



Ministry of Housing,
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Closure of night shelters in response to COVID-19

As part of the Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 'Everybody In' campaign has ensured that there are nearly 15,000 people accommodated in emergency accommodation, including those who have come directly from the streets, people who have become vulnerable to homelessness and rough sleeping during the pandemic and people previously housed in shared night shelters.

Night shelters have since been closed due to the risk of infection in these communal settings.

As Government begins to lift lockdown restrictions, a number of night shelter providers have indicated their intention to reopen. The Government appreciates the huge contribution that night shelter providers make in supporting some of the most vulnerable people. However, public safety and ensuring the virus does not spread remains our top priority. Government advice therefore continues to be that all communal night shelters should remain closed at the present time.

We are working urgently with Public Health England on the issue of COVID-19 transmission in communal rough sleeping accommodation settings, including night shelters, and will provide further advice in the coming weeks, and the steps providers may need to take to ensure night shelters can safely re-open.

As we enter the summer months, local authorities are also advised to plan for heatwaves. It is important that local responses are adapted in line with Government guidance on COVID-19, including the closure of night shelters. Local authorities can make use of the Homeless Link [SWEP guidance](#)¹ and [other resources](#)² as well as [PHE's Heatwave Plan for England](#)³ to support their responses.

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¹ <https://www.homeless.org.uk/our-work/resources/guidance-on-severe-weather-emergency-protocol-swep-and-extended-weather-provision>

² <https://www.homeless.org.uk/connect/blogs/2020/jun/23/hot-weather-and-homelessness-%E2%80%93-preventing-deaths-in-summer>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heatwave-plan-for-england>