



News Release on November 10<sup>th</sup> from Sally Keeble

Labour parliamentary candidate Northampton North

## **CALL FOR GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT AS ROUGH SLEEPING NUMBERS IN NORTHAMPTON HIT RECORD HIGH**

Sally Keeble, Labour's parliamentary candidate for Northampton North, has called for major government investment in homelessness as Northampton's rough sleepers count showed record numbers of people sleeping rough on the streets of our town.

And she warned that with Universal Credit due to start its roll-out in Northampton on November 14<sup>th</sup>, more action was needed to protect people from the risk of becoming homeless.

Sally Keeble said: "The figure of 26 from the rough sleepers count are the highest since 2010. The last peak was in 2015 when 25 people were found to be sleeping on the streets. The figures excluded people sleeping in tented encampments. Although it is permitted to exclude them from the count, as the weather turns colder they are going to need a proper roof over their heads.

"The homelessness situation could become worse when the roll-out of Universal Credit starts next week. After that date people who are on a range of benefits, including Housing Benefit, and whose circumstances change will need to move onto Universal Credit. In the trial areas Universal Credit has been found to lead to a rise in rent arrears and housing charities have warned about the risks that lie ahead.

"Last week we were told austerity is over. So there's no reason that the Government couldn't put more money into homeless services."