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Analysing understandings of 'rough sleeping': managing, becoming and being homeless

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Analysing understandings of 'rough sleeping': managing, becoming and being homeless

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Abstract

This research considers the ways in which the lives of rough sleepers are understood. In doing so, it considers the ways in which rough sleepers are positioned by services, the ways in which rough sleepers account for their own lives, and the ways in which rough sleepers negotiate and manage their day-to-day experiences.

Analysing previous literature and policy, the research claims that lives might be better understood using a narrative approach alongside other methods. Therefore, it employs methods of life mapping and auto-photography with rough sleepers, alongside participant observation and semi-structured interviews with service providers. These methods aided the understanding of the ways in which each group understands rough sleepers' lives.

The research finds that in contrast to policy and service provider discourses, which often focus on deficits, discourses of poor decision making in ideas of causation, and dichotomies of deservingness, rough sleepers' own accounts focus on the importance of context to develop an understanding of the importance of key life events. Furthermore, the research suggests that understandings of rough sleepers' lives presented in policy and service provider discourses which see these lives as 'chaotic', 'off track' and 'failed' are in stark contrast to rough sleepers own accounts, which entail elements of order, success, and aspirations.

In considering these alternative approaches to understanding the lives of rough sleepers, the study proposes that narrative approaches to engaging with rough sleepers, which recognise the agency that rough sleepers have, could provide a way to better understand the ways in which rough sleepers understand their own lives.

Acknowledgements

Contents

List of Tables and Figures

Tables

Figures

Chapter One

Introduction

In the twenty-first century, 'rough sleeping'[1] still marks the most visible form of marginality and inequality in Britain despite being a policy and funding focus since 1990. Various attempts to reduce, or eliminate rough sleeping over this time have fallen short of intended targets[2] (for example in pledges to eradicate rough sleeping by 2012 (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011b, 2008)), and one recent national policy document even has explicit within its title "Vision to end rough sleeping" (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011b). Despite these pledges, 'snapshot' estimates claim that in England around 2,414 people could be sleeping rough on a single night (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2014), with other counts suggesting that the actual figure could in fact be much higher (Broadway, 2014). Furthermore, official estimates have increased year on year since 2010 (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011a, 2012b, 2013, 2014). Therefore, rough sleeping presents an ongoing social issue.

This suggests a problem with the way current policy or research understands 'rough sleepers'. This thesis contends that many of the dominant ways of understanding rough sleepers' lives in policy are often framed by policy elites and are based on historical understandings and ideological

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[1] 'Rough sleeping' and 'rough sleepers' are referred to in quotation marks here, because these are problematic terms. This research aims to understand different ways in which those who sometimes 'sleep rough' would define their own experiences (see chapter four) and thus questions this terminology. In the interest of readability quotations marks are not applied to these terms throughout the thesis. However, whenever other problematic terms arise these too will be placed in quotation marks in the first instance.
[2] Even where these have been achieved, such as the Rough Sleepers Unit's acclaimed success, questions about the legitimacy of such claims have been asked, for example Branigan' (2001).

standpoints. These have failed to take account of the voices of rough sleepers themselves, or alternatively, have suppressed these voices in presenting understandings of homelessness. Much previous research about homelessness has focused either on risk factors 'causing' or allowing 'exits' homelessness (see Anderson & Christian, 2003; Fitzpatrick, Kemp, & Klinker, 2000; Mcnaughton Nicholls, 2009; Pleace, 2000 for discussions of causation, and Harding & Willett, 2008; Warnes, Crane, & Coward, 2013 for discussions of 'exit routes' from homelessness); developing typologies about 'the homeless' (e.g. Ravenhill, 2008); or enumeration of rough sleepers (for examples of such research, see Busch-Geertsema, 2010; Cloke, Milbourne, & Widdowfield, 2001; Williams, 2005). There is also a lack of research addressing the ways in which service providers understand and discuss their daily interactions with rough sleepers.

This research addresses some of the issues in such approaches by focusing upon developing knowledge of the ways in which rough sleepers' lives are differently understood. In order to achieve this, this research looks at the experiences of people providing services to rough sleepers, and the ways in which they discuss *managing* rough sleepers. It employs ethnographic and in-depth approaches to understand these experiences, examining policy documents produced in service spaces, and draws on interviews carried out with service providers to identify the different ways in which rough sleepers' are positioned by service providers. In doing this, the research aims to address some of the gaps that exist in research about homelessness service providers' opinions of rough sleepers.

Alongside this, the thesis considers the stories of rough sleepers themselves, looking at rough sleepers' accounts of their own lives more generally and their narratives of *becoming* homeless. In combining the narrative and visual methods of life mapping and auto-photography, the research aims to give voice to the accounts of rough sleepers. In utilising such an approach, the research aims to present these stories in ways which do not reduce their experiences to risk factors or causal

pathways, but instead presents an appreciative view of the ways in which factors may be interactive, unclear, and complex. As such, it aims to build on other life story research carried out with people experiencing homelessness (e.g. Brown et al., n.d.; McNaughton, 2008; Ravenhill, 2008) and acknowledges that stories of how someone becomes homeless are often complex, and reduction only to risk factors does little to explain the ways in which rough sleepers account for their own experiences of becoming homeless.

The thesis also gives account of rough sleepers' stories of *being* homeless, looking at the ways in which they discuss their day-to-day management and negotiation of being homeless, and drawing on observations made in homelessness service spaces. In doing so, the research aims to build upon previous research which has addressed this topic (for example, Snow & Anderson, 1993; Duneier, 1999; Waters, 1992; Ravenhill, 2008; McNaughton, 2008).

In order to address the topics of managing, becoming and being homeless the thesis considers four research questions, which are outlined below.

The research questions

This study explores the experiences of rough sleepers and those who provide services to rough sleepers, aiming to answer one main research question:

- How are the lives of rough sleepers understood?

In order to address this question, three further research questions are considered, which are:

- How are rough sleepers positioned by services?

- How do rough sleepers account for their own lives?

- How do rough sleepers manage and negotiate their homelessness on a day-to-day basis?

By reflecting upon current research and policy relating to the topic in chapters two and three, it is suggested that the present understandings of rough sleepers' lives are often lacking in voice from both rough sleepers and front-line service providers. This research aims to address these issues through the research questions above. In order to provide answers to these questions, the study explores the ways service providers position rough sleepers, both in policy documents in chapter five, and in the discourses of service providers in interviews in chapter six. Chapter seven and eight explore the ways in which rough sleepers give account of their own lives, exploring both in-depth stories and drawing themes across these. Chapter nine considers the ways in which rough sleepers discuss their day-to-day management and negotiation of homelessness. In exploring these differing accounts and opinions, the research builds an answer to the question '*how are the lives of rough sleepers understood?*' which allows rough sleepers to tell their own stories, whilst also describing the experiences service providers have in a context of austerity. As such, this research aims to develop an understanding of stories which allows for a fuller and more appreciative understanding of the lives of rough sleepers.

The research location

Much previous academic research about homelessness has taken place in large cities, such as London; with some moves to research rural homelessness more recently in the UK (e.g. Whiteford, 2010; Cloke et al., 2002). More recently, there have been some studies that compare smaller cities or towns, but these are often in comparison to large cities or rural spaces, and are rarely deemed worthy of their own research. Furthermore, where these have been studied, often these spaces have been selected for their 'crisis' status. These crises have tended to either reflect high levels of homelessness; particularly harsh attitudes towards homelessness (e.g. in policing of homelessness); or because of wider trends such as industrial decline, high unemployment levels, or high deprivation rates. As such, crisis inflected discourses have tended to dominate discussions of homeless spaces.

Instead, this research focuses on three towns in the English Midlands which have not previously been the focus of in-depth homelessness research. These towns are not large cities, nor rural areas, but are one large county town, one medium sized town and one small town all within the same county. Furthermore, although the impact of austerity and wider changes in UK industries are unavoidable, there is no evidence to suggest that these towns have particularly high unemployment rates or levels of deprivation. In addition, these towns do not have particularly high incidences of rough sleeping, and as such neither appear to have a rough sleeping crisis, nor seem to be going through particularly unique rapid social change. However, each of these locations has an established homelessness 'scene' (Cloke et al., 2010) including homelessness services, and the presence of rough sleepers. Therefore, in a number of ways, these towns might be considered to be 'ordinary' or 'unremarkable' in many ways. However, this ordinariness is what makes these towns interesting as a case, as this allows for a movement away from previous 'crisis' focused accounts of homeless spaces. Therefore, in studying these locations, the research makes a contribution in the study of different types of location in the study of homelessness.

Structure of the thesis

Following this introductory chapter, the thesis is split into nine subsequent chapters. Chapter two critically reviews the previous literature in the field, considering the different forms of homelessness research that have been undertaken. It critically considers some research which is seen as presenting 'risk factor' analyses (see footnote 1 on the use of quotation marks around problematic terms), and suggesting that this approach views homelessness through a risk management lens. As such, this literature is seen to distinguish between different levels or types of 'causes', and despite attempting to move away from distinguishing between 'individual' and 'structural' causes (see footnote 1), can nevertheless have the effect of reinforcing these

boundaries. It is suggested that instead a deep understanding of the lives of those who experience homelessness might be better gained by considering research approaches which move outside of only considering homelessness and the 'causes' of homelessness to considering the ways in which individuals understand and make sense of (or not) such events.

Chapter three moves into exploring the ways in which rough sleepers are positioned in national policies. It explores the historical development of policies about rough sleepers, tracking historical forms of almsgiving and Christian discourses of governing the poor (see footnote 1). The chapter then broadly traces some of the key policies relating to homelessness, from the Poor Laws to the Rough Sleepers' Initiative. The chapter considers the contemporary political context, considering the impacts of both neoliberalism and austerity on both rough sleeping and service provision. The chapter also explores current policies in relation to rough sleepers with particular understandings of rough sleepers as having 'chaotic', 'off track' and 'failed' lives evident (see footnote 1). However, it is suggested that these documents often fail to recognise the value of the voices of rough sleepers or front-line service providers.

The fourth chapter explores the methods used within this research. This research is largely qualitative in nature, and this chapter describes and reflects on the research process. It considers the methods adopted within this study, discussing the types of data gathered and the analysis of this data. It also reflects on the ethical and practical considerations and issues made during the research process, and some of the tensions that were faced during the fieldwork element of the study.

The fifth chapter moves into analysing policy documents produced in front-line homelessness services by service delivery agents, exploring the positioning of rough sleepers within such documents. It also introduces the three main services of study for this research, the Well Centre;

the Sun Centre and the Retreat. In addition, the relationship between national policies and service level interpretations and implementation of this is considered. In addition, service definitions of homelessness, rules and guidelines, and discourses about service users, are explored.

Chapter six moves into exploring the discourses of service providers, taken from research interviews and fieldnotes made during the research process. This chapter begins by considering some of the realities (and ideals) of service provision that are experienced by service providers. It then explores the perceived role of service provision and rules in the management of rough sleepers. Following this, the chapter explores the discourses about rough sleepers apparent in service provider discourses, as well as the perceived role of homelessness service provision.

The seventh chapter explores the ways in which individuals who identify as having been rough sleepers account for their own lives. This considers the accounts and life maps constructed with individuals themselves. Focusing upon three case study examples, this chapter explores the ways in which rough sleepers understand and give meaning to their own lives. In considering these accounts, it is suggested that the lives of many people who identify as rough sleepers can be understood in broader terms, with rough sleeping seen as a part of their story, but not necessarily the defining feature of their stories.

Chapter eight considers some of the themes emergent in the accounts of rough sleepers' lives. This analysis does not aim to provide a set of risk factors associated with becoming homeless, but instead aims to understand the ways in which rough sleepers give meaning to important life events within their own accounts. Such themes and patterns are understood to be important in the ways in which individuals structure and present their accounts and life stories.

Chapter nine considers the ways in which rough sleepers manage and negotiate their lives on a day-to-day basis. Drawing on arguments that homelessness must be understood as multi-dimensional, the first section of this chapter claims that a number of pains of homelessness are evident in the accounts of rough sleepers. It moves on to consider the ways in which rough sleepers manage these pains, through their use of space, homeless cultures, and services.

The final chapter concludes the study, by bringing together an analysis of the different understandings of rough sleepers' lives. It claims that, whilst understandings of rough sleepers as chaotic, off track, failed or undeserving are made within policy documents and in some service provider accounts, these differ greatly from the accounts that rough sleepers present of themselves. In focusing upon homelessness and the management of the factors seen to lead to it, approaches employed in policy and service spaces are seen at times to lack an in-depth understanding of the context of rough sleepers' behaviours. Instead, it is suggested that an understanding of rough sleepers lives' that employs a narrative approach and focuses upon the lives of individuals, instead of only on their homelessness (and associated causal or risk factors), might foster an approach which develops more effective and lasting solutions to the difficulties faced by rough sleeping individuals.

As is evident from the above structure, chapters five to nine consider empirical data from the research. Within the study, the method was to approach the research from a 'bottom up' perspective, whereby developing an understanding of individuals' stories, experiences and relationships is key. However, within the structure of the thesis, these are presented in a 'top down' manner, whereby service spaces and service provider perspectives are presented prior to rough sleepers' own perspectives. Such a presentation style aims for the reader to develop an understanding of the context and 'scenes' of homeless service spaces and provision for rough sleepers. This in turn allows for a deeper understanding of the relationships that exist within (and

outside of) service spaces, and of the context in which both service providers and rough sleepers'

individual narratives and experiences are discussed.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

This review is split into three main parts, relating to the main sub-sections of this thesis: Managing, being and becoming homeless. In considering these topics, it critically explores previous literature, tracing some of the key arguments in the field. It suggests that for managing 'the homeless', a changing context of provision is evident, affected by political and other influences. For becoming homeless, the chapter considers the debate about the causes of homelessness, suggesting that approaches which acknowledge the agency of homeless individuals potentially provide a useful analysis. In being homeless, the different tactics individuals use to negotiate their experiences of homelessness are considered. This focuses upon three areas that are cited within multiple accounts of homelessness: homeless culture(s), survival strategies, and use of space. The chapter concludes by outlining the theoretical approach employed within this thesis.

Managing 'the homeless': A changing context for service provision

Some recent accounts of cities suggest a punitive turn and the presence of 'revanchism' (Smith, 1996; Mitchell, 2003). DeVerteuil (2006) highlights three symbols of US punitive cities: The defunding of poverty and housing programmes at a local level, within a wider context of

governmental welfare cuts; the hardening of extreme social and economic inequalities; and a 'backlash' against the presence of the poor in public spaces. Whilst the UK context might be argued to be a little less clear, (for example, in policy terms, there are ongoing funding for rough sleepers projects, whilst at the same time cuts to services that support rough sleepers, and an increasingly restrictive welfare system), counter-arguments have suggested that accounts of an increasingly punitive existence for rough sleepers overlooks spaces of care and compassion, with evidence of a number of services which aim to support rough sleepers (Cloke et al., 2010, 2005, 2007a; DeVerteuil, May, et al., 2009; DeVerteuil, 2006; Bowlby, 2011). These counter-arguments have suggested that the presence of care and compassion based activities and services presents a challenge to the revanchist thesis.

However, in their analysis of the ways in which new poverty management is used in relation to homeless people, Scullion et al. (2015, p. 420) note that:

> On closer inspection ... the new 'poverty management' seems at least compatible with revanchism, which typically involves *coercion* of homeless people, in their exclusion from prime spaces and their abjection (cast down as well as out) (Kristeva, 1982). This abjection, however, is not necessarily permanent or intended to be so; it can be associated with containment, confinement or 'maintenance' (in abeyance) within marginal spaces such as shelters or ghettoes (Wacquant, 2008), where the abject are subjected to a variety of disciplines, crudely understood as 'care and control'. This is evident in the imposition of market disciplines (Cloke et al. 2010, p. 37) and control of the 'conduct of conduct' (Cloke et al. 2010, p. 38).

However, these authors note the complexity of responses in front-line services, suggesting that there is mixed evidence for this. Bearing in mind these accounts, it appears that some of the strategies employed for managing homeless people, both in and out of service spaces, might be understood as entailing elements of revanchist practices. Authors elsewhere have noted the coercive nature of many practices for the management of homeless individuals (and groups), and even those of responsibilisation entail elements of coercion to engage in 'responsible' practices (Fitzpatrick & Jones, 2005; Johnsen & Fitzpatrick, 2010; Flint, 2009; Whiteford, 2010a). In this context, it is important to return to the ways in which political factors have shaped these practices.

As observed in chapter two, under successive British governments of the past three and a half decades, notions of conditionality have been emphasised. However, under New Labour, as will be seen in chapter three, the use of enforcement measures to encourage homeless people to engage with services were considered (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998).

Under the New Labour government, an increasing focus on professionalisation of voluntary services was also used to create 'good partners' for delivering welfare (Ling, 2000), and this continued with the allocation of Supporting People funding (Buckingham, 2009). Within this context of professionalisation, some homelessness services have moved from relatively informal processes of support, to more formal procedures, such as line management, standardised procedures, the use of paid staff and increased monitoring and recording of outcomes (Buckingham, 2009, 2012; Scullion et al., 2015).

Applying for funding can require meeting set criteria, aligning to particular aims, focusing on particular outcomes, or making statements of intent or goals for the service (which can implicitly entail assumptions or judgements about the nature, causes or solutions to homelessness, and individuals who experience it) (May et al., 2005). Therefore, services may, to different extents, appear to buy into such discourses, as partners within particular funding schemes. Cloke et al. (2010, p. 39) suggest that such partnerships create 'insider' services, whereby:

> organizations working in partnership with government (and thereby viewed as 'fit' for inclusion in governance at a distance) are granted at least a temporary legitimacy in terms of their apparent professionalism and suitability to engage in the wider responsibilities of citizenship.

However, in contrast to this, 'outsider' organisations, who work outside of government partnerships are seen as less legitimate, with the authors suggesting:

> those working outside of partnerships with government, who often rely on charitable giving and volunteer labour and are thus often less well placed to provide a high standard of specialist service. Some such outsider organizations are often subjectified as deviant and unprofessional because their activities involve serving homeless people

on the streets, and therefore effectively oppose government-led orthodoxies geared towards removing homeless people from sight. Actually existing neoliberalism, then, works in parallel to enact ethical codes and subjectivities of welfare for compliant insiders while imposing more punitive codes of deviancy on uncompliant outsiders. (Cloke et al., 2010, p. 39).

However, it should be noted that this distinction acts as a continuum rather than a clear and mutually exclusive divide between insider and outsider organisations.

Processes of professionalisation can be understood within wider processes of neoliberalisation (May et al., 2005). Discussing the processes of neoliberalisation, Peck & Tickell (2002) suggest that there has been a change from the "roll back" neoliberalism of the 1980s, whereby deregulation and marketisation were the main foci; to a "roll out" version of neoliberalism that became discernible from the 1990s onwards. This roll out neoliberalism, they argue, creates a context "in which new forms of institution-building and governmental intervention have been licensed within the (broadly defined) neoliberal project." (Peck & Tickell, 2002, p. 389). They go on to suggest that:

> neoliberalism is increasingly associated with the political foregrounding of new modes of "social" and penal policy- making, concerned specifically with the aggressive reregulation, disciplining, and containment of those marginalized or dispossessed by the neoliberalization of the 1980s. (Peck & Tickell, 2002, p. 389)

These authors suggest that in this shifting terrain:

> …new technologies of government are being designed and rolled out, new discourses of "reform" are being constructed (often around new policy objectives such as "welfare dependency"), new institutions and modes of delivery are being fashioned, and new social subjectivities are being fostered. (Peck & Tickell, 2002, p. 389).

These modes of governance are not only applied to individuals, under notions of responsible and active citizenship, and taking the form of conditionality (Dobson, 2011); but also to services, in questioning whether they foster responsible citizenship (or sustain irresponsible citizenship, (Johnsen et al. (2005b) see also Bright (1999) for example, on political discourses of this type) . Thus, service positions of legitimacy (and deservingness) are precarious, in similar ways to those in which rough sleepers are seen. Therefore, distinctions between more/less insider and outsider

organisations gaining a status that is viewed within the sector as legitimate, professional, and knowledgeable (or not) can be closely tied to official discourses of homelessness, and can be linked to service discourses of causation, deservingness and management techniques. Further, such positions are not fixed but open to change. Additionally, services must continually develop their narrative, as funding is often fixed-term and reliant on demonstrations of 'success'. As such, "the industry is self-perpetuating, in that, whilst attempting to alleviate homelessness, it is also in its interest to ensure that there is always a next phase that needs to be looked into or addressed" (Ravenhill, 2008, p. 15).

Professionalisation of services can be seen as being double edged, as "This has not only improved the quality of many services, but has also introduced a target driven culture such that providers now work to a framework of specific outcomes against which their funding depends." (Murray & Johnsen, 2011, p. 326). Furthermore, Whiteford (2007, p. 23) claims that:

> this has enabled the homelessness sector to transform from a loose and uncoordinated network of concerned individuals and small organisations providing basic 'survivalist' services such as shelter, food and companionship, into a multi-million pound industry which is characterised by diversity, innovation and, above all, a modern business-like approach.

Although Whiteford's claim of a previously loose and unconnected network of actors might be more accurately described as an 'informal' network of actors, his claim of a 'business-like' approach is important, as well as his note of the innovation and diversity within the sector.

In the pursuit of funding, some 'insider' services might be criticised as too heavily focusing on responding to government agendas in order to maximise their chances of receiving funding, adopting a business-like approach at the expense of receptivity to the 'other' (Whiteford, 2007; Scullion et al., 2015; Cloke et al., 2010). However, in some service spaces, receptivity of the homeless

individual has remained central to the delivery of services, and as such, this cannot be simply written out of accounts of homelessness (Cloke et al., 2010).

Moves to professionalise services can also involve hiring paid staff and providing "a greater range of facilities and higher levels of support to move into independent living." (Johnsen et al., 2005a, p. 791). Thus it could be argued that the ethic of an underpinning 'voluntary attitude' is weakened by both an employment of a greater number of 'professional' paid staff, and by a focus on a business-like approach. However, as is noted elsewhere:

> 'professionals' can have a voluntary attitude, while 'amateurs' can lack receptivity to the other. The actions of any given professional or amateur can simultaneously both advance (through containment and discipline) and push back (through meeting physical, emotional and spiritual needs) a revanchist project (Scullion et al., 2015, p. 420).

Additionally, professionalisation has in some ways provided legitimacy for the work of (some) homelessness services, with increased funding allowing for the development of previously unachievable support, arguably improving the 'quality' of services (Whiteford, 2007; Murray & Johnsen, 2011). This recognition has allowed services to stake claims as being 'experts' in their field (Clarke et al., 2000). In doing so, professionalisation also indicates "the ways in which topics of public and political concern become colonized - owned, even - by particular types of knowledge in ways that organize power relations." (Clarke et al., 2000, p. 8). As such, and as seen within accounts of insider and outsider organisations, it is not that all homelessness services have gained legitimacy in this way, but that particular discourses and forms of service provision have been granted greater legitimacy by funders.

In addition, activities associated with professionalisation such as keeping formal records and measuring outcomes in service users' lives are also important in creating professional services, as

they allow services to demonstrate success, providing justification for funding in an increasing competitive and accountability-focused industry (Buckingham, 2009).

However, it is possible to question the basis on which 'quality' is measured. For example, measures of service 'quality' such as a higher success rate in re-housing, or fewer people seen sleeping rough might result in particular management processes and outcomes. As Ravenhill notes, a pressure to demonstrate such success can mean that "there is a danger of 'client hogging' and cream-skimming, with organizations competing for easy clients, or to keep funded beds full. Problematic clients and/or those with chaotic behaviour are difficult and not cost-effective to help" (Ravenhill, 2008). Similarly, approaches which aim only to move people away from the streets can result in 'warehousing' individuals (Scullion et al., 2015; Cloke et al., 2010). Such approaches arguably give little interest to the priorities and needs of rough sleepers themselves. However, in contrast, professionalised services might employ personalised approaches, which offer less conditional or unconditional support to the client, outside of a standard and uniformly applied approach.

As such, the outcomes of professionalisation should be understood as complex and multi-faceted. The processes associated with professionalisation can lead to varying (sometimes, seemingly contradictory) outcomes. However, whilst the aforementioned developments have undoubtedly affected the homelessness sector, the impact has not been uniform across all services (Cloke et al., 2010). The founding principles that underpin a particular service can continue to infuse and shape its development, despite a changing context or the introduction of new ways of working. For example, historically, many homelessness services in England developed in response to a perceived local need, and had religious roots at their outset (Johnsen et al., 2005a; Murray & Johnsen, 2011; Johnsen & Fitzpatrick, 2009). However, for some services, the pressure to professionalise has impacted on their approach to working with rough sleepers (including differing degrees to which they have maintained their religious ethos).

In their analysis of English day centres Johnsen et al. (2005) suggest that some centres have moved away from a religious ethos in favour of a secular ethos, whilst others have maintained a religious ethos, whilst professionalisation has also impacted on services. Johnsen noting that (2014, p. 419):

> In some cases, religious names reflected strong links with religious bodies and/or the ongoing influence of faith on programme delivery. In others, religious titles were described by project managers as little more than 'historical artefacts' harking back to a faith heritage that has little, if any, influence on contemporary ethos or operation.

Johnsen, Cloke and May suggest four broad types of homelessness service ethos present, as shown in the table below, although it should be noted that these authors are clear that "our accounts of organisational ethos...called into question any neat ethical distinction between faith-based and secular ethics of generosity and service" (Cloke et al., 2005, p. 1090).

Type	Original ethos	Current ethos	Professionalised
Overtly faith-based, non-professionalised	Religious	Religious	No
Overtly faith-based, professionalised	Religious	Religious	Yes
Shift from faith-based, professionalised	Religious	Secular	Yes
Secular-based, professionalised	Secular	Secular	Yes

Table 1: Types of homelessness service, by ethos

However, the context in which each service operates may vary from others, and whilst ethos and professionalisation play important roles within service provision, other factors such as service history; location; staffing; relationships with other local services; (non-) charging for services; and explicit and implicit attitudes towards rough sleepers, all potentially play a role in the day-to-day delivery of homelessness provision, both in the formal services provided, and the informal 'feel' of service spaces (Cloke et al., 2010; Murray & Johnsen, 2011).

Summary: Managing the Homeless

Within this review, a changing context of service provision is discussed. This acknowledges the changing political landscape. These developments trace the professionalisation of homelessness services, noting the ways in which this has improved the standards of services, but at the cost of working within official discourses, and having to meet contractual obligations, and these are already suggested to have changed the way in which services position service users. The authors here also suggest that local differences, including those between services, are evident in the management of homeless individuals. However, since the publication of these studies, austerity measures in Britain have impacted upon rough sleepers and the services provided for them. Therefore, the positionings of rough sleepers may have changed due to financial (and other) pressures on services, which have increased the competition for resources, both between services, and for service users within them.

Becoming homeless: Structure, individual choice, and agency

> Considerable disagreement exists among researchers about the nature of homeless people, the causes of their condition, and their capacity for remedial action. This is an important issue because, in many circumstances, the descriptions used become labels which can pigeonhole individuals in negative ways. Once classified as "the underclass," for instance, those who are down and out are seen by many as hopeless, a latter-day version of the "undeserving poor." (Daly, 1996, p. 7).

As is noted in the above extract, debate about the causes of homelessness has been an on-going feature of homelessness research. These causes are broadly understood to constitute what makes someone *become* homeless, and as such, are worthy of some consideration here. As Neale (1997, p. 49) notes, in her critique of homelessness theory:

two theoretical approaches have polarised the debate about the causes of homelessness. One of these emphasises structural factors and the other focuses on individual or agency explanations.

Useful for examining these moral judgements, Parsell & Parsell (2012) discuss two types of purported 'choice' in decisions to sleep rough: "rational choice" and "deviant choice". Discussing rational choice views, they suggest that "From this perspective, homelessness is a calculated and rational choice of a free agent" (Parsell & Parsell, 2012, p. 3), discussing homelessness as an alternative to needing to engage in employment, instead prioritising leisure and comfort. The second of Parsell and Parsell's approaches is that of 'deviant choice'. They discuss this as being related to "an irrational choice; choosing badly and defeating oneself…On this model, homelessness is not itself chosen, but a consequence of other deviant life choices." (Parsell & Parsell, 2012, p. 4). Whilst the authors point to refusal to engage in the labour market as the main deviant choice, such an approach can also be applied to illicit drug use, intimate partners, or engaging in illegal or illicit activities. As a result, individuals are seen to carry the responsibility for the decisions they have made. Thus within accounts of decision making, differences are drawn between deviant choices which render individuals responsible for their actions; and rational choices in which the individual may see an adaptive function in becoming homeless.

In contrast to these accounts of individual choice, structural explanations of homelessness "locate the causes of homelessness in external social and economic factors, such as housing market conditions, poverty and employment" (Fitzpatrick et al., 2009, p. 4). These are often seen as being outside of an individual's control. Further, Fitzpatrick (2005) has suggested that at least four levels of factors potentially playing a role in homelessness causation are evident: economic, housing, interpersonal and individual, in a combination of ways, whereby no single one can be presumed to be logically prior to others.

Analysing such distinctions, Rosenthal (2000) claims that sub-populations of rough sleepers are evident in previous research, and these have been traditionally split into three categories, which he defines as "lackers", "slackers, and "unwilling victims". These have traditionally been related to judgements of whether the individual is perceived as being able to control the supposed causes or not, with this divide also related to ideas of an individual's perceived deservingness of support (Rosenthal, 2000). Further, this distinguishes between a group who are deemed to make a rational choice to become homeless (or associated choices, leading to their homelessness), and groups who are victims of circumstance of lack of ability (Parsell & Parsell, 2012). The below table details these categories, their deserving/undeserving status, and the theorised reasons for their homelessness:

Category	Able to control cause? (Perceived causes)	Un/Deserving
Unwilling victims	No (Structural factors, e.g. lack of available work)	Deserving
Lackers	No (Individual vulnerability factors, e.g. mental/physical health, age)	Deserving
Slackers	Yes (Unwillingness to work, fecklessness, poor decision making)	Undeserving

Table 2: Categories of homelessness, adapted from Rosenthal (2000)

To better understand the causes of homelessness, a range of risk factors associated with homelessness have been identified within past studies (Randall & Brown, 1999; Fitzpatrick et al., 2000; Anderson & Christian, 2003), such as disputes with parents and step parents, experience of physical or sexual abuse, time in local authority care, lack of qualifications, school exclusion, unemployment, failure to maintain a home, causing a nuisance to neighbours, debt, alcohol and illicit drug use, among others. Many of these risk factors were related to individual circumstances, rather than macro-level structural forces.

During the latter part of the twentieth century, this divide between structural and individual explanations began to lose traction, becoming replaced by what was termed the new orthodoxy (Pleace, 2000). This approach claimed that structural understandings could not explain the high prevalence of vulnerable rough sleepers, whilst also suggesting that individual factors could not fully explain homelessness, as wider social issues undoubtedly impacted upon homelessness. Instead, this new orthodoxy claimed that structural and individual factors were interactive. The main propositions of the approach are summarised by Fitzpatrick (2005, p. 4) as being that:

- structural factors create the conditions within which homelessness will occur; and

- people with personal problems are more vulnerable to these adverse social and economic trends than others; therefore

- the high concentration of people with personal problems in the homeless population can be explained by their susceptibility to macro-structural forces, rather than necessitating an individual explanation of homelessness.

Somerville (2013) and Fitzpatrick (2005) have criticised the new orthodoxy approach to explaining why people become homeless, for a number of reasons. As Somerville and Fitzpatrick both suggest, there is a lack of conceptualisation of what counts as a structural or individual factor - with examples such as marriage breakdown, or poor educational achievement, potentially being framed as belonging to either of these categories. In addition, homelessness is understood only as a housing condition, a single-dimension understanding of homelessness which is imposed, rather than considering other ways in which homelessness might be understood or conceptualised. Somerville also discusses this in relation to the facticity of homelessness, whereby governments have monopolised definitions of homelessness, but with the cost of a potential disconnect from the human experience, noting that such an approach "discounts that experience or attempts to reduce it to a single dimension (lack of housing) and then produces statistical associations that do not seem

to reflect any real social relations" (Somerville, 2013, p. 6). Such an approach, Somerville contends, considers the relationship between a dependent variable of homelessness, and other independent variables such as the risk factors listed above; providing an uneasy account of causation. Fitzpatrick adds to this, by suggesting that whilst the new orthodoxy does identify relationships between levels of factors, it is vague about how these relate to homelessness, asking "What is it about these structural and individual "factors" that generate homelessness?" (Fitzpatrick, 2005, p. 5).

Recently, pathways and careers approaches have been used in homelessness research to consider the causes of becoming homeless (MacKenzie & Chamberlain, 2003; Mayock et al., 2008; Martijn & Sharpe, 2006; Clapham, 2003; van Laere et al., 2009; Mallett et al., 2005; Anderson & Tulloch, 2000; Fitzpatrick, 1997; Clapham, 2002; Anderson, 2001; Chamberlain & MacKenzie, 2006; Chamberlain & Johnson, 2013). Such ways of understanding the process of becoming homeless trace an individual's route into, through and out of homelessness, with homelessness understood as being part of a wider housing pathway (Anderson & Tulloch, 2000; Clapham, 2003) and suggest that homelessness must therefore be understood as a process, rather than only an outcome.

The pathways approach does have some value, in that it recognises that homelessness must be understood within a wider context, rather than only as an outcome detached from all other areas of one's life. However, to situate homeless pathways within wider housing pathways or careers arguably positions housing as superior to other aspects of one's life for understanding homelessness.

Pathways approaches have been used to identify risk factors associated with the causes of homelessness (Anderson & Christian, 2003). Although they understand homelessness as a process, rather than only an outcome, this risk factor approach suffers from many of the problems of the new orthodoxy identified by Somerville (2013) and Fitzpatrick (2005) above.

Fopp (2009) questions the use of terms such as pathways and careers, noting that such terms may imply choice on the part of rough sleepers, as making decisions about which paths/careers to follow. However, whilst this contention is made, the opposite might also be said to be true, about pathways at least, with the notion of set pathways into/through/out of homelessness, which individuals have no choice but to follow. Such an approach might be said to remove elements of the agency of rough sleepers (discussed later in this chapter). Furthermore, pathways approaches could be argued to suggest a linearity in relation to experiences of housing and homelessness, whilst the narratives created by rough sleepers might not present such linear routes.

One particular study which adapts the pathways approach is Fitzpatrick (2005), who does so within a critical realist framework. As seen above, she is critical of risk factor based research which she regards as failing to explain why these factors can lead to homelessness. She suggests, instead, that causal mechanisms that generate homelessness exist at four levels, housing structures, economic structures, interpersonal structures and individual attributes, with no hierarchy assumed between them. However, Fitzpatrick's approach is criticised by Somerville (2013), who claims that through re-framing risk factors and causes, Fitzpatrick translates the new orthodoxy into a different language, which still has individual and structural levels. However, Somerville also suggests that there is a lack of clarity over the weight that each of these is given, or how they interact.

Somerville also questions the critical realist understanding of narrative, as:

> It seems not to be understood by realists that life stories exhibit a narrative structure that is categorically different from the social and spatial structures that realists have in mind. The pathways that homeless people relate in their narratives do not seem to be of the same kind as the pathways that realists seek to identify. Narratives need to be understood as a form of knowledge, structured by plots, themes and characters, which is different in nature from the "rigour" or "robustness" sought by the "new orthodoxy". Narratives are, indeed, "cultural", and, therefore, homelessness narratives can be described as a "cultural phenomenon". This does not make the homelessness

described in these narratives any less real – on the contrary, the reality of the homelessness experience is often heightened in homeless people's life stories. (Somerville, 2013, p. 399)

One of the major issues with the studies and theoretical approaches of the new orthodoxy and critical realist approaches, is that in their attempts to develop risk factor or causal approaches, they can actually re-create individual/structural divides, implicitly positioning rough sleepers either understood as passive victims or creators of their own circumstances. Thus, this divide is still evident in research and policy, despite the claim made by Anderson & Christian (2003, p. 115) that "Over the long term, the UK has moved away from views that homelessness is explained either as a structural social problem, or as an individual failing, to a more sophisticated analysis of the interaction between social structures and individual circumstances."

Such approaches could be at a disjuncture with the narratives that rough sleepers themselves create, failing to recognise the agency that rough sleepers may describe, with Cloke et al. (2010, p. 18) suggesting that such studies "strip homeless people not only of their agency, but also their humanity". Agency approaches in homelessness research have been used previously (McNaughton, 2006; Cloke et al., 2010; Ravenhill, 2008). However, the term 'agency' can be understood in different ways. For example, Long (1992, p. 22–23) provides an understanding of agency which claims:

> In general terms, the notion of agency attributes to the individual actor the capacity to process social experience and to devise ways of coping with life, even under the most extreme forms of coercion. Within the limits of information, uncertainty and other constraints (e.g. physical, normative or politico-economic) that exist, social actors are 'knowledgeable' and 'capable'.

For Long, agency is not just about decision making, but composed of social relations. Such an approach is employed by DeVerteuil et al. (2009, p. 635), who discuss the role of agency at length, recognising the positive and negative aspects of agency, suggesting:

Although various structural constraints may impede everyday survival, homeless people may also exercise considerable discretion. This "constrained agency" balances the notion of homeless people as "rational decision makers who can and do negotiate their social worlds" (Molina, 2000, p. 669) with fundamental structural constraints (e.g., extreme poverty, excessive unemployment, lack of affordable housing, and recently escalating anti-homeless policies) that set boundaries for all behavioral choices. Moreover, we do not wish to conceal the sometimes negative aspects of homeless agency, but rather place these acts within the larger drive for survival. Many adaptive survival patterns that help in the short term may actually make it more difficult to escape homelessness in the long term (Wolch & Dear, 1993).

Within DeVerteuil et al. and Long's accounts, agency can be understood as the individual capability to act rationally to negotiate the complex context of the social world, which can act in constraining ways for individuals.

One approach which can develop this understanding of agency further is that employed by McNaughton Nicholls (2009; see also by the same author, McNaughton, 2008). To develop her explanation of agency and ways of understanding individual accounts of homelessness, McNaughton Nicholls employs a 'contextualised rational action' approach, initially developed by Somerville & Bengtsson (2002). Somerville and Bengtsson make six key points about a contextualised rational action approach. These are:

1) It takes actors' self-determination seriously, rather than reducing it to an effect of social structure or discourse, or confining it to one of a number of 'domains' of interaction.
2) It assumes that actors operate on the basis of 'thin' rationality, where the context of their action has a crucial effect on the decisions and choices that they make.
3) The open-endedness of context means that general theories of social action have to be treated with a certain degree of scepticism or caution. In general, middle-range theorising based on social mechanisms seems to be a more realistic ambition.
4) It has high critical potential; just taking actors seriously and assuming that people normally do things for a reason surprisingly often implies efficient criticism both of policy and research.
5) The open-endedness of context often makes it fruitful to combine contextualised rational action with other lines of theory.
6) The ambition to take real actors and contexts seriously often makes historical and ethnographic approaches more useful than statistical and quantitative ones.
(Somerville & Bengtsson, 2002, p. 134–135).

This approach recognises the importance of agency and self-determination, whilst also proposing an approach of 'thin' rationality to understand the way in which actors make decisions, taking into account the context of decision-making. In particular, the use of thin rationality is key, in both Somerville and Bengtsson's initial proposal, and McNaughton Nicholl's application of this. This form of understanding rationality "is thin in that it leaves unexamined the beliefs and the desires that form the reasons for the action whose rationality we are assessing, with the exception that they are stipulated not to be logically inconsistent" (Elster, 1983, p. 1).

Somerville and Bengtsson acknowledge the way in which thin rationality can be used to develop an understanding of rationality in which actors and their social contexts are taken seriously, suggesting:

> Instead of the absurd assumption of perfect rationality…we propose a model based on Elster's (1983) concept of 'thin rationality', where individual actors are assumed to have some logical consistency in the pursuit of their goals, whereas the nature of those goals (the preferences of the actors, including the social norms they adhere to) is not assumed a priori by the researcher but is open to empirical investigation, where the social and institutional context is of crucial importance (Somerville & Bengtsson, 2002, p. 124).

As such, and as highlighted by the authors, thin rationality approaches do not lend themselves to the development of general social theories and rules (in the form of "if a then always b" (Somerville & Bengtsson, 2002, p. 124)), as perfect forms of rationality (as well as similar subjectively understood contexts) would be assumed. The authors note that such assumptions add a sense of determinism to theorising. Such accusations could be made of risk factor, pathways and new orthodoxy approaches to homelessness, which can abstract these events from their role within individual narratives of homeless people's lives.

In contrast to such approaches, a contextualised rational action approach recognises that "with open-ended thin rationality, and allowing norms and procedural preferences to enter the model,

this is not possible. And if we accept that human action is driven by intention and meaning we cannot make probabilistic predictions either" (Somerville & Bengtsson, 2002, p. 124). Rather than focusing on making probabilistic predictions, contextualised rational action places relationships and individual subjectivity and sense-making at the core of understanding rationality. As such, narratives can be used to develop middle-range theories in which theorising of the sort "if a then sometimes b" (Somerville & Bengtsson, 2002, p. 125) can take place. Therefore, an appreciation and consideration of individual viewpoints, understandings, as well as subjective accounts of context are of importance for understanding rationality within a contextualised rational action approach.

McNaughton Nicholls applies a contextualised rational action within her work. In particular, her definition of agency demonstrates the importance of individual accounts, as she defines agency as being:

> the sense of individuality, of being 'an individual' that someone has. This is their internal sense of unique existence recognised by themselves and others. Agency does not refer to actual actions or outcomes, but to the internal processes, independent but embedded in structures, that individuals subjectively experience (McNaughton, 2008, p. 46).

This definition of agency recognises that individuals can be understood in terms of their accounts, which interact both with and within a social context (Somerville, 2013). However, within this study, combining approaches which understand agency as both an internal process, and an expression of behaviours is useful, as these two events are inextricably linked. As such, this research takes an approach in which agency represents *both* an internal process *and* external behaviours as expressions of individuality. Therefore, individual understandings and accounts of the processes of decision making, which are subjectively (and culturally) experienced, interpreted and accounted for, are key to developing understandings of homelessness. Thus, agency might be thought of as an

individual expression and understanding discretion and decision making, interacting with a social context, but also subjectively understood and accounted for within individual narratives.

Within her work, McNaughton Nicholls asserts that acts of transgression can be understood as a form of contextualised rational action, where transgression is behaviour is that which falls outside of normative behaviour (McNaughton Nicholls, 2009). She draws on 'edgework' to demonstrate this, whereby edgework is understood as active risk taking, in a social context of mundane and over-determined contemporary social life (Lyng, 2005), claiming that these forms of edgework happen "when people actively engage with risk at the normative 'edge' of social behaviour" (McNaughton Nicholls, 2009, p. 73). Further, McNaughton Nicholls suggests that edgework "is the management of transgression, and inherently involves agency – even if this is choosing between a range of actions each of which are risky – a choice is being made" (McNaughton Nicholls, 2009, p. 73). As such, whilst agency may be influenced by social processes and context, it is understood as existing subjectively within the individual's own life history. Transgression could indeed be understood as a form of contextualised rational action.

However, McNaughton Nicholls' approach to these understandings is not without issue. McNaughton Nicholls adopts a critical realist approach in her work, suggesting that "To generate explanations of social phenomenon, critical realists seek to uncover the 'real' causal powers of social objects and structures, which may or may not have 'actual' effects depending on contingent conditions (Sayer, 2000)" (McNaughton Nicholls, 2009, p. 71). The focus on necessary and contingent relationships within this approach appears to be at odds with the narrative structure of life stories that individuals create, and might be criticised for focusing too heavily on creating 'rigorous' accounts of understanding causation which are focused on uncovering 'structures', neglecting to take account of the cultural nature of narratives. Indeed, as Somerville (2013) notes, McNaughton Nicholls focuses primarily on homelessness as a 'structural' issue. This is not to deny

that there is a lived reality, but instead to recognise that understanding 'structure' differently can

produce a different understanding of the role of homeless individuals' narratives.

Somerville (2013) proposes that using McNaughton Nicholls' definition of agency, alongside the

approach of contextualised rational action, it is possible to think of 'structure' in a different sense

to that which McNaughton Nicholls does. Within Somerville's approach, "An agent is understood

as one who can narrate their life course; that is, who can structure their life course in terms of a

story. So "structure" here means the narrative structure of an individual life course" (Somerville,

2013, p. 19). As noted earlier in this chapter, Somerville (2013) has highlighted the 'cultural' nature

of narratives. He elaborates on the nature of life stories, and the role of structure and culture in

understanding these, stating:

> Individual life stories, however, are not the whole story. Different individuals will tell
> different stories about their lives, and in these stories, they will relate to their
> environments in different ways, and the stories of these different individuals may or
> may not intersect at particular points, and the observations of third parties, such as
> researchers, may generate different stories again. What McNaughton calls "structure",
> then, is something that is to be understood within and through the stories of all these
> different individuals. The "structure" is not outside of all these stories but is an integral
> part of each story (e.g. as a set of themes or as a backdrop to the narrative). If such
> stories can be regarded as part of "culture", then "culture" and "structure" become
> indistinguishable. (Somerville, 2013, p. 19)

Thus, 'structures' within accounts may appear as ways of understanding and accounting for one's

own life, rather than within the traditional structural/individual divide of the new orthodoxy and

risk factor approaches. Whilst a social context exists, individual accounts provide a way of

understanding the ways in which this social context is subjectively interpreted, understood, and

approached. Therefore, structure refers to the tools and techniques that individuals draw upon to

organise accounts of their life stories. Therefore, a hypothesised divide between structural and

individual causes may be drawn upon by individuals in order to organise their own accounts.

However, equally, other organising tools might also be employed. Further, it is important to note

that these accounts are created within (and interact with) a social context in which actors are reflexive, and are therefore cultural in their nature.

Life story approaches to homelessness research can allow for the recognition of agency. In particular, those which focus on whole lives, rather than only 'homeless lives' (which consider significant life events *only* in relation to homelessness) are particularly useful for the recognition of agency, and the ways in which homelessness may only be part of a wider life story (examples of such approaches include Somerville et al., 2011; McNaughton, 2008; Ravenhill, 2008). These approaches are particularly useful for re-framing the lives of people experiencing homelessness, and moving beyond binary structural/individual divides, acknowledging the complexity of many life events, as well as their significance outside of homelessness causation. Further, these approaches recognise of the importance of agency, as an internal process of individual thinking and understanding, which interacts with and within a social context. In this sense, the contextualised rational action approach provides a useful framework for understanding rough sleepers' narratives, and understanding these as culturally and subjectively informed, employing structures as a way to organise their narrative accounts.

Summary: Becoming homeless

Having considered the approaches above, it is evident that differences are currently apparent in the prominent ways of understanding the process of *becoming* homeless. Moving from research which was accused of favouring either structural or individual explanations of homelessness to the new orthodoxy displayed a development of theory, to consider the interaction between different factors. However, this approach suffered from a number of issues, not least that in considering risk factors, and under-theorising these, it potentially did little to clarify what counts as a structural or individual factor. Pathways and careers approaches are seen as useful for understanding

42

homelessness as a process within other pathways, although again the focus in some studies on developing risk factors was seen as potentially re-creating this individual/structural divide. Furthermore, Fitzpatrick's (2005) use of a critical realist perspective was seen to develop other levels of factors, but again in looking for causes potentially re-created risk factor approaches. One major and recurring issue with such approaches is that they appear to divide individual/structural causes into clearly separable, observable categories. Approaches which instead emphasise agency show the inter-relationship between social constraints and context, and individual decision making and discretion. This can be utilised within a contextualised rational action approach, which aims to take actors seriously, recognising this agency, and employing thin rationality for understanding decision making. This approach appears to allow for an understanding of the ways in which human experience can be useful for the study of *becoming* homeless, as well as understanding accounts of *being* homeless, to which attention will now turn.

Being homeless: Culture, survival strategies, and use of space

The literature regarding the experiences of *being* homeless is often ethnographic in nature, focusing upon the day-to-day experiences of those sleeping rough or using services. As noted above, contextualised rational action and agency approaches are useful for understanding narratives of being homeless, with their focus on taking the individual's perspective seriously and ensuring that subjective understandings are considered fully within analyses of being homeless.

Within the literature about being homeless, increasingly, research has been undertaken which considers the experiences of (largely overlooked) sub-populations or characteristics such as female homelessness (Marpsat, 2000; Casey et al., 2008; Radley et al., 2006; Moss & Singh, 2012; Watson

& Austerberry, 1986), youth/older homelessness (Buchanan et al., 2010; Jackson, 2012; Mayock & O'Sullivan, 2007; Mayock et al., 2008; Hutson & Liddiard, 1994; Hall, 2003; Farrugia, 2011a; Pain & Francis, 2004; Somerville et al., 2011; Mayock et al., 2011; Farrugia, 2011b; Ogden, 2014; Roschelle & Kaufman, 2004; Warnes & Crane, 2006; Crane & Warnes, 2001a, 2010; Carlen, 1996; Wardhaugh, 2000), and rural homelessness (Cloke et al., 2002, 2003, 2001a, 2007b; Robinson, 2004; Whiteford, 2010b). Furthermore, studies have also focused on particular topics such as the health of homeless individuals (Holland, 1996; Riley et al., 2003; Joly et al., 2011; Crane & Warnes, 2001b; Hodgetts et al., 2007; Pleace et al., 2000), or crime and homelessness (Ballintyne, 1999; Newburn & Rock, 2005; McCarthy & Hagan, 1991; Khan, 2010; Gowan, 2002) and including the criminalisation of begging in this list would extend it further still (e.g. Erskine & McIntosh, 1999; Fooks & Pantazis, 1999; Wardhaugh, 1996; Johnsen & Fitzpatrick, 2010).

However, other texts have focused on giving in-depth accounts of rough sleeping and homelessness more generally. Early accounts of this type include Anderson's (1965, originally 1923), *The Hobo: The Sociology of the Homeless Man*. Anderson's study aimed to provide an in-depth analysis of the various elements of the life and experiences of 'the hobo', discussing themes still apparent in current research about rough sleepers, such as themes relating to culture and space (such as the inhabiting of 'Hobohemia' and the culture associated with being a hobo); discussions of services and lodging houses available; the gendered nature of homelessness; and resistance and survival strategies (through singing songs of protest) (Anderson, 1965). Anderson identifies four types of sub-populations within the poverty arena. These are the hobo (a casual labourer, who migrates between locations); the tramp (who migrates, but is unwilling to work); the home guard (a casual labourer, but more stationary in terms of movement); and the bum (who is both stationary in terms of movement and who "like the tramp, is unwilling to work and lives by begging and petty thieving." (N. Anderson, 1965: 96)). Whilst Anderson's work has been superseded by various analyses of

homelessness, this early work discussed many of the themes and ideas still present in research today.

Studies of the lived experience of rough sleepers have often focused upon cultural analyses of this population (e.g. Ravenhill, 2008; Randall & Brown, 1999), with this being described as a 'subculture'. Such an approach can be understood within a concept of culture which claims:

> Culture…is not so much a set of *things* – novels and paintings or TV programmes and comics – as a process, a set of *practices*. Primarily, culture is concerned with the production and the exchange of meanings – the 'giving and taking of meaning' – between the members of a society or group. To say that two people belong to the same culture is to say that they interpret the world in roughly the same ways and can express themselves, their thoughts and feelings about the world, in ways which will be understood by each other. Thus, culture depends on its participants interpreting meaningfully what is happening around them, and 'making sense' of the world, in broadly similar ways. (Hall, 2013a, p. xviii–xix).

As such, culture can be understood to be created through practices, by individuals ascribing meanings, as well as being about relationships between individuals. Although Stuart Hall warns against such a definition being used to suggest a singular, uniform experience amongst people within a culture, he does note that cultural meanings can to some extent "organize and regulate social practices, influence our conduct and consequently have real, practical effects", further suggesting that "It is participants in a culture who give meaning to people, objects and events." (Hall, 2013a, p. xix). Furthermore, as Tom Hall notes in his analysis of youth homelessness, "culture is something shared and collectively affirmed, not just an aggregate concurrence of individual coping strategies and whatever else" (Hall, 2003, p. 111). Thus, although not singular or uniform, there may be elements that are shared amongst a culture.

However, in broader cultures, subcultures can also exist. For Gelder:

> Subcultures are groups of people that are in some way represented as non-normative and/or marginal through their particular interests and practices, through what they are, what they do and where they do it (Gelder, 2005, p. 1).

Therefore, subcultures might be understood as being marginal or non-normative, and from this perspective rough sleepers, through their status, practices and location (of not having a home), might be understood to be marginal[3]. In this sense, homeless cultures can be understood as (to some degree) shared meanings and understandings, practices, and relationships, which act as organising tools for making sense of a shared experience. However, it should be noted that even within wider homelessness cultures, sub-cultures may exist, and individuals may interpret and act in their own ways (Huey, 2012).

Tom Hall claims that homelessness cultures are a logical outcome of the need to negotiate the experience of homelessness. He suggests that:

> there are good enough reasons for supposing that a collection of teenagers moving around the same grid of streets in the same town and struggling to get to grips with the same difficulties might, in the process, reach some sort of common understanding particular to their lived situation, a shared sense of how things stand and where that leaves them; there are good reasons too for supposing that this consensus might bed in somehow (Hall, 2003, p. 112).

In Ravenhill's work, *The Culture of Homelessness*, she focuses upon the 'roofless', who are defined as "Those people who literally have no roof over their heads at night and have to sleep on the streets, on benches, in parks or under bushes." (Ravenhill, 2008: 13). Ravenhill also defines subculture, suggesting that this is "a system of beliefs, values and norms adopted by a significant minority in any given society or culture" (2008, p. 145). Within her findings on the culture (and lived experience) of homelessness, Ravenhill makes a number of claims regarding homeless cultures, suggesting initially that "The homeless culture exists in most major towns and cities in England" (Ravenhill, 2008, p. 145).

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[3] Despite the criticisms of subcultural theory from post-subcultural theorists (summarised in Weinzierl & Muggleton, 2003), subculture provides a way of understanding the ways in which structural divisions within cultures (and within subcultures) might be deemed to be important for an understanding of culture (Shildrick & MacDonald, 2006).

Ravenhill highlights the ways in which homeless cultures entail strong intense friendships and through this offers an informal counselling and support service, but also has a undercurrent of violence, due to conflict within groups. Ravenhill suggests that these various elements are part of the same relationships within homeless cultures, and are observable social practices within homeless cultures.

Ravenhill's analysis also gives detailed attention to the presence of hierarchies within this culture, suggesting that these are inverse to the mainstream culture, where "The homeless person with the most problems and difficulties ranks the highest." (Ravenhill, 2008: 165) and that "Inverse hierarchies within the homeless community seem to stem from the perception of life as an endurance test, with survival being the key factor." (ibid). The author claims that survival and endurance act as badges of honour, with more badges moving people further up the hierarchy. Ravenhill notes that this hierarchical structure creates tensions and problems, especially when people (such as the newly homeless) do not recognise the hierarchy already in place, and that "Hierarchies are not always accepted passively...There are times when there is jostling for power, status and respect." (ibid: 166). Furthermore, she notes that:

> Inverse hierarchies, in part, developed and are reinforced by the homeless industry, medical profession, social services and housing departments. For example, when applying for social housing, the more problems you have the more points you gain. If you have complex multiple needs, you are a 'special case', one meriting more time and more elaborate support. ... There was evidence to suggest that that language and jargon of professionals in incorporated into the homeless culture's vocabulary. ... This use of jargon acted as a series of labels adopted by people within the homeless community that in mainstream society would have been viewed as negative, embarrassing or shameful. These labels represent more badges of honour. (Ravenhill, 2008: 166).

In other words, for Ravenhill, systems and policies relating to homelessness and need can reinforce inverse hierarchies.

Ravenhill also suggests a number of types of sub-cultures within a main homeless culture, such as the street-drinking culture, depressive contemplators, clowns, the drug-addicted culture, daycentre/hostel groupies, precariously housed individuals, intermittent participants, homeless advocates, and the homeless at heart (Ravenhill, 2008, p. 147–155). These types, Ravenhill suggests, are "overarching subcultures that tend to dominate the scene" (Ravenhill, 2008, p. 147). However, she also claims that strong and intense friendships are present within homelessness culture, stating that "They offer interdependence on each other for protection, stability and comfort." (Ravenhill, 2008, p. 161).

Ravenhill's analysis of culture is useful in its ability to understand alternative forms of order and meaning from a mainstream society. She suggests that "Subcultures often develop from a position of marginalization and powerlessness within mainstream society. Thus the functions and attraction of the homeless culture can be interpreted as having developed to serve specific needs that mainstream society does not cater for." (Ravenhill, 2008, p. 145). Such an approach allows for an appreciation of the way in which subcultures might cater for marginal populations.

Similarly to Ravenhill's analysis, in her analysis of day centres, Waters (1992) suggests that hierarchies are formed in homelessness services and that such hierarchies are often formed on the basis of behaviours and feelings of superiority. However, Waters notes the variety of individuals using day centres, and questions the presence of an overarching homeless culture or community, claiming instead that:

> Single homeless people who use day centres are not a body of people who recognise a positive common identity, and then take control and action to achieve shared goals. ... Homeless people spend time with each other because they have to in order to get access to housing and community, or because they have no other choice (Waters, 1992, p. 40).

In their analysis of homelessness, Snow & Anderson (1993) do suggest the presence of a homeless subculture, although they note that "It is not a subculture in the conventional sense, though, in that it is neither anchored in nor embodies a distinctive set of value. Rather...its distinctiveness resides in a patterned set of behaviors, routines, and orientations that are adaptive responses to the predicament of homelessness itself and to the associated conditions of street life" (Snow & Anderson, 1993). These authors suggest three different sorts of constraints on homeless people: organisational and political, such as local services and attitudes towards homelessness that may affect the resources and opportunities available; ecological constraints, such as the availability of spaces and services; and moral constraints, which guide the boundaries of acceptable behaviours. Furthermore, these authors focus on the relationships between individuals who experience homelessness, suggesting that whilst individuals may build relationships with others whilst sleeping rough, "Many of these relationships...were quite superficial, based primarily on casual contact at caretaker agencies or in drinking or sleeping grounds." (Snow & Anderson, 1993, p. 190). Therefore, within their analysis, Snow and Anderson suggest that whilst there may be constraining factors which lead individuals to work in partnership to negotiate on a day-to-day basis, this does not constitute an overarching homeless culture.

Furthering these analyses, Cloke et al., (2010) published the results of their study *The Homeless Places Project*, in their book *Swept Up Lives?*. Within their work, Cloke, et al. note the degree to which hierarchies of deservingness and undeservingness are created within homeless cultures. They suggest that "Just like members of the housed public, day centre users routinely (even if unconsciously) classify one another" (Cloke et al., 2010: 135). Alongside these constructions of deservedness, the authors note that three distinct subcultures emerge within the wider single homeless population – those who are alcohol addicted ('drinkers' or 'pissheads'), those who are heroin addicted ('smackheads' or 'junkies') and those who have no major substance addictions ('straightheads' or 'normals') (Cloke et al., 2010: 134). The authors note that this sub-cultural divide

can create tensions if multiple subcultures are brought together, and that a hypothesised hierarchy exists within these groups. They note that "'pissheads' see themselves as superior to 'smackheads' and vice versa, and 'straightheads' consider themselves more virtuous than either of the other two groups" (ibid). Thus, subcultures are suggested to exist within wider homeless cultures.

Cloke et al. also identify differences between locally distinct cultures of homelessness, especially in relation to service use, suggesting that there are "culturally significant local 'scenes' of homelessness" (Cloke et al., 2010, p. 184). As such, this approach is seen as recognising the potential differences in local scenes of homelessness. Even within these local settings of homeless cultures, individual understandings, experiences and narratives can differ, with Huey noting that "'the homeless' are not a homogeneous population but rather communities of individuals of varying status and with different beliefs and experiences." (Huey, 2012, p. 65)

From these analyses, homelessness cultures can be understood as practices, meanings, understandings and relationships which enable (and sometimes inhibit) individual negotiation and management of homelessness. These can be varying, and locally distinct, but can enable individuals to deal with both locally distinct and more general (e.g. lack of shelter) experiences of homelessness. Furthermore, within these cultures, individuals can to differing extents employ, use or dismiss elements of homeless cultures in their day-to-day experiences of homelessness. Within chapter nine of the thesis, utilising data from the research, individual uses of culture to negotiate being homeless are explored further. This theme is then considered further in the conclusion of the thesis.

Survival strategies

A further theme that emerges in the literature is that of survival strategies of homeless individuals. These strategies have been explored within ethnographic accounts of homelessness. This theme is useful for understanding the ways in which homelessness might affect people, even where homelessness is defined in narrow housing terms. Snow & Anderson (1987, p. 1365) suggest that individuals who are homeless may have a variety of needs or desires, not just for physiological survival, claiming:

> identity-related concerns can be readily gleaned from the talk of homeless street people, clearly some of the most destitute in terms of physiological and safety needs - calls into question this popular assumption. More specifically, our findings suggest that the salience of identity-related concerns is not necessarily contingent on the prior satisfaction of more physiological survival requisites. Instead, such needs appear to coexist, even at the most rudimentary level of human existence.

Similarly, in Carlen's account of the young homeless people she spoke to, she explains:

> As they talked of what it is like to be homeless, the young people ruminated almost as much about the effects of homelessness on their states of mind, personalities, sense of themselves, personal relationships and views of society as they did about the daily struggles for shelter, food, work and (in some cases) drugs" (Carlen, 1996, p. 103).

Such pressures or effects necessitate survival responses of multiple kinds, according to Carlen, who claims:

> Survival on the street is a matter of keeping body, mind and spirit together. The body has to be fed, sheltered and protected against assault or exploitation, the mind has to be kept occupied, and the spirit has to be cherished sufficiently to sustain the young person's will to on go despite the odds against them (Carlen, 1996, p. 98).

Carlen lists a number of activities that homeless people may be involved in, suggesting that these are related to their survival: "As part of survivalism, increasingly risky activities may include begging, busking, prostitution, drug taking, drug dealing, more systematic and serious crime, and bouts of public drunkenness - with all the attendant violence and police intervention." (Carlen, 1996, p. 120). Such activities might be seen to provide resources for individuals in a number of ways, where access to other mainstream resources is lacking, but were considered risky by Carlen. Such risky activities are not dissimilar to the edgework (Lyng, 2005) that McNaughton discusses in her work on

transitions through homelessness. McNaughton applies the idea of edgework as voluntary risk taking to understand some of the behaviours seen, and suggests that "actions such as substance abuse could be understood as not only a form of escape, but as a way of taking some *control* over [a] situation" (McNaughton, 2008, p. 77). Similarly, Huey (2012) notes the use of weapons and creation of tough bodies as strategies of self-protection. As such, behaviours which are risky might be understood to be survival strategies.

In their research, Snow & Anderson (1993) discuss four main areas of survival skills within a homeless subculture. These consisted of four broad areas: wage labour; shadow work; ties to others and salvaging the self. They suggest that the first of these, wage labour, could be secured either through regular work, or through day (temporary) work. The authors note that homeless people are at a disadvantage in gaining regular work, because they may have low skill levels, but also because 'street life' causes complications in gaining and maintaining employment such as meeting certain standards of dress and appearance, a lack of work history, and lack of transport. The authors note that despite the difficulties day labour could bring, it was often more suitable for homeless individuals, as it paid on the same day, often provided transportation, and did not have the same expectations of dress that regular work would have. However, day labour could be sporadic, with few guarantees or employee benefits. As such, although employment provided a survival strategy, it was seen to be precarious or hard to come by and maintain - "jobs without a tomorrow" (Snow & Anderson, 1993, p. 123). The authors also discuss institutionalised assistance, that is either working for institutions such as those providing services to rough sleepers; or in the form of income supplements, either in the form of transfer payments (broadly equivalent to welfare benefit payments in the UK), or through familial 'hand-outs', that is payments made by family members to homeless people.

Snow and Anderson also described shadow work, that is, more informal forms of work. These included selling and buying 'junk' and personal possessions, and selling illegal goods and services, such as drug dealing, prostitution, and selling plasma (from one's blood). The authors also discuss forms of activity such as begging and panhandling. Within this account, the authors suggest that begging is seen as morally low by some (since this is a 'hand-out' and goes against a 'work ethic'). They also note that in some spaces this is an illegal activity, but they note the creativity of some individuals, who offer a service such as reciting poems in exchange for money, in order to circumvent such laws. A similar account of circumvention of laws is seen within Duneier's (1999) exploration of the lives of street traders, who adapted their behaviour in order to stay within legal frameworks. Snow and Anderson also discuss scavenging, the process of checking discarded materials for saleable items. The final form of shadow work the authors discuss is theft. Therefore, forms of formal and informal income are seen as ways to cope with homelessness and attract resources.

In addition to these approaches, these authors note that "these relationships are plagued by contradictory characteristics. Quick and easy conviviality and an ethos supporting and sharing of modest resources are counterbalanced by chronic distrust of peers and fragility and impermanence of social bonds." (Snow & Anderson, 1993, p. 194).

The final strategy these authors discuss is the salvaging of the self. They note that "The pain of being objects of curiosity and negative attention are experienced fairly regularly by the homeless", also noting that in contrast homeless people may be ignored by others. The technique of salvaging the self focuses upon the methods an individual uses to deal with such difficulties. These techniques include making sense of their situation by seeking meaning in causal accounts of their homelessness. Furthermore, identity ascription, either by others, or claimed, allowed individuals to seek a position and give meaning to their situation. Distancing from others, either categories (other

homeless people, for example); roles (such as beggar); or institutions (such as a local day centre). Likewise, embracement of a similar type was seen as a mechanism to take on and accept such roles. Further, embellishments such as fictive storytelling or fantasy were discussed. For Snow and Anderson, this form of salvaging the self was "especially critical for survival because it is the one thread that enables those situated at the bottom to salvage their humanity" (Snow & Anderson, 1993, p. 229). This salvaging of the self has also been discussed by other authors, who suggest the presence of similar techniques in homeless people's ability to deal with stigma (Rayburn & Guittar, 2013).

Snow and Anderson provide arguably the most detailed argument to date on the methods individuals use as survival strategies. Other authors have looked at similar methods, such as the sale of the Big Issue (Fitzpatrick & Kennedy, 2000a, 2000b) or use of shadow work and rough sleeping as means to survive by people living in the 'cardboard city' area of Manchester (Wardhaugh, 1996).

A further detailed account of the survival strategies employed by homeless individuals is that of Bender et al. (2007). They note that in general, this is referred to as 'street smarts', and split this into personal strengths and external resources. They suggested that individuals drew upon coping skills and resourcefulness, noting that "As youth navigated services systems, new communities, and varied social cultures, they described developing proficiency in locating resources and solving problems. They learned to coordinate times when various services were available, such as taking advantage of free meals or clinic services during times public transport services were also available" (Bender et al., 2007, p. 32). They also noted motivation in these individuals, suggesting that homeless people took motivation from others who had 'got out' of homelessness. Furthermore, the maintenance of a positive attitude focusing on hope, and positive feelings, was understood to

be an individual coping skill. The last of these individual skills was spirituality, with some individuals taking comfort in the feeling that a higher being was watching over them and ensuring their safety.

Bender et al. (2007) also suggest that external resources were drawn upon in order to survive rough sleeping. They note that peer networks were drawn upon in a number of ways including to gain emotional support from other homeless people whilst on the street, to increase one's own security and safety, to facilitate drug use, and to share experiences and validate difficulties such as in finding employment, negotiating service systems, coping with adverse weather conditions, and finding shelter. These authors also point to the use of so-called societal resources by individuals, for example, taking charity from strangers, begging, and doing small tasks for people.

In these analyses of survival strategies, homeless individuals appear to employ a number of methods to deal with the difficulties they face. Their access to these forms of survival mechanisms appear to not only help them to deal with these difficulties, but also to be shaped by them, as Snow and Anderson note regarding homeless individuals' access to regular work.

However, whilst such approaches are useful for understanding the ways in which individuals deal with the issues they face, it is important to acknowledge, as Cloke et al. (2010, p. 8) do, that some of these behaviours may go beyond pure survival, suggesting that "recognizing the tactical agency of homeless people...transcends the notion of mere survival". As such, such tactics might be expressions of agency which go beyond mere survival. One such tactic is that of use of space, considered below.

Uses of space

Within accounts of homeless people's lives, use of spaces is another prominent topic, with authors accounting for the use of space in various ways. Carlen notes that some rough sleepers are excluded from different spaces, stating:

> the most acute sense of grievance suffered by the street homeless inheres in their experience of being denied access to places that are freely open to the non-homeless. As they attempt to rest in pubs, public transport depots, parks, libraries and museums, the young 'no fixed aboders' are repeatedly harried by a variety of proprietors and minor officials intent on moving them on. (Carlen, 1996, p. 110)

However, Hodgetts et al. (2008, p. 934) claim that "homeless people can resist exclusionary practices, for example, by appropriating marginal spaces, journeying across prime spaces, or occupying spaces at marginal times (Mitchell, 2003)". One such example is considered by Radley et al. (2006) who discuss one man's journeys to cafes and shops to engage in casual engagements and discussions with domiciled individuals. In doing so, he was able, to some extent, to challenge 'us' and 'them' binaries. Such accounts show the use of space by homeless people as a means of agency.

In her account of homelessness, Ravenhill (2008, p. 176) comments that "It is no accident that areas with public toilets, off-licences, overhanging roofs, recessed doorways and buildings with hot-air vents are frequented by the roofless and street users. They offer limited shelter and hygiene". She also suggests that spaces can be used for different purposes and highlights four such uses: to create an obstacle on a pavement, in order to draw attention to oneself; to create a safe place to sleep; to define identity, for example through being part of a wider collective of rough sleepers (such as in cardboard city); and to create a home, whereby home is not about a building, but about spaces and feelings (Somerville, 1992; Easthope, 2004). Ravenhill further suggests that a degree of ownership over space allows one to develop a sense of self-worth and to retreat into a (relatively) private space. In Ravenhill's account, then, spaces can be used for different reasons, relating both to the self and to recognition from others.

DeVerteuil et al. (2009) discuss spaces in relation to different strategies that might be used by homeless people. They identify four strategies: exit, that is, the use of space to get away from harassment, move on, and other demands; adaptation, modifying one's behaviour in situ to disguise homelessness; persistence, whereby homeless individuals neither exit the location nor modify their behaviour; and voice, through group or collective forms of protest. They suggest that different strategies are employed in different spaces, and identify three types of space, and the main strategies used within them. These spaces are prime spaces, such as beach communities and inner-city areas that have maintained socioeconomic integrity. Within these exclusive and affluent spaces, only the techniques of exit and adaption are used. Transitional spaces are inner-suburban areas with mixed-incomes. They are ethnically mixed, and lower in density. In these spaces persistence, adaption, occasionally exit are employed by homeless individuals. The third space, marginal space, is impoverished. In addition to the other techniques, some forms of voice are used here. Thus, within the account of DeVerteuil et al. (2009), space might be understood to be used in different ways, but also to be constraining in various ways.

One of the most comprehensive accounts of the use of space is Cloke et al.'s, (2010) account of the re-mapping of the city in relation to homelessness. They note four key types of space: spaces to sleep, eat, earn and hang out. Spaces to sleep, which they suggest are often in marginal areas of cities, can reinforce the stigma that rough sleepers face, as they can be characterised by drug use and prostitution. These spaces, the authors argue, are governed by rules and regulations made by those who use them. The authors do note that sometimes prime city space is used, such as car parks, but that choices about where to sleep are informed by the micro-architecture of cities, such as whether a space both provides material shelter and has a tolerant regime.

The second type of space they mention is spaces to eat. They suggest that "accounts of places to eat reinforce both the centrifugal pull of homeless services located in the marginal spaces of the

city, and the mobilities of homeless people as they journey into prime city space" (Cloke et al., 2010, p. 76). The authors mention that food is often free or inexpensive in emergency homeless services, such as day centres, and suggest that homeless people they spoke to knew of a food route, suggesting that "Such a route depends upon mutual information networks that enable people to journey to particular services offering food at particular times of day" (Cloke et al., 2010, p. 76). However, they also claim that places to eat such as day centres also serve other functions, such as spaces of solidarity, and as "a space where an individual's homeless status - conferred 'other' in most contexts - becomes the norm". However, they also note that such spaces can be volatile and violent, and can also be spaces of fear for some individuals (see also Johnsen et al., 2005).

The third of the spaces Cloke et al. mention is places to earn. They claim that in the light of the revanchist thesis (Smith, 1996), it might be expected that greater restrictions are placed on homeless people over the potential places to earn, and note that a greater police focus on beggars and homeless people is apparent in some cities. However, despite this, spaces to earn such as begging pitches persist, although heavily policed/governed spaces may be avoided. They suggest that pitches are governed by informal etiquette as well as by threatened or used violence.

The fourth place they discuss is places to hang out, either in groups or alone. They note that the use of spaces allows homeless people "'time away' from institutional spaces in which they spend much of their day, and from other homeless people" (Cloke et al., 2010, p. 84). However, they also note that growing exclusion from places used to hang out, such as libraries and museums, can affect an individual's ability to access services. Spatial access is self-regulated, in the sense that distinct social groups are apparent, and may be intolerant of others attempting to access the places they use. This is recognised to be an uncertain process since, "Where gatherings occur in prime city spaces the meaning of those spaces is … re-inscribed by homeless people, if only for a while and in ways that - outside of the hours of congregation - may remain invisible to the housed public" (Cloke

et al., 2010, p. 85), while in other cases, more visible congregation may be seen as a threat to dominant meanings and uses of city spaces.

There appears to be a consensus that spaces are not equally accessible, and that access is sometimes denied to homeless individuals. However, it is also important to recognise the ways in which a range of spaces can be used and adapted by homeless people in a variety of ways. Although Cloke et al.'s account appears to provide the most detailed of these arguments, other uses of space are clear within other accounts, with authors noting the way in which resistance is apparent in such uses. The different uses of space are also apparent within this account, with uneven geographies of homelessness across homeless spaces, rather than uniform spaces of homelessness.

Summary: Being homeless

Accounts of *being homeless* tend to focus on the day-to-day lived experiences of rough sleepers and other homeless individuals. Some studies have focused upon the experiences of particular groups, or have studied homelessness in relation to particular topics such as health or crime. However, other in-depth studies are apparent. Although the focus on these studies is wide-ranging, themes of homeless cultures, survival strategies, and use of space can be drawn across a number of these. Therefore, these have been considered in some detail. Within these, research that suggests the existence of one overarching homeless culture is seen as potentially problematic, with other authors suggesting that locally distinct cultures are apparent. The use of survival strategies is mentioned by a number of authors, with Snow and Anderson (1987) discussing this in great detail. These approaches seem to highlight the presence of a number of survival techniques for homeless individuals. However, it should be noted that, as Cloke et al. (2010) suggest, people's agency in these methods may go beyond mere survival. In the use of spaces, authors suggest varying uses of space by homeless people. However, these authors note the different uses of space within cities as

well as between different cities. As such, whilst these accounts provide some knowledge, other uses of space, strategies for negotiating spaces, and homeless cultures may emerge within research.

Conclusion

Within this chapter, the literature in the field has been considered. This has been split into three main sections, in line with the main arguments presented in this thesis. Within the literature on managing the homeless, a developing context of changes such as the professionalisation of services is evident, within a wider context of neoliberalism. This context has been suggested to be uneven across services, and to contain complex responses to rough sleepers. However, it is unclear whether positionings of rough sleepers may have changed, especially given recent political developments such as austerity. Therefore, a space in the literature to consider more recent accounts of discourses in service documents and from service providers is evident.

In the literature on becoming homeless, debates concerning the so-called causes of homelessness are presented. This literature considers changes in emphasis between structural and individual approaches to understanding the process of becoming homeless. Further, alternative approaches such as the new orthodoxy, critical realism, and pathways and careers approaches are appraised, noting that their presentation of homelessness as a process rather than only an end-point is useful. However, these approaches are in some cases devoid of agency, instead re-emphasising the differences between individual and structural levels of causation which are potentially problematic in their distinction. Here, it is concluded that approaches which attempt to separate out elements of an individual's life are problematic, as they potentially overlook the inter-related nature of these elements. Therefore, a different methodological approach of contextualised rational action, which acknowledges the presence of agency, whilst also recognising the narrative structure of accounts

of homelessness, is seen as potentially useful for re-considering understandings of becoming homeless.

Regarding the literature of being homeless, three topics which appear in a number of texts on homelessness are considered. In literature concerning homeless culture(s), texts which suggest a single overarching homeless culture are suggested to be problematic. Instead, texts which recognise differences between cultures and locales are suggested to present a potentially useful analysis. Literature on survival strategies explored the techniques that individuals use to negotiate their experiences of homelessness. Whilst this presented many influential arguments, Cloke et al.'s (2010) claim of the need to recognise such tactics as going beyond mere survival must be noted. Further, in the use of space, individuals were seen to use different spaces in a variety of ways. Authors suggested a number of ways in which space was employed by homeless individuals. This analysis presented a number of arguments; however, the difference in accounts of the ways in which space is used potentially means that further uses of space might be identified.

Overall, within this chapter, the literature relating to homelessness is regarded as still developing, especially in relation to in-depth analyses of the experiences of rough sleepers. Although there are some powerful studies on the topic, it can be concluded that: analysing current discourses of service provision may provide insight into the ways in which austerity measures do or do not impact on provision; the use of different methodological approaches which acknowledge agency may provide new understanding of the ways in which rough sleepers account for their own lives (both becoming and being homeless); and analyses which acknowledge the complexity of being homeless might add to existing knowledge in this area.

Theoretical approach adopted within the thesis

Within this thesis, a theoretical approach is adopted which draws on agency perspectives and contextualised rational action, in order to take actors seriously, and to recognise the value of narrative and individual subjectivity of experience in understandings of homelessness. The theoretical approach of the thesis is outlined below.

A broadly 'weak' social constructionist position is adopted, which "emphasizes the socially constructed nature of knowledge and institutions, and the way in which knowledge often bears the marks of its social origins" (Sayer, 2000, p. 90). In this sense, 'homelessness' as a category or definition is understood to be socially constructed and defined, but the experience of having no shelter is understood to be a 'real life' event. In this sense, there is an experienced world, but our understandings of these experiences are mediated by socially constructed knowledge.

The thesis also aims to draw upon contextualised rational action theory (Somerville & Bengtsson, 2002) and its application to accounts of homelessness (e.g. McNaughton Nicholls, 2009). To this end, the thesis aims to recognise agency, as being both an internal process of sense making, and a manifestation and expression of this individuality in actions, combining approaches developed by authors previously, and discussed within this chapter (Long, 1992; DeVerteuil, Marr, et al., 2009; McNaughton Nicholls, 2009). Also, the thesis adopts a position of thin rationality, whereby actors are presumed to act in broadly logically consistent ways, but in which the desires or reasons for those actions are not examined. In addition, within this approach, the social context of decision making for understanding the rationality and logic of such decisions is crucial (Elster, 1983; Somerville & Bengtsson, 2002).

The thesis also moves away from a deterministic focus on identifying 'causes' and probability, to one which places events within their context, as part of a wider life story. As such, stories are built within and interact with social context, but events and their significance and meaning should be understood within these stories, whilst acknowledging the existence of a social reality outside of these stories. As such, in-depth, narrative, and ethnographic methods are employed (as discussed in more detail in chapter four).

This theoretical approach also means that the thesis moves away from the simplistic 'structural'/'individual' divide which appears in many previous accounts of homelessness, and which provide little understanding of the context of experiences, or the ways in which experiences are subjectively understood and accounted for within narratives. Whilst the divide may appear within the accounts of individuals themselves, as an organising tool for their narrative, this approach will not be imposed on these narratives.

As such, the thesis aims to adopt an approach that is open to the narrative accounts of individuals, takes these accounts seriously, and recognises context and individual subjective experience as key in the understanding of (possibly, seemingly broader) social events.

Chapter Three

Policy Review

Introduction

The phenomenon of homelessness appears always to have existed in England (Greve, 1997; Ravenhill, 2008) and has been recognised as a state policy issue since the administration of the Poor Laws. However, since 1990, a focus upon rough sleeping as a particular policy priority has been evident (Jones & Johnsen, 2009). Rough sleepers occupy a particularly visible place in society, which has often led to them becoming the focus of social policy in ways which other homeless populations have not. As will be discussed in this chapter, some of the ways in which policy constructs rough sleepers' lives have their roots deep in history, with changes evident over time to the way in which policies have been developed about rough sleepers. However, consistent in this has been the lack of voice and power that rough sleepers have had in the development of social policy *about* them.

The previous chapter focused upon the literature concerning studies of rough sleeping. This chapter focuses upon policies and legislation relating to rough sleeping and homelessness more generally. It examines both historical and current understandings of rough sleepers' lives. This chapter begins by considering the development of rough sleeper policies and legislation, tracing a brief history through policy and legislation. Following this, it explores the contemporary political context, focusing upon the impacts of neoliberalism and austerity and their relationship to the historical roots of social policy about rough sleepers, before moving on to look at current policy documents, examining the ways in which rough sleepers' lives are understood in such policies.

The development of homelessness legislation and policies in history

Prior to the development of state policies in relation to homelessness, informal and locally organised forms of poverty relief existed in the UK. Indeed, since at least the Roman era, there has been some form of 'poor relief' in the UK (Pashley, 1852: 134). Therefore, in order to understand the relationship between these initial forms of poverty relief and present policy, the historical roots of poverty relief are explored.

The historical roots of poor relief and governance of the poor

Prior to the development of the Poor Laws, poverty relief was administered primarily by the Church, and was considered the duty of Christians, when there was little organised state involvement in poverty relief. As noted by Webb & Webb (1963a, p. 1):

> To give alms to all who were in need, to feed the hungry, to succour the widow and fatherless, to visit the sick, were duties incumbent of every Christian, not wholly, and perhaps not even mainly, for the sake of those who were relieved, but for the salvation of the charitable.

Almsgiving was not just an individual exercise in this period, but was part of wider Church giving and provision for the poor, with outdoor relief (provision of food and water) the principal method of supporting the poor[4] (Webb & Webb, 1963a). In providing this support, Christians were expected to offer alms to all, and so little (if any) judgement of 'deservingness' or 'worthiness' was made about individuals requiring poverty relief (Leonard, 1965a; Webb & Webb, 1963a). As will be discussed below in more detail, this position began to change with growing fears about vagrancy in

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[4] In some cases, indoor provision was made through the use of residential houses for the elderly, infirm, and for those in employment but who required accommodation(Lowe, 1997).

England, from the 13th century onwards, and was primarily noticeable in the development of Vagrancy Acts and the advent of the Poor Laws (Wardhaugh, 2000).

As provision was locally organised during this period, the parish acted as the primary unit of organising giving and poverty relief across England. As such, local provisions were highly uneven, and dependent upon local attitudes, funds, and numbers of people in poverty requiring relief (Webb & Webb, 1963b; Hindle, 2004; Leonard, 1965a). Such geographical unevenness has been present in poverty relief ever since, up to the present day (as will be seen later in this chapter).

Importantly, in providing this relief, the Church was able to position itself as a moral authority in England. In doing so, it had extensive power and utilised powerful discourses of moral governance relating to the poor (Dean, 1999). The power that the Church was able to exercise in its governance of poverty relief has been termed 'pastoral power' by Foucault because of its relationship to the pastoral care provided by the Church (Dean, 1999; Foucault, 1982; Bernauer & Mahon, 1994). Early discourses of governance of the poor understood the poor as 'demoralised' and in need of moral direction and transformation, necessitating Christian moral guidance in order to aid them in developing a more moral life. This type of life could be achieved by following the guidance of local pastors, who, as Dean (1999, p. 74) notes, were deemed to hold a special relationship between God and earthly individuals:

> The pastoral relationship is between God, the pastor (his representative) and the pastorate (the Christian community). The relation between God and his people is conceived within this tradition as the relation between the shepherd and the flock

This pastoral relationship had to be built between God (the shepherd), pastors (as representatives of God) and individuals (flock) (Bernauer & Mahon, 1994; Foucault, 1982). Foucault makes four claims about this type of power:

1) It is a form of power whose ultimate aim is to assure individual salvation in the next world.

2) Pastoral power is not merely a form of power which commands it must also be prepared to sacrifice itself for the life and salvation of the flock. Therefore, it is different from royal power, which demands a sacrifice from its subjects to save the throne.

3) It is a form of power which does not look after just the whole community, but each individual in particular, during his entire life.

4) Finally, this form of power cannot be exercised without knowing the inside of people's minds, without exploring their souls, without making them reveal their innermost secrets. It implies a knowledge of the conscience and an ability to direct it.

(Foucault, 1982, p. 214)

As such, the shepherd and flock became bound together by moral ties. In exchange for guidance and sacrifice on the part of the shepherd, the flock were expected to give complete obedience to the shepherd. And, in order to ensure the well-being of every subject, the shepherd required deep knowledge of the individual, "of the needs and deeds, and the contents of the soul, of each" (Dean, 1999, p. 75). Furthermore, in order to ensure the development of a moral conscience, continual processes of self-examination and scrutiny were required on the part of each individual. As is noted below, tools such as confession and examination of conscience could be used to scrutinise one's own morality, and the flaws within each moral subject:

> The importance Christianity accorded to this "pastoral power," this permanent concern with the total well-being of religious subjects, emphasized obedience as a paramount virtue and, thus, generated a struggle with one's desires, with oneself. This obedience was pledged, however, on the basis of a pastoral knowledge of oneself that was made up of each person's specific truths. Christianity encouraged a search for the truth of one's self, and this search was served by sophisticated practices of examination of conscience and confession" (Bernauer & Mahon, 1994).

In subscribing to such a moral life, individuals were believed to be able to gain salvation, through a form of mortification, that is a renunciation of material 'goods' on earth, in exchange for future salvation.

Thus, within these Christian discourses of governing the poor, individuals who were poor were deemed to be lacking in moral fibre and in need of spiritual guidance in order to achieve salvation in the next world. This could be achieved by bringing them within the Church, and by facilitating processes of self-examination, confession and encouraging the leading of a Christian moral life.

However, whilst the Church gave alms to individuals, increasing fears about the moral threat posed by vagrants, and concerns regarding the effect of indiscriminate almsgiving, meant that the state began to develop national policies in relation to poverty, homelessness and vagrancy. As such, whilst the Church remained important in making provision for the poor, the state also began to develop national policies regarding poverty management.

Vagrancy, deservingness, and the Poor Laws

Rough sleepers have been the focus of national policy in England since the advent of the Elizabethan Poor Laws. The Poor Laws themselves developed over a period of time, with Leonard (1965, p. 2) noting that "the making and administration of the English Poor Law was a growth and not a creation". Two significant developments were present in views of poverty relief in the years preceding the Poor Laws, with Hindle (2004, p. 100) noting that:

> the voluntaristic tradition was gradually eroded by the double burden of Elizabethan Protestant thinking about charity: first, that donors should endeavour to distinguish between the categories of the poor; and second, that provision should be public rather than private.

Although the state developed these laws in relation to vagrancy and poverty, and developed as a major governing force during the period following the Elizabethan Poor Laws, forms of pastoral power have arguably continued over time, both in the form of state power (discussed below), and in the continued role of faith-based organisations in the delivery of homelessness provision.

In relation to the development of state power, and its relationship with pastoral power, Foucault suggests, "we should distinguish between the two aspects of pastoral power – between the ecclesiastical institutionalization which has ceased or at least lost its vitality since the eighteenth century, and its function, which has spread and multiplied outside the ecclesiastical institution" (Foucault, 1982, p. 214). Foucault claims that "In a way, we can see the state as a modern matrix of individualization or a new form of pastoral power" (Foucault, 1982, p. 215). During this period state

pastoral power shifted the objective of good moral behaviour. Thus, this no longer focused on leading people to salvation in the next world, but instead focused on ensuring it in this world – salvation took on a different meaning: focused instead on the provision of health, well-being, security, protection against accidents, etc. This was not least because new forms of sciences (such as medicine and bio-politics) could better assure these things. As such, within the changing role of the state, pastoral power continued in other forms, and to be operated by other agents – such as the police, hospitals, and state apparatus and agents.

Within the Poor Laws themselves, distinctions were made between the categories of the poor, and since this time English national policy regarding homelessness has constructed two distinct populations: those who are seen as deserving of support and those who are seen as undeserving of support (Clapham, 2003; Fitzpatrick, Pleace, Stephens, & Quilgars, 2009; Ravenhill, 2008). Clapham notes the enduring existence of these distinctions, claiming that current policy discourses "contain understandings of who is "deserving" and "undeserving" of help that have their roots deep in the history of social policy" (Clapham, 2007: 81).

Prior to this, early distinctions between the deserving and undeserving poor had been evident in the first national Act relating to vagrancy in England in 1349, which punished people considered to be 'vagrants' (Jütte, 1994; Slack, 1988). However, these categories were more clearly evident in the Elizabethan Poor Laws, which split the poor into three categories, each with their own perceived cause and appropriate response (Digby, 1982; S. Williams, 2011). These are shown in the table below:

Category (perceived cause)	Able to control cause?	'Appropriate' response (Deserving of support?)
Able-bodied poor (Structural factors, e.g. lack of available work)	No	Provided with work, given food and shelter in workhouses (Deserving of support)
Impotent poor (Individual vulnerability factors, e.g. mental/physical health, age)	No	Cared for in hospitals (Deserving of support)
Vagrants, Vagabonds, Rogues, Sturdy beggars (Unwillingness to work)	Yes	Punishment (Undeserving of support)

The construction of vagrants as undeserving of support appears to be supported by claims that "Related to the image of the vagabond and idle beggar was the view that vagrants were poor not so much by circumstances beyond their control as through their own fault" (Jütte, 1994: 147), in contrast to the other groups who were considered to be unable to control their own position. This legal position of discouraging idleness also appears to be built on an ideological stance that vagrancy "posed a serious challenge to the moral and physical well-being of the Christian commonwealth" (Jütte, 1994: 146).

Furthermore, provision within the Poor Laws only had to be made for those who had 'settlement' within the parish, meaning that a 'local connection' to the area (either through birth, apprenticeship, or another means) was required for relief. As Lowe recognises, "Then, as now, local practices [of poverty relief] varied very considerably" (Lowe, 1997, p. 21).

Both the Vagrancy Laws and Poor Laws were updated over a number of years, especially in relation to the Poor Laws, which were updated substantially in the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act (often referred to as the New Poor Law). This New Poor Law was a substantial moment in poverty relief in the UK. Under the previous Poor Laws relief was still organised in parishes, and relied heavily on outdoor relief of the poor. In contrast, the New Poor Law moved duty for provision from local parishes to Boards of Guardians, who represented these parishes (Somerville, 1999). Lowe claims that this was "a fundamental turning point from a system of misguided and half-hearted benevolence based essentially on the power of local landowners and clergy, to a determination by the national state apparatus to rid society of the moral scourge of poverty by its ruthless subjugation" (Lowe, 1997, p. 21). In addition to this change in organisation of poverty relief, bringing this within state control, the Act aimed to move from a position of providing outdoor relief to moving this relief indoors, to workhouses. Workhouses had been in existence prior to the 1834 Act, but had been little used (Wardhaugh, 2000). The 1834 Act consolidated their use, aiming to develop an approach to poverty relief which ensured that such individuals were not receiving more than those within work. As such, reforms continued to discourage 'idleness' (non-employment), by employing notions that rough sleepers should be less eligible than individuals in employment. Such a view has been persistent in policy relating to rough sleepers, with subsequent laws containing explicit notions of rough sleepers having less eligibility than those who were working (Somerville, 1999)[5]. The workhouse aimed to have a deterrent effect, in order to ensure that individuals were not benefitting 'unfairly' from their claims of poverty.

In sum, the Poor Laws had the effect of bringing a state role into the management of poverty, although, as Foucault notes, the forms of both salvation and governance did not disappear but

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[5] Debates about the existence of a dangerous underclass, who represent a potential danger to social order, have also persisted over time (Morris, 1994; Murray, 1994).

shifted in emphasis. These laws for the first time made distinctions between those individuals considered to be deserving, and those who were undeserving. Furthermore, they focused upon the need for a local connection to be eligible for assistance. As such, these laws created a number of discourses of poverty that have been evident in poverty management ever since, including in current policy and legislation.

Welfare state provision, urgent need, and priority need

With the move towards a welfare state in England and the introduction of the National Assistance Act in 1948, the Poor Laws were repealed, and the criteria for eligibility for support from the state changed. The 1948 Act gave welfare assistance to those who were in 'urgent need' of accommodation, thus people without dependent children or vulnerabilities (such as being disabled or elderly) fell outside of the assistance eligibility criteria (Fitzpatrick, Kemp, & Klinker, 2000; Noble, 2009). However, although this represented a shift in official provision, Poor Law terminology relating to homeless individuals, "of their 'eligibility' for help, whether they are 'deserving' or 'undeserving', whether they have 'local connections'" continued (Lowe, 1997, p. 19). In addition, many Poor Law workhouses were used as sex-segregated hostels for families during the 1950s and 1960s. In addition, those without a local connection continued to be treated in similar ways to vagrants (Somerville, 1999; Wardhaugh, 2000). Even where individuals were entitled to assistance, "The typical stance of these authorities towards homeless people was negative, unhelpful, ignoring, uncaring, moralistic, stereotyping and rejecting" (Somerville, 1999, p. 30). Thus:

> The Poor Law tradition was therefore maintained by local authorities in spite of national legislation against it. As a result, for most homeless people, the coming of the welfare state made no difference to their treatment – those who were settled were seen as 'deserving', while those who were deemed 'less eligible' or 'undeserving' were often rejected or removed from the area (Somerville, 1999, p. 30).

The 1948 Act was superseded by the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977, which laid the foundations for the current legal definition of homelessness. The 1977 Act, for the first time,

recognised homelessness as a housing issue, with some groups given right to permanent housing by local authorities, and with responsibility for assistance being transferred to local authority housing departments (Somerville, 1994; Lowe, 1997; Wardhaugh, 2000). This Act has subsequently been absorbed into further housing laws, most recently in the Homelessness Act 2002, but the fundamental principles of this Act remain in place.

The 1977 Act was preceded by a number of social changes in Britain, which are considered in detail in Somerville (1994), but some of these will be outlined here also. For example, prior to the Act, there was a significant increase in family homelessness in England after private sector rents had been de-controlled by government in the 1957 Rent Act. In addition, slum clearance programmes in the 1960s had led to a rise in family homelessness, with the cause of this homelessness clearly not attributable to the families themselves (Somerville, 1999, p. 30). As such, there were a vast number of cases of seemingly deserving families being made homeless. In addition, the screening of *Cathy Come Home* (1966) and the foundation of the housing charity *Shelter* had given homelessness a much higher profile as a social issue (Lowe, 1997). However, as Somerville (1999, p. 31) notes, "Media attention and public sympathy are not, by themselves, sufficient to produce policy change". Indeed, Lowe highlights a number of issues with subsequent law and policy (such as the Local Government Act 1972 and the 1974 DoE 'Homelessness' Circular) which made the situation regarding the duties of local authorities in relation to homelessness increasingly unclear. Combined, research, public opinion and a lack of clarity regarding the law, meant that "In the early 1970s the situation reached new levels of absurdity" (Lowe, 1997, p. 24).

In addition, a number of changes within society also affected provision. For example, large-scale housing programmes had been successful in housing many, but a minority were less able to make use of these. As such, these groups (e.g. children, elderly people, pregnant women, women at risk of violence) were argued to be more vulnerable within the housing system, with the 1948 Act

assistance ineffective in providing solutions (Somerville, 1994). In addition, a number of other factors relating to housing stock meant that fewer private rentals were available, and that local authority housing began to cater more often for the poorest households in society (Somerville, 1994). Further, ideological and institutional factors added pressure to change, for example shifting from Poor Law attitudes towards familial and welfarist attitudes, whereby the punitive approach to separating families under the Poor Law had become viewed as incompatible with a new emphasis on improving the welfare of homeless families (Somerville, 1994).

According to the 1977 Act, for a person applying for assistance from a local authority housing department to be owed a statutory duty to accommodation by a local authority, they usually should:

- Be found to be legally homeless or at risk of homelessness within the next 28 days. Homeless is defined in legislation as having no accommodation available that is reasonable for them to occupy.

- Be found to be in a priority need category. These include adults with dependent children; pregnant women and their partners; people who are considered vulnerable; people who are homeless as a result of a disaster (e.g. flood, fire); and some people between the ages of 16 and 20.

- Not be found to be 'intentionally' homeless. This is where they have had a suitable place to occupy but chose not to stay there, or where a council feels that a person has made themselves homeless in order to 'play the system', or deems them to in some way be at fault for their homelessness.

- Have a local connection to the place of the application. This could be either that they have lived or worked in the area for a minimum amount of time (this can be set by each local authority, with variations evident between different local authorities), because a person has family in that area, or because they have another special reason to live in that area.

Under this system, although all people who experience homelessness are entitled to support in the form of advice from a local authority, only some are statutorily owed a housing support duty (although it is important to note that local authorities may choose to house individuals who do not meet priority need criteria, but who are not intentionally homeless). Therefore, in England and Wales, people with families, or able to prove their vulnerability, and able to prove their deservingness (both by not being intentionally homeless, and by having a connection to the area) are considered 'priority groups'. People who are eligible for this are often referred to as 'statutorily homeless', because of their entitlement to statutory support.

As Somerville notes, the 1977 Housing (Homeless Persons) Act marked a major change in access to housing for homeless people: "It did not, however, put an end to Poor Law thinking and attitudes", suggesting that intentionality and local connections "echoed the pre-1948 distinction between the 'deserving' and the 'undeserving' poor and were in line with the belief that 'charity begins at home'" (Somerville, 1999, p. 32). Likewise, the current definition of statutory homelessness distinguishes between populations prioritised for support over others, with some having lesser priority for various reasons, for example either because they are without dependents (referred to as 'single homeless'), do not fall within a vulnerability or priority need status, because their homelessness is considered to be intentional, or through lack of local connection to the area.

Thus, within legislation relating to homelessness, despite various re-framings over time, distinctions are still evident in policy between those who are perceived to be deserving of support, and those who are felt to be undeserving of support (Becker, 1997). Ideological tensions and historic views of rough sleepers as vagrants may contribute to the maintenance of an 'undeserving' label, still based upon notions that single rough sleepers without vulnerabilities are able to alleviate their position, but choose not to (Becker, 1997; Golding, 1991; Wardhaugh, 2000). In addition, the local nature of implementation is evident in the 1977 Act in the way in which local authorities are responsible for

housing individuals. As with the Poor Laws, a consequence of this has been local differences in both the interpretation of the laws, and in the provisions made by each local authority in relation to homelessness (Lowe, 1997). As such, whilst provision is made in relation to homelessness, some of the hallmarks of the Poor Laws are still present in law, such as the persistence of attitudes regarding deservingness and local-ness, and in the locally uneven provision in relation to homelessness which has constantly characterised poverty relief in the UK.

The emergence of rough sleeper policies: 1990 onwards

Despite the achievements of the 1977 Act, homelessness, and in particular rough sleeping, continued to rise during the 1980s (Wardhaugh, 2000; Jones & Johnsen, 2009). The degree of success of the 1977 Act in providing accommodation for some homeless populations, had meant that homelessness became seen as less of a pressing social issue (May et al., 2005). Additionally, Somerville (1999) notes a number of processes of depoliticisation of homelessness during the 1980s, some more deliberate than others. The transfer of responsibility for homelessness from welfare departments to housing departments had the effect of divorcing homelessness from wider political issues such as poverty or poor housing, and instead "The identification of homelessness as a housing problem, which helped to make the 1977 Act possible in the first place, tended to obscure the reality of homelessness as a social problem" (Somerville, 1999, p. 36). In addition to this outcome of the 1977 Act, more deliberate ways of depoliticising homelessness were evident during the 1980s, relating to notions of 'genuine-ness' of claims. Further depoliticisation in relation to specific crises such as mortgage repossessions or street homelessness in London was also evident. The latter of these was a very visible issue, and was not a statutory responsibility of local authorities. As such, the Department of Environment responded by establishing the Rough Sleepers' Initiative (RSI) in 1990.

The RSI was designed to make it unnecessary for anyone to sleep on the streets of London (Randall & Brown, 2002), and the advent of the RSI marked a significant political moment for homelessness, as since this point, policies aimed at reducing the number of rough sleepers have been ever-present in England (Wilson, 2011). The early approaches of the RSI aimed to reduce the need for an increasing number of rough sleepers to sleep on the streets of London, through providing outreach work, emergency hostel places and resettlement services, and was said to be successful in doing so, reducing counted numbers of rough sleepers significantly (Randall & Brown, 1993).

However, the RSI has also been criticised by commentators. May et al. (2005, p. 205) claim that the RSI represented an attempt at crisis management, "as central government sought ways to contain the growing number of homeless people visible on the streets of Britain following a period of economic restructuring and a rolling back of the welfare safety net in the mid-to-late 1980s". Indeed, commentators have argued that the RSI represented an attempt to reduce the visibility of rough sleeping in London, rather than addressing the long-term causes of rough sleeping (Liddiard, 1999), with it being suggested that "the main appeal of the RSI was that it enabled central government to point to a visible response to the problems of street homelessness (namely, the increased provision of emergency accommodation), without challenging the position of single homeless people more generally as a residual group within the British welfare system" (May et al., 2005, p. 713). The short term nature of policies to address rough sleeping from the 1990s onwards has also been noted in policy commentaries (Wardhaugh, 2000, p. 41; Somerville, 1999).

The New Labour Government in 1997 established the Social Exclusion Unit. This had oversight of the development and implementation of the new Rough Sleepers Unit (RSU), which replaced the RSI in 1999, with the explicit brief of reducing the number of rough sleepers by two thirds by 2002 (Randall & Brown, 2002; Wilson, 2011). Being placed within the remit of the Social Exclusion Unit,

rough sleeping was identified as "one of the most potent symbols of social exclusion in Britain today" (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998, p. Foreword).

The Social Exclusion Unit report on rough sleeping put forward mixed reasons for pursuing a reduction in numbers, proposing:

> There are good reasons for aiming to end rough sleeping. It is bad for those who do it, as they are intensely vulnerable to crime, drugs and alcohol, and at high risk of serious illness, and premature death. And rough sleeping is bad for the rest of society. The presence of some rough sleepers on the streets will attract others - often young and vulnerable - to join them. Many people feel intimidated by rough sleepers, beggars and street drinkers, and rough sleeping can blight areas and damage business and tourism (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998, p. Foreword).

Here, the reasons of rough sleeping being "bad for those who do it" and being "bad for the rest of society" are both present. Rough sleeping being bad for those who do it might be understandable in some senses, given higher than average rates of being victims of crime (Newburn & Rock, 2005), claims of shorter life expectancy (Grenier, 1996; see Crisis, 2011 in relation to life expectancy of single homeless people), and other issues such as health. However, rough sleeping is also constructed as bad for society in the sense of it being a "threat to order", in line with approaches towards 'vagrants' discussed earlier in this chapter (Busch-Geertsema, Edgar, O'Sullivan, & Pleace, 2010, p. 36), and echoing an 'underclass' or 'deviance' based discourse (Levitas, 2005).

These different ways of understanding rough sleepers are also evident in the approaches that the report suggests to reduce rough sleeping, with a lack of opportunities such as access to hostel accommodation and employment highlighted, and solutions to this seen as key to reducing rough sleepers' exclusion. However, in addition to this, a more coercive approach is taken to reducing the number of people sleeping rough, as it is noted that:

> The Government has no present plans to change the powers in respect of rough sleepers or make it an offence to sleep rough. But since the explicit intention of the policy is to deliver clear streets, the Government believes that the public will feel they have a right to expect hostel places to be taken up as more become available. The new

> body should monitor this closely and if new powers are needed to ensure places are taken up the Government will reconsider the matter (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998).

This approach seems to employ a moral underclass discourse (Levitas, 2005), highlighting the requirement for individuals to be responsible and active in taking the opportunities available to them. Failure to do so means that individuals can be seen as responsible for their own homelessness, through their 'deviant' decision making. However, such approaches fail to comprehend the context of decision making, or the ways in which individuals might be differently able to take up such opportunities due to individual differences and experiences. A number of government policies have entailed similar suggestions about the nature of rough sleeping and the responses to it (e.g. Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008; Homelessness Directorate, 2003; Randall & Brown, 2002; Rough Sleepers Unit, 2003).

The election of the coalition government in 2010 saw the development of replacement policies relating to rough sleeping and homelessness, and it is these policies which are most relevant for understanding the current ways in which rough sleepers' lives are understood in policy terms. However, prior to an analysis of the policies themselves, it is important to place these within a wider political context. Therefore, two important political factors will be considered: the impact of neoliberal politics in the UK; and austerity politics since the 2008 financial crisis.

Current policy: contemporary political context

In order to make sense of the context for current homelessness policy, it is important to consider some wider political trends and factors affecting homelessness policy. The rise of neoliberal politics in the UK has impacted on the political climate, as has the recent growth in austerity politics, in which distinctions between the deserving and undeserving poor have been sharpened, in addition to funding for services being cut, and an increasingly restrictive welfare state.

Neoliberalism

Neoliberal politics have had a significant influence over the past forty years, focusing on the creation and maintenance of markets across society, competition at individual and organisational levels, and a reconfiguration of the welfare state (Lyon-Callo, 2004). This ongoing shift in the political terrain has been far-reaching, and has impacted harshly on those at the margins of society, including rough sleepers.

For the purposes of this research, Loïc Wacquant's analysis of neoliberalism provides a basis for considering the effects of neoliberalism. In Wacquant's terms, neoliberalism can be understood as a "transnational political project aiming to remake the nexus of market, state, and citizenship from above" (Wacquant, 2010, p. 213). Wacquant identifies four "institutional logics" of neoliberalism (Wacquant, 2010, pp. 213–214):

- economic deregulation, which aims to make market-like approaches and mechanisms the prime means of organisation not only for corporate and economic decisions, but a range of human actions, on the grounds of 'efficiency'.
- welfare state devolution, retraction, and recomposition, which is designed to "facilitate the expansion and support the intensification of commodification", employing "workfare" style policies to coerce individuals into wage labour, and "establishing a quasi-contractual relationship between the state and lower-class recipients, treated not as citizens but as clients or subjects (stipulating their behavioral obligations as condition for continued public assistance)" (Wacquant, 2010, p. 213).
- an expansive, intrusive, and proactive penal apparatus, which is said to reach into the very edges of social and physical space in order to contain and manage the disorders and confusion resulting from social insecurity and inequality, allowing for disciplinary

supervision over the "precarious fractions of the postindustrial proletariat" (Wacquant, 2010, p. 213).

- the rhetoric of 'individual responsibility', which provides a vocabulary for constructing the entrepreneurial self, the spread of markets and increased competition, and reduced accountability of the state (and private sector).

Regarding analyses of the effects of neoliberalism in UK, it should be noted that some of the outcomes associated with neoliberalism have a longer policy history than might seem the case from a reading of Wacquant. For example, Mooney and Hancock note that "The division of the working class into 'deserving' and 'undeserving' categories, which pre-dates the post-war welfare settlement, has remained a persistent theme" (Hancock & Mooney, 2012, p. 110), as has been seen earlier in this chapter. In addition, in considering UK analyses of workfare, evidence of the coercion of individuals into paid work, with less eligibility for those who did not conform to this, is present throughout the lifetime of the Poor Laws and in acts with applied penal sanctions to vagrants. Furthermore, the creation of markets is part of a longer capitalist trend which has impacted greatly upon the development of the Western world, in a longer trajectory than the past four decades.

Authors have also noted that processes of neoliberalism are uneven and fragmented (May, Cloke, & Johnsen, 2005), and similarly that policies may be implemented unevenly across and within services by different individual providers. Such moves can be met with resistance and contention (Kennett, 1999), and as Huey (2009, p. 262) acknowledges: "if we turn our attention closely to how homelessness is viewed and responded to within individual locations, what is seen is an amazing diversity of inclusionary and exclusionary responses both within and across nations". Thus, it is important not to suggest that the impacts of neoliberalism are evenly and uniformly experienced.

Therefore, it is important to avoid suggesting that this style of managing marginal populations is a new or equally experienced phenomenon, and instead to recognise its historical links to framings of the poor in UK policy, as well as its unevenness. Having said this, the relationships between the different logics of neoliberalism that Wacquant proposes provides a useful commentary for understanding some of the effects of neoliberal politics, whilst recognising the criticisms of his work, and ensuring due attention is paid to the differences in both local and historical scenes of social policy and poverty management.

Regarding the relationship between neoliberalism and the individual, Woolford & Nelund (2013) propose five characteristics of neoliberal citizens, which are that these individuals are active in the formal economy; are prudent, both to personal risks and navigation of dangers of inner cities; that they are responsible for their own decisions, therefore having a reduced reliance on the state; that these individuals are autonomous, going beyond being responsible, instead being active in making choices about their own life; and that they are entrepreneurial, relating to ideas of an innovative self. Similarly, Aradau (2004, p. 265) suggests that neoliberalism attempts to create citizens who successfully manage risks, as "risk has become one of the main technologies of neoliberalism, which attempts to create prudential, autonomous and self-regulating citizens". According to these accounts, within a neoliberal logic, citizens are expected to be actively working in the formal economy, self-managing (responsible), risk-aware and prudent, and innovative. However, many of these characteristics are evident in previous historical moments. For example, as noted above, an expectation of employment for those able to engage in work was a key driver behind the Vagrancy and Poor Laws. Similarly, notions of self-management are evident within Christian discourses of governance of the poor.

However, there is a particularity about the way in which these logics and discourses are organised within a neoliberal political framework that do present an important context for understanding

policy in relation to rough sleepers (and people in poverty more generally). One of the outcomes of a focus on creating strong markets has been increasing precariousness within both the labour market, and various other markets. Within this structure, those who are able to use the markets to their advantage are rewarded, whilst those who can make less use of markets are seen as 'risky', non-prudent, and subject to various interventions, referred to as the 'dispossessed' by Peck & Tickell (2002)[6]. The dispossessed to whom they refer experience increased precariousness in a number of ways, such as employment, housing, access to social welfare, and other social welfare nets. Some of these are direct effects of changes in social policy, whilst others, such as employment, relate to the changing role of markets, reduced power of trade unions, and changing employment structures such as a reduction in long-term stable employment, with an increasing number of individuals at constant risk of being made unemployed (Shildrick, MacDonald, Webster, & Garthwaite, 2010). Standing (2011, p. 8) discusses this precariousness in relation to his notion of the 'precariat', a group which he suggests is growing and is "flanked by an army of unemployed and a detached group of socially ill misfits living off the dregs of society".

For those whose needs are not catered for by private markets and who are unable to utilise markets in this 'successful way', the welfare state can act to provide support (Briggs, 2006). However, since the 1980s, the scope and delivery of state support has changed vastly. Key to this has been the reduced role of the state in the delivery of welfare provision, with voluntary and private organisations taking on many of the state's roles in the delivery of services, and latterly with the state moving to work in partnership with these providers (Cloke et al., 2010; Ling, 2000). Some details of this shift have been noted in chapter two, and will not be repeated here. However, it is important to note that a proclaimed change in ideology around welfare has also been evident in

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[6] The 'dispossessed' referred to by Peck and Tickell also appear under a number of other labels in academic and policy discourses, such as the 'new poor', 'socially excluded', 'underclass', 'urban poor', among others (Hancock & Mooney, 2012).

the neoliberal restructuring of the state, following an era of greater welfare allowances in relation

to homelessness (as seen previously in this chapter, in the 1977 Act in particular).

In what Rhodes & Mény (1998, p. 1) refer to as "an era of welfare pessimism", debates about an

hypothesised 'social contract' between individual and the state have been apparent, and the

changing relationship has had a renewed emphasis on the 'responsibilities' of the individual,

wrapped up in claims that previous welfare regimes gave individuals 'something for nothing' and

encouraged a 'culture of dependency' (H. Dean, 2004). Such claims have been used to justify

increasingly restrictive welfare provisions, supported by notions that the responsibilities of the

individual needed to counterweight the freedoms promised by neoliberalism. As Harvey (2005, p.

65–66) suggests:

> While personal and individual freedom in the marketplace is guaranteed, each
> individual is held responsible and accountable for his or her own actions and well-
> being. This principle extends into the realms of welfare, education, health care, and
> even pensions...Individual success or failure are interpreted in terms of entrepreneurial
> virtues or personal failings rather than being attributed to any systemic property (such
> as the class exclusions usually attributed to capitalism).

Many of the outcomes of a reduced welfare state, working in partnership with local agents,

arguably echo those of pre-welfare state discourses and ideologies, whereby individuals who were

seen as over-reliant on the state were viewed as in need of 'correction' (the various types of

response are outlined in chapter five). Indeed, this rhetoric of individual responsibility is not new,

and is evident in policy relating to homelessness throughout history, as demonstrated above by the

enduring discourses of 'intentional' homelessness, 'less eligibility' and 'bogus' welfare claims, as

well as the presence of 'workfare' style policies, which were evident in the Vagrancy and Poor Laws.

However, whilst echoes of these logics are evident throughout periods of history, the ideology of

neoliberalism combines and re-frames these discourses in a post-welfare era, in which markets are

seen as a key organising tool of the state (including the welfare state), the role of the welfare state

is to be vastly reduced and reconfigured, including an increasingly restrictive safety net, and the rhetoric of individual responsibility is pervasive (framed within a desire for enterprising and innovative individuals). This change in discourse and practice in dealing with people in poverty marks a move away from the social democratic ideology that had underpinned welfare state support in the post-war era. Therefore, neoliberalism sets a broad political context for understanding the ways in which rough sleepers are understood in current political terms.

As citizens who often fail to make the most of markets, and who are supposedly in need of state intervention, rough sleepers are seen as being either in need of change and deserving of support should they embrace such change; or being undeserving of such support, due to their deviant choices. These understandings position rough sleepers as requiring state intervention to make them 'good' or 'normal', but at the same time serve to silence the voices of rough sleepers themselves. Indeed, if rough sleepers object to such approaches, this can serve to confirm their deviant status, and undeservingness for their unwillingness to engage. Such positioning of rough sleepers is considered further within chapters five and six of this thesis, where service provider discourses about rough sleepers are explored. Rough sleepers' own management and negotiation of such positions is also explored within chapter nine of this thesis.

Politics of austerity

In addition to the broad political influence of neoliberalism, the current climate of austerity plays a role in contextualising this study. Austerity measures can be understood as a key tool of neoliberal thinking, moving away from previous Keynesian approaches to economic thinking, and focusing on reducing government expenditure (Peck & Tickell, 2002; Atkinson et al., 2013).

Coinciding with these austerity measures, and the changing economic conditions of the UK, has been an increase in the number of people observed sleeping rough from 2010-2013. Although these counts are not considered to accurately reflect the actual number of people sleeping rough in England (Cloke, Milbourne, & Widdowfield, 2001; Pawson & Davidson, 2006; M. Williams, 2005), they may provide a general trend in rough sleeping and suggest that over the past four years, the number of estimated people sleeping rough in England and Wales has grown, in contrast to purported reductions in the 1990s and early 2000s (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011a, 2012b, 2013, 2014).

Such measures have impacted upon service provision for rough sleepers. In 2014, Homeless Link reported that 38% of single homelessness projects had reported a drop in funding in the previous financial year (Homeless Link, 2014). As such the context for provision of services to rough sleepers is changing, with services increasingly stretched in their ability to provide to an increasing number of people sleeping rough. The present context of austerity has also 'sharpened' the distinctions between those seen to be deserving of support, through being seen to take the opportunities presented to them; and those considered to be undeserving of support, due to 'choosing' not to take these opportunities (Dobson, 2011). In addition to this, Dobson (2011) suggests that perceived 'need' and 'victim' status may play a role in the allocation of scarce resources.

Within the present context, this 'sharpening' has developed through political and media rhetoric which polarises 'hard working families' and 'welfare scroungers' (Grayling, 2012; Hancock & Mooney, 2012; Mooney & Hancock, 2010; Sheldrick, 2014). In this discourse, the precariousness of labour and other situations such as housing are not seen as outcomes of market processes, nor austerity measures, but instead as a consequence of poor choices of individuals. In line with such an approach, the 'undeserving' poor are presented by politicians as a risk to economic recovery (ITV News, 2014), due to their 'taking' from the state, and regarded as requiring punishment (for

example in the 'sanctioning' of welfare benefit payments). Although such actions are likely to *increase* an individual's precariousness, such acts are used to justify further austerity measures, and increasingly restricted access to welfare mechanisms, to protect the 'hard working families' of the middle classes from the risks posed by an undeserving poor (Harvey, 2005; Standing, 2011).

The broad processes of neoliberalisation can be understood to affect rough sleepers in various ways, reflecting broad shifts in the changing relationship between the state, services, and individuals. In addition, this particular moment of austerity has resulted in reduced income for homelessness services, has accelerated the pace of increasing restrictions on welfare, and has correspondingly sharpened a focus on deservingness. However, it remains to be seen if these are reflected in policy documents themselves. Therefore, it is to the rough sleeper policies themselves that attention shall now turn.

Current policy documents

The two primary government policies concerning homelessness are set out in *No Second Night Out*, whose key objective is to ensure that "Anyone who finds themselves sleeping rough should be quickly helped off the streets so they do not have to spend a second night without a roof" (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011b, p. 13); and *Making Every Contact Count*, which is in place to "think about how services can be managed in a way that prevents all households, regardless of whether they are families, couples, or single people, from reaching a crisis point where they are faced with homelessness" (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012a, p. 3).

Two funding schemes are also in place: the *Homelessness Change Programme*, which is designed to "underpin other work being undertaken to end rough sleeping by providing funding to support

the development and improvement of hostels to support rough sleepers, and those at risk of sleeping rough, to access education, training and employment and to support them into more stable independent living" (Homes and Communities Agency, 2011, p. 52); and the *Homelessness Transition Fund*, a fund "to help ensure that progress towards ending homelessness was not lost, to help protect critical services and fund new approaches to tackling rough sleeping such as No Second Night Out" (Homeless Link, n.d.). In addition to this, with rough sleeping understood in policy terms as part of a wider set of 'social problems', a further policy is relevant here, entitled *Social Justice: Transforming Lives* (also referred to as the Social Justice Strategy), which "is about making society function better – providing the support and tools to help turn lives around" (Department for Work and Pensions, 2012, p. 4). These policies are considered individually here, before focusing on the ways in which rough sleepers' lives are presented within these policy documents.

No Second Night Out

The *No Second Night Out* policy relates directly to people who experience rough sleeping. This policy states that "Anyone who finds themselves sleeping rough should quickly be helped off the streets so they do not have to spend a second night without a roof" (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011: 13).

No Second Night Out claims that "Rough sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness and where people are most vulnerable" (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011b, p. 12). Here, rough sleeping is linked to vulnerability but also to visibility, as was the case with the RSI previously. Such an approach makes the motivation for preventing rough sleeping unclear, with extracts from the policy document highlighting different reasons for being rough sleeping being a policy target, with it being noted that:

- "No one should have to sleep out on our streets in the 21ˢᵗ century" (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011: 12)

- "Homeless people often have complex underlying problems that can be worsened by living on the streets" (ibid).

- "The economic case for action is as strong as the moral one...There are also negative impacts on communities and industries such as tourism from visible rough sleeping and associated activities, such as begging and street drinking" (ibid: 13).

Thus, short-term provision is justified within the policy both as improving outcomes for the individual, but also improving outcomes for the economy (linked to the visibility of rough sleepers). Therefore, within the document, there are mixed justifications for this type of intervention.

The policy claims that "Homeless people often have complex underlying problems" (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011b, p. 12), such as alcohol and drug support needs and mental health problems, and have a history of contact with state institutions (spending time in prisons, care, or the armed forces). It is suggested that "These factors are often linked to social disadvantage" (identified here are family breakdown, debt, lack of skills and qualifications, and trauma). In order to address rough sleeping, the policy outlines five principles:

- New rough sleepers should be identified and helped off the streets immediately so that they do not fall into a dangerous rough sleeping lifestyle
- Members of the public should be able to play an active role by reporting and referring people sleeping rough
- Rough sleepers should be helped to access a place of safety where their needs can be quickly assessed and they can receive advice on their options
- They should be able to access emergency accommodation and other services, such as healthcare, if needed
- If people have come from another area or country and find themselves sleeping rough, the aim should be to reconnect them back to their local community unless there is a good enough reason why they cannot return. There, they will be able to access housing and recovery services, and have support from family and friends

(Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011b, p. 16).

The policy itself focuses on moving people away from the streets, rather than addressing any long-term issues relating to homelessness. Further, within these principles, rough sleeping is constructed as a 'dangerous lifestyle', which both suggests a habitual element to sleeping rough in the use of the term "lifestyle", as well as danger - with no clear message as to whether this danger is to the individual, to others, or to the state (or a combination of these). As in the 1998 Social Exclusion Unit report, the dangers rough sleepers may face when sleeping rough could be the focus of this; but so too, the dangers posed by rough sleepers to social order may be the focus, as in previous social policies about rough sleepers.

This policy focuses on dealing with the immediate issue of sleeping rough. As such, arguably, as with the RSI and other subsequent policies, it is focused on removing visible homelessness from the streets, into short-term accommodation, whilst ignoring the issue of single homelessness as a residual group within homelessness policy.

Making Every Contact Count

The second homelessness policy to be considered is *Making Every Contact Count*. This policy is focused upon prevention of homelessness more generally, as opposed to only rough sleepers. This approach is more explicit in its approach, suggesting that with intervention from the state or service providers, people experiencing homelessness will have "a better chance of rebuilding their lives. Individuals will receive the help they need to get their lives back on track – to be healthy, find a stable home, enter and hold down employment, manage their finances, up skill, and stay away from crime" (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012a, p. 5). This implies that such lives are currently off track and broken, in need of 'rebuilding' to become acceptable and suitable on track lives. Furthermore, this document suggests that services should "step in when things go

wrong, to give people another chance" (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012a, p. 5).

The policy suggests a number of steps for the prevention of homelessness, which are to:

- Tackle troubled childhoods and adolescence
- Improve health
- Reduce involvement in crime
- Improve skills; employment; and financial advice
- Pioneer social funding for homelessness

(Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012a, p. 3)

In focusing upon these areas, the policy takes a skills deficit approach to homelessness, seeing rough sleepers as requiring intervention in these areas. In offering (purported) improvements in health, reduced involvement in crime, and improving skills, employment and financial advice, the policy can be understood to offer the state's form of 'salvation' in this world outlined by Foucault, which was described earlier in this chapter.

This policy discusses rough sleepers' lives as being off track or failed and needing to be given a second chance, to get their lives back on track. As such, this policy appears to understand homelessness as being related to skills deficits, with skills intervention required to ensure a reduction in future rough sleeping. It further suggests that the intervention of experts can aid rough sleepers in 'rebuilding' their lives, positioning rough sleepers as needing the support of others, silencing rough sleepers' own understandings of their lives.

Social Justice: Transforming Lives

The introduction to *Social Justice: Transforming Lives* states: "The Social Mobility Strategy [the policy's sister strategy] is about ensuring people are able to move up the social ladder, regardless of background; this Social Justice Strategy is about ensuring everybody can put a foot on that

ladder" (Department for Work and Pensions, 2012, p. 4). The Social Justice Strategy engages with four key policy topics: families (in particular the so-called 'troubled' families); education and young people; 'worklessness'; and supporting the most disadvantaged adults.

Within the Strategy's chapter on supporting the most disadvantaged adults, which addresses homelessness (alongside other issues such as alcohol and drug dependency), it is suggested that homelessness is indicative of other forms of deprivation, claiming that "The worst affected [by multiple deprivations] can become socially excluded, living chaotic lives and shut off from the sources of support and services they need to start to recover" (HM Government, 2014, p. 48). The document goes on to say that "Lives can go off course – and when they do, we want to ensure that responses are as effective as possible, and that people always have a second chance in life." (Department for Work and Pensions, 2012, p. 48), and that:

> We need to ensure that support for these groups is both well-timed and well-coordinated. Support should address the root causes of problems and aim to bring about long-term change in people's lives. Recovery and reintegration into the community, including sustainable employment, must be the goal of all support for the most disadvantaged adults. (Department for Work and Pensions, 2012, p. 48)

Within this discourse, rough sleepers might be understood to lack stability and 'settled' ways of life, suggesting problems of order within these lives. In addition, it suggests that these lives are 'off course' and in need of intervention to take them back 'on course'. Furthermore, through the use of terms such as 'recover', the Strategy echoes previous historical discourses, which focus on recovery narratives from 'broken' lives. However, like *Making Every Contact Count*, this Strategy is focused on long-term interventions to address supposed deficits, rather than immediate responses to the accommodation issues relating to rough sleeping.

Funding: Homelessness Transition Fund and Homelessness Change Programme

In current policy, two major funding streams have been implemented by government. These are the Homelessness Transition Fund, and the Homelessness Change Programme. The Homelessness Transition Fund allocated £20 million of funding for homelessness services, with services expected to apply for funding in order for them to meet the No Second Night Out requirements. According to Homeless Link:

> All the projects awarded grants are working to support one or more of the following outcomes:
> - No one should spend a second night out
> - No one should live on the streets
> - No one should return to the streets once helped
> - No one should arrive on the streets
> (Homeless Link, n.d.)

This fund was tied closely to government criteria, which focused upon the principles set out in the *No Second Night Out* policy document. In addition to this fund, the Homelessness Change Programme, which allocates up to £30 million to homelessness services, has been administered by government. According to documentation, "The aim of the Homelessness Change Programme stream within the Affordable Homes Programme is to underpin other work being undertaken to end rough sleeping by providing funding to support the development and improvement of hostels to support rough sleepers, and those at risk of sleeping rough, to access education, training and employment and to support them into more stable independent living" (Homes and Communities Agency, 2011, p. 52).

These funds have an explicit remit of supporting government agendas relating to homelessness. They focus on improving the quality of accommodation for rough sleepers. However, whilst this funding focuses on immediate responses, it depoliticises the issue of single homelessness, by de-coupling it from legislation that considers single homeless individuals as low priority.

Understandings of rough sleepers' lives in policy documents

As stated at the outset of this chapter, rough sleepers occupy a particularly visible place in society, which has often led to them becoming the focus of social policy in ways which other homeless populations have not. As Wardhaugh (1996, p. 706) notes, it is not homelessness *per se* that is associated with this risk to social order, but the visibility of this:

> Homelessness in perceived as dangerous because (and only if) it is visible in public spaces. It is this visibility that represents a threat to the security and sense of place enjoyed by settled citizens. Thus, it is not marginality per se that is dangerous: rather it is the visible presence of marginal people within prime space that represents a threat to a sense of public order and orderliness.

Indeed, the continued focus on eradicating rough sleeping, but a lesser focus on hidden homelessness or other types of homelessness, might be argued to support such claims.

Continuing rough sleeper policies and committing millions of pounds of funding to these might seem to contrast with wider policy changes and political trends such as neoliberal politics, austerity measures, and welfare reform, which could justify reduced access to resources for a section of the poorest in society, including rough sleepers. However, whilst rough sleeper policies may at first appear to be contrary to these approaches, in fact they can complement these in that they depoliticise the issue. Although the failure to provide a safety net for non-priority homeless people has been a political issue, the policy emphasis on individual pathology serves to depoliticise this issue.

These policy documents employ particular terms and ways of thinking about rough sleepers' lives. As such, they create stories and narratives of rough sleeping, either as a standalone phenomenon, or as part of an associated topic such as poverty or wider homelessness. Evident within the discourses of present legislation are some long-standing discourses about rough sleepers. Within present legislation, which is based around the 1977 Act and current policy documents, divides are evident between deserving and undeserving populations, which have been present since the Poor Laws. Additionally, within the 1977 Act, and within some recent policy documents, distinctions

made on the basis of having a local connection are also evident, again continuing from long-standing historical discourses about the need to have a 'legitimate' local connection in order to have a right to assistance.

Within current policy documents, use of terms such as chaotic, off track, recovery, and second chance, are also evident and suggest particular ways of thinking about rough sleepers. "Chaotic lives" is a term used to refer to rough sleepers within a number of policy documents (Cabinet Office, 2006, p. 10; Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011b, p. 21, 2012a, p. 10; Department for Work and Pensions, 2012; Making Every Adult Matter, 2009), but without a clear definition being offered. The Oxford English Dictionary definition of 'chaotic' suggests that it is "characterised by chaos, disorderly, confused" (Pearsall & Trumble, 2003). Therefore, a chaotic life might be understood as one lacking in order or being disorderly. However, in such terms, "chaotic lives" is a term of subjective interpretation, based on value judgements, and can be pejorative in nature.

This term is not only present in current policy documents, but also in previous documents. Such phrases are often linked to concepts of off track and failed lives of individuals who had not attained their full potential (a further subjective judgement). Such views can be traced in policy through different terms such as social exclusion, which the New Labour government understood as being "a shorthand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime, bad health and family breakdown" (Social Exclusion Unit, 2001, p. 10) and suggested that "some of the most excluded groups, such as children in care or adults leading chaotic lives", were "groups that have generally *failed* to fulfil their potential and accept the opportunities that most of us take for granted" (Cabinet Office, 2006, p. 10 [emphasis added]). More recently, the term 'multiple disadvantage' has been used to refer to "a combination of three or more problems such as

95

unemployment, poor skills, low income, poor health, poor housing, family breakdown and high crime" (Department for Work and Pensions, 2012, p. 49).

In these policy documents, characteristics of social exclusion, multiple deprivation, and poverty are associated with concepts of individuals having lives lacking in order. These represent a powerful political discourse of 'mainstream' or 'normative' order. Such terminology as chaotic, off track or off course lives also suggests that these are bad or faulty lives, in contrast to 'normal' lives and such labels are applied to rough sleepers in stigmatising ways by individuals outside of this population (Parsell, 2010), and has been an issue since the early Christian discourses of transforming individuals with broken lives (considered at the start of this chapter). Labelling rough sleepers in such stigmatising ways can also serve to discredit and silence their voices and opinions, and in turn helps to justify the 'expert' intervention from professional service providers and government agents. Where protest is made by rough sleepers, this serves to reinforce both their undeserving deviant label, and the notion of their failure to be responsible and independent citizens.

Therefore, discourses in current policy documents echo long-standing normative viewpoints about rough sleepers, in relation to deservingness and a local connection; aid the depoliticisation of homelessness; and discuss rough sleepers in terms of deficits and being in need of (expert) intervention.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on policy about rough sleeping, and associated phenomena. It has traced the early roots of Christian governance of the poor, in which poverty relief was offered by local parishes. This also examined the way in which pastoral power is argued by Foucault to have operated at this time, with these early discourses of governing the poor portraying individuals as

needing to bare their soul to God, and to transform themselves by leading a good life in order to achieve salvation.

Following this, the chapter moved to consider the ways in which the state became involved in the management of those in poverty. In particular, the Poor Laws and Vagrancy laws served to delineate between deserving and undeserving populations – a binary that has been evident in policy ever since. In addition, these laws established long-lasting ideas around the need for a local connection in order to be eligible for assistance. Further, over time, less eligibility principles were established. A shift in pastoral power was also traced through this, with it being argued that the state began to use its power in order to offer a different form of salvation (such as health, wealth and other goods). In addition, over time, the responsibility for administering poverty relief changed, from parishes to local authorities, and indoor relief became prioritised over outdoor relief.

The chapter then focused on the development of laws about homelessness over the post-war period, focusing particularly on the National Assistance Act 1948 and the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977. Here, it was argued that the 1977 Housing (Homeless Persons) Act represented a key moment in legislation about homelessness. This Act established priority need status, and represented somewhat of a shift from some previous Poor Laws ways of thinking about homelessness. However, some of the long-standing principles of poverty relief, in relation to deservingness and local connection, were also evident here. Policies from the 1990s such as the RSI were also considered here. These short-term policies have been argued to have depoliticised homelessness, since they focus on reducing the visible homeless, whilst not changing their legal status in relation to housing.

Following this, the chapter considered current policy. It began by discussing the impact of neoliberalism and austerity on the current political climate. Here, it was claimed that whilst some

of the institutional logics associated with neoliberalism are longer-standing historically, the organisation of these logics (under discourses of markets, entrepreneurialism, freedom, and others) in a post-welfare era present an important contextual backdrop for considering current policy. In addition, austerity politics, it is argued, have led to reduced funding for services, have been used to justify an increasingly restrictive welfare state, and have sharpened distinctions of deservingness. Current policy documents have been explored here, as well as the discourses expressed in them. These discourses focus on some long-term distinctions such as distinctions of deservingness and local connections, but also position rough sleepers as having deficits (thus potentially benefitting from expert intervention), whilst ignoring the political context of a lack of housing support for these individuals.

In conclusion, this chapter demonstrates that there are some long-standing discourses of governing the poor, around the need for change and intervention, deservingness, local connections and less eligibility. Many of these are still evident in contemporary politics and policy. However, contemporary politics also serve to 'reframe' these, in a logic of a smaller welfare state, of market dominance, and of the entrepreneurial and responsible self. Thus, individuals who are deemed to fail in this climate are deemed to require intervention, in order to provide normative order within their lives. However, as has been a hallmark of poverty relief and homelessness policy, these policies are implemented with local differences, meaning that whilst policy or political discourses may exist at a national (or normative level), the implementation of policy may vary between localities.

The relationship between, on the one hand, the understandings of rough sleepers' lives found within policy documents and political discourse and, on the other hand, the ways in which rough sleepers' lives are understood by rough sleepers themselves, is unclear. As Zufferey & Kerr (2004, p. 349–350) note, "The 'needs' of 'homeless' people are often defined by policy makers, funding

bodies and service providers, which position individuals who access homeless services as unable to represent themselves and as the socially deficient 'other' in need of expert intervention". The policies discussed within this chapter rarely draw upon rough sleepers' views of their own lives, instead developing from ideological and moral standpoints, which may bear little resemblance to the realities of rough sleepers' lives and experiences of homelessness. By contrast, this thesis aims to find ways of allowing the views of rough sleepers to be heard and the next chapter outlines the methods used within this research to develop an appreciation of the different ways in which service providers and rough sleepers might understand, position and account for rough sleepers lives.

Chapter Four

Methods

Introduction

In attempting to provide answers to the research questions set out in chapter one, this study employed an in-depth qualitative approach, drawing on ethnographic, narrative and visual methods. This chapter describes the details of the research process, including details of the research location and population. It discusses the methods used to gather research data, outlining four main stages of data collection; and considers the research tools used to gather this data. It also explains the ways in which the data was analysed, drawing upon different forms of analysis. Finally, some ethical and political considerations of the research are explored.

Research approach

As this research aimed to gather in-depth data on meanings and experiences, an in-depth qualitative approach was employed. Qualitative research has been used previously in homelessness research, from early studies such as Anderson's *The Hobo: The Sociology of the Homeless Man* (1965, originally 1923) to recent research considering the topic (Martin & Kunnen, 2008; Robinson, 2008). The value of qualitative research approaches for homelessness research has been previously identified, with the suggestion made that:

Qualitative research is identified as particularly relevant and useful in homelessness research. Liamputtong & Ezzy (2005, p. 7) describe it as 'especially appropriate' for sensitive research involving vulnerable participants, including people who experience homelessness, because its 'flexible, fluid and facilitative' methodologies obtain in-depth information and enable participants' voices to be heard through the research process. (Martin & Kunnen, 2008, p. 65).

Bryman (2012, p. 380) suggests that "Qualitative research is a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data". In addition to this, it has been suggested that qualitative research can allow for in-depth understandings from the perspectives of participants (Marvasti, 2003; Merriam, 2009; Flick et al., 2004). In addition to this, introducing the fourth edition of their handbook of qualitative research, Denzin & Lincoln (2011, p. 3), discuss not only the methods for qualitative research, but suggest that qualitative research is interpretive, naturalistic, and consists of a number of representations[7] of the world, suggesting:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including fieldnotes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretative, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of their meanings people bring to them. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 3).

Denzin and Lincoln discuss the research tools and instruments considered appropriate for qualitative research. Many of these discussions highlight research approaches which allow for the understanding of meanings in subjective and inter-subjective ways. For example, Merriam (2009, p. 2) states, "Qualitative inquiry, which focuses on meaning in context, requires a data collection instrument that is sensitive to underlying meaning when gathering and interpreting data" Similarly, Denzin & Lincoln (2011, p. 4) suggest that:

qualitative researchers deploy a wide-range of interconnected interpretive practices, hoping always to get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand. It is understood, however, that each practice makes the world visible in a different way.

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[7] Here, representation is understood to be "the production of meaning through language" (Hall, 2013b, p. 14).

Hence, there is frequently a commitment to using more than one interpretive practice in any study.

Thus, the interpretive nature of qualitative research (and its analysis) is emphasised, with Denzin and Lincoln noting that different research approaches provide a different 'lens' through which the world can be observed and understood.

In order to develop an in-depth understanding and appreciation of the ways in which rough sleepers' lives are understood by service providers and by rough sleepers themselves, this research employed ethnographic methods such as participant observation and 'hanging out' and participating in day-to-day service use activities within day centres and night shelters, in which "researchers learn about the lives of the people they are interested in through first-hand experience in their daily lives." (O'Reilly, 2009, p. 150). The purpose of such an approach is, "to understand parts of the world more or less as they are experienced and understood in the everyday lives of the people who 'live them out'." (Crang & Cook, 2007, p. 1).

Ethnographic methods have been successfully used in previous studies of homelessness (Martin & Kunnen, 2008; examples of ethnographic research about homelessness include Hall, 2003; Ravenhill, 2008; McNaughton, 2008; Cloke et al., 2005; Snow & Anderson, 1993; Arrigo, 1998; Duneier, 1999). Hammersley & Atkinson (2007) suggest that such an approach allows for knowledge of social worlds to emerge from data. This is in line with a view of social research that develops an appreciate understanding of the social worlds of rough sleepers.

According to this view, understanding the social world requires researchers to adopt an approach which allows them to undertake detailed observation. The data generated by this research and used within the analysis were generated from nine months of participant observation between September 2012 and May 2013 (inclusive), in which I was a participant as a service user. In addition

to this, methods of 'life mapping' and auto-photography were used with rough sleepers, as well as in-depth interviews with service providers. Like participant observation, such methods aim to allow for development of detailed understandings from the perspectives of these individuals. Each of these methods is considered in further detail later in this chapter.

As is set out above, this research was interested in gathering data on meanings and experiences, both from the perspectives of rough sleepers themselves and those providing services to them. At times, research and policy relating to homelessness could be accused of homogenising the individual experience of homelessness. However, the focus of this study was on providing in-depth knowledge on subjective and inter-subjective positions and negotiations, in which meaning and understanding were central concerns. Therefore, this project utilised research methods which allowed for such understandings, employing ethnographic, narrative and visual methods in order to generate data on not only on the biographies of individual rough sleepers and the day-to-day experiences of being homeless, but also on the ways in which rough sleepers' lives were positioned by front-line service providers. Each of these methods is given consideration later in this chapter, before describing how they were used in the research. However, first, the research setting and populations are considered.

Research setting and populations

Much homelessness research in the UK has previously taken place in large cities such as London, often related to its high number of rough sleepers, as well as the presence of a number of large homelessness organisations and funders. More recently, authors have considered sites of rural homelessness (for example, Cloke, Johnsen, & May, 2007; Cloke, May, & Johnsen, 2010; Cloke, Milbourne, & Widdowfield, 2001, 2002, 2003; D. Robinson, 2004; Whiteford, 2009, 2010b). Although some research exists which considers places which neither represent large cities nor rural

areas (e.g. Cloke et al., 2010; Ravenhill, 2008), this type of research is uncommon in studies of homelessness.

This research took place in three Midlands towns in England: 'Midtown', 'Dryborough' and 'Slowville' (the names of these towns have been pseudonymised to protect the identities of the services involved in the research). Of these, Midtown had a greatest estimated housed population with around 200,000 people; Dryborough had approximately 50,000 and Slowville around 30,000 (Nomis, n.d.). These three sites are geographically sited within the same county, and are the largest (Midtown), and two medium (Dryborough and Slowville) sized towns within the county. According to the English Indices of Deprivation 2010, Midtown and Dryborough are within the upper-middle quartile of least deprived local authority areas, whilst Slowville is within the lowest quartile (Data.gov.uk, 2010)[8]. Official rough sleeper count data for the past three years, suggests that Midtown has a rough sleeper count of between five and 15 individuals on a given night; Dryborough around five, and Slowville consistently at three (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2014, 2013, 2012b). However, as noted elsewhere, there are a number of issues with rough sleeper statistics (Williams, 2005; Widdowfield, 1998; Pawson & Davidson, 2006), which mean they should be treated with caution.

This research presents a different context for considering the experience of homelessness. Not only does it consider three sites which have not previously been studied using in-depth qualitative methods, but it also moves away from features of much previous homelessness research: the number of rough sleepers in the area (these three locations do not have particularly high numbers of rough sleepers and thus, do not appear to have a homelessness 'problem'); the size and population of a place (these are not rural spaces nor highly populated urban spaces); and the affluence or deprivation of a place (these places are not overly affluent, nor deprived). Thus, such

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[8] This is true for both rank of average score and rank of average rank in each of these cases.

spaces might initially appear to be fairly 'unremarkable' or 'ordinary' (Bell & Jayne, 2009) and as such have often been overlooked within homelessness research. However, it is precisely that which makes them interesting, and through engaging in homelessness research in these locations it becomes possible to move away from the crisis inflected talk which often dominates debates about homelessness.

Within this research setting, two broad 'populations' of interest were identified: individuals who identified as either being or having been rough sleepers; and people who were currently working or volunteering in homelessness services. The relationship between and within populations of service providers and rough sleepers is a focal point of this research, as considering the relationships within and between individual members of these two groups allows for an exploration of how the practices of front-line service providers and of rough sleepers themselves, co-construct a social and policy 'homeless space'.

Rough sleepers

One population of interest for this study consisted of individuals who identified as either being or having been rough sleepers. This employed a self-defined approach, which allowed people to share their own understandings of rough sleeping (in relation to their experiences). This also meant that imposed definitions of a political nature (such as those offered in official counts) and debates about who does or does not 'count' as a rough sleeper, whilst almost impossible to avoid, were understood from the perspective of those people who felt they had been defined in this way. In some cases, this did not relate to the experience of sleeping rough itself, but the notion of being presented with having no accommodation, and having to negotiate this position (thus, threatened with the prospect of sleeping rough).

17 in-depth interviews with self-identified rough sleepers took place during the research (see the below table for basic demographic information about this population). These individuals were all users of one of three homelessness services discussed later in this chapter, and were approached using an opportunity sampling method. As such, their representativeness of wider rough sleeper populations is hard to gauge, since this excludes non-service-using rough sleepers, and is further complicated because so little is known about non-service using rough sleepers.

Name	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Sleeping rough at time of interview(s)
Peter	Male	50	White British	No
Craig	Male	-	White British	Yes
Alexander	Male	16	White British	Yes
Luke	Male	30	White British	Yes
Max	Male	18	White British	Yes
Kelvin	Male	20	White British	Yes
Louise	Female	29	White British	No
William	Male	39	White British	No
David	Male	29	White British	No
Trevor	Male	62	White British	No
Stuart	Male	41	White British	No
Victor	Male	43	Black British	Yes
Gary	Male	51	White British	No
Laura	Female	30	White British	Yes
Samantha	Female	27	White British	Yes
Jane	Female	53	White British	Yes
Adam	Male	28	White British	Yes

Table 3: Basic demographic data for population of rough sleepers in the study

Within this population, the range in ages of individuals was between 16 and 62. 13 of these individuals were male and four female. This gender breakdown is broadly representative of the population observed during the fieldwork. 16 of these individuals identified their ethnicity as being White British, with one individual stating their ethnicity as being Black British. This broadly reflected

the nature of the homeless population in the locations studied, although there were also a number of Central and Eastern European migrants in service spaces. Although I developed a relationship with some of the latter individuals, in each of these cases, communication between myself and each of them was not clear enough to be confident that valid and informed consent could be given, and doubts about miscommunications remained.

For the population of rough sleepers, a criterion-based opportunity sampling method was used, in which the criterion was identifying as a 'rough sleeper'. Each of these people were using at least one of the three services that formed the 'intensive' phase of the research. This sampling method was used in order to gain access to a population of individuals who have previously been suggested to be 'hard-to-reach'. Additionally, other sampling methods (such as purposive sampling) would have involved a decision on my part over whose lives were deemed most or least relevant, interesting, or appropriate.

Service providers

Another population of interest for this research was that of service providers, that is those individuals who voluntarily or in paid roles performed duties within homelessness services. Of the 21 people interviewed in this group, all but one came from the three services, the Well Centre, the Sun Centre and the Retreat, discussed in further detail later in this chapter[9]. The other person (Julie) came from an accommodation service which shared premises with the Well Centre, but was independent of this service. Julie was interviewed as I had been involved with a number of interactions with her and her service, and a number of rough sleepers had made reference to her

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[9] Fifteen of the individuals interviewed were women, with the other six male. Nineteen of the individuals identified as being White British, with one reporting as being Iranian and another as Welsh. This is largely in line with the broad observations of service providers made during the fieldwork.

service. Therefore, it was felt including Julie in this sample provided an opportunity for her to give an account of service provision from her perspective (and in relation to her service). As with the population of rough sleepers an opportunity sampling method was used. This approach was employed due to its ability to engage with available and willing individuals.

It should also be noted at this point that a simple divide between 'service provider' and 'service user' may be problematic. This is because service users often perform voluntary service provision roles within service spaces. Similarly, as one service provider (Amy) stated, although the role of service provider might have been to help others, this could also play a part in helping the service provider themselves: "I am not here for me to be helped, but I suppose in a weird kind of way it is (laughs)". However, the roles could be at least partially separated, as those rough sleepers or service users who engaged in service provision activities were often separated from other service providers in service terminology, with terms such as "client volunteer" used to describe this group. This difference was also apparent for "client volunteers" as William made apparent, talking about his own volunteering experience:

> I was a buddy. How do you describe that? Umm, I wasn't a befriender, because I wasn't an outsider, I was classed as an insider, so that was the only way to describe my role which was that of a befriender...That's how I did it but they wanted to call it buddy because by then I'd got to know everybody so I wasn't an outsider as such, I was one of the people, you know, part of the crew. I'd been there.

Thus, whilst these groups are not mutually exclusive, differences are evident between those individuals whose service-ascribed master status is "client" (service user) and those for whom this is service provider.

Research process

The research process entailed four stages. This initially involved entering the field and negotiating access to service spaces. Following this, once access had been granted, time was spent in service spaces, initially in a scoping phase, before moving to a more intense phase of research focusing on a smaller number of service spaces. In the fourth phase I left the field after a large amount of data had been gathered, only returning to the field occasionally. These phases, although less easy to separate in practice than this distinction suggests, are discussed below.

Entering 'the field'

In carrying out this research, two main phases of data collection were undertaken, both employing ethnographic methods. These consisted of an initial 'scoping' phase, in which short amounts of time were spent in a number of homelessness services across the three research sites (Midtown, Dryborough and Slowville). This phase was concerned with understanding the types of services that were available to rough sleepers, the differences, commonalities and relationships between services, as well as their openness to the prospect of research. During this phase, my role had similarities to Gold's observer-as-participant, which he claims "calls for relatively more formal observation than either informal observation or participation of any kind." (Gold, 1969, p. 36). The visits to these services often consisted either of formal observation roles, or some participation in events - with time spent either observing day-to-day activities, 'shadowing' members of staff, or 'hanging around' in service spaces, taking part in activities and conversing with individuals within these spaces.

From this phase, three services were selected for a more 'intensive' phase of observation. The reasons were multiple, but among them were that these services were open to the research approach and methods (including critical discussions), willing to engage in discussions about their practices, and provided services for the population of interest for the study. These were:

- *The Well Centre*: A day centre for "people who are homeless and disadvantaged", based in Midtown. The Well Centre had recently moved premises to share premises with a number of other homelessness services, including an accommodation service and the local council, and appeared, from the scoping phase, to be the largest day homelessness service in Midtown. The Well Centre, like many day centres, provided services for people experiencing homelessness, but also for other 'vulnerable adults'.

- *The Sun Centre*: A day centre "for adults who need support", based in Dryborough. Like the Well Centre, the Sun Centre provided services not only for individuals experiencing homelessness, but other people too. At the time, it was the largest known provider of day services to homeless individuals in Dryborough.

- *The Retreat*: A direct access accommodation service for people experiencing homelessness, based in Slowville. Whilst other accommodation services existed in Slowville, these operated with restrictions about age or referred access, thus The Retreat offered accommodation to a wider range of individuals. The Retreat offered stays from one night up to three months.

During this 'intensive' phase of observation, my role was more closely aligned to that of Gold's 'participant-as-observer', in that this was an overt role as researcher, with participation in numerous activities and engagement and relationship building with people in these spaces over a longer period of time and involving numerous visits (Gold, 1969).

Negotiating access

Access to services during the initial scoping phase was gained by approaching these services in person, and introducing myself and the research, using the information sheet (appendix one) to introduce the research to service providers. Some potential barriers to access were considered prior to approaching services, and I obtained an enhanced CRB check.

However, access to services had to be negotiated. In almost all services, this required approaching key gatekeepers about accessing services, and registering details, often as a 'volunteer'. Identifying and approaching key gatekeepers undoubtedly played a large part in negotiating access, but the role of serendipity and fortunate timing cannot be ignored (Sarsby, 1984). Upon initially approaching the Sun Centre, I was informed that it would not be possible to engage in research with rough sleepers since these were a vulnerable population. However, upon returning to the Sun Centre two weeks later, a change in management meant that the research was more openly received.

Registering as a 'volunteer' raises particular ethical issues about the role of the researcher. However, during the course of the research, it became clear that, without engaging in this way, little long-term access would be granted. As such, registering as a volunteer was necessary in order to facilitate long-term access, although my day-to-day activities included little such work. To avoid confusion about my role (researcher/volunteer), I introduced myself as a research student looking at life stories of people who had experienced homelessness, which was a more accurate reflection of my role in practice, in which I participated in service use practices.

Spending time in service spaces

Once access to services had been negotiated, time was spent within service spaces, talking to people and generally 'hanging around' (Wogan, 2004; Cloke et al., 2010; Rosenthal, 1991). This

allowed me to gain a greater understanding of service spaces, and to build some initial responses. The observations made during fieldwork were recorded as fieldnotes.

Spending time in the field prior to interviewing (around 4 months prior to first interview) was also an important part of the research. This allowed me time to negotiate this terrain, to build up relationships with people using and providing services, and to understand some of the politics at play in service spaces. Divides between overt and covert observation have also emerged within previous research (e.g. Cloke et al., 2010; Ravenhill, 2008). Within this research project, an overt observation approach was used, to ensure that individuals were aware of me and my reasons for frequenting these spaces.

Taking an ethnographic approach entailed spending time doing things that service users did, such as listening to what might seem 'mundane' conversations, playing pool or card games (both of which were popular in service spaces), or watching television. I conversed on topics relating to football, television programmes, education, family, pubs, clothes and a host of other topics - both listening, and talking about myself as a process of engaging. This was important for two reasons:

1) To allow for an understanding of the day-to-day processes of management and negotiation at play in service spaces. Whilst these topics might seem 'boring', or 'mundane', I was opened up to some of the pleasure, uncertainty, fear, contentment, and other emotions that individuals may experience.

2) To develop an understanding of 'what matters' to people. These actions were not always part of a process aimed at the end-point of 'taking data', but were part of building an understanding of the small and big stories present in the lives of individuals, and in doing so understanding the 'roundedness' of these individuals, moving away from research which can reinforce their othered-ness (Madden, 2003).

I gave information about myself to both rough sleepers and service providers, as well as gathering other people's data. A sharing (rather than taking) of information potentially exposed me to some of the difficulties and concerns that researched populations may have. For example, the giving of personal data and information without fully knowing the potential consequences or ways in which that information might be used; the trusting of an individual about whom fairly little is known; and the emotional investment of spending time with an individual, and having some form of shared experience with them (albeit in different roles of researcher/service user/service provider). In approaching research in this way, it is hoped that at least some re-shaping of the traditional researcher-participant relationship took place, although with the acknowledgement that the issues with this relationship are not fully resolved through these methods.

These researcher-participant relationships were an important part of the research. As has previously been suggested, the relationship between the researcher and those involved in the research is not fixed, but can change based upon a range of factors (Duneier, 1999; Bucerius, 2013). Duneier spoke about this in relation to his own role during his research, stating:

> This seemed to have a variety of changing meanings, including: a naive white man who could himself be exploited for "loans" of small change and dollar bills; a Jew who was going to make a lot of money off the stories of people working the streets; a white writer who was trying to "state the truth about what was going on["]. (Duneier, 1999, p. 12)

Within this research, I was potentially an outsider to service providers and rough sleepers, having no first-hand experience of homelessness, nor having worked within homelessness services. Further, gender, ethnicity, class and age were potentially 'othering' factors, because I was a white British, male, aged 24 at the time of the fieldwork. This is not to suggest that each participant was different to me in every way listed above, but instead to say that such differences may sometimes have been apparent, rendering me an outsider in various ways.

However, in spending time in services, as I had not experienced homelessness, my role could not be that of a full insider. Instead, it was more in line with Bucerius' (2013) notion of a 'trusted outsider'. Bucerius argues that although the position of an insider has been seen as the 'gold standard' for ethnographic fieldwork, this insider status could in fact limit the potential to ask questions, find out about relationships, rules and norms; with insiders hampered by assumptions about the knowledge they have. As Bucerius suggests, this outsider position allowed her to use her lack of knowledge to her advantage:

> I could pose detailed questions that only an outsider could ask about group life and the drug trade, and the inside knowledge with which I was increasingly entrusted allowed me to gain a more complete picture of the group over time. (Bucerius, 2013, p. 702)

In this case, it is felt that such a position was advantageous for me as a researcher, as it similarly allowed for the asking of questions and gaining of trust over time.

During this period, it was also important to negotiate positions between me and other people in service spaces. This was complicated further by different and sometimes competing complex aims and desires of individual (and groups of) rough sleepers and service providers. In order to maintain relationships, whilst not being seen as being too close to a particular individual or group, I aimed to maintain a "buddy-researcher" (Snow et al., 1986) role, in which a level of distance was maintained whilst engaging in acts of friendship.

Furthermore, relationships with service providers were developed in the knowledge that critical results might emerge from the data. Service providers from each of the three services visited during the 'intensive' phase of observation showed a knowledge of this in informal conversation, with many showing an openness to constructive criticism of services (which in turn was partially demonstrated through me being allowed to collect service documents with little restriction).

However, in a context where dominant discourses exist, critical discourses had to be carefully approached.

Whilst spending time in service spaces, individual rough sleepers were approached about potential involvement in the research. During the initial 'intensive' phase of research, some service providers engaged in processes of recommending rough sleepers for involvement in the research. Whilst grateful for the opportunity this afforded, I was also aware of the potential reasons that service providers might have for directing me towards particular individuals. Therefore, whilst I engaged with these individuals, other service users were also approached, including individuals about whom service providers had sounded a note of caution. Such an approach aimed to manage potential service provider bias towards 'correct' or 'appropriate' discourses of 'homeless lives'.

Following service rules and guidelines was also a point of consideration during the research. Policies such as carrying a personal alarm (policy in The Retreat), wearing a name badge, and paying for items such as food and drink were contentious issues, which had the potential to create distance between service users and myself. On my first visit to The Retreat, I was told that it was policy to carry a personal alarm, and that I would need to do this. However, in future interactions, I did not carry one, as I felt that this created a sense of the 'dangerous other' in my interactions with rough sleepers, which I wished to avoid. I also used a similar approach regarding name badges I was given in service spaces. These items, I felt, potentially created a barrier between me and rough sleepers, having the potential to reinforce notions of being on the side of service providers, or having some form of official capacity within spaces. I also kept a strict rule about paying for items that people using services would be expected to, despite regularly being offered these free of charge (often this related to food or drinks). However, I maintained these practices as I felt that they would give me greater insights from a service user's perspective. Such decisions were focused on building

relationships and rapport, as well as developing a greater understanding from the perspective of service-using rough sleepers.

Leaving the field

After nine months spent in the field, the decision was made to leave the 'intensive' phase of research. This was largely informed by the observations and data I was encountering, which provided little new insight above those provided by previous gathered data.

Following this phase of the research, contact was maintained with individuals encountered during the 'intensive' phase of research. During the research, my contact details were supplied to all people involved, so that they could contact me following withdrawal from service spaces.

Further, I returned to the service spaces frequently, although with greater increments of time between each visit (initially visiting once a week, then once a fortnight, once a month, and towards the end of the research at less regular intervals). This maintained relationships between me and people in service spaces, as well as allowing time to reflect and return to ask any questions or discuss issues which were unclear in initial data. Further, as I had built relationships with individuals in the field, this allowed for some continuation of these relationships, whilst recognising that these relationships would change. As well as managing relationships between myself and others, and recognise that over long periods of time, emotional bonds may emerge, and that 'breaking' these suddenly could be detrimental to 'researched' individuals, reinforcing negative views about social research.

Research tools and data gathering

During the research, a number of research tools were employed. These were used to gather data from a range of sources, and to aid the understanding of homelessness from the perspectives of service providers and rough sleepers. Each of these tools is considered below.

Participant observation, fieldnotes and document collection

A general research tool of participant observation was employed. The method of participant observation entails a particular approach to the topic of study, with May (2011, p. 163) stating:

> participant observation is said to make no firm assumptions about what is important. Instead, it encourages researchers to immerse themselves in the day-to-day activities of people whom they are attempting to understand. In contrast to testing ideas (deductive), they [ideas] may be developed from observations (inductive). (May, 2011, p. 163).

This entailed two main features, which were, "First-hand participation in some initially unfamiliar social world *and* the production of written accounts of that world by drawing upon such participation." (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 1 [emphasis added]). From this, extensive fieldnotes were made, initially in the forms of mental or jotted notes in the field (made on mobile phone in private spaces such as toilets). As soon as possible after leaving service spaces, these were written up into extensive fieldnotes, which involved more detailed notes on the sights, sounds and encounters, as well as my own thoughts and feelings. This was an attempt to capture "thick description" of research experiences (Geertz, 1973; Emerson et al., 1995). It is important to acknowledge that any fieldnotes made are partial and selective (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

The notes made ranged from some basic observations early on (often about capturing basic ideas and observations), to more detailed notes later in the research project, which entailed general

observations but also more detailed notes on particular topics and encounters. These fieldnotes aimed to provide an account to build a general understanding from, as well as a space to reflect on my experiences as a researcher. In particular, fieldnotes were useful for recording my emotions following interviews - especially those which entailed recalling of traumatic events, as this allowed me a space to record my feelings about these.

Fieldnotes were also useful in providing contextual information, and recording experiences with people outside of the interview setting. As Watt & Scott Jones (2010, p. 110) note:

> When we talk to people, it is not uncommon for them to leave gaps or silences in their narrative. ... This can create gaps or silences in the data and sustained participant observation can help in filling in these gaps or contradictions.

Thus, fieldnotes were useful for potentially filling in gaps in interviews, and building knowledge not only of the 'realities' of homelessness spaces, but also the silences and absences, as well as unclear accounts in formal interviews (both with service providers and rough sleepers).

In addition to fieldnotes and interviews, documents relating to service policy and statistics on service use were collected towards the end of the research. The aim of collecting these documents was to build up an understanding of the service discourses of homelessness and provision present in service documents. These documents were collected in an overt manner, approaching service providers for documents.

Each service provided documents such as service policies and forms, as well as statistics regarding service use. However, the differences between these show the discrepancies across homelessness services in official policies and information gathered about those people who use services. These documents were often either available publically, having been published; archived on websites or internet pages; or given to me by service providers (Scott, 1990). They had all been produced in official capacities by service providers, either as statements of account, leaflets for promoting

services, or documents for new volunteers and workers. The collection of documents thus allowed for an understanding of the discourses evident in service provider documents.

Semi-structured interviews with service providers

In addition to these fieldnotes and observations, semi-structured interviews with service providers were employed to gain data on their experiences of working in homelessness services. In this case, semi-structured interviews were employed to increase the likelihood that particular conceptual topics would be discussed during the process, as these topics were considered important to understanding service provision. However, the employment of semi-structured interviews meant that this was flexible, and open to change of direction as and when service providers discussed other topics (Wengraf, 2001), recognising service providers as having a form of expert knowledge through their experiences. The questions used within this were often open-ended (see appendix five for interview schedule), to allow for a degree of individual interpretation of the important topics for discussion. This allowed for some understanding of what mattered to service providers (Bryman, 2012).

The interviews were concerned with a number of general topics and concepts within the research, with more narrowly focused questions being posed to the participants (Wengraf, 2001). The topics related to how/why people came to work or volunteer in the service; their views of service provision; their perceptions of their role; their opinions on working with other service providers (within a service); their perspectives on service users; their understandings of connections that services had to other service providers and the local community; their opinions on policy - both internal and external to services; and questions such as what they would do with unlimited resources.

All but one of these interviews were conducted over one episode, with one lasting two episodes. Interviews lasted between fifteen minutes and 1 hour 40 minutes. These interviews were carried out after spending six months in the field, and thus at this point I had met and spoken to each of these service providers on a number of occasions. Participants were given the option whether or not to have interviews recorded, with all service providers happy for interviews to be recorded.

Life mapping and auto-photography with rough sleepers

In aiming to uncover the ways in which rough sleepers understood and provided accounts of their own lives, two main research tools were utilised alongside ethnographic fieldnotes. These were life mapping and auto-photography, both of which incorporated narrative and visual elements. Participants were given options about the type of research method they wished to use.

Life mapping was used for eliciting narrative and biographical data, drawing on in-depth interviews to capture this data. This approach was influenced by methods such as the Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM) (Wengraf, 2012) and Hermanns' (1995 cited in Flick, 2009) account of narrative interviews, which outlines methods that allow for participants to control the direction and content of narrative accounts. Furthermore, these tools allow for an understanding of homelessness which recognises its episodic, and fluid, rather than a fixed, status (May, 2000a; Ravenhill, 2008), with life mapping allowing individuals to both contextualise their homelessness, and to recognise its position within a wider narrative.

In these interviews, I brought a number of mapping tools (A1 flipchart paper; marker pens in four different colours; sticky notes of different shapes; corrector fluid; biro pen; pencil; and face shapes of various types), with rough sleepers encouraged to use these as they wished. In addition, rough sleepers were asked at the outset of the interview if they wished to draw the map, or if they wished

me to do this under their direction. Rough sleepers were also able to develop their maps over a number of episodes, meaning that they were able to reflect on these and make changes in subsequent interviews (although few did make changes). Employing such an approach to some degree allowed participants to lead the appearance and content of the data. Overall, half of the interviewees who completed life maps (seven) chose to complete these themselves, with the other seven choosing for me to do this whilst they spoke. Participants were given the option of the interview being recorded prior to interview. In all but two cases for rough sleepers permission was given for the interview to be recorded. In the two cases not recorded, I spent time immediately following interviews making notes about these interviews, key quotations, and points of reference.

In three cases, life maps were not completed, but biographical data was discussed and audio recorded. In two of these cases (Laura and Stuart), life mapping exercises began with me acting as scribe, but stopping soon into the research. Whereas almost all other individuals engaged with the tool and me in turn, in each of these cases, there was an intense focus upon me, with eye contact and body direction being aimed towards me. As both of these stories entailed elements of abuse or neglect early on, it was felt that the telling of this sensitive and potentially painful information, alongside these visual cues may have been a call to me to engage in more intense forms of listening. In this sense, whilst life mapping may be used as a tool to elicit information through an intermediary focus point (taking the focus away from individuals) (Prosser, 2011), at times this should be used with discretion. Furthermore, in one interview (Craig), the life mapping tool was not used successfully. In this case, shortly after beginning the interview, Craig asked me a number of times "what do you want to know?" Despite my insistence that I wanted to know about his life, and explanation of the tools, he continued to ask what I wanted to know. Thus, I asked questions about his life in an unstructured interview format, asking about his life prior to homelessness, his experiences of homelessness, and his future (reflecting the three main elements often present in life maps).

The task for the auto-photographers was similar to the one of life mapping. That is, individuals were not directed to take photographs about their homelessness, but instead what mattered to them in their life. The processes utilised by participants for both tasks allowed them to choose what to tell, describing or capturing not only their environments (Radley et al., 2005) but also their ascribed identities (Parsell, 2010, 2011b).

Within this project, the auto-photography option was only taken up by four individuals (with two completing this process); most participants chose the life mapping exercise instead. This method did produce some interesting and relevant data, with a number of images and commentaries about these images produced. However, it has not been possible to integrate all such images within the main body of the thesis itself, with only one used within this main body. However, in order to ensure that these images are not lost, and that their value is seen, some example images (alongside extracts from the transcripts) have been included in appendix seven of the thesis.

One of the barriers that seemed to discourage people from choosing the auto-photography option was the time that it took to go and independently take the photographs and then return to discuss them in a research interview. In future research, employing processes that allow for rough sleepers and researchers to work collaboratively, by employing the use of methods such as 'go alongs' (Kusenbach, 2003), or an adapted form of 'go alongs' allowing for taking and discussing of photographs in-situ, may produce a more appealing and collaborative method for rough sleepers.

The processes of life mapping and auto-photography aimed to be participatory and exploratory in nature, and acknowledged rough sleepers as having expert knowledge, with the interviewer either fulfilling the role of listener or scribe. Offering a choice of two different, but related mediums that participants could choose from aimed to open up avenues for communication that suited different

participants. Both options sought to draw out similar communicative processes for discussing a rough sleeper's life, allowing for an understanding of the meanings that individuals assigned to visual and narrative data about their own lives (Gotschi et al., 2009; Radley, 2010).

Narratives can be understood as "discourses with a clear sequential order that connect events in a meaningful way for a definite audience and thus offer insights about the world and/or people's experiences of it" (Hinchman & Hinchman, 1997, p. xvi). Within narrative approaches to research, it has been suggested that "[t]he researcher's primary aim is not to discover whether narrators' accounts are accurate reflections of actual events, but to understand the meanings people attach to those events." (Chase, 2005, p. 424). It is also important to note that "Whatever else they may say, stories do not simply tell the tale of a life. Here, a life is seen more richly as "composed" or constructed: The writer becomes a part of the writing." (Plummer, 2004, p. 565). In this sense, life stories can be seen as constructions, and thus whilst not dismissing such accounts as dishonest, it is important to note that these potentially communicate partial viewpoints or information, as well as individual meanings. Thus, "Stories can be told in different ways at different times." (Plummer, 2004, p. 565).

A distinction can also be made between "long" and "short" life stories (Plummer, 2004, p. 565–566). Plummer suggests that long life stories are those in which a text itself is dedicated to the telling of a complete account of an individual story, and are usually longitudinal in nature, drawing on a wide range of resources, and involving intensive observation of the individual's life. In contrast to this, he suggests that "short" life stories:

> take much less time, tend to be more focused, and are usually published as one in a series. They are gathered through in-depth interviews, along with open-ended questionnaires, requiring gentle probes that take somewhere between half an hour and 3 hours. The stories here usually have to be more focused than the long life histories. (Plummer, 2004, p. 566).

Within this research, the majority of interviews in this study were collected over one episode, however five of these were collected over multiple episodes, with one being carried out over five episodes. The shortest of these interviews lasted for around 40 minutes, whilst the longest (combined) was almost nine and a half hours long. Therefore, most of these narratives can be described as "short", rather than "long" life stories (Plummer, 2004).

As Robinson (2008) acknowledges, many people encountering homelessness services are required to give some level of biographical data in order to access them, and they may be used to interviews in other contexts (such as therapeutic interviews or a discussion of problems). Therefore, it was important to position this interview as not to do with personal issues or problems, and not to discover causes of homelessness, but instead as being about an individual's experiences and recognition of these. Using mapping and photography techniques allowed interviewees not only to dictate the content of their narrative, but also its form with a range of map forms emerging from the research (a selection of these maps are shown in appendix six, displaying the diverse visual and narrative forms they took).Further, those people involved in the research were able to leave with something from the research, as each person was given a copy of their map and/or photographs. This approach aimed to give collaborative outputs over time.

The use of these methods aimed to give potential to discuss topics that individuals felt were important, but may have been considered not directly relevant to their homelessness (Sarantakos, 2005). In doing this, the use of life maps and auto-photography moved away from ideas of homelessness as the object of study or a master status (Hughes, 1945), towards the lives of people being the object of study, and moves away from previous approaches of focusing on homelessness careers or pathways (May, 2000a; MacKenzie & Chamberlain, 2003; Chamberlain & MacKenzie, 2006; Anderson & Tulloch, 2000; Mayock et al., 2008; van Laere et al., 2009; Clapham, 2003, 2002; Chamberlain & Johnson, 2013).

Whilst employing narrative methods, pathways and careers approaches have been criticised elsewhere (Fopp, 2009; Somerville, 2013). Fopp notes that such approaches can appear to place fault unduly on rough sleepers, and Somerville suggests that such approaches might be understood as a re-constitution of realist accounts of risk-based research approaches, suggesting that this misunderstands the nature of narrative, as:

> It seems not to be understood by realists that life stories exhibit a narrative structure that is categorically different from the social and spatial structures that realists have in mind. The pathways that homeless people relate in their narratives do not seem to be of the same kind as the pathways that realists seek to identify. Narratives need to be understood as a form of knowledge, structured by plots, themes and characters, which is different in nature from the "rigour" or "robustness" sought by the "new orthodoxy". Narratives are, indeed, "cultural", and, therefore, homelessness narratives can be described as a "cultural phenomenon". This does not make the homelessness described in these narratives any less real – on the contrary, the reality of the homelessness experience is often heightened in homeless people's life stories. (Somerville, 2013, p. 399)

Therefore, approaches such as those which aim to develop probabilistic risk based approaches to homelessness causation, could be at a disjuncture with the narratives that rough sleepers themselves create.

Instead, through life mapping and auto-photography techniques, the study aimed to allow people to construct their identity as complex with a number of statuses, and to position their homelessness within a wider life story, in which co-existing events may be complex, contradictory, and non-linear. Such approaches allow for recognition that homelessness may be *what* someone is experiencing, but not fully constitutive of *who* that person is (Parsell, 2010). Within this research, the use of life mapping and auto-photography approaches provided flexible tools which allowed rough sleepers to assert some control over the content and form of their told life stories, in contrast to approaches which focus more heavily upon only their homelessness.

Data analysis

Different methods of data analysis were used to analyse the different forms of data present. These were informed by traditions of discourse analysis, document analysis, narrative analysis and visual analysis. In this section, these different approaches are discussed, with the data analysis method used within this research outlined towards the end.

Discourse analysis

Within this research, discourse analysis was used to analyse service provider interviews, as well as examining the discourses in service documents. A discourse can be understood as, "*a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world)"* (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 1 [emphasis in original]). The approach used within this research draws upon Hall's (1997) approach to discourse analysis.

Within such approaches, discourse is taken as being about representation rather than purely about linguistics. This approach sees discourse as:

> a group of statements which provide a language for talking about – a way of representing the knowledge about – a particular topic at a particular historical moment. ... Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language. But...since all social practices entail *meaning*, and meanings shape and influence what we do – our conduct – all practices have a discursive aspect (Hall, 1992: 291, cited in Hall, 1997: 44).

Thus, using this approach, both language and practice have a discursive element.

Drawing upon Hall's interpretation of discourse analysis, this research project is guided by the idea that physical actions and objects exist, but that they are given meaning within discourses. Hall

highlights examples and notes six key elements that may be contained within discourses of a subject:

1. Statements about that phenomenon, which give us a particular kind of knowledge about these things;
2. The 'rules' which prescribe the ways of talking about topics and phenomena, and exclude other ways of talking about them, at a particular historical moment;
3. 'Subjects' who personify the discourse, with the attributes we would expect them to have, given the manner in which knowledge was constructed about that topic at the time;
4. How this knowledge about the phenomenon acquires authority and power, how it becomes seen to embody a 'truth' about the phenomenon, at a particular moment in history;
5. The practices within institutions for dealing with the subjects, whose conduct is being regulated and organised according to the 'knowledge';
6. Acknowledgement that a different discourse will arise at a later point in time. Opening up new conceptions and ways of dealing with the same phenomenon.

(Adapted from Hall, 1997: 45-46).

Thus, in this approach, rough sleeping, homelessness, chaotic lives, social exclusion and deservingness (as well as the people who personify these roles/types) have meanings within discourses about them.

Discourses can also be understood as being influenced by power relations between different actors within a society or culture (Hall, 1997; Carabine, 2001). Carabine notes that: "If our study of discourse is to be more than a study of language, it must look also at the social context and social relations within which power and knowledge occur." (Carabine, 2001: 275). Taking this into account in this study, this would mean that power is not only apparent in the way in which large national policy documents and statements create discourses, but also in the way in which people interact in spaces and create their own discourses of knowledge. Thus, important to understanding the relationship between power and knowledge is an analysis not only of policy documents which may influence services and service providers, but also the discourses emergent within service documents and service provider interviews

Furthermore, the approach to discourse analysis used within this study is influenced by some elements of critical discourse analysis, in that it is aware of the importance of recognising that discourses are both constitutive as well as constituted by the context in which they exist. Here, their inter-textuality, is important, as Parker notes:

> The process of focusing on specific texts might lead us to pragmatically treat these as abstracted from culture when we carry out our analysis, and so we have to be aware of the ways in which the meanings we study are produced in their relationship to other texts, the way they are 'intertextual'. (Parker, 2004, p. 310).

This inter-textuality is important for understanding the ways in which individuals construct discourses, as well as being constructed within discourses. As Phillips & Hardy (2002) note, such discourses can be multiple and complex:

> We think our experience is largely written for us by the multitude of conflicting discourses of which we are a part. This is not to say that we do not strategically draw upon these discourses. We obviously do. But our ability to act strategically is limited by the discourses that accompany our intervention and the complex processes of social construction that precede it.

This research aims to analyse the ways in which some discourses are drawn upon, but also the ways in which such discourses might be complex, contradictory, or limiting in their approach. In considering the ways in which individuals and larger collectives are able (or unable) to successfully draw upon discourses, this analysis allows for an understanding of the ways in which some discourses become dominant and others marginalised.

In attempting such an analysis, I draw upon Carabine's (2001) application of discourse analysis, which suggests that once topics and data have been chosen and identified, one should look for inter-relationships between discourses; discursive strategies and techniques used; absences and silences; and counter-discourses and strategies. Furthermore, she suggests adding a contextual layer of understanding, by considering the background and power/knowledge networks surrounding such data. The data generated from service provider interviews (chapter six) and

service documents (chapter five) have been analysed with such approaches to discourse analysis approaches in mind.

Document analysis

In exploring the documents from service spaces, documentary methods were drawn upon. As Payne & Payne (2004, p. 61) note: "Documents are naturally occurring objects (i.e. not deliberately produced for the purpose of social research) with a concrete and semi-permanent existence which tell us indirectly about the social world of the people who created them". In this sense, documents can be understood to contribute to discourses about homelessness, but also to be influenced by the perspectives of those who created them.

Scott (1990) proposes a difference in texts which are personal (e.g. individuals' diaries, letters, etc.), public (e.g. created by government and publically available), or private (e.g. created by businesses or charities). Each of the service provider documents fits the 'private' category, as they have been created by charities, as private organisations, although they are publically available.

Furthermore, Scott suggests four frames for analysing documents, which are:

- Authenticity: whether a document is what it claims to be.

- Credibility: a judgement on how distorted or accurate a documents content is likely to be.

- Representativeness: Whether documents are representative of all documents of that type.

- Meaning: Both in the literal meaning of the content of the document, and the interpretive meaning "in which the researcher relates the literal meanings to the contexts in which they were produced in order to assess the meaning of the text as a whole" (Scott, 1990, p. 30).

The authenticity of the documents within this research can be accepted, since many of them came directly from the services. The representativeness is difficult to measure, since many of them were

created at a service level. Therefore, it is the meaning and credibility of these documents which is the focus of this research. In drawing out the meaning of these documents, some assessment of their credibility is also likely to take place.

In considering the meanings and credibility of documents, Rapley suggests a focus on both what is and is not said, for developing an understanding of the ways in which arguments are developed. He further suggests that as well as considering the content of these documents:

> When studying texts you are also interested in *the rhetorical work of the text*, how the specific issues it raises are structured and organized and chiefly *how it seeks to persuade you* about the authority of its understanding of the issue (Rapley, 2007, p. 113).

Thus, some of the same processes that are employed in analyses of discourses were also useful for analysing the documents within this research. These focused not only on the content of documents, but the relationships between different discourses, and the techniques and methods used within these texts. However, in addition to this, the assumptions made within these texts are also important to consider (Rapley, 2007; Scott, 1990; Prior, 2003). In relation to rough sleepers, this could consider such elements as the causes of their rough sleeping, or their ability to show agency in their day-to-day lives. Within the analysis of documents, the meanings and the devices used for giving documents (and arguments presented) credibility were the focus on analysis. Chapter five focuses upon these documents in further detail.

Narrative analysis

In this research, the data generated from life mapping and auto-photography had narrative elements, and as such required analysing with narrative analysis in mind. The approach employed within the research draws upon Lieblich et al.'s (1998) classification of content vs. form and holistic vs. categorical interpretations of narratives. Here, it is important to note that this research does not

conform strictly to one of the types of approach that Lieblich et al. identify, but is influenced by the various types (holistic-form; holistic-content; categorical-form and categorical-content) of analysis proposed. Indeed, three examples of more holistic accounts of stories are presented in chapter seven, whilst the categorical forms (to consider themes across narratives) are used within chapter eight.

In addition to this approach, some authors have suggested that narratives are structured in particular ways. Elliott (2005, p. 42) interprets Labov & Waletzky's (1997, originally 1967) model of narrative analysis suggesting their model to have six elements:

Abstract: Summary of the subject matter
Orientation: Information about the setting: time, place, situation, participants
Complicating action: What actually happened, what happened next
Evaluation: What the events mean to narrator
Resolution: How it all ended
Coda: Returns the perspective to the present

This research did not employ such a rigid approach to understanding narratives, as these narratives often included a number of complexities, and some did not include elements such as orientation, resolution or evaluation. However, the analysis did draw upon these categories (employing a flexible approach) to help to understand the ways in which narratives were relayed during the research process. Furthermore, the contextual elements of narrative were considered, because as Denzin notes:

Lives are biographical properties. They belong not just to persons, but also to larger social collectives, including societies, corporations, and, for some, the world-system. How lives as biographical properties are owned, exchanged, discarded, managed, controlled, destroyed, assembled, wasted, talked and written about, is of central concern (Denzin, 1989, p. 29)

Within this research, life stories were understood as being constructed within a context of service provider and policy understandings of rough sleepers, with stories not only owned by individuals, but also belonging to wider social claims about them.

During the research, although analytical approaches such as Elliot's and Lieblich et al.'s provided a useful way of thinking about narratives, an approach to narrative analysis was used which understood them as potentially 'messy' stories. As such, although these methods were drawn upon, flexibility in the data analysis was required. Thus, methods such as Labov and Walttzky's were useful in analysing the elements of narrative, whilst Lieblich et al.'s approach allowed for an understanding of the different forms of narrative. The research also approached narrative not just as being produced by individuals, but also as potentially related to wider discourses about these individuals.

Visual data analysis

Visual data from life maps and photographs were present in this research (chapters seven, eight and nine). Different levels of visual analysis have been discussed previously, with it being suggested that there are differences between:

> (1) what is given in the photograph - its *content;* (2) whatever the photograph is of - its *referent;* and (3) the presentation of the photograph once made - the *context* in which it appears and the use made of it. (Ball & Smith, 1992, p. 19–20, emphasis in original)

In considering visual data, Pauwels' (2011, p. 5) integrated framework for visual social research splits these into further categories for understanding the dimensions of visual data. Within this, the origin; referent; medium; analytical focus and theoretical foundation; methodological issues; presentation format; status/role; and intended use are considered. Such an approach has similarities to the above methods of narrative analysis that consider the form and/or content. Many of these aspects are not discussed explicitly when referring to visual data within this analysis, but a number of them play implicit roles in it.

The analysis of these images largely focused upon the meanings individuals attached to the images. As such, whilst I made an interpretation of their content, the meanings held within these images (through signs and discourses) were understood through the discourse analysis of the transcripts alongside this visual data, as this made it possible to explore the meanings for the individuals who took the photographs and created the life maps. However, it has also been argued that images may also express ideas that words cannot, because: "Pictures, drawings and metaphors show a person's emotional state of mind much better than verbal definitions or descriptions." (Diem-Wille, 2004, p. 119).

As life mapping and auto-photography involved both a visual and verbal aspect, the transcript and the visual data were analysed together. This allowed for seeing the interaction between these two forms of data, and the ways in which form and content interact. Within this analysis, therefore images are understood as potential ways to communicate ideas and meanings, both in their form and in their content.

The data analysis process

These various forms of analysis, whilst having different foci or methods, have a number of common features. For the purposes of this research, these are understood to be that:

- Analysis of both content and form can be considered important in developing understandings of meanings and techniques used for generating meanings.

- Data are relational, and must be understood in terms of their relationships to other topics and discourses.

- The context in which data are produced are therefore important, and should be considered.

- Discourses evident in data can operate and be influenced at by a number of other discourses, and various levels (e.g. national policy; local policy; local informal discourses).

- It is important for the researcher to reflect upon their own position in relation to this data and its production.

These different approaches were used to analyse different parts of the research data. Differences, for example, in the use of critical approaches to discourse analysis used for the analysis of documents and service provider accounts, and those of narrative analysis, used for the analysis of life maps and photographs, were important.

The process of analysis involved the transcription of interview data verbatim. During this transcription, data was not 'cleaned' to eliminate pauses or verbal expressions such as 'um'. These remained in the text, with pauses marked with [pause] in text. During the process of analysis, transcripts were manually coded. Initially, CAQDAS software was trialled in the forms of both atlas.ti and NVivo. However, during this process, some of the meanings and relationships between data became obscured, whilst others became privileged, in ways which were problematic for understanding the depth of meanings in the data. Therefore, for a period, data was analysed in both formats, and compared for the understandings it provided. It was felt that the manual analysis allowed better for these understandings, despite the issues of data management involved in coding and analysing manually. In all forms of data, the relationships between the emerging discourses and other discourses, data, and contextual information, were considered.

Ethical considerations

During the process of this research, a number of ethical issues were considered. These included consent, deception, risk of harm, and dilemmas during research. These are discussed in detail below.

Throughout the research process as a whole, I aimed to treat people with decency, honesty, and respect; topics implicit within previous studies of rough sleeping, and also appropriate principles for carrying out research with people (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). In this sense, the aim of the research was not to use individuals for their data and 'judge' these, but to give individuals voice to narrate their own lives as data. In research involving 'vulnerable populations' such as rough sleepers a commitment to such values is imperative. Furthermore, it is hoped that participants may have benefitted from being involved in the research, and indeed a number commented on their pleasure of being involved in the study at different stages of the research process.

In approaching services, gatekeepers were provided with information sheets (appendix one) about the research, and were then be able to make a choice over whether access was granted to observe the service or not. Where interactions with individuals in service spaces took place on an informal basis (e.g. in participant observation), I was careful to inform service users about my role in the service. However, on a number of occasions, service providers mistook me for a service user. This provided some interesting insights, prior to me highlighting my role.

Information sheets and consent forms were used to introduce the research to interview participants, and written consent was sought prior to interviewing for the first time, with it being made clear that the participant was able to leave any point during the research without consequence, and with the option of having their data destroyed. Verbal consent was re-gained prior to any further interview episodes.

Mental health and potential issues of intoxication were also an important consideration when gaining consent. In this research, I had a number of encounters with all individuals who took part in interviews prior to interviews taking place. This helped to develop an understanding of that individual, and where any concerns were present about their ability to give consent, interviewing

would have either been delayed or not used. Although such a process did not have to be implemented, this precaution was in place to ensure that individuals were satisfied with their involvement in the research process.

Data was pseudonymised throughout the research process to ensure the confidentiality of those involved. This approach was used in the cases of the locations and services involved, as well as the individuals named within this research. Such an approach was negotiated, with some services wishing to remain anonymous. Many participants within the research also stated a preference not to be named in any future research outputs, and changing their names protects the data from being linked with any individual, ensuring that in the future they can disassociate themselves from the narrative produced during the research period, should they wish to.

Deception also played an important role in the ethical considerations of this research. Whilst some previous research has used covert methods to engage with individuals experiencing homelessness (e.g. Ravenhill's taking of images in her research, in 2008), this research took an overt approach to engagement. This was in line with a commitment to having a form of participatory methods. However, in addition to this, as the research aimed to give 'voice' to rough sleepers, whose voice is often missing from dominant discourses about homelessness, it was logical to engage in overt research with this group, as this allowed them to understand why and how this 'voice' might be used.

Within the research, a number of occasions emerged where my own experiences were sought by others (e.g. around homelessness, illicit drug use, alcohol use). On these occasions, I had the option to answer truthfully, but with the knowledge that this could render my experiences different to those of the individuals. However, I did answer these questions truthfully, since it was felt that if I anticipated levels of honesty from the people involved in the study, I needed to display these levels.

Further, by being honest about these things, I felt that I not only confirmed the role of individuals as having expert knowledge, but also showed willingness to engage in personal admissions, which in turn could build relationships between me and people involved in the research.

The study adhered to the Key Principles outlined in the ESRC's (2010) Framework for Research Ethics, although point 5 (Harm to research participants must be avoided in all instances) is a particular consideration for this research. The British Society of Criminology's (2006) Code of Ethics was also adhered to, with particular attention being paid to the guidance that no adverse effect to the well-being of the individual should be made by the research. The Open University's Code of Practice for Research and Those Conducting Research were followed, as were the Open University's Ethics Principles for Research Involving Human Participants; and ethical approval was granted for the research by the Open University's Human Research Ethics Committee.

With regard to such ethics statements, it is important to note that during the research, participants may have suffered some pain in recalling particular memories and traumatic episodes (Lee, 1993). Indeed, within some interviews, individuals cried and showed other physical signs of upset when recalling such events. However, participants were allowed to either continue, stop or pause with their stories when they wished to. These options are considered to be important options, as giving the participant different options aims to give power to the participant over what they wish to do when painful topics emerge – a choice which aims to leave the research participant feeling happy about their involvement in the research.

Attempts to manage pain, and minimise the long-term damage of any involvement in the research were made. However, it is also important to note that these accounts were important to parts of some life stories. As Ravenhill (2008: 91) reflects, even when discussing painful topics, "for some, the interview was cathartic". Within this research, some individuals spoke of their relief in being

able to discuss these topics. Further, at the end of each interview, regardless of whether painful topics have emerged or not, I concluded with some less intrusive conversation and questions, because "It is important that interviewees' feelings are respected and that the interviewee is not left at the end of the interview feeling exposed and violated." (Ravenhill, 2008: 91). Following this, over subsequent interactions with individuals, and by maintaining relationships with participants, I was able to converse about the process, and discuss any feelings or emotions that individuals had experienced during and after the interview process. In addition to this, by allowing individuals to update or change their life maps and photographs, it was hoped that individuals would be able to ensure that they were satisfied with their involvement in the data generated during the interview process. As such, it is hoped that through engagement in the research process, individuals will not have suffered any adverse long-term effects, and indeed that the research may have served a useful emotional function.

As previous researchers (Cloke et al., 2010; Robinson, 2008) have noted, day centres and night shelters can be spaces of fear for some, and may carry an element of risk. Risk has become an important part of research in recent years, and prior to fieldwork, I was expected to complete a risk assessment at the Open University, based around their anticipated research practices. This risk relates to the potential harm I may have faced during the research, harm which is both potentially physical or emotional (for example, authors have noted the physical dangers of being in unfamiliar spaces with unfamiliar research participants, see, e.g., Cloke et al. 2010), but this type of research can also have an emotional impact on a researcher (Cloke et al., 2010; Ravenhill, 2008).

A number of strategies were employed to manage the physical risks, such as using a 'buddy' system when in service spaces. Using this approach, a third party is informed of details about the research, such as the location, expected date and time of the research period, name of any organisation involved, and who to contact in case of emergency. The researcher then 'checks-in' to show safe

arrival and completion of the research period. Should any changes to the expected completion time be made, the 'buddy' is informed of this. They are instructed to follow emergency protocol should they not hear from the researcher at the expected time. Such an approach has been utilised by previous researchers in situations of potential danger (Jamieson, 2000; Ravenhill, 2008; Third, 2000), and is a method that is familiar to me, having used this method in previous employment roles.

Robinson (2008, p. 101) has noted the ways in which safety and risk, both physical and emotional, can impact on a researcher:

> The acquisition of a tough body was also a process of registering and negotiating the ways in which both agency staff and homeless people positioned me and each other as physically and emotionally 'in danger', and a process of learning about homelessness as a spatial context of threat which could be corporeally managed by being streetwise to a certain extent. I was warned by agency staff about 'burn out', and the need to regularly debrief with someone about the often traumatic interactions and interview content I was exposed to. I was taught by both staff and homeless people to 'watch my back', and to be sensible about my safety within refuges and drop-in centres such as by trying to steer clear of people if they became aggressive and by making sure I avoided being alone with clients in private or secluded places, such as bedroom or parts of the buildings out of earshot, eyesight or surveillance camera range. I was instructed to understand that my body was at constant risk from needle-stick injury in particular and I became competent at routinely taking this into account when choosing where to sit and when handling clothing, bags and handbags that did not belong to me.

Robinson also discusses the reactions she had as attempts to negotiate these potential issues, both in terms of the dangers she might face, and her representing danger to people experiencing homelessness:

> I had to learn to present myself as someone safe, accepting and non-judgemental, as someone in whom agency staff had confidence, and as someone sensitively attuned to the generalised context of trauma underpinning homelessness and to the very specific ways in which this context played out in the everyday interactions of those living homeless. My negotiations with research participants in public interview locations was as much for interviewees' wellbeing as my own, as was the post-interview support offered by agency staff. (Robinson, 2008, p. 101–102)

During this research, a different approach was taken to the management of these risks. Like Robinson, I aimed to present myself as non-judgemental and willing to learn about the processes and emotional work involved in homelessness. However, whilst I was aware of the potential risks of interviewing people in secluded spaces, I felt that I had got to know the individuals involved to a degree, and that I too posed a potentially similar threat to individuals. Thus, where individuals were happier to be interviewed in open, public spaces, this was adhered to; however many individuals stated a preference to talk in closed spaces. Further, interviewing in private spaces allowed for disclosures that may not have been made to service providers or other service users, and meant that the impression management requirements could change from those usually employed in service spaces (although it is important to note that *some* form of impression management is likely to have remained, even in private spaces with the researcher). Thus, this option provided an important resource during the research.

In addition to measures to reduce the risk of physical harm, measures were also taken to minimise the risk of emotional harm I might have faced, due to encountering traumatic stories and accounts (Lee, 1993). In many cases, the use of a reflexive diary employed in this study, allowed a platform for cathartic release. Additionally, I was engaged in constant dialogue with others, and was able to consult research supervisors with research dilemmas, or with information which was distressing or concerning – albeit whilst keeping the identities of the research participants confidential and anonymous. By employing strategies that enable a release of information, the emotional toll I faced was reduced. Furthermore, in engaging with subsequent dialogue with participants in the research, I was able to discuss these points with individuals (although this was often at their request). Therefore, life mapping was part of a wider biographical research process, of which life mapping interviews formed a part.

Despite all of these considerations, and the planning involved in the research, there were some occasions for which there was little ability to prepare, or where I had to 'think on my feet' in response to an immediate situation. This involved such things as accepting gifts and whether or not to report known issues or planned activities. In these cases, I did not accept any gifts, and although such a situation did not arise, I followed a protocol of reporting anything in which I felt an individual posed a threat to their own life or the life of someone else. I also employed an approach of going with a 'gut feeling' about the best course of action on issues where I was placed in an ethical dilemma. This often entailed me using my contextual knowledge, reflecting on my own role, and having accountability (not only to others, but also to myself in a moral dimension). However, such approaches were not always straightforward, and a number of points of doubt, feelings of having done the wrong thing, or being unsure about their responsibilities were present at times during the research. These were often resolved upon writing them in a research diary, and later reflecting on these; or through discussion with research supervisors.

Thus within this research, a number of points of contention emerged in considering ethical and unethical practices. At times, these were negotiated through formal means, such as in the case of using consent forms. However, at other times, these employed informal and less rigid approaches, requiring me to rely upon my knowledge and feelings during the research.

Political research and researcher reflexivity

During the course of the research, the analysis of data, and the writing up of the research, it was important for me to be reflexive about my own position. Reflexivity has been defined as relating " to the researcher's immediate, continuous, dynamic and subjective self-awareness of the research process" (Band-Winterstein et al., 2014, p. 531). In many cases, researchers reflect upon the relationship between themselves and research participants (Berger, 2013), recognising the impact

that their own subjectivity may have when interpreting the research. In this case, elements relating to my own position (such as age, gender, ethnicity, class and personal experiences) have been reflected on above, in their relation to developing relationships with people during the research process.

However, it must also be noted that homelessness research is unavoidably political (Third, 2000), even from the point of defining who counts within definitions of homelessness (Jacobs et al., 1999). In this case, there was a clear political motive in giving voice to rough sleepers, recognising their strengths in being able to account for their own life story. Such an approach represents a particular approach to homelessness research, one which suggests that there is a value in hearing these voices. This approach was clear in the ways in which 'rough sleeper' was defined, whereby individuals self-identified as either having slept rough or having been presented with having no accommodation. Thus, this research represented an approach which offered alternatives to dominant discourses about rough sleepers, in contrast to imposed definitions and judgements of who counts as a rough sleeper in government counts.

During periods of time spent in services, I applied a critical lens to understanding experiences and accounts. Rather than attempting to make moral judgements, I aimed to understand why different behaviours occurred. This critical approach often meant attempting to understand the reasoning behind behaviours, rather than accepting them without understanding the reasoning behind these, or simply criticising them. At times, I thus felt as though I was 'taking sides' with rough sleepers, service providers, or other parties such as other service users, because I was able to understand (to an extent) their viewpoint (sometimes, I felt, conflictingly, as though I was able to take different sides at the same time!) (Becker, 1967; Liebling, 2001). Such an approach represents a particular research approach, which aims to develop in-depth understandings, rather than simply describing observations, or making moral judgements from one's own viewpoint.

Conclusion

This research aimed to develop in-depth knowledge of rough sleeping in four main research areas, using a qualitative approach to homelessness research. By employing approaches which combined elements of ethnographic approaches including participant observation and collection of documents, as well as narrative and visual research methods of life mapping and auto-photography, the research aimed to provide insightful data.

During the analysis of the research data, different approaches to the various forms of data were employed. These used approaches of discourse analysis to consider the ways in which service provider accounts were constructed and understood, also utilising elements of document analysis to examine service documents. Narrative and visual forms of analysis were used to consider the visual and spoken narratives that were generated through life mapping and auto-photography with rough sleepers. These approaches aimed to understand the meanings of such stories, as well as their relationships to other data, and wider discourses of homelessness.

The ethical and political considerations involved in this research have also been set out. A number of considerations were made, and these required me to sometimes plan in advance to anticipate potential issues, whilst at other times these required on-the-spot decision making on my part.

In the use of such methods and their analysis, I aimed to allow for an analysis of the different ways in which rough sleepers' lives are understood. Through considering data relating to service provider views on rough sleepers, both in documents and from interviews, chapters five and six examine the ways in which rough sleepers are positioned by services. In considering the narrative elements of rough sleepers' own accounts, chapters seven, eight and nine consider the ways in which rough

sleepers account for their own lives. In addition to this, by considering the observations made

throughout fieldwork, and rough sleepers' accounts of being homeless, chapter nine explores the

ways in which rough sleepers manage and negotiate their positions. As previously mentioned,

within the research a 'bottom up' perspective was employed, whereby developing an

understanding of individuals' stories, experiences and relationships was key.

Chapter Five

Managing 'The Homeless':

Discourses in Service Documents

As discussed in chapter three, homelessness policies at times portray the lives of rough sleepers as being off track, failed and chaotic; in turn suggesting responses for managing homeless populations which focus on changing behaviours. The role of the "homelessness industry" (Third, 2000; Ravenhill, 2008) can be seen as one which informs the 'homelessness agenda', both through particular discourses of homelessness, and through the practices of service provision. However, any notion that the homelessness industry is free from the influences and constraints of political and policy discourses and priorities should be treated with caution. The relationship between these national policy positionings and service discourses of managing rough sleepers is complex (Prior, 2009), and as Cloke et al. (2010, p. 40) note, it is important to have:

> caution in accepting wholesale any notion that the actions of the state are without limits, and to take full account of the geographical unevenness and/or susceptibility of state policy to transformation and resistance from the individuals and organizations that populate its insider and outsider subject positions.

This chapter explores the discourses of service provision within official service documents from three local services in one Midlands county, the Well Centre in Midtown; the Sun Centre in Dryborough; and the Retreat in Slowville. The chapter looks at the discourses of service provision within service documents from these three services. This chapter suggests discourses within service

policy documents do acknowledge the heterogeneous nature of homelessness, and are often sympathetic to the complexities of 'causes' of homelessness. However, these discourses often also construct rough sleepers as having deficits, seeing some of these deficits as due to the deviant decisions made by rough sleepers, and others as caused by rough sleepers' inability to manage life events (or a combination of the two).

Discourses of service provision in service documents

Homeless Link, a national membership charity for homelessness organisations in England, estimates that in England there are currently around 216 day centres and 1271 accommodation services for single homeless people, such as rough sleepers (Homeless Link, 2014). Across England, national regional services (multiple-site, well renowned and prominent in discussions of homelessness) exist, such as Shelter, Crisis, and the Big Issue. However, in addition to these services, there are also a number of smaller and less prominent services, often consisting of one site, with small budgets and staffing levels (Scullion et al., 2015). Each of the three services discussed within this chapter fit this latter category, having only one site and small-medium budgets, with a focus only on providing services (rather than advocacy, or lobbying departments).

The Well Centre, the Sun Centre and the Retreat all relied heavily on government funding, either from local authorities, or from (one or more) national funding schemes, in line with a large number of homelessness services (Homeless Link, 2014). Whilst funding within the sector has not fallen for all services, austerity measures and recent developments in local and national funding arrangements have changed the funding landscape for homelessness services. Previously 'ring-fenced' funding from local authorities under the *Supporting People* fund is no longer guaranteed, but is now allocated by local authorities using their discretion to decide the most appropriate uses of this funding within their local area. This has resulted in increased competition for local authority

funding, not just among homelessness providers, but also providers of other welfare services, with a requirement to produce tangible measures of success to demonstrate value for money and efficiency of service. As such, these services were in a state of flux, having to meet the demands of a changing sector.

The service documents considered here were collected during the fieldwork phase of the research. These included documents on the use of services; documents given to staff and volunteers; rules and guidelines for service users; public-facing documents such as flyers, leaflets produced by the service; and statements/documents available on the websites of the services. The audience for these documents would in some cases be public, whilst for others it would be a more specific audience of service users or service providers. The discourses from these documents are therefore seen as holding important information about the ways in which the positioning of rough sleepers is communicated, to people providing services for rough sleepers, to rough sleepers themselves, and to a wider audience of the general public.

Within the discourses from service documents, complex, overlapping and sometimes seemingly contradictory patterns are apparent. For the purposes of this exploration, these are broken down into different areas, although the relationship between these is often complex, with a number of overlaps.

The Well Centre

The Well Centre was a day centre close to Midtown's town centre. It had recently moved to new purpose-built premises, which it shared with other homelessness services. The Well Centre provided tea and coffee, IT facilities, showers, laundry facilities and activities, all free of charge; whilst charging around £1.50 for food (serving both breakfast and lunch). It also had a clothing store, where

items could be bought for 20 pence each. Although the Well Centre spoke of having a Christian ethos in its volunteer handbook, with it also being noted in their annual report that the service had "The ethos being based on a practical demonstration of Christian service", mention of "transforming lives" with documentation (with transformation seen within historical Christian discourses of moral governance), and having been established in 1974 as a soup kitchen from a local cathedral, in practice there was little evidence of a Christian ethos or any related practices in the day-to-day management of the Well Centre, with no signage or discussions about this between service providers and service users. In fact, within the volunteer handbook it was noted that:

> politics and religion are often subjects that can turn a conversation into an argument very quickly. Whatever your beliefs or views are, it is probably best to keep them to yourself with regards to the customers at the Well Centre.

Therefore, whilst a religious ethos was seen as historically important, there had arguably been a shift towards a secular approach to homelessness provision by the Well Centre. The Well Centre could also be seen as somewhat professionalised, hiring 10 paid staff who had roles in relation to centre management, fundraising, cooking, and service user engagement, as well as employing discourses referring to service users as "customers".

The Well Centre could also be considered to be professionalised in its approach to fundraising, with a dedicated fundraising team of individuals. The Well Centre drew its core funding from a range of sources, with the largest of these being from local authority grants, Big Lottery fund grants, and company charitable foundations, with smaller donations from other charities, local churches and schools, businesses and individual benefactors. In particular, trusts and foundations were likely to fund particular projects, such as training and payment of staff, development of new facilities or staff specialisms, and provision of activities such as classes or workshops. Big Lottery funding was specifically for use in "a volunteer improvement programme enabling clients & volunteers to overcome barriers to employment and increasing social integration".

The Well Centre recorded 956 registrations between 1st of October 2012 and 25th of September 2013 (the latter date being the date on which data the service compiled this data). This data suggested that the majority of people using the service were homeless or precariously housed.

Definitions of homelessness

In discussing what homelessness is, documentation from the Well Centre focused on the backgrounds of people who experience homelessness, as well as the perceived reasons for homelessness. It also spoke of some of the difficulties in providing services, stating:

> What is homelessness?
> Sadly the answer to this question is very easy. The reasons can be numerous; the breakup of a marriage or relationship; the loss of a job which in turn could lead to repossession of a home or inability to pay rent; an addiction or abuse of drugs, either prescribed or illegal; alcohol or gambling. People may become homeless because of mental illness, although as with drug or alcohol abuse, some people become unwell or develop a problem because they have become homeless. People who have served in the armed forces often find it difficult to cope with 'civvy street' when they come out. Others may be running away from an abusive relationship. The reasons are many and it could happen to anyone one of us given certain circumstances.
>
> People who are homeless come from all walks of life and social backgrounds. Not all of them will be sleeping rough on the streets, but will be insecurely housed, living in bed and breakfast, short stay hostels or sleeping on friends [sic] floors.
>
> Helping people who have become homeless is not always easy but always rewarding. One surprising thing for a lot of people who are new to working with homeless people is the fact that some homeless people will refuse any help that is offered. This can be for a number of reasons. It may be that the person was in care and was abused or had their trust shattered in some other way or it may be because they have built up relationships with other homeless people and once these bonds are established it can be very difficult to break away from this network and seek help regarding housing.
>
> It can be a painstaking and long process to get a homeless person to even come into the centre and use the primary services we have available let alone specialist services such as health and housing offered by other organisations.
>
> Each step forward, no matter how small, is what the Well Centre is here for, to offer help, support and encouragement in the hope of transforming lives.

This extract recognises the complexity of the 'causes' of homelessness, highlighting a number of examples of trigger points for becoming homeless. In addition, the inter-relationship between homelessness and other issues is recognised, with it being noted that "some people become unwell or develop a problem because they have become homeless". In this sense, these issues are recognised as a potential product of homelessness, as well as a potential factor in leading to homelessness. This explanation also seems sympathetic to homelessness as being able to affect anyone, suggesting "it could happen to any one of us given certain circumstances".

Furthermore, this extract develops expectations about working with people who are homeless, with it being suggested that some individuals may not wish to engage with services. Emphasised here appears to be an acceptance of working at a pace comfortable for each individual, implying an accepting approach to service provision, with the document stating: "Each step forward, no matter how small, is what the Well Centre is here for, to offer help, support and encouragement in the hope of transforming lives".

Thus, this way of conceptualising homelessness appears to suggest an analysis of the issues affecting each individual, whilst also maintaining an approach that is sympathetic and accepting of rough sleepers, and stating that such causes could affect anyone within the wider population. It also points to rough sleepers as being potentially 'damaged' and difficult to engage because of traumatic past experiences.

Rules and guidelines for provision in service discourses

Understandings of rough sleepers' lives within service documents from the Well Centre also point to suitable ways in which rough sleepers should be engaged with, and the volunteer handbook from the service notes, "Professional boundaries are imperative in order for the Well Centre to show a

duty of care to our customers, volunteers and staff". In addition to this, a number of guidelines are

provided. These tend to point to the risks that service users may pose. These are framed as "basic

common sense guidelines", which suggests that these should be logical to all people, and were as

follows:

> Basic common sense guidelines when working or in contact with the Well Centre
> customers
> - NEVER give your address or telephone number to customers
> - NEVER agree to meet a customer outside of the Well Centre; you are not insured,
>   it is against Well Centre policy and potentially very dangerous – NO MATTER
>   HOW MUCH YOU FEEL YOU KNOW THIS PERSON. If the Well Centre is made
>   aware that you are meeting customers outside the centre you will be asked to
>   leave.
> - If you meet someone on your way to and from the Well Centre by all means say
>   "hello", but do not linger.
> - In the event of a violent or potentially violent situation in the Well Centre, your
>   only responsibility is to make yourself safe by getting out of the area. If the alarm
>   has not been raised then do so and leave trained staff to deal with the situation.
> - Notify staff immediately if a customer is behaving in a threatening or abusive
>   way towards you.
> - NEVER give a customer money, refer them to a staff member. If they say they
>   have but failed there will be a good reason for this action. Giving out money will
>   undermine the staff members decision and will cause resentment from other
>   customers and other may see you as an easy target.
> - If you wish to make a donation of clothes or blankets etc. do not hand them out
>   individually but take them to the clothes store so they can be given out fairly.
> - If you donate any food hand this in to the kitchen where it can be handed out
>   fairly.
> - Do not dress provocatively whilst at the Well Centre, or act in an over friendly or
>   intimate way. You may give customers the wrong message.
> - Politics and religion are often subjects that can turn a conversation into an
>   argument very quickly. Whatever your beliefs or views are, it is probably best to
>   keep them to yourself with regards to the customers at the Well Centre.
> - If a relationship is formed that the staff at the Well Centre believe is
>   inappropriate then you will be asked to leave permanently and no reference will
>   be given.
> - Reasons you may be asked to leave – theft, crossing boundaries, not working
>   well within the team, unsuitability for the role and other underlying issues.

Although many of these could be deconstructed for their discourses, the guideline that "If you meet

someone on your way to and from the Well Centre by all means say "hello", but do not linger" is

particularly telling, as it appears to suggest a particular suitable way of engaging which balances

acknowledging the individual with avoiding a risk of the unknown in interacting with service users. Similarly, danger is reflected in notions of not meeting service users outside of the service. These reinforce ideas of homeless service users as being risky or dangerous individuals who should be engaged with in careful risk-managed ways. However, in some cases, as with user-volunteers, individuals can straddle these two categories.

Discourses of service provision

The Well Centre spoke of itself as "a local charity which welcomes people who are homeless, disadvantaged or vulnerable whatever their reasons or circumstances might be". This discourse of being for people who are homeless, disadvantaged or vulnerable whatever their reasons or circumstances seems to suggest a wide-ranging remit of potential service users, and the use of the word "welcomes" suggests an inclusive and accepting approach to service provision. However, the service also used the slogan "Tackling homelessness, rebuilding lives" across its external-facing documents.

The Well Centre claimed that: "Its mission is to provide resources which encourage, inspire and challenge homeless people to transform their lives." Such a mission statement suggests that homeless people have lives in need of transformation, again reinforcing the concept of a 'broken' life in need of change. It proposes mixed approaches of encouragement (support), inspiration (suggesting that homeless individuals may without the service lack such visions of inspiration), and challenge (related to ideas of need to change unacceptable behaviours or elements of one's life), which suggest the co-existence of support approaches and encouraging change. This appears to relate homelessness to lives that are 'broken' (either in being damaged or failed), and in need of rebuilding, and terms such as "transforming" echo a historical discourses of spiritual transformation related to Christian discourses of the poor.

Similarly, the Well Centre discusses the ways in which it aims to meet this mission, through multiple

forms of provision:

> The Well Centre aims to fulfil its mission by providing the following for our customers:
> - Nourishing food
> - A friendly atmosphere for conversation and relaxation
> - Workshops to improve life skills
> - One to one support from our volunteer team
> - A base for Big Issue vendors
> - Customer outings
> - Computer suite with internet access
> - Training and support
> - Shower and toilet facilities & disabled facilities
> - Disabled access to all areas of the building
> - Opportunities to volunteer
> - Offer a genuine voice in the way our services are delivered and developed

Within these, a range of different approaches can be seen, which both highlight the acceptance of

being a space to 'be' (Cloke et al., 2010), by stating that the centre operates as "A friendly

atmosphere for conversation and relaxation", as well as providing material goods such as shower

and toilet facilities, and emphasising the possibility to "improve life skills", in line with ideas of self-

improvement of service users.

In further documentation, the Well Centre emphasises these notions of providing a space to be,

which is accepting of rough sleepers, providing material goods and a space for interaction, claiming:

> We provide a warm and welcoming, non-judgemental environment for our customers. Since 1974 we've remained true to the ideals of our original founders and continue to provide the basic but essential 'foundation' services, such as hot meals and drinks, showers and recycled clothes.
>
> Being homeless often means feeling lonely, so our centre encourages social interaction and provides the opportunity to meet up with old friends and make new ones, watch TV, read a paper or just have a good chat over a cup of tea or coffee.

Here, the focus on social interaction, and providing "essential 'foundation' services" which are warm, welcoming and non-judgemental suggest an approach which focuses on acceptance and provision of services without conditions.

Within the Well Centre some services had costs attached to them (although these costs were waived if people were considered destitute). Paying for meals and buying clothes had costs attached, and charging for these items was often spoken of as having a role of making people think about the best use of their money, thus playing a responsibilising role for rough sleepers.

Measures that engaged rough sleepers in meaningful activity and responsible practices were often seen as being caring towards individuals, by fostering self-management skills. These skills were often seen as lacking in rough sleepers, and can be understood to be a priority in creating citizens who are independent, autonomous and responsible (Woolford & Nelund, 2013; Aradau, 2004), echoing long-standing distinctions and current political discourses about creating responsible individuals. This approach to helping individuals is summarised within Well Centre documentation, when it is claimed that:

> "We run a range of workshops and activities every week to encourage and help customers to rebuild their lives, improve their self-esteem and develop new skills. **We aim to give everyone a hand up, not just a hand-out.**"
> [emphasis in original].

Within this statement, the previously evident discourse surrounding "rebuilding lives" is apparent, but this is accompanied by statements suggesting that these activities also improve service users' self-esteem as well as developing new skills, implying that service users may lack these prior to engagement in such activities. The emphasis within this statement on aiming to "give everyone a hand up, not just a hand-out" has strong echoes of Blair's (1999) suggestion that the welfare system should be:

> "active" not "passive" genuinely providing people with a "hand up" not a "hand-out". ... We believe that the role of the welfare state is to help people help themselves, to give people the means to be independent. We are creating an active welfare state focused on giving people the opportunities they need to support themselves, principally through work."

This discourse links the idea of a "hand up" with ideas of welfare recipients being "active", and a "hand out" with "passivity", emphasising the need for individuals to play an "active" role in increasing independence and self-regulation. Linking this to the Well Centre service documentation, the concept of giving people a "hand up" by improving skills to create independence becomes apparent.

Service users could also volunteer to carry out work within the Well Centre, being able to volunteer in the kitchen, clothing store, on reception, or completing administrative tasks. Discussing this, service documents suggested that volunteering "has provided them [service users] in some aspects to enable them to help make their lives run more smoothly." Such a statement implies that, prior to this, service users' lives were lacking in such smoothness. Further to this, it is suggested within the same document that "Most of our customers are not from environments that are not the most organised [sic] and time often has no importance to them, or the way they present themselves [sic]." Here the suggestion that customer environments are disorganised adds to the construction of homeless individuals as having chaotic lives. This statement may reflect an accurate assessment for some individuals, but ideas of time and appearance not being important to these individuals relates to notions of deficits in rough sleepers' lives.

This document also points to other areas in which 'customer volunteers' have been given support, and highlights the below issues as key:

> Other issues where support has been required has been around
> - Attendance – helping them to understand the impact on the centre if they don't attend their volunteer session
> - Timekeeping

- Personal hygiene
- Drinking
- Offering trust and belief that someone else thinks they are capable and able
- Supporting strong positive relationships between different backgrounds

These are areas the service identifies as making a change in rough sleepers' lives, and such characteristics are in line with ideas of a chaotic lifestyle, pointing to issues and deficits within the characters of service users.

These differing aspects of service provision seemingly emphasise a combination of compassion based approaches with approaches that aim to responsibilise individuals (Rose, 1999, 2000), such as conditionality of access to some areas of provision. Within this discourse, these elements are seen as being jointly progressive for rough sleepers in the Well Centre, and this is perhaps best summarised in the below statement, taken from a service document:

> By treating all our customers with dignity and compassion, we aim to see them develop, move on and rebuild their lives. With education, training & development, we help them to get jobs, move into their own homes and become positive and progressive citizens.

Emergent points

The Well Centre service documents analysed here construct individuals experiencing homelessness as being broken and damaged, and in need of support. Although not blaming individuals for their homelessness, it does highlight a number of supposed "deficits" within individuals, and suggests careful management and supervision as responses to these. These highlight the risks of engaging with rough sleepers, as well as pointing to measures to responsibilise and increase skills of rough sleepers. Therefore, discourses are apparent within Well Centre documentation which present rough sleepers as being in need of support and care, being risky, and in need of behaviour change, as well as being able to change themselves.

The Sun Centre

The Sun Centre was a day centre near to Dryborough town centre. It was located in Albert Hall, a local authority-owned building, which had been poorly maintained and to which the Sun Centre could make few changes. The Centre sold tea and coffee at a cost of 30p, and meals at lunchtime for around £1.50; it also provided shower facilities and I.T. facilities free of charge, and some service users were able to access a free-of-charge laundry service. In addition to this, a shop where service users could buy cans of food, clothing, and bric-a-brac was also in the Centre. In its provision, the Centre offered skills workshops around cooking and woodwork; games and activities; and themed events (such as Christmas card making workshops). It also had a member of staff specifically focused on service user issues such as on housing, form filling, and similar issues.

The Sun Centre had originally been established by a local Christian Union in 1994, and had an explicit Christian ethos within some of its documentation, for example noting that its two Charitable Objects were to:

1) To relieve poverty, need, hardship, distress

2) To advance the principles of Christianity through action in the sphere of family life in England and Wales

However, there were no overt Christian symbols in the day-to-day running of the centre, with no signage, discussions, or messages of this type, nor an overt pressure for service users to subscribe to a Christian ethic.

The service appeared to have professionalised over time, with five paid staff members, and with discussions of "customers" and "clients" in service documents; however it was less professionalised than the Well Centre in its fundraising approach, with much of this being taken on by one of the organisation's trustees. The Sun Centre drew its core funding from company foundations, individual

trusts, and local Churches. It received some funding from the local authority, but this was not guaranteed, and amounts fluctuated greatly on an annual basis. The Sun Centre also operated Dryborough local foodbank, and received restricted funding from the local authority for this activity.

The total number of visits to the centre was 1614 for the first three quarters of 2013, whilst the number of people registering as homeless totalled 63. However, the statistics for the Sun Centre should be treated with caution, since they list the total number of visits to the service, but record the total number of registrations of homeless individuals. Therefore the data are compiled on differing bases. Further, the daily visit totals were arrived at by totalling numbers from each quarter. Thus, they are prone to double counting.

Definitions of homelessness

Rather than providing a definition of homelessness or rough sleeping, the Sun Centre had a wider definition of its service users. This recognised that the service-using population was wider than only homeless individuals, but also entailed a particular route to homelessness (emphasis is added in the below extract to highlight this):

> These are a wide range of people, ranging in age from eighteen to over eighty. **Some have complex needs, as when addiction to drugs or alcohol leads to the breakup of relationships and then to the loss of a roof over their heads**. Some have mental health problems, others with poor standards of literacy and/or numeracy need help to understand official communications, or help in completing all sorts of forms. Some are ex-offenders finding it difficult to get a job; some are referred by other agencies for something as simple and basic as a food parcel. Yet others find in the time and space we are able to offer companionship and friendship that they do not find anywhere else. In other words there is no such thing as a typical user, and our open door policy means that we never know who will come through it next, or what needs they might bring with them.

The final sentence of this extract recognises the heterogeneous nature of the people using the service, suggesting that there is "no typical user". However, many examples are given. In relation to homelessness, this suggests a path whereby alcohol or drug addiction then leads to relationships

ending and homelessness as a result of this, implying addiction as a key cause of homelessness. Furthermore, within the concluding sentence of this, although the potential variety of individuals using the service is noted, the recognition of "needs" of service users is a key point in relation to provision.

Rules and guidelines for provision in service discourses

The Sun Centre also focused upon managing and developing appropriate relationships with service users within its documentation. Of the three services, the Sun Centre focused the least in its documentation on the risks posed by service users. It stated that: "Personal contact with service users should not be made outside of your day to day duties at work. You should not give or receive any personal contact details such as address or telephone number." Whilst this approach highlights a management of interaction with individuals outside of service spaces, it does not provide as much detail, nor seem prescriptive on as many levels as the documents from the Well Centre or The Retreat. However, this does treat rough sleepers as needing to be engaged with 'appropriately' (professionally, at a distance), and recommends staff not to have interaction outside of the service.

Discourses of service provision

Within documentation from the Sun Centre, the aims of the service are set out. These state that:

> Our aims are to meet the immediate needs of the homeless and other vulnerable people for food, shelter, company and support and to assist service users towards independence and self-reliance by helping them to deal with their particular problems and to acquire skills and confidence.

Evident here are the multiple aims of providing for immediate material needs (shelter, food) alongside care and acceptance (company and support), and moves towards 'self-reliance' and 'independence' ("by helping them deal with their particular problems and to acquire skills and

confidence"). In similar ways to the Well Centre, and as acknowledged within previous literature

(Johnsen & Fitzpatrick, 2010; Johnsen et al., 2005a), these elements of service provision appear to

co-exist. However, it is also important to note that ideas of problems and acquisition of skills and

confidence appear here, re-iterating ideas of current deficits in the lives of rough sleepers, and the

Centre's role in addressing these.

In addition to this, the Centre explains on public-facing flyers its role in relation to service users. It

suggests that people have complex needs, and suggests that its role is to provide time and space

for individuals for whom other services do not cater. In addition, the vision and mission of the

Centre are discussed:

> *People in our society today are often vulnerable, lonely and grappling with complex needs. There are agencies - public and voluntary - that exist to meet those needs but in the current economic climate many of these agencies, including the Sun Centre, are under increasing financial pressure in meeting the demands on their services. However, there are still significant gaps in that provision, and the unique role of the Sun Centre is to fill at least some of those gaps, particularly gaps in time and space.*
> ***Time*** *to talk, and be listened to; time to help unravel complex problems and identify practical steps towards solutions.*
> ***Space*** *that is welcoming, clean and comfortable, inexpensive, without pressure and non-judgemental.*
>
> > ***The Vision*** *of the Sun Centre is that all members of our society will be valued, and know they are valued, and be able to access the support and services they need to achieve this.*
> >
> > ***The Mission*** *of the Sun Centre is to offer time, space and practical guidance to people that enables them to tackle the problems that limit their quality of life.* [emphasis in original].

This vision talks of ensuring that all individuals are valued and feel valued, espousing an egalitarian

ethos. The mission of the Centre highlights the provision of time and space, and the Centre as a

place to 'be', without judgement or pressure, and where care is given (through being listened to).

However, it also suggests that these individuals have "problems that limit their quality of life" and

suggests the role of the Sun Centre as one that enables the individuals to tackle these "problems",

again positioning the Centre as a place which develops skills within individuals so that they can better order their lives.

Understandings of a wider group of service users were discussed within a number of service documents. One external-facing flyer for the service stated: "At the Sun Centre we provide a support service for adults, many of whom are homeless, have addiction problems or other issues." A second flyer expanded on this, saying:

> We provide a Drop-In Day centre for adults who need support, whether this is linked to housing difficulties, or their need for companionship and assistance with developing purposeful activities, healthier life-styles, building relationships of friendship and other routes towards enhancing quality of life.

This extract talks of people using the service as having 'problems' or 'issues', and proposes the idea of people needing support, related to these issues and problems. Within this, current policy terminology such as "purposeful activities", "healthier lifestyles" and "quality of life" is present. These solutions are based on improving individual skills and behaviours, and can be related to ideas that service roles should focus on ensuring that individuals are able to effectively manage their own lives with good order as independent, responsible individuals (Woolford & Nelund, 2013; Aradau, 2004).

Within Sun Centre documentation, social exclusion was also referred to explicitly, with one service flyer claiming that:

> Socially excluded people and those living alone welcome the opportunity to meet others in a friendly environment where they can buy an affordable healthy lunch or snack and hot drinks.

Here, the people using the service are framed as being "socially excluded", with the centre providing an environment which reduces this exclusion. Later within the document, the service's role in reducing "social exclusion" is discussed explicitly, with it being suggested that: "Clients use

the facilities alongside various other groups of people / agencies in a way that reduces isolation, avoids labelling and promotes inclusion". Here, the terms "isolation" and "labelling" are contrasted with "inclusion", a term that stands opposed to "social exclusion". This suggests that the service sees its own role as reducing "social exclusion" through inclusive, non-judgemental and accepting practices.

Emergent points

The presence of these strands of discourses suggests that the Sun Centre has multiple and co-existing aims and roles in the lives of rough sleepers, in ideas of acceptance, providing material support, and encouraging change in the lives and behaviours of rough sleepers. These can be related to the understandings of rough sleepers apparent within these documents which suggest that they are excluded (and in need of care), materially deprived, and have deficits and problems (in need of changing and encouragement to change).

The Retreat

The Retreat was a direct-access accommodation service in Slowville, which accommodated up to four people for up to three months (although this could be extended at the discretion of the management team and with funding through Housing Benefit to do so), and had short-term accommodation for two people. It was physically attached to a local Church, having been converted from a disused toilet block, but was self-contained, with its own entrance, kitchen, toilet facilities and staff office. The facilities of The Retreat were basic, with electric heaters having to be used to heat rooms due to a lack of central heating. It offered individuals staying there washing, shower and toilet facilities, use of a washing machine (free of charge), one hot microwave-cooked frozen meal an evening, and cold/hot drinks.

The Retreat was managed as part of a larger charity operated by the adjoining Church. The charity also had move-on shared accommodation, and a drop-in café in the Church on some weekdays. The details of The Retreat's funding arrangements were not as clear as the cases of the Well Centre and Sun Centre, as their funding arrangements were subsumed within the accounts of the Church itself. However, The Retreat did receive some funding from the Local Authority, as well as donations from individuals and local companies. Income was also generated through service users paying set fees using their Housing Benefit. In addition, a local supermarket made donations of bread, and a local bakery gave food donations to The Retreat.

The Retreat was opened in 2008, in response to a rough sleeper sleeping in a Church storage shed. The Retreat was granted temporary planning permission, subject to a successful probationary period of operation. In 2012, it received permanent planning permission, upon completion of this probationary period. The Retreat had initially taken many of its policies from an accommodation service in a nearby town, but had adapted these over time, with many felt to be too punitive for the service (for example, initially, service users were required to hand over mobile phones when entering the service each night only to retrieve the next day; this practice had now changed).

Although there were no overt Christian symbols within The Retreat itself, this was frequently discussed, and within the documents given to volunteers it was noted that volunteers should "accept that the Homeless project is run and managed by the … Church which is a Christian organisation and be sympathetic to the Christian ethos." Therefore, there was a sense of a Christian ethos underlying the service. The service had elements of professionalisation, with three paid staff members. Updates were made by staff and volunteers through maintaining a "shift diary" of the notable points from each 'shift'. The Retreat recorded 60 registrations in 2012, all of whom were

homeless. It did not keep statistics on whether individuals had slept rough or not, and did not break

homelessness into different sub-categories.

Definitions of homelessness

The Retreat adopted a broad and inclusive definition of homelessness within its documents, stating:

> For all practical and social intervention reasons within the scope of The Retreat project a person is declared homeless if they declare themselves to be so **and** upon investigation is found to be either now or in all probability at any time in the next 28 days likely to be living with no security of accommodation due to any one of the following criteria: That they are living in a place of accommodation which for health, safety, overcrowding, post institutionalisation, fear of violence or well-being reasons is unsuitable, or who are living illegally in another's premises or who have no fixed abode, or are rough sleeping are considered to be homeless

Whilst this definition includes rough sleeping, it takes a wider approach to defining homelessness.

Such an approach appears to be in line with 'broad approaches' to homelessness (Jacobs et al.,

1999), and has similarities to the statutory definition of homelessness employed currently.

Rules and guidelines for provision in service documents

Rules about engaging with rough sleepers were discussed within The Retreat's service

documentation, with it being said that:

> There are also some **general rules** which all volunteers are obliged to abide by. These include:
> - Do not give your telephone number or address to any client.
> - Do not arrange to meet any clients off-site on a social basis.
> - Basic health and safety guidelines must be observed.
> - If you need to cancel a shift please inform us as soon as possible. (Preferably with 48 hours' notice).
> - Do not bring visitors to the organisation without first consulting the minister or delegated leaders.
> - Do not discuss personal information about the clients with any person outside The Retreat project.

Some of these rules relate to confidentiality, health and safety, and informing people of missed shifts. However, the first two of these are about managing the relationships between service users and service providers, encouraging service providers to only engage with service users on-site, and in this way seems to associate interaction off-site with 'inappropriate' relationships between service providers and service users.

Discourses of service provision

The Retreat set out its aims within the service documents suggesting that: "Our charity aims to provide a place of safety, care and opportunity for people in crisis, targeting the local homeless community". Concepts of safety, care and opportunity are evident, as well as a focus on crisis support. Further detail is given in the below extract, which states the goals of the service:

Goals/Strategies/Outcomes
- To set up a contact point to quantify the numbers of homeless people and for them to have their needs assessed, offer practical support and provide a signposting service to other agencies and support groups in a personalised program of intervention and support tailored to individual need and situation.
- To provide an emergency homeless shelter that will provide a safe but basic place of refuge for the whole period whilst the above process is being handled.
- To highlight the needs and problems of the homeless community in our area, partnering together with others in responding appropriately to this need, in a way that focuses on issues of resolution rather than avoidance of the scale and the personal impact of the problem.
- To compile data on the scale of homelessness within North Midtownshire.
- To win the cooperation and support of all the potential partner agencies in our region and finalised a joint action plan to help in delivering an effective and viable means of support to all those effected [sic] by the issue of homelessness in our region.

Evident here is the suggestion of a personalised programme of intervention and support, in response to individual need, maintaining personalised 'case work' approaches. Further, the notion that the service should provide a "safe but basic place of refuge", whilst emphasising safety, also might imply notions of less eligibility of individuals using the service in relation to standards of

accommodation outside of the service (Cloke et al., 2010). This would be unsurprising, given policy pressures on homelessness providers to move service users on to longer-term accommodation, with provision of basic services being seen as a method of doing so.

Once individuals had access to The Retreat, their space in the service was guaranteed for the next day (unless they had been excluded from the service). However, they had to return to the service each night in order to maintain their place, unless they had previous permission from the service providers to stay away from the service. According to service statements, service users had to be at the service by 7pm to keep their room (although practice was more lenient and service users were often allowed access if they returned before 8pm).

The Retreat also set out a number of directives for its service users. These included rules for gaining entry to the service and times people were expected to go to, and be woken up from, their bedrooms (service users had to be in their rooms by midnight, and would be woken up by 8am on weekdays and 9am at weekends by staff). In this sense, the idea of creating structures for individuals in line with the expectations of service providers about appropriate times for being awake/asleep were evident.

Rules about gaining entry to the service were also set out. These included only using the gates to The Retreat to enter and leave the premises (although in practice, service users were sometimes allowed to use the connecting corridors to go to and from the Church). This was also true when service users wished to gain access to the adjoining café, with the documents to service users stating:

> You are able to attend the Corner café on a Monday/Thursday/Friday morning in the church but should not walk back and forth through the corridors from the café to the Retreat. You should ask to be let out via the black gates and then use the church door to get into and out of the Café (and the black gates should you need to talk to staff back in the Retreat).

This marks a clear physical separation of The Retreat from the rest of the Church.

In creating such conditions, the service removed an element of autonomy about users' use of time. Nancy, a service provider at The Retreat, suggested that this was because people using the service might be involved with illicit drugs, and that after 7pm was the time they would be most likely to source drugs (although no evidence was provided to support such a claim). However, this clearly took a view of service users either being involved, or at risk of being involved, in 'bad behaviours' and managing opportunities for people to be involved in such behaviours, albeit under the veil of ensuring the 'safety' of those individuals. In this sense, a moral underclass discourse was evident in the way of thinking about service users.

In The Retreat, 'contributing' by 'volunteering' to carry out chores and other tasks also meant that service users could potentially stay for longer than other residents, with the service documentation to service users stating:

> Most traditional night shelters provide a roof over your head at night, require that you leave the premises in the morning and return at a set time in the evening to keep your bed. We try to work a little differently by allowing you to stay in during the morning if you are willing to carry out tasks/chores around the premises if there are some to do.

In incentivising such behaviour, The Retreat arguably adopted a 'responsibilising' agenda, with less eligibility to services for those who did not engage with this. The concepts of giving back and contributing are key to this, with the idea that people can stay if they are willing to carry out such tasks.

In order to maintain safety of individuals, other service users and staff, the following rules were set out to service users:

If you do any of these, you may be asked to leave The Retreat immediately.
Threatening behaviour of any description to staff/volunteers or other service users.
Bringing in any drugs, alcohol, solvents, drug paraphernalia or weapons onto the premises
Scaling the perimeter walls to gain entry or exit from the Retreat
Leaving the emergency exit gates open round the back of the church premises in order to get in and out.
Borrowing money from another resident
Not coming into the Retreat for the night without seeking <u>prior</u> permission for a night pass (this can only be given by Manager 1 or Manager 2) unless you can then provide proof that you were detained in custody or hospital.
Ignoring a request from staff/volunteers to do/not to do something during the evening/night that causes the safety of staff/volunteers or other residents to be compromised.
In any of these circumstances, you will be told to pack your belongings and leave immediately. If you fail to do so or becomes abusive, the emergency services will be called to support staff/volunteers.
[emphasis in original].

Whilst some of these rules are about safety, they also concern acceptable and unacceptable behaviours for service users in The Retreat. In particular, service users' lack of ability to leave the service without scaling the walls suggests an element of containment within the approach to managing behaviour. These can be conceived as responsibilising the chaotic behaviours of individuals.

Within documents given to potential volunteers, The Retreat also set out expectations of volunteers. These contained expectations of what service providers should do, stating that: "These monitor and supervise the clients like house parents, and offer companionship." Within this expression of the role of service providers, a clear relationship between provider and user is expressed, with the service user being in need of monitoring and supervision, and the service provider being like a "house parent". Here, the concept of needing to manage the behaviour of service users is evident, whilst the idea of a service provider being a "house parent" suggests an element of service user deficit, to some extent infantilising rough sleepers as 'faulty' individuals (which in turn may draw upon historical Christian rhetoric of 'lost' populations in need of transformation through spiritual guidance, as seen in chapter three).

Statements were also made within documents about the effect of the service on service users' lives.

Two key extracts are discussed here. The first states:

> For many the direct and personal support they have received within the project
> is a key factor in helping them face or overcome the reasons that initially led to
> their homelessness situation. We use an individualised support package
> depending on each client's needs and often use the 'Outcomes Star' model of
> assessment developed by the London Housing Foundation. We work closely with
> each clients [sic] support group or network and have seen many of our clients
> and day time service users access or re-engage more positively with other
> agencies and services

Here, service users are discussed in ways which suggest that the causes of homelessness are able

to be assessed, measured (quantified) and addressed by the individual themselves. Further, whilst

an individualised method of support is being spoken about in the form of the 'Outcomes Star', this

method still uses a framework that considers "likely" points for consideration, quantifying these

points. This tool can be used to structure the relationship between the service provider and user,

and thus can provide a tool for developing understanding. However, the tool can also be

understood as a tool of self-reflection, in line with historical Christian methods of managing the

poor (through pastoral power). In addition to this, within this extract, it is suggested that such

support means that many service users are able to re-engage more positively with other agencies

and services, emphasising the social level potential deficit that may serve to exclude rough sleepers

from mainstream services (see below in this chapter, Archard, 1979).

A further statement was made about the service users and providers, and the role of the service in

the lives of individuals experiencing homelessness:

> What any brief summary will now show is the many hours of supportive work
> that has gone into every client, in assessing need, listening to their story,
> providing an appropriate response and ongoing support. The project seeks to be
> a positive advocate as they face personal challenges, own up to their past
> failings, begin to re-engage with society and housing system, and re-discover
> hope for the future. We have seen some amazing turn-around stories in the
> midst of the everyday and sometimes unfruitful endeavours. Working with the

> homeless is always a roller coaster journey of emotions, success and failure, but it has become a daily privilege and honour for the team to serve them in this way.

Here, a number of discursive elements are noticeable. The suggestion of "past failings" suggests elements of a therapeutic discourse, in which service users must "own up" in order to "re-discover hope for the future". Here, individuals experiencing homelessness are portrayed as being lost (in the sense of having lost hope and needing to turn their lives around). Furthermore, the support offered is around "turn-around" in the stories of the individuals and aiding rediscovery of "hope for the future" suggesting a transformation-focused discourse. Additionally, ideas of Christian service to the poor are evident within the final sentence. These elements of this discourse strongly echo those of Christian discourses of governing the poor (discussed within chapter three), with a focus on a Christian ethic of care, transformation, and self-reflection and being true about one's own 'failings'.

Further to this, the statement contains claims about "everyday and sometimes unfruitful endeavours", suggesting that "turn-around stories" are an exception. This relates to the concept of working with "the homeless", as "always a roller coaster journey of emotions", suggesting extremes of emotions, rather than mundane or less extreme emotions, and in turn supporting ideas of individuals experiencing homelessness as having chaotic lives (resulting in such extremes of emotion). In addition to this, the concepts of "success and failure" are discussed in relation to "the homeless", and such categorisation suggests that these are distinct and mutually exclusive categories, suggesting that these are the only two possible outcomes (although of course this is not the case).

Emergent points

Within The Retreat's service documents, people experiencing homelessness are framed as being lost and in need of guidance. Service provision is seen as needing to manage and correct the professed poor behaviours of lost individuals in order to show them a better way of life. This involves elements of responsibilisation, but notions of care and support, as well as therapeutic discourses, are also evident within these documents. Further, ideas of the service providing only a "basic" place of refuge suggest that, whilst the chaos associated with homelessness is external to the service, the service incentivises move-on to other forms of accommodation. Thus, in this sense the Retreat looks at individuals experiencing homelessness as needing to change, and providing a space and methods for fostering such changes. Through many of these discourses, the Retreat also has clear echoes of historical Christian discourses of managing and governing the poor.

Themes in service documents

From the discourses of service provider documents analysed within this chapter, it is evident that differences as well as similarities between services exist. These are apparent in the roles a religious ethos appears to play for each service, as well as their paths of professionalisation. In each case, services showed a level of professionalisation, paying staff and engaging in discourses of service users which referred to them as "customers" (Third, 2000; Ravenhill, 2008), although this was most explicit for the Well Centre, and least so for the Retreat. Referring back to table one (see chapter two), which drew on Cloke et al.'s (2010) typology of homelessness services, both the Sun Centre and the Well Centre fitted the typology of a "shift from faith-based, professionalised" service, with a move away from overt faith-based approaches. The Retreat maintained an overtly religious ethos. Although this service was undergoing processes of professionalisation, it remained largely non-professionalised with a small minority of service providers being paid. As such, the Retreat fits within an "overtly faith-based, non-professionalised" category, moving towards becoming an "overtly faith-based, professionalised" service. Thus, as Johnsen noted in chapter two, some

services may be religious in name only, with little reflection of this in their day-to-day practice, whilst others maintain a strong religious ethos.

Whilst aspects of professionalisation might be linked to notions of accepting national policy discourses of rough sleepers, this does not mean that such discourses are translated equally and directly into discourses of service provision within policy documents. These examples demonstrate the ways in which services may differ in their interpretation and implementation of various national policy discourses and priorities. Thus, service history, ethos, priorities and discretion in interpreting policy can mean that national policy discourses and priorities discussed in chapter three differ in their local implementation.

Positionings of rough sleepers in service documents

From the discussions above, it is clear that rough sleepers are framed in a number of ways within service documents, some of which are more explicit, whilst others are implicit within discussions of the ways in which services engage with individuals. Within the service documents analysed here, rough sleepers are understood as being vulnerable, not only because of their current situation, but also because of their past biographies, and across all three services, there are mentions of needs and problems that individuals have or face (e.g. addiction, mental health, skills deficits, among others) (Vandemark, 2007; Mooney & Hancock, 2010). These needs and problems are often seen as related to biographical factors which have led to rough sleeping, thus rendering rough sleepers vulnerable and in need of care and support from services, whilst also needing encouragement to change in order to address such issues.

In managing these so-called failed or broken individuals, approaches co-exist which demonstrate care for rough sleepers, such as the provision of material support and providing a place to be (Cloke

et al., 2010) as well as discourses of intervention and behaviour modification. These are related to claims of different forms deficits or problems (and necessary intervention), which in turn can be related to explanations of chaotic lives and failures in the management of risks, and have elsewhere been divided into various categories.

In his work on responses to skid-row occupants, Archard defines four types of response from services (and within official discourses of deficits/change), and uses the below table to express this:

Dominant ideological base	Dominant view of skid row alcoholic	Main strategy of recovery	Institutional base
Moral	Spiritually weak	Salvation	Missions
Penal	An offender	Correction	Police cells, courts, prisons
Medical	Diseased	Treatment	Alcoholism units (detoxification centres)
Social	Socially inadequate	Rehabilitation	Shop-fronts, crypts, half-way houses

(Archard, 1979, p. 14)

Here, Archard divides the types of response into those relating to Christian discourses of the poor (related to pastoral power, as seen in chapter two), which view individuals as in need of moral and spiritual change; those relating to penal practice, which presume punishment will deter and correct the individual; and those which are medical and spiritual models. Archard notes that the social and medical models can work simultaneously, as:

> These strategies are premised on two notions: that alcoholism, as opposed to occasional or even persistent drunkenness, is a disease, and that skid row alcoholism is a particular variant of that disease, compounded by social disaffiliation from the normal institutions of urban societies. Thus two interlocked problem areas present themselves for consideration by psychiatrists and social-work agents when working with skid row alcoholics: physical and psychological recuperation on the one hand and attainment of social stability on the other (Archard, 1979, p. 12)

Similarly, in relation to homelessness, different forms of management are evident from various accounts, some of which are evident in the below categories:

- Those which have medicalised roots and therapeutic responses, such as what Ravenhill has referred to as the "battle for the mind" (Ravenhill, 2008, p. 207), which involve reduced individual culpability, but often also imply that such individuals are incapable of making good choices in the management of risks, and need recovery-based interventions (Mathieu,

1993; Fisher & Collins, 1993; Lyon-Callo, 2000). Such interventions may be understood to be based around medical models, or historical religious models of individual transformation through religion;

- Responsibilising and normalising approaches (Whiteford, 2010a); and skills based 'meaningful' activities and training, as a means of giving individuals additional management methods to increase their ability to manage external factors, such as money management, relationship building and competing in a precarious labour market (Woolford & Nelund, 2013; Aradau, 2004). Here, an attempt is made to manage the risk posed to wider society by rough sleepers by creating citizens who are increasingly autonomous in self-managing various aspects of their own lives.

- Criminalisation and enforcement measures (Fooks & Pantazis, 1999; Johnsen & Fitzpatrick, 2007), to deter and punish the supposedly deviant and poor decisions of rough sleepers who are deemed to be undeserving of support and making poor moral choices.

- Approaches which see housing as the main issue affecting the individual, and as such aim to rehouse them in independent accommodation, with little other intervention (such as the Housing First model).

Such approaches suggest a complex menu of management measures, which at times may crossover and overlap in complex and tangled forms. One tool which services used within the research was the Outcomes Star. The Outcomes Star allows service users (in conjunction with service providers) to score themselves on a range of areas, to plan ways in which they can improve their skills or abilities in those areas, and to be able to reflect on their progress in these areas. The areas identified within the *Outcomes Star* are:

1. Motivation and taking responsibility
2. Self-care and living skills
3. Managing money and personal administration
4. Social networks and relationships
5. Drug and alcohol misuse

6. Physical health
7. Emotional and mental health
8. Meaningful use of time
9. Managing tenancy and accommodation
10. Offending
(Burns, Graham, & MacKeith, 2013, p. 3)

Using the *Outcomes Star*, services engage rough sleepers in a 'journey of change' (Burns et al., 2013,

p. 5), which largely promotes self-management from individuals. This scale scores individuals from

1 – 10, conceptualised as follows:

1-2: Stuck (leave me alone)
3-4: Accepting help (I want someone else to sort things out)
5-6: Believing (I can make a difference. It's up to me as well)
7-8: Learning (I'm learning how to do this)
9-10: Self-reliance (I can manage without help from the project)
(Burns et al., 2013, p. 5).

The Outcomes Star can be used by different service providers in different ways, and the relationship

between service user and provider in developing their plan can vary between individuals.

Having said this, the ten indicator areas might also be judged to focus on areas of normative order,

identified in policies in chapter two as 'deficient' in rough sleepers. However, it should be noted

that the tool can be understood to have positive and negative functions, as it can be used to build

and develop a relationship between the service provider and service user, and to manage

expectations. In addition, quantifiable 'change' can lead to easy measurement of 'improvement'.

Further, for services, the ability to express their impact in quantifiable ways can improve their

chances of future funding. However, this quantification can also be criticised for focusing too heavily

upon this 'auditing' role, distracting from the qualities of the individual's life and potentially

abstracting these from their context. In addition, the ten focus areas arguably reflect normative

views of 'good order'. In addition, this tool could be argued to represent a modern form of pastoral

power, in which the individual is encouraged to become self-reflective, and to focus on finding ways

to improve their life.

Service provision and management

As noted at the start of this chapter and by authors elsewhere (Cloke et al., 2010), services themselves occupy a precarious position in terms of their perceived legitimacy. This can have a close relationship to funding from government sources, and is often related to their endorsement of official (government) policy discourses. In managing rough sleepers through discourses of deficits, vulnerability and risk, services are also managing their own risk in relation to the precariousness they face of being seen as legitimate and successful service providers.

Within a context of the professionalisation of homelessness services, this is important for the continued existence of each service, as the potential for being cast as an illegitimate homelessness-sustaining service, as well as increased competition for funding (sometimes related to this legitimacy), means that homelessness organisations occupy a precarious position, one which potentially threatens their existence. Therefore, increased pressure on these organisations to provide services which evoke these differing strands of managing rough sleepers can be seen as being linked to official discourses which emphasise both the idea that rough sleepers should be "helped off the streets" (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011b, p. 16), whilst also warning of a "dangerous rough sleeping lifestyle" (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011b, p. 16). Such discourses often focus on quantifiable evidence of 'successful interventions' with rough sleepers, which shape the ways in which services allocate resources towards activities such as CV writing and money management, which both aim to develop normative forms of 'good' order and skills in service users, whilst also providing tangible and quantifiable measures of successful provision.

Conclusion

Within this chapter, the discourses of service provision evident in official documents have been analysed. These considered three case studies: The Well Centre, the Sun Centre and The Retreat. Within these, the definitions of homelessness in different services were considered. In addition, in discussing the role of service provision, rough sleepers were presented as having needs, problems and deficits. However, these were seen as requiring support and compassion as well as behaviour modifying responses (evoking therapeutic, responsibilising and punitive discourses). The emphasis on particular strands of these responses differed between services, such as responsibilising through charging for items differing, with items such as hot drinks charged for in some spaces, but free of charge in others. Similarly, the emphasis placed on direct interventions such as skills management differed across services.

Whilst this analysis provides a platform for understanding the complex positionings of rough sleepers within policy documents, it is important to recognise that differences existed between services: in their ethos; the extent and interpretation of professionalisation; and in the emphasis they placed on particular areas of service provision. However, as has been noted elsewhere, it is important to caution against any suggestion that individual service providers subscribe wholesale, or even in part, to the underpinning ethos and the discourses of provision evident within these documents. Therefore, the next chapter explores the discourses of individual service providers, as well as the practices of these individuals within service spaces.

Chapter Six

Managing 'The Homeless':

Discourses of Service Providers

Within the previous chapter, discourses of service provision within service documents were analysed. These focused upon discourses evident in documents such as policies and 'promotional' materials for a public audience. This chapter moves beyond this analysis of documentary discourses to consider the discourses of providers themselves. These are taken from interviews during fieldwork in the Well Centre, the Sun Centre and The Retreat.

This chapter begins by considering previous literature regarding the role of service providers as street level bureaucrats. It then moves on to discuss some of the ideals and realities of service provision, noting that many realities of service provision do not match the ideals that providers have. It also suggests that the role of national policies in these services is seen as minimal, but that service policies, which are suggested to be much more important, are informed by national policies and wider political views of rough sleepers. As such, service providers are seen to operate in a middle ground between national policies and politics, service level rules and policies, and their own attitudes and ethics. The chapter also considers service providers' discourses about rough sleepers suggesting that these reflect some of the dominant historical and contemporary common discourses around chaotic lives, causation, and deservingness, but that service providers show viewpoints that sometimes contrast with these discourses or show the tensions between lay normative viewpoints and viewpoints which emerge from working with rough sleepers themselves.

These complexities are reflected in the perceived role of services and service providers, which show notions of responsibilisation and change, but also a need to care for rough sleepers, and deepen friendship between service providers and rough sleepers.

The role of service providers

Individuals working in homelessness services play an important role in interpreting and implementing policies. Michael Lipsky proposed the term 'street-level bureaucrats' to understand the role of individuals working in front-line services who work directly with citizens. He claimed that these street-level bureaucrats play an important role in the interpretation and implementation of policies, claiming:

> the decisions of street-level bureaucrats, the routines they establish, and the devices they invent to cope with uncertainties and work pressures, effectively *become* the public policies they carry out. ... public policy is not best understood as made in legislatures or top-floor suites of high-ranking administrators, because in important ways it is actually made in the crowded offices and daily encounters of street-level workers (Lipsky, 1980, p. xii).

Lipsky went on to suggest that "Street-level bureaucrats make policy in two related respects. They exercise wide discretion in decisions about citizens with whom they interact. Then, when taken in concert, their individual actions add up to agency behaviour" (Lipsky, 1980, p. 13). Lipksy highlighted that such discretion is not confined to those considered as professionals, but is also exercised by individuals at various levels of public service hierarchies, who can decide whether or not service users are granted access to particular resources or opportunities. This could be argued to be true of homelessness service providers, as these individuals often have the power to decide where to signpost service users, whether or not a service user is ready to move on to other services, and whether or not to provide endorsement of individuals (through providing a reference, for example). Therefore, the discretion exercised by homelessness service workers has the power to affect outcomes for service users.

Furthering Lipsky's analysis, Maynard-Moody & Musheno (2000a, p.332) suggested that "These street-level workers operate at the boundary between citizens and the state, and they profoundly shape the definitions of both through the actions they take and the norms they invoke." These authors claim that street-level bureaucrats not only act as "state agents" whose discretion is based around policies and rules, but also discuss their own roles as being informed by norms, values and personal beliefs, as well as being influenced by colleagues and service users. Maynard-Moody and Musheno challenge the notion that service workers only act in self-interest, highlighting a number of occasions when they make their work harder than it might need to be, in order to meet the needs of citizens.

Maynard-Moody and Musheno argue that "Street-level decisions are based on practical knowledge and informal procedures and are improvisational in the face of unpredictability" (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2000, p. 347), and are not seen as part of governmental policy making or as exercising discretion. Instead, street-level bureaucrats see themselves as client-faced, although the authors note that:

> This does not mean that rules don't permeate all aspects of street-level work—they do—or that most street-level actions don't conform to agency guidelines—they do as well. The most common situation may be that rules and guidelines effectively fit the situation and are followed. When the rules and procedures fit, street-level judgment is not problematic; there is no conflict, no dilemma, and, not incidentally, no story to tell. Stories and conversation are inspired by and help tellers and listeners deal with ambiguous and conflictual situations, not routine events (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2000, p. 349).

In order to do this, the authors claim, individual workers use their own judgements and morality to inform their work, with rules and guidelines acting as part of the background to this.

In contrast to Maynard-Moody and Musheno, Alden claims that discretion in gatekeeping can be understood by considering the restrictions street-level bureaucrats work within, noting:

It has been argued that the use of discretion to gatekeep is not necessarily an exercise of power on the part of employees, but rather a reaction to top-down pressures and policy ambiguity (Lipsky, 1980), underpinned by an overriding lack of resources (Niner, 1989; Evans, 1999, p. 138; Bowpitt et al., 2011) (Alden, 2015, p. 3).

Indeed, discretion in gatekeeping might be understood to be at times both an exercise of power on the part of service providers, and a reaction to top-down ambiguities and pressures. The following extract reinforces the importance of street-level bureaucrats in the lives of service users, and takes account of the scarcity of resources, as well as the ambiguity of policies:

> Deciding who is a good or a bad person, who has rights and who is disenfranchised, and what community actions are tolerated or punished...have material consequences for individuals and society. Street-level workers allocate state-provided resources and services. State-provided resources are often inadequate to the needs of individuals, and this scarcity gives street-level workers enormous power over citizen clients. They must make triage-like decisions as they ration time, money, and participation in programs to individuals. They must decide not only who should be helped but who can be helped. Moreover, if clients, especially poor and dependent clients, want or need state resources, they must yield to the workers' authority. Street-level workers are also in the position to impose state sanctions as they decide whose behavior is carefully scrutinized, who is questioned, and who is arrested (Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2000, p. 355).

An understanding of the role of homelessness service providers is important for understanding the ways in which rough sleepers are positioned by services. This is especially true in a context of austerity because, as Dobson (2011) argues, at times of economic crisis, a sharpening of the divide between those individuals deemed deserving and those seen as undeserving of support is apparent.

Dobson claims:

> increased rationing of public resources during times of perceived economic crisis may encourage focus on how far recipients are 'deserving' of provision. This in turn can result in selectivism on the basis of assessed 'need', and attendant growth in policies and practices to support such processes. For example, Harrison & Sanders (2006) have explained that assessment of clients' (including rough sleepers) 'deservingness' involves identification of 'victims' who would receive greater resources than those who had behaved in ways that 'caused' their problems, and were therefore undeserving, and that reduced access to resources might represent 'punishment' for deviant behaviour (Dobson, 2011, p. 549)

Therefore, the majority of the rest of this chapter focuses on this in detail, initially considering service provider accounts of ideals and realities of service provision in a changing service context, before moving on to explore the role of rules and policies. Following this, it looks at discourses about service users, and the perceptions of the role(s) that services do or should have in relation to rough sleepers.

Ideals and realities of service provision

Many service providers discussed how they came to become involved in service provision. For some individuals, their motivations stemmed from religious beliefs, and were based around Christian discourses of service. This was the case for Robert (The Retreat), who stated of his voluntary role: "I just feel that it is, it is something that God has called me to do quite frankly and I am just happy in it". For others, this religious underpinning was accompanied by their experiences of the services themselves, such as was the case for Penny (The Retreat), who combined notions of a Christian duty of care, with expertise coming from her personal experiences:

> I feel that I can use my experiences to help those that come through. I can't know what they are feeling but I can have an idea, and they know that I have been there, just some of the things I say, some of the ways I say things, so they know and I suppose in a way that some of the good help that they can use. They can bounce off me and say 'if I do this or if I do that…' although I take no credit for the hard work that the office staff put in, they are just amazing, and then of course it is part of my religious belief that we are here to help others. We are put on this planet for those that have gone astray and God has been good to me so why shouldn't I use his ability to be good to others. Show his goodness not mine. So I don't take any credit at all, it is all his (laughs) it is all his.

Only service providers from The Retreat spoke explicitly about a Christian duty of care in their interviews. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that The Retreat seemed to maintain the highest level of subscription to an explicit Christian ethos. However, not all individuals within The Retreat were Christian, with some volunteering due to their own experiences of homelessness.

For others, their decision to engage in homelessness service provision was not so much about their own knowledge and experience, but an interest in homelessness more generally, as was the case for Gavin (Sun Centre), who said: "It is just something that I have always been interested in, the homeless and people in certain situations. I have always wanted to do some volunteer work, but while I was working I never got round to it, as soon as retired I came into it". Likewise, many individuals' experiences of provision started because of being asked to volunteer or apply for paid roles by existing staff. In some cases, 'getting into' service provision was not initially underpinned by decisions relating to an ethos or particular ethic, as was the case for Sue:

> I think my little boy was in reception [first year at school] so he would have been four and a half, something like that, reception school, and I moved them [across] schools and they started a new school after Christmas. Got them settled and I thought right I need to find a job, so I just scoured the paper and I saw a job for the Well Centre. The very first job that I applied for was a deputy manager at the Well Centre. Now for quite a while I had been donating tins and bedding and towels and bedding and stuff like that but a friend of mine used to pick it up and bring it down so I had no idea what it was. It was for 25 hours, Monday to Friday, and I thought why not? I will give it a go. … I walked down into the old place and I just thought 'this is it. I love it, I love it' and that was it. I got the job so that was over 4 years ago and then since then I have done different roles within the Well Centre. So that literally was it, the first job that I applied for and it was the first job that I got and that was it really

However, for Sue, despite not initially having an affection, her feeling of 'loving it' resonated with many accounts of this type. For many, a deep personal satisfaction in their role was apparent, contrasting these to other roles which they felt were less meaningful. Sandra (Well Centre), suggested: "It's worthwhile isn't it? It's better than working to make shareholders rich, you know what I mean?" Similarly, Sue (Well Centre) suggested that job satisfaction came from the knowledge of the impact on rough sleepers, stating "I thrive on the bits knowing that probably you have made a difference for somebody's day, in some small way, shape or form". A number of service providers, both paid and voluntary, had previously worked in the private sector, and compared their roles favourably to working within the private sector, such as Carol (Sun Centre) who said:

> I worked in HR [Human Resources]...and also wrote, also did training there so I wrote a couple of things, computer training, write computer training and I helped devise the appraisal system, all of that side. Dealt with absences, all sorts, that sort of stuff. ... I

had my kids and was at home for a year and a half doing night shift and that made me want to work somewhere where I could give something back because it took a lot out of me working there, and you know, being able to actually change people lives and make a difference. ... I feel that I can give something back to the people that need help. Especially with some of them that society doesn't look at twice, they think they are the dregs of the Earth, whereas it is actually getting to the bottom of why they are actually where they are and helping them. ... I feel like I have achieved something at the end of the day.

Harriet (Sun Centre), who had previously worked for a number of years in finance, felt that working in the homelessness sector offered a different kind of job satisfaction, claiming: "It is much more rewarding than any financial compensation." Such a sentiment was echoed among other service providers, such as Robert (The Retreat), who noted, "I probably enjoy this work more than any work, paid or unpaid, that I have done in the past." and Gavin (Sun Centre), who stated: "I get more satisfaction doing this than I have ever had in any of the paid work I have done. I feel more fulfilled at the end of the day, as though I have done something worthwhile and not wasted my time." Therefore, for many individual service providers, this type of work was rewarding, as their roles were perceived as making a difference to people's lives. These views demonstrated the dedication and personal commitment many people had to making a difference to rough sleepers' lives. This was the case across a number of accounts, regardless of the underpinning reasons for their involvement in provision (for example, this was evident in accounts which were religious and secular in basis, likewise for those which were voluntary and paid roles).

These views persisted despite many service providers also suggesting that realities of service provision often complicated achieving these ideals. A number of service providers spoke about the day-to-day realities of managing diverse populations, discussing both positive and negative aspects of their work. Negative experiences included seeing individuals self-harm, witnessing or experiencing aggression towards other members of staff or themselves, and exhaustion of working in mentally draining conditions. Sue (Well Centre) spoke about why she continued, saying: "I work here because I want to help the people that are here. I am not doing it for my own self-gratification

or anything because some of the rubbish that I have to go through, you know, you really wouldn't

bother sometimes". Similarly, Harriet spoke about a bad day, suggesting that for her this:

> usually involves alcohol, fighting, takes up a lot of time and it takes you away from
> focusing on the people that really need your help, when they come in like that. ... when
> they come in and they take up your whole day so you get nothing done and there is no
> respect for anybody else, just what they want and then they start shouting at you and
> telling you that you have never done anything to help them.

Disagreements between service users were cited by a number of service providers as presenting

difficulties, often because these took up valuable time. However, a lack of appreciation from service

users was also discussed as being a reality of service provision, as well as in some cases, abuse from

service users. Anne discussed one particular incident, of "being spat at, ... yes they are bad days,

you get abuse and you know, then you feel like what are you doing? But that is very rare anyway.

It is not, obviously, a daily thing".

However, despite these rare occasions of abuse, many service providers suggested that a majority

of service users were courteous and polite. As Carol (Sun Centre) said:

> Most of them are fine. They have their moments, they get a bit too close sometimes
> and you have to turn your back and go, you know, but I have not had any real issues
> and I don't know whether that is maybe because they respect me, I don't know, but I
> do have quite a good rapport with them and they don't tend to push it too far. I don't
> feel uncomfortable with any of them, there is only one that I have ever felt really
> uncomfortable with, it is the only one that I have said I wouldn't want to be alone in a
> room with him at all but he is in prison now. But he is the only one, I suppose, but most
> of them are fine. Smelly but fine.

Although these negative experiences were evident, positive experiences of provision were also

apparent. These often focused on the smooth operation of day-to-day management of services,

but also focused around seeing people's situations change, often in relation to accessing housing.

Related to the lack of emergency accommodation services in Dryborough, Sandra (Sun Centre)

spoke of a good day as having fewer homeless people presenting at the service, because:

> when you don't get too many homeless people coming through the door...because if
> they are of a certain age range they don't get any support from the local council and

that, so there is not a lot you can do for them really. Trying to get them into the local night shelter [The Retreat] if they have got a space, if not, give them a sleeping bag and say 'bye'.

Sandra suggested that this was emotionally difficult, because "It is hard to know that you are saying 'ta ta, see you tomorrow' when you are going home to a nice warm bed and they are going to go and sleep rough on the street." In addition, many service providers spoke of their wish to have no homelessness whatsoever, despite a recognition that this would impact on their own job prospects.

In addition to these mixed experiences, service providers also spoke about long working hours, and lacking the resources and facilities to do all that they would wish. This lack of resources often made working with rough sleepers harder, adding further pressures to such work. The Well Centre had recently moved into new facilities, and issues with facilities were discussed less frequently by service providers from the Well Centre. However, other issues such as lack of time remained, with Sue (Well Centre) suggesting:

> I just don't have enough time to do what I would really, really like to do. ... I have got loads of ideas that I would like to do with people, I know I would like to develop people and that. Just doing it on my own I can't, and then I feel like I am letting them down a bit. So I think that probably upsets me a bit, that I feel like I have let people down because I have not been able to do what I probably set out to do with them. But hopefully that will change now, it will. I think we have got so much potential, some of them, but it does take a lot of time and a lot of effort and I haven't got that much time to put that much effort in really so, some of them just need a hand don't they?

Here, Sue's account demonstrates a feeling of being restricted, and the emotional toll this can bring when attempting to provide services. Similarly, a lack of time was evident in a number of accounts of provision, and sometimes this was seen as being related to other factors such as facilities or funding, as with Penny (The Retreat), who stated:

> Time is against us in everyday time is against because there is just not enough working hours in the day to do what we would really want to do and there is not enough for added staff to help out, and I am talking about room as in space, there is no space for others to work here. Yes, I think that is, as a negative we are boxed in with space and sometimes we are boxed in by rules and regulations for instance we would love to put

central heating into the back bedrooms but the powers that be say that that is not possible, and that sort of thing.

Similarly, Sandra (Sun Centre) claimed: "We are limited by resources so we can only work within what we got [sic]". A lack of resources impacted directly on the types of facilities that were on offer in services, such as a lack of central heating or computer access in The Retreat.

Whilst this lack of resources impacted on service provision, evident within the accounts presented above is a deep commitment to working with rough sleepers on the part of individual service providers. Many service providers spoke of their work (voluntary or paid) as deeply rewarding, in spite of the many challenges that they can face on a daily basis, including those relating to service use, the emotional toll of such work, and a lack of resources and time impacting on what was possible.

When asked about the possibilities of provision with unlimited resources, service providers showed some differences in their ideals. Dryborough currently had no direct access accommodation service for rough sleepers, and individuals were signposted from here to The Retreat. Many service providers in the Sun Centre stated as their top priority funding for the establishment of an accommodation service in Dryborough.

Within the Retreat and the Sun Centre, desires for improved facilities within the buildings were also mentioned. Harriet (Sun Centre) suggested that increased resources would also allow for a wider range of services, saying:

> I would love a brand new building, built to spec and designed by the people who are on the front-line that know what we need, with the overnight shelter as a separate entity, the food bank on the other side. A workshop, a business centre enterprise, a café, everything. I would love to see that here

Similarly, John (The Retreat), suggested:

I think if it was unlimited resources we could expand, building wise and I mean the other organisations they help a lot but if we had unlimited resources we could employ people to be here and help these people with mental issue[s], with drug issue[s], with alcohol issue[s], of course the resources, the money is very important. I mean you can, I don't think you can do a lot with £5,000 but if £5,000 becomes £200,000 you could do a lot.

Further, service providers often spoke of their wish to have more paid staff, and an increase in specialist or highly trained staff. Nancy (The Retreat) asserted that "a few more paid employees would give this place more support I think, because you are more likely to go to work with a paid job". However, Michelle (The Retreat) noted that this was heavily reliant upon funding, and that "to try and get enough funding for training purposes is very hard, you know, or to get enough. The funding we have we can't necessarily divert the money that we would need really to say this is the training we need. So that can be quite difficult I suppose."

Even within the Well Centre, where facilities were considered by many to be less of an issue, increased resources were seen as potentially increasing the range of services the Well Centre could offer, with Louise discussing her desire to see the establishment of an advocacy arm of the service. Similarly to providers across services, Cara spoke about the ways in which increased resources could allow for specialised services to be delivered, suggesting that further funding could be used for the service to have "More staff. Yes more really experienced staff in certain activities and certain therapies. I know a lot of people ask for counselling and so yes, things that, yes more staff."

These types of provision can be associated with the professionalisation of homelessness services, with improved facilities and staff expertise seen as ideal service provision scenarios. Within these accounts, this professionalised service is viewed as benefitting service users, rather than being about increasing service legitimacy.

However, increasing professionalisation was a contentious issue for some service providers. The Well Centre had recently moved to a purpose-built facility, and this had changed some practices of service provision. Within some accounts, such as Louise's, this was seen as having a positive impact for service users:

> The fact of change has been moving into this building, that has changed things considerably. For a start the facilities are quite different, a lot more attractive and to people who use the service, and that sends a very strong signal in itself, that we, you are not just worthy of a basement, no light and a floor that you can't clean and walls that you can't paint, which is the place we are in before. Some people would have felt that that is all they are worth. We are saying actually we think you are worth this marble clad and beautiful copper lined outer... we have got this garden, we have got these training facilities, we have got this kitchen. We think you are worth all of these things. So that sends a fantastically positive signal to clients, that they are valuable too and they are important enough for the council, and actually central government, to build this facility for them to start getting access to the things that they need.

However, Amy (Well Centre) felt that since the move, the main focus of the service had moved from care to finance, suggesting: "It is this profit thing that is throwing all out of... They used to be a non-profit organisation and they really did care about the people but I think their aims has [sic] gone a little bit from that". Amy suggested that this had led to a change in ethos, in which finances became increasingly important. Similarly, Alison suggested that a long-term change in service operation had taken place:

> when I first became a Trustee we used to have meetings every month and we were then, we didn't have the money and look at it and say well 'we can go for another five weeks, that is all the money we have got' and then something always cropped up and we had a little extra money but literally it was from hand to mouth in the beginning. Then it went business-like and as the years went on the more I realised I didn't understand what they were talking about half the time because it was corporate business and this, and that is not my scene. I mean it had to happen because there is certain government legislations, everything has to be put in the right place and all these corporation laws and these charities laws.

For Alison, despite the added financial security of a more business-like model of financial management, this was accompanied by a shift in emphasis at trustee level. Alison had recently resigned from the Board of Trustees at the Well Centre, and spoke of her reasons for doing so being related to this shift in emphasis, stating:

> before I resigned off the board and I went to a meeting and the actual clients weren't mentioned once and I thought that is not right, because it was all about, as I say, company law and all these things that I didn't understand and I thought 'well yes, I know you have got to have these things in place and I know the trustees have got to do it but where has the caring side of it gone?

Thus for some members of staff, changes in the perceived focus of organisations, especially in relation to the role of finance, were not a completely welcome outcome of increased professionalisation.

Similarly, provision for paid staff was a contentious issue. All three services hired some paid members of staff. As seen above, many individuals saw an increase in paid (professional) staff as a positive step for services, with these individuals seen as potentially bringing increased expertise. However, not all service providers shared this view. Some providers felt that it created an unhelpful distinction between paid and unpaid service providers. When asked if there were differences between paid and voluntary service providers, Leo (Sun Centre) stated:

> I think so yes. But I have always felt that. I have always been a bit militant like that I think, but I do. But then again that doesn't take away from the fact that the paid staff are beautiful you know what I mean, they are lovely people and so there is no kind of animosity there but I feel that there's that difference and I don't feel that it is right

Alison (Well Centre) suggested that there was a difference in motivation between paid and voluntary providers, claiming:

> Volunteers are here because they have chosen to be here. And like everything else this is a job. I am not saying they are not caring because I think they do care but it is different. It is a different thing. They have to get up five days a week to come to work. I nip in whenever I want to, to have a chat and that is a big difference. A big, big difference

Thus, whilst paid members of staff were seen as providing expertise by some providers, others felt that this meant the voluntary ethic was reduced, or that this presented an unhelpful distinction between paid and voluntary service providers (some of these issues have been discussed in chapter two).

Moves to professionalise services had also impacted on service provision, with some providers describing this positively, for example Robert (The Retreat), who stated:

> We are trying to be more professional, we are trying to certainly show the council the local authorities and other statutory bodies, that we are not just a load of dilettantes doing silly things, that we are dedicated and we stick to our policies and procedures etc, which is, in a way I suppose it has become a bit more formal but that is necessary. As I say as far as I am aware we have got a much better reputation with the Council than we used to, which I think is good.

However, other service providers were more critical of the impact of such changes. Sue (Well Centre) felt that a focus on changing behaviours and move on for individuals (within target-driven, quantitative measures) had changed the focus of service provision:

> I suppose the service has changed now and people are so much more into, I mean when we were down at the old place a lot of it was about day to day thing and looking after people's basic needs and all that lot, which is great and they still need that. There is a lot of emphasis now on employment funding it is about getting people back into work and training and employability opportunities and that. I think these people have got so many other issues I think the last thing on their mind is to get a job because there is loads of other stuff to deal with and unless you are catching them as they are just coming out of one job or moving to another job, that gap in between, so many things can happen, so I don't, yes, I think the service, I think everybody is pushing towards you know, you have got to be monitoring them and getting them onto a course and things like that. There is so many issues I think you have got to get over before you even get them on to courses. Half of them can't even read and write. ... I just don't think we can forget about the people who are here because they are really, really need us, and they need what we are offering so not everybody is going to fit into little tick boxes are they? And they have been on five courses, haven't they done well because they fit into a little cohort, or a big cohort that are, but they are never going to fit into any of them boxes

Sue's criticism here focuses upon both the expectations placed on service users, and on the monitoring, recording and auditing of these areas of provision. Her account, here, shows some of the issues that increased procedures associated with professionalisation of services can bring.

Whilst the changing nature of service provision potentially had useful outcomes for services, and was seen positively by some providers, this was not always the case. In three cases former voluntary providers had changed their roles from volunteer to service user in protest at changes in services

(this ensured that they were able to maintain links to service users). In each case, service providers cited changing practices of provision as the reason for this.

Therefore, although professionalisation of services was deemed useful in legitimising services and providing resources, some service providers also felt that it had impacted negatively upon the focus of service provision. In some cases, this meant that the care elements to which many service providers showed a deep dedication were seen to be valued less than quantification and measurement of change in rough sleepers' lives. As such, professionalisation brought with it some positive aspects in the resources and opportunities for service development, but also changed the nature of provision, in ways which some service providers found unpalatable, with some even protesting through changing their status from service provider to service user.

The role of rules and policies

Many service providers discussed the role that rules and policies played in the day-to-day practices of service provision, at national, local and service levels. Many national policies were felt not to directly impact on service provision, although particular aspects such as the need for individuals to have a local connection for housing, the rules for Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) provision, and the rules for counting and estimating the number of rough sleepers, were discussed by interviewees. For many, national policies were seen as being distant from the day-to-day realities of service provision, as Sue (Well Centre) suggested:

> Not very often do I find out information about policies to, you know, "tackle homelessness". I know they are all there and I probably should read them shouldn't I?
> I know I should but I don't. I am quite a hands on day to day person.

However, the issue of consistency in the application of local and service level policies and rules was discussed by service providers, and was seen as more directly relevant to service provision. As

suggested above, service providers potentially played an important role in the implementation of policy.

In some cases, discretion was considered to have negative consequences for service users, with Kirsty (Sun Centre) claiming:

> These people that make the decisions kind of know a lot of the people in the town and so your surname can dictate quite a bit before you have even got through the door, so the policies don't work quite well in that scenario. People have different takes on policies as well. I could read a policy, you could read the policy, and we could both absorb it in different ways, so therefore I would probably deliver it in a different way, so we are not all working to the same policy in respect, if that makes sense?

However, in addition to the impact that differences in interpretation and prior relationships could have, she also pointed out the role that other personal aspects could play, proposing:

> I think also how you are as an individual that day as well. If you are feeling strong and in control then you are going to make good decisions, if you feel overwhelmed and worked and tired and just an awful lot of spinning and an awful lot to be done you are going to make a decision, an easy option decision.

Likewise, Amy (Well Centre) felt that differences in interpreting "Some [rules] are put into place for some people, thinking about it, yes, not as strong as for others, which I think is unfair." However, in contrast to this, other service providers proposed a need for flexibility in interpreting the rules, to take account of individual circumstances. Cara (Well Centre) spoke about tailoring activities as well as rules to the needs of individuals, suggesting:

> you have got to find what is relevant for people, not push people into doing things just because it is there, it has kind of got to have some meaning to them and has got to be a purpose for it rather than trying to push everyone into it. It does end up that I have to try and ask everyone about everything and you find out who is not interested and who is.

Carol (Sun Centre) also spoke about being able to know how to deal with service users, if they were having good or bad days, and suggested that this was a learnt skill, stating:

> I think I have now learnt to know when the clients are having good days and bad days so if they have had too much to drink or you can tell that there are some sort of drugs

or whatever, you know when to sort of step back and just give them some food to fill them up a bit or whichever.

Similarly, Geraldine (The Retreat) suggested that service providers' personal experiences, as well as working with people for whom many rules and policies had led to difficulties, meant that 'bending' the rules was important:

> We stick to the rules while we are here, more or less, but we do, me and Penny are the worst ones, we bend them because we both realise that we have both been through bad times and bending the rules to help people is what we are here for in the first place

Geraldine felt that following the rules too closely could lead to increased difficulties in service provision, saying:

> I wish some of them were a bit more laid back. ... They stick to the rules. I think one of the important things is you have got to learn a little give and take. Charity is a good one, some of them have got no charity, if somebody does something wrong they make them pay for it, you know, put them out, that is it. They don't give people enough chances.

Similarly, Amy (Well Centre) spoke of breaking rules when they conflicted with her personal views on what provision should include. She spoke about particular examples, and felt that policies and rules sometimes limited the provision offered to service users:

> I have been in confrontation with policies, things I have done, but I have done nothing to put me in danger or you know things like that. It is things like taking people to the doctors and hospitals. I feel really, really, really strongly that if we are here to support people we should take them places and I have broke [sic] that rule so many times, so many times, but you know, I feel I am here to help people so if it means taking them, escorting them to hospital I will do it, which I have been told off loads of times for, but I have gone ahead and done it still, you know. It is just the way that I am.

Furthermore, some individuals working within centres had experienced homelessness themselves, and felt that this gave them a level of empathy with service users, in some cases interpreting rules differently to allow for this. John (The Retreat) felt that this gave him a different level of understanding, claiming: "It helps a lot [having experienced homelessness] because if you haven't been, if you haven't lived here you don't understand actually what the residents go through". Similarly, Sandra (Sun Centre) spoke of this as changing the relationship between provider and user,

stating: "I have been where a lot of these people have been so I am not pretentious. I am on the same level as them and they know that, so I think that helps build a rapport". Such ways of working were perceived to change the delivery of provision, as service providers with similar experiences to service users were able to develop empathetic relationships with service users, drawing on a unique form of knowledge and understanding, which those without such experiences lacked. However, it should also be noted that this assumes a homogeneity of the experience of homelessness. More likely is that some service users will have had similar experiences, and others will have had vastly different experiences. As such, this empathy will not extend to all, but is more likely to extend to some service users.

Summary

Within discussions of rules and policies, many service providers spoke about not being aware of the most recent national policies, and these policies were often judged to bear little relation to the day-to-day experiences of service provision. Instead, many service providers were more familiar with service and local level policies and rules. Having said this, and as seen within the previous chapter, many service level policies and rules were often focused on the creation of good order and change within the lives of service users. However, as the quotations above indicate, many service providers discussed discretion and interpretation of these rules and policies, inscribing their own opinions and standpoints in their day-to-day practices. In some cases, where policies conflicted with personal opinions and views, rules and policies were circumvented and replaced by approaches deemed more suitable by individual service providers, built on their own opinions and values. It is these personal discourses to which attention now turns.

Discourses about service users

Within service spaces, individual discourses of service provision showed variations or similarities to discourses evident in service documents and national policies. In addition, variations between individual service provider discourses were evident. Within this section, these are analysed in relation to three key themes recurring within service provider accounts: service users as having chaotic lives, being vulnerable and risky; perceptions of causation of homelessness; and distinctions between deserving and undeserving categories of individuals. Each of these is analysed in turn, using extracts from service provider accounts to illuminate key points and topics emerging from interviews with service providers.

Chaotic lives, vulnerability and risk

Within service providers' discourses of people experiencing homelessness, the concept of individuals having chaotic or disorganised lives emerged on a number of occasions. Penny (The Retreat) spoke of homeless people prior to coming to the service as having "gone through all sorts of mayhem, chaos, their life is in total, whoa". Similarly, Michelle (The Retreat) spoke of there being "opportunities for people to better their lives and that sort of thing and sometimes those people take the opportunities and sometimes...they are just not at the right place in their lives to grab those opportunities and therefore their lives are still chaotic". Here, Michelle seems both to discuss these lives as being chaotic because of people being unable to take opportunities, but also discusses the idea of people bettering their lives, and in this sense seems to portray homeless lives as of less value than 'better' forms. Additionally, Alison (Well Centre) spoke of people using the service in a sporadic way, "you know how unpredictable they are". Here, ideas of chaos, unpredictability and mayhem point to service provider concerns with a perceived lack of routine, structure and

organisation in service users' lives. Such views appeared to be linked to common-sense views of rough sleepers which see their lives as lacking in order, and individuals as not responsible enough.

This lack of organisation, routine and structure was linked by some to decision making and, in particular, to prioritising short term outcomes over long term outcomes. For example, Alison (Well Centre) spoke of a particular service user, suggesting that even during pre-arranged interactions: "immediately something crops up she is gone, you know, and you have to accept that because that is the way life is for them". Here, the idea of a "way of life" suggests that short-term outcomes are prioritised as part of everyday life, but fails to question why this might be the case.

Consistent with this was the claim of Louise (Well Centre), who spoke of one role of the service as being to: "gently try and introduce what I call structure. Where we are encouraging people to recognise that the things that they do have consequences for themselves and for others but primarily for themselves". This discussion of structure seems to imply a lack of structure prior to this, and links this to ideas of taking responsibility. She also suggested that charging for food meant that:

> they can choose whether they are going to spend that £1.40 on a can of drink in the morning or keep it and then have a hot meal at lunchtime, and a lot of our guys, their decision making doesn't stretch that far. They are presented with a can of drink now or a meal later, they will go for the drink now and sort out later when later comes and there isn't a lot of forward planning in their sort of decision making. But that comes as they, you know, they deal with the consequences, then they have to start learning things like planning again. So those are very, very small things but they will help the shifting of a mind-set of people that have been locked into a certain way of thinking for some time.

Within this extract, Louise suggests that a particular way of thinking which prioritises short-term over long-term outcomes is something service users have been "locked into". This is also associated with lacking consideration for others. Across all three services, costs were attached to elements of service use (as briefly discussed in the previous chapter), and such moves can be linked to notions

that rough sleepers need responsibilising, in line with changing ways of thinking and patterns of behaviour, evident both within long-standing historical discourses about people in poverty, and in current policy discourses of rough sleepers.

Such activities as charging for items are seen to encourage rough sleepers to act in ('normal') responsible ways, but this neglects the context of this decision-making, in which alcohol may provide other ways of coping for that individual, so that alcohol is perceived as important to get through that moment. As such, these views understand consuming alcohol over food as deviant, irrational, and poor decision making. Such views appear to be informed by long-standing historical and present policy discourses of the need to foster responsible decision making in the lives of rough sleepers, by implication suggesting that their lives are currently lacking in adequate decision making skills.

The perceived vulnerability of homeless individuals was also discussed within service provider accounts. Some providers discussed this explicitly in terms of vulnerability, such as Matthew (The Retreat) who claimed, "we are dealing with people, with fragile, broken people, vulnerable people". Matthew referred to individuals experiencing homelessness in such terms on a number of occasions, discussing them in terms of being "broken, transient, damaged communities" and "the broken people". Here Matthew seems to conceptually link the idea of vulnerability and ideas of fragility and brokenness of individuals, which draws on historical Christian discourses of people in poverty as broken (as seen in chapter three).

Similarly, Sue (Well Centre) spoke of people using the service as vulnerable people, by suggesting: "some people are very, very vulnerable, where is the best place to find a vulnerable person that you can take advantage of? Somewhere like this". Here, she was relating this to the idea of vulnerability in relation to others preying on this and claimed that the service had "a few tough nuts

in here who probably prey on the vulnerable". Within this extract, distinctions between predatory (risky to other service users) and vulnerable service users are made, suggesting a presence of both within service spaces.

Risk was inextricably tied in with accounts of vulnerability, with some individuals seen as both vulnerable and risky within service provision discourses. Louise (Well Centre) claimed: "it is a very risky environment that we are in, so we do have to manage that". In discussing risk, Penny (The Retreat) drew attention to the lack of knowledge providers had about service users, and the way of dealing with this, stating: "They come to us completely unknown in the majority of cases. We work on instinct most of the time". Further, this was discussed in relation to ideas of people having to lie to protect themselves, and the risks associated with trusting individual accounts. Here Alison (Well Centre) suggested that "because of the lifestyle they lead and because they have to protect themselves, they have to lie a lot". Here she referred to "sob stories" in order to get money or compassion from service providers. Likewise, Michelle (The Retreat) proposed:

> I suppose to get here sometimes people have had to be manipulative, that had to learn to be manipulative to survive and then… of course when you are trying to help somebody and you can see it is still manipulations and it is lies, even though we sort of say 'you don't have to lie here, you can tell us so that we can help' some people have got to the point where in actual fact their life has been built on such a lie that is has become their lives or they have got themselves into such a mess that they can't tell the truth or they don't want to tell the truth, and then it becomes very difficult to help, to try and get to the root of the problems.

Within this account, the concept of needing to be manipulative is attributed to some people experiencing homelessness, and this adds to the idea of risk and service users as untrustworthy. For Michelle, this is linked to ideas of who is easier or harder to support, and so risk becomes linked to ideas of support. Matthew (The Retreat), too, suggested "we do have some cunning characters who try to pull us to pieces". He spoke of this particularly in regards to rule breaking, suggesting that: "these people try to break the rules all the time because that's what they have spent a lot of their life doing is breaking the rules. So if you set a rule up they will find a way to get around it".

Therefore, in order for them to mitigate the risk associated with this rule breaking, he claimed that the service "keep changing the goalposts but we are always in charge of where the goalposts are".

Such discourses appear to be linked to both experiences of providing services, as well as ideas that service users are deviant in their approach, lying and manipulating situations. For example, Matthew suggests that these individuals have spent their whole lives breaking rules, suggesting a view of these individuals as deviant. Similarly, Alison claims that individuals have had to lie, because this is a part of the rough sleeper 'lifestyle'. However, other service providers, such as Penny, recognise that a lack of information means that providers are working on instinct in the main. As such, perceptions of riskiness and vulnerability appeared to be linked to normative notions of rough sleepers as being vulnerable, but also as presenting risks to service providers. These views appeared to be drawn from experiences of providing services and from more common-sense viewpoints of rough sleepers and their 'character'.

Many service provider discourses focused on the perceived skills deficits of service users, such as deficits in access to resources, deficits in ways of thinking and morality, and deficits in ability to care for oneself. However, some counter-discourses were also apparent. These moved away from a deficits approach to recognising skills. Kirsty (Sun Centre) spoke about service users in ways that focused on the strengths of service users, noting: "we have got some artists, we have got some very good professional people in here". Kirsty felt that these skills were absent from mainstream constructions of homelessness, which she saw as dehumanising, suggesting: "they [mainstream views] just think they [homeless] are scum. And they're not, they are people." Therefore, Kirsty saw the people using the service as having some skills, moving away from approaches which she felt removed humanising elements from individuals.

Kirsty's discourse appeared to be drawn out of her experience of working within the service. She suggested that her views had changed over time, influenced by her experiences of working with rough sleepers, stating:

> I was quite naive when I first started. I think I was very much like, I suppose a lot of what people are. I can't think of the word. People taking the Mick out of the benefit system was how I thought and perceived all these people [were]… OK yes, maybe 10% of them are but the other 90% aren't at all and some of that 90% aren't even claiming what they should be claiming. I think I was very naive and now I am not, I am more open and I sit I actually listen to people about where they are coming from

Thus, for Kirsty, a shift in influence was evident, from lay normative views of rough sleepers which saw them as undeserving, to one in which there was a need to listen to rough sleepers, and to not pass judgement, based on her experiences of working within a homelessness service.

Across services, discourses constructed rough sleepers in a number of ways. These at times viewed rough sleepers as having chaotic lives, which were linked to ideas of a lack of responsibility, and to poor decision making skills. Likewise, individuals were understood in some ways as being vulnerable, whilst also potentially being risky. These views appear to be influenced by a range of discourses, including common-sense discourses of rough sleepers. However, in addition, some individuals drew upon (to different extents) religious discourses of rough sleepers as broken. In addition, discourses of rough sleepers being deviant and in need of behaviour change were evident in a number of service provider accounts. Such views are evident within current policy priorities in relation to homelessness provision, but are also steeped in historical discourses of the state and Christian governance of the poor, which emphasise a need for moral change within individuals (although with different ways of fostering this). In addition, some service providers, such as Kirsty, displayed counter-discourses to these normative views of rough sleepers. Kirsty felt that rough sleepers' talents were not recognised within common-sense views. Indeed, Kirsty suggested that upon coming to the service her own views had initially been in line with the views discussed above, but that her experience of working in the service had affected her views of rough sleepers.

Causation

Perceptions of causation of homelessness also played an important role in the way service users were discussed by service providers, with the perceived extent of culpability playing an important role in these discourses.

Some service providers distinguished different categories of causation. For example, Michelle (The Retreat) suggested that "sometimes it is poor choices that they have made independently of perhaps their environment, or what has happened around them has led to them being homeless". Here, a clear distinction is made between categories of personal choice and environment, which are seen as existing independently of each other. Such an approach appears to employ a lay normative approach to causation, abstracting decision-making from its environment, and employing ideas of morality to account for this decision-making. Moral underclass discourses (Levitas, 2005, 2006; Murray, 1994) were evident in a number of service provider accounts. Alison (Well Centre) referred to the people using the service as "dossers and rough sleepers". Such terminology as "dossers" suggests an active choice in this, and has strong negative overtones relating to an assumed lack of willingness to engage in employment.

Alison also claimed that service users had a lack of motivation, saying:

> when I came, I brought a bag full of clothes today and they are great. They say "oh do you want a hand?" and come and do it. But if you ask them to do something they are "oh, I don't want to do that" and it is getting them off their backsides to do something basically.

She added: "they don't want the responsibility and I think they have got to learn to take responsibility". Here, although Alison acknowledges that some service users volunteered to help her, she suggests difficulties in getting service users "off their backsides", implying laziness and a

lack of desire on the part of service users. She later suggested that service users also lacked

commitment, suggesting "They won't commit to long term at all". Here, individuals are framed in

ways that suggest they lack responsibility and commitment, linked to common-sense and historical

discourses of an undeserving and feckless poor, which are evident within policy, but also related to

religious discourses of morality and need for guidance.

Further examples of moral underclass discourse were evident. For example, Michelle (The Retreat)

claimed:

> The girls come in and they have got broken relationships and children from a
> number of different fathers and most of them don't even have contact with
> those children because perhaps the families ended up taking them off them and
> they go out and get pregnant again and that's really sad and it is, the girls who
> come in, if we don't manage to support them they tend to leave and you know
> that they have just gone to live with somebody else, another probably
> inappropriate, in another inappropriate relationship and there is no learning,
> there is no…there is a lot of wrong. It is wrong. … there is a proportion of society
> that is, I don't know if it's moral, the moral compass has just gone completely.

Within this extract, Michelle highlights mothers with children from multiple 'inappropriate'

relationships with different men as a key point. She related this to ideas of morality, suggesting that

"the moral compass has just gone completely". Furthermore, Michelle's discourse is a gendered

discourse of unfit mothers and inappropriate relations. These ways of positioning service users echo

the sentiments of Murray's underclass thesis, in which he suggested that there was a section of

people in poverty who:

> were defined by their behaviour. Their homes were littered and unkempt. The men in
> the family were unable to hold a job for more than a few weeks at a time. Drunkenness
> was common. The children grew up ill-schooled and ill-behaved and contributed to a
> disproportionate share of the local juvenile delinquents. (Murray, 1996, p. 23).

Some service providers appeared to have mixed views of rough sleepers. In part of her discussion,

Nancy (The Retreat) discussed homelessness causation in ways that implied lack of control over

causes, suggesting that people who experienced homelessness were: "ordinary people in

unfortunate circumstances and that is how we treat them. … they didn't mean to do it." However,

Nancy had experienced homelessness herself prior to becoming a service provider, and in relation to this stated that:

> I don't judge anyone coming in here but I will sit there and say to these people 'think about why you are here' and I thought hard and fast about why I came here and that was because my relationship… I probably didn't try hard enough, do you know what I mean. I am not saying it is all England's fault, I am saying I done the wrong thing [sic].

Within this extract Nancy refers to her own relationship breakdown as being her fault, and appears to justify similar approaches to service users, by making them consider why they are homeless. The concept of "thinking long and hard about why you are here" is in line with the service literature from The Retreat, which emphasised the idea of encouraging individuals to own up to "their past failings", in line with Christian discourses of governing the poor. Therefore, Nancy's account of homelessness causation simultaneously positioned rough sleepers as able and unable to control the causes of their homelessness, with different approaches evident within her account. However, these might be understood as being influenced by historical religious discourses which suggest that people are 'lost' and in need of support, but also in need of self-reflection.

However, not all service providers pointed to ideas of individual causes of homelessness and saw them instead as often being out of the control of individuals. For example, Harriet (Sun Centre) suggested of people without knowledge of homelessness: "a lot of them think it's just the people who are on drink and drugs. It's not just that. The main cause of it is people's relationships splitting up or family moving away and leaving young kids there". This was in contrast to service literature from the Sun Centre, which had explicitly spoken of alcohol issues as leading to relationship breakdown, followed by homelessness. As such, Harriet posed a counter-discourse to that presented by the service she was involved in.

Similarly, Kirsty (Sun Centre) spoke about the stigma relating to ideas of homelessness being individually caused, saying:

> there is a stigma out there that people say it's their own fault but unfortunately when you lose your job you have got no income and you are not paying the bills and your mortgage and you are repossessed and your relationship breaks down. You can be on the streets within 12 weeks yourself so I think people really need to take that into account. We are not all safe.

Here, Kirsty drew upon a counter-discourse of homelessness being possible for anyone, regardless of circumstance.

Claims about the causes of homelessness were an important feature of service provider accounts. In many of the accounts of service providers, homelessness causation was framed as being due to poor decision making, laziness and irresponsibility. Such views have strong links to historical discourses of the undeserving poor, as well as being linked to contemporary moral underclass discourses (Levitas, 2005). There were no services where all service providers subscribed to such a view, but such views were evident in accounts from some service providers within every service. In some cases, such as Kirsty's and Harriet's, discourses of circumstance and a lack of personal fault were dominant, with this often being linked to common lay counter-discourses of loss of jobs and relationship breakdown. Furthermore, within some accounts, such as Nancy's, evidence of historical Christian discourses of governing the poor are evident, focusing on individuals as needing self-reflection and change as well as support.

Individual service providers did not always subscribe to service discourses about the supposed causes of homelessness. Instead, these discourses appear to be infused with individual views, which are, to different extents, based upon moral underclass discourses, Christian historical discourses, and lay counter-discourses of victims of circumstance. As such, these views appear to reflect the distinctions that previous commentators have suggested are evident, between perceived

categories of lackers, slackers and unwilling victims. However, these accounts also demonstrate the ways in which these discourses can overlap, rather than existing only as mutually exclusive identities.

Deserving and undeserving categories of individuals

Discussions of perceived deservingness and worthiness of support were evident within service provider accounts. In some cases, these were explicit, whilst in others they were implicit within distinctions of different service provider groups.

Alison (Well Centre) distinguished between service users whom she felt "had a rough ride" and those whom she felt "take advantage". She suggested that, further to taking advantage, there was hypocrisy amongst some service users who "are on about all these foreigners taking jobs and their flats and this, that and the other. Which yes, I agree. But then they don't do anything to help themselves." However, whilst she spoke about some individuals as being less deserving, she was conflicted over this, noting that the personal biographies of individuals made her feel differently, stating: "I am mixed up about it because when you sit and really talk to them, some of them have had horrendous lives". Alison's opinion reflects the tension between dominant lay normative views of good citizens, who take opportunities and are active in shaping their own biographies and trajectories; and the personal narratives of some rough sleepers which can be shaped by traumatic experiences, which can limit the extent to which individuals are able to take such opportunities.

The idea of people "taking advantage" of services was a common theme in service provider accounts, with Michelle (The Retreat) talking of "piss takers" and Sandra (Sun Centre) claiming that:

> some people just try to use the place to get what they can. They have obviously got their own problems, like a drug habit or an alcohol habit so they tried to use this place to subsidise their habit, do you know what I mean? They spend all their

money on that and come here and try and get free this and free that, free everything. So they can be hard work because sometimes certain individuals will actually demand it as their right and I have been known quite often to say 'I am sorry but we are not an extension of the DWP, we are not here to subside you bad habits' and they don't like that.

For Michelle (The Retreat), deservingness was also linked to ideas of people "wasting time", implicitly linked to ideas of probability of successful outcomes for the service, suggesting:

all resources are finite so if you have got a finite number of resources you have to try to make the best of that you can with those resources. So if people are wasting your time or wasting their time or the organisation's time, because they for whatever reason aren't in the position to grasp these things then those people do become less deserving when you've got others who are more deserving.

Here, deservingness is linked to ideas of having to prioritise individual cases where chances of success are higher. Within a context of scarce resources and strong demands for success, this relationship can be understood as being related to maximising the chances of success and the efficient use of resources. As such, distinctions of deservingness were not based necessarily on ideas of causation, but were influenced by service provider views on potential success rates, as well as interactions with service providers. As such, the pressures associated with providing services influenced notions of deservingness within some provider accounts.

Similarly, whilst not explicitly formed as deservingness, ease and difficulty of working with service users was discussed within service provider accounts. In many cases, these related to ideas that people who did not want to "change" were difficult to work with. For example, John (The Retreat) suggested that: "If they don't want to help themselves there is nothing we can do about it". Similarly, Kirsty (Sun Centre) stated: "the ones that just don't want to move on, that just don't want to make change. They are the ones that are hard". Here ideas of *wanting* to change are clear, and clearly imply that individuals need to be active in the process. This too links with Michelle's view of deservingness as being associated with the ability to take opportunities when they are presented.

Deservingness was also linked to concepts of the balance between "contributing" and "taking", as well as "appreciation" of service providers. Interactions with service providers and methods of asking for support played a role in this, with Sue (Well Centre) identifying a difference between people who ask because they are "desperate" and those who "are quite bolshie and will ask for things but they are asking for things in a manner that you think 'do you know what, no actually, because you don't really need it, just want'". Such distinctions appear to draw on ideas of differences in need and approach of service users, distinguishing between individuals who are desperate and those who are perceived to have a lesser need status.

Engaging in voluntary work was also seen as being appreciative of service provision, as well as 'giving back', increasing deservingness. Here, ideas of "giving back" and "taking" were explicitly discussed within service provider accounts. Anne (Well Centre) stated:

> We try to encourage people to help as volunteers, our clients, so yes, that is rewarding when they actually help us out. A few of the residents will help clean at the end of the day. You get free meal vouchers, but it is still nice of them to help us instead of us always helping them. So we get something back from it really, which is good because not many of them do want to help.

Free meal vouchers incentivised such behaviour, providing a greater level of eligibility for those individuals seen to be "contributing" or "giving back" (also creating less eligibility for those people who did not engage in this). However, Anne also spoke of people as not wanting to help, thus framing volunteering as being about a *desire* to help.

Whilst a number of people spoke in terms that implied a judgement relating to deservingness, Louise (Well Centre), discussed having issues with the use of much terminology applied to people experiencing homelessness, suggesting "it becomes very judgemental when you talk about things like bad lifestyle choices, or wrong lifestyle choices, or lifestyle choices that don't have meaning. … The word meaningful is very irritating". Therefore, Louise seemed to hold a critical view of

terminology that constructed people in binary terms (e.g. meaningful/not meaningful). Thus, some

providers saw problems with discussing individuals in ways which presented them in binary terms,

recognising that realities are more complex than a binary divide suggests.

Summary

Service providers' accounts of rough sleepers' lives positioned rough sleepers in ways that reflected

the complexities of service provision. Rough sleepers were positioned, in some respects, within the

dominant discourses of rough sleepers as having chaotic lives in need of change, which were linked

to ideas of a lack of responsibility, and to poor decision making skills. Individuals were also

understood in some ways as being vulnerable, whilst also potentially being risky. In addition, rough

sleepers' homelessness was perceived by many service providers as being related to poor decision

making and moral deficits. Such viewpoints appear to draw their views from a number of

discourses, both historical in nature and reflected in contemporary debates. However, counter-

discourses were evident from a minority of service providers, which focused on the skills rough

sleepers had, and on relationship breakdown and job loss that occurred through no fault of their

own.

However, in constructing notions of deservingness, a departure was evident from these historical

and common-sense discourses of poverty. Instead, in discussing their perceptions of deservingness,

service providers discussed the ways in which service users interacted with services. This focused

on notions of who best (or worst) made use of services and their provision, who volunteered for

services, and who interacted with service providers in 'appropriate' ways. As such, notions of

deservingness were not so heavily focused on causation, but instead were based on the service user

dispositions favoured by service providers.

Evident within these accounts are the various influences on service providers. These come from service discourses, dominant discourses, common sense perspectives, and their own experiences. As such, service providers operate in a difficult middle ground between policies and dominant industry expectations of creating 'good' moral citizens, and their own knowledge of the complexities and realities of rough sleepers' lives, which sometimes reinforce, but sometimes differ from such discourses. This creates a complex and contradictory environment, in which service providers necessarily may attempt to balance the aims and goals of services, which often reflect wider neoliberal ideals through the guise of professionalised services. They face restrictive and constraining lack of resources, which means that their own service ideals are rarely met; and their own viewpoints at times reinforce but at other times challenge and resist dominant viewpoints of rough sleepers. Therefore, their views of the role of services and service providers may reflect well-intentioned and committed but also contradictory and conflicted aims and goals.

The role of services and service providers

As seen above, service users were constructed in complex and sometimes conflicting ways by service providers. However, service providers also spoke about the aspects of provision that they felt services should provide, as well as their own perceived roles. These included various areas of provision, although consistent across discourses were notions that services were for individuals who are excluded from mainstream society, and as Louise (Well Centre) states, "fall out of the net that society makes, however it makes it, and that is what we are there to do. To catch those people".

Providing resources and responsibilising service users

Service providers spoke about providing resources for individuals who did not have other means of

accessing facilities, as reflected within Louise's statement that: "you [the service providers] are

reaching people that have fallen out of the system one way or the other". Many service providers

saw material support as an integral part of provision, giving service users access to resources that

would otherwise be inaccessible. Kirsty (Sun Centre) described a case of this:

> We have got two people coming in that have got no bed for tonight, we have been very
> quick at responding. We have given them a hot meal, we have offered them a shower,
> we have offered them some clothes, we have offered them some bedding, which they
> all took greatly, and we have now given them a contact to go now into a hotel because
> SWEP [Severe Weather Emergency Protocol] is on because of the weather conditions.

Many of these facilities were either no or low cost. However, the responsibilisation of individuals

was also evident in accounts of provision. All three services had charges for services such as food

and clothing (although allowance was made in each service for cases of service users having no

funds).

Service providers argued that service users needed to be responsible in dealing with the

consequences of their actions, such as Matthew (The Retreat) who discussed the service creating:

"a little bit of building responsibility, a little bit of turning people to face the consequences of their

actions". Such accounts suggested that service users lacked responsibility. One perceived way of

countering this was charging for items, with Louise (Well Centre) describing charging for clothing:

> we charge 20p for an item of clothing because if they pay for it they have to choose
> what they buy on the supposition that they have limited income which they usually
> have so they won't be able to just buy the shop. So they have to choose what they buy
> and if they buy the wrong thing that is a consequence that they have got to live with.
> If they have bought a T-shirt when they should have bought a jacket then they have
> now got to go and get another 20p from somewhere because there was a consequence
> to falling for the really groovy t-shirt that they thought looked really great versus the
> somewhat shabby pre-used coat that doesn't look that great but would actually keep
> the rain off. So it is basically putting things in place so they have to make choices.

Louise linked this directly to increasing individual responsibility, suggesting that charging for

clothing and food was "about consequences and structure and taking responsibility". Such a focus

on personal responsibility is not unusual within services (Whiteford, 2010a) and many service providers were supportive of it. This method arguably constitutes a responsibilising approach to rough sleepers. However, charging for items might also be deemed to be linked to notions of creating better consumers, who are able to maximise their effective use of opportunities and markets, within a 'positive behaviour pattern'. Matthew (The Retreat) spoke of "poor patterns of behaviour" by individuals, suggesting that the role of the service was: "seeing them break out of that negative cycle and find a good cycle to replace it with". Here, ideas of positive and negative cycles and behaviours are made clear, echoing previous distinctions between negative behaviours of individuals in poverty and intervention through a number of means to address these 'behaviour deficits' or 'skills deficits'.

Anne discussed the charging for meals in the Well Centre and linked this with ideas of building people being able to help themselves (and taking responsibility for paying for food), saying:

> I think it's a good thing because then they know they just can't get anything for free and everything is not just handed to you. You do have to pay for stuff in life so everybody else does so why shouldn't they? They get benefits so they can afford it ... yes I think it does help them a hell of a lot.

Anne claimed that charging for food was useful because people would have to pay for food outside of the service, so this was perceived to help normalise service users to the rules that apply in mainstream society. However, these normalising processes also contribute to responsibilising such individuals. Similarly, Amy (Well Centre) suggested that this was a positive aspect of provision, stating:

> One thing I wouldn't change is them paying for a meal because I think they should keep some money, if they want to a little bit of food keep some money for themselves to be able to do that, that is good.

Further to this, Geraldine (The Retreat) felt that paying for food and drinks could increase feelings of self-worth and self-respect among service users:

I mean like in the café everything used to be free but then we decided to start charging them, You know half of them have said that they feel a lot more respect now because they feel good about paying for their things instead of 'sponging' as they called it, so yes, it does a lot of good.

In addition to this, elements of changing behaviours of service users were evident in other ways. Across all three services, service users were expected to engage in voluntary work. Whilst an important element of this related to the concept of 'giving back' instead of 'taking', it was also perceived to add structure to rough sleepers' lives. Service providers often spoke of this as forming responsibility and commitment, something which they saw as lacking from such people previously, and in this sense it reinforced notions of service users having chaotic or disorganised lives and needing responsibilising measures in order to change their patterns of behaviour.

Individuals spoke about different types of provision, and spoke positively of responsibilising practices. In some cases, these were linked to feelings that individuals lacked responsibility, whilst for others they were seen as increasing self-worth and self-confidence. Such views can be seen as 'fostering' good behaviour in rough sleepers, through a means of therapeutic approaches to provision, in which rough sleepers are seen as developing self-worth.

Moving on

Within accounts of provision, moving people onto other services and activities was seen as important to many individuals. In many cases, this was contrasted to people who used services over a long period, with moving on seen as a goal of service provision. Sandra (Sun Centre) suggested that the role of the centre was to aid people to progress by moving on. She saw this as cultural, criticising a societal acceptance of a lack of willingness to change, but suggested that current

changes to welfare would mean that people had to put in an effort to change their own situation, stating:

> Obviously we don't want to, we don't want to encourage people to stagnate and wallow in their own bad habits and misery. We want to help them to move forward. Obviously it sometimes takes longer to get them moving because they need some motivation and it can be hard sometimes to get people motivated and to realise that that if they don't make the effort you know… It doesn't help that we live in a society that has for so long allowed people to bum around on benefits, yes. It has been too easy for people to get labelled as having mental health problems and alcohol problems and just get themselves on benefits and stay on them for years and now that the central government is trying to cut down on this obviously it is going to be harder and harder for these people to get any kind of support anywhere and not going to be encouraged and allowed to stagnate like they have for years, so yes it is hard. You have got to make them realise 'sorry life is changing, darling, you have got to pull your finger out and make some effort now. You are not going to keep getting hand-outs'.

Sandra seemed to suggest that acceptance of personal issues had exacerbated problems, as individuals had not been *required* to change. As such, Sandra seemed broadly supportive of a more restrictive welfare provision, reflecting contemporary political discourses of an overly-generous welfare system.

Sue (Well Centre) also spoke about moving service users on, although her account revealed the complexities of providing services. She made a distinction between different types of service users, proposing a difference between those people new to the service (who were "desperate") and those who had used the service over longer periods (who the service "maintained"):

> if I really broke it down in my head there are quite a few people who use this service who I don't think should be using this service because they have been here for years and years and years and kind of stagnated. They know they come here Monday to Friday 08:30 to 13:00. They know they are going to be able to play pool, they know they are going to drink free tea and coffee, they know they are going to be able to dig in and out of whatever is on offer but I also understand that without this place they would probably have nothing, they have been turned away from everywhere else but I don't think we are supporting them people in the right way because I think their journey should be moving in a different direction now, and then there is the people that walk freshly off the street who you know are desperate, in need of a desperate shower, something to eat, clean clothes. So I am a bit, we are quite good at maintaining people but then we are also good at bringing brand new people in who really, really

desperately need us so I am a bit split on where I think we offer. Sometimes I just think we do maintain people and they need moving on.

A number of other service providers also highlighted moving on and progression to other services as being key areas of provision. Such approaches to moving on can be understood as being related to a wider policy context which has focused upon moving on of service users to avoid 'silting up' of service spaces, with a focus on moving on as being a measure of success in these policies (Cloke et al., 2010; Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007).

However, in addition to the areas of service provision that appeared to focus upon changing behaviours and moving people onto other services, other aspects of service provision were evident, such as care.

Care

Service providers highlighted caring aspects of service provision as important. For Robert (The Retreat), a key aspect of provision was spending time with individuals, and he suggested that this had an effect on service users, because: "They just feel that someone cares, they are not completely alone in the world, and someone is there to help them get back on their feet so to speak. It is a sort of befriending you could say really". Similarly, Penny (The Retreat) spoke about the aspects of care provided for service users, proposing: "It's [the service's] strongest point is the care they give to the resident. It is well thought out and it comes from the heart". Thus an ethic of care was palpable within many service provider accounts, regardless of whether these individuals came from a Christian background or not (supporting the claims made by Cloke, et al. (2010) about the evidence of an ethic of care across individuals, regardless of their religious views).

Acceptance of all individuals and being welcoming of a diverse mix of individuals was also seen as an important aspect of service provision, with Louise (Well Centre) claiming: "we are basically an accepting agency, we are not trying to judge anybody, we are not going to reject somebody on the basis of what we hear". Likewise, Carol (Sun Centre) suggested that one of the strengths of the Sun Centre was:

> I would say making anybody feel welcome. I would say that is one of the strengths of the Sun Centre. I don't think people don't feel welcome when they come in. I think we do try to make it a relaxed and open environment.

Many service providers spoke about the importance of being able to listen to service users, comparing this to approaches considered more critical of service users. However, Geraldine saw this as a skill learned over time, suggesting:

> You learn to give people more chances ... not [to be] so stuffy, because these people aren't, they don't need stuffy they need somebody who will sit and listen half the night if that is what is necessary. Um, that will listen to their problems and not tell them. I can remember a couple of times, right at the beginning, listening to people telling them to grow up and pull themselves together. They don't need that, they need somebody who can sit and listen.

Furthermore, some aspects of provision were seen as providing fun for service users, with Louise (Well Centre) stating: "there is the training and activities programme which is, which basically is there to help people have fun. Sometimes it is just at that level where they just have fun". Such activities were seen as controversial, with some service providers feeling that such activities did not encourage responsibility or move on, instead maintaining and pacifying service users.

With service provider accounts, an ethic of care was evident in almost all cases, regardless of religious affiliation. However, in addition to elements which appeared to have care at their core, friendship and socialising were key parts of service provision.

Friendship

Social aspects of day centres and night shelters were highlighted as being key aspects of provision by a number of service providers. For example, Louise (Well Centre) said: "Most of them [service users], if you talked to them, I would guess, would probably say that they would come here to meet their friends and be with their friends and that is fine too, that is an important part of what we do".

However, as well as promoting social interaction between service users, some service providers spoke about their social interactions with service users. Whilst previous accounts have spoken of care in service spaces (Conradson, 2003; Johnsen & Fitzpatrick, 2010; Johnsen et al., 2005a), in some cases these relationships moved beyond care towards friendship, sometimes working in direct conflict with service rules about relationships between service users and providers in order to develop such relationships. Some service providers spoke of this as an unavoidable aspect of service provision. For example, Geraldine (The Retreat) spoke of meeting service users outside of the service and felt that this had positive impacts on relationships with service users:

> You are not supposed to get too friendly with the people, we are not supposed to have them in your houses afterwards. Sometimes when we have got people here who are really bad, do you remember Jenny? ... She came up my house loads of times. It made her feel better because I listened to her and I am not judgemental. ... I get on well with them and they talk to me, they tell me things they won't tell other people, because I make them laugh and I will listen.

She acknowledged the risks associated with this but suggested that "You can't blame people for what they do, you would probably do it yourself in the same position".

Similarly, despite her own discussion of people as lying to get money, Alison (Well Centre) spoke of giving people money if she felt they needed it, and of contacting people and meeting them outside of the service, stating "you build relationships with people". Alison suggested that this allowed her

to develop relationships with service users which were deeper than other service providers had with users.

Furthermore, in contrast to approaches of care, which could appear to suggest a one-way relationship with service users, some service providers spoke about the positive role that being involved in provision had given them. Eleanor (Sun Centre) spoke about volunteering at the Sun Centre, saying: "It has been company for me as well with my problems, so I have needed the centre as much as some of the others. So they have helped me as well and I am helping other people at the same time". Similarly, Geraldine discussed the ways in which being involved in The Retreat had given her an increased sense of self-worth, stating:

> It makes us feel good as well, well it makes me feel good, being worth something. Personally, when I grew up being told I was useless all the time, I ain't useless anymore because I help people now. So it makes me feel better as well as the people we are helping.

Each of these extracts claims a two-way relationship between service users and providers, with positive outcomes for both parties. Such representations of the relationships between service users and providers not only move away from ideas of only being confined to service spaces but also move towards notions of two-way relationships between service users and providers, with both parties benefitting from this. Such moves suggest that the user/provider binary may not be as clear cut as initially proposed (although user-volunteers also straddle this divide), with both parties using the service and providing positive aspects for other individuals.

Summary

Within these accounts, service provision was seen as multi-faceted. These facets of provision constructed rough sleeping in various ways: responsibilising practices constructed rough sleepers as lacking responsibility (making poor choices or having bad habits) and requiring intervention to

change behaviours; move on was seen as being rehabilitated to housing; care was understood as providing support and respite from difficulties; and friendship appeared as a way of moving beyond being only the subjects of service provision. Such constructions reflect the complexities of service provision, in which service providers show a deep dedication and commitment to supporting rough sleepers. However, views of the best ways to help rough sleepers are informed by a range of viewpoints and discourses. Service provider accounts may be influenced by historical discourses about managing the poor; more contemporary debates about service use, welfare, and a need for intervention; and service discourses about service roles. However, these also are shaped by service providers' own viewpoints, which sometimes reflect these views but at other times suggest a need for unconditional care. Further still, the human side of service provision is perhaps best reflected in the ways in which some service providers contravene service rules to build lasting friendships with rough sleepers, in conflict with service rules and guidelines, but influenced by their own compassion and liking for these individuals as people.

Conclusion

Within this chapter, the discourses of service providers have been analysed. Initially, the accounts of Lipsky (1980), Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2000), and Alden (2015) on the role of street-level bureaucrats were explored. These analyses suggested that interpretations of policies and rules were made at street level, with contextual factors, such as resources, interactions with colleagues and the public, and individuals' own views of morality, all affecting decision making. Dobson (2011) suggested that at times of austerity and fewer resources, divisions between deserving and undeserving groups become sharper.

Within service provider accounts, the ideals of service provision showed the strong commitment and dedication that many service providers have to supporting rough sleepers. The providers often

spoke of the ways in which this type of work was fulfilling and worthwhile, and cited a range of reasons for becoming involved in service provision. However, they also recognised that the day-to-day realities of service provision often involved restricted resources and emotionally draining and physically demanding practices. However, despite these difficulties, many service providers still held ideals of their role as making a difference to rough sleepers' lives.

Policies made at national level were often seen as having little relation to provision on the ground, other than specific policies relating to access to services (e.g. local connection policies, or Severe Weather Emergency Protocol). Service level policies and rules were deemed to play a much larger role in day-to-day provision. This provision was developing in a changing and increasingly professionalised environment, in which resources and opportunities were increased, but at the perceived cost, for some service providers, of a care for individuals. However, some service providers noted that, in their day-to-day activities, they adapted rules to fit their own interactions with rough sleepers. As such, even within services, rules were interpreted and applied with discretion by individual service providers.

The viewpoints and discourses that service providers had of rough sleepers did, in some cases, reflect the dominant discourses of rough sleepers as having chaotic lives, building on common-sense notions of causation, and perceiving divides between deserving and undeserving populations. However, such discourses were complex in their nature. Individuals appeared to draw upon (and be influenced by) a range of discourses, such as those evident within historical Christian discourses of governing the poor, such as a need to moralise those who are deficient or 'off track'; those within historical policy debates (e.g. about differentiating between the perceived causes of homelessness); and those which focus on contemporary lay normative and policy discourses, such as ideas of rough sleepers needing responsibilising (which are themselves linked to earlier historical discourses).

At times, individuals moved away from such discourses, recognising the skills that rough sleepers had. Such views appeared to develop out of experience of working with rough sleepers, such as was the case in Carol's account of her own shift in perspective. In some cases, service providers spoke of their conflicted attitudes between viewpoints of self-responsible citizens, which focused on the need to be responsible and active in taking opportunities, and the personal biographies of rough sleepers, which suggested complexities in the ability to do so.

Further, in relation to notions of deservingness, a departure from these common discourses was apparent, to one which focused more heavily on experiences of service provision. Within such accounts, service providers viewed particular individuals as more deserving, often in relation to their use of services (and the chances of 'success' that accompanied this), their 'giving back' by volunteering, and their approach and manner in relation to service providers.

Finally, the chapter explored the role of services. Within this, recurring aspects were apparent, of providing resources and responsibilising rough sleepers, linked to notions that rough sleepers lacked responsibility or had poor decision making abilities and the need to move on service users and rehabilitate them to mainstream services and housing. Such viewpoints are informed by the dominant historical and contemporary views of the need for services to create responsible and autonomous citizens. However, service providers also spoke about services as a space of care, informed by viewpoints that recognise that rough sleepers need support without judgement or pressure to change. This viewpoint of 'care' stretched beyond only Christian service providers, suggesting an ethic of care is also evident in other providers' accounts.

Some service providers also spoke about friendship. Friendship moved beyond previously identified categories in homelessness literature, which often discuss provision as being one-way, with rough sleepers being the subjects of this provision. Instead, friendship illustrated the way in which a

number of providers felt that they had benefitted from provision, and how some had developed connections which had meaning beyond service provider/service user divides, reflecting deep and sometimes long-lasting relationships with people about whom they had a continued fondness.

This analysis therefore suggests that homelessness service providers operate in a complex environment where their own passion, values and attitudes meet (and sometimes collide with) historical and contemporary discourses of creating 'good citizens', national-level and service-level policies, and the realities of providing services with scarce resources. As such, service providers' perceptions of rough sleepers and of the role of service provision are complex, reflecting the ways in which rough sleepers are understood by providers (differently, depending on the individual) to need controlling, changing (through responsibilisation, therapeutic approaches and other approaches), and care and support from service providers. Beyond this, service providers even discussed friendships with rough sleepers, which suggested moves beyond a service provider/service user divide, reflecting relationships of compassion based upon affection for the individual.

Chapter Seven

Becoming Homeless:

Life Stories of Rough Sleepers

As has been argued in previous chapters, rough sleepers and their lives are positioned in particular ways in policy documents and by service providers. This chapter considers the ways in which rough sleepers account for their own lives. Within this research, seventeen such accounts have been analysed. Of these, three are presented in detail within this chapter. The accounts presented within this chapter are not presumed to represent an account of 'facts', but instead a presentation of one's own life as told by each individual (Denzin, 1989). Each of these individuals has been presented with the situation of having no accommodation, thus potentially having to sleep rough at least once during their lifetime, and these three cases demonstrate the heterogeneous nature of homeless populations, whilst also displaying some common themes.

Example life stories of rough sleepers

In this section, the accounts and life maps constructed by/with individuals themselves are examined, in order to build an understanding of individual accounts of rough sleepers. This examination attempts to provide an accurate re-telling of these accounts, neither demonising nor romanticising the individuals within these accounts. It does not shy away from the complexity with which narratives can be built, but instead demonstrates the ways in which such complexity is marshalled by individuals when providing an account of their lives.

Peter's story

In discussing his story, Peter, a 54 year old male, spoke mainly about his adult life. However, prior to discussing this at length, he spoke about his childhood, and highlighted one traumatic moment as an important life event – the death of his father, when he was ten years old. Peter discussed the impact of this, stating:

> Everyone thought he's only ten, he'll get over it. Didn't work, didn't for me. Seriously, it affected my life for an awful long time. Awful. It dictated my direction, pretty much. I threw myself into school, 'cause I couldn't stand being at home, everyone was so sad. I threw myself into sport, just to avoid sitting at home because it was just, it wasn't home anymore, 'cause Dad weren't in it. And that lasted pretty much until I left home at 19 to go to university.
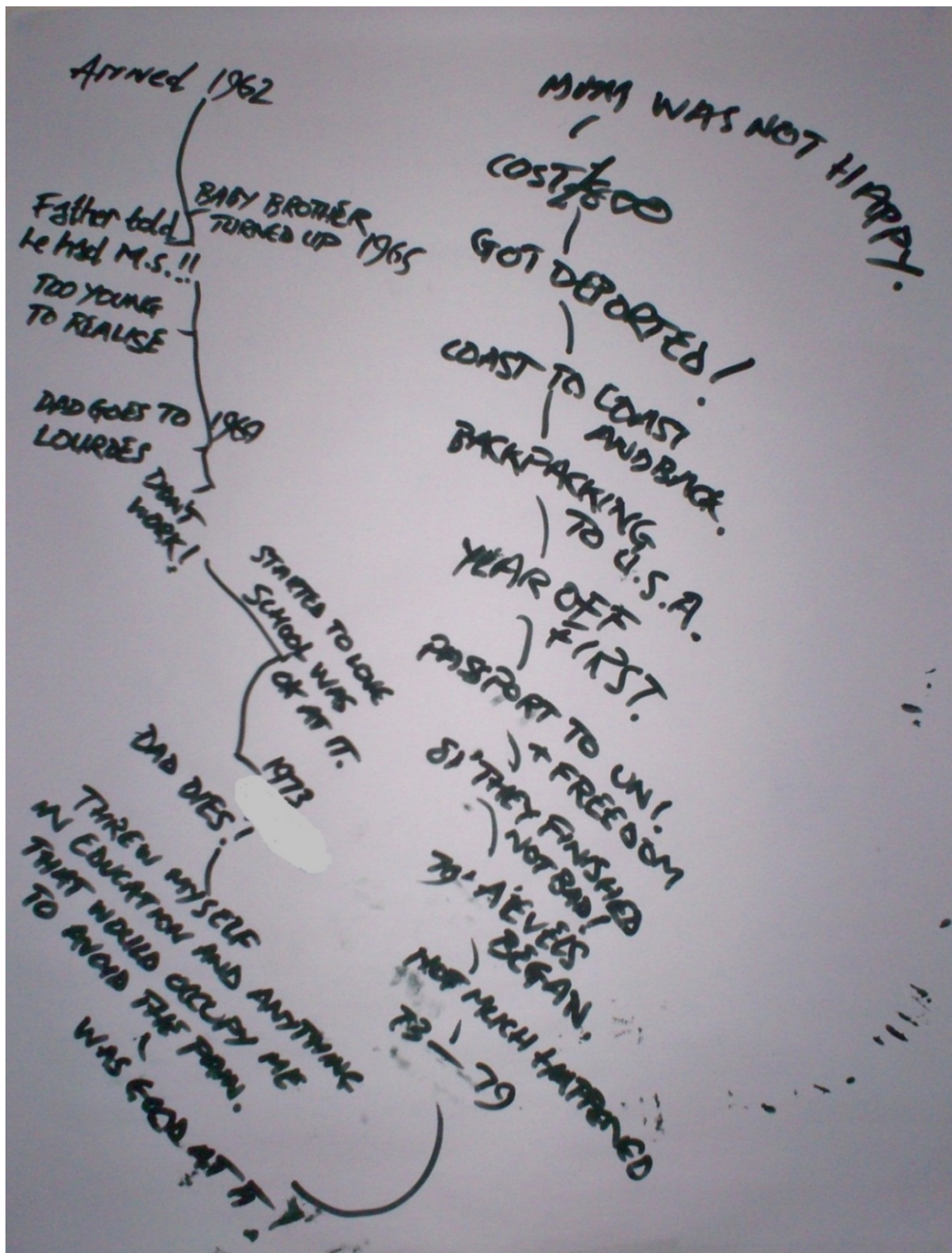
Figure 1: Page one of Peter's life map

He spoke of leaving home to go to university, saying: "I had to escape. I had to get away from it."

He referred to this being "freedom" on his life map, and talked of this being "[freedom] from being

at home. I'd spent nearly nine years, really, with how I can deal with this, my Dad dying when I was

ten. Always there, always there". Thus within Peter's life story, he emphasised the effect of his

father's death on his home and family in his life, suggesting that this "dictated" his direction in

focusing on education, sport, and leaving home to go to university.

In discussing his adult life (from leaving the family home to go to university onwards), Peter discussed a number of positive and negative experiences, but referred to himself as sounding like a "broken record", referring to things going wrong in his life when his life was largely settled in positive ways. Three main phases of this were highlighted as positive, with three points between these as very negative. The first positive point was Peter's account of going to university ("had a blast"), marrying his wife ("I was crazy for her. Couldn't wait." although he also said that this was a "Big mistake. Big, big, big, big mistake."), and the birth of his son (Peter said there was "total joy" about this). After attending university, Peter worked as a P.E. teacher, and he described the following five year period (between 1984-89) as "bliss". This period showed a long initial period of happiness as an adult.

However, a period between 1989 and 1995 was much less positive for Peter, describing 1989 as when "The shit hits the fan". After a road traffic accident ended his career in 1989, Peter said that there was a lack of money, and that the tension from this ended his marriage. The following year was described by Peter on his life map as the "worst year of [my] life so far". During this year he attempted to kill his father-in-law, and subsequently spent six years in prison. He noted that this was because:

> He went round and told everybody that would listen, that his daughter had left me because I was sexually abusing my child. And you can call me anything you like, and I will accept whatever you call me if that's how you feel, but do never, ever, ever accuse me of something so heinous. I spent six years in prison because of it. 'Cause that bastard told lies about me. But I went to prison as a violent offender, I did not go to prison for what he called me, because I made him admit in open court that he had lied about that. That was my only mitigation for the prison sentence that I knew was coming, but I was not going to prison as a sex offender, because I am not and the idea disgusted me, that I nearly killed him for it.

Upon his release from prison, Peter noted on his life map that whilst he had freedom, his family were no longer there, nor was his career, also noting that he missed his son deeply (Peter has not seen his son since his time in prison). This extract from Peter's story shows the precariousness of

employment, family structures, and accommodation tenure. In this sense, Ravenhill's (2008, p. 72)

notion of "trigger points" of homelessness might provide a useful analytic tool. Peter's car crash

could be understood in such terms, leading to the breakdown of a number of structures within his

life, representing a key moment in his story.
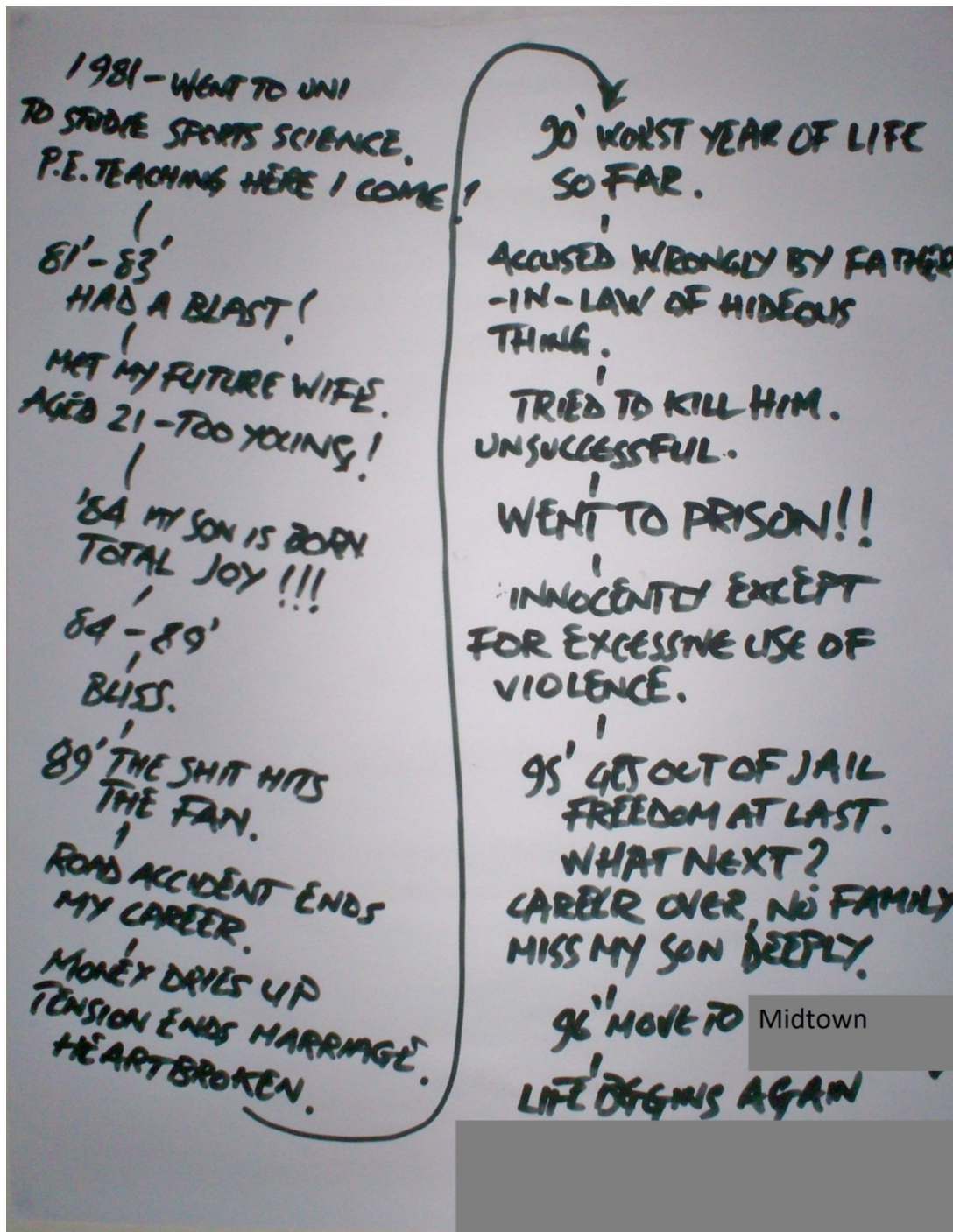
Figure 2: Page two of Peter's life map

Peter then became homeless, sofa surfing and spending time in hostels, before meeting a new partner. He described this relationship as doing "more than [I] could have wanted or indeed expect". During this time, Peter had a stable relationship, found employment, and went on holiday regularly. He spoke about this period with positivity, noting that he had trust and acceptance of himself, responsibility and self-esteem; linking these not only to the relationship, but also to "working and earning". He noted that during this relationship "bliss had reappeared", and that "things remained good" until 2001 when his partner died from ovarian cancer.

Following the death of his partner, Peter stated that "once again heartbreak, confusion, depression and substance abuse ensued!", and following this he "lost confidence, esteem and primarily employment and home", becoming homeless. Here, he stated that "chaos ensued". Peter presents this point as chaotic, but another key trigger point is evident here, in relation to a combination of factors which appear to stem from the death of his partner.

After this, in 2002, Peter found the Well Centre, which he described at that time as being "an old fashioned soup kitchen". He wrote about finding this as being positive, suggesting "once again my feet found the first rung of a new ladder. Good, honest people to help me through. It worked." After this, he noted that he became more involved with the community, and set up his own homelessness charity, "quite successfully", calling this "salvation". He described this charity by claiming that it was "a charity run by and for all people regardless of reason [for their homelessness] whose circumstances lead them to seek guidance not solely from "official organisations", here stating that although official organisations helped, the charity gave people "the confidence of knowing that we (the org[anisation]) felt the same emotions, victories however small, defeats however devastating as they did. Without judgement, condescention [sic] or fear!!" Peter also spoke about his enjoyment in fundraising and raising social awareness for the organisation. He

spoke about developing a relationship with a new partner and his continuing love for her, suggesting that at this point "all was meteoric, stars shone brightly. But broken record lay dormant".

However, after this positive point in Peter's life came another "broken record time". Peter was diagnosed with genetic hemochromatosis, which he spoke of as being "debilitating", "painful" and having "too many other negatives to list except one – incurable". Peter referred to this point by saying "the record finally snapped". He also spoke of his response to this, and the result of this, stating:

> Immediate response, denial, all medical help called upon. Must find acceptance and devise a plan of action. Unfortunately in the search for peace of mind through such action, my life and love chose not to make this increasingly difficult journey at my side.

Following this, towards the final points of Peter's life map, he became involved in the Well Centre moving to new premises. Here, he noted that "as time consuming and tiring as it was with my condition worsening, the fulfilment of my contribution sits among us for all to admire. It made me feel whole again…and [I] still do!!"

Summary

Peter's life story and map show how complex individual life stories can be, and the importance of key life events. Key moments such as his father's death, a road traffic accident, his partner's death, and his own serious illness are focal points of Peter's account. As such, Ravenhill's (2008) model of 'trigger' points provides a useful tool for identifying the importance of key events within rough sleepers' accounts.

Peter's experience of homelessness twice, as well as his use of substances, trauma and time spent in prison, might fit that expected of a homeless individual (Broadway, 2014). However, his experience of education, mobility (year out), setting up of own charity, and stable relationships,

show behaviours and experiences which might go against typical expectations. His notion of being a 'broken record' demonstrates the precariousness of stability, as in many cases these situations were described as stable and positive for Peter, only for uncontrollable forces to change this. In addition, a number of times within his account, Peter points to his own actions, but these often appear related to coping with these key traumatic life events. As such, a contextualised rational action approach might be useful in analysing Peter's account. Whilst these behaviours might seem unusual or abnormal to an outsider, for Peter they provided a way of coping with the situation, and as such may have been contextually rational, despite their other consequences (Somerville & Bengtsson, 2002; McNaughton Nicholls, 2009; McNaughton, 2008). Furthermore, in detailing the complexities of his story, Peter goes beyond telling his life through a lens of homelessness, showing a number of other important experiences within his life.

Alexander's story

Figure 3: Alexander's life map

Alexander was born close to Dryborough, where we first spoke in the Sun Centre. Aged 16, and the elder of two siblings, he was adopted at a young age due to complications with his birth parents,

who he said "went off on crazy angles doing all sorts of stuff that didn't appeal to [him]." Alexander

spoke about his adoptive home, and said that he had left there because he "wanted to go off on

my own track, and that's what I'm doing now."

Alexander discussed his childhood, and suggested that this was characterised by a lack of clarity

about his own identity and relationships with others:

> It was difficult, because I didn't know exactly like, who I was. And I tried, I was
> struggling to try and like work out what had happened. And my parents couldn't
> exactly help, social services wouldn't help because I was too young, but now I'm
> old enough, I've started like asking more questions, asking social services stuff.
> Asking them who I talk to about this, this and this. And soon they're going to put
> me in for some counselling to try and help that way. If that works then I'll be
> much happier 'cause then at least I know who I am instead of being stuck in a
> situation where I haven't got much money, I haven't got many friends, I haven't
> got much to do, I dunno what to do with myself 'cause I don't know who I really
> am, or what is good to do.

Within this extract, Alexander highlights a number of unanswered questions, and discusses the

impact of a lack of closure over these questions. Alexander suggested that this sense of not knowing

had built tension in his family,

> It was tense because of all the questions I had been asking and still wouldn't get
> answers to. ... My dad was getting a little bit aggravated, I was getting
> aggravated, my mum was getting aggravated, my brother was getting scared of
> me because of my anger.

This "aggravation" appeared to be a culmination of a number of events for Alexander, which

included what he saw as a lack of support from his father in the build up to his GCSE exams, his

father's lack of involvement in a project between Alexander and his father to rebuild a moped for

Alexander's use, and in Alexander's changing feelings on religion. Alexander said that this led to a

situation whereby "it just didn't work so I eventually left and all of that [homelessness] started

happening". When questioned on whether he made a choice to leave, Alexander said that "It was

half and half. My dad told me to get out and I said are you saying that I should leave for good?' and

he went 'no I never said that' and I said 'well it sounded like it so I'm gonna leave anyway', so he

just ended up saying 'fine, go', so I did" stating that "Surprisingly it felt good. It felt that a whole weight had lifted off my shoulders, like that I could relax for a bit and just keep calm". Alexander suggested that since he had left his family home, his relationship with his parents had improved. Therefore, for Alexander, becoming homeless was about being able to break away from a space of tension, the family home, rather than being a victim of a series of events. His description of leaving as being a weight off his shoulders shows the way in which he saw this as a potentially positive change, as has been the case in some studies of homelessness previously (Tomas & Dittmar, 1995).

In addition to this account of his life before becoming homeless, Alexander also spoke about his perceptions of himself, and designed his map to show what he felt were the contrasting elements of his personality, putting "devil" characteristics on one side, and "angel" elements on the other. He said that this was because: "I'm part devil, part angel. Angel by day, devil by night. That's what all my friends say to me. ... 'Cause by day I'm usually like calm and whatever but by night I'm crazy". He discussed running around Dryborough, BMX biking and skateboarding as activities he would engage in at night. In addition to this, he suggested that these "devil" ideas were also impacted by other people's views of him, stating: "They just say I've got devil powers. People call me the devil child, 'cause I'm terrible. I just, I dunno. People just think I'm crazy, most of the time I agree with them". Alexander reiterated this later in the interview, and noted that this had led to him seeking counselling:

> Yeah, I'm mad. People, that's why people have the devil side of me, 'cause I just have periods where I go crazy. That's why I'm going in for counselling, 'cause people think I'm messed up.

Alexander discussed the idea of being "messed up" in relation to his friends. After discussing a friend's time in a mental health unit, and the ways in which he and his friends sometimes use logic in ways that seem illogical or unusual to others, he suggested that "then again, all me and my mates are crazy, we're all mixed up".

In contrast to these elements, which emphasised the ways in which Alexander felt he differed from what he saw as conventional expectations, he also referred to skills and factors that he believed belonged on the angelic side of his life map. Alexander highlighted his career aim to become a rapper as important here, suggesting that he had a desire to inspire others. Alexander also discussed his ability in areas relating to physical fitness, creativity (noting his proficiency in rapping and drawing). In addition to this, educational ability and experience was a topic in which Alexander seemed to have some pride, discussing his GCSE results and stating: "I got Maths, English, Science, Sport, ICT and Music all at C grade. I was pretty happy about that." Alexander also expressed his desire to engage in key skills training at local colleges, but said that these attempts had been impacted by his homelessness. He spoke about his experience of one course, which he said had offered things that he already knew, and discussed his plans to enrol for another, which he was yet to find out more about.

In discussions, Alexander also spoke about employment experience. He spoke about two paid roles - gardening and tattoo design, both of which seemed to be short-term roles on an informal basis. Alexander discussed income from tattoo design as being variable, paid on the basis of the number of designs picked. Despite the insecurity of income, Alexander suggested that he enjoyed both of these roles. However, in discussing current job prospects, Alexander made it clear that he felt there were no prospects of work for him in the near future in his local area, relating this to the economic climate at the time.

Alexander also discussed intimate relationships and his own fatherhood, stating that he had recently been told he was a father. He spoke about how he became aware of this, as well as his response:

> Yeah, [child's name]. That's her name. Yeah, 'cause umm, me and [former partner's name] were saying if we did have one, we'd name it [child's name]. She just put on Facebook this is your baby girl [child's name]. I just, I didn't know

> what to do, I just sat there crying. Three days just staring at my wall thinking. I didn't say nothing, I didn't think, I didn't even know what I was thinking about, I didn't even know if I was thinking or not.

When asked whether being a father made a difference in his life or not, Alexander suggested that it did:

> It kind of, it does, 'cause it makes me feel that I've got a responsibility. And if I want that responsibility to stay, then I've gotta work, I've gotta work hard and push forward for it. Just aim for what you want and don't give up until you got it.

Within this extract, Alexander points to ideas of working towards a dream, (implying that such dreams are achievable). These in turn are linked to ideas of responsibility and parenting, and the balance between rights (to see his child) and responsibilities (needing to work in order to do this). Alexander also spoke about the relationship which produced this child, and felt that becoming homeless had impacted on this:

> Interviewer   Were you with your ex for a long time?
> Alexander   Yeah, three years. And I don't know what happened. It's just 'cause I moved out. Like a week after that, I ended up splitting up with her. And I haven't spoken to her for all that time. Until I got to the hotel, which she called me [sic].

During the research process, Alexander entered two further relationships, and discussed his feelings about them. He spoke of each meaning more to him than the last. Whilst this might be seen as suggesting a naivety over feelings, it also indicated how intense or close the relationships felt to him. In particular, in contrast to his first relationship where he mentioned living distance as adding complications, his account of his final relationship during this research phase showed an intensity in the amount of time spent together:

> I go around there every day and drop over there and tip toe and watch TV. Umm, go on the laptop, watch a film with her, have a fag and go back upstairs, watch another film if we've got enough time. And then at nine o'clock I leave. And then on Fridays I stay there overnight. Saturdays I stay overnight and then Sundays I come back.

Furthermore, intimate relationships and fatherhood may have provided a sense of meaning, or an ability to know who he was. Alexander had spoken of not knowing who he was, and in entering

relationships, Alexander may have been able to form a sense of self in relation to others. Furthermore, in entering new relationships which were better than previous ones, Alexander was able to assert the success of his current relationship, instead of the failure of previous ones. Nevertheless, for Alexander, relationships formed only a small part of his story. His description of his own personality and his familial relationships seemed much more important during his discussion.

Alexander's life map was split into two main parts: skills and living experiences. His account of his life showed that following him leaving his family home (due to tension and unanswered questions about his adoption), he had a number of short-term stays with friends (sofa surfing), and had stayed in hostels or hotels. He often described these in negative terms, discussing threats to himself, as well as theft of a number of personal belongings. He spoke about homelessness hostels, suggesting that "they're full of the same people. Which is people that will steal your stuff, beat you up, take your food, all of the same stuff". Such views seem to suggest an unstable context, with feelings of being constantly at-risk of potential problems. Thus, for Alexander, accommodation did not always provide a supportive or safe environment.

Summary

Within his account of his life, Alexander presents a binary of angel and devil. However, this is not only linked to ideas of good and bad, but also to ideas of day and night, demonstrating differences in his perception of his own personality. Within his account, Alexander seems to point to achievements as being his own successes, often because of a perceived lack of support in these. The difficulties he experienced are often linked to factors such as unstable situations, or tensions within his family. However, he does not romanticise his own role within his family, instead presenting this as a complex situation of a number of parties becoming "aggravated".

Alexander's discussion of education, relationships and children may have provided a way through which Alexander was able to salvage a sense of self. Whilst he had multiple relationships throughout the course of the research, the continued positive accounts of these, as well as his fatherhood, provided a sense of success within his life story, in contrast to those elements which might be judged (in normative terms) as being less successful, such as stable tenancy, family relationships, or employment.

Within this account, homeless appears to offer a form of solution to the problems within the family home (Tomas & Dittmar, 1995). Further, Alexander's account shows the way in which temporary accommodation is sometimes not a solution to the issues of homelessness, providing an unstable living situation. Therefore, whilst Alexander might be judged by services to have forfeited his access or accommodation, such judgements of rationality are abstracted from the context in which they are made. Thus, again, employing a contextualised rational action approach can provide a way of understanding Alexander's behaviour, through employing approaches of thin rationality, recognising Alexander's agency within this situation, and also recognising the importance of context within his decision making.

Jane's story
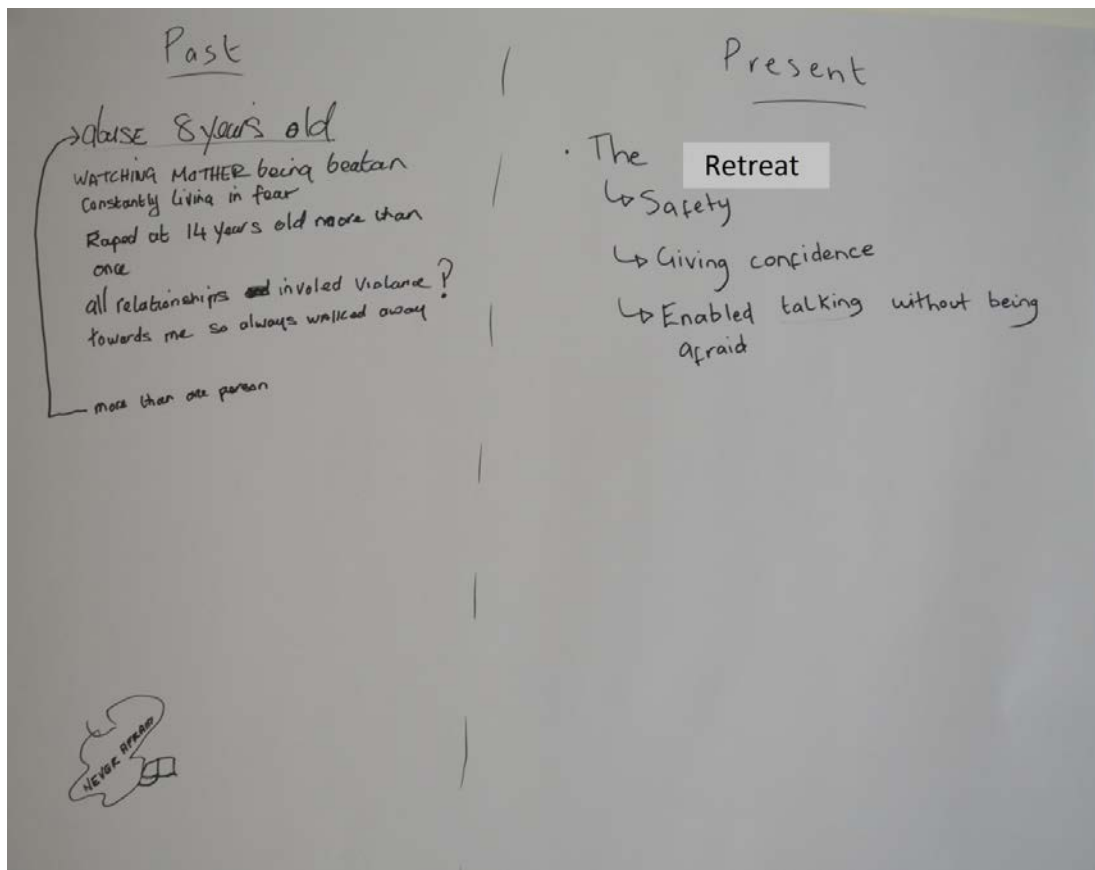
Figure 4: Jane's life map of her past and present

Jane discussed her life in three chronological parts: The past, the present, and the future. Her past

was split into positive and negative points, with her noting that "Obviously having my children was

a good thing". She spoke in detail about the importance of her children to her, discussing her pride,

and discussing this in terms of being an achievement:

> I brought them all up. And I also brought them up to have manners, to know right and
> from wrong and all that kind of thing, and I'm very proud of the fact that they're all out
> there, doing their own thing, and they're doing good things. One's in the army, one's
> does mountains [mountain climbing] and business and the other one is, is kind of like
> a PA thing, whatever that involves. But they're all in good places. ... So yes they are very
> important to me, very, very important.

However, when discussing other positive points in her life, Jane suggested: "that's a hard one that

is, 'cause there's nothing good. And that's no word of a lie. ... very, very bad childhood...It just never

stopped." She said that this bad childhood "goes from non-stop from the minute I was born to I was

about sixteen and I turned around, I went 'I'm not having this anymore'. In between that it was out

of my control and not very nice, sort of thing". During her childhood, Jane was sexually abused,

something which she discussed during her account:

> That's the one where she used to send me, 'cause she wanted money. She knew what
> was going on. ... I mentioned it to her. I've just remember now [sic]. And said 'look, this
> is happening every time you send me for money, this is happening'.

Jane explicitly discussed the trauma associated with this abuse:

> Right, how can I put this? Right, abuse is abuse. Whether you, it doesn't matter how
> little or far you go, it's still abuse. To put things into, not into perspective because it still
> puts the fear of God into you. He never actually had sexual intercourse with me, he
> touched, but it's still abuse.

Jane also experienced violence from her father towards her mother, and the impact of this was

highlighted within her account. In particular, Jane had trouble understanding why Jane's mother

took her and not her other siblings through these traumatic events:

> all the boys, they, they didn't see as much as us three older kids did of our father
> beating the hell out of my mum and all that kind of thing, and one minute being there,
> the next minute not being there. Me being dragged down to the dole office, whatever
> it was called in them days, because he left and took all the money so she'd got no
> money, so I'd be dragged down to some dole office for her to be saying to them 'look
> we've got no money'. I remember many an argument her having with the person at the
> counter and they're going 'well, you know, we've paid you, we can't...he's took it'. None
> of that was particularly very good for me. I still don't understand why only me. [My
> siblings] never got taken.

Additionally, Jane had been pregnant at sixteen but spoke of not being allowed to keep her child

by her mother. This was in contrast to her sister, who was allowed to keep her child, despite in

Jane's view, being less responsible. This was another decision Jane was unable to comprehend:

> My sister, she was allowed to keep her child, yet I wasn't, she still went out partying
> and blur, blur, blur, blur. I was the one that was looking after him and my Mum sort of
> thing. Yet when it happened to me, I was told no way. I wouldn't have gone out
> partying, I would've devoted my life, even at sixteen. I wasn't going out partying at the
> time, I've never been that kind of person anyway, but, it doesn't piss me off, it, I don't
> get it I suppose. I just, I don't get it.

Jane's account of her childhood highlighted a number of events which she was unable to make

sense of. Her mother's role and her own lack of control over these damaging and negative situations

played an important role in her discussion of her childhood, and she appeared to have unanswered

questions about these. Furthermore, the differences she highlighted between her own and others' experiences appeared to highlight a sense of injustice and heightened trauma in comparison to her siblings. Indeed, there was only one instance of childhood happiness that Jane spoke of, spending time in a forest. This, she suggested, was happy because whilst in this forest, she "never ever, ever, ever, never felt afraid. Never. Only time in my life I was never afraid."

Intimate relationships also represented a significant part of Jane's account. She spoke of her marriage, and her subsequent relationships:

> Umm, I got married. He, within two months of being married to him, I found out he was being unfaithful and he started to hit me and stuff like that so I walked away very quickly. We became really good friends after that actually. Umm, one, two, three - three relationships after that kind of went the same way. It was either being unfaithful or violence and I won't put up with any so I just walked away. I spent most of my life, ten years solid completely, on the run completely on my own, because I just gave up. And that's where I am again now, because I give up. It's easier to be on my own than have to put up with. Oh I'd love to meet somebody who isn't gonna be unfaithful and violent but I just don't seem to be lucky enough to come across that kind of person. Maybe I'm looking in the wrong place.

Jane found this surprising, stating: "It mystifies because like I say, I'm the least, least violent person you'd ever, ever come across, so, somewhere along the line I am going wrong in that bit there, and I can't work out what it is." Jane spoke of how these had initially started well, but had changed over time, again leaving her with unanswered questions about why this had happened. She claimed:

> when I first met any of these, they were charming, nice, the relationship was lovely, fun, nice. Nothing. You know it all seemed fantastic. But then all of a sudden this comes into it later, and that's when I walk away sort of thing. So why can you go from, from niceness to, I've never been able to work it out. ... I can't answer that one. I really can't. I just don't understand why. There's a big, big, big question mark on that one, 'cause I'd love to know the answer to that, 'cause I can't work it out. Nope.

Recurring patterns were evident in Jane's discussion of relationships. She described her relationships as all going "the same way". Jane often spoke about these issues as being due to her partners, but also spoke of her own role, in that she felt that she could be "looking in the wrong place". Such views of women *choosing* poor partners are evident in discussions from some service

providers, as seen in the previous chapter. Jane's discussion of relationships was largely negative, focusing upon not knowing why she had repeatedly negative experiences.

Jane also discussed her relationship with her family. She said that: "They're not important. I've never really been close, close. We never have as a family because of what we saw my parents do to each other". Jane had recently moved in with her sister, an experience which had brought her siblings back together. However, she suggested "I still didn't get as involved as they get involved with each other, I always still stood on the, on the outside which is what I've always done basically".

In discussing being an outsider, Jane suggested that "it's through choice because, how can I put it? I hate hypocrisy. That's, that's one of the best words I can think of". This related to some of Jane's siblings labelling her, because she would drink "a couple of glasses of wine" every day, whilst her siblings engaged in what she felt was "binge drinking". Jane spoke of her family labelling her as an alcoholic, but felt that she did not fit this category due to her ability to function. She admitted some alcohol consumption, stating:

> [I] lost my job so I'm looking for a job sort of thing, yeah I went off the rails for a couple of weeks and did drink heavily and too much, far too much. But I soon worked out in my own brain that that wasn't working sort of thing, and this is where they started labelling me.

Jane felt that being given the label of being an alcoholic was unfair. In particular she felt that her actions upon becoming homeless justified her feeling, "because the first place I went to was a council office, not a shop or a pub, a council office to make sure I'd got a bed for the night. And I did that all on my own, no help sort of thing". Within this discussion, Jane implicitly discusses her alcohol use in relation to deservingness. Initially, this focuses on the loss of her job as exacerbating this. The precariousness of her deservingness is also apparent, as her alcohol use might be seen to be the cause of her homelessness, or one of a number of issues associated with her job loss. Here,

Jane's account of seeking support of her own accord might be seen as a way of increasing her own deservingness, because she acted in perceived 'responsible' ways.

Jane's recent experience of living with her sister, and in particular the way in which this broke down, was also a feature of Jane's account of family. She claimed that after accidentally breaking a door at her sister's home, her sister had initially told her not to leave the house the next day, but after approaching her sister:

> I said to her, 'so am I supposed to go now or not' sort of thing, and she went 'yes get out'. 'Okay'. So I just, just went and got my bag 'cause I had no idea where I was gonna even sleep that night because I had no idea sort of thing.

This, Jane said, led to her experience of homelessness, at which point she was directed to The Retreat. Jane spoke of her previous experiences as impacting on her approach to accepting support:

> It's taken that I will be independent and do it all my own and say 'nah, you don't have to do that [Jane], you can actually accept help' sort of thing, that's stubbornness and pride. So we've taken stubbornness and pride and we've chucked it out of that door and said help is good, which I think is good, yep.

Jane's account of the relationship between elements of her biography (such as relationships with others) and her present use of services demonstrates the relevance of biographical knowledge for developing an understanding of rough sleepers' present experiences and behaviours. Without such knowledge, Jane might be judged to be non-engaged with services and uninterested. However, as Jane states, her experiences have affected her view of accepting support from others, including service providers.

In addition to this experience, Jane spoke about her plans for the future. She spoke of three scenarios for the future, with the worst consisting of nothing, and each of the other two containing ambitions. She suggested that "obviously, the, the next step is, umm, having somewhere that I have a door to shut". However, she also pointed to employment as an important part in her future life, rather than her current situation receiving Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), saying:

> Is it E, ES, or whatever, on the sick. So that's where I am at the moment. So that part I don't have to worry about at the moment, if you know what I mean. But I couldn't not be without a job, if you know what I mean.

For Jane, safety, work and friendship represented three core aims, with her own home added to this in a "best case" scenario. This perhaps related to her ideas of lack of control over many situations within her own life (especially housing, related to relationships, job loss and family), whilst also reflecting wider normative ambitions (housing, employment, friendship).
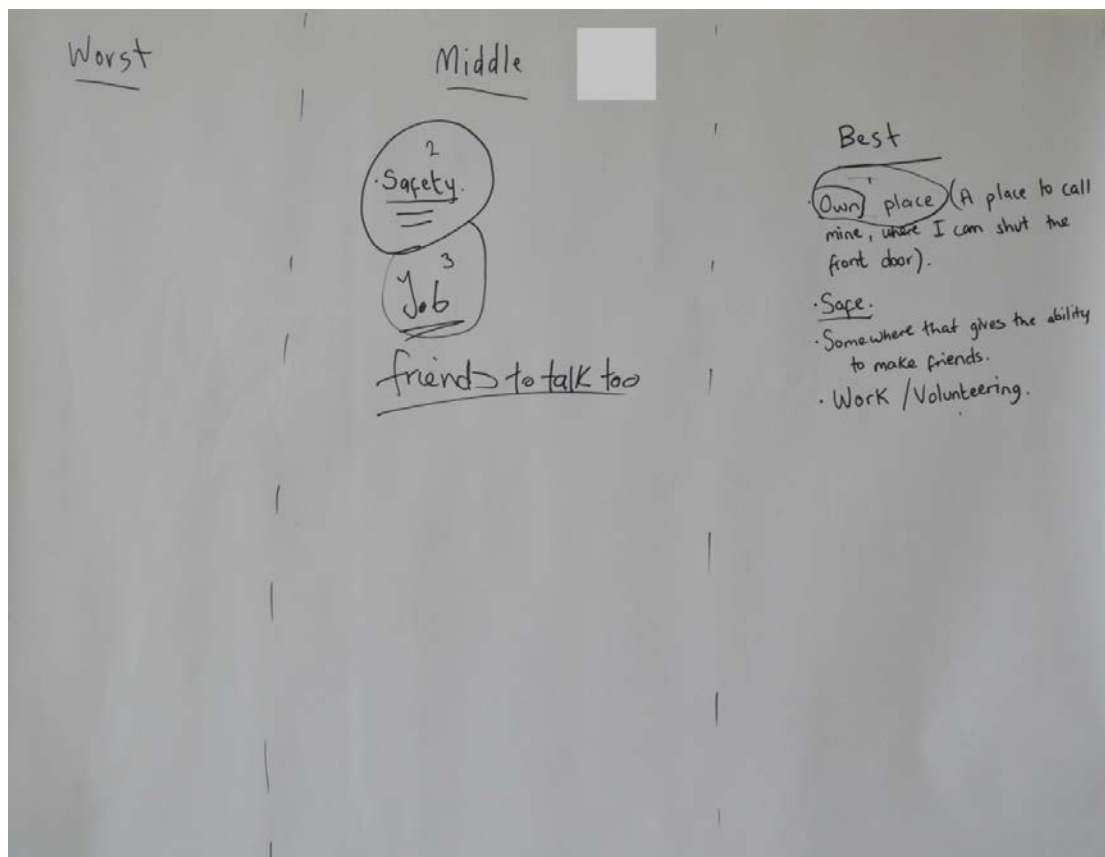
Figure 5: Jane's life map of her future, detailing best, middle and worst-case scenarios

Summary

Jane's account consisted of discussions of her past, present and future. Her past discussed elements relating to her inability to understand her mother's decisions, as well as the reasons for violence and infidelity as existing in each of her intimate relationships. Further, her relationship with her

siblings was discussed as being (to an extent) self-exclusionary, although here she noted the impact of seeing her father's violence towards her mother in her family not being close. Jane often suggested that these experiences were out of her own control, but pointed to repeated notions of victimisation within these (often discussing her own agency in leaving these situations when possible). The most positive discussion within Jane's account came from discussing the success of her children. This might be understood as demonstrating her own proficiency and ability through parenthood (as discussed further within the next chapter). Additionally, drawing upon her sons' statuses as all in employment might be seen to mitigate her own unemployment. Jane also discussed some plans for the future, focusing on employment, safety, friendship and stable tenancy as being important for her future.

Conclusion

The above accounts show the differences that can exist between life stories of becoming homeless. These examples represent three different stories of homelessness, with individuals ranging in age, gender and experiences of homelessness. Within these stories, the heterogeneous nature of homeless populations becomes apparent.

Across these accounts, the complex role of different contextual factors (such as family, relationships, and employment) was discussed. As such, a contextualised rational action approach is seen as a valuable tool in approaching these biographical accounts (Somerville & Bengtsson, 2002; McNaughton Nicholls, 2009). This approach recognises that individuals can have agency within their lives, and aims to take individuals and their accounts seriously. Within these accounts, displays of agency are evident in the ways in which individuals make sense of their lives, and in the behaviours that relate to their decision making, in which a thin rationality approach also proves a useful framework. As seen within these accounts, many behaviours that might seem irrational to outsiders

can in fact be understood as rational when their context is considered, relating to the immediate and personal-historical context of their decision making. Furthermore, it is evident that a number of factors can influence the decisions that individuals make, including emotions, mental health, and limits to knowledge and resources.

The homeless interviewees also discussed causes of their homelessness, highlighting complexities and drawing attention to trigger points within these accounts (Ravenhill, 2008), as well as to the influence of longer-term experiences. Further, a sense of life outside of homelessness (both in the past and in the future) was clear within these accounts. Thus, these stories demonstrated the need to think of people who experience rough sleeping outside of their homelessness, both because individuals do not see themselves as defined by their homelessness, and because many valuable details relating to individual biographies exist and are framed as being outside of their homelessness. Continuing from the analysis provided in this chapter, the next chapter considers themes across rough sleepers' accounts of their life stories.

Chapter Eight

Becoming Homeless:

Understanding 'Chaotic' Lives

This is the second of two chapters that explore experiences of becoming homeless. Following on from the previous chapter, this chapter examines themes across the seventeen life stories of rough sleepers, with consideration given to the ways in which rough sleepers account for their own lives. This analysis does not aim to provide a set of risk factors associated with becoming homeless (previous research has already considered the characteristics of homeless populations, for example Fitzpatrick, Kemp, & Klinker, 2000; Randall & Brown, 1999). Instead it considers the ways in which rough sleepers discussed these factors within their accounts. Although each story was different, some themes and patterns are present across multiple rough sleeper accounts. Such themes and patterns were understood to be important for the ways in which individuals structure and present their accounts.

As noted in chapter three, whilst judgements of good order, success, and on track lives are apparent within policy discussions *about* rough sleepers, the opinions and understandings of rough sleepers themselves are missing from such an analysis. This chapter focuses upon some of the ways in which rough sleepers discuss elements of their own lives relating to ideas of order and chaos, failed citizens and off track lives. Considering the ways in which rough sleepers discuss such topics provides a powerful alternative to the ways in rough sleepers lives are spoken about by others, such as in policy documents.

Reclaiming spoiled identities: Accounts of skill and achievement in the lives of 'failed' citizens

Homeless individuals are often stigmatised because of their homelessness (Parsell, 2010). As discussed previously, this can relate to ideas of being a 'failed' citizen. However, whilst individuals recognised such ways of thinking about their situations, many people also presented accounts of success within their own lives. In some cases this focused on legitimate or mainstream measures of success such as formal employment and education, but success was also considered in alternative ways by rough sleepers, such as through illegitimate measures of success (such as illicit incomes), or through personal meanings of success that provided a contrast to mainstream measures.

Education

Of the seventeen people who had experienced homelessness within this study, eight discussed completing school. For many of the older individuals, education was discussed as a part of their route to employment. However, for younger individuals, many more of whom had not experienced long-term employment, educational success demonstrated skill and ability. For example, as noted in the previous chapter, Alexander spoke about his experiences of school, and his satisfaction with his grades: "I got Maths, English, Science, Sport, ICT and Music all at C grade. I was pretty happy about that". Similarly, Kelvin discussed his experience of college:

> I went to college and I done three years in brickwork and carpentry then I went on to do first diploma in...first diploma in agriculture, got a distinction in that. Then I went onto national award in horticulture, got a distinction in that, then I was working upon a university degree, umm higher level, like higher education. And then I went on to do that and I done halfway through and I just packed it up, I just thought oh fuck that. And I thought fuck off. And then, yeah, basically after that it fucked up from there.

Kelvin's account of an unsmooth education was not unusual within the sample. He had experience of education beyond school, but his route to this was not straightforward: "I kept getting kicked out [of school] so they referred me to college". Although six individuals had experience of further or higher education, two of these had not completed this; and of these six cases, four discussed leaving compulsory education early. Three of the seventeen made no reference to their educational background. In one case, Stuart had been permanently excluded from school, later completing an access course to study at university.

Max also spoke about his experiences of school, discussing this as an area of ability: "I done well in school, so, you know, I even had the chance to go to sixth form, go to university, but it was just my Mum being my Mum, she couldn't cope with me and fucking kicked me out." Here, homelessness was seen as an interruption in Max's route through education. Additionally, Alexander spoke of his desire but inability to go to college after completing school, due to experiencing homelessness: "I haven't been to college yet, because, umm, I just finished school when I got kicked out. And throughout then [being homeless], I haven't been college [sic] or school." Further, three participants, Louise, Laura and Samantha, discussed moving between schools, and suggested that this had impacted on their education. Therefore, lack of stability or homelessness was often viewed as an interruption to education, often accompanied by feelings of better educational outcomes if this had not been interrupted. The below table shows the range of educational experiences discussed by participants:

Participant ID	Did not complete compulsory education	Completed compulsory education	Further / Higher education (*Did not complete Further/Higher education)	Did not discuss
Peter		✓	✓	
Craig			✓	
Alexander		✓		
Luke	✓			
Max		✓		
Kelvin	✓		✓	
Louise				✓
William				✓
David		✓	✓*	
Trevor		✓		
Stuart	✓		✓*	
Victor		✓		
Gary		✓		
Laura	✓			
Samantha		✓	✓	
Jane				✓
Adam	✓			

Table 4: Table of participants' educational experiences

Thus, a range of educational experiences was evident within the group, with this potentially representing an area of ability and skill for some individuals, especially younger people. A range of experiences of education was evident, demonstrating the heterogeneous nature of the population, and their experiences in relation to education. For some, experiences of education were interrupted either by homelessness, or by instability in the family home. However, this was not the case for all individuals, with some completing compulsory education, and others moving into higher education.

Education can be considered a mainstream measure of success and achievement, as it is considered an important indicator of social exclusion mentioned in policy documents (Cabinet Office, 2006; Social Exclusion Unit, 1999). For individuals who had completed compulsory education, this

represented an area of success. Therefore, for those individuals, this can be seen as both a way of reclaiming a spoiled identity of 'homeless' and demonstrating a degree of mainstream success, combating notions of being failed citizens.

Employment

The majority of the people in this study had some experience of formal employment, although most were currently not in paid formal work. Employment can again be seen as a mainstream measure of success or failure, as identified in the discussion at the start of this chapter, and also an important indicator of social inclusion (Levitas, 2005; Somerville, 1998).

Participant ID	No employment history	Illicit/ illegitimate work	Short-term unstable employment	Long-term stable employment
Peter				✓
Craig				✓
Alexander			✓	
Luke		✓		
Max		✓	✓	
Kelvin		✓	✓	
Louise			✓	
William			✓	
David				✓
Trevor				✓
Stuart		✓		✓
Victor		✓		✓
Gary				✓
Laura		✓	✓	
Samantha				✓
Jane				✓
Adam		✓		

Table 5: Table of participants' employment experiences

For many, employment represented an area of possible stability, but could also be precarious in nature; it could come to an end that was unexpected end or without aspirations being realised. For

example, Peter's seemingly stable career ended abruptly, when a road traffic accident ended his role as a P.E. teacher. This led to a lack of income, and increased tension in his marriage, with his relationship ending soon after. In contrast, Trevor had spent many years in the construction industry, which he described as "a marvellous experience". However, in recent years he had been out of work, and described trying to get work prior to retirement onto pension credit:

> I tried for four years before I was sixty to get work with three agencies, not one job. Clean driving license, right, and passport and all that. Not one job come up in four year. And Cameron says go back to work, what fricking work? There's no work there. So I gave up now, pension credits, just carrying on.

Trevor described many of the roles he had in positive terms, but also spoke about temporary employment, where the precariousness of such work was evident. "I worked at [a multinational company] for two years and about a month, they laid me off. I was a temp. Promised me for a year I'd get a job there." For Trevor, this was closely linked to ideas of things not going as he had intended them: "It never happened for me you see, I wanted a two bedroom flat so I could have the kids over. Saved for over ten years you see so I could come here."

Gary's career aims were not realised when he was given a medical discharge from the army. He described this, saying:

> I was gutted 'cause I'd signed up for 22 years when I first joined, and that's what I wanted to do, my 22. But I ended up doing three and a half. But I enjoyed what I was doing, so, I still look back at it now thinking well I wish it never happened...but obviously shit happens as they say. So it all went pear shaped for me.

The notion of Gary's career going "pear shaped" too shows the way in which his long-term expectations of employment were not realised.

David's career aspirations were also not met. He initially worked in a bakery department of a large supermarket with the promise of being given training, which he hoped would lead onto being able to open his own bakery. However, his opportunities for training were limited, and he felt that this was "a bit of a case of if your face fitted you were alright", feeling that his own did not. After one

work related injury, and having to have surgery on his hand, David had to take time away from work, and at this point also had to move house. This led to David getting into debt, using an overdraft, loan and credit card to finance his cost of living.

Not all individuals, though, had experienced long-term employment. Louise was involved in a short-term work experience scheme "in [a local pub, part of a national pub chain] training to be a chef". Discussing this role, Louise revealed an aspiration of wanting to be a "top chef", but more immediately the aim of getting "a job out of it." However, during the research, Louise's work experience finished without her being offered a job, with her noting that "you could say that it didn't quite work out." Instead, Louise planned to work in hotels during the summer on the south coast of England.

Kelvin had also experienced a number of periods of short-term employment within his life, pointing to one particular experience as especially significant, where he was an assistant manager. His experience of this ended after his illicit drug use was exposed to company management after a few months of working there. Kelvin also discussed his work in a number of roles in catering, public libraries, construction and warehouse work. Kelvin's experience was not unusual for an individual in short-term work, as such accounts often highlighted attempts to find work across a number of sectors, and were marked by lack of stability in employment.

Although the majority of individuals spoke about some experience of employment, a minority had not had any formal experience of work. However, in some cases, informal work acted as a form of income generation. For example, as mentioned in the previous chapter, Alexander spoke of working on tattoo designs: "If that person wanted tattoo designs I'd draw them. So that I drew them for him, he'd pay me for the drawings. … But he used to come over just to pick them up, just to pick the pictures up and pay me if he liked them."

252

There was a marked difference in accounts of short-term and long-term employment. For individuals who had been mainly in long-term stable work for periods of their life, employment played an important role in their accounts, and losing such work represented a trigger point for difficulties within their life story, with other seemingly stable situations within their life such as relationships or housing also changing soon after changes in the employment. However, for individuals who had little experience of long-term employment, or whose employment had not finished unexpectedly, changes in employment appeared to mark less of a rupture. For these individuals, such movements in and out of work may have been anticipated, and thus managed as part of an expected cycle in and out of work (Shildrick et al., 2010). Thus, whilst both forms of work were precarious, the perceived security and stability of long-term employment often meant that losing this work was unexpected, presenting unfamiliar challenges for individuals to manage; whereas continuous instability in short-term employment meant that being out of work, whilst sometimes distressing, was part of the routine of unstable employment patterns.

Illegitimate forms of income

In some cases, illegal or illegitimate forms of gaining income were discussed, such as shoplifting (two cases); making fraudulent insurance claims (one case), theft from the workplace (one case) and burglary (one case). In five cases, dealing of illicit drugs had been a form of income, with all five individuals also using illicit drugs whilst selling these. At times, success and enjoyment in being able to do these things was discussed by individuals, but often this was accompanied by danger and risk, such as in Max's account of selling illicit drugs:

> I fucking loved it. Absolutely loved it. You know, the fact that I'm getting free weed, which not a lot of people get. I did do pretty well for myself in that aspect, but it's not good, not a good lifestyle, 'cause you end up, I mean fucking, I put my fucking mate Tom's life at risk, which I regret. A guy came to the door with a machete, fucking, come storming in, where's the gear? Oh shit, fuck, what do we do? There's half an ounce sat

there, have this, just go away. That's 130 quid gone. Which didn't belong to me, that belonged to Tom, my best mate. You know, he had a fucking machete at his door, guy with a machete for fucks sake.

Luke not only sold illicit drugs but was also involved in managing brothels and other areas of illicit activity. Laura, after running away from her home and becoming homeless, and then being introduced to illicit drugs whilst squatting, started to sell sex. She spoke about how the man who she was squatting with and who had introduced her to drugs and told her about this as a form of making money:

> He told me about ways of making money and that was, this was, so going down King's Cross I started selling myself. Easy money. Easy money. I didn't think it was, well it is, easy money. Obviously as well I was drinking alcohol and I was onto the heroin and I loved the crack so much, and the money was quick and easy. Started robbing people as well. Obviously I was the bait, get the punters in and they, these group of men would rob them.

However, Laura also spoke of the dangers of sex work:

> Obviously, doing, the selling your body business. Didn't get, people were taking the piss. They'd use you and abuse you. And I got assaulted many times. I got hit over the head with a bottle, I've got fifteen stitches in my head. And he said it was mistaken identity, he thought I was someone else. But still it's no excuse.

Two other accounts of work after running away were discussed, both of which involved working and living with travellers. Here, both Luke and Adam discussed being involved in the work of the travelling communities they were part of (fitting uPVC and stealing from drug dealers; and working on a funfair respectively). In cases of running away, the forms of work were often marked as being normal for the situation, rather than in terms of success and failure. Again, such decisions can be understood utilising a contextualised rational action model, in which the decision to run away from home and the associated behaviours might be understood to be rational in that context.

Alternative forms of skill and ability

As alternatives (and sometimes in addition) to mainstream measures of skill and ability in accounts (such as employment and education), other forms of skill and ability were discussed by participants. Of these, the most common was parenting, either with ability as a parent being demonstrated through the achievements of their children, or aspirations to be a good parent. For Trevor, the success of his children was a demonstration of his own ability as a parent: "I've got five kids now, and I've got five sons and daughters. Three in Cork and two in Wexford, and they're doing ever so well. They're all working". Here, success through parenthood is evident. This could represent a proxy measure of success, as in these cases children were mentioned as working, purporting to demonstrate the parent's own instillation of a 'work ethic' in children (and thus reducing any claims of them having a 'work shy' attitude).

Even where parents had little or no contact with their children, pride at being a parent was still evident, as was the case for Trevor. In some cases, children had been separated from their parents, and in such cases contact was often seen as a future aim. For Laura, being a good mother in the eyes of her children represented an aspiration for the future:

> The main thing is, my kids, if they want, come knocking at my door and come into my home and I welcome them in, obviously, with open arms. I'd probably cry my eyes out, blabber, blabber, blabber. But it'd [be] nice to see them, but it'd be more nice to see that they're proud of me. That I've stopped the drugs, I haven't relied on any man, and I've stopped the drink, and I've done well for myself. I've done it all myself. That is my dream. I would die a happy woman with a smile on my face, just to hear them words, 'I'm proud of you Mum'.

Although parenthood was a commonly discussed display of skill and ability, other areas of skill included martial arts (in three cases), rapping (one case), being an empath and having paranormal communication (one case). Spirituality also featured in three accounts; however, whilst in some cases this acted as a form of knowledge (with William discussing seeing spirits), others discussed it as being a coping mechanism in times of crisis.

Summary

The above accounts of education, employment and income show the ways in which people demonstrate order and success in their own lives. In some cases, these are attached to mainstream notions of achievement and skill, in areas such as employment and education, which have previously been discussed as indicators of being either socially included or excluded. However, in other accounts, alternative forms of skill and achievement formed measures of success, in contrast to the stigmatising notions of failed citizens. Further, some accounts discussed illicit forms of income generation, and here a break from mainstream forms of income generation was evident, although such income generation was not discussed as being related to being a failure, but rather as being contextually rational (Somerville & Bengtsson, 2002; McNaughton Nicholls, 2009). These measures of skill and achievement, both mainstream and alternative, could represent attempts by individuals to demonstrate success and in doing so salvage and re-claim elements of stigmatised identities (Snow & Anderson, 1987), re-casting themselves as successful or skilful, contrasting with the label of being failed citizens.

Support structures, chaos and order

Many individuals discussed social networks within their accounts, often relating them to family and relationships, alongside access to resources, particularly housing (unsurprising given the nature of the research). Although different types of relationships and resources could provide stability and, in doing so, provide support structures for individuals, they could also be precarious and volatile in nature, entailing risks such as violence. Three main areas of focus are discussed here: relationships with families; intimate relationships; and other social relationships and exclusion. The role of demographic factors in these accounts is also considered.

Family

Within accounts, relationships with family members such as parents and siblings were often discussed. Although in some cases these relationships were supportive (six accounts of having supportive parents, either birth or adoptive, were discussed), in many there was tension, trauma or abuse in the family as a child or adult (eleven people reported cases of conflict with parents, siblings or step-parents).

In some cases, trauma at an early age or being unable to make sense of decisions made by family members left individuals feeling confused, with these issues often being left unresolved. For example, William spoke about his adoption, which failed to make sense to him, as his birth mother later mothered other children:

> I met up with her, oh gosh, I was at [a local] Middle School so I was between the ages of ten and twelve, or nine and twelve, one or the other. And by then she'd had three others besides me. I'm the oldest of four, of three children. And I cannot understand why she kept them but never kept me. And even to this day now, I turn forty in June, I still do not understand why she did it. I guess I never will, only she knows that

Similarly, two individuals cited forms of abuse, and in both cases their confusion stemmed from their mother's knowledge of this, but failure to act. This had a major impact on Stuart's family, as he discussed in his account:

> (crying) My family's really fucked up. It really is. Really messed up what happened with my family (crying stops). My mother, she er, after this guy [Stuart's step-father] had been raping my sister and was out of order to us lads [physically beating his older male siblings], we were taken, they were all taken into care. I was younger so I wasn't taken into care. And I kind of stayed in the home. And he was off, I dunno, and I lived with my Mum for a while, and then he moved back in and I lived there for a couple of years, then when I was fifteen I just kind of pissed off. But my Mum stayed with him, my Mum stayed with him and I've tried to understand it, do you know what I mean. I've tried to understand why she stayed with him, I can't get my head around it. I mean I love my Mum to bits, but I just can't understand that, you know, and it, it broke my family. Just broke my family, you know.

In other cases, trauma of other sorts impacted on individuals. In Peter's account, as seen in the previous chapter, his father's death at the age of ten had a major impact on Peter. Accounts of trauma ranged from experiences such as parents divorcing or adoption, to being a victim of rape, violence, and emotional abuse. In many cases, such trauma was discussed as having a significant impact on individuals, with attempts to manage such situations coming in many different forms. This supports claims of previous research, which highlight the high prevalence of abusive or traumatic experiences within homeless populations (Fitzpatrick et al., 2011).

This trauma was often linked to constrained ways of expressing agency in accounts of rough sleepers, with very little ability to express forms of choice evident in some accounts from the research, such as Laura's, who spoke about living with a man she knew. She spoke about an incident where this man had spiked her drink, for his friend to then rape her:

> he locked me in his house, he took his mum's door keys, he threatened her, and he's took all the phones. Umm, he waited for me to wake up after he'd spiked my drink, and yeah, he told me to pack my stuff, I'm out. So I thought alright then, I weren't in the mood to argue, 'cause I was so doped up. So I packed my suitcases, got a taxi to come, 'cause I couldn't walk. Even though my sister lived around the corner. I went to, and then that's when I found out a taxi was outside, that's when I found out I couldn't get out. Umm, so he pulled me back upstairs, dragged me upstairs, gave me a razor blade and told me to do my neck. So I did, so I did. If I'm gonna get out, I've got to cut my own neck, it's the only way I'm leaving. So I ended up with twenty stitches in my neck. The police came, but I told my sister what happened with his mate, and she told me to call the police, well told the police about it. I didn't want to. But then I was angry. Umm, even though I cut my own neck, well I did but obviously not, I'm a self-harmer but I wouldn't do my neck, do you know what I mean? So I was angry, so I told the police what, what I could remember anyway. So umm, Christmas morning, no 24th, and then onto Christmas morning I was being interviewed, being examined, having blood tests, all that lot. It took hours and I just wanted to sleep.

Taking Laura's account, the traumatic nature of some events is evident. This event is clearly extremely constraining, and demonstrates the horrific nature of some rough sleepers' experiences. Furthermore, Laura highlights the emotional dimensions of the process, as she discusses her desire to sleep following this traumatic episode.

However, individuals understood traumatic events in different ways. For Laura, despite the horrific nature of this event, it was presented as an episode with few links to other parts of her life. In contrast, in Stuart's case, his step-father's sexual abuse towards his sister, and physical abuse towards his brothers was something he felt might have had a significant impact upon his life, stating: "They're significant things that have affected my life, I'm sure of it. They must be. Maybe that's the reason why I've been a junkie all my life. Maybe. Maybe they're the reasons why I've sought quick fixes and gratification. Who knows? Who knows?" Thus, for individuals, the impact of particular traumas could be understood differently within a wider biography. Thus, for individuals, the impact of particular traumas could be understood differently within a wider biography.

Four of the sample were either fostered or adopted, with varying outcomes. William spoke of loving his adoptive family. However, whilst positive experiences were mentioned in two of the three other cases (all male), all three had left the family home before the age of sixteen. Indeed of the seventeen people involved in the research, six people had left home by the age of sixteen, often because of differences between themselves and family (or step-family) members. This was the case for Max, who spoke of conflict with his step-father:

> Me and him were fighting a lot, my Mum couldn't cope with it, 'cause I've got two little sisters, you know, and them growing up with shouting and screaming, she didn't want that, so she kicked me out. I've been on my own since I was fourteen years old, you know, living by myself, just getting on with my life.

Where conflict with family members was reported, these conflicts were often over long periods, and resulted in individuals having little or no contact with family members (many starting in teenage years).

Some individuals reported positive relationships with family members, and this often created a stable support structure from which individuals could build, as well as rely on in times of need, creating a buffer for individuals who experienced trigger points. However, whilst this buffer existed

for some, it was not always stable. This was the case for Laura, who had been looking for support

to stop using drugs during pregnancy, but who had previously had conflict with her mother:

> I moved into a house, council gave me a house. And my twin sister moved in with me.
> But I had my mother in my ear hole, and she thought she had the right to tell me what
> to do, how to live my life. Thinks she knows better. Thinks she knows what's best for
> me. And I always thought it's too late. And I was still self-harming believe it or not. I
> was still self-harming. And obviously my eating problems were still that, there. So she
> made me feel that low. Me and my twin sister decorated up the house, got all the baby
> stuff ready, the cot and that. Umm, had the house three weeks and decorated it. She,
> I think I was seven and a half months or eight months gone, she made me feel that low
> that I wouldn't cope on my own, so I gave up the house and moved in with her, and my
> sister moved back as well. It was nice all us four sisters were together, but I couldn't
> cope with that woman, couldn't cope with that woman.

Laura's account shows the extreme coercion that some family ties could bring. Where individuals

spoke about not getting on with family members, relying on them for support was often hazardous,

as their relationships could be volatile and unstable, thus exacerbating the issues that they were

trying to escape.

Even where relationships were described in positive terms, circumstances sometimes meant that

family members could not accommodate individuals in times of need. Following his medical

discharge from the army, Gary went to his hometown, but encountered problems with finding a

place to stay, despite his parents living there, and was only able to sofa-surf there on a short-term

basis: "They [my parents] hadn't got room to put me up. They didn't want me to live out in the

street but they'd only got a one bedroom bungalow so I, I did stay a couple or three nights on the

sofa like, you know, 'cause Mum and Dad didn't want me outside."

Further, the precariousness of such support structures was evident in some accounts, such as

Stuart's. After coming back from working abroad and unable to afford to rent a property, he

attempted to turn to his sister for support, having previously lived at his sister's house. However,

their relationship had changed, and this impacted on the support structures he had relied on in the

past:

> Because I'd had a bit of an argument with my sister and she's now moved over to Spain, all my clothes and my passport and all my legal things were stuck, are stuck in her loft. So I was basically in a situation where I didn't have any ID, didn't have any clothes and I just didn't have anywhere to go. I didn't have, and I couldn't see any way out of it.

For some of the rough sleepers, accounts of family relationships show the ways in which they could provide a support structure on which individuals could build and rely in times of need. However, these accounts also show that such support structures are not always fixed, and can be precarious in nature. Family relationships could provide resources on which individuals could draw, but could be unstable in nature, requiring individuals to manage these relationships. Furthermore, even where relationships with other family members were strong, this did not always mean that they could provide the necessary support, as was the case with Gary's parents upon him leaving the army.

Intimate relationships

Intimate relationships with partners were a common feature of discussion for people within the study. As with family relationships, for some rough sleepers, these could be a source of security and long-term stability, providing not only physical security in the form of accommodation, but also emotional support which acted as a buffer to deal with difficulties. Relationships also marked an area of potential success for individuals, in ways similar to those discussed earlier in this chapter. Successful relationships showed a measure of ability, in line with mainstream notions of success in family and relationships outlined in recent policy documents (Department for Work and Pensions, 2012). Where individuals had been involved in successful relationships, partners were often described positively.

In his account, Peter spoke about his experience of meeting and forming a relationship, and the impact of this on him, noting on his life map:

> Met a very fine woman – accepted me for me – began a relationship that did more than could have wanted or indeed expect. Back to work, acceptance of self. Responsibility and pride restored. … Wow Greek islands – not once but regularly, bliss had reappeared – self-esteem and trust of self. Kefalonia, Zakhintos, Kos, Crete, Athens. It was Joyous – working and earning – pride back.

Similarly, Victor spoke about his relationship with his former partner and her enduring support: "my [former] partner, in the meantime, she has been an absolute gem, for what she has done to this day, right, she deserves a medal, just for putting up with me."

Positive relationships, though, were not always present in individuals' accounts. For some, intimate relationships could be volatile, and sometimes violent, encompassing risk and instability. As seen in the previous chapter, Jane's relationships appeared to have striking similarities, with unfaithful or violent partners. In her account, Laura spoke about her past relationships, most of which had involved violence, suggesting that this was related to her mental health: "All the relationships that I've had have always been the same. And that's what's part of this personality disorder, I tend to stick to destructive relationships, you see. Like glue." Thus relationships could entail risk of violence or other complications, and were not uniformly positive for rough sleepers.

The role of intimate relationships was further complicated in that relationships potentially provided resources in one sense, but could also act as a barrier to accessing other resources. Laura discussed a relationship which provided resources in dealing with conflict with her mother, stating that her boyfriend "moved in with us, 'cause I needed him, honestly. I needed someone to back me up with that woman." However, whilst her partner provided a form of resource in this sense, he also prevented social services from helping Laura, as she discusses below:

> They [social services] were trying to help me, trying to help [my son] I suppose, make sure he gets the support and help he needs, and me as well. So they were quite helpful at one point (laughs). But just this [partner], he didn't let them help me. He was telling me that then they are gonna, they're gonna take my kids off me.

In Laura's account, her partner moving in was both positive in that it allowed her some control over the coercion her mother displayed but was also negative in that this was replaced by another coercive force in her life.

Intimate relationships could be a source of support and stability for individuals. However, at times these could be volatile, violent and traumatic for individuals. Further, intimate relationships, like other social relationships, could be double-edged, in that they could be both protective against, but could also create, difficulties for individuals. Movements between protective and perilous relationships were not always easy to see; and additionally, these types were not mutually exclusive, with some social relations being able to provide resources in one sense but being precarious, risky, or volatile in other senses, or at other times. Thus, in some cases, these relationships may have helped to support the mainstream forms of order discussed in policy documents and earlier within this chapter, whilst at other times they may have made such forms of order difficult to attain or maintain.

Other social relationships and exclusion

The instability of these support structures and resources meant that individuals were excluded from aspects of mainstream society at times. Traumatic situations could impact on this, as could levels of perceived trust in others. William's account of this came after he had been part of a Christian organisation, but was excluded and became socially isolated:

> Nobody, and I do mean nobody knew where I was. I became a ghost. I erased everything that I had to do with the Church, everything that I had to do associated with people connected to it. I just vanished. There was no trace of me.

In addition to William's account, Kelvin spoke of cutting ties to his friends. He stated:

> I don't need my mates, I don't need no mates. I was thinking about it earlier, I was thinking, do you know what, you actually haven't got any mates anymore, you actually haven't got no-one. I don't give a shit to be honest, you know, 'cause I've got myself,

you know what I mean? I've got myself, you know, that's all I need, I don't need other people telling me what to fucking do, you know. Maybe that's me being stupid, maybe I might need mates in the future, but I'd rather make enemies than mates to be honest with you, 'cause that's who I am, I don't need mates to be there for me, I can stand by myself, you know what I mean like. So I've told 'em all to fuck off basically.

Such a bold move might seem reckless, since it could reduce his access to resources and social networks. However, further discussion revealed some of the rationale underpinning his decision:

There's always times for new mates, you know what I mean, and I'd rather make new mates, better mates than what they are 'cause they're all drug takers, you know, drinkers, this, that and the other, what I've known for about eleven, twelve years, you know what I mean. I don't need them people. All they're doing basically was sitting here feeding on their habit off mine.

However, in addition to this, there was evidence of situations where homelessness had impacted on an individual's ability to build or maintain relationships with others, such as Max's example of living outside of the family home:

It's a different lifestyle. You know, I didn't, obviously, I didn't really have it 'cause from the age of fourteen years old, you know, I'm living on my own and from that point I was, you know, doing drugs so I didn't really get given that chance or opportunity of a normal life, so, you know. It's just shit.

Thus, instability and precariousness in situations such as housing and relationships meant that exclusion from aspects of mainstream society was evident at times. At times, this exclusion was presented as a choice by individuals, whilst at other times it was understood as being heavily constrained by factors in their immediate situations.

Demographic factors

Within the accounts presented, factors relating to age, gender, and ethnicity were potentially important to people's experiences, not only of homelessness, but in wider biographies. In one service, differences in ethnicity (focused on divides between English and non-English speakers) were evident, with the presence of an 'Eastern European table', despite differences in language,

nationality, and cultural norms present within this table's group. Within the accounts presented above, these factors also played an important role.

The importance of gender was evident in Laura's and Jane's cases, with their experiences of violent relationships, and the subsequent feelings that this was because of their choice in partners appeared to be linked to their gender. Likewise, all adopted individuals who left home prior to the age of sixteen were male. Age also played an important role in some biographical accounts, for example in Trevor's account of looking for work prior to retirement. Similarly, younger individuals within the research were less likely to have been in long-term employment, and were more likely to highlight education as an area of success than older individuals. Such factors appeared to play an important role in the biographical accounts of individuals, and therefore are important to recognise when considering accounts of support structures, skills and achievements.

Summary

Within discussions of support structures such as family, intimate relationships and friendships, it is clear that complexities emerge. People discussed these in a variety of ways, emphasising the different extents to which these could be both supportive and restrictive. Although rough sleepers' lives are often discussed within policy as being chaotic and lacking order, the evidence presented here suggests that in some circumstances, the environments in which individuals attempt to create order are themselves unstable, fluid, and unpredictable. Attempts to manage these unpredictable situations and to maintain agency sometimes result in behaviours which appear to be self-excluding, deviant or irrational (McNaughton Nicholls, 2009; McNaughton, 2008).

Housing and living situations

Perhaps predictably, some rough sleepers reported that their control over their own tenancy marked an important area of their life. The reason for such importance being placed on having one's own tenancy often came from the experience of others (such as family members, partners, friends) having control over legal rights to accommodation. This made accommodation insecure, often coming to abrupt ends with little or no warning, or made it conditional upon the quality of relationships with the tenancy holders, or involved high levels of risk to personal safety.

One such example of the risks involved in moving in with others was William's account of moving in with his partner. William gave up his own tenancy to do so, leaving him with no legal rights to accommodation following the breakdown of the relationship. William said that upon relationship breakdown, "I became homeless, sort of homeless. I say sort of, I was sofa surfing, at a mate's house. ... For four months I was sofa surfing."

Living with partners could reduce the level of control and autonomy an individual had over their own life, increasing the risk of violence they had in their own life. Laura discussed this, after moving in with a partner who limited her movements:

> He used to lock me in the flat, I was on the top floor. Umm, even though I was, I ought to feel that ain't my home no more, but I know it was. I just wanted him out, do you know what I mean. So at one point he, he made a decision, right we're leaving, just pack a few stuff, and we're not coming back. No, no, no. I was not gonna leave all my kids' photos, all my kids' toys that I put up in my room. No way was I. So he beat the fuck out of me, and I had no choice.

Laura's account of losing belongings when leaving tenancies unexpectedly was not unique. Two more accounts of leaving belongings due to unexpected moves involving threats to personal safety were evident. Sharing tenancies with others could also increase risk of eviction with little warning,

with two accounts claiming that the behaviours of co-tenants or partners had caused issues for their tenancy. Max spoke of his eviction because of damage to the property he was in:

> An alcoholic was living next door to me. Smashed a hole through his bedroom into my bedroom and then blamed it on me. I got the blame for it, I got kicked out. I lost my rent in advance, 208 pound, which I now owe, owe to the job centre. Left me in more debt, and err, yeah it ended up with me being here.

Within these accounts, the instability of living in shared accommodation is clear. On occasions, accommodation shared with others, but in which individuals felt they had little power, was discussed as being chaotic. In addition to Alexander's account of homelessness hostels as being chaotic (see chapter seven), Laura spoke of children's homes being chaotic. She also spoke about accommodation she shared with her former partner, lodgers, and her children, stating: "we obviously had a house full and then therefore having three lodgers and him and my two boys the house was always chaotic". The chaotic nature of the situation often meant that individual behaviours could appear chaotic, with attempts to manage situations which could be unsafe or unpredictable.

Having one's own tenancy did not guarantee any long-term stability in accommodation, and could still be precarious, as Stuart made clear:

> Luckily I found a place where the landlord only wanted 150 pounds bond, and was prepared to wait until the rent came through, but it was 60 pounds more than the dole pay a month so I had to take it. Now I'm in a situation where every month, I've only been there, this is my third month there, every month I'm struggling to find that 60 pounds. And you know, I'm only a couple of, I dunno I'm only one or two months away from being on the street again at any time. Until I can get working, umm, until I can get working or find another place that the dole will cover, I'm always in a situation where I'm vulnerable to become homeless at any time.

Here, the vulnerability and financial pressure associated with having one's own tenancy also created a sense of precariousness.

Being released from institutions also represented a time of particular difficulty in housing, resulting in homelessness in a number of cases. Even where rough sleepers had discussed having family

members to go to, leaving institutions was a time of particular risk of homelessness, in line with the

claims made by previous research (Cooper, 2013; Fitzpatrick et al., 2000).

Rough sleeping often represented the worst accommodation outcome for individuals, with people

attempting to find alternative living arrangements where possible, exhausting other opportunities

for accommodation prior to sleeping rough. At times, individuals would go to extraordinary lengths

to avoid having to sleep rough, such as in the case of Victor, who claimed to have moved in with a

partner under false pretences:

> I lived a complete and utter lie, right (laughs). A complete lie. She liked me, I hated her. She wanted sex with me, I didn't want sex with her. I done it but I didn't want sex with her. Everything I done, I didn't want to do it with her, right the only thing that I wanted was actually a roof over my head, right, that was warm and I could get some food, right. So if it meant I had to do certain things, I did them. If it meant I had to shut up and be quiet, I did that so whatever. Umm, and she was happy I think. I wasn't. Used to make me cringe to be honest, it used to make me, I was just not in a happy scenario

However, for Gary, sleeping rough was discussed in much more positive terms, with him calling this

"sleeping outside" on a number of occasions. He spoke of sleeping outside after living with his

current partner:

> I stayed with my girlfriend for six months then I slept outside for a while 'cause that's where I like to be, I love sleeping outside. Being ex forces as well. So I said 'Look', I said 'nothing against you darling', I said 'I'm going back out to the streets'. But she kept all my gear there and did my washing for me.

When asked about the experience, Gary spoke in positive terms saying: "I loved it. I loved it. Nobody

to disturb me, nothing. No rules and regulations." However, Gary's view of sleeping rough was

unique within the sample, and may have been related to his particular experience of sleeping

outside in the summer in a local park in what might be seen as more favourable conditions

(although the risks of this should not be forgotten).

Therefore, accommodation presented a potential space of safety and security, or danger and

precariousness. This was often linked to other aspects of life, in particular support structures or

relationships with family, intimate partners, or other homeless individuals in accommodation services. These relationships could complicate accommodation situations, resulting in potentially precarious tenancies. These spaces could provide a context of more/less order, and as such, in developing order in responses to unstable situations, individual behaviours could provide the best management methods but might be imperfect, and might appear chaotic (for example, as in the cases of Laura's relationship with a violent partner, or William's moving in with his partner after a short amount of time). For some people, in some situations (such as stable relationships or family ties), these spaces could represent spaces of security, whilst for others they might be spaces of risk or danger. Such experiences of accommodation could explain desires to have accommodation over which individuals had exclusive rights.

On and off track lives: Aspirations and the future

Related to ideas of chaotic lives, and often discussed in relation to developing structure, long-term thinking, or planning, it is sometimes suggested that rough sleepers prioritise short term outcomes, or lack the ability to plan ahead. However, in contrast to this, many of those interviewed talked about their future aspirations. In some cases, this included mainstream measures of success discussed earlier, with employment such as in drugs and alcohol counselling or owning one's own business cited as desired career paths. However, other aims were also evident, such as Gary's aspiration to go on holiday to Turkey. Often, these measures related to an individual's age (with younger individuals citing career aspirations more often), as well as contextual factors such as perceived chances of being able to find work. Whilst these long-term aspirations were evident, more immediate desires were also evident, often relating to an individual's ideas of being settled and stable. This was the case for Laura, who suggested "All I want is to be settled, you know what I mean, to get on with my life."

Some individuals spoke with caution about long-term planning due to a lack of stability and uncertainty in housing, relationships, or other contextual factors, suggesting that there were risks in long-term planning. This was evident in Jane's account, as she suggested that for her future:

> It's a case of day by day now. That's literally all it is, is day by day. No-one can predict the future. No-one whatsoever. You can try but something'll come along and completely pull that all apart within seconds so it's day by day at the moment.

Similarly, for Laura, uncertainty over her future meant that long-term planning was difficult:

> I'm not so sure on the future. The future's uncertain and I hate the feeling of not knowing. If I knew what was going to happen I could plan ahead, get ready for it. And my life at the moment has been for many years, it's a waiting game. You have to wait for things, I had to wait for things to happen. Patience is a virtue they say. I stick my fingers up at that half the time (laughs). Patience is a virtue, is it?

Laura also suggested that long-term planning also entailed a degree of emotional risk:

> I get too settled too easy, and I don't get my hopes up. I learnt that along, along the way, don't get my hopes up. I'm one of those that get my hopes up, and then when I have to be let down I take it to heart.

Trevor suggested that planning ahead held an element of risk in relation to income. He stated:

> Every day is a bonus. I don't know if I'm gonna wake up tomorrow necessarily, so one day at a time. I don't plan nothing ahead, don't plan ahead. Every time you plan something, there's disaster. If get the money and go (bump) now...you were building up to it you see, if you plan something six months ahead.

Thus, whilst long-term planning is often discussed as lacking in the lives people who experience rough sleeping (and in this sense, adding to the chaos in these lives), in some cases, the logic for not planning ahead is evident, and can be seen as a rational decision, and expression of agency in structural conditions which can be unstable.

Similarly, Stuart's account of attempting to find work and being close to losing his Jobseeker's Allowance highlighted the importance of understanding the immediate constraints he faced in being able to achieve even short-term goals:

> I didn't have a phone at the time, and I remember one of the people in the agency, in the umm dole office asked me for a phone number, and she said well, and I said 'I don't have a phone'. And she said 'well what if an interview comes up or we have a job for you', and I was like, 'Well, you know, I don't have a phone'. And she was like, 'well you

know, they're only ten pounds'. And it just me realise that I would've probably said the same thing if I was working, it's only ten pounds, but that ten pounds to me then, I just didn't have it, you know, and it seemed that they were so, I'm sure it wasn't intentional, you know, I'm sure she didn't mean anything by it, but it just seemed that their perception of my situation wasn't based in reality.

In such cases, individuals did not always discuss their lives as being off track, but rather as constrained in various ways.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown the ways in which rough sleepers account for their own lives, focusing upon the ways in which notions of chaos and order, success and failure, and on track and off track lives, are presented within these accounts. The findings of this research suggest that individuals do discuss elements relating to these binaries, but often in complex ways. In initial discussions of success, some mainstream measures such as educational achievement or employment histories were drawn upon. However, success in illegitimate forms of income, and alternative senses such as successful parenting, were also drawn upon. For individuals, these measures of success potentially acted as a way to re-claim some success, in contrast to their status as 'homeless' or 'failed', as understood within wider policy terms. Such displays might then be understood as a process of salvaging the self (Snow & Anderson, 1993).

In discussing support structures and relationships with family, friends, and intimate partners, rough sleepers discussed the complexities of these relationships. In some cases, these structures could be both supportive and constraining at the same time. Furthermore, at times, the resources these structures or relationships could bring were conditional or precarious. Thus, these structures had the potential to create both challenging and supportive conditions for rough sleepers. Individuals

demonstrated astute (although not always successful) management of these relationships and structures.

At times, individual circumstances required engaging in behaviours which seemed chaotic or deviant, but were contextually rational. Within these, agency is evident, although at times behaviours within these accounts appear to be heavily constrained. Thus, a theoretical approach that recognises the role of agency within individual accounts, whilst also emphasising the importance of understanding the context in which decisions are made, is key to developing a fuller understanding of these accounts. Events such as leaving home, choosing to leave accommodation, and having unstable relationships with family and partners might be judged to be chaotic or poor by outsiders, but understood within their context, and alongside the agency of individuals, can be understood as rational (Somerville & Bengtsson, 2002; McNaughton Nicholls, 2009).

Also evident within these accounts is the importance of key life events such as traumatic episodes and 'trigger' points of homelessness (Ravenhill, 2008), as well as factors such as educational achievement, employment background, and demographic factors. Key to developing a fuller understanding of these is their placement within a wider personal biography. Furthermore, whilst rough sleepers may be affected by large-scale changes such as austerity, these changes are understood in relation to their direct impact on the individuals concerned. Thus, the personal biography becomes an important tool for understanding the ways in which individuals internally process wider social change (McNaughton's (2008) definition of agency).

The long-term aspirations of the population studied were also considered within this chapter. This analysis suggested that in contrast to the claims that rough sleepers do not engage in long-term planning because of their so-called 'chaotic lives', individuals did in some cases have long-term aspirations and demonstrated forms of order in their short-term and long-term planning. However,

in many cases, previous long-term aspirations had been difficult to achieve because of complications, and in some cases this led individuals to suggest that long-term planning was risky, since many of the structures on which this relied (such as housing, relationships, and employment) were highly precarious and uncertain, and that this could result in emotional or other types of pain and suffering, should plans not develop.

As identified within chapters three, five and six, individuals are often discussed in negative terms in policy and service provision discourses as being failed citizens, and having off track and chaotic lives. However, the findings presented within this chapter suggest that individuals themselves present their own lives as having order, being on track, and having success. These accounts sometimes utilise mainstream forms of success, whilst others employ alternative forms of order and success. In doing this, rough sleepers show resistance to some of the stigmatising ways in which their lives are discussed, attempting to re-claim their spoiled identities. Furthermore, in contrast to policy understandings and risk factor approaches which tend to abstract factors and behaviours from their wider context, central to developing a greater understanding of the role of these is a biographical and narrative approach which allows for a deeper understanding of contextual decision-making. Following this chapter, the next chapter moves from considering the themes from across the life stories of rough sleepers, to considering their accounts of their day-to-day experiences of homelessness, and their attempts to manage and negotiate these experiences.

Chapter Nine

Being Homeless

Introduction

As suggested in previous chapters, the ways in which rough sleepers manage their day-to-day lives are often seen as chaotic and off track, exposing the personal failings of rough sleepers. However, this gives little consideration to the ways in which rough sleepers talk about their own daily lived experiences. Therefore, the focus of this chapter is upon the ways in which rough sleepers manage and negotiate their situations of homelessness on a day-to-day basis.

The chapter begins by proposing that homelessness inherently carries some pains, drawing on Sykes' notion of "the pains of imprisonment" (Sykes, 1999, p. 63), which suggests that prison life is "depriving or frustrating in the extreme". Further, acknowledging the multiple emotional and physical dimensions of homelessness proposed by Somerville (1992), four pains of homelessness (relating to these different dimensions) are proposed from the accounts of rough sleepers within this research. These are: the lack of access to resources; the suffering of stigma; the frustrations of process; and the perils of precariousness. These pains are argued to create unstable conditions for rough sleepers which are frequently subject to change with little or no warning, marginalising rough sleepers as a stigmatised population.

The chapter then goes on to argue that in order to negotiate these unstable conditions, rough sleepers engage in a number of management techniques: the use of space; the use of homeless

cultures; and the use of services. It suggests that by engaging in these management methods, rough sleepers use their skills to attempt to bring order to these situations, and resist discourses that see them as failed or chaotic. However, each of these management methods in itself brings its own complications and precariousness, and as such rough sleepers are constantly re-negotiating their own positions. It is contended that this constant process of re-negotiation can appear to be chaotic to outsiders, but is in itself a method for managing the scarce resources, marginalised positions, and precariousness that rough sleepers face constantly, even when engaging in management methods, and as such can be understood as a form of contextualised rational action (Somerville & Bengtsson, 2002; McNaughton Nicholls, 2009). In doing so, they aim to bring order to their own lives, even if this does not always constitute mainstream or normative forms of good order. Furthermore, in negotiating their day-to-day lives, they demonstrate skills of various kinds and an astute form of responsibility over their own lives in managing the trade-offs between imperfect solutions to counter the pains of homelessness, employing approaches which can be understood as contextually rational, in contrast to discourses which see rough sleepers as irresponsible and having deficits.

The chapter concludes by suggesting that, in contrast to the understandings of rough sleepers as having off track and chaotic lives, individuals describe order and discuss how they actively manage their daily lives in ways that help them to negotiate the pains of homelessness, although these do not always constitute so-called good order and thus may seem chaotic to outsiders. This analysis therefore understands rough sleepers to be agents who display skills in managing and negotiating their own situations and experiences, but within (often highly) constrained contexts.

The pains of homelessness

In their analysis of homelessness, Snow & Anderson (1993, p. 7) highlight that differences exist between individuals who are considered to be homeless, such as refugees, migratory labourers, those made homeless by natural disasters, or those who are homeless because of economic or institutional changes and developments. They claim that "Each of these groups experience some degree of homelessness, but the nature of that experience often varies considerably among them." (Snow & Anderson, 1993, p. 7). To understand these differences, the authors suggest that three dimensions of homelessness are apparent: a residential dimension, a familial-support dimension, and a role-based dignity and moral-worth dimension. They claim that whilst homelessness is usually defined in relation to the first of these, the two other dimensions also affect individual experiences of homelessness.

The multi-dimensionality of homelessness has also been discussed elsewhere, (for example Somerville, 1992, 2013; Watson & Austerberry, 1986; Snow & Anderson, 1993) and Somerville (1992) has claimed that:

> Homelessness is not just a matter of lack of shelter or lack of abode, a lack of a roof over one's head. It involves deprivation across a number of different dimensions - physiological (lack of bodily comfort or warmth), emotional (lack of love or joy), territorial (lack of privacy), ontological (lack of rootedness in the world, anomie) and spiritual (lack of hope, lack of purpose).
> (Somerville, 2013, p. 1)

In suggesting this to be the case, Somerville argues that homelessness is not only about lacking a physical home (housing)[10], but also these related conditions, many of which pertain to homelessness being about *lacking* in one dimension or another (although, importantly, not related to claims of personal failings). This approach highlights that homelessness impacts on individuals in both physical and emotional forms. Such an approach also highlights that homelessness can be

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[10] Debates around the nature of what 'home' is/means have been extensive elsewhere. See for example Moore, 2007; Jones et al., 2003; Somerville, 1997, 1992; Easthope, 2004; Rybczynski, 1986; May, 2000b; Parsell, 2011a.

defined not only in relation to housing tenure, but also in many other ways by individuals who experience it, and that those who experience houselessness might not consider themselves to be homeless. This can be understood to be a cultural definition of homelessness, in which homeless is both interpreted and given meaning by those who experience it, with Hall (2013, p. xix) noting "It is our use of a pile of bricks and mortar which makes it a 'house'; and what we feel, think or say about it that makes a 'house' a 'home'".

This cultural understanding of lacking across a number of dimensions, rather than only housing, is useful in considering the various elements of being homeless that could be understood to create pains, frustrations or deprivations for individuals experiencing homelessness. In order to understand the use of the term 'pains' in this way, this research draws upon Sykes' description of the "pains of imprisonment" (Sykes, 1999, p. 63). Sykes suggests that whilst the physically brutal prison regimes of the past are no longer apparent, "It is imperative that we go beyond the fact that severe bodily suffering has long since disappeared as a significant aspects of the custodians' regime, leaving behind a residue of apparently less acute hurts" (Sykes, 1999, p. 64). Here he discusses "loss", "deprivation" and "frustration" as three of these hurts (ibid), and goes on to suggest that "they can be just as painful as the physical maltreatment which they have replaced" (ibid). Sykes lists these pains as being: the deprivation of liberty; the deprivation of goods and services; the deprivation of heterosexual relationships; the deprivation of autonomy; and the deprivation of security. Sykes suggests that:

> However painful these frustrations or deprivations may be in the immediate terms of thwarted goals, discomfort, boredom, and loneliness, they carry a more profound hurt as a set of threats or attacks which are directed against the very foundations of the prisoner's being. The individual's picture of himself as a person of value - as a morally acceptable, adult male who can present some claim to merit in his material achievements and his inner strength - begins to waver and grow dim. (Sykes, 1999, p. 79)

Therefore for Sykes, whilst these pains hold a physical element, they also have a psychological effect causing hurt and attacks on the individual's self-worth. Whilst Sykes' account of the pains of imprisonment is written about the pains suffered by prisoners, homelessness, as a condition of deprivation, hurt or lacking across a number of dimensions, can also involve a number of such pains.

In discussing their experiences of homelessness, a number of people discussed different forms of deprivations, suffering and difficulties, relating to the impact that homelessness had on their lives. Whilst many defined their homelessness in relation to housing tenure, associated hurts and deprivations were apparent in both physical and emotional forms. For the purposes of analysis, those which arose most frequently are considered, and broadly grouped into four categories: lack of access to resources; suffering of stigma; frustrations of process; and perils of precariousness. Whilst these pains are grouped as such for the purposes of this analysis, in practice they are inter-related, often reinforcing one another in a number of ways, as will become evident within this chapter. Furthermore, these pains could be felt differently and to varying extents by individuals, relating to different aspects of their own experiences.

The lack of access to resources

This category refers to those pains related to the individual's inability to access resources they might usually expect to. This concept has links to notions of social exclusion, which are often constructed as being related to an individual's "social isolation and segregation from the formal structures and institutions of the economy, society, and the state." (Somerville, 1998, p. 762), or understood as "being excluded from (or drifting out of) the way of living, the life resources or living conditions that are customary and approved of in a given society." (Moisio, 2002, p. 170). However, the category introduced here differs from notions of social exclusion in that its focus is largely on an individual's own personal feelings of deprivation and exclusion. These were split into two main areas within

accounts: an individual's inability to access the resources of shelter when sleeping rough; and a person's inability to access a full range of resources such as goods, services, and facilities they might otherwise expect to access.

A lack of shelter was referred to in terms of a feeling of being exposed and lacking in privacy. In this sense, the emotional pains of being vulnerable were evident, in addition to the physical nature of being cut off. For David, the emotional impact of this was clear, as he suggested: "That was the darkest point, when I was sleeping rough". Despite being referred to as *sleeping* rough, numerous accounts of such lack of accommodation discussed being unable to sleep when on the street. This was the case for David, who suggested that he would "cat nap" (sleep for short periods) when possible. For Max, who had slept on a bench, this was also the case. He took the below photograph during his auto-photography, and described the experience of sleeping on it:

Figure 6: Image from Max's auto-photography

Max	That particular bench right there. That was my bed for one night, mate. I came over err, to Slowville after umm [an accommodation service] in Hilltops sent me over here, and I got to the shelter and they couldn't have me for the night, so I had to sleep on that bench. Doesn't that look cosy? Nice and warm isn't it? Oh it's just so lovely.
Interviewer	What was it like sleeping on the bench?
Max	I didn't go to sleep that night. I was scared for my life. It was horrible, mate, it was so cold. I didn't even have a sleep bag with me, which I left over in Hilltops. I was freezing, mate, throughout the whole night, trying to just wrap up warm. It was fucking, it was bad. It was really bad.

Here, Max made reference not only to his vulnerability in terms of safety, but also to the cold. In this sense, Somerville's notion of a "lack of hearth" is evident here. Victor also discussed his lack of sleep when on the streets, stating: "Not good, don't like it and I didn't even sleep, I was just fuming, livid, angry, alright. Very much so". Stuart also discussed being unable to sleep when sleeping rough. However, the cold conditions during his stay added a further layer of perceived vulnerability, as he discusses below:

We had a really, really cold winter. I can remember one night I was out, and I was so cold, I mean, really, really cold. And I just walked around all night, you know, there wasn't a question of me sitting down somewhere and trying to sleep 'cause I probably would've died.

Therefore, in being unable to access shelter, individuals are not only 'cut off' from society in a physical sense, but also suffer emotional pains of vulnerability and fragility when sleeping rough (linked to the perils of precariousness discussed later within this chapter).

In addition to the exclusion of being unable to access shelter, individuals also have increased difficulties in accessing goods, services and facilities when sleeping rough. Discussion of this within accounts often focused upon food and drink, being (un)able to maintain oneself (wash, clean and clothe), and being (un)able to access services. Max spoke about being unable to get food whilst sleeping rough:

Max	Do you have any idea how deprived and low down you feel after you've eaten half a cheeseburger which has been left for about half a day, out on the side street, because you're that hungry?
Interviewer	How did it feel?

Max   Like you wanted to end it there and then.

Max suggested that this inability to access food led him to shoplift for his food, suggesting that "I had to go shoplift for my food. I had no choice but to, you know, I got put into that much of a bad position that I had to go do illegal criminal activity to be able to feed myself". Max described this as being a highly constraining situation, in which he had little perceived alternative. Similarly, Craig spoke about his difficulties accessing drinking water whilst sleeping rough:

> Where do you get clean water? You can't get clean water in here [Well Centre]. If you go to McDonalds it's hot water, you go to the bus station it's hot water. You can't get clean drinking water anywhere in Midtown, apart from a pub but they don't open until eleven o'clock do they?

Although individuals were able to access these resources some of the time, this was often only at the times when services were open, and access to these was therefore out of their control. Thus the lack of access to resources is also evident in only having access to services at particular times.

Further, having the ability to wash, clean and buy clothes (to maintain oneself) was discussed as being difficult when sleeping rough. Stuart discussed his inability to buy clothes because of a lack of money:

> I haven't bought myself any new clothes since I've been back in Midtown. I bought myself a pair of jeans from here [Well Centre] that cost me twenty pence. They're actually women's jeans, you wouldn't know that, it's only that the button does on the other side. I don't care, they're a relatively nice pair of jeans. Now they're worn through that I can't wear them anymore 'cause my arse is hanging out but umm, you know, I don't know when I'll be able to buy a new set of clothes. My clothes are dirty now. Not that I don't wash my clothes, it's just that I don't have any other clothes to change into.

Similarly, whilst on the streets, David was unable to access showering facilities. He spoke of wearing a number of layers at all times, "to keep the cold out and to keep the smell in". David discussed showering for the first time in a number of weeks, stating: "When I climbed into the shower I almost broke down in tears". This demonstrates the emotional toll the pains of homelessness can have on individuals.

In discussing his lack of access to resources, Craig spoke of lacking a mobile phone. Here, he spoke of the way in which this could limit one's ability to access homelessness services: "If you haven't got a phone, how are they gonna contact you [to offer you a place in accommodation]? How are you gonna get battery power when you, say you did have a mobile phone, how are you meant to charge it?" Thus access to facilities and services could be impacted by and impact upon the lack of other resources individuals could draw upon (impacted by their physical exclusion from some spaces creating a lack of resources, such as electricity or money; but with this lack of resources also making it more difficult to access these spaces).

Therefore, the pains felt through the lack of access to resources are multiple through an inability both to access shelter and to fully access services, facilities and goods, due to the constraints associated with being homeless. These provide both physical and emotional levels of pain for individuals, as the above accounts show.

The suffering of stigma

In addition to a lack of access to resources, there are pains associated with the stigma of being homeless, and the spoiled identity this ascribes to individuals (Goffman, 1990b; Snow & Anderson, 1993, 1987; Rayburn & Guittar, 2013; Parsell, 2011b). Max discussed this, stating: "you know what really pisses me off is how most of society looks down on people who are homeless. I'm eighteen years old, I've got my whole life ahead of me. I'm homeless." He felt that this perception was amplified by the media, who he felt portrayed "homelessness to be an extremely bad thing when you've hit rock bottom. And yeah, you've hit rock bottom, but we're human beings. We are all equal." In particular, Max felt that homeless individuals were sometimes de-humanised, which he

suggested failed to acknowledge that "every single one of those people has a heart, has a brain and has feelings, they're a human being, not a fucking animal."

Such stigmatised ways of understanding the lives of rough sleepers have parallels to those found in policy documents. Indeed, notions of lives being off track were evident in such accounts, as Max makes clear when he talks of homelessness being "rock bottom". The de-valued status of the lives of rough sleepers was evident in Stuart's account of his feelings of being homeless, as he said: "being homeless it, it made me feel dreadful. You know, I could put loads more words on it, but it made just feel generally all round dreadful and worthless, which was terrible".

Although all individuals experiencing homelessness bore a stigma relating to their homelessness, this could be felt more keenly by some, depending on the individual's perceived deservingness of support. Indeed, being categorised as deserving or undeserving could impact on the way in which individuals were treated. Although this categorisation was largely ascribed by others, Victor, a former homelessness support worker, spoke about stereotypes of homeless individuals generally, but also highlighted his own experience. He suggested that his knowledge of processes and willingness to challenge staff had led him to be seen as a 'troublemaker' conferring an undeserving status:

> some people can be so judgemental it's unreal, right, about whoever. And there are actually, there's a lot of homeless people out there that are mega intelligent, right and people just don't realise that, how intelligent they could [be], do you know what I mean? Whether it's degrees or whatever and they've just had a crisis in their life, something's happened, or it might be just a breakdown. But something has happened, but people 'you're homeless, you're dirty, you're scum, you're this, you're that'. I see it in here, right, so that's why some, I mean, some don't like me in here, because I see things, I know certain things, how certain things should be done. I'm still human, treat me as a human, there's nothing wrong with me.

Instead, Victor felt that the 'average drug user' might be seen as *more* deserving of support than he was, because they were less likely to challenge staff. As such, the categories of lackers; slackers; or

unwilling victims (Rosenthal, 2000)[11] could in different circumstances shift in their deserving status, based upon other factors (such as their willingness to challenge staff, or their playing by the rules and expectations of services). Therefore, whilst expressions of autonomy were possible, the symbolic power of these (e.g. as signifying deviant behaviour) meant that autonomy was not free, but carried important consequences for individuals. As Victor's account shows (and the perils of precariousness further demonstrate), being deemed undeserving of support could easily happen, and thus expressions of autonomy had to be carefully managed by individuals.

The spoiled identities that individuals carried also meant that they endured a further suffering of stigma, that of a lack of 'voice'. Stuart discussed this in relation to his experience of applying for Job Seeker's Allowance. On one occasion, he had lost the form which detailed his job search. However, as he discussed, being in a position of having a spoiled identity meant that he had to carefully negotiate his position, since protesting could have worsened his position:

> I managed to kind of talk 'em round, umm, but I remember thinking, you know, if someone else was in that situation who maybe umm, yeah I could've easily snapped at that moment and told 'em to go and fuck 'emselves and that would've been it then, you know, the whole focus would've been on the words that I'd used, rather than what the actual issue was. You know, that I was homeless. Of course, you know, I don't have a filing cabinet, you know. And it was kind of like these are the rules, we're not interested in the whys. You've broken the rules. The whys will come about when it goes to review, and that review would've meant that my money was at best four or five days late.

Here, Stuart's ability to negotiate relied largely on impression management (Goffman, 1978) to perform 'appropriately' (e.g. through body language and spoken language). Although he negotiated this successfully, the stigma Stuart bore potentially meant that his behaviour was under greater scrutiny than would normally be the case. This meant that Stuart was unable to voice protest in his own way, as his form of protest and complaint would have rendered him perhaps unmanageable as well as ungrateful of the support given, and thus undeserving of further support.

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[11] Other similar distinctions have been made within the literature such as bad, mad and sad (Seal, 2005); or sin talk, sick talk and system talk (Gowan, 2010).

Thus the suffering related to having a spoiled identity was keenly felt by some rough sleepers. In expressing notions of being worthless, de-humanised and lacking in voice and autonomy, homelessness is seen to carry a stigma for those who experience it, so that the suffering of stigma could be felt in a number of ways by rough sleepers.

The frustrations of process

Further pains were also evident in the accounts of individuals experiencing homelessness, namely the frustrations of process. By this, it is meant that these individuals are reliant upon processes largely outside of their own control for progress through housing, income and other welfare programmes. Such processes were often the outcomes of techniques for managing the behaviours of people in marginal positions, and often involved judgements being made about individuals (e.g. in relation to deservingness). As Skeggs (2005, p. 977) suggests, such judgements might be understood as a method of social control of the working classes:

> Attributing negative value to the working class [or other homeless individuals or groups] is a mechanism for attributing value to the middle-class self (such as making oneself tasteful through judging others to be tasteless). So, it is not just a matter of using some aspects of the culture of the working class to enhance one's value, but also maintaining the *position of judgement* to attribute value, which assigns the other as immoral, repellent, abject, worthless, disgusting, even disposable.

Such processes were often frustrating for individuals who were the subjects of such judgements, as rough sleepers were reliant upon gatekeepers (such as service providers), who could judge by rules which could be inflexible or not accepting of their personal circumstances (although, as seen within chapter six, service providers also had considerable discretion in interpreting such rules). Furthermore, such processes were often focused upon rough sleepers' homeless or other (e.g. unemployed) status, and as such could serve to reinforce their stigmatised positions.

Sometimes, processes and procedures meant that individuals were unable to access services immediately, or only for limited amounts of time. Craig spoke about the delay he faced in being able to access accommodation, as did Kelvin who said:

> I went to the council, I stayed on the street for about a month, I think it was December, no it was November, no it weren't, was it, yeah it was December, I stayed out for about a week or two weeks out in the cold in the umm train station, and then I went back to the council, and they gave me a place in the [local] hotel in Dryborough. I stayed there for three weeks.

Thus, the frustrations of process were evident in the time taken for some individuals to access services. In addition to this, the process of attempting to access services could mean a daily ritual of asking services for spaces, ritualising this pain, as David discussed:

> We were told that go down [to the local hostel] first in the morning at 8 o'clock and ask to put your name down on the list for a room, and if anyone's moving out that day they know, and if your name's at the top of the list and a space becomes available then you're in.

Additionally, when experiencing homelessness for the first time or in a new space, the initial lack of knowledge of the terrain of homelessness (and the need to negotiate this in order to access services) could be a process of uncertainty for individuals. David suggested that of his experience of homelessness, "That was the worst bit, not knowing who to turn to or where to go." Similarly, Max spoke about his initial reaction when his mother told him to leave his family home:

> I don't know what I'm supposed to do, soon as she's chucked me out, I'm thinking 'fuck, what do I do?' I go straight to my mates, I'm homeless. Go council, what do they do? They fucking ring social services, you know, they get me over to Hilltops, living in a hostel, you know, fucking, it was horrible, mate.

Here, Max's account of negotiating this terrain showed the way in which these processes could be painful. Although his referral to a hostel prevented him from sleeping rough, he still described the experience as "horrible". Therefore, although this formed part of the procedure for dealing with homeless people his age, the obligatory nature of this process meant that he was unable to avoid the difficulties it entailed.

Similarly, processes relating to rules and their inflexibility sometimes created difficulties for individuals. This was the case for Stuart, when he had lost his proof of looking for work:

> I'd go to the dole to sign on, and I remember one time, I'd lost my umm, you have to do like, you have to show 'em that, you know, your job search, and I'd lost the bit of paper like with the job search and I didn't realise till I'd turned up there that I'd lost it. And they were gonna put me up to a review, so that review would've been whether they would've sanctioned my money, you know, the small bit of money that they give me, they would sanction that, and I would've nothing, or I think you get like a hardship payment of I think it's about half the money that you usually get. And even if they haven't umm, you know, even if it'd gone up to the review and they hadn't sanctioned me it meant that I wouldn't have got my money on the day I was expecting it and I'd borrowed money from people, and I needed that money on that day.

Stuart's account shows the relationship between the suffering of stigma and the frustrations of process, since this process can be seen as an outcome (and reinforcing) of his stigmatised position. Furthermore, this details the precariousness of his access to resources, with access to money potentially being reduced. Such an example shows the way in which the different pains of homelessness are interactive, and subjectively experienced by individuals.

In other ways, rules and procedures meant that individuals were limited in their access to resources. Victor wanted to look for accommodation in Slowville, but had no 'local connection', so had been low priority when looking for accommodation. However, moving to a place where a large relocation programme was taking place improved his chances of finding accommodation, despite having no 'local connection' to this place. This represented a best choice from the limited options available, due to rules which limited his opportunities elsewhere. He said:

> Do I want to move to Greenton? No, right, of course bloody not. What's in Greenton? Jack shit, nothing, right (laughs). But it's cheaper, I think new start. I saw a board, sorry, there was a board at the train station, and what was it [that] it said. Earn your own money, meet new people, umm, it was about five different things. And you know when something sticks in your mind and you think yeah.

In addition to rules at this level, matching the criteria for access to services could be an issue for individuals. This was particularly the case when attempting to access support services, and these criteria could change over time. David discussed this in relation to his stay in an accommodation service:

> [Because] they were going to be moving into the new building, the criteria was going to be different, it wasn't just homeless, you had to have drug and/or drink problems as well in order to live in the new building. And 'cause I didn't fall into that category, I just had mental health issues, severe as they were, umm, the outlook wasn't too bright.

The dynamic and changing nature of processes and systems created a complex field of negotiation for individuals, and in this way created a further pain of process – that of *changing* processes. In addition to accessing support services, the changes in welfare and housing systems and policies created fast-changing processes, which were reflected in discussions of individuals being able to access these. Changes in these processes meant that individuals had to re-negotiate the processes, enduring pains similar to those who were new to homelessness, and reinforcing the precariousness of their situation, as processes, rules or eligibility criteria could change with little or no warning. As such, provision for rough sleepers can be understood to be chaotic and unstable at times.

Within these accounts, the limiting and constraining nature of processes and rules acted as a form of pain to individuals, since these complex systems could impact on the opportunities available to rough sleepers, both immediately (such as access to accommodation services and welfare services) and in the long-term (e.g. access to elements of welfare and housing provision).

The perils of precariousness

When experiencing homelessness, individuals encounter a number of situations in which their position is precarious or insecure. This was across a number of dimensions, such as finances, safety,

access to services, and accommodation situations (Marsh & Kennett, 1999; Sharam & Hulse, 2014; Standing, 2011).

Within the accounts of individuals in this study, this was most obvious in the form of safety, with individuals noting their feelings of being at risk of being victimised when sleeping rough. Max, who had been sleeping rough in an underground car park, spoke of his experience of being urinated on:

Max	Somebody pissed on me. Whilst I was sleeping one night. Yeah, he err, I dunno who he was, but err, he pissed on me. How fucking nice. 'Cause there was that gap, looked over, think it was about two o'clock in the morning, Saturday night, I was getting pissed on. You know, how would that make you feel, if you were in a sleeping bag, getting pissed on? How would you feel?
Interviewer	How did you feel?
Max	There's no word to describe it. There is no word to describe it in the human, well the English dictionary, there's not a word for it.

This precariousness and insecurity was not only felt when sleeping rough, but also in service spaces.

Both Alexander and Max spoke about their experiences of staying in hostels, with Max claiming:

> I had a laptop stolen off of me, an Xbox stolen off of me, TV stolen off of me, numerous clothes stolen off of me, my room got broken into about twice every month. Was fights in there. Somebody even put a fucking heroin needle under my fucking door. You know, I didn't know what that person had, he might've had AIDS for fucks sake, but I nearly stood on it. You know what I mean, that would've gone into my blood stream. Oh congratulations, I'm fucked! You know, it was horrible in there. It was, it was a nightmare.

In addition to the precariousness surrounding safety, precariousness around possessions was evident. Four of the participants in the research spoke of having to leave possessions when moving between hostels or into homelessness. Kelvin spoke of his experience of leaving his possessions at his former girlfriend's house after five men told him to leave:

> I've never seen anyone so fucking big. They were like that, muscles out here, I thought fuck, and there was like five of 'em like that, and I was like fuck that shit, so I legged it, didn't go back there. I left my shit there, I left my Nan's shit there, I left everything there and I ain't even got it back yet.

Further, financial precariousness was evident in accounts of homelessness, although being housed did not always reduce this, as Stuart found. Here, he discusses his financial precariousness shortly after exiting homelessness, claiming:

> I feel at the moment that I have to be really careful not to just give up and think well sod it, I'm just gonna just do loads of drugs and fuck it, and you know, do crime and just live for the day. Because if I do that, I will be homeless again. You know, I have to, I have to be really, really careful. I won fifty pounds yesterday, I actually collected it today, on a free competition, was really, really lucky.

Furthermore, precariousness in various homeless situations was evident even outside of sleeping rough, with sofa surfing and hostel stays often conditional and contingent upon factors outside of an individual's control. This created uncertainty, which in itself could be painful, as it gave a sense of placelessness and lack of fixed abode, as Stuart discussed:

> It felt terrible because I never knew with any certainty where I would be sleeping that night, and I kind of felt I couldn't see an end to my situation. I couldn't see how I was gonna get out of my situation. Umm, I never felt like I was gonna end it all, I felt pretty down, I mean, sometimes I think you saw me when I was there, when I was in quite a bit of a state, you know, like psychologically, and you know, grubby and all the rest of it.

For some, this meant sleeping rough provided a space of certainty, despite its heightened levels of exclusion. Craig's tenancy within a local hostel was due to finish soon, and he discussed the uncertainty this created, suggesting that only harsh weather was holding him back: "It's snowing outside now yeah? But trust me, if it was sunny outside I would rather be on the street. At least you know where you stand." Craig had previously spent time in hostels, and spoke of the difficulties he had encountered in these spaces and when staying with friends:

> I was in there. I got a job. Same thing as here. You have to pay 130 quid a week, so I left that place. I moved in with my mate, and I don't admit it but he was err, physical towards me yeah, not in that gay way, but he'd have a drink and he used to use his fists. So I had to move out of there. Back to square one weren't I. It's like a, what do you call it, revolving dance floor. Trust me, if you can ever prove a point off these people yeah, you'll never move [from] step one, because it just keeps going round and round.

Craig referred to this as a "revolving dance floor", discussing the cyclical nature of his homelessness. Such claims might support previous research which has highlighted the episodic nature of many accounts of homelessness (May, 2000a) and what Carlen (1996, p. 103) has called the "no win circle". Further, the idea of not being able to move away from this cycle and lacking control are apparent, when Craig suggests that "you'll never move [from] step one, because it just keeps going round and round."

In addition to this, and related to the suffering of stigma, the precariousness of deservingness was evident in some accounts. This related to the fine line between being seen as deserving or undeserving of support, and the ways in which individuals could move between these groups (often moving from deserving to undeserving categorisation). This was particularly apparent in service spaces, as will be discussed later in this chapter.

Apparent here is the precariousness of situations for rough sleepers. These are related to the safety and security of oneself and one's belongings, but also in relation to the precariousness of access to services, as well as the precariousness of being within a deserving category for support. Thus, the ways in which precariousness could affect the lives of rough sleepers are multiple when experiencing homelessness.

Summary: Revisiting the pains of homelessness

As Somerville (1992) suggests, homelessness is multi-dimensional in nature. This is evident from the above accounts of the pains of homelessness, which suggest that homelessness is experienced as being more than houselessness. Whilst these hurts are separated for the purposes of discussion here, they are inter-related and difficult to separate in practice. Therefore the pains of homelessness can be multiple, multi-dimensional and related to each other. Across these four: the

lack of access to resources; the suffering of stigma; the frustrations of process; and the perils of precariousness, individuals can experience or live with the threat of physical harms. However, in addition to this, these difficulties carry severe emotional impacts on individuals, with individuals discussing this as being "the darkest point" (David), "rock bottom" (Max) and homelessness "made me just feel generally all round dreadful and worthless" (Stuart). These pains inevitably create chaotic and difficult to manage situations for rough sleepers, since the conditions they foster are unstable and open to rapid change. However, within their accounts, rough sleepers discussed their attempts to manage these pains.

Managing the pains of homelessness

In order to manage these physical and emotional pains, individuals build up different forms of resilience and coping strategies. Here it is important to differentiate between survival techniques that might be seen as fundamental to a person's life, and these tactical shows of agency which often went beyond just survival, and provided ways of coping with the different dimensions of the pains of homelessness (Cloke et al., 2010). Such methods were evident in a number of accounts, and these could take different forms for each individual. However, some common management techniques were apparent, and these are split into three ways of managing the pains of homelessness: the use of spaces; the use of homeless cultures; and the use of services. Although a range of methods were evident, these three methods were commonly cited by individuals within the research, and as such appear to represent three of the most significant ways in which individuals attempted to negotiate and manage their homelessness on a day-to-day basis.

The three methods of management were interactive, with each potentially affecting and being affected by the other two. For example, the use of space could both affect an individual's ability to understand and engage with locally specific homeless cultures (if a culture already existed in that

location), and might impact on which services are available to that individual. However, engagement in homeless cultures and using services might also open up (or close off) opportunities for accessing spaces or making decisions about where to stay. Similarly, use of spaces might mean engaging with particular locally distinct homeless cultures, or the presence of a particular culture might deter a person from using services. Thus, these aspects of management and negotiation are intertwined in complex and multiple ways.

In discussing these, individuals gave accounts of the order within their own lives, in contrast to the stereotypical notions of having chaotic lives, demonstrating negotiation and management skills. Although not always considered good order, these techniques provided individuals with an ability to navigate through complex day-to-day situations of homelessness.

Use of space

Within accounts of being homeless, a number of individuals spoke about their use of different places and spaces. Often these discussions were about why people chose to frequent particular spaces when sleeping rough. These suggested that space provided a way for rough sleepers to manage the pains of homelessness and develop order in response to the inherently chaotic and constraining situation of having no accommodation.

Order through spaces

During episodes of homelessness, individuals made decisions about which towns to stay in. These decisions were important, since each local area could represent a locally distinct homeless setting (including cultures, criteria for support, services available). This was the case between the three

areas considered in this research (Midtown, Dryborough and Slowville), and has also been suggested to be the case by previous authors (Cloke et al., 2010).

In deciding where to stay, rough sleepers drew upon their knowledge of locations. This often meant staying in places where they had existing social networks. For example, after an intimate relationship ended, Craig returned to Midtown to live with his family. This was also the case for Gary who returned to his parents' hometown after being given a medical discharge from the army. Laura also made a decision based around where her family lived, and the perceived opportunities this afforded her, as living in the same local authority area as her family would give her a local connection to that area, increasing her chances of accessing housing.

However, choice of locations was also shaped by heavily constraining factors, such as a lack of money to travel between towns and cities (access to resources); or knowledge of the formal processes for registering for housing in an area. This was the case for Louise, who, after being released from a mother and child assessment centre, slept in the local train station due to being unable to travel outside of Dryborough. Similarly, Adam was largely unable to travel outside of London, something he needed to do in order to sofa-surf, as he detailed:

> I did have friends that I could sort of sofa surf, but most of my friends, 'cause I'd travelled with the funfair, ... I had friends in just about everywhere really, so when it came to sofa surfing it wasn't so easy 'cause when you've just spent a couple of nights on your friends sofa in London it wasn't so easy to ring someone in Blackpool for instance and go 'oh you haven't got a sofa for a couple of nights have you?', 'yeah of course I have mate come on up here'. Well it's not so easy as just a come on up here when you're homeless, you haven't got the money to be hopping on trains. So you're hopping on trains and they'll kick you off after a couple of stops, you've then got to wait for the next train, they'll kick you off again after a couple of stops. And that normal five hour trip will take you two days to do.

Thus, individuals appeared to express agency in their decisions about where to stay. However, such decisions were not free choices, and were heavily shaped by their access to resources and knowledge.

In addition to decisions over which towns to stay in, people also made decisions about spaces within towns and cities. Cloke, May, & Johnsen (2010) have suggested that a focus on places to earn, eat, sleep and hang out is evident in accounts of homeless individuals' use of space, and these uses of space were evident within rough sleepers' accounts in this research too. Through developing geographical knowledge, and developing mental maps of cities and towns, rough sleepers were able to bring order to the chaotic situation of having no accommodation, and as such, use of space provided a method of negotiating the pains of homelessness. In doing so, rough sleepers demonstrated skills of applying their own agency, to develop order through their use of space. This is in contrast to policy understandings of rough sleepers which see them as chaotic and as having deficits.

One particular use of space which has received little academic attention has been the use of invisible or hidden spaces. Staying in hidden or invisible spaces meant that individuals could manage their own stigma to friends and relatives, as a form of impression management (Goffman, 1978). Victor and Stuart both spoke of not speaking to friends or family whilst they were homeless due to their embarrassment at their situation. In addition to this, hidden spaces provided an element of protection from the risks that rough sleeping entailed. David detailed his account of sleeping rough, stating:

> [I slept rough] mostly in the area where I lived, kind of hiding in bushes and trees and what not, and there was a bridge nearby with kind of a footpath bridge and on the underside of that where it kind of comes down to the ground there's a kind of little gap where I'd try to kip in there. … I didn't want to leave the area 'cause I knew it so well. But I didn't want to be seen, I was embarrassed and ashamed. I didn't want to be seen by anyone I knew, to see me in that situation, sleeping rough. Why, I don't know, some part of my dignity hadn't quite died.

David spoke of the trade-off between knowing the area (thus reducing the perils of precariousness through lowering the risks of the unknown and unfamiliar) and the risk of being seen by someone

he knew (thus increasing the suffering of stigma through shame). His desire was for a space that provided relative safety, but also where he was hidden or invisible - a form of managing and negotiating multiple pains of homelessness at the same time. The negotiation and management of different pains was not only apparent in David's account of different spaces. Craig, for example, stayed in Patford, a small village outside of Midtown, where he was largely unable to access the services (e.g. food, water, washing facilities) he would be able to in Midtown, but spoke of his reasons for staying in Patford, stating: "I just know it's safe. … I can have a fire. Alright, it takes you an hour to get into town, but I'm not gonna sleep in a fucking doorway over here." Although staying in Patford meant that Craig may have been in some ways further excluded (e.g. from the services, goods and facilities available in Midtown), this place provided him with a place to be invisible and hidden, which allowed him to negotiate the perils of precariousness (as he felt that this area was safe). Thus, for both David and Craig, the use of invisible space allowed some management of the pains that homelessness could bring. However, this came at the cost of potentially increasing other pains, and so involved a process of careful negotiation.

Such careful negotiation shows the ways in which rough sleepers demonstrate forms of individual responsibility for their own use of space, drawing on their own skills and knowledge to negotiate access to the most useful spaces. These uses of space can be understood as forms of contextualised rational action, in which individuals are using their own agency to negotiate their experience. Whilst the context of being homeless plays a role in their decision-making, individuals are also using their own knowledge and skills to make rational choices about where to stay within the local area. Furthermore, taking McNaughton Nicholls' (2009) approach, these behaviours might be understood as being transgressive. Within their context, however, they have a firm rational foundation, as is evident within each individual's account of the reasons for choosing these locations.

Negotiating access to spaces

Access to spaces often had to be negotiated by rough sleepers. Adam spoke of his time sleeping

rough in central London, and his use of buses as a means of reducing the exclusion of homelessness:

> I was sleeping rough most of the time. Umm, I found umm, night buses and things like that in central London are always useful 'cause you could always get half an hour's kip at the back of there when you needed somewhere with a roof over your head, and they'd just turn a blind eye 'cause 90% of the time they could tell, right, you know, they'd wake you up at the end of the line and you'd go 'look mate, I've got a travelcard I'm living on the streets at the minute' and they'd just go 'all right just stay there mate, we're turning the bus round in ten minutes we'll be heading back down, blah, blah, blah' and 'fine just drop me off wherever you drop me off, it's not gonna make any difference to, to my situation, I'm still gonna be living on the streets'.

The suffering of stigma is evident in Adam's account of his encounters with bus drivers, although

their attitude appears to be accepting of his rough sleeper status. Sleeping on buses may have

provided a best solution for Adam to get some relief from the lack of access to shelter. Similarly,

Louise spoke of her experience of sleeping at the train station in Dryborough:

> Louise   I lived at the train station for three months (laughs).
> Interviewer And what was that like?
> Louise   Horrible. It was cold, but there was nowhere else sheltered to sleep, so I used to sleep under benches in the train station. It was so easy to get into, just foot over the gate (laughs). So like, yeah, I used to sleep under benches at the train station. And then I met somebody.

Here, Louise spoke of this as being the only space with shelter, showing that this reduced the pains

of exclusion by giving a form of shelter. However, this was not a perfect solution, since she

described sleeping in the train station as being horrible and cold, showing the ways in which physical

exclusion from spaces still had some impact on her, despite providing some form of shelter. She

also made reference to the ease with which she was able to access this space, thus being able to

negotiate a lack of access to resources (shelter), something she discussed further:

> There weren't many cameras, it was just like vault over the gate, 'cause the cameras used to move, and so we had to watch cameras, and when they turned away we jumped just over the gates, it was quite cool (laughs). It was hilarious.

Within these extracts, Louise's ability to access this space is described as "easy", "cool" and "hilarious". Whilst Louise might be accused of romanticising this, it is her account of ease of access which is important here.

However, whilst the use of space could provide a way to manage the pains of homelessness and chaos of having no accommodation, access to spaces had to be constantly re-negotiated. This was the case for Louise, who had to re-access the train station every day; and for Adam, who had to negotiate with bus drivers to allow him to stay for as long as possible. Thus, access to such spaces was precarious, and situations could change with little or no warning. During her second episode of homelessness, Louise again attempted to access the train station, but increased security measures made this more difficult:

> This time I couldn't even go to the train station, 'cause it was, you know they've got all them barriers and you can't get in there, do you know what I mean?

Summary

Whilst use of spaces and places could act as a way to manage and negotiate the pains of homelessness, these had to be negotiated, drawing on rough sleepers' own skills and knowledge. Often, access to these spaces allowed some temporary relief from the pains of homelessness, and the situation of having no accommodation. This demonstrated the order that rough sleepers actively seek to bring to their own experiences of being homeless by gaining temporary relief from the pains of homelessness and the instability having no accommodation. However, these spaces were often short-term solutions and lacked long-term guarantees. They had to constantly be re-negotiated, creating precarious spaces to which rough sleepers could lose access with little or no warning. As such, rough sleepers attempted to bring order and express agency through their use of space, in contrast to dominant understandings of rough sleepers which understood their lives as being chaotic and lacking in order. Whilst these might initially appear off track to an outsider looking

in, within the context of the pains of homelessness and the constraints these bring, these management techniques help individuals to negotiate the immediate day-to-day difficulties homelessness can bring. However, alongside the use of different spaces and places, there are other ways in which individuals attempted to manage their day-to-day positions of homelessness, such as through engaging with homeless cultures.

Use of homeless cultures

Becoming involved with elements of homeless cultures could also act as a way to manage some of the chaos that the pains of homelessness brought. Homeless cultures provided support in various ways, through sharing of knowledge, guiding through processes, and emotional support.

Social support and individual agency

For some individuals, belonging to a homeless culture provided a way of 'fitting in', as they found that issues or needs which were not accepted outside of homeless cultures were accepted within homeless cultures. In particular, individuals discussed accounts of alcohol and illicit drug use; mental health problems; or ways of coping with personal issues that had been deemed unacceptable or inappropriate in other settings. Thus, a tolerance of personal issues was apparent in homeless cultures, in line with previous research which has highlighted the tolerance of "unusual norms" in homelessness services (Johnsen et al., 2005a, p. 796). This was the case for Laura, who stated that:

> All these people on the streets, they found, I found that they were more loving than my family was. And I soon forgot about my family. I told social services I want, I don't want to go back there.

Belonging to a homeless culture could also help individuals to negotiate their lack of access to resources, and the support afforded to individuals could help them to negotiate the frustrations of

process whilst providing a buffer to the precariousness they experienced. This was evident in forms of shared knowledge, whereby individuals would share information and skills. Individuals would help each other to complete forms, a show of support that allowed for negotiation of the frustrations of process.

Information about spaces, places and services was shared between individuals within homeless cultures, such as in Louise's account of being shown how to get access to the train station she slept in: "Yeah, good bunch of people [staying at the train station] to be fair (laughs), they showed me how to get in." This sharing of knowledge allowed individuals to manage the pains of homelessness, for example through sharing knowledge of which service provided what goods and facilities, through sharing information about safe or known spaces, and through sharing knowledge about how to negotiate processes (such as form filling). Information was also spread among rough sleepers, especially information about the range and quality of services provided. In addition to this, the rules and expectations in different spaces, places, and services were discussed, allowing individuals to manage some of the perils of precariousness evident in these spaces.

Furthermore, the emotional support individuals provided helped others to negotiate the emotional dimensions of the pains of homelessness, as Alexander discussed:

> there was a guy there [staying in the same hotel] who was going through a lot, and me and him chat regular really. So kind of, swap stories, just when we were having a fag outside, and then he goes back in and I go back in, and I come out later and he's there and he's like (simulates speech noises), and I'm like 'yeah' just having a nice old chat, and it's good. ... It lets off steam. Lets out things, like stress. Keeps you calm, 'cause at least you know that whatever goes in comes back out, because you can, you may be able to keep it in, but if you let it out in a nice environment, then it's just going to be calm.

As is evident from these accounts, use of homeless cultures was seen as a way to negotiate the pains of homelessness and the complexities that these could bring. In accepting unusual norms[12], homeless cultures provided some people with a space to belong. Through developing shared knowledge, groups were able to negotiate some of the pains of process, giving individuals increased agency in situations which were highly constraining and largely outside of their control (such as the criteria for receipt of welfare benefits). This suggests that whilst homeless cultures are seen as a threat to social order in policy discourses that see it as a "dangerous lifestyle" (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011b), which fosters 'bad' citizens making 'off track' choices, these in fact offered an important way for rough sleepers to build resistance strategies to government and social processes that stigmatised and marginalised them. However, whilst homeless cultures could provide these ways to negotiate, it is important not to romanticise this. Positions within homeless cultures had to be negotiated by rough sleepers (Ravenhill, 2008).

Negotiating positions

Within the homeless cultures, accounts of hierarchy and order were apparent. These were not universal, and individuals had to understand their locally specific features in order to negotiate their own positions. However, there were some common features amongst these cultures. Within day centres and hostels, sub-cultures were often based and formed around shared interests, stances or beliefs. For example, the hierarchical sub-groups referred to as 'drinkers', 'druggies' and 'normals' elsewhere (Cloke et al., 2010, p. 134; Ravenhill, 2008, p. 159) were mentioned in informal conversation in day centres. Here, hierarchical notions of superiority and distancing were evident,

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[12] Johnsen et al. (2005a) note that "The day centre is… a place where an individual's homeless status— conferred 'other' in most contexts— becomes the 'norm'. Consequently, as Parr (2000) notes of drop-ins for people with mental health problems, bodily appearances, odours and certain behaviours (e.g. sleeping under a table) that might be deemed 'odd' or 'inappropriate' elsewhere, are accepted."

with groups often pointing to others as being less deserving (through forms of distancing, similar to those discussed in further detail in Snow & Anderson (1987).

Ravenhill (2008) has claimed that inverse hierarchies to mainstream culture are evident within homeless cultures, with those considered most in need, and to have gone through the worst experiences, placed at the top of this hierarchy. She claims that this is facilitated by service provision and national policy which prioritises support for those deemed to 'need' it most. Whilst such hierarchies were to some extent present within this research, this was more complex than only focusing upon need or experience. Peter claimed that another service user was well-respected, not only because of his life experiences, but because these were rarely mentioned within day-to-day interaction, and as such this individual was understood to possess a well-respected personal strength. Similarly, appropriate service use played a key role in hierarchies. Individuals could be placed low within a hierarchy if they were felt to use services inappropriately, or to take an unfair share of food. This reflects the findings of Cloke et al.'s (2010) study.

Whilst hierarchies and order offered some of the reasons for sub-groups forming, these also developed based upon mutual interests (often in homeless services), such as playing pool, conversation, participation in skills workshops, and trust. Trust formed a vital role in the negotiation of homeless spaces as it reduced potential threats to losing possessions, with individuals sitting with others they trusted and leaving items in the care of people they trusted (e.g. if using the toilet).

Although established hierarchies and forms of order were evident within homeless cultures, these positions were not fixed and were open to negotiation from individuals. Forms of self-policing were used which acted to maintain or negotiate hierarchical orders (reinforcing notions of trust, mutual interest, and belonging between individuals who supported one another's stance). Positions could

be negotiated in a number of ways, such as sharing what one had, as Trevor talked about when discussing his experience of sleeping rough:

> I have [had periods of sleeping rough] twice. When I was out on the streets I known all the people, I known them all you see. And when I had money I used to dish it out to 'em, they were like family you see, we look after each other like brothers and sisters. "Behave, 'cause we're family", I said. "Sit down, you're brothers and sisters, behave".

Trevor used sharing of his money to build influence within the group, whilst sharing of items reinforced a collective identity (in the form of siblings) within the group. Through this, he negotiated status within an established order by building trust and engendering a sense of belonging.

However, other forms of negotiation were also evident. Whilst this occasionally came about in forms of violence, this was rare in well-established groups, who would often work together to restore the established order. More common was the establishment of leaders or representatives of sub-groups. Here, Duneier's (1999) use of Jacobs' (1972, p. 79) notion of "self-appointed public characters" is relevant. Jacobs (ibid) suggests that:

> A public character is anyone who is in frequent contact with a wide circle of people and who is sufficiently interested to make himself a public character. A public character need have no special talents or wisdom to fulfil his function - although he often does. He just needs to be present, and there need to be enough of his counterparts. His main qualification is that he *is* public, that he talks to lots of different people. In this way, news travels that is of sidewalk interest.

Although both Jacobs' and Duneier's uses of the term relate to "public characters" on sidewalks, the features outlined by Jacobs here could also be applied to some individuals who might be called 'homeless characters'. Some of these were evident, and performed a number of roles within homeless spaces and services. For example, each morning Gary would travel to a local bakery to pick up leftover sandwiches and cakes from the previous day, taking them to the Well Centre for distribution between service users (this also gave Gary a policing role, in which he would allow each person their fair share of one item, one of the informal rules of homeless cultures referred to earlier). Similarly, more formal roles such as Peter's involvement in a homeless charity were

evident. Additionally, William spent time working on the reception of Well Centre, likening this role to one of a counsellor:

> I became more or less like a counsellor to some of them because like, I had a load of, I still do, a load of people coming up to me and asking me for stuff that I find you would only talk to a counsellor about, you know. Umm, so I, I didn't feel that I was mainly there as a receptionist, more of a counsellor.

Such characters could also (although often in limited ways) act as negotiators in order to increase the voice of individuals experiencing homelessness, as although stigmatised, their established role gave them a level of negotiated power not available to all rough sleepers. This was evident in the ways in which individuals were approached to represent homeless groups, for example by service providers.

However, whilst established norms and hierarchies could in some senses maintain social order among homeless individuals, these could also be exclusionary in nature. Craig discussed his experience when first becoming homeless, whereby his clothing meant that he was outside of these norms, and thus individuals were suspicious of him, excluding him initially:

Craig	People look at me, and they all automatically think 'oh he's classy'. Do you know I got charged for that?
Interviewer	What's that?
Craig	When I was in the old hostel, yeah, I'd just split up with my missus. I had designer clothes yeah. They thought I was an undercover copper.

Like Craig, other individuals had to negotiate their positions, and develop an understanding of locally distinct homeless cultures and the norms within them.

Summary

As is evident from the above analysis, engaging with elements of homeless cultures allowed individuals a way to negotiate the pains of homelessness in various ways, through a feeling of belonging and a sense of support. However, to fully engage with this, individuals needed to

understand the complex hierarchies and ordering processes apparent within homeless cultures. Therefore, the processes of hierarchy and order negotiation in homeless cultures showed order, and reflected many dominant views of 'good citizens', such as putting in to get out, supporting peers, and trustworthiness. As such, some of the norms within homeless cultures had similarities to those of mainstream cultures. However, homeless cultures' acceptance of unusual norms often meant that individuals who did not appear to reflect forms of good order reflected in wider society were also accepted into these structures. Individuals themselves had to negotiate the norms and positions of order evident within homeless cultures, doing so through building trust, taking leadership roles, and providing support to others, in many ways reflecting the norms present within mainstream cultures. In addition to engaging with homeless cultures, some individuals also engaged with services as a means of negotiating the day-to-day management of the pains of homelessness, and this forms another important part of understanding the experience of being homeless.

Use of services

In addition to the above methods, service use also formed a way to negotiate the situation of sleeping rough. Use of services allowed for management of some of the pains of homelessness but could also increase others. As a result, careful negotiation of service spaces was evident in some accounts of service use.

Service use and negotiating pains

Service use offered a way to negotiate a number of pains, most obviously those of lack of access to resources, in that it could provide access to shelter as well as goods, services, and facilities (Waters, 1992). A number of individuals made reference to the role of services as doing this, such as David

who spoke about staying in a hostel in Midtown, stating: "Basically I had a roof over my head and food in my belly. And that was the two main things essential, essential for survival I suppose."

Similarly, Stuart spoke about his use of the Well Centre when sleeping rough, saying:

> I remember coming here in the mornings, like half eight in the mornings when it opens, just like, you know, so relieved to just get in somewhere, and I'd get myself in the shower. Sometimes I'd just stand, you know, I'd stand under that hot shower for about ten minutes just standing there, you know, kind of recharging myself.

However, as well as helping to negotiate this 'hard' lack of resources, service use could help to fight 'softer' lack of resources, by providing a place to hang out and socialise (Cloke et al., 2010). Indeed, Trevor spoke of the way in which his use of the Well Centre allowed him "company, and relaxation. Something to do in the mornings, somewhere to go. Pass the time. Umm, see my old friends, make sure they're alright." In this sense, service use could increase the embeddedness of individuals into homeless cultures (although this was something services also tried to move individuals away from (Ravenhill, 2008)).

Services could also reduce the suffering of stigma and a lack of voice, whilst providing ways to negotiate the frustrations of process, as the knowledge and privileged voices of experts in services could give greater power when negotiating access to services such as housing and welfare payments, as Jane discussed:

> If I wasn't here, I would be the one, I would be the one that was phoning the council or going to the council or the Job Centre or wherever sort of thing. Whereas here, it, Nancy helps. She tells me what, where I need to go and what I need to be doing, but it's all with my consent.

Thus, in Jane's case, Nancy's knowledge of these processes allowed for negotiating of these processes, and gave Jane a voice she may not have otherwise had through advocacy (another example of this was service providers providing supporting statements on behalf of service users). Also, within services, conversations between service providers and service users could act as a way of providing support for individuals, and giving voice to homeless individuals, as Laura discussed:

"I've been in worse off places, really I have, obviously. Umm, it's nice to have some support. Err, which is nice to know that there's support there when I need it."

Services provided a way for rough sleepers to potentially develop forms of order. This was most obvious in the ways in which accommodation provided a physical space from which individuals could build. However, this also allowed for some negotiation of the complex pains of process, such as applying for housing. As such, service support in negotiating these processes could allow for increased rough sleeper agency. Therefore, this suggests that rough sleepers could utilise services to build stability and develop forms of order in their experiences of sleeping rough. This is in contrast to dominant discourses which understand them to be chaotic in nature.

However, whilst services could reduce some of the pains of homelessness, they were not always perfect spaces, compared with memories of having a home of one's own. Often services could reduce one or a number of pains, whilst also exacerbating others. Victor spoke of his experience of staying at The Retreat, and the way in which this provided some provision, whilst also presenting other issues, such as getting him 'down':

> three times I've been here. But the first time was umm, not, not a nice experience. Not something I tend to be used to. Umm, I'm extremely grateful to having a roof over my head and being able to eat something. Umm, that is what I can be grateful to. I'm not going to say that the umm oh it's a perfect place to be, it's lovely, it's warm, it's this, it's that. 'Cause it isn't, right. Umm, it's horrible. It can actually get you quite down.

Alexander and Max also spoke about their stays in different accommodation services and spoke of the perils of precariousness these could create, especially in terms of security and safety, and Max spoke of some of the issues of living with people who one would not choose to:

> There are some people in here which I don't get along with. Err, you know, one has threatened me quite a few times, and he's older than me. He's err, wanders around with a pair of scissors in his hands, quite sharp ones, you know the little thin ones, 'cause he'll stab you anytime. Living and sleeping with that fear in the back of your head, he could easily do that, he could easily plunge that into your fucking throat and you drop dead there and then.

Thus, as has been noted elsewhere, service spaces could provide both spaces of care for individuals, but could also represent spaces of danger, especially given the vulnerability of some individuals experiencing homelessness (Johnsen et al., 2005a). In this sense, in some cases service use necessitated behaviours which were perceived to increase one's own personal security, but which appeared chaotic to outsiders (such as carrying a weapon). Furthermore, service use itself could be chaotic, with individuals sharing spaces with a diverse range of other individuals. Furthermore, rough sleepers had to negotiate service use, and in doing so had to display astute skills.

Negotiating service use

In the most basic terms, rough sleepers had to negotiate access to services in terms of time. As services were often limited in the times at which they could open to individuals, and often served meals at set times, individuals had to show an acute awareness of time to ensure that they had access to these. Such an awareness of time seems to contradict notions of chaotic lives identified in policy documents, and the suggestion that time was of little importance to service users (claimed in Well Centre documentation). Instead, it suggests an astute management of time on a daily basis.

However, other forms of negotiation were evident once individuals had accessed services. Engaging with services could provide a way of negotiating the suffering of stigma of being homeless, and being labelled as having off track and chaotic lives. Through engaging with homelessness services, individuals could demonstrate that they were heading on track with their lives. However, in order to do this, individuals had to first accept dominant discourses of having off track, failed and chaotic lives, due to their homelessness, and thus had to attempt to negotiate a position within the discourses of homelessness which saw them as fitting the lackers, slackers or unwilling victims

categories discussed previously (Rosenthal, 2000), either positioning themselves as fitting within a lacker or victim category, or showing 'change' from being within the slacker category.

The different categories individuals were placed into (and subsequent responses from services), whilst largely ascribed, could be open to processes of negotiation and change. Thus, impression management (Goffman, 1978) formed an important part of use of services. Careful impression management was important, since the negotiation of the suffering of stigma within services (for example fitting a deserving unwilling victim rather than an undeserving slacker or deviant category) were unfixed, could be open to change, and were precarious. Further, service expectations and categorisations could operate on an individual level, meaning that individuals had to learn the expectations that each service had of them as an individual. Therefore, this was a complex negotiation process.

Individuals could be expected to engage in activities which demonstrated their engagement with the discourses of having failed lives, and the need for correctional measures to solve this. For example, individuals could engage in voluntary work in service spaces, and this was seen as being a potential route to employment (thus seemingly reducing difficulties relating to a lack of work opportunities). All services within this research offered some form of voluntary work, although the expectation to engage in such work varied widely between services.

Even outside of engagement in activities, careful impression management was an important part of occupying service spaces, in order to negotiate the precarious nature of access to services and the potential suffering of stigma. Such impression management was evident in Max's account of staying at The Retreat, and he detailed the difficulties of negotiating changes once a category had been ascribed:

> Instead of on payday through jobseekers, dole, which fucking most of this population that takes drugs is on, instead of spending it on marijuana, or amphet, or general drugs, I bought myself a pair of boots and a phone. What does that say? I'm wanting to sort my life out. Unfortunately, the staff here don't think that, unfortunately nobody believes me at all. And I am trying my absolute hardest every day to get past this.

In this case, Max's use of money related to his previous drug use, and perceived undeservingness resulting from this. Here, Max's spending shows an attempt to show 'responsible' use of money (on boots and a phone) rather than 'irresponsible' (and 'deviant') use of money on illicit drugs. Indeed, successful impression management could also speed up processes (as individuals were perceived to be correcting their behaviour) and thus reduce the frustrations of process.

As previously mentioned, the spoiled identity rough sleepers carried meant that their behaviour could be deemed to be in need of correction in ways which placed strong restrictions on their autonomy, again as a method of normalising their behaviour. In The Retreat, this meant that all people had a set 'lights out' time in the evenings, which, whilst negotiable, arguably went beyond a responsibilising or normalising role through imposing discipline on individuals (the semi-penal nature of some hostels and approaches has been discussed elsewhere, e.g. Cooper, 2013; Barton & Cooper, 2012; Barton, 2005; Archard, 1979). For example, Craig felt that people had little autonomy and were infantilised within other hostel services, stating:

> Go to bed? Do your own thing. It's like being in the kindergarten. Would I tell you to go to bed? There you go. Would I tell you what shoes to wear? If you wanted to wear a red one and a blue one, it's your choice. Need to tell you what to do every day of the week man.

The precariousness individuals faced meant that they had to carefully negotiate voices of protest against established ways of working, with Craig stating: "if you put your foot down, you get in trouble don't you." Similarly, Victor suggested that he had been in trouble for suggesting alternative methods of working during his time at The Retreat.

Summary

For some rough sleepers, use of services allowed the development of order, as it allowed for the management of a number of the pains of homelessness. However, these services could in themselves create chaotic environments, and could ascribe particular identities to rough sleepers. Service users themselves often had to negotiate the forms of order imposed both at a service level, and by individual service providers themselves, who could have different practices and ways of working. As such, in order to successfully manage and negotiate services, rough sleepers had to be astute in their use of agency and their skills of impression management.

Conclusion

This chapter sets out rough sleepers' own accounts of being homeless. It discusses the ways in which they negotiate their homelessness on a day-to-day basis, and considers these in relation to wider discourses which focus on rough sleepers as being chaotic and having deficits. Initially, the chapter discusses the ways in which rough sleeping entails a number of pains of homelessness. These are split into four categories, which are: lack of access to resources; the suffering of stigma; the frustrations of process; and the perils of precariousness. These are said to be interactive, and in being so, create a situation for rough sleepers which is unstable, chaotic, and rapidly changing.

The second part of this chapter considers the ways in which rough sleepers manage and negotiate these pains on a day-to-day basis. It claims that three main methods of doing so are frequently discussed by rough sleepers. These are: use of space; use of homeless cultures; and use of services. Each of these allows rough sleepers to develop a sense of order and develop their own agency in response to the instability that the pains of homelessness bring. However, these are highly constrained and informed by a range of factors outside of rough sleepers' control. Further, each of

these methods was precarious rather than fixed, and necessitated processes of constant re-negotiation and management – in re-accessing spaces; in managing one's own position in homeless cultures; and in managing one's own ascribed identity in homelessness services. As such, in contrast to discourses which see rough sleepers as being off track, failed, chaotic and having deficits, these processes of negotiation and management suggest that rough sleepers strive to create order in contextually appropriate ways, even if these forms of order do not always reflect the good order a normative discourse might desire. In doing so, rough sleepers utilise their own skill and agency to successfully manage their day-to-day experiences of homelessness and resist discourses which see them as irresponsible and having deficits.

Becoming and being homeless

Across chapters seven, eight, and nine, the experiences of individuals who identify as being or having been rough sleepers have been considered.

In chapter seven, the life stories of three individuals were considered, whilst in chapter eight emergent themes across the accounts of rough sleepers were considered. Chapter nine then considered the day-to-day negotiation of positions of being a rough sleeper.

In considering these three chapters together, it is possible to both see how individuals account for their own lives and how they manage their positions on a day-to-day basis. From these accounts, it is possible to see the importance of context in relation to factors such as family, relationships and employment, which played a role in some accounts of *becoming* homeless. These relationships and structures could be supportive but could also be difficult to negotiate, constraining an individual's agency hugely. Therefore, the resources these relationships brought were often conditional or precarious.

The stories that rough sleepers present of their own lives show more nuanced conceptions of the importance of particular life events, behaviours, and ways of understanding homelessness than is evident in some research, and in policy documents. The stories presented in these chapters show how rough sleepers account for their lives in ways that demonstrate the effectiveness of their agency and capacity to achieve a certain kind of order, even in highly constrained situations.

Chapter Ten

Conclusion

This thesis has focused upon the research question: *How are the lives of rough sleepers understood?*
In order to achieve this, it focused upon three sub-questions:

- How are rough sleepers positioned by services?

- How do rough sleepers account for their own lives?

- How do rough sleepers manage and negotiate their positions on a day-to-day basis?

It has argued that current understandings of these lives found in policy documents, and in some
academic literature, overlook the ways in which rough sleepers provide accounts of their own lives.
It has discussed the ways in which the lives of rough sleepers are positioned in policy documents,
as well as in service documents and by service providers, as being off track, failed or chaotic,
influenced by dominant historical political discourses, and reframed by neoliberal political ideology
that promotes 'responsible' ways of living. It claims that within contemporary mainstream policy
viewpoints, divides between deserving and undeserving groups, whilst historical in nature, are also
re-framed to take account of whether individuals are deemed to have behaved in responsible ways.
Further, in the current context of austerity and increasing rough sleeper numbers, in tandem with
reduced service resources, these views are sharpened not only in political constructions of rough
sleepers, but also by service providers in the rationing of scarce resources for a growing population
of rough sleepers.

Chapter review

Within this thesis, a number of topics have been discussed across the ten chapters. Chapter one introduced the research, claiming that rough sleeping presents an ongoing social issue, adding that this has had a renewed policy and funding focus since 1990. It noted that various attempts to reduce or end rough sleeping over this time have fallen short of intended targets. It suggested that these understandings of rough sleepers' lives often are framed by elites, drawing on historical and ideological ways of thinking, with little attention paid to the understandings that either rough sleepers or front-line workers had of rough sleepers' lives.

Chapter two reviewed the relevant literature. Within this chapter, a changing context of service provision was identified. This highlighted the impact that the re-configuration of relationships between the state and service providers has had upon service provision practices. Evidence of a professionalisation of services was apparent, although not uniform across all services. This review also considered the literature on becoming homeless, focusing on the ways in which causation of homelessness in rough sleepers' lives has been understood. Despite various re-framings through the new orthodoxy, critical realism, and pathways and careers approaches to understanding rough sleepers' lives, many approaches have lacked a detailed understanding of the ways in which rough sleepers account for their own lives. This is in contrast to approaches, such as that employed in this research, which recognise agency and emphasise the importance of context. This chapter also considered the ways in which the day-to-day processes of negotiating positions of homelessness have been considered in previous literature. It focused upon three topics which are apparent within a number of accounts: homeless culture(s); survival strategies; and use of space. Through analysis of this literature, tactics of negotiation were evident, although with different authors suggesting their own accounts of this. Furthermore, local differences between cultures, strategies and spaces

meant that locally distinct scenes and negotiation tactics could be observed in the towns considered within this study.

Chapter three reviewed the policies relating to rough sleepers. It explored historical and current understandings of rough sleepers' lives in policy documents. It began by tracing a brief history of rough sleepers in Christian discourses of governing the poor, and in historical policy and legislation such as the Poor Laws. It also considered how policies have focused on reducing rough sleeping since the inception of the Rough Sleepers Initiative in 1990. It then examined the contemporary political context, focusing upon the impacts of neoliberalism and austerity. Finally, the chapter considered current policy documents, exploring the ways in which rough sleepers' lives are understood in and framed through such policies.

Chapter four presented the methods used within this study. The research employed qualitative approaches, utilising ethnographic methods of participant observation, alongside narrative and visual methods of life mapping and auto-photography, and in-depth semi-structured interviews. Through this, it aimed to develop understandings from a range of perspectives. Through these methods, data was gathered which focused upon rough sleepers' lives as well as their day-to-day methods of negotiating homelessness. In addition to this, the research gathered the views of service providers about their own experiences of service provision, and their views on the rough sleepers they worked with. This provided insightful data which allowed the voices of individuals to be heard.

Chapter five focused upon the discourses of rough sleepers within service documents. These considered three case studies: The Well Centre, the Sun Centre and The Retreat. Within these, the differing definitions of homelessness between services were considered. In addition to this, in discussing the role of service provision, rough sleepers were presented as having needs, problems

and deficits. However, these were seen as both requiring support and compassion in behaviour modifying responses (evoking therapeutic, responsibilising and skills-developing discourses). The emphasis on particular strands of these responses differed between services, for example some services 'responsibilised' clients by charging for items such as hot drinks while other services provided them for free. Similarly, the emphasis placed on direct interventions such as skills management differed across services.

Chapter six explored the discourses of service providers. Initially, previous accounts of the role of street-level bureaucrats were analysed. These analyses proposed that interpretations of policies and rules were made at street level, with contextual factors such as resources, interactions with colleagues and the public, and individuals' own views of morality affecting decision making. Within service provider accounts, policies made at national level were often seen as having little relation to provision on the ground, with service policies and rules seen as more important for day-to-day provision of services. In addition, the ideals and realities of service provision were considered. These were important for understanding the ways in which service providers understood their own role, as well as some of the complexities they face in the day-to-day delivery of services. The chapter then explored the ways in which service users were spoken about by service providers. Three main themes were evident in service provider accounts: first, understandings of rough sleepers which understood rough sleepers as having chaotic lives, being vulnerable, and being potentially risky; second, understandings of causation, often relating to morality; and third, discussions of the perceived deservingness of rough sleepers. In these three themes, service providers drew on lay normative and policy discourses about rough sleepers. However, complexities and counter-narratives were also present. The impact of experiences of service provision was also noticeable within these discourses. Finally, the chapter explored the perceived role of services. Within this, recurring aspects were apparent, namely: providing resources and responsibilising rough sleepers;

moving on service users and rehabilitating them to mainstream services and housing; taking care to provide a space away from judgement and difficulties; and friendship.

Chapter seven considered the life stories of three cases in detail. These accounts highlighted different life stories of becoming homeless. Across these accounts, the complex role of different contextual factors was discussed, with a contextualised rational action approach applied to developing an understanding of the rationality of different behaviours and decisions. In addition, trigger points were understood as important for understanding processes of becoming homeless. Further, a sense of life outside of homelessness was clear within these accounts.

Chapter eight focused on the ways in which rough sleepers account for their own lives, considering how notions of chaos and order, success and failure, and on track and off track lives, are presented within these accounts. Although details relating to these binary categories were present in some accounts, they were often complex. Individuals also discussed a number of other elements of their lives, demonstrating how homelessness forms part of a wider life story, with a number of inter-relationships among topics. Within this chapter, rough sleepers presented their own lives as having some forms of order, being on track in some ways, and having success, sometimes employing mainstream notions of order and success, but also employing alternative forms of these. In doing this, rough sleepers show resistance to some of the stigmatising ways in which their lives are discussed, attempting to re-claim their spoiled identities.

Chapter nine set out four main pains of homelessness endured when sleeping rough or accessing homelessness services: lack of access to resources; the suffering of stigma; the frustrations of process and the perils of precariousness. Each of these was suggested to be complex and multi-dimensional, entailing both physical burdens and severe emotional demands. Following this, it was contended that individuals employ a range of methods in order to attempt to manage these pains

and negotiate their day-to-day homelessness, with three major strategies for doing so considered here: use of spaces; use of homeless cultures; and use of homelessness services. Each of these entails a complex process of negotiation on a day-to-day basis, and shows that rough sleepers operate as active agents, within the constraints of their subjectively experienced homeless situations. It suggests that in contrast to dominant understandings of rough sleepers as being chaotic, off track, failed and having deficits, rough sleepers instead talk of the ways in which they carefully manage and negotiate their daily lives, drawing on skills and personal agency and attempting to bring order. In doing so, they demonstrate some success in the management and negotiation of the pains of homelessness.

Key themes and relationships

This research makes a number of points in relation to provision for rough sleepers. It aims to answer the overall question: *how are the lives of rough sleepers understood?* It does this by asking three further questions, each of which is considered in turn here. These are:

- How are rough sleepers positioned by services?

- How do rough sleepers account for their own lives?

- How do rough sleepers manage and negotiate their positions on a day-to-day basis?

In considering these three questions, the ways in which rough sleepers' lives are understood within policy, service provision, and by rough sleepers themselves, are explored, and the similarities and differences between these are also considered.

How are rough sleepers positioned within national policy documents?

Within national policy documents about homelessness, rough sleepers' lives were positioned as being chaotic, off track and failed. Such views are evident both within contemporary policy and political discourses about rough sleepers, and in historical discourses about governing the poor. In addition, both historically and presently within policy, distinctions are made between more and less deserving categories of individuals. These are apparent in the distinctions made within the Poor Laws, but they also exist within the present legal framework of statutory homelessness support. Furthermore, long-standing ideas of less eligibility of people in poverty, a focus on ensuring that individuals are not intentionally homeless, and on the need to have a local connection, are all evident to some extent in legal and policy discussions of rough sleepers. In addition, the continued existence of historical Christian practices of governing the poor, and forms of 'pastoral power' (Foucault, 1982), both in state and faith-based narratives of poverty management, are visible in the ways in which rough sleepers are discussed in policy as needing moral regulation and change, and needing to be self-reflective in their faults and failings. However, in the present context, neoliberal political discourses re-employ and re-frame a number of previous discourses about people in poverty, through ideas of the need to prioritise markets, foster citizens who are innovative and self-regulating, and to develop an increasingly parsimonious welfare state.

Within current policy, two main strands of policy are evident, each of which view rough sleepers primarily through their homeless status, conferring a master status (Becker, 1967). The first strand is contained within the present *No Second Night Out* policy, which has a policy focus on dealing with the immediate situation of rough sleeping. This approach aims to move rough sleepers away from the streets, and as such has similarities to previous policy programmes like the Rough Sleepers Initiative. Such approaches have been criticised for dealing only with the visibility of rough sleeping, serving to depoliticise homelessness, as they do not take account of the ways in which rough sleepers (often single homeless people) are unlikely to have access to statutory housing support.

However, these types of policy rarely make judgements about rough sleepers' lives, instead focusing on the removal of rough sleepers from a visible street location.

The second strand is carried through policy documents such as *Making Every Contact Count*, *Social Justice: Transforming Lives*, and funding programmes such as the *Homelessness Transition Fund* and the *Homelessness Change Programme*. These policies focus more heavily on aiming to change the behaviours of those who sleep rough in a number of ways, such as through skills workshops, 'purposeful activities', and alcohol and drug rehabilitation. This second strand of policy has clearer discourses of rough sleepers' lives, focusing on these as being 'off course' and 'off track', 'chaotic', and in some ways as 'failed citizens'. These discourses of rough sleepers serve to justify intervention to change their 'poor' behaviours (as well as prioritising financial support to services that can demonstrably meet these aims). These discourses have strong historical links, especially in their focus on a need to change rough sleepers' behaviours. Furthermore, through focusing on the ways in which rough sleepers can 'improve' their own lives through engaging in individualised programmes of change and self-reflection, these policies hold a form of (state) pastoral power akin to that which Foucault discusses (Foucault, 1982). Thus, present policy draws on historical discourses and practices of governing the poor, but also employing contemporary terminology and framings to construct rough sleepers' lives as 'off track', 'chaotic' and in many ways 'failed', and thus in need of intervention and change in order to improve such lives.

How are rough sleepers positioned by services?

The ways in which rough sleepers were positioned within service-level policy documents show some relation to the national policy discourses discussed above. However, positionings of rough sleepers' lives within these policy documents were often more complex, as each of these documents reflected a number of service-level influences, including (differential)

professionalisation of services (and understandings of provision in professionalised terms), the historical roots of the service, and changes in service provision over time. All three services within this study had religious roots, but two of these had moved away from explicitly religious practices and all three had become increasingly professionalised (although to different extents, with the Well Centre the most professionalised of the three). Although the Well Centre and Sun Centre service documents contained traces of religious discourses, there was little presence of overt Christian symbols or ethos in these services' day-to-day practices of provision. However, within The Retreat's documents, discourses that more closely reflected those of historical Christian discourses of governing the poor were evident, as were some service practices which likewise bore resemblances to historical Christian practices.

Discourses about rough sleepers within these documents often recognised the heterogeneous nature of homeless populations. Furthermore, they were often sympathetic to ideas of different 'causes' of homelessness, focusing upon a number of commonly-discussed trigger points in relation to homelessness (such as relationship breakdown, loss of tenancy, eviction). However, these service documents also tended to see rough sleepers as having common problems and needs, which the service aimed to provide for. It is understandable that service discourses might position rough sleepers as needing support, whilst also highlighting the support that services offer, as this helps to justify the service's continued existence in response to service users' needs. The needs identified varied, and the responses were often not explicitly discussed – but often drew upon one or more of the material, moral, social, skills-based, spiritual, and therapeutic bases identified by Archard (1979), and frequently focused on a co-existence of approaches which provided care and support for individuals and pressure to change their behaviours.

However, also notable within the research is that different approaches and understandings are evident between services, even within geographically close locations. Previous studies have focused

upon comparing locations which are geographically distant, whilst this analysis focused on services which were fairly close in proximity. The variation between these services shows the extent to which differences in practice and discourse are evident, even in closely located services.

Individual service provider accounts showed a range of ways of positioning rough sleepers. Various perspectives were evident within each service, with each individual provider bringing their own ethic and reason for involvement to their work (Cloke et al., 2010). Additionally, individual service provider views did not always reflect the discourses of service documents. Further, many individuals spoke of 'bending the rules' and making allowances for individuals within their work, and in some cases the practices discussed directly conflicted with the suggestions made within documents (for example, breaking rules about meeting service users outside of the service).

The ways in which service providers positioned rough sleepers did, in some cases, reflect elements of dominant contemporary discourses about rough sleepers as having chaotic, off track, and failed lives. However, such discourses were complex in nature, and also had links to historical discourses about the poor. Individuals appeared to draw upon (and be influenced by) a range of different conceptual frames, such as: those evident within historical Christian discourses of governing the poor (such as a need to remoralise those who are deficient or 'off track'); those within historical policy debates (particularly about differentiating between the perceived causes of homelessness); and those which focus on contemporary lay normative and policy discourses (such as those which focus on ideas of rough sleepers needing responsibilising, similar to earlier historical discourses of governing the poor).

Many service providers spoke of rough sleepers as lacking in skills, responsibility and commitment, having lives that are chaotic and lacking in structure. Service providers spoke about rough sleepers as both vulnerable and risky, often suggesting that rough sleepers were manipulative and lying, and

that this had become a 'way of life'. In such cases, rough sleepers were seen as being in need and presenting risks to service providers. In addition, service providers spoke about the perceived causes of homelessness. In many accounts, this was linked to notions of poor decision making and, in a number of cases, poor morality. Evident here were a number of views underpinned by notions of a 'moral underclass' (Murray, 1994).

However, not all service providers spoke in such terms, and within some accounts complexity around these views was evident. For example, Alison spoke of a lack of motivation and commitment, referring to individuals as "dossers", but also noted that the biographical accounts of individuals led her to have conflicted feelings about this, as "some of them have had horrendous lives". In some cases, service providers made distinctions between the common sense views about rough sleepers that they had entered the service with (as being lazy and irresponsible), and the experiences of service provision which had changed their views of rough sleepers, with some service providers suggesting that their initial perceptions were inaccurate. However, this was in a minority of cases. In addition some service providers expressed counter-views to normative discourses, drawing on both their experiences and knowledge of service users to discuss the skills that they had, such as successful careers, and utilising commonly cited counter-discourses about the causes of homelessness (for example focusing on relationship breakdown).

Within service provider accounts, the pressures of providing services were also apparent, with constraints on resources and time and the emotional toll of such work as important aspects of the reality of service provision. These undoubtedly had an impact on positioning of service users, especially in relation to deservingness, with many service providers linking rough sleepers' deservingness to their 'appropriate' use of services. This appropriate use of services was focussed on three main elements of service use: rough sleepers' potential success in using services, with some service providers noting that finite resources resulted in a need to prioritise cases with the

greatest chance of success; service users' volunteering in service spaces, related to notions of 'giving back' (itself related to forms of 'responsible' citizenship); and rough sleepers' interaction with service providers, with service users who were rude or demanding perceived as being less deserving than others.

Service providers also focused on the role of services. Within this, various roles of services were apparent: providing material resources to rough sleepers, recognising material deprivation as an aspect of sleeping rough; responsibilising rough sleepers, linked to notions that rough sleepers lacked responsibility or had poor decision making abilities; and moving service users on to other services. Such viewpoints were linked to service provider views of rough sleepers' lives, and also served to position rough sleepers through their perceived need. These views were informed by the dominant historical and contemporary views of the need to create responsible and autonomous citizens. However, service providers also spoke about services as spaces of care, informed by viewpoints that suggest that rough sleepers need support. This viewpoint of 'care' stretched beyond only Christian service providers, with an ethic of care also evident in other providers' accounts. Indeed, many service providers suggested the need for a presence of both care/support and fostering behaviour change.

Some service providers also spoke about friendship. Friendship illustrated the way in which a number of providers felt that they had benefitted from provision, and how some had developed connections which held meaning beyond the service, reflecting deep and sometimes long-lasting relationships with people for whom they had a continued fondness. In some cases, service providers directly broke rules in order to maintain such relationships, showing the ways in which such relationships can develop to go beyond the service provider/service user relationship.

Relationships between service provider accounts, service documents, and national policy discourses

In considering the relationship between service provider accounts and policy and service discourses about rough sleepers, it is evident that individual service providers bring their own views and ethos to provision. In a number of cases, these were influenced by historical and political common sense views about rough sleepers, and by particular strands of popular discourses (for example about a moral underclass). Similarly, rough sleepers were spoken about in terms which discussed their lives as being chaotic, or needing structure or change, suggesting notions of lives which are 'off track', 'failing' and which have deficits, and are thus in need to intervention. To some extent, these discourses appeared to have similarities to policy discourses. However, rough sleepers were not positioned uniformly by service providers as having deficits or off track lives. Some service providers gave counter-views to dominant discourses, drawing out skills, or highlighting the ways in which their viewpoints were influenced by their experiences of service provision. Thus although some common themes were noticeable across numerous service provider accounts, variation was also evident between individual service provider accounts, even where providers worked within the same service. Furthermore, even though some of these discourses lent themselves to notions of needing to distance oneself from rough sleepers, some service providers broke service rules in order to build relationships with service users outside of services.

How do rough sleepers account for their own lives?

Within their accounts, rough sleepers did not present their own lives as chaotic, off course or failed. Instead, they highlighted the importance of key life events. In accounts of becoming homeless it was clear that trigger moments (Ravenhill, 2008) played an important role in individual biographies.

Across a number of accounts, rough sleepers also highlighted the importance of key relationships within their lives. Relationships such as those with family and relatives, and with intimate partners could be complex. These relationships could provide a protective 'buffer' against troublesome life events, through provision of accommodation and materials goods, as well as emotional support. However, at times, these relationships had damaging and traumatic effects on individuals. In some cases, this meant that individuals struggled to make sense of these relationships and their significance within their life, with some linking difficult relationships to ongoing distance from family members, drug use, and relationship difficulties. Furthermore, in some cases, relationships could be both supportive and constraining. At times, the resources these relationships could bring were conditional or precarious, or relationships could protect individuals against some difficulties they were facing, whilst adding new complications. Thus, these relationships had the potential to simultaneously create challenging conditions and to build supportive conditions for rough sleepers. Within their lives, rough sleepers often spoke about a need to carefully manage and negotiate these relationships.

In addition to this, rough sleepers spoke about the ways in which accommodation and housing situations played an important role within their lives. Rough sleepers spoke about the insecurity that some tenancies could bring. For example, sharing with others or moving in with partners meant that legal rights were forfeited. However, when complications arose, these individuals were often left with no accommodation, with little or no advance warning of this happening. In addition, whilst staying in temporary accommodation or with others could sometimes provide a solid foundation, at other times such living conditions could be unstable, representing risky spaces in which rough sleepers felt themselves to be in danger. When this was the case, rough sleepers spoke about engaging in behaviours that attempted to manage these threats (for example carrying a weapon, or carrying their valuable items with them at all times), or about moving out of accommodation. Such behaviours might seem chaotic, deviant and irrational to an outsider. However, employing an

approach which places importance on the context in which decisions are made allows for an alternative account, in which the rationality in such decisions is evident.

In making sense of such behaviours, a contextualised rational action approach provides a useful tool in understanding these biographical accounts (Somerville & Bengtsson, 2002; McNaughton Nicholls, 2009). This approach recognises that individuals can have agency within their lives and aims to take individuals and their accounts seriously. Within rough sleepers' own accounts, displays of agency are evident in the ways in which individuals make sense of their lives, and in the behaviours that relate to their decision making. However, the contextualised rational action approach also emphasises the importance of understanding the context in which decisions are made, which is crucial to understanding agency. As seen within these accounts, many behaviours that might initially seem irrational can in fact be understood as rational when their immediate and personal-historical context is considered.

In addition to this, rough sleepers spoke about areas of relative success and skills within their accounts. These often focused upon educational success (especially for younger individuals), employment success, and other forms of success and skill such as illicit forms of income, or success and skills as parents, often evidenced through their children's success. In discussions of success, some mainstream measures such as educational achievement or employment histories were drawn upon. Where individuals had found success within these, they often spoke of their proficiency. However, where less success was evident, individuals often gave reasons for this (for example, many individuals who had low educational attainment spoke about their unsettled schooling; and those out of employment emphasised their work ethic, but not being given a job). However, success in gaining illegitimate forms of income, and alternative interpretations of achievement such as successful parenting, were also drawn upon. These alternative approaches can be read as an attempt to re-claim elements of skill and success in one's life, in contrast to their status as

'homeless' or 'failed', as understood within wider policy terms. Such displays might thus be understood as a process of salvaging the self (Snow & Anderson, 1993).

Furthermore, in accounting for their own lives, some rough sleepers spoke about their long-term aspirations. Rough sleepers spoke of the dangers of long-term planning, often related to previous experiences of being 'let down' by plans that did not materialise. As such, rough sleepers did not see their own lives as devoid of planning, but instead suggested that long-term planning was risky. However, more general aspirations were evident within rough sleepers' accounts. These often linked to desires to have a tenancy of their own, employment success and settled intimate and family relationships. As such, rough sleepers highlighted relatively mainstream aspirations in their own accounts.

Within rough sleepers' accounts, the importance of recognising life events outside of homelessness was clear. Rough sleepers did not present themselves only through their homelessness as a master status, but rather recognised their homelessness as part of a wider story, in which homelessness represents one (or multiple) episode(s). Furthermore, as was evident within these accounts, many valuable details relating to individual biographies exist and are framed as being outside of accounts of homelessness.

How do rough sleepers manage and negotiate their positions on a day-to-day basis?

Within their accounts of negotiation and management of their positions, rough sleepers often spoke of the deprivations and pains, both physical and psychological, that were experienced, in line with accounts of homelessness as being multi-dimensional. These pains were overlapping and at times reinforcing in nature.

Four pains of homelessness were identified within rough sleepers' accounts of being homeless. The first of these was a lack of access to resources, which included lack of shelter, and lack of access to goods, services, and facilities that they might otherwise expect to access. The second was a suffering of stigma, and the spoiled identity of being homeless. Here, individuals spoke of being homeless as a de-valued status, and of how this led to judgements that would otherwise not be made (for example, around perceived deservingness). This meant that individuals could be discredited because of their spoiled identity, and as such could suffer a lack of voice. Thus the suffering of stigma meant that individuals were perceived in ways that would usually not be the case. The third pain of homelessness was the frustration of process. Being homeless meant that individuals were subject to processes and procedures that they would otherwise be unlikely to encounter, and were reliant upon the decisions made by others (especially gatekeepers) in navigating these processes. These processes could prevent individuals from accessing resources and were linked to their stigmatised position. The fourth of these pains concerns the perils of precariousness, which took a number of forms, such as financial precariousness, safety, access to services, and accommodation status, as well as precarious 'deserving' status. Individuals spoke of the need to constantly manage and negotiate these various forms of precariousness in their day-to-day practices.

Individuals used three main repertoires of negotiating the pains of homelessness: use of space; use of homeless cultures; and use of services. Each of these allowed rough sleepers to develop a sense of order and develop their own agency in response to the pains of homelessness.

Rough sleepers' use of space focused on the order that space could bring about, through giving protection and temporary respite from the pains of homelessness (for example, by reducing their visibility, or by moving to a place where they had local knowledge of 'safe' spaces). However, individuals had to negotiate access to spaces. At times, this meant engaging in behaviours that were

illegal or might be considered deviant, such as trespassing. However, for individuals, this presented a contextually rational way to negotiate access to the best available space.

Homeless cultures could provide social support, common experiences (and thus a degree of empathy), and shared knowledge about negotiating the pains of homelessness (such as knowledge of local services). Hierarchies were evident within homeless cultures, based not only around need and experience, but also around ability to manage ('strength') and around appropriate service use. Individuals needed to negotiate positions within homeless cultures, and engaged in processes of distancing from other rough sleepers they deemed to be less deserving (Snow & Anderson, 1987). However, other forms of negotiating position were also evident, through developing trust and providing support to other rough sleepers.

Service use also provided ways of managing the pains of homelessness, for example, by providing time and social company, advocacy, and a physical 'base' from which to operate. However, individuals needed to negotiate service use. As seen within the discourses of service providers, lay normative views of deserving and undeserving populations still influenced many service provider practices and views. Consequently, rough sleepers needed to engage in forms of impression management in their service use, which necessitated either presenting their circumstances within the frames of being an 'unwilling victim' or 'lacker', or, if they were understood by service providers to fit within the 'slacker' category, demonstrating a willingness to change (Rosenthal, 2000).

Each of these methods of management and negotiation was affected by the context in which rough sleepers used them, each was precarious rather than stable, and each necessitated processes of constant re-negotiation and management, in: re-accessing spaces; managing one's own position in homeless cultures; and managing one's own ascribed identity in homelessness services.

Furthermore, whilst reducing some pains, each of these management methods could exacerbate other pains of homelessness. Therefore careful management of these methods was necessary.

In contrast to discourses which see rough sleepers as being off track, failed, chaotic and having deficits, these processes of negotiation and management demonstrated ways in which rough sleepers strive to create order in contextually appropriate ways, even if these forms of order do not always reflect the 'good order' of normative discourses. As with understandings of becoming homeless, therefore, a contextualised rational action approach provides a useful tool for understanding how these behaviours can be understood to be actually rational. Within these accounts, rough sleepers demonstrated attempts to manage their positions on a day-to-day basis, employing various tactics. The tactics employed went beyond survival and allowed different forms of physical and emotional management and coping strategies, to allow individuals to retain agency and to negotiate their positions throughout their experiences of homelessness, albeit within constrained contexts.

Relationships between rough sleepers' accounts, service provider accounts, and national policy discourses

Rough sleepers did not account for their lives in terms of being off track, chaotic, failed or deficient. Instead, within discussions of becoming homeless, rough sleepers emphasised the importance of key events, relationships and support structures in accounts of their lives. Context was vitally important in thinking about these aspects of their accounts. Furthermore, rough sleepers did not present their own lives as failed, but instead employed both mainstream and alternative measures of skill and ability to demonstrate success in their own lives.

Rough sleepers' accounts of the day-to-day management and negotiation of homelessness focused upon the ways in which they negotiated complex and unstable situations, relating to the four pains

of homelessness. Policies and service providers often fail to take account of the multi-dimensional nature of rough sleeping, instead focusing upon lack of access to accommodation, and developing narratives of a need to change rough sleepers' behaviour. However, these different dimensions of the pains of homelessness are important to understanding the ways in which rough sleepers bring order to their own lives. Furthermore, these negotiations and management techniques require a wide range of skills, in contrast to notions of rough sleepers as lacking in skills and having failed lives.

Thus in discussing their own lives, rough sleepers spoke in ways which showed disparities from the views present within national discourses, as well as in many service provider narratives. The heterogeneous nature of homeless populations and various 'causes' noted within service documents are reflected within rough sleepers' accounts. However, in contrast to the claims made within these documents, which focus on the problems and deficits rough sleepers may have, many rough sleepers do not discuss their own lives as requiring a change of behaviour. Instead rough sleepers re-claim their identities from the spoiled master status of 'homeless' through discussing proficiency in a range of areas, both 'mainstream' and 'alternative' measures of success and skill. In short, rough sleepers do not account for becoming homeless as being due to 'lifestyle' issues and problems, but instead they highlight the importance of key life events and relationships, as well as the context in which key decisions have been made that affect those events and relationships.

Similarly, rough sleepers' accounts of their own lives sometimes differ from those of many individual service providers who cite poor moral choices and bad decision making. In contrast to this, many rough sleepers talked about the importance of key life events within their biographies, with long-term traumatic effects, the importance of unforeseeable changes in circumstance, and the resources they were able to draw upon at 'trigger' moments. Some rough sleepers spoke of drug use, alcohol use and other possible 'deviant' behaviours but often accounted for these in

context as providing protection from pains such as trauma, loss and fear. Furthermore, rough sleepers did talk about their vulnerability, especially when sleeping rough, but did not present their own lives as 'risky' or manipulative. Elements of manipulation might arguably be present in maximising the positive outcomes from service use, or in negotiating positions within homeless cultures, but for rough sleepers this was about negotiating the pains of homelessness in the most astute and effective ways possible. Thus, a range of differences were evident between rough sleepers' own understandings of their lives, and the understandings within national policy discourses, service documents, and a majority of service provider perspectives.

However, there are some similarities between rough sleepers' accounts and these other discourses. Like national policy discourses (present and historical) and service provider discourses, rough sleepers do engage with lay normative notions of deservingness. In using services, rough sleepers had to engage in processes of negotiating their own deservingness. However, they often also made judgements about other people's deservingness, either through categorical distancing from particular groups or in relation to other individuals' inappropriate use of services. In such ways, rough sleepers' own discourses of their peers show similarities to political and service provider discourses about deservingness.

In addition to this, a discourse common to both rough sleepers and some service providers was about the service provider-service user relationship. Within their accounts, rough sleepers distinguished between service providers who they perceived to care and those who did not, often informed by the mutual appreciative relationships that they had built with the individual providers. This shows the value in service providers "meeting [individuals] where they are at", a process described elsewhere as being "built on the understanding/ reality that their clients have a wide range of circumstances, needs, ways of coping, and ways of progressing through the counselling process" (Kidd et al., 2007, p. 18). Many service users felt that this showed a level of understanding

different from the 'standard' approaches to rough sleepers. Likewise, some service providers spoke about developing deeper relationships with service users, which moved beyond a service-focused relationship and towards relationships of friendship, from which service users and service providers could both benefit.

Conclusion

From this analysis, it is clear that in considering understanding of the lives of rough sleepers, some differences and similarities are apparent across the different accounts and discourses. National contemporary and historical discourses of governing the poor focus on governance through control, therapy, behaviour change and other means, and position rough sleepers' lives as off track, chaotic, and failed. Service documents to some extent reflect these notions through ideas of deficit and the need to foster behaviour change and responsible citizenship, but also have some recognition of the complexity of homelessness and the heterogeneous nature of homeless populations, with service narratives reflecting different forms of professionalisation, service history, and present service ethos and priorities. Service provider discourses draw on some lay normative views about poor decision making, morality and chaotic lives. However, each service provider brings their own values, beliefs and experiences of provision, meaning that in some cases counter-discourses are evident. Rough sleepers themselves do not discuss their own lives as being off track, chaotic and failed, but instead focus on the ways in which they build order into their lives. In some cases, whilst these behaviours appear to be chaotic, they are contextually rational for these individuals. However, in discussing other rough sleepers, these individuals also draw on common notions of deservingness, using categorical distancing of those perceived as less deserving, in order to manage their own position of deservingness.

Overall, this thesis then argues that whilst there are some minor similarities between perspectives, rough sleepers account for their lives in ways that differ from lay normative and policy understandings, which often abstract behaviours from their context and understand these lives as chaotic, off course and failed. Instead, through their life stories, rough sleepers account for their lives in ways which demonstrate the contextually rational underpinning of their behaviours. In a minority of cases this complexity is recognised by service providers, but in many cases service provider discourses are also distant from rough sleepers' own accounts.

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Appendices

Appendix One: Information Sheet given to Services

My name is Daniel McCulloch and I am currently involved in some academic research for the Open University in Milton Keynes. My research is about the voices of service-using rough sleepers and service providers. Therefore I am interested in talking to rough sleepers and people who provide services for rough sleepers. My research is particularly focused on the areas of (town names), and therefore I would be interested in getting involved with your service.

What does the research aim to do?
The research aims to give voice to the views and opinions of both rough sleepers and those involved in working with rough sleepers. I would be interested to know some information about individual biographies and experiences, and the views and opinions that people have at the moment. In order for me to understand the service space, I would like to spend some time volunteering for your service. If possible, I would also like to spend some time interviewing some of the people involved in both providing and utilising the services that you provide. If this is possible, this would be entirely at their own discretion and I would not pressure them into talking to me.

Why are you interested in talking to me and finding out about my service?
I would be interested in talking to you because I would like you know your opinions and the experiences of the people who help to provide the service that you give. This would help me to have a better understanding of what it means to provide your service. I would also like to talk to some of your service users who have experience of 'sleeping rough', as their opinions are also of interest to me.

What would it mean if I got involved?
If you choose to get involved in the research it would mean that you have the chance for you and those involved in your service the chance to have a voice within the research. It would give your service providers and users a platform to discuss their experiences, and these might later be discussed within wider forums. However, there is no pressure to take part in the research, it is entirely your choice as to whether or not you would like to be involved.

Is there any risk to the service, its users, or its workers?
The risks will be minimised by making sure that people remain anonymous (by changing people's names), and that if service providers wish, names of services are also changed. All identities of people will be kept confidential within the research team. Added to this, all information which is

not of use to the research and may be sensitive will be kept confidential. The safety and well-being of everyone involved in the research will remain the priority throughout any involvement, and therefore I would ensure that anyone who chooses to get involved in elements of the research such as interviews would be aware of what the interview would entail, as well as their right not to discuss topics that they do not want to, and of their right to withdraw from the research without any consequences.

Thank you for taking the time to read this short information sheet. If you would like to know more about getting involved with the research, please feel free to contact me using any of the methods on the attached business card.

If you would like to speak to someone else at the Open University about the research, you can contact [supervisor name] using any the methods below.

Appendix Two: Consent Form used with Rough Sleepers

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

STUDY NAME: 'NO FIXED ADDRESS'

Thank you for showing an interest in this research project. I would be interested in your thoughts and opinions and may want to include your views and experiences in my research. To do this I need your consent. To give your consent is to say that you are willing to be involved in the research, but you do not have to give your consent if you do not want me to include your experiences.

Before you decide if you want me to include your views and experiences, you need to know about the research. It is important that you understand the research and this form. So if you need to ask questions or if anything isn't clear, you should ask me at any time.

Why is the research happening?

The research is part of an academic research project in Social Sciences at the Open University. It is looking at the voices of service-using rough sleepers and service providers.

Why do you want my view?

As you are a person who has experience of rough sleeping/working with rough sleepers, I am interested in what you have to say.

Do I have to take part?

NO. It is up to you if you want me to include your experiences or not. If you do choose to take part, you are free to leave the research at any point without any consequences, and you can have all information (data) about you destroyed. If you are happy for me to include your views, you will need to complete the consent form on the last page.

What happens if I do take part?

If you do choose to take part, I will ask you to take part in one or two interviews about your experiences. The views and experiences you talk about may be used in the research. Also,

you may be invited to take part in an auto-photography exercise (where you will be asked to take photographs), although you will be provided with information about this at a later point. The research could be published in the future. However, all of your details will remain confidential to me, and your responses included in the research will be made anonymous. Anonymity means that people will not be able to tell who you are, and confidentiality means that your personal details will only be known to me. The only time that I will tell anyone your details will be if you tell me something that makes me think that you are at risk of causing significant danger to yourself or someone else.

Will anyone be able to tell who I am from what I write?

No. Only the research team will be able to tell who you are. Your name and the names of anyone you mention will be changed in the research. Everything else I will keep securely so that only I can tell who you are.

If I want to contact you about the research, how can I do this?

If you have any questions, if you want any information or if you want to be given a copy of the research you can contact me using the details below. If you are unable to do this, you can ask someone from the service to contact me on your behalf:

[contact details]

Who can I talk to if I have problems during the research?

Although it is hoped that you have no problems during the research, if you have any problems or feel upset about the research you can talk to someone from the service about the research. You can also ask a service provider to contact a person at the Open University, where I am based. The contact details of the contactable person at the Open University are:

[contact details]

Thank you. If you want to take part in this research and have your views and experiences to be included in the research, please complete the form on the next page. If you are not interested in the research, I will not be offended and I thank you for your time.

1. I consent to participate in this project, the details of which have been explained to me, and I have been provided with a written statement to keep.

2. I understand that my participation will involve taking part in an interview and I agree that the researcher may use the results as described above.

3. I acknowledge that:

(a) the possible effects of participating in this research have been explained to my satisfaction;

(b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation or prejudice and to withdraw any unprocessed data I have provided;

(c) I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded subject to any legal requirements;

(d) I have been informed that with my consent the data generated will be stored firstly on an audio recording device and later on a computer;

(e) If necessary any data from me will be referred to by a pseudonym in any publications arising from the research (in order to keep my identity anonymous);

(f) I have been informed that a summary copy of the research findings will be available and will be explained to me, should I request this.

I consent to this interview being audio-taped   □ **yes** □ **no**

I wish to receive a copy of the summary project report on research findings   □ **yes** □ **no**

(FOR AUTO-PHOTOGRAPHY EXERCISE ONLY) I agree that if I do take part in the auto-photography exercise, then the photographs that I take may be used by the researcher in any research outputs, free of charge, and without re-seeking my permission in the future   □ **yes** □ **no**

To be completed by you:

Name/Identifier   Signature/Identifier   Date

_____   _____

      _____

– –

To be completed by the researcher:

Name   Signature   Date

_____   _____

_____

Consent signifier

☐ Written   ☐ Audio   ☐Other (state:_____)

Participant Reference: _____

Appendix Three: Consent Form used with Service Providers

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

STUDY NAME: 'NO FIXED ADDRESS'

Thank you for showing an interest in this research project. I would be interested in your thoughts and opinions and may want to include your views and experiences in my research. To do this I need your consent. To give your consent is to say that you are willing to be involved in the research, but you do not have to give your consent if you do not want me to include your experiences.

Before you decide if you want me to include your views and experiences, you need to know about the research. It is important that you understand the research and this form. So if you need to ask questions or if anything isn't clear, you should ask me at any time.

Why is the research happening?

The research is part of an academic research project in Social Sciences at the Open University. It is looking at the voices of service-using rough sleepers and service providers.

Why do you want my view?

As you are a person who has experience of working with rough sleepers, I am interested in what you have to say.

Do I have to take part?

NO. It is up to you if you want me to include your experiences or not. If you do choose to take part, you are free to leave the research at any point without any consequences, and you can have all information (data) about you destroyed. If you are happy for me to include your views, you will need to complete the consent form on the last page.

What happens if I do take part?

If you do choose to take part, I will ask you to take part in one or two interviews about your experiences. The views and experiences you talk about may be used in the research. The

research could be published in the future. However, all of your details will remain confidential to me, and your responses included in the research will be made anonymous. Anonymity means that people will not be able to tell who you are, and confidentiality means that your personal details will only be known to me. The only time that I will tell anyone your details will be if you tell me something that makes me think that you are at risk of causing significant danger to yourself or someone else.

Will anyone be able to tell who I am from what I write?

No. Only the research team will be able to tell who you are. Your name and the names of anyone you mention will be changed in the research. Everything else I will keep securely so that only I can tell who you are.

If I want to contact you about the research, how can I do this?

If you have any questions, if you want any information or if you want to be given a copy of the research you can contact me using the details below. If you are unable to do this, you can ask someone from the service to contact me on your behalf:

[contact details]

Who can I talk to if I have problems during the research?

Although it is hoped that you have no problems during the research, if you have any problems or feel upset about the research you can talk to someone from the service about the research. You can also ask a service provider to contact a person at the Open University, where I am based. The contact details of the contactable person at the Open University are:

[contact details]

Thank you. If you want to take part in this research and have you views and experiences to be included in the research, please complete the form on the next page. If you are not interested in the research, I will not be offended and I thank you for your time.

4. I consent to participate in this project, the details of which have been explained to me, and I have been provided with a written statement to keep.

5. I understand that my participation will involve taking part in an interview and I agree that the researcher may use the results as described above.

6. I acknowledge that:

(a) the possible effects of participating in this research have been explained to my satisfaction;

(b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation or prejudice and to withdraw any unprocessed data I have provided;

(c) I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded subject to any legal requirements;

(d) I have been informed that with my consent the data generated will be stored firstly on an audio recording device and later on a computer;

(e) If necessary any data from me will be referred to by a pseudonym in any publications arising from the research (in order to keep my identity anonymous);

(f) I have been informed that a summary copy of the research findings will be available and will be explained to me, should I request this.

I consent to this interview being audio-taped   □ **yes** □ **no**

I wish to receive a copy of the summary project report on research findings   □ **yes** □ **no**

(FOR AUTO-PHOTOGRAPHY EXERCISE ONLY) I agree that if I do take part in the auto-photography exercise, then the photographs that I take may be used by the researcher in any research outputs, free of charge, and without re-seeking my permission in the future   □ **yes** □ **no**

To be completed by you:

Name/Identifier   Signature/Identifier   Date

_____   _____
        _____

— —
— — — —

To be completed by the researcher:

Name   Signature   Date

_____   _____

_____

Consent signifier

☐ Written   ☐ Audio   ☐Other (state:_____)

Participant Reference: _____

Appendix Four: Auto-Photography Information Sheet

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION — AUTO-PHOTOGRAPHY

STUDY NAME: 'NO FIXED ADDRESS'

Thank you for showing an interest in this element of the research project. I would like you to take part in a further exercise, but to do this I need your consent.

Before you decide if you want to take part in this part of the research, it is important that you know what it will involve. If you want to ask questions or if anything isn't clear, you should ask me at any time.

Why is this part of the research happening?

This is part of the same research project, but this part uses photographs to explore the voices of service-using rough sleepers and service providers.

What will happen if I choose to take part?

If you do choose to take part, the further exercise will involve you taking photographs using a camera. I would like you to take photos of things that are important to you in your day-to-day life. I will give you a camera to take these photos with. You can take up to ……… photos if you wish. After you have taken the photos, I would like us to talk about the photos, why you chose to take them, and what they mean to you.

Please do not take photos of any significant illegal activity that is not known about by the police. If photos are taken of significant illegal activity, I have to report these to a relevant person.

What will happen to the photos I take?

As the photos you take are your property, you will be given a copy of the photos to keep for yourself. I would like your permission to re-produce these photos in any future work relating to the study. To do this, I would need your permission.

What happens if I don't want a photo to be used?

If you don't want a photo to be used in any future outputs, you should say this when talking about the photos. I will make sure that any photos you would rather keep private are not used in the future.

Will the research still be anonymous?

All of your details will still remain confidential to me, and your responses included in the research will be made anonymous. Any photos that have people's faces in will not be used, unless that person allows for their face to be used.

How long will I have to take the photos?

I would like you to take the photos within a week. As it is ……………… today, I would like you to take the photos by next ………………. I will come in and collect the camera from you to get the photos developed, and we will sit down later on that day and talk about the photos.

Do I have to take part?

NO. It is up to you if you want to take part or not. If you do choose to take part, you are free to leave the research at any point without any consequences, and you can have all information (data) about you destroyed. If you are happy for me to include your views, you will need to sign an additional box on your original consent form.

If I want to contact you about the research, how can I do this?

If you have any questions, if you want any information or if you want to be given a copy of the research you can contact me using the details below. If you are unable to do this, you can ask someone from the service to contact me on your behalf:

[contact details]

Who can I talk to if I have problems during the research?

Although it is hoped that you have no problems during the research, if you have any problems or feel upset about the research you can talk to someone from the service about the research. You can also ask a service provider to contact a person at the Open University, where I am based. The contact details of the contactable person at the Open University are:

[contact details]

Thank you. If you want to take part in this research exercise and have you views and experiences to be included in the research, please tick the box on the consent form. If you are not interested in the research exercise, I will not be offended and I thank you for your time.

Appendix Five: Interview Schedule used with Service Providers

Person's history *(Aim: To understand individual's journey to their current position.)*
To start with, I'd like to talk about how you first became involved in the service...

- What led you to become involved in this service? Go back as far as you think is relevant.
- Why do you work/volunteer here?
  - What is a bad day here like?
  - What is a really good day here like?
- How did you become involved in working/volunteering for the service?
- Do you think that your experience affects the way you work?

Service provision *(Aim: To understand person's beliefs of what service is/does.)*
I'd like a little bit about the service itself...

- What does the service mean to you?
- How would you describe what the service does? What is the aim of the service?
  - Is this what it should do? Should it be doing anything else?
- Do you think that the service is changing/has changed? (Better/worse? How has it changed?)
- What does the service do well?
  - If you could change one thing about the service what would it be?
- What could the service do better/improve?
  - If you could only keep one thing about the service, what would it be?
- In five years time, what would your ideal vision of the service be?

Person's role *(Aim: To understand person's view on their role.)*
Thinking about your role within the service...

- What do you do within the service at the moment?
- Has this changed over time?
- Are there differences between your official job role and what you actually do?
- What is it like to work here? Do you enjoy working here?
  - What are your favourite things about the job?
  - What are your least favourite things about the job?

Service Providers *(Aim: To understand person's view on working with other service providers.)*
I'd like to talk a little bit about the people that work here...

- What are the other staff/volunteers like to work with?
- Do you think the staff work as a team here?
    - Are there things which the staff does especially well?
    - Are there things that the staff could do better?
- Do you think that the staff all have the same vision for the service/see the service heading in the same direction?
- Does it make a difference whether you are a volunteer or a paid member of staff here?

Service users *(Aim: To understand individual's perspective on people who/who do not use service.)*
Thinking about the people that use the service...
- Who uses the service?
- Who is the service aimed at?
- Why do you think people come here?
- What do you think a person's first impression is when they come to this service?
- Do you think there is anything that would put someone off of using the service?
- Are there people that the service does not allow in (e.g. children?). Reasons for this?
- Do people that use the service interact? Are there sub-groups?
- What are the people who use the service like to work with?
- Do you enjoy working with the people using the service?
    - Are there any people that are particularly challenging to work with?
    - Are there any people who are especially rewarding to work with?

Connections *(Aim: To understand person's perspective on the way service connects to community.)*
I'd like us to chat about the service and the local community...
- Does the service collaborate with other service providers outside of this organisation?
    - Do these collaborations work well?
- Do you think that the service is well respected within the local area?
- How much do you think people in the local community support the service?
- Do you think that in the wider community homelessness is responded to in the right way?
- Do you feel that there is enough support for the service?
    - Locally? Nationally?

Policy *(Aim: To understand person's perspective on policy.)*
Thinking about policy...

- To what extent are you aware of different policies? What kind of policies?
- To what extent are policies helpful in your work?
    - Why? Any particular ones?
- Do national policies reflect the reality of providing this service?
- Do local policies recognise and respond to the important local issues?
    - Do they have an impact on the way that the service does things?
- Are there differences between policy and real-life practice?
- Does policy deal with or create any issues in dealing with homelessness?
    - Does policy deal with any elements particularly well?
    - Create any particular issues?

Closing questions
- What is the biggest challenge facing the service at the moment/in the near future?
- If you had unlimited resources what would you do?
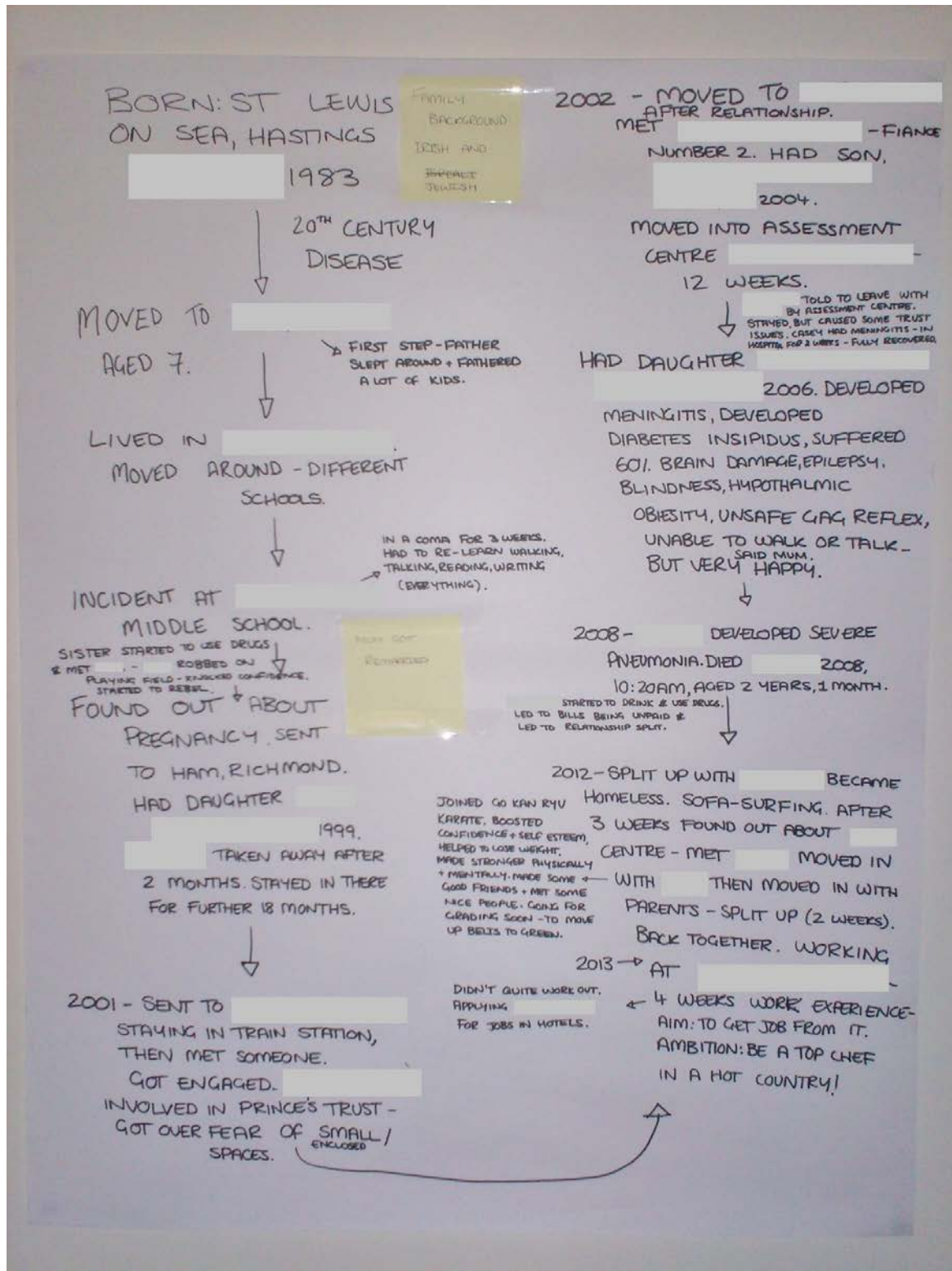- Is there anything we haven't discussed which is important?

Appendix Six: Images of Life Maps Created by/with Rough Sleepers

Kelvin's Life Map

William's Life Map

Max's Life Map

Louise's Life Map

BORN: ST LEWIS ON SEA, HASTINGS ▓▓▓ 1983

Family Background Irish and ~~Israeli~~ Jewish

20TH CENTURY DISEASE

MOVED TO ▓▓▓ AGED 7.

→ FIRST STEP-FATHER SLEPT AROUND + FATHERED A LOT OF KIDS.

LIVED IN ▓▓▓. MOVED AROUND - DIFFERENT SCHOOLS.

IN A COMA FOR 3 WEEKS. HAD TO RE-LEARN WALKING, TALKING, READING, WRITING (EVERYTHING).

INCIDENT AT ▓▓▓ MIDDLE SCHOOL.

SISTER STARTED TO USE DRUGS & MET ▓▓▓. ▓▓▓ ROBBED ON PLAYING FIELD - KNOCKED CONFIDENCE. STARTED TO REBEL.

MUM GOT REMARRIED

FOUND OUT ABOUT PREGNANCY. SENT TO HAM, RICHMOND. HAD DAUGHTER ▓▓▓ 1999. TAKEN AWAY AFTER 2 MONTHS. STAYED IN THERE FOR FURTHER 18 MONTHS.

JOINED GO KAN RYU KARATE. BOOSTED CONFIDENCE + SELF ESTEEM, HELPED TO LOSE WEIGHT. MADE STRONGER PHYSICALLY + MENTALLY. MADE SOME GOOD FRIENDS + MET SOME NICE PEOPLE. GOING FOR GRADING SOON - TO MOVE UP BELTS TO GREEN.

2001 - SENT TO ▓▓▓. STAYING IN TRAIN STATION, THEN MET SOMEONE. GOT ENGAGED. ▓▓▓ INVOLVED IN PRINCE'S TRUST - GOT OVER FEAR OF SMALL / ENCLOSED SPACES.

DIDN'T QUITE WORK OUT. APPLYING ▓▓▓ FOR JOBS IN HOTELS.

2002 - MOVED TO ▓▓▓ AFTER RELATIONSHIP. MET ▓▓▓ - FIANCE NUMBER 2. HAD SON, ▓▓▓ 2004.

MOVED INTO ASSESSMENT CENTRE ▓▓▓ - 12 WEEKS.

TOLD TO LEAVE WITH ▓▓▓ BY ASSESSMENT CENTRE. STAYED, BUT CAUSED SOME TRUST ISSUES. CASEY HAD MENINGITIS - IN HOSPITAL FOR 2 WEEKS - FULLY RECOVERED.

HAD DAUGHTER ▓▓▓ 2006. DEVELOPED MENINGITIS, DEVELOPED DIABETES INSIPIDUS, SUFFERED 601. BRAIN DAMAGE, EPILEPSY, BLINDNESS, HYPOTHALMIC OBESITY, UNSAFE GAG REFLEX, UNABLE TO WALK OR TALK - BUT VERY HAPPY. SAID MUM.

2008 - ▓▓▓ DEVELOPED SEVERE PNEUMONIA. DIED ▓▓▓ 2008, 10:20AM, AGED 2 YEARS, 1 MONTH.

STARTED TO DRINK & USE DRUGS. LED TO BILLS BEING UNPAID & LED TO RELATIONSHIP SPLIT.

2012 - SPLIT UP WITH ▓▓▓ BECAME HOMELESS. SOFA-SURFING. AFTER 3 WEEKS FOUND OUT ABOUT ▓▓▓ CENTRE - MET ▓▓▓ MOVED IN WITH ▓▓▓ THEN MOVED IN WITH PARENTS - SPLIT UP (2 WEEKS). BACK TOGETHER. WORKING AT ▓▓▓.

2013 →

4 WEEKS WORK EXPERIENCE - AIM: TO GET JOB FROM IT. AMBITION: BE A TOP CHEF IN A HOT COUNTRY!

Appendix Seven: Images from Auto-Photography Created by Rough Sleepers

Alexander's Auto-Photography

"Like, basically all of these, if you look at all of 'em, they've got me and my friends in them. The, the friends that mean a lot. So basically all I'm saying is homeless people, they just need friends. They just needs friends to get along. Like, anything else. You don't need money, you just need friends, giving us a helping hand. And as long as we've got each other we'll survive."

Alexander	Umm, yeah, my books, if anybody stole my books of me I'd go mad, I cannot live without books. I love my books. I love reading. And umm, yeah that book in the middle has about 700 pages, that one about 500 and that one has about 400.
Interviewer	Right.
Alexander	So I read quite a lot. I could all three of them in a day.

"me, my drawing is a passion to me. So if, sometimes I find it's easier to put out my emotions into err, drawings. Like I want to find the key, but I feel that I'm too close to death, but I'm still gonna say fuck fate, 'cause I'm the morning star. But I'm also a last pilgrim. So everything, everything links up to each other. That, that's obviously death with a scythe. I've got shining light to the morning star. But there's fire from the last pilgrim, they key turns into the writing, it's, yeah. It's complex but people will understand it when I explain it to them, eventually."

Max's Auto-Photography

"It's a mug. This is one thing which I do, umm, really do appreciate, is coffee. Err, when I was living on the streets, I tell you what, I craved a cup of coffee every day just to get me up in the morning. I wasn't able to get it. The fact of having no money and what not, it just, it just, it's bad but yeah luckily for us, we umm, get asda price coffee. Not gold blend, not some nice de-caf or nescafe, asda price coffee, which is disgusting. But I do appreciate it, yeah."

"This was umm, the black gate at the front. And erm, [another service user] he's err, he's got his hood up, walking towards there. I took this photo because it sorts of amplifies like, you know, people's history. You know, you take a person with, who has his hood up all the time, of being criminally, engaged with criminal life. And erm, what not. And err, I took that photo 'cause he was walking towards umm, the shelter. And it just, it goes to show you like, yeah, I'm not a criminal. But yet I still manage to end up in this place."

"This is in the bedrooms. Yeah, look at how tiny that is. Apparently we, we're not allowed decent heaters because of the electricity bill. 130 pound a week, from four of us. Four of us. That's almost, well, yeah, that's more than 500 pound, but yet we're only allowed that for a couple of hours a night. That small little heater there. You know. Yeah. Just...just think about it. You know, 500 quid a week. That's what they get given to umm, let us live here. They do fuck all for us. I'm being perfectly honest. We have to do everything for ourselves. Before I came to this shelter I was in an absolute mess, temporarily suicidal. And when I came here I was still in such a fucking state. Luckily for me I managed to pull myself out of it but I'm on the straight and narrow mate. Everything's just looking good for me at the moment I, I've never felt better in my life."

"it's a err, it's a billboard of umm, McDonalds chips. And don't they look tasty. At the time I had no money, I wasn't able to get anything eat. It was during the day, I was starving about this time, and erm, yeah it was this day precisely it was erm, it was quite a nice day and erm, yeah, I looked up there, I was just like I need to take a photo of that, 'cause it looks really tasty doesn't it. But yeah, I'm not, I can't even afford a quid to go get some. And there's not even a McDonald's in Slowville, so I don't even know why it's there. You know what I mean? Yeah. You know food, when you're homeless, food's the first thing that's on your mind. When I was erm, living on the streets, I had to go shoplift for my food. I had no choice but to, you know, I got put into that much of a bad position that I had to go do illegal criminal activity to be able to feed myself. Isn't that bad? And this is what the government has to offer me. I aint proud to be British. I'm disgusted in myself to be British, 'cause it's a fucking horrible nation. I hate it."