



News Release from Sally Keeble

Labour parliamentary candidate Northampton North

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Vulnerable families at risk in hidden homelessness

Vulnerable families with children are at risk among the ranks of the hidden homeless in Northampton, Sally Keeble, Labour's parliamentary candidate in Northampton has warned.

Welcoming Radio Northampton programme on homelessness, she said that tighter working was needed between the county and borough council to make sure that children aren't put at risk.

"Rough sleeping on the streets of Northampton is the tip of the iceberg. Underneath it there are a lot of families with children who don't have a place to call home," she said.

In the worst case she has encountered, a young mum with a three months old baby was left sofa-surfing around Northampton for over two months after being chased out of her council flat by gun-wielding intruders.

"It is essential that in assessing the housing rights and needs of families with children all the family circumstances are taken into account," Sally Keeble said. "This is required under both the Children Act and the Homelessness Act, but it's not happening.

"This latest case was the worst I have ever encountered."

She said that the latest government figures showed nine Northampton families with children were placed in bed and breakfast hostels. Another 194 Northampton families with children were in "nightly paid, privately managed accommodation – self-contained."

"We should be clear what this accommodation is," she said. "If it's a hotel room with an en suite and a microwave for cooking, then that's not appropriate for families with children."

At the root of it, she said, was a national housing crisis due to a lack of housing, the high cost of rented accommodation as well as the impact of problems with Universal Credit.

Ends

For more information contact: Sally Keeble phone 07803 901936

Note to editors: The figures on bed and breakfast and other temporary accommodation are taken from government figures here <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness>

The name and details of the family concerned in this release are not being made public. They have, however, been passed to both Northampton Borough Council and Northamptonshire County Council.