



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Jim Cunningham MP
House of Commons
London
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Mrs Heather Wheeler MP
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Dear Jim,

14-11-18

I recognise your concerns about the levels of homelessness in Coventry. The Government is clear that no one should be without a roof over their head. That is why we have committed to halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it by 2027. We are implementing a range of measures not only to tackle rough sleeping but also wider homelessness, as set out below.

As you may know, the Homelessness Reduction Act, the most ambitious homelessness legislative reform in decades, came into force on Tuesday 3 April 2018. The Act transforms the culture of homelessness service delivery as:

- for the first time local authorities, public services and the third sector will work together to actively prevent homelessness for people at risk, irrespective of whether they are a family or single person, what has put them at risk or if they have a local connection to the area;
- local authorities will work with people at risk of losing their homes to develop personalised housing plans, tailored to focus on the needs and circumstances of the household. This includes support from other services where it's needed; and
- Coventry specifically are receiving an additional £240,000 over the next two years to carry out these new duties, and we have a team of specialist advisors supporting them in implementing the legislation.

In addition, over £1.2 billion in funding has now been allocated through to 2020 to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping, as well as supporting the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act. This includes:

- £215 million of central government funding for homelessness programmes, which includes £28 million for our Housing First pilots and the £20 million Private Rented Sector Access Fund announced at Autumn Budget 2017;

- £316 million of core funding to local authorities, of which Coventry are receiving £200,000; and
- £617 million in Flexible Homelessness Support Grant funding, of which Coventry are receiving almost £1 million, which gives local authorities greater flexibility to prioritise homelessness prevention in their areas.

As you will be aware, in May 2018 the Government launched three regional Housing First pilots, one of which is the £9.6 million West Midlands pilot and includes Coventry. The pilots will support around 1000 rough sleepers (and those at risk of rough sleeping) with the most complex needs, to help them to end their homelessness. Individuals will be provided with stable, affordable accommodation and intensive wrap-around support to recover from complex issues, such as substance abuse, and mental health difficulties and sustain their tenancies.

On rough sleeping, ahead of the publication of the strategy in August, the Government announced a new Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) to have an immediate impact on reducing the levels of rough sleeping. This includes:

- a cross-Government, multi-disciplinary new Rough Sleeping Team, building on, and complementing, the work of our successful Homelessness Advice and Support Team;
- £100,000 funding to support training of frontline rough sleeping workers across the country to make sure they have the right skills and knowledge to work with vulnerable rough sleepers; and
- additional funding of up to £45 million for 2019 – £20 million was announced in the strategy of which £34 million has already been provisionally allocated to the 83 local authorities. Details around the remaining £11m fund will be communicated in due course.

Thank you for raising this important matter, I hope that you have found this helpful in setting out the funding and support that the Government has made available to prevent and reduce homelessness in Coventry.

I will place a copy of this letter in the library of the House.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mrs Wheeler', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

MRS HEATHER WHEELER MP