

Kerslake Commission evidence submission

akt

1. Thinking about the response to rough sleeping during the pandemic, which measures, policies, practices or joint working do you think worked well and why?

It is difficult to provide a fully informed answer to this question, as a small number of akt's service users accessed schemes such as 'Everyone In'. However, the co-ordinated approach adopted during the first national lockdown enabled the speed at which those experiencing rough sleeping could be placed in emergency shelter. This has been a particularly effective response to rough sleeping during the pandemic.

2. In contrast, which measures, policies, practices or joint working do you think have not worked well and why?

The lack of monitoring of the gender identity and sexual orientation of those housed in hotel accommodation(via Everyone In) has made it difficult to ascertain how many LGBTQ+ young people have accessed emergency accommodation. Moreover, from our experience, programmes such as Everyone In primarily targeted visible, entrenched rough sleepers who tend to be older. Our service users are between the ages of 16-25 years, so this posed particular challenges for placing these young people experiencing rough sleeping into emergency accommodation. Finally, we also heard accounts of young people feeling concerned about their safety and therefore not accessing hotel accommodation. Our service users also have multiple risk factors that can create additional barriers to accessing support if emergency accommodation is not LGBTQ+ friendly/ inclusive or is perceived as not LGBTQ+ friendly/inclusive. For instance, a trans young person rough sleeping will often be concerned about the potential threats to their safety if they accessed emergency accommodation. We have supported young people who did not access emergency accommodation provided under Everyone In because of this reason.

3. Please describe the specific challenges, and opportunities, in the next phase of the Everyone In programme and helping people to move on from hotel accommodation.

N/A

4. And finally, what do you think needs to be put in place to embed the good work that developed during the pandemic, or improve upon it?

Everyone In showed that we could take swift action to support those experiencing rough sleeping immediately. As we look forward, we need to see the same impetus to preventing and tackling all forms of homelessness, including hidden homelessness. It is also imperative that we focus on the homelessness experienced by groups such as LGBTQ+ young people. To help prevent and combat LGBTQ+ youth homelessness, implementing uniform mandatory monitoring of sexual orientation and gender identity is vital to understanding the true levels of homelessness experienced by LGBTQ+ young people, shaping policy responses, and promoting more inclusive service delivery. Moreover, prevention and early action-focused solutions to homelessness, including LGBTQ+ youth homelessness, must be adopted as we advance. This includes increased investment in emergency housing and long-term housing options by, for instance, increasing the supply of social housing and ensuring that shared accommodation is affordable, particularly for young people. For further recommendations on the policies and actions needed to help improve the support available to LGBTQ+ young people, please refer to akt's latest research report: The LGBTQ+ Youth Homelessness Report (2021). Available at [:https://www.akt.org.uk/report](https://www.akt.org.uk/report)