

# Overview and Scrutiny

## Homelessness & Rough Sleepers



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# What we will be focusing on

- **‘Rough sleeping’ and ‘hidden homelessness’**
- **Causes and effects of homelessness**
- **Engagement with rough sleepers**
- **Homelessness Reduction Act 2017**
- **Housing First model**



# ‘Rough sleeping’

- **Sleeping, about to bed down or bedded down in the open air (streets, tents, doorways, parks and bus shelters, etc)**
- **Living in places that are not designed for habitation (stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, stations, cars, etc)**



# 'Hidden homelessness'

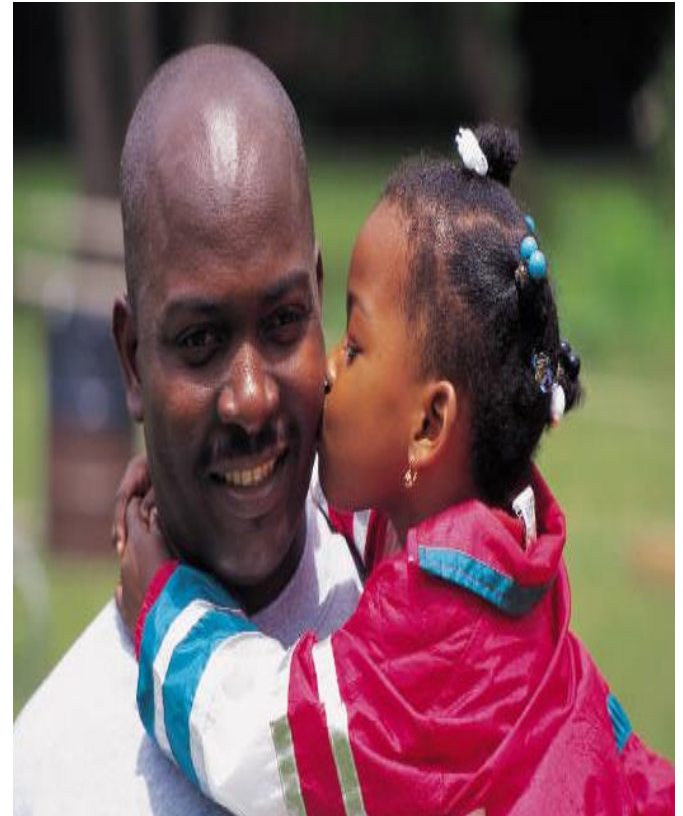
- **People who become homeless but do not show in official figures**
- **Sofa surfers, squatters and people living in insecure accommodation**
- **People in nightshelters, hostels and temporary accommodation**





# Causes of homelessness

- **Loss of private rented accommodation**
- **Relationship breakdown**
- **Friends or relatives no longer willing to accommodate them**
- **Financial difficulties**
- **Shortage of suitable, affordable housing**



# Causes of homelessness

- **Abuse or neglect**
- **Leaving prison or hospital in an unplanned way**
- **No recourse to public funds**
- **Tenancy breakdown (rent arrears, ASB, abandonment, etc)**



# Causes of homelessness

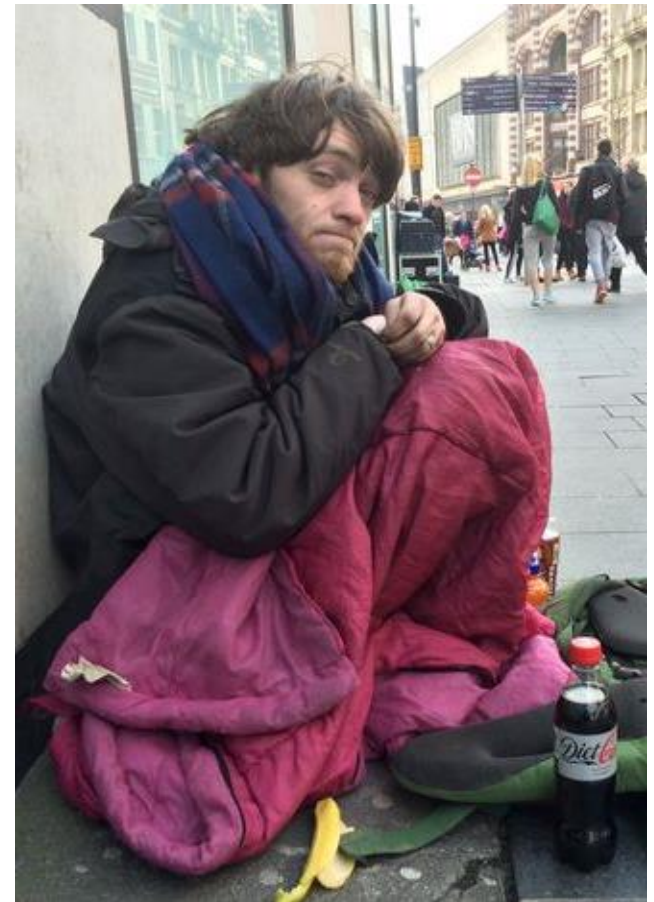
- **Unmet support needs**
- **A danger to others**
- **An unwillingness or inability to engage**
- **Mental ill-health**
- **Misusing alcohol and/or drugs**
- **Use of NPS**





# Effects of homelessness

- **Physical / mental health**
- **Self-esteem, confidence and personal hygiene**
- **Isolation, risk of assault, loss of support networks**
- **Disruption of healthcare, training and employment**
- **Nowhere safe to store personal possessions**





# Engaging with rough sleepers

- **Street Outreach Workers**
- **Intervene early**
- **Focus on prevention**
- **Look for solutions outside Northampton**
- **Involve friends/family**
- **Build relationships**
- **Collaborate**



# Engaging with rough sleepers

- **Establish needs of each rough sleeper**
- **Provide advice on housing options**
- **Access housing and support services**
- **Refer to Nightshelter**
- **Arrange reconnection**



# Engaging with rough sleepers

- **Outcome focused and persistent**
- **Non-judgemental, empathic, reliable**
- **Work with others to solve problems**
- **Challenge rough sleepers' lifestyles**



# Engaging with rough sleepers

- **9 people sleeping in tents in the woods**
- **Proactive engagement**
- **Established their needs, intentions and housing options**
- **Took urgent action to accommodate them**





# Earliest results

**“I have never felt accepted,  
never found the right people  
to help me, support me.  
But you have done all that  
and more in only a few hours”**



**“Thank you for keeping in contact  
with my Dad. Please feel free to  
tell [him] anything”**



# Engaging with rough sleepers

- The nightshelter opened on 6 February 2017
- **It connects people to local services that can deal with the things that can cause homelessness, including debt, mental health issues, addictions and unemployment**



# Engaging with rough sleepers

## NIGHTSHELTER ACCESS CRITERIA

- **Must have local connection with Northampton**
- **Must not be too high a risk to other people in shelter**
- **Must be willing and able to engage with local services and show respect for staff, volunteers and guests**



# Emmaus communities

- **25 communities in UK (providing homes and work for 623 people)**
- **Fresh start in life with support of community**
- **Work 40 hours a week in social enterprise**
- **Help with move-on**





# Reconnection

- **Help in returning to area / country of origin**
- **Assistance with travel arrangements / costs**
- **Enables people to return to an area that is familiar to them and where they can get a lot more support**



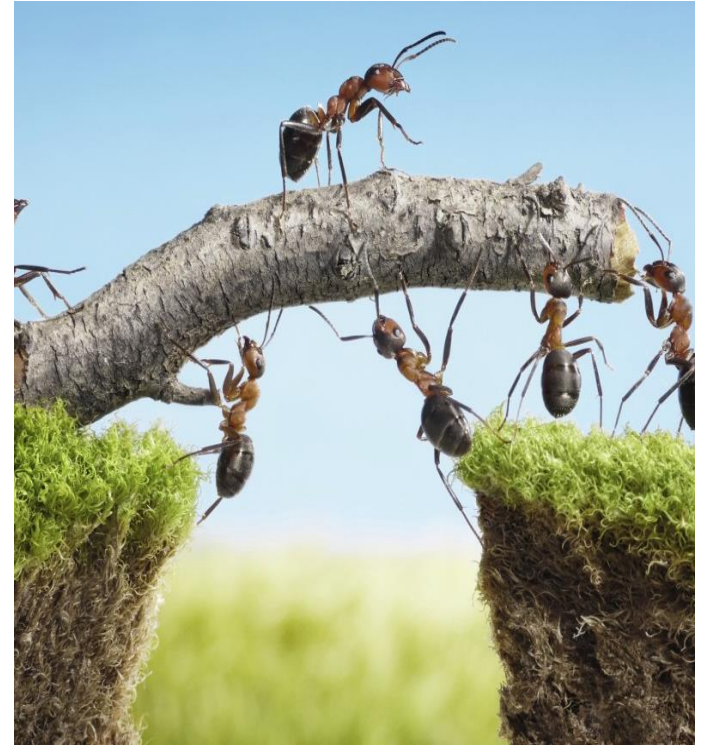
# Supported housing

- **New assessment arrangements for accessing housing**
- **Rough sleepers are being prioritised if they are engaging with services**
- **Improving access to supported housing**



# Homelessness Reduction Act

- **Duty to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible people**
- **Introduced holistic needs assessments and personalised housing plans**
- **Public sector bodies have a duty to refer**



# Housing First model

- **No need to prove they are ready for independent living**
- **The only condition is that they are willing to maintain tenancy**
- **Offered intensive and flexible, person-centred support**

