Support for single homeless people in England

Annual Review 2022

Homeless Link

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Contents

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Acknowledgements
We are grateful to all the homelessness services who took time out of their busy schedules to complete our survey.

Executive Summary

For the past fifteen years, Homeless Link's national study on support provided by the homelessness sector in England has provided crucial evidence to inform policy and practice. By exploring key trends in single homelessness[1] and the nature and availability of support, this fifteenth edition of our *Support for Single Homeless People in England: Annual Review* makes an important contribution to the evidence base on single homelessness provision in England. The research aims to help service providers, commissioners, policy makers, and local authorities understand and respond to the needs of people experiencing homelessness.

The findings are based on four key data sources including a representative survey of 295 accommodation providers and 61 day centres from across England, data from the Homeless England database, and national government statistics. The comprehensive nature of this analysis allows us to assess not only the current state of single homelessness provision, but to identify and analyse historic trends.

Homelessness trends

2022 was a year marked by a cost of living crisis that increased pressure on people at risk of homelessness and people already experiencing homelessness. As the homelessness sector emerged from the last of the pandemic related interventions, concerning trends started to emerge, with increases in people experiencing homelessness, rough sleeping and in temporary accommodation.

- 296,180 households were at risk of or experienced homelessness from April 2022 to March 2023, a 6% increase on 2021-22, and a 10% increase from 2018-19 when the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) was first introduced. This includes:
  - 139,990 households were threatened with homelessness within 56 days and owed a prevention duty, a 4% increase from 2021-22, and a 5% decrease from 2018-19.
  - 156,190 households were experiencing statutory homelessness and owed a relief duty, a 7% increase from 2021-22, and a 28% increase from 2018-19.
- 54,000 households (39%) were owed a prevention duty due to the end of an assured shorthold tenancy in the private rented sector.
- 49,790 households (32%) were owed a relief duty because friends and family were no longer willing or able to accommodate.

[1] The term 'single homelessness' is a commonly used term in the homelessness sector. It does not denote relationship status and is shorthand for 'people who have no dependent children in their household and who are not owed a statutory homelessness duty by a local authority.' The term can cover couples. Throughout this report we refer to single homelessness, and single homeless people. In both cases, this is the group to which we refer.

- The 2022 rough sleeping snapshot found that 3,069 people were estimated to be sleeping rough on a given night, a 26% increase from 2021 and a 74% increase since 2010. Rough sleeping increased in every English region compared with 2021.
- As of 31st December 2022, there were 100,510 households in temporary accommodation, this is a 4% increase on the previous year, and a 20% increase compared to 2018/19 when the HRA was first introduced.

Availability and access to homelessness services

Whilst accommodation projects and bed spaces have increased slightly from 2021 the Annual Review finds a sector that has been steadily declining since 2010, and at a rate that is at odds with the increases in homelessness and rough sleeping seen across England.

- There are currently 911 accommodation projects for single homeless people in England
- The number of accommodation services has increased by 2% from last year, but is still 33% lower than a decade ago in 2012, and 38% lower than 2010
- The increase in providers is driven by London which is the only English region to see a rise in number of accommodation projects since 2021 (16% increase). Excluding London there was 2% decrease in accommodation projects.
- There are 33,093 bed spaces in England, an increase of 3% from last year, and a 20% decrease from 2012, and a 24% decrease since 2010.
- With growing pressure on services 71% of accommodation projects reported having to turn someone away from support because their project was full.
- 79% of accommodation projects are mixed gender, with 11% men only and 10% women only
- 38% (343) of accommodation projects are youth specific services
- 9% (58) of accommodation projects are able to support people with high or complex needs
- A total of 173 day centres currently operate throughout England.
- Over the past year, there has been no change in the number of day centres

Support needs and support services available

There is evidence that since the pandemic that the level of support needs of people accessing homelessness services has increased substantially. Despite most accommodation providers offering low to medium support needs provision, almost all services are now supporting people with a range of overlapping needs. Barriers to statutory services, in particular health and social care, remain the biggest challenges in terms of ensuring people are accessing the support they need.

- 50% of accommodation providers and 79% of day centres are seeing an increase in people experiencing homelessness for the first time.

- 46% of accommodation providers and 63% of day centres have seen an increase in non-UK nationals with limited or restricted eligibility accessing their services, the biggest increase of any demographic.
- Mental health was the most commonly reported support need amongst accommodation providers (81%), a 16% decrease since 2021 but a 93% increase since 2020 and an 138% increase from 5 years ago in 2017.
- Support needs related to addiction, both drug dependency (98%) and alcohol addiction (100%) were the most common reported support needs amongst day centres.
- For both accommodation and day centres the sharp increase seen in 2021 following the COVI9-19 pandemic, in the number of people with higher levels of support needs accessing services providers has continued in 2022.
- Access to mental health support remains the biggest barrier for accommodation providers, with 90% of respondents stating they have a problem accessing mental health services, this is followed by drug and alcohol services (59%) and physical health services (49%).
- For day centres access to accommodation is the most significant challenge with 96% of respondents stating they have a problem accessing accommodation provision, this is followed by mental health services (91%) and then access to immigration advice and support (65%).

Funding

The funding model of the sector over the past decade has change substantially, with Housing Benefit rising from only 13% of accommodation providers main income in 2012 to 43% in 2022. At the same time, LA commissioned grants or contracts as a main funding source have decreased from 79% in 2012 to 40% in 2022. This is an enormous shift that the sector has seen in the last decade and has left the sector exposed to the impact of the cost of living crisis.

- Housing benefit is the most commonly cited main source of income for accommodation providers (35%), and 78% of all providers receive Housing Benefit as part of their overall income.
- 65% of those who receive Housing Benefit as a main income source are in receipt of Enhanced Housing Benefit
- In the last decade there has been a 231% increase in Housing Benefit as a funding source for accommodation providers and a 49% decrease in local authority commissioned services.
- Income for day centres is heavily reliant on fundraising, grants and philanthropy with 40% of providers stating their main income source is through grant funding, and 19% through individual giving.
- 24% of accommodation providers stated that their income had decreased since the previous year, with 56% stating there was no change to their income, and 21% reporting an increase.

- 46% of day centres stated that their income had decreased since the previous year, with 29% stating there was no change to their income, and 25% reporting an increase.
- 66% of accommodation providers, and 57% of day centres state that lack of inflationary increases in funding means that some of the services they deliver are no longer financially viable – meaning that no change to income reported may still be causing pressure on services.
- 50% of accommodation providers and 36% of day centres reporting they risk service closures as a result of rising costs, and a fifth of providers stating they have already reduced their provision.

Move-on from accommodation

The main aim of most homelessness services is to support people to develop the skills and abilities to move out of homelessness and into independent living, but accommodation providers are facing increasing barriers to be able to support people into secure, sustainable housing.

- 40% (4,243) of people currently being accommodated are waiting to move-on from their current provision into more secure, sustainable housing.
- 51% (2,160) of people waiting to move-on have been waiting for six months or longer.
- Lack of affordable housing, both insufficient social housing (87%) and no PRS available at LHA rates (65%) are the two main barriers to move-on reported.
- Of those who do move-on from their accommodation most leave to positive destinations. On average 39% of residents move-on to social housing.
- 8% of people return to homelessness on move-on - either sofa surfing or rough sleeping.

Conclusion

2022 has been a significant year in the homelessness sector as it emerged from the pandemic into a cost of living crisis. Since 2020 and the introduction of COVID-19 measures for people experiencing homelessness the sector has achieved some enormous successes, but the impact on the workforce has been immense with growing recruitment challenges and reports of burnout, as well as the struggle to maintain the momentum and progress made during the pandemic. The cost of living crisis has brough its own challenge as services feel the pressure of increased costs, at the same time as we start to the see the impact on people at risk of, and experiencing homelessness. Alongside this the Government published its updated rough sleeping strategy and for the first time RSI funding was announced as a multi-year grant programme.

But despite the new strategy, commitment to multi-year funding, and the progress made accommodating tens of thousands of people who were street homeless during the pandemic, 2022 was the first year that rough sleeping started to rise again since 2018, with an estimated 3,069 people sleeping on the streets on any given night. Alongside this, the number of households owed a statutory homelessness duty is at its highest since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act, and numbers of people in temporary accommodation are also at record highs. With 50% of accommodation providers, and 79% of day centres reporting increases in people accessing their service who are experiencing homelessness for the first time, the pressure and demand the sector is facing is evident.

Although overall there has been a slight increase in accommodation providers since last year, this is driven by London alone, and in the last 10 years the sector has shrunk by 20%, whilst over the same timeframe homelessness has increased. And despite an increase in rough sleeping from 2021 we haven't seen a change in the available support from day centres.

As the impact of the rising cost of living continues to be felt by providers, and with more and more people in need of services, the impact of a sector that has been slowly shrinking over the past decade is being felt. The 2022 Annual Review highlights a sector facing increasing complexity, increasing demand and ongoing systemic barriers. Despite this, regional variation tells us that there are examples of local areas working to reverse these trends, increase capacity and find ways of providing the support needed by people experiencing homelessness. Understanding this is key to identifying the best practice and ways of working needed to ensure that services can continue to effectively support people experiencing homelessness.

Chapter 1. Introduction

For the past fifteen years, Homeless Link's national study on support provided by the homelessness sector in England, has provided crucial evidence to inform policy and practice. By exploring key trends in single homelessness and the nature and availability of support, this fifteenth edition of our *Support for Single Homeless People in England: Annual Review* makes an important contribution to the evidence base on single homelessness provision in England. The research aims to help service providers, commissioners, policy makers, and local authorities, understand and respond to the needs of people experiencing homelessness.

Methodology

The findings for this report are drawn from four key data sources:

1. Telephone and online survey from 295 accommodation providers (34% response rate) conducted between September 2022 and November 2022.

2. Telephone and online survey from 61 homelessness day centres (35% response rate) conducted between September 2022 and November 2022.

   The sample structure was a vital part of this survey. Homeless Link ensured that the profile of the projects interviewed closely represented the profile of the sector's projects (accommodation or day centre) as a whole. For this survey, we achieved 95% confidence intervals of ±5% for the survey results from accommodation providers as a discrete group, and from the aggregated grouping of accommodation providers and day centres. The survey was conducted by Social Engine. Appendix 1 providers further detail on our survey methodology.

3. Homeless England database figures on projects and bed space availability.

   This database is managed by Homeless Link and holds information about homelessness services in England. Although the data is not live, it is updated regularly and considered to be the most accurate data source on homelessness services in England. Data on the availability of services and bed spaces were extracted from the Homeless England database, allowing a comparative analysis with previous publications of the Annual Review. Overall comparisons of accommodation projects, day centres and bed spaces can be given from 2010. Changes in methodology mean more detailed breakdowns are from 2014 onwards.

4. Existing data on homelessness trends, including national statutory homelessness and rough sleeping figures as published by the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing.

Data accuracy

In line with all Annual Review's since 2017 the survey asked services to provide data for the period of April 2021 – March 2022, allowing for a year on year comparison with last year's report. Some questions such as those related to funding have consistently asked for information on the last financial year and therefore allow for comparison over a longer time period. Changes to questions over time mean that trend comparison is not always possible. Certain questions ask for snapshot data relating to records of "last night", "last month" last year". Within different homelessness services, amounts and methods of data collection tend to vary however, and some survey questions may therefore be based on informed estimates provided by the responding organisation, rather than exact figures (Table 1.1.)

Table 1.1. Quality of data provided by respondents

	Accommodation providers	Day centres
All exact figures	5%	**3%**
Mostly exact figures	10%	**22%**
About half and half	15%	**12%**
Mostly estimates	60%	**42%**
All estimates	10%	**22%**

*accommodation providers N=203; day centres N=60

Where possible regional breakdowns for accommodation providers are included throughout this report. The sample size of day centres is too small to be able to provide regional breakdowns.

Table 1.2. Survey response rates by region

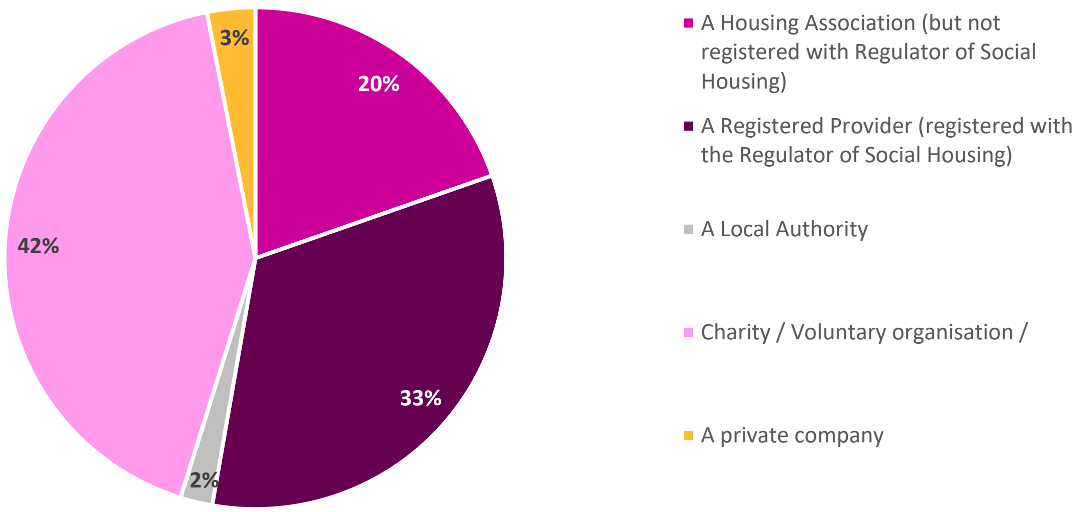
	Accommodation Providers		Day Centres	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**
East	46	16%	1	2%
East Midlands	27	9%	3	5%
London	47	16%	13	21%
North East	14	5%	1	2%
North West	34	12%	11	18%
South East	46	16%	11	18%
South West	35	12%	8	13%
West Midlands	22	7%	5	8%
Yorkshire and the Humber	23	8%	8	13%
Total	294		61	

*1 accommodation provider responded on an England wide basis and therefore is not included in the regional breakdown

Accommodation provider respondents

Chart 1.1. shows the breakdown of types of accommodation providers that responded to the survey. The majority of respondents were charities or voluntary organisations (42%, 122), followed by Registered Providers (33%, 96), and Housing Associations that are not RPs (20%, 57). A small proportion of respondents represented private accommodation provision (3%, 9) and local authority accommodation (2%, 6).

Chart 1.1. Accommodation provider survey respondents 2022



N=290

Chapter 2. Single homelessness in England

This chapter provides context for this year's report. It explores the different categories of homelessness and then looks at the existing evidence on the numbers and distribution of people experiencing homelessness in England. The evidence is drawn from government figures on statutory homelessness and rough sleeping, published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

Key headlines

- 296,180 households were at risk of or experienced homelessness from April 2022 to March 2023, a 6% increase on 2021-22, and a 10% increase from 2018-19 when the HRA was first introduced. This includes:
    - 139,990 households were threatened with homelessness within 56 days and owed a prevention duty, a 4% increase from 2021-22, and a 5% decrease from 2018-19.
    - 156,190 households were experiencing statutory homelessness and owed a relief duty, a 7% increase from 2021-22, and a 28% increase from 2018-19.
- 54,000 households (39%) were owed a prevention duty due to the end of an assured shorthold tenancy in the private rented sector.
- 49,790 households (32%) were owed a relief duty because friends and family were no longer willing or able to accommodate.
- The 2022 rough sleeping snapshot found that 3,069 people were estimated to be sleeping rough on a given night, a 26% increase from 2021 and a 74% increase since 2010. Rough sleeping increased in every English region compared with 2021.
- As of 31st December 2022 there were 100,510 households in temporary accommodation, this is a 4% increase on the previous year, and a 20% increase compared to 2018/19 when the HRA was first introduced.

Types of homelessness

The term 'homelessness' comprises a range of different temporary and long-term circumstances that extend beyond those sleeping rough or housed in temporary accommodation by their local authority. The legal definition of homelessness derives from the Housing Act 1996 and states that an individual is classified as 'homeless' if they do not have accommodation that: (a) they can legally occupy, (b) is accessible to them, (c) is 'physically available to them (and their household), and (d) is reasonable for them to live in.

Statutory homelessness

The term 'statutory homelessness' refers to households — classified as either families (those with dependents) or individuals (single homelessness) — that have a legal entitlement to a homelessness duty by their local authority. Until the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in 2018 this was limited to those owed a Main Duty, and were therefore deemed to be both unintentionally homeless and in priority need, which included anyone who was: pregnant; living with dependent children; homeless as a result of fire, flood or other disaster; aged under 18, a care leaver aged 18 to 20; and/or assessed as vulnerable.[2] The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced people who are made homeless as a result of domestic abuse as an additional priority need category.[3]

The vulnerability assessment includes those with physical disabilities and mental health needs. However, assessments for vulnerability meant that decisions were at local authority discretion and led to many single homeless applicants being excluded from statutory support.

One of the goals of the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) was to address the inconsistency in access to support for single people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Expanding the statutory duties on local authority instead ensured that support was provided regardless of priority need decisions. However, eligibility entitlements based on immigration status still apply to all duties under the HRA.

Under the HRA there are three duties under which the local authority can grant applicants accommodation and/or support:

Prevention duty: Local authorities must help prevent households deemed to be threatened with experiencing homelessness in the next 56 days from becoming homeless. If, during this period, the household experiences homelessness, they will be moved to a relief duty.[4]

Relief duty: Local authorities 'must take reasonable steps' to relieve homelessness within 56 days, primarily through securing alternative accommodation.[5]

Main duty: If, at the end of the 56 day relief duty period, a household is: (a) still deemed to be homeless, (b) in priority need), (c) eligible for assistance, and (d) not intentionally homeless, they are entitled to accommodation from the local authority. The local authority should conduct an assessment and provide temporary accommodation until more permanent accommodation can be provided.[6]

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[2] The Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002, extended the definition of 'vulnerable' to include: mental health problems; physical or learning disabilities; old age; leaving prison or the Armed Forces; care leavers; being at risk of violence (or threats of violence); other special reasons.

[3] s.189(1)(e) Housing Act 1996 as inserted by s. 78 Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

[4] This is defined in Section 195 of the 1996 Act. Available here: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/13/section/4#section-4-2.

[5] This is defined in Section 189B of the 1996 Act. Available here: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/13/section/5#section-5-2.

[6] See DLUHC's *Homelessness data: notes and definitions* (2018). Available at; https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homelessness-data-notes-and-definitions

Single homelessness[7]
This term covers individuals or couples without dependent children who are homeless. Single homeless people are much less likely to meet the priority need criteria of homelessness legislation (see above) and therefore often do not qualify under the main duty of the HRA which would guarantee them housing under local authority statutory duty. As mentioned above, being considered 'vulnerable' is particularly significant for single homeless people, as it is the primary way they are found to be in priority need.

This report explores how homelessness support services provide an alternative source of support for single homeless people in these circumstances. Many people experiencing single homelessness will stay in short term accommodation (e.g. hostels, shelters and temporary supported accommodation) provided by the voluntary homelessness sector, while others may end up sleeping rough or end up 'hidden' from the system.[8]

Hidden homelessness
Due to difficulties accessing support, personal circumstances or lack of understanding about the support available, many single homeless people end up what is termed 'hidden homeless'. Living in squats, sleeping on someone's floor, sofa-surfing with friends, sleeping on night buses/underground trains/airports or sleeping rough in concealed locations, these individuals are often not 'visible' on the streets or to services and as a result will not receive the advice and support that they need.[9] Although the introduction of the Relief Duty through the HRA means that since 2018 many of these people are entitled to some statutory support this is a population that is traditionally less visible and, as a result, more likely to be disengaged from services and support.

The lack of visibility means that people experiencing hidden homelessness are less likely to be captured in official statistics meaning an accurate capture of the scale of hidden homelessness is difficult, however there are increasing data available to help better understand the hidden homeless population.[10] In 2018/19 the English Housing Survey included a new question on sofa surfing which showed that 541,000 households had someone living with them in the last 12 months who would otherwise be

[7] The term 'single homelessness' is a commonly used term in the homelessness sector. It does not denote relationship status and is shorthand for 'people who have no dependent children in their household and who are not owed a statutory homelessness duty by a local authority.' The term can cover couples. Throughout this report we refer to single homelessness, and single homeless people. In both cases, this is the group to which we refer.

[8] Crisis (2017) *Moving on: Improving Access to Housing for Single Homeless People in England,* https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/237833/moving_on_2017.pdf

[9] Reeve, K. and Batty, E. (2011) *The hidden truth about homelessness. Experiences of single homelessness in England,* https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/236815/the_hidden_truth_about_homelessness.pdf

[10] ONS (2023) *"Hidden" homelessness in the UK: evidence review*. Available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/articles/hiddenhomelessnessintheukevidencereview/2023-03-29

homeless.[11] Crisis' core homelessness figure calculated through triangulating data collated from sources including the English Housing Survey and the ONS Survey of Living Standards estimated that approximately 139,000 households are experiencing hidden homelessness on any given night.[12]

Rough sleeping

The term 'rough sleeping' refers to the experience of people who sleep outside or in buildings or places that are unfit for human habitation (e.g., car parks, cars, stations, doorways). Rough sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness and is a dangerous and isolating experience that has a severely detrimental impact on an individual's physical and mental health and life expectancy.[13]

In order to estimate the numbers of people sleeping rough in England on any given night, local authorities conduct an annual snapshot estimate to approximate rates and trends in rough sleeping across the country. The current methodology for the rough sleeping snapshot was introduced in 2010 and uses a specific and defined definition of what rough sleeping means: *'People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or "bashes")'.*

The snapshot approach is not intended to provide a complete figure of the number of people rough sleeping in England and is by definition a best estimate count of street homelessness. In conducting these estimates, local authorities are expected to consult with local agencies, such as the police, voluntary sector, and outreach teams, to ensure they have the most accurate information on who is likely to be sleeping rough on a given night and where they are likely to be found.

Rough sleeping policy context

After rough sleeping figures rose from 2010 through 2017, the government launched a new Rough Sleeping Strategy with the goal of halving rough sleeping by 2024 and permanently ending it by 2027.[14] This was to be accomplished through a focus on prevention, intervention, and recovery. The following year, Government increased this goal with the new aim to end rough sleeping by 2024.

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[11] DLUCH. (2020). *English Housing Survey 2018 to 2019: sofa surfing and concealed households - fact sheet*. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2018-to-2019-sofa-surfing-and-concealed-households-fact-sheet

[12] Watts, B et al. (2022). *The Homelessness Monitor: England 2022*. London: Crisis.

[13] Aldridge R.W., et al. (2019). *Causes of death among homeless people: a population-based cross-sectional study of linked hospitalisation and mortality data in England*. Wellcome Open Res, 4(49)

[14] MHCLG. (2018). *Rough Sleeping Strategy.* Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/733421/Rough-Sleeping-Strategy_WEB.pdf

Interventions to support the Rough Sleeping Strategy include the creation of the Rough Sleeping Initiative in March 2018. The most recent round of funding was announced in September 2022, and includes up to £500 million for 2022-25, which will be distributed 303 areas.[15] This is the first time that the RSI funding has provided multi-year funding settlements.

In 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic introduced a significant change in rough sleeping policy and intervention with unprecedent support for people experiencing street homelessness. Everyone In was the main government initiative marking this period, whereby all people who were experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping were offered private accommodation. Approximately 37,000 people were housed through this campaign,[16] leading to dramatic reductions in rough sleeping across the country and over 26,000 people being placed in longer-term accommodation.[17]

For the first time in England's history, Everyone In meant that nearly every person living in this country had access to accommodation, including single people without priority need and those with limited or no recourse to public funds. While these measures began at a clear point in time on 26 March 2020, the end of this provision has been less clear, and regional variation started to appear throughout the latter stages of 2020 and into 2021. By 2022 almost all measures enacted during the pandemic had ended.

In September 2022 the government released an updated Rough Sleeping Strategy, "Ending Rough Sleeping for Good" including for the first time a definition for ending rough sleeping: it is prevented wherever possible, and where it does occur it is rare, brief and non-recurrent.[18]

[15] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rough-sleeping-initiative-2022-to-2025-funding-allocations
[16] MHCLG. (2021). Government continues drive to end rough sleeping, building on success of Everyone In. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-continues-drive-to-end-rough-sleeping-building-on-success-of-everyone-in.
[17] Wilson, W. and Barton, C. (2022). Rough sleeping (England). *House of Commons Library.* Available at: https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN02007/SN02007.pdf.
[18] DLUHC (2022) *Ending Rough Sleeping for Good.* Available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ending-rough-sleeping-for-good

Homelessness trends

For a range of reasons, it has been challenging to measure and assess homelessness trends in England. This includes the lack of a clear, consistent definition of homelessness, the use of a variety of different approaches to measuring single homelessness, and the wide prevalence of hidden homelessness.

The HRA presented a vital opportunity in our ability to estimate the scale of homelessness and, in particular, single homelessness. This change in legislation led to the replacement of the P1E data returns with a new system – the Homelessness Case Level Information Collection (H-CLIC) in April 2018. With the shift in the definition of homelessness beyond those in priority need, this has greatly expanded our ability to assess the scale of single homelessness however it does mean that most of our trend data now starts in April 2018 and is not comparable with historic data.

The statutory statistics collected by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities (DLUHC) includes a much greater level of detail on the reasons people are experiencing (or at risk of) homelessness, their support needs, their length of time in temporary accommodation, and the outcomes of prevention duties.

However, it is still vital to note that whilst this data helps us understand the wider trends, it does not tell us about those not engaging with support, people experiencing more hidden forms of homelessness, or those not entitled to support because of immigration restrictions.

Statutory homelessness

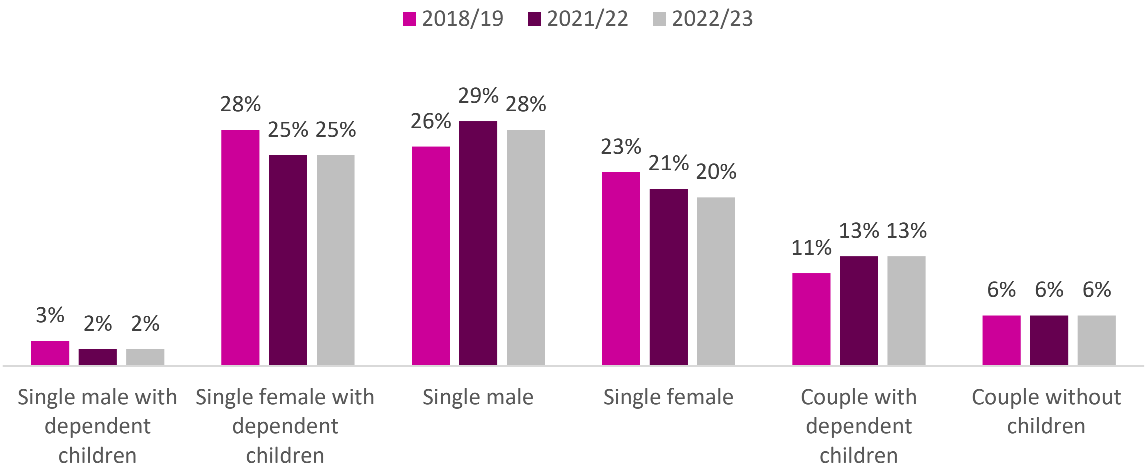
According to DLUHC's 2022-23 statutory statistics,[19] 296,180 households were at risk of or experienced homelessness during this period and owed either a prevention or relief duty. This is a 6% increase on 2021-22, and a 10% increase from 2018-19 when the HRA was first introduced.

Prevention duty
In 2022-23 139,990 households were threatened with homelessness within 56 days and owed a prevention duty. Whilst this is a 4% increase from 2021-22, it is a 5% decrease from 2018-19. The profile of households owed a prevention duty has remained relatively consistent with the previous year with single males without dependents making up the highest proportion of households (39,000, 28%), followed by single female parents (35,480, 25%), and single females without dependents (28,630, 20%). Compared with 2018-19 when the HRA was first introduced there have been some changes to the profile of those owed a prevention duty when single female parents

[19] DLUHC (2023) Statutory Homelessness live tables. Accessed in July 2023. Available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness

made up the largest proportion (28%). Chart 2.1 below sets out the changing profile of those owed a prevention duty between 2018-19, 2021-22 and 2022-23.

Chart 2.1. Profile of households owed prevention duty 2018/9 – 2022/23



Of those owed a prevention duty the most common reason was due to the end of an assured shorthold (AST) tenancy in the private rented sector, 54,000 households making up 39% of the total proportion owed the duty. This is a 22% increase from 2021-22 and a 20% increase from 2018-19. Breaking down the reason for end of an AST:

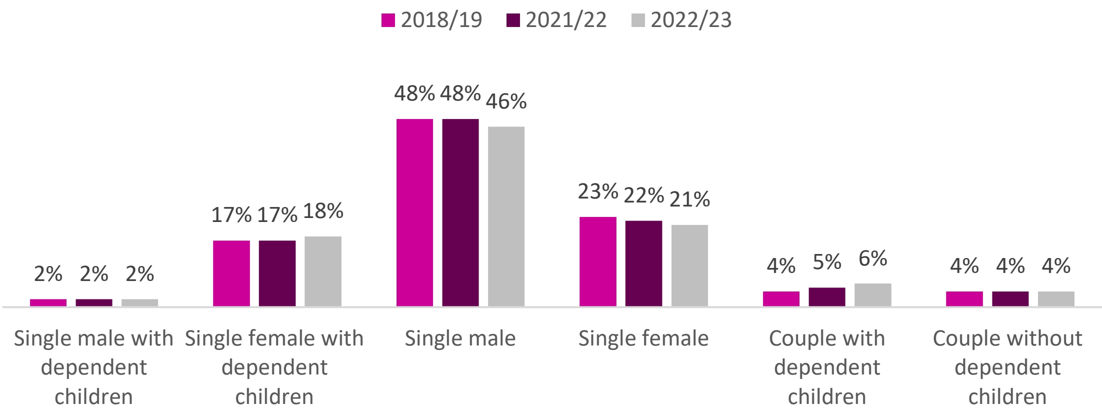
- 34,690 households were owed a prevention duty because their landlord was selling or re-letting the property. This is a 24% increase on 2021-22 and a 45% increase on 2018-19.
- 8,360 households were at risk of homelessness due to rent arrears, a 9% increase on 2021-22 but a 25% decrease on 2018-19.
- There has been a 124% increase from 2021-22 in people in rent arrears due to an increase in rent, and a 64% increase since 2018-19.
- Of those at risk of homelessness due to the end of an AST 24,060 households had a valid section 21 notice. A 21% increase on 2021-22, and a 24% increase since 2018-19.

130,510 households ended their prevention duty in 2022-23. Of those 68,920 households had a positive outcome and secured accommodation for 6+ months. Whilst this is a 16% increase on 2018-19 and no change compared to the previous year, as a comparative proportion of the total households whose duty ended there is a reduction compared to previous years. In 2022-23 53% of duties ended resulted in secured accommodation, compared with 56% in 2021-22 and 58% in 2018-19. In contrast 31,170 households ended their prevention duty as homeless, a 32% increase on 2021-22 and 53% increase from 2018-19. This is also an increase in terms of proportions increasing from 20% of the total number of duties ended in both 2018-19 and 2021-22 to 24% in 2022-23.

Relief

In 2022-23 156,190 households were experiencing statutory homelessness and owed a relief duty. This is a 7% increase from 2021-22, and a 28% increase from 2018-19. The profile of households owed a relief duty has remained relatively consistent with the previous year with single males without dependents making up the highest proportion of households (71,550, 46%), although whilst this is an increase in actual households from both 2021-22 (3% increase), and 2018-29 (23% increase) it is the lowest overall proportion of single males owed the relief duty since the introduction of the HRA. Single females make up the next largest group owed the relief duty (33,440, 21%), followed by single females with dependent children (28,150, 18%). The biggest increases in the relief duty are seen amongst those with dependent children with families making up 42,770 of all those experiencing homelessness, a 16% increase on 2021-22, and a 46% increase on 2018-19. Chart 2.2 below sets out the changing profile of those owed a relief duty between 2018-19, 2021-22 and 2022-23.

Chart 2.2 Profile of households owed relief duty 2018/9 – 2022/23



Of those owed a relief duty the most common reason was friends or family no longer willing or able to accommodation, 49,790 households making up 32% of the total proportion owed the duty. This is a 13% increase from 2021-22 and a 56% increase from 2018-19. Experiencing homelessness as a result of domestic abuse was the next main reason given, 26,320 households (17% of those owed relief duty), this is an 8% increase on 2021-22 and an 87% increase on 2018-19. The third most common reason was due to the end of an AST, 19,940 households (13% of those owed relief duty), a 39% increase from 2021-22 and a 47% increase from 2018-19.

174,080 households ended their relief duty in 2022-23. Of those 63,170 households had a positive outcome and secured accommodation for 6+ months. Whilst this is a 55% increase on 2018-19 and 1% increase compared to the previous year, as a comparative proportion of the total households whose duty ended there is a reduction compared to previous years. In 2022-23 36% of duties ended resulted in secured accommodation, compared with 39% in 2021-22 and 42% in 2018-19. In contrast 76,900 households ended their relief duty whilst still homeless and progressed to main duty decision where they will only receive continued support if they are found to be in priority need. As a proportion of the total households whose duty ended this is an increase compared to previous years. In 2022-23 44% of duties ended with households still homeless, compared with 40% in 2021-22 and 33% in 2018-19.

Rough sleeping

Local authorities in England carry out an annual snapshot count or estimate of the number of people sleeping rough on a single 'typical' night in Autumn (October to November). These statistics provide a snapshot figure of those sleeping rough across local authorities in England. Local authorities decide which approach to use to determine the number of people sleeping rough in their local area on a single night.[20] All of the available methods record only those people seen, or thought to be, sleeping rough on a single 'typical' night. They do not include everyone in an area with a history of sleeping rough, or everyone sleeping rough in areas across the October-November period.

In Autumn 2022 after four years of decreasing numbers of rough sleepers there was the first increase seen since 2017, with 3,069 people counted or estimated by local authorities to be sleeping rough.[21] This represents a 26% increase from 2021 (Table 2.1), and a 74% increase since the current methodology for measuring rough sleeping was introduced in 2010.

Table 2.1. Annual comparison of rough sleeping in England with 2022

	Number of rough sleepers	% change (with 2022)	Numerical change (with 2022)
2010	1,768	+74%	+1,301
2011	2,181	+41%	+888
2012	2,309	+33%	+760
2013	2,414	+27%	+655
2014	2,744	+12%	+325
2015	3,569	-14%	-500
2016	4,134	-26%	-1,065
2017	4,751	-35%	-1,682
2018	4,677	-34%	-1,608
2019	4,266	-28%	-1,197
2020	2,688	+14%	+381
2021	2,443	+26%	+626
2022	3,069	-	-

[20] Details on the approach options for the rough sleeping count are available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-snapshot-in-england-autumn-2022/rough-sleeping-snapshot-in-england-autumn-2022-technical-report

[21] DLUHC (2023) Rough sleeping snapshot in England: autumn 2022. Available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-snapshot-in-england-autumn-2022

Regional trends in rough sleeping

There are regional variations in the numbers of people seen sleeping rough. London, the South East and the West Midlands saw the greatest increase in the number of people seen rough sleeping in 2022 when compared to 2021 (Chart 2.3). The lowest increase was seen in Yorkshire and The Humber. No region saw a decrease in rough sleeping compared to the previous year.

Chart 2.3. Regional change in rough sleeping count, 2021 and 2022

In terms of overall distribution of rough sleeping across England, London, the South East and South West reported the highest number of rough sleepers, with the North East reporting the lowest numbers.

Table 2.2. Proportion of rough sleeping in England by region

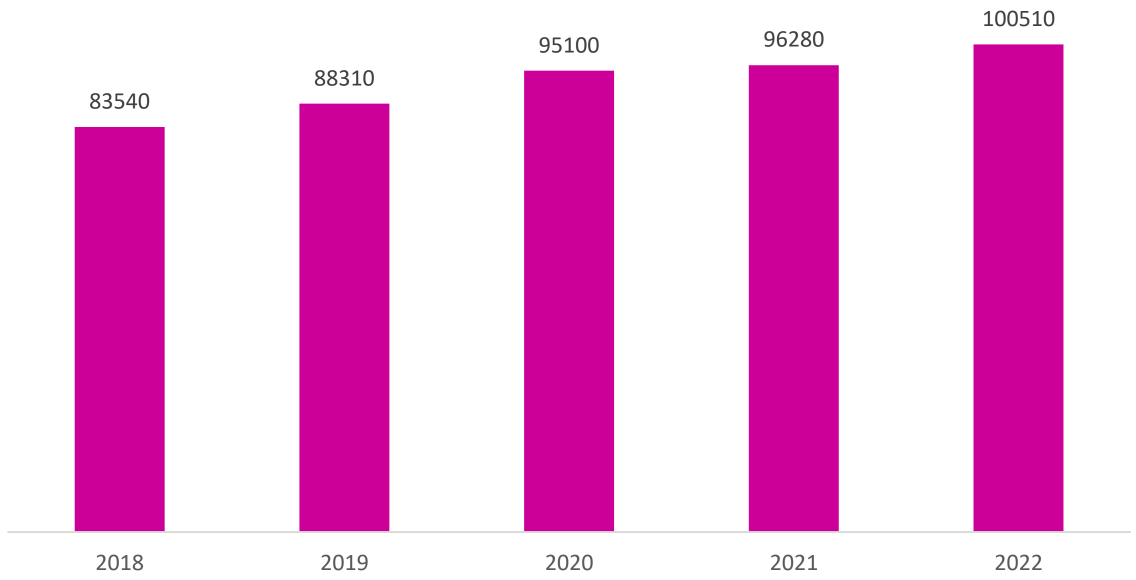
East Midlands	7%
East of England	9%
London	28%
North East	2%
North West	8%
South East	19%
South West	13%
West Midlands	8%
Yorkshire and The Humber	6%

Temporary Accommodation

Local authorities have a duty to accommodate households if there is also a long term duty to house someone e.g. through the main duty decision for anyone who is priority need. Accommodation may be provided for as long as it takes to find permanent housing. Local authorities may also provide emergency accommodation whilst they are looking into a housing situation pending decision on priority need and main duty decision. Not everyone owed a prevention or relief duty will be given temporary accommodation by their local authority as part of their statutory support.[22]

As of 31st December 2022 there were 100,510 households in temporary accommodation (TA), this is a 4% increase on the previous year, and a 20% increase compared to 2018/19 when the HRA was first introduced.[23] Chart 2.4 below sets out the number of households in TA as of December 31st annually since the introduction of the HRA. The total households in TA at the end of 2022 represent the highest number of households since 2005.

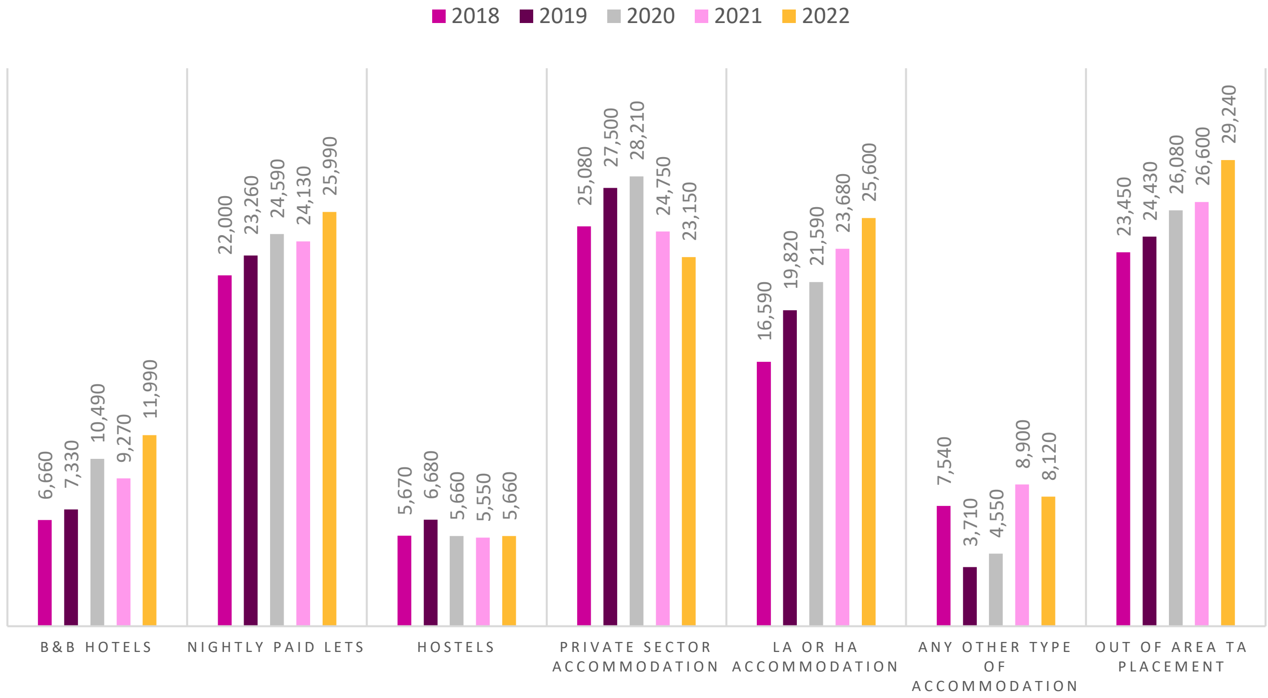
Chart 2.4. Total households in Temporary Accommodation 2018 -2022



Most households in TA were accommodated in LA or Housing Association stock (25,600 households) with the majority of these families with dependent children (17,230 households), followed by PRS (23,150 households, of which 17,230 had dependent children). 25,990 households were in nightly paid, private lets and 11,990 were in B&Bs. 29,240 households had been accommodated in TA outside of their local authority area.

[22] Shelter (2023) *Temporary housing when homeless.* Available here: https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/homelessness/temporary_housing_when_homeless
[23] DLUHC (2023) Statutory Homelessness live tables. Accessed in July 2023. Available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness

Chart 2.5. Numbers accommodated in different forms of temporary accommodation, December 31st 2018 - 2022



Chapter 3. Availability and access to homelessness services

This chapter explores the availability of accommodation services and day centres in England. Drawing on findings from analysis of the Homeless England database and the survey with services from across England, it discuses key characteristics of existing provision and changes in this provision over the past year.

Key headlines

- There are currently 911 accommodation projects for single homeless people in England
- The number of accommodation services has increased by 2% from last year, but is still 33% lower than a decade ago in 2012, and 38% lower than 2010
- The increase in providers is driven by London which is the only English region to see a rise in number of accommodation projects since 2021 (16% increase). Excluding London there was 2% decrease in accommodation projects.
- There are 33,093 bed spaces in England, an increase of 3% from last year, and a 20% decrease from 2012, and a 24% decrease since 2010.
- With growing pressure on services 71% of accommodation projects reported having to turn someone away from support because their project was full.
- 79% of accommodation projects are mixed gender, with 11% men only and 10% women only
- 38% (343) of accommodation projects are youth specific services
- 9% (58) of accommodation projects are able to support people with high or complex needs
- A total of 173 day centres currently operate throughout England.
- Over the past year, there has been no change in the number of day centres

Definitions

Homelessness provision is described in various ways, and accommodation providers and day centres differ in size and in the level and nature of support offered. The following definitions cover the key features of both forms of provision:

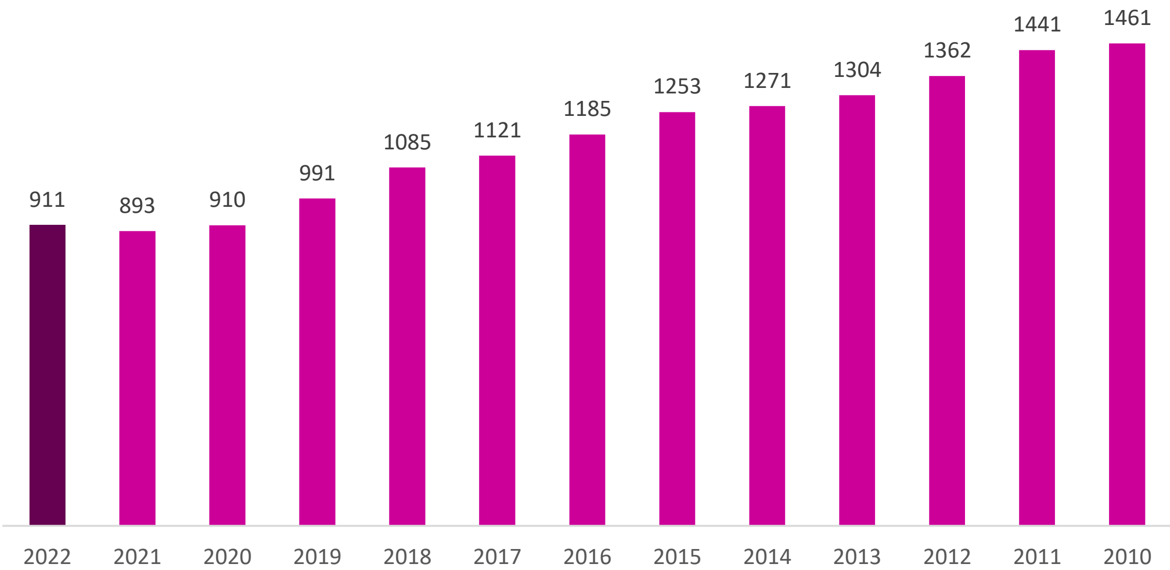
Accommodation providers provide both short and long-term accommodation and generally aim to support people to prepare for independent living. Examples of accommodation projects include foyers, supported housing schemes, and hostels. The level of support, access criteria, and target groups vary between projects. Those able to live independently may be placed in accommodation with lower levels of support, while those with other types of support needs may need to live in accommodation that provides support to meet these needs.

Day centres offer non-accommodation-based support for those sleeping rough and/or who are either experiencing or at risk of other forms of homelessness. Day centres are usually provided and run by voluntary, faith, or community organisations[24] and have often emerged in response to a local need.

Availability of homelessness accommodation services

Data from the Homelessness England database identifies 911 accommodation projects for single people who are homeless in England, representing a 2% increase from the previous year's figure of 893. This reverses over a decade long trend of decreasing accommodation options for single households. Despite the increase from last year this still represents a 19% decrease in the last five years, a 33% decrease in the last 10 years, and a 38% decrease since 2010.

Chart 3.1. Number of accommodation providers, 2010 - 2022



Source: Homeless England database

The increase from 2021 to 2022 in accommodation projects is driven by London which is the only region to have seen an annual increase with the number of projects increasing from 163 in 2021 to 189 in 2022 (16%) compared to a 2% decrease for all other English regions, with 717 projects in 200 compared to 730 in 2021. The North East and South West saw no change in the number of projects, remaining at 50 and 137 respectively. All other regions saw a decrease in providers.

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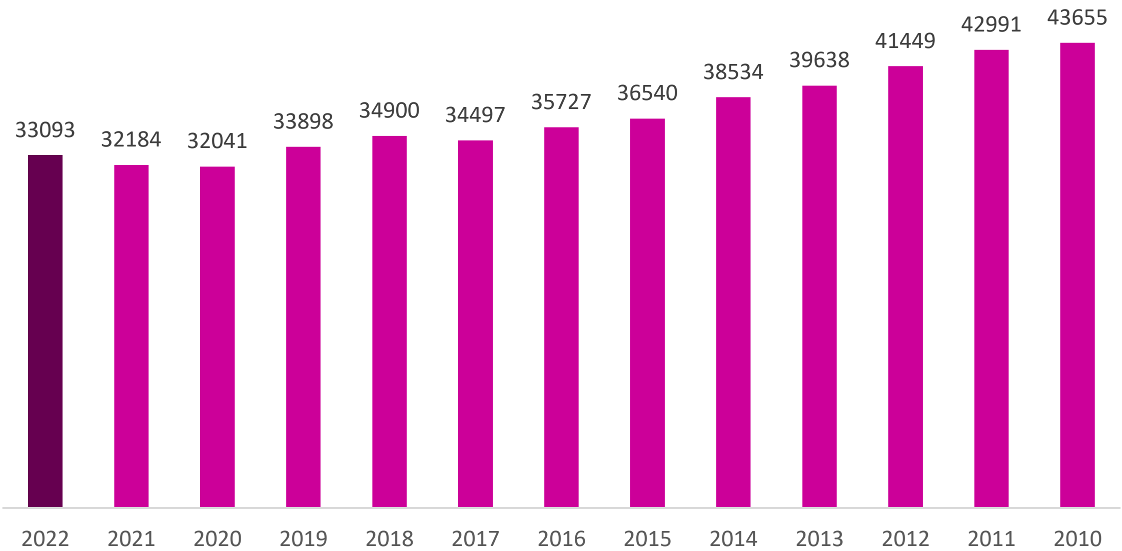
[24] Findings from a survey of 124 day centres, showed that the majority were run by voluntary sector homelessness organisations (43%) or religious organisations (27%). https://www.kcl.ac.uk/scwru/pubs/2005/Crane-et-al-2005-Homeless.pdf

Chart 3.2. Change in number of accommodation providers by region, (2017,2021,2022)

Source: Homeless England database

Bedspaces in accommodation projects have increased by 3% to a total of 33,093 since the previous year. It is important to highlight that although the number of bedspaces has risen since last year, this year's figure of 33,093 represents a 4% decrease in the last five years, a 20% decrease in the last 10 years, and a 24% decrease since 2010.

Chart 3.3 Number of bedspaces available in England, 2010 - 2022

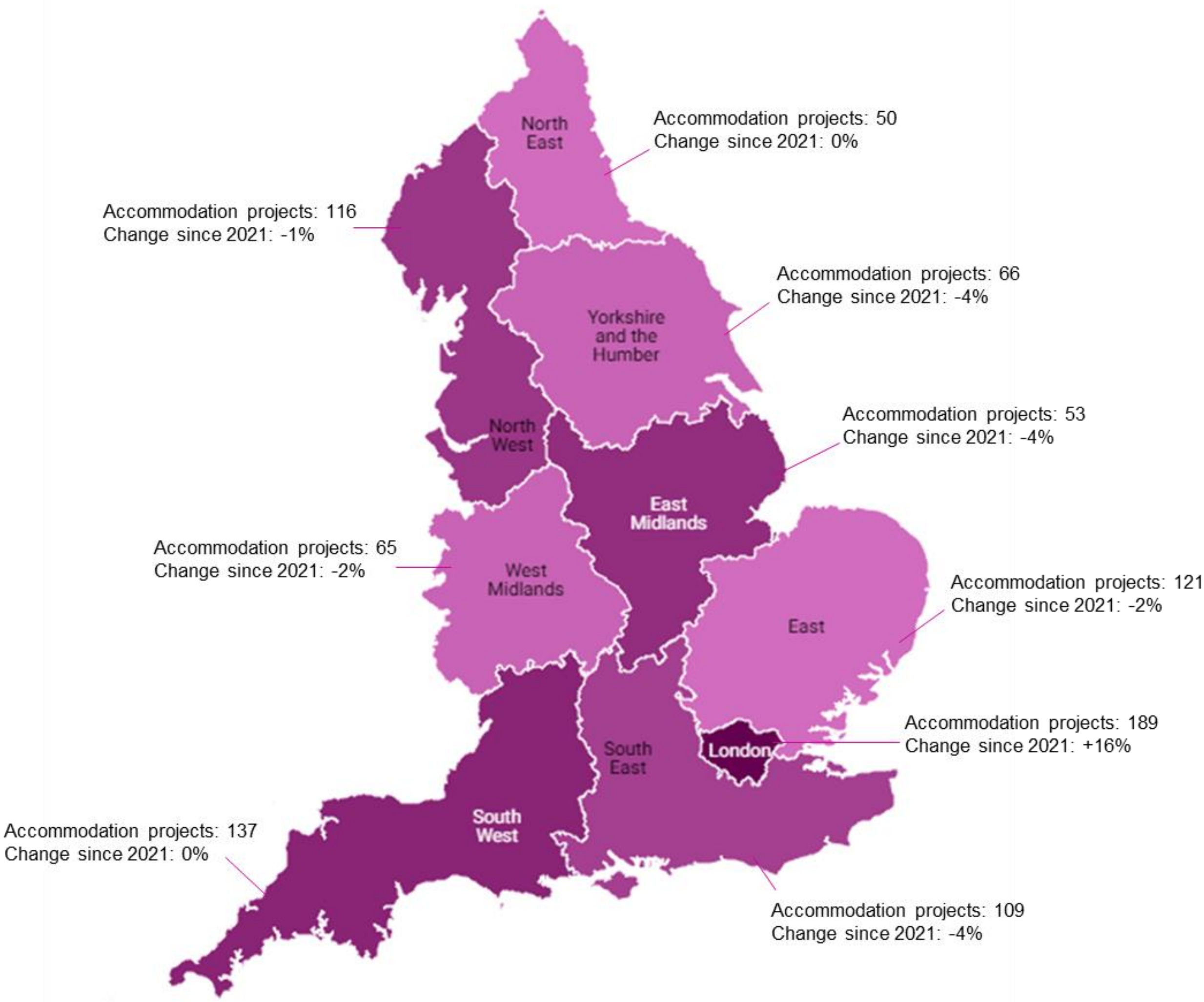


Source: Homeless England database

Despite seeing a decrease in overall accommodation projects across most English regions between 2021 and 2022, only the South East and Yorkshire and the Humber saw a reduction in the number of bedspaces. All other regions saw an increase with East of England showing a 12% increase in bedspaces and the North East a 7% increase. This perhaps indicates a reduction in the number of different providers, with certain providers growing in capacity at the same time as others are exiting from provision. It could also speak to an increase in larger accommodation projects with more bedspaces per site.

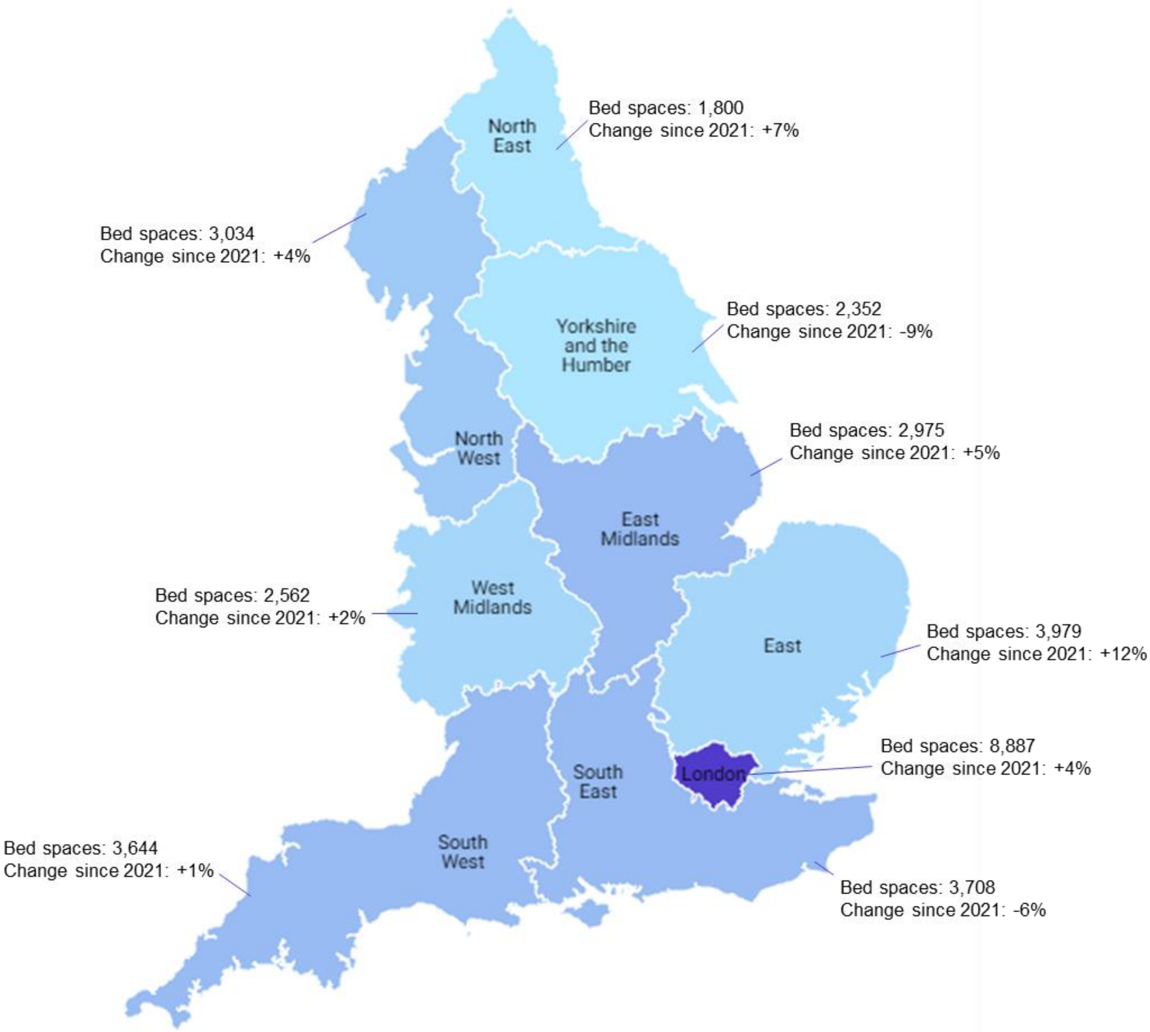
The maps below shows that the scale of provision for single homeless people is characterised by significant geographical diversity.

Map 3.1. Regional distribution of homelessness accommodation projects, 2022



Source: Homeless England database

Map 3.2. Regional distribution of bed spaces, 2022



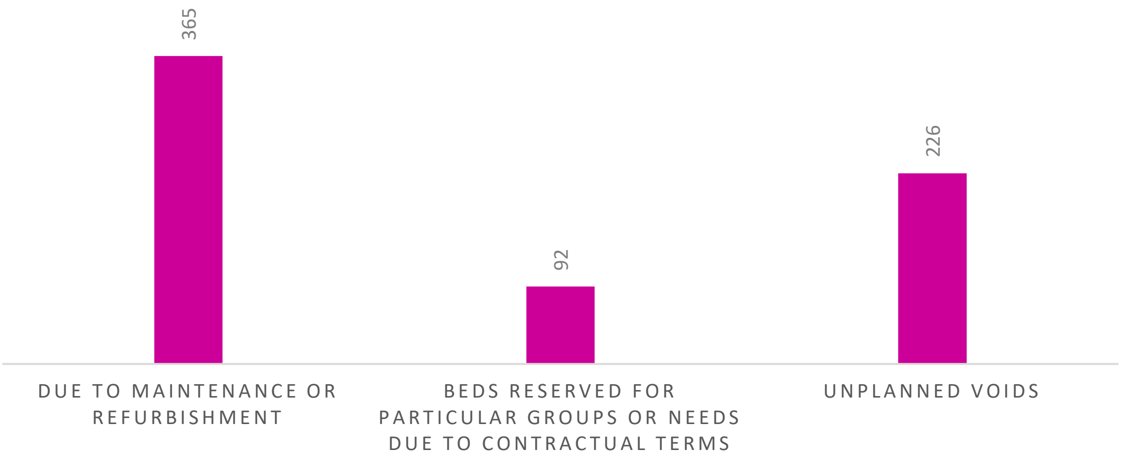
Source: Homeless England database

Bed night voids

To create a picture of the level of demand, the accommodation survey asked respondents whether they had any voids (empty beds) the previous night. 194 projects (67% of respondents) reported an aggregate of 858 voids – 7% of reported available bedspaces that night. As per previous Annual Review findings this suggests that providers are running at high capacity.

The reason for voids can vary, ranging from planned voids due to maintenance or refurbishment, bedspaces held for specific groups or needs based on contractual obligations or unplanned voids. Respondents were asked for the reason behind their voids the night before of which the majority (53%) were due to maintenance.

Chart 3.6. Reason for voids

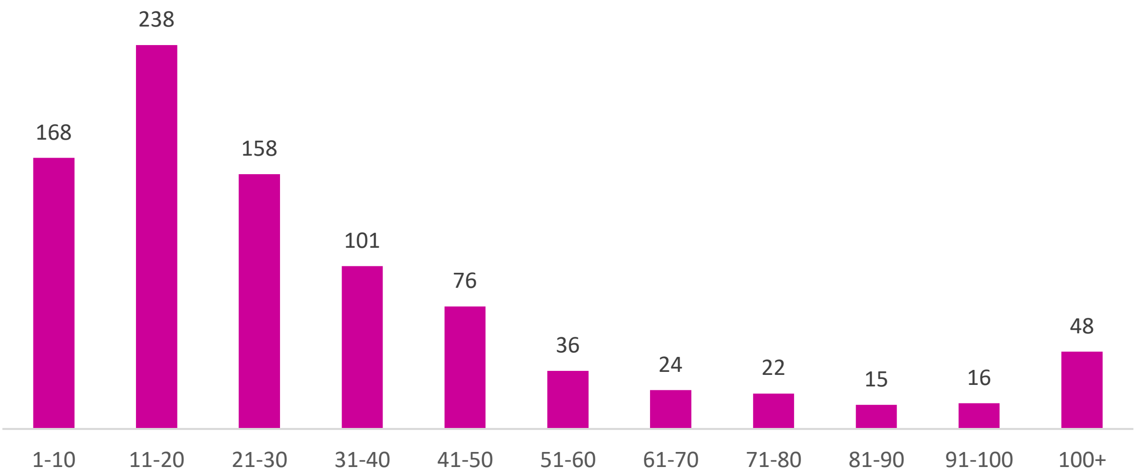


Source: Accommodation providers survey, N=291

Size of accommodation projects

In 2022 45% of accommodation projects provided up to 20 bedspaces within their service, with 26% providing between 11 and 20 spaces. There is an average of 29 bedspaces per provider.[25]

Chart 3.4. Accommodation projects by maximum bedspace capacity



Source: Homeless England database

Since the 1980s homelessness accommodation projects had followed a general trend of downsizing accommodation provision into smaller scale projects with a recognition that smaller project can offer a more personalised approach.[26] This aligns with more

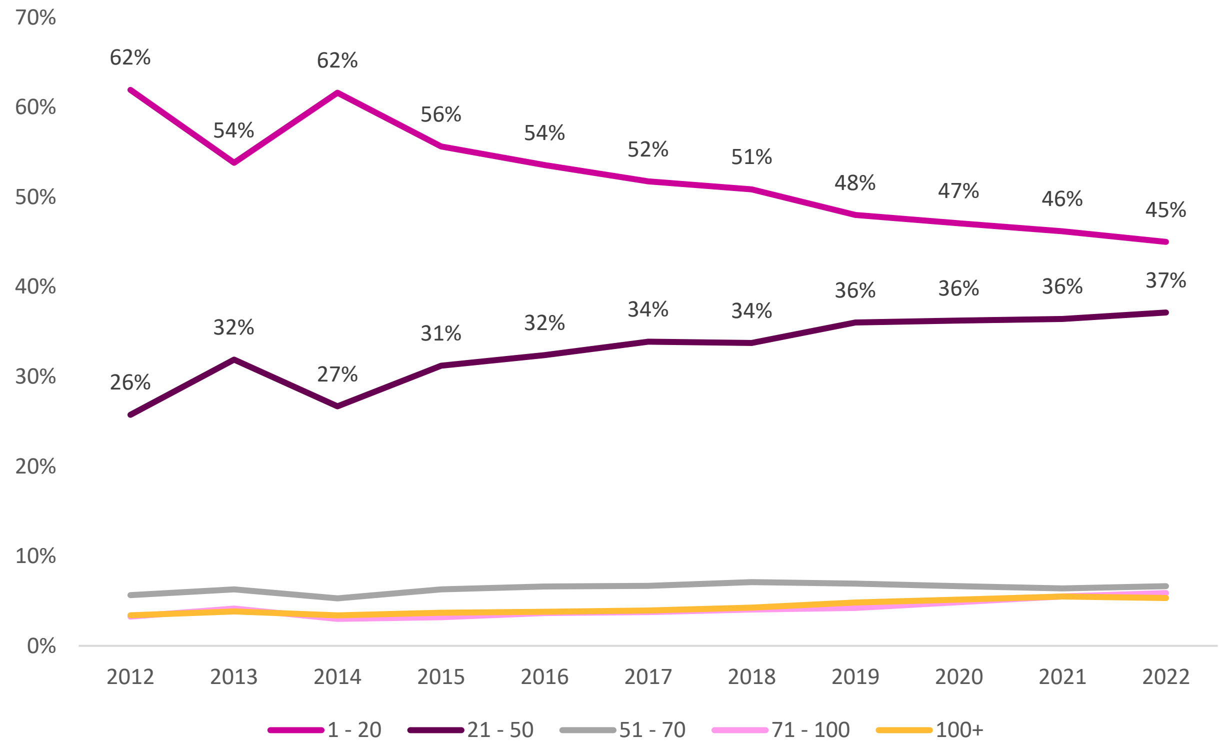
[25] 29 is the median number of bedspaces. The mean is 41 and is impacted by a small number of extremely large scale providers.

[26] May, J., Cloke, P. and Johnsen, S. (2006) *Shelter at the margins: New Labour and the changing state of emergency accommodation for single homeless people in Britain*, Policy and Politics, 34, 711-729

recent practice developments including Trauma Informed approaches and Psychologically Informed Environments.[27]

However, although the majority of accommodation projects are still aimed at smaller – medium capacity (under 30 residents) since 2014 there has been a shift in the previously seen trend of providers downsizing with a reduction in the proportion of small providers (under 20 bedspaces) and an increase in the proportion of medium providers (between 20 – 50 bedspaces). This aligns with the same timeframe that we start to see changes in main funding sources for accommodation providers with reduction in local authority grants and increase in Housing Benefit (see Chapter 5).

Chart 3.5. Accommodation projects by size, 2012 - 2022



Source: Homeless England database

Availability of accommodation for specific populations

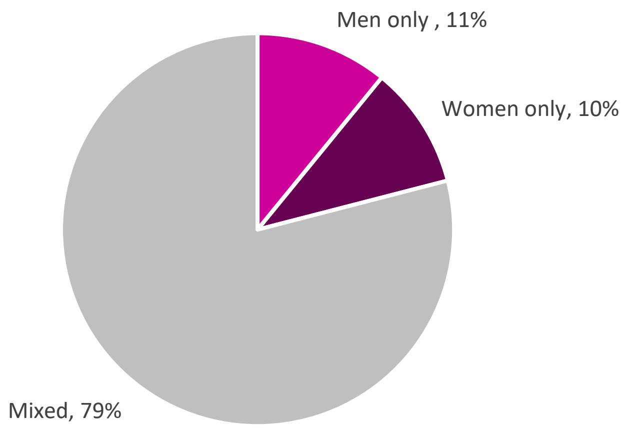
Gender

A total of 79% (761) of accommodation projects offer mixed gender accommodation, with only 11% (105) offering men only provision, and 10% (97) offering women only provision. This is comparable with 2021 in which 12% and 11% of providers offered men only and women only provision respectively. When broken down there is a higher

[27] DLUHC (2023) *Trauma-informed approaches to supporting people experiencing multiple disadvantage, A Rapid Evidence Review*; Irving, A. & Harding, J. (2022) *The Prevalence of Trauma among People who have Experienced Homelessness in England*

proportion of men only emergency provision than there is for other forms of accommodation, representing 14% of the total compared with 8% for female only emergency accommodation.

Chart 3.7. Accommodation projects by gender

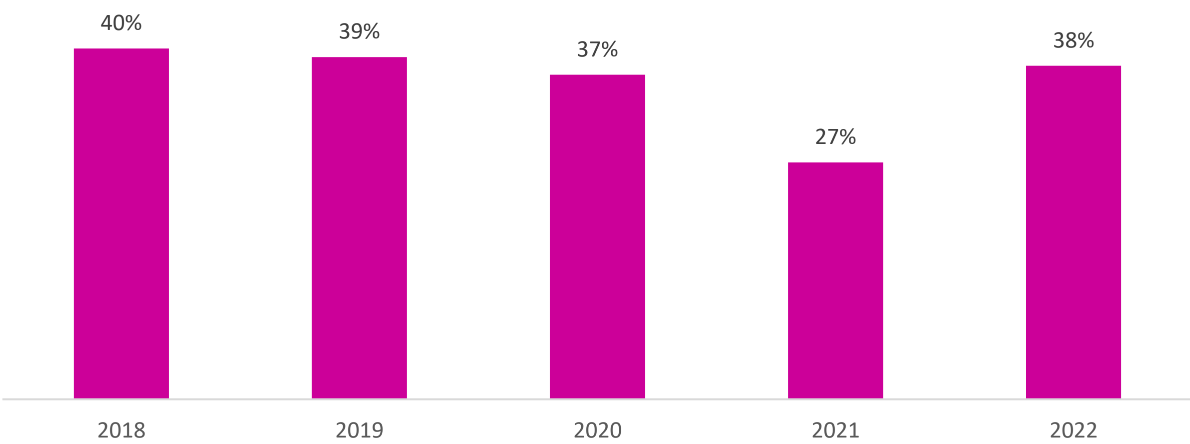


Source: Homeless England database, N=911. Note projects may offer gender specific and mixed gender accommodation within the same service.

Young people

A total of 343 accommodation projects are dedicated to young people. This represents 38% of the overall number of accommodation projects in England. This is a 41% increase on the 244 projects in 2021 in which only 27% of accommodation projects were reported as being youth specific. However, the 2022 data are more in line with the proportion of young people projects reported in recent years as set out in chart 3.8. and suggests that 2021 data were an anomaly.

Chart 3.7. Proportion of accommodation provision that is youth specific



Source: Homeless England database, N=911

Support needs
Accommodation provision for low to medium support needs makes up 91% of accommodation across England, with only 9% (58) of projects able to support individual with high or complex needs. There is significant regional variation apparent with accommodation suited to different support needs with 25% of accommodation providers in London able to support those with high needs compared with 1% in East of England and the North East. Across all regions less than a fifth of accommodation is suited to low or general needs provision.

Chart 3.8. Proportion of accommodation provision available for different support needs by region

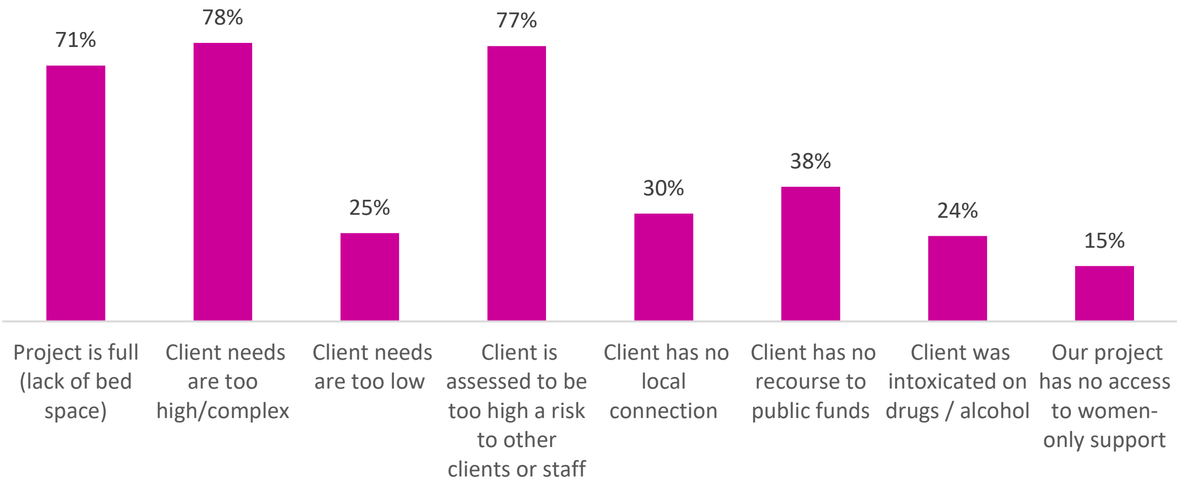
Source: Homeless England database, N=911

Accessing accommodation services

Survey respondents were asked how many people were accommodated last night, and how many had been accommodated cumulatively over the last 12 months. There were 10,692 people accommodated on a given night and 20,823 accommodated over the last 12 months. On average providers accommodated 2.2 times their capacity over a year period i.e. the move on rates were such that they were able to provide support for over double the number of beds that they have available.

240 respondents reported that they had refused access or referrals to their project at some point over the last 12 months. The most prevalent reason for someone to be turned down from an accommodation project was because either their support needs were too high or too complex for the service to manage (78%) or because the client was assessed to be too high a risk to staff or other residents (77%). As set out above only 9% of accommodation providers are able to support those with a high level of needs. The third most likely cause of rejecting a referral was because of capacity i.e. the project is full (71%).

Chart 3.9. Reasons for rejected referrals to accommodation providers

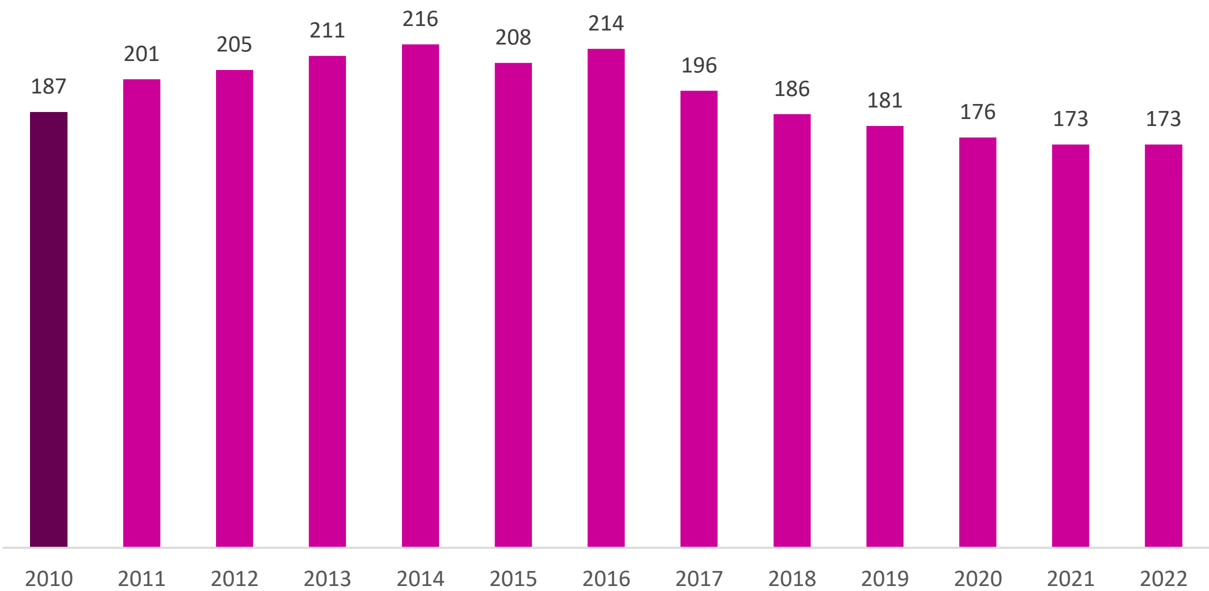


Source: Accommodation providers survey, N=240

Availability of day centres

Data from the Homeless England database identifies 173 day centres for people experiencing homelessness in England, which is the same number as in 2021. Since 2010 there has been fluctuation in the number of day centres with the total trending upwards between 2010 and 2016 when the number reached 214, before declining year on year until 2022.

Chart 3.10. Number of day centres, 2010 – 2022

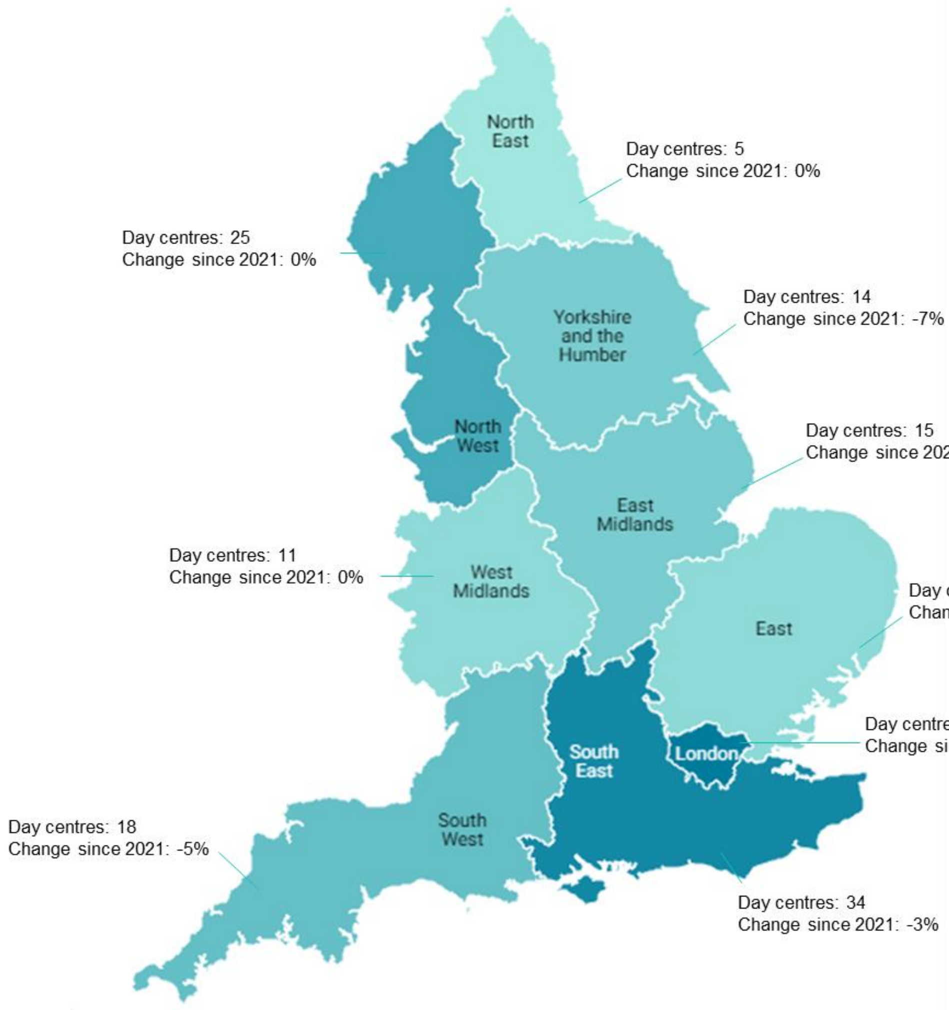


Source: Homeless England database

This trend broadly mirrors the rough sleeping count numbers which climbed steadily up until 2017 before starting to fall slowly, and then dropping sharply as a result of COVID-19 rough sleeping interventions. This suggests that provision of day centres does respond to levels of rough sleeping need, although in 2014 when there were 2,744 people counted as sleeping rough in the snapshot there were 216 day centres across England. Compared to 2022 that represents a 12% increase in the rough sleeping snapshot, but a 20% decrease in the number of day centres available.

There is significant regional variation in terms of the numbers of day centres available across England but this variation supports assertions that day centres tend to be need responsive and react to levels of rough sleeping in particular. This becomes evident when looking at the proportion of people estimated to be rough sleeping in each English region in the annual snapshot with the comparable proportion of day centres captured on the Homeless England database.

Map 3.1. Regional distribution of day centres, 2022



Source: Homeless England database

Chart 3.11. Regional proportion of rough sleepers and day centres

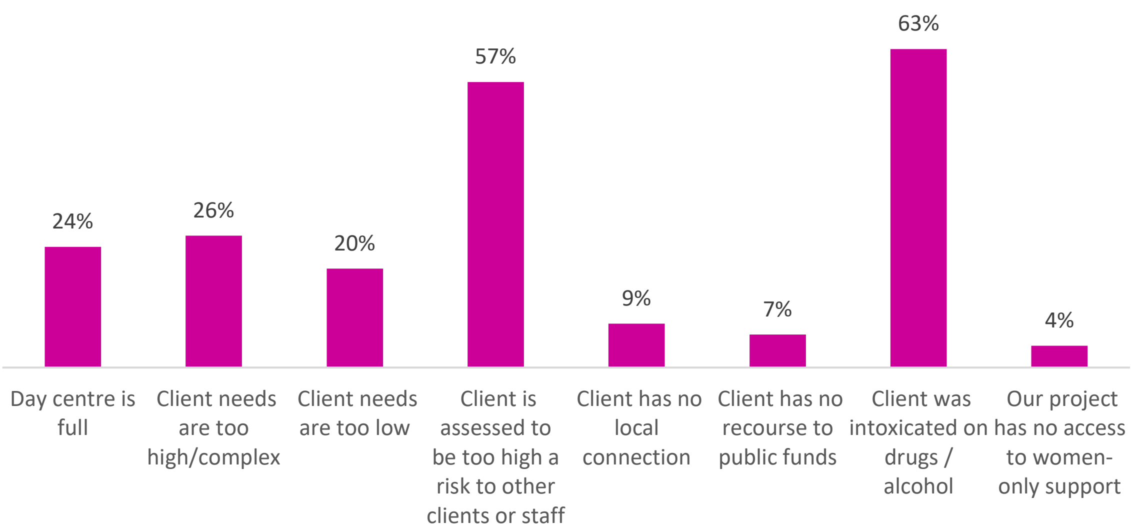
Source: Homeless England database

Accessing day centre services

Survey respondents reported a snapshot count of 2,441 people being supported by a day centre on a given day and that over the course of a year they had supported an estimated 63,310 individuals. This is an average of over 40 people per day across each day centre.

46 (75%) respondents reported that they had refused access or referrals to their project at some point over the last 12 months. The most prevalent reason for someone to be turned down from a day centre was because they were intoxicated on drugs or alcohol (63%), or because the client was assessed to be too high a risk to staff or other people at the service (57%).

Chart 3.12. Reasons for refused access to day centres



Source: Day centre survey, N=46

Chapter 4. Support needs and support services available

This chapter explores the characteristics and support needs of people accessing single homelessness services. Drawing on findings from the accommodation and day centre surveys it looks at the profile of who is accessing support, the main services provided by homelessness organisations, and barriers to accessing support.

Key headlines

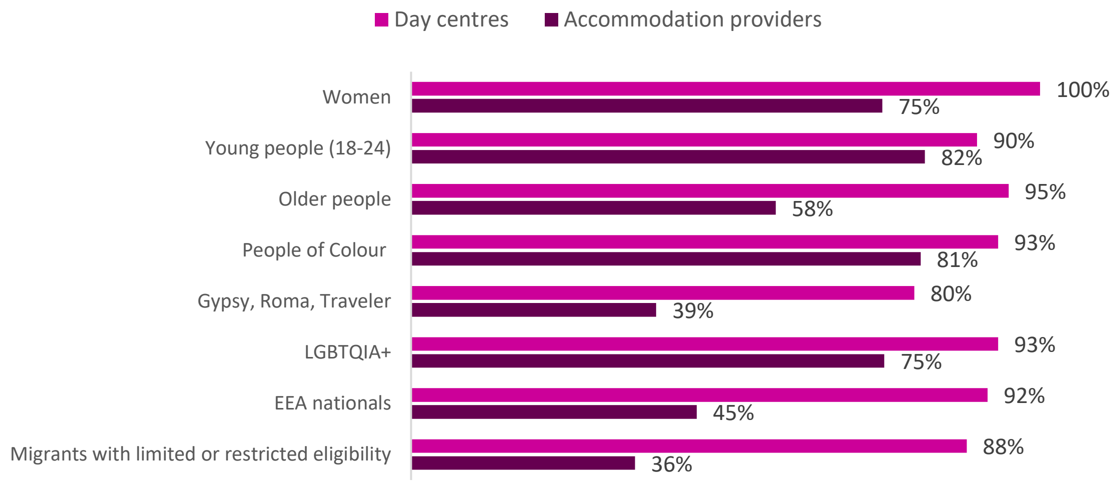
- 50% of accommodation providers and 79% of day centres are seeing an increase in people experiencing homelessness for the first time.
- 46% of accommodation providers and 63% of day centres have seen an increase in non-UK nationals with limited or restricted eligibility accessing their services, the biggest increase of any demographic.
- Mental health was the most commonly reported support need amongst accommodation providers (81%), a 16% decrease since 2021 but a 93% increase since 2020 and an 138% increase from 5 years ago in 2017.
- Support needs related to addiction, both drug dependency (98%) and alcohol addiction (100%) were the most common reported support needs amongst day centres.
- For both accommodation and day centres the sharp increase seen in 2021 following the COVI9-19 pandemic, in the number of people with higher levels of support needs accessing services providers has continued in 2022.
- Access to mental health support remains the biggest barrier for accommodation providers, with 90% of respondents stating they have a problem accessing mental health services, this is followed by drug and alcohol services (59%) and physical health services (49%).
- For day centres access to accommodation is the most significant challenge with 96% of respondents stating they have a problem accessing accommodation provision, this is followed by mental health services (91%) and then access to immigration advice and support (65%).

Profile of people accessing homelessness services

We know that while there is a huge diversity of people experiencing homelessness that some populations are less well served by existing provision that may not reflect specific needs, ways of working, and the impact of being served by services that were not originally set up to reflect diverse needs.

We now know that women,[28] young people,[29] people from the LGBTQIA+ community,[30] people with a history of the asylum system,[31] and people with multiple disadvantage[32]have both different experiences that may lead to them becoming homeless but also different needs once homeless. It is important to understand the diversity of people supported by homelessness services, including trends amongst groups that may be more likely to have particular vulnerabilities. As such survey respondents were asked if between April 2021 and March 2022 they had supported people from specific populations.

Chart 4.1. Populations supported by homelessness services in 2021-22



Source: Accommodation providers survey, N=289; day centre survey, N=60

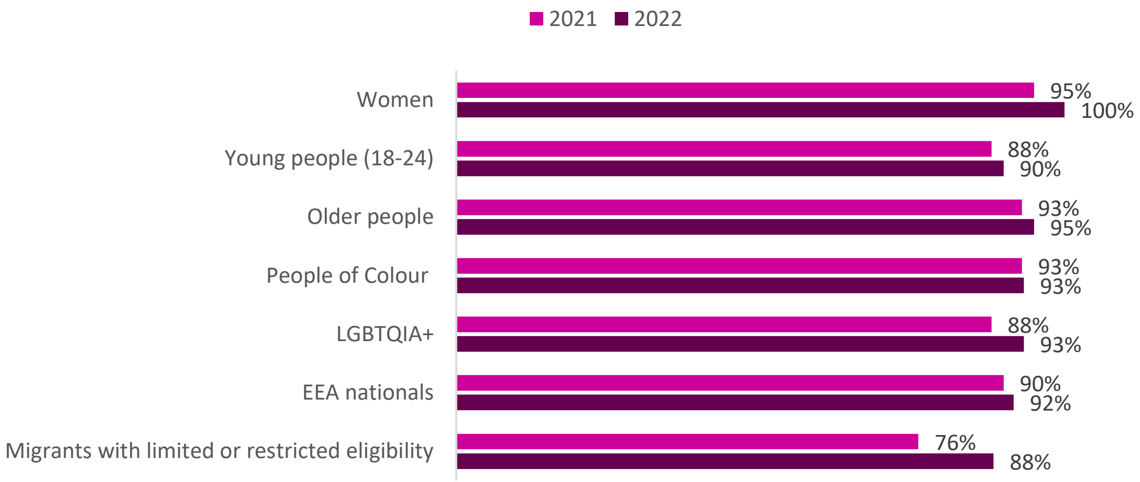
Unsurprisingly due to their direct access nature, across the board day centres are supporting a high number of people from many different populations and it's clear from the data that people from these groups are experiencing homelessness and in need of the support provided by day centre services. For accommodation providers there are a high number of projects supporting young people (82%) which echoes the findings set out in chapter 3 showing the high proportion of providers who are either dedicated to youth support, or are able to support young people within their service. Due to immigration restrictions preventing access to housing benefit or accommodation entitlements it is not surprising that most accommodation providers

[28] Bretherton, J. & Pleace, N. (2018) *Women and Rough Sleeping: A Critical Review of Current Research and Methodology*. University of York
[29] Homeless Link (2018) *Young and Homeless 2018;* Homeless Link (2020) *Young and Homeless 2020.* Both available at: https://homeless.org.uk/knowledge-hub/young-and-homeless/
[30] AKT (2021) *The LGBTQ+ youth homelessness report.* Available at: https://www.akt.org.uk/youth-homelessness-report-2021
[31] Homeless Link (2022) *Unlocking the Door: A roadmap for supporting non-UK nationals facing homelessness in England.* Available at: https://homeless.org.uk/knowledge-hub/unlocking-the-door-a-roadmap-for-supporting-non-uk-nationals-facing-homelessness-in-england/
[32] CFE research (2022*) 'More than a roof' - addressing homelessness with people experiencing multiple disadvantage*. Available at: https://www.fulfillinglivesevaluation.org/new-publication-more-than-a-roof-addressing-homelessness-with-people-experiencing-multiple-disadvantage/

are not supporting migrants with limited or restricted eligibility (36%), but the contrast with the 88% of day centres who are providing support to this population shows the disparity in needs being met.

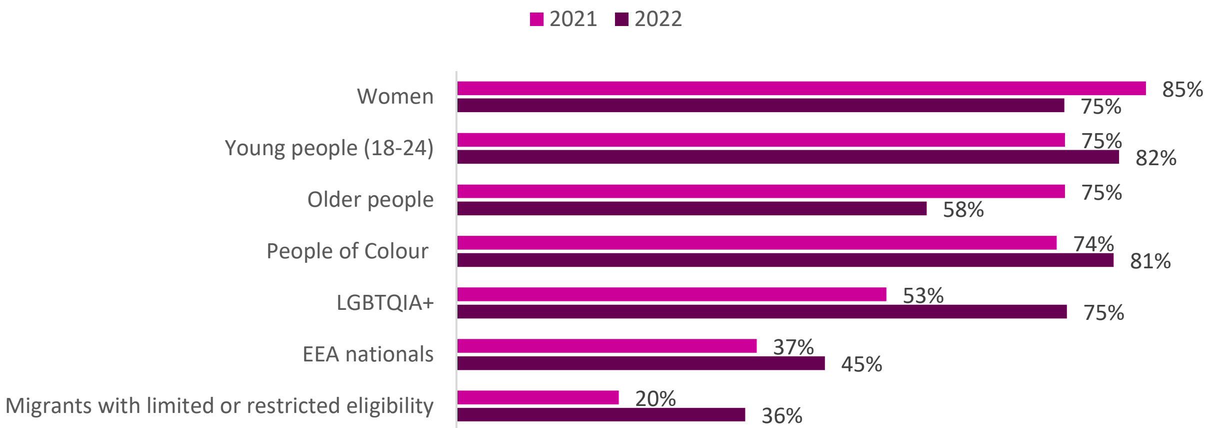
For day centres in all instances there has been an increase in the proportion of providers reporting that they have supported people from different populations since the previous year.

Chart 4.2. Change in proportion of day centres supporting specific populations, 2020-21 to 2021-22



Accommodation projects have also generally seen an increase in the proportion of providers reporting they have support people from different populations compared to the previous year. However, women and older people are the exception to this, with fewer providers reporting they had supported anyone from these groups in the last financial year.

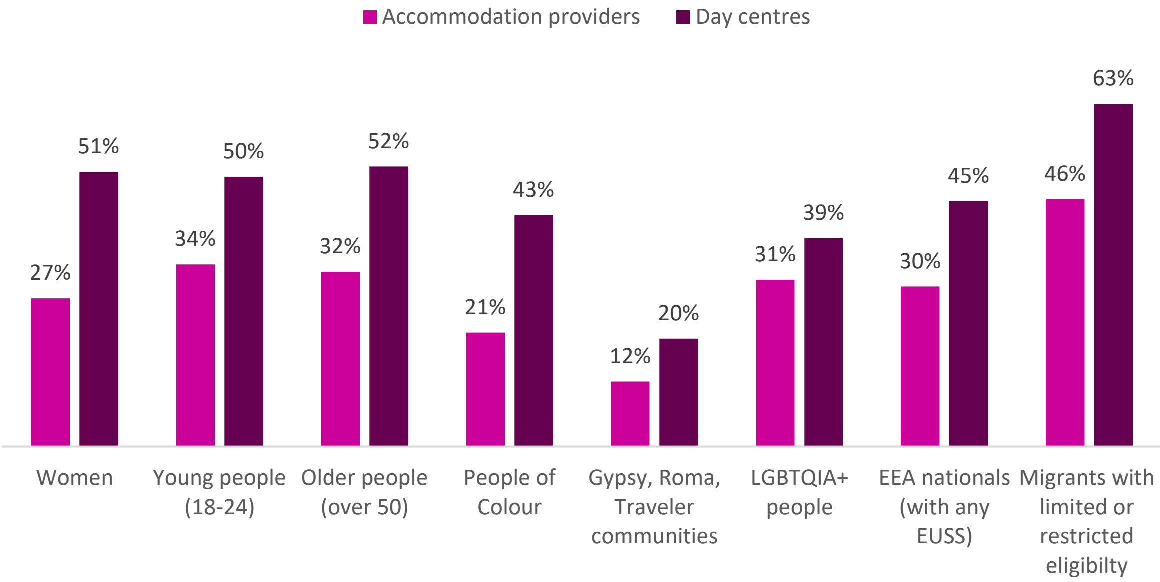
Chart 4.3. Change in proportion of accommodation providers supporting specific populations, 2020-21 to 2021-22



Change in the profile of people accessing homelessness services

Whilst the section above explores whether providers have supported anyone from specific populations in the last year, this section looks at whether providers have seen a change in the numbers of people from different populations that they have supported compared to the previous year.

Chart 4.4. Proportion of homelessness services who have seen an increase in the number of people they are supporting from specific populations



Source: Accommodation survey, N=289; day centre survey, N=60

In all cases both accommodation providers and day centres have seen an increase in the number of people from different populations in need of their services and support, with migrants with limited or restricted eligibility seeing the biggest increase across both provider types, with 46% of accommodation providers saying they were supporting greater numbers and 63% of day centres.

Day centres are seeing a more acute increase in need, which aligns with anecdotal evidence that suggests due to being so close to the immediate needs of street homelessness that they are likely to be amongst the first to pick up on new and emerging trends.

In reflection of the cost of living crisis the survey also asked about changes in the number of people needing support who were experiencing homelessness for the first time, who were experiencing homelessness due to employment and unemployment related reasons, and directly because of the cost of living crisis.

Chart 4.5. Proportion of providers seeing an increase in people needing support due to cost of living crisis

Source: Accommodation survey, N=279; day centre survey, N=58

Across both accommodation providers and day centres there is a big increase in the number of people who require support who are experiencing homelessness for the first time, 50% and 79% respectively. There are also indications of a concerning rise in in-work homelessness amongst those in low income jobs, with 41% of accommodation providers stating they have seen an increase in people needing their support who are currently in low paid jobs, and 55% of day centres.

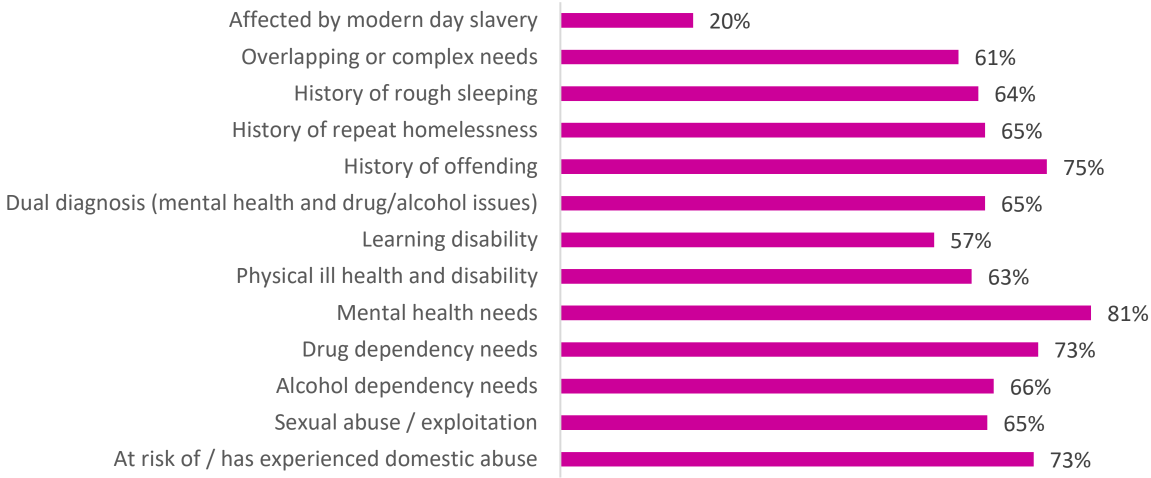
Support needs of people accessing homelessness services

Service providers were asked for information on the support needs of people accessing their services and how this has changed compared to the previous year. Across both accommodation providers and day centres there were no residents who had no support need beyond housing needs. This follows the trend emerging in 2021 which showed a significant increase in the level of support needs seen across providers compared with previous years.

Accommodation providers

Accommodation projects were asked if the people they are accommodating in their service have any additional support needs. 81% of projects report they were supporting people with mental health needs, followed by history of offending (75%), domestic abuse (73%) and drug dependency needs (73%). Whilst health and social care related needs are the most prominent, accommodation projects are also working with people who been affected by sexual abuse or exploitation (65%) and modern day slavery (20%). The level of trauma being experienced by people within homelessness accommodation services needs to be recognised.

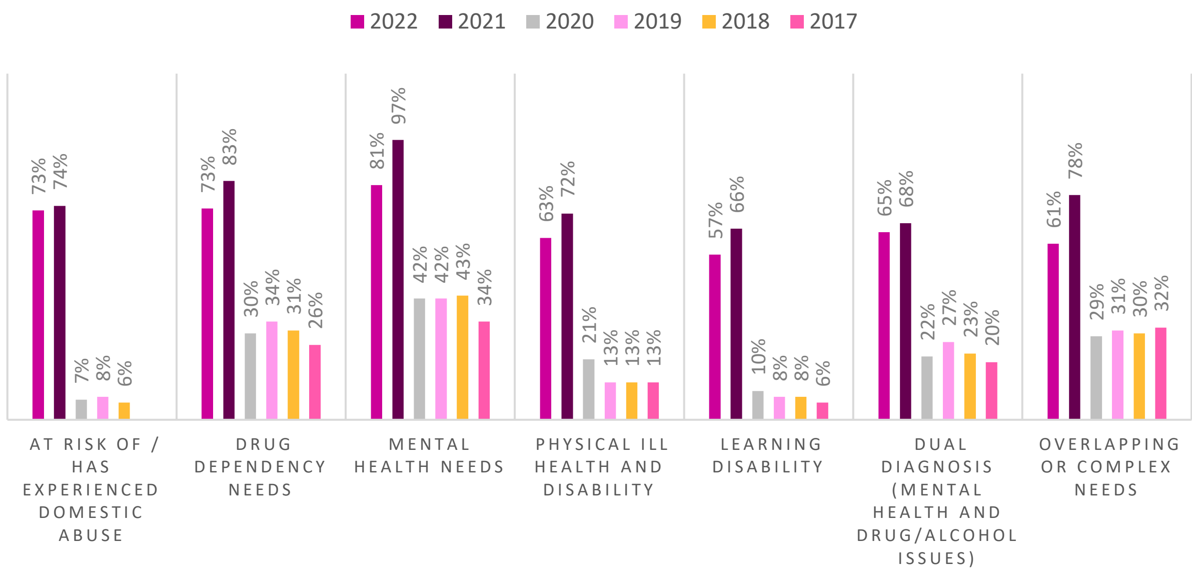
Chart 4.6. Support needs of accommodation project residents



Source: Accommodation survey, N=251

Since 2021 there has been a 16% decrease in the proportion of providers who state they were supporting people with mental health needs. However, 2021 saw a sharp increase in those with mental health needs being supported by accommodation providers, and 2022 shows a continuation of the trend started last year showing a 93% increase since 2020 and a 138% increase from 5 years ago in 2017. The steep increases in the number of providers supporting people across all support need areas that was seen in 2021 has continued in 2022 indicating that last year was not an anomaly and that there has been a shift in the profile of people needing support, and the complexity of their needs after 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Chart 4.7. Change in support needs of accommodation project residents, 2017 – 2022



*data on numbers of people at risk of / has experience of domestic abuse not available for 2017

Day centres

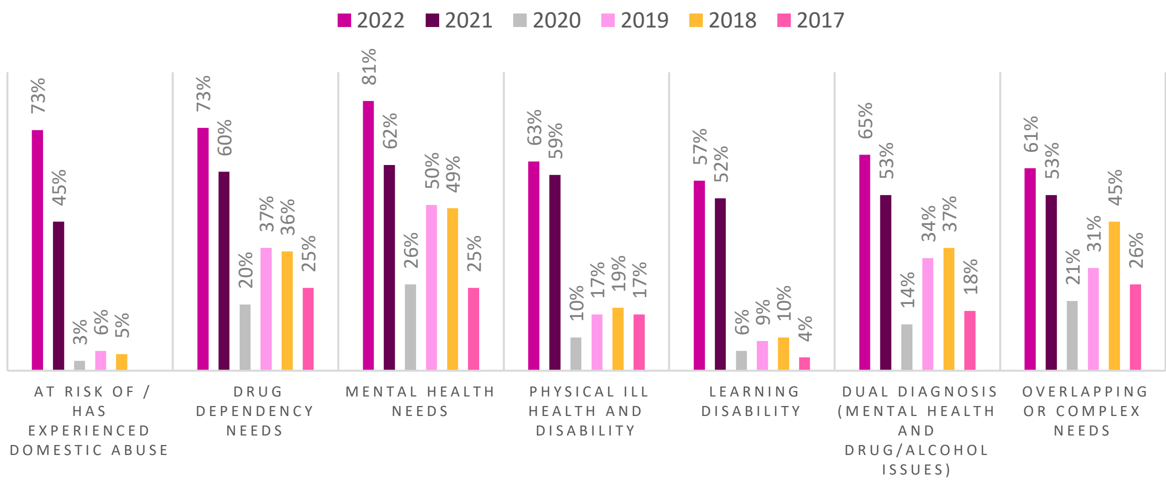
Support needs related to addiction, both drug dependency (98%) and alcohol addiction (100%) were the most common reported support needs amongst day centres. Followed by history of offending (98%) and support needs related to both mental and physical health (97%). It is also notable that 48% of day centres report they have supported, at minimum, someone who has been affected by modern day slavery. In general day centres are consistently supporting people with a high level of often overlapping, and complex needs, and trauma.

Chart 4.8. Support needs of day centres users

Source: Day centre survey, N=61

As with accommodation providers there was a significant increase in the proportion of day centres seeing people with a range of support needs in 2021 and this trend has continued in 2022. For day centres, in all support need areas explored there is an increase from 2021 to 2022, with a 31% increase in day centres supporting people with mental health needs, and a 62% increase since 2021 in day centres supporting people at risk of, or with experience of domestic abuse.

Chart 4.9. Change in support needs of day centre users, 2017 - 2022



*data on numbers of people at risk of / has experience of domestic abuse not available for 2017

Support services provided by homelessness services

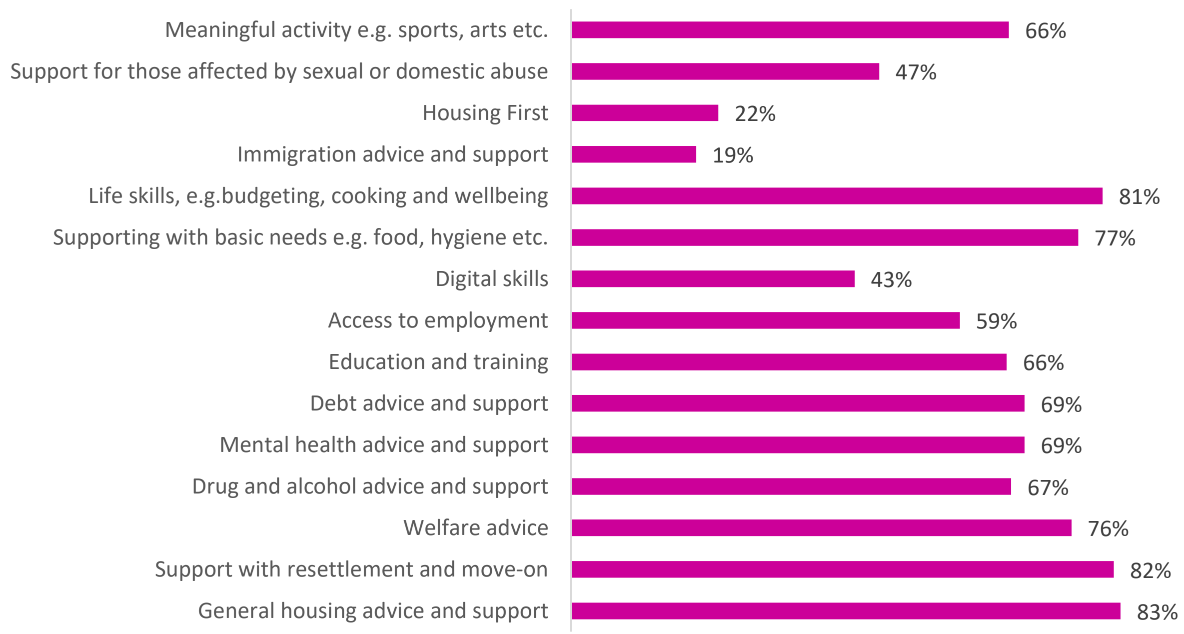
Accommodation providers and day centres provide a range of services to help people experiencing homelessness address their support, care, and practical needs in addition to their housing needs. These services can be provided in-house at the services' premises, externally at another service, or both.

Accommodation providers

The accommodation survey asked providers if they provided any additional services beyond providing a bedspace for the night. All providers reported that they offer additional support, with an average of 10 different additional services or support available within their provision.

Unsurprisingly for accommodation providers the most commonly reported services provided relate to general housing advice and support (83%) and support with move-on and resettlement (82%). Life skills including supporting with budgeting and cooking is offered by 81% of providers, and support with basic needs including food and hygiene by 77%. Over two thirds of providers are offering support related to health and social care including mental health advice and support (69%) and substance misuse support (67%). The diversity of provision available is clear with the range of different offers available through projects.

Chart 4.10. Service provision within accommodation projects



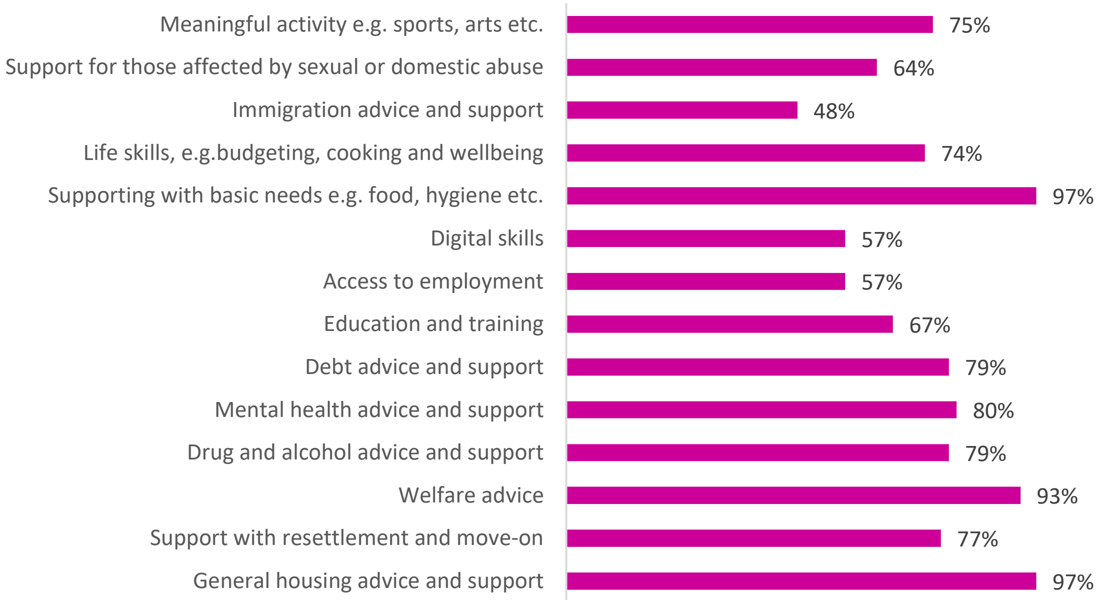
Source: Accommodation survey, N=251

Day centres

Day centres were asked what additional support their service provides for those who make use of their services. As with accommodation providers all day centres provide a range of different support offers as part of their service, with an average of 11 different additional services or support available within their provision.

Support focussed on immediate needs was more prevalent amongst day centres, with 97% of providers offering general housing advice and support, and 97% support with basic needs including food and hygiene. Providing advice and support related to welfare (93%), mental health (80%), and substance misuse (78%) are also all very common amongst day centre provision.

Chart 4.11. Service provision within day centres



Source: Day centre survey, N=60

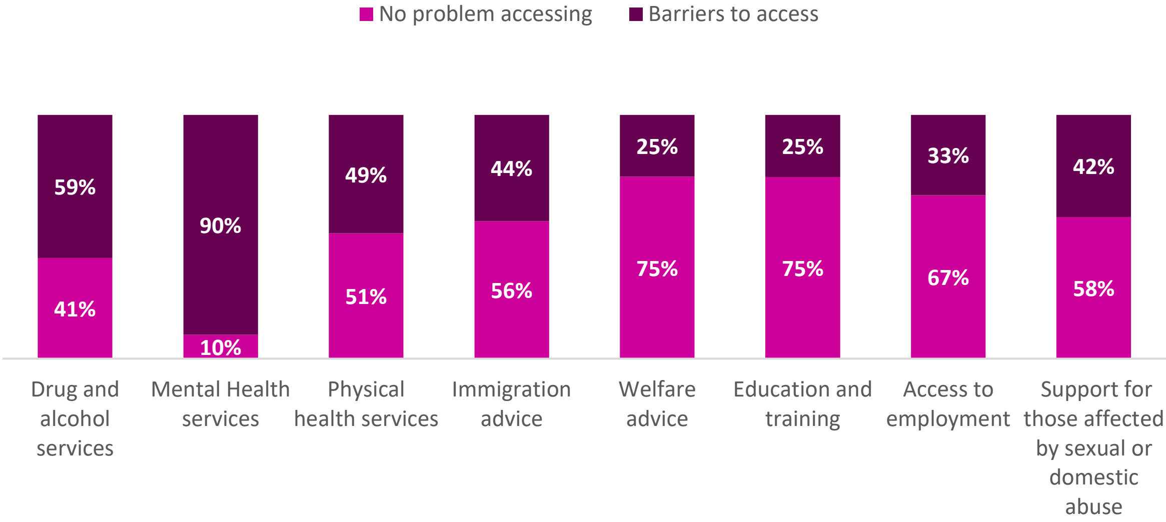
Barriers to accessing services

Not all support is, or should be, available internally to providers, and more significant needs or those that are entitled to wider statutory support are reliant on the wider system and services infrastructure. Providers were asked about whether they experience barriers in accessing external services for the people they support, and where barriers exist what they typically relate to.

Accommodation providers

For accommodation providers access to mental health support remains by far the most challenging with 90% of respondents stating they have a problem accessing mental health services, this is followed by drug and alcohol services (59%) and physical health services (49%).

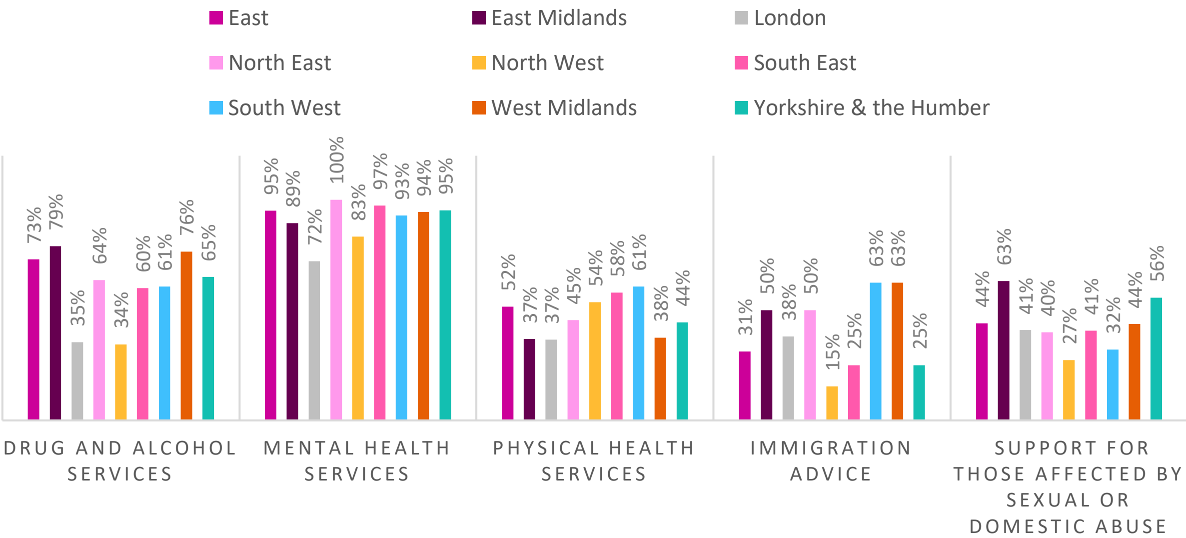
Chart 4.12. Services accommodation providers experience barriers in accessing



Source: Accommodation survey, N=245

There is some significant regional variation in terms of access to different service types with London and the North West generally proving to have less barriers than other regions. For example, 100% of providers in the North East said that they had difficulty accessing mental health services compared to 72% in London and 83% in the North West. The disparity is most notable with drug and alcohol services where for both London and the North West just over a third of providers stated they had barriers to accessing provision compared to between 60% and 79% for other regions.

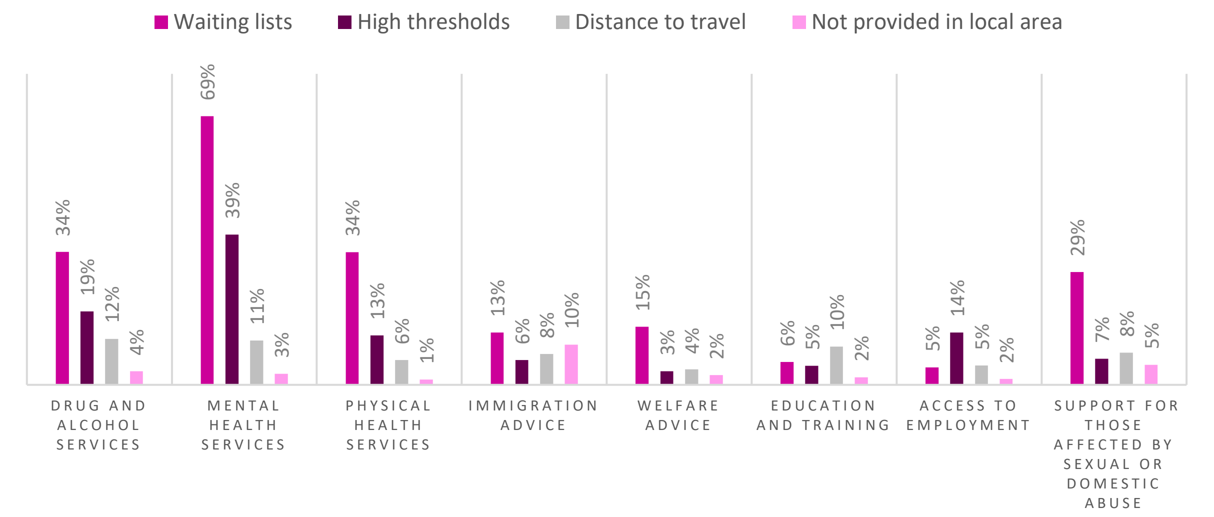
Chart 4.13. Proportion of providers experiencing barriers to services by region



Source: Accommodation survey, N=245

When looking at why providers experience barriers, with the exception of access to education, training and employment, barriers related to waiting lists remain the biggest challenge in terms of access to other services, with 69% of providers saying waiting lists are a barrier to mental health services, and 34% for physical health services and drug and alcohols services respectively.

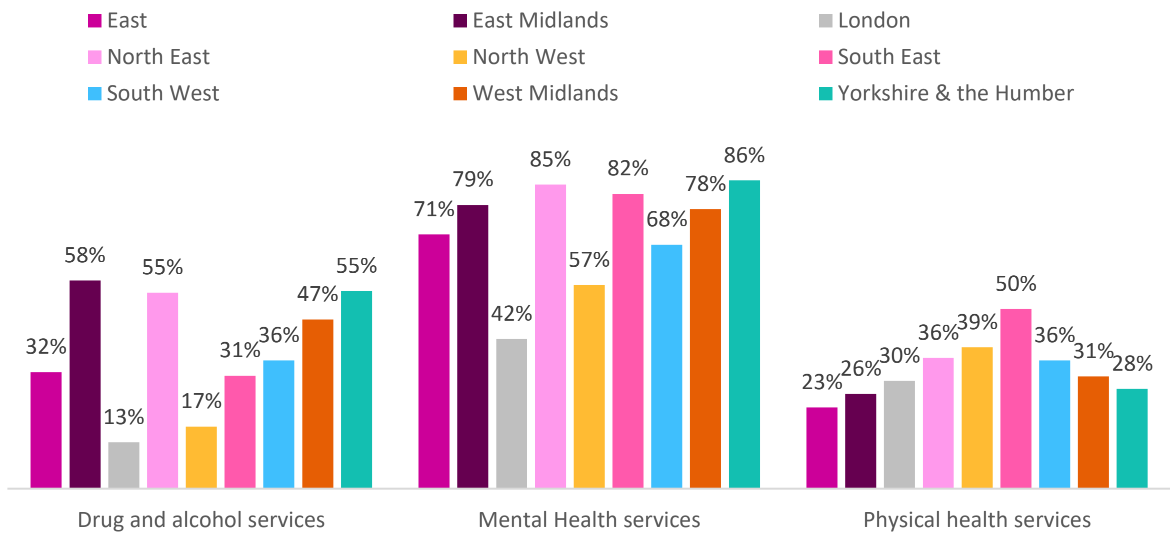
Chart 4.14 Reasons accommodation providers face barriers to services



Source: Accommodation survey, N=245

When looking at waiting lists specifically again there is quite a lot of regional variation evident particularly in relation to health services, and again with London and the North West proving to have less barriers in this regard for mental health and substance misuse services.

Chart 4.15. Waiting lists as a barrier to services by region

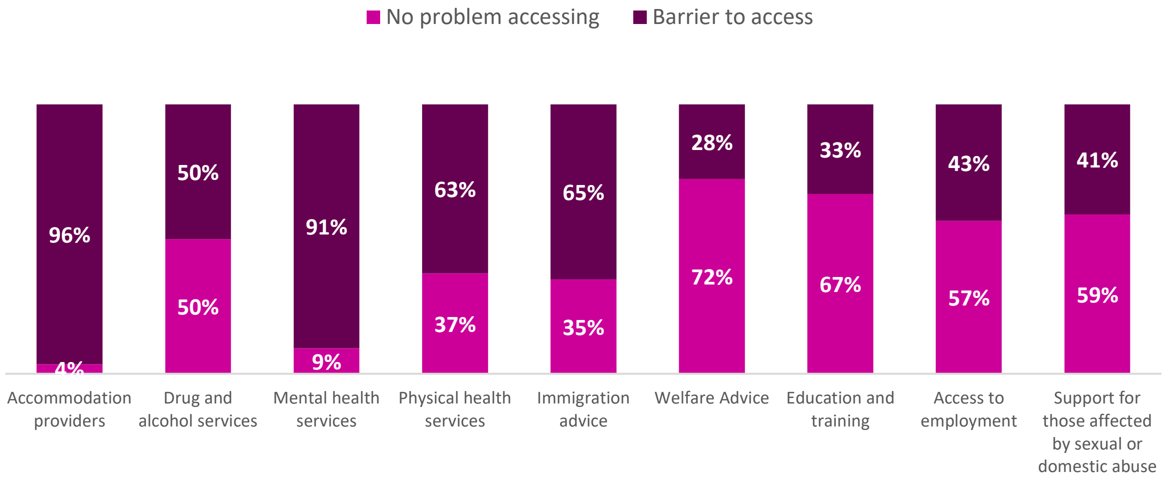


Source: Accommodation survey, N=245

Day centres

For day centres access to accommodation is the most significant challenge with 96% of respondents stating they experience barriers in accessing support from accommodation providers, this is followed by mental health services (91%) and then access to immigration advice and support (65%).

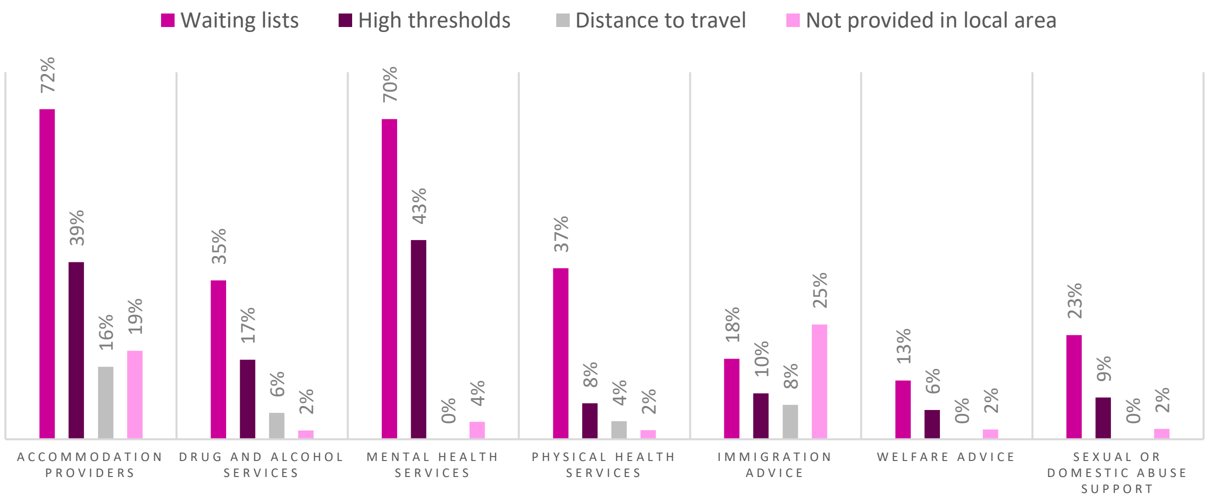
Chart 4.16. Services day centres experience barriers in accessing



Source: Day centre survey, N=58

When looking at why providers experience barriers, with the exception of access to immigration advice and access to employment, waiting lists remain the biggest challenge in terms of access to other services, with 72% of providers saying waiting lists are a barrier to accommodation services, and 70% for mental health services. Lack of local provision is the main reason given for not being able to access immigration advice (25%).

Chart 4.17. Reasons day centres face barriers to services



Source: Day centre survey, N=58

Chapter 5. Funding

The survey explores how services are funded and how this has changed over the last year. This chapter of the report explores funding sources and how trends in funding have changed over time.

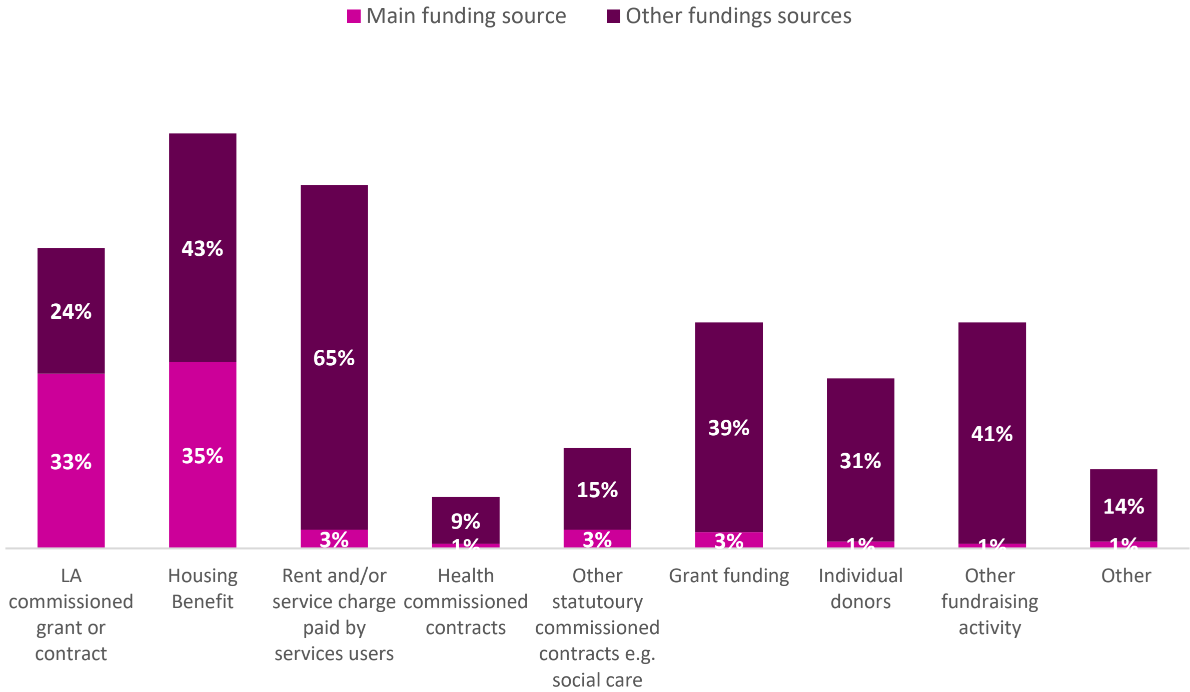
Key headlines

- Housing benefit is the most commonly cited main source of income for accommodation providers (35%), and 78% of all providers receive Housing Benefit as part of their overall income.
- 65% of those who receive Housing Benefit as a main income source are in receipt of Enhanced Housing Benefit
- In the last decade there has been a 224% increase in Housing Benefit as a funding source for accommodation providers and a 49% decrease in local authority commissioned services.
- Income for day centres is heavily reliant on fundraising, grants and philanthropy with 40% of providers stating their main income source is through grant funding, and 19% through individual giving.
- 24% of accommodation providers stated that their income had decreased since the previous year, with 56% stating there was no change to their income, and 21% reporting an increase.
- 46% of day centres stated that their income had decreased since the previous year, with 29% stating there was no change to their income, and 25% reporting an increase.
- 50% of accommodation providers and 36% of day centres reporting they risk service closures as a result of rising costs, and a fifth of providers stating they have already reduced their provision.

Accommodation providers funding source

The main sources of income for accommodation providers is Housing Benefit with 35% of providers stating this was their main income followed by LA commissioned contracts or grants including e.g. RSI funding (33%). However, when looking at income sources overall it is apparent how prevalent Housing Benefit is for accommodation providers, with 78% of providers stating it's one of their key funding sources.

Chart 5.1. Accommodation providers funding sources



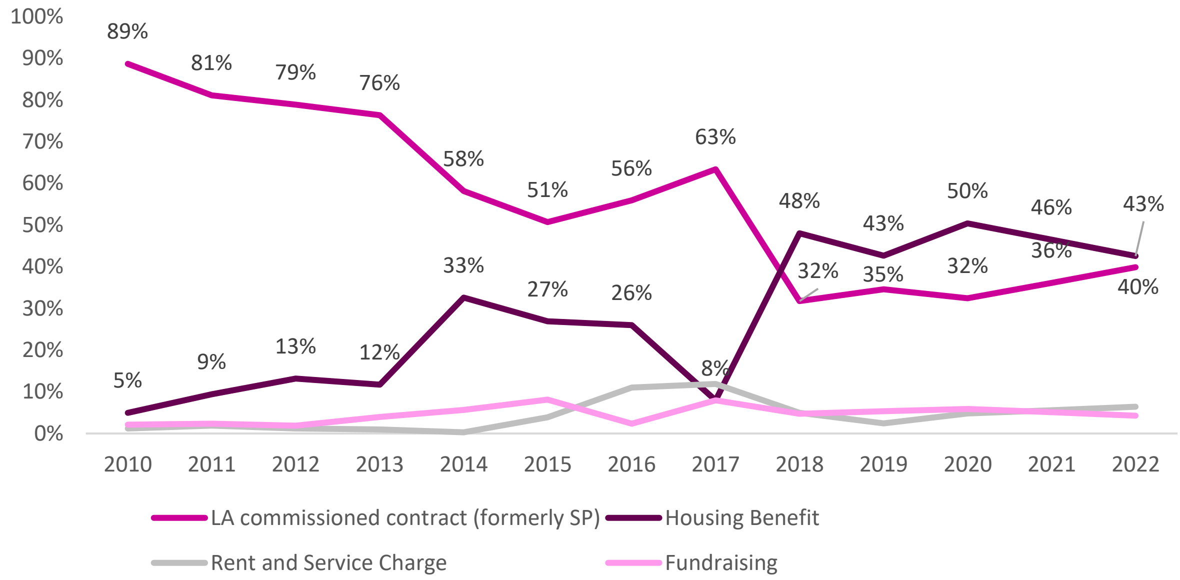
Source: Accommodation survey, N=229

Given the growing attention to the role of exempt accommodation provision and funding for supported accommodation providers, for the first time our 2022 survey asked respondents to separate out Housing Benefit by Enhanced Housing Benefit income, and all other Housing Benefit income including Universal Credit. Enhanced Housing Benefit accounts for 65% of main income received through Housing Benefit.

Since 2010 there has been a significant shift in the way in which accommodation providers are funded with the ending of the ring-fenced supporting people programme and the growth in providers becoming more reliant on Housing Benefit through exempt accommodation regulation. Chart 5.2. shows that it was in 2017 that the big switch to providers generating most of their income through Housing Benefit was seen and that for the first time supported accommodation providers were primarily funded through the welfare benefit system rather than through local authority commissioning and grants.

In the last decade there has been a 231% increase in Housing Benefit as a funding source for homelessness accommodation and a 49% decrease in local authority commissioned services.

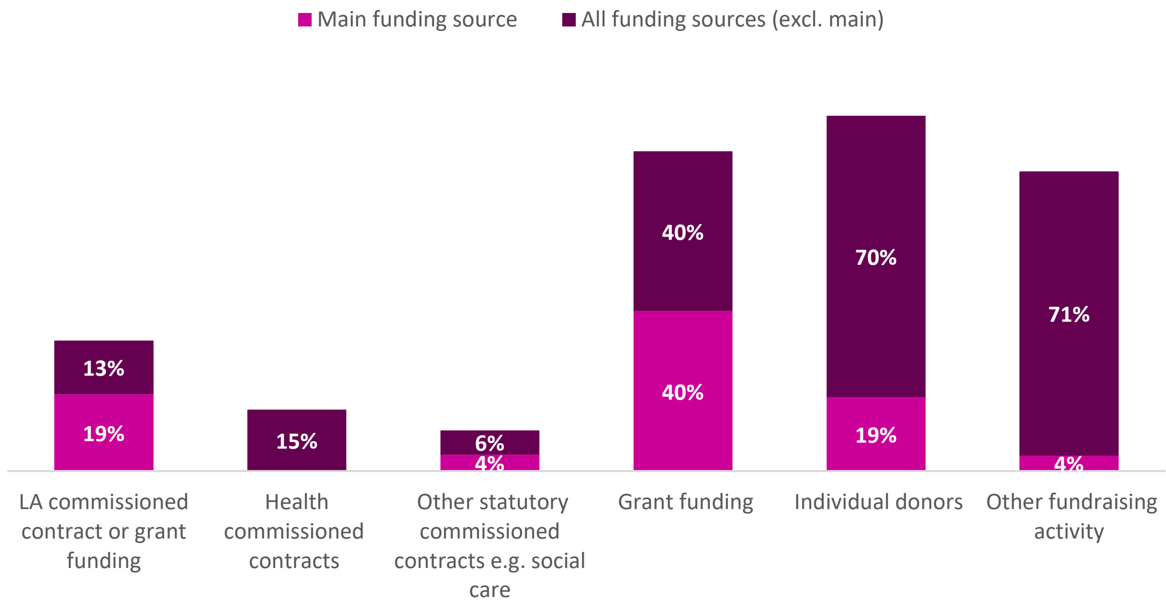
Chart 5.2. Accommodation providers main source of funding, 2010 - 2022



Day centres funding source

Income for day centres is heavily reliant on fundraising, grants and philanthropy with 40% of providers stating their main income source is through grant funding, and 19% through individual giving. When looking at all sources of income grant funding (80%), individual giving (89%), and other fundraising (75%) account for the majority of day centre funding.

Chart 5.3. Day centres funding sources



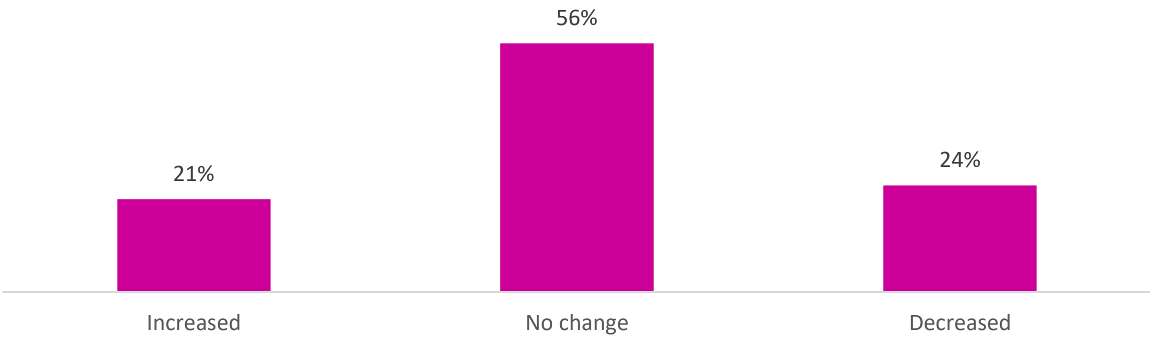
Source: Day centre survey, N=58

Unlike with accommodation providers there has been little change in the profile of day centre funding with grant income and other forms of fundraising long making up the bulk of funding sources.

Change in income for accommodation providers

24% of accommodation providers stated that their income had decreased since the previous year, with 56% stating there was no change to their income, and 21% reporting an increase.

Chart 5.4. Overall funding compared to last financial year for accommodation providers



Source: Accommodation survey, N=227

Chart 5.5. Overall funding compared to last financial year for accommodation providers by region

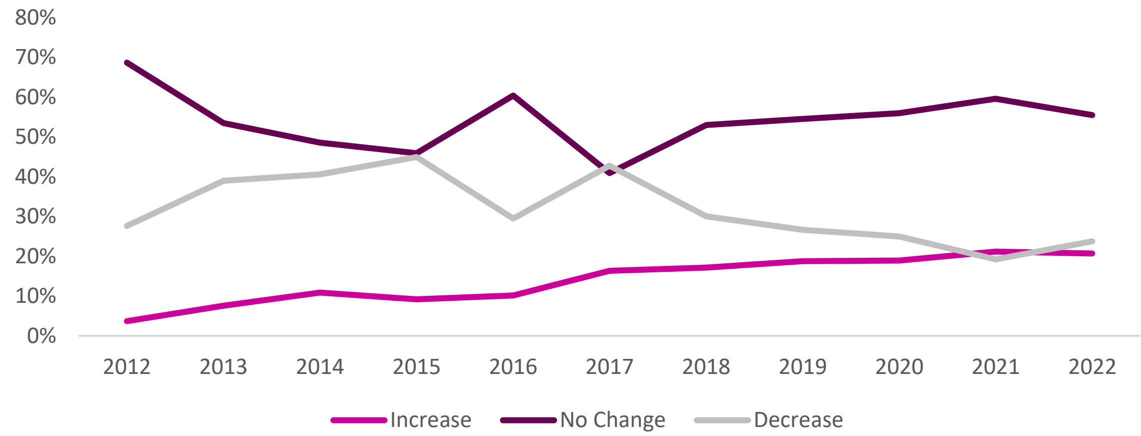
Source: Accommodation survey, N=227

There is regional variation amongst changes in funding with 34% of respondents in the North West, 33% in the North East and 30% in the South East stating they had seen a decrease. Comparatively only 13% of those in the South West and 16% of those in

Yorkshire and the Humber had seen a decrease. The North East has the most variation with only 25% of providers stating there had been no change, and 55% stating they had seen an increase in income.

Looking back over the last decade to 2012 we can see that has been sustained pressure on the accommodation sector with at least a fifth of providers consistently reporting a decrease in funding, and the numbers reporting an increase at a rate lower than to replace income lost from the sector. However we can also see the impact of funding interventions with a steady reduction on providers losing income from 2018 onwards which follows on from the introduction of the Rough Sleeping Initiative.

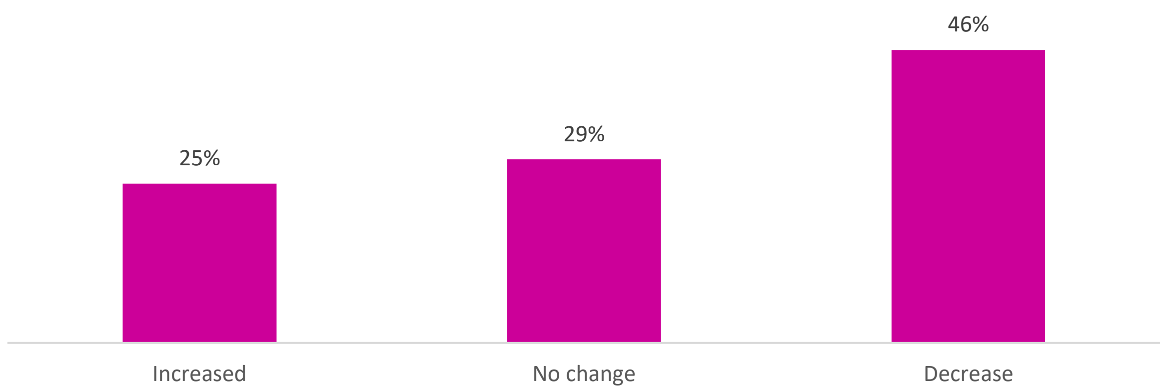
Chart 5.6. Overall funding compared to last financial year for accommodation providers, 2012 - 2022



Change in income for day centres

46% of accommodation providers stated that there income had decreased since the previous year, with 29% stating there was no change to their income, and 25% reporting an increase.

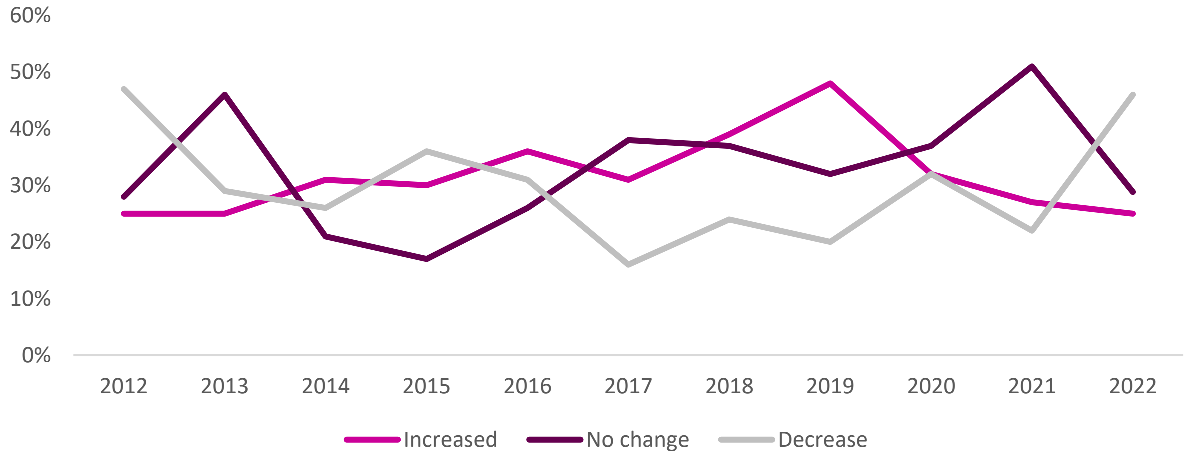
Chart 5.7. Overall funding compared to last financial year for day centres



Source: Day centre survey, N=59

In the last 10 years. since 2012 we can see that has been quite a lot of fluctuation in terms of funding stability across day centres. Between 2016 and 2021 day centres have been more likely to report either no change in their income or an increased income. However in 2022 we see an end to that trend with just shy of half of providers reporting a decrease.

Chart 5.8. Overall funding compared to last financial year for day centres, 2012 - 2022



Impact of rising cost of living

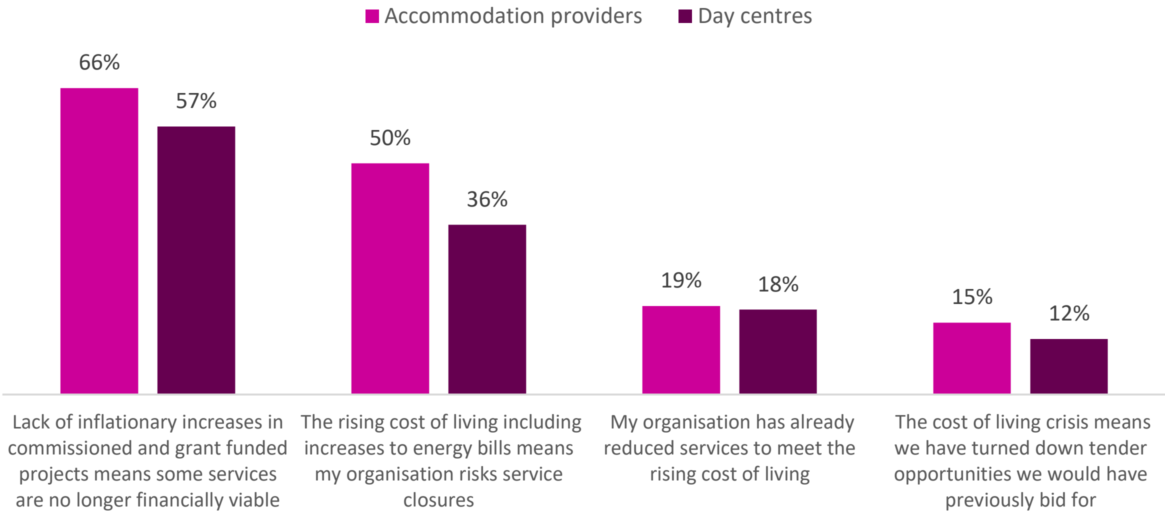
The 2022 annual review was carried out at a time of increased cost of living, record rates of inflation and significant increases in electricity and gas prices.

One of the biggest concerns raised by providers across the homelessness sector is that there has been no inflationary increases built into local authority commissioned services, in some cases for many years. Providers report that historically they have been able to subsidise the year on year increase in costs through general income raised but the significant increase in costs in 2022 has meant that this is no longer viable.[33] 66% of accommodation providers, and 57% of day centres state that lack of inflationary increases in funding means that some of the services they deliver are no longer financially viable. This should be read in context with the 56% of accommodation providers who said they had seen no change in their funding – in the context of substantial increased costs a real terms no change in funding is the equivalent of a decrease in actual budget available.

[33] Homeless Link (2022) *Keep Our Doors Open: The homelessness sector and the rising cost of living.* Available here: https://homeless.org.uk/knowledge-hub/keep-our-doors-open-campaign-materials/

It is clear that there is a huge financial pressure on the homelessness sector with 50% of accommodation providers and 36% of day centres reporting they risk service closures as a result of rising costs, and a fifth of providers stating they have already reduced their provision.

Chart 5.9. Impact of rising cost of living on service provision



Source: Accommodation survey, N=218; Day centre survey, N=55

Chapter 6. Move-on from accommodation

The main aim of most homelessness services is to support people to move out of homelessness and into independent living. This chapter draws on the accommodation survey findings to explore key trends in relation to move on.

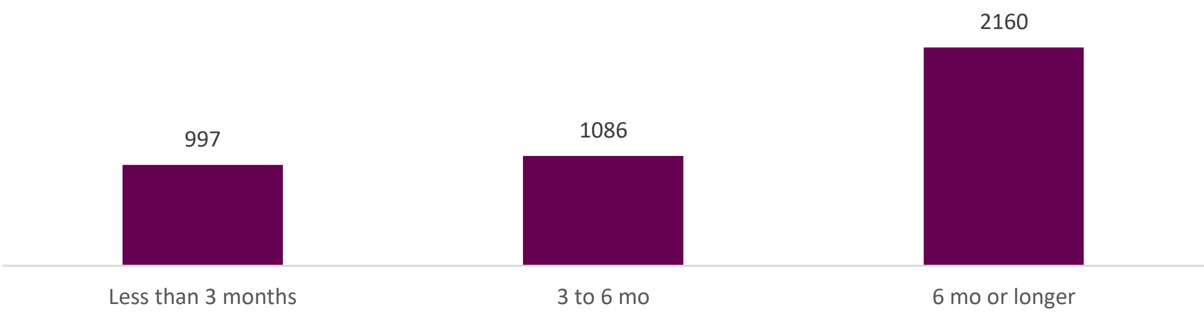
Key headlines

- 40% (4,243) of people currently being accommodated are waiting to move-on from their current provision into more secure, sustainable housing
- 51% (2,160) of people waiting to move-on have been waiting for six months or longer
- Lack of affordable housing, both insufficient social housing (87%) and no PRS available at LHA rates (65%) are the two main barriers to move-on reported
- Of those who do move-on from their accommodation most leave to positive destinations. On average 39% of residents move-on to social housing.
- 8% of people return to homelessness - either sofa surfing or rough sleeping

Waiting for move-on

Survey respondents stated that they currently had 4,243 residents waiting to move-on from their accommodation, of which 51% (2,160) had been waiting for six months or longer. This represents 40% of the total number of people accommodated across the survey sample and indicates significant blockages in the system, which if released could substantially increased available bedspaces for those in need.

Chart 6.1. Number of people waiting for move-on by length of time

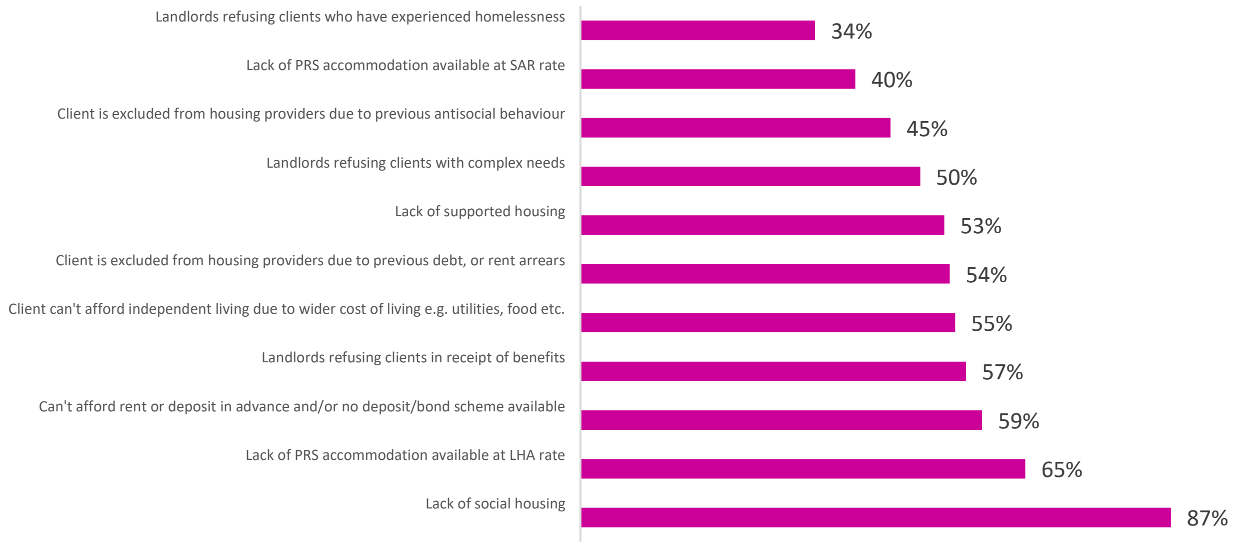


Source: Accommodation survey, N=231

Barriers to move-on

Lack of affordable housing, both social housing and housing available at Local Housing Allowance rates were given as the main reasons for people not being able to move-on from homelessness accommodation when they are ready. Other issues related to affordability including inability to afford independent living, not being able to afford rent or deposit in advance, and for younger residents insufficient accommodation available at Shared Accommodation Rates.

Chart 6.2. Reported barriers to move-on by accommodation providers

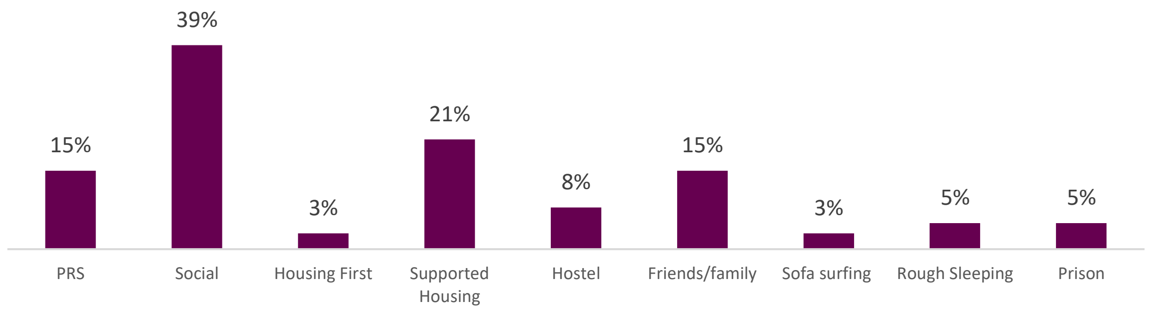


Source: Accommodation survey, N=246

Move-on destination

Of those who did move-on from accommodation there is a stark range in destination on leaving provision, ranging from social housing through to rough sleeping. On average 39% of residents move-on to social housing followed by 21% going to supported housing (this could be from a non-supported accommodation provider or to a more suitable form of supported housing). A minority (8%) of people return to homelessness on move-on either sofa surfing or rough sleeping. Chart 6.3. shows the average proportion of residents moving on to different destinations based on survey respondents.

Chart 6.3. Move-on destinations



Source: Accommodation survey, N=235

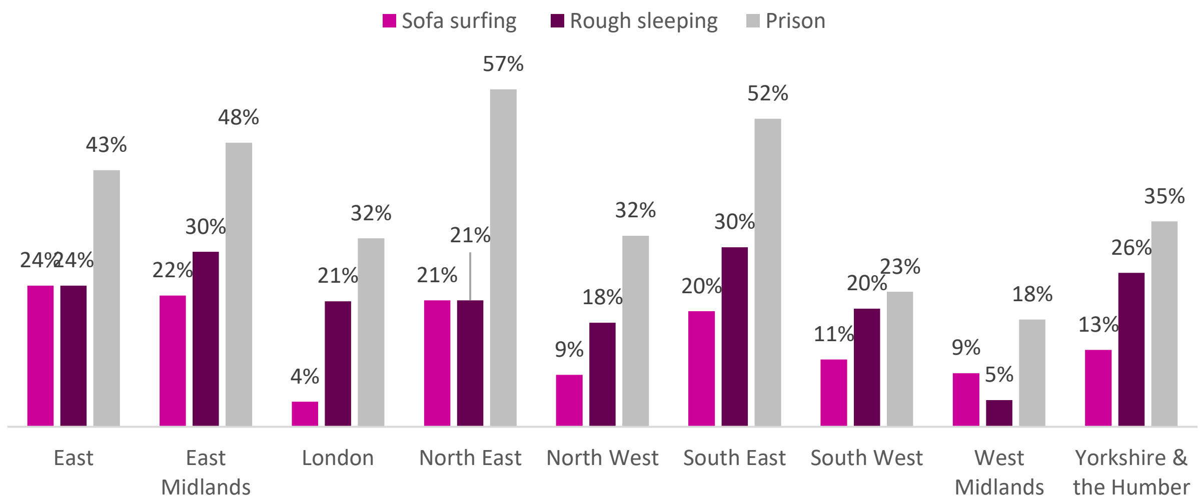
When looking regionally there is significant variation in terms of destination of people who have moved on from accommodation providers and trends very much mirror housing affordability patterns, with providers in the North East, where there are a greater number of social housing provision and PRS properties at LHA rates more likely to have moved people into one of these tenancies.

Chart 6.5. Positive move-on destinations by region

Source: Accommodation survey, N=235

When looking at negative move-on i.e. individuals either return to homelessness or move to prison, again there is regional variation to be seen. Providers in the North East and South East were most likely to have had residents move from their accommodation to prison, and the South East and East Midlands most likely to have seen residents return to rough sleeping.

Chart 6.6. Negative move-on destinations by region



Source: Accommodation survey, N=235

Chapter 7. Conclusion

2022 has been a significant year in the homelessness sector as it emerged from the pandemic into a cost of living crisis. Since 2020 and the introduction of COVID-19 measures for people experiencing homelessness the sector has achieved some enormous successes, but the impact on the workforce has been immense with growing recruitment challenges and reports of burnout, as well as the struggle to maintain the momentum and progress made during the pandemic. The cost of living crisis has brough its own challenge as services feel the pressure of increased costs, at the same time as we start to the see the impact on people at risk of, and experiencing homelessness. Alongside this the Government published its updated rough sleeping strategy and for the first time RSI funding was announced as a multi-year grant programme.

But despite the new strategy, commitment to multi-year funding, and the progress made accommodating tens of thousands of people who were street homeless during the pandemic, 2022 was the first year that rough sleeping started to rise again since 2018, with an estimated 3,069 people sleeping on the streets on any given night. Alongside this, the number of households owed a statutory homelessness duty is at its highest since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act, and numbers of people in temporary accommodation are also at record highs. With 50% of accommodation providers, and 79% of day centres reporting increases in people accessing their service who are experiencing homelessness for the first time, the pressure and demand the sector is facing is evident.

Although overall there has been a slight increase in accommodation providers since last year, this is driven by London alone, and in the last 10 years the sector has shrunk by 20%, whilst over the same timeframe homelessness has increased. And despite an increase in rough sleeping from 2021 we haven't seen a change in the available support from day centres.

Since the end of the pandemic and related support for people experiencing homelessness there has been a substantial increase in the number of people with support needs beyond their housing needs that services are helping. Over the last two years providers have reported seeing a dramatic numbers of people experiencing a wide variety of needs ranging from mental and physical health, substance misuse, experiences of domestic abuse, and a growing proportion of people who have been affected by modern day slavery. At the same time only 9% of accommodation providers state they are suited to supporting people with a high or complex needs. And providers still report significant barriers to accessing mental health and substance misuse services.

The impact of the lack of affordable housing, both social housing and private rented at LHA rates, is also evident in the 2022 Annual Review. Findings show that 40% of people currently accommodated were waiting to move-on, of which over half have been waiting for over 6 months but are not able to due to systemic barriers causing blockages. Providers pointed to lack of social housing and lack of private rented sector accommodation available at LHA rates as the primary driver of this.

The 2022 Annual Review also highlights how the sector has transformed over the last decade with the changing face of funding sources. As the once dominant supporting people programme faded we see that accommodation providers have become increasingly reliant on Housing Benefit to fund their support services and accommodation and pushed more and more supported housing projects into becoming exempt providers

As the rising cost of living continues to be felt by providers, and with more and more people in need of services, the impact on a sector that has been slowly shrinking over the past decade is being felt. The 2022 Annual Review shines a light on a sector facing increasing complexity, increasing demand and ongoing systemic barriers. Despite this regional variation tells us that there are examples of local areas working to reverse these trends, to increase capacity and to find ways of providing the support needed by people experiencing homelessness. Understanding this is key to identifying the best practice and ways of working needed to ensure that services can continue to effectively support people experiencing homelessness.

Appendix: Methodology and sampling

The findings featured in this report are drawn from the following four key data sources:

Telephone and online survey from 295 accommodation projects (34% response rate)

A combination of telephone and online surveys were conducted between September 2022 and November 2022. Of a total available population of 871 , 295 (34%) accommodation projects responded and were included for analysis. There were 423 total responses, with 70% meeting the inclusion criteria. Responses were excluded if they were a) a duplicate or b) incomplete (answering less than 25% of the survey).

Telephone and online survey from 61 day centres (35% response rate)

A combination of telephone and online surveys were conducted between September 2022 and November 2022. Of a total available population of 173 services, 61 (35%) day centres responded. There were 91 total responses, with 67% meeting the inclusion criteria. Responses were excluded if they were a) a duplicate or b) incomplete (answering less than 25% of the survey).

For both accommodation providers and day centres we achieved 95% confidence intervals of ±5% and stratified each project type by region and local authority. This in turn allowed us to generalise the findings to the wider sector.

Homeless England database

This database is managed by Homeless Link and covers information about homelessness services in England. Although the data is not live, it is updated regularly and is the only data source on the number of homelessness services in England. Data on the availability of services and bed spaces were extracted from the Homeless England database, allowing a comparative analysis with previous publications of the Annual Review.[34]

Existing data on homelessness trends

Existing data on homelessness trends, including national statutory homelessness and rough sleeping figures as published by the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing.

[34] All Homeless Link Annual Review reports are available at: https://www.homeless.org.uk/facts/our-research/annual-review-of-single-homelessness-support-in-england

Sampling approach

The sample structure was a vital part of this survey. Homeless Link ensured that the profile of the projects interviewed closely represented the profile of the sector's projects (accommodation or day centre) as a whole. For this survey, we achieved 95% confidence intervals of ±5% for the survey results from accommodation providers as a discrete group, and from the aggregated grouping of accommodation providers and day centres.

Providers were contacted initially by email, with follow up by phone and email. Surveys were conducted over the phone and online according to individual preference and we attempted phone contact with each provider three times in addition to the email invitations to invite response. Social Engine were commissioned to support the completion of the survey with a focus on meeting regional targets.

For accommodation providers only, the available sample numbers 871 projects. This required 267 interviews to be completed to achieve the confidence interval of ±5%. We achieved this with **295** respondents.

For accommodation providers and day centres combined, the available sample size of 1,044 projects required 281 interviews to be completed to achieve the confidence interval of ±5%. We achieved considerably higher with 61 day centres and 295 accommodation providers resulting in a **356** overall sample.

Within each of the two project types, we stratified by region to ensure that there were no unexpected skews in the data which can at times occur within a purely random un-stratified sample. Using the original sample, we calculated regional quotas which were set to ensure that the samples from each project type reflected the actual distribution of projects across England.

In addition to achieving a reliable overall evidence base, we also wish to ensure – as far as practical – that we secure a representative sample across all regions of England. However, due to the significantly smaller samples size for each region, it is necessary to accept a higher confidence interval.

For each region a minimum expected target with a margin of error of +/-15% has been calculated, along with an aspirational target of +/-10%. The table below summarises the numbers required for each region based on the available sample size and the total achieve. Aside from the North East region all areas achieved the minimum expected target for accommodation providers and day centres combined.

	AP + DC	Target at +/- 15%	Target at +/- 10%	Total AP	Total DC	Total AP + DC
East	136	33	57	46	1	47
East Midlands	65	26	39	27	3	30
London	203	35	65	47	13	60
North East	51	23	35	14	1	15
North West	137	33	57	34	11	45
South East	141	33	57	46	11	57
South West	154	34	59	35	8	43
West Midlands	75	27	42	22	5	27
Yorkshire and Humber	82	28	44	23	8	31

What We Do

Homeless Link is the national membership charity for frontline homelessness services. We work to improve services through research, guidance and learning, and campaign for policy change that will ensure everyone has a place to call home and the support they need to keep it.

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Let's End Homelessness Together

Homeless Link