

Severe cold weather can be a life-or-death situation for people who rough sleep, in Manchester when the temperature is forecast to drop below zero [Manchester City Council](#) and charity partners with additional resource are able to mobilise to get people off the street and provide ongoing support so this is just the first step towards a permanent solution.

MCC, charities, businesses and volunteers alongside people affected by homelessness form the [Manchester Homelessness Partnership](#). The Partnership work all year to plan and deliver co-ordinated responses to specific challenges, in summer 2020 it was agreed that all emergency accommodation had to meet [minimum standards](#) that safeguard physical and mental health. The pandemic accelerated the goal of all emergency accommodation being single room occupancy and the impact of this has been evident in people's wellbeing.

The first cold weather activation for this winter period was on 24th December, when it is activated, charities work together to provide a wraparound service that covers day, night, weekends and even Christmas Day. During cold weather activation all services have a role to play to get everyone into emergency accommodation, we evaluate the response and work with people who were rough sleeping to try and improve it for the future. Always remembering two things; this shouldn't be happening (one person on the street is too many) and we can always do better.

The [Booth Centre](#) and [Coffee4Craig](#) (at The Meanwhile) operate the daytime and out of hours hubs. This is where people who sleep rough can be directed to be accommodated. Young people can also be directed to [Centrepoint](#) who are also able to refer into emergency accommodation. People are also provided with a phone if they need one so they can be linked in with ongoing support, they are offered food and welfare essentials and then get a taxi to their accommodation.

The referrals into accommodation are all now done electronically which has streamlined the process considerably and has meant more people can get referred directly from the street – this has been important this year as we also have the threat from Covid to deal with. In the city, in the evenings trained staff and volunteers from Coffee4Craig and [Men's Room](#) meet at the evening hub before starting their coordinated outreach and the [MASH](#) van circulates offering advice and support to women. At weekends [Lifeshare](#) operate their breakfast club and are able to refer people into accommodation and do outreach. In South Manchester [Reach Out to the Community](#) run outreach in the day and night, again referring people directly from the street and providing a taxi so they can get to their accommodation. Across Manchester homelessness charities are involved in referring people they work with into accommodation and providing information regarding the hubs this includes [Shelter](#), [Mustard Tree](#), Centrepoint and [On The Out](#) who provide a specialist service for people leaving prison.

Manchester City Council and charities lead outreach work, this is normally done in teams of two or three, with all people being trained in areas such as safeguarding, first aid and mental health. Once someone sleeping on the streets is identified the team will do an assessment of that person's needs, a referral form is completed and sent. A room will then be allocated and a taxi ordered for the person. If the team feel someone needs non-emergency medical attention [North West First Aid](#) will attend.

Once in emergency accommodation this is just the start of the journey and services work together to give people the best possible chance of making this step a long term one. Some of the accommodation is staffed full time with support workers from a range of organisations including [Riverside](#), [SSG](#), [DePaul](#) or Manchester City Council. Where private hotels are being used then

support workers from [Barnabus](#), On The Out and the Mens' Room visit to provide support. Specialist support for young people is provided by Centrepoint, for women by MASH, for asylum seekers by [Boaz Trust](#) and for EU migrants by the [Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit](#) and the Booth Centre. The Booth Centre and Barnabus make and deliver food parcels. The Booth Centre also provides activity packs and art materials. Bus tickets are available so people can travel to appointments and services that will guide people in their next steps towards goals such as improved health, permanent accommodation and employment. [Change Grow Live](#), [Urban Village Medical Practice](#) and the [NHS Mental Health Homeless Team](#) can offer health support. People referred into emergency accommodation are being offered a full homelessness assessment by the Council, to establish if they have a statutory entitlement to rehousing.

By working together, we can support more people to achieve their goals.

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