



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Felicity Buchan MP

Minister for Housing and Homelessness

2 Marsham Street

London

SW1P 4DF

Our reference: 31451104

Caroline Lucas MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

23 October 2023

Dear Caroline,

Thank you for your email of 7 September 2023, about the high levels of homelessness in Brighton. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

I recognise your concerns about the levels of homelessness in Brighton. No-one in our society should have to suffer the injustice of living a life on the streets, deprived of shelter, warmth, and necessities.

That is why this Government has made the unprecedented commitment to end rough sleeping and to fully enforce the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA) which is the most ambitious reform to homelessness legislation in decades.

In September 2022, the Government published the new cross-government strategy 'Ending Rough Sleeping for Good', setting out how we are investing £2 billion over the next three years to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.

This Government is committed to fully enforcing the HRA and we have taken steps to continue this work by providing over £1 billion in funding through the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) over three years. Local authorities can use this flexibly to meet their homelessness and rough sleeping strategies – for example, to offer financial support for people to find a new home, to work with landlords to prevent evictions or to provide temporary accommodation, among other preventative measures. This is part of the £2 billion of funding to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping over three years. I can confirm that a total of £14,326,765 HPG funding will be provided to Brighton and Hove Council for 2023-25.

The Government has made good progress towards its goal to end rough sleeping and tackle homelessness. While the annual rough sleeping snapshot in 2022 has risen compared to 2021 following sustained decreases since the peak in 2017, the long-term trends show the significant progress that Government and local partners have made. Rough sleeping levels are 35% lower in 2022 compared to the peak in 2017 and 28% lower than they were in 2019 before the pandemic, which is when we saw significant reductions in rough sleeping in light of the specific Covid-related support that the Government put in place.

Our rough sleeping strategy sets out a 'prevention first approach', including bringing forward investment so that nobody leaves a public institution for the streets. I can confirm that a total of £257,250.00 has been allocated in 2021-25 to support people leaving custody in Brighton and Hove.

To help people who sleep rough get off the streets as quickly as possible, we are investing over £530m in funding to local authorities across England from April 2022 to March 2025 through the Rough Sleeping Initiative. I can confirm that a total of £8,376,605 RSI funding will be provided to Brighton and Hove Council for 2022-2025. As well as a further investment of £675,676 has been allocated through the Rough Sleeping Accommodation programme to Brighton and Hove Council in 2020 to provide homes for people who have experience of rough sleeping.

The Government also recognises that rents are increasing. Our £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme will deliver thousands of affordable homes for both rent and to buy right across the country. While the Levelling Up White Paper committed to increasing the supply of social rented homes and a large number of the new homes delivered through our Affordable Homes Programme will be for social rent.

The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) determines the maximum housing support for tenants in the private rented sector. It ensures that claimants in similar circumstances living in the same area are entitled to the same maximum rent allowance regardless of the contractual rent paid. LHA rates are not intended to cover all rents in all areas. We, along with colleagues in HM Treasury and DWP, keep rates under review.

The Government remains steadfastly committed to our goal to end rough sleeping and we will continue to work with local authorities and partners, the voluntary and community sector and private sector to end it for good.

I trust this information is helpful and I thank you for writing on this important matter.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Felicity Buchan".

Felicity Buchan MP
Minister for Housing and Homelessness