



**Summary of manifesto for missing people:
calls to action for the next government**

**missing
people**

Registered charity 1020419



SUMMARY

Police respond to more than 300,000 missing person reports a year in the UK – one report every two minutes. Most people who go missing are found quickly, but several thousand each year are not.¹ Missing People has produced this manifesto to highlight priorities for the next government to safeguard vulnerable missing adults and children, and to improve support for those left behind.

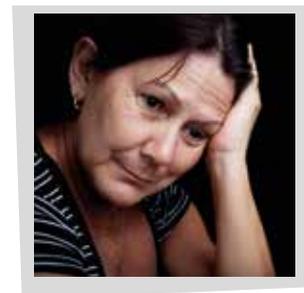
Hundreds of thousands of families each year are forced to cope with the emotional trauma of someone they love going missing. At the same time, many have to deal with the immense practical challenge of preventing the life they hope their missing loved one will return to from falling apart.² This can be impossible, as there is no system in place to help families manage and protect a relative's finances and property while they are missing. As a result, families can find themselves powerless to safeguard their missing loved one's finances, to protect their property from repossession and to ensure their

relative's dependants are looked after. Families must be enabled to safeguard their missing relatives' affairs. **We are calling on the government to respond by prioritising the introduction of guardianship legislation to enable families to apply to the courts for the right to manage their relative's legal and financial affairs while they are missing.**

Whether adults go missing because of mental health problems, domestic violence, neglect or dementia, most are vulnerable before they disappear. Being missing makes them even more vulnerable as they are hidden from help and at serious risk of harm,



“ It was a bad dream that would not stop. I looked for him everywhere in the faces of the homeless and the lost and the lonely young people on the street. When human remains were found we ceased to breathe for what seemed an eternity while we awaited news. We have suffered this for 17 years now and we will never get over it. We won't ever really move on, though we have learned to function at some level to maintain a job and a life, but we are broken. ”



Mother of a missing son

including becoming a victim of crime.³ Yet, when adults return from being missing, most are not given the help they need to tackle their problems, which means many go missing again. Adults must be supported to break this cycle. **We are calling on the government to respond by ensuring that every adult who returns from being missing is offered a return interview to find out what help they need, and then support to access that help.**

200,000 missing person reports each year relate to children and young people. Much more must be done to both prevent these

vulnerable children and young people from going missing, and to safeguard those who do. A lack of safe places to stay can mean missing children resort to sleeping rough or staying with someone they have just met, which puts them at extremely high risk of sexual exploitation and crime. This must change. **We are calling on the government to respond by ensuring that every missing child or young person who is unable to return home safely can access suitable emergency accommodation to keep them safe.**

We know that young people are not always aware of the dangers of running away, or what help they can call on to get support before they feel they have to escape, or to stay safe if they do. Children must be informed about how to get the help they need. **We are calling on the government to respond by ensuring that all children are educated about the risks of running away, and what help they can access to stay safe.**

NEXT STEPS

We need your support to improve the lives of missing people and their families.

Please visit our website
www.missingpeople.org.uk/manifesto
to find out more and to pledge your support
or email manifesto@missingpeople.org.uk

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