

Havant Borough Council

Severe Weather Emergency Protocol

Rough Sleeper Reporting

Not everyone who is homeless or sleeping rough is aware that there are services available to help them.

If someone is concerned about someone who is sleeping rough, or they are sleeping rough themselves and are in need of help, they can report this through the [Streetlink website](http://www.streetlink.org.uk) (www.streetlink.org.uk) or by calling 0300 500 0914.

They will be asked to provide as much information as possible about the location of the person they have seen sleeping rough such as the town or postcode; street name and nearest building number; a description of where they are sleeping rough (i.e. bench outside supermarket); and what time of day/night they have seen them sleeping rough.

The information they provide will be reported to Havant Borough Council's Housing Services team who will arrange for the rough sleeper to be approached by outreach services, so there is no need for them to do this themselves. By doing so they will be linked with local services and be offered the appropriate advice and assistance to end their rough sleeping.

However, if it is thought that the person is in immediate risk of harm or danger or needs urgent medical attention, 999 should be called.

Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP)

Housing authorities are required to ensure that there is provision in place for rough sleepers during periods of extreme weather to prevent people dying on the streets in the cold.

The SWEP is triggered when the night time temperature is forecast by the Met Office to be zero degrees Celsius or below for three consecutive nights. This temperature is monitored by the council's Emergency Management and Housing Services teams who will also monitor any other extreme weather conditions which may also trigger the SWEP such as torrential rain/flooding etc.

Eligibility Criteria

During the period of the SWEP the rough sleeper is not required to demonstrate eligibility for assistance as homeless (including whether they have any recourse to public funds), priority need, intentionality or local connection.

However, the rough sleeper must:

- Be at risk if they continue to sleep rough during the course of the severe weather;
- have nowhere to sleep indoors during the course of the severe weather (indoors does not include cars, sheds or garages);
- agree to the assistance offered by the council.

Procedure

If the rough sleeper meets the above criteria they will be offered emergency accommodation for the duration of the severe weather.

Rough sleepers requiring assistance can make contact during office hours with the Housing Options team by calling at the Plaza or telephoning 023 9244 6379 or outside of office hours they can use the council's emergency contact telephone number 07850 358156. Their circumstances will be assessed so as to determine the most suitable accommodation to be provided.

All clients placed into emergency accommodation when the SWEPP is in operation will be referred to a Community Housing Support Worker so that contact can be arranged for ongoing support.

The weather forecast will be checked daily and once the minimum temperature is predicted to have risen above zero degrees Celsius, emergency accommodation will no longer be provided.

The rough sleeper will be offered housing advice and assistance from the Housing Options team and the outreach services to deal with their longer-term issue of homelessness.

If any incidents of anti-social behaviour or unacceptable behaviour are shown during the course of the time that emergency accommodation is being provided which may cause it to be withdrawn, the assistance being provided will be reviewed by the council to see if there are any alternative ways to prevent rough sleeping during the severe weather whilst at the same time managing the risks imposed.

Emergency Accommodation Offered

Accommodation offered will be dependant on what is available during the period of SWEPP. The Council endeavours to work with accommodation providers and local community organisations to ensure that suitable accommodation with an element of support is available.

Where this is not available the council may utilise Bed and Breakfast accommodation in either local independent or commercial establishments. Whilst every effort will also be made to provide accommodation within the borough, due to the lack of accommodation available it may be that this has to be provided out of borough. Where this is the case, and if required and appropriate, support will be provided to facilitate travel to that accommodation.