



No Second Night Out Policy

Last reviewed June 2018

1.0 No second night out policy overview

This policy is managed and adhered to by the Strategic Housing Team. This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure alignment with government legislation, guidance and best practice.

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1.1 Introduction

Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) is committed to ending rough sleeping in the Dacorum area. To support this, we have a 'No Second Night Out' approach.

Regardless of whether the main homelessness duty is owed, as a local authority we have a duty to provide homeless people with advice and assistance to help them find suitable accommodation. By working in partnership with other local organisations, we will ensure that all people who are, or are at risk of, rough sleeping in Dacorum are supported in the appropriate way.

For the purpose of this policy 'rough sleeping' is defined as;

- People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (e.g. on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments); and
- People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (e.g. stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations or 'bashes').

The Council is required to respond to any local or national restrictions imposed by central government. The administration of this and other Council policies could, therefore, be impacted by a pandemic or other emergency for the period that such restrictions are in operation.

1.2 Aim(s) of the policy

The aims of this policy are to;

- Prevent and relieve rough sleeping in Dacorum;
- Outline our approach to supporting people who are rough sleeping so they can move off of the streets; and

Set out how we will increase local options so that rough sleeping is not enabled

1.3 Links to Council's corporate aims

This policy supports our [Homelessness Strategy 2016-2020](#) as well as the council's corporate priorities which are set out in '[Delivering for Dacorum – Corporate Plan 2015-2020](#)'.

1.4 Equality and diversity

The council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity in housing services and has procedures in place to ensure that all Applicants and Tenants are treated fairly and without unlawful discrimination.

1.5 Policy Statement(s)

We will ensure there is a consistent and rapid response to supporting rough sleepers across all support services operating in Dacorum (see 2.1).

We will work with rough sleepers to identify their needs and develop appropriate support plans (see 2.1 and 2.2).

We will help reconnect rough sleepers to areas where they have support networks e.g. family (see 2.3).

We will provide appropriate support for people from the European Migrant Area (see 2.4).

We will, where possible, provide appropriate support for people who have no recourse to public funds (see 2.5).

We will work with public health partners and the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) to reduce the number of people rough sleeping when discharged from hospital (see 2.6).

2.0 No second night out policy detail

2.1 A consistent and rapid response

In order to ensure there is a consistent and rapid response to supporting rough sleepers in Dacorum, we work closely with our local partners to identify and respond to rough sleeping in a timely manner and create clear pathways for referral.

Partners range across a number of sectors, including:

- the voluntary and community sector;
- the police and criminal justice system;
- health services;
- other local authorities;
- local faith groups;
- the Job Centre Plus; and
- other internal DBC teams and departments.

We will also utilise information and address referrals from '[Streetlink](#)' to inform appropriate decisions regarding the allocation of resources across the borough when tackling rough sleeping. Rough sleepers can also be brought to our attention via our website: dacorum.gov.uk/roughsleepers.

On receiving notification of a rough sleeper we will undertake an initial assessment of their housing needs. Alongside the assessment, we will offer Crashpad accommodation to prevent a second night rough sleeping.

Using established forums and networks such as:

- case conferences;
- Single Non-Priority Multi-Agency Panel;
- Housing Panel;
- Homelessness Forum; and/or
- The community safety partnership,

we will coordinate a multi-agency response. This will enable individuals to access further accommodation and support services as required.

Our 'single service offer' focuses on the use of a Personal Housing Plan (PHP) which includes personalised, tailored advice and actions. Self-service advice is also available through our online [Housing Options Tool](#).

At DBC we have access to a Homeless Prevention Fund. We can use this discretionally to support rough sleepers to improve their housing situation e.g. providing upfront payment for deposits on private rented accommodation.

Due to low numbers of rough sleepers in the Dacorum area (when benchmarking nationally) each case will be managed on an individual basis.

In the event of an emergency or severe cold weather, the council and local homelessness services will increase service provision for rough sleepers by providing overnight accommodation in our local homeless hostel. We will also work with partners to conduct additional street inspections when the weather is severe.

If an individual becomes homeless outside of normal working hours and is at risk of rough sleeping, our established emergency homeless telephone line (**0800 018 6050**) allows them to access support at all times.

All rough sleeper referrals to homelessness services will consider any safeguarding issues. Case monitoring and recording of outcomes will take place in order to monitor levels of rough sleeping and also assess the impact of our No Second Night Out approach.

2.2 Reconnecting rough sleepers

New rough sleepers without a connection to Dacorum will have access to local housing services whilst an assessment is undertaken. Reconnection to the relevant local authority will then be carried out in a planned and co-ordinated way, in line with the Hertfordshire Local Connection Protocol.

Individuals refusing a suitable arranged reconnection may still be offered some services locally as part of the local strategy to prevent homelessness. Additionally, if a verified rough sleeper does not have a meaningful local connection with any area, we will work with our partners to enable them to access the support they require.

2.3 Addressing complex needs

We recognise that rough sleeping can often be linked to a number of other social or medical issues, such as:

- substance misuse;
- physical and mental health problems;
- financial concerns; or
- social isolation.

Acknowledging this, we understand that traditional services are often structured to tackle single 'issues'. By taking a partnership and multi-agency approach, we will signpost and enable rough sleepers with complex needs to access the support they require to move them off of the streets and into safe and stable accommodation.

When cases such as these arise, we will refer to a Multi-Agency Response Panel (MARP) where we meet with other key partner agencies involved in the case e.g. social services, mental health services etc. A recommendation will then be made regarding meeting the client's future housing needs.

2.0 No second night out policy detail continued

2.4 Supporting economic migrants

We know that the vast majority of migrants entering the United Kingdom successfully establish themselves by finding employment and appropriate accommodation. However, we understand that sometimes they can be at risk of rough sleeping as a result of unemployment, redundancy and/or evictions from private sector accommodation.

We are also aware that migrants entering the country may establish encampments in the local area. Reports of unlawful encampments within Dacorum will be passed onto the Active Communities Team, who are responsible for carrying out an initial assessment against relevant homelessness criteria.

Through our partnerships with the voluntary sector, immigration services and other local community groups, we will support economic migrants to resolve their housing situation and where possible prevent them from continuing to sleep rough.

2.5 No recourse to public funds

No recourse to public funds (NRPF) refers to people who are subject to immigration control, and have no entitlement to welfare benefits or social housing within the UK.

This applies to the following groups;

- Asylum seekers with an asylum claim in process who have been refused UKBA Asylum Support;
- Asylum seekers who have reached the end of the legal process and have been refused; and
- Irregular or undocumented migrants (migrants who have entered the country without a visa, stayed after the expiry of their visa or have other immigration irregularities).

As a local authority, we do not have the discretion to spend public funds on NRPF clients, However, where possible and appropriate, we may use statutory funding that can be allocated to support NRPF clients in resolving their homelessness.

As a housing service, we hold a positive working relationship with Community Action Dacorum who are responsible for acting as the point of contact for all local voluntary and community centre groups. This means that we may be able to signpost NRPF clients to an appropriate support agency if one is available.

Alternative support available within the local area includes faith and community groups set up by volunteers and we may be able to signpost clients to these groups if appropriate.

2.6 Discharged from hospital

It is important for us, as a local authority, to consider the housing needs of those who are being discharged from hospital, as it is widely acknowledged that insufficient or poor quality housing can impact negatively on health conditions.

We work in partnership with local hospitals and health centres to ensure that discharge from these organisations is managed in a planned way and no client is left at risk

of rough sleeping. We will also hold a MARP meeting with appropriate partners to address issues linked to rough sleeping in those who are due to leave hospital without established connections. The aim of this meeting is to effectively signpost these individuals to support and advice that will help them into suitable accommodation on leaving hospital.

2.7 Enforcement

It is important to differentiate rough sleeping from other kinds of street activity. In Dacorum we understand that street activity can sometimes lead to rough sleeping and therefore it is important to address these issues as early as possible.

As a local authority, we will take appropriate action in line with legislation and corporate policies where necessary to tackle harmful or undesirable street activity.

In some cases of street activity, we may use powers under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Police Act 2014 to serve a Community Protection Notice (CPN) to individuals engaging persistently in street activity which is detrimental to the Dacorum area and/or Dacorum residents.

3.0

Links to other corporate documents

This policy links to and should be read in conjunction with the following policies and strategies:

- Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020
- Tenancy Agreement
- Allocations Policy

4.0

Legislation

The legislation listed below will be taken into consideration when implementing this policy:

- Housing Act 1996
- Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977
- Localism Act 2011
- Homelessness Act 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017