

## Health Improvement Partnership Board Detailed performance report

### 1. Details

**Strategic Priority:** Tackling the broader determinants of health through better housing and preventing homelessness

**Strategic Lead:** District and City Councils (through the Housing Support Advisory Group)

**PROGRESS MEASURE:** 10.5 Ensure that the number of people estimated to be sleeping rough in Oxfordshire does not exceed the baseline figure from 2015-16 (baseline 90)

**Current indicator RAG Rating** Green

### 2. Trend Data

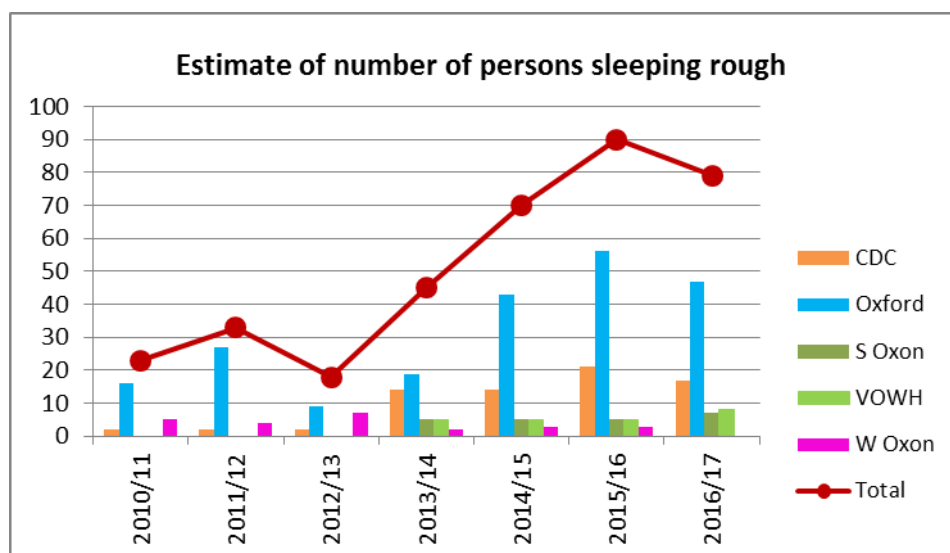
Since November 2014 all districts and the city council have reported their November estimate for rough sleepers according to the methodology set out by Homeless Link. This figure is reported annually, usually in Quarter 3. Oxford City Council also conducts a count of rough sleepers, which is reported below.

November estimate of rough sleeping for 2016:

Cherwell	City	South	Vale	West	Total
17	47	7	8	0	79

Count: 33

Since 2011 the prevalence of rough sleeping has increased, predominantly in Cherwell and the City.



### 3. What is the story behind this trend? - Analysis of Performance

Not surprisingly, the significant increases have taken place in Oxford and Cherwell; where individuals are aware that there will be more resources and other rough sleeper communities; as larger towns/cities.

The rise in rough sleeping reflects a national increase in this indicator. The autumn 2016 England Rough Sleeper Count increased by 16% compared to the previous year (DCLG). These statistics were released in January 2017 amid rising concern about the effects of [insecure tenancies](#) and rising rents, [benefit cuts](#) and shortages of affordable housing in many parts of the country.

The impact of the Welfare Reform agenda has undoubtedly had a negative effect on the number of rough sleepers. For example, a reduction in Local Housing Allowance has made it increasingly difficult for people in receipt of benefits to secure private rented accommodation, particularly when facing greater competition from working households also trying to secure accommodation in an expensive local housing market. The introduction of the reduced Benefit Cap has made it more difficult for benefit dependant households to sustain their tenancies. The high demand for housing in areas such as Oxford, coupled with low average wages and a lack of social housing makes Oxfordshire unaffordable for a large number of people.

### 4. What is being done? - Current initiatives and actions

Despite rising numbers in previous years, rough sleeping is reducing and the problem is being well managed in Oxfordshire.

#### Actions

- Rough sleeping and homelessness remains a strategic priority in all Districts and the City; in terms of priority and funding (£1.4 million per annum, in the City alone, to support 'wrap-around' services).
- Outreach services are operated in all Districts, and the City, aimed particularly at entrenched rough sleepers.
- Regardless of priority need, rough sleepers are provided with dedicated local caseworkers.
- The Oxfordshire Homeless Pathway supports those with complex needs.
- The Floating Support service meets a range of needs and works with people to prevent homelessness.

#### Commentary

- It should be noted that funding for the Oxfordshire Homeless pathway will reduce from April 2017. This means that there will be a reduction in spaces for those with complex needs and a significant reduction in low support provision.
- A revised pathway is being commissioned by the City, County and District Councils with the CCG. The new pathway will include improved monitoring and control at a local level; which should improve move-on and therefore, help to counter-balance the reduced capacity.
- The Floating Support service is continuing next year with reduced capacity, mitigated by robust triage and demand management. The service has continued to exceed performance targets.

## 5. What needs to be done now?

### Action

- Implementation of the prevention activities that will form part of the County-wide initiatives that successfully attracted £790,000 of DCLG Trailblazer funding.
- Implementation of the Prevention Duty that will be introduced as part of the Homelessness Reduction Bill; for which new funding will be made available.
- Robust responses to the current consultation around Supported Housing Funding.

### By Whom & By When

- County-wide project being led by Oxford City.
- Individual Housing Authority responsibilities but with some collaboration.
- Individual organisation responses; focussed on ring-fencing and local control.

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