

Press release: Government announces up to £26 million for vulnerable rough sleepers

Vulnerable people sleeping rough across the country will receive specialist tailored support they need to recover from life on the streets and find accommodation, thanks to a £26 million fund announced today (1 March 2019) by the Housing Minister, Heather Wheeler MP.

Councils will be able to bid for the extra investment to fund innovative local schemes which help those sleeping rough and struggling with mental health problems or substance misuse issues into a home as a priority, and provide the wrap-around help they need get back on their feet.

Councils will use the funding to:

- create teams of 'Navigators' – specialist support workers who will work tirelessly as a single point of contact to help people off the streets and into recovery by directing them to the services they need, such as mental health support, substance misuse counselling and housing advice services
- establish dedicated lettings agencies for rough sleepers – specialist agencies which provide homes and advice for those sleeping on the streets, supporting them into affordable and stable accommodation
- set up specialist rough sleeping Somewhere Safe to Stay 'hubs' – new hubs which will ensure those on the streets have access to professional help and guidance to start their recovery, including immediate shelter and tailored mental health support
- introduce Supported Lettings schemes – helping vulnerable people sleeping rough to sustain tenancies – properties that they may not otherwise be able to access

Funding announced today forms part of the government's [rough sleeping strategy](#), which aims to end rough sleeping for good backed by investment of £100 million.

Minister for Housing and Homelessness, Heather Wheeler MP said:

No one should ever have to face a night on the streets, and steps are being taken to ensure people are never faced with this as their only option.

These are vulnerable people who need specialist support to get back on their feet and turn their lives around.

The funding announced today will ensure those sleeping on the streets across the country have access to the professional help and guidance they need to start their recovery – taking us one step

closer to our ambition to end rough sleeping for good.

Today's announcement follows the publication of the latest annual rough sleeping statistics, which shows the number of people sleeping rough has fallen for the first time in 8 years – with a decrease of 19% in the 83 areas supported through the government's Rough Sleeping Initiative.

To date, councils have used the investment to create an additional 1,700 beds and 500 rough sleeping support staff – meaning there are more people in warm beds tonight as a result of government funding.

Bidding for this fund is open from today and will close on 29 March 2019. Ministers will announce successful councils later this year.

In [August 2018](#), the government unveiled its [rough sleeping strategy](#), which sets out the next steps towards achieving the aim of supporting everyone off the streets and into a home and to end rough sleeping for good, backed by £100 million of funding.

The Rough Sleeping Initiative funds 83 councils with the highest number of rough sleepers across the country.