



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Housing, homelessness and multiple disadvantage

Insights from the Changing
Futures programme

The Changing Futures programme is a £92 million initiative between Government and The National Lottery Community Fund. It seeks to test innovative approaches to improving outcomes for people experiencing multiple disadvantage, including homelessness, drug and/or alcohol problems, mental health problems, domestic abuse and contact with the criminal justice system. There are an estimated 363,000 people affected by multiple disadvantage in England.

This infographic summarises the role homelessness plays in the experience of multiple disadvantage. It draws on information provided by over 3,000 people who had received support from the programme up to September 2024.*

When people first join the Changing Futures programme, they have a wide variety of housing situations and the majority are homeless



■ Homeless
 ■ In supported accommodation
 ■ Renting
 ■ Own home
 ■ Other

* Bases for statistics differ depending on how many people provided data on a particular topic.

Homelessness and multiple disadvantage are highly interconnected

Homelessness can be both a cause and consequence of other forms of disadvantage. Of Changing Futures participants:

89% had experienced homelessness at some point in their life*

65% of those with experience of homelessness first experienced this before the age of 26



73% had experienced rough sleeping at some point in their life

62% of those with experience of rough sleeping first experienced this before the age of 26



Even among those who are not homeless when they first join Changing Futures, over a third are not confident about the stability of their housing situation.

35% of people who are not homeless when they join Changing Futures are not confident they will still be in stable accommodation in six-months' time



* Homelessness can encompass rough sleeping, staying temporarily with friends or family ('sofa surfing') and staying in a short-term hostel, emergency accommodation, refuge or other temporary accommodation.

Addressing homelessness and securing stable accommodation is an important part of addressing multiple disadvantage

Among Changing Futures participants who shared personal goals, the most commonly mentioned theme was accommodation. Goals included remaining in their accommodation, moving to safer, more appropriate or independent accommodation, or just having a home of their own.

To get a roof over my head and get a good night's sleep.

To avoid eviction, to sort out council tax arrears.

Moving into independent accommodation away from problem areas.

But when they first join the Changing Futures programme, the majority of those who are homeless are not confident about moving into more stable accommodation in the near future.

73% of people who are homeless when they first join Changing Futures are not confident they will be in stable accommodation in six months' time



A lack of suitable accommodation can affect people's ability to engage in other support services. Addressing housing issues often comes early in the journey of support with Changing Futures. Stable accommodation provides the foundations for people to work on other areas of their life.

I've got a flat. I've done it up lovely. My son comes up and has his tea every other night. It will be a nice Christmas this year, because last Christmas I was on the streets

Gender-specific approaches are needed

There are significant differences in the proportion of men and women who had recently experienced homelessness and rough-sleeping when they first joined the Changing Futures programme.



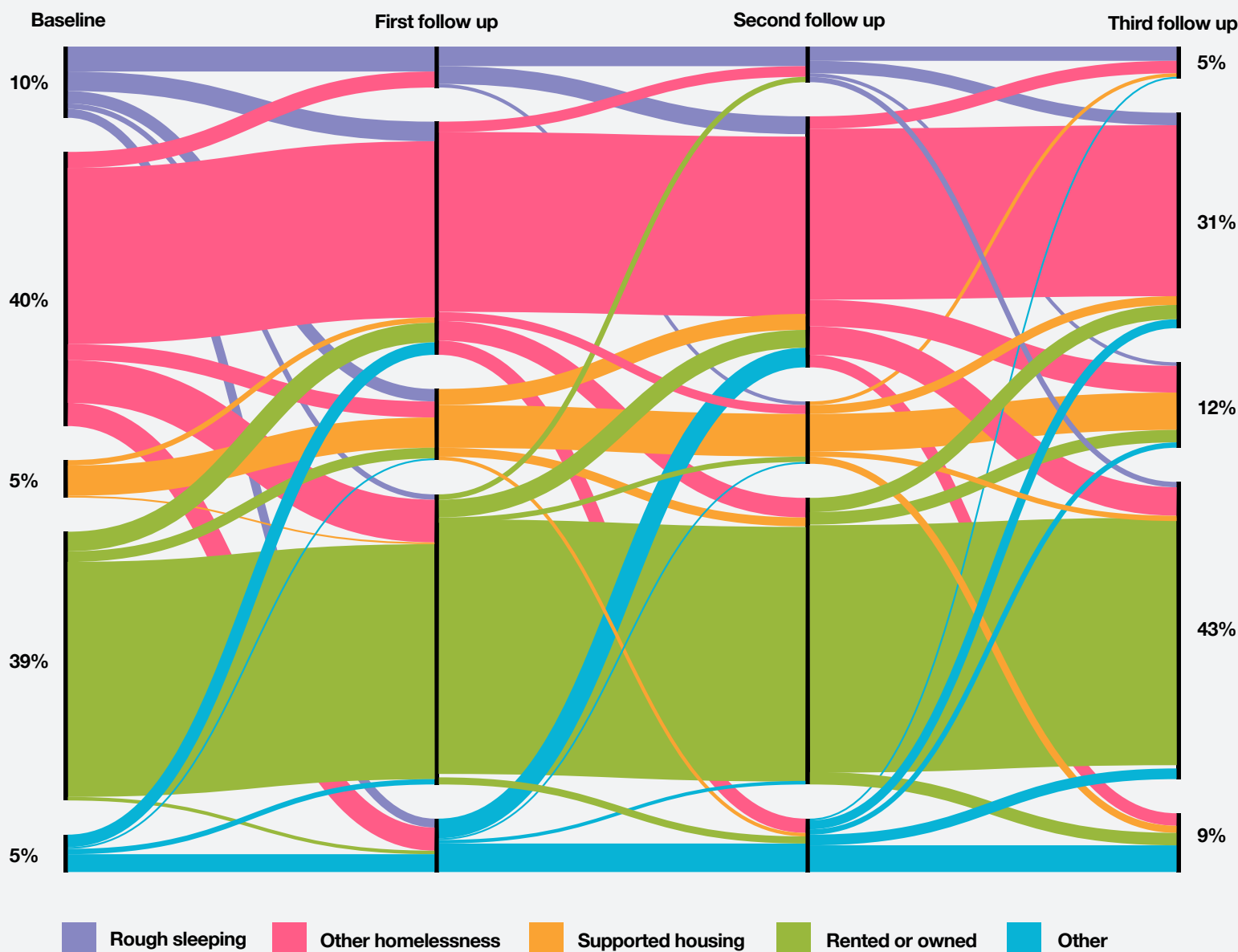
Women experiencing homelessness are more likely to be missed by services. Women-only accommodation and spaces where women feel comfortable are particularly important but are not always available. The Changing Futures evaluation fourth interim report[†] explores supporting women experiencing multiple disadvantage in more detail.

[†] www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-the-changing-futures-programme

Support like Changing Futures helps. But the transition from homeless to housed is rarely straightforward

The diagram below illustrates the flow of Changing Futures participants between different accommodation types between their (approximately) first three, six, nine and 12 months on the programme.* The thickness of the lines indicates the number of participants.

Where Changing Futures participants were staying most of the time in the previous month at baseline and follow-up



The overall proportion of people sleeping rough reduces with many moving into other homeless accommodation, such as hostels and emergency housing. Other forms of homelessness also reduce as people move into supported and rented accommodation. The diagram also shows some people moving from more stable forms of accommodation back into homelessness. See the infographic 'Achievements of the Changing Futures programme' for further information on changes in homelessness and rough-sleeping over time.

* Of the 'Renting or owned' category in the diagram, the majority of people are in social housing (renting from the council or housing association). Less than 3% are in housing owned by themselves or a close family member when they first join the programme.

People experiencing multiple disadvantage face particular barriers to finding housing

77%

of Changing Futures participants had asked their council for help because they were homeless or at risk of being homeless in the year prior to joining the programme

18%

of these had been helped to find settled accommodation



55%

had been helped to find temporary homeless accommodation



12%

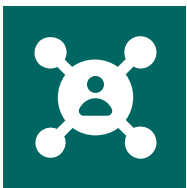
said no help had been provided



Limited housing stock and high demand can result in inflexible eligibility criteria, such as needing to have high levels of social care and/or mental health needs to be considered for supported housing. A conviction for arson, even if it was many decades ago, is often a barrier to getting accommodation. Where housing is offered, it may not be suitable – such as being a long way from support services or mixed gender.



Disabled people getting support from Changing Futures are less likely to experience improvements in homelessness and rough sleeping than those who are not disabled. People interviewed as part of the Changing Futures evaluation highlighted that the needs of disabled people are not always catered for and there is often limited accessible accommodation.



Changing Futures areas have helped overcome some of these barriers, for example, by organising multi-agency responses with housing providers and other services to provide support and share any risks. Although it varies between Changing Futures areas, several have highlighted statutory housing/homeless services as harder to engage in partnership working.