

Housing providers and local authorities: tackling move-on together during coronavirus

Briefing for housing associations

Housing associations have a key role to play in preventing homelessness and are committed to working with the most vulnerable people in our communities. During the coronavirus crisis, housing associations have worked with sector partners and the government to ensure temporary accommodation for those who need it and start to provide permanent homes for people leaving hotels and other temporary accommodation.

Housing associations are also in a strong position to assist with the next steps. Housing associations want to work with national and local government to move people into permanent housing and keep people housed, providing the social housing and support needed to end wider homelessness.

On 24 May, the government [announced](#) that it would fast track funding to make long-term homes available for rough sleepers, with 3300 made available over the next 12 months. While this is welcome, we will keep pressing for the other funding and changes we need, to ensure there is absolutely no return to rough sleeping. There is also an immediate need to support councils to provide homes for people who will be quickly moved on from the hotels where they have been temporarily housed.

Some housing providers have homes that are currently empty, as the usual nominations and lettings procedures were paused at the start of the coronavirus outbreak. They want to ensure they are playing their part in providing homes for vulnerable people, including people who have experienced homelessness. There is also an opportunity to consider how we can acquire, build or tenure flip additional homes for the future.

This document sets out an offer that housing providers can make to local authorities to make long-term homes available quickly for people moving on from temporary accommodation for former rough sleepers.

Why is this an issue?

- Homeless people are at **higher risk of coronavirus**, for health reasons and difficulty self-isolating.
- This is a chance to **end rough sleeping**, which the government pledged to do by 2024. It will also free up temporary accommodation for those who are new to homelessness and **reduce homelessness** as a whole.
- **Many people have been “blocked” in temporary accommodation**; there will be a backlog of homeless households needing to move on and housing providers can help them move on quickly.

What can housing providers do now?

- Talk to your local authority about how best to support them **to map the support needs of people who need housing** so the right options can be identified.
- **Discuss applications with the local authority and identify where you have any suitable properties or spaces that may meet applicants’ needs** (location, safety, support offer of high, medium or low, type of property, size, adaptations). Ideally, any accommodation you provide will be ready for people to move in to, with appropriate furnishings and white goods.
- **Work with the local authority to secure funding for support.** You may need to make the case for additional funding to provide more supported units than usual or convert general needs properties into supported properties, including additional funding for drug, alcohol and mental health services.
- If you provide **Housing First**, offer this to the local authority for people with the most complex needs.

What can housing providers do in the future?

- Think about properties you may be able to **convert from market sale or shared ownership into affordable or social rent or supported or sheltered accommodation** and **identify private market properties you could purchase or lease.** You may also be able to **build new homes.**