

## Help plan for post-lockdown and beyond (05/05/20)



As those of you who were able to join us for our weekly webinar on 22 April 2020 will know, even whilst in the midst of the pandemic and lockdown, we, like some of you, are now looking at what happens post lockdown, at both local and national level and are envisaging three phases:

- Exit:** what can be done now to plan for the closure of hotels and other covid-19 sites
- Transition:** how we ensure the right housing and support pathways are available once restrictions are lifted
- Recovery:** what measures are needed to strengthen the protection for those left vulnerable by covid-19, reduce the risk of people becoming newly homeless, and do things differently based on what we have learnt from this crisis

More specifically, we are looking at what action is needed to ensure people do not return to rough sleeping and homelessness and what wider systemic change is needed to prevent future homelessness and respond effectively to covid-19 impacts.

To do this, we need your insight and local knowledge. As ever, what you know from frontline experience is key to how effective we are at pushing for the right provision to be in place. Please tell what you know in relation to our policy priorities:

1. **Financial viability** of the homelessness sector ([read our on the urgent need for financial support](#)). Tell us of your concerns in relation to financial capacity to deliver homelessness prevention. It would be particularly helpful if you're able to provide us with specific financial data (we will, of course, maintain your anonymity when using financial data). Also, if you're part of a local community support hubs and know of local plans for the end of lockdown and beyond or know of local authority overspend, please let us know.
2. **Claimant access to welfare benefits and/or bank accounts.** DWP have made a number of welcome changes to [how they deliver their services](#) and [levels of Universal Credit and the Local Housing Allowance rate](#), but we need to know what negative or positive impact these have had on the claimants you work with. Tell us, from your experience, which of the changes work well and what changes should be kept.
3. Issues that have greater impact on **women and/or young people**, particularly around homelessness prevention and protection from exploitation.
4. **People applying as homeless being turned away by local authorities.** We're hearing reports that the expectation that all rough sleepers should be brought in are being 'relaxed'. We're also hearing reports of Housing Options teams advising applicants to ring Streetlink, rather than processing people's homelessness applications. Local authorities are still bound by their duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the Housing Act 1996, so if you know of local authorities that need central government support to meet those duties, let us know.
5. Availability of **support in temporary or emergency accommodation.** in general and more specifically with **drug and/or alcohol** dependency issues.

Contact us via our Policy Managers, Sue Christoforou and Jennie Corbett or your Partnership Manager:

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