



Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Eddie Hughes MP

Minister for Rough Sleeping and Housing

**Department for Levelling up, Housing and
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To: All Local Authority Chief Executives
cc Council Leaders

20 December 2021

Dear Chief Executive,

PROTECT AND VACCINATE – ROUGH SLEEPING RESPONSE TO THE NEW VARIANT

I would like to start by thanking you for the unprecedented work that you continue to do to ensure people sleeping rough receive the support they need during this challenging time. I understand the additional pressures that the spread of the Omicron variant and cold weather pose for local authorities in terms of rough sleeping, and I know you are already working hard to ensure protections are in place.

In light of the Omicron variant the Prime Minister has implemented Plan B to step up our response to COVID-19 and announced a national endeavour to vaccinate every eligible adult this year. From what we know about the low vaccination rates amongst the rough sleeping population, Omicron presents a severe risk to the individuals you do so much to protect. Therefore, I am asking now for a range of action to make sure that we put in place the right support and help us to vaccinate this vulnerable group with urgency.

Accommodating people sleeping rough

As we have seen through the course of the pandemic, one of the most immediate ways to prevent transmission of COVID-19 amongst those sleeping rough is to provide self-contained accommodation. We have already provided significant funding to expand rough sleeping pathways, particularly through the Rough Sleeping Initiative; however, given the new threat posed by Omicron we recognise we need to go further. Therefore, we are announcing a £25 million funding package to support all local authorities across England to find appropriate accommodation and, most importantly, to use this as a way of boosting vaccination rates across this vulnerable population.

This means you should (subject to individual assessments) make offers of safe and appropriate accommodation to people who are rough sleeping now. This will include people who may have previously been offered accommodation but rejected it or left accommodation, and individuals new to rough sleeping who require help to move on from rough sleeping. We recognise that in some areas you may have to make decisions about who you help first based on local resources, particularly because of the staffing needed to run accommodation safely. Where you need to, we suggest that you focus on the most vulnerable people sleeping rough, particularly clinically vulnerable, as well as those with a history of rough sleeping.

Importantly, you should do all you can, working with partners in the NHS to ensure everyone in this cohort gets vaccinated. For people who have received no doses of the vaccine or just one, this will take time as the latest clinical advice recommends five months to become fully vaccinated (first vaccine to booster), and this is why it is vital that we provide additional funding for emergency accommodation to keep people safe. We recognise that supporting vaccine uptake will not always be straightforward and some of the individuals you work with will be vaccine hesitant; however, the evidence is clear that full vaccination is the most effective barrier from the dangers of COVID-19.

Increasing vaccination uptake amongst people sleeping rough

Alongside the extra support for emergency accommodation, we are also announcing some further measures to increase vaccination levels:

- We are working closely with NHSEI's Vaccine Deployment Programme to target mobile vaccination units to areas where there may be a high concentration of unvaccinated people sleeping rough. The 50 areas with the highest levels of people sleeping rough will have already received our requests for further information to help target these mobile units. Thank you for your responses for far – your rough sleeping advisor is on hand if you need any assistance.
- We are also providing a £3.2 million vaccination incentivisation package. This will comprise of funding direct to local authorities to be used flexibly to encourage the uptake of vaccination amongst people sleeping rough. This funding will be used at your discretion to incentivise vaccination amongst this cohort using your knowledge and understanding of the issues they face. You may wish to support activities such as travel costs, meal vouchers, or funding for staff to take people to vaccination appointments. Again, your rough sleeping adviser will be on hand to support you with this and offer guidance and oversight regarding these funds.

The funding set out above will be in place up to the end of March 2022, but we will work with you to understand any costs that fall into next year. Allocations by areas are at Annex A – further details will be provided shortly.

Supporting non-UK nationals with restricted eligibility

All individuals, regardless of immigration status, are eligible to receive a vaccine and do not need an NHS number to do so. It is critical that you include all non-UK nationals in your plans, and – as ever – ensure that you are exhausting all options within the law to support them.

This should include doing a full and proper assessment of each individual's circumstances and need and considering in full what discretionary powers you have to support and/or accommodate them. Although the assessment is for you to make on a case-by-case basis, in the government's view the circumstances are such as to enable you to exercise public health and emergency powers to provide accommodation (see Section 2B National Health Service Act 2006 and associated statutory guidance published in accordance with Section 73B, and Section 138 Local Government Act 1972). Other powers, for example the General Power of Competence (Section 1 Localism Act), can also be used for this cohort although in some (but not all) cases use will be limited unless it is necessary to avoid breach of a person's ECHR rights. In the government's view the circumstances are such that the ECHR exception may well be engaged; however, again it is for local authorities to make an assessment on a case-by-case basis.

This does not mean that accommodation could be offered on a long-term basis or that this cohort could, for example, be placed into a supported housing. However, time-limited, emergency support as outlined in this letter would, in our view, be possible.

Testing

As per current advice to the general population, your workforce and volunteers should be taking a minimum of two Lateral Flow tests a week. This increases to daily testing if confirmed as a close contact with someone who has Covid-19. The same frequency of testing applies to people experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping who you may be accommodating. We would encourage you to build a good supply of Lateral Flow tests, to account for the possibility of more individuals being accommodated, and the increased likelihood of close contact with someone who has Covid-19.

Anyone who is required to self-isolate (whether because of a positive COVID-19 test result, or as a contact) may be supported in doing so by you, using the specific Self Isolation Practical Support funding that has been made available for this. The offer of practical support includes meeting the needs of people sleeping rough and others experiencing homelessness. You are encouraged to use this fund in any way that may support those who need to self-isolate, including accommodation that can be used for self-isolation, and transportation associated with this. Please email Covid-19LAFundingrequests@dhsc.gov.uk and cc in TTpracticalsupport@dhsc.gov.uk, if you'd like to check whether potential uses of this fund would be appropriate.

Operation of communal night shelters to accommodate people sleeping rough

You will be aware of my department's [COVID-19: provision of night shelters](#) operating principles. These principles were updated on 13 December with a new requirement that communal settings should not be opened without written agreement from the local authority and the local Director of Public Health, based on a comprehensive risk assessment. It is vital that these operating principles are followed and widely disseminated amongst shelter operators. This guidance also applies to any communal settings opened before this date.

Impact on Rough Sleeping Initiative

We know you are also in advanced planning for RSI 2022-2025 which begins in April 2022. The deadline for RSI applications was 4 February 2022. Given the additional work to respond to the challenges posed by the Omicron variant we are extending this deadline to midnight on 25 February 2022.

This will mean that full RSI 2022-2025 allocations will only be confirmed after 1 April 2022. However, we can now assure you that we will fund a minimum level of provision for the first 3 months of RSI 2022-2025. This will be equal to 75% of your current RSI 4 costs pro-rated for 3 months, calculated based on the 9-month RSI 2021/22 (12 months for areas that were new to the RSI in 2021/22). This assurance is being provided to help give you planning certainty for the first financial quarter of 2022/23.

Where applicable, the additional 3-month staff costs that were agreed in RSI 2021/22 for new staff posts commencing July 2021 will continue to be paid in the first quarter of 2022/23.

This Government remains absolutely committed to protecting this vulnerable group and ending rough sleeping for good, and I thank you for all your work to help us achieve this.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'E. Hughes'.

EDDIE HUGHES MP

Protect and Vaccinate 21/22 Allocations**This funding will be ring-fenced. Further guidance will be shared with local authorities shortly.**

Local Authority	Accommodation (2021-22)	Vaccination (2021-22)	Total Allocation
Adur	20,493	2,651	23,144
Allerdale	8,855	1,146	10,000
Amber Valley	10,247	1,326	11,572
Arun	112,712	14,581	127,294
Ashfield	20,493	2,651	23,144
Ashford	61,480	7,953	69,433
Babergh	40,986	5,302	46,289
Barking and Dagenham	40,986	5,302	46,289
Barnet	133,205	17,232	150,438
Barnsley	30,740	3,977	34,717
Barrow-in-Furness	8,855	1,146	10,000
Basildon	20,493	2,651	23,144
Basingstoke and Deane	8,855	1,146	10,000
Bassetlaw	61,480	7,953	69,433
Bath and North East Somerset	122,959	15,907	138,866
Bedford	10,247	1,326	11,572
Bexley	40,986	5,302	46,289
Birmingham	317,644	41,092	358,736
Blaby	8,855	1,146	10,000
Blackburn with Darwen	112,712	14,581	127,294
Blackpool	81,973	10,605	92,577
Bolsover	8,855	1,146	10,000
Bolton	61,480	7,953	69,433
Boston	40,986	5,302	46,289
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	368,877	47,720	416,597
Bracknell Forest	71,726	9,279	81,005
Bradford	81,973	10,605	92,577
Braintree	71,726	9,279	81,005
Breckland	92,219	11,930	104,149
Brent	245,918	31,813	277,731
Brentwood	8,855	1,146	10,000
Brighton and Hove	399,616	51,697	451,313
Bristol, City of	809,479	104,719	914,198
Broadland	20,493	2,651	23,144
Bromley	30,740	3,977	34,717
Bromsgrove	10,247	1,326	11,572
Broxbourne	20,493	2,651	23,144
Broxtowe	40,986	5,302	46,289
Buckinghamshire	133,205	17,232	150,438
Burnley	61,480	7,953	69,433
Bury	8,855	1,146	10,000
Calderdale	20,493	2,651	23,144
Cambridge	61,480	7,953	69,433
Camden	799,232	103,393	902,626
Cannock Chase	40,986	5,302	46,289

Canterbury	153,699	19,883	173,582
Carlisle	8,855	1,146	10,000
Castle Point	10,247	1,326	11,572
Central Bedfordshire	51,233	6,628	57,861
Charnwood	8,855	1,146	10,000
Chelmsford	143,452	18,558	162,010
Cheltenham	112,712	14,581	127,294
Cherwell	92,219	11,930	104,149
Cheshire East	71,726	9,279	81,005
Cheshire West and Chester	8,855	1,146	10,000
Chesterfield	81,973	10,605	92,577
Chichester	30,740	3,977	34,717
Chorley	30,740	3,977	34,717
City of London	317,644	41,092	358,736
Colchester	122,959	15,907	138,866
Copeland	8,855	1,146	10,000
Cornwall	338,137	43,743	381,880
Cotswold	20,493	2,651	23,144
County Durham	71,726	9,279	81,005
Coventry	112,712	14,581	127,294
Craven	40,986	5,302	46,289
Crawley	81,973	10,605	92,577
Croydon	153,699	19,883	173,582
Dacorum	61,480	7,953	69,433
Darlington	20,493	2,651	23,144
Dartford	81,973	10,605	92,577
Derby	51,233	6,628	57,861
Derbyshire Dales	20,493	2,651	23,144
Doncaster	266,411	34,465	300,875
Dorset	215,178	27,837	243,015
Dover	71,726	9,279	81,005
Dudley	20,493	2,651	23,144
Ealing	225,425	29,162	254,587
East Cambridgeshire	8,855	1,146	10,000
East Devon	81,973	10,605	92,577
East Hampshire	51,233	6,628	57,861
East Hertfordshire	61,480	7,953	69,433
East Lindsey	20,493	2,651	23,144
East Riding of Yorkshire	153,699	19,883	173,582
East Staffordshire	8,855	1,146	10,000
East Suffolk	61,480	7,953	69,433
Eastbourne	122,959	15,907	138,866
Eastleigh	71,726	9,279	81,005
Eden	8,855	1,146	10,000
Elmbridge	51,233	6,628	57,861
Enfield	215,178	27,837	243,015
Epping Forest	30,740	3,977	34,717
Epsom and Ewell	20,493	2,651	23,144
Erewash	8,855	1,146	10,000

Exeter	225,425	29,162	254,587
Fareham	112,712	14,581	127,294
Fenland	122,959	15,907	138,866
Folkestone and Hythe	92,219	11,930	104,149
Forest of Dean	8,855	1,146	10,000
Fylde	20,493	2,651	23,144
Gateshead	10,247	1,326	11,572
Gedling	8,855	1,146	10,000
Gloucester	51,233	6,628	57,861
Gosport	61,480	7,953	69,433
Gravesham	71,726	9,279	81,005
Great Yarmouth	112,712	14,581	127,294
Greenwich	143,452	18,558	162,010
Guildford	81,973	10,605	92,577
Hackney	122,959	15,907	138,866
Halton	20,493	2,651	23,144
Hambleton	8,855	1,146	10,000
Hammersmith and Fulham	40,986	5,302	46,289
Harborough	30,740	3,977	34,717
Haringey	81,973	10,605	92,577
Harlow	10,247	1,326	11,572
Harrogate	30,740	3,977	34,717
Harrow	10,247	1,326	11,572
Hart	8,855	1,146	10,000
Hartlepool	20,493	2,651	23,144
Hastings	174,192	22,535	196,726
Havant	8,855	1,146	10,000
Havering	40,986	5,302	46,289
Herefordshire, County of	133,205	17,232	150,438
Hertsmere	10,247	1,326	11,572
High Peak	30,740	3,977	34,717
Hillingdon	61,480	7,953	69,433
Hinckley and Bosworth	10,247	1,326	11,572
Horsham	102,466	13,256	115,721
Hounslow	61,480	7,953	69,433
Huntingdonshire	61,480	7,953	69,433
Hyndburn	10,247	1,326	11,572
Ipswich	51,233	6,628	57,861
Isle of Wight	51,233	6,628	57,861
Isles of Scilly	8,855	1,146	10,000
Islington	92,219	11,930	104,149
Kensington and Chelsea	81,973	10,605	92,577
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	8,855	1,146	10,000
Kingston upon Hull, City of	184,438	23,860	208,298
Kingston upon Thames	122,959	15,907	138,866
Kirklees	40,986	5,302	46,289
Knowsley	8,855	1,146	10,000
Lambeth	256,164	33,139	289,303
Lancaster	61,480	7,953	69,433

Leeds	276,657	35,790	312,447
Leicester	143,452	18,558	162,010
Lewes	61,480	7,953	69,433
Lewisham	174,192	22,535	196,726
Lichfield	30,740	3,977	34,717
Lincoln	163,945	21,209	185,154
Liverpool	143,452	18,558	162,010
Luton	71,726	9,279	81,005
Maidstone	30,740	3,977	34,717
Maldon	61,480	7,953	69,433
Malvern Hills	30,740	3,977	34,717
Manchester	645,534	83,510	729,044
Mansfield	92,219	11,930	104,149
Medway	194,685	25,186	219,871
Melton	30,740	3,977	34,717
Mendip	194,685	25,186	219,871
Merton	8,855	1,146	10,000
Mid Devon	20,493	2,651	23,144
Mid Suffolk	40,986	5,302	46,289
Mid Sussex	102,466	13,256	115,721
Middlesbrough	92,219	11,930	104,149
Milton Keynes	30,740	3,977	34,717
Mole Valley	20,493	2,651	23,144
New Forest	81,973	10,605	92,577
Newark and Sherwood	30,740	3,977	34,717
Newcastle upon Tyne	51,233	6,628	57,861
Newcastle-under-Lyme	112,712	14,581	127,294
Newham	112,712	14,581	127,294
North Devon	92,219	11,930	104,149
North East Derbyshire	8,855	1,146	10,000
North East Lincolnshire	71,726	9,279	81,005
North Hertfordshire	10,247	1,326	11,572
North Kesteven	8,855	1,146	10,000
North Lincolnshire	51,233	6,628	57,861
North Norfolk	51,233	6,628	57,861
North Northamptonshire	102,466	13,256	115,721
North Somerset	71,726	9,279	81,005
North Tyneside	30,740	3,977	34,717
North Warwickshire	8,855	1,146	10,000
North West Leicestershire	8,855	1,146	10,000
Northumberland	51,233	6,628	57,861
Norwich	143,452	18,558	162,010
Nottingham	297,151	38,441	335,592
Nuneaton and Bedworth	20,493	2,651	23,144
Oadby and Wigston	8,855	1,146	10,000
Oldham	10,247	1,326	11,572
Oxford	297,151	38,441	335,592
Pendle	8,855	1,146	10,000
Peterborough	143,452	18,558	162,010

Plymouth	112,712	14,581	127,294
Portsmouth	256,164	33,139	289,303
Preston	102,466	13,256	115,721
Reading	184,438	23,860	208,298
Redbridge	153,699	19,883	173,582
Redcar and Cleveland	10,247	1,326	11,572
Redditch	10,247	1,326	11,572
Reigate and Banstead	20,493	2,651	23,144
Ribble Valley	8,855	1,146	10,000
Richmond upon Thames	40,986	5,302	46,289
Richmondshire	8,855	1,146	10,000
Rochdale	71,726	9,279	81,005
Rochford	10,247	1,326	11,572
Rossendale	8,855	1,146	10,000
Rother	10,247	1,326	11,572
Rotherham	20,493	2,651	23,144
Rugby	30,740	3,977	34,717
Runnymede	10,247	1,326	11,572
Rushcliffe	10,247	1,326	11,572
Rushmoor	10,247	1,326	11,572
Rutland	10,247	1,326	11,572
Ryedale	40,986	5,302	46,289
Salford	30,740	3,977	34,717
Sandwell	20,493	2,651	23,144
Scarborough	122,959	15,907	138,866
Sedgemoor	20,493	2,651	23,144
Sefton	10,247	1,326	11,572
Selby	10,247	1,326	11,572
Sevenoaks	30,740	3,977	34,717
Sheffield	235,671	30,488	266,159
Shropshire	184,438	23,860	208,298
Slough	122,959	15,907	138,866
Solihull	30,740	3,977	34,717
Somerset West and Taunton	102,466	13,256	115,721
South Cambridgeshire	8,855	1,146	10,000
South Derbyshire	8,855	1,146	10,000
South Gloucestershire	8,855	1,146	10,000
South Hams	40,986	5,302	46,289
South Holland	30,740	3,977	34,717
South Kesteven	20,493	2,651	23,144
South Lakeland	20,493	2,651	23,144
South Norfolk	10,247	1,326	11,572
South Oxfordshire	40,986	5,302	46,289
South Ribble	8,855	1,146	10,000
South Somerset	61,480	7,953	69,433
South Staffordshire	8,855	1,146	10,000
South Tyneside	40,986	5,302	46,289
Southampton	143,452	18,558	162,010
Southend-on-Sea	184,438	23,860	208,298

Southwark	276,657	35,790	312,447
Spelthorne	10,247	1,326	11,572
St Albans	40,986	5,302	46,289
St. Helens	10,247	1,326	11,572
Stafford	92,219	11,930	104,149
Staffordshire Moorlands	30,740	3,977	34,717
Stevenage	163,945	21,209	185,154
Stockport	61,480	7,953	69,433
Stockton-on-Tees	10,247	1,326	11,572
Stoke-on-Trent	235,671	30,488	266,159
Stratford-on-Avon	51,233	6,628	57,861
Stroud	40,986	5,302	46,289
Sunderland	92,219	11,930	104,149
Surrey Heath	10,247	1,326	11,572
Sutton	20,493	2,651	23,144
Swale	51,233	6,628	57,861
Swindon	81,973	10,605	92,577
Tameside	30,740	3,977	34,717
Tamworth	10,247	1,326	11,572
Tandridge	20,493	2,651	23,144
Teignbridge	102,466	13,256	115,721
Telford and Wrekin	10,247	1,326	11,572
Tendring	20,493	2,651	23,144
Test Valley	30,740	3,977	34,717
Tewkesbury	10,247	1,326	11,572
Thanet	71,726	9,279	81,005
Three Rivers	10,247	1,326	11,572
Thurrock	40,986	5,302	46,289
Tonbridge and Malling	30,740	3,977	34,717
Torbay	81,973	10,605	92,577
Torridge	40,986	5,302	46,289
Tower Hamlets	297,151	38,441	335,592
Trafford	10,247	1,326	11,572
Tunbridge Wells	10,247	1,326	11,572
Uttlesford	8,855	1,146	10,000
Vale of White Horse	20,493	2,651	23,144
Wakefield	10,247	1,326	11,572
Walsall	30,740	3,977	34,717
Waltham Forest	81,973	10,605	92,577
Wandsworth	204,931	26,511	231,443
Warrington	30,740	3,977	34,717
Warwick	61,480	7,953	69,433
Watford	40,986	5,302	46,289
Waverley	10,247	1,326	11,572
Wealden	10,247	1,326	11,572
Welwyn Hatfield	10,247	1,326	11,572
West Berkshire	20,493	2,651	23,144
West Devon	30,740	3,977	34,717
West Lancashire	8,855	1,146	10,000

West Lindsey	8,855	1,146	10,000
West Northamptonshire	112,712	14,581	127,294
West Oxfordshire	30,740	3,977	34,717
West Suffolk	122,959	15,907	138,866
Westminster	1,916,108	247,879	2,163,987
Wigan	40,986	5,302	46,289
Wiltshire	133,205	17,232	150,438
Winchester	20,493	2,651	23,144
Windsor and Maidenhead	8,855	1,146	10,000
Wirral	20,493	2,651	23,144
Woking	10,247	1,326	11,572
Wokingham	30,740	3,977	34,717
Wolverhampton	51,233	6,628	57,861
Worcester	153,699	19,883	173,582
Worthing	112,712	14,581	127,294
Wychavon	51,233	6,628	57,861
Wyre	10,247	1,326	11,572
Wyre Forest	20,493	2,651	23,144
York	51,233	6,628	57,861