

8/2018 Rough Sleeping Strategy



16/8/18

Key Points

- On 13 August the Government published its Rough Sleeping Strategy, intended to deliver its 2017 manifesto commitment to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end it by 2027.
- Against the background of the Homelessness Reduction Act, plans already announced to increase the supply of affordable housing and continue with existing arrangements for funding supported housing, it sets out the further action now proposed across Government to tackle rough sleeping.
- It is based on three principles: prevent, intervene, recover. A range of measures is proposed under each heading, involving new funding of £100 million.
- The strategy includes a detailed timetable for implementation and a commitment to review progress and refresh the strategy annually.

Background

The Conservative Manifesto for the 2017 General Election promised to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end it by 2027. On 13 August the Government published its strategy for delivering this commitment. Against the background of the Homelessness Reduction Act, plans already announced to increase the supply of affordable housing and continue with existing arrangements for funding supported, it sets out the further action now proposed across Government to tackle rough sleeping. It is based on three principles: prevent, intervene, recover, with a chapter devoted to each of these.

Prevention

Building on the focus on prevention which is already part of the reforms introduced by the Homelessness Reduction Act, the Government proposes:

- £3.2 million a year for two years for a new range of pilots to help people leaving prison to find stable and sustainable accommodation;
- A review of the legislation around homelessness and rough sleeping, including the Vagrancy Act;
- Research to better understand how LGBT individuals experience homelessness, and the links between modern slavery and rough sleeping;
- To ensure that deaths or incidents of serious harm to rough sleepers are rigorously investigated where appropriate;
- To work with stakeholders to look at affordability in the private rented sector, with a view to developing policy options for post-2020 when the current freeze on LHAs comes to an end.

Intervention

To help and support those already sleeping rough, the Government proposes:

- Up to £45 million to continue the work the Rough Sleeping Initiative which funds a range of local schemes to meet local need;
- £17 million for Somewhere Safe to Stay pilots in around 15 areas;
- Funding for rough sleeping navigators, new specialists who will help people who sleep rough to access appropriate local services, get off the streets and into settled accommodation;

- Up to £2 million in health funding to enable access to mental health and substance misuse treatment for people who are sleeping rough, and a NHS budget of £30 million for health services to rough sleepers, following an audit of this area of health provision;
- New training for frontline staff;
- £5 million new support for local areas to work with non-UK nationals who sleep rough;
- A Rough Sleeping and Support team prioritising support work and helping to resolve the immigration status of non-UK nationals who are sleeping rough;
- New funding for an improved StreetLink supporting the general public, business and communities to engage positively with people who sleep rough;

Recovery

The Government recognises the need to ensure that sustainable accommodation is available for people who have been sleeping rough and support to move into it. It proposes:

- The allocation of up to £135 million of dormant accounts funds to support innovative financing for homes for people who sleep rough or are at risk of sleeping rough;
- £50 million in Move On Funding that will deliver a new supply of homes outside London for people who are sleeping rough or ready to move on from hostels or refuges; this is additional to the £50 million allocated to the GLA for use for the same purpose in London;
- £19 million of new funding for Supported Lettings to provide flexible support in homes provided for people with a history of rough sleeping;
- Funding to help local areas grow Local Lettings Agencies to support vulnerable people into accommodation;
- £28 million for Housing First pilots in Greater Manchester, the West Midlands and Liverpool has already been announced;
- Homelessness experts for every Job Centre Plus;
- A Young Futures Fund to support young people who are not in education, employment or training.

Next Steps

A final chapter sets out a detailed timetable for implementation and commits the Government to review progress and refresh the strategy annually.