

Brent Homelessness Forum

10:00 – 12:30, 8 December 2023

IN PERSON @ BRENT CIVIC CENTRE, Boardrooms 5 and 6

Minutes

Agenda item	Actions
<p>1. Welcome and introductions</p> <p><u>Attendees:</u> Atara Fridler, Chair (Crisis), Leila Baker (Campbell Tickell), Mary Carter (Campbell Tickell), Marchell Davis (EACH), Laurence Coaker (Brent), Ryan Fuke (St Mungo's), Max Griffiths (Via), Donna Gould (Via), Noah Okunromade (Brent), Anne McBrearty (CLCH NHS), Jane Cook (Groundswell), Jacqui Crane (Groundswell), Amarjit Bains (Bridges Outcomes Partnerships), Laura Potter-James (Crisis), Dami Obe (LNWH Housing Link), Anne Airebamen (NHS NWL ICB), Juan-Jo Peris (Brent SMART), James Blackmore (Rumi's Kitchen), Holly Cooper (Crisis), Emanuela Visentin (Synergy Brent), Michelle Agard (Synergy Brent), Andy Brown (Brent Public Health), Sam Thornton (Brent ICP), Manjit Bance (Brent), Cassie Mouricette-Bailey (Brent), Ella Dane-Liebesny (Brent), Betania Tzegai (Brent Health Matters), Amie Reid (NHS) Caroline Evans (Brent Public Health).</p> <p><u>Apologies:</u> Stephen Kyle (EACH), Kristine Wellington (CVS Brent), Catherine Martin (Brent), Bridie Lane-Williams (Brent & Crisis), Penny Karioki (NIA), Sahra Hajiali (Brent), Cllr Promise Knight (Brent), Versha Versani (NHS NWL ICB), Peter Gadsdon (Brent), Kim Wright (Brent), Beccy Mitchell (DWP), Shaheen Pathan (DWP).</p> <p>Minutes and actions from previous forum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Holly included winter shelter in Rough Sleeper Working Group agenda – due to present update today.	<p>Shaheen to share list of banks requiring minimal ID.</p>
<p>2. Place-Based Work Evaluation</p> <p>Leila and Mary presented slides and invited attendees to feedback any thoughts via email to Atara. Evaluation was commissioned by Crisis' national organisation to inform place-based work in other areas. Work in Brent seems to be very learning-led – services recognise what doesn't work and adapt collaboratively. Leila and Mary asked for feedback on any other things that we do that aren't covered in the slides.</p> <p>Amarjit suggested mapping out services by what is available at prevention and at crisis point - could be something to review in next homelessness strategy, a year from now.</p>	
<p>3. Rough Sleeping in Brent: Update</p> <p>Ryan presented slides on BfZ – currently only 8 weeks into data collection. Inactive = not seen by referring agencies for 30 days. Via, NHS and Pathway teams due to start referring into BNL within the next month so numbers are due to increase. Number of women surprisingly currently mirrors CHAIN data – was expecting more due to the broader definition of rough sleeping. May just not have all the right people around the table yet. Mental health and housing working group has struggled to get data, BfZ data will be really helpful for this. Focus of BfZ weekly meetings have recently focused on substance misuse. Max advised these meetings have been good for Via as they've been able to facilitate referrals via BfZ discussion. The main barriers to ending homelessness recorded in the data are identified by the referrer but this would be after assessment and discussion with the rough sleeper.</p>	

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<p>Ryan presented slides on St Mungo’s rough sleeping. Grey area with spaces falling between public and private land - people sleeping in communal areas of flats etc, work to be done on how to approach this.</p> <p>If you are struggling to make Streetlink referrals on new website, email Ryan (ryan.fuke@mungos.org) and he will send a link to an alternative referral form. Noah asked why there is no longer a reference number – St Mungo’s don’t know but have asked for this function to be reinstated as it was very useful. Ryan suggested using What3Words to give exact location details. Spotlight count for 2023 counted increase of 10 people from 2022.</p> <p>Brent are in line with GLA SWEP, triggered locally when GLA triggers it (temperature drops below 0 degrees). Home office have agreed not to give notices to those in asylum seeker accommodation during first 3 days of SWEP – mentioned that this can be more dangerous on longer SWEP calls, as people will be evicted once the SWEP bedspaces are already full. Amarjit asked about hidden homelessness with women, Ryan advised this is a big problem and even women found bedded down as couples where their relationship has issues of control and/or violence. Built for Zero is hoping to account for these hidden homeless women and further discussion is needed around verification processes for women.</p>	
<p>4. Brent Winter Night Shelter (WNS)</p> <p>James advised that last year’s shelter ran at rotating venues and guests had trouble getting to and from the venues, so this year we have managed to secure Crisis Skylight Brent as a singular venue for the whole shelter. This will run from 3rd January to 28th March and shelter will be overnight only- Holly asked for attendees to provide any information on warm spaces/venues that may be open from 8am as they will be required to leave the building by 8am but most warm spaces don’t open until 10am.</p> <p>When SWEP is called, an additional 10 bedspaces will be available at Crisis Skylight Brent (8 local and 2 regional). Both WNS and SWEP bedspaces will be for low-medium support needs, details of the criteria will be confirmed in the next rough sleeper working group. SWEP placements will be allocated by the Council and WNS placements will be via referral from Crisis, SHPS and St Mungo’s only – people will not need to be verified rough sleepers but will be on the BfZ by-name list.</p> <p>Holly asked partner organisations and councillors not to signpost any rough sleepers to Crisis Skylight Brent to request a bedspace without a referral as they will be turned away. The building is located in a busy area on Harlesden High St near to a pub therefore will likely be lots of foot traffic outside during night shelter hours and having to reject people who approach without a referral may lead to escalations/confrontations - the shelter will be mainly run by volunteers.</p>	<p>Cllr Dar to contact James and Holly regarding warm spaces.</p> <p>Holly to organise information sessions once shelter plans confirmed.</p>
<p>5. Homeless Health Service – Community Team Expansion</p> <p>Amie presented slides. Funding has been granted until 2026. Referral forms to be circulated once nurses are in post. 1 of the 2 nurses have been recruited but they are likely to start in 2 months’ time. Cllr Dar asked about support for those with no recourse to public funds as people fear being reported to immigration services, community team will work with this cohort, no questions asked. In hospitals, treatment comes first but issues arise when it comes to secondary care as those with no recourse could be charged at that point. Jacqui mentioned there are options such as destitution waiver and had not heard about anyone getting reported to the Home Office for seeking healthcare. Advocacy is available via Doctors of the World. Anne advised all 51 GP practices in Brent are registered with Doctors of the World, translated leaflets available online. Community team service is not linked with social prescribing, GP can link in with social prescribers and Groundswell support people to attend appointments.</p>	<p>Jacqui to share resources for accessing healthcare with NRPF.</p> <p>Cassie to support inviting social prescribers to next forum</p>

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<p data-bbox="172 103 708 132">6. AOB including forum subgroup updates</p> <p data-bbox="124 163 261 192"><u>Cuckooing:</u></p> <p data-bbox="124 224 1155 329">Ella is reviewing Brent’s procedures around flagging cuckooing and the wrap-around support available. Invited people who work with victims of cuckooing to provide their details to arrange a time to speak about the review: ella.dane-liebesny@brent.gov.uk</p> <p data-bbox="124 360 480 389"><u>SHPS refugee service update:</u></p> <p data-bbox="124 421 1201 792">Amarjit advised the Home Office is concerned that they are making an issue for Councils with the streamlined asylum process – met with them to find collaborative way of working. Home Office have acknowledged that their data isn’t great but they are going to pilot working with SHPS around managing expectations as having a secondary voice often helps. Anita advised they started the service in August and try to get into hotels as soon as possible to look at housing, integration and personal goals. Lack of affordable housing locally but as those living in hotels only get a small allowance and can rarely travel far, they want to stay in the area as it is familiar to them. Caseload of approx. 100 currently, helping people access night shelters and other housing providers, have housed 33 people to date.</p> <p data-bbox="124 824 552 853"><u>Brent Single Homelessness Service:</u></p> <p data-bbox="124 884 1166 1144">Laurence advised it’s the 4-month anniversary of Turning Point, was previously getting 144 applications per week, currently have 40 approaches a day but these do not all progress into applications (some people just come in to see their caseworker or for signposting). Have started to work with Via New Beginnings for substance misuse support. Turning Point is an improvement to the old system but Council recognise the building is small and lacks privacy so they are already looking at new buildings. Turning Point was a medium-term solution due to longer-term redevelopment plans.</p> <p data-bbox="124 1176 1201 1435">Holly flagged uncertainties mentioned by colleagues around purpose of DTR and whether flagging mental health issues creates a referral to SMART, Laurence clarified that mental health DTR doesn’t go immediately to SMART team, they are assessed case-by-case and the DTR mental health tick box was created for data collection purposes. Asked if there still talk of attaching a specialist GP to Turning Point – this is an aspiration but they are restricted by space allowance. EACH are also based in the same building and advised they find the same issue of lack of privacy.</p> <p data-bbox="124 1467 373 1496"><u>Crisis Skylight Brent:</u></p> <p data-bbox="124 1527 1096 1632">Laura advised that due to demand, the service is no longer taking referrals and is operating a drop-in assessment system instead. Capacity for approx. 5 same-day assessments per day. Drop in will be 10am-1pm, Monday – Friday.</p>	