**Sandwell Council is here to help the homeless**

Sandwell Council is doing everything it can to help the homeless during the coronavirus outbreak.

The council has provided the homeless and rough sleepers with temporary accommodation and have distributed essential hygiene and information packs during the coronavirus outbreak this month.

These include cleansing wipes, bottled water for refills, soap, tissues and gloves as well as an information leaflet with an emergency contact number for 24-hour response for those who need housing and whose support provision is affected.

All Sandwell’s 34 known rough sleepers have now either been supported into temporary accommodation or helped to live with family or friends.

The council used street outreach through the council and Housing First providers to ensure all rough sleepers have been traced and will continue to respond to any rough sleeper reports during March.

Those in accommodation have also been provided with food packs and bedding and offered continuous support where needed.

Councillor Joanne Hadley, cabinet member for homes, said: “It is a very difficult time for our residents in Sandwell and can be even more worrying if you are at risk of homelessness or know someone who may already be homeless or rough sleeping.

"The council has been preparing for the impact of coronavirus on the service for over two weeks with a range of support put in place to continue to help the citizens of Sandwell.

“We are making a great effort to work with our housing partners to prevent homelessness of the most vulnerable in Sandwell by providing temporary accommodation and information during the coronavirus outbreak.

“We want to make sure no one is sleeping rough or is made homeless during these difficult times and we are continuously checking with housing providers and rough sleepers on a daily basis to make sure they are using accommodation and making contact where they have not.

“We have secured B&B providers who are willing to remain open for emergencies and who may reopen if we have sufficient demand.

“I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our staff and housing partners who working tirelessly to make sure everyone is receiving the necessary support they need are during this world wide pandemic.”

If you are threatened with or already homelessness, or worried about a rough sleeper please call the contact centre on 0121 368 1166 option 2.

For more information on what Sandwell Council is doing to support people during the coronavirus outbreak, please visit [www.sandwell.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://track.vuelio.uk.com/z.z?l=aHR0cDovL3d3dy5zYW5kd2VsbC5nb3YudWsvY29yb25hdmlydXM%3d&r=12758943732&d=11142132&p=1&t=h&h=a1b6d6b94649aada459bf2fc9563b228)