

## Rough Sleeping Report

### 2018 Rough Sleeping Estimate

There is currently no national mechanism for recording every person who sleeps rough in England. Rough sleepers figures are collected annually either by a street count or an estimate and a 'typical night' takes place between 1 October and 30 November.

In recent years Dover has carried out an estimate. This is a snapshot assessment, based on evidence from the local authority and a range of external agencies, about the number of people sleeping rough in that LA area on a particular night. This is generally accepted as being the fairest way of assessing rough sleeping, as carrying out a count relies on actually finding a person sleeping out rather than taking account of people who are known to appropriate agencies.

Estimates can include a spotlight count as one of the evidence collection methods and this is usually carried out by Porchlight a few nights before the estimate date. Other agencies involved with the process are the Dover Outreach Centre and the Council's Community Safety Unit. This year our estimate was based on the night of the 22<sup>nd</sup> November and a verification meeting was held on the 26<sup>th</sup> November where all the agencies discussed the rough sleepers known to each agency to avoid duplication of numbers.

This year we returned the figure of 20 rough sleepers, an increase of 7 from last year's total of 13.

There has generally been a rise across the county which reflects a countrywide increase, according to the organisation Homeless Link who the MHCLG task to gather and verify the information. Recording rough sleeping is acknowledged as having its limitations however the snapshot methodology aims to get as accurate a representation as possible.

**See appendix 1 for Kent figures.**

### Rough Sleeping Related Bids

In August 2018 the Government produced a Rough Sleeping Strategy, setting out its plans to help people who are sleeping rough now and to put in place the structures to end rough sleeping for good. Its vision is to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end it by 2027.

A number of funding streams have subsequently been made available. The Rough Sleeping Initiative Fund was shared between the 83 councils in England with the highest numbers of rough sleepers in their areas. In Kent, three Councils were successful in accessing money from the pot after being invited to bid: Canterbury, Maidstone and Thanet. Included in this initiative is a Rapid Rehousing Pathway (RRP), and the Govt wants to ensure that this pathway exists in some form, in every area where there are rough sleepers. As such, it recently invited applications from LAs wishing to be Early Adopters, to apply for funding to support the local establishment or enhancement of a RRP for rough sleepers. The four elements of the bid are:

- 15 Somewhere Safe to Stay Pilots – funding 15 assessment hubs that build on the No Second Night Out model in London, to rapidly assess the needs of people who are sleeping rough or those who are at risk of sleeping rough and support them to get the right help.
- Local Lettings Agencies – funding the setup or extension of local lettings agencies, to help local areas to make the most efficient use of rental accommodation, foster the development of strong relationships between landlords and tenants, and where possible develop a property portfolio to meet the needs of rough sleepers.

- Supported Lettings – funding flexible floating support in homes provided for people with a history of rough sleeping. This will provide flexible support funding to help over 5,000 people at risk of rough sleeping, over the next two years, to sustain their tenancies in homes across the housing sector.
- Navigators – funding new specialists who will help people who sleep rough to access the appropriate local services, get off the streets and into settled accommodation. These individuals will work with a range of multidisciplinary teams and provide both navigation and co-ordination support, using strong local relationships, expertise and collective working.

Dover Council, in conjunction with the Dover Outreach Centre, Porchlight and our Community Safety Unit has submitted a bid for a total of £162,718 covering 2018/19 and 19/20. The outcome is expected during December.

In addition, we have also submitted a bid, in partnership with Folkestone & Hythe and Thanet Councils for a £561k part of the £20 million Private Rented Access Fund. The fund is focused on schemes that will enable better access and sustainment of tenancies for those who are, or are at risk of becoming homeless and rough sleeping. The money is available for the financial years 2018/19 and 19/20 and once again, successful bidders will be notified during December.

#### Severe Emergency Weather Provision (SWEP)

SWEP arrangements are triggered when the night time temperature is predicted to be zero degrees Celsius or below or when there are other severe weather conditions forecast.

During periods of cold weather the forecast for Dover is checked daily on the Meteorological Office website.

As soon as the protocol is triggered, we contact our voluntary and statutory sector partners to advise that the SWEP is in place, with details of who to contact if they identify any rough sleepers. Our out of hour's service is also contacted to advise that the SWEP has been triggered.

#### Dover Outreach Centre (DOC) Winter Shelter

The DOC will once again be operating their winter shelter provision, working in partnership with six local churches providing the space for up to 15 people per night. The winter shelter is available from the beginning of December until the end of February, with the option of extending into the first two weeks of March depending on the weather.

Dover Council don't currently fund the Winter Shelter from the homelessness budget however a funding support request for £10k has been received from the Chair of Trustees and a report will be going to the Portfolio Holder for consideration.

**Contact Officer: Elly Toye, Housing Options Manager, Ext 42259**