

Appendix 1 - Learning from the operation of the Night Beds Service 2017-2020

The introduction of the night bed service in 2017 and the data available has supported the learning around the needs and aspirations of individuals who are rough sleeping. Key learning as follows:

Demand - the amount of demand has at times exceeded the capacity of the service despite increasing the capacity of the service from 45 to 57 night beds, as an example during:

January 2020 - 38 people could not book a night bed
February 2020 - 59 people could not book a night bed
March 2020 - 50 people could not book a night bed

It is important to note that homelessness does not affect a static group of people as can be seen from the following table which shows the numbers of individuals that have used the night bed service and their length of stay from December 2017 to March 2020.

Length of stay	number of individuals
0 (no show)	15 (2%)
1 night	149 (19%)
2-7 nights	202 (26%)
1 week to 1 month	174 (22%)
1 month to 3 months	125 (16%)
over 3 months	116 (15%)
	781

Organising the service across two locations has positive benefits including managing complex relationships between individuals and more flexibility in meeting individual needs but does have its constraints

The communal nature of the Night bed service does not suit everyone as many individuals have complex (social, addiction, physical and mental health) needs and providing the necessary support can be difficult in this setting.

Housing alone does not provide the solution. The complexity of needs requires collaboration with partners to ensure accommodation is sustainable. This includes collaboration with Mental Health Services, Recovery Services, Adult Social Care, and the voluntary sector and other organisations as needed.

Individuals who leave the service frequently access the service again. Complexity of needs means that individuals face challenges and are unable to engage with the support services either due to not being the right time in their recovery for instance or the method of delivery does not enable them to sustain alternative housing options.

Individuals need somewhere to be during daytime hours, due to the limited opening hours of the day and night services this has not been possible.

Supporting rough sleepers and the hidden homeless: options for the way forward

The increased opening hours of the Portsmouth Day Service, as a result of the Cold Weather Funding, has been positive. Individual rough sleepers and support providers reported a benefit of being able to access a service and hot meal in the evenings and Night Bed Services reported a beneficial impact in terms of the presentation of individuals accessing the Night Beds.

A significant number of individuals accessing the Homeless Night Beds and Day Service choose not to engage with support relating to mental health, recovery or alternative housing options. The establishment of the Homeless Medical Team and specialised housing support within the Day Service has demonstrated however that where support services are located within homeless services and tailored to the needs of rough sleepers, individuals are more likely to access support tailored to them and provided on site

Arrangements with service providers

The service providers for the Homeless Night Service, Two Saints and Society of St James, are both commissioned by Portsmouth City Council to deliver well-established services supporting homeless individuals in the city.

Two Saints are commissioned to deliver the "Core Homeless" supported housing service, which includes a 32 bed hostel provision at Hope House in Milton Road. The Society of St James are the contracted provider for the Homeless Day service until 2021.

In the case of Two Saints the night service provision, currently 27 additional beds at Hope House and four extra night support staff, was added as an additional schedule to the Core Homeless service contract. There is the facility to raise a contract variation each year to continue the night service and to add any additional provision as required. The Core Homeless service contract runs until April 2023, with the option of two further 36 month extensions.

Society of St James has been providing a further 30 beds as night shelter accommodation within a building it owns in Kingston Road. A contract procedure waiver was agreed on the basis of the city's need to meet its obligations having been awarded funding to address rough sleeping; the direct award was justified to the Society of St James as it was already delivering daytime homeless support, and had a suitable facility available to also provide a night shelter.

The contract agreed with Society of St James was initially 12 months in length from April 2019, but with an option to extend until March 2022 has been activated. The contract can be ended in March 2021 with three months' notice provided, or extended into the second year without needing further negotiation. The contract can be varied each year to reflect any changes in funding or service provision.

***No contractual changes or variations have been made during the emergency provision.