

STREET ZERO NEWSLETTER MARCH 2021

POISED TO BE ONE OF THE FIRST UK CITIES TO END ROUGH SLEEPING FOR GOOD BY 2022

HELLO FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS

We hope this, our second e-newsletter, finds you well. We're sending out positivity to you all and hang on to the hope that there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Thank you for pledging your continued support to Street Zero and the work of the partnership. Today, over 1,500 people from the North East will receive this update sharing the progress our partners are making. Last week, it was reported that due to government efforts and 'Everyone In', the number of people recorded rough sleeping in August 2020 was 37% lower than in 2019 nationally. Newcastle can report there are 74% fewer people sleeping rough on the streets of our city year on year. Our priority for 2021 is focussed on the following four aims:

1. INVEST IN INTEGRATED HEALTHCARE LED SUPPORT FOR HARD TO REACH INDIVIDUALS WITH LONG TERM COMPLEX NEEDS IN A SMALL SAFE ACCOMMODATION UNIT

2. PROVIDE PLACE-BASED SUPPORT TO THE TEMPORARY HOSTEL COMMUNITY NOW ACCOMMODATED BUT STILL TRAUMATISED AND ISOLATED. ENSURING INDIVIDUALS DO NOT SEEK TO RETURN TO A LIFE ON THE STREETS

3. PARTNERS REFURBISHMENT OF OVER 100 FLATS NOW COMING ON STREAM ARE READIED, AND THE SELECTION FOR TENANTS IS ACCELERATED

4. THAT THE AGREED REGIONAL PROTOCOL WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES, OF SAFE RECONNECTION, IS WORKING EFFECTIVELY.

ONE & ONLY VOICE ON ROUGH SLEEPING IN NEWCASTLE

Newcastle is recognised nationally as an exemplar of partnership working because of the Street Zero approach. We have brought together experts from the full spectrum of support services across the city.

We join up all of the resources, share information, and plan proactive interventions as opposed to reactionary responses. It is this approach and expertise that makes us the one true voice on rough sleeping. Led by the evidence, we share the real picture of the situation here in our city and how we are working together with partners towards our collective goal - to make Newcastle a city where no one sleeps rough.

Street Zero is the only organisation that works like this - a truly unique collaboration between the public sector, businesses, charities, and community organisations all working together to drive change.

Today, we ask you to spread the word! Ask your friends and family to join the countdown to zero [here](#). Sign their name to pledge their support to Newcastle becoming one of the first UK cities to end rough sleeping for good.

PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS

Newcastle Council's work to prevent thousands of people in Newcastle from becoming homeless has won a top international award and praise from the UN. The city won the prestigious gold in the World Habitat Awards. It recognises innovative, outstanding and revolutionary housing ideas, projects and programmes from across the world, is a testament that Newcastle's approach is leading the way.

In 2020, Newcastle City Council, Your Homes Newcastle, and other frontline partners prevented significant numbers of people from falling into homelessness. Within that, over 600 locals were prevented from losing their accommodation through the tenant protection scheme and 470 people who were homeless are now living in their own home.

Within the vast and complex subject of Homelessness, Street Zero focuses specifically on rough sleeping. We're part of the city's response to supporting residents to have a more stable life, identifying people at risk of homelessness, and providing the help they need before they reach crisis point, rather than responding afterwards.





THE RIGHT KIND OF HOME

What makes a place a home is different for everyone. The Housing First scheme aims to redefine and change the type of accommodation available for people who are sleeping rough. Regular engagement that is respectful and provides choice will mean that the offer of housing is right for the person and that they are supported in creating a home they want to spend time in.

Our partners, Changing Lives and Your Homes Newcastle, have worked to create the right type of housing. Over 100 newly-refurbished single furnished flats are ready for immediate use, making the process quicker.

In February, 40 newly refurbished and fully furnished one and two-bedroom flats were available from Your Homes Newcastle on behalf of Newcastle City Council. These new flats are now home to those who were living on the streets and allows them to live independently.

TRANSFORMING LIVES

As COVID took hold, the national Government scheme 'everyone in' offered 33,000 people who were rough sleeping a bed. The scheme brought a shift in mindset nationally and now over half a £billion is committed to supporting people rough sleeping through the pandemic and beyond.

In Newcastle, people who were rough sleeping and may not have been seen as 'ready' for their own home have flourished in the city's hostel environment. One of the city's 779 emergency beds is often the first step on the journey towards sustaining a home.

Our partners have seen people who have found peace, contentment, and a sense of hope. They are actively engaging with service providers about their

future, working to build a new life with purpose and direction. Others still feel traumatised and isolated particularly in these difficult times and they require ongoing support.

A small number of people have declined the offer of support which can happen when people become used to a certain way of living. Individuals feel unable to accept support for many reasons such as relationship and eviction issues, experiencing violence where they have lived previously, or debt issues. They can often find it difficult to engage with healthcare and can often fail to retain their accommodation, so return to living on the streets. Partner, Home Group, trialled a new way of working with people who felt unable to engage.

This approach works closely with the authorities to engage people with support and encouragement in the first place. Healthcare professionals can then offer a tailored pathway in an adapted living environment to help individuals with long term complex needs such as mental health, addiction and basic life support, focusing upon addressing their trauma which often goes back to childhood. The 12-month trial was a success and is being developed with other partners.

As a city, we have agreed on a protocol with other neighbouring Local Authorities to effectively and safely reconnect people sleeping rough in the city centre back to their local area.





£70K EMERGENCY FUNDING DURING COVID

In the spring of 2020, as the first lockdown was introduced our Emergency Fund awarded [£57,000](#) to Changing Lives, Tyne Housing, and Home Group for eight different projects. To support the most vulnerable in hostels during this third lockdowns, we've awarded a further £13,000 to Tyne Housing and Home Group.

Tyne Housing has served almost 9,000 meals between March and December 2020 through its 'Plates for People' programme. This, combined with its infection control measures, resulted in minimal coronavirus infection amongst this highly vulnerable group with no instances of hospitalisation. An incredible success!

Another £5.5k grant from the Street Zero Emergency Fund will help Tyne Housing support residents in its hostels who are unable to access food, with no safe place to cook or the local crisis services they rely on are closed. It will minimise social contact by providing a healthy meal every day for every hostel resident, in addition to their existing provision at their Joseph Cowen Health Centre.

Home Group will receive a further £7.5k for diversionary activities and wellness packs bespoke to the individuals based on their interests to keep our people both physically and mentally stimulated, as well as reduce stress and anxiety. The team will create packs to promote stimulation and activities that pass the time whilst adhering to staying indoors and social distancing. Previous funding had a hugely significant and positive impact on the lives of the homeless community across Newcastle. The people who receive the wellness packs and diversionary activities have a say in what's included - the picture above was

diversionary activities have a say in what's included - the picture above was taken to show the range of the wellness packs and diversionary activities.

THE BUSINESS PLEDGE

North East businesses have played a major part in helping Street Zero support people rough sleeping in Newcastle. A huge THANK YOU to the businesses that have recently joined the Fenwick campaign joining the countdown to zero by donating £350. We are incredibly grateful for the support we have received so far from leading organisations operating in our city. If your business, colleagues or employer would like to join the pledge, please let us know here: team@streetzero.org.

NORTH EAST CHARITY AWARD WINNER

The team Street Zero trustees' nominated me for Charity Leader of the Year in the North East Charity Awards 2020. It was a huge surprise and I was delighted to be able to highlight the work of the Street Zero partnership, created as a way to coordinate city-wide efforts to prevent homelessness and ultimately eradicate rough sleeping in Newcastle. We're achieving great things and we couldn't do it without the support of the city.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

Newcastle is a city that cares. Without the generosity of people like you, our work to directly support people rough sleeping would not be possible. There are many ways to get involved, including ideas on how to fundraise at home in our [new 2021 pack](#). We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for being part of our community. You are helping to change lives for the better. We're extremely grateful.

Bob



BOB ELDRIDGE, STREET ZERO CHAIR



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