

Keep Our Doors Open

Campaign briefing



Homeless Link

Rough sleeping is rising while homelessness services are struggling to keep their doors open

Rough sleeping rose by 26% in 2022, the biggest year on year rise since 2015. At the same time, a combination of prolonged inflation, historic funding deficits, staff shortages and increased demand for support has pushed the homelessness sector into crisis. Services across the country are deeply concerned that, without an inflationary funding uplift, they will be forced to scale back the support they offer, or even close their doors all together.

Nearly half of homelessness services face closures without a funding uplift

Between September and November 2022, Homeless Link conducted a major survey of the homelessness sector. The questions focused on the impact of rising costs on services, receiving 356 responses from organisations across the country.

Key statistics are as follows:

- Nearly half (47%) of the organisations surveyed agreed that the rising cost of living, including increases to energy bills, means their organisation risks service closures.
- Nearly two thirds of respondents (64%) agreed that a lack of inflationary increase in their funding would make services unviable.
- Nearly one in five (19%) of respondents agreed that their service has already reduced services to meet the rising cost of living.
- Nearly half of respondents (48%) said their service has supported more people due to the cost of living crisis.

Money for charities announced in Spring Budget not enough

In March, the Chancellor announced £100m of funding for charities facing financial hardship. While the recognition of the importance of third sector providers was welcome, without a full inflationary uplift for homelessness support, hundreds of services could still shut down altogether. Not only will this leave people experiencing homelessness with nowhere to turn for accommodation and support, those already housed may face the trauma of returning to the streets.

Our asks of Government

- 1. Uplift commissioned contracts in line with inflation:** Housing costs, building costs and staff costs are all rising. This urgently needs to be reflected in contract uplifts.
- 2. Specialised utility support for charities:** From April 2023, the Government is replacing the Energy Bill Relief Scheme with the Energy Bill Discount Scheme. The new scheme does not provide adequate support to third sector providers of residential accommodation.
- 3. Uplift Local Housing Allowance in line with market rates:** 49/50 private lets are now unaffordable for people who rely on housing benefit.

How can organisations support the campaign?

The support of homelessness organisations across the country will be vital to applying the necessary pressure on Government to bring in the changes that we need to see.

Join our Key Supporters group

Over 30 homelessness organisations from across the country are 'Key Supporters' of the campaign. They receive regular updates and are first to hear of opportunities to get involved. If your organisation are interested in joining then please get in touch with Campaigns Manager Nye at nye.jones@homelesslink.org.uk.

Write to your MP

Raising awareness of the issues homelessness services are facing within parliament is critical. MPs are always keen to hear from organisations that are delivering services or based within their constituency and they often take these issues right to the top of Government.

Support the campaign on social media

Share your support for the campaign on social media through the hashtag #KeepOurDoorsOpen. Some suggested tweets are below:



Hundreds of homelessness services could close down due to rising costs.

Government must urgently uplift homelessness funding in line with inflation to #KeepOurDoorsOpen



The Government committed to ending rough sleeping by 2024. But it rose by 26% in 2022.

@RishiSunak & @Jeremy_Hunt to stick to your pledge, homeless services need a funding uplift to #KeepOurDoorsOpen



We are seeing both homelessness and our costs rising, but our budgets remain the same.

@michaelgove you committed to ending rough sleeping. To meet that target, services like us need a funding uplift in line with inflation to #KeepOurDoorsOpen

What We Do

Homeless Link is the national membership charity for frontline homelessness services. We work to improve services through research, guidance and learning, and campaign for policy change that will ensure everyone has a place to call home and the support they need to keep it.

Homeless Link

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@HomelessLink

**Let's End Homelessness
Together**

