be offered emergency reconnection beds while they are given support and helped to prepare for reconnection.

During the winter of 2019/20 the Government temporarily relaxed rules regarding EEA nationals who are accessing a treaty right, meaning that they can be accommodated by the Council for up to three months, but can still not access welfare or housing benefits.

8. Rough Sleeping Initiatives – the National and London Picture

National Rough Sleeping Initiative and Rough Sleeping Strategy

The Government has recently set a target to halve the number of rough sleepers in England by 2022 and to end rough sleeping by 2027. In March 2018, the Government launched a new Rough Sleeping Initiative, led by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG). This includes a Rough Sleeping Team made up of experts from Government departments and homelessness organisations and a pot of targeted funding for local authority areas experiencing high levels of rough sleeping.

In August 2018, MHCLG published its Rough Sleeping Strategy. This sets out a programme of funding and interventions to support the Rough Sleeping Initiative around the themes of Prevention, Intervention and Recovery. Over the next two years, this will include:

- 500 additional homelessness workers; a commitment to providing homelessness specialists in every Jobcentre Plus.
- A new Move-On Fund to deliver homes outside of London for rough sleepers and hostel/refuge residents who need additional support.
- Floating support for people with a history of rough sleeping to promote tenancy sustainment.
- Housing First pilots in Greater Manchester, West Midlands and Liverpool to support people with multiple and complex needs. These will seek to move rough sleepers into permanent independent housing, with additional support to enable them to maintain these tenancies.
- Young Futures Fund, a new Social Impact Bond (SIB) to support young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), which will run alongside the previously announced SIB for entrenched rough sleepers.
- Expanding StreetLink, the online system which enables members of the public to alert local authorities and street outreach teams about rough sleepers.

There is also continuing support and funding to enhance rough sleepers' access to private rented sector accommodation. In addition, the strategy commits to increased support for prison leavers, people with mental health and substance misuse needs and non-UK national rough sleepers as well as more funding to train frontline staff around the needs of LGBT+ rough sleepers, victims of modern slavery and domestic abuse.

As part of this strategy the Government has made significant funding available for rough sleeping services. Local authorities have been invited to bid for several funding streams to help rough sleepers off the streets. This has included the Rough Sleeping Initiative fund, the Rapid Rehousing Pathway fund, and the Cold Weather fund. The Council made successful bids for £350,000 from the Rough Sleeping Initiative fund for street outreach, and £790,000 from the Private Rented Sector access fund to increase housing supply. Whilst welcome, the short term, one-off nature of this funding makes long term planning of services difficult, and does not support the long term supply of additional accommodation.

Pan-London initiatives

The Mayor of London's **Rough Sleeping Commissioning Framework** (December 2017) sets out plans to work with boroughs and other partners to prevent rough sleeping, people living on and returning to the streets. The framework contains a number of cross-cutting priorities, including: non-UK nationals, meeting rough sleepers' physical and mental health needs, emergency accommodation and partnership working around enforcement. The framework also seeks to increase work with faith and community-based organisations and to improve rough sleeping data collection and use.

The Mayor's **Rough Sleeping Plan of Action** (June 2018) contains additional commitments, to be coordinated by the new No Nights Sleeping Rough Taskforce – a group of senior partners from Government, local authorities and homelessness organisations. These include:

- Doubling the number of London Street Rescue workers and expanding the remit of the Safe Connections outreach service
- A London Cross-Borough Accommodation Network to support reciprocal moves between hostels, supported accommodation, social housing and PRS accommodation
- A specialist service to coordinate and carry out mental health assessments with rough sleepers and help them access treatment.
- Setting up two floating assessment hubs, which will provide a response to rapid increases in rough sleeping or specific local rough sleeping issues through intensive, targeted support.

The Council worked proactively with the GLA and Mayor of London to bid for, and successfully implement, a floating assessment hub, which was delivered in November 2018 to support rough sleepers off the streets in the vicinity of Hackney Central. The floating hub was more successful than anticipated in helping to support people from the streets, and get them into - and maintain - accommodation. The Council has been funded for a second floating hub this year.

9. The Scale of Rough Sleeping in Hackney

Rough sleeping in Hackney is measured in three ways:

- National Rough Sleeper Count. This is a single night snapshot of rough sleepers in Hackney. Counts are carried out in November each year and involve Council staff, Police, outreach and representatives from other voluntary sector and faith organisations. Counts are conducted using guidance issued by the Government in 2010.¹⁷ Since 2016, they also seek to gather basic demographic information about rough sleepers, including: gender, age and nationality. While such information is useful in comparing Hackney with neighbouring boroughs it is only a snapshot on a single night, and therefore can be impacted by various factors including weather. It also fails to pick up individuals who may be sleeping on busses or tubes, or in squats.
- Local Rough Sleeper Counts To measure the impact of our rough sleeping work, since July 2019 the Council has also commenced additional Hackney rough sleeper counts on a two monthly basis. These counts can be used as a baseline against which to measure the success of our actions. They also help to improve our knowledge and evidence of the extent of rough sleeping in the borough.
- Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN) is a multi-agency database which records information about rough sleepers and the street population in London. It is commissioned by the Mayor of London and managed by St Mungo's, a leading homelessness charity and housing association. The GLA utilises CHAIN data to produce regular reports on rough sleeping activity and trends in all London boroughs.¹⁸

¹⁷ DCLG (2010), *Evaluating the Extent of Rough Sleeping: a new approach*. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluating-the-extent-of-rough-sleeping--2

¹⁸ <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports>

The headline data:

Table 1: National Street Count Data

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Hackney	12	20	17	18	23
London	742	940	964	1,137	1,283
England	2,744	3,569	4,134	4,751	4,677

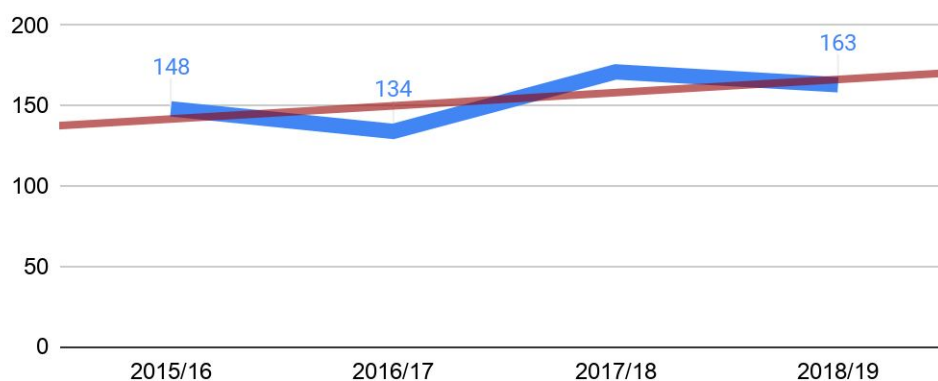
Table 2: Bi Monthly Hackney Local Street Count Numbers and Gender

	26/07/2019	27/09/2019
<i>Male</i>	13	8
<i>Female</i>	7	2
<i>Identified in another way</i>	0	0
<i>Other/not known/undisclosed</i>	0	2
Total	20	12

Table 3: Local Street Count Data – Nationality and Age

Nationality	26/07/2019	27/09/2019	Age	26/07/2019	27/09/2019
UK	11	4	Under 18	0	0
EU	3	4	18-25	0	0
Non EU	1	1	25+	17	9
Non known/ undisclosed	5	3	Not known/ undisclosed	3	3

Number of people seen rough sleeping in Hackney (CHAIN data)



CHAIN data for Hackney indicates that rough sleeping numbers in the borough have been relatively stable since 2014/15. In 2017/18 the total number of rough sleepers (171) was

slightly higher than in the previous two years (148 and 134 respectively), but this has subsequently declined in 2018/19. The 2018/19 total of 163 is only slightly higher than that for 2014/15 (155) despite severe challenges caused by welfare reform and lack of affordable housing options increasing homelessness.

Hackney saw a 4.7% decrease in rough sleepers between 2017/18 and 18/19 from 171 to 163. This goes against the London wide trend which saw a significant increase in rough sleeping, with numbers up 18% from 7,484 to 8,855. Over the last year Hackney's decrease is out of synch with our surrounding boroughs, with Newham, Islington, Waltham Forest and The City of London seeing significant rises in rough sleeping, which are amongst the highest in London. Only Tower Hamlets' position mirrors that of Hackney with a slight decrease in numbers.¹⁹

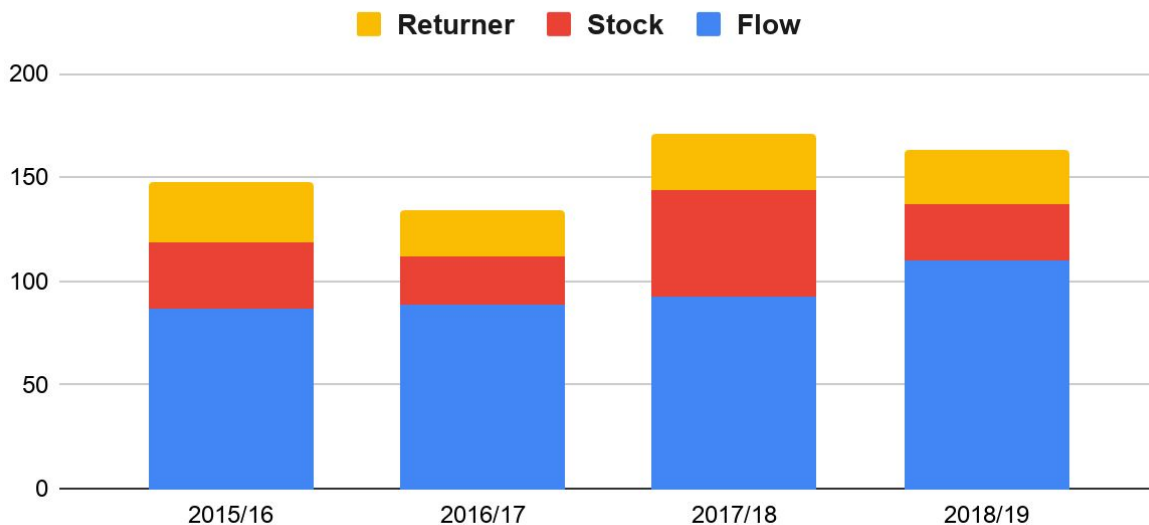
While annual street count data for November 18, shows an increase, it is worth highlighting that Hackney's increase was significantly below the trend both across London and our surrounding boroughs.

Although early days, our own local counts are showing a decrease between July and September, particularly among UK nationals, which suggests that our additional rough sleeping work is having an impact.

Who is rough sleeping in Hackney

The 'flow', 'stock', 'returner' model is utilised by CHAIN/GLA to categorise rough sleepers. 'Flow' rough sleepers are people who have never been seen by outreach workers on the streets prior to the current year. 'Stock' rough sleepers are those who have been seen across a minimum of two consecutive years. 'Returner' rough sleepers are people with a gap in their rough sleeping histories of at least 12 months.

Annual flow, stock and returner rough sleepers in Hackney (CHAIN data)²⁰



CHAIN data indicates that in 2018/19 the percentage of "stock" rough sleepers in Hackney, individuals seen on the streets across at least two years has fallen. These tend to be the most entrenched rough sleepers and includes people with complex support needs,

¹⁹ CHAIN Annual Reports, 2017/18. Haringey indicates 212 rough sleepers (up from 146 in 2016/17), Newham indicates 418 rough sleepers (up from 396 in 2016/17).

²⁰ GLA Annual CHAIN Reports, as above.

especially in relation to substance misuse. Most of this group are understood to be UK nationals, although it also includes a small number of EEA nationals and others with NRPF.

During 18/19, intensive and personalised support work was undertaken with Hackney's most entrenched rough sleepers. This was funded through the Mayor of London's Social Impact Bond for entrenched rough sleepers, which pays service providers St Mungo's and Thames Reach for helping the most established rough sleepers - including those with mental health issues and drug and alcohol problems – off the streets and into stable accommodation. The London-wide project, which is funded until July 2021, provides personalised support to 350 entrenched rough sleepers, enabling them to access accommodation, healthcare, skills, work and training opportunities. This intensive targeted approach has had significant success, with some of the borough's most complex rough sleepers supported into accommodation and off the streets. This work is continuing and from 2020 will be supported by Hackney's three rough sleeping navigators who will work on a 1-2-1 basis to get rough sleepers off the streets and support them to maintain accommodation.

In contrast, CHAIN data for Hackney indicates that the proportion of “flow” rough sleepers – those new to the streets has increased from 58.8% in 2015/16 to 67.5% in 2018/19, with the increase particularly high during the last financial year. The proportion of returner rough sleepers remained relatively stable, at around 16%.

Internal records, compiled by our commissioned street outreach team, show that this trend has continued in 2019/20 with significant churn in the borough's rough sleeping caseload. The proportion of rough sleepers being supported off the streets, and into accommodation is at an all-time high. However they are being replaced by new rough sleepers at about 20 a month. This is due to the consequences of a lack of housing options and appropriate support. The increase in ‘flow’ rough sleepers in Hackney mirrors the London-wide trend, which saw a 24% increase in new rough sleepers compared to 2017/18.

CHAIN data shows that the majority of people who sleep rough in Hackney originate outside the borough, and do not have a local connection to the borough. The majority come from neighbouring boroughs (Haringey, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Islington and Waltham Forest). A smaller number of rough sleepers originate from other London boroughs and other areas of England. Rough sleepers may be drawn to Hackney for one of several reasons: to access the borough's good quality health, substance misuse or mental health services; because they have exhausted housing and support options in their home area or following enforcement out of a neighbouring borough.

Where rough sleepers are bedded down in Hackney but do not have a local connection to the borough, they will be unable to access rough sleeping services, including accommodation, in the borough. In these cases our Street Outreach team, working in partnership with the Greenhouse, will provide advice and support around reconnection to other areas of the UK where they have access to accommodation.

Reconnection services help people who are sleeping rough to find accommodation in a new area where they feel safe and are able to leave the streets behind, including finding accommodation in an area where they have local ties, identifying any rights to social housing that they may have, or an alternative if they don't. Where rough sleepers have a connection to another part of the UK, our services work with Safe Connections (run in partnership with Thames Reach) who can source housing and support options in other areas of the country where the rough sleeper may have family and community ties. Safe connections is GLA-funded. It works with rough sleepers who have come onto the streets within the past three months.

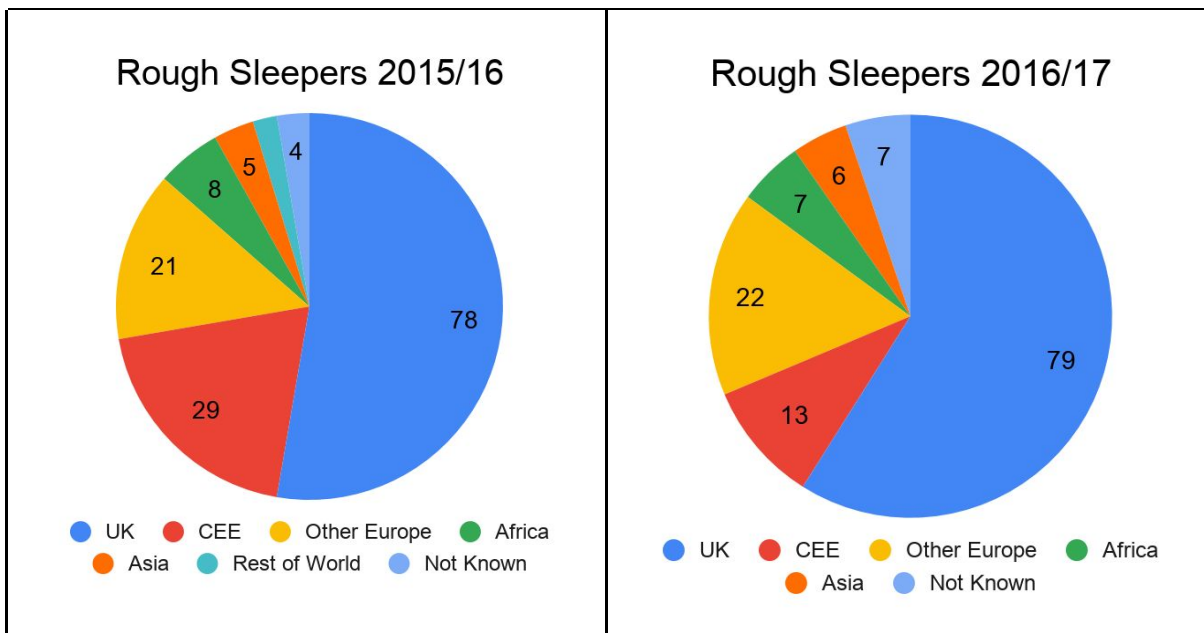
Our team works closely with other councils and Safe Connections to:

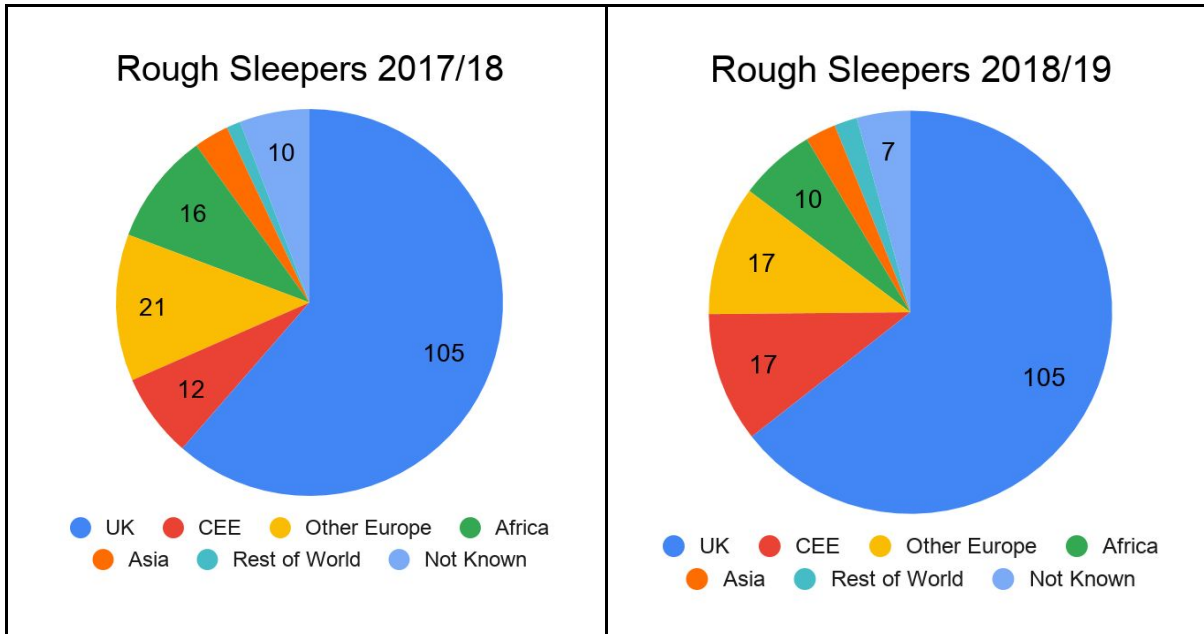
- Reconnect rough sleepers without a local connection to Hackney, back to their home borough.
- Reconnect rough sleepers who are street homeless in other boroughs back to Hackney services.

Where outreach workers identify reconnection our services will ensure that the individual will not sleep rough or otherwise be at risk in the place to which they are to be re-connected. For example, by checking that they did not leave because of an ongoing threat to their safety, and are entitled to access to housing and social services. If someone is identified as a UK resident who does not have a local connection to Hackney, and a local connection to another area is unclear, we will work to identify whether the rough sleeper has a local connection in another area. Where rough sleepers may have a local connection to Hackney, but lack evidence, we will help the rough sleeper obtain necessary evidence to demonstrate a local connection, so they can be housed.

Whilst some of this group of rough sleepers have a significant number of bedded down contacts in Hackney, many are transient, ie have only one or two CHAIN contacts in the borough, meaning they have only been seen in Hackney by our Street Outreach Team once or twice. It is difficult to find an effective accommodation and support solution in these cases, as it is not possible to effectively assess people’s needs. Where individuals are spotted bedding down in Hackney, but CHAIN records show they primarily sleep rough in another borough, Hackney will liaise with rough sleeping and outreach services in the borough where they spend most of their time to ensure that appropriate joined up support and services are provided.

Nationality of Hackney rough sleepers

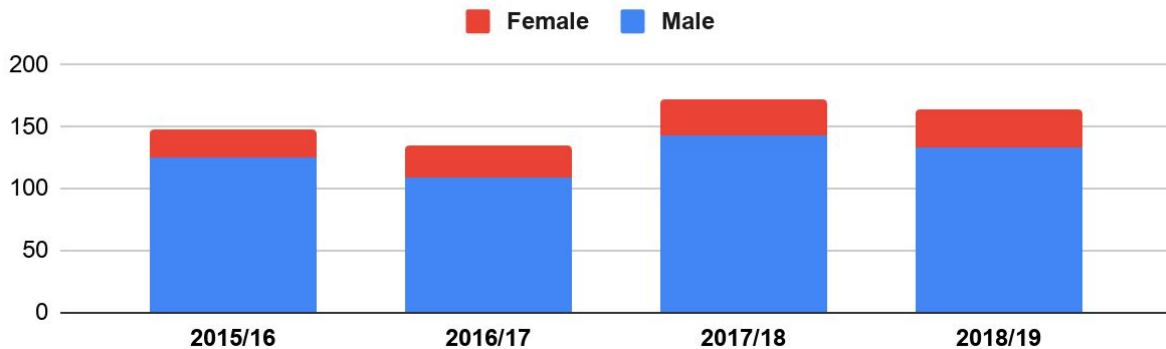




UK nationals continue to be the largest proportion (64%) of Hackney’s rough sleepers, and this number is growing. Between 2015/16 and 2018/19, the proportion of CEE nationals and other European nationals decreased (from 20% to 11% and 14% to 10% respectively). There was a slight increase in the proportion of rough sleepers from African countries (5% to 6%).

In relation to 2018/19 figures, Hackney’s proportion of UK nationals is significantly higher at (64%) than the London average (49%), whilst its proportion of CEE nationals is significantly below the London average of (31%). The proportion of rough sleepers from African countries is slightly above the London average (6%). Hackney does not face the same challenges from large groups of CEE nationals of other boroughs, although some hotspots do exist.

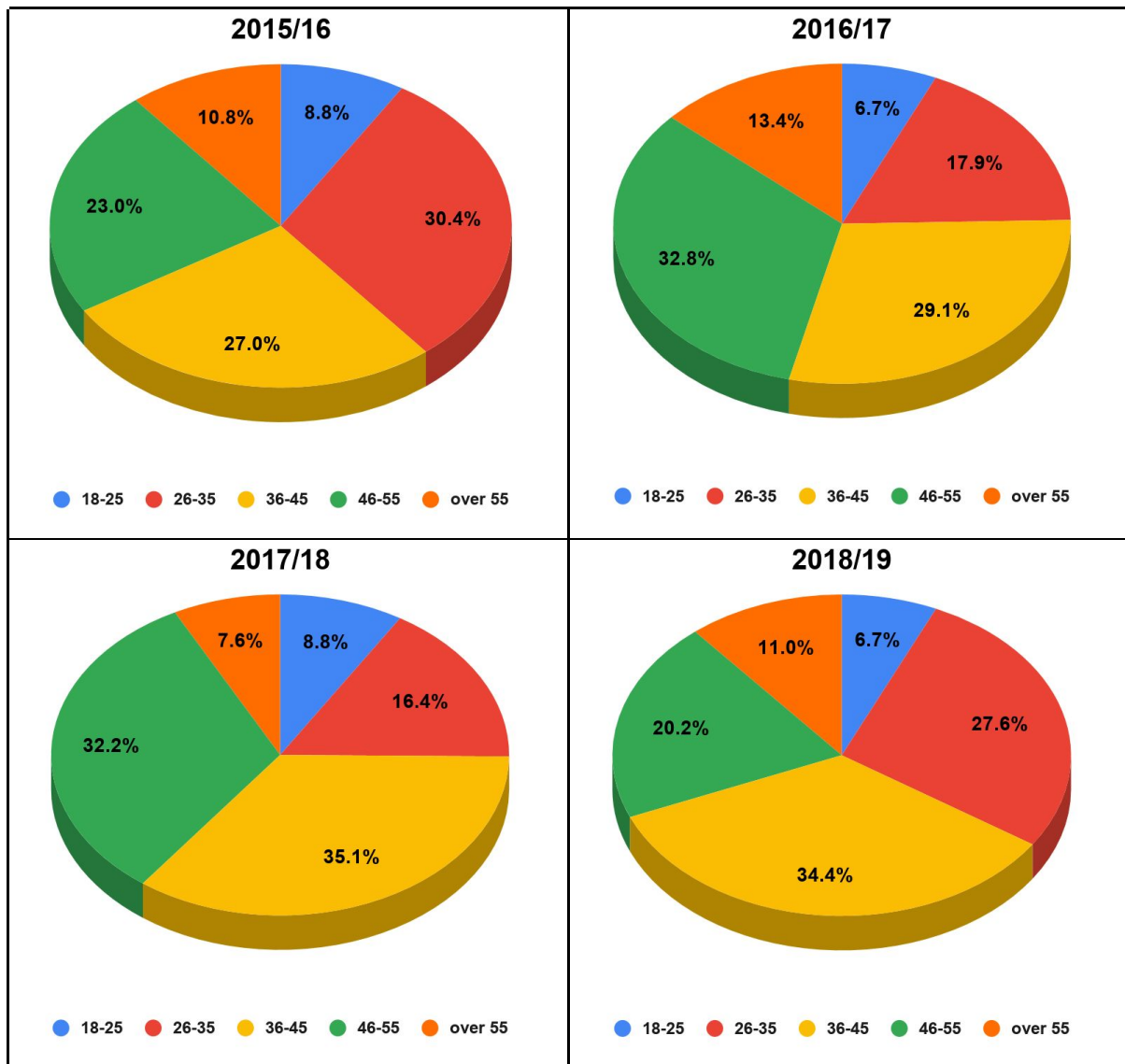
Hackney's rough sleeping population by gender



No transgender individuals were identified in any year.

Hackney continues to have a slightly higher proportion of female rough sleepers (19%) than the London average of 16%.

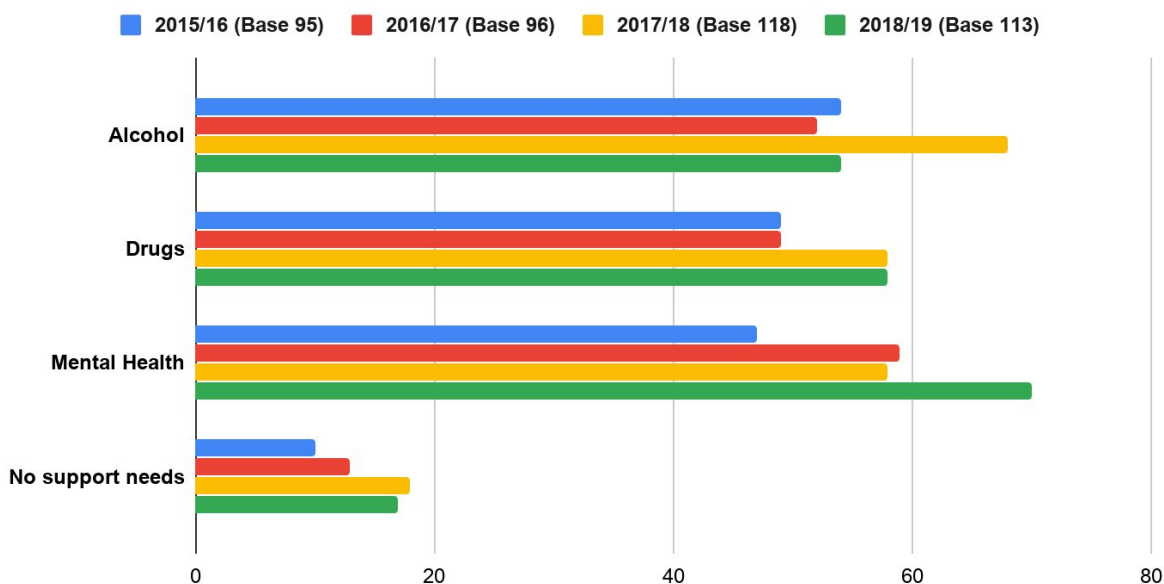
Age breakdown of rough sleepers in Hackney



No under 18-year olds were seen rough sleeping in Hackney. Where people who are under 18 years old are found sleeping rough, or are potentially under 18, they are immediately referred to the care of Children Services.

The number of young rough sleepers under 25 has remained low. Our counts and CHAIN data show that the numbers of people under 25 sleeping on our streets has not risen, and has actually decreased compared to the significant increase in wider youth homelessness in the borough. There are significant shortfalls between the maximum state help with housing costs through Universal Credit to most persons under 25 (currently around £108 per week) and the median rent levels in Hackney (currently £121 per week for a room rising to £348 per week for a self contained 1 bed flat). The Council is concerned that this could lead to not only increased temporary accommodation pressures but also increased rough sleeping, as affordable private rented housing options become ever harder to source for this group in London. Action to mitigate the lack of affordable housing supply for young people will form part of our overarching homelessness strategy.

Rough sleeper support needs where known²¹



During 2018/19 85% of rough sleepers in Hackney, whose needs were known or assessed by outreach workers, required support in one or more areas. This is broadly in line with the figures for 2016/17 and 2017/18, where between 85% and 86% of rough sleepers required support in one or more areas.

Hackney's proportion of rough sleepers where support needs are known is higher than in London as a whole. For example, in relation to alcohol, Hackney's figure of around 52% (a decrease from 57.5% in 2017/18) compared to a London average of 42% for the same period. Similarly Hackney's proportion of rough sleepers with support needs around drugs 51% (49% in 2017/18) is above the London average of 41%.

Worryingly, the proportion of rough sleepers in Hackney with mental health needs in 2018/19 was 62% - a significant increase from 49% in 2017/18. This is above the London average of 50%. This significant increase in rough sleepers with mental health needs is Hackney specific, and is not identifiable across London where figures have remained static.

Hackney's rough sleepers are more likely to be UK nationals with more complex vulnerabilities and support needs than the London average. CHAIN figures reflect a significant increase in rough sleepers locally with mental health needs – a trend which is also reflected generally across the single homeless population in Hackney, including those in temporary accommodation.

There is growing demand for supported housing, at a time when services are already stretched due to austerity. This means that individuals with lower level support needs may find themselves in general needs accommodation. Some people are clearly struggling to manage in general needs accommodation, and the Council is examining options for additional supported provision for this group and vulnerable singles.

²¹ CHAIN data excludes people for whom support needs are not known/assessed. In 2017/18, this applied to 28% of rough sleepers in outer London boroughs. This is comparable with the Hackney total of 31% not known/assessed. (For the purposes of CHAIN Hackney is treated as an outer London borough.)

The higher than average instance of addiction in Hackney's rough sleeping population has been recognised in the retendering process for our Integrated Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services, with a much greater focus in the new contract on meeting the needs of the on-street population and rough sleepers. Mitigating action for the increase in mental health needs has been taken with the procurement of a dedicated on the street Mental Health Worker from October 2019 to ensure that these individuals are now connected into appropriate mental health services.

10. What services do Hackney provide to reduce rough sleeping?

The Greenhouse

The Greenhouse is central to Hackney's homelessness and rough sleeping prevention approach. The service is a partnership between Hackney Council, NHS England and Thames Reach and provides an integrated healthcare, housing and welfare advice service for single homeless people without secure tenure, including those with NRPF. The Greenhouse was launched in 2007. Since September 2015 it has been expanded to host Hackney's Housing Advice for single homeless people.

The Greenhouse team includes a GP and nurse, staff from Thames Reach and the Council's Housing Advice service. The Greenhouse has specialist GPs who are used to working with homeless individuals, and longer appointments give patients the time to talk about their physical and mental health. The service understands that these patients may have low confidence, and limited ability to independently access appropriate health services.

The service offers:

- Holistic assessment of service users' circumstances, including: housing, medical needs, issues around substance misuse, mental health, offending and/or sex working and welfare benefits advice
- TB screening, needle exchange and links to dentistry and eye care services
- Information and assistance around finding accommodation
- For young people, mediation and encouragement to return to the family home where this is safe and appropriate
- Tenancy sustainment support, including: landlord mediation and Discretionary Housing Payments to reduce rent arrears, provide essential goods and/or top up Housing Benefit
- Work with partners to provide access to employment, training and debt advice and specialist immigration advice
- Weekly visits from Vietnamese and Polish-speaking interpreters
- Homeless health peer advocacy via Groundswell who can support clients to attend and understand appointments and work with them to build their resilience.
- A registered address for rough sleepers enabling them to receive post and claim benefits.

The Greenhouse's environment is informal, relaxed and welcoming. Service users use a single reception counter for their medical and housing enquiries. The Greenhouse's use of walk-in appointments enables service users to receive same-day assessments. This makes the service accessible to vulnerable homeless people who, given their highly chaotic lifestyles and vulnerabilities, often find it difficult to keep to scheduled appointments.

The combined expertise of Thames Reach and Hackney Council staff enables all service users to receive a comprehensive and personalised assessment. Hackney Council officers are able to make statutory homelessness decisions, introducing more streamlined processes. Where needed, service users can be referred immediately into emergency accommodation, including assessment beds at St Mungo's Mare Street hostel. All Greenhouse staff have direct access to Hackney's supported accommodation pathways, which include mental health units, as well as single homeless and dedicated rough sleeper provision. This direct access to supported housing improves capacity, increases speed of placement, and increases the likelihood of service users sustaining their engagement with services and ultimately positive outcomes.

The proximity of Hackney MIND (Mental health) and Hackney Recovery Service (Drug and Alcohol Treatment services) makes it easier for homeless people to access specialist support. Greenhouse staff meet regularly with partners to review protocols and working practices. Currently, this includes work with probation services.

The quality and effectiveness of the Greenhouse's approach has been recognised by the Care Quality Commission, which rated the service as 'outstanding' in its 2017 review in three areas (Being safe, Responsive and Well-led).

The Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) has significantly changed local authorities' responsibilities around providing advice and assistance for single homeless people and requires councils to work in new ways to prevent homelessness within this group. The Greenhouse's approach supports delivery of these new expectations. In line with increased demand for advice and assistance from single homeless people, we have further expanded the Greenhouse's staffing capacity. This includes a number of apprentices with lived experience of homelessness.

Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP)

The Council follows the pan-London protocol which ensures that all rough sleepers and people at risk of rough sleeping are accommodated during periods of cold weather. Currently, this is defined as being any night when the temperature is forecast to drop to zero degrees or lower in any part of the capital. Emergency accommodation is available for the duration of the cold weather, or until rough sleepers have found suitable alternative accommodation. The Council works with Mare Street hostel and Hackney Winter Night Shelter to provide additional beds during these periods. During periods when winter SWEP is operational our Outreach Team provides additional outreach to locate rough sleepers and encourage them into the bed spaces.

Since summer 2019 the Council now operates summer SWEP provision. Under summer SWEP provision no one should be on the streets in extreme heat where the temperature in London is forecast to exceed 28 degrees for at least three consecutive days. During this period rough sleepers in Hackney are offered a room to avoid the heat. The outreach team also distribute water and sun cream.

Hackney Single Homeless Adult Pathway

Hackney Single Homeless Adult Pathway provides accommodation-based support for rough sleepers. Recently redesigned, the Pathway is aligned to Hackney's Community Strategy, with a continued focus on keeping vulnerable adults safe. The Pathway model is designed to allow service users to progress through appropriate temporary supported accommodation options towards more permanent placements. The framework for the Pathway identifies three distinct stages across an individual's Pathway Journey. The stages are:

- Assessment
- Engaging support
- Move through

The service model focuses on both stabilising clients with previously chaotic lifestyles - including those engaged in street activity - preparing a clear route to independent living. The Pathway stages represent a framework for building support around the individual, reinforcing a strengths-based recovery approach which places the person at the centre of support, ensuring the service user achieves maximum outcomes at each stage of their Pathway journey.

The Pathway is flexible and responsive to the multiple and complex needs of service users including:

- People with substance misuse issues, including those who are in the pre-contemplative and contemplative stages of addressing those issues
- People with very chaotic lifestyles, including those displaying anti-social behaviour
- People with low level and/or undiagnosed mental health needs who may or may not be addressing those issues
- People at risk of offending
- People with health issues associated with entrenched rough sleeping

The Pathway has been remodelled to develop and support the implementation of a psychologically informed environment and trauma-informed support across all schemes, and is therefore better placed to work with entrenched rough sleepers.

Housing First

Traditionally, much supported accommodation for rough sleepers has been based around a 'step down' model, moving from high support through semi-independent accommodation into independent living. This approach does not work for all service users, especially those with complex needs and histories of repeat homelessness: people may not thrive within communal environments, and housing groups of vulnerable rough sleepers together can make it difficult for people to maintain abstinence from drugs/alcohol. As a result, some service users can become stuck in high-support accommodation or be excluded from projects due to their needs or behaviour. Both of these scenarios are costly both for individuals and for public services.

Housing First is an evidence-based approach to supporting homeless people with high needs to live in their own homes. It does not seek to establish conditions for housing readiness, but rather provides people with a secure home at the start of their journey out of

homelessness, using this as a platform from which other issues are addressed. Support is via intensive floating support, which can be increased or decreased as needs arise.

In our previous Rough Sleeper Strategy, the Council committed to piloting the Housing First model for individuals who have not successfully exited the Pathway or temporary accommodation due to their ongoing drug, alcohol and/or mental health issues, but who have demonstrated their ability to manage accommodation in terms of rent, service charge payments and health and safety. The Council's first Housing First scheme commenced in January 2020, with 20 people placed in units with appropriate floating support attached.

Thames Reach peer landlord scheme

Peer Landlord schemes are shared housing for former homeless individuals who are living in the private rented sector for the first time. Each property contains a live-in "Peer Landlord". The Peer Landlord is a co-tenant with a shared background of historic homelessness, who has gained a level of independence, experience and resilience. The Peer Landlord enables a supportive environment by acting as a positive role model for the other tenants. They have received training in housing and financial management, covering basic skills such as maintenance, money management and paying bills, and lead in liaising with Thames Reach, who manage the properties. The model is designed to be affordable, with properties leased from social investors and housing associations at below market rates. The aim is to enable tenants to have somewhere affordable to live while they take steps towards employment and independence. The tender has been successfully awarded to Thames Reach, and the first two large properties in Hackney – one with 14 rooms, and one with 7 rooms – have been obtained for the scheme. Both properties are currently being repurposed as they require significant work to bring them up to the necessary standard.

Floating Support

Tenancy Sustainment Teams (TSTs) The GLA funds two TSTs, run by St Mungo's and Thames Reach. These teams provide floating support for former rough sleepers who have moved into long-term supported accommodation provided in housing association tenancies via the Clearing House. The Clearing House is a point of coordination and liaison for a partnership of registered housing providers and rough sleeping services. The Clearing House accepts referrals from all the major hostels and outreach teams, and matches former rough sleepers with appropriate social homes and support. Once in accommodation, TSTs provide three main types of support: helping people to maintain tenancies, accessing employment and training opportunities and moving into independent accommodation when they no longer need the service. Service users have a named worker whom they can contact for support and makes regular home visits to check on progress, offer advice and access to specialist services.

Hackney Recovery Project. This provides specialist substance misuse outreach in Hackney one afternoon per week. Hackney's substance misuse contract is currently in the process of being retendered. A new five year contract is due to commence from October 2020. Under the new contract there is a much stronger focus on the specific treatment needs of rough sleepers and street users. The contract emphasises close partnership working with street homelessness outreach teams and the Greenhouse, and the amount of on-street assertive outreach for substance misuse treatment significantly increases. The contract specifically targets rough sleepers and those of no fixed abode, having a low threshold to access, and a street substance misuse outreach team with operating hours that better reflect the needs of rough sleepers.

Services Delivered to enhance service provision and prevent rough sleeping by the Council and its partners.

- Our Hackney Hospital Discharge officer pilot, which was initially jointly commissioned with City and Hackney CCG, was so successful that the provision has been included as a core activity. Funding has now been made available from Hackney Council to cover this role. The post provides support to people who are entitled to aftercare under S.117 of the Mental Health Act and other patients. Carrying out assessment of patients' housing needs at admission and discharge reduces the risk of them becoming homeless when they leave hospital and has also significantly reduced bed blocking.
- A joint protocol between the Councils' Benefits and Housing Needs, Adult Social Care, and Mental Health teams has been agreed and implemented. As a result, a collaborative approach is taken to best support vulnerable residents, ensuring where possible that accommodation is maintained while a resident is an inpatient of mental health services. Where a patient does not have appropriate accommodation to return to, early intervention and information sharing gives time for a full investigation and risk assessment to be undertaken, meaning that individuals with mental health issues are not placed in inappropriate accommodation or Bed and Breakfast. It also ensures that a housing solution and support can be found for discharge that best fits the resident's needs, thus preventing street homelessness.
- 2018 saw the launch of Hackney's permanent No Second Night Out hub. This will ensure we are able to provide a rapid response to new rough sleepers and help as many people as possible to access emergency accommodation, so that they do not need to spend a second night on the streets.
- In 2019 Hackney Winter Night Shelter was expanded with funding from the Mayor of London's Rough Sleeping Innovation (RSI) fund to operate a women's night shelter. This shelter runs from a 4/5 bedroom house in Hackney and accommodates up to 10 women in shared rooms. Each woman who has been sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough stays for up to 90 days while they are supported to obtain more stable accommodation.
- In March 2019 the Council successfully bid for **£350,000** of funding through the MHCLG RSI to create and recruit a Hackney specific Street Outreach Team (SORT) consisting of:
 - **A Dedicated Rough Sleeping Coordinator.** This role acts as a single point of contact for all rough sleeping services. The post provides both a strategic overview and operational lead for rough sleeping service in borough to ensure delivery of our rough sleeping programme. Since this officer has been in post we have seen increased funding for rough sleeping services, identified gaps in provision, and raised the prominence of rough sleeping initiatives across the community. The role has helped to join up and coordinate services across the statutory and voluntary sector, improving partnership working, ensuring that all different parts of the effort to tackle rough sleeping are working together as efficiently as possible.

- **Three rough sleeping outreach workers.** The team is now operational and provides significantly increased and more responsive on-street capacity to find individuals who are sleeping rough and connect them to appropriate housing and support compared to the previous pan-London service. Referrals from the public are responded to more rapidly (within 24 hours). The team has more capacity to conduct street checks for rough sleepers, build up evidence and a better knowledge base of rough sleeping behaviour in the borough, and conduct ongoing, intensive work with people on the streets enabling better reconnection and access to sustainable, supported accommodation.
- **An Approved Mental Health Outreach Worker.** The Council has taken on a dedicated mental health worker to work on the streets alongside the outreach team, ensuring rough sleepers get quicker assessment and diagnosis of mental health problems, and are more rapidly connected into appropriate mental health treatment and support.
- **Three Navigators.** Three navigators will work with small caseloads of rough sleepers with complex needs on a 1-2-1 personalised basis. Unlike outreach workers, their smaller caseload will mean these navigators have the ability and time to form long term trusting relationships with the most entrenched rough sleepers, based on the needs of each person. They provide a personalised service, rather than trying to refer the rough sleeper into standard uniform provision. The support provided builds on people's strengths and is shaped by an understanding of the impact of trauma on that person's behaviours. Over time navigators become a single, consistent and trusted point of contact for the individual they are supporting, enabling them to successfully engage, or re-engage with services from which they would otherwise be excluded, including encouraging them to return to accommodation which they have abandoned or been excluded from. They all have small discretionary budgets, ensuring rough sleepers get access to the specific support they need and do not fall between gaps in local services.
- A Dedicated Employment Advisor has been put in place working specifically with the cohort of single homeless and former rough sleepers, and will intervene at an early stage, providing employment support, that is intensive, flexible and structured with the specific needs of homeless people in mind. This role will provide support that tackles the multiple barriers which single homeless can face, which is not catered for by mainstream employment services.
- The Community Safety and Enforcement Team have recruited a Street Population Coordinator to focus on working with those street users who are accommodated but are highly visible on our streets and may cause anti-social behaviour such as aggressive begging and street drinking. This post (although outside the rough sleeping remit) will be able to support those individuals who generate significant referrals from the public due to their highly visibility but are not actually homeless or sleeping rough. Many of these individuals may still be highly vulnerable and may have support needs. It will also coordinate with rough sleeping services, where concerns are raised about anti-social behaviour, and there is also housing need.

We have also introduced and improved:

Additional emergency bed spaces - The Council has procured additional emergency bed spaces, in excess of the units commissioned through our supported housing pathway by Adult Social Services to support the work of the new on street outreach team.

Floating Hubs - With the GLA and St Mungos we are delivering short term floating assessment hubs. These hubs are a two week intensive service, where Council services, dedicated outreach teams, homeless organisations and local community and voluntary organisations all work together to encourage rough sleepers off the streets, and into the hub. There are no restrictions on access to the hub, where rough sleepers can be assessed and connected into long term sustainable services. The first floating hub was based at the site of the former Homerton Neighbourhood Housing Office, and targeted rough sleepers in the vicinity of Hackney Central, and was very successful. Overall 77% of people who entered the floating hub moved directly into accommodation and 76% were not seen sleeping rough again three months later, including long term rough sleepers and non UK nationals.

Hackney Single Homelessness Forum - This brings together a number of organisations working with rough sleepers and other single homeless people. The forum is an opportunity to network, share information, discuss relevant issues and plan future priorities. The forum aims to meet three or four times a year and is chaired by Thames Reach. The forum has been involved in developing Hackney's new Homelessness and Rough Sleeper strategies and will be involved in delivering actions arising from these documents.

Street Users Outreach Forum (SUOM) - SUOM is a statutory/voluntary partnership which aims to coordinate outreach, support and enforcement activities around persistent or serious ASB carried out by street users, mainly relating to substance misuse. SUOM promotes intelligence sharing and action planning to encourage service engagement. Where enforcement is considered, SUOM ensures this action is appropriate and proportionate and has a clear auditable evidence trail. SUOM meets monthly to review individual cases. We have recently reviewed the work of SUOM to ensure it has a stronger evidence and casework focus. A new post of Street Population Controller has been created based in the Community Safety and Enforcement service to lead SUOM.

Website - The council has set up a dedicated information page on the Hackney website specifically on rough sleeping (<https://hackney.gov.uk/rough-sleeping>). This provides essential information for individuals who are homeless or at risk of rough sleeping. It also informs the wider public about what they can do to help a rough sleeper, and where they should go if they are concerned about someone sleeping rough.

Campaigns - The Council have launched a new publicity campaign on what the public should do if they see a rough sleeper called "Talk, Tap, Time, Tell" which will be widely promoted around the borough through social media, leaflets and events.

This promotes the key messages of:

- **Talk** – A smile of hello can make a big difference to help people to feel less invisible and part of the community.
- **Tap** – Residents can help financially by donating £3 through Tap London's contactless donation points around the borough.
- **Time** – Residents can give their time by finding out volunteering opportunities with local homeless charities at <https://hackney.gov.uk/rough-sleeping>.

- **Tell** – Residents can contact our outreach workers through the StreetLink app or direct people to the Greenhouse, for support and advice.

The service has already run targeted leafleting about this campaign outside the borough's main train stations offering advice on rough sleeping as part of World Homeless Day.

Hosting Tap London Points – Tap London is a network of contactless points, backed by the GLA and Mayor of London, where individuals can use their debit or credit card to donate £3.00 to 22 recognised homelessness charities. These organisations provide direct aid to homeless people across London and Hackney, with 100% of the money going to the charities concerned. Hackney has worked with TAP London to install contactless donation points at both Hackney Town Hall and the Hackney Service Centre. We are currently working with other Council Services and with the business community to increase the number of contact points for donations right across Hackney.

Second Annual Rough Sleeper Conference - The Council held its second annual rough sleeper conference in February 2019 with attendance of around 75 representatives from local voluntary and community organisations. The summit gave the wider sector key updates on rough sleeping policy from MHCLG, and an update on the local position regarding rough sleeping in Hackney. The conference discussed key issues including the upcoming challenges regarding rough sleeping, and how as a borough partnership we might respond and be more joined up.

Successfully embedded No First Night Out (NFNO) principles around homeless prevention into the borough's mainstream housing advice services - NFNO was initially a stand alone tri-borough project operating across the City of London, Hackney and Tower Hamlets, funded by Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)'s Homelessness Prevention Programme and was first piloted in 2016/17. Its aim was to build up an evidence base to be able to proactively identify those individuals that were most at risk of rough sleeping, before they reached the streets – The Pre Rough Sleeper. The idea was if you could identify the key characterises which made people more likely to go on to rough sleep and provide intensive casework, support and interventions to those people, you could prevent them from ever reaching the streets. Referrals were received to the project from a wide range of services, including: Jobcentre Plus and Hackney Citizens Advice Bureau. A typology (set of characteristics) relating to people at risk of rough sleeping was developed by St Mungo's and was utilised by local frontline staff to identify and target support for service users.

From the end of March 2019 following the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act, we incorporated that learning and mainstreamed it into our housing advice services, as part of our dedicated prevention work with singles. Referral to a standalone project was therefore no longer necessary. Under the Homelessness Reduction Act referrals now come from third parties to the Greenhouse, and our dedicated front line workers provide the necessary support to this group. This can include access to emergency housing to alleviate the immediate risk of rough sleeping, access to supported housing and support to access the private rented sector. Hackney have obtained £87,000 in grant funding for 18/19 and 19/20 to help bring the property procurement work previously undertaken by NFNO into our mainstream services, including introducing a dedicated officer to facilitate access to accommodation for those individuals who would have previously gone through the NFNO project by working with private landlords and charities to acquire properties.

11. What impact has this had on our rough sleepers?

Reports of rough sleepers are received through StreetLink. At first instance they are searched for by the pan London Rapid Response Outreach Team. They prioritise those individuals at imminent risk, and aim to find referrals from individuals sleeping rough within an hour, and referrals from the public within 2 hours. Any remaining referrals are passed to Hackney's own street outreach team, who will respond to all StreetLink referrals within 24 hours of the report.

Some of those reported are not rough sleepers, as many of the most visible individuals on our streets, have secure accommodation. In other cases the individuals cannot be found. However in all cases the outreach team will go out a minimum of 3 times, at different times to try and find an individual reported via StreetLink and get them support.

Sometimes referrals are closed - because they are duplicate reports, or they are too vague for a search to be undertaken. In other cases the rough sleeper is well known to services, and already being targeted by ongoing street outreach work. But just over 24% of referrals from StreetLink to the team result in a new individual being found.

The fact that referrals do not result in an individual being found sleeping rough normally means they are not rough sleepers, but are street users or those asking for money who have gone home to accommodation.

StreetLink Referrals Received By Street Outreach Team						
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Referrals received	70	90	126	130	108	112
Person Found	17	22	35	32	23	24
Person Not Found	45	54	65	74	73	82
Not looked for as already known	8	13	24	16	10	6
Case Closed	0	1	2	8	1	0
Referred to Emergency Services	0	0	0	0	1	0

The outreach team currently receives about 25 new rough sleeping cases per month, as new rough sleepers move into the borough or flow onto the streets for the first time, which they work with to get off the streets.

Between April 2019 when our new enhanced street outreach services came online and September 2019, our Street Outreach Team worked with 152 verified rough sleepers who have been sleeping on Hackney's streets to support them into accommodation. Of these:

- 71 rough sleepers have been supported into housing
- 46 rough sleepers can no longer be found
- 35 remain on the streets

46 cases have been closed because the rough sleeper can no longer be found. Despite multiple searches the outreach team are no longer able to find the rough sleeper, and their whereabouts are no longer known. Cases are only closed when we have been unable to find the rough sleeper for at least 2 months, and they have not been verified sleeping rough in

another borough. Rough sleepers are by nature transient, they will routinely move around the country, or leave the streets for accommodation often staying with friends or family.

Since April 71 rough sleepers, have been successfully supported off the streets and into housing, either being placed in Temporary Accommodation, been housed through NSNO, moved into alternative housing provision such as the YMCA, moved back in to live with family, or been reconnected into services in other boroughs.

Of the 35 cases still open and on the streets, 8 are EEA nationals who are not exercising a treaty right. A further 4 have NRPF either being over-stayers whose visa has expired, or are undocumented migrants.

Although it is early days the monthly stats show that the service's work is having an impact with the rough sleeping numbers dropping from 23 to 14 during the latest annual borough wide street count in November 2019 compared to the previous year. Although this is a one off count the decline in rough sleepers is supported by decreases in our smaller bi-monthly counts in July and September 2019. Our approach has had significant success in helping UK nationals with recourse to public funds off the streets, although less success with EEA nationals due to restrictions on public funds.

Winter 2019/20 the Government has agreed to temporarily relax the restrictions on housing on EEA nationals who are not exercising a treaty right for a maximum of three months to help support them into employment, although they remain blocked from claiming benefits. The Council is seeking funding to intensively work with this group of people.

Next steps

Reducing rough sleeping in Hackney requires a holistic approach to meeting rough sleepers' needs. This will involve using a range of borough-wide partnerships, initiatives and strategies.

12. What we will continue to deliver and new initiatives

Priority One: Prevention

Limited budgets for homelessness services make it essential that we use available resources effectively, so we can identify and prioritise support for people at greatest risk of rough sleeping.

We will utilise learning from the NFNO approach to prompt early intervention from homelessness services and prevent people reaching the streets. This will include providing intensive engagement, advice and mediation services and sourcing alternative housing solutions.

The Greenhouse will continue to provide a one-stop shop for advice, assistance and support for single homeless people. This will include holistic needs assessment and clear referral pathways into local accommodation and support services, including substance misuse and mental health services.

We will promote local homelessness prevention services, so people are aware of what is on offer and where they can go to for help. We will ensure that services are welcoming and accessible, so that people feel comfortable using them at an early stage. Everyone using homelessness prevention services will receive a comprehensive needs assessment and

have access to the advice and support they need via clear pathways, so they do not disengage during the process.

Hackney's increasingly expensive housing market and growing housing waiting list, coupled with reductions in benefits, means an essential part of homelessness prevention will be to manage the expectations of people seeking social and other affordable housing options in the borough. This will involve all partners signing up to giving a single message about the reality of the local housing market and encouraging individuals to consider a wider range of housing options, which for some will be outside of Hackney.

The Hospital Discharge Project at Homerton Hospital and Multiple Needs Service demonstrate the value of partnership working to prevent homelessness. We will seek opportunities to increase joint working between statutory and voluntary services, so that people at risk of homelessness are identified quickly and can access the accommodation and support they need. We will ensure that clear protocols and pathways are in place to support this process and explore possibilities for integrated commissioning.

People at risk of rough sleeping with NRPF have very restricted housing and support options. We will continue to offer supported, voluntary reconnection for this group, but explore additional options to help prevent them coming onto the streets.

Actions brought forward from existing strategy:

- Provide clear signposting to housing advice services, including via social media and translation of relevant text into community languages.
- Provide domestic violence and abuse awareness training to Hackney's customer service team; domestic violence and abuse and safeguarding training to hostel managers and support workers.

New actions for the refreshed strategy:

- Recognise that registered social landlords have a key role in preventing people ending up sleeping on the streets, and work with them to see how they can better prevent single homelessness, through the early identification of single tenants with complex needs who are struggling to sustain their tenancies, and could be at risk of eviction. For those who are already rough sleeping we will work with registered social landlords to identify and support those sleeping rough on their housing estates.
- Utilise new data available under the HRA to increase our understanding of demand for homelessness prevention services in Hackney and single homeless people's accommodation and support needs; utilise this information to inform future service responses. This is likely to include numbers of placements in accommodation and numbers of people experiencing repeat homelessness.
- Monitor the impact of Universal Credit roll-out on rough sleeping in Hackney. Seek to counter potential negative impacts through providing education, training and employment opportunities, liaising with local landlords and, where possible, use of direct payments for housing costs.
- Develop information-sharing arrangements with multi-agency partnerships in relation to people experiencing domestic abuse (such as MARAC), and work with registered social landlords to ensure wherever possible it is the perpetrator not the victim of the abuse that is removed from the property.

- Continue to build and improve links with the Prison Service, National Probation Services, Pan London Offender Housing Advice Services, Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRC's) and other appropriate partners as required under the Homelessness Reduction Act duty to refer, to ensure early notification when an offender is due to be released from prison, so that individuals are not released on to the streets, and that appropriate accommodation options can be sought. We will work with specialist housing providers to maximize accommodation options for prison leavers and ex-offenders.
- Provide tools and knowledge to the public, professionals and partners to enable them to identify specific triggers, risk factors and causes of rough sleeping, to ensure that these individuals are identified before the point of crisis, so that services and support can be provided before they reach the streets.
- Continue to widen and embed No First Night Out principles beyond mainstream housing advice services, throughout Council departments, commissioned services, and into places where the wider community may have contact with individuals who are at risk of rough sleeping.
- Review joint working arrangements with statutory services to ensure these support the new HRA Duty to Refer.
- Pilot specialist support for Greenhouse service users with dual diagnosis needs by providing on-site psychiatric nursing and joint substance misuse and mental health clinics.
- Seek to forge new links and pathways with accommodation providers; provide reassurance for landlords about the preparation and support in place for single homeless people who have support needs. This will include working with adult social care commissioners to develop approaches which help homeless people improve their tenancy management and life skills.
- Carry out further consultation with current and former users of Greenhouse services to better understand the effectiveness of holistic needs assessments on preventing homelessness; involving Experts by Experience in developing our future service offer.
- Move from services that are short term, crisis based interventional, with an end date in mind towards providing support that is individually paced, moving with the person's situation, with longer support provision where necessary, particularly with substance addictions and coping with deep seated trauma.

Priority Two: Outreach

NSNO delivers an effective, rapid response for new rough sleepers in Hackney, providing access to suitable accommodation and support which enables them to exit the streets quickly. However, some Hackney rough sleepers have complex needs and are entrenched in their street lifestyle. Supporting this group to come off the streets can be a slow and challenging process, which requires an assertive and persistent approach from street-based services.

Hackney's outreach services will be able to work with all local rough sleepers, regardless of support needs and the length of time they have spent on the street. This will involve

improving coordination between existing outreach services and commissioning additional resources to increase outreach capacity. This will enable us to be more responsive to reports of rough sleeping and to deliver intensive, personalised casework, including street-based assessment, where needed.

Our approach to managing street population issues will be robust and proportionate. We will continue to work with community safety colleagues and others around rough sleeping hotspots. We will utilise enforcement action in response to ASB as a last resort and where it is understood that this will bring clear benefits for the individual and community involved. Any enforcement actions will always be accompanied by an offer of support which seeks to address the underlying cause of rough sleepers' behaviour.

We will continue to publicise StreetLink widely, to enable members of the public to report concerns around rough sleeping. We will support local people and businesses to become more involved in longer-term responses which help rough sleepers to leave the streets. We will also engage the street population to explore how services can help them change their lifestyle.

Actions brought forward from existing strategy:

- Continue to monitor the location and support needs of people involved in street activity, utilising this information to inform design and delivery of outreach and support services.
- Continue to work with housing estate management and community safety teams to gather intelligence around rough sleeping in estate blocks.
- Monitor Hackney Accommodation Pathway data to assess if hostel and/or temporary accommodation placements are appropriate for rough sleepers, including those with multiple needs.
- Utilise the Single Homeless Forum to coordinate responses to rough sleeping by statutory and voluntary sector services and develop effective action plans
- Continue to use SUOM (Street Users Outreach Forum) to develop multi-agency approaches for rough sleepers and people at risk of rough sleeping whose anti-social behaviour is most problematic.

New actions for the refreshed strategy:

- We will maximise all available funding opportunities to retain and expand our enhanced on-street outreach provision, including cross-boundary funding bids and opportunities where appropriate.
- We will map rough sleepers' engagement with Hackney outreach services, to assess the effectiveness of current arrangements.
- We will work with the Government and the Mayor of London to secure long term resources for the Council's commissioned on-street outreach service, and dedicated mental health outreach worker beyond the initial one year funding window.
- We will seek to improve joint working around substance misuse, including multi-agency street-based responses.

- We will acknowledge that rough sleepers do not recognise borough boundaries. Our response to rough sleeping will involve working with neighbouring boroughs and with local authorities further afield. In tackling rough sleeping we must work closely with neighbouring councils to ensure we are working towards realistic and appealing reconnection offers. There is already some good effective joint working with neighbouring boroughs and we will take steps to improve this and create a wider partnership that coordinates a joined up response to rough sleeping. As part of this we will seek to improve coordination with street outreach in neighbouring boroughs, to enable safe reconnection and more effective work with transient rough sleepers.
- We will develop partnerships and pathways to engage rough sleepers with primary care and mental health services, and support access to welfare benefits and scripts to tackle drug addictions.
- We will build links and relationships with staff at London Overground and National Rail stations and British Transport Police to jointly resolve problems in begging hotspot areas, meaning those people asking for money who are rough sleepers are supported through the Greenhouse to access support, benefits and housing.
- Hackney has a community that cares deeply about homelessness and rough sleeping. This is evidenced by the range of volunteer-led initiatives, including soup kitchens, food banks, and night shelters. It is clear that individuals and groups want to be involved in finding and providing solutions that end rough sleeping and homelessness. As a Council, we will work with the community, building upon existing partnerships and embrace the strengths and capacity of our community and individual community members to prevent and relieve rough sleeping.
- We will explore how community and faith-based organisations can be involved in developing long-term solutions to rough sleeping in Hackney. Initially, including expanding membership of the Single Homeless Forum and promoting joint working with service users of common concern.
- Local businesses are also concerned about rough sleeping and are keen to help. We are ready to work with and advise businesses on how they can make a real difference to the lives of people sleeping rough. We will work with businesses through local business forums and strategic groups to look at how the business community can best help rough sleepers, in a consistent, tailored and coordinated way. This includes working with businesses to look at additional funding opportunities.
- We will hold regular joint training for frontline workers in statutory and voluntary services, to develop approaches for engaging with the street population, and encouraging rough sleepers into services. This will include developing an understanding of trauma-informed care, meaning that workers have an awareness and sensitivity to the way in which a client's behaviour can be understood through their past traumatic experiences, especially during childhood.
- We will continue to utilise publicity campaigns and action days in local rough sleeping hotspots to build public and local business awareness of rough sleeping and street population issues and the Council's response to these. We will run Council wide campaigns on rough sleeping giving a clear message to the public about how they can help someone sleeping rough and what services the Council provides for rough sleepers. We will explore how we can further develop online resources to enable people to report

street activity and become more involved with the work of local voluntary and community organisations, building on our recent revamp to our website.

- We will continue to promote alternative models of giving for members of the public who wish to financially support rough sleepers in ways which do not involve directly giving cash to people on the streets. This will include using online and contactless technology, building on the work already undertaken by Tap London, working with local businesses to identify suitable sites for further contactless donation points.

Priority Three: Pathways

Hackney's supported accommodation pathways will support local rough sleepers to improve their health, wellbeing and employability and to move towards independence. Multi-agency move-on panel meetings will ensure all residents are placed in appropriate long-term accommodation. Rough sleepers from outside Hackney will be supported to exit homelessness through being offered reconnection to the area where they have the strongest links and family/community support.

Some service users experience difficulties in securing and sustaining tenancies and are therefore at risk of returning to rough sleeping. The Government's welfare reform policies and funding cuts to local authority services make it even more important that we prepare people for independent living to ensure they don't return to rough sleeping.

Too many rough sleepers get stuck in a revolving door of rough sleeping that makes recovery difficult. Some rough sleepers will abandon accommodation services that are available to them, or all too frequently get evicted due to anti-social behaviour. As a Council we need to make sure that we provide the right accommodation service that meets the individual needs of the rough sleeper, and that we understand that eviction although an easy option will most likely mean the rough sleeper returns to the streets. This is why we have recruited navigators to ensure that people receive a personalised service rather than being referred to potentially inappropriate uniform provision, and to work with rough sleepers to encourage them to return to accommodation which they have abandoned or been excluded from.

Actions brought forward from the current strategy. We will:

- Continue to ensure that all Greenhouse service users have personalised plans, which include support around life skills, building resilience and sustaining accommodation.
- Continue joint working at the Greenhouse with Jobcentre Plus and the Council's Hackney Works Programme to get rough sleepers into employment.
- Explore the potential for developing a cross-borough pool of shared housing, to support mobility and flexibility and which is genuinely affordable.
- Work with the NHS and other health partners to explore how the use of trauma and psychologically informed approaches can help to reduce substance misuse and improve health outcomes for rough sleepers.

New actions for the refreshed strategy:

- We will continue to commission a range of organisations to provide specialist supported accommodation for rough sleepers and will work with adult social care commissioners to ensure that intensive support is available for people with complex mental health needs. We will explore how learning from Hackney's Multiple Needs Service (MNS) and the

Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) approach can improve the design and coordination of services for people facing multiple needs, including via integrated commissioning.

- We will review adults commissioning to ensure there is joint working across the relevant adult social care and homelessness teams to ensure that the move on pathway is joined up, and accommodation and support is appropriate to the person's needs.
- We will monitor abandonments and evictions within Hackney's hostels and supported accommodation and utilise recognised good practice, such as Homeless Link's Abandonments and Evictions Toolkit, to address issues.
- We will explore additional accommodation options for NRPF rough sleepers. This will include the possibility of funding a temporary bed space for stays of up to six months within the Mare Street hostel in order to work to confirm immigration status and secure access to welfare benefits.
- We will offer EEA nationals intensive employment support to enable them to move into work meaning they can access benefits and housing, including help with housing costs. This will be done in partnership with the Council's Hackney Works employment service and close work with Crisis' employment services.
- Complete the pilot delivery and enhance a Housing First model with wraparound support for rough sleepers with complex needs. This will initially provide tenancies for 20 people and is jointly funded by Hackney Council, City of London and City and Hackney CCG.
- In response to emerging needs within accommodation pathways, we will increase support for older rough sleepers and people engaged in hoarding behaviour and have a greater focus on providing pre and post-tenancy support, including floating support.

13. The Relevant Strategies

Successful delivery of our priorities requires effective partnership working. The Council will work with other statutory, voluntary and community sector organisations to prevent rough sleeping, help rough sleepers move off the streets as quickly as possible and sustain a life away from homelessness. This will include supporting the objectives and actions of other relevant strategies and agendas, namely:

Hackney Homelessness Strategy 2020–22

The Homelessness Strategy has been reviewed and updated and is due to be published shortly. It will be rebadged as a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy, incorporating key elements of this document.

The refreshed Rough Sleeping Strategy supports the Homelessness Strategy's overall objectives around delivering accessible services to prevent homelessness and assisting homeless households into suitable and sustainable long-term housing.

Housing Strategy 2017–22

The refreshed Rough Sleeping Strategy supports this strategy's objectives around addressing people's housing-related health and support needs. This will include:

- Participating in reviews of supported housing and prevention services, to target those most in need, including people with mental health needs
- Supporting health initiatives which encourage people to remain independent in their homes
- Helping former rough sleepers to get jobs, so they can benefit from the growing local economy.

Supported Housing Commissioning Strategy 2013-18

We share the strategy's aims of promoting independence, improving the quality of life and developing new models of support for vulnerable adults/people/with complex needs. This will include joint work with commissioners to:

- Ensure supported housing commissioning plans reflect service users' emerging needs and ensure effective pathways into and out of supported housing
- Participate fully in accommodation panels and other joint working arrangements.

Temporary Accommodation Strategy 2015–18 and Lettings Policy 2016

A key aim of these documents is to manage demand for temporary accommodation and social housing in Hackney. The refreshed Rough Sleeping strategy will support this by:

- Preventing rough sleeping wherever possible through early intervention
- Giving clear messages about Hackney's use of the private rented sector for long-term accommodation, supporting people to actively bid on Hackney's Choice Based Lettings scheme and, where relevant, considering out of borough moves
- Exploring how volunteering and befriending services can help reduce tenancy failure.

14. Complementary Services

Hackney, London and National Initiatives

Street-based enforcement services

Enforcement Officers are part of the Council's Community Safety, Business Regulation and Enforcement Service and are a key link between rough sleepers, accommodation and support services. Enforcement Officers undertake street patrols, gathering intelligence on rough sleepers, building relationships with them and providing information and advice, including options for leaving the streets. The team works with our Street Outreach Team around new rough sleepers and with Hackney Housing services and Police in relation to rough sleepers with complex needs and is also represented on SUOM.

Enforcement Officers also deal with anti-social behaviour associated with street activities. This includes removing drugs and sex paraphernalia where local residents are supportive of this approach. In this work we recognise that rough sleeping is not a crime and is not in itself anti-social. We will never assume that someone sleeping rough is connected with anti-social behaviour or criminality. And we will not enforce against someone simply for rough sleeping.

Where anti social behaviour and criminality is taking place, in order to protect the individual, public and business community, enforcement may be undertaken, however it will be evidence lead, proportional, measured and appropriate. Any action will be joined-up, accompanied with appropriate support and engagement.

The Council operates a number of housing-led initiatives, projects and services which aim to work holistically to prevent rough sleeping.

Multiple Needs Service (MNS)

MNS is funded by the Public Health team via a Council and CCG pooled budget. The service works with up to 24 people experiencing severe and multiple disadvantages, including homelessness/rough sleeping, drug and alcohol misuse, involvement with the criminal justice system and mental health problems – all of which are frequently associated with repeated cycles of poverty, violence and abuse. The service accepts referrals from a range of teams, including Hackney Recovery Service, Integrated Offender Management, London Street Rescue and Open Doors. On joining the service most people are experiencing two or more of these needs, are at risk of losing their accommodation and also using emergency services in an unplanned way.

MNS focuses on improving service users' mental and physical wellbeing. It uses an innovative support model which focuses on relationship-based and trauma-informed approaches and coordinated support, rather than requiring individuals to engage with several services. This is facilitated via a dedicated multiple needs practitioner, who helps service users explore their goals and aspirations and how they wish to access support.

An evaluation report completed at the end of year two of the project indicates that service users' wellbeing had improved markedly. In addition, 80% of service users had accessed drug and alcohol treatment services and contacts with criminal justice and A&E services had also significantly reduced.

MNS has helped to improve joint working relationships and arrangements with Housing and other services. The evaluation report has also highlighted the value of targeted interventions with this group. During a 12-month period the project decreased the use of crisis public services by MNS service users by almost £200,000. Over the same period, the total average cost of all public services by individual MNS service users decreased from £34,574 to £20,257.

Since 2016, Hackney has been part of the national Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) network and is one of 23 local areas in England using the MEAM Approach. This is enabling us to design and deliver better coordinated services for people facing multiple needs.

Open Doors

Open Doors provides a dedicated harm reduction service for sex workers in Hackney, including those who are rough sleepers or in insecure housing. This includes information and advice, day and night time outreach, supported sexual health services, drop-in and case work.

EASL (Enabling Assessment Service London)

EASL is a pan-London mental health team which supports homeless people and organisations that work with them. The team carries out multidisciplinary mental health assessments and also delivers training and support to its partner agencies, so our partners

can do more to address the mental health issues of their service users. In Hackney, this includes work with the SORT

15. Non-commissioned services

Hackney has a vibrant voluntary and community sector, which provides very generous support to local rough sleepers. Local organisations include the following:

Hackney Winter Night Shelter (HWNS)

Hackney Winter Night Shelter has been operating in Hackney since 1996. It is run by Hackney Doorways, a registered charity operating in Hackney. Hackney Doorways trains a large pool of volunteers (currently around 700), who work alongside professionals to help service users rebuild their lives. HWNS is funded by a number of charitable trusts and local businesses and is also supported by fundraising within the local community.

The winter shelter operates from the beginning of November until the end of March each year. It provides accommodation and hot food for people sleeping rough or at risk of rough sleeping in Hackney. It also works with local agencies to find longer-term accommodation, provides move-in/on packs and travel costs to appointments for service users. The shelter is run in a different venue each night of the week in Hackney in partnership with local churches and now schools. Each venue has its own team of volunteers and coordinators.

In 2017/18 Hackney Winter Night Shelter provided beds for 102 people, of which 69 were helped to move into longer-term accommodation. Both the Greenhouse and the Council's housing advice service work closely with HWNS to support the move-on process. They were open for 151 nights, filled a total of 2,738 beds and served more than 5,000 meals. They also worked with a further 21 people to help them access a range of other support services.

In 2019 HWNS opened its first women's shelter, offering a year round safe space for women who are rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping. The shelter accommodates up to 10 women in shared rooms, and aims to help them move onto stable accommodation within 90 days. This is being operated as a pilot project for 12 months.

North London Action for the Homeless (NLAH)

NLAH is a small charity which runs a drop-in centre in Stoke Newington for homeless people and for those in other difficult circumstances. The centre's kitchen is open twice a week (Monday lunchtime and Wednesday evening) and provides a free three-course vegetarian meal. The centre also provides takeaway food and clothing on request. There is a kitchen garden project, which grows vegetables and which service users can become involved in.

The centre has Eastern European outreach workers, a TB specialist and drug and alcohol workers. There are also visits by health workers. Day-to-day work is carried out by volunteers.

Shelter's Family Service supports families at risk of homelessness through housing and welfare benefits advice.

Mind in Hackney provides a range of wellbeing and recovery-orientated services to people with mental ill health. These include therapy, advocacy support, welfare benefits advice, access to education and training. It is also part of the commissioned City and Hackney Wellbeing Network, a network of voluntary sector mental health services for adults.

Rhythms of Life is a volunteer-run soup kitchen, based in Hoxton, which operates in Hackney and central London, using food donations from a range of partners.

It also distributes clothing, hygiene products and refers rough sleepers to partner charities (which include Shelter, St Mungo's and Crisis). It also offers free weekly classes to rough sleepers in literacy, numeracy, employability skills and art.

Hackney Migrant Centre aims to offer a single service for professional advice and support for migrants. This includes:

- Advice Service – provided via partnership arrangements with visiting professionals from various agencies
- Immigration Law Project – with Islington Law Centre. This assists migrants to gain access to their legal rights and entitlements and to obtain leave to remain in the UK. This includes drop-ins and on-going casework
- Moving out of Hardship project - a joint project with Haringey Migrant Support Centre (HMSC) and Coram Children's Legal Centre, Migrant Children's Project which provides advice and support to vulnerable migrant families and young people in London with immigration status issues. The project aims to tackle the root causes of service users' crises and enable them to secure immigration status, so that they can access work, housing, benefits and NHS services.

The advice team provides outreach at HMC and HMSC, including initial assessments and follow-up casework. The Centre additionally provides weekly drop-ins for advice and social activities, medical advice and help in accessing NHS health services and food.

The Aziziye Mosque provides a drop-in for advice and support in Stoke Newington, including housing, welfare benefits, family and substance misuse. Turkish and Arabic are spoken. The mosque has access to interpreters for other languages.

The **Christ Apostolic Church (Bethel) UK** provides a free cooked breakfast every Sunday and hot meals on the last Saturday of the month for homeless people.

Food Cycle is a volunteer-led service, which provides free meals to refugees and asylum seekers in East London.

The Dalston Project is based at St Peter's Church, De Beauvoir and works with women and babies. **Hackney Destitution Resource Centre (Red Cross)** provides drop-ins for destitute people on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Seventh Day Adventist Church in Stoke Newington provides the Open Door weekly drop-in for homeless people, including rough sleepers. It provides food and also has a clothes bank and signposting to other services.

Urban Table @ the Round Chapel is a weekly soup kitchen that has been running for over 15 years and attracts people from all walks of life.

The Clapton Community Drop In Project supports people with housing and benefits issues, signposting to services and informal support. It runs on Sundays, alongside the Urban Table soup kitchen.

St Anne's Drop-In Kitchen in Hoxton provides a soup kitchen for homeless and other people in need on Saturday evenings.

St Michael's and All Angels, London Fields offer voluntary support for homeless people as part of the Hackney Winter Night Shelter programme provided by members of St Michael's, St John the Baptist RC Church and other local residents between January and March. This includes an evening meal, overnight accommodation and breakfast. The church also participates in the Hackney Foodbank, which collects non-perishable food and distributes it to families and individuals in crisis.

Hackney Foodbank provides food and support to local people. It is a registered charity founded by local churches and community groups in Hackney and belongs to the nationwide network of foodbanks, supported by The Trussell Trust. It works with over 180 local partners and is supported by other community organisations through food donations and other support.

Women at the Well is a service for women who have been affected by prostitution, including those with complex needs. The Outreach and Support Service works across East London and helps women access emergency accommodation, crisis support and onward referral to other services.