



Statutory Homelessness: October to December Quarter 2012 England

Household acceptances

- 13,570 applicants were accepted as owed a main homelessness duty between 1 October and 31 December 2012, 6 per cent higher than during the same quarter of 2011.
- On a seasonally-adjusted basis, there were 13,790 acceptances, an increase of 3 per cent from 13,420 in the previous quarter.
- There were 53,450 acceptances in the 2012 calendar year up 10% from 48,510 in 2011.

Households in temporary accommodation

- 53,130 households were in temporary accommodation on 31 December 2012, 9 per cent higher than at the same date in 2011.
- On a seasonally-adjusted basis, 53,660 households were in temporary accommodation on 31 December, a 2 per cent increase from 52,540 in the previous quarter.

22 March 2013



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Responsible Statistician:

Andrew Presland

Phone: 030344 43510

homelessnessstats@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Media Enquiries:

Office hours: 0303 444 1157

Out of hours: 0303 444 1201

press.office@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Introduction

This release provides summary information on local housing authorities' activities under homelessness legislation, collected through the quarterly P1E statistical return. Data include the number of households [accepted as owed a main homelessness duty](#) (referred to as 'acceptances') during the quarter, and the number of households in temporary accommodation on the last day of the quarter. Accompanying live tables are provided online and are listed on pages 9 and 10. 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.

This statistical release does not include any regional totals except for London following the recent consultation on the publication of regional statistics. Further details are given in the Written Ministerial Statement of 18 December, 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.

Decisions taken by local authorities on homelessness applications

Between 1 October and 31 December 2012, local housing authorities made 29,060 decisions on applications (by eligible households) for housing assistance, under the homelessness legislation of the Housing Act 1996. This is 6 per cent higher than in the corresponding quarter in 2011. After seasonal adjustment, the number of decisions was 29,100, 3 per cent higher than in the previous quarter of 28,230.

Key points:

Of the 29,060 decisions made between 1 October and 31 December 2012:

- 47 per cent were accepted as owed a main homelessness duty (these are known as 'homelessness acceptances');
- 28 per cent were found not to be homeless;
- 17 per cent were found to be homeless but not in [priority need](#); and
- 8 per cent were found to be intentionally homeless and in priority need.

The number of households found to be unintentionally homeless and in priority need - and so owed a main homelessness duty - increased by 6 per cent compared to the same quarter in 2011; the number of households found to be homeless but not in priority need increased by 7 per cent compared to the same quarter in 2011. Further, the number of households found not to be

homeless increased by 5 per cent and the number of households found to be intentionally homeless and in priority need also increased by 5 per cent, compared to the same quarter in 2011.

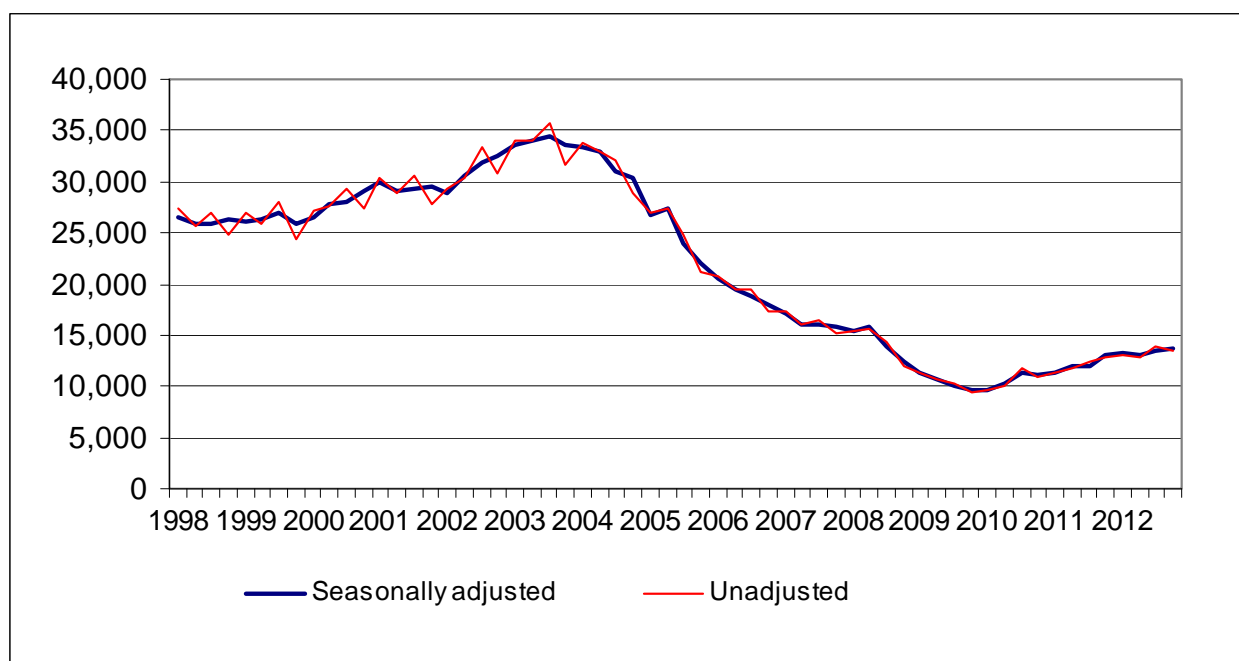
The proportion of households accepted as owed a main homelessness duty as a percentage of decisions is at the same level compared to quarter 4 last year at 47 per cent. Households accepted as owed a main homelessness duty are dealt with further in the next section.

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

Between 1 October and 31 December 2012, local authorities accepted 13,570 households as being owed a main homelessness duty. This is a 6 per cent increase compared to the same quarter last year. After seasonal adjustment, the number of acceptances during the fourth quarter of 2012 was 13,790, an increase of 3 per cent from the seasonally-adjusted figure of 13,420 in the previous quarter.

Chart 1: Households accepted by local authorities as owed a main duty each quarter, 1998 to April to December quarter 2012, England



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

Key points:

There has been an increase in the number of acceptances where the reason for homelessness was the ending of an assured shorthold tenancy when compared to the same quarter last year,

from 2,450 to 3,100 households. The proportion of all acceptances due to this reason is 23 per cent, an increase from 19 per cent in the same quarter in 2011.

There has been a decrease (30 per cent) in the number of acceptances where homelessness resulted from a requirement to leave accommodation provided by Home Office as asylum support, from 320 to 220 households compared to the same quarter in 2011. Similarly, there has been a 28% decrease in the number of acceptances where homelessness resulted from mortgage arrears, from 410 to 290.

In the 2012 calendar year, the total number of acceptances was 53,450. This is an increase of 10% from 48,510 in 2011.

The number of household accepted as being owed a main homelessness duty in London is 4,210. This is an increase of 22% from 3,460 the same quarter last year and accounts for 31% of the England total. In London, the main reason for the loss of last settled home was the ending of an assured shorthold tenancy at 1,200 (28%). This is an increase of 61% from 740 in the same quarter last year.

Full breakdowns of reason for loss of last settled home and others, including age of accepted household, ethnicity, nationality, household type, priority need group and local authority can be found in some of the live tables at the link provided in the “Accompanying Live Tables” section of this release.

Households in temporary accommodation

The number of households in [temporary accommodation](#) on 31 December 2012, arranged by local authorities under homelessness legislation, was 53,130 - 9 per cent higher than at the same date last year. After seasonal adjustment, the number of households in temporary accommodation was 53,660, an increase of 2 per cent from 52,540 in the previous quarter.

Historically, there tends to be a lag between a change in direction in the number of acceptances and a change in direction in the number of households in temporary accommodation. The turn in the time series during 2011 shown in Chart 2 followed the increase in the acceptances series that began in 2010, as shown in Chart 1. These trends are shown together in Chart 3.

Chart 2: Number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter, 1998 to 2012, England

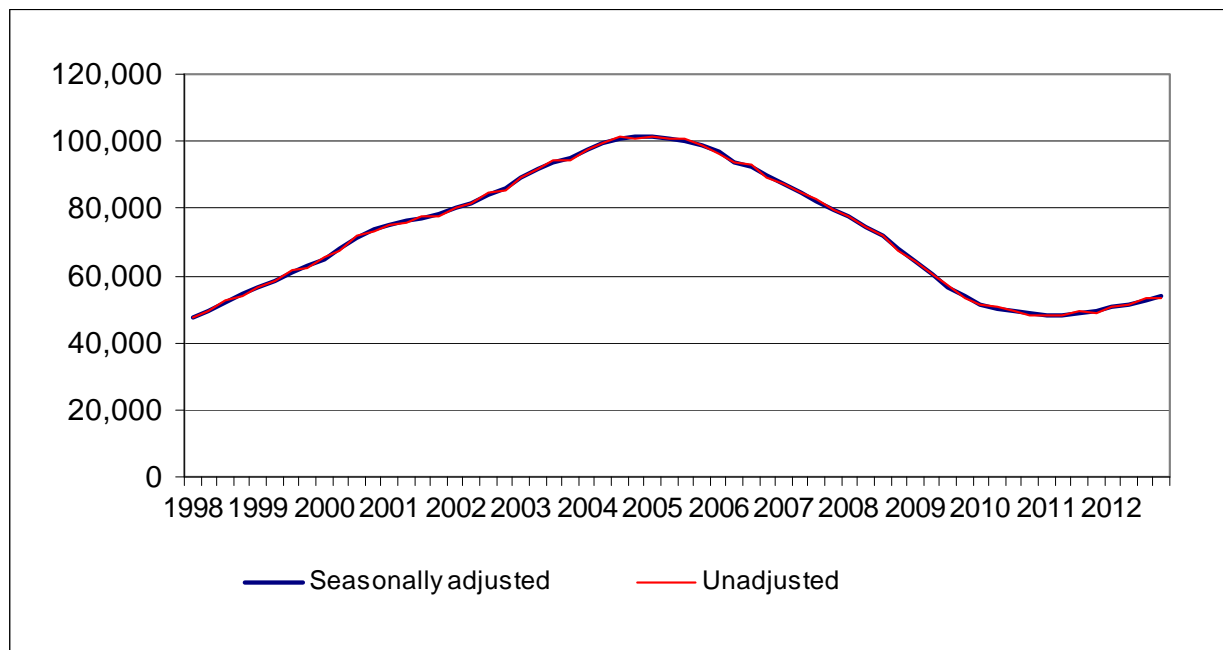
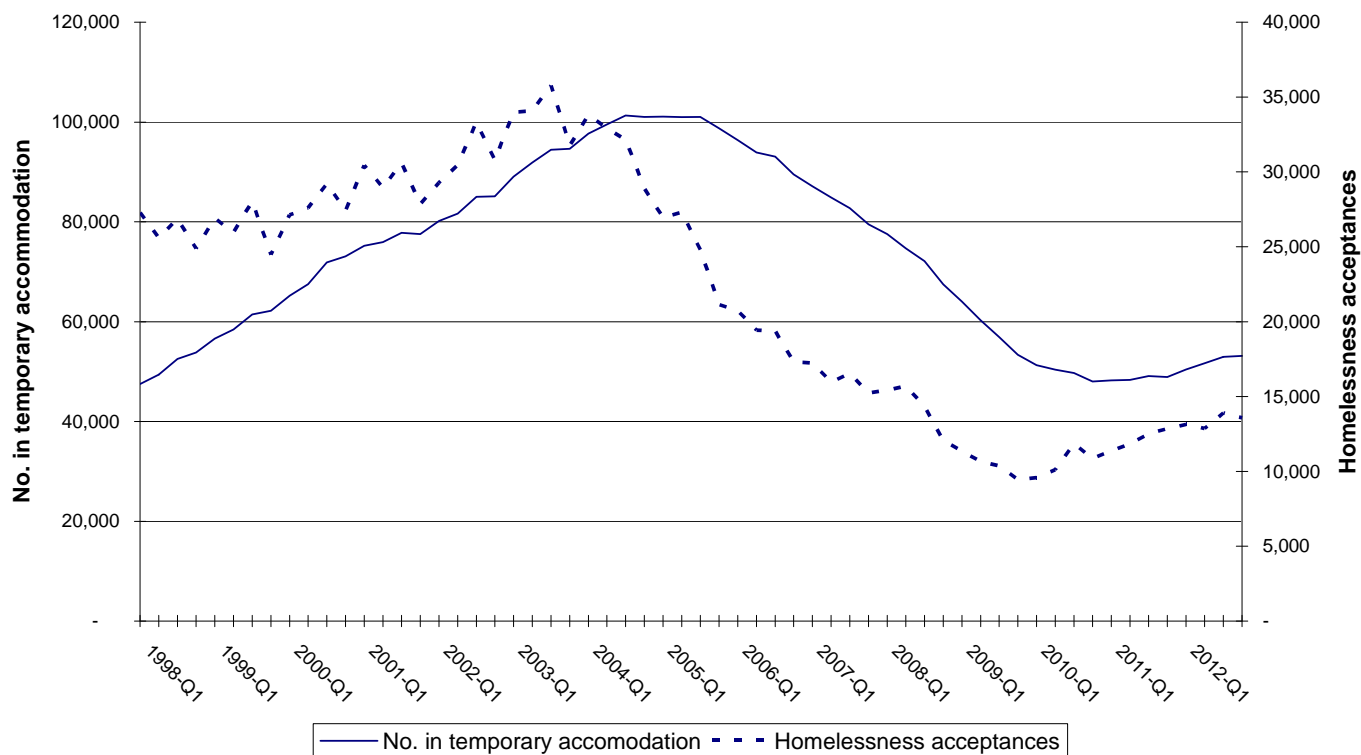


Chart 3: Households accepted by local authorities as owed a main duty, and households in temporary accommodation, quarterly 1998 to 2012



See Live Table 775: Homeless households in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter, by type of accommodation

Key points:

At the end of December 2012, 84 per cent of households in temporary accommodation were in [self-contained](#) accommodation - little changed from the same date last year. The actual number in this form of temporary accommodation has increased since the same quarter in 2011, up from 41,450 to 44,860 households.

The percentage of households in temporary accommodation with shared facilities (bed and breakfast style accommodation or hostels/women's refuges) was little changed from the end of December 2011, at 16 per cent of all households in temporary accommodation.

The number of households in bed and breakfast hotels rose to 4,000, compared with 3,170 at the same date last year, an increase of 26 per cent.

Of the 53,130 households in temporary accommodation on 31 December 2012, 40,860 included dependent children and/or a pregnant woman (within which households there were 76,790 children or expected children). The average number of children in those households in temporary accommodation with children is about 1.9, having been at this level since 2006, after increasing from 1.7 when the data were first collected in 2004.

Of these 40,860 households with children, 89 per cent were in self-contained accommodation. This is little change compared to the end of the same quarter last year. 1,690 (4 per cent of the total) were in bed and breakfast style accommodation, up from 1,310 (also 4 per cent of the total) at the end of the same quarter last year. This is an increase of 29%. Of these 1,690 households, 850 had been in bed and breakfast style accommodation for six or more weeks (110 of which were pending review). This represents an increase of 92% since the end of the same quarter last year, when the number was 450.

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

At the end of December 2012, there were 80 households headed by 16 and 17 year old applicants in bed and breakfast style accommodation (a 14% reduction on the end of the same quarter last year). 50 of these had been there for six or more weeks.

The number of households in temporary accommodation in London at 31 December 2012 was 38,860. This is an 8% increase compared to the same quarter last year (35,920) and accounts for 73% of the total England figure. The number of households in B&B accommodation in London is 2,270, an increase of 35% from 1,680 at 31 December 2011 and accounts for 57% of the total England figure.

Households in temporary accommodation in another local authority district

Of the 53,130 households in temporary accommodation on 31 December 2012, 9,670 were in accommodation in another local authority district. This is an increase of 32 per cent, from 7,350 at the same date last year.

Breakdowns including type of accommodation, age of household in temporary accommodation, ethnicity, household type, priority need category and local authority can be found in several of the live tables at the link provided in the “Accompanying Live Tables” section of this release.

Action taken to end homelessness duty

Action taken in respect of acceptances

Of the 13,570 acceptances between 1 October and 31 December 2012, 8,220 (61 per cent) were placed in some form of temporary accommodation.

For a further 4,130 accepted households (30 per cent), arrangements were made, with consent, to remain in their existing accommodation (or to make their own arrangements) for the immediate future while awaiting the provision of alternative accommodation. This is an increase of 5 per cent from 3,930 households in the same quarter in 2011.

6 per cent of acceptances were provided with settled accommodation by being granted a secure tenancy in local authority or private registered social landlord accommodation. A further 1 per cent were provided with an assured shorthold tenancy in the private rented sector.

The remaining 2 per cent either made their own arrangements or had no further contact with the authority, thus bringing the homelessness duty to an end.

See Part 1 of Live Table 778: Homeless households accepted by local authorities and households leaving temporary accommodation (or no longer recorded as “duty owed, [no accommodation secured](#)”), by outcome

Households leaving temporary accommodation and other temporary arrangements

Between 1 October and 31 December 2012, a main homelessness duty was ended for 11,130 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 up 3 per cent from the same quarter in 2011.

7,970 (72 per cent) of these households were provided with settled accommodation, by accepting a “Part 6” offer of a secure tenancy in local authority or housing authority accommodation. This is at the same level as quarter 4 in 2011. A further 5 per cent refused such an offer, the same level as a year earlier. An additional 4 per cent accepted alternative offers of rented accommodation. This is a decrease from 5 per cent in the same quarter last year.

13 per cent of households leaving temporary accommodation or other temporary arrangements did so on a voluntary basis, the same level as a year earlier. The remaining households ceased to be eligible, or became intentionally homeless from the temporary accommodation provided for them.

See Part 2 of Live Table 778: Homeless households accepted by local authorities and households leaving temporary accommodation (or no longer recorded as “duty owed, no accommodation secured”), by outcome

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

Foreign national households

2,010 foreign national applicants were accepted as homeless between 1 October and 31 December 2012. Of these, 390 were European Economic Area (EEA) accession country (‘A10’) nationals, 400 were from other EEA countries and 1,220 were from outside the EEA. During this period, foreign nationals accounted for 15 per cent of all acceptances, up from 14 per cent in the same quarter last year, when there were 1,810 acceptances.

See Live table 785: Decisions taken by local authorities under the 1996 Housing Act on applications from eligible foreign national households; and Live table 786: Homeless foreign national households accepted by local authorities, by reason for eligibility

Accompanying live tables

The following live tables on homelessness can be found at the following link:

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

Table 770	Decisions taken by local authorities under the 1996 Housing Act on applications from eligible households (including a map at local authority level)
Table 771	Homeless households accepted by local authorities, by ethnicity
Table 772 *	Homeless households accepted by local authorities, by region (including a map)
Table 773	Homeless households accepted by local authorities, by priority need category
Table 774	Homeless households accepted by local authorities, by reason for loss of last settled home
Table 775	Homeless households in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter, by type of accommodation (including a map at local authority level)
Table 776 *	Homeless households in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter, by region (including a map)
Table 777	Homeless households in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter, London and England
Table 778	Homeless households accepted by local authorities, and households leaving temporary accommodation (or no longer recorded as “duty owed, no accommodation secured”), by outcome
Table 779	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
Table 780	Homeless households accepted by local authorities, by household type
Table 781	Homeless households accepted by local authorities, by age of applicant
Table 782	Homeless households in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter, by household type and ethnicity
Table 783 *	Homeless households in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter, by type of accommodation and region

- Table 784 Local authorities' action under the homelessness provisions of the 1985 and 1996 Housing Acts, by local authority (financial year: latest year is 2011-12, unchanged from the previous quarter's release)
- Table 784a Local authorities' action under the homelessness provisions of the 1985 and 1996 Housing Acts, by local authority (quarterly)
- Table 785 Decisions taken by local authorities under the 1996 Housing Act on applications from eligible foreign national households
- Table 786 Homeless foreign national households accepted by local authorities, by reason for eligibility
- Table 793 Families with children in Bed and Breakfast accommodation for more than 6 weeks, excluding those pending review, by local authority (a new table this quarter)

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

Definitions

1. **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).
2. **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.
3. **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.
4. **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.
5. **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).

6. **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.

Legislation

Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/52/contents>) and the Homelessness Act 2002 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/7/contents>) place 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.

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. The **seasonally adjusted** estimates have been produced using the X12-ARIMA model, in accordance with Official Statistics practices, which have then been constrained so that they are consistent with the unadjusted financial year totals. Historically, the number of decisions and acceptances tends to be lower in the second quarter than in the first and third quarters, and will also be affected by seasonal holiday periods, especially Christmas and the New Year. In the second quarter of 2009, seasonal adjustments were introduced for the households in temporary accommodation series, because this series was also found to be affected by seasonality.

2. **Rates per 1,000 households** have been calculated using the 2008-based household projections for 2012 (rather than the 2008 mid-year household estimates previously used) produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government. These are consistent with the projections published on 26 November 2010 at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/household-projections-2008-to-2033-in-england>

3. 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.

4. The maps are based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office:

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Data Source and Scope

Local housing authorities report their activities under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 to the Department for Communities and Local Government by completing the quarterly P1E statistical return. A recent form can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-prevention-and-relief-p1e-guidance-and-returns-form>

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 annual statistical release on homelessness prevention and relief and Live tables 787 to 792

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. This release does not contain data on other forms of homelessness, for example, rough sleeping. The devolved administrations publish their own statistics on statutory homelessness.

Related statistics in the devolved administrations

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 is the most significant. The target states that by 31 December 2012 everyone assessed as being unintentionally homeless is 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, when fully enacted, the 2003 Act will remove or substantially amend 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.scotland.gov.uk/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://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/housing/homeless/?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:

http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/publications/housing_bulletins.htm

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.

Related links

The Department also releases information on Homelessness Prevention and Relief. The most recent publication, relating to local authority actions in the 2011-12 financial year, can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-prevention-and-relief-england-2011-to-2012>

Rough sleeping statistics can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2012>.

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>

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 2012, most authorities reported some form of checking on all data items in the return.

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 government region they are in and by type of authority. For example, the West Midlands 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 323 out of 326 local authorities (99 per cent response). Three local authorities provided only the two headline figures: the number of households accepted as owed a main homeless duty and the number of households in temporary accommodation. Section 7 of the form, covering households leaving temporary accommodation or other temporary arrangements had the lowest rate of return, with 16 local authorities not providing any figures. Overall, 96 per cent of cells were filled in by local authorities.

The publication date for this release was amended from 7 March to 22 March to allow for further quality assurance work to be carried out. This was needed because some of the automated

checks usually carried out when local authorities enter their data on to the web-based system were found to have not been made. It was therefore necessary for statisticians to carry out an extra stage of querying figures with local authorities and hence delay the publication until they were confident that the figures were robust. To minimise the delay, estimates were made for figures that were still subject to clarification by local authorities at the 'cut off' date for publication. As a result, the published figures reflect full responses from 258 local authorities (79% of the total), compared with 296 local authorities (91%) for Q3 2012.

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>

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. This can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statistical-notice-dclg-revisions-policy>.

There are two types of revision 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 four quarters of the previous year will be reviewed for revision. A decision on whether to revise will be made based on the impact of any change and the effect it has on the interpretation of the time series. Provisional figures are labelled in the tables with a "P".

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. Acceptances, decisions, and numbers in temporary accommodation are core series describing

homelessness in England, and are key series for international comparisons. They are used by ministers and officials in the Department for Communities and Local Government 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.

The Departmental Business Plan, first published on 8 November 2010 and refreshed on 31 May 2012, includes an impact indicator on households in temporary accommodation. As at 31 December 2012, there were 53,130 households in temporary accommodation. This is 9 per cent higher than at the same date last year. After seasonal adjustment, the number of households in temporary accommodation was 53,660, an increase of 2 per cent over the figure of 52,540 in the previous quarter. The refreshed Business Plan can be seen at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dclg-business-plan-2012-to-2015>

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.

User consultation

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.

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* (available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/dclg-draft-statistics-plan-for-2011-to-2012>) 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 April to 3 December 2011 and the final version of the plan was published on 7 March 2012.

Other information

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>.

The publication date for the first quarter (January to March) 2013 Statutory Homelessness Statistical Release will be Thursday 6 June 2013.

Enquiries

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>

Further details on this Statistical Release are available from:

Media Enquiries:

office hours: 0303 444 1157

out of hours: 0303 444 1201

e-mail: press.office@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Public enquiries:

telephone: 0303 444 3510

e-mail: homelessnessstats@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Zone 4/J4, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1E 5DU

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

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/>.

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

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

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