

[Press release: Government actions a further step in homeless prevention](#)

New guidance to make sure local authorities intervene earlier to help prevent families and individuals becoming homeless in the first place has been published today (16 October 2017).

The guidance, which is subject to an [8-week consultation](#), sets out how local councils should implement the [Homelessness Reduction Act](#), due to come into effect in April 2018. The new Act requires councils to provide services to all at risk of becoming homeless, on top of those with a priority need such as families with children and those who are vulnerable.

Following further discussions with local authorities in England on the resources required to implement the Act, the government is providing an additional £11.7 million in new burdens funding to local authorities, taking the total amount to £72.7 million. This additional funding will be shared among local authorities over 2 years to meet the requirements of the Act.

The government will also be providing a share of £3 million to local authorities to support them in upgrading their data systems to allow them to assess how the Act is changing homeless prevention in their areas. This comes on top of the government's investment of £550 million until 2020 for homelessness and rough sleeping.

Minister for Homelessness Marcus Jones said:

Tackling homelessness and rough sleeping are complex issues with no single solution, but this government is determined to help the most vulnerable in society. That's why we're implementing the most ambitious legislative reform in decades, the Homelessness Reduction Act.

Local authorities play a vital role in implementing the Act. Therefore the guidance and government funding will support them in making sure people will get the help they need earlier to prevent them becoming homeless in the first place.

The consultation asks for views on the guidance for local councils as they prepare to undertake their new duties under the Act, including:

- Making information and advice about homelessness available to all residents free of charge. This includes advice on preventing homelessness and securing accommodation, as well as rights under the Act, and how to access help.
- Tailoring advice to meet the particular needs of vulnerable groups, including victims of domestic abuse and young adults leaving care.
- Working collaboratively with people who are homeless or threatened with

homelessness, to agree a personalised housing plan based on their needs and circumstances. The plan will set out the 'reasonable steps' the local authority and the customer will take to prevent homelessness or help to secure alternative housing.

- Providing help to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible applicants, including single people who do not have 'priority need', and those who might be considered 'intentionally homeless'.
- Securing and helping to secure suitable safe accommodation for people who are homeless, or helping them to stay in their current home wherever possible and appropriate.

The [8-week consultation](#) closes on 11 December 2017.

The Homelessness Code of Guidance has been drafted with the assistance of a working group of local authorities and other stakeholders, and the final version will be published in the spring 2018.

The government is also continuing to fund free training through the [National Housing Advisory Service](#), a partnership between Shelter and Citizens Advice, for local authority staff on the Homelessness Reduction Act up until April 2018.