



# Key considerations for planning SWEP and winter provision

## Planning ahead

- Who is the LA lead in planning for winter provision and SWEP?
- Are the Public Health team aware/involved?
- Which organisation will have overall responsibility for the operation of the provision?
- How are faith and community providers involved?
- Is there an existing multi-agency group for planning provision and making key decisions, or does one need to be convened?
- Does this group link to the local Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) and the wider winter planning arrangements in your area?
- Does this form part of the LA's wider rough sleeping strategy?
- How will you use the voice of lived experience in your planning?

## Winter project, severe weather provision, or both?

- Does your area need provision for the whole winter period?
- If your area has a winter project, is there enough capacity for it to be used for SWEP placements, or do you need additional SWEP provision?
- Can your provision be offered year-round?

## Capacity/need

- Will the provision cover just one LA area, or is collaboration across multiple areas more suitable? E.g., where numbers are low in any given area.
- What data do you have to indicate the likely need for winter and SWEP beds? E.g., number of people seen sleeping rough in recent months.
- What data do you have about different demographics/the support needs of those sleeping rough that can ensure your provision is tailored to those accessing it?

## Trigger of SWEP provision and communication

- What definition of severe weather will you be adopting for triggering SWEP?
- What flexibility will you have to allow for different types of weather conditions to trigger SWEP, such as snow, heavy rain, and strong winds, which can all lead to significant risk of harm?
- Who in the LA monitors the weather forecast during the winter months? How will this be managed if the person is absent or out of hours?
- Do you have a network to share SWEP plans and notifications when SWEP has been triggered and when it ends - including outside officer hours?
- How are you using your website and media channels to ensure communication is as effective as possible?

### Funding

- How will the provision be funded?
- Have you helped to identify possible sources of funding such as RSI funding, Housing Benefit, other LA funding? If a charity is involved, have you considered fundraising income, Night Shelter Transformation Fund and other charitable grants?
- If funding through Housing Benefit, what about people who have restrictions due to their immigration status?

### Service model

- What buildings can be used to meet the need?
- Are there opportunities for the LA, faith groups, local businesses, or other organisation to gift a building or offer discounted lease/rental terms?
- How far can your winter and SWEP provision reflect good practice by consisting of single room or full self-contained accommodation units?
- If provision includes communal sleeping areas, is there a clear reason why, and has the LA and the local Public Health team been involved in reaching this decision?
- If you have a communal sleeping model, what hours will it be open, what measures will be in place to keep people's health safe?
- How far will your provision meet the needs of different cohorts e.g., men, women, people who are non-UK nationals, people with restrictions on their eligibility, LGBTQ+ people, people with pets?

### Public Health safety measures

- How well are you able to ventilate the building, in particular, communal spaces?
- What arrangements have been agreed for minimising transmission between guests, staff, and volunteers who may be showing signs of respiratory infections?
- What arrangements have been agreed for guests who would like to maintain social distancing?
- How far can support and assistance be offered to guests to take up a Covid-19 and/or flu vaccination/booster where relevant?
- Have you engaged with your local Director of Public Health to gain expert advice to support staff, volunteers, and guests to stay healthy?

### Eligibility and access arrangements

- Is the provision accessible to everyone sleeping rough, or at risk of rough sleeping, including people with restrictions due to their immigration status?
- What organisations/people will be able to make referrals?
- Is there a clear referral process in place?
- Is the eligibility criteria and assessment process as light touch as possible?
- Who will assess eligibility, how will this be done, and what is the decision-making process?

- Will verification of someone's rough sleeping status be required? If so, does this avoid someone having to sleep rough again?

### Support and move-on pathway

- What additional services, such as mental/physical health support, referrals for immigration advice, welfare benefits and food banks can be provided/delivered?
- Can you help broken relationships with organisations that might need to work together, including specialist organisations?
- Is there a move-on pathway to help people access longer term accommodation and support?
- Could you consider an 'in for good' approach where no one has to return to rough sleeping?
- Have you considered the support need of non-UK nationals who may have restrictions on accessing benefits and services? Could you enable access to specialist immigration advice?

**Please review our SWEP and Winter Provision Toolkit for information and guidance to help you with the above questions.**