

# Dealing with begging

## What is being done?

Enforcement plays a part in dealing with begging, but it is not a solution and needs to be done carefully. Most successful prosecutions result in fines, making it hard for those who are genuinely homeless to break the cycle. Appropriate enforcement must be combined with support to help those in genuine need to turn their lives around.

### Neighbourhood policing

Dealing with beggars is high on the list of priorities for the City Centre Neighbourhood Policing Team. This team has been set up to find long-term solutions to issues blighting life for visitors, residents and workers.

### BID Police Sergeant

Sheffield BID funds a dedicated police sergeant who is the first point of contact for BID Levy Payers who need day-to-day remedial advice and action on issues such as this. Businesses can raise concerns directly with Sergeant Matthew Burdett at Snig Hill Police station. In addition, Sergeant Burdett works very closely with the City Centre Neighbourhood Policing Team to pass on intelligence from the business community.

### BID Ambassadors

Sheffield BID also funds two city centre BID Ambassadors working alongside the Council's team to maintain a regular presence in high footfall areas which makes it harder for people to beg persistently in a specific place.

### Early morning rough sleeper patrol

There is an early morning rough sleeper patrol where PCSOs move on the problematic sleepers who are often the same people that are begging.

### Help Us Help

Those involved in dealing with the issues around street begging want members of the public to avoid donating cash to people on the streets. The Help Us Help campaign aims to change behaviours by encouraging people to give to the charities and organisations who can support and help those in need. Visit [www.helpushelp.uk](http://www.helpushelp.uk) for information

### Public Space Protection Order

Sheffield City Council is currently working on a Public Space Protection Order which provides additional powers for soft enforcement on issues such as begging and other anti-social behaviour.

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# Help and advice



## How to deal with begging

### **BID Sergeant Matthew Burdett says:**

“Ensure that all matters are reported to the police or to the relevant support services. Begging and rough sleeping are offences under the vagrancy act and can be linked to organised crime. Amongst the people that undertake such activities there are people who are vulnerable and are in need of specialist help. Giving money will only serve to increase the problem and make people less likely to engage with the services that they need to support them. It will also attract other ‘career beggars’ to the city centre profiteering from the kindness of local people.

“If you do see someone begging outside your place of work, business or place of residence, please report the matter on the contact numbers below depending on what your issue or concern is. For your own safety, please do not engage with someone that is begging as this could lead to a confrontational situation. Please advise your employees and colleagues to refrain from giving to the homeless and instead contact the services below. Those businesses and individuals that wish to help in a constructive way can visit the Help Us Help website for further advice.

“Any belongings left behind by a rough sleeper should not be removed. If you do have to move anything left behind please be extremely cautious as there may be sharp objects which could cause injury. Be alert as the removal of items can lead to confrontational situations with the rough sleeper. In these circumstances, it would be advisable to either contact the BID’s Street Rangers team, or the Highways department to clear the area.”

### **Contact numbers:**

**Police** – call 101

**Police online** – [www.reportingcrime.uk](http://www.reportingcrime.uk)

**BID Police Sergeant** –  
[police@sheffieldbid.com](mailto:police@sheffieldbid.com)

**Rough Sleeper Services** – 0800 0665358 or text 80800 followed by your message, which should include the location and any other relevant information.

**BID Street Rangers** (to clean up) –  
[streetrangers@sheffieldbid.com](mailto:streetrangers@sheffieldbid.com)

**Help and advice** (support services)  
[www.helpushelp.uk](http://www.helpushelp.uk)