



Winter provision for rough sleepers in Gloucester – Service Proposal

Gloucester City Mission and Emmaus Gloucestershire have formed a partnership to explore options for extending services for rough sleepers, in Gloucester, between January 10th and 28th February 2016.

The service proposal outlined below is based on local knowledge and an understanding of the numbers and needs of rough sleepers during winter months, and current levels of provision. It takes account of the severe weather emergency protocol (SWEP) and no second night out (NSNO).

The service specification outlines a pilot short term service to meet the basic survival needs of rough sleepers in Gloucester in winter months. Both Gloucester City Mission and Emmaus are aware that the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping requires a holistic approach that goes beyond the provision of food and shelter, and do not support temporary accommodation options that fail to break the cycle of rough sleeping.

Data gathered during the project will be shared with statutory and voluntary services to assist planning for integrated services, and to inform planning for winter 2016/17.

1. Service Proposal.

What: Overnight shelter and support for 15 rough sleepers from 10th January until the end of February 2016. This may be extended if severe weather prevails into March and the project has been successful.

Chairs, bed rolls and sleeping bags /blankets (not beds)

Simple food evening and morning: sandwiches, soup, cereals, tea/ coffee; hot meals where these can be provided by supportive agencies

Showers and toilets

Access to washing machines and dryers (limited)

Provision of clothing and sleeping bags

Signposting/ linking to homelessness services

Access to homeless health care team

Where: The service will be provided at the George Whitfield Centre, Great Western Road, Gloucester (the Hub). This is ideally placed in that it is close to the city centre but not in the path of shoppers or tourists. It is housed in the same building as the homeless health care team, and the foodbank. There are immediate neighbours and no commercial premises

operating in the evening. The centre is a few hundred yards from the hospital, with A&E facilities.

Gloucester City Mission rent the premises (the Hub) from Gloucester City Church and already operate a day centre for rough sleepers and socially isolated people, three afternoons a week.

When: The service will operate from 10th January 23rd until the end of February. Door will open at 8.00pm and close at 10.0pm.

People will vacate the premises by 8.00 am, unless awaiting an appointment with homelessness services, or the health care team.

Who: The provision is for rough sleepers in Gloucester who are known to homelessness services and are deemed to have a local connection. Access will be by referral. By exception, where someone is known to the service, and space is available, a place will be allocated.

Places will be allocated on a needs basis, following assessment of referrals, **each day**. While some people are likely to be referred on more than one occasion, the service will operate within NSNO guidance which means there is an expectation that statutory and voluntary agencies responsible for homelessness services to support people into sustainable accommodation.

SWEP: Emmaus Gloucestershire and Gloucester City Missions are concerned that there is a lack of provision for SWEP in the County. This service is provided, free of charge, to statutory agencies, to people who require accommodation under these provisions, subject to availability. When SWEP is called referrals and admissions will be negotiated with homelessness services. The service is set up to accommodate those who have a connection in Gloucester. By exception, and if space is available, the service may take referrals from Cheltenham, if made by homelessness services.

2. Staff and Volunteers

There will be two paid members of staff on the premises at all times during opening hours. These will be drawn from a pool of suitably qualified and experienced staff, working on a part time basis. Staff will work a 12 hours shift, taking turns to have a rest period during the night.

One of the staff pool will be a project co-ordinator who manage rotas, organise activity, supervise staff and volunteers .and co-ordinate partnership working with homeless services and other partners.

The Project Manager at the Hub, who is employed by Gloucester City Mission, will manage referrals and coordinate partnership working with homelessness services and other partners. He will be responsible for the building and all legal/ regulatory requirements.

4. Referral and Assessment

Referrals to this service can be made by

- Gloucester City Council
- County Homelessness Team
- Streetlink/ St Mungo/ P3

- Police
- Other voluntary agencies in the County

Referred people should arrive no later than 9.00pm. Access by those who have not been referred during the day may be considered if there are vacancies in the evening.

No dogs will be admitted

Referrals, using a specific referral form, will be made to the Project Manager at the HUB by 2.00 **each day**. The project manager may delegate this responsibility to the project coordinator, or to the Community Manager at Emmaus Gloucestershire.

Referrals will be assessed according to need, and whether these needs can be safely met by the service. Being allocated a place one evening is not a guarantee of a place the next evening. The service will NOT have dedicated mental health staff on duty which will be a barrier to some people being accommodated.

People who are considered dangerous to others due to drug and alcohol use will not be admitted.

The project manager will share responsibility for agreeing the allocation of places with the project coordinator and the community manager at Emmaus Gloucestershire.

5. Transport

Emmaus Gloucestershire will, where possible, arrange transport for rough sleepers to the centre. This service will be accessed via the community manager at Emmaus Gloucestershire.

6. Next Day and No Second Night Out

EG and GCM recognise that this service only provides an emergency humane service to ensure the safety of rough sleepers in cold weather. It is not intended to sustain unsafe rough sleeping. Both organisations are committed to holistic services that prevent homelessness and reduce the risk of people becoming entrenched in a negative cycle of short term accommodation.

It is therefore essential that statutory agencies engage with this service and attend the hub each morning to offer pathways to break the cycle of rough sleeping. No person should be using this service continuously throughout the period of opening.

7. Information Management

Data on service users will be captured to assess need, and to decide whether they can be admitted to the Hub.

A register of people using the service each night will be kept, with details of comings and goings and behaviours. This may be used to inform decisions about admission on future nights.

In keeping with NSNO principles, information about rough sleeping patterns will be gathered so that more sustainable housing and support can be provided by those responsible.

9. Impact Assessment

The intended impact is that

- 15 rough sleepers each night will have be safe and protected from the winter weather;
- The cycle of rough sleeping will be broken for a number of rough sleepers
- A number of people who were rough sleeping for the first time will have no second night out
- A number of rough sleepers will access health services for the first time
- Statutory and voluntary agencies will have a great knowledge of those who are rough sleeping their needs and related problems
- Statutory and voluntary agencies will have worked together and improved partnership working
- The cost to the public purse will be reduced, as this service is provided by the charity and faith sector

10. Costs

The cost of the service will be met by Gloucester City Mission and Emmaus Gloucestershire. EG will appeal for funding from supporters, a network of contacts and the public. Shortfall will be met from charity reserves. GCM will find from donations from church members.