

**Plymouth  
Rough Sleeping  
Reconnection  
Policy**

# **PLYMOUTH'S ROUGH SLEEPING RECONNECTION POLICY**

## **I. Definition**

Reconnection is the process by which people sleeping rough in Plymouth, who have a connection to another area where they can access accommodation and/or support networks, are enabled to return to this area in a planned way.

## **2. Summary**

Reconnection is for clients who are currently sleeping rough in Plymouth or are at serious risk of sleeping rough in Plymouth and have a 'local connection' to another area, or have support networks in another area and are able to access accommodation there.

Reconnection involves:

- assessing the client's needs and identifying areas where they have a connection and/or where they have support networks
- contacting services in that area to validate/ensure access to services there and/or contacting support networks to validate/ensure they can offer support and accommodation to the client
- agreement between the client and the services in Plymouth that reconnection is the most effective way to meet their accommodation and other needs
- financial help to cover the cost of reconnection, if and as appropriate.

## **3. Why have a reconnection policy?**

- Research suggests that when reconnections policies are developed as part of a Local Authority's overall approach to tackling rough sleeping and single homelessness they can be an extremely effective way to reduce rough sleeping and single homelessness in that area.
- To improve the service we provide to people sleeping rough or who are vulnerable to rough sleeping by ensuring they are provided with the most appropriate and effective support to meet their individual needs.
- To develop reconnection as a positive choice for people sleeping rough or people vulnerable to rough sleeping who do not have a local connection to Plymouth.
- To promote a co-ordinated multi-agency approach to support reconnection where appropriate.
- To target scarce resources at those most in need within the local community.
- To improve local needs assessment and service planning.

## **4. Principles**

I. Reconnection will only be considered for people who have an identified 'local connection' outside of Plymouth, have no identified local connection to any area or have identified support networks outside of Plymouth in an area where they can access accommodation. (For guidelines on determining local connection see Appendix B).

II. Plymouth recognises it is not appropriate to apply the reconnection policy to every person with out-of-area connections. Each case will be assessed taking into account individual circumstances in line with this policy. People sleeping rough or vulnerable to rough sleeping will not be excluded from accessing a short term SP service in Plymouth because they do not have a local connection (see Appendix B). However, when someone is assessed as being suitable for reconnection they will be seen to have accommodation and / or support options elsewhere. See 6 below.

III. Reconnection is a planned and robust process.

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- IV. Designated cross authority services, such as domestic abuse services, will be excluded from this policy.
- V. Plymouth's Rough Sleepers Strategy Group agrees and promotes this policy with local stakeholders and Supporting People (SP) providers to ensure reconnection is available as a positive choice for people sleeping rough or vulnerable to rough sleeping.
- VI. The reconnections policy will be reviewed as needed through the Rough Sleepers Strategy Group.

### **4. Outcomes**

This policy is intended to:

- Enable stakeholders and Supporting People providers to offer re-connection to people sleeping rough or vulnerable to rough sleeping where it is available and appropriate.
- Enable people sleeping rough or vulnerable to rough sleeping to return to an area where it is more appropriate for them to live and/or receive support.
- Gain a better understanding of need and patterns.

### **5. Implementation**

- For information about the reconnection flowchart please see Appendix A.
- For guidance about establishing if reconnection is appropriate and for information about implementing the re-connection process please see Appendix C.

### **6. Access to Plymouth Services**

- Priority for hostel beds will always be based on the assessed vulnerability/support needs of the client, with those clients assessed as being the most vulnerable/having the highest support needs being given the highest priority for any available hostel bed.
- Where a client's vulnerability/support needs are assessed as being best met by reconnection to another area, and where there are no reasons why reconnection to another area cannot take place, clients will be considered as having an appropriate housing option and therefore will not be prioritised for any available hostel beds in the City.
- This will be made clear to people for whom reconnection is assessed as being the most appropriate option.

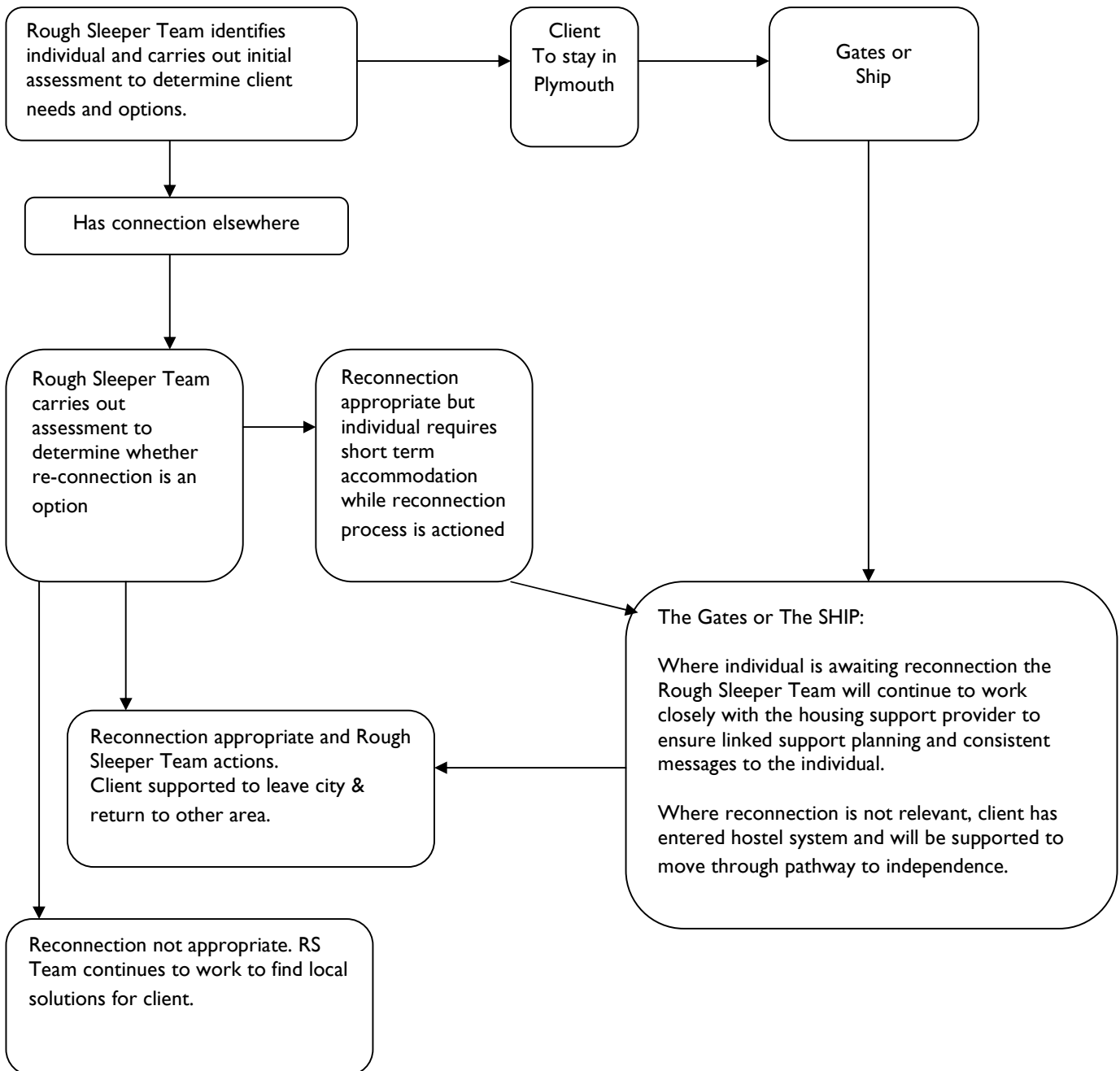
### **7. Monitoring and evaluation of the policy:**

Monitoring and evaluating the Reconnection Policy will be the responsibility of the Rough Sleepers Strategy Group and will include consideration of:

- Patterns of rough sleeping locally.
- The number of people for whom reconnection is an available option.
- The number of people reconnected successfully.
- The number of people returning to Plymouth after re-connection.
- The number of people rough sleeping who refuse to engage with the reconnection process.

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## APPENDIX A: PLYMOUTH RE-CONNECTION FLOWCHART



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### **APPENDIX B: GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING LOCAL CONNECTION**

Below are guidelines for determining whether someone has a connection to a particular place (local authority area). Answers to these issues will indicate whether someone has a connection to particular area.

<p>Client lived, from choice, continuously, in a Local Authority area for 6 months out of last 12 months or for 3 out of the last 5 years immediately prior to being remanded in custody and/or sentenced to a period in custody or admission to hospital or residential care.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>They have close relatives (parents, siblings, children) who have lived in a Local Authority area for 6 months out of the last 12 months or for at least 5 years.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>They have no established local connection with any Local Authority area.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>They are fleeing domestic violence (to a particular local authority: the place of local connection).</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>They have sustainable permanent employment within a particular authority.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>They have enrolled and been accepted into a higher education college and funding has been agreed.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>They have enrolled and been accepted into a recognised training programme in a specific area.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>They are unable to return to an area where they have a local connection because of a serious risk of violence.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>They are unable to return to an area where they have a local connection as they may present a risk to others.</p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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### **APPENDIX C: IMPLEMENTING RECONNECTION PROCESS**

#### **Establishing reconnection is appropriate**

The client is known to be sleeping rough or is identified as vulnerable to rough sleeping.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
An assessment of the client's housing and support needs has been completed by the Rough Sleeper Team and reconnection has been identified as an appropriate option to meet the client's needs.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Family/ close relatives (parents, siblings, children) who have lived in the area for at least 5 years or 6 months out of the last 12 months and/or a support network/appropriate person have been identified in another Local Authority area and can accommodate the client.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
A connection to another Local Authority area or a support network has been established, it is safe to return to this area and the client has agreed to be reconnected to this area or the area where they have a support network/appropriate person who can accommodate them.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
The referrer and/or other agencies working with the client have been informed of the intention to reconnect.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

#### **Implementing reconnection policy**

Relevant housing, rough sleeper and/or other services in the identified area have been contacted, a local connection has been confirmed, accommodation and support, if appropriate, has been agreed.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
The client has identified a support network / appropriate person and an accommodation address to be reconnected to and this has been verified prior to reconnection.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
An assessment of the client's financial situation has been carried out and it has been established that the client cannot self finance reconnection.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Date and time identified for reconnection, client has signed the reconnection agreement and travel warrant has been arranged.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Client escorted onto coach / train, as appropriate.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>