



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

# Statutory Homelessness, January to March (Q1) 2020: England

This release provides information on local authority activities carried out under their statutory homelessness duties including amendments under the Homelessness Reduction Act (2017). It covers activities undertaken during January to March 2020 and households in temporary accommodation on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

This release covers the first week of the coronavirus (COVID-19) lockdown in England (23<sup>rd</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> March).

Between January to March 2020:

- 38,450 households were assessed as being threatened with homelessness within 56 days, and therefore owed a prevention duty.
- 36,690 households were initially assessed as homeless and therefore owed a relief duty.
- 10,260 households were assessed as being unintentionally homeless and in priority need following the relief duty, and owed a main duty.
- In total 36,200 households who were threatened with homelessness or were homeless were able to secure accommodation for 6 months or more.
- On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 the number of households in temporary accommodation was 93,000, up 9.4% from 85,040 on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. This increase is driven by single households, up 28.5% to 29,390. These figures may be linked to the COVID-19 'Everyone in' scheme.
- The number of households with children in B&B was 1,550, down 28.6% from 2,170 on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, and households with children in B&B for more than 6 weeks were down 30.3% to 530 households.

## Housing Experimental Statistics Release

20 August 2020

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### Responsible Statistician:

Homelessness Statistical  
Data Team  
0303 444 2867

### Statistical enquiries:

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

### Media Enquiries:

0303 444 1209  
[newsdesk@communities.gov.uk](mailto:newsdesk@communities.gov.uk)

### Date of next publication:

Autumn 2020

# Headlines

## Initial Assessments

- The number of households assessed as threatened with homelessness within 56 days, and therefore owed a prevention duty, was 38,450 in the period January to March 2020.
- 36,690 households were initially assessed by local authorities as homeless, and therefore owed a relief duty, an increase of 7.6% from January to March 2019.
- 57.5% of households owed a prevention duty and 77.6% of households owed a relief duty were single households (households without children).
- Of those owed a duty, there were 35,720 households, or 47.5%, identified as having one or more support needs. The most common support need was a history of mental health problems, accounting for 17,490 households or 23.3% of households owed a duty. 11,350 households, or 15.1% of all households owed a duty, had a support need of physical ill health or disability.
- 5.8%, or 4,590, of the 78,890 assessments made under the new duties were as a result of referrals from other public bodies under the duty to refer. The National Probation Service made the most referrals to homelessness services which resulted in an assessment under the duty to refer with 920, or 20.0% of the total.

## Outcomes

- In January to March 2020, 36,200 households have secured accommodation for 6 months or more because of the new prevention or relief duties.
- Over half of the 34,360 prevention duties which ended between January to March 2020 (20,480 or 59.6%) ended because the household secured accommodation for 6 months or more and their homelessness had been prevented. Of these, 38.3% or 7,840, were able to remain in their existing home.
- 6,270, or 18.2%, of households who were owed a prevention duty were homeless at the end of the 56 days, and therefore owed a subsequent relief duty.
- Of the 39,600 relief duties ended, 15,720 or 39.7% of households had accommodation secured for at least 6 months.

## Main Homelessness duty

- The number of households owed a main homelessness duty continues to be lower than the level before the introduction of the HRA as households are now prevented or relieved from homelessness prior to the main duty under the new duties introduced in April 2018.
- In January to March 2020, 10,260 households were accepted as owed a main homelessness duty, up 27.5% from January to March 2019, however this is down 23.0% compared with 13,320 households in the quarter immediately prior to commencement of the HRA.
- 6,900 households had their main homelessness duty come to an end in January to March 2020 similar to January to March 2019. 5,460 households accepted an offer of settled accommodation, or 79.1%.

## Temporary Accommodation

- On 31st March 2020, the total number of households in temporary accommodation was 93,000, up 9.4% from 85,040 a year earlier on 31st March 2019. This increase is driven by single households, up 28.5% to 29,390 on 31st March 2020, while households with children were more stable, up 2.3% to 63,610. These figures may reflect people housed in emergency accommodation under the COVID-19 'Everyone in' scheme.
- There were 17.1 households living in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households in London, compared with 1.6 households per 1,000 in the Rest of England.
- On 31st March 2020, 25,540 or 27.5% of households in temporary accommodation were in accommodation in a different local authority district. 85.2% of these out of district placements were from London authorities.
- On 31st March 2020, 63,610 households or 68.4% included dependent children, with a total of 129,380 dependent children living in temporary accommodation.
- Most households with children, 86.9%, were in self-contained accommodation, up 4.3 percentage points from 82.6% at the end of March 2019.
- Of the households in temporary accommodation, 8,180 were living in bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation, up 17.4% from 6,970 at the same time last year.
- There were 1,550 households in B&B with dependent children, down 28.6% from 2,170 the same time last year. Of the households with children in B&B, 530 had been resident for more than the statutory limit of 6 weeks. This is down 30.3% from 760 on the 31st March 2019.

# 1. Introduction

## What does this release cover?

This is the quarterly statistics release for statutory homelessness assessments and activities in England between 1st January and 31st March 2020. It also reports on stock households in temporary accommodation under statutory homelessness duty in England on 31st March 2020. Statistical releases are published quarterly, and the latest quarter is provisional. Local authority administrative lags usually result in a 2-3% uplift from the first published figures, though this varies by section.

There is also an annual publication planned, to be published in Autumn 2020 which has more detailed information regarding the financial year, and additional tables.

This release covers the initial part of the period of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Lockdown started in England on the 23rd March and this release therefore covers some of the households who needed help and additionally some households who were accommodation under the 'Everyone in' scheme<sup>1</sup>, whereby local authorities were required to house rough sleepers in hotels or emergency accommodation. It is likely that there is underreporting of households accommodated under 'Everyone in' in London coordinated by the Greater London Authority (GLA). We expect that more households will be included in the next quarterly release. More information on the potential impact of COVID-19 on temporary accommodation numbers is provided within the [Temporary Accommodation](#) section.

These statistics were introduced in the April to June quarter of 2018, to coincide with the commencement of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017. While local authorities adjusted to the new data requirements, there has been an overall increase in data quality. Now, all local authorities have provided data for some quarters, and so imputations have become more accurate, and response rate has improved.

## What data is used in this release?

The data used in this release are from the Homelessness Case Level Information Collection (H-CLIC) data system. This system is used as a reporting requirement of

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<sup>1</sup> Further information on the 'Everyone in' scheme is available at the following links:  
<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/housing-communities-and-local-government-committee/news/covid-19-homelessness-rented-sector-inquiry-launched-19-21/>  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/3-2-million-emergency-support-for-rough-sleepers-during-coronavirus-outbreak>

local authorities to provide data on statutory homelessness for those approaching local authorities for help with homelessness. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 H-CLIC replaced an aggregated data return (collected using the P1E form). The replacement of the aggregated return coincided with the introduction of new legislation, the HRA. This new system collects more detailed data on activities undertaken by local authorities to help prevent or relieve homelessness and the outcomes of these activities. The data collected in this release show total activity over the quarter except for data on temporary accommodation which is a snapshot at the end of the quarter.

Several local authorities have reported issues collecting or reporting accurately on prevention, relief, and main duties. This quarter's figures are based on full or partial returns for 311 out of 317 local authorities (98.1% response rate). Partial returns indicate that the quality of the data varies by section. Details of coverage by section are detailed in the release and in 'Additional Information'. We have imputed missing figures to ensure national headline figures are representative and from the January to March 2020 release we have applied reverse imputation for those local authorities that failed to submit H-CLIC data prior to July to September 2019. This means that all national headline figures for previous quarters have been revised in the time series Statutory Homelessness live tables. Further details on reverse imputation are available in the [Technical Note](#). Low numbers have been suppressed at the local authority level to prevent identification of individuals. There may be seasonal trends in this data, which are not currently adjusted.

Some local authorities are unable to provide temporary accommodation data via H-CLIC, and 39% of temporary accommodation is provided through P1E for this quarter. Further details on the data quality and improvement plan are available in the [Technical Note](#).

## What are experimental statistics?

This release is categorised as experimental statistics to reflect the new methods of collection and aggregation of case level data via H-CLIC. The quality of data in this publication is being continually improved, and the data presented will be revised in future quarters. The purpose of publishing this data as experimental statistics is to allow users to use these statistics with an understanding of the quality and limitations.

We advise that new duties are not comparable with previous homelessness data collected before April to June 2018. Temporary accommodation and main duty data are comparable to data collected before April to June 2018, however, due to the new steps local authorities must take with households prior to a main duty, any inferences about trends in main duty acceptances should be made with caution. Due to the minimum 56 day lag for new main duty assessments from April 2018, we recommend using 2019/20 main duty acceptance data to compare to 2017/18 or earlier. Main duty

comparisons will reflect whether the prevention and relief duties are working to effectively prevent and relieve homelessness for households with priority need.

Further information on data quality and planned development work is included in the [Technical Note](#).

MHCLG is looking to hold user events in 2020 to understand more about how these statistics are used and how they can be improved. If you would like to be involved in these events, or please contact [homelessnessstats@communities.gov.uk](mailto:homelessnessstats@communities.gov.uk). Comments on any issues relating to this statistical release can also be addressed to the "Public enquiries" contact given in the "Enquiries" section below or suggestions for future releases to [homelessnessstats@communities.gov.uk](mailto:homelessnessstats@communities.gov.uk).

## What are the homelessness duties?

This publication covers statutory homelessness, which is those people who are assessed by local authorities according to their legal duties. Statutory homelessness entitles you to help from your local authority, called 'duties'. 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.

Definitions	Types of homelessness
<b>Statutory Homelessness</b>	A household is considered statutorily homeless if 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, as well as households who currently have the right to occupy suitable accommodation, but that are threatened with homelessness within 56 days.

The data in this release regards the duties applicable under the HRA 2017, and therefore excludes anyone who has not approached their local authority for assistance who would otherwise be considered homeless. It will include some, but not all, households with a broad range of living circumstances including rough sleeping and staying temporarily with friends or family. 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.

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<sup>2</sup> See Definitions in section 7, Additional Information

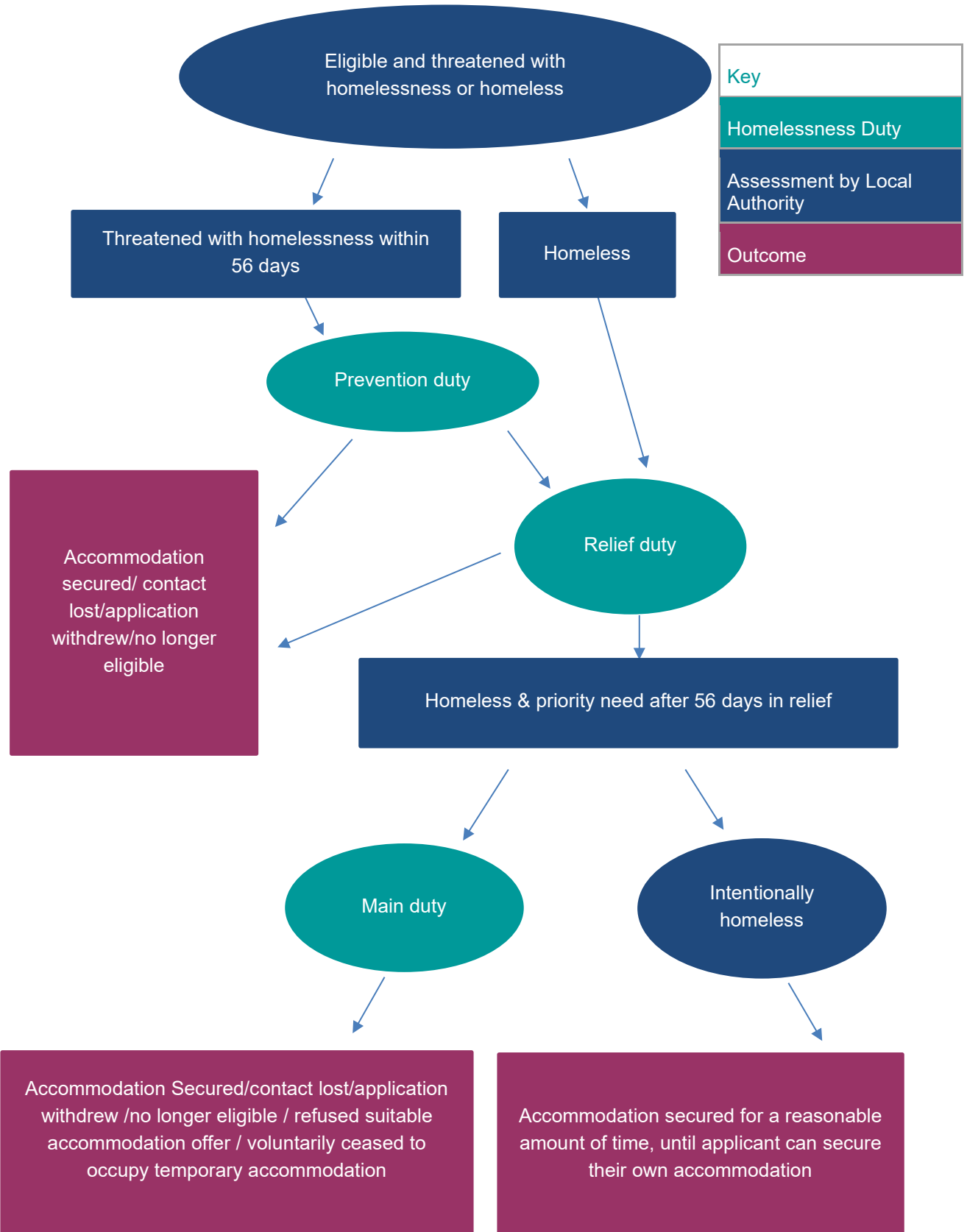
Definitions	Homelessness Duties
<b>Prevention</b>	Prevention duties include any activities aimed at preventing a household threatened with homelessness within 56 days from becoming homeless. This would involve activities to enable an applicant to remain in their current home or find alternative accommodation 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.
<b>Relief</b>	Relief duties are owed to households that are already homeless and require help to secure settled accommodation. This would involve activities to find accommodation to relieve their homelessness. 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.
<b>Main Duty</b>	<p>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 they did not secure accommodation in the prevention or relief stage. This means a household owed a main duty is no longer a household that is threatened with homelessness. In addition, a minimum of 56 days now has to have elapsed from a household approaching the local authority to being owed a main duty.</p> <p>Households who approached their authority before the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018 can still be owed a main duty through a delayed assessment or reapplication duty.</p>

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 previously. The definition of main duty acceptances and temporary accommodation remain the same, however due to the new steps local authorities must take with households prior to a main duty, any inferences about trends in main duty acceptances before and after the HRA 2017 should be made with caution. More information on comparability is available in the [Technical Note](#).

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<sup>3</sup> Eligibility and priority need are further defined in section 7, Additional Information

## Flow through the homelessness duties and outcomes





## 2. Initial Assessments

This section of the release covers the initial assessment of people who presented themselves at their local authority and were threatened with homelessness or who were already homeless between January to March 2020. This section does not cover secondary relief duties owed to a household where the applicant has not managed to secure accommodation whilst being threatened with homelessness. It also does not cover main duty assessments as these are included under [Main duty decisions](#).

For the authorities that failed to provide this information, their data was imputed from previous returns. Imputed figures account for 3.3% of the England total, and so it should be used with caution. Further details on the authorities whose figures were imputed can be found in the coverage section, or the live tables. We will also revise this data in future.

This section includes:

- New duties owed – prevention and relief
- Household composition
- Causes of homelessness
- Accommodation at the time of approach
- Referrals from other public bodies

### New duties owed

[Table A1](#)

<b>Table 1: Initial Assessment of homelessness duties owed to households in England, January to March 2020</b>			
Outcome of initial assessment	<b>January to March 2020</b>	Same quarter last year: January to March 2019	% change
Threatened with homelessness within 56 days – owed a <i>prevention duty</i>	<b>38,450</b>	39,290	-2.1%
Homeless – owed a <i>relief duty</i>	<b>36,690</b>	34,110	7.6%
Not homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days – no duty owed	<b>3,750</b>	4,600	-18.5%
<i>Total Assessments</i>	<b>78,890</b>	78,000	1.1%

Between January to March 2020, 78,890 homelessness assessments were made under the new duties. 75,140 or 95.2% households were initially assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days, and therefore owed a statutory homelessness duty. This is up 2.4% from January to March 2019.

38,450 or 48.7% of households assessed were threatened with homelessness within 56 days and owed a prevention duty. 4,740, or 12.3%, 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 slightly from 5,050 households in January to March 2019.

Definitions	Section 21
<b>Section 21 notice</b>	A section 21 notice is the form a landlord must give a tenant to start the process to end an assured shorthold tenancy. This is recorded alongside initial assessments.

36,690, or 46.5% of households were assessed as homeless and owed a relief duty, an increase of 7.6% from 34,110 in the same quarter last year. This increase is driven by single households, which accounted for 88.4% of the increase. Many of these households would not have been eligible for assistance prior to the introduction of the HRA. This makes it difficult to determine if more people are being offered help or homelessness is increasing.

3,750 were found to be not homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days. This is down 18.5% from January to March 2019. A fall in the number assessed as not homeless is in part due to improvements in data reporting that previously overstated numbers of applicants. Some local authorities in early quarters stated that they had included households who sought local authority help for other reasons than statutory homelessness, and it has not been possible to identify the homeless applicants from within these.

Overall, the increase in households assessed as being owed a new homelessness duty is driven by an increase in households owed relief duties.

## Household composition

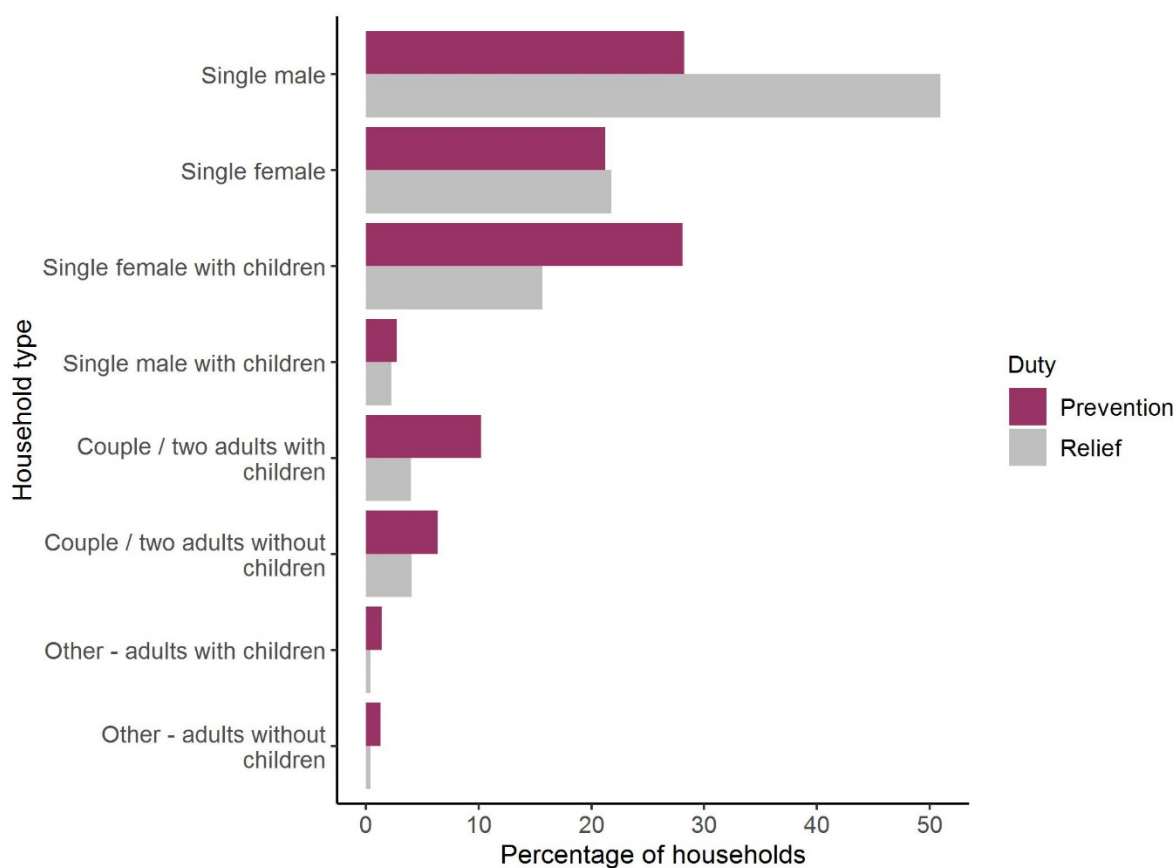
[Tables A5p and A5r](#)

Data in this section shows the household composition of those who were initially assessed as owed either a prevention or relief duty during January to March 2020. **Single households** are of particular interest, as before the introduction of the HRA

(2017) single households without a priority need were not eligible for formal local authority duties, and so may have been turned away from local authority assistance or been part of the ‘hidden homeless’. The expansion of the duties means that more single households are eligible for support, and so are included in H-CLIC data.

Definitions	Single Household
<b>Single households</b>	A term used for households without children, which will include couples and households with two or more adults.
<b>Single adult households</b>	Single adult households are a subset of single households, where the household comprises just one individual adult.

**Figure 1: Single Male households are the largest group of those owed a duty.**



Of the 75,140 households owed a prevention or relief duty after initial assessment, 67.3% were single households and 32.7% were households with children. This is similar to January to March 2019. Of the 38,450 households owed a prevention duty, 57.5% were owed to single households compared with 77.6% of the 36,690 households owed a relief duty. In January to March 2018, immediately prior to the introduction of the HRA, around 30% of households receiving a main duty were single

households<sup>4</sup>.

During January to March 2020, single males without children were the largest household group owed homelessness duties, making up 50.9% of households owed a relief duty, and 28.2% owed a prevention duty.

Single female parents with dependent children were the second largest group owed a prevention duty, comprising 28.0% of households, and the third largest group after single males and single females owed a relief duty, comprising 15.7% of relief duties owed. Couples with children and extended family households with 2 or more adults and children represented 11.6% of those owed a prevention duty and 4.4% of those owed a relief duty.

The proportions of household type making up prevention and relief are broadly comparable with January to March 2019, although previously single female parents with dependent children had been the largest group assessed as owed a prevention duty.

Following the 2017 HRA amendments, single households without priority need are now being helped by local authorities. This has improved information and understanding of those previously classed as hidden homeless. In January to March 2020, there were over 45,000 single adult households owed either prevention or relief duties, many of which would have previously been hidden, or would not have met the criteria for assistance. The proportion of those previously classed as hidden homeless now being owed a statutory duty is difficult to quantify.

## Causes of homelessness

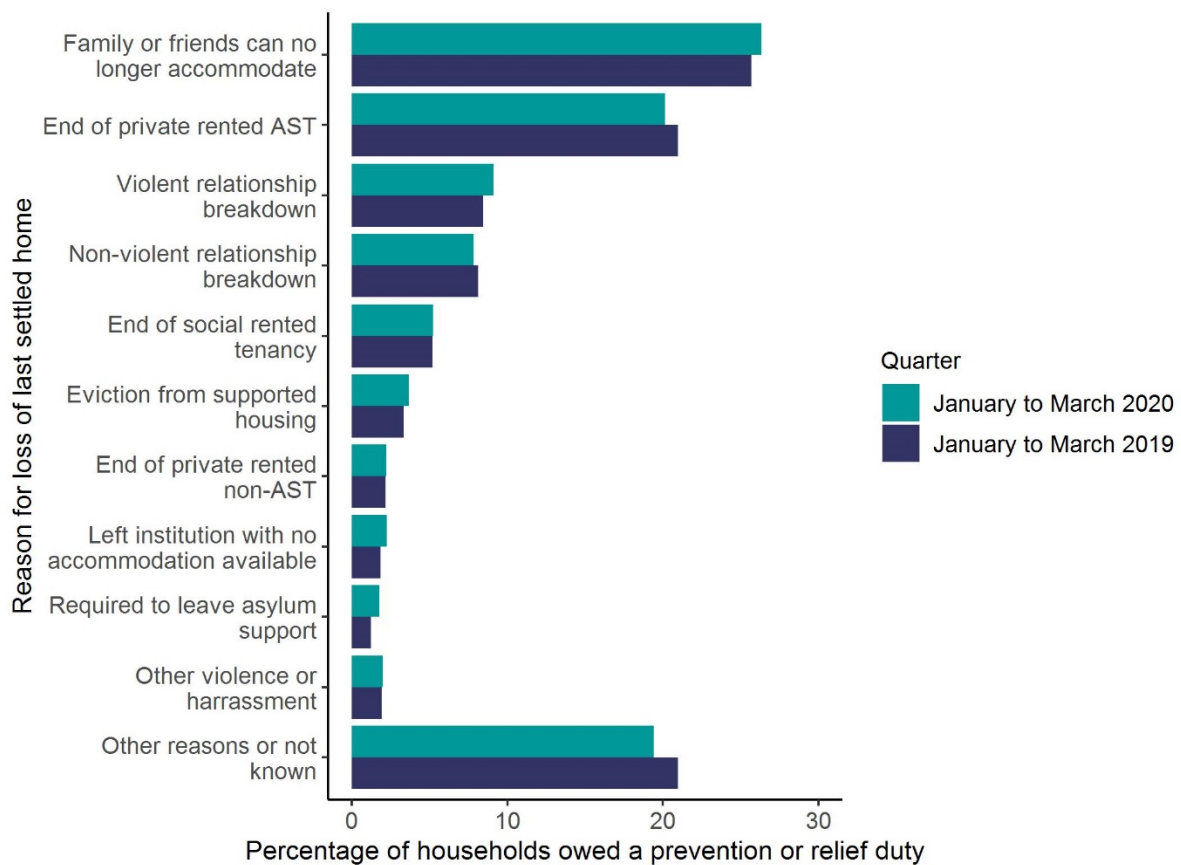
### Table A2

The reason for loss of last settled home is a good indication of the cause of homelessness for households assessed as being owed a duty. However, users should note in this section 'other' is a large category overused by some local authorities who we are working with to improve their reporting. 'Other' is listed as the reason for loss of their last settled home for 19.4% of households. Other or unknown is therefore overrepresented and will impact on the numbers represented in every other category, with the potential for this impact to be disproportionate.

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<sup>4</sup> 'Single households' for January to March 2018 were calculated from lone adult households and 'all other household types' in previous data tables. All other household types would include couples without dependent children, other groups of adults, but also possibly groups of 3 or more adults with dependent children as part of the household.

**Figure 2: In January to March 2020, around a fifth of households who were homeless or threatened with homelessness cited the end of a private rented tenancy as the reason for losing their last settled home.**



Between January to March 2020, the most common reason for loss of last settled home was “friends or family no longer willing or able to accommodate” which accounted for 19,780 households or 26.3% of households assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness, similar to January to March 2019 (up 0.6 percentage points). The second largest category was termination of an assured shorthold tenancy (AST)<sup>5</sup> at 20.1%, down 0.9 percentage points from January to March 2019.

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. 7,360, or 48.6%, of AST terminations in this quarter were due to the landlord wishing to re-let or sell the property. Other reasons were much smaller proportions, with the next most common being a change in personal circumstances, accounting for 9.3% of AST terminations, and tenant difficulty budgeting, 8.2% of AST terminations.

<sup>5</sup> See Definitions, page 28, in the Additional Information section

## Accommodation at time of application

Table A4

Current accommodation is used to identify the accommodation types of households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, at the point at which they approach a local authority for help.

Please note that it is believed that 'no fixed abode' has been overused by data providers as a category in the return where living with friends or family would have been more appropriate. 'No fixed abode' should not be used as a proxy for rough sleeping as this category can include people who are temporarily staying at multiple addresses but not sleeping rough. In addition, other or unknown is overrepresented, and will impact on the numbers represented in every other category, with the potential for this impact to be disproportionate.

<b>Table 2: Current accommodation of households who were assessed homeless or threatened with homelessness at the time of approaching the Local Authority.</b>			
Accommodation Type	<b>Number of Households January to March 2020</b>	<b>Percentage of households January to March 2020</b>	Number of households January to March 2019
Private rented sector	<b>19,160</b>	<b>25.5%</b>	19,610
Living with Family	<b>18,080</b>	<b>24.1%</b>	17,570
No fixed abode	<b>9,150</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	8,670
Social rented sector	<b>8,010</b>	<b>10.7%</b>	8,050
Living with friends	<b>7,270</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	7,120
Homeless on departure from institution	<b>2,710</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	2,170
Rough sleeping	<b>2,320</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	1,840
NASS accommodation	<b>1,230</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	880
Temporary Accommodation	<b>1,090</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	1,040
Owner-occupier or shared ownership	<b>990</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	1,060
Refuge	<b>740</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	780
Other or not known	<b>4,370</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	4,600

As shown in Table 2, the most common accommodation type at the time of approach was private rented sector with 19,160 or 25.5% of households, followed by living with

family, 24.1%. Other notable groups included social housing, 10.7%, and living with friends, 9.7%. This is comparable with January to March 2019, when private rented sector was the most common accommodation type.

At time of application 2,320 households were rough sleeping, 390 of which were in London and 1,930 in the rest of England. This is a 26.1% increase from January to March 2019 and represents 3.1% of all households owed a new duty in January to March 2020, similar to the 2.5% of households in January to March 2019.

This is lower than the 4,266 rough sleepers recorded as sleeping rough on a single night in England in 2019. This difference is expected as HCLIC will only capture rough sleepers who had a homelessness application assessed and assistance provided by a local authority during this quarter. Further data sources on rough sleeping can be found in the Additional Information section at the end of this release.

<b>Definitions: Rough sleeping and Statutory Homelessness Data</b>	
<b>Rough sleeping</b>	People sleeping in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or “bashes” which are makeshift shelters, often comprised of cardboard boxes). Rough sleepers in this publication may have slept rough one night or across several nights
<b>Rough sleeping at the time of Local Authority Approach</b>	Rough sleepers are defined as those who were, in the judgement of the assessor, rough sleeping when they approached a local authority for help.
<b>History of Rough Sleeping</b>	This is a support need based on a history of sleeping rough and does not mean that the household was sleeping rough at the time of approach to the local authority

## Support needs

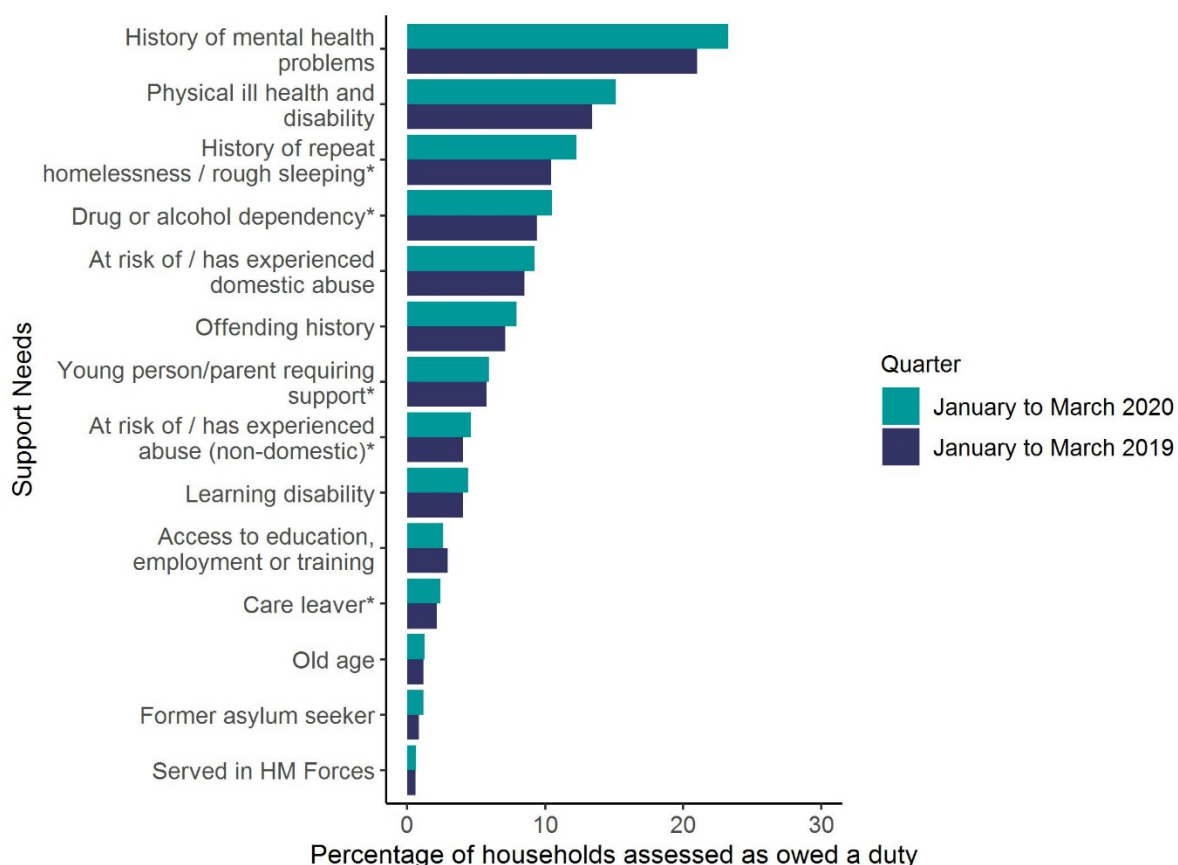
### Table A3

The HRA 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 acquire and sustain accommodation. This gives an indication of the additional services local

authorities provide to prevent an individual becoming homeless or to stop the cycle of repeat homelessness.

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.

**Figure 3<sup>6</sup>: Over a fifth of households who were assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness reported a history of mental health problems.**



Of the 75,140 households who were owed a homelessness duty in January to March 2020, 35,720 or 47.5% of households were identified as having support needs, compared with 43.5% in January to March 2019. Of the households who had a support need, 17,440 households or 48.8% had one support need, 8,260 households or 23.1% had two support needs and 10,020 or 28.1% had three or more support needs.

The most common support need identified was a history of mental health problems which was reported by 17,490 households or 23.3% of households owed a

<sup>6</sup> Please note: these categories are grouped using support need categories that are similar. This means some households may be counted more than once in these categories



new duty – see Figure 3. The second largest group was those with physical ill health or disability, identified by 15.1% of households. Other notable groups included those with experience of or at risk of domestic abuse, 9.2%, and those with drug or alcohol dependency, 10.5%.

A history of repeat homelessness or rough sleeping was identified in 4,990 and 4,220 households respectively. This is higher than the 2,320 households who were sleeping rough at the time of approach to the council, as households with this support need may have been living in other settled or unsettled accommodation at the time of approach.

## Referrals from other public bodies

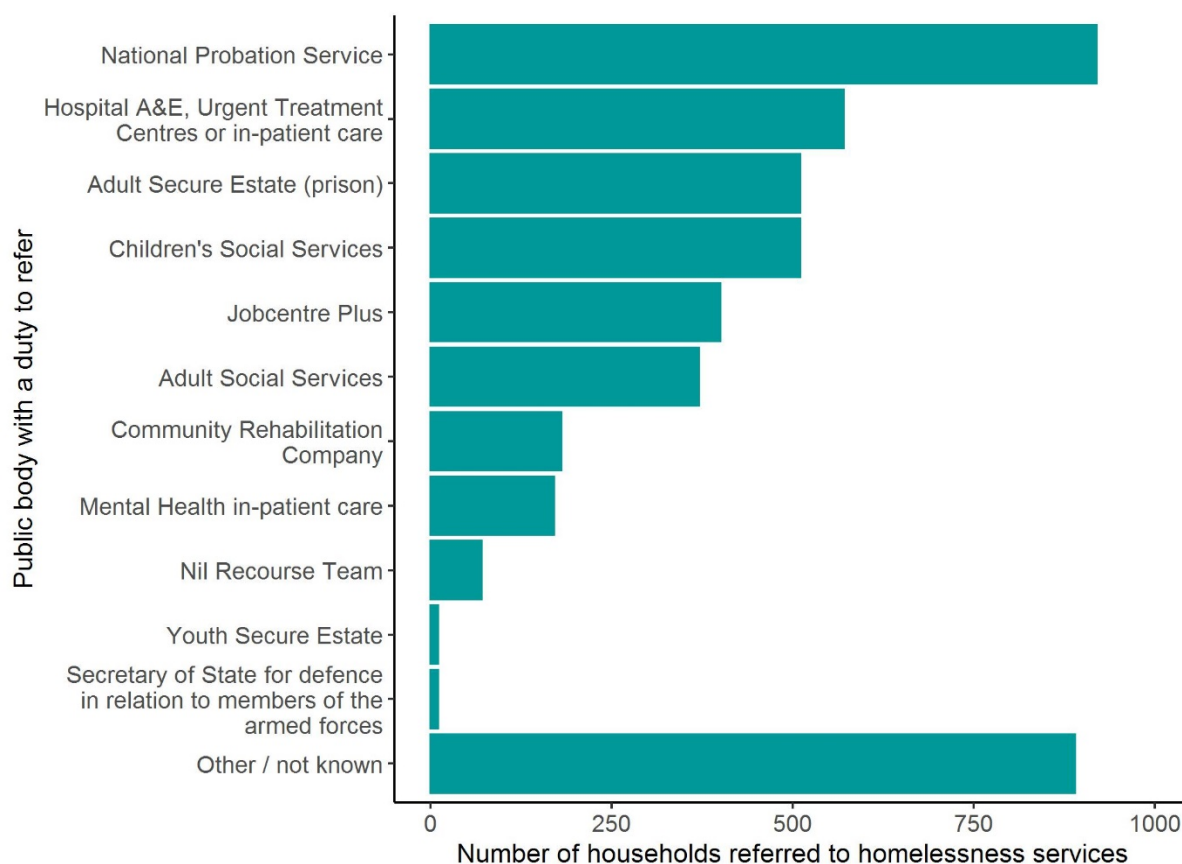
Table A7

Definitions	New duty for specific public authorities to refer users to local housing authorities
<b>Duty to Refer</b>	Since 1st October 2018, duty to refer has required 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.

Information on duty to refer is captured and reported by local authorities when the referral results in a new homelessness application. The operational processes to refer people are still being refined and there may be underreporting of these numbers if a referral is not made quickly enough. Authorities with legal responsibilities under this duty and the number of referrals made during January to March 2020 are provided in Figure 4.

For 890 households, local authorities indicated that a household had been referred to them under a duty to refer but failed to identify an eligible referring authority; these referrals are reported as 'Other / not known'. This means the referrals from some or all the public authorities may be underestimated. MHCLG are working to reduce the use of 'Other / not known'.

**Figure 4: The National Probation Service referred the most households to homelessness services which resulted in an assessment, under the duty to refer**



During January to March 2020, there were 4,590 referrals made under the duty to refer which resulted in an assessment, compared with 4,090 between October to December 2019. Of the referrals made, 96% resulted in a homelessness duty.

National Probation Services have the largest number with 920, or 20.0% of the total, and 96% of these resulted in a homelessness duty. Hospital A&E, Urgent Treatment Centres or in-patient care made the second highest number of referrals resulting in an assessment with 570, followed by Adult Secure Estate (prison) with 510. These three authorities represent 43.6% of referrals which resulted in a homelessness assessment under the duty to refer.

Households can also be referred to local authorities by public bodies without a duty to refer e.g. GP practice, police or housing associations. During January to March 2020 2,890 referrals were made by other organisations, public or private without a legal duty to refer which resulted in the household being assessed. 210 additional referrals were made by other local authorities.

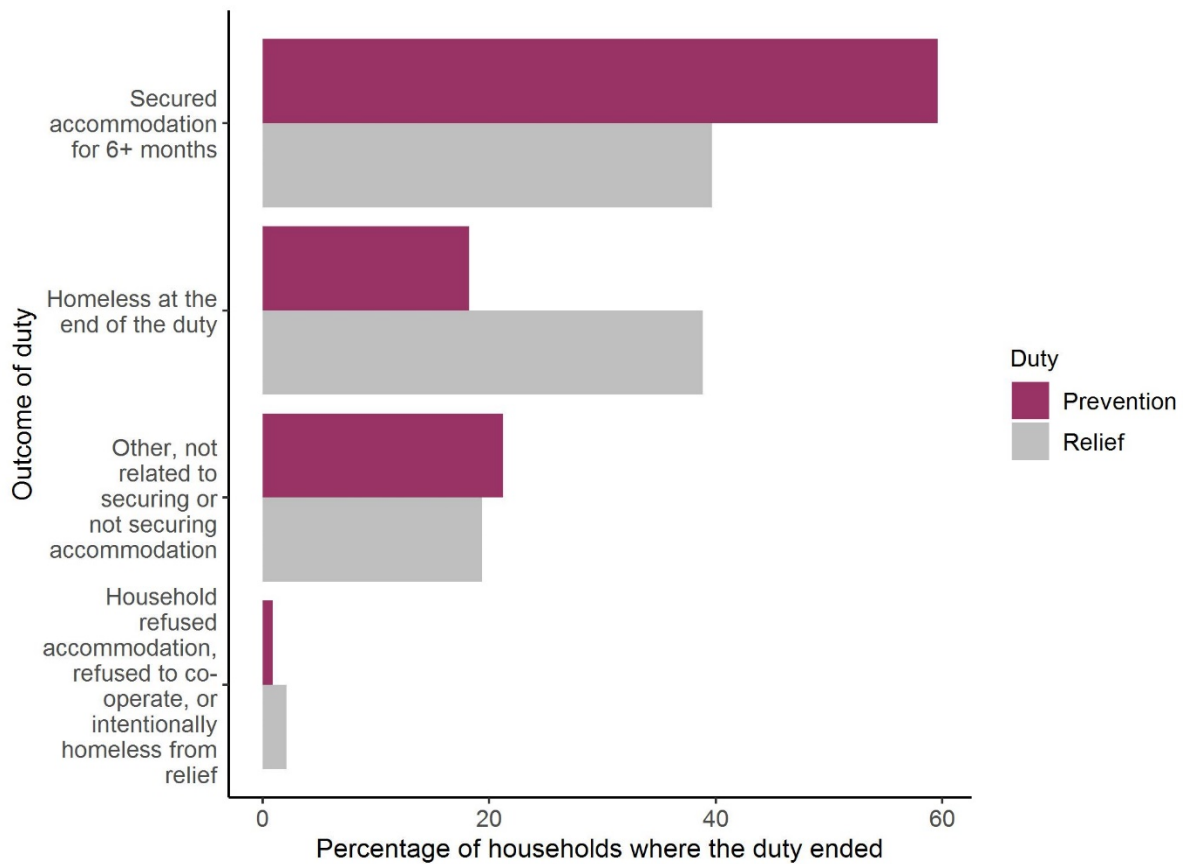
### 3. Prevention and Relief Duty Outcomes

The new duties require local authorities to take reasonable steps to try to prevent or relieve a household's homelessness by helping them to secure accommodation for at least 6 months. These duties last 56 days each. The reasons for duties ending indicate the likely outcomes of duties.

This data is not comparable to prevention and relief data collected prior to the enactment of the HRA 2017, as before April 1<sup>st</sup> 2018 prevention and relief activities were not a statutory duty; previous prevention activity data included interventions and activities that prevented a household from making a homeless application, sometimes referred to as 'upstream' prevention, and previous relief activities were offered only at the discretion of the local authority to those not eligible for main homelessness duty.

The outcomes in January to March 2020 may refer to duties which began in previous quarters. Several local authorities have reported issues collecting or reporting accurately on prevention and relief duties ending. For the authorities that failed to provide this information, their data was imputed from previous returns. Imputed figures account for 3.7% of the England total for prevention, and 2.9% for relief, and so totals should be used with caution. Further details on the authorities whose figures were imputed can be found in the coverage section, or the live tables. We will also revise this data in future.

**Figure 5<sup>7</sup>: Over half of prevention duties ended in secured accommodation for 6 months or more between January to March 2020.**



## Prevention duty ended

### Table P1

Figure 5 shows the outcomes for the 34,360 prevention duties that ended in January to March 2020, and the outcomes for relief duties ended in the same period. The number of prevention duties that ended has increased from the 32,790 households in January to March 2019.

20,480 households, or 59.6%, secured accommodation for 6 months or more and were no longer threatened with homelessness. Of those who secured accommodation 38.3% secured their existing accommodation, whilst 61.7% secured alternative accommodation.

<sup>7</sup> Note: the categories in Figure 5 are variables collapsed from tables P1 and R1. Homeless at the end of the duty includes those intentionally homeless for prevention duties. Other, not related to securing or not securing accommodation includes: Application withdrawn or applicant deceased, contact lost, 56 days elapsed and no further action, local referral accepted by other LA, and no longer eligible. Households where the outcome is not known are not included.

For 6,270 or 18.2% of households, the prevention duty ended because the household became homeless, and was therefore owed a relief duty.

There are several further reasons why a prevention duty may end that do not relate to securing accommodation for 6+ months or the household becoming homeless. 21.2% of prevention duties ended for other reasons, such as losing contact, or the application being withdrawn, and 0.9% ended due to the household refusing accommodation or refusing to co-operate.

## Relief duty ended

### Table R1

39,600 households' relief duties ended this quarter, up from the 33,330 households reported in the same quarter last year. As shown in Figure 5, 15,720 or 39.7% of households had accommodation secured for at least 6 months.

For 38.9% of households the relief duty ended because their homelessness had not been relieved within 56 days. 19.3% of households' relief duty ended for reasons not related to failing to secure or securing accommodation for at least 6 months, and 2.1% ended due to the household refusing accommodation, refusing to co-operate, or becoming intentionally homeless.

## 4.Main Duties

### Main duty decisions

[Tables MD1 and MD1 TS](#)

Data in this section concerns decisions on whether the main homelessness duty is owed to a homeless household.

Definitions	What is Main Duty?
<b>Main Duty</b>	<p>Main homelessness duty describes the duty a local authority has towards an applicant who is <b>unintentionally homeless, eligible for assistance and has priority need</b><sup>8</sup>. This definition has not been changed by the 2017 HRA. However, these households are now only owed a main duty if they did not secure accommodation in the prevention or relief stage. This means a household owed a main duty is no longer a household that is threatened with homelessness. In addition a minimum of 56 days now has to have elapsed from a household approaching the local authority to being owed a main duty.</p> <p>Main duty does not have a limit on the number of days. Households eligible for main duty homelessness are usually put into temporary accommodation and continue to be helped by the local authority until the duty ends for a specific reason, such as securing accommodation, or withdrawing.</p>

From 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018 homeless households were owed a 56 day relief duty before a main duty decision could be made or a duty could commence, and in some cases would also have been owed a prevention duty before the household became homeless.

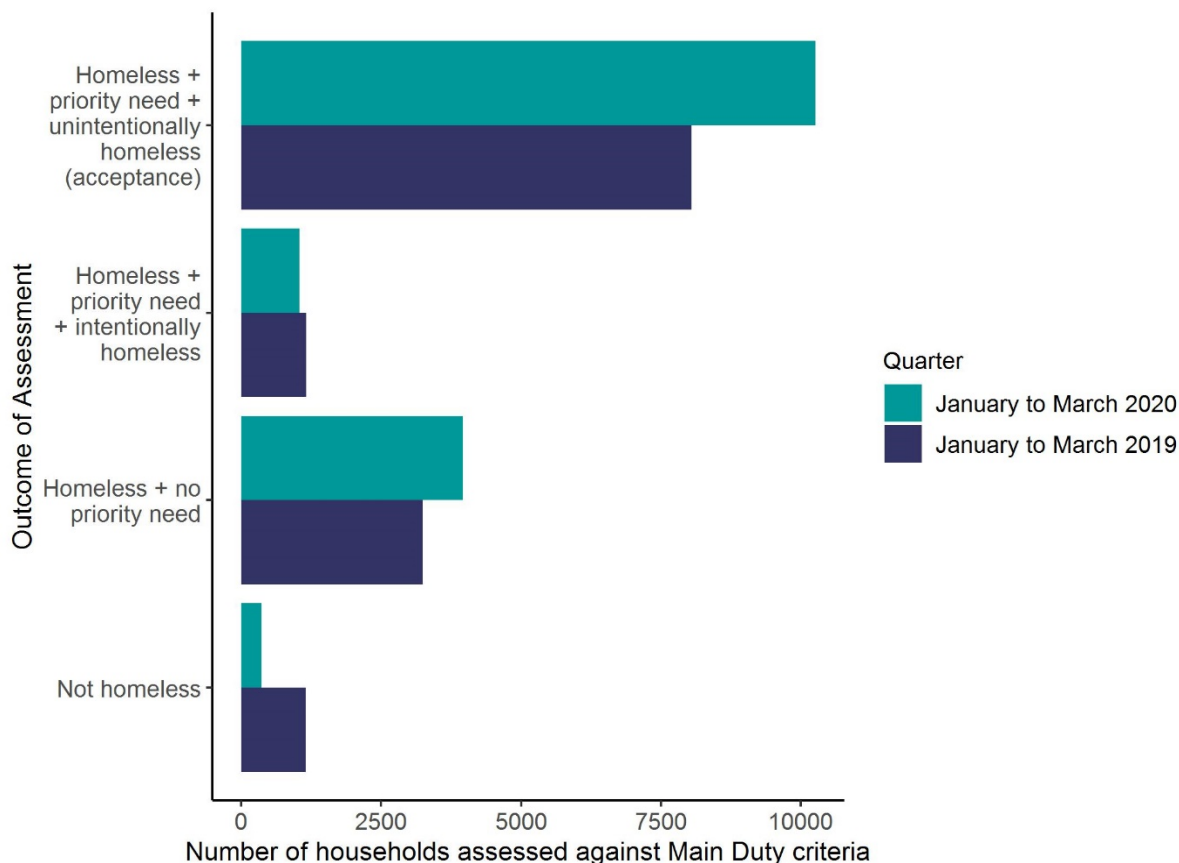
Several local authorities have reported issues collecting or reporting accurately on main duty decisions. For the authorities that failed to provide this information, their data was imputed from previous returns. Imputed figures account for 4.4% of the England total, and so it should be used with caution. The England level figure in this release is also likely to be under-reported and has previously been revised up in

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<sup>8</sup> Eligibility and priority need are further defined in section 7, Additional Information.

previous quarters. Further details on the authorities whose figures were imputed can be found in the coverage section, or the live tables. We will also revise this data in future.

**Figure 6: Main duty decisions between January to March 2020 found over 10,000 households were owed a main homelessness duty**

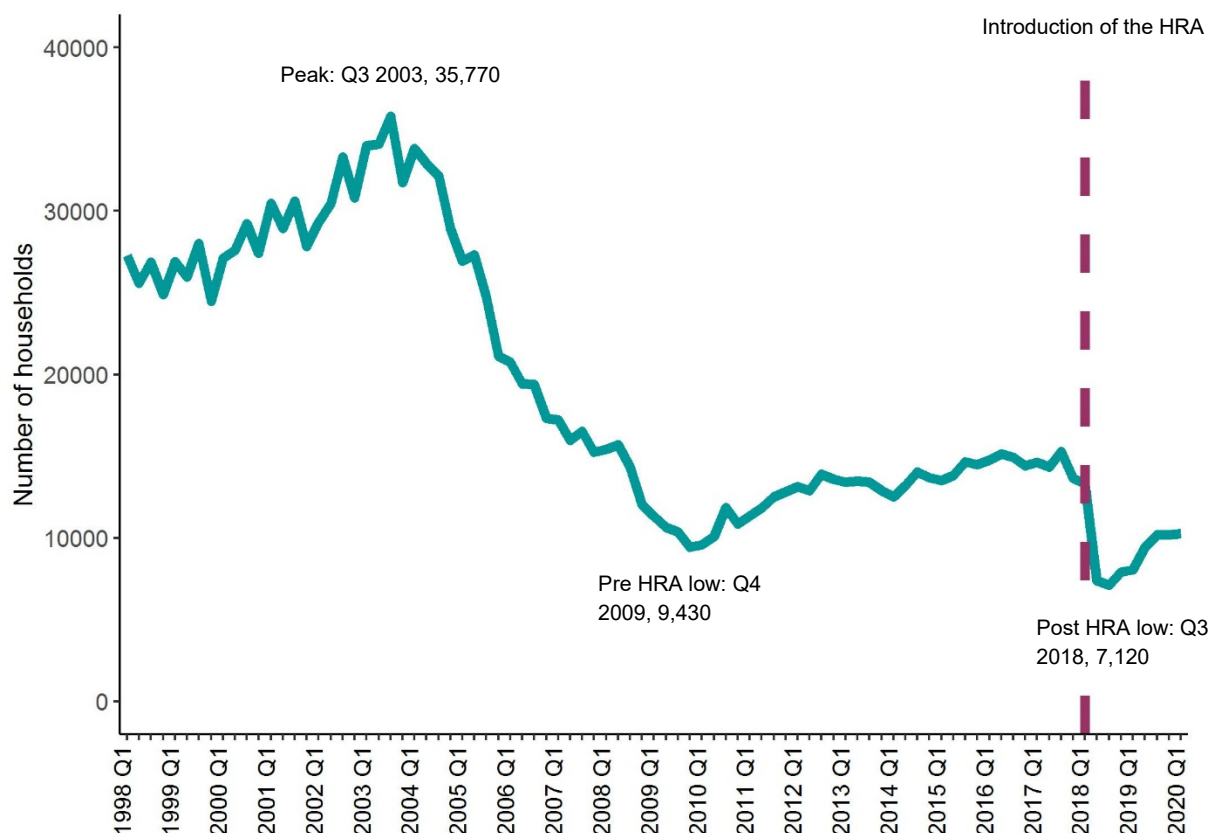


Local authorities made 15,620 main homelessness duty decisions in January to March 2020. This is up 14.9% from January to March 2019, but down 39.3% compared with 25,750 households in the quarter immediately prior to commencement of the HRA. 10,260 households were accepted as owed a main homelessness duty, a 27.5% increase from 8,050 in January to March 2019, but 23.0% fewer than in the quarter immediately preceding the commencement of the HRA. This fall is to be expected as some households with priority need are now assisted with homelessness under the prevention and relief duties.

Of those owed a main duty 2,920 were in London, accounting for 28.5% of the England total. 3,960 households were found to be homeless but did not have priority need, and therefore not owed a main duty following the statutory relief duty.

Figure 7 shows how the total number of households owed a main homelessness duty has changed over time from Q1 1998 to Q1 January to March 2020.

**Figure 7: Main duty homelessness acceptances are increasing but are still below the level before the introduction of the HRA**



## Main duties ended

### Table MD2

Some local authorities have struggled to provide accurate information on main duties ended. As with temporary accommodation this information mostly relates to cases assessed before the introduction of the 2017 HRA. For the authorities that failed to provide this information, their data was imputed from previous returns. Imputed figures account for 4.8% of the England total, and so it should be used with caution. The England level figure for the latest quarter in this release is also likely to be revised, and has previously been revised up or down by at least 4% in previous quarters. Further details on the authorities whose figures were imputed can be found in the coverage section of the release, and the live tables.

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. Because there is no fixed end, this section includes some outcomes of main duty applications made prior to the HRA commencement date as well as



decisions made under the amended legislation. The main duty can also be ended for other reasons such as the applicant turning down a suitable offer of temporary or settled accommodation, or the applicant no longer being eligible for assistance.

**Table 3: Outcomes of Main Duties Ended in England, January to March 2020**

Outcome of Main Duties Ended	Number of January to March 2020	Percentage of households January to March 2020	Number of households January to March 2019
<b>All outcomes</b>	<b>6,900</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6,930</b>
Accepted an offer of settled accommodation	5,460	79.1%	5,260
<i>Local Authority or Housing Association accommodation</i>	4,890	70.9%	4,500
<i>Private Rented Sector accommodation</i>	570	8.3%	760
Intentionally homeless or voluntarily ceased to occupy Temporary Accommodation	710	10.3%	860

As shown in Table 3, the main homelessness duty was ended for 6,900 households in January to March 2020. 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 similar to 6,930 households in January to March 2019.

5,460 households accepted an offer of settled accommodation, or 79.1%. This is a comparable proportion of households with January to March 2019. Most households (70.9%) accepted a tenancy offer in local authority or housing association accommodation.

Of those households whose duties ended without securing accommodation, 220 households became intentionally homeless from temporary accommodation, while 490 households voluntarily ceased to occupy temporary accommodation.

## 5. Temporary Accommodation

Unlike other data in this release, temporary accommodation (TA) is a snapshot at the end of the quarter. It is not a cumulative total of all placements across a quarter. The number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter includes households who are:

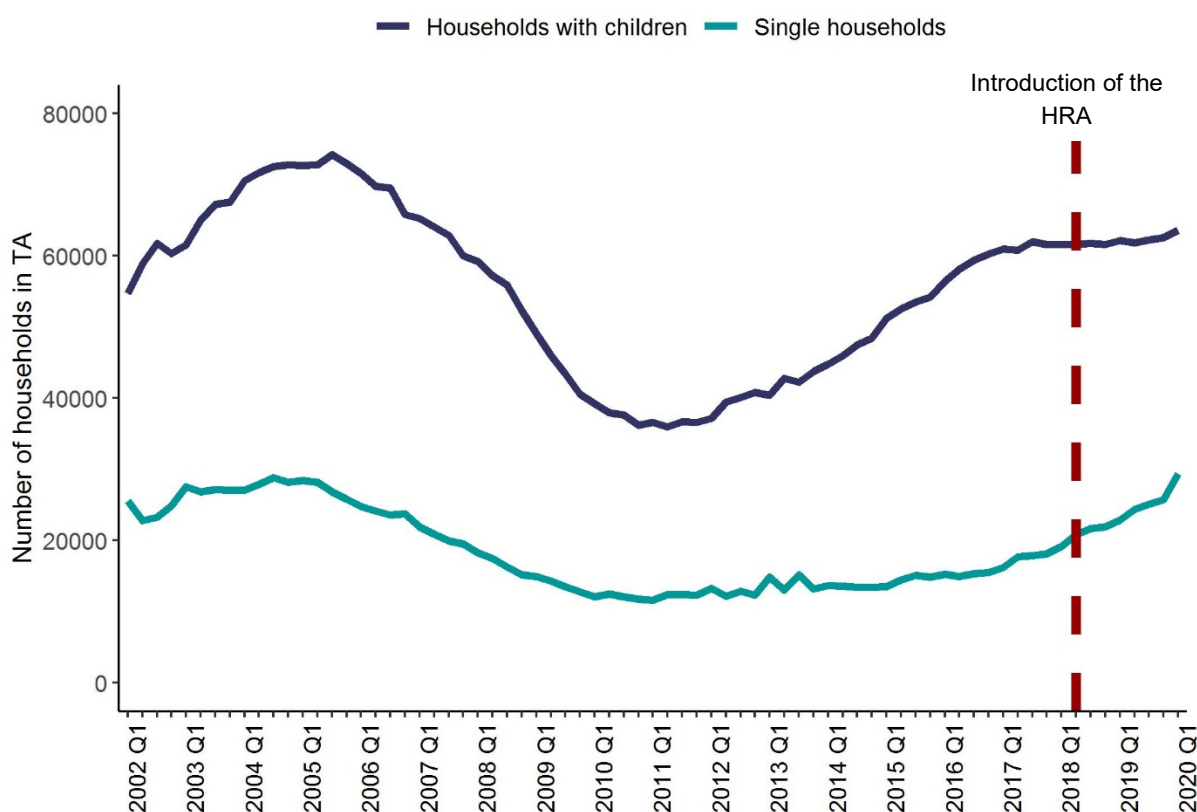
- awaiting a decision on whether a main duty is owed under a new application or reapplication
- awaiting a decision on whether a referral has been accepted under local connection arrangements
- undergoing a local authority review or county court appeal
- under a relief duty and have or may have priority need so eligible for temporary accommodation
- homeless, eligible for assistance and in priority need and owed the main homelessness duty
- intentionally homeless and have priority need and are being accommodated for a limited period

Definitions	Temporary Accommodation
<b>Temporary accommodation</b>	Households in temporary accommodation refer to households living in 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.

TA has been reported by local authorities through a combination of P1E summary and H-CLIC case level returns this quarter, as in previous quarters since April-June 2018. Local authorities were able to use 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. For the authorities that failed to provide this information, their data was imputed from previous returns. Imputed figures account for 13.2% of the England total households in TA, and so it should be used with caution. Further details on the authorities whose figures were imputed can be found in the coverage section, and the live tables. The list of these LAs can be found in the coverage section. Further details on the data quality issues can be found in the [Technical Note](#).

This quarter's temporary accommodation figures coincided with the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the start of the government's 'Everyone in' policy which resulted in thousands of people being housed in emergency accommodation. Details on the published statistics are provided in [Related links and statistics](#). It is likely that some of those housed under 'Everyone in' have been reported in the temporary accommodation figures this quarter. However, many of these households will not have been included either because they were not housed in emergency accommodation by the end of March, were not yet reported by the local authority, or because the local authority has not offered a relief duty under the HRA. We expect the picture to become clearer next quarter and have requested that local authorities report people temporarily accommodated under the 'Everyone in' policy on H-CLIC via a separate reporting category.

**Figure 8: The number of single households in temporary accommodation continues to rise, though households with children has levelled.**



The number of households in temporary accommodation has been increasing steadily since 2010. As shown in Figure 8, since the introduction of the HRA this has been primarily due to increasing numbers of single households in temporary accommodation.

On 31st March 2020, the total number of households in temporary accommodation

arranged by local authorities under homelessness legislation was 93,000, up 9.4% from 85,040 on 31st March 2019. This increase is driven by single households. The number of single households in temporary accommodation was 29,390, up 28.5% on the same date last year, while the number of households with children is more stable at 63,610, up 2.3% from the same date last year.

**Table 4: Households accommodated in temporary accommodation at 31 March 2020 compared the same quarter last year, England, London and Rest of England**

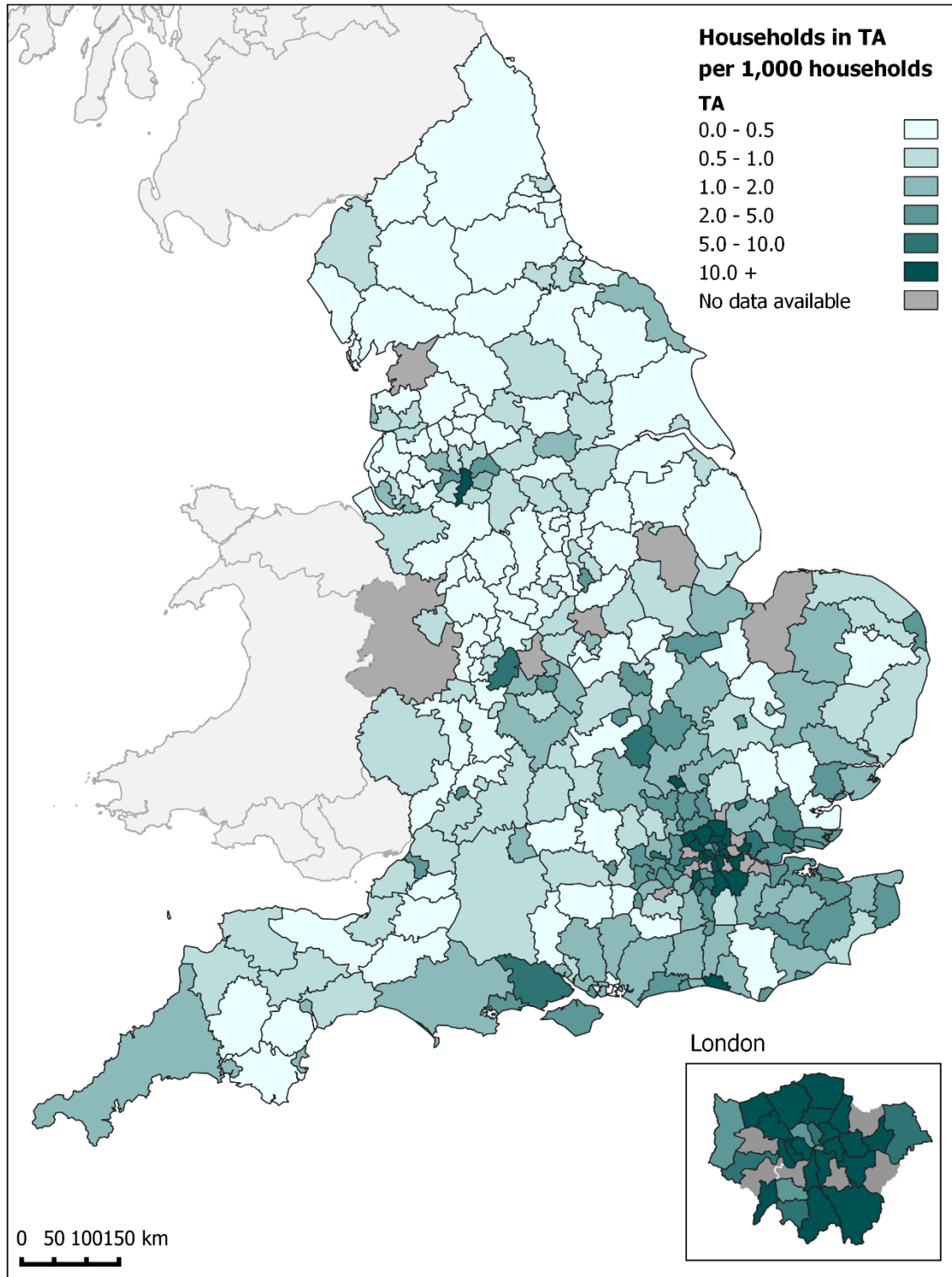
	<b>31st March 2020</b>	Same quarter last year: 31st March 2019	
	<b>Households in TA</b>	Households in TA	Percentage change
England	<b>93,000</b>	85,040	9.4%
London	<b>60,720</b>	56,780	6.9%
Rest of England	<b>32,280</b>	28,260	14.2%

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

As shown in Table 4, the number of households in temporary accommodation in London on 31st March 2020 was 60,720, an increase of 6.9% from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. London accounted for 65.3% of the total England figure. In comparison the number of households in temporary accommodation in the Rest of England increased by 14.2% to 32,280 on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. These changes are driven by the increase in single households.

This means that in England there were approximately 4.0 households living in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households overall, but there were approximately 17.1 households per 1,000 in London and 1.6 households per 1,000 in the Rest of England. As shown in Figure 9, the rate of households in temporary accommodation is highest in London boroughs, and shows additional hotspots in urban centres such as Manchester and Birmingham. The local authority with the highest rate of households in TA per 1000 households is Newham, with 52.8, and the highest outside of London is Luton at 16.3 households per 1000.

**Figure 9: A map of households in temporary accommodation per 1000 households in each local authority area shows greater concentration in the South East and hotspots in urban areas.**



Produced by Homelessness Statistics Team, MHCLG  
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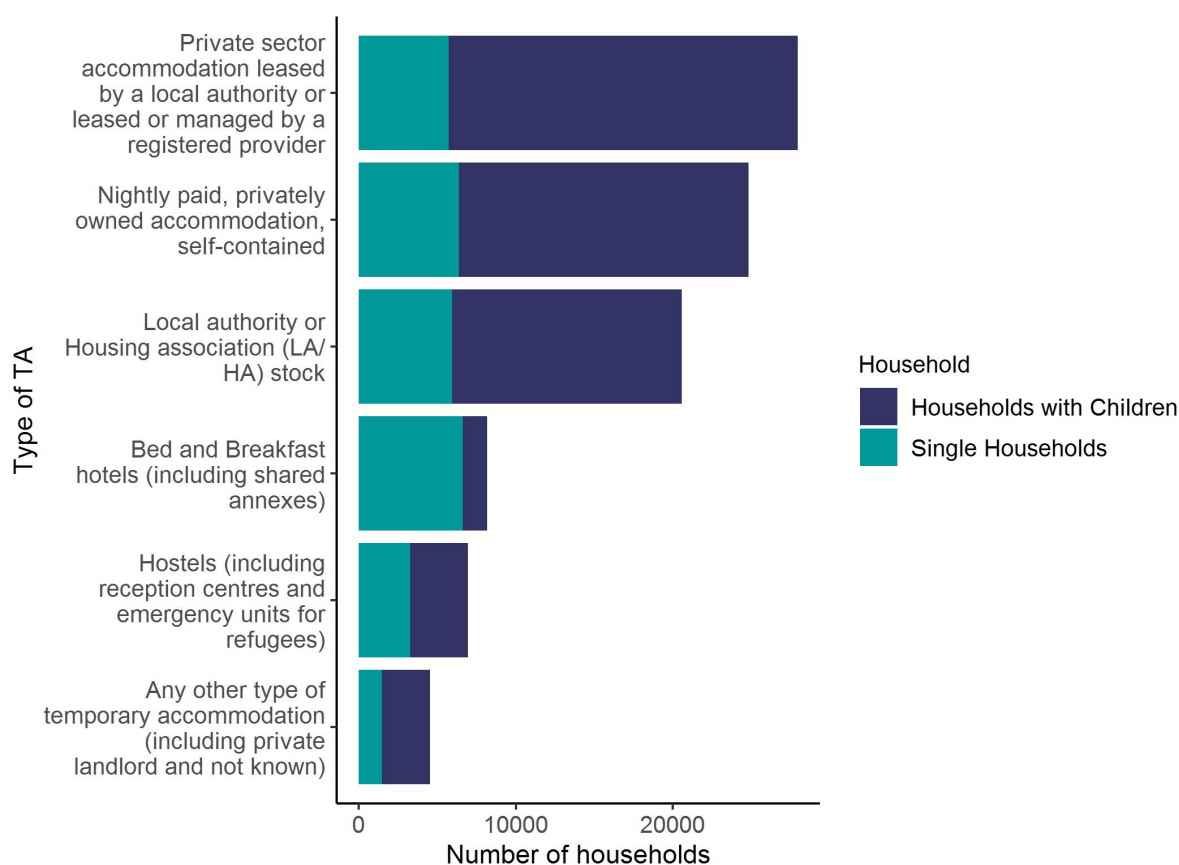
Data sources: OS Boundary Line,  
 Local Authority HCLIC returns,  
 ONS Household Population Projection

## Types of Temporary Accommodation

Table TA1

The types of temporary accommodation which saw the biggest increases were Hostels, up 21.1% from 31st March 2019 and B&B accommodation, up 17.4%. Both of these increases were driven by single households and may be linked to the COVID-19 'Everyone in' government policy.

**Figure 10: Private Sector and nightly paid accommodation are the most common types of TA, and the households in TA are mostly those with children, except in Bed and Breakfast hotels.**



Of the 93,000 households living in temporary accommodation on 31st March 2020 78.8% were in self-contained accommodation, up from 76.9% at the end of March 2019. The number of households in temporary accommodation with shared facilities (bed and breakfast and hostels, including women's refuges) was 15,120, or 16.3% of all households in TA. Of these, 8,180 households were living in bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation (privately owned accommodation in which facilities are shared), which is an increase of 17.4% from 6,970 at the same time last year. 81.1% of households in B&B accommodation were single households.

Households in London are the majority of private sector and nightly paid accommodation, making up 77.9% and 81.0% of households in those types of temporary accommodation, while 52.6% of households in Local Authority or Housing Association accommodation are in the Rest of England.

The number of households in temporary accommodation in a different local authority district than those they applied in was 25,540, or 27.5% of all households in temporary accommodation, up 3,100 from the same quarter last year. 85.2%, or 21,760 of out of local authority placements were from London boroughs.

## Children in Temporary Accommodation

### [Tables TA1 and TA2](#)

<b>Table 5: Households accommodated in Bed and Breakfast temporary accommodation at 31 March 2020 with comparisons to previous quarter and year, England</b>					
	<b>31st March 2020</b>	Previous quarter: 31st December 2019		Same quarter last year: 31st March 2019	
	<b>Households in B&amp;B</b>	Households in B&B	Percentage change	Households in B&B	Percentage change
Total households in B&B	<b>8,180</b>	7,330	11.6%	6,970	17.4%
Households in B&B with dependent children	<b>1,550</b>	1,900	-18.4%	2,170	-28.6%
<i>Of which: resident for more than 6 weeks</i>	<b>530</b>	530	0.0%	760	-30.3%

Of the 93,000 households in temporary accommodation at the end of March 2020, 63,610 households or 68.4% included dependent children, compared with 62,170 or 73.1% on the same date last year. A total of 129,380 dependent children were in temporary accommodation on 31st March 2020, an increase of 3.1% compared with March 2019. The average number of children in family households in temporary accommodation was 2.03 children. Most households with children, 86.9%, were in self-contained accommodation, up 4.3 percentage points from 82.6% at the end of March 2019.

Of the 8,180 households in B&B, 1,550 or 18.9% had dependent children, down from 2,170 the same time last year. Of the households with children in B&B, 530 had been resident for more than the statutory limit of 6 weeks. This is down 30.3% from 760 on the 31st March 2019. Only 20 16 to 17 year-old main applicants were in B&B accommodation on 31st March 2020.

## 6. Accompanying tables

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

The below tables can be accessed at:

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

### **Initial assessments of statutory homelessness duties owed**

- A1: Number of households assessed and owed a prevention or relief duty
- A2: Reason for loss of last settled home for households assessed as owed a prevention or relief duty
- A3: Support needs of households assessed as owed a prevention or relief duty
- A4: Accommodation at time of application for households assessed as owed a prevention or relief duty
- A5P: Household type at time of application for households assessed as owed a prevention duty
- A5R: Household type at time of application for households assessed as owed a relief duty
- A6: Age of main applicants assessed as owed a prevention or relief duty\*
- A7: Households referred to a local authority prior to being assessed
- A8: Ethnicity of main applicants assessed as owed a prevention of relief duty\*
- A9: Nationality of main applicants assessed as owed a prevention or relief duty\*
- A10: Employment status of main applicants assessed as owed a prevention or relief duty\*
- A11: Reason for eligibility of main applicants assessed as owed a prevention or relief duty

### **Statutory homelessness prevention duty outcomes**

- P1: Reason for households' prevention duty ending
- P2: Type of accommodation secured for households at end of prevention duty
- P3: Main prevention activity that resulted in accommodation secured for households at end of prevention duty\*
- P4: Destination of households with alternative accommodation secured at end of prevention duty\*
- P5: Household type of households with accommodation secured at end of prevention duty\*

### **Statutory homelessness relief duty outcomes**

- R1: Reason for households' relief duty ending
- R2: Type of accommodation secured for households at end of relief duty
- R3: Main prevention activity that resulted in accommodation secured for households at end of relief duty\*



- R4: Destination of households with alternative accommodation secured at end of relief duty\*
- R5: Household type of households with accommodation secured at end of relief duty\*

**Statutory homelessness main duty decisions & outcomes**

- MD1: Outcome of main duty decision for eligible households
- MD2: Outcome of households no longer owed a main duty
- MD3: Priority need category of households owed a main duty

**Households in temporary accommodation**

- TA1: Number of households in temporary accommodation at end of quarter by temporary accommodation type
- TA2: Number of households in temporary accommodation at end of quarter by household type

\* These tables will now only be published as part of the expanded annual release at end of financial year. The latest published figures can be found in April 2018 to March 2019 Detailed local authority-level tables.

## 7. Additional information

### Definitions

Additional Definitions of terms used throughout this publication	
<b>Assured Tenancy</b>	<b>Shorthold</b> An Assured Shorthold Tenancy is a fixed term letting from a private rented landlord. Typical tenancies last 1 or 2 years.
<b>Eligible Households</b>	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: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities/chapter-7-eligibility-for-assistance">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities/chapter-7-eligibility-for-assistance</a>
<b>The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017:</b>	<b>Act (HRA)</b> 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: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities</a> .
<b>Intentionally homeless:</b>	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.
<b>Threatened homelessness:</b>	<b>with</b> 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.
<b>Hidden Homelessness</b>	Hidden homelessness includes people who live in overcrowded, insecure or uninhabitable conditions. Many people in this group do not present to the local authority for help and are sometimes unaware they would be considered statutory homeless. For this reason, the group are called hidden homeless with an unknown proportion appearing in Official Statistics. This makes quantifying the number of hidden homelessness difficult.
<b>Households for whom a duty is owed, but no accommodation has been secured:</b>	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.
<b>Main homelessness duty acceptance:</b>	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.
<b>P1E:</b>	P1E was a quarterly local authority return, used by MHCLG to report on statutory homelessness in

	<p>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.</p>
<p><b>Priority need:</b></p>	<p>The legislation provides that some categories of applicants have a priority need for accommodation if homeless, whereas others do not. Applicants who have priority need include households: with dependent children or a pregnant woman; homeless due to fire, flood or other emergency; who are particularly vulnerable due to ill health, disability, old age; 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.</p>
<p><b>Self-contained accommodation</b></p>	<p>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).</p>

## 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:

### **Scheduled revisions**

There are no scheduled revisions to the statutory homelessness release. However, it should be noted that data in each new release and latest quarter is provisional and subject to revision in future quarters. Local authorities may add new homelessness duty cases late or revise previous data submissions where mistakes have been spotted. These changes will not be marked with an R in the local authority dataset because these are likely to be extensive across all local authorities. However, the time series dataset will be marked with a P for the latest quarter and an R, where applicable, for previous quarters where changes have been made.

Revisions to the previous quarter will be made routinely with each new quarterly release. Where revisions to earlier quarters for the current financial year are made, these will be incorporated into the dataset at the end of the financial year.

### **Non-Scheduled Revisions**

Where local authorities spot a mistake in their own data that change affects the national story, such as changing a national trend or total by 3% or more or reversing it, these changes will be incorporated into the live tables and published statistics release as soon as possible. These changes will not be preannounced on the release calendar. Users will be informed of the change by a change to the title of the document, adding a '(revised)' suffix both on the webpage and in the document itself. An explanation of the changes will be included in the updated publication and local authority level changes will be marked with an 'R'. Smaller changes at the local authority level are routinely expected as part of the previous quarter revisions in future publications. Where a local authority notes a minor correction to their data, these will be updated in the next release along with the other routine amendments.

If MHCLG spot a mistake in the numbers or trends referred to in this release or live tables, these will be updated as soon as possible. Users will be informed of the change by a change to the title of the document, adding a '(revised)' suffix both on the webpage and in the document itself. An explanation of the changes will be included in the updated publication and local authority level changes will be marked with an 'R'.

## Coverage

The response rate for the latest quarter was 311 out of 317 local authorities (98.1% response rate). However, only 303 local authorities, 95.6%, provided usable data which is included in this release.

### **Initial assessment:**

8 local authorities were unable to provide initial assessment information. For the authorities that failed to provide this information their data was imputed from previous returns. The authorities whose figures were estimated were: Bexley, Dartford, Ealing, King's Lynn & West Norfolk, Lancaster, Redbridge, Wandsworth, and Woking, who did not provide accurate data this quarter but have provided figures in previous quarters. They are highlighted and referenced in the live tables. Comparisons with previous numbers of initial duties accepted indicate that the impact of this is small. There may be seasonal trends in this data, which is not currently adjusted.

Data for most authorities is included, however, it should be noted that a small number of authorities only provided information on one member of the household. A complete list of household breakdowns at the local authority level are provided in table A5P and A5R.

### **Prevention and relief:**

Several local authorities have reported issues collecting or reporting accurately on prevention and relief duties. 8 out of 317 local authorities did not provide this information, and this data was therefore imputed. The authorities whose figures were estimated were: Bexley, Dartford, Ealing, King's Lynn & West Norfolk, Lancaster, Redbridge, Wandsworth, and Woking, who did not provide duty end data this quarter but have provided figures in previous quarters. This means the overall England total and trends throughout the year should be used with caution.

### **Main duty:**

Several local authorities have reported issues collecting or reporting accurately on main duty decisions. Users of one of the main software systems have previously informed us that this information is not always extracted for a case and has resulted in some underreporting or missing information. 7 out of 317 local authorities either provided inaccurate data or did not provide this information. The authorities whose figures were estimated were: Bexley, Charnwood, Dartford, Ealing, King's Lynn & West Norfolk, Lancaster, and Wandsworth. As local authorities resolve these issues, main duty decision totals for this year are likely to be revised in future publications.

Some local authorities have also struggled to provide accurate information on main duties ended. As with temporary accommodation this information mostly relates to

cases assessed before the introduction of the 2017 HRA. 10 out of 317 local authorities did not provide this information. The local authorities whose figures were estimated were: Bexley, Dartford, Ealing, King's Lynn & West Norfolk, Lancaster, Lewisham, Redbridge, Richmond upon Thames, Wandsworth, and Westminster, who did not provide accurate data this quarter but have provided figures in previous quarters. However, other local authorities identified issues with underreporting. The England level figure is likely to be under reported so should be used with caution.

### **Temporary accommodation:**

Complete temporary accommodation (TA) data was provided by 298 (94.0%) local authorities. 15 local authorities either provided no temporary accommodation figures or their figures were incomplete and could not be used. Figures for these households have been imputed. The authorities who did not provide this information were Bexley, Broxbourne, Charnwood, Dartford, Ealing, King's Lynn & West Norfolk, Lancaster, Lewisham, North Kesteven, North Warwickshire, Redbridge, Richmond upon Thames, Shropshire, Wandsworth, and Woking. 4 local authorities provided temporary accommodation totals but no reliable breakdowns by type of temporary accommodation or no numbers of households in TA - these breakdowns were estimated for: Brighton & Hove, Greenwich, Kettering and Swindon.

Further issues of data quality are addressed in the [Technical Note](#).

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>.

## **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.

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

MHCLG is looking to hold user events in 2020 to understand more about how these statistics are used and how they can be improved. If you would like to be involved in these events, please contact [homelessnessstats@communities.gov.uk](mailto:homelessnessstats@communities.gov.uk).

Comments on any issues relating to this statistical release can also be addressed to the "Public enquiries" contact given in the "Enquiries" section below 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. 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.

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. Further information on the timescales for the consultation of user feedback will also be published on this forum:

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

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.

The H-CLIC newsletters for data providers, and other guidance documents, are published at the above GSS link.

## 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

Related MHCLG statistical releases are available at:

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

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) emergency accommodation survey data

MHCLG have published new management information about the support for people sleeping rough and those at risk of sleeping rough, as part of the 'Everyone in' campaign during the COVID-19 pandemic. The published data shows that 14,610 people had been provided emergency accommodation as at May 2020. The data, including a breakdown by London and Rest of England, is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-rough-sleeper-accommodation-survey-data-may-2020>

## Rough sleeping

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

publish this separately. This count/estimate is used to track annual changes in the population. The latest 2019 statistics published on 27/2/2020 reported 4,266 individuals rough sleeping in England. Further breakdowns can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-snapshot-in-england-autumn-2019>. The number of people owed a homelessness duty will include some but not all people rough sleeping in this count.

A further source of data on rough sleeping is from the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN). CHAIN is a multi-agency database recording information about people seen rough sleeping by outreach teams in London. CHAIN is managed by St Mungo's, a London-based homelessness charity, and is used by organisations working with people sleeping rough in London. Information is recorded onto the CHAIN database by people who work directly with people sleeping rough in London (e.g. workers in outreach teams, day centres, hostels and resettlement teams). CHAIN does not cover 'hidden homeless' groups, such as those who are squatting or staying in inaccessible locations to outreach workers.

There will be some overlap between rough sleeping households in this release and the rough sleepers in the annual autumn count and estimates and in the CHAIN dataset, the extent of this overlap is unknown and is likely to differ at local authority level.

The ONS have also published plans to improve homelessness and rough sleeping statistics in future available here: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/articles/improvinghomelessnessandroughsleepingstatisticsacrosstheuk/2019-09-17>

## Hidden Homelessness

MHCLG produce other statistics releases that can help build up the wider homelessness picture including hidden homeless. 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>

## Social Housing

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>

## Local Authority expenditure on housing and homelessness

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

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>. The GSS have published an interactive tool which provides details on the similarities and differences in the legislation which has an impact on the official statistics on statutory homelessness across the 4 counties. This is available here: <https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/dashboard/tools/homelessness-statistics/landing.html>

The most recent statutory homelessness statistics for the other U.K. Countries are available as below:

Scotland: <https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/RefTables>

Wales: <https://gov.wales/homelessness-statistics>

Northern Ireland: <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/housing-statistics#toc-2>

## 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)

If you have any enquiries regarding this document/publication, complete the form at <http://forms.communities.gov.uk/> or write to us at:

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government  
Fry Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF  
Telephone: 030 3444 0000

For all our latest news and updates follow us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/mhclg>

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