

# Consultation launched on replacing the outdated Vagrancy Act

- The government is determined to end rough sleeping and is repealing the antiquated Vagrancy Act
- Consultation launched to inform replacement legislation – ensuring the police can protect the public and communities

The government is set to repeal the Vagrancy Act as part of plans to end rough sleeping for good.

The government has driven a 43% drop in rough sleeping since 2019, which is currently at an 8 year low.

We will bring forward a bold new strategy that builds on progress to date and sets out how we will end rough sleeping for good and support vulnerable people off the streets, alongside wider work to continue to protect communities from crime and anti-social behaviour.

Earlier this year the government pledged to repeal the Act – in place since 1824 – which makes it an offence to sleep rough or beg in England and Wales.

Begging is harmful to those involved and can have a detrimental impact on wider communities.

The [consultation](#), launched today, seeks views on proposals to respond effectively to begging, potential penalties for harmful begging and how to encourage vulnerable people to engage with rehabilitative support.

This will ensure the police and other agencies can respond effectively and help communities feel safe while ensuring rehabilitation and support is at the heart of our approach.

Rough Sleeping and Housing Minister Eddie Hughes MP said:

No-one should be criminalised simply for having nowhere to live, and it is right that we repeal the outdated Vagrancy Act.

We must balance our role in providing essential support for vulnerable people with ensuring that we do not weaken the ability of police to protect communities.

The Vagrancy Act 1824 is an Act of Parliament that makes it an offence to sleep rough or beg in England and Wales.

In February 2022 an amendment was made to the Police, Crime, Courts and Sentencing (PCSC) Bill which will enable full repeal of the Vagrancy Act. In order to ensure that there is no gap in legislation, and to ensure that the

police have the tools they need, this repeal will come into force when replacement legislation is in place.

The [consultation](#) will last for 4 weeks from 7 April 2022 to 5 May 2022.