

North East Lincolnshire Rough Sleeping Needs Assessment 2018/19

Background

Rough sleepers are one of the most vulnerable and marginalised groups in society, and locally we have seen a large increase in the number of people sleeping on the street.

In response to the Director of Public Health's annual report on vulnerable communities, this needs assessment was carried out, in order to:

- better understand the needs of local rough sleepers
- make recommendations of how to improve outcomes

We are also working with central government as part of the new Rough Sleeping Initiative

Harbour Place



Harbour Place is a charity based in Grimsby that works mostly with rough sleepers.

They provided invaluable support in producing this needs assessment, by helping us to access their service users and providing advice throughout.

As well as operating a 15-bed night shelter 365 days a year, they also provide food, clothing and support local homeless people with benefits, housing and health issues.



Between October 2018 and February 2019, we carried out over 135 surveys with 34 different rough sleepers at Harbour Place.

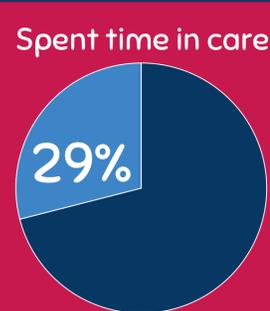
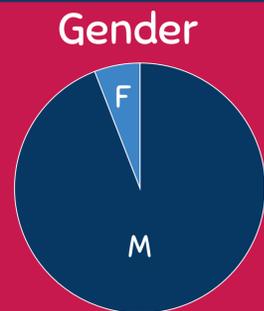
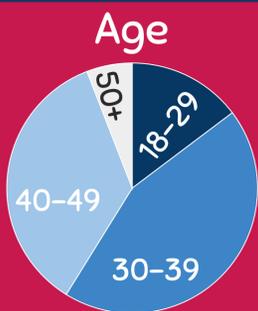
We used Homeless Link's Health Needs Audit, questionnaires on both drug and alcohol use, the short Warwick-Edinburgh mental wellbeing scale and a bespoke local survey.

- 67% reported using substances to cope with their mental health
- 64% reported a diagnosis of depression
- 35% have been unable, at some point in the last year, to get a mental health appointment
- 40% receive no mental health support (of those with a MH need)



Who are our rough sleepers?

*only those surveyed



The most commonly reported diagnosed physical health problems were: musculoskeletal (38%), dental (32%), asthma (24%), seizures, fainting and foot problems (all 21%) and urinary problems and hepatitis C (both 18%)

- Crack and new psychoactive substances (NPS) – i.e. spice – were the most common drugs used
- Alcohol use was lower than expected, perhaps due to the relative affordability, availability and efficacy of NPS



Median age first slept rough

18

Mean years between first time sleeping rough and now

14

All surveyed were white British, but locally, there are a small number of foreign nationals with no recourse to public funds



Whilst this is still a work in progress, draft recommendations include:

- setting up a multi-disciplinary team to take substance misuse, housing, benefits, dental and general health services into Harbour Place
- working closer with prisons and probation services to ensure released prisoners have accommodation secured on release
- production of literature, agreed by all local stakeholders, to signpost rough sleepers towards all services available to them