

# *UK homeless struggle without emergency help during pandemic*

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**In London, every winter, there is a spike in avoidable deaths among rough sleepers, as temperatures plummet**

London, February 8 (RHC)-- In London, every winter, there is a spike in avoidable deaths among rough sleepers, as temperatures plummet. And observers say that this year could be catastrophic, with more people sleeping rough than ever before.

There was a staggering 118 percent increase in new referrals of young people from April to August 2020 compared with the same period in 2019. The reasons being unemployment, rent arrears, financial instability and evictions.

Before the pandemic hit, the British government made an election manifesto commitment to end rough sleeping by May 2024. But the "Everyone In" campaign the government's Communities, Housing and Local Government department launched after the pandemic first hit, immediately housing nearly 30,000 people, has proven the problem can be solved much sooner if the will is there.

In a UK first, homeless people have been made a priority for the COVID-19 jabs after Oldham Council in Manchester took matters into its own hands and vaccinated its rough sleepers, alongside those over 80. GPs say with a life expectancy of just 43-45, homeless people are an extremely vulnerable group and need protecting. The highly infectious new strain of COVID-19 and the cold weather makes this the most dangerous time for those without a home.

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