## 10. Homelessness support services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Service Provided</th>
<th>Target Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homeless Health Team</strong></td>
<td>Nurse-led Primary Care Service provided at The Rainbow Health Centre 141 Brigstock Road, Croydon, CR7 7JN</td>
<td>Homeless and rough sleepers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NHS Walk-in Services</strong></td>
<td>GP Hub Central Croydon Walk-in service East Croydon Medical Centre, 59 Addiscombe Road, Croydon, CR0 6SD</td>
<td>All groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>London Borough of Croydon Leaving Care Service</strong></td>
<td>Accommodation and support for young people leaving care. Personal Adviser support to care leavers up to their 25th birthday</td>
<td>Former looked after children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>London Borough of Croydon Family Justice Centre and MARAC</strong></td>
<td>Supporting families experiencing domestic violence, providing support and developing a safety plan. MARAC is held fortnightly, and discusses support for highest risk cases and develops coordinated safety plans to support victims</td>
<td>Residents experiencing domestic violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bromley and Croydon Womens Aid</strong></td>
<td>Support and refuge for women experiencing domestic violence Tel: 020 8313 9303</td>
<td>Residents experiencing domestic violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Domestic Violence Helpline</strong></td>
<td>Support for women experiencing domestic violence Tel: 0808 2000 247.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Turning Point Recovery Network</strong></td>
<td>Substance misuse support services</td>
<td>Residents with substance misuse problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**London Borough of Croydon, Gateway and Welfare **</td>
<td>One to one support, surgeries, home visits</td>
<td>Households vulnerable to housing/financial crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>London Borough of Croydon, Gateway and Welfare Welfare rights team</strong></td>
<td>Budgeting review, support to increase personal income</td>
<td>Households vulnerable to housing/financial crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>London Borough of Croydon, Gateway and Welfare Personal budgeting</strong></td>
<td>Support and guidance for people affected by welfare reform</td>
<td>Households vulnerable to housing/financial crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>London Borough of Croydon, Gateway and Welfare Welfare reform team</strong></td>
<td>Community Connect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10.1. As part of a review of homelessness local authorities should examine the provision of support services for people who are homeless, or who are likely to become homeless or who have been homeless before and need support to prevent them from becoming homeless again.

10.2. This section sets out the services provided to assist vulnerable and older people to remain independent, floating support and tenancy sustainment services, services provided to care leavers and other young people, resettlement service and services for victims of domestic violence.

10.3. Advice and information services have been detailed in Section 8 of the review, and supported housing services provided through Homelessness Prevention Grant are detailed in Section 9.

Health services for homeless people

10.4. **Homeless Health Team** - provides a designated service targeting the street homeless, those accommodated in hostels, families living in Bed and Breakfast accommodation, and Asylum Seekers. The service offers a specialised service tailored to meet the specific health needs of this group. A designated surgery, the Rainbow Health Centre, provides registration for a marginalised group that previously had great difficulty in registering within the borough. They offer a full range of health care services including health checks and childhood Immunisations. Outreach activities in collaboration with the voluntary sector enables the team to provide specific services at sites that will be attended by both the homeless and asylum seekers.

10.5. **The NHS walk in service** - provides drop-in health advice, information and treatment for minor injuries, access to GP if needed, links with homeless health team and migrant help line to help deliver service to asylum seekers and homeless people, including rough sleepers.

10.6. **Support for Care leavers** - Floating support schemes enable young people leaving Care to achieve and maintain independent living. Officers from Gateway and Residents services and Leaving Care and independence service meet on a six weekly basis to plan the best route into independent living for individual care leavers. In addition, local authorities are required to appoint a Personal Adviser to support care leavers based on the needs of the young person as set out in their statutory Pathway Plan. This will include support to access housing and developing the practical and other skills required for independent living. Croydon’s arrangements are set out in our Leaving Care Policy\(^1\) and in our recently published ‘local offer’ which covers all aspects of housing and homelessness relevant to care leavers, and the support available\(^2\).

10.7. **Green Light service** – the Green Light service is provided by volunteers and provides minimal invasive medical care and a signposting service to Croydon’s rough sleepers.

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\(^2\) [https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/documents/s9941/Appendix%20%20Care%20Leavers%20Local%20Offer.pdf](https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/documents/s9941/Appendix%20%20Care%20Leavers%20Local%20Offer.pdf)
Support for people experiencing domestic abuse

10.8. **Multi-agency Risk Assessment and Independent Domestic Violence Advisors** - A key aspect of domestic violence partnership work is the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). MARACs are regular local meetings where information about high risk domestic abuse victims (those at risk of murder or serious harm) is shared between local agencies. There are currently over 260 MARACs operating across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

10.9. By bringing all agencies together at a MARAC, sharing relevant and proportionate information, and ensuring that whenever possible the voice of the victim is represented by an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA), a risk focused, co-ordinated safety plan can be drawn up to support the victim. An IDVA is a named professional case worker for domestic abuse victims whose primary purpose is to address the safety of 'high risk' victims and their children. IDVAs are a victim's main point of contact with services. They normally work with their clients from the point of crisis to assess the level of risk, discuss the range of suitable options and develop coordinated safety plans. IDVAs are proactive in implementing safety plans, which include practical steps to protect victims and their children, as well as longer-term solutions. These plans will include actions from the MARAC as well as sanctions and remedies available through the criminal and civil courts, housing options and services available through other organisations. IDVAs offer independent support and work over the short- to medium-term to put victims on the path to long-term safety.

10.10. **The National Domestic Violence Helpline** - The Helpline can give support, help and information over the telephone, wherever the caller might be in the country - call the helpline on 0808 200 0247.

10.11. **Bromley and Croydon Women's Aid** – Bromley and Croydon Womens Aid provides refuge accommodation for any woman and her children (boys must be under the age of 12) who is experiencing domestic abuse, or who is at risk of abuse. They also supports people in the community who want to know their options, and raise awareness on domestic abuse and how people can seek assistance and support. Tel: 020 8313 9303

Support to help people live independently

10.12. **The Staying Put Team** service and Major Adaptations Unit provides support to help people stay put who would otherwise need to move home through disabled facilities grants, to help people in private sector housing pay for aids and adaptations assistance to older and disabled people to apply for grants for repairs to their homes to bring them up to standard; the SAFE service for older people carries out safety and security works; and through aids and adaptations are also carried out to homes of council tenants with disabilities.

10.13. **Age Concern** also provides information and advice on housing, benefits, health and social care and local services and help to people moving, including furniture.

Drugs and alcohol

10.14. **The Council commissions Turning Point to provide support where there are mental health or substance misuse issues. Turning Point’s adult substance misuse services support people aged eighteen and over into recovery by tackling both treatment needs and wider social reintegration issues including housing, employment and education. Services are open to substance misusers and their families and carers for whom the service will facilitate support groups and provide training. Turning Point will take self and professional referrals by phone,
email or post or people can drop in between 9:30 and 4:30 to speak to one of the Turning Point Team.

**Gateway and Welfare**

10.15. The Council’s Gateway and Welfare division aims to improve outcomes for our residents and reduce the demand on Council services from housing and financial crisis. Gateway and Welfare work in a holistic way in response to whole family needs including income, employment, skills/training and housing needs. The services that make up Gateway and Welfare all work according to the same principles: enabling families and individuals to find sustainable solutions, collaborating to reduce any duplication, and supporting residents to take control and overcome the challenges they face.

10.16. The Gateway and Welfare division provides the following services that are particularly relevant to this section of the homelessness review:

- Debt Management – Helping residents who have debts/require budgeting support and signpost to agencies to help consolidate debts
- Income Maximisation – supporting residents to apply for benefits, they may be entitled to which helps maximise income. Support residents to find employment/increase hours.
- Employment; Training, work experience
- Relationship/Parenting support
- Public Health - signposting residents on for further support.

10.17. **Enablement and Welfare: Interventions Team** – provides assessments for approximately 500 housing benefit applicants every month. They process around 460 claims for free school meals and are responsible for income collection in respect of emergency accommodation. As part of collecting arrears or outstanding debts the service provides help with budgeting and supports residents who are affected by welfare reforms (e.g. under occupancy and benefit cap).

10.18. **Enablement and Welfare: Welfare Rights Team** – supports residents to identify welfare benefits they may be entitled to and make an application. The work the team does helps residents to retain existing employment, or to find new employment, helps reduce child poverty, and increase income to help cover additional costs of caring or costs arising due to disability. The team supports families and individuals facing poverty by providing benefits and debt advice, and supports those with mental illness or addiction problems, and families whose children have a life limiting illness or severe disability. It assists vulnerable residents to access support and services provided by the council and other third sector organisations such as grants, aids and adaptations. It also provides a range of outreach services for people who may be in danger of exclusion due to age, poor health lack of transport and psychological barriers to access mainstream advice services, and home visits to those unable to leave their home.

10.19. **Community Connect** – works with residents in local communities to improve their financial resilience, employment, and to prevent homelessness for those most in need. The service is based on an evidence based understanding of local needs. Community Connect also helps residents on a budget and encourages healthy eating habits through its Food Stop Service. The Food Stop supports people that owe money to the council by helping to reduce their food shopping bill by paying £3.50 a week for around £20 worth of grocery shopping. People signed up to the service can save an average of £500-£700 per year. The service (currently
based in New Addington Fieldway) has supported over 100 people to clear their debts, and has delivered £324,000 worth of cost avoidance savings to Croydon Council. The Council plans to roll-out Community Connect and Food Stop to other parts of Croydon so that even more residents can benefit.

*Review question 13 – Homelessness prevention*

*Have we captured all the relevant homelessness support services currently being delivered in Croydon?*

*Given the levels of homelessness set out in the review and the profile of homelessness, are there any significant gaps in our homelessness support service provision? If yes, what are they and how can they be filled?*

*Contact details for feedback/comments on this section*

Input and feedback can be provided in writing, by email, by telephone or via the survey on our Get Involved web site. The information provided as part of this review will feed into Croydon’s third Homelessness Strategy since the Homelessness Act 2002 was introduced.

To provide feedback or comments please write to: David Morris, Gateway Transformation Programme Lead (Interim), Croydon Council, Bernard Weatherill House, 8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA, or email david.2.morris@croydon.gov.uk.