



Department for  
Communities and  
Local Government

# Statutory Homelessness: October to December Quarter 2015



## Homelessness *Statistical Release*

23 March 2016

- If faced with the loss of their home, any household can apply to their local authority for acceptance for housing assistance. A household is considered homeless if they no longer have a legal right to occupy their accommodation or if it would no longer be reasonable to continue to live there, for example, if living there would lead to violence against them.

### Household acceptances

- 14,470 households were accepted between 1 October and 31 December 2015, 1 per cent fewer than in the previous quarter and 6 per cent more than during the same quarter of 2014.
- In the long term, acceptances peaked in 2003-04 before falling sharply until the end of 2009. They have since been on a gradually rising trend.

### Households in temporary accommodation

- If a settled housing solution is not immediately available, accepted households may be placed in temporary accommodation.
- Of the households accepted between 1 October and 31 December 2015, 9,420 (65 per cent) were placed in temporary accommodation. The majority of the remaining households were able to stay in their existing accommodation for the time being.
- The total number of households living in temporary accommodation while awaiting placement in a settled home is measured on the last day of each quarter. On 31 December 2015 there were 69,140 households in temporary accommodation, 12 per cent higher than at the same date in 2014.
- In the long term, the number of households living in temporary accommodation peaked at the end of September 2004 before falling sharply until the end of 2010. The number has been gradually rising since 2012.

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# Introduction

The term 'homeless' is often used to refer to people who are sleeping rough. However, a household will be considered as statutorily homeless by their local authority if they meet specific criteria set out in legislation (see page 21). Such households are rarely homeless in the literal sense of being without a roof over their heads, but are more likely to be threatened with the loss of, or are unable to continue with, their current accommodation.

Broadly speaking, somebody is statutorily homeless if they do not have accommodation that they have a legal right to occupy, which is accessible and physically available to them (and their household) and which it would be reasonable for them to continue to live in. It would not be reasonable for someone to continue to live in their home, for example, if that was likely to lead to violence against them (or a member of their family).

In cases where an authority is satisfied that an applicant is eligible for assistance, is in **priority need**, and has become homeless through no fault of their own, the authority will **owe a main homelessness duty** to secure settled accommodation for that household. Such households are referred to as **acceptances**.

**Priority need groups** include households with dependent children and/or a pregnant woman and individuals who are vulnerable in some way. Individuals are classed as vulnerable if they: have mental illness or physical disability; are a young person (16 to 17 years old, or 18 to 20 years old and vulnerable as a result of previously being in care); were vulnerable as a result of previously being in custody; were vulnerable as a result of previously being in HM Forces; or were forced to flee their home because of violence or the threat of violence.

When a main duty is owed the authority must ensure that suitable accommodation is available until a settled home becomes available. Households are either assisted to remain in their existing accommodation (duty owed, no accommodation secured) or are placed in **temporary accommodation** to await an offer of settled accommodation.

When a **main duty is not owed** (e.g. where the household is found to be intentionally homeless, not in priority need or not homeless), the authority must make an assessment of their housing needs and provide advice and assistance to help them find accommodation for themselves. Where an applicant falls into a priority need group but is intentionally homeless the authority must ensure that accommodation is available for a reasonable time to allow the household to find a home.

Key information is presented in this statistical release. Accompanying Live Tables are provided online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness> and are listed on pages 14 and 15. These form the underlying data used to produce most of the text and charts. The definitions section provides more detail of terms used within the release.

# Decisions taken by local authorities on homelessness applications

Between 1 October and 31 December 2015, local housing authorities received 29,250 applications for housing assistance under the homelessness legislation of the Housing Act 1996 (excluding those who were ineligible, such as recent arrivals to the UK). This is 2 per cent more than in the corresponding quarter in 2014.

Of these;

- 49 per cent were accepted (referred to as 'owed a main homelessness duty').

Of the remainder:

- 25 per cent were found not to be homeless;
- 17 per cent were found to be homeless but not in priority need; and
- 9 per cent were found to be intentionally homeless and in priority need.

See Live Table 770: Decisions taken by local authorities under the 1996 Housing Act on applications from eligible households.

## Households accepted as owed a main homelessness duty

In England between 1 October and 31 December 2015, local authorities accepted 14,470 households, up 6 per cent compared to the same quarter last year and down 1 per cent from the figure of 14,670 in the previous quarter. The corresponding figures for London and Rest of England and the percentage changes are shown in Table 1 below.

The number of households accepted in London, at 5,160, accounts for 36 per cent of the England total.

**Table 1: Households accepted as owed a main homelessness duty during 2015 Q4 with comparisons to 2015 Q3 and 2014 Q4, England, London and Rest of England**

	<b>2015 Q4</b>	<b>Previous quarter: 2015 Q3</b>	<b>Percentage change since 2015 Q3</b>	<b>Same quarter last year: 2014 Q4</b>	<b>Percentage change since 2014 Q4</b>
England	14,470	14,670	-1%	13,680	6%
London	5,160	4,700	10%	4,690	10%
Rest of England	9,310	9,970	-7%	8,980	4%

There were 56,500 acceptances in calendar year 2015, up 6 per cent from 53,410 in 2014. In

London there were 18,650 acceptances in calendar year 2015, up 9 per cent from 17,180 during 2014 and representing 33 per cent of the England total, while in the rest of England the 2015 figure of 37,860 is up 4 per cent on the 2014 figure of 36,230.

See Live Table 770: Decisions taken by local authorities under the 1996 Housing Act on applications from eligible households, Live Table 774 London and Live Table 774 Rest of England.

**Chart 1: Households accepted by local authorities as owed a main duty each quarter, Q1 1998 to Q4 2015, England**

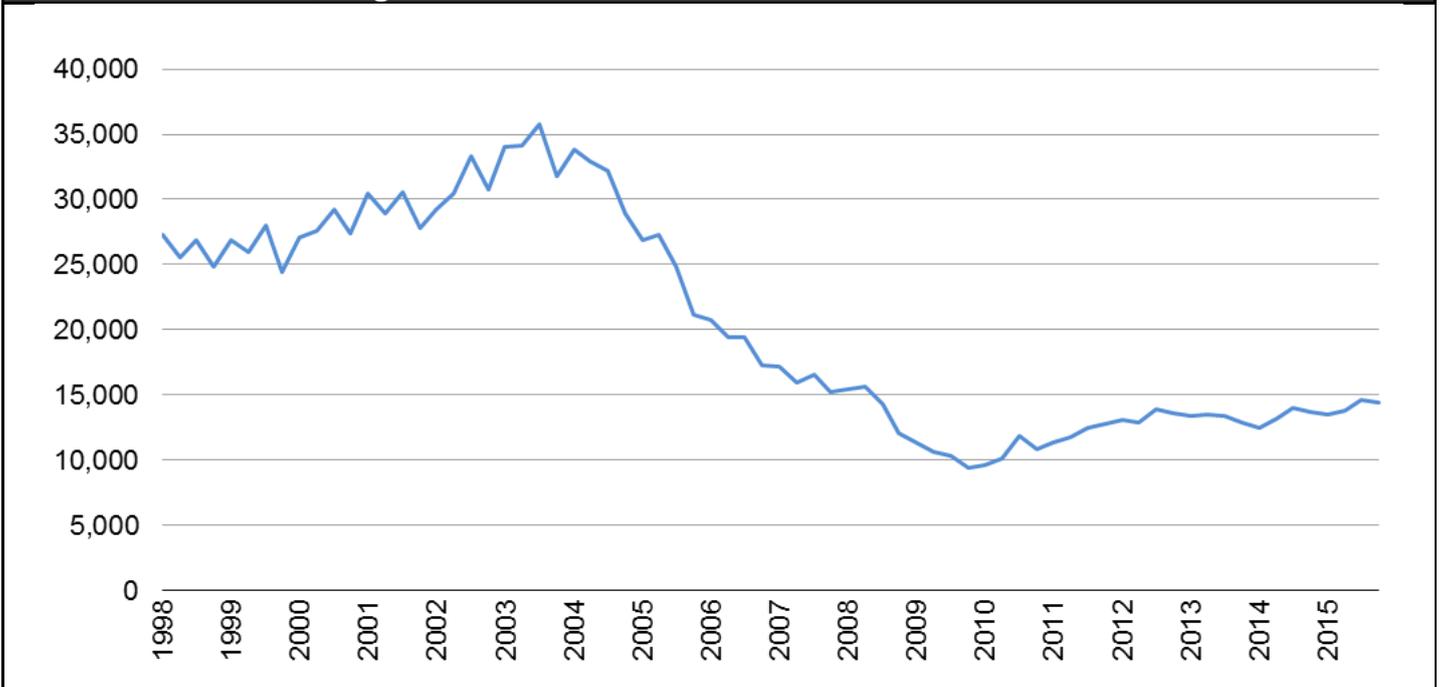


Chart 1 shows the number of acceptances in England since 1998. The annual number of acceptances during a calendar year peaked in 2003 at 135,580 before falling to a low of 41,780 in 2009. In 2015 the annual number of acceptances at 56,500 was 58 per cent below the 2003 peak, and 35 per cent higher than the 2009 low.

## Acceptances by priority need category

Between 1 October and 31 December 2015, the presence of dependent children in the household was the primary reason for priority need in 9,800 households or 68 per cent of acceptances. A further 940 households (7 per cent) were in priority need because they included a pregnant woman.

See Live Table 773: Homeless households accepted by local authorities, by priority need category.

## Acceptances by reason for loss of last settled home

The most frequently occurring reason for the loss of the last settled home was the ending of an assured shorthold tenancy with a private landlord. Throughout England, the proportion of all acceptances due to the ending of an assured shorthold tenancy was 31 per cent (4,510 households), and in London this proportion was 40 per cent (2,080 households). The end of an assured shorthold tenancy has been an increasingly frequent cause of loss of last home over the last six years, rising from 4,580 or 11 per cent of all cases in 2009 to 17,190 or 30 per cent of cases in 2015, and being the most frequently occurring reason for the loss of last settled home for the last fifteen consecutive quarters, although over the last year there has been little change in this proportion. The context for this is that size of the private rented sector has doubled since 2002 to reach 4.3 million households in 2014/15<sup>1</sup>.

The number of acceptances where homelessness resulted from parents being no longer able or willing to provide accommodation was 2,050 (14 per cent of the total) while the number of acceptances where homelessness resulted from friends or other relatives being no longer able or willing to provide accommodation increased from 1,720 in the previous quarter to 1,860 (up from 12 to 13 per cent of the corresponding totals).

See Live Table 774: Homeless households accepted by local authorities, by reason for loss of last settled home.

## Relative levels of homelessness

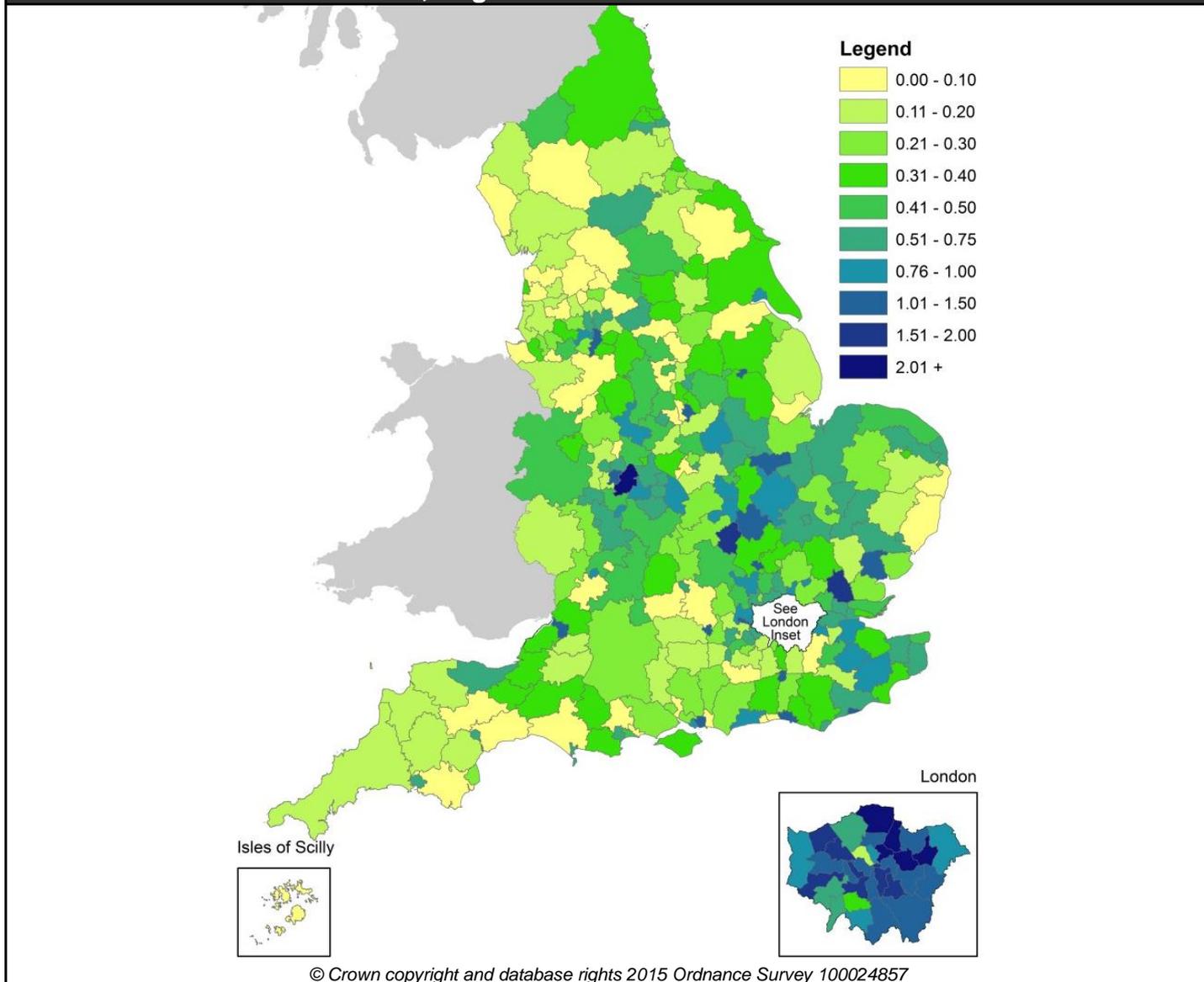
To give an idea of levels of homelessness in relation to the population density, the rate of acceptances per 1,000 households can be calculated. Between October and December 2015 the number of homeless households was 0.63 per 1,000 households in England. In London, the rate was 1.48 and in the rest of England it was 0.48 per 1,000 households. Map 1 below illustrates the rates at local authority level.

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<sup>1</sup> English Housing Survey 2014/15: Headline Report

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2014-to-2015-headline-report>

**Map 1: Statutory Homelessness: Acceptances Rates per 1,000 households  
1 October to 31 December 2015, England**



## Immediate outcome for accepted households

When a household is accepted as homeless by a local authority, the authority has a duty to ensure that suitable accommodation is available. In some cases the household is provisionally able to remain in their existing accommodation to await an offer of alternative accommodation (referred to as 'duty owed, no accommodation secured'). In cases where this is not possible, the household will be housed in temporary accommodation arranged by the local authority.

Including the small number of cases accepted under the re-application duty, there were 14,500 acceptances between 1 October and 31 December 2015. Of these, 9,420 (65 per cent) were placed in some form of temporary accommodation, up from 63 per cent in the previous quarter. For 3,800 accepted households (26 per cent), arrangements were made, with consent, to remain in their existing accommodation.

A further 6 per cent of accepted households (830) were provided with settled accommodation by being granted a secure tenancy in local authority or private registered social landlord accommodation. Less than 1 per cent (40 households) accepted an offer of an assured shorthold tenancy.

Local authorities can discharge their homeless duty by making an offer in the private rented sector; 80 households accepted such an offer and 40 rejected one.

See Live Table 777: Immediate outcome of decision by local authority to accept household as unintentionally homeless, eligible and in priority need.

## Households in temporary accommodation

A 'snapshot' of all households living in **temporary accommodation** is counted on the last day of each quarter. The number of households in temporary accommodation arranged by local authorities under homelessness legislation on 31 December 2015 was 69,140. This is 12 per cent higher than a year earlier and 1 per cent higher than on 30 September 2015. The corresponding figures for London and Rest of England and the percentage changes are shown in Table 2 below.

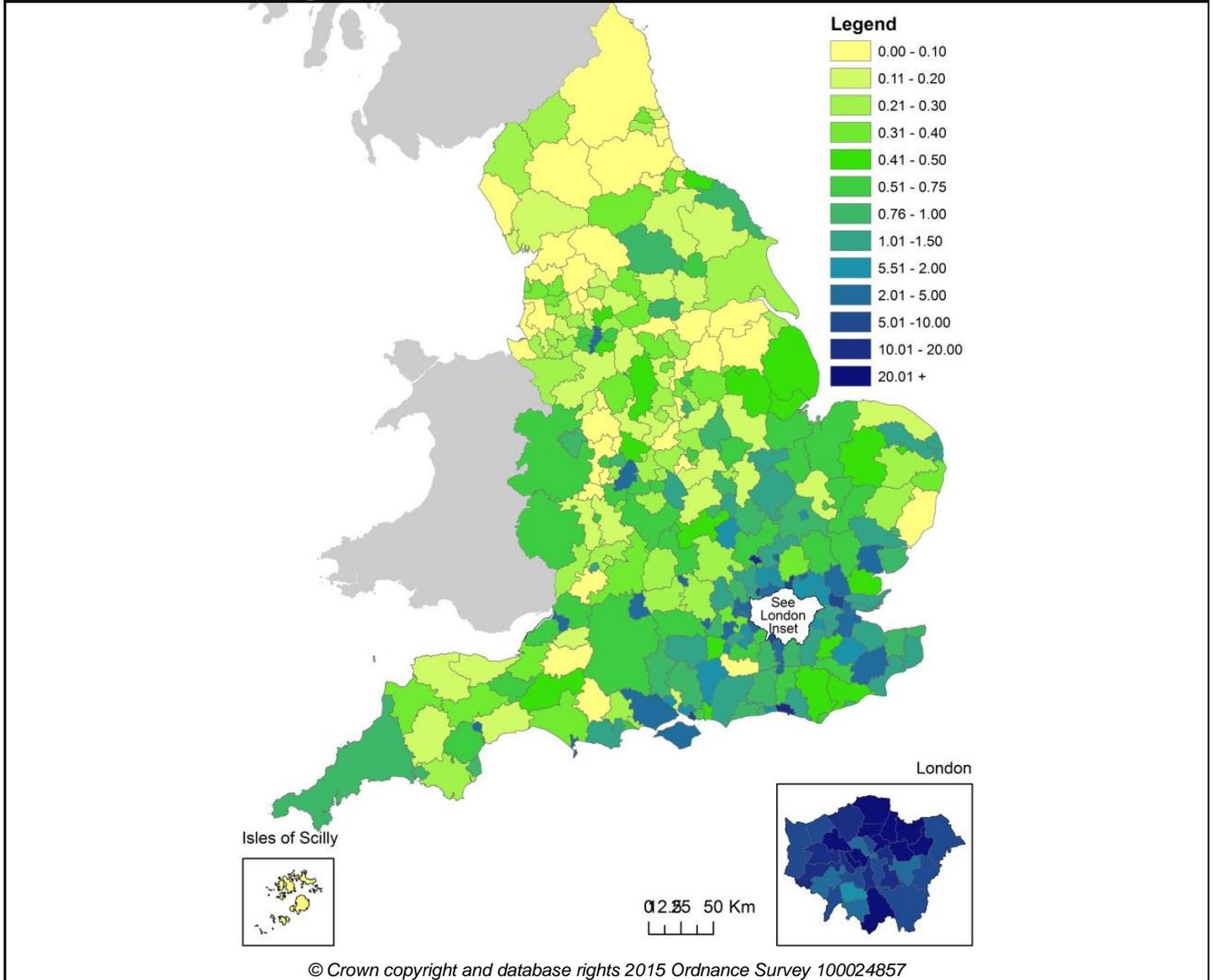
In London, the number of households in temporary accommodation at 31 December 2015 was 50,970 representing 74 per cent of the total England figure.

**Table 2: Households accommodated in temporary accommodation at the end of 2015 Q4 with comparisons to the end of 2015 Q3 and 2014 Q4, England, London and Rest of England**

	<b>31 Dec 2015</b>	<b>Previous quarter: 30 Sept 2015</b>	<b>Percentage change since 30 Sept 2015</b>	<b>Same quarter last year: 31 Dec 2014</b>	<b>Percentage change since 31 Dec 2014</b>
England	69,140	68,560	1%	61,930	12%
London	50,970	50,490	1%	47,020	8%
Rest of England	18,170	18,080	1%	14,920	22%

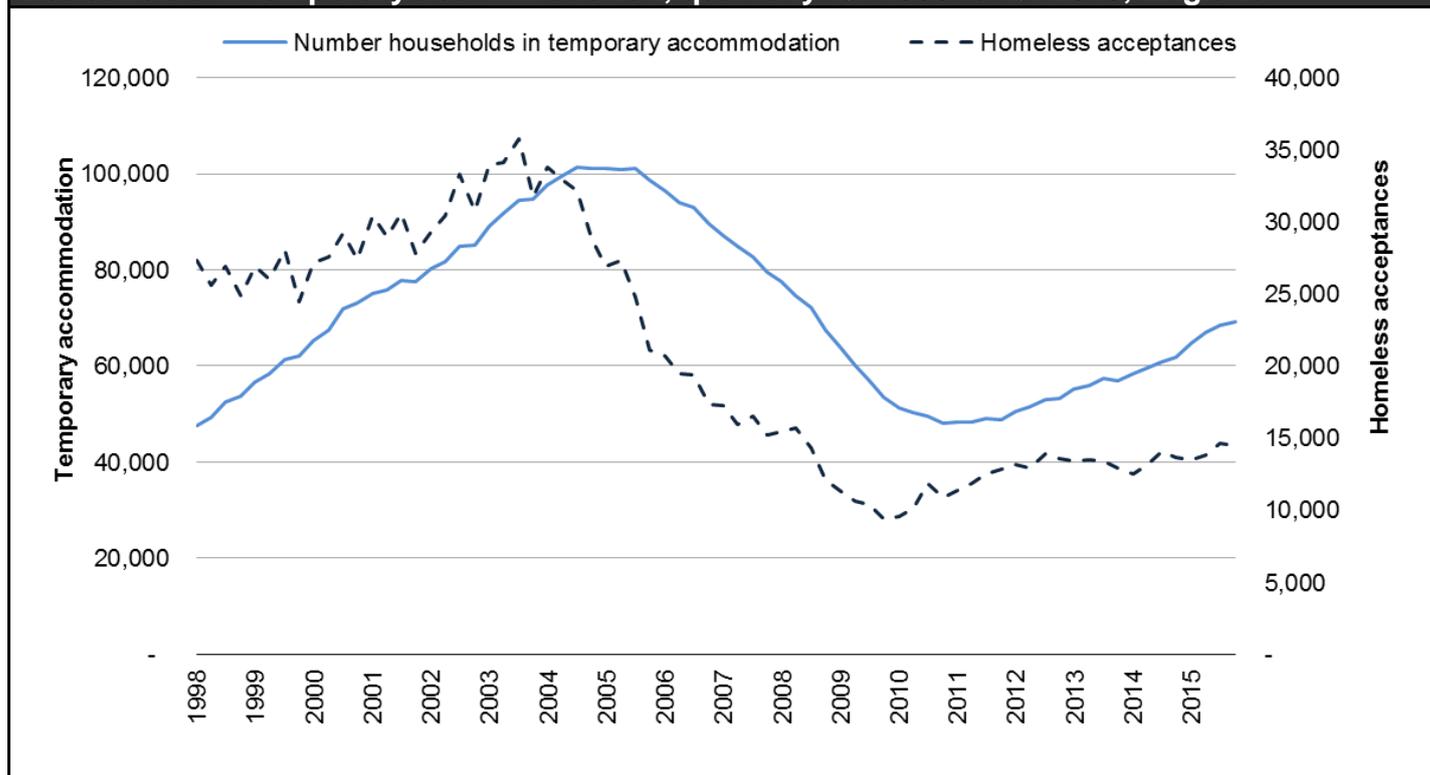
To give an idea of the relative numbers of households living in temporary accommodation inside London and in the rest of England in relation to the population density, the rate of households in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households can be calculated. In England at the end of December 2015 there were 3.01 households living in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households. The respective figures were 14.60 cases per thousand households in London and 0.93 cases per thousand households in the rest of England. The patterns at local authority level can be seen in Map 2 below.

**Map 2: Temporary Accommodation Rates per 1,000 households  
31 December 2015, England**



Historically, there tends to be a lag between changes in the number of acceptances and changes to the number of households in temporary accommodation. Chart 1 (on page 4) shows the increase in the number of acceptances that peaked in 2003 before falling off to 2009. Chart 2 shows that the number of households in temporary accommodation follows a similar pattern with a delay. The number of households in temporary accommodation peaked at 101,300 at the end of September 2004 before declining to 48,010 at the end of 2010.

**Chart 2: Households accepted by local authorities as owed a main duty, and households in temporary accommodation, quarterly Q1 1998 to Q4 2015, England**



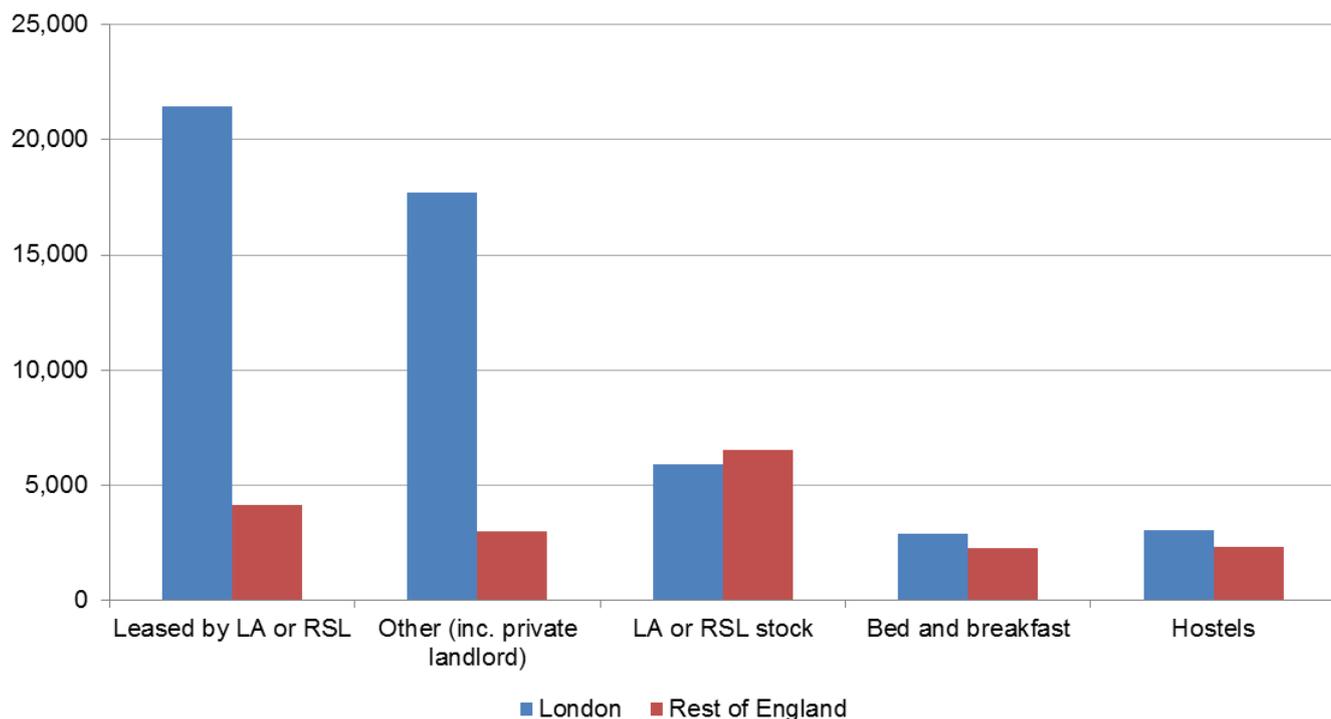
See Live Table 775: Type of temporary accommodation: Households in temporary accommodation by type of accommodation, and cases where duty owed but no accommodation has been secured at the end of each quarter, England, London and Rest of England.

## Types of temporary accommodation

In England, at the end of December 2015, 58,670 households were in **self-contained** temporary accommodation, an increase of 12 per cent from 52,300 on the same date last year, and representing 85 per cent of all households in temporary accommodation. The number of households in temporary accommodation with shared facilities (bed and breakfast accommodation or hostels/women's refuges) increased by 9 per cent compared to the same date a year earlier, from 9,630 to 10,470 households. Of the number in shared facilities, there were 5,110 households living in bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation (including those in shared 'annex' facilities), an increase of 13 per cent from 4,540 as at 31 December 2014.

The number of households in 'other private sector accommodation' (mostly nightly paid self-contained annexes, but also including supported lodgings, mobile homes and other types of accommodation) has increased by 13 per cent in the year to 31 December 2015, from 18,320 to 20,690 households. Of these, 16,210 were in nightly paid self-contained annexes. This represents 23 per cent of all households in temporary accommodation, up from 20 per cent a year before and 7 per cent five years before.

**Chart 3: Households in temporary accommodation by type of accommodation, 31 December 2015, London and Rest of England**



## Households in temporary accommodation by household type

Of the 69,140 households in temporary accommodation on 31 December 2015, 54,210 included dependent children and/or a pregnant woman (within which there were 106,140 children or expected children). The average number of children in those households in temporary accommodation with children is 2.0.

Of the 54,210 households with children, 48,260 (89 per cent) were in self-contained accommodation.

There were 5,110 households in bed and breakfast style accommodation as at 31 December 2015. Of these 2,270 (44 per cent) had dependent children or expected children of which 870 had been resident for more than 6 weeks. The corresponding figures for the previous quarter and same quarter the previous year, and percentage changes, are shown in Table 3 below. The number of households and families in bed and breakfast style accommodation at 31 December has fallen sharply compared to 30 September, continuing a pattern seen in December in previous years - over the last ten years, the average fall at the end of December compared to September has been 11% for the number of households and 23% for the number of families.

**Table 3: Households accommodated in Bed and Breakfast temporary accommodation at the end of 2015 Q4 with comparisons to the end of 2015 Q3 and 2014 Q4, England**

	31 Dec 2015	Previous quarter: 30 Sept 2015	Percentage change since 30 Sept 2015	Same quarter last year: 31 Dec 2014	Percentage change since 31 Dec 2014
Total households	5,110	5,910	-13%	4,540	13%
Households with dependent children or expected children	2,270	3,000	-24%	2,040	11%
<i>Of which: resident for more than 6 weeks</i>	870	1,050	-17%	780	12%

See Live Table 793: Families with children in Bed and Breakfast accommodation for more than 6 weeks excluding those pending review, by local authority

## Households in temporary accommodation in another local authority district

Of the 69,140 households in temporary accommodation on 31 December 2015 there were 18,670 households (27 per cent) accommodated in another local authority district. This is an increase of 17 per cent, from 15,990 at the same date last year (26 per cent of the total).

Of the 18,670 accommodated in another local authority district, 17,150 were from London authorities (92 per cent of the England total). This is an increase of 16 per cent from the same date last year when 14,830 such households were placed by London authorities.

*Further breakdowns of households in temporary accommodation can be found in several of the Live Tables at the link provided in the Accompanying Live Tables section of this release.*

## Households leaving temporary accommodation and other temporary arrangements

Between 1 October and 31 December, a main homelessness duty was ended for 10,340 households who had previously been in temporary accommodation or had remained, with consent, in their existing accommodation while awaiting the provision of alternative accommodation. This is a 1 per cent increase from the same quarter in 2014.

Of these households, 7,000 (68 per cent) were provided with settled accommodation by accepting a "Part 6" offer of a tenancy in local authority or housing authority accommodation, an increase of 2 per cent on the figure of 6,890 in the same quarter of 2014. A further 470 refused such an offer.

A further 380 households (4 per cent) accepted an offer of settled rented accommodation in the

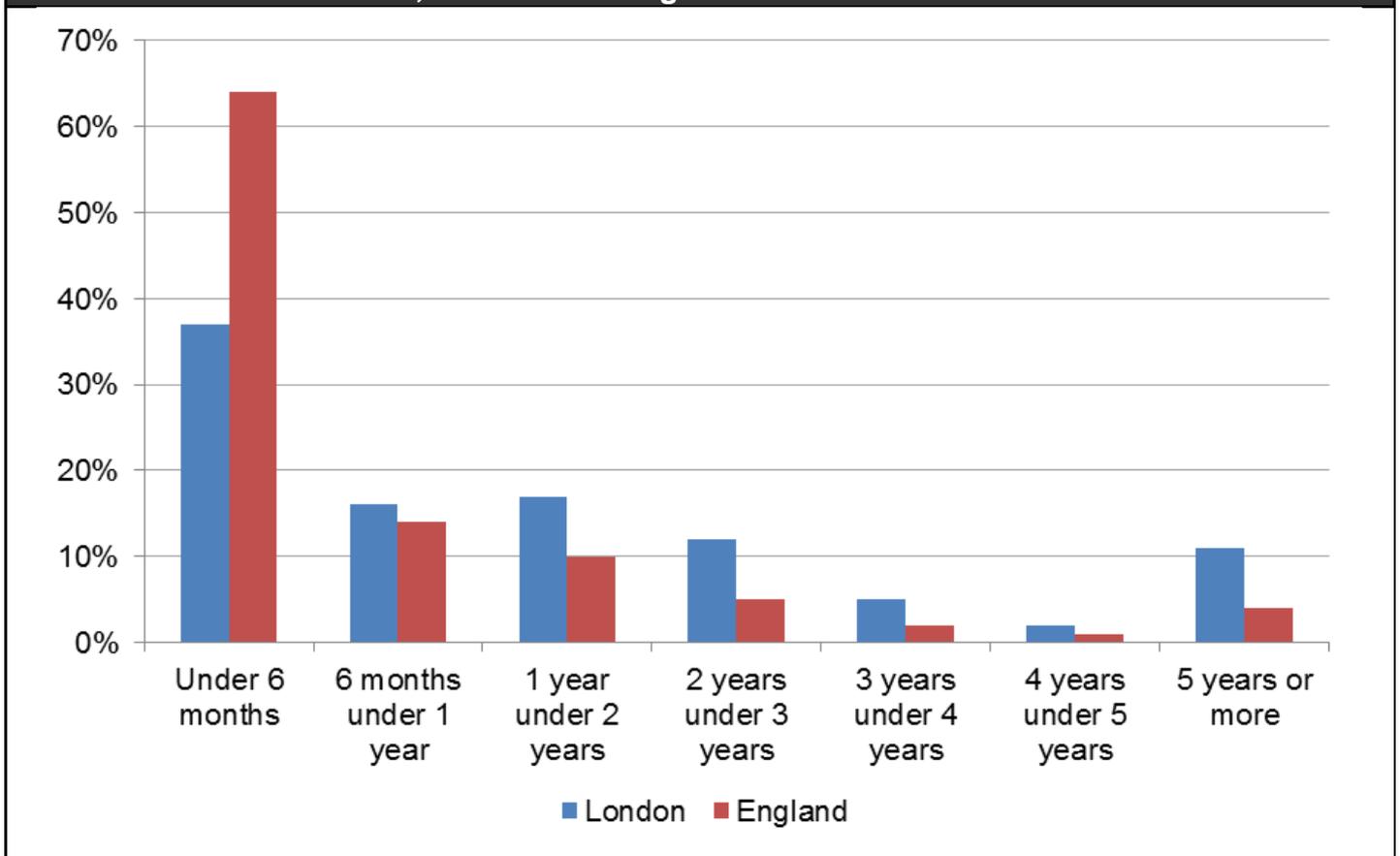
private sector, made under the Localism Act power, up from 370 in the same quarter the previous year, and 60 households rejected such an offer. There were 450 households (4 per cent) which became intentionally homeless from temporary accommodation while 1,340 households (13 per cent) voluntarily ceased to occupy temporary accommodation.

See Table 778: Households leaving temporary accommodation (or no longer recorded "Duty owed, no accommodation secured"), by outcome.

In England, 64 per cent of those leaving temporary accommodation between 1 October and 31 December 2015 did so less than 6 months after acceptance, and 79 per cent less than a year after acceptance. The corresponding percentages for London were 37 per cent and 53 per cent.

Live Table 779 provides details of households leaving temporary accommodation (or no longer recorded as "duty owed, no accommodation secured") during each quarter, by length of stay for England and London.

**Chart 4: Households leaving temporary accommodation by length of stay, October to December 2015, London and England**



## Foreign national households

There were 2,910 **foreign national** applicant households accepted as homeless between 1 October and 31 December 2015, up 18 per cent from 2,470 in the same quarter of 2014. Of these, 610 were European Economic Area (EEA) accession State nationals, 780 were from other EEA countries and 1,520 were from outside the EEA. During this period, foreign nationals accounted for 20 per cent of all acceptances, up from 18 per cent in the corresponding quarter last year.

See Live Table 785 Foreign Nationals decisions: Local authority assistance to foreign nationals under homelessness provisions of the 1996 Housing Act: decisions on applications for assistance, England; and Live Table 786 Foreign Nationals reason for eligibility: Local authority assistance to foreign nationals under homelessness provisions of the 1996 Housing Act: reason for eligibility of accepted households, England.

# Accompanying tables

Accompanying tables are available to download alongside this release. These are:

- Table 770** Decisions taken by local authorities under the 1996 Housing Act on applications from eligible households, England, 1998 to Q4 2015
- Table 770a** Re-application Duty: Decisions taken by local authorities on eligible households owed the reapplication duty under Section 195a of the Localism Act 2011, England 2011 to Q4 2015
- Table 771** Ethnicity: Households accepted by local authorities as owed a main homelessness duty by ethnicity, England, 1998 to Q4 2015
- Table 773** Reason for acceptance: Households accepted by local authorities as owed a main homelessness duty by priority need category, England 1998 to Q4 2015
- Table 774** Reason for loss of last settled home: Households accepted by local authorities as owed a main homelessness duty by reason for loss of last settled home, England, London and rest of England, 1998 to Q4 2015
- Table 775** Type of temporary accommodation: Households in temporary accommodation by type of accommodation, and cases where duty owed but no accommodation has been secured at the end of each quarter, England, London and Rest of England 1998 to Q4 2015
- Table 777** Immediate outcome of decision by local authority to accept household as unintentionally homeless, eligible and in priority need, England 1998 to Q4 2015
- Table 778** Households leaving temporary accommodation (or no longer recorded "Duty owed, no accommodation secured"), by outcome, England 1998 to Q4 2015
- Table 779** Length of time in temporary accommodation: Households leaving temporary accommodation or no longer recorded as "Duty owed, no accommodation secured" during each quarter, by length of time since acceptance, England and London, 1998 to Q4 2015
- Table 780** Accepted household type: Homeless households in priority need accepted by local authorities by household type, England 2006 to Q4 2015
- Table 781** Age of applicants: Homeless households in priority need accepted by local authorities by age of applicant, England 2006 to Q4 2015
- Table 782** Household types in temporary accommodation, England 2006 to Q4 2015
- Table 784** Local authorities' action under the homelessness provisions of the Housing Acts: financial year 2014/15
- Table 784a** Local authorities' action under the homelessness provisions of the Housing Acts: quarterly data for Q2 2014 to Q4 2015
- Table 785** Foreign Nationals decisions: Local authority assistance to foreign nationals under homelessness provisions of the 1996 Housing Act: decisions on applications for assistance, England, Q2 2004 to Q4 2015
- Table 786** Foreign Nationals reason for eligibility: Local authority assistance to foreign nationals under homelessness provisions of the 1996 Housing Act: reason for eligibility of accepted households, England, Q2 2004 to Q4 2015

**Table 793** Families with children in Bed and Breakfast accommodation for more than 6 weeks excluding those pending review, by local authority, quarterly data Q4 2012 to Q4 2015

**Detailed local authority level homelessness figures** - Spreadsheets containing detailed figures at local authority level from sections E1 to E7 of the P1E return for each quarter from Q2 2012.

Figures for individual local authorities are included in Tables 784, 784a and 793.

\* Tables giving regional totals have been frozen so as not to include figures for any periods after Q2 2012.

**Table 772** \* Homeless households accepted by local authorities, by region

**Table 776** \* Homeless households in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter, by region

**Table 783** \* Homeless households in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter, by type of accommodation and region

These tables can be accessed at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness>

Related DCLG statistical releases are available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>

## Definitions

**Acceptances:** households found to be eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falling within a priority need group (as defined by homelessness legislation - see paragraph 3 below), **during the quarter**, are referred to as “acceptances”. These households are consequently owed a main homelessness duty by a local housing authority. The main duty is to secure settled accommodation.

**Decisions:** refers to decisions taken in respect of all eligible households that apply for assistance under the Housing and Homelessness Acts. These do not therefore include households found to be ineligible for assistance (some persons from abroad are ineligible for assistance).

**Foreign nationals:** The accession States are countries whose nationals may be subject to the Home Office Worker Authorisation schemes for a transitional period: Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. Separate figures for decisions made on Croatian applicants were collected on the P1E form, following Croatia becoming an accession country on 1 July 2013. The ‘other EEA’ countries are Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, German, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.

**Households for whom a duty is owed, but no accommodation has been secured:** these are households who have been accepted as being owed a main homelessness duty and for whom arrangements have been made for them, with consent, to remain in their existing accommodation (or to make their own arrangements) for the immediate future. This was previously referred to as “Homeless at Home”. Before the second quarter of 2005, figures were also collected on those potentially in this category but whose application was still under consideration pending a decision.

**Priority need groups:** include households with dependent children or a pregnant woman and people who are vulnerable in some way, e.g. because of mental illness or physical disability. The priority need categories were extended by Order in January 2002 to include, additionally: applicants aged 16 or 17; applicants aged 18 to 20 who were previously in care; applicants vulnerable as a result of time spent in care, in custody, or in HM Forces, and applicants vulnerable as a result of having to flee their home because of violence or the threat of violence (in addition to domestic violence, which is one of the original priority need groups). It is not possible to establish precisely how much of the changed profile of acceptances is attributable to the Order. Previously, some local authorities would have accepted households that fell within the new categories as having a priority need because of “another special reason”. This applies in particular to applicants such as vulnerable young people, and people fleeing domestic violence. Where applicants are accepted as homeless because of an emergency, for example fire or flood, this will always be recorded as the main priority need category.

**Self-contained accommodation:** this includes all temporary accommodation where the household has sole use of kitchen and bathroom facilities, including property held by local housing authorities, registered social landlords and private sector landlords. A distinction is made between this type of accommodation and accommodation where such facilities are shared with other households (i.e. bed and breakfast, hostels and women's refuges).

**Temporary accommodation:** households in temporary accommodation (excluding those for whom a duty is owed, but no accommodation has been secured) **on the last day of the quarter**, as arranged by a local housing authority as a discharge of their statutory homelessness functions. In most cases, the authority is discharging a main homelessness duty to secure suitable accommodation until a settled home becomes available for the applicant and his/her household. However, the numbers also include households provided with accommodation pending a decision on their homelessness application, households pending a review or appeal to the county court of the decision on their case, or possible referral to another local authority, and households found to be intentionally homeless and in priority need who were being accommodated for such period as would give them a reasonable opportunity to find accommodation for themselves.

# National Statistics Designation

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

## Technical notes

This statistical release does not include any totals for former government regions except London following the consultation on the publication of regional statistics in 2012. Further details are given in the Written Ministerial Statement of 18 December 2012, which is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/statistics-for-local-enterprise-partnerships-and-upper-tier-local-authorities>.

Figures are given for London because they relate to the area covered by the Greater London Authority.

## Data collection

Local housing authorities report their activities under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Localism Act 2011) to the Department for Communities and Local Government by completing the quarterly P1E statistical return. The P1E is a form designed by the Department to ask local authorities questions about statutory homelessness and the authority's activities both within and outside the legislative framework.

The form contains questions about decisions made about homelessness applications, immediate outcomes, households in temporary accommodation, and prevention and relief activity, amongst other things. A recent form and guidance notes can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/homelessness-data-notes-and-definitions>.

Statutory homelessness statistics are published around 50 working days after the end of each quarter, on a pre-announced date in accordance with the Official Statistics Code of Practice.

The scope of this data collection and statistical release is limited to English local housing authorities' activities under homelessness legislation. It is proposed to expand the release to cover homelessness prevention and relief activity each quarter – see data quality section. The release does not contain data on other forms of homelessness. Rough sleeping figures are collected and published separately - see link on page 22. The devolved administrations publish their own statistics on statutory homelessness – see pages 23 and 24.

## Data quality

All P1E returns submitted by local housing authorities undergo thorough validation and cross-checking, and late returns are pursued to ensure overall response is as complete and accurate as possible. Anomalous data are highlighted and verified by contacting the local authority. Local authorities also provide details of any data checks they undertake. These can take the form of audits (by either internal or external auditors), periodic quality checks on data extracts, or random quality checks. For the period 1 October to 31 December 2015, 95 per cent of responding authorities reported some form of checking on the return. For sections 1 to 9 of the return, 47 per cent of sections had periodic checks performed, 46 per cent had random checks performed and 1 per cent had undergone an LA audit.

The validation process typically takes around six weeks, after which estimates for missing data are calculated. Local authorities are split into groups based on the former government region they are in and by type of authority. For example, the West Midlands area is split into two groups, one group of district and unitary authorities, the other of metropolitan districts. London is split into inner- and outer-London. Estimates are then calculated by an automated grossing procedure which either (i) updates previously reported data based on the changes observed in other authorities in the same group or (ii) apportions totals based on ratios reported by these similar authorities.

The latest quarter's figures are based on full or partial returns for 321 out of 326 local authorities (98.4 per cent response). Section 7 of the form, covering households leaving temporary accommodation or other temporary arrangements had the lowest rate of return, with 19 local authorities not providing any figures. Overall (for sections 1 to 7 of the form), 96 per cent of cells were filled in by local authorities.

The Department for Communities and Local Government's statistical quality guidelines are published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statistical-notice-dclg-quality-guidelines>.

The UK Statistics Authority recently undertook an assessment of the Department's homelessness and rough sleeping statistics and published a report on 10th December at:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment-reports/index.html>.

The report gathered detailed feedback from a wide range of users. The Department will use the findings of the report to plan future developments, including building on the contacts made in preparing the report to strengthen user engagement.

In order to give a more integrated quarterly picture of homelessness, it is proposed to publish the homelessness prevention and relief statistics each quarter commencing from the figures relating to the period January to March 2016, which will be published in June 2016. Previously homelessness prevention and relief statistics have been published annually:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics#homelessness-prevention-and-relief>.

We welcome the views of users as to whether there should be a single quarterly homelessness publication combining the statutory and prevention and relief figures, or if two separate quarterly releases would be preferred. Please send any comments to:

[homelessnessstats@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:homelessnessstats@communities.gsi.gov.uk).

## Revisions policy

This policy has been developed in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Official statistics and the Department for Communities and Local Government Revisions Policy (found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statistical-notice-dclg-revisions-policy>).

There are two types of revisions that the policy covers:

### Non-Scheduled Revisions

Where a substantial error has occurred as a result of the compilation, imputation or dissemination process, the statistical release, live tables and other accompanying releases will be updated with a correction notice as soon as is practical.

### Scheduled Revisions

Local authorities can update their P1E returns following publication of the data. At the end of each financial year, the figures for the eight quarters of the previous two years are routinely reviewed for revision. This release revises figures for the previous two quarters. Provisional figures are labelled in the tables with a "P". Revised figures are labelled in the tables with "R".

Revisions to historic data (all data older than that currently due for scheduled revision) should be made only where there is a substantial revision, such as a change in methodology or definition. Where there are small changes that do not substantially change historic data, internal updates are maintained.

## Uses of the data

The data in this statistical release form the basis of evidence on statutory homelessness. The data are used for a variety of purposes. Figures concerning decisions, and the numbers of households who have been accepted and those placed in temporary accommodation describe statutory homelessness in England and are used for international comparisons. Ministers and officials in the Department for Communities and Local Government use this information in the formulation and monitoring of policy, the allocation of resources, performance monitoring and to support bids for funding from the Treasury. The data are used to ensure democratic accountability in answers to Parliamentary Questions, ministerial correspondence, Freedom of Information Act cases and queries from the public.

Other Government departments also use the statistics, including DWP (monitoring those in temporary accommodation in receipt of housing benefit), DH (Public Health Outcomes Framework), DfE (Child poverty needs assessment toolkit for local authorities) and Defra (sustainable development indicators). Local housing authorities are both providers and users of the statistics and use the data extensively to plan services, allocate resources, monitor performance and benchmark against other authorities. The voluntary sector also uses the statistics to monitor and evaluate housing policy and for campaigning and fundraising purposes.

The following uses are made of data from particular sections of the P1E statistical return:

- Sections 1 – 7: data are used in this statistical release and Live Tables 770 to 784a and 793.
- Section 8: this has been discontinued.
- Section 9: data on foreign nationals - used in this statistical release and Live Tables 785 and 786.
- Section 10: prevention and relief data - used in the statistical release on homelessness prevention and relief and Live Tables 787 to 792.

## User engagement

Users are encouraged to provide feedback on how these statistics are used and how well they meet user needs. Comments on any issues relating to this statistical release are welcomed and encouraged. Responses should be addressed to the "Public enquiries" contact given in the "Enquiries" section below.

Following the proposal in the April to June 2015 statistical release published in September 2015, seasonally adjusted data have now been removed from this publication. Seasonally adjusted series were previously produced for homelessness decisions, acceptances and numbers in temporary accommodation (live tables 770 and 775). Analysis found little evidence of seasonal components to these series in recent years, implying that it is not statistically necessary to continue to seasonally adjust. This decision will be reviewed periodically.

The Department's engagement strategy to meet the needs of statistics users is published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/engagement-strategy-to-meet-the-needs-of-statistics-users>.

The Department's *Statistics Plan for 2011/12* is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/dclg-draft-statistics-plan-for-2011-to-2012>.

This sets out the Department's intention to reduce the detail of the statutory homelessness quarterly releases to include only the most high profile and volatile data, with a more detailed publication at year end. This approach is now being followed. The Statistics Plan was available for user consultation from 13 July to 3 December 2011 and the final version of the plan was published on 7 March 2012.

## Legislation

Each local housing authority is required to consider housing needs within its area, including the needs of homeless households. Legislation places a statutory duty on local housing authorities to ensure that advice and assistance to all households is available free of charge.

Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/52/contents>), as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/7/contents>) and the Localism Act 2011 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>), places statutory duties on local housing authorities to provide assistance to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Authorities must consider all applications from people seeking accommodation or assistance in obtaining accommodation. A main homelessness duty (see below) is owed where the authority is satisfied that the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falls within a priority need group. The priority need groups are specified in the legislation, although definition 3 above provides a summary.

In 2002 an [Order](#) made under the 1996 Act extended the priority need categories to include applicants who: are aged 16 or 17; are aged 18 to 20 and previously in care; were previously in custody; were previously in HM Forces; or were forced to flee their home because of violence or the threat of violence.

Where a main duty is owed, the authority must ensure that suitable accommodation is available for the applicant and his or her household until a settled home becomes available for them. Where households are found to be intentionally homeless or not in priority need, the authority must make an assessment of their housing needs and provide advice and assistance to help them find accommodation for themselves. Where the applicant is found to be intentionally homeless but falls in a priority need category the authority must also ensure that accommodation is available for long enough to give the applicant a reasonable opportunity to find a home.

## Methodology

1. **Rates per 1,000 households** have been calculated using the 2012-based household projections for 2015 (rather than the 2011-based household projections for 2014 previously used) produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government. These were published on 27 February 2015 and are available at Table 406 at the following link:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/407641/Household\\_Projections\\_Published\\_Tables.ods](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/407641/Household_Projections_Published_Tables.ods)

2. National figures in the text and accompanying tables are presented rounded to the nearest 10 households or applicants. Local authority figures provided in the accompanying Live Tables are unrounded.

## Related links

The Department now has an official linked open data site, which provides a selection of statistics on a variety of [themes](#) including homelessness available at:

<http://opendatacommunities.org/>

Some homelessness data sets derived from Live Table 784a are available at:

<http://opendatacommunities.org/themes/homelessness>

The Open Data mobile app provides a range of statistics published by DCLG for the locality and is available for download free of charge from the [Windows App Store](#) and [Google Playstore](#). Any enquiries about the app should be sent to [ODC@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ODC@communities.gsi.gov.uk).

The Department also releases information on Homelessness Prevention and Relief activity. The most recent publication, relating to local authority actions in the 2014-15 financial year, can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics#homelessness-prevention-and-relief>.

Rough sleeping statistics can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2015>.

Figures for Autumn 2015 were published on 25 February 2016.

Statistics on local authority revenue expenditure and financing in England can be found at the following link. The RO4 return within the Revenue Outturn suite relates to housing services and includes information on local authorities' expenditure on homelessness activities:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/series/local-authority-revenue-expenditure-and-financing>

Information on lettings of local authority and private registered provider properties in England are collected on the CORE (COntinuous REcording of Lettings and Sales in Social Housing) system. This includes information on whether lettings have been made to statutorily homeless households. Official Statistics are published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/series/rents-lettings-and-tenancies>

An on-line analysis tool is available at: <https://core.communities.gov.uk/>

## Pre-release access

Details of officials who receive pre-release access to the Department's quarterly Statutory Homelessness Statistical Release up to 24 hours before release can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics#pre-release-access-to-official-statistics>.

## Devolved administration statistics

In **Scotland**, local authorities' homelessness duties under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 have been substantially amended by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003. The 2001 Act extended the duties towards non-priority homeless households, ensuring they are provided with a minimum of temporary accommodation, advice and assistance. The 2003 Act introduced many changes, of which the target to abolish the priority need test by 2012 was the most significant. The target states that, by 31 December 2012, everyone assessed as being unintentionally homeless would be entitled to settled accommodation.

The framework of the assessment process is similar to that in England. Local authorities currently make enquiries as to whether the person is homeless, whether they have a priority need, whether they made themselves homeless intentionally, and whether they have a local connection with the local authority. However, the 2003 Act has removed or substantially amended the priority need, intentionality and local connection stages.

Data on applications are collected on the HL1 return, a continuous case level electronic data capture system. This case level data allows analysis of applications and breakdowns by combinations of characteristics which are not possible from the English local authority level P1E return. Cases can also be grouped to household level to identify instances of repeat homelessness.

Data on households in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter are collected on the HL2 form which is completed by local authorities and records summary snapshot details in a similar way to the P1E. The HL2 return also contains information on households at risk of homelessness as defined under Section 11 of the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003.

The most recent statutory homelessness statistics for Scotland are available at:  
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/RefTables>

In **Wales**, local authorities are bound by the same statutory duties as those in England. The data are collected on a quarterly local authority level WHO12 return, similar to the P1E form in England. The most recent statutory homelessness statistics for Wales are available at:  
<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/homelessness/?lang=en>

In **Northern Ireland** statistics on homelessness are obtained from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). Under the Housing (NI) Order 1988, NIHE has a similar statutory responsibility to secure permanent accommodation for households who are unintentionally homeless and in priority need; to secure temporary accommodation in a variety of circumstances and to provide advice and assistance to those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The most recent statutory homelessness statistics for Northern Ireland are available at:  
<https://www.dsdni.gov.uk/topics/dsd-statistics-and-research-housing/housing-statistics>

## **Comparing between countries**

Statutory homelessness statistics for Wales and Northern Ireland are comparable with the English figures. However, actions taken by Scottish authorities since the 2003 Act to meet the target to abolish priority need by the end of 2012 mean that caution should be exercised when comparing Scotland and England figures or deriving a UK figure over that time period.

# Enquiries

## Media enquiries:

office hours: 0303 444 1157

0303 444 1159

out of hours: 0303 444 1201

Email: [press@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:press@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

## Public enquiries and Responsible Statistician:

Mike Young

Email: [homelessnessstats@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:homelessnessstats@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

Information on Official Statistics is available via the UK Statistics Authority website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements>

Information about statistics at DCLG is available via the Department's website:

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics)

This Statistical Release, as well as previous releases, can be accessed and all text, tables and charts downloaded electronically, from the Department's website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/series/homelessness-statistics>

Information about DCLG is available via the Department's website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government>

The publication date for the first quarter (January to March) 2016 Statutory Homelessness Statistical Release will be in June 2016.

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If you have any enquiries regarding this document/publication, email [contactus@communities.gov.uk](mailto:contactus@communities.gov.uk) or write to us at:

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