

Appendix 1

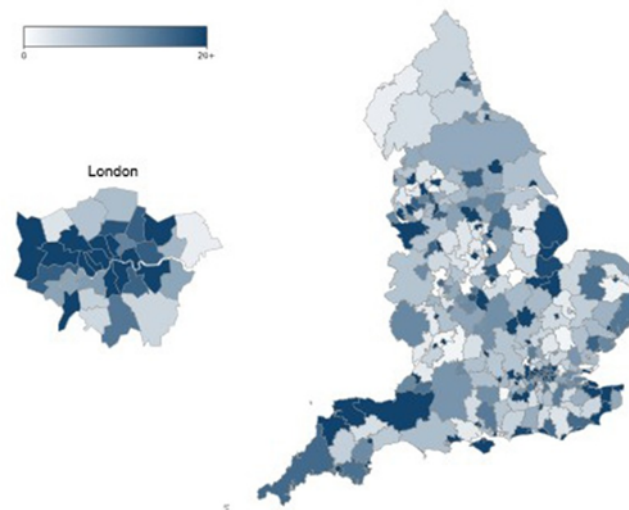
Member Briefing Note 1.

National Context Homelessness (Extracted from Gov sources)

Government report that every day last year, 900 households, including almost 300 families with children, were made homeless or threatened with homelessness. The number of people sleeping rough is at near-record levels, up by over 150% since 2010.

Over a third of all those sleeping rough each month are also long-term homeless, and this number has increased by almost 30% over the last two years. Around 13% of all people sleeping rough have returned to the streets after moving into settled accommodation, often when their underlying needs, such as poor health, lack of support networks or difficulty managing a tenancy, have not been properly addressed.

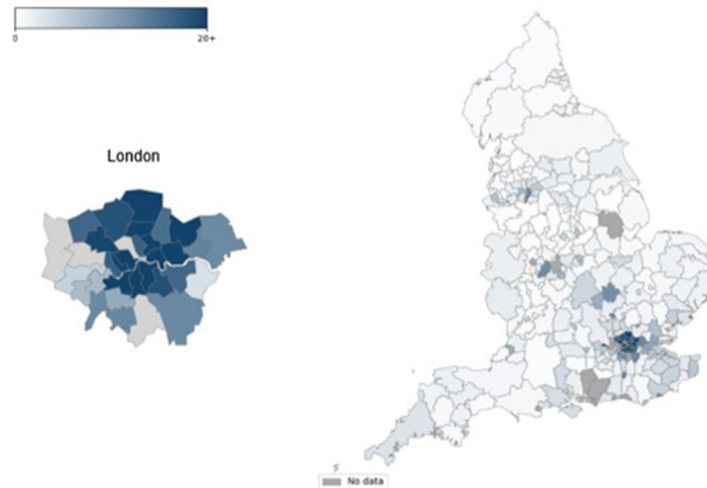
Figure 1.1c Estimated number of people sleeping rough over the month per 100,000 people in the population, September 2025



Alongside rough sleeping, temporary accommodation pressures are also rising at a record rate. As of 30 June 2025, 132,410 households were living in temporary accommodation, of which 84,240 were families, including 172,420 children. Whilst a significant proportion of temporary accommodation is relatively stable and self-contained, this is not the case universally. B&B accommodation – often insecure, poor quality and hugely expensive – is meant only for emergencies. However, in the latest statistics, 2,070 families had been living in this type of accommodation for longer than the 6-week statutory limit. Government is clear this practice is unacceptable and must stop.

Whilst homelessness affects every part of the country, temporary accommodation pressures are concentrated in London, the South East and South West, as well as major cities such as Manchester and Birmingham. Almost two thirds of all families in temporary accommodation live in London – 20 households in 1,000, compared to 3 in 1,000 across the rest of England.

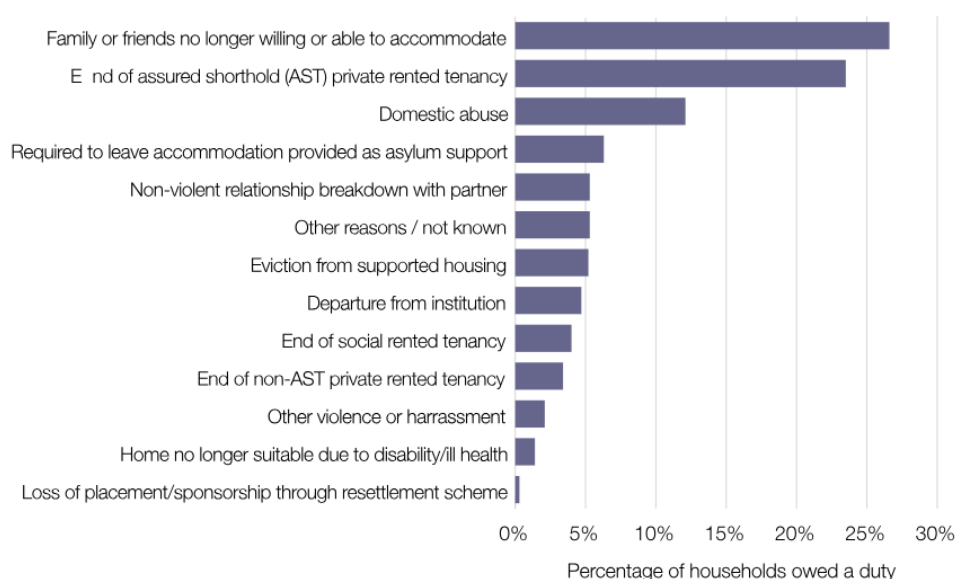
Pressures on temporary accommodation can lead to households being placed in accommodation outside their local area – sometimes away from support networks, jobs and schools. Over 42,000 households are currently placed in a different area, with 81% of these from London boroughs. While most out-of-area moves are within the same region, they still disrupt children's education and parents' jobs, adding to the stress and instability faced by families.



Poverty, housing availability and affordability are the root causes of homelessness and rough sleeping. 4.5 million children are living in relative poverty, a 900,000 increase since 2010/11. For generations, not enough homes have been built and there has been too little investment in social and affordable housing. One in three households lived in social housing in the 1980s, now it is closer to one in six.

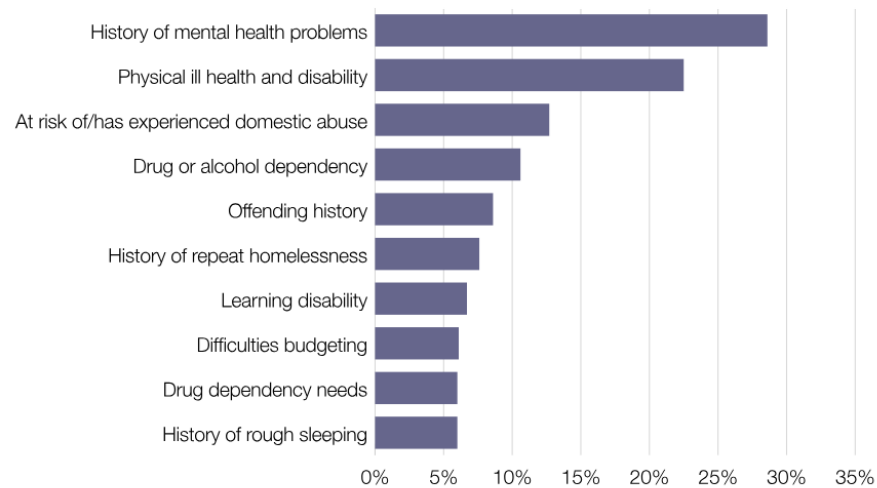
This shortage has left many people on low incomes struggling to afford rising rents in an increasingly insecure private rental market. The end of a private rented tenancy is currently the second most frequently cited reason for homelessness, after friends/family no longer being willing to accommodate an individual. Private renters in England spend far more of their income on housing in comparison to homeowners; particularly those on the lowest incomes, 71% of whom spend more than 30% of their income on rent. People who are privately renting also have not had the same stability as others, with over 6,500 households threatened with homelessness and owed a prevention duty as a result of “No Fault” Section 21 eviction notices between April – June 2025.

Figure 1.3a The percentage of households owed a prevention or relief duty by reasons for homelessness or threat of homelessness, April to June 2025



People who sleep rough are more likely to have complex and overlapping support needs. 84% of women and 65% of men who reported having slept rough within the last year had had three or more of the following experiences: homelessness, substance (either drugs or alcohol) use problems, mental health issues, domestic abuse, and interaction with the criminal justice system.

Figure 1.3b The percentage of households owed a prevention or relief duty by the top 10 support needs of households in April to June 2025



Member Briefing Note 2.

National Plan to End Homelessness (Dec 2025) Summary

The best way to end homelessness and rough sleeping is to prevent it before it happens. The focus of the plan is to:

- building more homes that are affordable,
- raising living standards,
- supporting individuals through crises, and
- reforming public services to put prevention at their heart.

Although government funding for homelessness and rough sleeping has increased consistently since 2018, the number of people in temporary accommodation and on the streets has continued to rise. There are many reasons for this, including:

1. **A lack of affordable housing** – without enough genuinely affordable homes, prevention efforts can only go so far.
2. **Rising poverty** – making it harder for households to meet their basic needs and housing costs, pushing more people to the brink of homelessness.
3. **Over-emphasis on crisis response** – recent government activity has focussed on crisis relief rather than longer-term prevention or the causes of homelessness. Efforts have centred on responding to immediate need and getting people off the streets quickly, often into expensive, short-term accommodation, rather than long-term solutions we know work, such as Housing First. In many areas it is only possible to get help once you have been verified as sleeping rough.
4. **Reduced prevention activity** – attention and resources have been diverted away from genuine prevention activity, resulting in less early intervention and more families stuck in unsuitable temporary accommodation.
5. **Poor coordination across public services** – the NHS, prisons and asylum system each trying to manage their own pressures has led to vulnerable people falling between the cracks without getting the help they need.

Government intends to give councils greater freedoms and accountability to make changes locally.

Long-term sustainable change to address the root causes of homelessness:

- Building 1.5 million homes, including a generational increase in new social and affordable homes backed by £39 billion investment.
- Making sure that social homes go to people who need them, by updating social housing allocations guidance and making best use of the current stock.
- Reforming the private rented sector via the Renters' Rights Act, banning Section 21 evictions and improving security for tenants.
- Tackling poverty and boosting living standards by scrapping the two-child limit to lift 450,000 children out of poverty, increasing the National Living Wage by 4.1% from next April and making a sustained, above inflation increase to the standard rate of Universal Credit.

Medium-term change to shift away from crisis and put prevention at the heart of public services:

- Setting a new national target to prevent homelessness for more households and to help more people into stable homes quickly, this parliament.
- Investing £3.5 billion in homelessness and rough sleeping services over the next three years, supporting over 300,000 households each year via new, more flexible multi-year funding arrangements that enable councils to invest more in prevention.

- Placing new legal duties on public services to identify, act and collaborate to prevent and address homelessness.
- No one should leave a public institution into homelessness – something that happened to almost 34,000 households last year – underpinned by new cross-government targets to reduce homelessness from prisons, care and hospital.
- Ending the perceived need to sleep rough before getting help supporting areas to develop plans that move away from verification towards assessment based on need.

Immediate action on temporary accommodation, particularly B&B use:

- Setting a new target to eliminate the use of B&Bs for families, other than very short-term use in emergencies, by the end of this parliament.
- Increasing the supply of good-quality temporary accommodation, both through the £950 million fourth round of the Local Authority Housing Fund, and through exploring options for partnerships with social impact and institutional investors.
- Improving experience for people living in temporary accommodation, including action on standards, schooling, healthcare and out-of-area placements.
- Supporting local models via updated guidance, toolkits and expanded £30 million Emergency Accommodation Reduction Programme.

Action to address rough sleeping, focussed particularly on those who have slept on the streets the longest:

- Setting a new national target to halve long-term rough sleeping (by the end of this parliament.)
- Launching a £124 million supported housing programme, reaching over 2,500 people, both to prevent homelessness and to help people off the streets and into more stable housing.
- Launching a £15 million programme to tackle long-term rough sleeping, working with targeted areas to test innovative approaches and spread learning.
- Providing £37 million for the Ending Homelessness in Communities Fund, working with the voluntary, community and faith sector to improve support given to people experiencing long-term rough sleeping.
- Working with councils and wider public services to define consistent expectations on effective and proportionate engagement and enforcement to address persistent anti-social or harmful behaviour in a rough sleeping context, where necessary.

Government intends to hold themselves and partners to account by:

- Introducing new national targets for this parliament, as outlined above.
- Requiring every council to publish an action plan to accompany their local homelessness strategy and setting a new requirement that these should include local targets aligned with the new Outcomes Framework for local government.
- Calling on Mayors to ensure real ambition across their regions on these outcomes, giving them funding to drive coordination and collaboration between local councils, services and other partners.
- Strengthening oversight and support for councils on delivery – including closely monitoring areas with particular challenges, providing targeted expert support and taking action to strengthen improvement when progress is not good enough.
- Funding a new National Workforce Programme to provide essential training, expert housing and homelessness advice, and skills for the homelessness and rough sleeping workforce.
- Publishing progress reports at least every two years to track progress at a national level against our actions and targets, overseen by the Inter-Ministerial Group, which will continue to meet to drive action and learn lessons from frontline delivery.

- Continuing to convene the national Lived Experience Forum and Expert Group to help monitor impact on the ground
- Continuing to build on our high-quality data and evidence, adopting a test and learn approach, and where local areas trial innovative practice, roll it out where it is effective and share learning.

5 Pillars to the Strategy

1. **Universal Prevention:** Tackling the root causes of homelessness
2. **Targeted Prevention:** Support for people at higher risk of homelessness
3. **Preventing Crisis:** Helping people stay in their homes
4. **Improving Emergency Responses:** Improving temporary accommodation and making people's experiences better if they do become homeless
5. **Recovery and Preventing Repeat Homelessness:** Ensuring people don't experience homelessness more than once and halving long-term rough sleeping

The Plan outlines immediate action intended to help councils address the most unacceptable forms of homelessness and rough sleeping:

- Eliminating unlawful Bed & Breakfast (B&B) use for families,
- Tackling poor-quality temporary accommodation more widely
- Halving the number of people experiencing long-term rough sleeping

Member Briefing Note 3

New Housing Related Legislation

Context and Background:

Exeter City Council has an existing statutory duty under the Housing Act 2004 to keep the housing conditions in their area under review. These duties are currently delivered through the Private Sector Housing Team, integrated within the Housing Department. These duties are currently carried out through:

- Operation of Housing in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) Licensing Scheme
- Responses to Private Sector Tenant complaints in relation to property condition

There are essentially three new challenges via the introduction of the Renters Rights Act 2025, licensing of Supported Housing, and central government's policy in relation remediation works to tall buildings in response to the Grenfell disaster.

The Renters Rights Act 2025

This Renters Rights Act (Oct 25) places new duties on Council's to enforce "the landlord legislation in its area". This legislation is specified and relates to The Protection from Eviction Act 1977 and Part 1 (Tenancy Reform) and Part 2 (Residential Landlords) of the Renters Rights Act 2025.

New powers of investigation become live on 27 December 2025, and the tenancy reform offences will become live on 1 May 2026. More details will emerge through the implementation of secondary legislation however, the focus of the government is on the tenancy reform measures being brought in without delay and **local authorities will have a new duty to enforce, and a new duty to report.**

The first stage of offences and changes to tenancies will occur on **1 May 2026**. New tenancy related offences created and to be enforced for the first time will include.

- Breaches of the fair possession ground
- Trying to let a property on a fixed term
- Trying to end a tenancy orally or by service of notice to quit
- Acting outside the section 8 grounds
- Failing to provide the tenant with adequate notice
- Rental discrimination
- Breaching rental bidding rules
- Not providing a written statement of terms of tenancy

By late 2026, once the national database of private rented properties and landlords has been established, there will be offences of:

- Failure to register a rental property on the database or providing false information
- Failure to register as a landlord on the database or providing false information.

In 2028 it will become mandatory for landlords to sign up for the Private Rented Sector Ombudsman, and there will be a new offence of:

- Failure to comply with the directions of the new Landlord Ombudsman, or failure to be a member of the Landlords Redress Scheme.

Long term (between 2035 and 2037) the Decent Homes Standard and Awaab's Law will be integrated into the Renters Rights Act 2025 for privately rented dwellings, and there will be new offences for:

- Having a category 1 hazard present in a rented property (HHSRS Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004)
- Failure to meet a Type 1 requirement (not meeting the Decent Home Standard).
- Failure to attend/inspect quickly enough in relation to certain nominated hazards
- Failure to undertake works in relation to nominated hazards.
- Failure to provide alternative accommodation in emergency situations

Overall, the introduction of the Renters Rights Act 2025 will place significant new burdens on Local Authorities. The Central Government have provided new burdens funding of £49,677.18 for the 25/26 financial year, with the same amount expected for the following financial year.

Central government has clearly stated in relation to the Renters Rights Act 2025 (and private sector housing more broadly) that it expects local authorities to have a far more robust enforcement approach than in the past. One estimate from the organisation Justice for Tenants, puts the increase in Civil Penalty use by local authorities to be between 5 and 10 times more under the Renters Rights Act. In the 24/25 financial year 3 Civil Penalty Notices were served in Exeter.

Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023

The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 introduces a licensing regime for supported housing. Consultation on implementing the Act happened in 2025, and it is anticipated that the implementation will be October/November 2026. Supported Housing is for vulnerable people and is exempt from standard Housing Benefit rules, allowing higher rents to cover significant care, support or supervision provided by housing associations, charities or councils. The Act will place a responsibility on local authorities to review, **survey, license and inspect supported exempt accommodation** in their area.

The licensing scheme will be essentially modelled on the Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) licensing scheme. Each property will require an application with fee, inspection, assessment and determination by council officers and an approval or refusal of license. During the term of the license a further inspection will likely have to be carried out. It is important to note that the inspections will have to be carried out by multi-disciplinary teams as the National Supported Housing Standards apply to not only the building and facilities, but the care given. It is estimated there are more than 100 properties likely to be subject to the scheme in Exeter.

High Buildings Enforcement Policy

Following the Grenfell Fire central government started initiatives to first survey each Local Authority to identify buildings over 18m and how many had potentially dangerous Aluminium Composite Material cladding. Subsequent building owners surveys done by the building owners were required to return surveys to MHCLG and then sign up to remediation schemes.

December 2024, the government launched the Remediation Acceleration Plan, which expects remediation works will start by the end of 2025, and by the end of 2029 all 18+ metre buildings in government schemes will be remediated. According to the information currently available from **MHCLG, there are 21 buildings between 11 and 18m high, and 4 higher than 18m in Exeter**. Inspections and remediation works will be delivered by National Remediation

Teams appointed by central Government. Our current understanding is that government expects local authority officers to inspect high buildings (11m to 18m) as necessary and take statutory action to enforce remediation works but no further details are yet available on how it is expected that Local Authorities would undertake this new role.

Housing Needs System Transformation

A programme of work is already underway to address systemic challenges faced in Exeter in relation to homelessness. This includes delivery of an evidenced based approach to the way the council delivers its statutory services and how it commissions essential frontline support services for those in need. This follows a strategic review of our performance data which highlighted significant operational and systematic issues including Private Rented Sector (PRS) evictions that remain underrepresented at the prevention stage but more visible at the relief stage, suggesting a persistent pattern of late-stage intervention for PRS tenants.

Included in this work is the creation of a new division the **Early Intervention and Prevention Service** which will specialise in targeted early interventions to prevent homelessness. It will provide brief and intensive outreach support to people experiencing housing difficulties, which if not addressed, may lead to them becoming homeless. Key outcomes for this service will be to reduce PRS evictions by engaging tenants and landlords earlier to prevent escalation and evictions.

This service will introduce new prevention functions such as:

- PRS Landlord incentive scheme, rent guarantee and bond, repairs micro-grants, and same-week mediation with the aim of giving landlords alternatives to eviction and creates a reason for landlords/tenants to make early contact with the council
- PRS Tenancy health checks and visits: triggered support after first arrears, ASB warnings, or health/crisis flags, with practical help (budgeting, repairs advocacy, pest control) with the aim of tackling solvable issues before notice is served.

This service will deliver new legal functions such as:

- The council's new duties under the Renters Rights Act (2005) and the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023.
- New offences under the Decent Homes Standard and Awaab's Law for the private sector.

This service will also continue to deliver

- The Housing in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) Licensing Scheme including registration, inspection, resident complaints and enforcement actions
- Responses to Private Sector Tenant complaints in relation to property condition
- Oversight of the Warm Homes Loan Scheme
- Responses to ad hoc information about Empty Homes
- Disabled Facilities and Home Adaptation Grants (excluding Social Housing)