

What is rough sleeping?

Rough sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness. It means living without shelter and often resting in places like shop doorways, bus stops, car parks, stairwells, or other public spaces. Many people also seek hidden spots out of sight, moving from one location to another to avoid attention.

Life on the streets brings constant risks and added vulnerabilities. These challenges make it much harder to stay safe, access support services, and rebuild stability—key steps towards tackling homelessness.

Tackling rough sleeping together

In East Suffolk, we take rough sleeping very seriously. Working alongside our partners, we strive year-round to prevent and reduce homelessness across the district.

Together, we aim to provide short-term emergency accommodation and support for people who are verified as sleeping rough and have a local connection. Our aim is to work closely with these individuals to prevent them from returning to the streets. Where possible, we also help those without a local connection to reconnect with their home area and access the support available there.

The [Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy](#) sets out East Suffolk Council's plan for the district where those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness receive the advice, support and assistance they need to access accommodation they can call home.

What we offer:

Our services include a dedicated Rough Sleeper Outreach team. We provide both outreach support to ensure people receive help wherever they are. In addition, we run a Housing First Project, offering long-term solutions for those who need stable accommodation and tailored support.

We also work closely with other relevant agencies in and around East Suffolk to maximise the support available to people sleeping rough. These include Suffolk Police, Suffolk County Council, Criminal Justice officers, neighbouring district and borough council teams, Turning Point, Department for work and Pensions, the Probation service, and accommodation providers.

East Suffolk Council activates the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) during periods of extreme weather, such as prolonged severe temperatures or official severe weather warnings. This protocol ensures that, together with our partner agencies, we provide an emergency response for people sleeping rough by helping them access suitable accommodation and support.

How you can help

If you see someone you think is sleeping rough, please report it:

- Visit the [Street Link Website](#) and complete the referral form.
- Email us at housing.needs@eastsuffolk.gov.uk
- Contact us on 0333 016 2000
- If possible, use What3Words to provide a specific location if you see a rough sleeper, this can be accessed via the following link or you can download the app [what3words /// The simplest way to talk about location](#)

Your help is vital in ensuring that everyone has access to the support they need.