

News

Councils given funding to cut the number of rough sleepers

Councils in Suffolk and Essex are to receive hundreds of thousands of pounds in Government funding to reduce the number of rough sleepers.

Ipswich Borough, Colchester Borough and the West Suffolk councils – Forest Heath District and St Edmundsbury Borough – have been handed a slice of a £30million Government fund, awarded to authorities with a high number of people sleeping rough.

Ipswich Borough Council has received £267,234 to tackle the issue while West Suffolk councils have been handed £245,782.

Colchester Borough Council has received £192,683.

In Ipswich, the grant will be used to provide up to five additional beds for rough sleepers and will extend the work of the Ipswich Night Shelter – which will open eight weeks earlier and will provide more beds.

A team of outreach workers will also extend the work of Ipswich Housing Action Group (IHAG) by including drug specialist and

ADAM HOWLETT

adam.howlett@archant.co.uk

alcohol abuse workers.

Councillor Neil McDonald, IBC's housing portfolio holder, said: "This new grant shows recognition of the positive work being done in Ipswich to work with rough sleepers.

"It also shows that more work is needed and this needs to be for the long term. I would like to thank our partner agencies, IHAG, Genesis, Anglia Care Trust and Selig, for their support in tackling the challenges of rough sleeping."

The West Suffolk councils will use the money to strengthen its current support for rough sleepers, providing extra accommodation and multi-agency outreach workers with expertise in drug, alcohol and mental health issues.

Councillor Sara Mildmay-White, cabinet member for housing for West Suffolk, said: "Reducing the number of people that are rough



Councils in Suffolk and Essex have been given funding to help reduce the number of rough sleepers in their communities

Picture: MICHAEL WALTER/PA WIRE

sleeping in our area is a priority for us but it is a complex problem and not each case is the same.

"Home is where the start is and the support given to help people tackle the complex issues they

may face is vital in not just maintaining a roof over their head but then enabling them to make a real change in their life.

"We would thank all our partners and the Ministry for

listening to the work we have already done and for funding this initiative which we hope will make a real difference to the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in our communities."