

Homeless Link 7-minute briefings

These briefings are intended to be short, snappy break-downs of reports, practice guidance, case studies and briefings.

This briefing gives an overview of actions East Sussex have taken to improve Care Leavers access to housing and support that meets their needs and prevent rough sleeping, and make best use of local, existing resources.

7. Further information

The mental health supports available through the Rough Sleeping Initiative has been central to effectively meeting the needs of young care leavers referred through. The joint working across local authority departments has also enabled the teams to monitor system barriers/blocks, as well as identify gaps in current provision, and where they sit.

1. Background

Young people leaving care are particularly vulnerable to homelessness. Care leavers' needs are diverse, some care leavers will be able to move into semi-independent accommodation or their own tenancy, however some will benefit from housing options with comprehensive support attached. East Sussex have a range of house pathways to support young people leaving care leavers, however identified that the housing options weren't suitable for all young people, particularly those with complex trauma.

2. Background

East Sussex also deliver the countywide Rough Sleepers Initiative (RSI) service delivered by a multi-disciplinary team, who support people who have slept rough for a long period, and have experienced multiple disadvantage/complex trauma. The local Through Care Service identified, that a small number of care leavers were not having their needs met through the existing youth homelessness pathway, and would benefit from the wrap-around support provided under the RSI.

6. What works

Young people referred into the pathway have multiple needs often relating to complex trauma. and are often in crisis have faced multiple insecure housing placements. The teams involved in providing support around the young people need to be responsive and provide the right information at the right time. The protocol has facilitated efficient and improved communication between County Social Services teams, housing and the Rough Sleeping Initiative team.

5. What works

The pathway recognises and responds to need for multi-disciplinary support, which is reflected in the referral process. Named individuals- the Young Person's Housing and Accommodation Manager and the RSI Coordinator, hold joint responsibility for assessing referrals to the RSI. Potential referrals are brought forward by a young person's Personal Advisor/Social worker, who will have outlined why they RSI pathway is appropriate for the care leaver

4. The solution

The protocol prevents rough sleeping and means those care leavers whose needs aren't met by mainstream support and housing options, can access appropriate specialist care and intensive support, so they are able to safely access and maintain suitable accommodation. The pathway between the two services is designed for young people where placements have broken down and all other routes exhausted.

3. The problem & solution

A small number of care leavers were not receiving support that was needed and available, and their health, wellbeing, and housing stability was compromised. They could not access support through the RSI pathway however, as they were not sleeping rough. To address this the through the care services and RSI teams worked to develop a protocol between the teams so care leavers can be referred directly into RSI support.

