

MHCLG evaluation of the support given to people at risk of rough sleeping during and after the COVID-19 Spring lockdown

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) are responsible for housing in England. They are evaluating the support provided to people at risk of sleeping rough during and after the COVID-19 national lockdown.

MHCLG would like to find out:

1. How well services worked to resolve homeless/rough sleeping
2. What the benefits are for people receiving these services
3. How services can best help people address the wider issues which can accompany homelessness/rough sleeping.

MHCLG are commissioning an independent research organisation to carry out the research. They will combine two methods of data collection:

1. Telephone interviews with people accommodated during the pandemic

MHCLG want to collect information from people who have received support about their history and experiences of homelessness and housing. This will be done by telephone interviews with some of those accommodated. You will receive a £10 voucher as a thank you for taking part in an interview.

What personal information is being shared?

Cambridge City Council hold personal information on people helped during the pandemic. They will share this with the MHCLG researchers so you can be invited to take part in an interview.

This information will include your name, date of birth and contact details (address, email and telephone number if held).

Information on your nationality will be shared so the researchers know that English might not be your first language. They will use your address or email address to write to you about the research and your mobile number to call you, if you have one.

In the interview you will be asked for personal information, such as your age, gender and your ethnicity, and whether you have spent time in prison or in hospital. This information will help MHCLG understand if services work better for some people than others. It is up to you whether you answer these questions.

Any information you provide during the interview will be kept **strictly confidential** unless a researcher thinks that you or someone else is at risk of harm.

If you agree to do the first interview, you will also be asked if you can be contacted again in the future. If you agree, researchers will use your mobile number to invite you to take part in more interviews. If you choose to take part, you may be asked to do up to 3 interviews. You will receive a voucher each time you complete an interview.

If the researchers can't contact you directly about taking part in another interview, they will ask for help from the council. Cambridge City Council may share your updated contact details with the researchers.

If researchers are still unable to contact you, they will ask the council to provide some information on your housing situation. This may include information on stays in hospital or prison.

You can choose to complete the interview without agreeing to take part in any further interviews and you don't have to answer anything you don't want to.

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2. Joining the interview answers with other information

MHCLG is doing another similar research project on homelessness and rough sleeping, but instead of interviews, it uses information collected by Government Departments. This information will be held by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on behalf of MHCLG.

It will include information about:

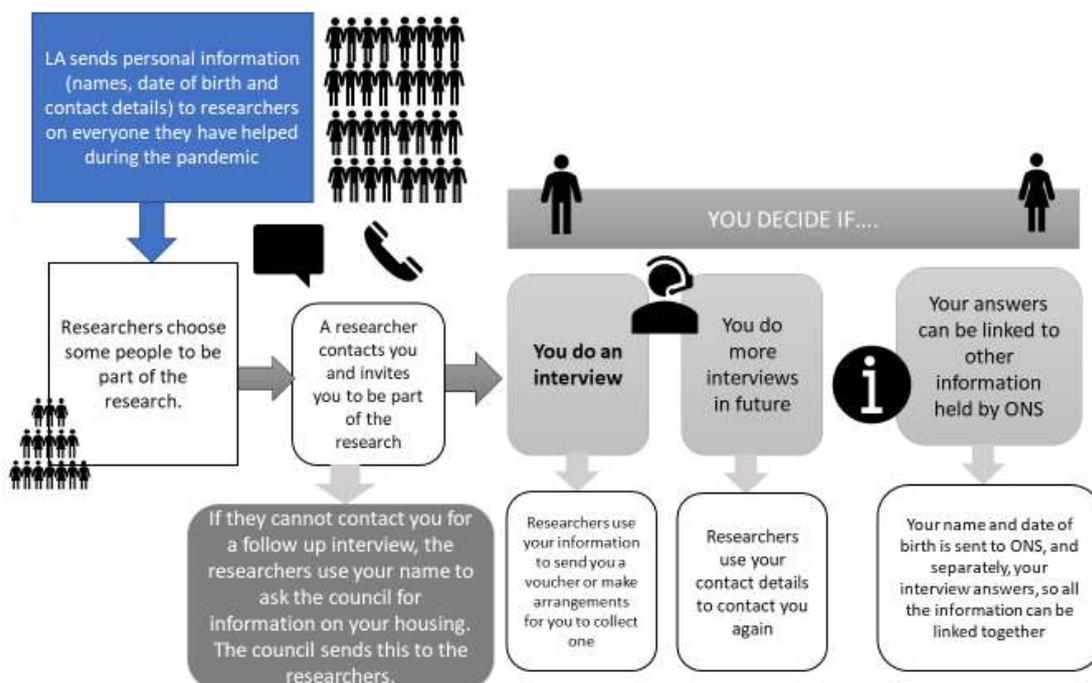
1. homelessness applications made to the council
2. contact with the criminal justice system
3. drug and alcohol services received
4. benefits received
5. health services used

When you are contacted for the telephone interview, you will be asked if you agree to your name, date of birth and interview answers being linked to the other information held on your use of public services and benefits.

You can take part in the interviews even if you do not want your interview answers to be linked with this other information.

For further information, please see our page at <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/mhclg-homelessness-research>.

Information flow diagram:



What happens to my personal information if I can't be contacted and don't participate in any interviews?

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The Local Authority holds information about your housing and homelessness applications using a unique code known as the H-CLIC number. This information is also held by MHCLG with the same unique number. If the researchers can't contact you at all, they will delete your personal information after 6 months, but keep your unique number.

This will be used to collect information about everyone that MHCLG wanted to be part of the research, even those they couldn't contact. This is to see if they are different to the people who did do interviews. The researchers will only see the HCLIC number, and won't whose information they are looking at.

Why are the council and MHCLG able to use my personal information for this research?

Your personal information can only be used by the council and MHCLG in a way that fits with the law. MHCLG can use your personal information for this research because it is to help the government make better future decisions about homelessness and rough sleeping services.

By law, your personal information can be used if it is in the public interest to do so. There is a separate basis in law to allow this. MHCLG believes that it is in the interests of the public for this research to be carried out so that homelessness services can be improved in future.

The council can share your personal information to help with this research using the lawful basis of Public Task. This means processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest.

The law states that extra care has to be taken with sensitive personal information. This includes information about your ethnicity and any contact you might have had with the criminal justice system. These are known as 'special category' personal data and criminal offence data. These are asked about in the interview, it will be up to you if you answer them.

Where information on your nationality is shared by the council, or you are asked to provide it, MHCLG believes it is necessary to ensure the research is the most useful it can be.

If you would like more information on what the law says about how your personal information can be used please see the 'Further Information' section below.

Data security and data storage

The council will only share your personal information in a way that is secure and the researchers have very clear instructions from MHCLG about how to keep your data safe, what it can be used for and when it will be deleted.

Your Personal Data will not be sent outside of the EU for the purposes of data processing

Automated decision-making

We will not use your data for any automated decision making.

What if I change my mind about the interview?

If you change your mind after completing an interview, you can let the researchers know. If your answers haven't already been used for the research, they will be deleted. Interview answers are expected to be

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used 4-8 weeks after an interview. You can also tell them to delete your personal details, which they will do. This won't affect your legal rights or the support you receive.

You will be sent the email address/mobile number by text, email or post after the interview has finished and reminded that you can contact the researchers to let them know you have changed your mind.

What are my rights?

Your personal information (names, dates of birth, addresses) will not be kept longer than needed for the research and it will not be used for anything else. It will be held securely and kept in accordance with the law.

If you are unhappy with how your personal information is handled, you can have the matter investigated. You can contact the Independent Information Commissioner online at ico.org.uk/livechat or telephone 0303 123 1113.

You can also ask to have your personal information deleted, ask to see your personal information (name, address etc) and ask for it to be changed if it is wrong, by emailing MHCLG's Data Protection Officer at dataprotection@communities.gov.uk

What will happen to the results of this research?

Aggregate level results of this research will be published, e.g. the characteristics of the people helped. MHCLG will publish reports on the gov.uk website. You will not be identified in any research report.

Where can I get more information?

If you would like further information about the research, what will happen to your information, and your rights please speak to the workers at your project or contact housing.advice@cambridge.gov.uk if you would like to have more information.

Further Information

Legal basis for processing your personal data

Data protection legislation sets out how are lawfully allowed to process your personal data. The personal data which MHCLG and Cambridge City Council will process will include special category personal data and may include criminal offence data. The following specific pieces of legislation will allow the lawful processing of personal data.

- a. Article 6(1)(e) of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): *"the processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller."*
- b. Article 6(3) of the GDPR: the basis for the processing is laid down in law. MHCLG is relying on its common law powers as its basis in law in order to process your Personal Data.
- c. Cambridge City Council are relying on:
 - o Section 8 of the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018: *"personal data that is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of the controller's"*

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official authority includes processing of personal data that is necessary for—... (d) the exercise of a function of the Crown, a Minister of the Crown or a government department”.

- d. Article 9(2)(g) of the GDPR: processing of special category personal data is *“necessary for reasons of substantial public interest, on the basis of Union or Member State law which shall be proportionate to the aim pursued, respect the essence of the right to data protection and provide for suitable and specific measures to safeguard the fundamental rights and the interests of the data subject”.*
- e. Article 10 of the GDPR: processing of criminal offence data *“shall be carried out only under the control of official authority or when the processing is authorised by Union or Member State law providing for appropriate safeguards for the rights and freedoms of data subjects.”*
- f. Section 10 and Schedule 1, Part 2, paragraph 6 of the DPA: the processing of special category personal data and criminal offence data is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest and necessary for the purpose of *“the exercise of a function conferred on a person by an enactment or rule of law”* or *“the exercise of a function of the Crown, a Minister of the Crown or a government department.”*