

Jenrick launches 'Protect Programme': the next step in winter rough sleeping plan

- Councils asked to make sure every rough sleeper offered somewhere safe to go, as new national restrictions start
- £15 million allocated for rough sleepers this year
- All councils to review their current plans for housing rough sleepers

A new scheme to help protect some of the most vulnerable people in our communities from COVID-19 has been announced by the Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick today (5 November 2020).

A further £15 million has been allocated to support the ongoing efforts to provide accommodation for rough sleepers during the pandemic. This scheme – called the 'Protect Programme' – will help areas that need additional support most during the restrictions and throughout winter.

This will run alongside the ongoing 'Everyone In' campaign, which is helping to protect thousands of lives during the pandemic – by September it had supported over 29,000 vulnerable people, with two-thirds now moved into settled accommodation.

The £15 million funding is on top of the £91.5 million allocated to 274 councils in September to fund their individual plans for rough sleepers over the coming months, as well as the £10 million Cold Weather Fund for all councils to help keep rough sleepers safe this winter.

Areas with high numbers of rough sleepers will receive extra targeted support to provide accommodation for those currently sleeping rough, working with councils to prioritise those who are clinically vulnerable – this will continue throughout the winter until March 2021.

In order to help prevent people being at risk of homelessness, Mr Jenrick has today also confirmed that bailiff enforcement action will not be permitted during the national restrictions or over the Christmas period. This builds on protections he announced earlier this year, including 6-month notice periods and new court rules meaning judges will prioritise the most serious of cases.

Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick said:

The way we have protected rough sleepers from COVID-19 is widely considered to be the best in the world.

At the start of the pandemic we launched Everyone In, which protected thousands of vulnerable people. That work hasn't stopped and we've backed it with £700 million.

As the new national measures come into force, I am launching the Protect Programme to ensure councils are offering everyone sleeping rough on our streets today somewhere safe to go – protecting people from the virus and moving forward with our goal of eliminating rough sleeping.

All councils will have to update their rough sleeping plans by the end of the year, providing an overview of their support for those sleeping rough. They will also be asked to carry out a rapid assessment of need for everyone they accommodate and to consider time limited interventions for those rough sleeping now or new to rough sleeping.

MHCLG is working with councils, charities and other partners – backed by over £700 million of government funding this year alone – to protect the most vulnerable in society, as part of our commitment to end rough sleeping for good.

This includes over £150 million to bring forward 3,300 long-term homes this year alone, alongside £112 million funding of the Rough Sleeping Initiative this year.

See the definition of those deemed [clinically vulnerable](#).

The top 10 areas to receive funding are as follows:

- London
- City of Bristol
- Brighton and Hove
- Cornwall
- Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole
- Manchester
- Salford
- Oxford
- Leicester
- Birmingham