

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**ASSETS, CULTURE AND HOUSING
CABINET MEMBER**

ROUGH SLEEPERS UPDATE

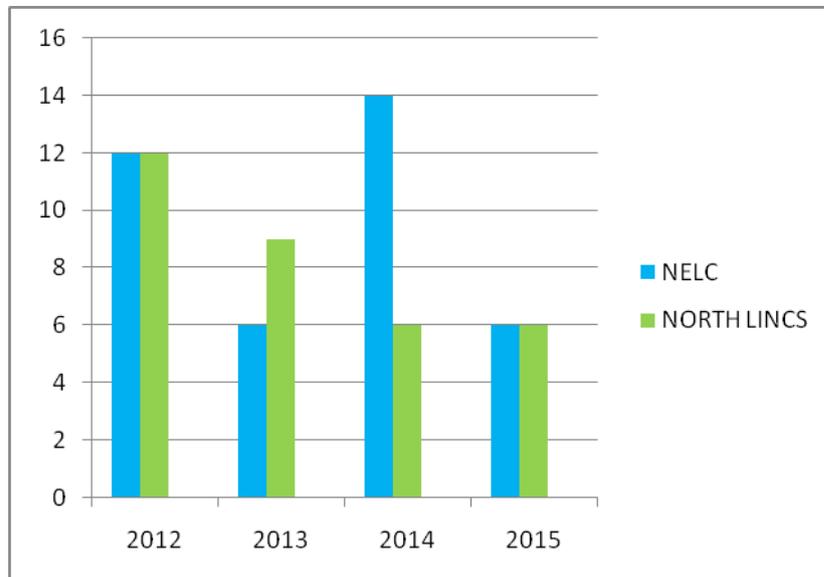
1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To report the annual rough sleeping figure for North Lincolnshire.
- 1.2 To provide an update on the work of the Assertive Outreach Worker.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Rough Sleeping remains the most visible and damaging manifestation of homelessness. In 1998, the Government set a target to reduce by two thirds the number of rough sleepers within four years. To achieve this, in 1999 they launched *Coming in from the Cold*, the Government's strategy for tackling rough sleeping. The strategy set out detailed plans for meeting the target. The current Government is committed to reducing rough sleeping to as near to zero as possible.
- 2.2 Progress against the target is measured by a single night's street count in areas where there is a known, or suspected, rough sleeping problem. Counts and estimates have taken place in most local authority areas since 1997. The results have helped establish robust annual estimates of people sleeping rough across England.
- 2.3 Since 1997, Councils have been encouraged to develop local strategies to address rough sleeping, particularly where there is a significant problem (more than 10 rough sleepers identified). The annual count helps inform the continuing development of such strategies, measures their success and identifies gaps in services.
- 2.4 At one stage, we were required to do an actual physical count on a specified night. In recent years, we have been able to submit a robust estimate of the number of people rough sleeping. To do so, we must consult with and gather information from all agencies dealing with rough sleepers in their area, including the local community.

- 2.5 Since 2008, we have undertaken a rough sleeper count. The last physical street count was in 2011. In 2012, an estimate indicated fourteen people sleeping rough. In November 2013, the estimate gave a figure of nine rough sleepers. The figure for 2014, following an estimated count in October, revealed six people sleeping rough.
- 2.6 This year, the estimate has given six people sleeping rough. Although this is the same figure as 2014, they are different individuals.
- 2.7 Our neighbours in North East Lincolnshire have also recorded six rough sleepers this year. They recorded fourteen in 2014. The graph and table below shows the comparison of the numbers identified for each area.



Year	North East Lincs	North Lincs
2012	12	12
2013	6	9
2014	14	6
2015	6	6

- 2.8 People become homeless for a whole range of complex and overlapping reasons. Solving rough sleeping is about much more than finding a home.
- 2.9 The reasons for homelessness are many. They include relationship break down, substance misuse, mental health and leaving an institution, such as prison.
- 2.10 The Government, through its No Second Night Out initiative, has recognised that if someone becomes entrenched within the rough sleeping culture, it becomes a lot harder to help them. To tackle homelessness through the “no second night out campaign” requires an Assertive Outreach Worker who will engage with those sleeping rough.
- 2.11 Earlier this year, we, along with the other three Humber authorities, successfully obtained funding from the Government’s Single Homeless fund. We have used our funding to employ an Assertive Outreach Worker based within the Housing Advice Team.
- 2.12 The outreach worker is providing the necessary capacity to engage with partners within both the council and the third sector, such as the Forge, to help rough sleepers in our area access suitable accommodation. They are also putting together our cold weather response for rough sleepers for this winter.
- 2.13 The Assertive Outreach Worker is a member of the multiagency group trying to tackle the issue of begging in the town centre given the association with homelessness. Of the six rough sleepers identified in the count, to our knowledge only one has actively engaged in begging.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 There are no options for consideration as this report is for information only.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

- 4.1 Financial - the count was completed using existing resources and partnerships. We have been able to employ an Assertive Outreach Worker using Government funding. The grant will only allow us to continue to fund this key post for a further six months.

5. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

6.1 This report was circulated to finance, public health and housing strategy for consultation. To date no comments have been received.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 That the Cabinet Member notes the contents of the report.

7.2 That the Cabinet Member recognises the key role of the Assertive Outreach Worker in tackling homelessness and those individuals recognised as 'hard to house'.

DIRECTOR OF PLACES

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