

Exploring begging in Newcastle City Centre: Consultation

November 2017

"I hate begging, it makes you feel...it's horrible it makes you feel like you're nothing"

"I did it to feed a habit and wasn't going out burgling, robbing, it's an easy thing, but I can see why they don't want people doing it because people are doing it for the wrong reasons, I did it for the wrong reasons regardless of having housing"

Introduction

Background and context

The Fulfilling Lives Newcastle Gateshead Programme (FLNG), funded by Big Lottery Fund, is seeking to help people across Newcastle and Gateshead, living with multiple and complex needs (a combination of at least three of the following four problems; homelessness; re-offending; problematic substance misuse and mental ill health) to better manage their lives.

The overall aim of FLNG is to learn through the programme, and through that learning evoke a change to the system that will allow us all to work more effectively for people with multiple and complex needs. Fundamental to this learning is the engagement of people with lived experience in the delivery of the programme and finding ways of improvement from a service user perspective.

FLNG host an Experts by Experience Network and employ a Research and Evaluation Team with experience of delivering peer research projects to support our learning. Newcastle City Council recognised this experience by asking FLNG to deliver a consultation exploring the experiences of people who beg in the city of Newcastle, to help them understand the causes and impact of begging, to develop a local begging policy in November 2017 and to shape their subsequent publicity campaign.

This report was produced as part of FLNG's ongoing learning. It is worth noting Newcastle City Council did not fund the research but it does demonstrate a forward-thinking approach by Newcastle City Council to establish the real causes of begging. The findings will be shared with the Big Lottery Fund and FLNG's interested parties to encourage similar approaches in other parts of the England.

Methodology

FLNG worked alongside Newcastle's Multiple Exclusion Team (MET), who provide city wide support for people who are multiply excluded, to identify and recruit a sample of people with experience of begging and FLNG identified Experts by Experience with lived experience of begging. Five people were interviewed on 19th October 2017 at a range of City Centre locations, and a further two were interviewed on 2nd November 2017 at a Changing Lives accommodation project; six males and one female were interviewed in total.

Three Fulfilling Lives Navigators who are frontline staff working with people with multiple and complex needs were interviewed about experiences of begging that their FLNG clients have shared with them.

Qualitative data collection was used to capture the voices of those engaged in begging activity, to explore individual's life experiences and views around begging. FLNG's Research and Evaluation Team and Co-production Lead carried out one-to-one semi structured interviews; six people with experience of begging agreed to their interviews being recorded, one agreed to notes being taken during the interview.

Research Questions

The main study question was: what is your experience of begging in Newcastle?

Supplementary questions included:

- Tell us about your experience of begging? When did you start begging?
- Why do you beg?
- What would make you stop?
- What more can council/police/services do to make you stop (if money wasn't an issue)?
- Do you access services? (If so, which?)
- Are there services you don't use/can't get access to?
- Do you have access to accommodation?
- What reactions have you had from the public when begging?
- What reactions have you had from police/other agencies?
- Anything else you want to add?

Summary of key findings

The following section details the key findings from the interviews completed. It follows three broad topics:

1) Why do people beg in Newcastle?

Generally participants' reason for engaging in begging activity was not to support their basic needs, but was to secure money to support an addiction to drugs or alcohol.

We found that there are a wide range of options available to meet people's basic needs, particularly access to food

2) The experience of begging

Participants describe a range of experiences when begging, from positive to very negative; all described feelings of guilt, shame and feeling degraded by the experience, though all saw their begging activity as borne out of necessity

There is a perception from participants that it is becoming harder to make money from begging activity, either because the public are becoming jaded or because there are more people begging in Newcastle city centre

3) What would make people stop begging?

Access to benefits impacted on the prevalence of participant's begging, and appears to be connected to a wider problem around rent arrears and moving in and out of temporary accommodation and rough sleeping. For some their begging activity became less prevalent

when they were housed and they connected this to accessing substance misuse treatment services

Participants who were not currently begging were on a script or in recovery, and described how they were starting to see that life could be different for them, they described being in a 'good place' and on the right footing to access services

Findings

1) Why do people beg in Newcastle?

Responses to the question: “why do you beg?”

We asked participants about their frequency of begging. Five of the seven participants had begged within the previous six weeks, one participant had not begged in several weeks and another hadn't begged in over 14 months.

We wanted to understand the journey that led people into begging in Newcastle; all seven participants stated addiction as their primary reason for begging:

*“Why'd I do it? To feed my addiction, a baby has to eat, it's got to feed, I have to feed it.”
(Participant 4)*

“I started begging when I got a habit...7 year ago...I'd been in and out of prison and I thought I'd try something different to fund the habit...it wasn't just for feeding a habit aye cos obviously we were homeless as well, but that's what it's mainly for, to fund me habit, I've been clean for 4/5 weeks now so when I first moved in I was out begging every day and I've not been out a few month now.” (Participant 2)

Two of the seven participants referenced their experience of childhood exposure to drugs and alcohol as contributing to their begging experience:

*“I was smoking heroin with my mam at the age of 12, so and I suppose I didn't stand much of a chance really...kids homes and stuff like and then obviously by that time I had a habit and by 17 I was absolutely ruined off it really and I knew it was a major problem at 17.”
(Participant 3)*

On their addictions, some participants identified that Novel Psychoactive Substances (legal highs/Spice) played a part in their reason for starting to beg:

*“I started begging eight or nine years ago, I was living at [name of hostel], I did it to get legal highs, then heroin, and then I moved onto Subutex and I stopped begging for ages”
(Participant 1)*

“I've got an addiction, I've begged about three year nigh enough every day, I started when spice came in”(Participant 5)

“I did it to feed a habit. Yeah it was a source of income, somebody does one side somebody does the other side of the street and put the money together, there's also beggars robbing beggars and intimidating them, arguments over spots and all that... a lot of violence and dog eat dog especially when spice came on the scene people were killing each other over it and it became quite chaotic.” (Participant 3)

Basic needs, housing, food and begging

All participants spoke about their basic needs namely housing and food. Of the seven participants one was rough sleeping at the time of interview, one was housed in private accommodation and the remaining five were in temporary accommodation. Participants generally felt that their need for food was well met by local soup kitchen and food bank provision:

“The kitchens...you haven’t got to beg for food, there’s the kitchens, there’s only so many coffees you can drink... you can go to the kitchens, from 1 o clock today the kitchens are open, you’re just begging for addictions.” (Participant 6)

“There’s places to go aye for food and stuff and like I said I would use this to my advantage, if people know where to go you can get accommodation, food or what have you, but people what’s got a habit like to fund a habit, like that’s mainly why people beg.” (Participant 2)

“Buying a cuppa/food? If I don’t give it someone else will, it’s crap sitting there for hours, there was only so many cups you could drink, I was bought so many pasties I’d give mine away to other homeless because I couldn’t eat anyway that much – they’re not sitting there for food....It took us til 14 months ago I am clean, I’ve got a good life, I don’t need to go back to it, live that lifestyle; I didn’t beg for food but to feed a drug habit that was out of control.” (Participant 3)

Most expressed a wish to change their accommodation or expressed frustration at their current situation, for one participant moving into a hostel from street homelessness had reduced their begging activity:

“I don’t want to live like this no more, I don’t want to be in here, I want my own place again, I feel ready for it...I’m getting older, I can’t live like this forever...as long as you’re not on the streets begging they divvent care how long you wait for your payment [benefits] I’ve never begged since I moved in here though...It’s not good really like but if you’ve got a habit you’ve gotta dee these things, like I say I’ve had no benefits for five six weeks now. I’ve got a roof over my head its stopped is from begging I still get the urge cos I’ve had no benefits for five weeks” (Participant 4)

Some participants begged whilst they were housed, though many described moving in and out of temporary accommodation and rough sleeping. One participant suggested that there are some people who need to beg and that there are too many beggars on the street who aren’t homeless, ‘spoiling it’ for people who need it. Participants describe that the public are becoming ‘fed up’ and are not giving money as readily because these people blur the boundary between ‘need and greed’ or because of a perception that more people are begging:

“Did I beg while housed – yeah, to feed a drug habit, I committed a lot of crime over the years and I was at a point physically where I could no longer commit the type of crime that I was used to doing so the only way I could make money that didn’t involve much effort was sitting down begging.” (Participant 3)

“People coming from Sunderland, from Blyth, Northumberland...People that actually have got houses, you still see them gannin’ begging and it stops people like me that are genuinely homeless that want money to get food, people think I’m a junkie and I’m not on any drugs at the minute. People give up, they cannot be bothered and they’re sick of helping people because it never gans anywhere...you see them coming in taking handfuls of clothes, taking all the warm clothes and they don’t need them” (Participant 1)

“We just beg at night time, cos we were asleep through the day, it’s becoming harder to get money, more people are begging and people not are giving, they’re negative about homeless, maybes 10-20% addicted, some haven’t got addictions, there’s people that’s got accommodation but you’re still classed as homeless in a hostel, some people, we’re used to the streets, we were thingy about taking a bed here, it’s a big family on the streets” (Participant 6)

One FLNG Navigator described seeing someone housed in temporary accommodation “dressing down” in ragged clothes, with a sleeping bag and saying “right I’m off to work” begging for the day.” Another participant described seeing this type of behaviour; someone who is housed ‘dressing as homeless’:

“I vary rarely beg now because I’m too embarrassed to, I’ve seen mysel go without two days because I cannot beg and when I beg they don’t give us anything, I feel stupid when they say no, I’m not a tramp I’ve had my own house, I lived with my ex, had the bairn, since I came out [of prison] everything went downhill- people that are getting paid should do more but how can you tell who is homeless and who aren’t cos people dress up, and rub their face and hands in black and bring a dog and people go ah. I’m clean and people maybe think he’s not on the streets. I had a sleeping bag, I’ve had rucksack over and a sleeping bag under and it still kills us the cold, not nice” (Participant 1)

2) The experience of begging

Where do people beg?

Generally there were a small number of city centre spots that participants reportedly visited to engage in begging activity, centred around the Haymarket area and Central Station/Centre for Life area.

How do people beg?

Participants made a distinction between two types of begging, one passive, sitting in a spot in town, and one more active, hand tapping, which they defined as “walking around town asking people for money for the bus or just if they’ve got any spare change.”

One participant had started hand tapping the previous year (Participant 7). He described himself as not having the confidence to 'hand tap' but he had a friend who was accommodated in the same hostel who did it. The participant hand tapped mainly to buy alcohol but the first time he tried it he used the money to buy crack cocaine. He described being uncomfortable with this activity and needing to have a drink to "get me courage up." This participant felt that begging would be more "humiliating" than hand tapping, where he "had craic with people and people to like us first" then asked them for money, often using a story, saying he needed the money for a taxi or other transport. The participant's friend, who first showed him how to beg walked around with a sleeping bag but the participant said this wasn't his 'style.'

One participant said that females were more likely to engage in hand tapping, "they don't like sitting down cos they are probably more at risk than men, and so by walking about and standing in a big crowd and doing it and they can make just as much money if not more than any man can" (Participant 3).

Income from begging activity

A wide range of responses were given in response to a question asking about how much money participants made from begging activity. This ranged from £7.50 on an "average day" to £650 one New Year's Eve:

"£100s and 100s on one new year I made £650 and people would give us 40 quid, 60 quid, I made as much money begging as I did burgling...On a Friday or Saturday I could comfortably make 300, it's a business to some people, some people don't sign on, they don't need to bother with benefits, the effort on jobseekers, even on the sick 200/250 a fortnight wasn't a lot of money, I could make that in a couple of days." (Participant 3)

"I know people say they're making money, it's not like it used to be, it's getting harder, it's not 100s, not anymore" (Participant 4)

"Got in with the wrong crowd, led astray, I didn't just wake up one day I knew a few people and I copied off them, organised – groups, small groups of people say five you'll all chip your bit money in- why? Easier, haven't got to raise as much money, every day I used to beg and I didn't make every single penny, we'd make seven pound fifty, get a bit to sort everyone out, a bit of basic you kna. Safe in numbers? Aye" (Participant 4)

"Not much really, just enough to go and score...you hear people it's £200 and that...if you can tell me where I can get 200 quid tell us! Over the last few years with legal highs and stuff there's loads doing it now, I've never ever used that, heroin was my addiction" (Participant 2)

The alternatives to begging

Three of the seven participants linked their begging activity to a lack of, or delays to welfare support. Notably participants told us about the status of their Universal Credit claims, delays in claims being set up and sanctions, impacting on their begging activity:

“I’ve been on a sanction for six months cos of being on the streets and me and me partner have been living on hardly nothing, we’re in serious rent arrears here having to go to food banks, having to beg, I need to beg, we can’t survive on nothing, we owe a serious lot of money, serious. Even with universal credit we can’t get housing cos of the arrears, it’s a catch 22 situation” (Participant 6)

“They put a claim in at the drop in eight weeks ago and I’ve had not one penny, I had an advisor appointment this morning, there’s been a payment since the sixth, sat there waiting to go in but they won’t pay til you put your details on the system, and now they’ve said I need to show this proof and verify it at the job centre, putting it on the system, I’ve been down the jobcentre and he said it’s done on line go on to the journal I’ve emailed my advisor and he said it takes ten minutes on line, so I’ve done that at reception here today, with a bit of luck it might come today, it’s made me feel a bit better today but it’s been a nightmare mate, honestly this Universal Credit is a nightmare, a bad decision...” (Participant 4)

“I live with me partner here and we were on Universal Credit...she was the main claimant and we went for a medical and had wa payments stopped so we fell down with them payments, ended up on and off the streets, we’re on Universal Credit now, well been to the Job Centre today...one of the workers here sent a message to say we cannot be on monthly payments obviously we’re chaotic at the moment, and maybe get paid fortnightly. I’d prefer it that way yeah cos stretching it out to last the month and we were using so it wouldn’t last the month...five weeks without using, it’s better, not having to go out begging every day to feed me habit and obviously I feel a lot better, got sort of a regular routine some structure in my life instead of, doing whatever...it’s not good that man” (Participant 2)

“It’s not good really like but if you’ve got a habit you’ve gotta dee these things, like I say I’ve had no benefits for five six weeks now. I’ve got a roof over my head it’s stopped is from begging I still get the urge cos I’ve had no benefits for five weeks” (Participant 4)

Two Fulfilling Lives Newcastle and Gateshead Navigators described working with clients who are actively engaged in begging. One client does not beg but hangs around a metro station where a few people like to chat to him regularly and they give him money and/or food sometimes. One Navigator is working with three clients who have benefits in place but who beg to support an addiction. Another has two clients who actively beg with one begging because he had no benefits for a while and went hand tapping to replace this, another client begged for money sitting on the street in a regular spot whilst waiting for Universal Credit to come through. Both of these clients used the money for drugs or alcohol.

Participants spoke about the criminal alternatives to begging; it was felt that begging activity is preferable to these alternatives:

*“There’s no need, you shouldn’t do it, but it’s better than going shoplifting and burgling”
(participant 6)*

*“I can understand people in my situation have to because they’ve got no money and they have to or go and steal and what would I rather do if it was me I’d rather beg cos I wouldn’t want to go to prison – you can beg, steal, or, or borrow, people do need to stop it definitely, people like myself they’ve got to or go and burgle houses, some I know beg and rob people.”
(Participant 1)*

The responses participants received from people when begging

We asked participants to share the responses they have received from the public when begging in Newcastle; a wide range of experiences were offered. Most participants described both positive, and negative, sometimes very negative reactions:

“I was urinated on, spat at, I was hit, I was kicked, had pints poured over us, and on the flip side I was given money by people that weren’t that aggressive and I continued to do it because I made good money.” (Participant 3)

“You know they don’t always get money they get food, a hot drink, like sometimes people just talk to you, when I’ve been begging I don’t always get money, I’ll have a crack on with people. It’s nice to talk to someone cos you’re on the streets and it’s a lonely place and there’s not much support on the streets you know” (Participant 6)

*“I’ve had every reaction you can think of, I’ve had people chase us, I’ve had people tell us to f**k off, I’ve had people give us money...but you do get good reactions...” (participant 4)*

Reactions from the public whilst rough sleeping during the night were relayed by participants:

“Me partner got his head split open, he got a brick hoyed at him we’ve had glass bottles, been spat at, had wa tent set on fire, sleeping bag cut...” (Participant 6)

“The worst time? – night time, when some have had a drink, weekends, students more likely that grief you, I’ve had money off a few students but the majority are against begging, some see you surviving on nowt, they don’t care” (Participant 4)

One participant became emotional when relaying a negative experience, changing the subject after, the Research Team felt that this experience reflected his being encouraged to overdose:

“I’ve had someone say I’ll give you a tenner if you’ll buy a bag of heroin, that’s come up a couple of times, I’ll give you a tenner if you buy a bag, I’ll say no, they’ll say I’ll not give you money then” (Participant 5)

During this consultation the Research Team spoke to a Fulfilling Lives Expert by Experience who doesn’t beg but wanted to share their views, and a member of the public who wanted to share their views on hand tapping. Both reflected on the dilemma of giving money knowing

that it may be used to buy drugs or alcohol and one described begging as a “complex social problem”:

“I feel guilty by giving them money, it might be for drugs...I can’t tell whose genuine and who is doing it for the drugs, there was a report last week in the Chronicle saying “oh it’s for drugs... the people you see on the city centre are for drugs and the people who are genuinely homeless just keep out of sight, in the parks and that”...this week a young lad said can you help us out? And I said “nah, but I can give you a banana, give you some food and he said nah I had a bad experience with a banana, or being given food, there was something in it” and I felt uncomfortable but I...I get intimidated by the unpredictability and I feel uncomfortable...It’s not right that people need to do it, there should be support.”

“Tappers, they’re...it’s getting out of hand...like the charity people on Northumberland Street, I’m approached everywhere I go in the toon for anything from 10p to a couple of quid. Part of me thinks I know where it’s going....and that could have been me, what life is that, sad.”

One participant who was in recovery and had not begged in over 12 months had some insight into this dilemma:

“I don’t really know many people over the years that have begged to get housed or to get a hostel or to go in the [name of hostel] for the night. The majority of people do it to feed a habit. I suppose if you have been in addiction, and you know what it’s like and experienced that you could maybe sort of have a better understanding of why these people do it. I don’t imagine they grew up wanting to be beggars as a career. I know I certainly never wanted to be a junkie. I never seen that as one my goals when I was growing up... No because in an addiction you don’t have feelings. I didn’t care about myself so I wasn’t going to care about anybody else was I? So for me, no, I didn’t feel nothing. I literally did not feeling nothing towards anybody or nothing towards myself, so when I was getting that money it was for my habit you know.” (Participant 3)

Generally participants spoke about the reactions that they have had from the public, though two participants spoke about the reactions they have had from the police, both described being ‘moved on’. A FLNG Navigator also told the Research Team about a client who was given an exclusion zone to move them from a regular begging spot.

“Police just chase you away, it’s classed as...you cannot do it now, if you get caught three times you get locked up...” (Participant 1)

Police – I was threatened with directions to leave but on the weekend the town was that busy they’d let it go.” (Participant 3)

What does it feel like to beg?

Participants described their guilt and shame at begging, and feeling degraded by the experience:

“Downgrading, horrible, it’s not nice to sit on the floor, not nice”

“I hate begging, it makes you feel, it’s horrible it makes you feel like you’re nothing”

“Degrading, the lowest of the low, gutted”

“You feel guilty, they’re giving you money and you know what it’s for”

Support services for people who engage in begging activity

As all participants had engaged in begging activity to support their addictions they were asked about their experiences of support services around substance misuse. One participant was accessing drug and alcohol services intermittently whilst begging. He had been addicted to alcohol since he was 16 then detoxed at 18, 24, and at 32 but suggested two weeks was ‘not enough’ to kick the habit.

Those still actively begging described being on and off script but generally they didn’t feel motivated to take action on their addictions, and described being caught in a cycle of begging and using substances:

“Addiction services, well [name of addiction service] are trying to get us on the methadone programme I see [name of worker] every Tuesday and he said he’ll refer us to [drugs and alcohol service] Thursday to get scripted” (Participant 4)

“The thing about it was getting on a script, there was no support and they were happy to put your methadone up and up, I used methadone as a safety blanket if I was rattling, [name of support organisation] got me into hostel after hostel but using always ruined everything. I tried to get clean loads of times, begging – I always knew it was there, I could sit up there and get a tenner easy in an hour, even dressed like this I could do it, money to be made man.” (Participant 3)

A Fulfilling Lives Newcastle and Gateshead Navigator told the Research Team about three of their clients who are actively begging whilst on benefits, they were described as having no motivation to explore their addiction. The Navigator described having been offered drugs when at a drug and alcohol service with clients, and identified this as a barrier to recovery for their clients; that encouraging these clients to explore their options for recovery could be seen to be limited by the general environment of the treatment services they are supported to access, and by seeing associates at these settings.

3) What would make people stop begging?

The participants who were not currently begging were on a script or in recovery, and described how they were starting to see that life could be different for them, they described being in a 'good place' and on the right footing to access services, two participants spoke about using services "to my advantage:"

"I don't think I'll ever go begging with a roof over my head, I would use mine [Universal Credit] wisely, I'm on methadone so I can use my money on other things" (Participant 4)

"I was living here before and aye I used to just treat the place like a hotel come in, go to bed, go out on a morning and come in on a night and I didn't use anything, went to get on a script and that I'm not getting any younger ye kna what I mean and I thought well use it to your advantage you know what I mean aye get the most out of the services what I can...I wasn't homeless when I come down...I lost a two bed flat down to like loss of benefits and stuff and I thought I would just use it to my advantage this time instead and get the most out of services." (Participant 2)

Case study: Life after begging, one experience

One participant who was in recovery and had not begged in over 12 months reflected on his experience of begging. Asked about how he feels about the experience in retrospect he describes how begging was a 'means to an end' and is now looking to the future:

"Any guilt/remorse? Truthfully absolutely not, erm was it right what I was doing? No it was a means to an end, I was screwed up mentally, couldn't make money any other way I had an addiction that controlled every fibre of my body and I couldn't stop using, it has us in a headlock, I accept it was wrong but I don't feel shame, I don't feel any guilt and that might sound harsh but I don't. Now when I come in to town and I see the same people it breaks my heart cos there's a way out if they want it, to be happy without drink and drugs, but I always give money because it was done for me....You know I feel guilty about the burglaries and the crimes I committed like that. I feel massive guilt around that but it was a means to an end. You know I'd go to any lengths to get money for me addiction and that's where it brought is to eventually.

Now, I'm in a relationship, I've got a massive 2 bed house, I get bathed every day, I own a ridiculous amount of trainers, the biggest thing, I'm hygienic, I contracted hep c at 17 I've done the treatment, I go to bed at night I haven't hurt anybody and I wake up in a bed, a water bed, and I'm living a life beyond me wildest dreams. I am hoping to apply for an apprenticeship that is available next year, do that and eventually go into full-time work. I've passed my driving test so am saving up the money for a car – I am not far off it – I just need to save up for a car. It never came into my thoughts. I sort of accepted I was a junkie and would die a junkie. I just sort of accepted that was the hand I got dealt." (Participant 3)

Conclusions

A small sample was secured for this consultation so findings relate to small numbers of people however several clear themes emerged from the research:

- This study sought to give a voice to people engaged in begging activity in Newcastle, we found that people were very honest about their experiences and this comes across in a relatively balanced picture; participants generally recognise that their begging activity presents as a complex dilemma for them, for services and the general public.
- Generally a participants' reason for engaging in begging activity was not to support their basic needs for food or housing or clothing, but was to secure money to support an addiction to drugs or alcohol. Any response to tackling this complex issue should explore solutions to breaking the cycle of chaotic substance misuse and changing entrenched street based lifestyles. It appears as though several interventions need to come together at a critical time when motivation to change is high to support people to move on from street based lifestyles.
- Participants describe a range of experiences when begging, from positive to very negative; all described feelings of guilt, shame and feeling degraded by the experience, though all saw their begging activity as borne out of necessity
- There is a perception from participants that it is becoming harder to make money from begging activity, either because the public are becoming jaded or because there are more people begging in the city centre
- There are a wide range of options available to meet people's basic needs, particularly access to food, most participants accessed food kitchens and/or food banks. Participants were grateful to members of the public who offered hot drinks and food and appreciated the social interaction this offered but this was not their motivation for begging and they describe being given more food and hot drinks than they could consume. This indicates that the goodwill of the general public could be directed in a different way
- Access to benefits impacted on the prevalence of participant's begging, and appears to be connected to a wider problem around rent arrears and moving in and out of temporary accommodation and rough sleeping. Anecdotally the lengthy wait for a benefits claim to be processed has seen some Fulfilling Lives NG clients dip back into begging activity. For some their begging became less prevalent when they were housed and they connected this to accessing substance misuse treatment services
- Participants who were not currently begging were on a script or in recovery, and described how they were starting to see that life could be different for them, they described being in a 'good place' and on the right footing to access services. There appears to be a link too then between secure housing coming together at the same time as drug and alcohol treatment, at this point participants report feeling ready to reduce begging activity

Next steps

- The findings of this study will be shared with Newcastle City Council. The experiences of participants chimes with what FLNG has learned about people with multiple and complex needs and we are keen to be part of discussions that shape the policy and subsequent publicity campaign.