

Research Briefing

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Statutory homelessness in (England): The legal framework and performance



- 1 Statutory homelessness framework in England: An overview
- 2 Statistics on statutory homelessness
- 3 How local authorities are performing

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Summary

Local authorities in England are not obliged to house everyone who is experiencing or at risk of homelessness. They are required to take action depending on the circumstances of each case. They must comply with relevant legislation and case law, and must have regard to a statutory code of guidance.

This briefing provides an overview of the statutory homelessness framework in England, and how local authorities are performing against it. It also explains statutory homelessness trends and stakeholder views within the sector.

Statutory homelessness framework in England

The legal framework for statutory homelessness provision in England is set out in [part 7 of the Housing Act 1996](#).

If someone applies to a local housing authority for assistance with obtaining accommodation, and they appear to be homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days, the authority must carry out inquiries to establish what help they must provide. For example, they have to assess whether the applicant is statutorily homeless or threatened with homelessness and if so, whether they are eligible for assistance.

The statutory definition of homelessness extends beyond rooflessness or sleeping rough and can include situations where people are sofa-surfing or where their current home is unaffordable.

Eligibility is based on an applicant's immigration and residence status in the UK.

Authorities are legally obliged to take 'reasonable steps' to try and prevent or relieve homelessness among all eligible applicants and their households. These are commonly known as the 'prevention' and 'relief' duties.

Local authorities are not obliged to secure accommodation for all people experiencing homelessness, but they must secure suitable accommodation for applicants who have or might have a 'priority need'.

Trends in statutory homelessness over 2022/23

In the 2022/23 financial year, local authorities recorded around 298,000 homelessness prevention or relief duties owed to households following an initial assessment. About 141,000 of these were prevention duties while around 158,000 were relief duties.

The Covid-19 pandemic had an impact on the homelessness work carried out by local authorities. In April to June 2020, the number of households owed a prevention duty fell by almost a third compared with the previous year. This is

attributed to government measures aimed at reducing evictions during the pandemic. The number of relief duties rose by 18% over the same period, in part because of instructions to local authorities to provide housing for people experiencing or at risk of sleeping rough.

The number of households owed a prevention duty has started to return to pre-pandemic levels and was 5% higher in 2022/23 than in 2021/22. The increase is primarily driven by households with children, particularly those threatened with homelessness due to the end of an assured shorthold tenancy (AST) in the private rented sector.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (prior to 9 July 2024, known as the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) collects data on the outcomes of households owed a homelessness duty by their local authority. Around two-thirds of all households owed a duty in 2022/23 either had accommodation secured or were owed a statutory ‘main duty’ to secure accommodation. This means they are unintentionally homeless and fall into a priority need group, so their local authority has a statutory duty to secure accommodation for them. The main duty is not assessed until the initial prevention and relief duties have elapsed.

Longer term trends

Statutory homelessness started to rise in 2010/11 for the first time since 2003/04. This is attributed to several factors, but primarily a continuing shortfall in the delivery of new affordable housing relative to levels of need. Changes to benefit entitlements are viewed as a significant contributory factor, particularly in areas with high private rent levels, such as London. One of the key findings in Crisis’ [Homelessness monitor: England 2019](#) was that benefit changes made it difficult for local authorities in areas of high housing demand to secure suitable housing for eligible homeless households.

How local authorities are performing

Prior to the implementation of the [Homelessness Reduction Act \(HRA\) 2017](#) in April 2018, various commentators and politicians raised concerns about some areas of statutory homelessness service provision, including:

- people experiencing difficulties accessing statutory homelessness services, which often led to accusations of ‘gatekeeping’
- the standard of advice and assistance provided to people who are not in a category of priority need, such as single people and couples with no dependent children
- the legislative framework not prioritising prevention, which encouraged councils to intervene at the point of crisis
- an apparent impact of funding constraints on local authorities’ capacity to deliver their statutory functions

Post-introduction of the HRA 2017

The HRA introduced duties on local authorities to prevent and relieve homelessness. The new requirements should mean no one who is eligible, and homeless or threatened with homelessness, is turned away without advice and assistance, and a personal housing plan as a minimum. Evidence indicates that while more people are accessing meaningful help sooner, some people are still being turned away without an assessment.

A [one-off oral evidence session of a 2019 Housing, Communities and Local Government \(HCLG\) Select Committee inquiry into the HRA](#) revealed that while the HRA was delivering many improvements as intended, including delivering more person-centred services, and fewer people being turned away without support or advice, some challenges remained, including:

- varying practice across local authorities
- limited supply of affordable housing to rent constraining capacity to relieve homelessness
- levels of ‘new burdens’ funding, particularly in London not being considered adequate to implement the HRA

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) launched a [call for evidence on the impact of the HRA \(PDF\)](#) on 23 July 2019. The government’s response was published on 25 September 2020, along with the findings of an [independent Evaluation of the Implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act: Final Report \(PDF\)](#). Like the HCLG Committee’s findings, the evaluation reported successes alongside recommendations for ongoing implementation, including:

- extending new burdens funding and updating how it is calculated and allocated
- maintaining and enhancing local authority support from MHCLG
- additional training to reinforce culture change and strengthen casework in local authorities
- obtaining and using service users’ feedback

[The government’s response](#) to the call for evidence and the outcome of the independent evaluation contained a series of commitments, including an awareness raising exercise around the new duties and a post-implementation review of new burdens funding.

Through the course of the Covid-19 pandemic, [councils were directed by central government, supported by funding, to bring ‘Everyone in’](#). This involved arranging safe accommodation for all people who were, or were at risk of, sleeping rough. The challenges faced by councils during this period meant they had to adjust to new ways of working, such as improving pre-existing pathways for single homeless people, which according to [research by](#)

[the Local Government Association](#) were “more effective and had potential for the future.”

[The final report](#) (2022) of a piece of longitudinal research carried out by Crisis found that while the HRA enhanced support for significantly more people facing homelessness, people were still being turned away with no help. Local authorities reported that a lack of housing options and not having enough staff or funding for their service was having a negative impact on their capacity to deliver the HRA’s aims. Crisis recommended:

- building on the intent of the HRA and widening legal protections to help everyone address their homelessness
- increasing the supply of social rented housing
- improving service standards through a statutory code of practice

In March 2023, the [Local Government Ombudsman published a report](#), marking five years since the HRA came into force. The Ombudsman acknowledged the pressure on councils’ ability to deliver “more with less” and noted “many examples where councils have adopted the correct approach”. However, they found that some councils were still failing to carry out some of their legal obligations. For example, some were still delaying completing assessments and accepting duties. The Ombudsman highlighted that these failings “represent missed opportunities to achieve one of the main aims of the act: preventing homelessness.”

The Library briefing on [Statutory homelessness \(England\): Causes and government policy](#) summarises what is known about the causes of homelessness and outlines the UK Government’s approach to tackling homelessness in England, including its programme of commissioned research.

1 Statutory homelessness framework in England: An overview

A local housing authority is a local council responsible for statutory housing functions.

Local housing authorities in England are legally obliged to ensure that advice and information about homelessness and preventing it is available, free of charge, to everyone in their area. Authorities must take specific action to help all eligible people (based on immigration and residence status in the UK) who are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days.

This section introduces the main legal duties owed by local housing authorities to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness in England.

1.1 Definition of homelessness

Duties owed to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness are contained in [part 7 of the Housing Act 1996](#).

The statutory definition of homelessness extends beyond rooflessness or sleeping rough. [Section 175 of the 1996 act](#) states that someone is homeless if they have no accommodation available to them, along with their household, which:

- they have a legal right to occupy, such as by ownership, tenancy agreement or other permission to reside there
- they can access¹
- would be reasonable for them to continue occupying, such as being affordable and being fit for human habitation

Accommodation is not considered reasonable to continue occupying if it is probable that it will lead to violence or domestic abuse against the applicant or anyone in their household.²

The statutory definition of homelessness also includes situations where someone has a mobile home, houseboat, or other moveable structure

¹ For example, someone who has been illegally evicted has accommodation they can legally occupy, but they cannot access it.

² Housing Act 1996, s177 sub-s1. “Domestic abuse” has the meaning given by section 1 of the [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)

suitable for human habitation, but there is nowhere they can legally place and reside in it.

Someone is threatened with homelessness if they are likely to become homeless within 56 days.

1.2

Duties owed to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness

Duty to make inquiries

If a local housing authority has reason to believe that a person applying for housing may be homeless or threatened with homelessness, the authority must “make such inquiries as are necessary to satisfy themselves” whether they are eligible for assistance and if so, what duties may be owed to the applicant under the Housing Act 1996.³ The statutory [homelessness code of guidance](#), that authorities must have regard to, says “Every person applying for assistance from a housing authority stating that they are or are going to be homeless will require an initial interview.”

Prevention and relief duties

The [Homelessness Reduction Act \(HRA\) 2017](#) amended part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and came into force 3 April 2018. It placed additional duties on local authorities in England to take ‘reasonable steps’ to help eligible applicants:

- avoid homelessness if they are threatened with homelessness.⁴ This is commonly referred to as the ‘prevention’ duty.
- secure suitable accommodation if they are homeless.⁵ This is commonly referred to as the ‘relief’ duty.

Eligibility is based on an applicant’s immigration and residence status in the UK.⁶ The new HRA duties stop short of requiring an authority to provide accommodation for homeless applicants who are not in priority need.

Circumstances in which the prevention and relief duties come to an end are explained in chapter 14 of the [homelessness code of guidance](#).

³ Housing Act 1996, s184 sub-s1

⁴ Housing Act 1996, s195

⁵ Housing Act 1996, s189B

⁶ For more information on eligibility, see chapter 7 of the statutory [Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities](#)

Ineligible applicants should still be able to access free advice and information about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness from a local authority.

Duty to provide advisory services

Local housing authorities have a duty to provide advisory services, free of charge, to any person in their area “including people who are not eligible for further homelessness services as a result of their immigration status.”⁷ Services must provide advice and information about the following:⁸

- the prevention of homelessness
- securing accommodation when homeless
- the rights of people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, including the duties owed to them under part 7 of the Housing Act 1996
- any help that is available and how to access it

The HRA amended the 1996 act to require that housing authorities design their advice and information services to meet the needs of people within the local authority area. In particular, the needs of the following groups must be taken into account:⁹

- people released from prison or youth detention accommodation
- care leavers
- former members of the regular armed forces¹⁰
- victims of domestic abuse
- people leaving hospital
- people suffering from a mental illness or impairment
- any other group that the authority identifies as being at particular risk of homelessness in their area

Public authority duty to refer

In addition to direct approaches from individuals/households, or applications made on their behalf by a solicitor, adviser or social worker for example, authorities may receive notifications from certain public bodies under the ‘duty to refer’.¹¹ Specified public authorities must notify housing authorities if they believe someone using their services may be homeless or threatened with homelessness. The public authorities subject to the duty to refer are

⁷ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities](#), para 3.1

⁸ Housing Act 1996, s179 sub-s1

⁹ Housing 1996, s179 sub-s2

¹⁰ The regular armed forces are the Royal Navy, the Royal Marines, the regular army and the Royal Air Force.

¹¹ Housing Act 1996, s213B

specified in the [Homelessness \(Review Procedure etc.\) Regulations 2018](#) and include:

- prisons
- youth offender institutions
- secure training centres
- secure colleges
- youth offending teams
- probation services (including community rehabilitation companies)
- Jobcentre Plus
- social service authorities
- emergency departments
- urgent treatment centres
- hospitals in their function of providing inpatient care

Housing authorities are responsible for setting up local procedures for managing referrals from public authorities.

The Secretary of State for Defence is also subject to the duty to refer for members of the regular armed forces.

The public bodies listed above must have the consent of the individual before making a referral to a housing authority and must allow the individual to identify which authority the referral should be made. The individual must also consent to sharing their contact details with the housing authority.¹²

A referral made by a public authority to the housing authority under the duty to refer is not classed as an application for homelessness assistance, but authorities should always respond to any referral received. They may wish to contact the referred individual using the details provided. If the individual does not respond, the authority should provide information about how to access advice and assistance.¹³

Assessments and personalised housing plans

If a local authority is satisfied that an applicant is both eligible for assistance and either homeless or threatened with homelessness, they must conduct a full assessment of the applicant's case. The assessment must consider the type of housing that would be suitable and any support that would be necessary for the applicant to secure and retain suitable accommodation. The outcome of the assessment must inform "a personalised plan to provide a

¹² DLUHC and MHCLG, [A guide to the duty to refer](#), 28 September 2018

¹³ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities](#), 22 February 2018, paras 4.20-21

framework for housing authorities and applicants to work together to identify appropriate actions to prevent or relieve the applicant's homelessness."¹⁴

The code of guidance says:

It should be noted that applicants who have been served a valid section 21 notice to end an assured shorthold tenancy of their only available home, which expires within 56 days, are threatened with homelessness.¹⁵

For more detailed information on homelessness arising from the service of a section 21 notice on an assured shorthold tenant, see Library research briefing on [Applying as homeless from an assured shorthold tenancy \(England\)](#).¹⁶

The new duties introduced by the HRA mean authorities should actively work with all eligible applicants when taking reasonable steps to help prevent and relieve homelessness. Personalised housing plans are important to this process.

Interim duty to accommodate

If a housing authority has reason to believe an applicant may be homeless, eligible for assistance and in 'priority need' (see below), they are obliged to provide interim accommodation while the authority establishes what action they must take.¹⁷ Any accommodation offered or provided by a local authority in discharge of its homelessness functions must be suitable for the applicant and their household (see below for information about suitability).

The 1996 act also requires local authorities to provide interim accommodation in the following circumstances:

- When they decide that an applicant who has priority need has become homeless intentionally (see below). The local authority must secure accommodation for long enough to give the applicant a reasonable opportunity to find their own accommodation.
- When an applicant with an apparent priority need, and no local connection to the authority, has been referred to another local authority. The local authority that has referred the case will have a duty to provide interim accommodation pending the outcome of that referral (see below for an overview of local connection).

Local authorities have discretionary powers to provide interim accommodation to applicants:

¹⁴ For more information on assessments and personalised housing plans see chapter 11 of the [Homelessness code of guidance](#).

¹⁵ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities](#), para 11.5

¹⁶ Commons Library research briefing CBP-06856, [Applying as homeless from an assured shorthold tenancy \(England\)](#), 9 July 2020

¹⁷ Housing Act 1996, s188

- when taking reasonable steps to prevent or relieve an experience of homelessness¹⁸
- pending the outcome of a review of a decision relating to their case¹⁹
- pending an appeal of a review decision to the county court²⁰

Priority need

The following categories of people have a priority need for accommodation under section 189 of the 1996 act:

Priority need categories d-g were added by the [Homelessness \(Priority Need for Accommodation \(England\) Order 2002](#) which came into force on 31 July 2002.

- a) pregnant women, or a person who lives with (or might reasonably be expected to live with) a pregnant woman²¹
- b) people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness as a result of any emergency such as flood, fire or any other disaster
- c) people who are vulnerable because of old age, mental illness, handicap or physical disability or other special reason, or with whom such a person resides or may reasonably be expected to reside
- d) 16- and 17-year-olds unless they are owed certain duties under the Children Act 1989²²
- e) 18-20-year-olds who were looked after, accommodated, or fostered by a local authority while aged 16 or 17²³
- f) people who are vulnerable as a result of being:
 - i. looked after, accommodated, or fostered (for people aged 21 or more),
 - ii. a former member of the armed forces, or
 - iii. in prison.

¹⁸ [Section 205\(3\) of the Housing Act 1996](#) enables local housing authorities to discharge the prevention and/or relief duties by securing accommodation for an applicant.

¹⁹ [Section 202 of the Housing Act 1996](#) gives applicants the right to request a review of a number of housing authority's decisions about their case. Housing authorities have powers to accommodate applicants pending a decision on reviews under [sections 188\(3\)](#), [199A\(6\)](#) and [200\(5\)](#) of the Housing Act 1996.

²⁰ Housing Act 1996, s204 sub-s2

²¹ For example, where an application is made by a non-pregnant partner in a couple who had not previously lived together, but who now, in light of the pregnancy, intend to do so.

²² [Homelessness code of guidance](#), paras 8.20–24

²³ For the definition of 'looked after' accommodated or fostered, see Shelter, [Priority need of people who have been in care](#), last updated 3 May 2024

- g) people who are vulnerable because they are fleeing violence or threats of violence that are likely to be carried out, other than domestic abuse (see below)
- h) people who are homeless because of experiencing domestic abuse²⁴

The test of vulnerability is not defined in law. Whether someone is vulnerable because of any of the specified reasons is for local authorities to decide, based on an assessment of the facts, in line with legislation, relevant case law and having regard to the statutory code of guidance.

Main housing duty

If attempts to relieve someone's homelessness are unsuccessful and the applicant is assessed as being eligible for assistance, 'unintentionally' homeless (see below) and in priority need, the local authority must ensure that suitable temporary accommodation is available for the applicant and their household. This duty is owed unless the housing authority refers the application to another authority because they do not have a local connection (see below). Temporary accommodation must be provided until one of the circumstances specified in [section 193 of the 1996 act](#) bring it to an end. This is commonly referred to as the 'main housing duty'. [The Localism Act 2011](#) enables authorities (since 9 November 2012) to discharge their duty to homeless households by offering a suitable tenancy in private rented housing.²⁵

Applicants who have a priority need, are unintentionally homeless, and no longer owed a relief duty due to 'deliberate and unreasonable refusal to cooperate', are not owed the main housing duty. However, local authorities must still provide them with temporary accommodation until one of a list of specified circumstances bring the duty to an end.²⁶

Intentional homelessness

A person becomes homeless intentionally if they deliberately do or fail to do anything that means they leave accommodation that was both available and reasonable for them to continue occupying.²⁷

Applicants who are assessed by a local authority as being in priority need and intentionally homeless are not owed the main housing duty. However, authorities must still secure accommodation for them and their household for enough time to give them a reasonable opportunity to find their own

[Chapter 14 of the homelessness code of guidance](#) says that local authorities must have regard to the applicant's particular needs and circumstances when deciding whether refusal to cooperate is unreasonable.

²⁴ Domestic Abuse Act 2021, s78

²⁵ The suitability requirements for private rented sector accommodation offers, that are intended to bring a main housing duty to an end, are set out in [article 3 of the Homelessness \(Suitability of Accommodation\) \(England\) Order 2012/2601](#).

²⁶ Housing Act 1996, s193

²⁷ Housing Act 1996, s191sub-s1

accommodation.²⁸ Local authorities must also provide advice and assistance to help them do this.

[Chapter 9 of the homelessness code of guidance](#) sets out the information that local authorities must consider when assessing whether someone has become homeless intentionally.

In relation to intentional homelessness decisions for care leavers aged 18-25, the guidance states:

It will be a matter for the housing authority to determine whether or not a care leaver has become homeless intentionally, taking into account all relevant facts.

[...]

In light of the vulnerability of care leavers and the instability they typically experience, it is expected that intentional homeless decisions are exceptional.²⁹

1.3

Suitability of accommodation

Any accommodation made available by a local authority, in discharge of its functions under part 7 Housing Act 1996, must be suitable for the applicant and all members of their household.³⁰ [Section 210 of the 1996 act](#) sets out what housing authorities must consider when determining suitability. [Chapter 17 of the Homelessness code of guidance](#) provides local authorities with detailed information about the factors to consider when determining suitability. At paragraph 17.4 the code states:

Space and arrangement will be key factors in determining the suitability of accommodation. However, consideration of whether accommodation is suitable will require an assessment of all aspects of the accommodation in the light of the relevant needs, requirements and circumstances of the homeless person and their household.³¹

Suitability factors that must be considered

The following factors must always be considered by local housing authorities when assessing the suitability of accommodation under part 7 of the 1996 act.

The needs and circumstances of the household

Local authorities are expected to carefully consider medical or physical needs when assessing the suitability of accommodation. For example, people with

²⁸ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), chapter 15, paras 15.13-15

²⁹ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), chapter 22, para 22.17

³⁰ Housing Act 1996, s206

³¹ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), para 17.4

mobility needs will require physical access to and around the home. Social considerations are also important, including the risk of domestic abuse, violence, racial or other harassment in a particular location.³²

Affordability

Any accommodation provided must be affordable, based on an assessment of:³³

- the financial resources available, such as income and savings
- the cost of the accommodation, such as rent, services charges, and council tax
- other financial commitments, such as child maintenance payments
- any other reasonable living expenses

[Paragraph 17.49 of the code of guidance](#) says that accommodation costs “should not be regarded as affordable if the applicant would be left with a residual income that is insufficient to meet these essential needs.”

Location

Local authorities must consider the location of any accommodation secured, including:³⁴

- the significance of any disruption to any household member’s employment, education or caring responsibilities
- proximity and accessibility to:
 - any essential medical services or other support needed by anyone in the household
 - local services, amenities and transport
- where placing out of area, the distance of the location from the authority’s district (see below)

As far as ‘reasonably practicable’, any accommodation secured by a local authority should be within their own area.³⁵ Where this is not possible, authorities are expected to try and secure accommodation as close as possible to where the applicant was previously living.³⁶ The code of guidance

³² DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), paras 17.5-17.6

³³ [Homelessness \(Suitability of Accommodation\) Order 1996, SI1996/3204](#)

³⁴ [The Homelessness \(Suitability of Accommodation\) \(England\) Order 2012, SI2012/2601](#)

³⁵ Housing Act 1996, s208 sub-s1

³⁶ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), para 17.53

highlights that in some cases, such as when a household member is fleeing domestic abuse, placing out of area may be beneficial.³⁷

Where a housing authority secures accommodation outside of their area, they are required by [section 208 of the Housing Act 1996](#) to notify the ‘receiving’ authority of the placement. The notification must include:

- the name of the applicant
- the number and description of other household members
- the address of the accommodation
- the date the accommodation was made available
- which part 7 Housing Act 1996 function the housing authority is securing the accommodation under

The notice must be given, in writing, within 14 days of the accommodation being made available to the applicant.

Standards

[Section 210 of the Housing Act 1996](#) requires local authorities to have regard to specific legal obligations in relation to the physical standards of accommodation secured. This includes, as a minimum, making sure the property:³⁸

- is free from any category 1 (serious) hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)³⁹
- would not be statutorily overcrowded, as defined by [part 10 of the Housing Act 1985](#)
- meets all relevant legal requirements if it is in a house in multiple occupation (HMO)

In February 2024, the code of guidance was updated to advise local authorities that accommodation is not suitable if there is not adequate space for a cot for each household member aged under two.⁴⁰

Bed and breakfast accommodation

[The Homelessness \(Suitability of Accommodation\) \(England\) Order 2003](#) states that bed and breakfast (B&B) is not suitable for applicants if there are dependent children or a pregnant woman in the household, except for a

³⁷ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), para 17.59

³⁸ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), paras 17.26-17.32

³⁹ For more information about the HHSRS see Commons Library research briefing CBP-01917, [The Housing Health and Safety Rating System \(HHSRS\)](#), 12 July 2019

⁴⁰ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), para 17.12

maximum of six weeks when there is no alternative accommodation available.

The code of guidance states that B&B accommodation should not be considered suitable for:

- care leavers aged under 25, and should only be used in exceptional circumstances and for short periods. This also applies to hotels and nightly let accommodation with shared facilities.⁴¹
- 16 to 17 years old, even on an emergency basis.⁴²

Suitability of private rented sector (PRS) accommodation

The suitability requirements set out in [article 3 of the Homelessness \(Suitability of Accommodation\) \(England\) Order 2012](#) apply to offers of PRS accommodation in the following circumstances:⁴³

- when the offer is intended to end the main housing duty
- it is a ‘final accommodation offer’ made in the homelessness relief stage
- it is secured for an applicant, who is in priority need, under the prevention or relief duty

Suitability over time

Accommodation that may not be suitable in the long term may be considered suitable in the short-term. For example, a local authority may consider accommodation suitable when discharging their interim duty (see above), but that same accommodation might not be suitable to discharge a main housing duty (see above). Local authorities are obliged to keep the suitability of accommodation under review and respond to any relevant change in circumstances until the relevant accommodation duty is ended.⁴⁴

1.4

Local connection

Local authorities are generally not required to consider whether a homeless applicant has a local connection with the area. However, the code of guidance notes that authorities are expected to consider local connection in relation to certain former asylum seekers.⁴⁵

⁴¹ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), para 22.28

⁴² DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), para 17.43

⁴³ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), para 17.15

⁴⁴ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), para 17.7-17.8

⁴⁵ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), chapter 10, paras 10.15-16

A local authority cannot refuse an application on the basis that someone does not have a local connection.

Local connection criteria

The criteria for establishing a local connection are set out in [section 199\(1\) of the Housing Act 1996](#) and include the following:

Normal residence in the area

An applicant has a local connection to an area if they normally reside there through their own choice.

The length of time required to establish a local connection through normal residence of choice is not defined in legislation. However, the local authorities agreement (LAA) suggests that the working definition of normal residence “should be residence for at least 6 months in the area during the previous 12 months, or for at least 3 years during the previous 5-year period.”⁴⁶

[The code of guidance, at paragraph 10.5](#), advises that this can include living in temporary accommodation provided by a local authority under the statutory homelessness provisions.

[Paragraph 10.6 of the code](#) states that a person who is street homeless or sofa-surfing should be treated as normally resident in that area if they have no settled accommodation anywhere else and the authority is satisfied the person is residing in the area.

Employment

A person establishes a local connection to an area by working there. The code of guidance states that having an employer based in the area is not sufficient.⁴⁷ The LAA advises that the work should not be of a ‘casual nature’.⁴⁸

Family associations

An applicant can have a local connection with an area if they or any other household member has family associations there.

There is no statutory definition of ‘family association’. The LAA suggests it is:

...where an applicant or a person who might reasonably be expected to reside with the applicant has parents, adult children or brothers or sisters who have been resident in the district for a period of at least 5 years at the date of the decision, and the applicant indicates a wish to be near them.⁴⁹

The code of guidance advises that “the actual closeness of the family association may count for more than the degree of blood relation” so that family members other than those listed in the LAA may be considered a local

⁴⁶ Local Government Association, [Procedures for referrals of homeless applicants to another local authority](#), last updated 5 August 2019, para 4.3(i)

⁴⁷ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), para 10.8

⁴⁸ Local Government Association, [Procedures for referrals of homeless applicants to another local authority](#), last updated 5 August 2019, para 4.3(ii)

⁴⁹ As above, para 4.3(iii)

connection. It also highlights that the five-year family association residency rule may negatively impact some groups, such as refugees whose relatives may not have built up the required length of residency in the UK.⁵⁰

Special circumstances

[Section 199 of the 1996 act](#) states that someone can establish a local connection because of special circumstances. This is not defined in legislation, but the code of guidance suggests “this might include the need to be near special medical or support services which are available only in a particular district.”⁵¹ The LAA indicates that it may apply to people who have been in prison or hospital and their circumstances do not conform to the other criteria.⁵²

Care Leavers and former asylum seekers

[Section 8 of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017](#) amended the 1996 act so that young people owed leaving care duties by a local authority under [section 23C of the Children Act 1989](#), have a local connection to that area. Such care leavers will establish a local connection in a different area if they have lived there continuously for at least two years, and some of that time was before they turned 16. Their residence must have been arranged under section 22A of the Children Act 1989.

Conditions for a local connection referral

Local housing authorities have discretion to refer an application to another authority if the ‘conditions for referral’ are met.⁵³ This includes circumstances where the applicant:

- has no local connection to the authority they have applied to, but they do have a local connection to another area
- has accepted a private rented sector offer in the area, within two years of the current application, and that offer was made by another authority⁵⁴
- was placed in the authority’s area by another authority as a result of a previous homelessness application, and the current application has been made within five years of the first application

The above conditions are not met if the applicant, or anyone in their household would be at risk of domestic abuse if they returned to the other area. They are also not met if the applicant, or any household member has

⁵⁰ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), para 10.9-10.10

⁵¹ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), para 10.11

⁵² Local Government Association, [Procedures for referrals of homeless applicants to another local authority](#), last updated 5 August 2019, para 4.3(iv)

⁵³ Housing Act 1996, s198 sub-ss2, 2ZA and 2A

⁵⁴ A private rented sector offer under section 193(7AA) of the Housing Act 1996

suffered violence (other than domestic abuse) in the other area and further, similar violence is ‘probable’ if they were to return there.

There are two stages during the application process where the conditions may be met for a local connection referral to another authority:

1. When it has been established that the applicant is owed the relief duty.⁵⁵
2. When the relief duty has come to an end, and it has been established that the applicant would be owed the main housing duty.⁵⁶

If an applicant has no local connection with any local authority area, the relevant duties will be owed by the authority the applicant has applied to.

If an authority refers an application to another local authority, the responsibility for discharging homelessness duties is transferred to the other authority once the applicant has been notified, in writing, that their case will be, or has been, referred. Applicants who are homeless and may be in priority need are still owed an interim accommodation duty pending the outcome of the referral (see interim accommodation above).

When local authorities disagree on whether the conditions for referral have been met, the homelessness code of guidance directs authorities to the LAA [guidelines for invoking the disputes procedure](#).⁵⁷

1.5

Homelessness strategies

The [Homelessness Act 2002](#) introduced a statutory duty on local authorities in England to formulate and publish a local homelessness strategy.⁵⁸ Authorities are also required to keep their strategies under review and modify them if necessary. They must, at minimum, carry out a homelessness review and publish a new strategy based on that review every five years.⁵⁹

Guidance for local authorities on conducting a review and formulating a strategy is contained in [chapter 2 of the Homelessness Code of Guidance](#).

⁵⁵ Housing Act 1996, s198 sub-sA1

⁵⁶ Housing Act 1996, s198 sub-s1

⁵⁷ DLUHC, [Homelessness code of guidance](#), para 10.61; Local Government Association, [Procedures for referrals of homeless applicants to another local authority. Guidelines for local authorities on procedures for referral](#), 5 August 2019, chapter 12

⁵⁸ Homelessness Act 2002, s1 sub-s3

⁵⁹ Homelessness Act 2002, s1 sub-4

2

Statistics on statutory homelessness

Summary

- Around 298,000 households were owed an initial duty to either prevent or relieve homelessness under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 in 2022/23.
- 68% of households owed a relief duty in 2022/23 were single adults applying alone. Around a quarter were households with children.
- Just under half of households owed a prevention duty were single adults, while around 42% were households with children.
- The number of households owed a homelessness prevention or relief duty due to the end of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST) in the private rented sector is increasing.
- There are ethnic disparities in homelessness. 10% of homelessness duties were owed to households with a Black applicant, while Black people make up 4% of England's population.
- Of all households owed a duty in 2021/22, 69% had their cases resolved with accommodation secured or a main duty owed by March 2023.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) publishes quarterly statistics on local authorities' homelessness duties.⁶⁰ The figures include decisions made on applicant households, the background of those households, and how local authorities have discharged their duties.

This briefing focuses on activity over the year between April 2022 and March 2023. Statistical releases are published quarterly by DLUHC:

- DLUHC's [quarterly statutory homelessness release](#) explains national trends in activity.
- Data for individual local authorities is available from DLUHC's [live tables on homelessness](#).

⁶⁰ On 9 July 2024, the government renamed the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). At the time of writing, MHCLG have not yet published any statutory homelessness releases.

2.1 Where do statutory homelessness statistics come from?

As explained in section 1 of this paper, the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017, with effect from April 2018, created new duties for local authorities in addition to pre-existing duties under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. This necessitated a change in how homelessness statistics are reported. When the act came into force, local authorities started to submit case-level homelessness data to DLUHC using a system called H-CLIC. H-CLIC provides more detailed information about the background of applicants and household support needs.

The government commissioned an evaluation of the implementation of the HRA, published in 2020. The evaluation identified two types of cases where prevention and relief activities were not consistently recorded in all local authorities. These are longer-term prevention cases, where the applicant is not at risk of homelessness within 56 days, and cases receiving support through routes other than the local authority's housing options team.⁶¹

DLUHC's quarterly releases often have data missing for some local authorities. In these cases, the national total includes estimates for those local authorities based on past trends.

2.2 Statistics for 2022/23

Prevention and relief duties

Local authorities have a duty to take reasonable steps to prevent homelessness for applicants who are threatened with homelessness within 56 days, and a duty to take reasonable steps to relieve homelessness for applicants who are homeless (see section 1). The H-CLIC system requires local authorities to record the outcome of their initial decision on homelessness applicants: whether they are owed a prevention or relief duty.

The table below shows the outcome of initial decisions made by local authorities in 2022/23. A total of 311,990 decisions were recorded, of which 298,430 resulted in a homelessness duty being owed (96% of the total).

⁶¹ MHCLG, [Evaluation of the Implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act: Final Report, 16 March 2020 \(publicly available 25 September 2020\) \(PDF\)](#)

Initial decisions on applications for homelessness assistance

England, 2022/23

Decision	Number of households	% of all decisions	% change on previous year
Homelessness duty owed	298,430		+7%
Prevention duty	140,790	45.1%	+5%
Relief duty	157,640	50.5%	+9%
Neither duty owed	13,560	4.3%	+12%
Total decisions	311,990		+7%

Source: DLUHC, [Statutory homelessness live tables](#), Table A1. 13 October 2023

The chart overleaf shows the number of households owed prevention and relief duties in each quarter between 2019 and 2023. In the April-June 2020 quarter, the number of households owed a prevention duty fell by almost a third compared with a year previously, while the number owed a relief duty was 18% higher.

The number of households owed a prevention duty remained lower in each quarter of 2020/21 than a year previously. By the end of June 2023, numbers generally remained lower than pre-pandemic levels but were beginning to increase. The number of relief duties owed in each quarter has remained higher than pre-pandemic levels throughout the period.

Both trends are likely to have been affected by the government's response to the pandemic.

Several measures aimed at reducing evictions were in place between March 2020 and May 2021,⁶² which are likely to have reduced the number of households becoming threatened with homelessness due to a tenancy ending.

Instructions to local authorities to provide housing for rough sleepers will have increased the number of people owed a relief duty at the start of the pandemic. It is not likely that this has remained a significant factor in the increasing number of relief duties in later years.⁶³

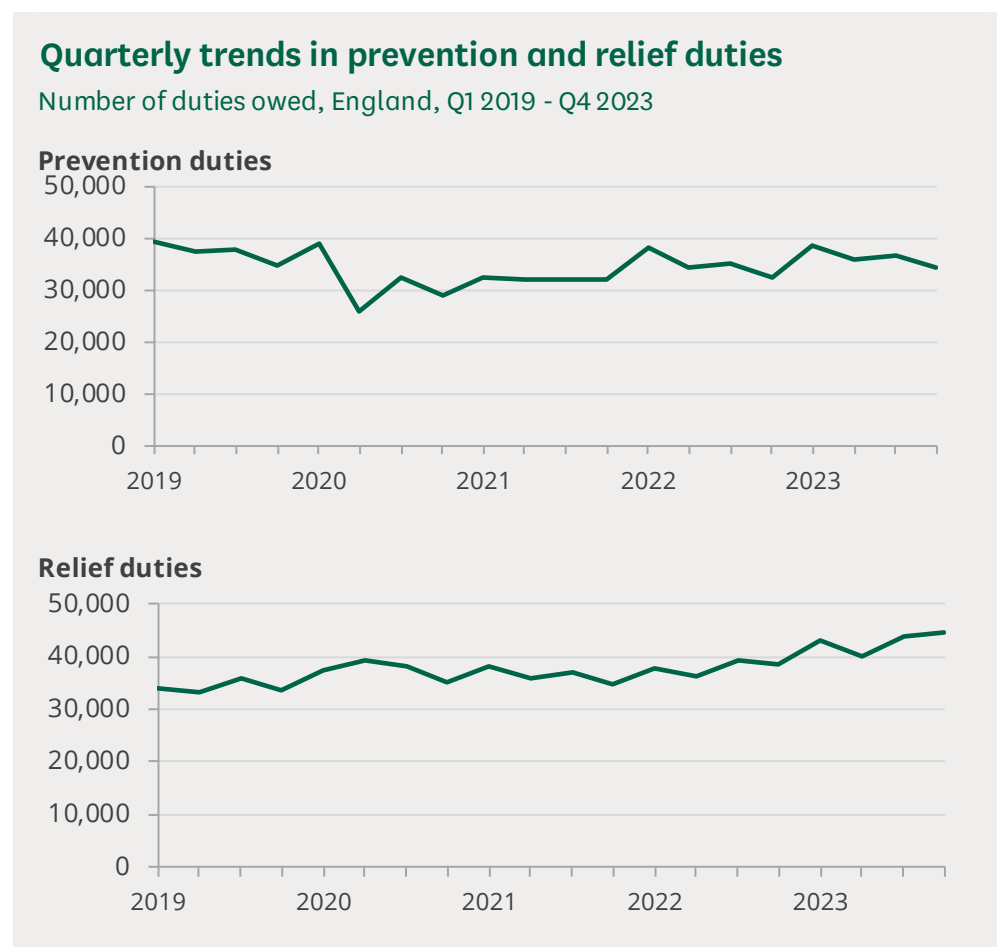
In its 2022/23 statistical release, DLUHC notes that between 2021/22 and 2022/23 there has been a large increase in households citing the end of privately rented assured shorthold tenancy (AST) as their reason for homelessness.

This increase is common across households with and without children, and for both prevention and relief duties. Households with children that were owed a

⁶² Shelter, [Covid-19: protection for tenants](#), 25 March 2022

⁶³ DLUHC, [Statutory homelessness in England: financial year 2020-21](#), 9 September 2021, p5

relief duty had the largest increase in number citing the end of an AST, at 43.4%.⁶⁴



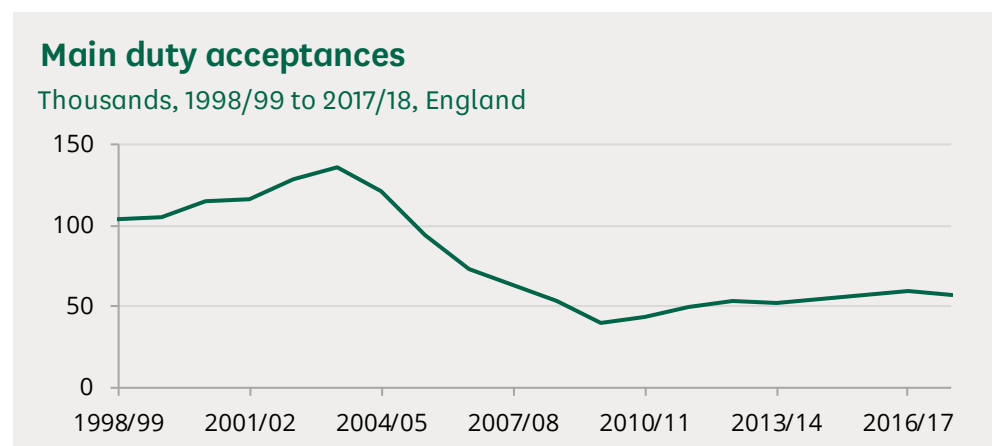
Source: DLUHC, [Statutory homelessness live tables](#), Table A1. 30 April 2024

Main duty acceptances

Local authorities have a statutory duty to secure suitable accommodation for households who are unintentionally homeless and in a priority need category, as set out in the Housing Act 1996 (see section 1). This is sometimes referred to as a ‘main duty’. Main duty decisions are not taken until after the duties determined at initial decision have elapsed.

The chart below shows long-term trends in decisions taken and households accepted as owed a main duty up to 2017/18 – that is, until just before the HRA took effect and introduced additional duties. Acceptances were at their highest in 2003/04, before falling and reaching a low point in 2009/10. During the 2010s, acceptances generally rose – increasing from 40,020 in 2009/10 to 56,580 in 2017/18, a rise of 41%.

⁶⁴ DLUHC, [Statutory homelessness in England: financial year 2022-23](#), 13 October 2023



Source: DLUHC, [Statutory homelessness live tables](#), Table MD1. 22 September 2022

Pre-April 2018 figures are not fully comparable with post-April 2018 figures due to the new duties created by the HRA. Households are now initially assessed as being owed either a prevention or a relief duty. The relief duty applies for 56 days, and a main duty only arises if a household meets the criteria and hasn't had their homelessness relieved during this period. According to DLUHC:

Despite more households being owed an initial prevention or relief duty, including priority needs groups such as households with children, there are fewer main duty acceptances as more households are receiving assistance at an earlier stage, through prevention and relief duties.⁶⁵

A total of 30,500 households were assessed as being owed a main duty in 2018/19, the first year in which the HRA was in force. The number has risen since then, reaching 74,290 in 2022/23.⁶⁶

Background of households applying for help

DLUHC also publishes data on the background of households owed a prevention or relief duty. Some of this data is published for financial years only, rather than quarterly. This section describes trends in 2022/23. All figures refer to households counted at their initial assessment (that is households moving from a prevention to a relief duty are only counted once).

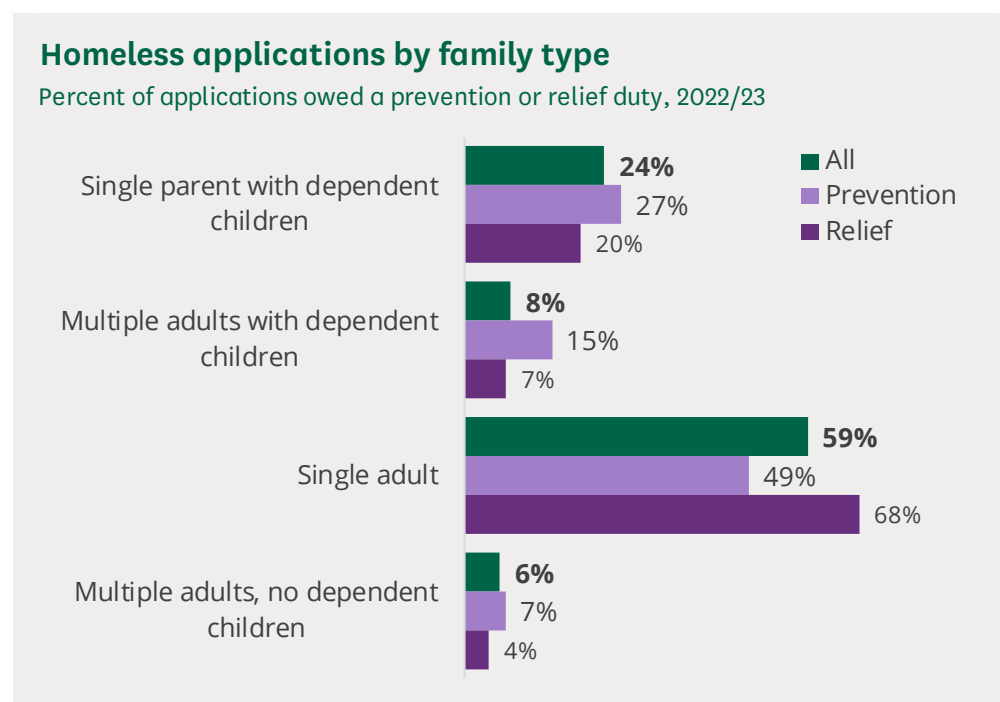
Household type and gender

The chart below shows the structure of households owed a prevention duty or relief duty during 2022/23. Single adults made up 59% of all households owed a duty (around 176,200 people). Single parents with dependent children made up 24% (around 71,660 households), and other families with dependent children made up 8% (around 23,340 households).

⁶⁵ MHCLG, [Statutory homelessness annual report, 2019-20, England](#), 1 October 2020, p17

⁶⁶ DLUHC, [Statutory homelessness live tables](#), Table MD1. 22 September 2022.

Relief duties were primarily owed to single adult households. 68% of relief duties were owed to single adults, while 27% were owed to families with children. Families with children were more likely to be owed prevention duties, accounting for 42% of all prevention duties owed.



Source: [Statutory homelessness live tables](#), Tables A5P and A5R, 13 October 2023.

Most single adults owed a duty were male. 63% were male (111,270 men) compared with 35% female (62,460 women). By contrast, most single parents were women: 90% of single-parent applicants were women (64,190 applicants), while 9% were men (6,750). Statistics on gender are only published for single-adult households, so we don't know the overall gender breakdown of people owed a homelessness duty.⁶⁷

Ethnicity and nationality

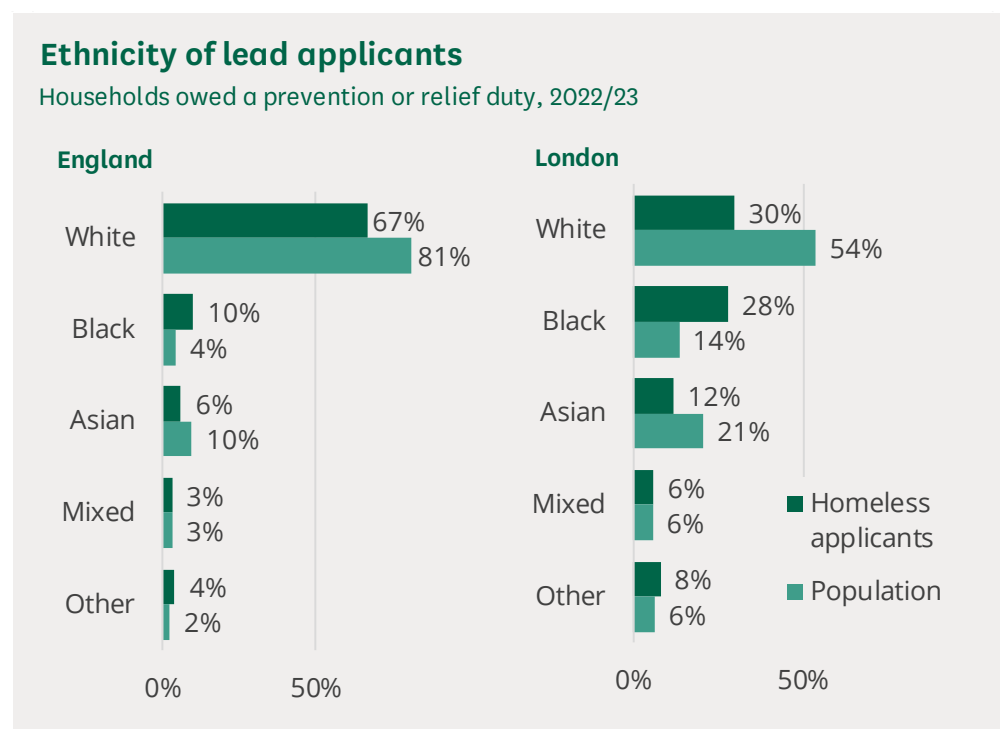
The chart below breaks down households owed a prevention or relief duty by the ethnic group of the lead applicant (that is the person making the application for the household) in England overall and in London. For comparison, the proportion of the individual population belonging to each ethnic group is also shown.

Across England, White applicants are under-represented relative to the general population and Black applicants are over-represented. 10% of applications owed a prevention or relief duty were from Black lead applicants, while Black people make up 4% of England's population. Asian applicants are also under-represented as a group, while applicants from Mixed or other backgrounds are also slightly over-represented.

⁶⁷ MHCLG, [Statutory homelessness in England: financial year 2021-22](#), Detailed local-authority level tables A5P and A5R, 22 September 2022

This trend is more pronounced in London. Black applicants accounted for 30% of applications owed a prevention or relief duty, while making up 12% of London’s population.

Outside of London, Black people make up around 6% of applicants owed a prevention or relief duty, and around 3% of the population. White people make up around 76% of applicants and 86% of the population.



Source: [Statutory homelessness live tables](#), Table A8, 13 October 2023.

DLUHC also publishes data on the nationality of applicants. 81% of lead applicants owed a prevention or a relief duty were UK nationals. 4% were nationals of A8 countries, A2 countries or Croatia.⁶⁸ 4% were nationals of other European Economic Area countries, and 9% were from non-EAA countries. 2% did not have a nationality recorded.⁶⁹

DLUHC has also published some data on homelessness among Ukrainian households in England. Full data was not submitted by all local authorities, and as such the following figures are estimates.

Between 24 February 2022 and 31 March 2024, 9,540 Ukrainian households in England were owed a prevention or relief duty, 2% of the total number of households in England owed a duty. Of these 67% had dependent children. 67% of Ukrainian households had arrived in the UK through the Homes for Ukraine Scheme (which allows Ukrainian nationals to come to the UK if they have a sponsor who can provide somewhere to live), and 20% had arrived

⁶⁸ The A8 countries are Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. The A2 countries are Bulgaria and Romania.

⁶⁹ DLUHC, [Statutory homelessness in England: Financial year 2022-23](#), Detailed local-authority level table A9, 13 October 2023

through the Family Scheme (which allows Ukrainian nationals to join family members in the UK).⁷⁰

Age

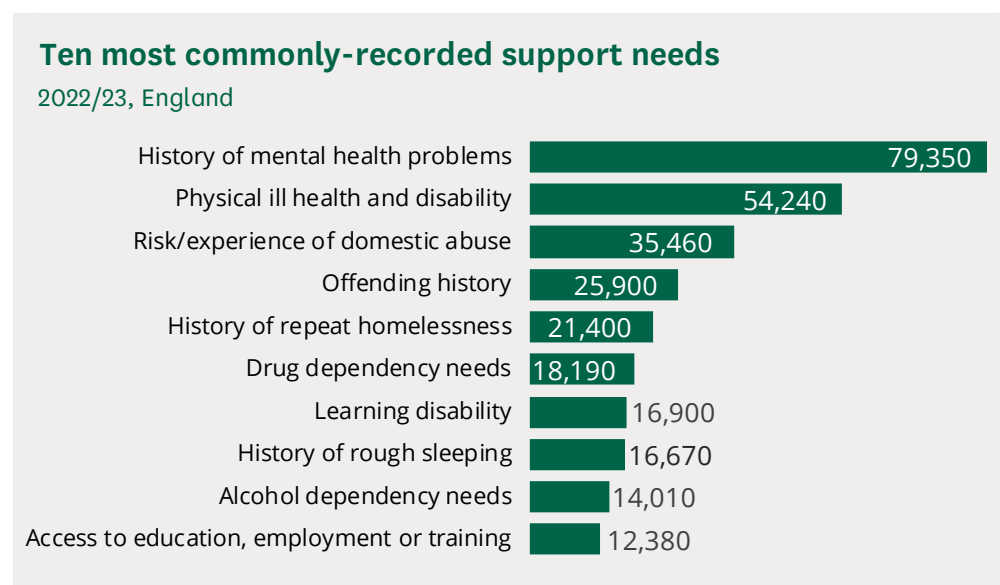
Applicants owed a prevention or relief duty were relatively young. Most lead applicants in 2022/23 (74%) were aged under 45. 19% were aged under 25, with 1%, or around 2,340 applicants, aged 16-17. Almost a third (30%) of applicants were aged 25-34. A quarter of applicants were aged 45 or over, with 4% aged 65 or over.⁷¹

Employment status

34% of lead applicants were registered unemployed at the time of their application. 25% were in work (14% in full-time work and 11% in part-time work). 14% were not working due to a long-term illness or disability and 11% were otherwise economically inactive (retired, students, or not seeking work). 3% were not registered as unemployed but seeking work. The remainder were classed as ‘other’ or ‘not known’.⁷²

Support needs

The HRA provides that households owed a prevention or relief duty are entitled to a personalised housing plan (see section 1). The local authority must assess the support needs of households as part of that process.



Source: [Statutory homelessness live tables](#), Table A3, 13 October 2023

During 2022/23, 157,470 households were identified as having support needs – 53% of all households assessed as owed a prevention or relief duty. Because households can have more than one support need, there were 348,360 support needs identified: an average of 2.2 per household. The chart above

⁷⁰ DLUHC, [Homelessness management information – Ukrainian nationals: England](#), 18 April 2024

⁷¹ As above, Detailed local-authority level table A6

⁷² As above, Detailed local-authority level table A10

shows the ten most commonly reported support needs. ‘History of mental health problems’ was the most common.

Reason for loss of last settled home

The table below shows the reason recorded for households losing their last settled home in 2022/23. Common reasons were family and friends no longer able or willing to accommodate the household (26%), the end of an assured shorthold tenancy (AST) in the private rented sector (20%), and domestic abuse (15%).

Reasons for loss of last settled home		
Households owed a prevention or relief duty, 2022/23, England		
	Number of households	% of total
Family/friends can no longer accommodate	78,580	28%
End of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy	58,960	21%
<i>Landlord wishing to sell/re-let</i>	32,940	12%
<i>Rent arrears</i>	10,830	4%
<i>Other reasons</i>	15,180	5%
Domestic abuse or other violence	43,750	16%
<i>Domestic abuse</i>	34,890	12%
<i>Other violence/harrassment</i>	8,860	3%
Non-violent relationship breakdown	20,480	7%
End of a social rented tenancy	11,070	4%
<i>Rent arrears</i>	6,510	2%
<i>Other reasons</i>	4,550	2%
Other	66,620	24%
Total	279,460	100%

Source: [Statutory homelessness live tables](#), Table A2, 13 October 2023

Loss of accommodation due to the end of an AST grew substantially from 2009/10 onwards, accounting for much of the overall growth in statutory homelessness in this period. The end of an AST accounted for 11% of all cases owed a main homelessness duty in 2009/10, rising to a peak of 31% in 2015/16, before falling to 27% in 2017/18.

These figures aren’t directly comparable with figures recorded under the new system.

Under the new system, around 21% of households owed a prevention or relief duty in 2018/19 and 2019/20 were homeless due to the end of an AST. This proportion fell to 13% in 2020/21, likely because of Government measures to

prevent evictions during the Covid-19 pandemic. The proportion rose again in 2021/22, reaching 20% in 2022/23, reflecting the end of these policies.⁷³

The Library briefing on [Statutory homelessness \(England\): Causes and government policy](#) provides information about the causes of homelessness.

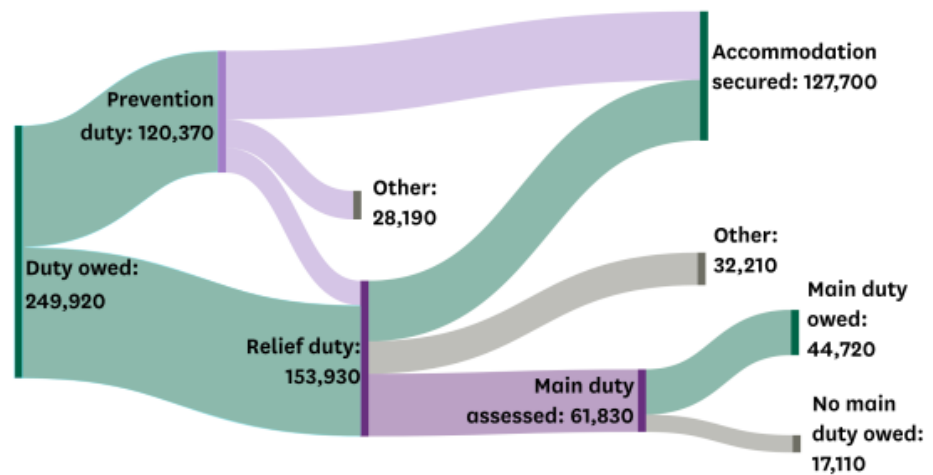
How are homelessness duties ended?

DLUHC has published data on the outcomes of households that were initially owed a prevention or a relief duty in 2021/22. The figures cover households whose cases had either closed or resulted in a main duty decision by the end of March 2023.

The flow diagram below shows the progress of these households.

Outcomes for households owed a prevention or relief duty

Households that were originally assessed in 2021/22, and whose case had concluded by March 2023



Source: DLUHC, [Statutory homelessness in England: financial year 2021/22](#), Flows tables: 2020/21, Table F1, 22 September 2022

52% of households were initially owed a relief duty, while 48% were owed a prevention duty.

Of all the households owed a prevention duty, 56% had their duty ended with accommodation secured and 44% did not. 20% went on to become homeless and were owed a relief duty. 23% had their duty ended because of ‘another’ reason (for example, refusal to co-operate, application withdrawn).

Accommodation was secured for 40% of households owed a relief duty (including some of those initially owed a prevention duty). 21% of households had their duty ended for ‘other’ reasons. The remaining 40% were still

⁷³ For background see: [Coronavirus: Support for landlords](#), Commons Library briefing (CBP-8867)

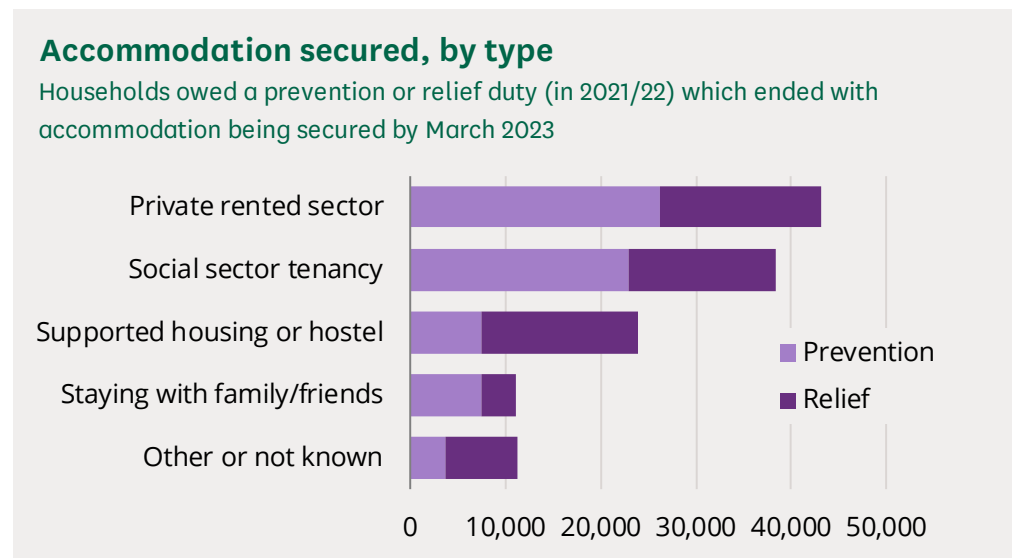
homeless after their relief duty expired and were therefore owed a main duty assessment.

72% of main duty assessments resulted in the household being owed a main rehousing duty. Most of the remainder were found to be homeless but were either intentionally homeless or not in a priority need group.

Overall, around two-thirds (69%) of cases eventually ended either with some form of accommodation secured or a main duty owed. 68% of cases where the household was at some point owed a relief duty ended in this way.

The chart below shows the type of housing secured for households whose duty ended with accommodation secured (not including households owed a main rehousing duty).

The private rented sector was the most common option, accounting for 34% of all duties ended. These figures include households that were supported to remain in their current accommodation, which in many cases is likely to have been in the private rented sector.



Source: DLUHC, [Statutory homelessness in England: financial year 2021/22](#), Flows tables: 2021/22, Table F1, 13 October 2023

Households in temporary accommodation

Local authorities must provide temporary (interim) accommodation for households who the local authority has reason to believe may be homeless, eligible for assistance and have a priority need, while they are waiting for a decision on their application. They must also provide temporary accommodation to households waiting to be rehoused as part of a main rehousing duty and to intentionally homeless households to give them time to find their own accommodation. Local authorities also have discretionary powers to provide interim accommodation to applicants in some circumstances. For example, when taking reasonable steps to prevent or

relieve an experience of homelessness. Section 1 of this briefing provides an overview of local authority duties and powers to provide accommodation.

There were 104,540 households in temporary accommodation at the end of March 2023. These households included 131,500 children.

The number of households in temporary accommodation in March 2023 was higher than the number a year previously (95,060). In general, the number of households in temporary accommodation has been rising year-on-year since late 2011.

The number of households in temporary accommodation in March 2023 was 89% higher than the number in March 2013.

The Library briefing on [Households in temporary accommodation \(England\)](#) provides more detailed statistics on trends in temporary accommodation.

2.3

Other estimates of homelessness

Organisations such as Shelter and Crisis have argued the official statistics do not give a full picture of homelessness in England. The figures exclude those who are homeless but who do not approach a local authority for assistance.

Crisis carried out research with Heriot-Watt University to define ‘core homelessness’ and estimate its extent, based on available data. Crisis’ definition of ‘core’ homelessness includes people sleeping rough, living in homeless hostels, placed in unsuitable temporary accommodation, sofa surfing, and living in other non-conventional accommodation (cars, tents, boats, etc.)

In its [2023 Homelessness monitor publication](#), Crisis estimated the number of people experiencing core homelessness increased from around 206,000 in 2012 to around 242,000 in 2022.⁷⁴

These estimates are based on datasets which can sometimes only indirectly measure the concepts looked at. They involve a degree of value judgement about what counts as ‘suitable’ temporary accommodation.

⁷⁴ Crisis, [The Homelessness Monitor: England 2023](#), 18 August 2023

3 How local authorities are performing

How local authorities prevent and respond to homelessness in their areas is often subject to scrutiny. This section provides commentary on what is understood about the provision of statutory homelessness services prior to and following the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

3.1 Pre-Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

Prior to the introduction of the [Homelessness Reduction Act \(HRA\) 2017](#) in April 2018, various concerns were raised about some areas of statutory homelessness service provision.

Accessing statutory services

Local authority actions that delay or avoid carrying out their statutory functions often led to accusations of ‘gatekeeping’.⁷⁵

Research found that many single homeless people were being “turned away” without having an assessment and no formal application taken.⁷⁶

In 2016, the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Select Committee’s homelessness inquiry indicated some local authorities’ housing options services, which aim to support a prevention-focused approach, were making it difficult for applicants to make a homelessness application.⁷⁷

Help for non-priority applicants

An independent panel of experts established by Crisis in 2015 identified issues with the standard of advice and assistance given to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness who have no dependent children.⁷⁸ This group are least likely to be in a category of priority need for homelessness assistance (see section 1). Prior to the HRA people who were not in priority need had no

⁷⁵ Local Government Ombudsman, [Review of Local Government Complaints 2015-16 \(PDF\)](#), July 2016; Communities and Local Government Select Committee, [Homelessness \(PDF\)](#), 18 August 2016, HC 40 2016-17, paras 39-44

⁷⁶ Sarah Dobie, Ben Sanders, Lígia Teixeira, [Turned Away The treatment of single homeless people by local authority homelessness services in England](#), Crisis, October 2014, p5

⁷⁷ Communities and Local Government Select Committee, [Homelessness \(PDF\)](#), 18 August 2016, HC 40 2016-17, para 40

⁷⁸ Crisis, [The Homelessness legislation: an independent review of the legal duties owed to homeless people](#), April 2016

specific right to receive help to prevent or relieve their homelessness, even if they were sleeping rough.

The [expert panel's report](#) (2015) concluded:

The demarcation between applicants who are owed the main homelessness duty (predominantly families with dependent children) and those who are not (predominantly single people) has created a two-tier system with regards to the assistance provided.⁷⁹

The 2016 CLG Committee's homelessness inquiry recommended the introduction of "a statutory duty to provide meaningful support to single homeless people".⁸⁰

Timeliness of responses

The expert panel convened by Crisis in 2015 argued that the legislative framework did not legally require councils to act soon enough to prevent homelessness.⁸¹

In a [House of Commons debate on homelessness 14 December 2016](#), then housing minister, Gavin Barwell, said that the legislation at the time "encourages councils to intervene at the point of crisis, not upstream when problems are first apparent."⁸²

In a [House of Lords debate on homelessness 7 September 2016](#), then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for MHCLG, Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth, said that tackling homelessness requires "an unrelenting focus on prevention" as well as a collective response at national and local levels. He expands, saying that effective prevention "requires a strong legislative framework, quality housing advice services, effective partnership working and funding."⁸³

Funding and resources

The survey of local authorities carried out for the [Homelessness monitor: England 2017](#) found that while funding for homelessness services had 'held steady' in 2015/16 for most responding authorities, a fifth had experienced cut backs. The authors concluded that a recent decrease in informal prevention and relief activity "most likely indicates" that "funding constraints have started to limit local authorities' homelessness service capacity, particularly with respect to these 'non-statutory' relief and prevention duties."⁸⁴

⁷⁹ As above, p13

⁸⁰ Communities and Local Government Select Committee, [Homelessness \(PDF\)](#), 18 August 2016, HC 40 2016-17, para 44

⁸¹ Crisis, [The Homelessness legislation: an independent review of the legal duties owed to homeless people](#), April 2016

⁸² [HC Deb 14 December 2016, c46](#)

⁸³ [HL Deb 7 September 2016 vol 774](#)

⁸⁴ Suzanne Fitzpatrick, Hal Pawson, Glen Bramley, Steve Wilcox and Beth Watts, [The homelessness monitor: England 2017](#), Crisis, March 2017

Responding to a parliamentary question 12 July 2016, then-homelessness minister, Marcus Jones, said that homelessness prevention funding had been “protected” and would amount to £315 million by 2020. He also referred to the government’s intention to explore legislation to enhance prevention work and referred to “increased central investment to tackle homelessness over the next four years to £139 million” and £100 million of funding for “low-cost move-on accommodation”.⁸⁵

3.2 Post-introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

The [Homelessness Reduction Act 2017](#) strengthened the duties on local authorities to prevent and relieve homelessness (see section 1). The new requirements should mean no one who is eligible and homeless or threatened with homelessness is turned away without advice and assistance, and a personal housing plan as a minimum. Evidence indicates that while more people are accessing meaningful help sooner, some people are still being turned away without an assessment.

Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee inquiry (2019)

When the HRA provisions had been in force for just over one year, the Housing, Communities and Local Government (HCLG) Select Committee opened an inquiry into the Homelessness Reduction Act. Evidence was collected via a [one-off oral evidence session 23 April 2019](#).

Overall, evidence revealed that while the act was delivering many improvements as intended, including delivering more person-centred services, and fewer people being turned away without support or advice, some challenges remained, including:⁸⁶

‘New burdens’ funding is made available to local authorities to cover the additional cost of a new policy or initiative.

- a low level of awareness of the HRA and varying practice across local authorities
- in areas with limited options for securing affordable rented housing the HRA was not delivering on the relief of homelessness
- some local authorities, particularly in London, believe levels of ‘new burdens’ funding are not adequate to implement the HRA

⁸⁵ PQ 42168 [on [Homelessness: Single People](#)], 12 July 2016

⁸⁶ Housing, [Communities and Local Government Committee, Oral evidence: Homelessness Reduction Act—One Year On \(PDF\)](#), HC 2089, 23 April 2019

Suggested scope for further adjustments to the legislation and implementation included:

- professional triage on first contact
- appointing specialist staff to work within an area of specialism, for example rough sleepers
- improvements to personalised housing plans, including ensuring they do not focus on very short-term housing solutions, and not using standard templates
- more investment in homeless prevention, for example pathway teams based in hospitals
- extending the public authority duty to refer (see section 1) to GPs

The [LGiU Local Government Homelessness Commission's work](#) on homelessness prevention from the perspective of local government, which reported in June 2019, considered the impact of the HRA. They reported evidence of an improved assessment process which had “changed the outlook of homelessness teams, orienting them towards prevention”. However, they went on to argue that while giving councils “extra duties towards vulnerable people at the point of crisis” the HRA does not give them the “powers or resources to stop them getting there in the first place” and does not address the underlying causes of homelessness.⁸⁷

Government review of HRA implementation

As part of the implementation of the HRA, the 2017 government committed to review how it was working in practice, including a review of the new burdens funding.

A call for evidence on the impact of the HRA was launched 23 July 2019.⁸⁸ It sought to gather evidence on:

- the impact of the act and the outcomes being achieved
- how local authorities' and their partners' approaches to tackling homelessness have changed as a result of the act
- the experiences of people approaching their local housing authority for help
- how implementation has been resourced, including the role and levels of new burdens funding

⁸⁷ [LGiU Homelessness Commission 2019: Final Report](#), June 2019 [login required], p11

⁸⁸ MHCLG, [Homelessness Reduction Act 2017: call for evidence \(PDF\)](#), 23 July 2019

- which elements of the act and processes are working well, and which may require adjustment

The government's response was published on 25 September 2020, along with the findings of an [independent Evaluation of the Implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act: Final Report \(PDF\)](#).⁸⁹

Evaluation findings and recommendations

The evaluation was commissioned by MHCLG from ICF Consulting Services Ltd with Kantar Public and Heriot-Watt University.

As with previous assessments summarised in this paper, the evaluation reported successes alongside recommendations for ongoing implementation. Among the detailed findings, the report noted:

- Assessments and personalised plans are being delivered by authorities but there were mixed views on impact. This was mirrored in the views of service users.
- The extended prevention duty was assessed as most effective in delivering more positive outcomes for service users. Clients with complex needs can present challenges for tenancy retention work.
- The effectiveness of relief duty was seen as variable with much depending on the local supply of affordable housing.
- Examples of improved advice and information services were identified.
- The transition to H-CLIC data reporting (see section 2) had been challenging. Authorities recognise the potential for the information to inform design and delivery of services but there is no evidence of this happening yet.
- Challenges for authorities implementing the HRA, including:
 - insufficient access to affordable housing, particularly in London
 - an increased administrative burden
 - meeting the H-CLIC data requirements
 - uncertainties over future funding
- Not all the bodies subject to the duty to refer were seen as having implemented the duty effectively.

⁸⁹ MHCLG, [Call for evidence outcome. Homelessness Reduction Act 2017: call for evidence](#), 25 September 2020

- While many service users described positive experiences of local authority homelessness services, there was evidence of the ethos of the HRA not being universally embedded amongst all staff in all areas.

The report made several recommendations for MHCLG to consider, including:

- extending new burdens funding and an update to the way new burdens funding is calculated and allocated
- maintaining or enhancing MHCLG's Homelessness Housing Advice and Support Team (HAST)
- providing support through guidance, tools and resources to help local authorities realise the benefits of H-CLIC data
- national promotion of the duty to refer and further review of its scope with the possibility of reformulation as a 'duty to collaborate'

Recommendations for authorities included:

- additional training to reinforce culture change and strengthen casework
- obtaining and using service users' feedback
- considering more senior staff recruitment – this is linked to improving capacity to deal with more complex aspects of the act
- reviewing and reflecting on homelessness service expenditure with a view to refining services
- providing feedback to public authorities on their duty to refer referrals

There was a further recommendation for other national government departments and agencies to “introduce national guidelines and monitoring arrangements around the duty to refer.”⁹⁰

Government's response

[The government's response](#) to the call for evidence and the outcome of the independent evaluation contained a series of commitments, including:⁹¹

- an awareness raising exercise around the new duties
- a post-implementation review of new burdens funding to “fully understand the impact of the new duties on local authorities”

⁹⁰ As above, p80

⁹¹ MHCLG, [Homelessness Reduction Act 2017: government response to the call for evidence](#), 25 September 2020

- promotion of the public authority duty to refer at a national level, to the relevant public bodies, and monitoring how it is being implemented via H-CLIC returns
- exploring how to improve joint working, including consideration of extending the duty to refer to other agencies

In March 2020, Crisis published the [interim finding of a three-year study into the implementation of the HRA](#). They found that the most substantial change following the HRA's introduction, was its significant expansion of access to homelessness assistance, particularly for single people. However, challenges remain around availability of affordable housing and varying approaches to service delivery among local authorities.

Responding to the report, the LGA saying they were “doing what they can to support all people who face the tragedy of being homeless” and agreed that more affordable housing is needed. They highlighted that local authorities are “under extreme pressure as a result of rising demand driven by a severe shortage of social housing.” They added that their capacity to take action is being limited due to “unprecedented funding pressures”.⁹²

Through the course of the Covid-19 pandemic, central government gave local authorities a mandate, along with funding, to bring ‘Everyone in’ to keep people safe and prevent the spread of the virus.⁹³ Councils were directed to arrange safe accommodation for all people who were, or were at risk of, sleeping rough.⁹⁴ This meant councils had to adjust to new ways of working, such as improving pre-existing pathways for single homeless people, which LGA research found were “more effective and had potential for the future.”⁹⁵ For some councils, the focus on securing suitable accommodation for people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping highlighted the scale of the issue and therefore revealed the need for more affordable one-bed accommodation in their areas. The challenges faced by councils during the pandemic also led to councils working with a broader range of partners than they had previously, including health, and the criminal justice system.⁹⁶

During a Westminster Hall debate on homelessness and temporary accommodation on 2 December 2020, then-Minister for Rough Sleeping and Housing, Kelly Tolhurst, said:

To help local authorities deliver their new duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act, the Government created a team of specialist advisers with expertise in the homelessness sector to support and challenge local

⁹² Government Business, [Lack of housing leaving homeless on the streets](#), 10 March 2020 [accessed 7 June 2024]

⁹³ MHCLG and Luke Hall, [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): letter from Minister Hall to local authorities on plans to protect rough sleepers](#), 27 March 2020

⁹⁴ For more information, see Commons Library research briefing CBP-9057, [Coronavirus: Support for rough sleepers \(England\)](#), 12 October 2021

⁹⁵ LGA, Lessons learnt from councils' response to rough sleeping during the COVID-19 pandemic, 19 November 2020, Executive summary

⁹⁶ As above

authorities in tackling homelessness in their area, at the same time as supporting councils to deliver a transformation in their homelessness services.⁹⁷

[The final report](#) of Crisis' longitudinal research was published in May 2022.⁹⁸ In summary, the findings include:

- While the HRA has meant more support and assistance for significantly more people facing homelessness, people are still being turned away with no help.
- Many staff found it challenging to deliver support under the HRA due to issues with lack of housing options, and not having enough staff or funding for their service.
- Services often remained focused on deciding whether people were eligible for support rather than providing support despite the HRA's intention to reduce gatekeeping practices.
- Some people did not have their homelessness prevented earlier because of a strain on services, and for some people opportunities were missed to prevent homelessness altogether.
- The HRA's new duty to refer, which widened the responsibility of identifying people at risk of homelessness across other public bodies, has led to more people approaching their local authority for help following advice from another organisation.
- Over the course of the study, accommodation outcomes improved. However, more than half (58%) of the respondents felt their accommodation was not suitable for their needs.

Crisis recommended building on the intent of the HRA and widening legal protections to help everyone address their homelessness, an increase in the supply of social rented housing, and improvements to service standards through a statutory code of practice.⁹⁹

In March 2023, the [Local Government Ombudsman published a report](#), marking five years since the HRA came into force. The Ombudsman acknowledged the pressure on councils' ability to deliver "more with less" and noted "many examples where councils have adopted the correct approach". However, some councils were still failing to issue a personalised housing plan or consider applicants' support needs. There were also examples of activities that amount to 'gatekeeping', such as delaying completing assessment and accepting duties. The Ombudsman highlighted that these failings "represent

⁹⁷ [HC Deb 2 December 2020, vol 685 c183WH](#)

⁹⁸ Cuchulainn Sutton-Hamilton, Michael Allard, Rebekah Stroud and Francesca Albanese, [I hoped there'd be more options:" Experiences of the Homelessness Reduction Act, 2018-2021](#), Crisis, May 2022

⁹⁹ As above

missed opportunities to achieve one of the main aims of the Act: preventing homelessness.”¹⁰⁰

Responding to the Ombudsman’s 2023 report, Councillor Darren Rodwell housing spokesperson for the LGA, called on the government to prioritise affordable housing delivery and to enable councils to deliver 100,000 social homes a year to meet demand and reduce social housing waiting lists.¹⁰¹

The Library briefing on [Statutory homelessness \(England\): Causes and government policy](#) provides information about the UK Government’s approach to tackling homelessness in England.

3.3 Homelessness duties to specific groups

People with a history of domestic abuse

On 2 May 2020, Robert Jenrick, then-Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, confirmed amendments to the Domestic Abuse Bill 2019-21 would ensure victims of domestic violence “get the priority need status they need to access local housing services much more easily”. He said it was a “fully-funded commitment” which would mean “no victim of domestic violence has to make the unbearable choice between staying somewhere that they know is unsafe or becoming homeless.”¹⁰²

References to ‘domestic violence’ throughout the 1996 act and 2002 Priority Need Order have since been replaced with the definition of ‘domestic abuse’ in [section 1 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#).¹⁰³ Before this change, to have a priority need domestic abuse survivors had to be classed as ‘vulnerable as a result of’ being homeless due to domestic abuse. The relevant provisions came into force on 5 July 2021.¹⁰⁴

Several reports, published since the 2021 Act was introduced, found evidence of continued ‘gatekeeping’ by local authorities making it hard for survivors of domestic abuse to obtain housing help via the statutory homelessness system.

In 2022, Solace Women’s Aid, [Priority Need For Housing For Survivors Of Domestic Abuse: One Year On](#), shared the results of their analysis of official

¹⁰⁰ Local Government Ombudsman, [More Home Truths - learning lessons from complaints about the Homelessness Reduction Act](#), March 2023, Ombudsman’s foreword, pp1-2

¹⁰¹ Local Government Lawyer, [Councils “all too often” failing in duties to prevent homelessness, says Ombudsman](#), 21 March 2023 [accessed 5 June 2024]

¹⁰² PoliticsHome, [Coronavirus: Communities Secretary vows priority council housing for people fleeing domestic abuse](#), 2 May 2020

¹⁰³ MHCLG, [More support for victims of domestic abuse at risk of homelessness](#), 5 July 2021

¹⁰⁴ [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#), s78

data for the nine-month period from when the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 came into force, and the same period the previous year. They found:

- The number of people who were assessed as homeless due to fleeing domestic abuse had increased by 24% in England and 22% in London. The number of people accepted as priority need increased by 35% in England and by 193% in London.
- With reference to so-called ‘gatekeeping’ practices among local authorities, 30% of frontline workers reported that the new priority need measures had improved domestic abuse survivors’ experience of making a homelessness application, but half said it had not.

In September 2022, the [Public Law Interest Centre published a report](#) which found that ‘gatekeeping’ of housing support for people who have experienced domestic abuse “is a systemic issue across London local authorities” and that the practice had “worsened over the last decade as a consequence of austerity and a chronic shortage of social housing.”¹⁰⁵

Solace Women’s Aid’s 2022 report noted some positive impact of the new priority need category and the change to the definition:

The change to priority need has made some improvements to survivors’ experiences of making homelessness applications and accessing support, and there is increased awareness of the new definition of domestic abuse since the passage of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.¹⁰⁶

Young people

Charities across the youth homelessness sector launched a campaign in 2023, calling on the government to develop a national cross-departmental youth homelessness strategy, informed by young people’s lived experience.¹⁰⁷ These calls followed growing concerns about the number of young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and the capacity of local authorities to support this age group. These concerns are supported by research which aims to highlight the challenges young people can face when trying to access support to prevent or relieve an experience of homelessness.

Widely cited research on the scale of youth homelessness in England is provided by national youth homelessness charity, Centrepoin. [Centrepoin collects and publishes data](#) obtained in response to freedom of information requests sent to local authorities across England. The data is used to “build the clearest picture possible” about the scale of youth homelessness by supplementing the official figures on statutory homelessness and rough

¹⁰⁵ Public Law Interest Centre, “[Abused twice](#)” [The ‘gatekeeping’ of housing support for domestic abuse survivors in every London borough](#), 22 September 2022, p6

¹⁰⁶ Solace Women’s Aid, [Priority Need For Housing For Survivors Of Domestic Abuse: One Year On](#), 2022, p4

¹⁰⁷ [#PlanForThe136k](#) [accessed 6 June 2024]

sleeping collected by government. They publish annual reports outlining the findings of analysis of their data.

In their 2023 report, [Failure to Act: The scale of youth homelessness in the UK](#), Centrepont shared the findings of their 2022/23 analysis. The figures indicate that more than a third of the young people who approached their local authority in England during the year may not have received a formal assessment under the homelessness legislation. Comparing this figure with the data analysed for their 2018 report, they note the proportion of young people receiving an assessment in the last five years had fallen from 79% in 2018/19 to 65% in 2022/23.¹⁰⁸

The 2023 Centrepont report confirms the findings of earlier reports in 2021 and 2018, which highlighted that a proportion of young people did not receive meaningful support to prevent or relieve their homelessness.¹⁰⁹ The reports also called for adequate funding of authorities' new duties under the HRA, and for specific data to be gathered on youth homelessness.

Research suggests that local authorities in England require an additional £332 million, to help them meet their legal obligations to assess and potentially support young people who were not assessed during 2022/23.¹¹⁰

The issue of youth homelessness was the topic of a [Westminster Hall debate, 1 May 2024](#). Leading the debate, Paula Barker (Labour MP for Liverpool, Wavertree), referred to the findings of Centrepont's 2023 report, and called on the government to change how data is collected and develop a national cross-departmental youth homelessness strategy.

Responding on behalf of the government, then-housing and homelessness minister, Felicity Buchan, reminded those attending that local authorities are required to deliver their new duties under the HRA and that DLUHC's specialist youth homelessness advisers provide "advice, support and challenge to local authorities to help them improve the delivery of homelessness services and to support compliance with the statutory duties."¹¹¹

Commenting on the differences between the numbers presented by Centrepont's databank research and the official statistics, Felicity Buchan said:

The Government numbers are official statistics and are closely verified and accredited by the Office for National Statistics. One reason for the differential is that the Centrepont data includes all initial inquiries to a local authority. The Government report on the total number of homelessness assessments and

¹⁰⁸ Centrepont, [Failure to Act: the scale of youth homelessness in the UK, executive summary](#), 2023

¹⁰⁹ Centrepont, [Making homeless young people count: The scale of youth homelessness in the UK \(PDF\)](#), November 2018; Centrepont, [A year like no other: Youth homelessness during the COVID pandemic](#), 20 April 2021

¹¹⁰ Centrepont, [£332 million funding gap for youth homelessness in England](#), research conducted by WPI Economics, April 2024

¹¹¹ [HC Deb 1 May 2024, vol749 c148WH](#)

the numbers of young people owed a homelessness prevention or relief duty. I just wanted to clear up the reason why the numbers are different. The Government numbers form part of the official statistics and follow very robust statistical methodologies.¹¹²

Government guidance

In April 2018, MHCLG and the Department for Education (DfE) published updated joint guidance on the [Prevention of homelessness and provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year old young people who may be homeless and/or require accommodation \(PDF\)](#). The guidance took account of the new HRA duties.

In October 2020, the [government published ‘good practice’ guidance](#) for councils to support the development of joint protocols that can help local authorities meet the accommodation needs of care leavers.¹¹³ This guidance was updated in May 2024 to reflect changes to [chapter 22 of the homelessness code of guidance](#) on expectations around joint housing protocols and intentional homelessness decisions for care leavers (described above in section 1).

3.4

Out-of-area placements

[Section 208\(1\) of the Housing Act 1996](#) requires authorities, when discharging their statutory homelessness functions, to secure accommodation within the authority’s own district “so far as reasonably practicable”. Section 1 of this briefing provides information about the suitability of accommodation, including out-of-area placements.

Some local authorities, particularly in London, secure temporary accommodation in other areas to help fulfil their statutory homeless duties. A number of councils in the areas where households are accommodated, referred to as ‘receiving’ authorities, have reported they are “struggling to house their own homeless people because they are increasingly having to take on temporary accommodation placements from London boroughs.”¹¹⁴ These pressures can lead some authorities to look beyond their own areas to find suitable accommodation.

33,350 households were placed in another local authority area at the end of December 2023, representing 30% of all households placed in temporary accommodation. 79% of these placements were by London authorities.¹¹⁵

¹¹² [HC Deb 1 May 2024, vol749 c149WH](#)

¹¹³ MHCLG & DfE, [Joint housing protocols for care leavers: good practice advice](#), updated May 2024

¹¹⁴ Inside Housing, [Sent away: the social rent shortage is driving London councils to move more homeless people out of the city](#), 23 August 2023 [subscription required]

¹¹⁵ DLUHC, [Statutory homelessness live tables](#), Detailed local authority level tables: October to December 2023, published 30 April 2024

[The Housing and Homelessness \(Local Accommodation Duty\) Bill](#) was introduced to Parliament in March 2021 by Karen Buck, then-Labour MP for Westminster North. The Bill did not progress. It would have required local authorities to ensure that households are accommodated in the local area when meeting their statutory homelessness functions, including when discharging their duty with an offer of private rented accommodation.

On 25 July 2023, then-housing minister, Rachel Maclean responded to a written question on the impact of local authorities accommodating homeless families in other areas:

The Homelessness Code of Guidance is clear that local authorities should, as far as possible, avoid placing homeless households out of their borough. However, where there is a limited supply of suitable accommodation, we are aware that sometimes it is necessary to place households in temporary accommodation outside of the local area.

Legislation stipulates that where temporary accommodation is provided, it must be suitable, taking account of the needs of the household. If a local authority places a household into accommodation in another local area, they are required by law to notify the local authority of any placement, to minimise disruption to schooling or employment.¹¹⁶

In January 2023, the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Households in Temporary Accommodation published the findings of their call for evidence on conditions in temporary accommodation. Their report identified out-of-area placements as an important issue requiring a strategic government approach.¹¹⁷

3.5

Access to housing association tenancies

Crisis' [Homelessness monitor: England 2019](#) recorded difficulties experienced by local authorities when trying to access housing association tenancies to help fulfil their homelessness duties. Challenges appear to be related to affordability or financial capability checks used by associations.

The national group of housing associations and homelessness charities, Homes for Cathy, has developed nine commitments to guide group members' policies, practices, and provision in relation to tackling homelessness. Two of these commitments aim to encourage practices that could help more people at risk of or experiencing homelessness receive an allocation of social housing.¹¹⁸ One of the nine commitments is to “offer constructive solutions to applicants who aren't deemed eligible for an offer of a home.”

¹¹⁶ PQ 194602 [on [Homelessness](#)], 25 July 2023

¹¹⁷ APPG for Households in Temporary Accommodation, [Call for evidence findings: summary, analysis of themes and call to action](#), January 2023

¹¹⁸ Homes for Cathy, [Our Commitments \(PDF\)](#), [accessed 7 June 2024]

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