**Re: Protecting everyone from homelessness during the COVID-19 crisis and beyond.**

Dear [Council Leader] and [Housing/Migration Cabinet Members],

As an organisation that [brief description of your work], we are writing to request your support in calling for greater protections against homelessness for people who have sought sanctuary in the UK.

We are extremely concerned about the Home Office’s recent decision to [resume eviction proceedings for those who have been refused asylum](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/asylum-seekers-evictions-home-office-coronavirus-second-wave-b486062.html). Without immediate action, people across our communities could be forced into street homelessness and destitution in a matter of days and weeks; [include if applicable: we have already seen people receiving as little as X day’s notice to leave their accommodation]. This would not be acceptable under normal circumstances, but in the context of rising COVID infection rates across the UK, it is clearly unsafe and irresponsible.

Unlike those who have been granted asylum, people who have been refused asylum have no recourse to public funds and are left with very few options. Through our work in [X local area], we have seen the terrible impact of enforced destitution and homelessness. [You could include here a few lines about your work, potentially including a case study or testimonial that demonstrates the impact of destitution.] That people are now facing this situation in the midst of a public health crisis is profoundly dangerous.

We know this isn’t the only option. In response to the threat of coronavirus, the UK and devolved governments, and local authorities made important changes to prevent homelessness. These included the suspension of evictions from asylum accommodation and the directive to provide homeless people with emergency accommodation, including those with NRPF. We recognise and value [X Local Authority’s] efforts to keep all members of their communities, regardless of immigration status, safe and housed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Having made this vital progress, we cannot now return to a business as usual in which people routinely face homelessness and destitution. **As an urgent measure, the Home Office must halt their plans to resume evictions for people who have been refused asylum.** In light of rising COVID infection rates, and at a time when voluntary and statutory services are under intense and increasing strain, it is clear that this is the only sensible course of action in the interests of the safety of people seeking asylum and public health.

**We are therefore requesting that [X Local Authority] writes urgently to the Home Secretary Priti Patel MP, copying in the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing and Local Government Robert Jenrick MP, to ask them to immediately halt their plans to resume evictions from asylum accommodation [change this to ‘further extend protections from evictions’ if you are in Scotland and Wales].**

As we move forward, we are keen to continue working with you to address the longer-term measures and solutions needed to protect everyone from the threat of homelessness and COVID-19; we are ready to help [X Local Authority] with this challenge and would value the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this in more detail.

However, for now, we urge you to recognise the critical need to suspend evictions into homelessness from asylum accommodation, and hope that you will take the action outlined above.

Please let us know if you have any questions, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours,