



July 2019 update - Stroud Green Road

We would like to update you on the lighting upgrade works being carried out under Stroud Green Road (SGR) Railway Bridge, as well as our continued work with the vulnerable people who sleep rough in this location. This briefing is a further update to the one published in April 2019.

Lighting works

The lighting upgrade and pigeon proofing repairs have now been completed under Stroud Green Road Bridge. The final stage is the painting and minor repairs of the bridge.

The start date for this work is Sunday 7th July with a total programme of 8 weeks (5 weeks for Seven Sisters Road bridge & 3 weeks Stroud Green Road bridge) working Sunday to Thursday nights (22:00 to 05:00).

The councils Highways Team are currently liaising with key partners, including TFL and Network Rail, to ensure the works run smoothly. They are also exploring options for making the current fencing more robust to ensure continuous access to the walls of the bridges for the contractors during this period.

What are we doing to help those who are rough sleeping?

Our priority is getting people into safe, secure accommodation and giving them the support they need to move off the streets permanently, where they are at significant risk. Islington and Haringey Councils work together with a wide range of partners to ensure a holistic approach is offered:

- Over the last two years, outreach teams have supported 37 people into accommodation who were bedding down at this site.
- Specialist outreach teams continue to visit this area regularly to engage with anyone rough sleeping here, offering support to get into accommodation and to link into any additional support services required.
- Islington hosted the temporary 'pop up' floating hub in May 2019, which offered immediate access to accommodation and support to anyone rough sleeping in Islington. Everyone bedding down at Stroud Green Road during this time was offered the hub. It operated for 2 weeks, offering ongoing accommodation and support to those that accessed it, to prevent a return to rough sleeping. 18 people who were rough sleeping in Islington went into the floating hub.
- A wide partnership event was held in May, which was attended by over 60 people from wide range of statutory and voluntary sector partners, as well as specialist advisors from the Ministry of Housing. This event looked at the various interventions that have been used to support rough sleepers in this location over the last 2 years and also identified areas for further work and collaboration. Some great ideas were generated from this and an action plan is being developed from the feedback, which will inform future work in the area.

- Streets Kitchen, in collaboration with Islington and Haringey Councils are currently planning Streets Fest! 2019. This is a festival which will be held in Finsbury Park in September, date to be confirmed. This is a health & wellbeing event for those who are homeless or vulnerably housed in both boroughs. The event will provide a 'one stop shop' for people to access a wide range of different support agencies in the same place, on the same day. We hope that bringing services outdoors in this way will increase accessibility and reach those in most need. This event is also open to members of the public who can come along to find out more about the support that is available and also how they can help. This event was held for the first time last year and was attended by over 200 people and was a great success.
- Islington Council worked with partners, including the Pillion Trust and Streets Kitchen, to deliver a temporary winter shelter in Islington, called the Glasshouse, for 15 people who were rough sleeping. This was an exciting project, which put into use a disused former glass factory. This project was supported by Housing Justice and the London Mayor. The Hornsey Road Traders Association donated £3,500 to the shelter and the positive support offered by the local community massively contributed to the success of the project. It is hoped that the shelter will re-open again this winter 2019.
- We continue to look at innovative ways in which we can support people and continue to review the needs of those rough sleeping. This has seen the implementation of a No recourse to public funds worker and a complex needs worker, who are able to offer greater support to those on the streets with these needs. We also secured funds from the Ministry of Housing to fund 2 additional navigator roles, who are now in post and offering more intensive support to those who need it.
- We continue to work with the local neighbourhood police teams, safer transport police and British Transport police to ensure co-ordinated efforts in addressing drug-related activity and criminality. In May, we secured a civil injunction against an individual who persisted in engaging in anti-social behaviour in the area, which was negatively impacting on local residents and the community.
- Islington and Haringey Council, along with relevant partners meet regularly to review support for individuals and the wider approach.

Ongoing Challenges

- This location continues to see a constant flow of new people arriving and sleeping rough here. During the last week of June, 3 new people were found rough sleeping at this location, all of whom were all were offered accommodation. 2 of the 3 individuals took up this offer.
- There are some people, who despite continued offers of accommodation and support, remain at this location and their health and wellbeing is deteriorating placing them at risk of harm. We are concerned that the vulnerable people here are being exploited by drug dealers, taking money in exchange for Class A drugs and that this area is becoming hostile as a result

We also believe one of the draws to this location is that people are being given money by well-meaning members of the public which is funding their substance use. This is why some people are reluctant to engage with support on offer to move away from the streets.

Going forwards

- Specialist outreach teams will continue to target this area to offer support to people rough sleeping here.
- The regularity of deep cleans of Stroud Green Road will be increased once works are finished and the fencing is removed.
- We will continue working with partners to take forward ideas from the action plan created at recent partnership event. This includes working more closely with the wider community, where we hope to draw on the success of the Glasshouse shelter, where community input was key and supported the success of the project.
- We will work with partners to deliver Streets Fest Festival 2019 at Finsbury Park and hopefully reopen the Glasshouse shelter this winter.
- We will continue working with partners to seek new ways of supporting people in this area, by working in collaboration.

Islington Council is committed to preventing homelessness and is investing in vital support for rough sleepers. For more on the support we offer visit www.islington.gov.uk/roughsleeping

What can I do to help?

- Talk to the person. Being kind and interested can be invaluable.
- Consider donating to a homeless charity or a night shelter in Islington or Haringey (details below).
- If you see someone new rough sleeping, report this to **Streetlink** giving as much detail as you can on their location and a description of the person to help the team identify them.
- Buy a copy of The Big Issue magazine from a registered vendor.
- Signpost people to relevant services and day centres (see below) where they can get help.
- Consider volunteering your time with a local organisation to help those on the streets.
- If you see drug dealing/drug related activity – please report this to the Police via 101 as this helps police to build up an intelligence picture and target their resources.

Contacts:

- Streetlink: www.streetlink.org/ 0300 500 0914
- Thames Reach: www.thamesreach.org.uk/ 020 7702 4260
- St. Mungo's: www.mungos.org/ 020 3856 6000
- Women at the Well: www.watw.org.uk/ 020 7520 1710
- All People All Places (Haringey), all-year round casework with overnight respite in winter: www.allpeopleallplaces.org
- The Margins Day Centre – held at Union Chapel, 19b Compton Terrace, N1 2UN on Wednesday from 11am until 2pm.
- The Manna Day Centre – held at St Stephen's Church, 17 Canonbury Rd, London N1 2DF on Tuesday from 7pm to 9pm, Wednesday 1pm to 3pm and Friday 9am -11am.
- Housing Aid centre at 222 Upper St, London N1 1YA for advice on housing options available to you - there is a drop in service on Monday to Friday from 9am until 5pm.

- Report any aggressive begging/anti-social behaviour to the local policing team by e-mailing NI-Finsburyparkward@met.police.uk or telephoning 0203 276 3030. In an emergency always call 999
- Report any non-crime related anti-social behaviour occurring to your area housing office or Islington Council's out-of-hours ASB line: 020 7527 7272, Haringey Council's ASB line: 020 8489 1335
<http://www.haringey.gov.uk/community/community-safety-and-engagement/anti-social-behaviour>

We know we cannot do this alone. If you have any comments, questions or suggestions on how we can tackle this harm, please contact sarah.turley@islington.gov.uk or maddie1.watkins@haringey.gov.uk