

Rough Sleeping Strategy: Rapid Rehousing Pathway Prospectus

Expressions of Interest for Early Adopters

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) invites applications from Local Authorities that wish to be **Early Adopters (EA)**, to apply for funding to support the local establishment or enhancement of a **Rapid Rehousing Pathway (RRP)** for rough sleepers.

We are looking for local authorities, with their partners, who are innovative, creative and want to pioneer a new approach to ending rough sleeping. Above all, we want to hear from local authorities who are determined to reduce their rough sleeper numbers, and will be unflinchingly focused on outcomes for this vulnerable group.

Areas who can deliver quickly, have good local relationships in place and at least some parts of a Rapid Rehousing Pathway that are functioning, will be prioritised as an Early Adopter. A second process will follow early next year to fund those with a strong local need but less developed systems.

What is a Rapid Rehousing Pathway (RRP)?

In our Rough Sleeping Strategy¹ (RSS) which we published in August 2018, we set out our plan to meet our commitment to halve rough sleeping by 2022, and end it entirely by 2027. By 2027, we want to base our response to rough sleeping on a rapid rehousing approach. This means if a person is at risk of rough sleeping they will have their needs assessed quickly in line with the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017², be offered appropriate support and then helped rapidly into a home, with appropriate support alongside.

We are clear that every area with one or more rough sleepers should have a clear local pathway into settled accommodation that includes:

- Rapid assessment of need and eligibility;
- Rapid rehousing into an appropriate settled home and referral into support services, where needed.

This approach was endorsed by our Advisory Panel, made up of sector experts, and the RSS set out policies that will support this system in local areas.

Why is this support available?

In autumn 2017, 4,751 people slept rough on a typical night. This was an increase of 15% on the previous year. We are clear that the human cost of this, in broken lives too often cut short, is unacceptable.

A stable home is an essential element in a person's recovery from rough sleeping and needs to go hand in hand with flexible support that is tailored to individual needs. We need to ensure that people have support in place to move into sustainable accommodation.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-rough-sleeping-strategy>

² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/13/contents/enacted>

Ensuring that the right support, tailored to an individual's needs, is provided alongside a home, is fundamental. The earlier that a stable base can be established, the greater the chances that an individual will not return to rough sleeping. The internationally recognised Housing First model follows the principle that the first thing to do when intervening to secure a person's recovery is to support them into a home, with intensive wrap-around support provided in tandem to help them address their needs.

In many areas, often supported and funded by the Government's Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI), a RRP exists, or at least some elements of it. We want to ensure this pathway exists, in some form, in every area where there are rough sleepers. The Government is therefore providing up to £100m of funding for areas to develop this pathway.

Firstly, we launched the £50m Move on Fund, administered by Homes England, which is now open for bids³ from areas outside of London. This fund will provide capital for the delivery of much needed homes for people leaving hostels and domestic abuse refuges, and also fund provision of tenancy support for at least two years.

We are now inviting Expressions of Interest from innovative areas who are determined to reduce the numbers of rough sleepers on their streets. We are looking for local authorities, groups of local authorities or local authorities with their partners who would like to become Early Adopters of the pathway as set out in the RSS. These four elements are:

- **15 Somewhere Safe to Stay Pilots** – We will fund 15 assessment hubs that build on the No Second Night Out model in London, to rapidly assess the needs of people who are sleeping rough or those who are at risk of sleeping rough and support them to get the right help.
- **Local Lettings Agencies** – We will fund the setup or extension of local lettings agencies, to help local areas to make the most efficient use of rental accommodation, foster the development of strong relationships between landlords and tenants, and where possible develop a property portfolio to meet the needs of rough sleepers.
- **Supported Lettings** – We will fund flexible floating support in homes provided for people with a history of rough sleeping. This will provide flexible support funding to help over 5,000 people at risk of rough sleeping, over the next two years, to sustain their tenancies in homes across the housing sector.
- **Navigators** – We will fund new specialists who will help people who sleep rough to access the appropriate local services, get off the streets and into settled accommodation. These individuals will work with a range of multidisciplinary teams and provide both navigation and co-ordination support, using strong local relationships, expertise and collective working.

At this stage, we are seeking expressions of interest from authorities that would like to be considered as an EA and would like to adopt one or more of the above services into their pathway. They must:

- be able to rapidly deliver new services;
- have some/many functioning services/pathway elements for rough sleepers;
- have a rough sleeping problem and have a proven track record of reducing these numbers through interventions; and
- have strong local relationships.

Expressions of Interest must reach us by email to roughsleepingstrategyEOI@communities.gsi.gov.uk by midnight on the 31 October 2018.

³https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/733423/Move_On_Fund_Prospectus_Final.pdf

The Programme

Overview of the offer

The objective of the programme is to deliver functional and effective Rapid Rehousing Pathways for rough sleepers across England, building on the work of the RSI.

To this end, we will be allocating funding to EAs who can demonstrate that one or more of the interventions that we are funding is missing from their Pathway. We will therefore be making an assessment of the speed of delivery, projected outcomes and the proposed model of each intervention, as well as assessing the impact on the Pathway as a whole. For example, where a Somewhere Safe to Stay hub is placed, there must be suitable move on options to support it. Areas will also want to consider local need and local cohorts, to ensure that the pathway is appropriate for the area and the demographic characteristics of those who are experiencing rough sleeping locally.

We will not fund work that would happen anyway. This money cannot simply top up an existing project *unless* communities can provide clear evidence that the proposal would not have happened without our funding.

In addition, and in recognition of the importance of effective housing pathways for ex-offenders, we will give special consideration to Expressions of Interest that include support for those with an offending history.

Early Adopters must be able to deliver services which meet the following criteria:

Somewhere Safe to Stay (SStS)

We are seeking Expressions of Interest from local authorities and their partners, which have a need for, and can deliver, an assessment hub in their local area and consider that this would ensure more people could be supported off the streets.

- Building on No Second Night Out assessment hubs (NSNO), these centres will provide a safe emergency environment away from the street which is open and staffed 24 hours a day seven days a week to anyone who presents and is identified as being at imminent risk of or already rough sleeping. This will be aimed at single people and couples without children who do not have priority need. **We expect delivery providers to be able to implement a robust triage process and capability with skilled staff trained and able to determine those who fit this cohort.**
- During a short stay (72 hours) at SStS clients will be fully assessed and have a personal housing plan aimed at alleviating their housing situation and preventing them from rough sleeping. **We expect delivery providers to be able to implement an assessment with staff trained and able to make assessments of and referrals for entitlement for housing, benefits and support.**
- SStS projects can be either cross-local authority or single authority run. Individuals should leave the hub with a 'single service offer' of a pathway to accommodation, which could include supported housing, the private rented sector, social housing or staying with family or friends. **We expect delivery providers to demonstrate that they have the support of other local areas, local delivery partners and a range of multidisciplinary teams.**
- Offers of a space in a SStS hub should be for those with an imminent risk of and those who are already rough sleeping. **We expect delivery providers to**

demonstrate that their service will be part of a pathway that includes assessments of local authority duties, and provision of a personalised housing plan.

- The space should be a shared “sit up” space but will also need to adhere to minimum/agreed standards to ensure a dignified and safe stay in an environment conducive to engagement and psychologically informed working. This is in order to ensure that only those who really need it will take up the offer, but also to ensure people are willing to move on from the service and are not likely to interpret it as an accommodation offer. Providers will also need to have available some emergency accommodation or rooms for vulnerable people or for individuals where a positive housing outcome is achievable but over a longer time scale. The environment must be safe and staffed 24hrs a day. Access to shower and toilet facilities is essential as well as basic facilities to prepare food and drink. The hubs must have adequate space for staff teams to work from including interview and assessment rooms. **We expect delivery providers to have a suitable building identified, with suitable or imminent planning.**
- As part of the pathway, there must be agreed alternative offers and contingencies for occasions when the hub is full and should not be seen as the only option. For example, on occasions if the hub is full, arrangements should be in place with the local authority in order to access other emergency accommodation where needed. Optimal case loads would be five per worker per shift/day. Hub space would need a clear optimal capacity - this would be driven by building availability and staffing models (eg NSNO London hubs have an optimum capacity of 25 clients at any given time). **We expect delivery partners to be able to estimate the use and throughput of their hub and have contingency plans.**
- SStS hubs should develop robust data and recording systems to use to evidence their work but also highlight the gaps and challenges locally and nationally to inform service and sector improvement - including recording length of stay, reasons for long stay, reasons for risk of rough sleeping, demographics, support needs etc. Crucially, all pilot areas will need to record outcomes and move on success. **We expect delivery partners to commit to monitoring this information.**

Supported Lettings

We are seeking Expressions of Interest from areas which have a need for additional funding to provide tenancy sustainment support to sit alongside homes that are let to rough sleepers leaving the street, former rough sleepers leaving hostels, and those at imminent risk of sleeping rough.

- We would like this funding to encourage landlords to bring forward new units for rough sleepers by building confidence in those who have concerns about taking on people who are leaving or who have recently left the streets. This funding cannot be used for those already housed or for families. **We expect delivery areas to demonstrate that they have homes which could be utilised by rough sleepers (PRS, Housing Association, or council homes) if low level support were available.**
- This support is only for people who have low/medium needs and will not be high level enough for those with complex needs, though areas could top this funding up. Areas will need to consider whether this is appropriate for their local populations of rough sleepers or former rough sleepers in hostels. **We expect delivery areas to**

demonstrate that they have a cohort of low/medium needs rough sleepers or former rough sleepers in hostels who could benefit from such support.

Tenancy sustainment support could include, but is not limited to:

- Support to develop independent living skills;
- Support with learning to manage a tenancy and adhere to tenancy terms, including paying rent;
- Support with learning to budget;
- Support or signposting to claim benefits;
- Support to develop and cultivate support networks;
- Signposting into work or education;
- Signposting to other services and agencies for help and support.

We expect delivery areas to demonstrate that they have local partnerships that will allow them to recruit or contract suitable support workers swiftly.

Navigators

We are seeking Expressions of Interest from local authorities and their partners, who consider that their Rapid Rehousing Pathway would benefit from one or more 'navigators' to support rough sleepers from their first contact with services through to settled accommodation.

- Navigators will be assigned to rough sleepers who would benefit from this kind of tailored support. Caseloads should not be more than 20, but could be lower. They should follow the client from street outreach, giving a continued single point of contact and support through pathway systems and through to resettlement support. They will focus not just on finding a housing solution but supporting the individual in their recovery to find employment, undertake training, develop budgeting skills, cultivate positive social circles and be better equipped to maintain their accommodation and independence and avoid returning to the street. Navigators should be able to offer personalised, creative, innovative and effective support and be a single point of contact, building trust with clients, working in an inclusive way and empowering clients to achieve. **We expect delivery areas to demonstrate that they have a route to recruitment for flexible (including flexible hours) and trained navigators or advocates.**
- Navigators should co-ordinate support services, work with stakeholders and provide support, encouragement and advocacy to enable clients to navigate support and accommodation pathways in order to move away from the living on the streets. This will require freedom to try different forms of innovative interventions to achieve outcomes, with the full engagement and partnership of local agencies. Ideally, Local Authorities will assign personalised budgets to their navigators, to ensure they are able to fully and effectively support their clients. Navigators should be able to demonstrate positive outcomes for clients over a two year period. **We expect delivery areas to demonstrate that their navigator will have the support of key local stakeholders and be embedded in a multidisciplinary team who will support and help to co-ordinate their tailored and targeted work.**

Local Lettings Agencies

We are seeking Expressions of Interest from local authorities and their partners, who would like to set up or expand an existing Local or Social Lettings Agency. These organisations or a group of specialists provide help for individuals who are not owed a housing duty by the

local authority and need additional support to access the private rented sector or other suitable housing.

- Local Lettings Agencies can provide a range of services, which can include:
 - Signposting to local services, including deposit services or charities;
 - Advice on renting, tenancy agreements and budgeting;
 - Guidance on support services and referrals to housing providers;
 - Brokering relationships with local landlords and housing providers, to create a bank of landlords who will let to more vulnerable tenants;
 - Leasing of properties and rental guarantees for landlords; and/or
 - Managing or holding a portfolio of property to be rented by vulnerable individuals.

This new funding will provide for the setup of new Local Lettings Agencies to provide this support, and the expansion of these services to provide more support to help people get into settled accommodation, including specialist support for rough sleepers. This can be established in a dedicated building or as part of a Housing Options service. **We expect delivery partners to demonstrate that they have a clear strategy to ensure that this service will provide housing outcomes for vulnerable people.**

- Whilst Local Lettings Agencies can provide services for a number of vulnerable groups who are not owed a duty of housing by the local authority, this funding will provide specialist posts to give support to rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping. These individuals will have an understanding of the specific issues that face this group and will have a range of strategies to overcome these challenges to support rough sleepers and those leaving hostels into settled, appropriate accommodation in all housing tenures. **We expect delivery partners to demonstrate that they have a route to recruitment for these officers.**

Funding

Grants will be paid to the appropriate principal local authority that is supporting the application (under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003), but can then be directed to local delivery partners.

If successful, local authorities (or lead authorities) will be given funding for 2018/19 and be given a provisional allocation for 2019-20.