

# How do I influence my MP?

We need the government to fully understand the urgency of youth homelessness as they are currently failing to address the needs of thousands of young people who face homelessness daily in the UK.

**That's why we need your help by ensuring your local MP keeps youth homelessness on their agenda.**



## The state of youth homelessness right now

Last year, almost 136,000 young people approached their local authority because they were at risk of or currently experiencing homelessness.

We are appalled that youth homelessness increased by 12% since the last election. What's more, out of all the money invested into homelessness reduction, only 0.25% has been spent specifically on young people specifically.

We cannot afford to let this crisis continue. The sheer loss to society and the annual cost of homelessness services means we have to act now.

Young people are not being prioritised in the current political agenda but, together, we are changing that.

## What do MPs do?

### In Parliament:

Parliament is sitting (meeting), MPs generally spend their time working in the House of Commons. This can include raising issues affecting their constituents, attending debates and voting on new laws.

### In constituencies:

In their constituency, MPs often hold a 'surgery' in their office, where local people can come along to discuss any matters that concern them. MPs also attend functions, visit schools and businesses and generally try to meet as many people as possible.

## Why we need you to engage with MPs

### Persuade MPs to use their vote

MPs are in a unique position where they get to vote on legislation (laws) in Parliament that will affect the lives of homeless people. You could, for instance, campaign to persuade your MP to vote for or against legislation that will affect young people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

### Informing MPs about key issues

MPs are not experts on youth homelessness. Campaigning can help inform MPs about the housing emergency and suggest solutions to end youth homelessness. For instance, you can use Centrepoint's annual report into the scale of youth homelessness to let your MP know about the number of young homeless people in your constituency and help them to understand the urgency of the problem.

### Keep up long-term pressure

With all the competing priorities in politics, it can be easy for important issues such as homelessness to get lost amongst lots of different concerns. By repeatedly and consistently talking to MPs and campaigning to end youth homelessness, you can ensure that young people's voices are not forgotten, and that your MPs knows that youth homelessness is a priority to you, their constituent.

## Find your local MP

MPs can only represent and respond to you if they are your local MP. Find out who your local MP is here:

<https://members.parliament.uk/FindYourMP>

## Ways to engage with your local MP

### 1. Email them

This is crucial – the more people in one area who raise their voices about youth homelessness, the more likely an MP is to take the situation seriously. You can use our existing template to email your MP about the rising numbers of young people facing homelessness [here](#). Or feel free to write a personalised email to your MP by [looking up the statistics for your local area](#) and bringing the situation closer to home.

Or you can write to them:

**[Name of MP], House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA.**

### 2. Set up a meeting with them

You ask an MP to raise a matter more publicly or to speak at an event of yours. If you wish to talk to your MP, you can contact your MP's office by phone or email or visit them in person.

## Raise some of these important points with your MP:

- Last year, almost 136,000 young people faced or were at risk of homelessness meaning youth homelessness has risen by 12% since the last General Election.
- Youth homelessness costs the government £8.5 billion every year.
- The government has only invested 0.25% of their whole homelessness reduction budget in youth homelessness reduction.
- This General Election, we are campaigning for the next government to commit to a series of targets for reducing and ending youth homelessness.
- Ending youth homelessness is not political. We are, therefore, asking all political parties to commit to a cross-departmental strategy for ending youth homelessness.

