

# SCRAP THE VAGRANCY ACT

Homelessness is not a crime.



No-one should be criminalised for being homeless or destitute. But the Vagrancy Act (1824) makes it a crime to sleep rough or beg in England and Wales. Crisis, Centrepoin, St Mungo's, Homeless Link, Shelter Cymru, Cymorth Cymru and the Wallich are calling for the Vagrancy Act to be scrapped.

The Vagrancy Act is still used to this day, with anyone who is seen living on the streets or begging liable for arrest. Figures indicate that the Vagrancy Act is used by the vast majority of police forces across England and Wales.

## Why is this important?

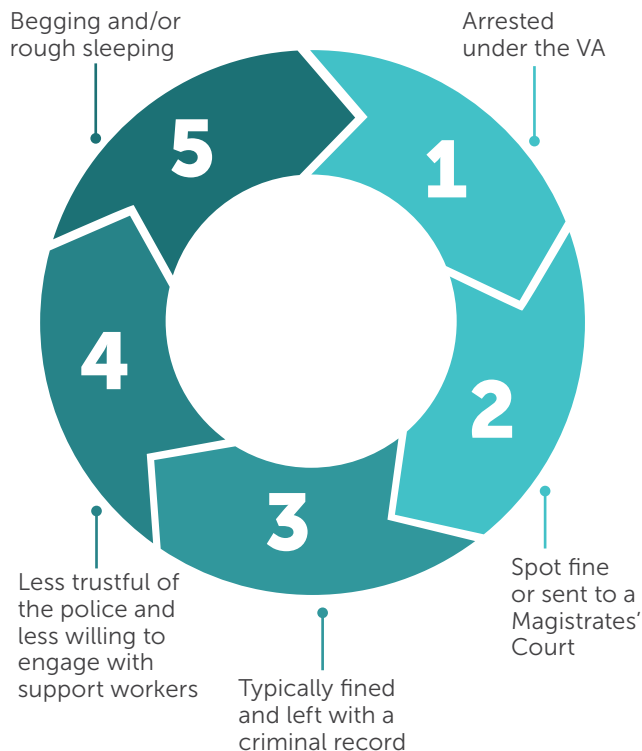
**The Vagrancy Act does nothing to resolve the root causes of homelessness.** In fact, it's more likely to push someone further from the vital services that help them to move away from the streets.

"When I found out about them... arresting people for sort of like vagrancy or whatever I learnt to sleep as far out of the city centre as possible... Some of the places I've slept in were terrible, you know what I mean. But at least I knew the police wouldn't come and you wouldn't get arrested... I slept under bridges and all sorts."

**Person sleeping rough in Leeds**



## The current situation under the Vagrancy Act



## What do we need to help people out of homelessness



**The police don't need the Vagrancy Act to tackle genuine crimes.** The Vagrancy Act 1824 doesn't contain any powers that the police don't already have through more modern legislation.

**The UK Government is soon to review the Vagrancy Act – so now is the time to make the case for its repeal.** Until the Act is scrapped, vulnerable people will continue to be pushed even further from support. That's why we're calling on the UK Government to [#ScraptheAct](https://www.crisis.org.uk/ScraptheAct) once and for all.

## What can I do?

1. Visit [www.crisis.org.uk/ScraptheAct](https://www.crisis.org.uk/ScraptheAct) to join the campaign, write to your MP and find out about other ways to get involved
2. Ask your organisation to sign up as a campaign supporter and publicly back the campaign, or show your support on social media: [#ScraptheAct](https://www.crisis.org.uk/ScraptheAct)
3. If you, or someone you know, has had personal experience of the Vagrancy Act, we'd love to hear from you. Fill in our survey at [www.crisis.org.uk/ScraptheAct](https://www.crisis.org.uk/ScraptheAct) or get in touch: [campaigns@crisis.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@crisis.org.uk)

This campaign is supported by:

