

The Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt
HM Treasury
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

Dear Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP,

We are writing to you as a collection of 37 of England's leading homelessness organisations, services and partners to make you aware of the dire situation facing providers of homelessness services and to call on you to release funding in the upcoming Spring Budget to help services stay afloat.

In its 2019 manifesto, the Conservative Party made an admirable commitment to end rough sleeping in England by the end of 2024. Yet rough sleeping rose by 26% in 2022, the biggest year on year percentage rise since 2015. Meanwhile, CHAIN, the database for homelessness in London, recently reported a record number of people sleeping rough in the capital. With demand for all our services increasing, we firmly predict another sharp rise for the upcoming 2023 statistics.

The Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy and the associated £2bn of funding over three years was welcomed by the homelessness sector when it was announced in 2021. However, this funding was finalised before the prolonged recent period of inflation. A recent poll by Homeless Link of 120 providers of homelessness services found that 66% of homelessness accommodation providers have services that are no longer financially viable due to lack of inflationary increases in commissioned and grant funded projects, 36% have already reduced their services to meet financial pressures, while 41% risk service closures imminently.

At the same time, councils across the country are axing homelessness services in a desperate bid to address huge funding deficits. Two county councils have now approved proposals to decommission homelessness funding from April, while a further four are proposing similar measures. Elsewhere, district and city councils are also reducing funding for services.

Support services are shrinking while homelessness surges. More and more people are being pulled into homelessness without the support of expert service providers to turn to, at huge risk to their physical and mental health and placing significant extra strain on emergency and health services. This is a disaster, which the Government must address immediately.

We recognise the Government's recent announcement of a £600m funding boost for local authorities to provide social care. However, given the enormous deficits elsewhere in

council budgets, this money is unlikely to make a material difference to the ability to fund homelessness services. The Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Select Committee, supported by the Local Government Association, recently urged Government to inject £4bn into council budgets over the next two years to prevent well-run councils from falling into bankruptcy and local services collapsing.

Therefore, we urge you to provide funding to enable backdated inflationary uplifts to local authority commissioned contracts for homelessness services and accommodation projects in the upcoming Spring Budget.

Yours sincerely,

Rick Henderson, CEO at Homeless Link

Kate Henderson, CEO at the National Housing Federation

Gavin Smart, CEO at Chartered Institute for Housing

Emma Haddad, CEO at St Mungo's

Lee Buss-Blair, Director of Operations at Riverside Housing

Amanda Dubarry, CEO at Your Place

Stephen Bell, CEO at Changing Lives

Nicholas Redmore, Territorial Director at the Salvation Army

Liz Rutherford, CEO at Single Homeless Project

Charlotte Talbott, Chief Executive at Emmaus UK

Lorraine Mealings, CEO at BCHA

Jean Templeton, CEO at St Basils

Andrew Redfern, Chief Executive at Framework Charity

David Smith, CEO at Oasis Community Housing

Salma Ravat, CEO at One Roof Leicester

Richard Gammage, Chief Executive at Two Saints

Mark Grant, CEO at Action Homeless

Amanda Croome, Head of Homelessness at Caritas Salford

Jayni Gudka, CEO at Unseen Tours

Dr Jan Sheldon, CEO at St Martins

Helen Bedser, CEO at Julian House

Steve Crane, CEO at Target Housing

Jo Carter, CEO at Glass Door Homeless Charity

Mark Simms, CEO at P3 Charity

Jodie Geddes, CEO at AMAT UK

Wendy Taylor, Assistant Director of Services at Cranstoun

James Boulton, CEO at Wycombe Homeless Connection

Chris Keating, CEO at Connection Support

Steve Rundell, CEO at Nomad Sheffield

Tim Fallon, CEO at SPEAR

James Martin, Director at Cambridge Cyrenians

Tim Archbold, CEO at Signposts

Malcom Putko, Group Operations Director at Harbour Housing

Benn Kiley, Operations Manager at A2 Dominion

Tom O'Connor, CEO at Providence Row

Natalie Allen, CEO at Sifa Fireside

Jonathan Pearce, Chief Executive at Bus Shelter MK