



Please contact us if your organisation comes into contact with anyone who says they are at risk of becoming homeless or they are sleeping rough:

Homelessness Prevention and Response Team

Dudley Council Plus 0300 555 2345

Provides a 24 hour 365 day service for advice and homelessness prevention. Assistance ranges from working with households to avoid mortgage arrears re-possession to placing people immediately in emergency accommodation. During normal office hours a full service is offered but outside of these hours a more limited service is provided to deal with emergencies.

If you see somebody sleeping rough in the Borough but you do not want to approach the person, or you can see that somebody has recently been using a place to sleep rough please report this information to the Team. Please be as specific as you can about the location and the date/time that you have seen the person. Please make sure that you only report information on recent sightings (within 24 hours of sighting).

Housing Options or supported housing

Dudley Council Plus 0300 555 2345

If, after talking to the person, you have established that they do have a place to stay, even if it is a temporary arrangement you can advise the person to ask for a 'Housing Options' interview. The person can then discuss their housing and support needs and our advisors will advise and assist them accordingly. This service provides advice and assistance on all housing tenures (council housing, renting privately and home ownership options) and can help people to access other services such as mediation and specialist supported housing.

Further information is also available at:

<http://www.dudley.gov.uk/housing>

Streetlink

Streetlink is a national rough sleepers reporting facility that can also be used. Any reports that are made for the Dudley Borough area are passed from Streetlink to our Homelessness Prevention Team for investigation/action.

<http://www.streetlink.org.uk/>

0300 500 0914

Dudley – Severe Weather Protocol

What the Severe Weather Protocol is

The Severe Weather Protocol is Dudley's undertaking to find a place of warmth and shelter for any person who is sleeping rough in the Borough when the following circumstances apply:

Cold Weather

The temperature is predicted to be zero degrees or below for three consecutive days. We will apply a common-sense approach to decisions and continue to operate the protocol if the temperature is due to rise for one day but the longer term forecast indicates sub-zero temperatures. We will also take wind chill factors into account.

Wind

Extreme winds or gales are predicted or occurring and there is an increased risk of injury through uprooted trees, falling walls, blown-off roofs and other debris. Wind chill can also be taken into account in the cold weather. We will implement the protocol for the duration of any 'Amber' or 'Red' Met Office Severe Weather warnings that include the Dudley Borough area.

Rain

Excessive or sudden prolonged rain that may lead to flooding and landslides that may affect those who are sleeping under bridges, on river banks and near streams and canals or any other setting where there is an increased risk of drowning. Extreme rain can result in health problems from being wet and loss of important belongings such as identification. We will implement the protocol for the duration of any 'Amber' or 'Red' Met Office Severe Weather warnings that include the Dudley Borough area.

Other severe weather conditions

We cannot cover every scenario in this guidance so we would ask rough sleepers or agencies to contact us and we will work with them to respond accordingly.

How Dudley decides when the protocol is in operation

Cold Weather

The Homelessness Prevention and Response Team monitor the long term BBC weather forecasts daily using the DY1 postcode or other Met Office forecasts if they are available. When the protocol is in operation an email is sent out to partner agencies that may have contact with rough sleepers.

Other severe weather

The Homelessness Prevention and Response Team will assess the local weather conditions and work with other agencies to respond accordingly.

Who can be helped by the protocol

When it is in operation the protocol covers anyone that is sleeping rough in the Borough regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, personal

circumstances or past housing history. The main aim is to offer a short term place of shelter to prevent any unnecessary distress, ill health or deaths that may occur as a result of the effects of the severe weather. The offer of shelter is for the period of severe weather, however, whilst people are being accommodated we will look to see if their longer term housing and support needs can be met.

What to do if you become aware of any rough sleepers or if you want to know if the protocol is in operation

Contact the Homelessness Prevention and Response Team on 0300 555 2345 (Dudley Council Plus). This number can be used to access the service on a 24/7 365 day basis. (Outside of normal office hours you will be redirected to the emergency duty officer).

Types of accommodation is offered

This will depend on the individual concerned and the availability of emergency accommodation. This could include (but not an exclusive list):

Being placed in a hostel

Bed and breakfast

Being placed in temporary furnished accommodation

Being offered the use of a chair/temporary bed space in the communal lounge/area of a hostel

Who covers the cost

The rough sleeper will not be charged for the service, however, we may need them to put in a claim for Housing Benefit so that we can recoup some of the costs. They will be assisted to do this. Any shortfall will be covered by the Homelessness Prevention and Response Team.