



## Statutory Homelessness, October to December (Q4) 2018: England

The Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 commenced on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018. The HRA amended the Housing Act 1996, creating new prevention and relief duties for local authorities with statutory homelessness responsibilities in England.

The statistics in this report are published as Experimental Official Statistics. This is the third statistical first release since commencement of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018 using new case level data. Figures in this release are not directly comparable with data for previous years. These are provisional figures and will be revised in the next publication. We are continuing to work with local authorities to improve the quality of this new data.

- This quarter's figures are based on full or partial returns for 322 out of 326 local authorities (98.8% response rate). Partial responses mean the completeness and quality of data varies by section and are specifically highlighted in this release.
- Between October to December 2018, 61,410 households were initially assessed as owed a **prevention or relief under the new statutory homelessness duties**. Down 8.3% from 66,960 households in the previous quarter.
- 33,020 households were initially assessed as owed a **prevention duty**, down 11.3% from 37,230 in the previous quarter. 28,400 households were initially assessed as owed a **relief duty**, down 4.4% from 29,720 in July to September
- Between October and December 2018, 6,690 households were accepted as owed a **main homelessness duty**. This increased 4.3% from 6,410 during July to September.
- On 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 the number of households in **temporary accommodation** was 83,700, up 5.0% from 79,720 on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017.
- Between October and December 2018, **prevention and relief duties ended** for 30,330 households by securing accommodation for 6 months or more. This is up 21.9% from 24,880 the previous quarter

## Housing *Experimental Statistical First Release*

24<sup>th</sup> May 2019

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# 1. Introduction

This release includes data on the actions of 322 of the 326 lower tier local authorities in England under their legal duties towards homeless households<sup>1</sup> and households threatened with homelessness, from October to December 2018. This data is provisional and likely to be revised in future quarters as local authorities update and improve their records. The data in this release are used to identify the broad characteristics and circumstances of households owed a new prevention or relief statutory homelessness duty (see definition below). Data in this release is collected through our [H-CLIC](#) case level return on [DELTA](#).

Data in this release are intended to be used to monitor the introduction of the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act and the activities of local authorities with responsibilities under homelessness legislation. The release is currently Experimental due to the introduction of new legislation and a new case management system. Caution should be taken when comparing this data as there may be quality issues and omissions that drive trends or affect comparability between local authorities. This release includes recent quarter updates on the number for those threatened with homelessness within 56 days and owed a prevention, relief or main duty. Further information on the circumstances and needs of these households along with their outcomes at the end of each duty is also provided.

We advise that only temporary accommodation and main duty data are comparable to previous quarters but with caution as there may be quality issues that have not yet been identified or resolved.

This release does not provide data on the definitive number of people or households affected by homelessness in England. The data in this release excludes anyone who has not approached their local authority for assistance who would otherwise be considered homeless. It also excludes anyone who has approached their authority but whose threat of homelessness falls outside the legal 56 day prevention duty, who may have been offered some assistance. Missing groups also include some individuals, living in overcrowded, insecure or uninhabitable conditions. These missing household groups are often referred to as the hidden homeless.

MHCLG publish a separate release in January on annual autumn rough sleeping counts and estimates (see [Related Statistics](#) in Section 9: Technical notes section for links to other sources). The autumn rough sleeping counts and estimates are

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<sup>1</sup> Households can comprise of only one individual

used to track annual changes in the population. Accommodation of the household at time of approach or the support needs of households can be used to identify the number of current and former rough sleepers in this release. There will be some overlap between rough sleeping households in this release and the rough sleepers in the annual autumn count and estimates, the extent of this is unknown and is likely to differ at local authority level.

## Statutory Homelessness

### Definition: Statutory homelessness

**Statutory homelessness** covers all eligible households who are owed a homelessness duty by a local authority. A household is considered statutorily homeless if a local authority decides that they do not have a legal right to occupy accommodation that is accessible, physically available and which would be reasonable for the household to continue to live in. The Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002, Localism Act 2011 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017<sup>2</sup>) determines the legal duties on local authorities towards homeless households and households threatened with homelessness.

**Eligible households** are those that meet eligibility criteria, which broadly concern UK immigration status and whether the household is habitually resident in the UK. For details and exemptions to these rules see:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities/chapter-7-eligibility-for-assistance>

**The Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA)** significantly amended homelessness legislation. The Act introduced a number of changes including:

- A strengthened duty to provide advisory services
- An extension to the period during which an applicant considered ‘threatened with homelessness’ from 28 to 56 days
- New duties to assess all homeless eligible applicants and to take reasonable steps to prevent and relieve homelessness.
- These steps will be set out in a personalised housing plan which, wherever possible, must be agreed between the local authority and the applicant.

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<sup>2</sup> See Definitions in Section 9: Technical notes

## Definition: New legal duties

Households who are statutorily homeless are owed legal duties that fall into three main categories:

- **Prevention duties** include any activities aimed at preventing a household threatened with homelessness from becoming homeless. This would involve activities to enable an applicant to remain in their current home or find alternative accommodation in order to prevent them from becoming homeless. The duty lasts for 56 days but may be extended if the local authority is continuing with efforts to prevent homelessness.
- **Relief duties** are owed to households that are already homeless and require help to secure settled accommodation. The duty lasts 56 days, and can only be extended by a local authority if the households would not be owed the main homelessness duty.
- **Main homelessness duty** describes the duty a local authority has towards an applicant who is unintentionally homeless, eligible for assistance and has priority need<sup>3</sup>. This definition has not been changed by the 2017 HRA. However, these households are now only owed a main duty if their homelessness has not been successfully prevented or relieved.
- **Duty to refer** requires specified public bodies to refer, with consent, users of their service who they think may be homeless or threatened with homelessness to a local housing authority of the individual's choice.

## Experimental statistics and H-CLIC

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 the **Homelessness Case Level Information Collection (H-CLIC)** data system replaced the aggregated data return (collected using the **P1E form**) for all new homeless applications. The replacement of the aggregated return coincided with the introduction of new legislation, the 2017 HRA. This new system collects more detailed data than previously on households, the activities offered to assist them, and their outcomes. The H-CLIC data specification, with detailed guidance for each field and guidance on how to enter the data through MHCLG's DELTA system, are all available on a dedicated Homelessness Statistics User Forum webpage:

<https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/user-facing-pages/mhclg-homelessness-statistics-user-forum/>. MHCLG have also published a series of newsletters about progress on the H-CLIC project which are also available on the webpage.

Data in this release are Experimental Statistics and should be treated as provisional.

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<sup>3</sup> See [Definitions](#) in Section 9: Technical notes

The purpose of the Experimental Statistics designation is to help inform regular users of the data quality issues and omissions that occur when a new data collection methodology is implemented. Every effort has been made to ensure the data in this Experimental Statistics publication is of suitable quality. However, in some instances there are issues with data at the local authority level which may affect the England totals. Where issues have been identified these are marked and explained in the relevant data tables and the main release.

In this release missing values have been treated differently. Usually these would be imputed to ensure national headline figures are representative. Where there is no data for previous quarter to compare under the new prevention and relief duties, imputation has not been possible. Authorities who have failed to submit any H-CLIC data for the new Act since April 2018 have been excluded from the totals. This means the national total is likely to be an underestimate. For households in temporary accommodation missing values were reduced by allowing local authorities to complete a P1E and / or H-CLIC return during 2018-19. This is explained in more detail in the data quality section.

The format and content of the release will change as the quality of data in the new fields improves. We are grateful for the effort of all local authorities to provide data and resolve any quality issues. Quarterly data will continue to be collected and reported in regular releases. Revisions to previous quarters will be published as required to reflect improvements in data quality and completeness.

MHCLG would like to hear from users of these statistics to understand more about how they are used and to plan improvements. The January to March 2019 quarter of H-CLIC data will include annual figures for the year to March 2019 and will provide more detailed breakdowns of the data. Following this publication, MHCLG plan to consult widely with users through events and online feedback. Further information on the timescales for this work will be published on the GSS homelessness statistics user forum webpage (link included under [User engagement](#)).

Please email any enquiries, comments or suggestions for future releases to [homelessnessstats@communities.gov.uk](mailto:homelessnessstats@communities.gov.uk).

The Government wants to ensure that this new ambitious legislation is working for all, and local government and its partners have the tools and support to effectively implement and operate the Act. This is why the Government committed to reviewing the implementation of the Act and how it is working in practice, including a review of new burdens funding provided to ensure that the Act could be implemented successfully. The review will provide important insight and will shape the Government's future plans.

The review will be run by MHCLG has two complimentary components running in parallel:

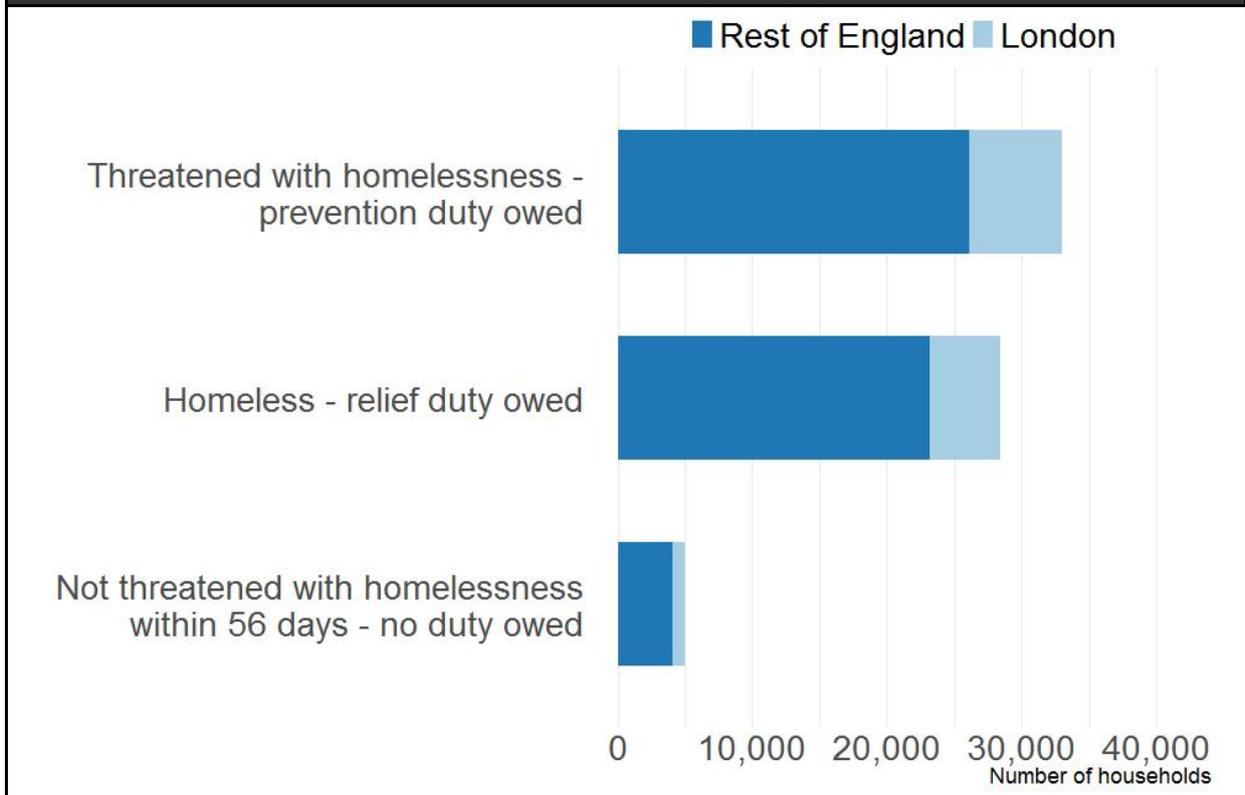
- External evaluation commissioned by MHCLG
- Intensive engagement by MHCLG with a wide range of stakeholders from local government and other sectors, including a call for evidence in summer 2019.

## 2. Initial assessment of duties owed

This section of the release covers the two duties; prevention and relief that were initially assessed as being owed between October and December 2018. This section does not cover secondary relief duties owed to a household where the authority has been unsuccessful in preventing their homelessness. It also does not cover main duty assessments as these are included under section 3: [Main duties owed](#).

The 2017 HRA amendments to statutory homelessness duties mean that any household approaching a local authority for assistance on or after the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018 was assessed under different criteria than previously. Local authorities are required to make inquiries into a homeless application whenever they have reason to believe that an applicant household may be homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days. Applicants threatened with becoming homeless within 56 days who are eligible for assistance, will be owed a prevention duty. Those already homeless will be owed a relief duty. These duties are owed irrespective of whether the applicant may or may not have **priority need**, or be considered to be '**intentionally homeless**'.

**Figure 1: Initial assessment of homeless duties owed to households, October to December 2018, England**



Between October to December 2018, 66,390 homelessness assessments were made under the new duties, and 61,410 or 92.5% households were initially assessed as owed a statutory homelessness prevention or relief duty. This decreased 8.3% from 66,960 in the previous quarter. London accounted for 12,120 or 19.7% of the initial assessments that resulted in a duty owed this quarter.

Of the 61,410 households initially assessed as owed a duty, 33,020 or 53.8% were owed a prevention duty. The number of households owed an initial prevention duty has decreased 11.3% from 37,230 in July to September. 3,890 households or 11.8% of prevention duties were owed because the household had been issued with a **section 21** notice. The number of prevention duties owed due to the issue of a section 21 notice have decreased 19.6% from 4,840 households in July to September. Of the 61,410 households initially assessed as owed a duty, 28,400 households or 46.2% were owed a relief duty. Households initially owed a relief duty decreased 4.4% from 29,720 in July to September.

4,970 of the 66,390 households that underwent an initial homelessness assessment between October and December were found to be not homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days. This figure is likely to be an overestimate as some authorities, included households who sought local authority help for other reasons

than homelessness, and it has not been possible to identify the homeless applicants from within these (see [Data limitations](#) in section 8: Technical Notes).

## Duty to refer

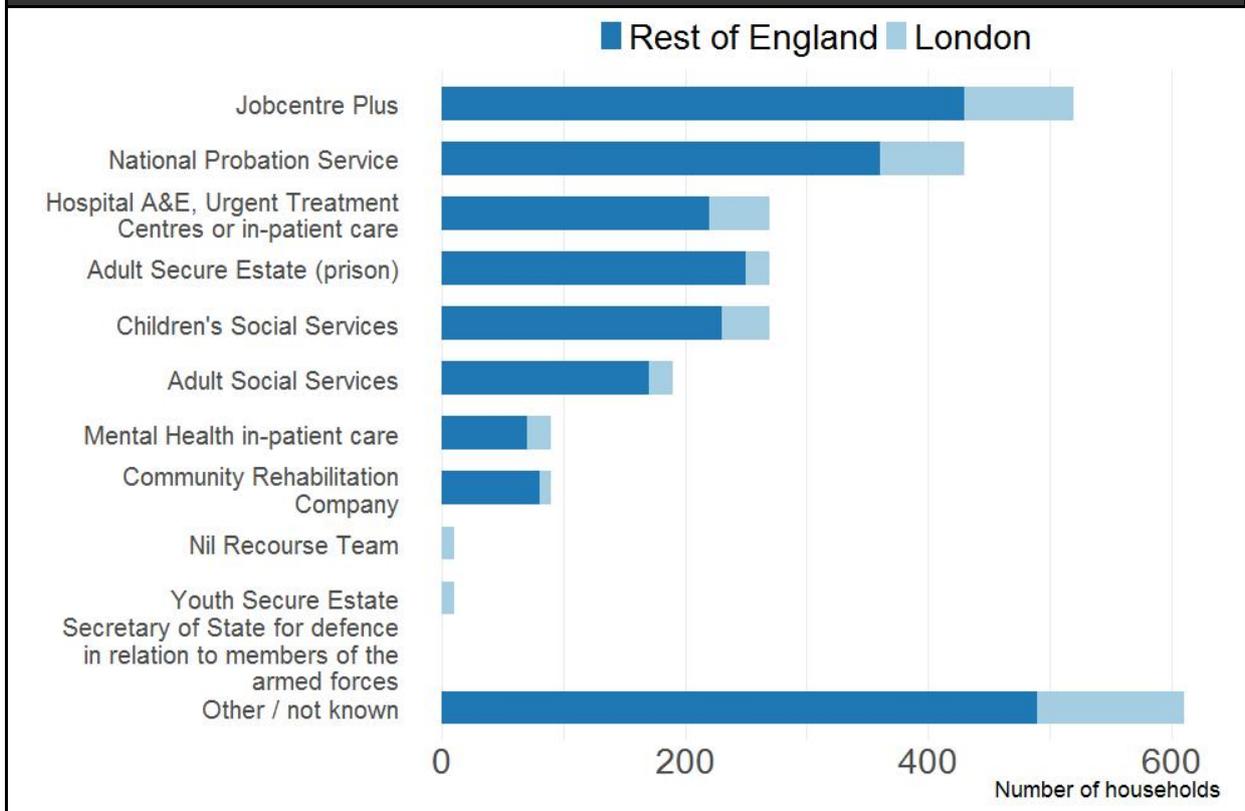
From October 2018, a number of public authorities were given legal responsibilities to refer users of their service who they think may be homeless or threatened with homelessness to a local housing authority of the individual's choice. This information is captured and reported by local authorities when the referral results in a new homelessness application. Public authorities with a duty to refer are;

- Adult Secure Estate (prison)
- Youth Secure Estate
- National Probation Service
- Community Rehabilitation Company
- Hospital A&E, Urgent Treatment Centres and in-patient care
- Mental Health in-patient care
- Jobcentre Plus
- Adult Social Services
- Children's Social Services
- Secretary of State for defence in relation to members of the armed forces

Some local authorities indicated that a household had been referred to them under a duty to refer but failed to identify the referring authority for 570 households. This means the referrals from some or all of the public authorities may be underestimated. MHCLG are working with local authorities to improve reporting of this information in future quarters.

Authorities with legal responsibilities under this duty and the number of referrals made during October to December are provided in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Authorities' referrals in October to December 2018, England**



During October to December, there were 2,750 referrals made under the duty to refer. Jobcentre Plus made the most referrals with 520 or 18.9% of the total. The National Probation Service made the second highest number of referrals with 430 or 15.6%. These two authorities represent over one third of referrals under the duty to refer.

Households can also be referred to local authorities by public bodies without a duty to refer. During October to December 2018 1,880 referrals were made by other organisations, public or private without a legal duty to refer. 210 additional referrals were made by other local authorities.

## Household composition of those initially assessed as owed a duty

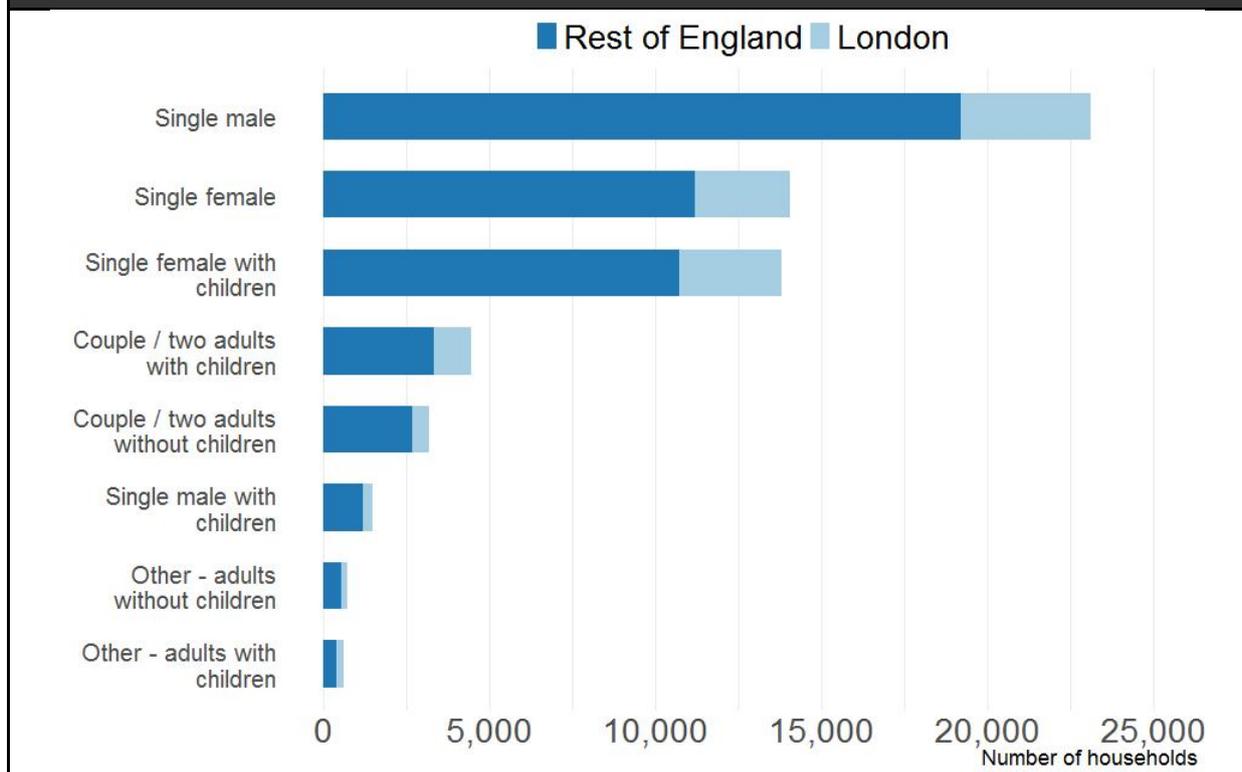
Data in this section shows the household composition of those who were initially assessed as owed either a prevention or relief duty during October to December 2018. Data for most authorities is included here, however, it should be noted that a small number of authorities only provided information on more than one member of the household. 4 local authorities reported more than 95% of their homeless

households as single adult households only and they provided data on 2,110 households. This means the single member households are overstated compared to other groups. A complete list of household breakdowns at the local authority level, including information on the 4 local authorities who reported 95% or more single households are provided in table A5. For links see section 8: [Accompanying tables](#) section at the back of the release.

Of the 61,410 households owed a prevention or relief duty, 41,050 or 66.8% were owed to single households. **Single households** is a term used for households without children, which will include couples and households with two or more adults. The creation of new duties to assess needs and help to prevent and relieve homeless for all eligible households irrespective of priority need, mean more single households will have applications taken and assistance provided than prior to commencement of the HRA.

During October to December, single males were the largest represented household group with 23,120 or 37.6% of the total. This increased from 35.1% of all households owed an initial duty during July to September. The second and third largest group was single females 14,040 households or 22.9%, closely followed by single females with children with 13,820 or 22.5% of the total. Couples with children and extended family households with 2 or more adults and children represented 5,000 or 8.1% of the total – see Figure 3

**Figure 3: Household composition of those assessed as owed a duty, October to December 2018, England**



## Households with support needs

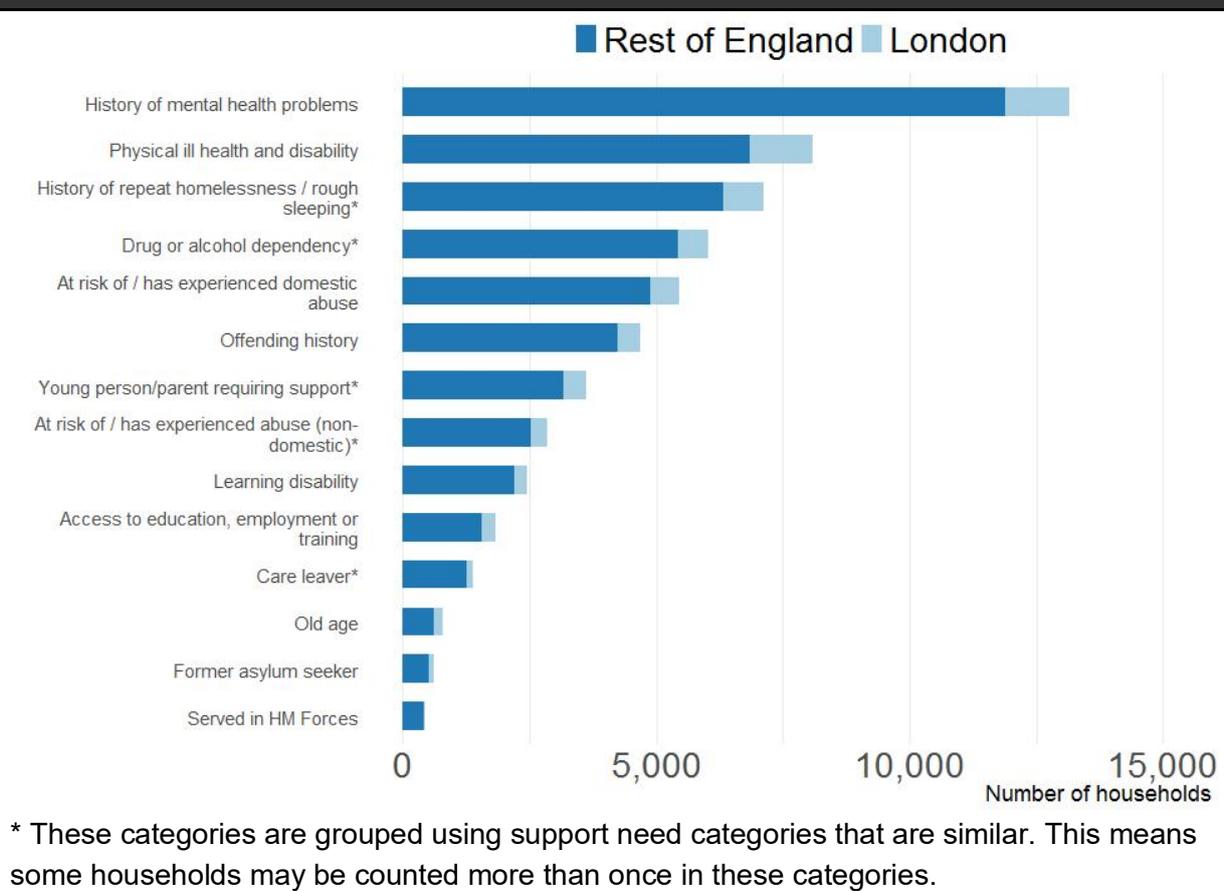
The amended legislation requires local authorities to assess the support needs of homeless households and consider how these needs might be met as part of their personalised housing plan. Support needs are not characteristics of the household, but instead are areas of additional needs that mean the household requires support to have and sustain accommodation. Where support needs are identified, the local authority should identify the steps to be taken to provide the necessary support as part of the personalised housing plan.

Local authorities report as many support needs that apply to each household. This means that total support needs, including no support needs, will exceed the number of households each quarter. A complete list of support needs and breakdowns at the local authority level are provided in table A3 (for links see section 8: [Accompanying tables](#) section at the back of the release).

Of the 61,410 households who were owed a homelessness duty, 26,880 or 43.8% of households were identified as having support needs. There were 32,910 households, or 53.6% with no recorded support needs. Of the 26,880 households who had a support need, 13,140 households or 48.9% had 1 support need, 6,020 households or 22.4% had 2 support needs and 7,720 or 28.7% had 3 or more support needs. 1,620 households were missing any support needs information, and these are provided in [table A3](#).

The most common support need identified was a history of mental health problems which was reported by 13,160 of households or 49.0% with support needs. The second largest group was those with physical ill health or disability, identified by 8,100 households or 30.1% of households with support needs. Other notable groups included those with experience of domestic abuse 5,460 households or 20.3%, those with drug dependency, 3,440 households or 12.8%, and alcohol dependency needs 2,580 households, or 9.6%. Those with a history of homelessness or rough sleeping were identified in 3,870 and 3,260 households respectively – see Figure 4.

**Figure 4: Households owed a homelessness duty by support need, October to December 2018, England**



## Current accommodation

Current accommodation is used to identify the settled accommodation types of households who could be prevented from becoming homeless and the unsettled accommodation or no accommodation types of households requiring relief. Households living with friends or family are considered either settled or unsettled accommodation types depending on the individual circumstances. This is because these households may be living in what have been long term stable arrangements, for example adult sons or daughters who have been living with parents, or may be in short term arrangements such as staying temporarily with friends due to a relationship breakdown or whilst looking for accommodation.

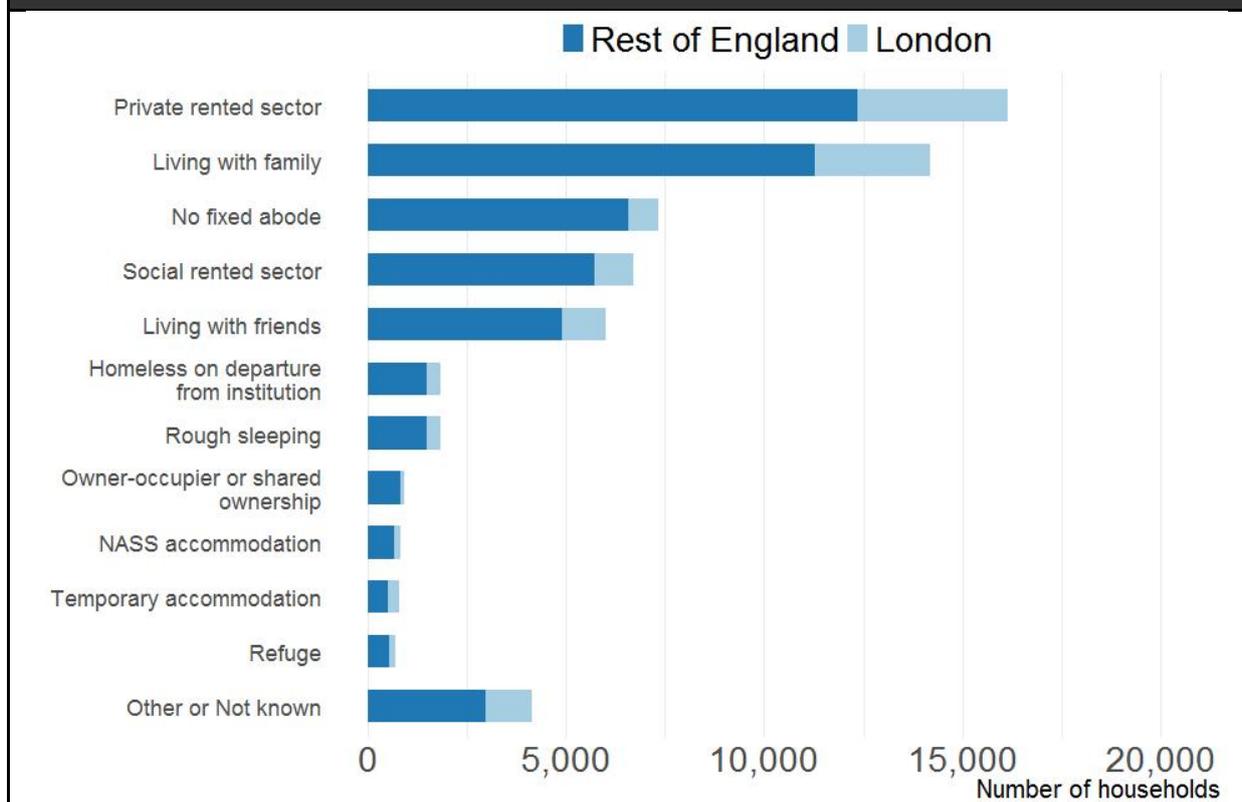
**Caution:** 'no fixed abode' has been overused as a data category in the data return where living with friends or family would have been more appropriate. It is also known that the category 'homeless on departure from institution' was underreported as many people leaving custody typically move in with friends or family for a few days and this latter category has been used instead. In addition other or unknown is

overrepresented and will have led to underreporting in some or all non other categories.

As shown in Figure 5, the most common accommodation type at the time of approach was private rented sector 16,140 or 26.3% households, followed by living with family, 14,200 households or 23.1%. Other notable groups included social housing, 6,710 households or 10.9% and living with friends, 6,020 households or 9.8%. 11,480 or 18.7% were living in unsettled accommodation, such as refuges, prison, temporary accommodation, no fixed abode, hospitals or National Asylum Seeker Support (NASS) accommodation.

1,830 households were rough sleeping at time of application, 350 of which were in London and 1,480 in the rest of England. This is a 4.6% increase from the 1,750 households reported in July to September 2018. Rough sleepers are defined as those who were, in the judgement of the assessor, rough sleeping when they approached a local authority for help. This is lower than the 3,260 households with support needs because of a history of sleeping rough who may have been living in other settled or unsettled accommodation at the time of approach. And both figures are lower than the 4,677 rough sleepers recorded as sleeping rough on a single night in England in 2018. Further work will be carried out to understand the overlap between these data collections.

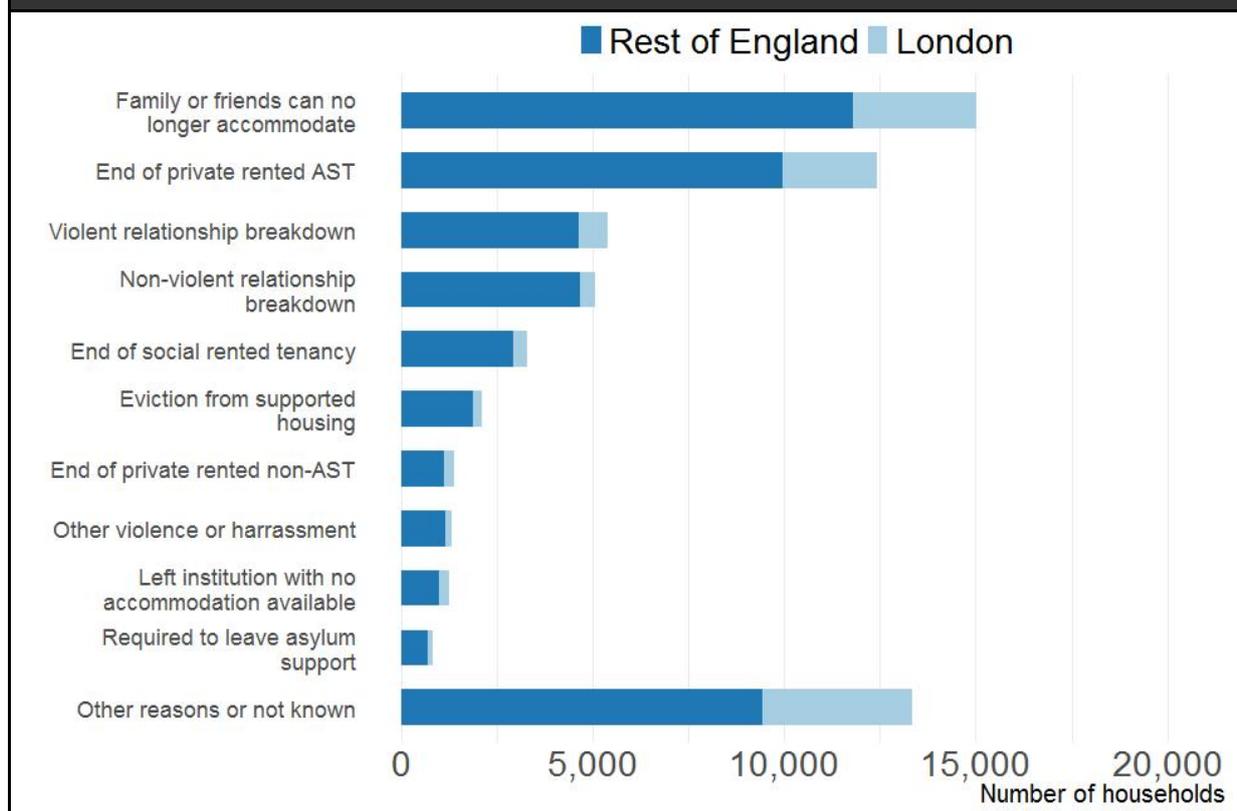
**Figure 5: Accommodation type at the time of first local authority approach, October to December 2018, England**



## Reason for loss of last settled home

Reasons for loss of last settled home is used to determine the circumstances that led to the household becoming homeless or threatened with homelessness. In this section other is a large category overused by some local authorities who we are working with to improve their reporting.

**Figure 6: Reason for loss of last settled home, October to December 2018, England**



Between October to December 2018, the most common reason for loss of last settled home was friends or family no longer willing or able to accommodate which accounted for 15,020 households or 24.5% assessed as homeless. The second largest category was termination of an assured shorthold tenancy (AST), 12,430 households or 20.2%.

ASTs can end for a range of reasons, such as difficulty budgeting, a recent change in financial circumstances, a breach of the tenancy agreement or landlord evictions both legal and illegal. 5,500 or 44.2% of AST terminations were due to the landlord wishing to re let or sell the property. Other than unknown or other reasons, the second largest reason for termination of AST was tenant difficulty budgeting, which accounted for 1,430 households or 11.5%.

### 3. Prevention duties ended

This section includes all applicants who an authority has assessed as eligible for assistance and threatened with homelessness within 56 days. Where this has been determined the local authority must take reasonable steps to try and prevent them from becoming homeless under a prevention duty. Data in this section concerns the number of prevention duties that ended between October and December 2018 and the reasons why these duties ended. It also includes information on the activities and accommodation outcomes of those whose homelessness was prevented.

The new prevention duty outcomes are reported when a homeless application has been taken and a statutory process followed. Data is not comparable to the previous prevention activity data up to end of March 2018. This previous prevention activity data included interventions and activities that prevented a household from making a homeless application, sometimes referred to as 'upstream' prevention and are no longer reported.

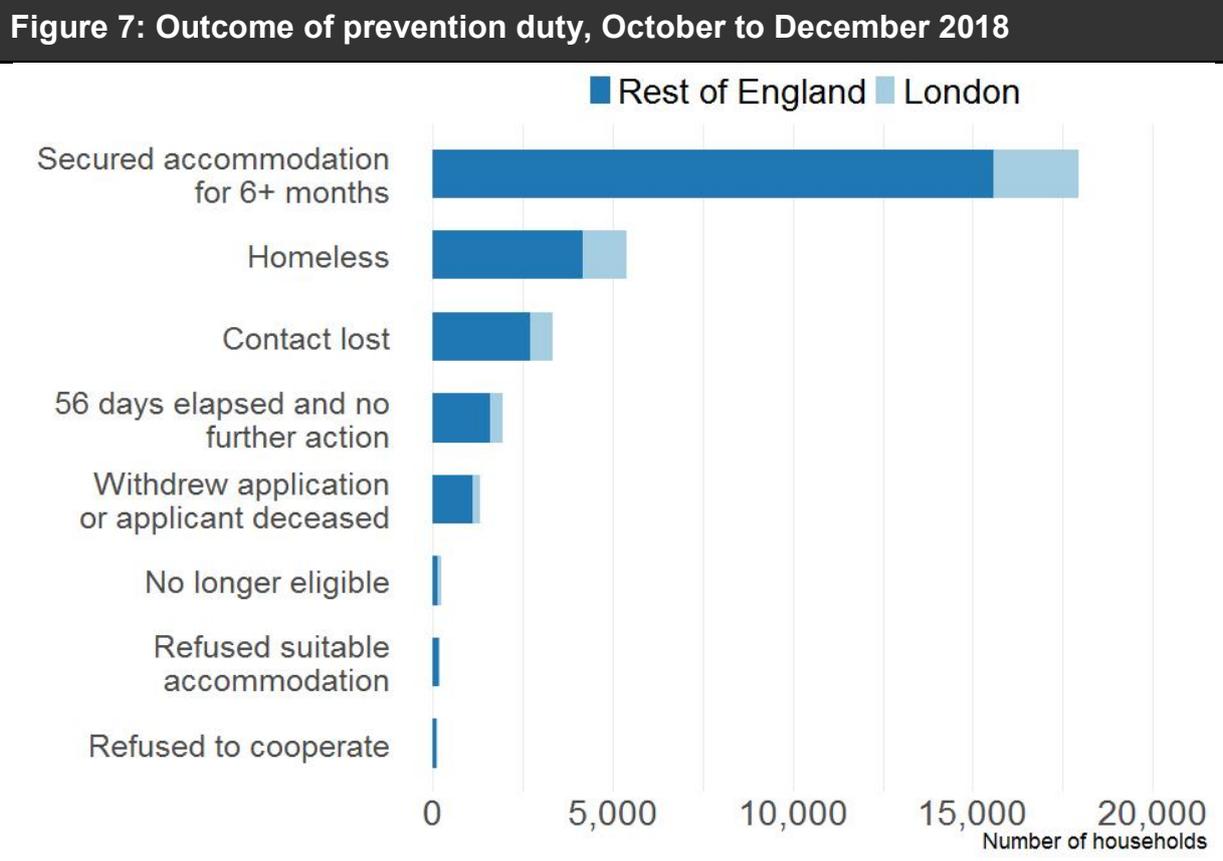
During April to June 2018, the number of prevention duty outcomes was limited by both the number of households assessed as owed a prevention duty and the length of time taken to end the duty. For this reason the number of prevention duties that would be brought to an end during this first quarter was expected to be lower than future quarters. From July onwards more households would have reached the end of the 56 day threatened with homelessness period.

A number of local authorities have reported issues collecting or reporting accurately on prevention duties. 11 out of 326 local authorities did not provide this information and one authority requested that their inaccurately reported information be hidden. This means the overall England total is underreported and should be used with caution. The data quality process is covered in more detail under [Data quality and coverage](#) in section 9: Technical notes.

Figure 7 shows reasons how the prevention duty ended for 30,580 households between the October and December 2018. The number of prevention duties that ended have increased by 17.0% from the 26,140 households in the previous quarter. Of the households whose prevention duty ended 17,950 households, or 58.7% secured accommodation for 6 months or more and were no longer threatened with homelessness. Of those whose accommodation was secured, 6,260 households or 34.9% secured their existing accommodation for at least 6 months. 11,690 households or 65.1% secured alternative accommodation for at least 6 months. 5,380 or 17.6% of households were homeless at the end of the prevention duty and would therefore be owed a relief duty.

The prevention duty ended for 200 households because the applicant refused an offer of accommodation. A further 120 households deliberately and unreasonably refused to cooperate with the reasonable steps set out in their personalised housing plan.

There are a number of further reasons why a prevention duty ends that do not relate to securing accommodation for 6+ months or the household becoming homeless. The prevention duty ended for other reasons not related to failing or succeeding to secure accommodation for 6+ months for 6,840 households or 22.4% of prevention duties ended. These reasons include where the authority lost contact with the client, the 56 day period ended and no further action was required, the application was withdrawn or the household ceased to be eligible for assistance.



## 4. Relief duties ended

Data in this section concerns the number of relief duties that ended for households between October to December 2018. Under a relief duty a local authority is required to take reasonable steps to try and relieve a household's homelessness by helping

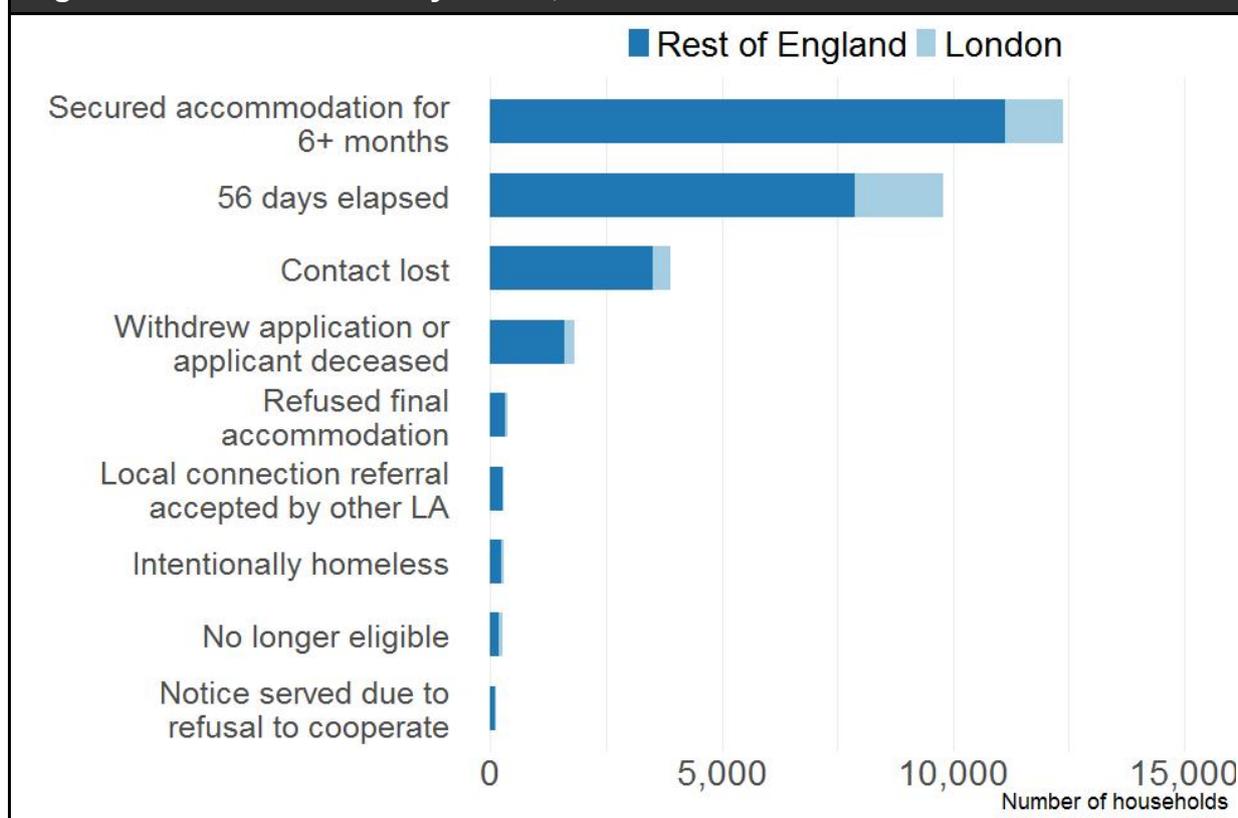
them to secure available accommodation for at least 6 months. Where these duties ended this quarter, these are included in this section. Breakdowns include reasons why duties ended, the activities undertaken and accommodation outcomes of those whose homelessness was relieved.

This data is not comparable to the data published on relief activities in previous years. Previously published relief data was based on activities offered to households at the discretion of local authorities. Under the 2017 HRA all households assessed as already homeless are owed a relief duty to try and relieve their homelessness. These numbers are not comparable to relief data published up until April 2018. As with the prevention duty, early reporting of the way the relief duty ended was limited by both the number of households assessed as owed a relief duty and the length of time taken to end the duty following commencement of the Act. The number of relief duties that were brought to an end during April to June was expected to be lower than future quarters, which means caution should be taken when making comparisons between the first two quarters of 2018/19.

As relief is a new duty, local authorities have had to adapt to the new process and associated ways to collect and report this information and some have experienced technical difficulties affecting reporting. Local authorities have experienced some issues reporting this information. Where issues were identified these have been flagged in the associated tables. The England total includes underreported and omitted local authority level figures so should be used with caution.

Figure 8 shows how the relief duty ended for households during October to December 2018. The relief duty ended for 29,320 households during October to December 2018, this has increased by 28.3% from the 22,850 households reported in the previous quarter. Of the 29,320 households whose relief duty ended between October to December 2018, 12,380 or 42.2% of households had secured accommodation for at least 6 months. This has increased 23.4% from the 10,030 households whose homelessness was relieved in the previous quarter. For 9,790 households (33.4%), the relief duty ended because their homelessness had not been relieved within 56 days. For 360 households the homeless duty ended because of a refusal of a final accommodation offer and a further 120 households were served a notice for refusal to cooperate.

**Figure 8: Reason relief duty ended, October to December 2018**



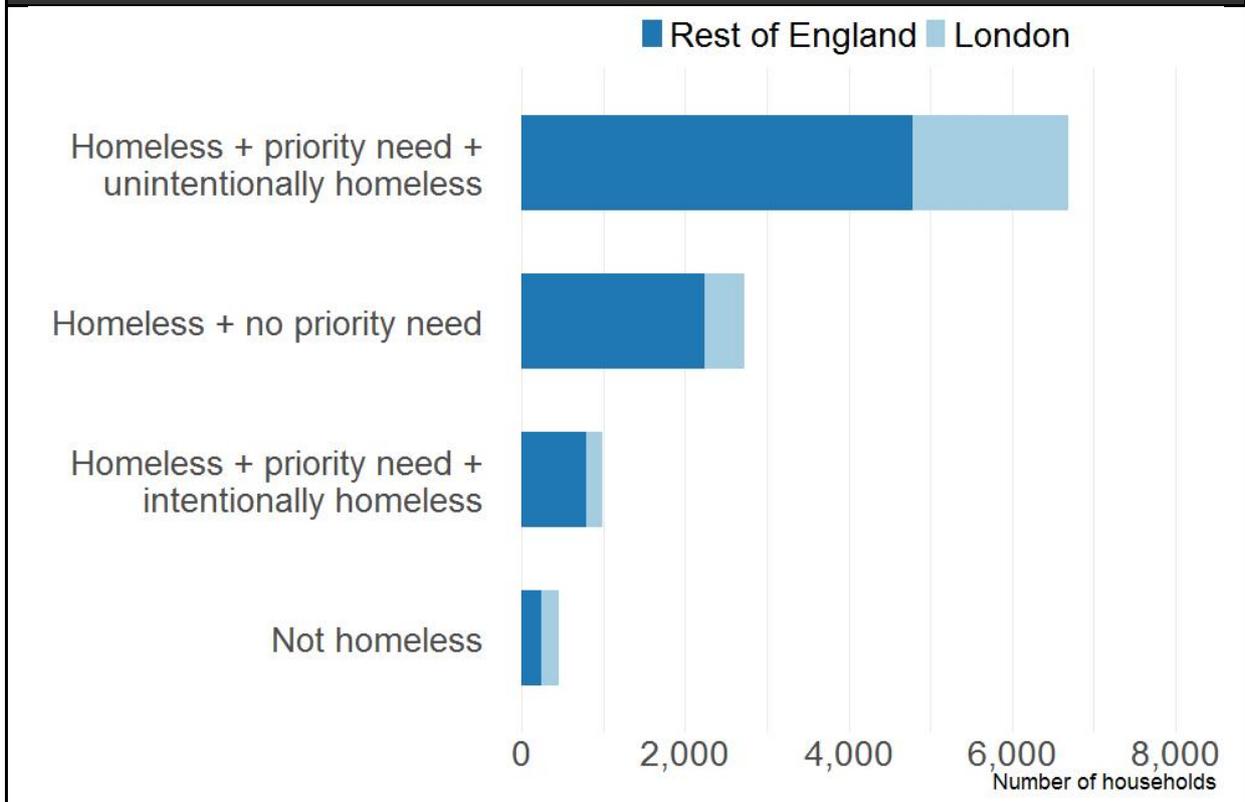
## 5. Main homelessness duty owed

Data in this section concerns decisions on whether the main homelessness duty is owed to a homeless household and includes some decisions on applications made prior to the HRA commencement date as well as decisions made under the amended legislation.

From April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2018 homeless households were owed a minimum of 56 day period under a relief duty before a main duty could commence, and in some cases would also have been owed a prevention duty. For the purpose of this data this means there will be a delay in households reaching the main duty stage in the early part of 2018-19.

The main duty decision figures for London and Rest of England are shown in Figure 9.

**Figure 9: Main duty decisions, October to December 2018**



Local authorities made 10,850 main homelessness duty decisions in October to December 2018. This is less than half of the 26,890 households who were issued with a main homelessness duty decision in the same quarter of 2017. 450 households were found to be not homeless. This is less than a quarter of the 1,910 households found not homeless in the previous quarter. This fall is likely to be a fall in pre 2017 HRA cases being assessed by local authorities as those not homeless would not have progressed onto a main duty decision from a relief duty. 2,720 households were found to be homeless but not priority need, an increase of 33.3% from 2,040 the previous quarter.

Figure 10 shows how the total number of households owed a main homelessness duty has changed over time from Q1 1998 to Q4, October to December, 2018.

**Figure 10: Main duty homelessness acceptances 1998 to Q4 2018, quarterly, England**



The number of main homelessness duty acceptances peaked in Q3 2003 at 35,770 before falling to the previous low of 9,430 in Q4 2009. This quarter the number of main duty acceptances is 6,690, which has increased 4.4% since the recent low of 6,410 in July to September 2018. Of the 6,690 owed a main homelessness duty, 1,900 were in London, accounting for 28.4% of the England total. Caution should be taken before using this figure as this number may be revised in future quarters as the new legislation and reporting systems are more established.

## 6. Households in temporary accommodation

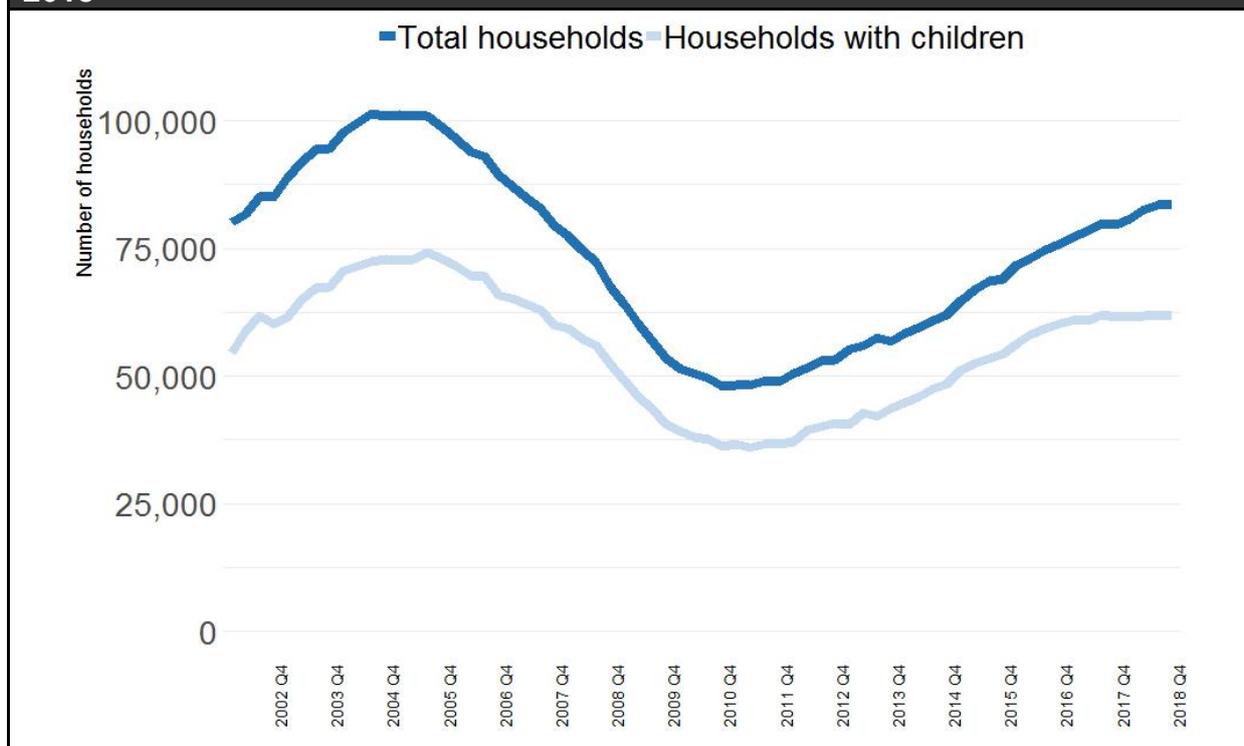
Temporary accommodation stock has been reported by local authorities through a combination of P1E summary and H-CLIC case level returns throughout the 2018/19 financial year. Local authorities had the choice of using either return or both to submit accurate temporary accommodation data. Despite offering this flexibility, many local authorities were still unable to provide accurate temporary accommodation data. This means more local authority level data has been imputed in this section than the rest of this release. Figures for households in temporary

accommodation have been imputed for 36 local authorities whose data had major quality issues, usually an omission of pre and / or post 2017 HRA implementation data. 15 local authorities provided a corrected total temporary accommodation figure but the breakdowns for these authorities by temporary accommodation type and household type have been imputed. This is a higher number than expected and as a result, caution should be taken when using and interpreting the temporary accommodation data, especially when comparing data to previous quarters based on the P1E returns. Further details on these issues are included in the [Data limitations](#) section.

The number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter includes households which are:

- Provided with interim accommodation until a decision is reached on whether a main duty is owed under a new application or reapplication
- awaiting a decision on whether a referral has been accepted under local connection arrangements
- undergoing a local authority review or county court appeal
- under a relief duty and priority need so eligible for temporary accommodation under amended 2017 HRA legislation.
- Homeless, eligible for assistance and in priority need and owed the main housing duty under 1996 Housing Act
- intentionally homeless and in priority need who are being accommodated for a limited period.

**Figure 9: Number of households in temporary accommodation, 2002 to Q4 2018**



On 31 December 2018, the total number of households in temporary accommodation arranged by local authorities under homelessness legislation was 83,700. This was 5.0% higher than the 79,720 households reported a year earlier and up 74.3% on the low of 48,010 on 31 December 2010. In London the number of households in temporary accommodation at 31 December 2018 was 56,880, 68.0% of the total England figure.

The corresponding figures for London and Rest of England and the percentage changes are shown in 1.

**Table 1<sup>4</sup>: Households accommodated in temporary accommodation at 30 December 2018 compared to previous quarter and year, England, London and Rest of England**

	<b>31 December 2018</b>	Previous quarter: 30 September 2018		Same quarter last year: 31 December 2017	
	<b>Households in TA</b>	Households in TA	Percentage change	Households in TA	Percentage change
England	<b>83,700</b>	83,500	No change*	79,720	5.0%
London	<b>56,880</b>	56,260	1.1%	55,160	3.1%
Rest of England	<b>26,810</b>	27,240	-1.6%	24,560	9.1%

\*No change refers to changes of less than +/-1%

Comparing the number of households in temporary accommodation to the population size in an area gives a measure of its use. In England there were approximately 3.6 households living in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households at the end of December 2018. There were approximately 16.2 cases per 1,000 households in London and 1.4 cases per 1,000 households in the Rest of England.

## Types of temporary accommodation

Of the total 83,700 households living in temporary accommodation on 31 December 2018, 70,980 (or 84.8%) were in self-contained accommodation. There were 124,490 children in temporary accommodation. The average number of children in households in temporary accommodation is 2.0 children. The number of households

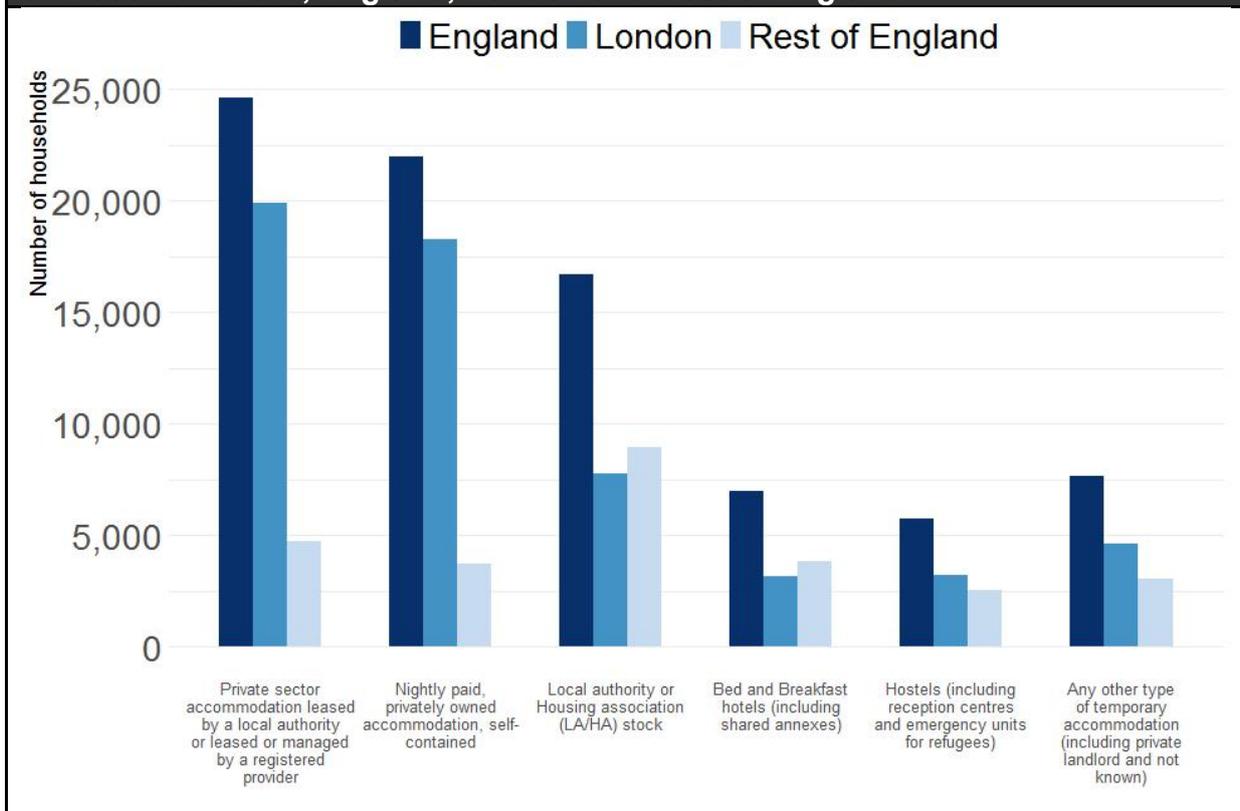
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<sup>4</sup> See Live Table TA1: Number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter by temporary accommodation type <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics#statutory-homelessness-and-prevention-and-relief>

in temporary accommodation with shared facilities (bed and breakfast and hostels including women's refuges) was 12,720, or 15.2% of all households. Of the households sharing facilities, there were 6,980 households living in bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation (privately owned accommodation in which facilities are shared), which is an increase of 20.8% from 5,780 at the same time last year.

Figure 12 shows a breakdown of households by temporary accommodation type.

**Figure 10: Households in temporary accommodation by type of accommodation, 30 December 2018, England, London and Rest of England**



## Households in temporary accommodation by household type

Of the 83,700 households in temporary accommodation on 31 December 2018, 61,740 households or 73.8% included dependent children. Of the 61,740 households with children, 56,030 (90.8%) were in self-contained accommodation.

There were 2,420 households in B&B with dependent children, 34.7% of all households in B&B accommodation. The number of households with children in B&B is up 18.0% from 2,050 in the same quarter last year. Of the 2,420 households with children in B&B, 810 had been resident for more than the statutory limit of 6 weeks. This is down 8.0% from 880 on the 30 September 2018 and down 8.0% from 880 on

30 December 2017.

The corresponding figures for the previous quarter and same quarter the previous year, and percentage changes, are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2<sup>5</sup>: Households accommodated in Bed and Breakfast temporary accommodation at 31 December 2018 with comparisons to previous quarter and year, England**

	<b>31 December 2018</b>	Previous quarter: 30 September 2018		Same quarter last year: 31 December 2017	
	<b>Household s in B&amp;B</b>	Househol ds in B&B	Percentage change	Household s in B&B	Percentag e change
Total households	<b>6,980</b>	6,550	6.6%	5,780	20.7%
Households with dependent children	<b>2,420</b>	2,260	7.1%	2,050	18.0%
<i>Of which: resident for more than 6 weeks</i>	<b>810</b>	880	-8.0%	880	-8.0%

The number of households in temporary accommodation in another local authority district was 23,150. This is an increase of 740 from the 22,410 households reported the same time the previous year, 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017. 20,830 households or 90.0% of out of borough placements were from London boroughs.

## 7. Main duties ended

When a household is accepted as being owed a main duty by a local authority the authority has a duty to ensure that suitable accommodation is available until such time that the duty ends. The main duty can also be brought to an end for other reasons such as the applicant turning down a suitable offer of temporary accommodation or the applicant no longer being eligible for assistance.

Some local authorities have struggled to provide accurate information on duties ended. As with temporary accommodation this information mostly relates to cases assessed before the introduction of the 2017 HRA. To ease the transition in reporting MHCLG have collected this information through both P1E and H-CLIC returns. 8 local authorities failed to provide information for October to December of which 4 have been imputed. However, other local authorities identified issues with underreporting. The England level figure is likely to be under reported so should be used with caution.

A main homelessness duty was ended for 5,770 households in between October to

<sup>7</sup> See Live Table TA1: Number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter by temporary accommodation type

December 2018. This includes those who had previously been in temporary accommodation or had remained, with consent, in their existing accommodation while awaiting alternative accommodation. This is a 4.0% decrease from 6,010 in the previous quarter and a 44.9% decrease from 10,470 during October to December 2017.

Of the 5,770 households, 4,400 were provided settled accommodation (76.3%). Of these 3,830 accepted a tenancy offer in local authority or housing association accommodation and 570 accepted a private rented sector offer. There were 230 households who became intentionally homeless from temporary accommodation, while 510 households (8.8%) voluntarily ceased to occupy temporary accommodation.

## 8. Accompanying tables

Accompanying tables are available to download alongside this release. References to previously published tables are included where comparisons are possible.

### [Initial assessments tables](#)

**A1:** Initial assessment of homelessness duty owed to households

**A2:** Reason for loss of last settled home for those owed a prevention or relief duty

**A3:** Support needs of main applicant and household members for those owed a prevention or relief duty

**A4:** Accommodation at time of application for those owed a prevention or relief duty

**A5:** Household type at time of application for those owed a prevention or relief duty

**A6:** Age of main applicants owed prevention or relief duty

**A7:** Households referred to a local authority prior to initial assessment

### [Prevention duty outcomes tables](#)

**P1:** Households where prevention duty ended and reason the duty ended

**P2:** Households where prevention duty ended with secure accommodation by accommodation type

**P3:** Main prevention activity that resulted in accommodation secured

### [Relief duty outcomes tables](#)

**R1:** Households where relief duty ended and reason the duty ended

**R2:** Households where relief duty ended with secure accommodation by accommodation type

**R3:** Main relief activity that resulted in accommodation secured

### [Main duty decisions & outcomes tables](#)

**MD1:** Main duty decisions for households by local authority

**MD1 TS:** Main duty decisions for households by quarter

**MD2:** Reason the main duty ended by local authority

**MD3:** Priority need category of households owed main duty by local authority

**MD3 TS:** Priority need category of households owed main duty by quarter

### **Temporary accommodation tables**

**TA1 TS:** Households in temporary accommodation by quarter

**TA1:** Local authority breakdowns of households in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter by type

**TA2 TS:** Household types in temporary accommodation by quarter

**TA2:** Household types in temporary accommodation by local authority

The above tables can be accessed at:

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

Related MHCLG statistical releases are available at:

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

## 9. Technical notes

### Data collection and methods

Local housing authorities report their activities under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 to the MHCLG by completing the quarterly HCLIC statistical return. HCLIC is an upload of all cases about statutory homelessness and the authority's activities within the legislative framework. Data in the temporary accommodation and main duty sections is also supplemented by additional data provided through P1E, where accurate data through H-CLIC was not available.

1. Rates per 1,000 households have been calculated using the 2014-based household projections for 2017 produced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. These were published on 12 July 2016 and are available at Table 406 at the following link:

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

2. National and regional 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. Local authority to regional and regional to national sum totals may not match due to rounding.

3. In tables containing information that is considered sensitive breakdowns have been suppressed at local authority, regional or national level to protect the identity of individuals. Suppressed data is clearly marked in the live tables and may mean local authority data provides a lower figure than the regional or national rounded totals.

4. Data in this release is part of a new data collection and reflects new duties owed under the 2017 amended HRA. This means that most missing returns at local authority level have not been imputed. This means England totals are likely to be an underestimate. If missing figures are subsequently provided, figures will be revised in the following release.

5. Where previous data can be used to identify trends missing local authority data has been imputed. Imputed totals include temporary accommodation and main duties owed or ended. Caution should also be taken with these imputed totals as the larger number of local authorities used to produce a total will have reduced the accuracy of this information.

## Comparability between the new H-CLIC case level collection and the old P1E summary return

Some data collected via P1E is **broadly comparable** to data collected via H-CLIC. The new method of reporting means initially any suggestion of recent trends about households in temporary accommodation should be made with caution.

Prevention and relief information collected by H-CLIC cover new legal duties introduced from the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018 so these are **not comparable** to the activity information collected in P1E.

The definition of main duty acceptances remains the same but the introduction of the new prevention and relief duties mean there are now steps local authorities take with households before they reach a main duty. These steps last a minimum of 56 days and make it difficult to assess trends in new main duties owed during April to June 2018. Any inferences about trends in main duty acceptances during 2018/19 should be made with caution.

H-CLIC is a household case level data collection and contains **new information not collected in the P1E return**. H-CLIC includes some information on all individuals

within the household and not just the main applicant. As H-CLIC is new and still being quality assured this release contains a limited amount of data in order to publish key information activities carried out by local authorities under the new legislation. This release includes numbers of initial assessments, prevention and relief activities, main homelessness acceptances, and the number of households in temporary accommodation. In future MHCLG intend to expand the publication to include more breakdowns on the circumstances and needs of households, reasons for homelessness. Timescales will be determined by the quality of the information received by the Department.

More information and guidance about the H-CLIC data collection can be found:

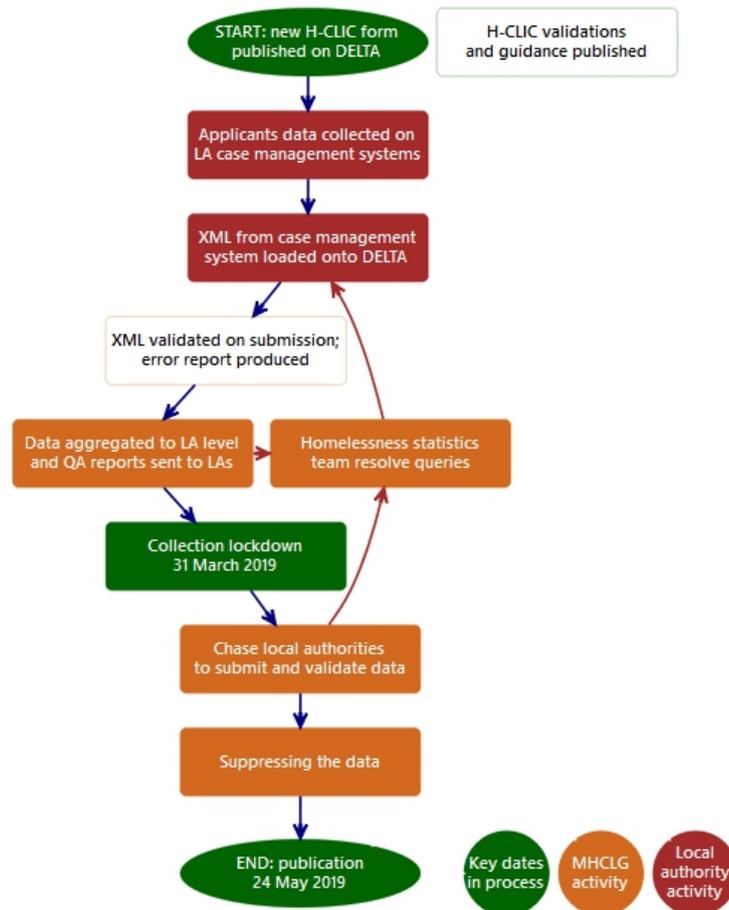
<https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/guidances/mhclg-homelessness-statistics-user-forum/>

## Data quality and coverage

All HCLIC returns submitted by local housing authorities undergo thorough validation and cross-checking and late returns are chased to ensure overall response is as complete and accurate as possible.

The diagram below shows the data collection and submission process, QA checks and feedback between local authorities and MHCLG during the process.

**For initial assessments, prevention and relief outcomes and wider information related to these cases.**



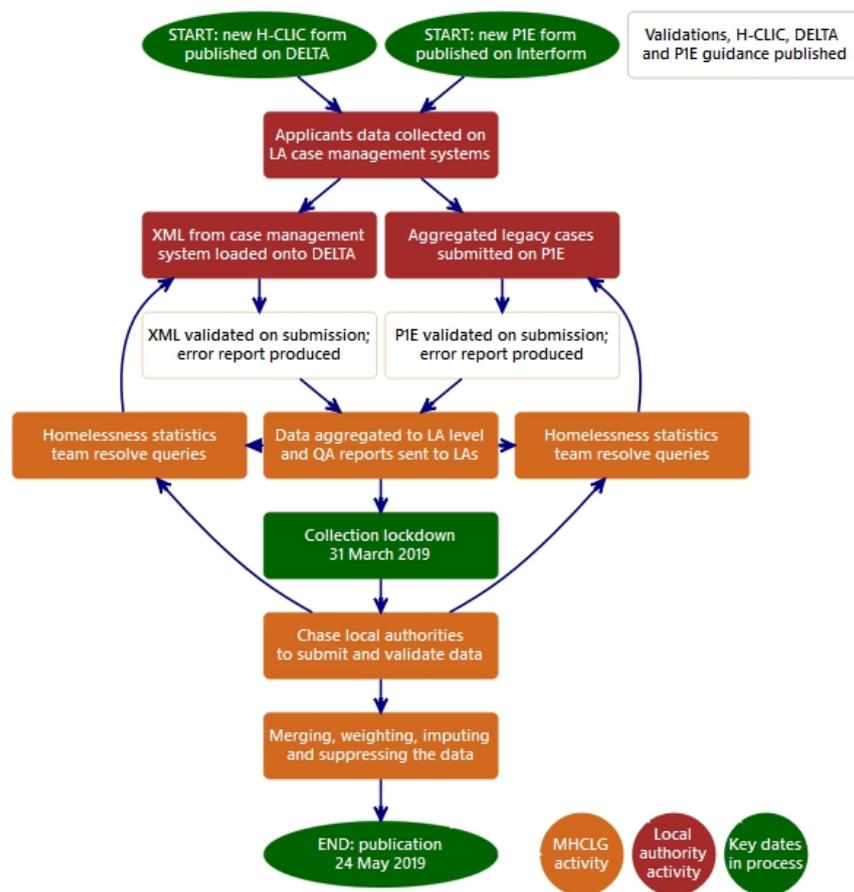
Case data is reported by local authorities onto the DELTA data collection platform. On upload a case level error report is instantly available to authorities by case ID. This allows local authorities to fix any case issues in their own systems. Once the deadline has passed or when the local authority is happy their case return is complete a summary level data QA report is sent to the local authority. This report contains the metrics we plan to publish in the release including any data from previous quarters. Any inconsistencies with previous quarters or anomalous use of certain fields are flagged in these reports and sent back to local authorities for approval. Local authorities fix their data and / or report and system issues to their software suppliers. A new case level submission is then provided on DELTA and a new updated summary return is provided to the local authority. The overall process is summarised below.

After the local authority returns phase is complete MHCLG collate the information

and the producer QA verification process begins.

Any issues raised by local authorities are logged throughout the process. Where system based issues are identified these are then raised with the software supplier. Conversations with suppliers then lead to improvements in guidance, a correction to MHCLG's own or the software suppliers systems or a combination of all of these to resolve the issue.

**For temporary accommodation, main duties owed and main duty outcomes data**



The process for temporary accommodation and main duties is similar to that for initial assessments, prevention and relief. However, for temporary accommodation and main duties local authorities can opt to provide data through P1E as well as H-CLIC. Local authorities provided this information using P1E, H-CLIC or both. This flexibility was provided to local authorities to ensure the best data quality was achieved during the transition. Additional steps were undertaken for these authorities to ensure no duplication or omission of data occurred.

## **QA principles, standards and checks applied by data suppliers**

Software suppliers started to incorporate the H-CLIC reporting requirement into their case management systems from August 2018 to April 2019. Software suppliers and local authorities were invited to test their XML extracts during May to June 2018. H-CLIC is an XML data submission, uploaded to MHCLG's DELTA<sup>6</sup> data collection system. The DELTA system checks the format of H-CLIC files, and the fields in each case are checked using schema validation tool. The schema checks are XPath coded scripts that test the validity of the data structure. Once the data has been uploaded onto DELTA the values submitted in each case are checked for consistency. Any omitted fields or inconsistent reporting variables are validated using a validation report that is shared immediately with the authority on the DELTA website. Local authorities reporting this data are required to check and correct the inconsistencies.

Local authorities have been in a continuous dialogue with MHCLG during the first three quarter reporting periods to ensure validations are working correctly and are understood. A number of issues were corrected during the first quarter and further work has been undertaken by MHCLG to improve this process in future quarters.

## **Producer's QA investigations and documentation**

Case level validations in DELTA are explained with information flags marked against the reportable fields and text validation messages that help local authorities identify the cause of their mistake. Where a combination of errors are flagged MHCLG have produced a validations glossary that helped local authorities understand and correct these errors.

Many software suppliers have incorporated MHCLG's schematron, a validation script run against the xml file, into local authority systems to enable local authorities to identify and fix errors at the point of collection. This allows the administrative officers who collect the information to resolve any issues at source.

After local authorities completed their first H-CLIC submission on DELTA, MHCLG sent out a number of quality assurance reports. Where relevant these reports combined pre 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act case updates submitted via the aggregated P1E return with new Act data submitted on H-CLIC. The reports checked for any significant changes against similar fields collected via the P1E and highlighted any possible issues. These quality assurance reports aggregated activity totals for the homelessness duties owed, outcomes, temporary accommodation and a number of other breakdowns. Local authorities were required to check these

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<sup>6</sup> <https://delta.communities.gov.uk/login>

against their internal reports and on the ground knowledge to sign off their data submission.

For new prevention and relief duties under the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act and existing main duties, local authorities were noted of changes in caseload volume that appeared inconsistent with the rest of England. These included much large percentage or absolute increases or decreases in caseload volume compared with similar local authorities in previous quarters. Any significant changes or data artefacts were flagged to authorities with an expectation that these issues would be explained or case data revised to correct for known mistakes.

Some examples of data issues highlighted in the report include:

- Duplicates – if some legacy cases were submitted via P1E for October to December 2018 and also some legacy cases were submitted via HCLIC this was flagged as a potential duplicate. The local authority was then contacted to confirm if the submissions were duplicates or separate cases.
- Comparing the January to March 2018 temporary accommodation figures with the June, September and December 2018 figures.
- Checks for missing sections or fields when no relief activity or prevention activity was reported at the local authority level or where the people and temporary accommodation sections contained few or no items

During the quality assurance process a number of authorities raised concerns with their submission. MHCLG's homelessness statistics team worked with these authorities and their software suppliers to resolve any incorrectly formatted data, data omissions or misunderstanding of the data requirement. Lessons were learned throughout the process and guidance documentation, new documentation, test sites were all made available to continually improve the quality of all local authority submissions.

The quality assurance process and additional three months spent improving data quality for the first quarter has significantly improved the data in this release. However, in order to ensure data is of a publishable standard the data available in this publication is reduced versus previous quarters.

### **Coverage**

The latest quarter's figures are based on full or partial returns for 322 out of 326 local authorities (98.8% response rate). One additional local authority failed to provide and prevention or relief duty data and another requested that their initial assessments, prevention and relief duty outcome figures not be published due to concerns about accuracy. Complete temporary accommodation data was provided by 275 (84%) local authorities. 15 local authorities provided a total households in temporary

accommodation but their breakdowns were imputed for regional and national totals. 36 local authorities either did not provide temporary accommodation data or it was agreed this was too inaccurate to use in this release. Temporary accommodation data for these remaining 36 local authorities was estimated using previous quarter's returns and a quarter on quarter change observed in three groups of local authorities: London boroughs, shire districts and other local authorities.

For the main dataset, excluding temporary accommodation, 208 local authorities signed off their data with few or no errors remaining. A further 79 local authorities did not sign off their data but no significant issues were identified by MHCLG quality assurance processes. The remaining 39 local authorities raised data quality concerns of which 1 did not consider their data good enough to be included in the publication. Authorities with issues are working to resolve these for future reporting periods.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's statistical quality guidelines are published here:

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

## Data limitations

Detailed information on the data coverage and limitation per H-CLIC section can be found on the front page of each of the [live tables](#).

### Initial assessments

Initial assessments include information on the new prevention and relief duties as assessed at the point of application. Applicants who were assessed as being owed a prevention duty at their initial assessment and were subsequently owed a relief duty are only reported as owed a prevention duty during this release.

Assessment data is not comparable with the homelessness decisions figures reported in previous statistical releases. This is because amendments to legislation, as introduced by the 2017 HRA, have introduced new duties that mean more people will be eligible for assistance out of homelessness from local authorities.

9 local authorities were unable to provide initial assessment information. 5 of these were missing in previous quarters. Comparisons with previous number of duties accepted indicates that the impact of this is small. For 4 of the authorities that failed to provide this information their data was imputed from previous returns in 2018/19. As local authorities adjust to the new system of collecting data, figures may be misreported. For example, during April to June 25 local authorities reported a large

proportion of the 'not threatened with homelessness' cases, incorrectly logging 'advice only' cases that were never formally issued a not homeless decision under this category. These authorities have been working to correct these mistakes in future quarters. During April to June local authorities reported some cases where household was not eligible, yet owed a prevention or relief duty. This was a failure to update the eligibility information. For this reason eligibility is currently not provided in this release. Where ineligible was noted and duties were reported to have been carried out these activities are included in the statistics. The number of local authorities and extent to which their data is affected has improved since June 2018. We are continuing to work with local authorities and software suppliers to resolve these issues.

### **Prevention and relief**

It should be noted that the prevention and relief data in this release cannot be compared with the prevention and relief activity reported in previous statistical releases based on the P1E returns and provided under the pre HRA 1996 Act. Through the P1E local authorities were able to report all cases where homelessness was prevented, whether or not a homelessness application had been taken. Data submissions included, for example, households who had been provided with assistance through a third party organisation funded by the Council to provide services that helped to prevent homelessness, such as money advice services. Prevention data reported in this release are based on case level information on homelessness applications, and does not include 'upstream' prevention activity that resulted in no homelessness application being necessary.

11 local authorities failed to provide prevention and relief data in October to December and 4 of these local authorities were imputed using data provided since April.

Feedback from local authorities who did provide data suggests that prevention and relief activities may be underreported in this publication, caused by issues with their new software extracting and uploading such data. Many local authorities and software suppliers were able to correct these issues but others remain. 1 local authority was unable to provide any prevention or relief duty data despite submitting data for assessments. 1 local authority requested that their data not be published because it was inaccurate.

### **Main duties ended**

Main duty end reasons were reported through a combination of the P1E and H-CLIC last quarter.

As with prevention and relief sections, comments from local authorities suggest that

figures in this section may be underreported. Minor errors have also been identified in some local authorities' returns and others have failed to complete this information. In October to December this information was imputed for 4 local authorities. Data for further 4 local authorities was missing and could not be imputed.

### **Temporary accommodation**

Temporary accommodation stock has been reported by local authorities through a combination of P1E and H-CLIC returns this quarter: Complete temporary accommodation data was provided by 275 (84%) local authorities. 36 local authorities did provide a return but their totals have been omitted from the release due to quality concerns that placements may have been underreported or double reported and couldn't be resolved. In these cases the figures have been imputed. Temporary accommodation for the remaining 15 local authorities was provided as a total and the breakdowns of this total have been imputed to create an England level total.

Double counting of temporary accommodation placements was a risk when collecting information in this way. However, the likelihood of this occurring was low because temporary accommodation placement data is usually linked to a payments database and records are kept up to date by the local authority to ensure any payments to accommodation providers are stopped when placements end. Any local authority that submitted data across two systems were checked for the placement dates in H-CLIC and overall totals versus the previous quarter, when only P1E was reported. Where double reporting was suspected local authorities were approached to explain their mechanism for reporting these cases so that the duplicates could be omitted from either the P1E or H-CLIC return.

During the transition from P1E to H-CLIC as part of the QA process local authorities were asked to verify their households in temporary accommodation. There were a number of inconsistencies identified in the way local authorities reported these numbers. Some local authorities omitted anyone in temporary accommodation whose main duty had been discharged and other local authorities did not. Over 70% of temporary accommodation is still being reported through P1E and the method varies by local authority. As a result, caution should be taken when using and interpreting the temporary accommodation data, especially when comparing data to previous quarters based on the P1E returns. In terms of comparisons related to recent changes in legislation, it should also be noted that the temporary accommodation figures remain the most consistent with historical data.

## Definitions

**Eligible households** are those that meet eligibility criteria, which broadly concern UK immigration status and whether the household is habitually resident in the UK. Eligibility is an extremely complex aspect of the legislation, and more information is available in Chapter 7 of the Homelessness Code of Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities/chapter-7-eligibility-for-assistance>

**The Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017:** This act commenced on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018, and amended Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 ("the 1996 Act"), and the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012. It placed duties on local housing authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness and to take reasonable steps to help those who become homeless to secure accommodation. The HRA provisions require local housing authorities to provide homelessness advice services to all residents in their area and expands the categories of people who they have to help to find accommodation. A Code of Guidance on the homelessness legislation, updated to incorporate the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities>.

**Intentionally homeless:** Households who have lost accommodation as a result of actions that they took or failed to take. This may include households who have given up suitable accommodation without good reason or have been evicted due to rent arrears or other breach of tenancy conditions.

**Threatened with homelessness:** Following the introduction of the HRA, an applicant is threatened with homelessness if it is likely they will become homeless within 56 days, or if they have been served with a valid Section 21 notice to end an Assured Shorthold Tenancy which expires within 56 days. Prior to the introduction of the HRA an applicant was accepted as owed duties if they were threatened with homelessness within 28 days.

**H-CLIC:** A case level data return used by local authorities to report information to MHCLG from April 2018. It collects information on the homelessness legislation as amended by the 2017 HRA. Information from these returns has been published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in Statutory homelessness in England, a currently experimental, quarterly statistical release.

**Households for whom a duty is owed, but no accommodation has been secured:** these are households who have been accepted as being owed a homelessness accommodation 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.

**Main homelessness duty acceptance:** A household who is accepted by the LA as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falling within a priority need group (as defined by homelessness legislation - see below) during the quarter are referred to as “main duty acceptances”. The main homelessness duty is to secure accommodation until such time as the duty ends, usually through an offer of settled accommodation.

**P1E:** Was a quarterly local authority return, used by MHCLG to report on statutory homelessness in England until March 2018. The purpose of the quarterly P1E forms was to collect summary data from English local housing authorities on their responsibilities under homelessness legislation. It also included a section on homelessness prevention and relief. Information from these returns has been published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in Statutory homelessness in England, a quarterly statistical release.

**Part 6 offer** An offer of social housing made to a homeless household through the local authority’s housing allocation scheme

**Prevention Duty** The new prevention duty is owed to eligible households threatened with becoming homeless within 56 days. The duty is owed irrespective of local connection, priority need or intentional homelessness, and lasts for up to 56 days. The local authority may choose to extend the prevention duty beyond 56 days if the applicant has not yet become homeless, in order to continue activities to prevent their homelessness. The duty is to take reasonable steps to prevent the applicant from becoming homeless. These steps are set out in a personalised housing plan which is, wherever possible, agreed with the applicant.

**Relief Duty** The new relief duty is owed to eligible households who are actually homeless, irrespective of priority need or intentional homelessness, and lasts for up to 56 days. The local authority may only extend the relief duty beyond 56 days if the is not owed the main homelessness duty. The duty is to relieve the applicant’s homelessness by taking reasonable steps to help secure suitable accommodation that will be available for at least 6 months. These steps are set out in a personalised housing plan which is, wherever possible, agreed with the applicant.

**Priority need:** The legislation provides that some categories of applicants have a priority need for accommodation if homelessness, whereas others do not. Applicants who have priority need include households with dependent children or a pregnant woman, people homeless due to fire, flood or other emergency, and people who are particularly vulnerable due to ill health, disability, old age, having been in care or as a result of having been in custody or care, or having become homeless due to violence or the threat of violence. A full explanation of priority need groups and assessments is contained in Chapter 8 of the Homelessness Code of

Guidance.

**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).

**Statutory homelessness** covers all eligible households who are owed a homelessness duty by a local authority. A household is considered statutorily homeless if a local authority decides that they do not have a legal right to occupy accommodation that is accessible, physically available and which would be reasonable for the household to continue to live in. The Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002, Localism Act 2011 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017<sup>2</sup>) determines the legal duties on local authorities towards homeless households and households threatened with homelessness.

**Temporary accommodation:** households in temporary accommodation (secured by a local housing authority under their statutory homelessness functions. The majority of households in temporary accommodation have been placed under the main homelessness duty to secure suitable accommodation until the duty ends, usually through an offer of a settled home. However, the numbers also include households owed a relief duty and provided with interim accommodation, 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.

## Revisions policy

This policy has been developed in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Statistics and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Revisions Policy (found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statistical-notice-MHCLG-revisions-policy>). There are two types of revisions that the policy covers:

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<sup>2</sup> See Definitions in Section 9: Technical notes

## **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.

On the day of the release corrections were published as a result of internal QA. An error was identified in page 23 and page 24 of the release. This identified an inconsistency in the reported figure for households with children in temporary accommodation. On page 23 a figure of 61,840 was used instead of the correct 61,740. The associated percentage was incorrect and reported as 73.5% when it should have been 73.8%. On page 24 the percentage change in table 2 for households in B&B versus the previous quarter was stated as 5.2% when it should be 6.6%. The live tables were unaffected.

## **Scheduled Revisions**

Local authorities can update their HCLIC 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. Q1-3 releases revise 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". These revisions are kept to a minimum wherever possible by encouraging local authorities to submit their data early. This allows MHCLG to run validation checks on data and check any unusual movements in data with affected local authorities. Where larger revisions are made more information will be provided in the footnotes of the statistical tables and the updated release, where changes impact on the headline numbers.

Revisions to historic data (all data older than that currently due for scheduled revision) will be made only where there is a substantial revision, such as a change in methodology or definition.

## **Uses of the data**

These data form the basis of evidence on homelessness duties. Ministers and officials in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government use this information to understand the scale and causes of homelessness and to consider possible policy responses. 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. They are used by MHCLG Ministers to help determine local authority performance for the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act. This includes assessing the performance of OGDs under the duty to refer. They are also used to allocate resources, monitor performance and to support bids for funding from the Treasury. For example the data was used in December

2015 to allocate £5m of funding towards areas with the highest use of temporary accommodation.

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. These statistics along with our annual rough sleeping count regularly feature in reports from Homelesslink, Crisis, Shelter and other homeless organisations.

## User engagement

The H-CLIC data specification was produced after consultation with charities, local authorities, local authority homelessness case management system software suppliers, other government departments and the Scottish Government, who moved to a case level reporting system in 2001. The final draft H-CLIC data requirement was shared with local authorities in August 2018. Feedback received on the data requirement meant the draft was revised until January 2018. Minor amendments to the H-CLIC data requirement have been published as revisions on the homelessness statistics user forum website from January 2018. During the development and QA process MHCLG have been in continued contact with software suppliers and local authorities via phone, email and face to face meetings. Software suppliers have been invited into the Department to discuss the data specification and reporting set up. Local authorities have consulted on the collection and burdens of the process via the Central and Local Government Information Partnership Housing group.

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.

A website has been created to keep users up to date with all the latest developments in MHCLG's homelessness statistics. It contains details of user events and information about planned developments. Users can also feedback their comments through this forum:

<https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/user-facing-pages/mhclg-homelessness-statistics-user-forum/>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 UK Statistics Authority has published an assessment of the Department's homelessness and rough sleeping statistics in 2015 these are available at:

<https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publications-list/?keyword=homelessness+assesment&type=assessment-report&theme=&producer=&date=&number.>

Improvements were made to the statutory homelessness statistics in response to this report. One of these changes was the move to Experimental Statistics. Correspondence about this change in designation can be found here:

<https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Ed-Humpherson-to-Sandra-Tudor-regarding-changes-to-statutory-homelessness-statistics-0.2-1.pdf>

## Notes

### 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/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics>

## Related links and statistics

The data in this release are used to identify the broad characteristics and circumstances of those households affected by statutory homelessness. Statutory homeless data does not directly provide a definitive number of people or households affected by homelessness in England. The term "homelessness" is much broader than statutory homeless and has a number of interpretations.

It is difficult to provide an accurate estimate of all homelessness across England. Data used to compile any estimate is collated from different datasets, which sample different subsets of the population over different time frames. Any estimate of homelessness in England will collate datasets that are not discrete from one another, which means some individuals may have been included more than once in the estimated total. The Department's homelessness releases can be found here:

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

MHCLG conduct an annual single night snapshot of rough sleeping each autumn and

publish this separately. The latest 2018 statistics published on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019 reported 4,677 individuals rough sleeping in England. Further breakdowns can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2018>.

The number of people owed a homelessness duty will include some but not all people rough sleeping in this count.

MHCLG produce other statistics releases that can help build up the wider homelessness picture. The English Housing Survey (EHS) is a national survey of people's housing circumstances. This includes breakdowns on the additional adults in a household who wanted to rent or buy but could not afford to do so. As part of the EHS interview, households are asked some questions about all members of the household, including the circumstances of additional adults in the household such as grown-up children, nieces and nephews, adult siblings, or parents or grandparents who might otherwise be living elsewhere. There are many possible reasons that additional adults might be living as part of a household, including caring responsibilities, being cared for by another household member, waiting to move into their own property, and simply preferring to live as part of the household. Data on concealed households, a subset of hidden homeless can be found in MHCLG's English Housing Survey Statistics here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/english-housing-survey>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2017-to-2018-headline-report>

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 and homeless households not covered by a local authority's statutory duty. The CORE social lettings includes lettings for Local Authority/ Private Registered Providers. The CORE social lettings Official Statistics can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/rents-lettings-and-tenancies>

An on-line analysis tool is available at:

<https://core.communities.gov.uk/public/AnalyseCOREData.html>

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/collections/local-authority-revenue-expenditure-and->

[financing](#)

## 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 March 2012, everyone assessed as being unintentionally homeless would be entitled to settled accommodation.

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.

The most recent statutory homelessness statistics for Scotland are available at:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/?term=homelessness&topics=Statistics&page=1>

Welsh homelessness legislation was governed by the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) until superseded by part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 which obtained Royal Assent in September 2014. The homelessness provisions came into force on 27 April 2015 (with the exception of provisions on intentionality, which came into force on 1 July 2015).

Changes to the legislation are explained here:

<https://gov.wales/topics/housing-and-regeneration/services-and-support/homelessness/new-homelessness-legislation/?lang=en>

The most recent homelessness statistics for Wales are available at:

[https://gov.wales/statistics-and-research?keywords=homelessness&%20All%20=All&field\\_stats\\_research\\_type%5B1%5D=1&%20All%20=All&published\\_after=&published\\_before=](https://gov.wales/statistics-and-research?keywords=homelessness&%20All%20=All&field_stats_research_type%5B1%5D=1&%20All%20=All&published_after=&published_before=)

The governing legislation for homelessness in Northern Ireland is the Housing (Northern Ireland) Order 1988 (as amended). Unlike the other three UK nations, housing is allocated by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), which covers the whole of Northern Ireland, rather than by local authorities.

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. However, Northern Ireland have slight differences in the definition of priority need. They also have an additional requirement to decide who is eligible. Someone can be deemed ineligible as a result of 'unacceptable behaviour' in previously held Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) tenancy. The most recent statutory homelessness statistics for Northern Ireland are available at:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/housing-statistics>

## Comparing between countries

The devolved administrations are working with the ONS to produce guidance on the comparability of datasets across the UK. The House of Commons Library have produced a guide to comparing the legislation that can be found here: <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-7201>. ONS have also produced a document about how this affects the comparability of statistics that can be found here:

<https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/GSS-homelessness-report-1.pdf>

Since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018 England statistics are no longer closely comparable to Northern Ireland data. However, the removal of priority need and introduction of new duties means that the data is more closely comparable to Scottish and Welsh data than previously. These differences in legislation can be quite complex and the GSS harmonisation team are working on a conceptual framework to help users of UK homelessness statistics understand the similarities and differences of these datasets. Updates about this work can be found here: <https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/policy-store/homelessness/>.

## Enquiries

### Media enquiries:

0303 444 1209

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

### Public enquiries:

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

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This document/publication is also available on our website at [www.gov.uk/MHCLG](http://www.gov.uk/MHCLG)

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