

ABEN approved service developments.doc

1.0 DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1. The following detailed recommendations have been made by Herriot Watt and a suggested action is included below for discussion.

| Rough sleeping recommendations | Suggested action |
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| Ensure that adequate and sufficiently pro-active outreach services are in operation across the city-region. | Continued development through Rough Sleeper Initiative programme |
| Address practices that risk blocking or delaying access to ABEN, including verification processes, and poor out-of-hours access options. | Local review of access and referral outcomes – ABEN Assurance and Learning |
| Ensure sufficient capacity within and flow through ABEN services so those newly in need or engaging can always access accommodation and support, including via improved prevention work specifically targeting those at risk of rough sleeping. | Local review of access and referral outcomes – ABEN Assurance and Learning |
| Improve the offer to those experiencing entrenched rough sleeping and/or reluctant to engage, including via increased access to Housing First tenancies and swift access to drug and alcohol services. | Task and Target functions to address, working across Rough Sleeper Initiative, Housing First and ABEN resources |
| Support effective assessment whether prospective ABEN users are at 'imminent risk of rough sleeping' to ensure that provision is safeguarded for the intended target group. | Local review of access and referral outcomes – ABEN Assurance and Learning |

| Housing led recommendations | Suggested action |
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| <p>Cease use of night shelters and night-time only accommodation. Move to single-room only accommodation and maximise use of self-contained options. Ensure that all ABEN accommodation enables flexible access to cooking and laundry facilities.</p> | <p>Adopt single room and full access recommendation.</p> <p>Explore and improve flexible access to cooking and laundry facilities.</p> |
| <p>Monitor and review eviction and exclusion practice and outcomes, avoidance and abandonment outcomes, and repeat ABEN use to enhance understanding of their drivers, mitigate negative impacts, and reduce their occurrence.</p> | <p>Review eviction and exclusion practise, including abandonment outcomes to establish more consistent practise and transparency – ABEN Assurance and Learning</p> |
| <p>Work with social and private landlords to increase access to mainstream accommodation for ABEN users, including via the Housing First programme and Ethical Lettings Agency, and ensure the sustainment of move-on accommodation by enhancing housing-related support provision.</p> | <p>Continued strategic ambitions – GM Homelessness Prevention Strategy</p> |

| Individual tailored and flexible support recommendations | Suggested action |
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| <p>Develop and empower the ABEN workforce to effectively deliver a newly developed GM-wide vision for ABEN support provision via training and capacity building; and by ensuring caseloads and access to resources that enable sufficiently intensive and flexible support.</p> | <p>Review support capacity and practise and launch frontline network (RSI) to provide training and community of practise – ABEN Assurance and Learning and RSI</p> |
| <p>Ensure support is available to those with NRPF to enable them to make best use of legal advice they are given and in the small number of cases where this</p> | <p>Review access to legal advice for NRPF clients –</p> |

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| group have more complex needs, explore means of better addressing them. | ABEN Assurance and Learning |
| Improve the availability of mental health support to ABEN users. This may include training ABEN staff, recruiting staff with mental health expertise into ABEN services, and/or improving the capacity of mainstream mental health services to better support ABEN users. | Include mental health training within frontline network, and progress Health Inclusion Implementation Plan. |
| Engage in targeted work to improve access to drug and alcohol services for ABEN users (and other individuals rough sleeping or at risk), prioritising swift access to maximise entry into and sustainment of accommodation. | Progress Health Inclusion Implementation Plan |

| Poverty alleviation, reintegration and assets recommendations | Suggested action |
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| Ensure that welfare rights advice, income maximisation and financial inclusion work are a core component and key focus of ABEN support work. | Ensure money support partners are embedded within ABEN services – ABEN Assurance and Learning |
| Explore the potential to roll out evidence-informed, asset-based approaches to support within ABEN accommodation, including a focus on education, training, employment and wider reintegrative opportunities . | Review support capacity and practise and launch frontline network (RSI) to provide training and community of practise – ABEN Assurance and Learning and RSI |
| Seek to minimise the corrosive impacts of ABEN accommodation on people’s capacity to build and sustain positive relationships with friends and family (including children), and maximise swift access to self-contained move-on accommodation where possible. | Review access and support policies to encourage local connections and relationships – ABEN Assurance and Learning |

| National Policy (lobbying and influencing) recommendations | Suggested action |
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| <p>Pursuit of legal and/or funding reforms that require and/or enable regional and local authorities to fund services that effectively prevent and relieve rough sleeping.</p> <p>Review of No Recourse to Public Funds policy, to ensure that those impacted by it are able to avoid rough sleeping and access the support they need, without reliance on discretionary and cash-limited local funds.</p> <p>Review the social security system and welfare reforms, in particular the Shared Accommodation Rate and Local Housing Allowance caps, to ensure that households in receipt of benefits are able to access and afford self-contained accommodation in the private and social rented sectors.</p> <p>Revise funding frameworks to disincentivise use of congregate forms of emergency and temporary accommodation, and encourage provision of self-contained options.</p> <p>Rapidly increase funding for Housing First to meet estimated levels of demand for the programme.</p> <p>Ensure that local authorities are adequately and appropriately funded to provide housing-related floating support to those at risk of or who have recently exited homelessness, in order to foster tenancy sustainment.</p> | <p>Adopt within Working with Government – GM Homelessness Prevention Strategy</p> |

1.2. The following detailed recommendations have been made by GM HAN and a suggested action is included below for discussion.

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| <p>That coproduction work is adequately resourced and that we value the input of people with lived experience. This means both paying for people’s time and making an emotional investment in them, which</p> | <p>Participation commitment - GM Homelessness Prevention Strategy.</p> |
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| matches the emotional investment they make in the work, to ensure they can participate on terms which work for them. | Funding co-production through regional programmes where possible. |
| That everyone has brought in to the work and is making the level of commitment needed. It affects trust when people feel those with lived experience can just be 'wheeled in and out' at the points in the decision-making process which are most useful or convenient to policy-makers only to fall down their list of priorities again afterwards. | Participation commitment - GM Homelessness Prevention Strategy |
| That everyone has access to the information they need in the format which best allows them to make sense of it. | Drawing on GMCA Communications resources for accessible information. |
| That people's input is responded to wherever possible and appropriate and that it doesn't just feel like a tick box exercise. | Participation commitment - GM Homelessness Prevention Strategy |
| That people with lived experience are involved in the commissioning and ongoing scrutiny and contract monitoring of ABEN services. | Participation commitment - GM Homelessness Prevention Strategy |

Note:

The full version of the ABEN Evaluation by Herriot Watt is now published: [Bed Every Night Evaluation](#)