

# **Rough Sleeping Plan of Action**

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## Foreword

It is shameful that in London, one of the richest and most successful cities in the world, thousands of people are left sleeping rough on the streets every year. When I became Mayor, I made tackling rough sleeping an immediate priority. In partnership with our No Nights Sleeping Rough taskforce, City Hall are doing everything we can to ensure that there is an immediate, safe and sustainable route off the streets for every single person who finds themselves there.

For the first time in a decade, we have seen the number of rough sleepers fall. But with almost 7,500 people sleeping out in 2017/18, much more needs to be done. That is why I have produced this comprehensive plan of what City Hall, councils, the Government and others need to do to truly end rough sleeping.

The plan sets out how City Hall will use our current powers and resources to our fullest extent. But we are also clear that to end rough sleeping, the Government must invest substantial and long-term funding in much-needed services and accommodation, and make the changes needed to address the root causes of homelessness and rough sleeping.

We have a moral duty to help all those sleeping rough on our streets, and we must not rest until, by working together, we have made sure no-one needs to sleep rough in London.



**Sadiq Khan**  
Mayor of London

# Executive summary

## THE MAYOR'S VISION

This Plan of Action sets out the steps that need to be taken to make the Mayor's vision of a sustainable route off the streets for every rough sleeper a reality. It demonstrates what is needed not only to give immediate and rapid help to people who end up rough sleeping, but also to ensure that once they have left the streets there is accommodation and support available to enable them to move on and live independent lives. Importantly, it also focuses on the importance of preventing rough sleeping from occurring in the first place and, where people have slept rough in the past, how they can be supported so that they do not return to the streets.

It is an ambitious plan, but one that is wholly achievable. It outlines the actions that the Mayor will take now; things he can and will do within his current powers and resources. These will build on the existing extensive framework of services, projects and initiatives that the Mayor, London's councils, charities and community and faith-based organisations are already providing.

However, rough sleeping is a large and complex problem, requiring wide-ranging and often costly solutions – solutions that the Mayor cannot take forward alone. The plan therefore also sets out a further set of actions for the Government. These include investing £574m (£261m of revenue and £313m of capital) over five years in the range of much-needed new services, initiatives and programmes outlined in the plan that the Mayor and other partners would deliver, as well making as a raft of wider legislative and structural changes.

By tackling the root causes of homelessness and rough sleeping, the Government could reduce the need for, and therefore the significant cost of, specific services over the longer term. It is far more cost effective to stop people becoming homeless in the first place. Ahead of such action being taken and having an effect, however, substantial upfront investment is urgently needed.

## 1 PREVENTING ROUGH SLEEPING

*Preventing someone from spending even one night on the streets – as a new rough sleeper or a returner - is always better than supporting that person to access accommodation and support once they are already experiencing the trauma of sleeping rough. This must be our ultimate goal.*

### Key issues

- There is greater scope for local authority Housing Options services to prevent rough sleeping – though they are under-resourced and often lack access to the solutions needed.
- People are falling through the net when leaving prison, hospital and asylum seeker accommodation.
- Those who are housed but are engaged in street activity, such as begging and street drinking, are particularly vulnerable to losing their accommodation.
- Welfare reform is increasingly impacting on rough sleeping.
- Insecurity, high rents and welfare reform are making it increasingly difficult to secure and sustain private rented sector (PRS) accommodation.
- Restrictions to Legal Aid have made it harder to access the legal assistance needed to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBT+) people are at particular risk of homelessness.
- Many people are returning to rough sleeping, for reasons that include a lack of adequate support to enable them to live independently, the inability to access specialist services for substance misuse and mental health, and inconsistent approaches to eviction.

### What the Mayor will do now

- Provide a hospital homelessness and immigration support service.
- Help ensure safe shelter for LGBT+ people in crisis.
- Help reduce evictions from Clearing House accommodation.
- Ensure that the needs of vulnerable people at risk of eviction are fully considered as part of his work to develop a 'London Model' of private renting to improve security of tenure for the capital's renters.

### What could be done with more resources

Around £92m of funding from the Government is needed over the next five years for:

- A 'somewhere safe to stay' initiative;
- A hostel in-reach service;
- A pan-London daytime outreach service; and

- A care and resettlement centre for homeless people leaving hospital.

### What else needs to change

In addition to making the vital investment outlined above, the Mayor urges the Government to:

- Honour its commitment to make adequate funding available to councils to enable them to fully implement the Homelessness Reduction Act, and maximise its benefit to rough sleepers;
- Support councils to adopt a No First Night Out (NFNO) approach<sup>1</sup>;
- Enhance housing support services for people in and leaving prison;
- Improve opportunities for newly-recognised refugees to access housing;
- Review welfare reform measures that are fuelling homelessness and the risk of it and are making it harder to assist those who become homeless;
- Increase the coverage of Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) outreach in homelessness services and enable workers to authorise exemptions;
- Restore Legal Aid for housing and debt matters to where there is a risk to the home, regardless of whether the risk is immediate, and for immigration cases; and
- Address the root causes of homelessness and rough sleeping, including by increasing the supply of affordable housing, reforming the PRS so that it offers a secure, high-quality long-term housing option, and adequately funding mainstream services and support – as well as reviewing welfare reforms as outlined above.

## 2 AN IMMEDIATE ROUTE OFF THE STREETS

*We know that rapid interventions combined with assertive outreach are highly successful at helping people to exit rough sleeping quickly and sustainably. This not only greatly benefits the people using these services, but also reduces the costs to the public purse arising from entrenched rough sleeping. But there is currently not enough capacity in the system to intervene as effectively as we need to.*

### Key issues

- The response to those on the streets is not sufficiently rapid or targeted.
- There is a chronic shortage of assessment services, emergency accommodation and women-only services.

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<sup>1</sup> NFNO involves the early identification by Housing Options services of people who are at imminent risk of rough sleeping and specialists embedded within those services to rapidly assess and provide solutions to their homelessness.



- There is significant scope to build on the success of the 2017/18 Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP).
- The provision of day centres is patchy across London.
- Current interventions are failing some long-term rough sleepers.
- People who are rough sleeping, or at risk of doing so, and the Londoners concerned about them, do not always know where to go for help.
- Commissioned and volunteer-led rough sleeping services need to work more closely together.

### **What the Mayor will do now**

- Enhance his London Street Rescue outreach team.
- Revise the Pan-London Outreach Protocol.
- Enhance his Safe Connections service for rough sleepers who are relatively new to the streets.
- Provide two floating assessment hubs.
- Provide two new No Second Night Out (NSNO) staging posts – accommodation for those for whom an immediate solution cannot be found.
- Improve winter provision, including:
  - Enhancing the Mayor's role in coordinating councils' SWEP plans, working to ensure that there is sufficient provision across the capital and that more people know where to go for help;
  - Providing coordinators to optimise the amount and quality of SWEP; and
  - Running a small grants programme for winter shelters.
- Enhance monitoring and recording to inform policy and service development, through improvements to CHAIN.

### **What could be done with more resources**

Around £80m of funding from the Government is needed over the next five years for:

- A London StreetLink service, comprising:
  - A dedicated advice line for people who are themselves rough sleeping or at immediate risk of doing so;
  - A webpage for Londoners containing details of local services available for rough sleepers; and
  - A pan-London rapid response outreach service;
- Places of safety - immediate and safe places where people sleeping rough or at immediate risk of doing so could go outside working hours to wait for the rapid response outreach service to arrive;
- A peer-led outreach service;
- A Roma support team;

- A network of local rapid intervention services, providing assessment services and emergency accommodation;
- Additional assessment hubs for new rough sleepers, for those not new to the streets, for women and for periods of severe weather; and
- A community link project.

### **What else needs to change**

In addition to making the vital investment outlined above, the Mayor urges the Government to:

- Devolve London's share of all new funding for rapid response, outreach and assessment services, and emergency accommodation, to the Mayor - to ensure a strategic, rational and cost-effective approach to provision.

## **3 SUSTAINABLE ACCOMMODATION AND SOLUTIONS**

*Ensuring a realistic and achievable pathway away from the streets is essential. Any offer must include sustainable accommodation, with support wherever it is needed, and - where their prospects would be far better and safer if they did so - assistance to those rough sleepers from outside London to return to their home area and receive the services they need.*

### **Key issues**

- Hostels and supported housing are increasingly unavailable to rough sleepers.
- Hostels do not work for everyone so other options are needed.
- There is a chronic lack of decent, affordable, sustainable accommodation options.
- The solutions for non-UK nationals sleeping rough are extremely limited.

### **What the Mayor will do now**

- Develop move-on accommodation.
- Make better use of hostels and longer-term accommodation.
- Improve standards in current hostels, and develop new ones.
- Enhance our understanding of hostels, to help inform policy and service development.
- Make Housing Moves available to people with a history of rough sleeping.
- Promote hosting schemes.

## What could be done with more resources

Around £316m of funding from the Government is needed over the next five years for:

- An extension of the Clearing House;
- A pan-London Housing First initiative;
- A PRS procurement service;
- A shelter for people with no or low support needs unable to access other housing;
- Enhancements to Routes Home, including bedspaces and services for people with complex immigration status and people with high support needs;
- A new non-UK nationals rough sleeping strategy group, to provide oversight, strategic direction, and evaluation of the aspects of the plan that relate to non-UK nationals;
- An extension of the Homelessness Change Programme, the Government-funded element of which has now ended.

## What else needs to change

In addition to making the vital investment outlined above, the Mayor urges the Government to:

- Provide a long-term, sustainable funding model for supported housing;
- Reinstate entitlement to Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit for EEA nationals with 'jobseeker' status;
- Review the routine application of no recourse to public funds conditions on grants of limited leave to remain on the basis of a person's family or private life in the UK; and
- Allocate the majority of the £20m PRS access funding announced in the 2017 Autumn Budget to London.

## 4 THE SUPPORT PEOPLE NEED TO REBUILD THEIR LIVES

*Leaving rough sleeping behind is not simply achieved by putting a roof over someone's head. To ensure a truly long-lasting solution there needs to be adequate access to appropriate support at the right time to enable people to move on with their lives.*

### Key issues

- Most rough sleepers have support needs, and there is a lack of adequate provision for people with these needs.
- Lessons must be learnt following the death of any rough sleeper, to inform and improve practice.
- There are insufficient services to support people into work and training.

- The provision of tenancy sustainment support is piecemeal and insufficient.

### **What the Mayor will do now**

- Improve access to mental health services, through a specialist team to help coordinate and carry out mental health assessments with people sleeping rough.
- Support health partners to implement the 'Health care and people who are homeless' Commissioning Guidance for London.

### **What could be done with more resources**

Around £86m of funding from the Government is needed over the next five years for:

- A cross-tenure tenancy sustainment service;
- A detox and rehabilitation treatment fund;
- A pan-London multi-disciplinary mental health project;
- A health and social care project to work with outreach teams and in hostels;
- A personalisation fund;
- An employment service, with work navigators providing tailored, intensive employment support; and
- A successor to the Mayor's current Social Impact Bond for entrenched rough sleepers.

### **What else needs to change**

In addition to making the vital investment outlined above, the Mayor urges the Government to:

- Ensure that there is a single lead commissioner for homeless health in London;
- Improve the provision of mainstream mental health services to rough sleepers, including those that address personality disorder, depression and anxiety disorder;
- Enhance mainstream drug and alcohol services to better meet the needs of rough sleepers;
- Ensure services meet the needs of rough sleepers with dual diagnosis;
- Improve support to enter work and training, including by providing specialist advisors in JobCentre Plus to work with people experiencing homelessness;
- Promote and develop a cross-departmental approach to provision and funding both for specific-rough sleeping services and those more widely, across, for example, housing, health, criminal justice, employment and welfare benefits;
- Develop and provide accredited training for everyone who works with people sleeping rough and ensure they all have access to this training; and
- Ensure that Safeguarding Adults Boards undertake a Safeguarding Adults Review following the death of any rough sleeper.

# Introduction

The Mayor believes that no-one should need to sleep on London's streets. His aim, set out in his London Housing Strategy, is to ensure '*a route off the streets for everyone who sleeps rough in London*'<sup>2</sup>. This Rough Sleeping Plan of Action sets out the steps needed to turn this aim into a reality – with its focus on preventing rough sleeping, alongside making sure there are routes off the street that are clear, easy to access, immediate, and sustainable. It is the first time City Hall has produced such a plan, setting out how the Mayor will do all he can with his current powers and resources, and where London needs investment and change from national Government to truly end rough sleeping.

The plan is evidence-based, built on a bedrock of the best available data and information, and informed by the invaluable views, experiences and advice both of those working in the field and people who have experienced rough sleeping (see Appendix 1). This has enabled a better understanding than ever before of the needs of people sleeping rough, as well as the gaps in services that need to be filled, the policy and practice changes that need to be made and - crucially - the funding that needs to be invested to sustainably tackle this enduring problem.

## The Mayor's vision

### A rapid response to those on the street

It is vital that people on the street, and Londoners concerned about them, know where to go for help and can access that help quickly. This plan sets out a new approach to achieve this. This includes enabling people on the street to immediately access a place of safety themselves if necessary, rather than having to do this via an outreach worker<sup>3</sup>. The aim is that by engaging with services quickly, people on the streets can be offered solutions to help them to progress with their lives.

### A clear pathway away from rough sleeping

We need to ensure that both the immediate and longer-term needs of every single person sleeping rough can be met. The plan outlines a set of new services that, in conjunction with those that already exist, would provide a clear pathway away from rough sleeping - a rapid response to help those sleeping out off the streets and into accommodation, through good quality services and with the support needed to help people to successfully live independent lives. It also sets out what else needs to change to support this pathway – legislative and structural change at a national level,

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<sup>2</sup> GLA. (2018, May). 2018 London Housing Strategy. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from London.gov: [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2018\\_lhs\\_london\\_housing\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2018_lhs_london_housing_strategy.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> People are usually required to be verified as sleeping rough before they can access rough sleeping services. A person is a verified rough sleeper if an outreach worker has seen them bedded down and records them as such on CHAIN.

as well as more resources for the mainstream services that so often play a pivotal role in helping people to move forward.

Every person's journey through services will be different. Some may follow a traditional 'pathway' through a range of services, whereas for others it may be preferable to move from an early assessment bed into longer-term housing without the need for temporary or supported housing along the way. Throughout this journey, people will come into contact with a range of services, operated by statutory, voluntary, community and faith-based organisations. Whatever the path, this journey should result in a sustainable route away from the streets.

### **An opportune time for meaningful, radical and long-lasting change**

**London has a range of high-quality and effective services for people sleeping rough**, funded by the Mayor, London's councils, the Government and through charitable donations and support from charitable trusts. The Mayor runs an £8.45m core programme of services, as well as major new services funded by £4.2m of additional investment secured from the Government in late 2016, and a further £3.3m that has recently been agreed (see Appendix 2). These complement the services, including outreach and hostels, provided by many councils, and the work of those from the charitable, community, and faith-based sectors.

We are starting from a strong foundation of organisations working tirelessly to assist some of the most vulnerable people in the capital – often supported by a network of highly-dedicated volunteers. The services they offer make an extraordinary difference to people's lives, with many new initiatives and approaches originating in London before being implemented in the rest of the country.

**There is proven leadership and commitment in the capital:** the Mayor's No Nights Sleeping Rough taskforce, which brings together senior partners from the Government, councils and charities, is demonstrating the strength of working together. It has already had considerable success in securing more Government funding for major new rough sleeping services in London, and is providing leadership to the sector<sup>4</sup>. In addition, the Mayor has successfully worked with councils to strengthen severe weather emergency provision across London. Furthermore, the overwhelming public response to his winter 2017/18 rough sleeping campaign, as well as the fact that thousands of people volunteer for rough sleeping services in the capital, make it clear that Londoners too are wholly committed to playing their part in ending rough sleeping.

**There is national political pressure to tackle rough sleeping:** a forthcoming Government strategy will underpin the national target to halve rough sleeping during this parliament and eliminate it altogether by 2027. This plan from the Mayor sets out

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<sup>4</sup> GLA. (2017, March 2). Mayor sets out plans for £4.2m boost for vulnerable rough sleepers. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from London.gov: <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/mayor-sets-out-42m-for-vulnerable-rough-sleepers>

what the Government must do in London to achieve these targets, by outlining what resources are needed, what wider changes need to be made, and how the root causes of homelessness must be addressed. The Government's initial funding of £30m – of which London has secured over a third - is a welcome first step, but as this plan (as well as other recently-published documents from Crisis and St Mungo's) clearly shows, substantially more and longer-term investment is still needed, alongside a focus on addressing the root causes of homelessness<sup>5 6</sup>.

### **The resources and wider changes needed to make significant and lasting difference**

The plan sets out the immediate action the Mayor will take to expand his major programme of rough sleeping work, within the resources and powers available to him. This includes both setting up new services and expanding his current ones. Over and above this, the plan outlines what could be achieved with more resources from the Government - a package of new services that need to be in place if we are to give every single person sleeping rough the opportunities they need to leave the streets and not return. The resources required are substantial, and need to be long-term (around £574m over five years - £261m of revenue and £313m of capital). This investment would not only transform the lives of those people who are rough sleeping or at risk of doing so, it would also result in significant savings to the public purse through reduced pressure on services<sup>7</sup>. Details of the levels of new investment needed from the Government are set out in each section of the plan, and in Appendix 3.

Wider change is also needed, to address some of the issues that cause rough sleeping or impede our ability to solve it. The plan therefore also calls on the Government to look again at some of its policies and legislation, such as welfare reform, and also to address funding gaps in services that are not specific to rough sleeping but have a significant impact on it. Details of the wider changes that are essential to the success of this plan are outlined in each section.

### **Clarity over leadership, accountability and roles and responsibilities**

Given the very large numbers of organisations, and parts of organisations, that have a key role to play in tackling rough sleeping, strong leadership, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and clear lines of accountability are vital. The plan proposes not

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<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. (2018, March 30). Government to lead national effort to end rough sleeping. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from gov.uk: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-government-initiative-to-reduce-rough-sleeping>

<sup>6</sup> Crisis. (2012). Everybody In: How to end homelessness in Great Britain. Retrieved June 20, 2018, from <https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/homelessness-knowledge-hub/international-plans-to-end-homelessness/everybody-in-how-to-end-homelessness-in-great-britain-2018/>. St Mungo's. (2018). Dying on the streets, the case for moving quickly to end rough sleeping. Retrieved June 20, 2018, from [www.mungos.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Dying-on-the-Streets-Report.pdf](http://www.mungos.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Dying-on-the-Streets-Report.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Estimates of the annual cost to the public purse of each person sleeping rough range from £11,000, with a net present value over five years of £20,000, to £20,000, with an NPV of £37,000. The higher estimates were produced by Social Finance in 2012 and the lower estimates by the GLA's Economics Team, in conjunction with Social Finance, in late 2016.

only the services needed to help people sleeping rough, but also a more planned and rational approach to delivery and accountability than currently exists. It sets out how London's services should work together, to transform a sector and range of services that have grown organically and not always in the most optimal way over time. In particular, it outlines more clearly defined roles for the GLA, London's councils and the Government, working alongside the charitable, community and faith-based sectors and with businesses.

### **Box 1 Overview of current funding for tackling rough sleeping in London**

#### **The Mayor**

Funding from the GLA budget:

- £8.45m each year is earmarked for core commissioned and grant-funded rough sleeping services, such as No Second Night Out, London Street Rescue and the Tenancy Sustainment Teams;
- £1.3m for a pan-London mental health pilot (for two years);
- £30m of capital funding to deliver new and refurbish existing hostels (to March 2021); and
- £50m of capital funding to deliver accommodation for people moving on from hostels and refuges (to March 2021).

Funding secured from Government for new initiatives and services:

- £4.2m from the 2016 Homelessness Prevention programme, for Safe Connections, the Entrenched Rough Sleepers Social Impact Bond and the London Cross-borough Accommodation Network (for up to three years); and
- £3.3m from the 2018 Rough Sleeping Initiative Fund, for outreach, winter provision and floating hubs (for one year).

#### **London's councils**

Councils' funding for rough sleeping comes from a range of wider budgets, including:

- Formula Grant, which contains an element previously (but no longer) earmarked and ring-fenced for specific groups, including rough sleepers (that is, Supporting People funding); and
- Funding streams to tackle all forms of homelessness, such as Homelessness Prevention Grant and Flexible Homelessness Support Grant (around £35m and £116m respectively across the capital in 2018/19). Large proportions of both of these are likely to be spent on wider forms of homelessness, including temporary accommodation for homeless families.

Funding secured from Government for new initiatives and services:

- £5.8m from the 2016 Homelessness Prevention programme, for a range of council-provided or commissioned services for rough sleepers (for up to three years); and
- £7.8m from the 2018 Rough Sleeping Initiative Fund, for a range of council-provided or commissioned services for rough sleepers (for one year).

#### **London's charities and voluntary, community and faith groups**

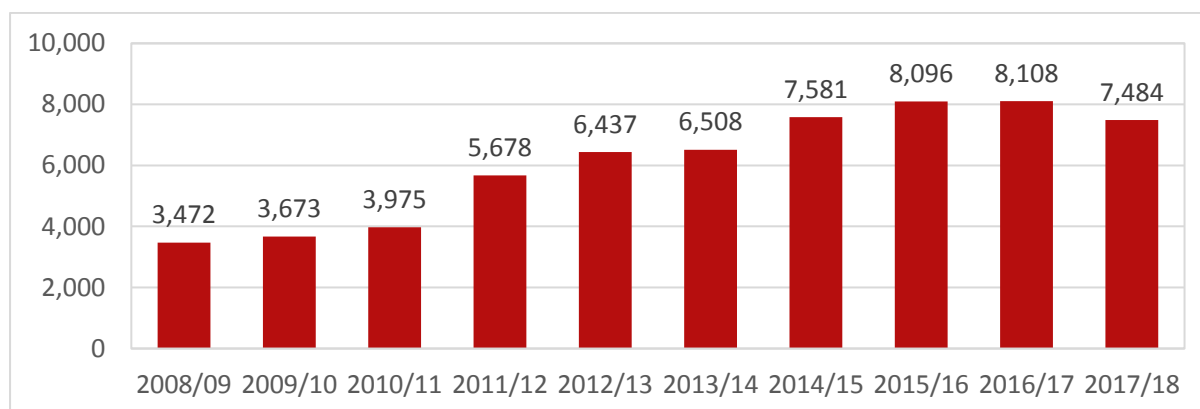
Funding may come from a variety of sources, including donations from the public and businesses and grant-giving bodies and trusts.



## CURRENT CONTEXT

The number of people sleeping rough in London doubled between 2010/11 and 2015/16. Numbers stabilised in 2016/17 and reduced, for the first time in 10 years, by around 600 people in 2017/18, to 7,484.

**Figure 1 Number of people seen sleeping rough in London 2008/9 to 2017/18**



Although the number of rough sleepers, particularly those who are non-UK nationals, has fallen slightly, this will come as a surprise to many Londoners, who perceive the opposite to be true<sup>8</sup>. This perception is likely to be because the level of rough sleeping is still far higher than it was for many years, and because street activity by those who are not necessarily homeless - mainly begging but also street drinking – also appears to have risen.

Almost six out of 10 (59 per cent) of those seen sleeping rough in 2017/18 were new to the streets and only seen sleeping rough once<sup>9</sup>. Around a quarter (26 per cent) of people had been seen rough sleeping across at least two consecutive years and 15 per cent had returned to the streets having not been seen sleeping rough in 2016/17. In 2017/18, over three quarters of those people met and assessed by outreach workers on the street had support needs. Half had mental health support needs and 43 per cent had alcohol-related needs. These proportions are around the same as in the previous year. However, the proportion of people with support needs relating to drug use increased to 40 per cent in 2017/18, up from 35 per cent in 2016/17 and 31 per cent in 2015/16<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> YouGov. (n.d.). Almost half of Brits believe homelessness has risen in their local area. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from YouGovUK: <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2018/04/16/almost-half-brits-say-homelessness-has-risen-their/>

<sup>9</sup> GLA. (n.d.). Rough sleeping in London (CHAIN reports). Retrieved June 4, 2018, from London Datastore: <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports>

<sup>10</sup> GLA. (n.d.). Rough sleeping in London (CHAIN reports). Retrieved June 4, 2018, from London Datastore: <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports>

## **Box 2 Why rough sleeping has increased**

The causes of rough sleeping are complex, comprising both systemic and individual factors. However, there are a number of key reasons for the increase in the number of rough sleepers seen in London in recent years – and, in particular, the doubling of numbers between 2010/11 and 2015/16.

**First, the increase in rough sleeping, like the increase in wider forms of homelessness, has coincided with the worsening of London’s housing crisis and changes to the welfare benefit system.**

London’s stock of social housing, and the number of social rented homes let each year, have been falling. Those who have struggled to afford market housing but been unable to secure social housing have faced sharp increases in private sector rents – in a sector that was already characterised by a lack of security and stability.

As private rents have risen, the Government has dramatically reduced the help available to would-be private renters, especially younger, single people, through the benefits system. It has therefore become much harder for many of the poorest and most vulnerable Londoners to secure and sustain accommodation.

**Second, reductions in local authority budgets have resulted in cuts to a range of services that prevented people from ending up on or returning to the streets, and that provided effective routes off the streets.**

The demands on local authorities have been rising, with obligations to accommodate rising numbers of homeless households entitled to temporary accommodation. At the same time, services have been cut, including hostels for rough sleepers, particularly those offering specialist provision, floating support services, drug and alcohol services, and adult social care.

Alongside pressures on local authorities’ budgets, cuts to funding for health services have seen the bar raised for accessing the specialist mental health support that is hugely valuable to many of those who are rough sleeping or at risk of doing so, as well as those who have slept rough in the past.

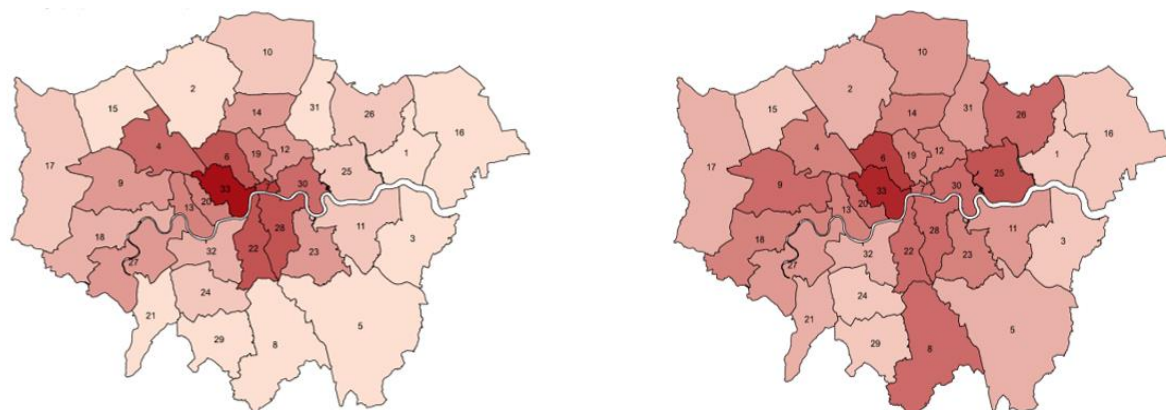
**Third, a growing number of non-UK nationals (particularly those from EEA countries) have become vulnerable to street homelessness.**

Two-thirds of the increase in the number of people seen sleeping rough in London between 2009/10 and 2015/16 can be attributed to the increase in their numbers. From 2014, the Government restricted EEA nationals’ entitlement to benefits in the UK, including help with housing costs. As a result, both they and services seeking to prevent and address rough sleeping found it harder to secure and sustain accommodation.

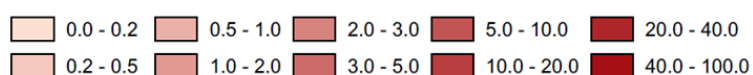
**Figure 2 Distribution of London's rough sleepers across London boroughs**

2008/09

2017/18



Number seen rough sleeping in each borough, as a proportion of the London total



The very large increase in rough sleeping since 2008 means that boroughs with previously very low levels now have significant numbers of people sleeping rough on their streets. Increases are particularly concentrated in outer London, which as a result now also have higher proportions of London's rough sleepers than they did in the past (see Figure 2 above). The provision of services has not kept pace with these increases and spatial changes. This is partly because funding – in particular, local authorities' Homelessness Prevention Grant - is largely allocated on the basis of historic patterns of need. These historic patterns also mean that services such as day centres and hostels are concentrated in central and inner London, while other areas that now have high levels of need lack the services and funding they need to adequately address their local issues.

The severe lack of affordable housing, compounded by welfare reform, an expensive and insecure private rented sector (PRS), limited access to community services through the no recourse to public funds condition and cuts to services - including those to help people with mental health or substance use needs - have all contributed to the increases in and persistently high levels of rough sleeping in recent years. Two thirds of the increase between 2009/10 and 2015/16 was accounted for by the steep rise in the numbers of non-UK national rough sleepers, particularly those from the European Economic Area (EEA) countries. Many of this group would have been impacted by changes to EEA nationals' benefit entitlement in 2014 that severely reduced their housing options<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Department for Work and Pensions. (2014, January 20). New rules to stop migrants claiming Housing Benefit. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from gov.uk: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-rules-to-stop-migrants-claiming-housing-benefit>

Rough sleeping is harmful and dangerous - the life expectancy of a rough sleeper is 47<sup>12</sup>. The high level of mortality among rough sleepers is appalling and unacceptable, and has understandably led to huge public concern<sup>13</sup>. In addition, an estimated eight in 10 rough sleepers are victims of crime or anti-social behaviour each year, and the longer someone sleeps rough, the greater their risk of becoming a victim of crime<sup>14</sup>.

More detailed information about particular groups of people sleeping rough is given in later sections of the plan. Further information can also be found in CHAIN reports<sup>15</sup>.

## MEASURING SUCCESS

The services and other changes outlined in the plan form a holistic package. Given the complexity of rough sleeping, and the wide range of issues involved, all elements of this package will need to be in place if we are to achieve the Mayor's vision of a sustainable route off the street for everyone who sleeps rough in London. There is therefore a limit to what can be achieved within current powers and resources. By taking the immediate actions outlined in the plan, we will be able to help many more people off the streets in the short term. But without more Government investment and wider change to ensure sustainable long-term solutions, it is inevitable that many people will rapidly return.

The overall effect of measures set out in the plan will be measured using CHAIN data. We will monitor the numbers of people sleeping rough each quarter and year, including those new to the streets, people who stay there for some time, and those who return. In addition, progress towards the Mayor's vision of an immediate route off the street for every rough sleeper will be assessed by monitoring the initial help being offered to people on the streets. The success and sustainability of the routes offered off the streets will also be assessed, through systems being developed to improve how pathways into and out of supported housing are recorded and to measure the numbers of people returning to the streets.

Because it is a one-night snapshot, and in some areas is based on estimates, the Government street count does not provide the level of data or degree of accuracy around numbers that CHAIN can offer. We will therefore not be using it to measure

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<sup>12</sup> Crisis. (2012). Homelessness kills. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from crisis.org: [https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/236799/crisis\\_homelessness\\_kills\\_es2012.pdf](https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/236799/crisis_homelessness_kills_es2012.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Greenfield, P., & Marsh, S. (2018, April 11). Deaths of UK homeless people more than double in five years. The Guardian.

<sup>14</sup> Crisis. (2016, December 23). Crisis reveals scale of violence and abuse against rough sleepers as charity opens its doors for Christmas. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from crisis.org: <https://www.crisis.org.uk/about-us/media-centre/crisis-reveals-scale-of-violence-and-abuse-against-rough-sleepers-as-charity-opens-its-doors-for-christmas/>

<sup>15</sup> GLA. (n.d.). Rough sleeping in London (CHAIN reports). Retrieved June 4, 2018, from London Datastore: <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports>

the success of the plan, though will continue to support the count itself, working alongside councils, the Government and voluntary sector partners.

In the short term, the overall numbers of people found sleeping rough and therefore recorded by CHAIN may increase as a result of the implementation of the plan. This is because the suite of new services and approaches it sets out are likely to enable more people who need assistance to be found, or come forward, and be helped. Numbers may also rise if the impacts of Government policies, particularly around welfare reform, start to accelerate, or other external changes occur.

## **IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN**

Timescales for delivery have been set out throughout the plan where actions relate to developing or enhancing services or other actions that are within the Mayor's current powers and resources. However, many aspects of the plan rely, for example, on securing significant new resources or wider system change. Their timescales are therefore dependent on Government action. The Mayor is therefore in ongoing discussions with the Government and others about what needs to happen to secure the step change needed to end rough sleeping for good.

The plan has been designed to be sufficiently flexible to respond to changes over time, for example, significant increases or decreases in the numbers of rough sleepers and wider policy change. It will therefore be reviewed regularly, to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.

The Mayor's No Nights Sleeping Rough taskforce will support the Mayor in implementing, reviewing and monitoring the plan<sup>16</sup>. In addition, the new non-UK nationals rough sleeping strategy group proposed in section 3 would have oversight of the aspects of the plan that relate to non-UK nationals.

## **ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT**

The plan comprises four sections:

- 1 Preventing rough sleeping;
- 2 An immediate route off the street;
- 3 Sustainable accommodation and solutions; and
- 4 The support people need to rebuild their lives.

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<sup>16</sup> What we do. (n.d.). Retrieved June 18, 2018, from London.gov.uk: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing-and-land/homelessness/no-nights-sleeping-rough-taskforce>

Each of the above sections sets out:

- **Roles and responsibilities** – who should lead on the high-level actions in the plan;
- **Current services and provision** – the current landscape;
- **Evidence and issues** – why we need change;
- **What the Mayor will do now** – immediate actions that the Mayor will take within the powers and resources available to him;
- **What could be done with more resources** – proposals for new rough sleeping services that require new Government investment; and
- **What else needs to change** – calls on the Government for structural and legislative change, and resources for services beyond those specifically for rough sleepers.

# 1 Preventing rough sleeping

*Preventing someone from spending even one night on the streets – as a new rough sleeper or a returner - is always better than supporting that person to access accommodation and support once they are already experiencing the trauma of sleeping rough. This must be our ultimate goal.*

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### The Government should:

- Ensure that national policy and practice contributes to preventing rough sleeping and that their pledges are fully funded, rather than policy contributing to rough sleeping; and
- Ensure that the Homelessness Reduction Act is being fully resourced and effectively implemented, including the 'Duty to Refer'.

### The Mayor should:

- Support councils to prevent rough sleeping, through funding innovative services and spreading best practice; and
- Make full use of all the powers and resources he has to help prevent people from returning to rough sleeping when they have been helped off the streets.

### London's councils should:

- Effectively implement the Homelessness Reduction Act to prevent rough sleeping to the fullest extent they can, given the funding available; and
- Work with the Mayor to make case for where more funding is needed.

### Others:

- Institutions with a 'Duty to Refer' under the Homelessness Reduction Act should ensure that they fully comply with this duty.

## 1.1 CURRENT SERVICES AND PROVISION

The primary responsibility and funding for preventing homelessness lies with local authorities, whose statutory obligations have recently grown with the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act. A few councils in London have embedded No First Night Out (NFNO) services within their Housing Options services. NFNO involves the early identification of people who are at imminent risk of rough sleeping and specialists embedded within the service to rapidly assess and provide solutions to their homelessness.

From October 2018, the Homelessness Reduction Act will give some public institutions (such as prisons and hospitals) a 'Duty to Refer' people they identify as threatened with homelessness in the next 56 days to a local authority. Some of these institutions currently provide or host services that play a role in preventing homelessness. These include the Ministry of Justice-funded Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRC) 'transforming rehabilitation' initiative, which works in prisons, and the homelessness teams operating in a small number of London hospitals, which are generally funded by health trusts or Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).

National charities, such as Shelter, the Citizens Advice network and Centrepoint, provide valuable advice services to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. In addition, the charitable, community and faith-based sectors provide a range of prevention services. These include building-based services, such as day centres, and initiatives which support people at points of transition. Income sources for such services vary. Some are commissioned by local authorities, but many are largely reliant on short-term grants, fundraising and volunteering. Some homelessness services in London, primarily day centres, host regular sessions with a Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) outreach workers, who provide advice and assistance to people on benefit claims and finding work.

Tenancy sustainment support plays a vital role in helping to prevent rough sleeping (or a return to rough sleeping) and can also improve other outcomes, such as engagement with substance use treatment. More information about these services is set out in section 4. One London borough has a hostel in-reach service, which helps to avert unplanned moves.

The Mayor's Platform for Life programme provides capital funding to develop accommodation to prevent homelessness among young people in work or training who are at risk of homelessness.

## 1.2 EVIDENCE AND ISSUES

### **There is greater scope for local authority Housing Options services to prevent rough sleeping – though they are under-resourced and often lack access to the solutions needed**

Some people sleep rough relatively soon after they have been in contact with an organisation or institution which could have given them the assistance needed to resolve their situation. These include local authorities, prisons and hospitals.

People at risk of rough sleeping often slip through the Housing Options net. Overstretched local authorities have faced severe funding cuts in recent years, diminishing the level of service they offer in many cases, and often leaving them with little choice other than to focus on those for whom they have a statutory responsibility. A combination of these cuts, the wider housing market, and welfare reform means that the options at councils' disposal to resolve people's situation are



often and increasingly extremely limited - in terms of access to affordable accommodation and to services for those with support needs, particularly where these needs are complex. At the same time, councils have seen a marked increase in the numbers of homeless households for whom they have a legal duty to provide accommodation, a group upon which they have focused their limited resources.

A third of the 30 per cent of new rough sleepers who attended the No Second Night Out (NSNO) hubs in 2016/17 had approached a local authority Housing Options service for support in the previous 12 months. Assuming this proportion is the same for *all* new rough sleepers, over 1,500 people sleeping rough for the first time in the capital that year had been to Housing Options. New rough sleepers with mental health issues appear to be more likely than other new rough sleepers to have previously sought help from a local authority. In 2016/17, 62 per cent of people who had sought assistance from Housing Options prior to rough sleeping had a mental health support need, compared with 51 per cent of the people who had not<sup>17</sup>. The potential for Housing Options to improve their service to those at risk of rough sleeping was consistently raised during the Plan of Action consultation by services supporting people at risk of homelessness and those who had slept rough, though pockets of good practice were also identified.

The enhanced duties to prevent and relieve homelessness that the Homelessness Reduction Act has placed on local authorities clearly have real potential to reduce the number of people who end up on the streets. However, local authorities and many other organisations are concerned that the resources the Government has allocated to implement the Act fall far short of what is needed<sup>18</sup>. This will clearly hinder councils' ability to deliver a high-quality prevention or relief support to all who need it. There could also be budget cuts in specialist services for rough sleepers, if funding is diverted from them to cover new statutory duties. In addition, the solutions that Housing Options are able to provide to people sleeping rough, or at risk of doing so, will continue to be severely limited unless there is a far greater supply of accommodation and services for this group.

### **People are falling through the net when leaving prison, hospital and asylum seeker accommodation**

#### *Prisons*

In 2017/18, the last settled base for four per cent of people new to London's streets was prison. Of all rough sleepers seen in London during 2016/17, a third had been to prison at some point in the past. This proportion was significantly greater among long-term rough sleepers (49 per cent) and those who had returned to rough sleeping after having accommodation (57 per cent). For more than one in 10 people who returned to rough sleeping after having successfully accessed accommodation,

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<sup>17</sup> CHAIN. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: CHAIN data analysis. GLA. Figures relate to people seen by NSNO during that year.

<sup>18</sup> Kappala-Ramsamy, G. (2017, September 27). 63 per cent funding reduction is taking its toll, warns London Councils. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from londoncouncils.gov: <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/32648>

going to and then leaving prison was the direct cause of their return to the streets. Effectively supporting people with histories of offending is therefore vital to preventing street homelessness.

Existing services for those leaving prison are under-resourced. For example, in the larger prisons in London, CRC-commissioned housing services have funding for just one or two housing advisors for over 1,000 prisoners. Services for those leaving prison without settled accommodation also struggle to meet the demand for this support.

Other factors hampering efforts to help ex-offenders include poor early identification of prisoners at risk of homelessness, lack of available accommodation options, and inconsistent practices between different local authorities in prioritising this group for assistance. There is also a particular lack of services or structures to ensure that people with short prison sentences and those on remand receive advice and assistance.

### *Hospitals*

A stay in hospital can be a trigger point for rough sleeping, with some people losing their accommodation or falling out of the hostel system at this point. Conversely, a hospital stay can benefit people who have slept rough, helping to prevent them returning to the streets again. In 2016/17, less than a quarter of rough sleepers who went into hospital were seen sleeping rough in the three months after leaving. Some, however, continue to be discharged back onto the streets.

Homeless hospital discharge projects which combine NHS and housing staff, such as the Pathway service, can have a major impact on preventing and resolving homelessness. Indeed, 93 per cent of people seen by services funded through the former Homeless Hospital Discharge Fund during 2013 and 2014 were found suitable accommodation when they were discharged<sup>19</sup>. Such services deliver very considerable cost benefits to the health service, saving an estimated £2 to £4 for every £1 invested<sup>20</sup>. However, these services are available in only a few hospitals in London. Even where they exist, their efforts are often hampered by lack of suitable accommodation options, including for those with ongoing health needs and especially for those not eligible for support with housing costs, such as EEA nationals and people with complex immigration status or no recourse to public funds.

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<sup>19</sup> Holland, S. (n.d.). Investment needed to continue homeless hospital discharge improvement. Retrieved June 18, 2018, from Homeless link: <https://www.homeless.org.uk/connect/news/2015/feb/09/investment-needed-to-continue-homeless-hospital-discharge-improvement>

<sup>20</sup> Dorney-Smith, S., & Hewett, N. (2016). Options for Delivery of Homeless "Medical Respite" Services. Pathway. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from <https://www.pathway.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Homeless-Medical-Respite-Scoping-Paper.pdf>

### *National Asylum Support Service accommodation*

Three per cent of people new to the streets during 2016/17 (around 150 people) had been in accommodation provided by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) prior to sleeping rough. Once on the streets, the outcomes for this group of people are comparatively poor. Almost one in five (19 per cent) of those who had been in NASS accommodation and attended NSNO in 2016/17 returned to rough sleeping when leaving the service compared with 12 per cent of others leaving the service.

A major issue is the 28-day notice period people who receive a positive decision on their asylum application are given to leave NASS accommodation. This leaves little time to find alternative accommodation, obtain a National Insurance number, find work, or establish a welfare benefits claim – often in an area away from their asylum accommodation, where they have established networks and better employment prospects. There is also a lack of advice and guidance available. Notably, the Government has not proposed that NASS is subject to the ‘Duty to Refer’.

### **People who are housed but engaged in street activity are vulnerable to losing their accommodation**

While some people involved in street activity, such as begging, street drinking and drug taking, are current rough sleepers, many have somewhere to live<sup>21</sup>. During the consultation on this plan, partners reported that there are many vulnerably housed people in London with connections to the street population. These people are more likely to start sleeping rough themselves when they encounter problems with their accommodation. This is borne out by the CHAIN figures, which show that in 2016/17 four per cent of new rough sleepers in London had a non-bedded down contact recorded on CHAIN prior to being seen sleeping rough for the first time<sup>22</sup>. In specific boroughs whose outreach teams have a greater focus on the wider street population, this figure is as high as 21 per cent.

### **Welfare reform is impacting on rough sleeping**

Welfare reform, including reductions and, most recently, a freeze in rates of Local Housing Allowance (LHA), the Benefit Cap, and Universal Credit, is a major contributor to homelessness, including rough sleeping, both causing it to increase and making it more difficult to address.<sup>23</sup> Reforms (especially those around LHA) have greatly reduced people’s ability to secure and sustain PRS accommodation – the last settled base for 38 per cent of new rough sleepers in 2017/18. These have

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<sup>21</sup> Most arrested beggars not homeless, police figures suggest. (2015, July 31). Retrieved June 4, 2018, from [bbc.co.uk: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-33729766](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-33729766)

<sup>22</sup> Outreach teams seek to assist off the streets people who appear to be rough sleeping, even if they are not bedded down at the point when the service encounters them. In these cases, they would be recorded on CHAIN as a non-bedded down contact.

<sup>23</sup> Fitzpatrick, S., Pawson, H., Bramley, G., & Wilcox, S. (2018). The homelessness monitor: England 2018. Crisis. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from [https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/238700/homelessness\\_monitor\\_england\\_2018.pdf](https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/238700/homelessness_monitor_england_2018.pdf)

compounded other problems with the PRS, in particular its insecure nature characterised by short term tenancies and no-fault evictions.

As LHA rates have fallen further and further behind market rents in London, many people reliant on welfare benefits to cover their housing costs have been forced to leave their homes if they are unable to secure other assistance, such as a short-term Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP). However, London's share of the national DHP budget has fallen in recent years – from a peak of 39 per cent in 2013/14 to 24 per cent in 2018/19. The methodology for allocating DHP funding fails to take account of the disproportionate extent to which low-income Londoners were – and continue to be – adversely affected by the changes in LHA that took place prior to April 2016.

As a result of the above factors, there are 20 per cent fewer Housing Benefit and Universal Credit claimants in inner London in 2017 than there were in 2011<sup>24</sup>. Small increases in some LHA rates awarded for 2018/19 do not come close to matching the average 22 per cent increase in London PRS rents since the LHA policy was introduced<sup>25</sup>. Furthermore, the Benefit Cap, which disproportionately affects London, means that some people are simply subjected to greater deductions from the housing element of their benefits when rates increase.

Younger people, in particular, often struggle to find PRS accommodation when at risk of homelessness. This problem has intensified following the extension of the Shared Accommodation Rate (SAR) to all those under 35, which contributed to a rise in the numbers of younger people seeking rooms in shared accommodation<sup>26</sup>. During the consultation on this plan, stakeholders highlighted that the extreme challenge they had in assisting people in this group to access accommodation had been exacerbated by many landlords converting single rooms in shared accommodation to studios that they can then let at higher rents - further reducing the pool of housing available to younger people who are only entitled to LHA at SAR levels.

Welfare benefit sanctions are also an issue, both for people receiving Universal Credit and those not yet included in the roll out, with vulnerable people worst affected. Research in 2015 found that a fifth of people in touch with homelessness

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<sup>24</sup> Fitzpatrick, S., Pawson, H., Bramley, G., & Wilcox, S. (2018). The homelessness monitor: England 2018. Crisis. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from [https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/238700/homelessness\\_monitor\\_england\\_2018.pdf](https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/238700/homelessness_monitor_england_2018.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> ONS. (n.d.). Index of Private Housing Rental Prices, Great Britain Statistical bulletins. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from <https://www.ons.gov.uk>: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/indexofprivatehousingrentalprices/previousReleases>

<sup>26</sup> Shelter. (2017). Shut out: The barriers low-income households face in private renting. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from [https://england.shelter.org.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/1391701/2017\\_06\\_-\\_Shut\\_out\\_the\\_barriers\\_low\\_income\\_households\\_face\\_in\\_private\\_renting.pdf](https://england.shelter.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1391701/2017_06_-_Shut_out_the_barriers_low_income_households_face_in_private_renting.pdf)

services who had received a benefit sanction reported that this resulted in them having to leave their temporary or permanent accommodation<sup>27</sup>.

Organisations participating in the consultation in this plan also highlighted the impact on homelessness of processes around Universal Credit. These include the complexity of making a claim and the lack of support which many vulnerable people receive with doing so (DWP provide outreach workers in only a small number of homelessness services), the five-week waiting period, and payments being made monthly. Housing costs being paid to the claimant rather than directly to the landlord was also raised as a prominent issue, both as a cause of rent arrears and as a disincentive to private landlords letting to people on benefits. Half of all council tenants who receive the housing element of Universal Credit are in at least one month of rent arrears, compared with 10 per cent of tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit<sup>28</sup>. In addition, in a recent study 63 per cent of landlords reported that they were less likely to rent to tenants on benefits because of the lack of direct payments under Universal Credit<sup>29</sup>.

Furthermore, those involved in homelessness prevention work outlined during the consultation on the plan how delays in Employment Support Allowance and Personal Independence Payment assessments, and lengthy reconsideration and appeals processes, are continuing to impact on vulnerable people's ability to maintain accommodation.

**Restrictions to Legal Aid have made it harder to access the legal assistance needed to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.** The changes introduced in the [Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012](#) limited Legal Aid for housing and debt matters where there is not an immediate risk of the recipient becoming homeless. This means that many people can only access advice just before they are faced with eviction, by which point their situation is harder to resolve. Legal Aid also no longer covers the majority of welfare benefits cases. As a result, many people cannot be assisted to resolve what is often the primary underlying cause of their potential homelessness.

Most immigration cases are now also excluded from Legal Aid, leaving many migrants without access to the specialist advice they need, or reliant on overstretched voluntary sector legal services. This greatly reduces the chance of them being able to sustain their current housing or find alternative accommodation if

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<sup>27</sup> Batty, E., Beatty, C., Casey, R., Foden, M., McCarthy, L., & Reeve, K. (2015). Homeless people's experiences of welfare conditionality and benefit sanctions. Crisis. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from [https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/20567/crisis\\_homeless\\_people\\_experience\\_of\\_welfare\\_conditionality\\_and\\_benefit\\_sanctions\\_dec2015.pdf](https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/20567/crisis_homeless_people_experience_of_welfare_conditionality_and_benefit_sanctions_dec2015.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/sep/16/universal-credit-rent-arrears-soar>

<sup>29</sup> Residential Landlords Association. (2017). Welfare Reform and Universal Credit: The impact on the private rented sector <https://research.rla.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Welfare-Reform-and-Universal-Credit-The-impact-on-the-private-rented-sector-2017.pdf>

they are made homeless. Since the Act was introduced in 2012, the number of Legal Aid providers in London has fallen by 13 per cent<sup>30</sup>.

### **LGBT+ people are at particular risk of homelessness**

Research suggests that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBT+) people are at particular risk of homelessness, often due to family breakdown, and may disproportionately suffer physical, verbal and phobic harassment, domestic abuse and sexual exploitation<sup>31 32</sup>. Both the Albert Kennedy Trust and Stonewall Housing have reported increases in young LGBT+ people being forced into homelessness by parental hostility, with the Albert Kennedy Trust seeing a 20 per cent rise in the numbers seeking its help with homelessness. An estimated 24 per cent of young homeless people are LGBT+<sup>33</sup>. Visible rough sleeping among LGBT+ people is relatively low, because of fears around safety and hate crime, which means that they are less likely to be engaged with services. There is a lack of LGBT+ appropriate refuge and shelter accommodation across London, and general services do not cater for LGBT+ needs. LGBT+ people often fear further discrimination and do not seek help. Appropriate refuge accommodation for LGBT+ is lacking and trans women often feel unsafe accessing women's shelters<sup>34</sup>. Accessing sustainable accommodation can be particularly challenging for LGBT+ people, with an estimated one in 10 LGBT people, and one in four trans people, who look for a house or flat to rent or buy each year discriminated against because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity<sup>35</sup>.

### **Many people are returning to rough sleeping**

In 2016/17, over 1,000 former rough sleepers returned to the street. Many of them had previously made a positive move away from it, for example, had moved into accommodation or back to their home area. Of those, seven out of 10 were living in accommodation with support immediately prior to returning to the streets, with 48 per cent living in hostels and 13 per cent living in Clearing House properties. Eviction was the most common reason for leaving their place of residence (affecting 37 per cent of people), with anti-social behaviour (ASB) the most frequent reason for eviction, followed by arrears. During the consultation on this plan, it was reported that practices around preventing evictions from hostels are not consistent and that

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<sup>30</sup> Legal Aid Scheme: Written question - 9862 (2017, September 14). Retrieved June 4, 2018, from parliament.uk: <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-09-11/9862>

<sup>31</sup> McDermott, D., & Luyt, R. (2016). Still Out There: An exploration of LGBT Londoners' unmet needs. Retrieved from <https://www.trustforlondon.org.uk/documents/54/Still-Out-There.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> The Albert Kennedy Trust. (n.d.). LGBT youth homelessness. Retrieved from [https://www.theproudsttrust.org/wp-content/uploads/download-manager-files/AlbertKennedy\\_ResearchReport\\_Youth-Homelessness.pdf](https://www.theproudsttrust.org/wp-content/uploads/download-manager-files/AlbertKennedy_ResearchReport_Youth-Homelessness.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> Lusher, A. (2016, December 18). Gay youngsters being forced from the family home in 'dramatically increasing' numbers, charities warn. Independent. Retrieved from <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/homelesshelpline/lgbt-gay-hate-crime-homophobia-homophobic-bullying-homeless-helpline-centrepoint-albert-kennedy-a7480326.html>

<sup>34</sup> Stonewall, Bid to the Mayor's Rough Sleeping Innovation Fund, 2017.

<sup>35</sup> Bachmann, C., & Gooch, B. (n.d.). ;LGBT in Britain, hate crime and discrimination. Stonewall. Retrieved from [https://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/lgbt\\_in\\_britain\\_hate\\_crime.pdf](https://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/lgbt_in_britain_hate_crime.pdf)

efforts to do so were sometimes hindered by the increasingly complex support needs of hostel residents, decreased staffing levels due to budget cuts, and a lack of much-needed input from external agencies, such as mental health and substance use services.

### **1.3 WHAT THE MAYOR WILL DO NOW**

#### **Provide a hospital homelessness and immigration support service**

The Mayor will fund a new two-year service to provide non-EEA homeless migrants who are in hospital with in-depth immigration casework, enabling them to avoid rough sleeping. In addition, non-EEA homeless migrants within the Pathway programme will receive advice on their housing options and avenues for resolving both their homelessness and immigration status. This work will also build a body of evidence on the number of non-EEA migrants at risk of rough sleeping on discharge from hospital, their needs, and the appropriate service model for supporting them.

#### **Help ensure safe shelter for LGBT+ people in crisis**

The Mayor will fund a service to provide a shelter for LGBT+ people in crisis, to help prevent them from rough sleeping.

#### **Help reduce evictions from Clearing House accommodation**

The Mayor will invest more funding in his Tenancy Sustainment Team (TST) service, to enable it to support more Clearing House residents. In addition, new practices for working with tenants with high support needs will be developed and enhanced. This will include additional training for the housing associations managing Clearing House accommodation on improving their response and communication with the TSTs where tenants are at risk of eviction.

#### **Ensure that the ‘London Model’ of private renting works for vulnerable people at risk of eviction**

The Mayor will ensure that the needs of vulnerable people at risk of eviction are fully considered as part of his work to develop a ‘London Model’ of private renting to improve security of tenure for the capital’s renters<sup>36</sup>.

### **1.4 WHAT COULD BE DONE WITH MORE RESOURCES**

#### **A ‘somewhere safe to stay’ initiative**

This council-led service would form part of the Homelessness Reduction Act offer. It would be aimed at people at immediate risk of sleeping on the streets or somewhere equally unsafe, either outside Housing Options opening hours or in cases where Housing Options has provided assistance under a relief duty but has not yet secured emergency accommodation. The service would provide short-term emergency accommodation and limited assessment, to enable each council to connect people to

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<sup>36</sup> See section 6.2 of the London Housing Strategy - [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2018\\_lhs\\_london\\_housing\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2018_lhs_london_housing_strategy.pdf)

appropriate accommodation and, if necessary, support options, without the need for them to sleep rough.

### **A hostel in-reach service**

This service would provide rapid and tailored interventions to people living in hostels who are at risk of eviction or abandonment, to support them to sustain accommodation. If people did find themselves leaving the hostel and moving to the streets, they would continue to receive assistance to return to accommodation as swiftly as possible.

It would focus on the London boroughs with the largest number of hostel beds for single homeless people, with new dedicated hostel in-reach workers attached to each of their outreach teams. For those boroughs without a commissioned outreach team, dedicated in-reach workers would be part of the Mayor's London Street Rescue outreach team which covers those areas.

The service would also undertake a review of hostel eviction processes, to ensure that good practice becomes common practice across London.

### **A pan-London daytime outreach service**

This multi-disciplinary, pan-London service would work in areas of London with high levels of daytime street activity. Support would be offered to all those in the daytime street population, both rough sleepers and those who have accommodation. The service would provide a range of support services to prevent people involved in daytime street activity but not sleeping rough from losing their accommodation, as well as reduce activities such as begging and street drinking.

It would be delivered in partnership with councils, which would provide resources from drug and alcohol, mental health, social care and community services to support the core team when required. While primarily a support service, it would include an enforcement approach, for instances in cases of ASB where all offers of support have been persistently refused. For this reason, the Metropolitan Police's lead officer on homelessness should provide guidance to local authority police teams to ensure any enforcement is considered sensitively and only as a last resort.

### **A care and resettlement centre for homeless people leaving hospital**

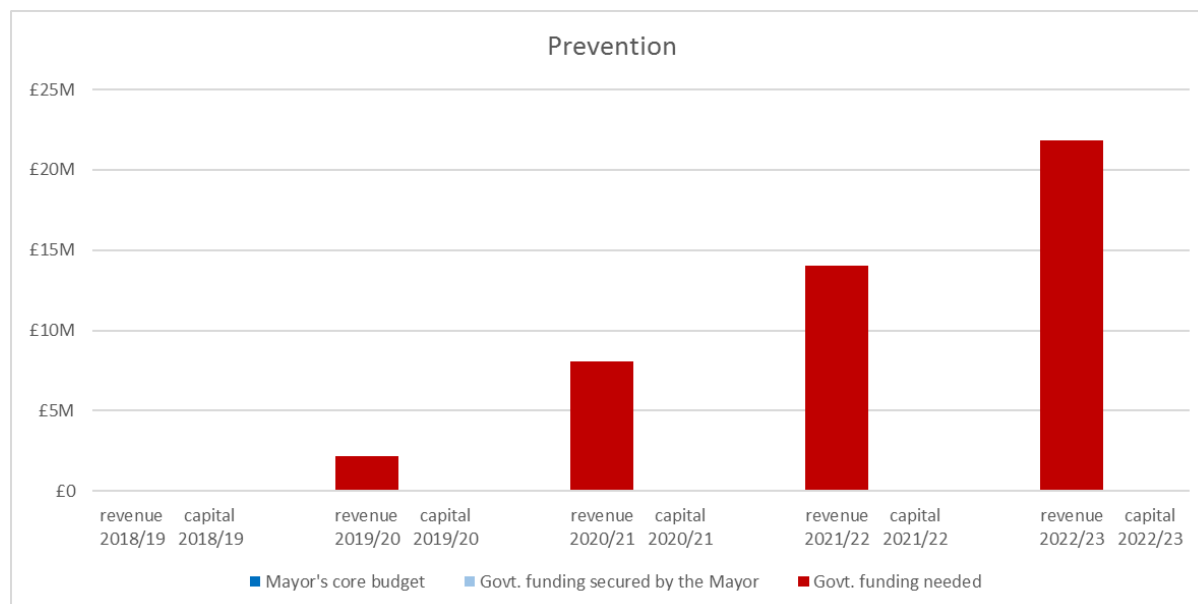
This service would provide accommodation with intermediate care and resettlement support for hospital patients who are homeless and have low to moderate short-term healthcare needs. It would prevent prolonged hospital stays, stop people being discharged from hospital to the streets and reduce readmissions to hospital. The service would be staffed throughout the day by a multi-disciplinary team of health, social care and housing workers, with skeleton staffing at night. It would care for people's immediate needs and also prepare them for move-on, including connecting them with services relevant to their primary support needs.



## Investment plan

Around £92m of Government investment is needed over the next five years to implement the above services and initiatives, all revenue. The annual amounts are set out in the figure below, along with the Mayor's current and future investment.

**Figure 3 Five-year investment plan for preventing homelessness**



## 1.5 WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE

In addition to making the vital investment outlined above, the Mayor urges the Government to:

- **Honour its commitment to make adequate funding available to councils to enable them to fully implement the Homelessness Reduction Act, and maximise its benefit to rough sleepers.** The Government should make available enough funding for the expansion of homelessness prevention and support services described in the Homelessness Reduction Act, estimated by London Councils to be at least £77 million each year in London<sup>37</sup>;
- **Support councils to adopt a No First Night Out approach** within all Housing Options services;
- **Enhance services for people in and leaving prison**, to ensure that the capacity of resettlement and housing support teams matches the level of need for this provision, including for those on short sentences and on remand;

<sup>37</sup> Kappala-Ramsamy, G. (2017, December 14). Fully fund services to address homelessness in London. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from londoncouncils.gov: <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/33095>

- **Improve opportunities for newly recognised refugees to access housing**, by extending the notice period to 56 days, improving integration support, and making NASS subject to the 'Duty to Refer' (by amending the Homelessness (Review Procedure etc.) Regulations 2018);
- **Review welfare reform measures that are fuelling homelessness and the risk of it and are making it harder to assist those who become homeless.** In particular, the Government should review the impact of reductions in and the freeze on LHA rates, the extension of the LHA SAR to single claimants under 35, the Benefit Cap, the shift to Universal Credit (including Alternative Payment Arrangements for people with a recent history or at risk of rough sleeping), and London's share of the DHP budget;
- **Increase the coverage of DWP outreach in homelessness services and enable workers to authorise exemptions.** Workers should also be assigned additional powers to directly exempt people from benefit sanctions, on a case by case basis, taking into account their circumstances and support needs; and
- **Restore Legal Aid for housing and debt matters to where there is a risk to the home, regardless of whether the risk is immediate, and for immigration cases.**
- **Address the root causes of homelessness and rough sleeping**, including by increasing the supply of affordable housing, reforming the private rented sector so that it offers a secure, high-quality, long-term housing option, and adequately funding mainstream services and support – as well as reviewing welfare reforms as outlined above.

## 2 An immediate route off the streets

*We know that rapid interventions combined with assertive outreach are highly successful at helping people to exit rough sleeping quickly and sustainably. This not only greatly benefits the people using these services, but also reduces the costs to the public purse arising from entrenched rough sleeping. But there is currently not enough capacity in the system to intervene as effectively as we need to.*

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **The Government should:**

- Ensure that national policy and practice supports a rapid response to rough sleeping; and
- Ensure that councils and the GLA are fully funded to provide this rapid response.

#### **The Mayor should:**

- Take strategic decisions on the allocation of Government funding for rapid response, outreach, assessment and emergency accommodation, subject to this funding being devolved to City Hall;
- Have oversight of the nature and shape of StreetLink in London;
- Provide outreach in the boroughs where it makes operational and economic sense for them to be part of a pan-London service, and on the night transport network;
- Provide rapid response outreach across London, subject to securing Government funding;
- Provide rapid assessment to supplement council provision, and provide emergency accommodation for rough sleepers with no likely local connection to the London borough where they are sleeping, or in severe weather when local provision is full, subject to securing Government funding; and
- Coordinate and activate severe weather provision.

#### **Councils should:**

- Provide outreach for people sleeping rough in their area, where the number of rough sleepers is high;
- Provide rapid assessment and emergency accommodation for all rough sleepers with a likely local connection, subject to funding, and during severe weather;
- Make full use of available resources to help ensure advice and support services, such as day centres, are available locally; and
- Have a named rough sleeping lead officer.

#### **Others:**

- The voluntary and community sector should contribute as far as they are able to winter/severe weather provision and daytime support for rough sleepers.

## 2.1 CURRENT SERVICES AND PROVISION

To provide help to people on the street, we need to be able to find them. StreetLink, a national service part-funded by the Mayor, plays a valuable role in helping services commissioned across London to do this. It enables people to let StreetLink know about anyone they see on the streets who they are concerned about, so that they can be linked into services. Rough sleepers are also able to refer themselves.

Outreach teams are locally commissioned in 19 London boroughs. Although models vary, they are all designed to provide a rapid, reactive service to people sleeping rough. The Mayor's London Street Rescue service, which supported around 1,500 people in 2017/18, provides a basic level of coverage in the 14 boroughs where councils do not commission their own outreach. It makes operational and economic sense for those councils with the highest levels of rough sleeping to commission their own outreach and for others to be part of the pan-London London Street Rescue service. Both local teams and London Street Rescue are directed to new people on the streets mainly by StreetLink referrals, as well as information from local partnerships and regular shifts in areas where there are likely to be people sleeping rough. They are complemented by an outreach service the Mayor commissions on London's night transport network. The delivery of outreach in the capital is underpinned by the pan-London outreach protocol, which the Mayor, London Councils and Homeless Link have signed up to<sup>38</sup>.

There are a number of immediate access, rapid intervention services across London, although their combined capacity is less than current need. Routes into these commissioned services are generally via an outreach team, rather than through direct access (that is, through people being able to access them themselves).

The Mayor's pan-London NSNO service provides help to people who are new to rough sleeping. It typically supports over 1,500 people each year, and 86 per cent of those seen in 2017/18 exited rough sleeping. Outreach teams can take people to an NSNO hub on the night that they are first contacted, and the service then aims to provide a rapid assessment of and resolution to the person's rough sleeping – a single service offer<sup>39</sup>. Many councils rely on NSNO as the main route off the street for new rough sleepers in their areas, with only a small number currently providing their own similar assessment services.

In addition, the Mayor's Safe Connections service helps rough sleepers who are relatively new to the streets and have a local connection in the UK. The team comprises expert caseworkers with specific skills in working with local authorities

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<sup>38</sup> [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/protocol\\_for\\_rough\\_sleeping\\_outreach\\_services\\_0.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/protocol_for_rough_sleeping_outreach_services_0.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> Once a rough sleeper's immediate needs have been met, services work with them to agree their single service offer – the next stage of their route out of homelessness. This offer could include temporary accommodation, a hostel, residential treatment for health or substance use issues, PRS or reconnection.

and housing providers to rapidly secure access to suitable housing and support in an area where rough sleepers have, or can build, support networks.

Some councils provide a small number of emergency bedspaces within other services. There is also a very limited amount of short-term accommodation for people who have been assessed and are waiting for something longer term to become available, such as a hostel place or somewhere in the PRS. This include 53 bedspaces at the Mayor's NSNO staging posts.

Specific emergency arrangements, known as Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP), swing into action during periods of severe weather. Last winter, the Mayor changed the trigger for SWEP, so that it is now activated both for his provision and that provided by councils in the capital as soon as the temperature is forecast to be 0°C on any night (as opposed to temperatures needing to be that low for three consecutive nights under the previous policy). SWEP shelter is accessed via outreach teams (which do additional shifts at these times) or Housing Options services, and generally takes the form of space in winter night shelters, or bed and breakfasts. Local provision is supplemented by the Mayor's pan-London SWEP bedspaces. SWEP provides an ideal opportunity to support people, some of whom have been sleeping rough for a long time, in not returning to the streets.

Some areas of the capital have successfully used volunteers to work with those on the streets. One example is the 'Street Buddies' model operated in Westminster, whereby former rough sleepers work with entrenched rough sleepers - supporting some of the borough's most long-term rough sleepers away from the streets when other outreach teams have been unable to do so.

London has at least 22 day centres for people sleeping rough, of which around two thirds are in inner London. These provide a range of building-based services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Support may include advice on housing, benefits, health, alcohol, drugs, help with rehousing, assistance with literacy and other skills and training.

## 2.2 EVIDENCE AND ISSUES

### **The response to those on the streets is not sufficiently rapid or targeted**

StreetLink offers a fantastic opportunity to engage members of the public and empower them to help people off the streets. Since the service was launched in December 2012, over 12,000 people in London have been provided with accommodation or other support as result of a referral to the service. However, it currently takes on average over three days for outreach teams to attend to someone referred to services via StreetLink, mainly because the teams are under-resourced. In addition, many people are no longer at the location where they were seen by the time an outreach worker gets there. Indeed, in 2016/17, over half of the 13,000 StreetLink referrals in London resulted in no-one being found, which is likely due to time lags in outreach teams being able to attend, and to the fact that people being

referred may be new rough sleepers, many of whom find a route off the street relatively quickly themselves without the intervention of rough sleeping services. The time taken by outreach teams to respond to StreetLink referrals varies significantly across the capital, and around 1,500 of the 58,000 referrals made over the last six years were not responded to all<sup>40</sup>. In addition, in some areas of the capital, people at the point of being 'verified' by an outreach worker report that they have already been sleeping rough for several weeks or longer.

### **Assessment services are in short supply**

Most people who sleep rough are seen bedded down on the streets of London only once<sup>41</sup>. This is in part due to the success of NSNO and similar assessment services provided by a small number of councils. However, given the increases in rough sleeping in recent years, NSNO is unable to deal with levels of demand and, in 2016/17, 1,281 people were unable to access the service because it was full. Of these, 34 per cent (436 people) were seen rough sleeping again within six months, compared with only 17 per cent of those who went to NSNO.<sup>42</sup>

While pan-London assessment hubs undoubtedly have a crucial role to play, during the consultation on this plan there was strong support for a mix of both pan-London and borough or sub-regional level provision. This is because most new rough sleepers will have a local connection to a London borough and should go on to enter the pathway that council provides. Also, the further someone has to travel to a hub, the less likely they are use it. Given the very rapid increase in rough sleeping in some parts of outer London in recent years, there is a clearly a strong case to expand provision in these areas<sup>43</sup>.

New rough sleepers are slightly less likely than longer-term rough sleepers to have support needs, although 74 per cent of those seen by NSNO in 2016/17 had at least one assessed support need around alcohol, drugs or mental health<sup>44</sup>. Given that support needs increase with the length of time sleeping rough (and worsen significantly after only a few weeks of rough sleeping), it is vital that people are helped off the streets as quickly as possible - before their health deteriorates or other needs increase.

### **There is a shortage of emergency accommodation**

In 2016/17, over 80 per cent of people at NSNO stayed for longer than the three-day target and almost half were there for over two weeks. This is mainly because of the acute lack of appropriate accommodation for them to move on to, such as the PRS, hostels, Clearing House and supported accommodation for people with support needs. During that year, around 40 per cent of people remained in the hubs for over

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<sup>40</sup> StreetLink monitoring figures.

<sup>41</sup> In 2017/18, 72 per cent of new rough sleepers were only seen once. GLA. (n.d.). Rough sleeping in London (CHAIN reports). From London Datastore: <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports>

<sup>42</sup> CHAIN. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: CHAIN data analysis. GLA.

<sup>43</sup> Note that UK nationals are over-represented among those using NSNO.

<sup>44</sup> CHAIN. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: CHAIN data analysis. GLA.

seven days specifically because NSNO was awaiting a response or vacancy from a partner agency, such as a local authority<sup>45</sup>.

Lengths of stay tend to be particularly protracted for those with no recourse to public funds, particularly for people with an uncertain immigration status (see section 3). Similarly, people with high support needs tend to spend longer at NSNO than those with lower or no support needs<sup>46</sup>.

The NSNO staging posts provide valuable accommodation for those whose situation cannot be resolved quickly by the hubs, freeing up capacity there and ensuring that people do not return to the streets. However, they are consistently full, often with people who have been there for a long time. Indeed, there is a lack of emergency accommodation throughout the capital, with 58 per cent of outreach workers reporting that over the last five years it has become more difficult to access this type of accommodation<sup>47</sup>.

More staging post accommodation, as well as locally-provided emergency accommodation, is therefore needed, to ensure that there is a pathway for those whose situation cannot be immediately resolved by assessment services and to free up these services to help people on the streets.

### **There is a lack of women-only services**

Women accounted for only 15 per cent of people who were seen sleeping rough in 2017/18. However, the true number of women sleeping rough is likely to be significantly higher, as – for safety reasons - women are more likely than men to sleep in more hidden places or sleep rough for very short periods interspersed with time spent in precarious housing situations<sup>48</sup>.

The outcomes for women who sleep rough are often worse than men's. They spend longer in NSNO or – if they do not go to NSNO – on the streets<sup>49</sup>. They also are at greater risk whilst on the streets, with research showing that nearly a quarter of female rough sleepers are sexually assaulted each year and 60 per cent are threatened with violence, compared with 40 per cent of men<sup>50</sup>. At 43, their life

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<sup>45</sup> CHAIN. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: CHAIN data analysis. GLA.

<sup>46</sup> NSNO monitoring data shows that in 2016/17 29 per cent of long stays were due to client support needs, with a significant proportion of the remaining 71 per cent being for support need-related issues such as lack of appropriate supported accommodation or complex immigration cases

<sup>47</sup> St Mungo's. (2018). National street outreach survey.

<sup>48</sup> St Mungo's Broadway. (2014). Rebuilding Shattered Lives. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from <https://www.mungos.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Rebuilding-Shattered-Lives-Update-Nov-2015-1.pdf>

<sup>49</sup> NSNO monitoring data shows that in 2016/17 29 per cent of long stays were due to client support needs, with a significant proportion of the remaining 71 per cent being for support need-related issues such as lack of appropriate supported accommodation or complex immigration cases.

<sup>50</sup> Albanese, F., & Sanders, B. (2016). It's no life at all. Crisis. Retrieved from [https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/20502/crisis\\_its\\_no\\_life\\_at\\_all2016.pdf](https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/20502/crisis_its_no_life_at_all2016.pdf)

expectancy is also lower than it is for their male counterparts<sup>51</sup>. Women sleeping rough are more likely than men to have mental health or drug support needs (61 per cent compared with 48 per cent for mental health, and 44 per cent compared with 40 per cent for drug use) but are less likely to have an alcohol support need (35 per cent compared with 44 per cent)<sup>52</sup>. They are also more likely to be young, with 13 per cent of women rough sleepers compared with seven per cent of men aged under 26<sup>53</sup>.

Domestic abuse is a common cause of homelessness for women. For example, it contributes to the homelessness of a third of women using St Mungo's services<sup>54</sup>. However, many are not able to access a refuge, particularly those with support needs, such as mental health or substance use<sup>55</sup>. Furthermore, 11 per cent of women who do access refuges have no option other than to sleep rough while they wait for a space to become available<sup>56</sup>.

Research by St Mungo's found that women do not generally like being in a minority in housing projects and services, as they can feel unsafe in male-dominated environments. In addition, services may not work for them because staff are not trained to help with their particular problems. For example, specific support around self-harm or eating disorders is rarely available<sup>57</sup>. During the consultation on this plan, stakeholders highlighted a distinct gap in homelessness provision specifically for women, including rapid intervention, staging posts and longer-term options. There was strong support from stakeholders for a women's pan-London assessment and short-term accommodation service to provide a bespoke, tailored approach to women sleeping rough.

### **There is significant scope to build on the success of the 2017/18 SWEP**

SWEP offers an important opportunity to provide people with an immediate route off the streets and to support them not to return there<sup>58</sup>. People are more likely to engage with both outreach services and day services during periods of extreme weather.

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<sup>51</sup> Crisis. (2012). Homelessness kills. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from crisis.org: [https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/236799/crisis\\_homelessness\\_kills\\_es2012.pdf](https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/236799/crisis_homelessness_kills_es2012.pdf)

<sup>52</sup> CHAIN. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: CHAIN data analysis. GLA.

<sup>53</sup> CHAIN. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: CHAIN data analysis. GLA.

<sup>54</sup> St Mungo's Broadway. (2014). Rebuilding Shattered Lives. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from <https://www.mungos.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Rebuilding-Shattered-Lives-Update-Nov-2015-1.pdf>

<sup>55</sup> Solace Women's Aid. (2016). The Price of Safety: How the housing system is failing women and children fleeing domestic abuse. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from [http://solacewomensaid.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Solace-Womens-Aid-housing-report\\_The-price-of-safety\\_Mar16.pdf](http://solacewomensaid.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Solace-Womens-Aid-housing-report_The-price-of-safety_Mar16.pdf)

<sup>56</sup> Miles, C., & Smith, K. (2017). Nowhere to turn. Women's aid. Retrieved from <https://1q7dqy2unor827bqjls0c4rn-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/NWTA-Full-report.pdf>

<sup>57</sup> Murphy, A. (2014, March 7). Why homeless services are failing women, The Guardian. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/housing-network/2014/mar/07/homeless-services-failing-women-st-mungos>



SWEP is highly successful in rapidly accommodating people who are less entrenched and have lower support needs. However, it can prove difficult, even in the extreme weather, to convince people who are more entrenched and have more complex support needs to come inside. This could be related to the offer of communal rather than private spaces, and a lack of confidence on the part of rough sleepers that they will be helped to move on from the shelter.

According to the GLA's review of the 2017/18 SWEP, at least 1,700 winter shelter and SWEP spaces were available last winter, with some services recording as many as 77 per cent of people not returning to the streets after using their provision. Indeed, over three quarters of those accessing the pan-London SWEP during the winter of 2017/18 have not returned to rough sleeping. However, many outreach teams found it difficult and time-consuming to get someone into local SWEP provision. Also, people were often moved from one SWEP location to another – particularly between pan-London and local SWEP services. Many stakeholders providing feedback to the review thought that an element of direct access provision was needed within the SWEP offer.<sup>59</sup>

### **The provision of day centres is patchy across London**

Most of London's day centres were established many years, or even decades, ago in response to the levels of local need at that time. This means that many areas of London where high levels of rough sleeping are a more recent phenomenon are either under-served or not at all served by this provision.

### **Current interventions are failing some long-term rough sleepers**

There are around 500 entrenched rough sleepers in London<sup>60</sup>. During the consultation on this plan, partners emphasised the great challenges they have in supporting this group of people to access services or accommodation. Almost all (92 per cent) have support needs but relatively few are engaged with relevant specialist treatment or support, meaning they are more likely to be very unwell or heavily using substances. Another barrier commonly identified by outreach teams during the consultation on this plan was that it can often be much more difficult to build relationships with this group, due to past trauma or a mistrust of professionals which has developed over time. In the consultation, people who had slept rough for long periods also highlighted that previous negative experiences of homelessness services made them less likely to engage with outreach teams.

### **People do not always know where to go for help**

Of those supported by NSNO in 2016/17, two thirds (over 1,000 people) had not approached a local authority Housing Options service prior to arriving at the hub<sup>61</sup>. This suggests that people do not know where to go, or are reluctant to access

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<sup>59</sup> GLA, SWEP review 2017/18, 2018.

<sup>60</sup> Defined as those currently rough sleeping who have been rough sleeping for at least a year or intermittently over the past five years.

<sup>61</sup> CHAIN. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: CHAIN data analysis. GLA.

statutory housing advice and support. Those sleeping rough, or at risk of doing so, also appear to be unaware that they can get help through StreetLink, with no more than 2,000 rough sleepers contacting the service during 2017<sup>62</sup>.

### **Commissioned and volunteer-led services need to work more closely together**

Both commissioned and non-commissioned services for people sleeping rough, including those that are volunteer-led, play important roles in current provision and will be essential to future plans. The scope for these two sectors to work more closely together was a common theme in the consultation on this plan and was also highlighted in the GLA's SWEP review<sup>63</sup>. Entrenched rough sleepers are likely to particularly benefit from improvements in this area. This is because some find it easier to engage with volunteer-led than formal services but also often require the resources and expertise offered by commissioned services to support their move away from the streets.

#### **Box 3 What Londoners can do to help**

*Londoners want to play their part in helping to end rough sleeping. They can help directly in a number of ways, including by:*

- **Contacting StreetLink** – Londoners can let StreetLink know, through its app or website, about people on the street they are concerned about. When StreetLink receives this information, they will pass it on to an outreach team, who will come and find the person sleeping rough at the earliest opportunity. During working hours, rough sleepers can get immediate help from the local council Housing Options service, or a local day centre if there is one. The Mayor will shortly enhance the StreetLink website to include details of local daytime services, so that any member of the public can find this information to pass on if appropriate;
- **Volunteering** – charities always need help and Londoners have a key role to play, for example, assisting with outreach, joining the StreetLink team, or hosting someone who has slept rough or is at risk of doing so; and
- **Donating** – giving to a homelessness charity, or the coalition of charities the Mayor has helped assemble, means that the money given goes directly to providing real help for rough sleepers.

Londoners showed incredible generosity during the Mayor's 2017/18 winter rough sleeping campaign, donating around £200,000 to the London Homeless Charities Group. They also responded to the Mayor's call to action to contact StreetLink – making over 8,500 referrals during the winter. This was highest level on record, up almost 45 per cent from around 5,900 referrals over the equivalent period in the previous year. Londoners also make year-round donations to individual homelessness charities, volunteer in their thousands with homelessness services, and show endless acts of kindness to people on the capital's streets.

<sup>62</sup> StreetLink monitoring data 2017.

<sup>63</sup> GLA, SWEP review 2017/18, 2018.

## 2.3 WHAT THE MAYOR WILL DO NOW

### **Enhance London Street Rescue**

The Mayor will more than double the number of London Street Rescue outreach workers this autumn. The aim is for faster referral response times, a higher proportion of successful referrals, and more intensive casework – ideally resulting in fewer people spending a second night out, fewer becoming entrenched in rough sleeping, better coverage during severe weather, as well as better outcomes such as engagement in wider support services.

### **Revise the Pan-London Outreach Protocol**

The Mayor, working with partners on the No Nights Sleeping Rough taskforce, will update the pan-London protocol for rough sleeping outreach services. Since this was developed in 2016, the environment has changed significantly (for example, the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act, and changes to Home Office policy), as have service models and the needs of people sleeping rough.

### **Enhance the Safe Connections service**

The Mayor will widen the eligibility criteria for his Safe Connections service to include a group of people who are technically considered to be ‘returners’ to the street, but have recently left independent accommodation that they had maintained for many years. This is likely to benefit around 300 additional people each year and will be implemented this autumn.

### **Provide two floating assessment hubs**

The Mayor will develop a service, to be in place in the autumn, which will help provide a rapid response to sudden increases in rough sleeping or issues with specific groups of rough sleepers in local areas. The hubs, which will be mobilised at short notice for short periods of time (two to three weeks), will provide access to short-term interventions to address immediate needs and a safe space enabling a thorough needs assessment to be made. As with NSNO, this service will aim to rapidly assess people and offer them a route off the streets.

### **Provide two new NSNO staging posts**

The Mayor will add to the current NSNO staging posts provision, to meet both current demand and the additional demand that will be generated by the floating hubs.

### **Improve winter provision**

Building on his success so far in leading London-wide efforts to strengthen winter and severe weather provision, the Mayor will from this winter:

- **Enhance his role in coordinating councils’ SWEP plans, working to ensure that there is sufficient provision across the capital and that more**

**people know where to go for help.** Messaging to the public and signposting for people sleeping rough will be improved to provide clearer and more consistent information about the help available during periods of severe weather. The London SWEP guidance will also be revised, with a greater focus on ensuring that people do not have to return to the street when weather improves;

- **Provide coordinators to optimise the amount and quality of SWEP provision** in the community and faith-based sector, and the outcomes for those people that use it; and
- **Run a small grants programme for winter shelters.** This will help to build capacity and to ensure that best practice is disseminated across London's network of winter night shelters. It will support the expansion of existing shelter capacity and facilitate the establishment of new shelters. This will dovetail with the expansion of London Street Rescue, which will create caseworker posts for winter night shelters, to help improve outcomes for those using them by providing access to specialist services and direct support to ensure a more sustainable route away from the streets. Delivered via existing networks and in collaboration with partners from the voluntary sector and faith organisations, this will help empower community groups to make a difference in their local area.

### **Enhance monitoring and recording**

The Mayor will make two key enhancements to CHAIN, to better inform service delivery and commissioning. These will be in place for this winter and will enable CHAIN data to capture:

- Self-reported information relating to people's rough sleeping history immediately prior to their first contact with outreach teams; and
- Better information about immediate offers of routes off the streets. This will help identify people without a route off the streets, as well as those who reject offers. It will provide vital information for tasking and targeting<sup>64</sup>, and support the work of outreach teams.

## **2.4 WHAT COULD BE DONE WITH MORE RESOURCES**

This section sets out proposals covering:

- Immediate assistance and a route off the street;
- Assessment and emergency accommodation; and

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<sup>64</sup> A multi-agency meeting coordinated by councils or providers that ensures an action plan for longer-term rough sleepers.

- The community and faith-based sector.

Many of the services and approaches outlined in this section would work together to ensure that wherever they are, and whatever time of day or night it is, people have an immediate route off the street. The services would help not only people who find themselves sleeping rough but also those at immediate risk of doing so.

During the day, Housing Options services and day centres should be people's first port of call. Figure 5 sets out what the immediate routes off the streets would be, once the following services were in place.

### **Immediate assistance and a route off the street**

#### **A London StreetLink service**

StreetLink would be enhanced to include three major new features for London. These features would help people off the streets more quickly, mean fewer people need to sleep rough in the first place, and make information about services more accessible both for people sleeping rough and the public. They comprise:

- **A dedicated advice line for people who are themselves rough sleeping or at immediate risk of doing so**, so that they can access more bespoke help from the service than they do currently. Skilled advice workers would offer advice based on the personal circumstances of the self-referrer to direct them to resources and services to help resolve their homelessness as quickly as possible. This could include directing them to Housing Options or to a place of safety;
- **A webpage for Londoners** containing details of local services available at that time that could be accessed directly by people in their area sleeping rough. This would enable the public to direct people who are homeless to their nearest service or place of safety. It would also include information on wider services for rough sleepers in their area and on the scale and nature of rough sleeping at a local level; and
- **A pan-London rapid response outreach service** would respond to out-of-hours referrals from StreetLink within three hours, ensuring a common rapid response across the capital. It would comprise volunteers working alongside skilled professionals. Everyone who is found, whether at immediate risk of rough sleeping or a new or known rough sleeper, would be offered an immediate route off the streets. Those who refuse the immediate offer would be referred to the local outreach team, to ensure that services continue to try and engage them and help them off the street. The service would free up existing outreach services to concentrate on more complex casework.

#### **Places of safety**

This new network of locations across the capital would provide immediate and safe places where people sleeping rough or at immediate risk of doing so could go

outside working hours to wait for the rapid response service to arrive. They would be directed there by StreetLink. These places of safety could ultimately be located within existing 24-hour services, such as police stations, town halls and hospitals<sup>65</sup>. However, in the short to medium term, we could locate them within existing Mayoral rough sleeping services.

### **A peer-led outreach service**

This new pan-London service would involve former rough sleepers engaging with people who have been on the streets for a long time and who have been reluctant to work with outreach and other homelessness services. The peer outreach workers would, over time and working in partnership with other homelessness services, connect people with accommodation and support services.

The service would also offer the opportunity for the peer volunteers to become paid trainees. The training scheme would develop their skills and enable them to find paid employment with homelessness organisations at the end of the programme. Through this model, the initiative would have great benefits not only for the current rough sleepers being supported, but also the peer workers themselves. This would sustainably support some of London's most entrenched rough sleepers into accommodation or support.

### **A Roma support team**

This service would deliver outreach-based interventions and service offers for the Roma community. It would focus on employability and practical support which offers a route off the street into legitimate employment. This would include befriending, support and advice to tackle illiteracy, and appraisal of individual skills and experience.

Romani-speaking mediators would work alongside existing commissioned and non-commissioned services and with members of the Roma community to provide a unique and tailored offer that provides a route from the street to legitimate employment. It would be a service for the Roma, led by Roma using Roma culture to lead and shape it.

See section 3.2 for further information about this group.

## **Assessment and emergency accommodation**

### **A network of local rapid intervention services**

These services would provide rapid assessment and emergency bedspaces for people with a local connection to the borough in which they are sleeping. The assessment service would operate in a similar way to NSNO – instilling the NSNO ethos and approach throughout the capital - and provision would be at either a

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<sup>65</sup> A minimum of 33 24-hour police stations and c20 A&E departments across London will ensure good geographical coverage.

borough or multi-borough level. Funding (both capital and revenue) for the rapid intervention spaces would sit with the GLA, with services commissioned and managed at the borough (or, where appropriate, multi-borough) level in line with local needs and requirements. It is likely that once these are in place across London, the Mayor's planned floating assessment hubs would no longer be required.

### **An additional NSNO hub for new rough sleepers**

An additional pan-London hub, to boost the services offered by the current NSNO hubs, would improve access to rapid intervention for people new to the streets who have no local connection with a London borough. Further, to better support the 'places of safety' model set out above, which could increase demand on pan-London and locally commissioned services, we anticipate an additional NSNO hub should add sufficient capacity to the system to ensure an immediate offer for everyone new to the streets.

### **A new assessment hub with accommodation for those not new to the streets**

This service would provide assessment and emergency accommodation (for up to 28 days) for people who are not new to the streets and who do not have a local connection to a London borough. Its aim would be to work with people to agree and provide a safe and sustainable route away from the streets.

### **A new women-only assessment hub**

The service would provide bespoke rapid assessment and emergency or short-term accommodation for women who are new or longer-term rough sleepers.

### **Triage hubs in severe weather**

These temporary shelters, which would be set up in accessible locations around the capital, would provide an immediate safe and warm place for people sleeping rough to go during cold weather. People could be taken there by an outreach worker or – unlike with local and pan-London SWEP provision - access the shelters directly themselves. Staffed by skilled assessment teams, their role would be to ascertain people's local connection, support needs and other details, so that they can be supported to access the most appropriate SWEP provision.

## **The community and faith-based sector**

### **A community link project**

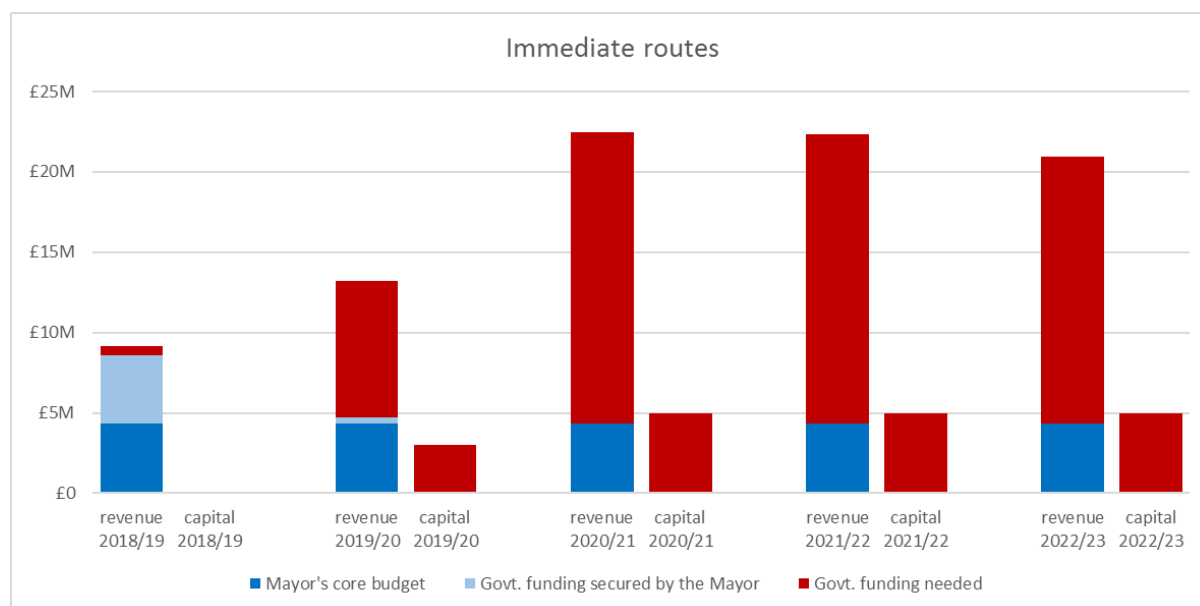
This new project would enable the community and faith-based sector to work more closely together with commissioned services, so that each can benefit from the other's good practice and ideas. A small number of link workers would engage with soup runs, day centres, advice services and other such community-operated services across London. The project would support and develop existing networks, offer training courses and guidance, and have the flexibility to respond to other needs of community groups as they become apparent. The project would create

better mechanisms for people working with community and faith-based services to access specialist services.

### Investment plan

A total of around £80m (£62m revenue and £18m capital) of Government investment is needed over the next five years to implement the above services and initiatives. The annual amounts are set out in the figure below, along with the Mayor’s current and future investment.

**Figure 4 Five-year investment plan for an immediate route of the streets**



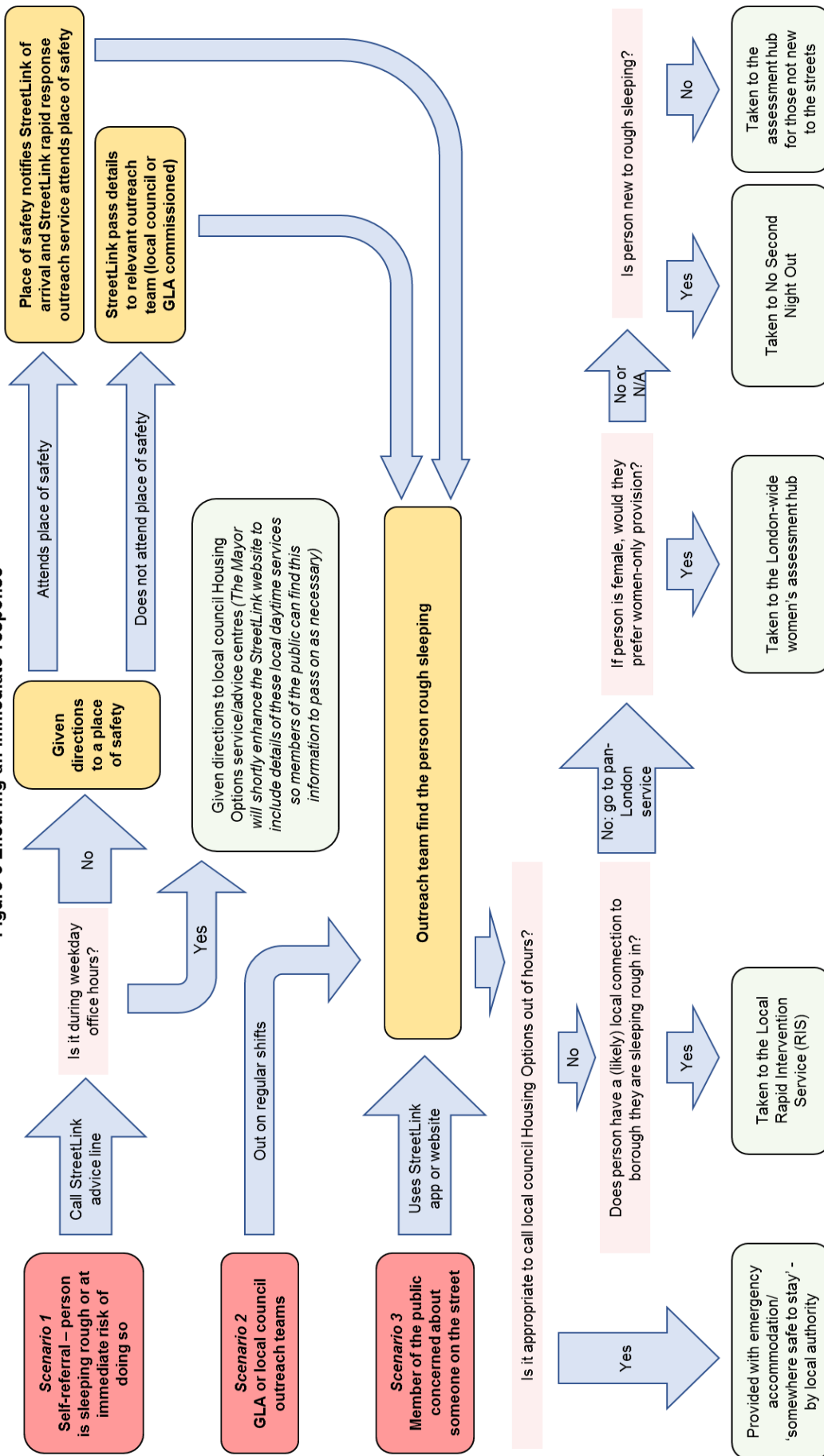
## 2.5 WHAT ELSE NEEDS TO CHANGE

In addition to making the vital investment outlined above, the Mayor urges the Government to:

- Devolve London’s share of all new funding for rapid response, outreach, assessment and emergency accommodation to the Mayor**, to ensure a strategic, rational and cost-effective approach to provision. This would enable the Mayor to determine whether services should be provided at a pan-London, multi-borough or borough level and disburse funds accordingly.



Figure 5 Ensuring an immediate response



## 3 Sustainable accommodation and solutions

*Ensuring a realistic and achievable pathway away from the streets is essential. Any offer must include sustainable accommodation, with support wherever it is needed, and - where their prospects would be far better and safer if they did so - assistance to those rough sleepers from outside London to return to their home area and receive the services they need.*

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### **The Government should:**

- Ensure that national policy and practice supports sustainable solutions and accommodation for rough sleepers; and
- Ensure that councils and the GLA are fully funded to provide sustainable solutions and accommodation for rough sleepers.

#### **The Mayor should:**

- Oversee the Clearing House, including programmes to deliver new homes, referrals and the provision of support;
- Deliver programmes to develop new and refurbish existing hostels;
- Provide short and medium-term accommodation for rough sleepers with no options for accessing other accommodation, subject to Government funding being secured; and
- Help optimise the use of accommodation for rough sleepers across borough boundaries, through the London Cross-borough Accommodation Network.

#### **London's councils should:**

- Ensure effective local needs-led pathways for rough sleepers, based on assessments of needs and provision, and developed in partnership with neighbouring councils and the sub-region;
- Use available funding to provide supported accommodation, including hostels, for rough sleepers; and
- Enable more rough sleepers to access social housing.

#### **Others:**

- Housing associations will be responsible for developing and managing Clearing House accommodation.

## 3.1 CURRENT SERVICES AND PROVISION

### Short and medium-term accommodation

There are almost 150 services in London providing over 5,300 bedspaces in hostels or supported housing for single homeless adults, 700 of which are exclusively for people with a history of rough sleeping<sup>66</sup>. Around a third of those services cater for people with low support needs, and the remainder for those with medium or high needs. This type of accommodation is generally funded and commissioned by councils. The Mayor's Homelessness Change Programme provides capital funding for improvements to existing and the development of new hostels<sup>67</sup>.

There is a very limited amount of short-term accommodation, provided through the Mayor's Routes Home service, specifically for non-UK nationals who are being supported to resolve their complex immigration status. Providing immigration advice and casework while people are on the streets is very challenging. It is far easier to ensure that people are able to attend legal appointments and to collect and apply for documentation if they are in accommodation.

In addition, there is a small number of hosting schemes in the capital. These involve members of the public offering a spare room free of charge and usually on a short-term basis to someone, often a young person or someone with no recourse to public funds, who is homeless or at risk of homelessness.

### Longer-term accommodation

The Mayor's Clearing House service provides access to affordable rented homes combined with specialist floating support (through two TSTs), with around 3,500 one-bedroom flats across London, of which around 250 are let annually, earmarked for people with a history of rough sleeping. Since 2008, new tenancies have been on a two-year fixed term, with the expectation that people will move on once they no longer need support. With sustainment rates of around 98 per cent each year, this is an excellent intermediate option before people move to completely independent living.

A relatively small number of rough sleepers access social housing, given the extreme shortage and the lack of priority given to many people sleeping rough. The PRS is therefore the main source of longer-term accommodation for rough sleepers, though finding affordable PRS presents major challenges.

Housing First approaches have become increasingly common in recent years. These involve people with complex and multiple needs, for whom traditional models of sustainable accommodation have not worked, going straight from the streets into stable homes. There is no requirement for them to be 'housing ready'. Once they are

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<sup>66</sup> GLA. (2018). London Hostels Snapshot.

<sup>67</sup> <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing-and-land/increasing-housing-supply/funding-supported-and-specialist-housing>

housed, people's needs are addressed through coordinated and intensive support – though there is no requirement to engage with this support. There are currently at least eight Housing First projects underway in the capital, mainly provided by councils.

In addition to Housing First, there are a number of small scale housing-led options for people who are entrenched rough sleepers, have high support needs, or have been excluded from accommodation and services multiple times. These include The Lodge and the Old Theatre, and models such as Emmaus communities.

### **Reconnection support**

The Mayor's NSNO service plays an important role in assisting rough sleepers from outside the capital to access help, support networks and other connections in their home area, where it is safe and appropriate for them to do so. NSNO staff will often travel with people, advocating on their behalf with local authorities, friends and family, and ensuring that suitable accommodation and support are in place. The Mayor's Safe Connections service, and some locally-commissioned services, offers similar support.

In addition, the Mayor's Routes Home service works with EU nationals who want to return to their home country but who need assistance to do so and to establish new support networks when they arrive. It enlists a full range of partners in both the UK and in other countries to help people make positive changes and find healthier, long-term solutions away from the street. The service includes partnerships with charities and other organisations in other EU countries. For example, Routes Home is funding a worker in Poland, through the charity MONAR.

## **3.2 EVIDENCE AND ISSUES**

### **Hostels and supported housing are increasingly unavailable to rough sleepers**

The supply of hostels and supported housing is falling, with more services closing than opening in recent years. Nationally, a fifth of beds for single homeless people have been lost since 2010 and, in the capital, due to the impacts of funding cuts many councils have decommissioned at least one hostel in the last five years - with further closures planned in 2018/19. At the end of 2017, only one council in London reported that it would be increasing capacity, with all others indicating that they would have a static or decreasing numbers of beds.<sup>68</sup> This is largely because of reduced council budgets, though the uncertainty around the future funding of housing costs for supported accommodation, particularly that which is intended to be transitional, has also had an impact.

This type of accommodation is also increasingly being used for other client groups, primarily people who are statutorily homeless. Only 10 per cent of hostel beds in London for single homeless adults are exclusively reserved for rough sleepers and

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<sup>68</sup> GLA. (2018). London Hostels Snapshot.

major hostel providers report that a third of people in their supported accommodation have never slept rough. The proportion of rough sleepers leaving the streets to go into hostels has decreased by almost 20 per cent in the last five years, with the number falling from 1,342 in 2013/14 to 585 in 2016/17.

The Government provided £15m for the Homelessness Change Programme in London, with the Mayor matching this investment. The Government's element of this programme has now come to an end, so new investment is needed on an ongoing basis to ensure that existing hostels are fit for purpose and there is new provision to meet need. In addition, it is essential that there is a sustainable mechanism to fund the housing-related elements of support in hostels, as well as sufficient revenue funding to meet wider support costs.

### **Hostels do not work for everyone so other options are needed**

Hostels often very successfully support people to better manage their needs and positively move on to other forms of accommodation. However, around a fifth of departures are due to eviction<sup>69</sup>.

There is currently no comprehensive London-wide data on people living in hostels and supported housing. This means that our understanding of their needs and circumstances is much more limited than it is for people sleeping on London's streets. Therefore, there is currently no robust information on why some people succeed in hostels and others do not. However, what we do know is that there are people for whom hostels may not or do not work and that other options are needed.

One is Housing First, which is typically proven to end homelessness for around 80 per cent of people with high support needs<sup>70</sup>. Existing Housing First projects have tended to focus on housing people with complex needs and it has generally proven to an effective solution for this cohort<sup>71</sup>. It has particularly high housing retention rates, ranging from between 60 and 90 per cent. Housing First also has other positive impacts, such as reducing offending and improving mental health (though it has not been shown to produce the same results for physical health). However, the evaluation of the GLA's Housing First pilot found that while Housing First works well for some, it is not the best solution for everyone.

Housing First requires considerable and ongoing investment, as the provision of often very intensive support needs to be open-ended. The accommodation also needs to be available on a long-term basis. It is therefore a more challenging service

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<sup>69</sup> St Mungo's. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: OPAL data analysis. GLA.

<sup>70</sup> Housing First Europe. (n.d.). What is Housing First. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from Housing First Europe Hub: <http://housingfirsteurope.eu/guide/what-is-housing-first/introducing-housing-first/>

<sup>71</sup> Mackie P., Johnsen A., & Wood J. (2017). Ending Rough Sleeping, What Works. Crisis. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from [https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/238368/ending\\_rough\\_sleeping\\_what\\_works\\_2017.pdf](https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/238368/ending_rough_sleeping_what_works_2017.pdf)

to provide in London than other areas of the country, given the capital's extreme housing pressures<sup>72</sup>.

### **There is a chronic lack of decent, affordable, sustainable accommodation options**

The Clearing House is in high demand, with the waiting list having increased by over 10 per cent each quarter for several years. Although there is an expectation that people will move on once they no longer need support, the lack of affordable move-on options presents a significant challenge. In addition, 1,700 of the 3,700 Clearing House units are occupied by people on lifetime tenancies, so there is no incentive for them to move on. Throughput is therefore relatively low.

As stated above, in London, most single people with histories of rough sleeping have very limited access to social housing. Reasons for this include the acute shortage, the fact that many rough sleepers are not in priority need under homelessness legislation, and the more restrictive eligibility criteria for registering on housing needs registers introduced in the past decade<sup>73</sup>.

The PRS is becoming increasingly difficult to access. In almost all parts of the capital, but particularly inner and central areas, it has become unaffordable for working people on low incomes and those whose housing costs are paid entirely by welfare benefits. Since 2010, average private rents in London have risen more than three times as fast as average earnings and the average private rent for a one-bedroom home in London is now more than the average for a three-bedroom home in every other English region<sup>74</sup>.

The strong demand for rental properties in London has contributed to an ever-reducing number of private landlords who are willing to rent to tenants on benefits. There is fierce competition between and across providers and councils for the very limited pool of suitable PRS properties which are within LHA rates and available to those whose housing costs are paid through Housing Benefit or Universal Credit<sup>75</sup>. At the same time, as outlined above, the welfare benefits available to cover rents in the PRS have been reduced.

Another issue is that many former rough sleepers want to remain in a specific location, close to family, friends, services and, for some, work. One challenge is finding low-cost accommodation locally for people who are ready to move on from the Clearing House or from hostels and want to remain in the area because they have successfully secured work locally. The fact that hostels and Clearing House

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<sup>72</sup> Bretherton, J., & Pleace, N. (2015). Housing First in England, An Evaluation of Nine Services. University of York. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from <https://www.york.ac.uk/media/chp/documents/2015/Housing%20First%20England%20Report%20February%202015.pdf>

<sup>73</sup> Crisis. (2017). Moving on, Improving access to housing for single homeless people in England. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from [https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/237834/moving\\_on\\_2017\\_es.pdf](https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/237834/moving_on_2017_es.pdf)

<sup>74</sup> GLA analysis of Valuation Office Agency, Private Rental Market Statistics.

<sup>75</sup> Often a client from one NSNO hub will be competing with a client from another hub.

properties are concentrated in central and inner London makes finding local move on from these types of accommodation very difficult.

As outlined in section 2, the result of these shortages is that people are getting stuck in services. The shortage of PRS accommodation is a key and increasingly prevalent reason for unacceptably long stays in NSNO - accounting for 11 per cent of all long-stays since NSNO opened, and 22 per cent in 2016/17<sup>76</sup>. Furthermore, major hostel providers report that 40 per cent of their residents with complex needs exceed the intended two-year maximum stay<sup>77</sup>, and in 2015, 36 per cent of those in hostels or supported housing in the capital were ready to move on but unable to do so (compared with 25 per cent in England overall)<sup>78</sup>.

### **The solutions for non-UK nationals sleeping rough are extremely limited**

Given that most non-UK nationals on London's streets are not entitled to welfare benefits, the options for this group are extremely limited. Some people, such as EEA nationals who are working legally or non-EEA nationals with indefinite leave to remain, are likely to be entitled to support with housing costs. However, for others, a supported reconnection to their home country may be the only path out of rough sleeping currently available. Last year's high court ruling that the Home Office's policy making rough sleeping an abuse of EU free movement rights was unlawful and discriminatory is very much welcomed. It is of paramount importance that where reconnection is the only option, people are fully supported and there are safe and sustainable options when they return.

For people who are working legally (and therefore likely to be entitled to welfare benefits), options are generally the same as they are for UK nationals – a PRS property in the most affordable parts of the capital, probably at some distance from where they are working. Those who are working in the informal economy have fewer options still and are often limited to very poor quality, overcrowded accommodation. Some non-UK nationals working in the UK want to minimise their housing costs in order to maximise the amount of money they can send home<sup>79</sup>.

Access to supported accommodation for non-UK nationals with support needs is very restricted. Although 40 per cent of rough sleepers with support needs are non-UK nationals, they account for only around a fifth of those in supported accommodation. This disparity is even more pronounced for those from Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries, who make up 18 per cent of London's rough

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<sup>76</sup> CHAIN. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: CHAIN data analysis. GLA.

<sup>77</sup> St Mungo's. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: OPAL data analysis. GLA.

<sup>78</sup> Homeless link. (2015). Support for single homeless people in England, Annual Review 2015. Retrieved from <https://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/Summary%20-%20Single%20homelessness%20support%20in%20England%202015.pdf>

<sup>79</sup> Rice, B., & Sebok, B. (2017). Research into the lives of Romanian migrant workers living in encampments in London. Thames Reach. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from <https://thamesreach.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Research-into-the-Lives-o-Executive-Summary.pdf>

sleepers with support needs but only two per cent of those in supported accommodation.

As a result, non-UK nationals sleeping rough are less likely than those from the UK to have successful outcomes. People from CEE countries, in particular, are less likely than UK nationals to accept an offer of assistance, and non-UK nationals are significantly more likely than UK nationals to return to rough sleeping immediately after attending NSNO (19 per cent compared with eight per cent).

In addition, there are currently an estimated 350 to 500 people sleeping rough in London with a complex immigration status, in need of accommodation and support to resolve their situation. This group have no entitlement to accommodation-related financial support as there is no clarity on their immigration status, as exemplified most recently by the Windrush scandal<sup>80</sup>.

Rough sleepers from the Roma community are far less likely than non-UK nationals overall to attend NSNO – in 2016/17, there were 236 new rough sleepers from a gypsy/ Roma/ Irish traveller background in the capital, most of whom were Roma, according to those working in the sector. Only three per cent of these were seen by NSNO (compared with a quarter of non-UK nationals overall).

There is concern that EU nationals sleeping rough could be disadvantaged by arrangements when the UK leaves the EU. A recent report by the Migration Observatory highlighted that those in precarious or non-standard housing are at particular risk of being excluded from the process to register for settled status<sup>81</sup>. This includes homeless EU nationals, and those without clearly defined addresses or living in communal establishments who may not have evidence of residing in the UK. It is possible that, following Brexit, the numbers of EEA rough sleepers with an uncertain immigration status will increase.

### **3.3 WHAT THE MAYOR WILL DO NOW**

#### **Develop move-on**

The Mayor will work with housing providers to implement his £50m programme to develop move-on accommodation for people moving on from hostels and refuges.

#### **Make better use of hostels and longer-term accommodation**

The Mayor will develop and operate a system, known as the London Cross-borough Accommodation Network, to help optimise the use of hostels and supported and other housing for rough sleepers. By enabling a network of reciprocal moves across

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<sup>80</sup> Marsh, S., & Gentleman, A. (2018, May 21). Windrush migrants still sleeping rough one month after minister's promise. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from theguardian.com: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/may/21/windrush-migrants-still-sleeping-rough-one-month-after-ministers-promise>

<sup>81</sup> Kone, Z., & Sumption, M. (2018). Unsettled Status? Which EU Citizens are at Risk of Failing to Secure their Rights after Brexit? Retrieved from [http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Report-Unsettled\\_Status.pdf](http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Report-Unsettled_Status.pdf)



the capital (including into and between hostels, supported housing, social housing and the PRS), this will help to formalise, develop and expand arrangements that already exist on a very small scale between a small number of London's councils.

### **Improve current hostels, and develop new ones**

The Mayor will work with housing providers to improve current hostels and develop new ones, through his £30m Homelessness Change Programme.

### **Enhance our understanding of hostels**

The Mayor will help improve data on hostels and their outcomes by working in partnership with providers and councils to agree a standard set of data that will be recorded by hostels about each person they are assisting. This data will then be analysed, disseminated and used to help inform policy, commissioning decisions and operational approaches in a similar way to that collected through CHAIN.

### **Make Housing Moves available to people with a history of rough sleeping**

The Mayor will prioritise people who are ready to move on from the Clearing House for a proportion of homes within his Housing Moves mobility scheme.

### **Promote hosting schemes**

The Mayor will help raise the profile of hosting schemes, to encourage more Londoners to offer accommodation in their homes to people in need.

### **Engage with partners on the forthcoming settlement schemes for EU nationals**

The Mayor will engage with civil society and statutory partners, through the Migrant and Refugee Advisory Panel and London Strategic Migration Partnership, to keep track of emerging migration concerns and vulnerable groups at risk of marginalisation from the Government's proposed settlement scheme for EU nationals.

## **3.4 WHAT COULD BE DONE WITH MORE RESOURCES**

### **Long-term accommodation**

#### **An extension of the Clearing House**

The Mayor would be able to oversee a new major programme to support the development of new Clearing House homes. This would be additional to the homes that will be delivered through the Mayor's £50m fund for move-on referred to above. Accommodation would be used to replace the Clearing House homes currently let on assured tenancies and those on assured shorthold tenancies currently occupied by people who no longer need support and for whom no suitable move on is available – that is, the current stock that is unlikely to be vacated in the foreseeable future. The homes developed would be for the new Housing First service proposed below, as well as for people coming from hostels and other routes.

## **Housing First**

The Mayor would develop and commission a pan-London Housing First service, working in partnership with housing providers and London's councils. It would work with some of London's most entrenched and high-support needs rough sleepers over the period, and would scale up year on year. Each year, some of the above additional Clearing House units would be earmarked for this service. The provision of this service is therefore reliant on the extension of Clearing House outlined above.

## **A PRS procurement service**

This new service would combine the buying power of councils and providers to procure PRS accommodation for rough sleepers within a fiercely competitive market. This will build on the work the Mayor is already doing in partnership with councils and the Government to help councils to take a more collaborative approach to securing private rented accommodation for homeless households.

## **Short and medium-term accommodation**

### **A new shelter for people with no or low support needs unable to access other housing**

This would provide basic free-of-charge shelter for a maximum of six months to verified rough sleepers with no or low support needs who are working or work ready and have no alternative accommodation options, usually as a result of national welfare rules. Intensive support would be provided to help people into work or, where they are working in the informal economy, formal work, to save for a rent deposit and to help them move on. A small number of move-on units in shared accommodation would also be provided.

## **Routes Home**

Two enhancements to this Mayoral service would significantly improve outcomes.

- For people with complex immigration status - additional bedspaces and the provision of dedicated Home Office caseworkers (working alongside people's immigration advice and support workers) to help ascertain and resolve their immigration status, a personalisation budget, and immigration training for the sector. Support workers and immigration advice workers would also work to help resolve people's rough sleeping.
- For people with high support needs - additional bedspaces (for stays of 28 to 56 days) and a personalisation budget. In addition, we would develop stronger partnerships with support and other relevant services in EEA countries. Link workers would be funded and Service Level Agreements developed in four countries. This would ensure that when someone voluntarily returns to their home country, there are guaranteed networks of support in place which are able to offer the necessary services to make the move positive and sustainable.

### **A new non-UK nationals rough sleeping strategy group**

This multi-sector group would:

- Provide oversight of the initiatives proposed in this plan in relation to non-UK nationals, developing systems of monitoring and user accountability/redress and resolving any strategic issues between other partners;
- Provide strategic direction on the approach to rough sleeping among non-UK nationals (both EEA and wider non-UK nationals) in the capital, including preparing for relevant changes in immigration policy as a result of Brexit, the impacts of the Judicial Review of the policy of removing EEA nationals found rough sleeping, and the operation of any Service Level Agreements and Memorandums of Understanding;
- Engage closely with civil society organisations; and
- Oversee an evaluation of the effectiveness of reconnections abroad and the sector's wider work with non-UK nationals sleeping rough.

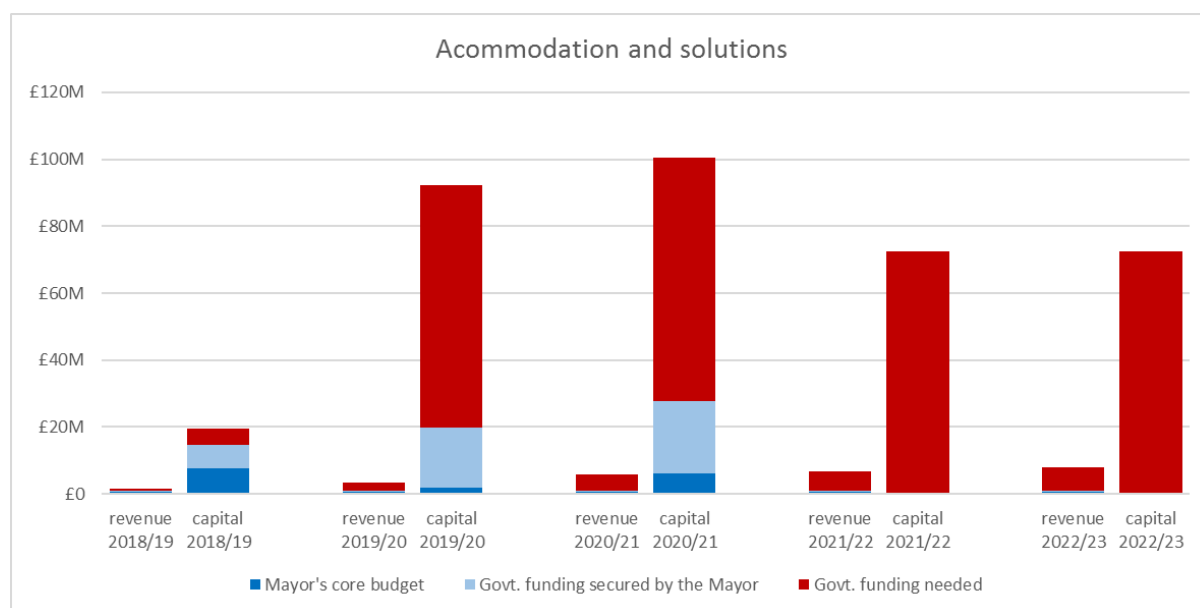
### **An extension of the Homelessness Change Programme**

The Mayor would oversee a new phase of the Homelessness Change Programme, to develop new and refurbish existing hostels.

### **Investment plan**

A total of around £316m (£21m revenue and £295m capital) of Government investment is needed over the next five years to implement the above services and initiatives. The annual amounts are set out in the figure below, along with the Mayor's current and future investment.

**Figure 6 Five-year investment plan for accommodation and solutions**



### 3.5 WHAT ELSE NEEDS TO CHANGE

In addition to making the vital investment outlined above, the Mayor urges the Government to:

- **Provide a long-term, sustainable funding model for supported housing**, to ensure that clear and certain future funding arrangements are put in place for supported accommodation that is intended to be transitional and that arrangements are sufficient to cover London’s needs, both current and future. In particular, the new revenue funding arrangements should meet the support and housing costs of supported housing in London. This should include ensuring that these arrangements:
  - Do not impede the delivery of new supported and specialist housing or the maintenance of current provision;
  - Are fit for purpose for accommodation in which people may stay short-term;
  - Meet pan-London needs for accommodation, now and in the future; and
  - Provide a sufficient level of financial support to match London’s needs;
  
- **Reinstate entitlement to Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit for EEA nationals with ‘jobseeker’ status.** This would enable EEA nationals to exercise their treaty rights and find employment while in accommodation. In addition, the Government must guarantee that any new registration system or transitional arrangements post-EU exit are simple, quick and easily accessible and that adequate legal advice is in place for all who need it, so that those sleeping rough are not disadvantaged;

- **Review the routine application of no recourse to public funds conditions on grants of limited leave to remain on the basis of a person's family or private life in the UK, and amend policy so that all victims of violence against women and girls (VAWG) are entitled to the financial support and safe accommodation they require to leave an abusive relationship irrespective of their immigration status.** The Government should ensure that people are not left homeless, destitute or living in extreme poverty as a result of Home Office policy.
- **Allocate the majority of the £20m PRS access funding announced in the 2017 Autumn Budget to London,** given the acute shortage of PRS accommodation in the capital that is affordable to those on low incomes. This would, in particular, benefit the proposed initiative to collaboratively secure a good supply of PRS referred to above.

## 4 The support people need to rebuild their lives

*Leaving rough sleeping behind is not simply achieved by putting a roof over someone's head. To ensure a truly long-lasting solution there needs to be adequate access to appropriate support at the right time to enable people to move on with their lives.*

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### The Government should:

- Ensure that national policy, practice and funding fully support the prioritisation of support to rough sleepers, including those with mental and physical health needs and substance use needs.

#### The Mayor should:

- Provide tenancy sustainment support for former rough sleepers moving into the Clearing House and, subject to funding, in other forms of housing where there is an absence of local provision; and
- Work with councils and health authorities to fill the gaps and pilot new initiatives in specialist provision for those with support needs, subject to funding.

#### London's councils and CCGs should:

- Use available resources to help ensure that local physical health, mental health and substance use services meet the specific needs of the homeless population.

#### London's councils and housing associations should:

- Provide tenancy sustainment support as required for former rough sleepers.

### 4.1 CURRENT SERVICES AND PROVISION

People with support needs who are sleeping rough, or have a history of doing so, will generally need to engage with mainstream services. This can be problematic, particularly for those with complex needs or who have slept rough for a long time. While there are some excellent rough sleeping or homelessness services providing bespoke and specialist support, these are few and far between and have diminished in number in recent years.

There are six GP practices or multi-disciplinary health centres in London with a specific remit to work with homeless people and a very small number of mainstream primary care services offering clinics specifically to the rough sleeping or hostel population. There is also a service operating across several areas of the capital

where peer mentors support people sleeping rough to engage with health services. In addition, there are four dedicated teams (covering five boroughs) to help people on the streets or in hostels who have mental health issues. There are also a handful of outreach teams who can access assistance from mental health practitioners through either a specialist worker embedded within their team or via the Enabling Assessment Service London (EASL). EASL is a team of mental health professionals providing advice, training and assessments in some areas of London.

Local authorities are responsible for providing drug and alcohol services, sometimes jointly commissioning them in partnership with the local CCG. Services specifically for homeless people, such as substance use outreach support on the street and in hostels, are available in a few areas.

It is the role of JobCentre Plus to support people into work, including through the Work and Health Programme. Some commissioned accommodation services for rough sleepers provide elements of employment, training and education (ETE) support. In addition, many of the main charities working in the sector provide their own ETE services, recognising their importance and the lack of commissioned options in this area.

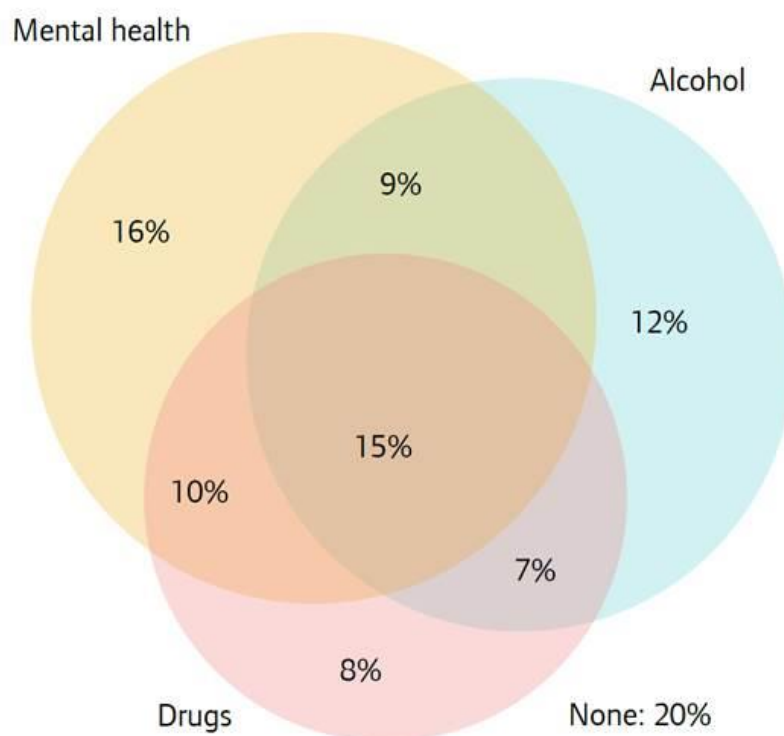
The Mayor's TSTs provide support to each person moving into the Clearing House and this is available for as long as it is needed. In addition, some councils and housing associations provide floating support to their tenants. But this tends to offer time-limited interventions to resolve a crisis, and with generally large caseloads and limited resources these services are not able to work with people over longer periods of time to prevent crises from developing. Most councils are only able to provide very limited tenancy sustainment support to people in the PRS.

There are also innovative personalised support models, such as the Mayor's current Social Impact Bond (SIB). This provides intensive support to 350 of the most entrenched rough sleepers in London, on a payment-by-results basis for outcomes that include accommodation, better managed needs and employment. Housing First offers similarly intensive support within a housing-led approach (see section 3).

## **4.2 EVIDENCE AND ISSUES**

### **Most rough sleepers have support needs**

In 2017/18, 77 per cent of people sleeping rough in London had a mental health, drug or alcohol support need, with many people experiencing more than one of these issues. Over 1,800 people who slept rough that year were known to have combined mental health and substance use problems, often referred to as dual diagnosis. Just under half (46 per cent) of those assessed had a physical health need. Over the past 10 years, the proportion (and number) of rough sleepers with any one of these support needs has significantly increased.

**Figure 7 Support needs of people seen sleeping rough in London, 2017/18**

There is a strong correlation between a person's level of support needs and the time they have spent on the streets. In 2016/17, almost two thirds (65 per cent) of entrenched rough sleepers had a mental health support need compared with 44 per cent of people who were new to the streets, and half had a drug use support need compared to around a third (32 per cent) of people new to the streets<sup>82</sup>. During the consultation on the plan, stakeholders highlighted that mental health and substance use support issues can be both a cause of, and exacerbated by, periods of rough sleeping.

The prevalence of support needs is even higher among single homeless people, including former rough sleepers, living in hostels than it is among those on the streets. An analysis of residents of St Mungo's hostels shows that the proportions of those with mental health, drug use, or alcohol use support needs are 83 per cent, 54 per cent, and 41 per cent respectively – with 70 per cent having at least one substance use need<sup>83</sup>. Personality disorder/ complex trauma is also common among people living in hostels, with the estimated proportion with this support need ranging from 60 to 80 per cent<sup>84 85</sup>. This underlines the importance of ensuring that people

<sup>82</sup> Entrenched rough sleepers are defined as those currently rough sleeping who have been rough sleeping consistently for at least a year or intermittently over the past five years. CHAIN. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: CHAIN data analysis. GLA.

<sup>83</sup> St Mungo's. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: OPAL data analysis. GLA.

<sup>84</sup> Homeless link. (n.d.). Mental health and wellbeing guide. Retrieved from [https://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/Mental\\_Health\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/Mental_Health_Guide.pdf)

<sup>85</sup> Cockerell, P. (2018, March 20). Rough sleeping and personality disorders: a dual diagnosis of exclusion? Retrieved from Mental health today:



have the treatment and support they need once they have left the streets, so that they can continue to rebuild their lives and not return to rough sleeping.

### **There is a lack of adequate provision for people with health and substance use support needs**

The most common issue raised by homelessness services during the consultation on the plan was the lack of mental health and substance use support from specialist agencies for the people they worked with, both on the streets and in accommodation.

#### *Mental health*

As stated above, a lack of adequate support from mental health services is a key barrier to people leaving the streets and sustaining accommodation once they have done so. In the consultation on the plan, homelessness services highlighted that mainstream mental health services often have high thresholds for access, long waiting times, inflexible working practices, a lack of resources or expertise to support people with complex needs and a reluctance to undertake assessments on the street. Psychotic conditions, anxiety and mood disorders can also be a significant barrier to someone leaving rough sleeping, yet access to secondary care and appropriate therapies for these disorders is highly variable, as is access to services for people with personality disorders.

The result of the inconsistent and often inadequate provision across London is that people frequently do not receive the help they need. A health needs audit of homeless people in south west London conducted in 2017 found that 54 per cent of those with mental health issues wanted support but were not receiving it<sup>86</sup>. Furthermore, almost half (47 per cent) of people living in St Mungo's hostels who have a mental health need which they are not able to manage independently are not engaged with relevant services<sup>87</sup>.

Over three quarters of outreach services in London believe that accessing mental health support for people sleeping rough in their area has become more difficult in the last five years and almost half of London's outreach teams are unable to secure on-street assessments and support from mental health services<sup>88</sup>. A lack of input from mental health professionals can mean that people are more mistrusting of outreach and housing services, as psychosis, delusional disorders and paranoia go untreated, compounding the difficulties which outreach teams have in supporting some people off the streets<sup>89</sup>.

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<https://www.mentalhealthtoday.co.uk/blog/inequality/rough-sleeping-and-personality-disorders-a-dual-diagnosis-of-exclusion>

<sup>86</sup> SPEAR. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: SPEAR data analysis. GLA.

<sup>87</sup> St Mungo's. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: OPAL data analysis. GLA.

<sup>88</sup> St Mungo's. (2018). National street outreach survey.

<sup>89</sup> St Mungo's. (2016). Stop the scandal. Retrieved from [https://www.mungos.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Stop\\_the\\_scandal\\_Feb2016-1.pdf](https://www.mungos.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Stop_the_scandal_Feb2016-1.pdf)

People in areas with statutory mental health homelessness teams have greater access to assessments, treatment and support. However, most of these services have been subject to significant budget cuts in recent years, either reducing in size or being stopped altogether. This has impacted on caseload capacity and the range of treatment and support they can provide. At the same time as ever-fewer people are offered the support they need from specialist homelessness services, mainstream provision in many areas has become increasingly stretched. While need has increased, 62 per cent of mental health trusts in England have seen their income fall in the past five years<sup>90</sup>.

### *Substance use*

Substance use can be a great barrier to moving away from the streets and can decrease a person's chances of sustaining their accommodation once housed. In 2016/17, drug and alcohol support needs were significantly more prevalent among people who returned to rough sleeping having previously made a positive move away from the streets than they were for a comparison group<sup>91</sup>. Around three quarters of people who returned to rough sleeping after accessing accommodation had a drug and/or alcohol support need.

As with mental health, people with substance use needs are not receiving the assistance they require from specialist services. Almost six out of 10 (57 per cent) of people living in St Mungo's hostels who have alcohol support needs and are not able to manage these independently are not engaged with relevant services. For those with drug support needs, this figure is 43 per cent<sup>92</sup>.

Providing rapid and effective substance use treatment not only benefits the person receiving it, but also makes financial sense – with every £1 spent on drug treatment saving the public purse £2.50<sup>93</sup>. However, during the consultation on the plan, many stakeholders reported that it is becoming ever more difficult for the people they work with to access the support and treatment they need. While there are pockets of good practice in provision, the general trend is for services to be less responsive to the needs of rough sleepers. As local authority budgets have shrunk, in many cases certain functions of their commissioned substance use services, such as outreach work with rough sleepers and work in hostels, have been cut from contracts.

For many people who are sleeping rough, or who have been involved in a street lifestyle, residential treatment in a secure environment and away from triggers

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<sup>90</sup> Royal college of psychiatrists. (n.d.). Mental health trusts' income lower than in 2011-12. Retrieved June 18, 2018, from Royal college of psychiatrists:

<https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mediacentre/pressreleases2018/mentalhealthtrustincome.aspx>

<sup>91</sup> No Nights Sleeping Rough taskforce, Returners research, 2017

<sup>92</sup> St Mungo's. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: OPAL data analysis. GLA.

<sup>93</sup> O'Connor, R. (2016, July 25). Tools for assessing value for money for alcohol and drug treatment. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from [publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk](http://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk):

<https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2016/07/25/tools-for-assessing-value-for-money-for-alcohol-and-drug-treatment/>

represents the best chance of successfully addressing substance use. However, during the consultation on this plan, many organisations, including providers of substance use services, highlighted the increasing difficulty in securing funding for residential treatment. Over 40 per cent of outreach teams in London report that residential detox services are not available to people sleeping rough in their area<sup>94</sup>.

Even where residential treatment is available, people are often expected to complete a structured community programme with daily attendance at groups or meetings before becoming eligible. This can be an unrealistic expectation of rough sleepers with complex support needs. A further issue, repeatedly highlighted by homelessness providers during the consultation on this plan, is that people without a local connection or whose local connection takes time to establish often experience unacceptable delays in obtaining treatment – access to which needs to be rapid in order to have the best outcomes<sup>95</sup>.

The shortages and stricter eligibility criteria outlined above are largely due to Government cuts to the public health budget – a reduction of over £531m between 2015/16 and 2019/20. During 2017/18 alone, budgets for drug treatment services fell by five per cent<sup>96</sup>.

### *Dual diagnosis*

Engagement with services is even less likely for people with dual diagnosis. For example, among people living in St Mungo's hostels, those with both drug/alcohol and mental health issues are less likely to be receiving mental health services than those solely experiencing mental health issues (44 per cent compared with 53 per cent)<sup>97</sup>. In the consultation on this plan, partners highlighted that people with dual diagnosis often experience a gap in services, with neither substance use services and nor mental health services willing or able to provide the support they need due to their other support needs.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) does not support creating specialist dual diagnosis services, instead recommending that there should be a range of coordinated services that address people's wider health and social care needs. These services need to work in partnership, with secondary mental health services leading on delivering care and no one excluded from treatment<sup>98</sup>.

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<sup>94</sup> St Mungo's. (2018). National street outreach survey.

<sup>95</sup> National Institute of Drug Abuse. (n.d.). Principles of Drug Addiction Treatment: A Research-Based Guide (Third Edition). Retrieved June 4, 2018, from [drugabuse.gov: https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/principles-drug-addiction-treatment-research-based-guide-third-edition/principles-effective-treatment](https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/principles-drug-addiction-treatment-research-based-guide-third-edition/principles-effective-treatment)

<sup>96</sup> The King's Fund. (2017, July 12). Big cuts planned to public health budgets. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from [kingsfund.org.uk: https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/press/press-releases/big-cuts-planned-public-health-budgets](https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/press/press-releases/big-cuts-planned-public-health-budgets)

<sup>97</sup> St Mungo's. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: OPAL data analysis. GLA.

<sup>98</sup> National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. (2016). Coexisting severe mental illness and substance misuse: community health and social care services. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from [www.nice.org.uk: https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng58](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng58)

This guidance has not yet been effectively implemented across London, impacting on the ability of rough sleepers with dual diagnosis to access services that can help them progress towards recovery.

### *Physical health*

While physical health needs appear to be better met than those around mental health, many people are still not accessing the services they need. For example, around four out of 10 people living in St Mungo's hostels who have physical health needs which they are unable to manage independently are not engaging with a relevant service<sup>99</sup>. In addition, the south west London health audit referred to in the above section on mental health found that 71 per cent of people had not been registered with a GP prior to engaging with homelessness services and that 40 per cent of those with health needs were not receiving medical support<sup>100</sup>. In addition, mental health and substance use agencies thought that the quality support being provided by hostels was variable and that this was negatively impacting on outcomes. They felt that while some hostels provide consistently excellent support, others were affected by a lack of experienced and high-quality staff and high staff turnover.

### **Lessons must be learnt following the death of any rough sleeper, to inform and improve practice**

The number of rough sleepers dying on the streets each year has increased, as numbers overall have risen. Between 2010 and 2017, 158 people who were sleeping rough in London died - an average of one death every fortnight<sup>101</sup>. More than half of these people had a mental health support need recorded. There is currently a lack of coordinated information and knowledge about the deaths of rough sleepers. This is needed in order to inform changes to practice and policy to prevent further deaths from occurring.

### **There are insufficient services to support people into work and training**

Eight out of 10 people who have experienced homelessness want to work<sup>102</sup>. Yet in 2017/18, only seven per cent of those living in St Mungo's hostels were in work, and in 2015 only around two per cent of people using Crisis's services were working full time and five per cent part time<sup>103 104</sup>.

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<sup>99</sup> St Mungo's. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: OPAL data analysis. GLA.

<sup>100</sup> SPEAR. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: SPEAR data analysis. GLA.

<sup>101</sup> St Mungo's. (2018). Dying on the streets, the case for moving quickly to end rough sleeping. Retrieved June 20, 2018, from <https://www.mungos.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Dying-on-the-Streets-Report.pdf>

<sup>102</sup> Homeless link. (2017, February). Homeless Link submission. Retrieved from Department for Work and Pensions and Department of Health consultation: 'Improving Lives: The Work, Health and Disability Green Paper': <https://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/Homeless%20Link%20submission%20-%20improving%20lives%20consultation.pdf>

<sup>103</sup> St Mungo's. (2018). Rough Sleeping Plan of Action: OPAL data analysis. GLA.

<sup>104</sup> ERSA; Crisis; Homeless Link; St Mungo's Broadway. (2015). Supporting homeless people into work: recommendations for the future of Government-led employment support. Retrieved June 4,

For some, work is a longer-term aspiration, while for others it could be a more immediate reality. The support which people need to help them towards achieving this goal can vary significantly. It may be access to education or training, assistance to apply for jobs and prepare for interviews, or help to develop some of the personal skills they will need in the world of work, such as confidence, resilience and communication. In the consultation on this plan, it was reported that although there are some excellent ETE services for homeless people delivered by third sector organisations, provision is very localised - with none whatsoever in many parts of the capital.

Organisations which provide ETE programmes reported during the consultation that one of the key challenges they face is supporting those without settled accommodation into work. They saw the notion of a 'jobs first' approach, in which someone who is sleeping rough can find employment to enable them to then access housing, as unrealistic. This is a particular issue for EEA nationals, who are generally more likely to be closer to the labour market than UK national rough sleepers but who are not normally eligible for support with their housing costs. ETE providers also highlighted that some funding streams available for their work do not adequately compensate for the intensive work which is needed to support many homeless people into employment.

Schemes like the Government's Work Programme have set out an intention to help some of the most marginalised people in society<sup>105</sup>. However, while providing some support and training opportunities, they rarely lead to jobs for homeless people far from the labour market. Homeless people on the Work Programme were often forgotten and excluded, just as they are marginalised in society<sup>106</sup>. The Work Programme has since been replaced by the Work and Health Programme, but few homelessness organisations are optimistic that this will more effectively meet the needs of homeless people<sup>107</sup>. Furthermore, as the programme is only mandatory after 24 months, for long periods, many people will only access support from JobCentre Plus. In the consultation on this plan, people who had slept rough felt that their experiences of support from JobCentre Plus were very poor and left them feeling stigmatised.

### **The provision of tenancy sustainment support is piecemeal and insufficient**

Many, though not all, people moving into accommodation will need support – either on a temporary basis or longer-term, and either on a resettlement 'light touch' basis

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2018, from <https://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/Supporting%20homeless%20people%20into%20work.pdf>

<sup>105</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/49884/the-work-programme.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/49884/the-work-programme.pdf)

<sup>106</sup> Sanders, B., Teixeira, L., & Truder, J. (2013). Dashed hopes, lives on hold: Single homeless people's experiences of the Work Programme. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from [https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/20570/crisis\\_dashed\\_hopes\\_lives\\_on\\_hold\\_2013.pdf](https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/20570/crisis_dashed_hopes_lives_on_hold_2013.pdf)

<sup>107</sup> Crisis. (2016, July). Supporting homeless people into work. Retrieved from [https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/20547/supporting\\_homeless\\_people\\_into\\_work\\_july2016.docx](https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/20547/supporting_homeless_people_into_work_july2016.docx)

or more intensively. But this is often not available, particularly to those moving into the PRS, social housing or temporary accommodation provided by councils. There is clearly a gap in this type of support, a gap which has increased in recent years - particularly as councils have decommissioned floating support services as a result of budget cuts. Indeed, during 2016/17, in the absence of any other provision, NSNO supported 122 clients who had left the service and were in council-provided temporary accommodation – to prevent them returning to the street.

Without adequate support, many people will return to the streets. In 2016/17, over 68 per cent of entrenched rough sleepers had been in accommodation since they first started to sleep rough. Of these, more than three quarters (78 per cent) had been in accommodation more than once and over a third had been in accommodation within the last six months. The experience of the Rough Sleepers '205' (RS205) project as well as the SIB demonstrates that support provided for the most entrenched rough sleepers works best when it is personalised and shaped by the individual<sup>108 109</sup>.

### **4.3 WHAT THE MAYOR WILL DO NOW**

#### **Improve access to mental health services**

The Mayor will fund and develop a two-year service comprising a specialist team to help coordinate and carry out mental health assessments with people sleeping rough, to enable people to be better assessed, leading to them accessing treatment, including medication and talking therapies. This £1.25m service will better enable mental health professionals to work in partnership with rough sleeping outreach teams in specific areas in London where there are high levels of rough sleeping and no adequate provision. If the service is successful, the Mayor will work with CCGs, Mental Health Trusts and the NHS to extend the approach across London.

#### **Support health partners to implement the 'Health care and people who are homeless' Commissioning Guidance for London**

The Healthy London Partnership published their commissioning guidance for London which outlined 10 commitments for London to improve health outcomes for people experiencing homelessness<sup>110</sup>. The Mayor will continue to work with Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STPs) and integrated care systems to ensure that these commitments are implemented.

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<sup>108</sup> Teixeira, L. (2010). Still left out? The rough sleepers "205" initiative one year on. Crisis. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from <https://www.bl.uk/britishlibrary/~media/bl/global/social-welfare/pdfs/non-secure/s/t/i/still-left-out-the-rough-sleepers-205-initiative-one-year-on.pdf>

<sup>109</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government. (2017). The impact evaluation of the London Homelessness Social Impact Bond. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/658881/SIB\\_Impact\\_evaluation\\_report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/658881/SIB_Impact_evaluation_report.pdf)

<sup>110</sup> Healthy London Partnership. (2016). Health care & people who are homeless: Commissioning Guidance for London. NHS. Retrieved from <https://www.healthylondon.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Commissioning-guidance-for-London-Homeless-health.pdf>

## 4.4 WHAT COULD BE DONE WITH MORE RESOURCES

### **A cross-tenure tenancy sustainment service**

Based on the TST model, this service would provide floating support to rough sleepers moving into accommodation in the PRS and council-provided temporary accommodation. While focused on London, it would also provide crisis support for people who, through Safe Connections, have moved outside the capital.

### **A detox and rehabilitation treatment fund**

This fund would enable rough sleepers on the street or in accommodation services whose local connection is unclear to access rapid detox and rehabilitation treatment, while their home local authority was being identified. Once the local authority is identified, they would then be responsible for funding the remaining treatment. Where no local connection is established, the fund would cover the entire treatment, as well as resettlement support to ensure that no one is discharged from residential treatment back to the streets or insecure housing. Rough sleepers should be a priority for detox and rehabilitation treatment.

### **A pan-London multi-disciplinary mental health project**

This project, which would be jointly commissioned with health partners across London, would improve access to mental health services, as well as ensure more and better mental health assessments for people sleeping rough or in accommodation-based services. It would comprise a multi-disciplinary team and have a fund to spot-purchase bedspaces. It would be a more comprehensive service than the mental health service that the GLA will initially commission and would enable rough sleepers to receive priority access to mental health support.

### **A health and social care project**

This would involve dedicated nurse practitioners, social workers and other specialists working with outreach teams and in hostels, to improve the physical health of rough sleepers and links and access to adult social care services. The project would be based in those boroughs with the highest levels of rough sleeping.

### **A personalisation fund**

This fund would enable a personalised offer for entrenched rough sleepers not part of other focused programmes (such as the Mayor's SIB and Housing First). Councils would nominate their most entrenched and difficult to engage clients, with a personalised plan setting out their route off the street. This fund would also be used for rough sleepers who are entrenched and have no clear local connection, to ensure that they get the support they need to exit rough sleeping.

### An employment service

Through this service, work navigators would provide tailored, intensive employment support. Where needed, temporary shared accommodation would be provided for people with low or no support needs for up to six months, though most people using the service would be in accommodation-based services. Navigators would work in a highly personalised way, will have access to personal budgets and have strong partnerships with organisations such as JobCentre Plus, homelessness charities, grant-making bodies, and training and employment services.

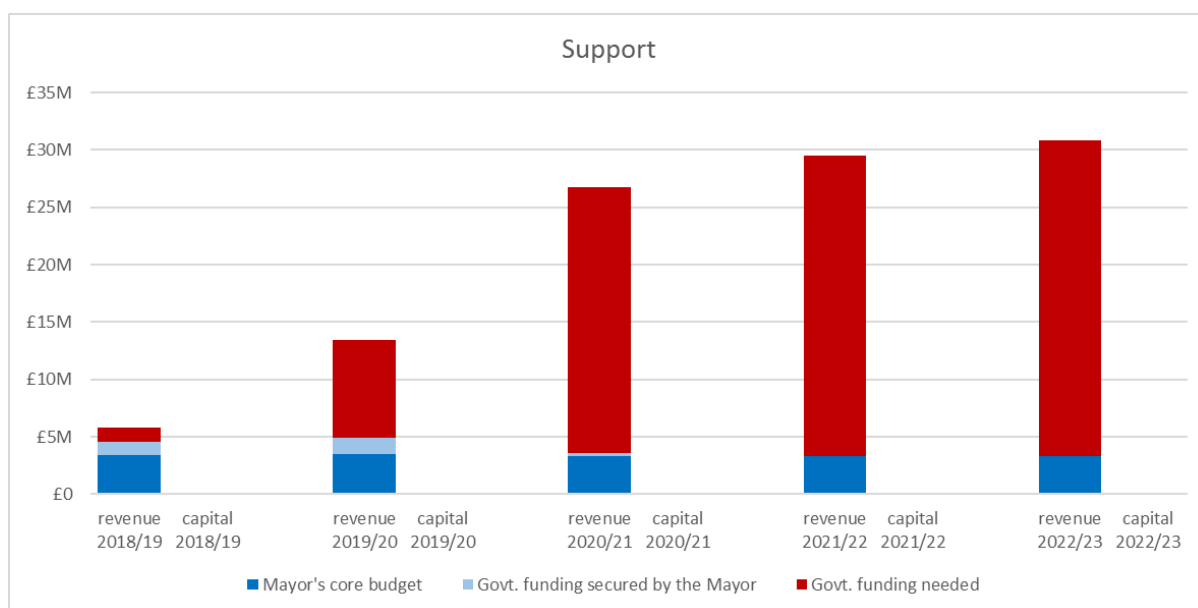
### A new Social Impact Bond

This service, which would start when the Mayor’s current SIB ends, would provide intensive and personalised support to some of the most entrenched rough sleepers in London.

### Investment plan

A total of around £86m of Government investment is needed over the next five years to implement the above services and initiatives. The annual amounts are set out in the figure below, along with the Mayor’s current and future investment.

**Figure 8 Five-year investment plan for accommodation and solutions**



## 4.5 WHAT ELSE NEEDS TO CHANGE

In addition to making the vital investment outlined above, the Mayor urges government to:

- **Ensure that there is a single lead commissioner for homeless health** to oversee practice, tasked with improving this client group’s access to mainstream services, and developing specialist services where required, as set



out in the Better Health for London report<sup>111</sup> and the NHS five year forward plan<sup>112</sup>;

- **Improve the provision of mental health services**, including those that address personality disorder, depression and anxiety disorder, ensuring that:
  - Department of Health and Social Care delivery bodies work together to ensure that there is access and flexibility in the provision mainstream services for rough sleepers;
  - Rough sleepers are a priority for mental health services; and
  - Secondary care services for those whose needs do not meet the existing thresholds are available for rough sleepers.
- **Enhance mainstream drug and alcohol services to better meet the needs of rough sleepers**: public health budgets should increase to ensure that rough sleepers are a priority for substance misuse services and local authorities can fund and commission appropriate and flexible services to respond to the needs of rough sleepers in their area;
- **Ensure services meet the needs of people with dual diagnosis**, by implementing the NICE guidance referred to above fully across London. There is also still a need for clearer directives and services for appropriate treatment for those with lower levels of support needs;
- **Improve support to enter work and training** by providing specialist advisors in JobCentre Plus to work with people experiencing homelessness. Additionally, funding for Work and Health Programme contractors should compensate the intensive work required to help many people with complex needs and housing needs to find employment;
- **Promote and develop a cross-departmental approach** to provision and funding both for specific-rough sleeping services and those more widely, across, for example, housing, health, criminal justice, employment and welfare benefits;
- **Develop and provide accredited training for everyone who works with people sleeping rough and ensure they all have access to this training**, to

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<sup>111</sup> London Health Commission. (n.d.). Better Health for London. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from [https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/better\\_health\\_for\\_london.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/better_health_for_london.pdf)

<sup>112</sup> NHS. (2014). Five Year Forward View. Retrieved June 4, 2018, from <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/5yfv-web.pdf>

ensure they can support people with complex support needs using best practice approaches; and

- **Ensure that Safeguarding Adults Boards undertake a Safeguarding Adults Review following the death of any rough sleeper.**

## Appendix 1 Methodology

An in-depth and wide-ranging analysis of CHAIN data was undertaken to identify characteristics, trends and outcomes in rough sleeping, and understand more about where and why these occurred. This focused on:

- New rough sleepers;
- Intermittent rough sleepers;
- Long-term rough sleepers;
- People who have declined rough sleeping services when offered; and
- Contact with public services (councils, hospitals etc).

In most instances, the CHAIN data analysed related to 2016/17.

Since that analysis was undertaken, the 2017/18 CHAIN data has become available. This more recent information is therefore used throughout the report other than when the findings from the in-depth analysis is used.

As accommodation services do not record information on CHAIN, the data which can be gleaned from the database about former rough sleepers' progress once they enter accommodation is limited. To ensure the evidence base incorporated those who had entered supported accommodation, an analysis of data from the St Mungo's<sup>113</sup> client record system (called OPAL) was undertaken. This identified characteristics of people living in supported accommodation for homeless adults, including their demographics, support needs, engagement with services, arrivals and departures, and changes over time. SPEAR<sup>114</sup> also provided a range of data on client needs and outcomes in their services in outer London.

To supplement and expand on the quantitative data, semi-structured discussions were held with over 30 partners. These included rough sleeping leads in London's councils, people working in a range of frontline homelessness services, senior managers in key third sector organisations and people from organisations providing specialist support for rough sleepers, such as mental health and substance use services. This consultation explored:

- Current key challenges;
- Good practice;
- Areas for improvement;
- Gaps in current services; and
- The effect of council and Government policies.

People with experience of rough sleeping were also consulted, particularly for their views of existing homelessness services and their ideas about what could be done differently to better support people.

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<sup>113</sup> <https://www.mungos.org>.

<sup>114</sup> <http://www.spearlondon.org>.

There was also a thorough review of literature and data, including recent research, policy documents, evaluations of current services and initiatives, and Government statistics.

## Appendix 2 The Mayor's current rough sleeping services

Project/service	Description	Cost in 2018/19
<b>Contracts</b>		
1 No Second Night Out (NSNO)/Severe Weather Emergency Provision	Three assessment hubs, plus accommodation 'staging posts', for those who are new to the streets Provision for all those on the streets during sub-zero temperatures	£3,680,000
2 Safe Connections*	Supported connections within the UK for those who are relatively new to the streets	£727,043
3 London Street Rescue /Night Transport Outreach*	Outreach service in boroughs that do not commission outreach, focussed on taking new rough sleepers to NSNO Outreach service operating on London Buses and the London Underground and Overground	£788,755
4 Routes Home	Specialist support for non-UK nationals	£599,406
5 Tenancy Sustainment Teams	Tenancy support to those who move into Clearing House units	£1,311,931
6 Clearing House	Allocation of Clearing House units	£1,243,692
7 CHAIN	Rough sleepers' database	£209,992
8 Social Impact Bond*	A payment by results project focusing on frequent rough sleepers	£222,493
<b>Grants – Rough Sleeping Innovation Fund round 1</b>		
1 Homeless Health Peer Advocacy	Peer advocacy for rough sleepers to access health services	£1,000,000
2 Women's Hidden Homeless Project	Service aimed at engaging 25 of the most entrenched female rough sleepers	£45,000
3 Homeless Women's Health Project	Supports female rough sleepers to overcome physical and mental health barriers to exiting rough sleeping	£21,000
4 Missing People Project	Project linking the Missing People database with the CHAIN database.	£31,871
5 Homelessness and Acquired Brain Injury Project	Improves awareness and skills of working with rough sleepers with acquired brain injury.	£28,195
6 Supporting Women Towards Change	Works with women with multiple needs across four south London boroughs	£4,500
7 Beam	Crowdfunding for education and training for current and former rough sleepers to access employment.	£52,613
		£13,750

8 Saving Lives	Develops training and guidance for services on mental capacity	£9,187
9 Housing First Richmond and Wandsworth	Housing and intensive support for rough sleepers with complex needs in Richmond and Wandsworth	£18,500
<b>Grants – Rough Sleeping Innovation Fund round 2</b>		
1 Change Please	Provides training and employment for rough sleepers at two new cafés, alongside supporting them to access and sustain accommodation	£40,000
2 Aneemo	A web-based training and support tool for staff in the homelessness sector, with a focus on working with people with mental health issues and experiences of trauma	£23,649
3 The Connection at St Martin's (CSTM)	To increase the capacity of non-commissioned services to support people sleeping rough who are not from the UK	£52,709
4 TAP London	Facilitates contactless donations to homelessness charities	£23,400
5 Stonewall Housing	To provide safe shelter accommodation and daytime community centre to homeless LGBTIQ+ people	£50,000
6 Praxis	Housing advice and immigration casework for homeless non-EEA homeless migrants in three London hospitals	£39,919
7 Housing Justice	Supports church and community night shelters to implement a strengths-based casework model	£35,363
8 St Mungo's	Supports couples who have no route of the street via direct intervention, training and a toolkit for homelessness professionals	£22,500

\*Safe Connections is wholly funded, and the SIB is partially funded, by the Government. The Night Transport Outreach service is part-funded by Transport for London. All other contracted services and projects are wholly funded from the GLA's core rough sleeping budget.

## Appendix 3 Five-year investment plan

The charts below set out what the Mayor is currently spending on rough sleeping services and initiatives, what he will spend (that is, on services and initiatives set out in the ‘What the Mayor will do now’ sections of the plan) and the new Government investment needed (as set out in the ‘What could be done with more resources’ sections). Separate charts showing year by year investment for prevention, an immediate route off the streets, accommodation and solutions, and support appear at the end of each of the relevant ‘What could be done with more resources’ sections in the plan.

Chart 1 Year by year investment for the plan overall

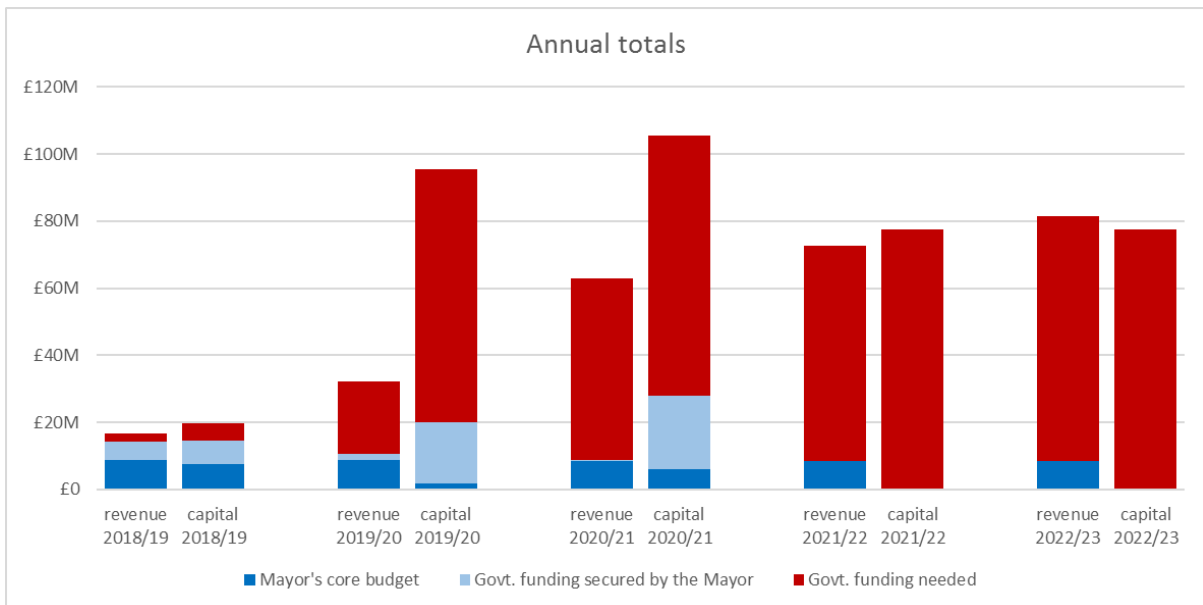


Chart 2 Investment over five years for each section of the plan

