

West Berkshire Council: Rough Sleepers across West Berkshire at an all-time low

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Rough Sleepers across West Berkshire at an all-time low

The number of rough sleepers has officially decreased from nine to zero in West Berkshire, which is a result of the great partnership work between the council housing team and homeless charities across the district.

The rough sleeper count was confirmed by an external verifier who reported our reduction in numbers actually on the streets at that time.

Cllr Hilary Cole, Executive Member for Housing, Strategic Partnerships and Transformation at West Berkshire Council, said: “This news is a real credit to the team who deal with rough sleepers and shows our genuine commitment to eradicating rough sleeping in the district.

“We will continue to monitor the situation to ensure no one is sleeping rough or homeless, especially during these very cold times, as we continue to proudly work with our external partners in providing food and supplies not only over the festive period, but all year round.

“Our work is not just about getting people off the streets, it is about preventing them from ending up on the streets in the first place. When rough sleepers are accommodated we assist individuals to sustain their tenancies through initiatives such as the Housing First scheme, employment and training to assist rough sleepers back into work or employment related training courses.

“Our longer term plans are being aligned with the [Reducing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and delivery plan](#) with a key priority focussing on utilising our existing resources and ensuring move on pathways exist for all clients.”

With the weather now taking a turn as the temperatures drop, we have implemented our Winter Plan to proactively minimise the adverse impact on rough sleepers this winter across West Berkshire. Beds are set aside to ensure anyone who is verified as sleeping rough can have access to accommodation 24/7 and all accommodation will be Covid safe with self-contained facilities.

If you spot a rough sleeper, here is some information on what you can do:

- Call Streetlink on: 0300 5000914 or via their website: <https://www.streetlink.org.uk>. You can provide the location, details around physical appearance, time and any other additional useful information.
- Contact our Rough Sleeper Team: housing@westberks.gov.uk. Our Outreach Worker will investigate and make contact with the rough sleeper to verify the case within 24 hours and endeavour to arrange a move off the streets.
- If you think the person you are concerned about is in immediate danger, needs urgent care, or there is a health and safety concern for members of the public, please call 999.
- Donate to local homeless charities rather than directly to individuals.

ENDS

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