

Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick spends Christmas evening at Birmingham Christmas Shelter

Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick spent the evening volunteering on Christmas Day at Birmingham Christmas Shelter.

Birmingham Christmas Shelter is open throughout the day and night during Christmas week and welcomes up to 150 guests daily.

The team at the shelter provide hot food and drinks as well as entertainment, services, clothing and a safe and warm place for vulnerable people to sleep.

The shelter depends entirely on donations and volunteers who work all year round to prepare for the following Christmas.

Commenting after the visit, Robert Jenrick said:

It was a real privilege to spend the evening with the fantastic team at the Birmingham Christmas Shelter, and meet some of the people who were staying there this Christmas.

The volunteers I met were truly inspiring, and thanks to their hard work the guests at the shelter were able to enjoy Christmas Day, get a proper meal and have a warm place to sleep for the evening. I commend their efforts to support vulnerable people in their community this Christmas.

As Communities Secretary I will put tackling homelessness and rough sleeping right at the heart of this government. This week we announced funding of over £260 million to prevent homelessness and support vulnerable people on our streets and we are committed to putting an end to rough sleeping by the end of this parliament.

Last April the government introduced the [Homelessness Reduction Act](#), the most ambitious reform to homelessness legislation in decades.

This week [£263 million has been announced](#) for local authorities to prevent and relieve homelessness in their areas through the Homelessness Reduction Act, including the £200 million Flexible Homelessness Support Grant and the new £63 million Homelessness Reduction Grant.

In August last year the government unveiled its [Rough Sleeping Strategy](#) – backed by £100 million – which set out the next steps towards ending rough sleeping for good.

This forms part of a wider strategy to tackle all forms of homelessness,

including:

- investing £1.2 billion to tackle homelessness
- providing £76 million for the Rough Sleeping Initiative to 246 local authorities – including the 83 areas with the highest number of rough sleepers
- this year councils are using the investment to create an estimated 2,600 more beds and 750 additional specialist support staff
- providing £28 million for Housing First pilots in Greater Manchester, the West Midlands and Liverpool to support vulnerable rough sleepers with complex needs
- introducing the Homelessness Reduction Act to ensure people at risk of becoming homeless get help more quickly.

The Communities Secretary also announced £10 million – extended this week by £3 million – for the Cold Weather Fund, which will boost life-saving support for rough sleepers during the cold winter weather.

This government has committed to ending rough sleeping by the end of this Parliament in 2024 – 3 years earlier than the previous commitment.