

Press release: Housing Minister unlocks private rented sector for most vulnerable

- Over £19.5 million to be provided to local authorities to help people access a home in the private rented sector
- This action will help those that are homeless, or at risk of homelessness find a more permanent home
- Government also calls for the end of housing advertisements which specify 'No DSS' tenants

Housing Minister Heather Wheeler MP has confirmed over £19.5 million is to be shared among 54 projects across England to help thousands of people who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless, to secure their own home.

Councils will use the funding boost to help vulnerable people secure their own tenancy through support such as, paying deposits or putting down the first months' rent.

This will give them an opportunity to make a home in a property they may otherwise not have been able to access.

This funding forms part of the £100 million [Rough Sleeping Strategy](#) which set out detailed plans to end rough sleeping for good.

Today the Minister has also outlined plans to look at letting adverts which potentially discriminate against would-be tenants on Housing Benefit and made clear these should end.

Out of 4.5 million households living in private rental accommodation, 889,000 receive housing benefit to help pay their rent.

Yet the latest figures show around half of landlords said they would not be willing to let to tenants on Housing Benefit – ruling out thousands of vulnerable people and families.

In the coming months, ministers will meet leading industry representatives, including mortgage providers, landlord associations, tenant groups, and property websites to clamp down on blanket exclusions in adverts – with a view to stopping them altogether.

This builds on ongoing government action to create a fairer housing market that works for everyone.

Minister for Housing and Homelessness Heather Wheeler MP said:

I want everyone to have the security, dignity and opportunities they need to build a better life – at the heart of which is

ensuring everyone can find a safe and secure home to call their own.

This funding will make a huge difference in opening up the private rented sector to people who need it and give them the chance to rebuild their lives.

I will also be meeting key stakeholders to tackle the practice of 'No DSS', to underline the need for immediate change.

Minister for Family Support, Housing and Child Maintenance, Justin Tomlinson said:

Everyone should have the same opportunity when looking for a home, regardless of whether they are in receipt of benefits.

With Universal Credit, payments can be paid directly to the landlord, and we continue to listen to feedback and work with landlords to improve the system.

Landlords can already receive rent from tenants on Housing Benefit and Universal Credit – meaning payments can be paid directly into their accounts.

This helps strengthen the choices and opportunities available for those on benefits to secure the homes they and their families need.

In a third move, local authorities can from today, also bid for a share of up to £26 million of Rapid Rehousing Pathway funding for 2019 to 2020.

This extra investment can be used to fund innovative local schemes which help those sleeping rough and struggling with mental health problems or substance misuse issues. It will give them the wrap-around help they need to get back on their feet.

The Private Rented Sector Access Fund will support minimum tenancies or existing tenancies for a period of 12 months.

See more information about the 54 projects set to receive funding: [PRS Access Fund successful bids](#) (PDF, 71.5KB, 2 pages)

The Crisis Private Rented Sector Access Programme ran from 2010 until 2014, backed by £11 million in funding from the government. The programme supported over 153 schemes across the sector, creating 8,000 tenancies over 4 years. A total of 90% of these schemes created lasted beyond 6 months.