

New analysis shows one third fall in number of vulnerable people sleeping rough linked to government initiative

- New analysis finds the numbers of people sleeping rough is around a third lower than predicted if the government's Rough Sleeping Initiative had not been in place
- Over £400 million to help reduce homelessness and rough sleeping, including an additional £54 million next year – a 13% real terms increase in funding
- Additional funding totalling £10 million to help councils step up support for vulnerable people on the streets during the winter months

New analysis shows that the government's trailblazing Rough Sleeping Initiative is having a significant impact on reducing the numbers of vulnerable people sleeping rough on the country's streets.

The Rough Sleeping Initiative – a cornerstone of the government's ambitious Rough Sleeping Strategy – has provided £76 million to 246 councils across the country to date, supporting rough sleepers in their area off the streets and into secure accommodation where they can get the help they need to rebuild their lives.

The report published today (12 September 2019) shows that the Rough Sleeping Initiative has reduced the number of vulnerable people sleeping rough by 32%, compared to the number it would have been had the initiative not been in place.

The analysis estimates the impact of the initiative from its launch in March 2018 until autumn that year and takes account of a range of factors, including whether councils submitted estimates or counts in the official annual rough sleeping statistics, the weather on the night the data was collected, and local housing and labour market conditions, to zero in on the effects of the initiative.

Welcoming the evaluation findings, Communities Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

Since becoming Communities Secretary in July, I have been able to see first-hand the outstanding work taking place under the Rough Sleeping Initiative every single day to transform the lives of society's most vulnerable – and these figures are proof that our strategy to end rough sleeping is working.

But we must keep that momentum up, which is why we have committed a record investment to tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in the months ahead – ensuring progress continues to be made and

people are given the help they need to turn their lives around.

Today's figures come just days after the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced £422 million of funding to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping – up £54 million from £368 million in 2019 to 2020.

The Communities Secretary and the Chancellor have also announced a further £10 million to boost life-saving support for rough sleepers during the cold winter weather and has called on councils to come forward and bid for the funding now in order to step-up preparations in time for the winter months.

Last year, funding provided by government during the coldest weather meant thousands of vulnerable rough sleepers spent the night in safe and warm accommodation, rather than on the streets.

In August last year, the government unveiled its [Rough Sleeping Strategy](#) – backed by £100 million – which sets out the next steps towards ending rough sleeping for good.

This forms part of a wider strategy to tackle all forms of homelessness, including:

- investing £1.2 billion to tackle homelessness
- providing £76 million for the Rough Sleeping Initiative to 246 local authorities – including the 83 areas with the highest number of rough sleepers
- this year councils are using this investment to create an estimated 2,600 more beds and 750 additional specialist support staff
- introduced the Homelessness Reduction Act to ensure people at risk of becoming homeless get help more quickly, with councils receiving over £72 million to support them in these duties

The Rough Sleeping Initiative was announced in March 2018.

The RSI [impact evaluation](#) published today assessed the impact of the programme compared to if the initiative had not taken place.

The impact analysis aimed to understand the impact of the Rough Sleeping Initiative on the overall numbers of people sleeping rough by comparing 83 RSI areas to a comparison group of 83 non-RSI areas.

The evaluation estimates the overall net reduction in rough sleeping as a result of the RSI compared to if the programme had not existed.

The analysis accounted for a range of factors, including whether councils submitted estimates or counts in the official annual rough sleeping statistics, the weather on the night the data was collected and local housing and labour market conditions, to assess the effects of the programme and ensure the results were unbiased and not the result of other external factors.

Analysis also shows RSI areas changing their approach to measuring rough

sleeping did not account for the fall in rough sleeping seen in these areas.

The evaluation looks at the first year of funding for the programme, which saw £30 million allocated to the 83 areas of the country with the highest levels of rough sleeping based on the 2017 annual rough sleeping statistics.

In 2019 to 2020, the government allocated a further £46 million – including £12 million for councils not previously funded – to build on the programme's work and help even more people off the streets and to move forward with their lives.

Analysis was independently peer reviewed by Bryson Purdon Social Research, an independent research partnership.

In order to reach as many rough sleepers as possible, £1 million of the Cold Weather Fund will be available to providers and services that are not commissioned by local authorities. This element of the fund will be administered by Homeless Link, who will ensure interventions are effective in supporting as many people as possible off the streets.