

Committee:	Dated:
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub-Committee – For Information	04/07/2022
Subject: Annual Rough Sleeping Snapshot 2021 Report	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3, 4, 11
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children’s Services	For Information
Report author: Jack Deeprise, Rough Sleeping Co-ordinator	

Summary

This report draws on national and localised data released and analysed by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in relation to the 2021 Rough Sleeping Snapshot (Appendix 1). This reports notes that the City of London (CoL) has seen a third annual reduction in Rough Sleeping Snapshot numbers, and shows that these reductions are in line with national and Greater London trends. There are comparisons made in this paper to other London borough Snapshot data, notes on methodology and street count methods, and exploration of monthly local CoL ‘Street Audit’ trends.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. Since 2010 all local authorities in England have been required to conduct a ‘Rough Sleeping Snapshot’ annually in the autumn months. This snapshot is a recording of a single night figure of people rough sleeping in each area. All local authorities must conduct their Rough Sleeping Snapshot between 1 October and 30 November each year.

2. The purpose of a Rough Sleeping Snapshot in a local authority area is to:
 - Estimate the number of people sleeping rough on a single night in autumn.
 - Assess changes in the number of people sleeping rough over time.
 - Compare local authorities and regions in England.
 - Understand some basic characteristics about people who sleep rough.¹
3. For the purposes of a Rough Sleeping Snapshot, the official definition of 'people sleeping rough' is:

'People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or 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' which are makeshift shelters, often comprised of cardboard boxes). The definition does not include people in hostels or shelters, people in campsites or other sites used for recreational purposes or organised protest, squatters or travellers.

Bedded down is taken to mean either lying down or sleeping.

About to bed down includes those who are sitting in/on or near a sleeping bag or other bedding²

4. A Rough Sleeping Snapshot is conducted by local authorities in conjunction with local commissioned and non-commissioned services, such as outreach teams, police, health services, faith sector representatives, and voluntary services. There are three different types of approaches and methods which can be taken to conduct a snapshot:

- **A count-based estimate:** A physical counting of individual rough sleepers in an area. This is conducted after midnight on the chosen day.

- **An evidence-based estimate meeting:** Evidence of rough sleeping is presented by the local authorities and rough sleeping services, and a list of rough sleepers who are likely to be out on the chosen given night is submitted.

- **An evidence-based estimate meeting including a spotlight count:** Same as above, but combined with a 'spotlight' count, which is a physical count also conducted after midnight, though it may not be as extensive.

Local authorities choose which approach to take, and are advised to choose an approach that will most accurately provide an on-the-night rough sleeping estimate for their area.

¹ Appendix 1: Rough Sleeping Snapshot in England: Autumn 2021 – Page 5, Paragraph 1.2

² As above

5. National Picture

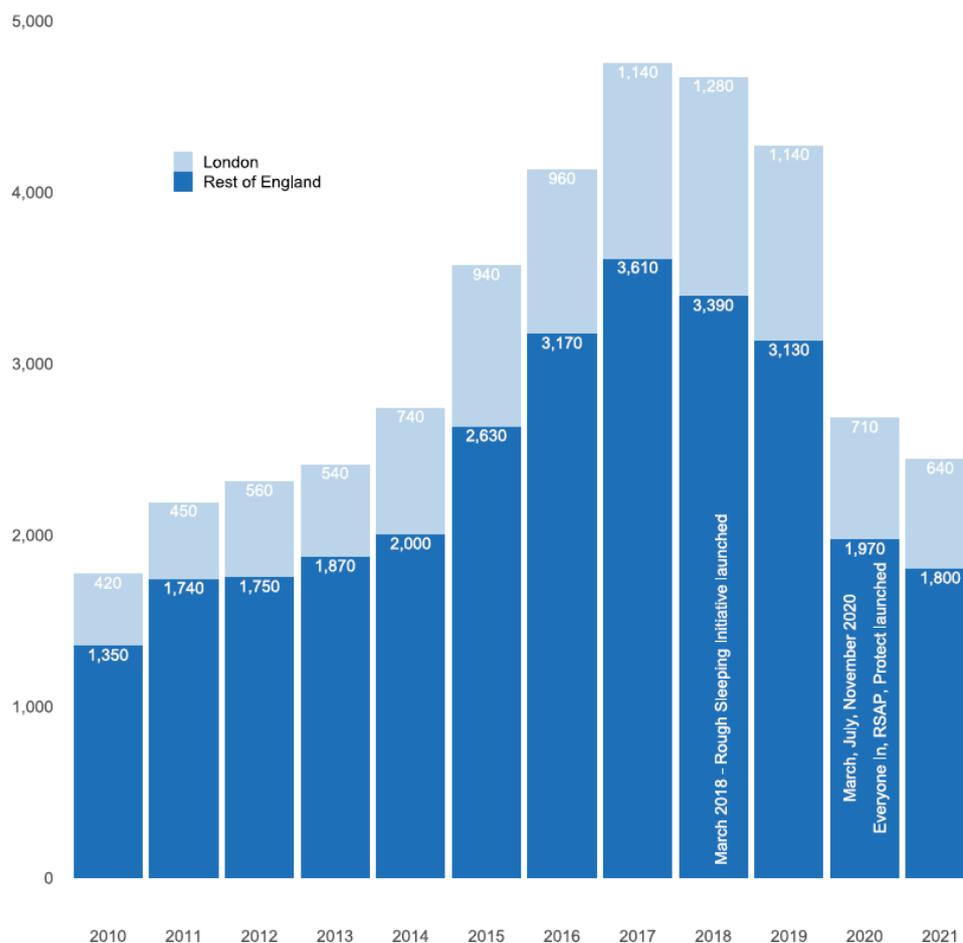
The number of people rough sleeping on a single night, as estimate by Rough Sleeping Snapshots, has fallen again in 2021. This is the fourth annual consecutive overall fall in single rough sleeping nights. The snapshot for 2021 remains higher than amounts counted in 2010 at the start of nationwide adoption of this process.

England 2021 – Key Statistics:

- 2,440 estimated rough sleepers recorded on a single night.
- 2021 down 9% on previous year, and 49% on 2017 peak.
- Rough sleeping decreased by the largest amount in London, shrinking by 10%.
- 45% of all rough sleepers in England recorded on a single night are in London and the South East.

The graph below illustrates the overall national picture and compares with London, since 2010.³

³Appendix 1: Rough Sleeping Snapshot in England: Autumn 2021 – Page 7, Figure 2.1.1



Current Position

6. CoL Rough Sleeping Snapshot Approach 2021

The method and approach taken to complete the 2021 snapshot was an 'evidence-based estimate meeting including a spotlight count'. The original plan for conducting 2021's snapshot estimate was to conduct a 'count-based estimate'. This has been the method taken by CoL historically. This method was not taken in 2020 due to COVID-19 concerns arising from mobilisation of a large amount of people to conduct the count.

As COVID-related risks were not as severe in November 2021, CoL officers had organised for 2021's snapshot to take the form of a full street count. However, due to advance notification of the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) being enacted due to cold weather on the day of, and days following, the count, it was decided that CoL would return again to the evidence with spotlight count process. This decision was taken because:

- Homeless Link, independent verifiers of the snapshot process, advised that a night where SWEP could be called would no longer constitute 'a typical night', and a full count process may not be as accurate. An evidence-gathering session would be necessary.

- Due to the relatively small geographic area of the Square Mile, a spotlight count would still be highly effective in covering the ground needed to record rough sleepers.

The result of the CoL’s snapshot process in 2021 was:

- 19 individuals recorded on spotlight count.
- one individual added as a result of the evidence-gathering session with rough sleeping services.
- A total of 20 individuals recorded as CoL’s 2021 Rough Sleeping Snapshot, verified by Homeless Link.

7. Approach used by other local authorities

The table below shows the different approach used by local authorities in 2020 and 2021.⁴ It shows that the evidence-based estimate meeting with a spotlight count was the most prevalent method chosen.

Approach	2020	2021
Count-based estimate	39	59
Evidence-based estimate meeting	149	102
Evidence-based estimate meeting (inc. spotlight count)	126	148
Total	314	309

8. Rough Sleeping Snapshot Trends: 2017 – 2021

Figure 1 below illustrates the data for CoL since 2017 and the national peak of the Rough Sleeping Snapshot data with an average trend line. 2021 is the fourth consecutive year that CoL has seen a reduction in single night figures. The snapshot data for 2021 fell by 13% against the previous, and by 70% when compared against 2017.

Figures 2 and 3 show snapshot data for England and Greater London, respectively, since 2017. The comparisons of these data sets show that CoL’s snapshot data trend to 2021 largely reflects the national and Greater London picture. This is especially apparent in the Greater London trend, which highlights the interconnected nature of rough sleeping across the London boroughs. This shows that, on the whole, rough sleeping trends in a city which has rough sleepers often transitioning across borough boundaries will often have shared rises and falls in rough sleeping numbers. There are always exceptions to this

⁴ Appendix 1: Rough Sleeping Snapshot in England_autumn 2021 – GOV.UK.pdf – Page 21, Table 4.1

however, and this will be explored further in this report.

Figure 1

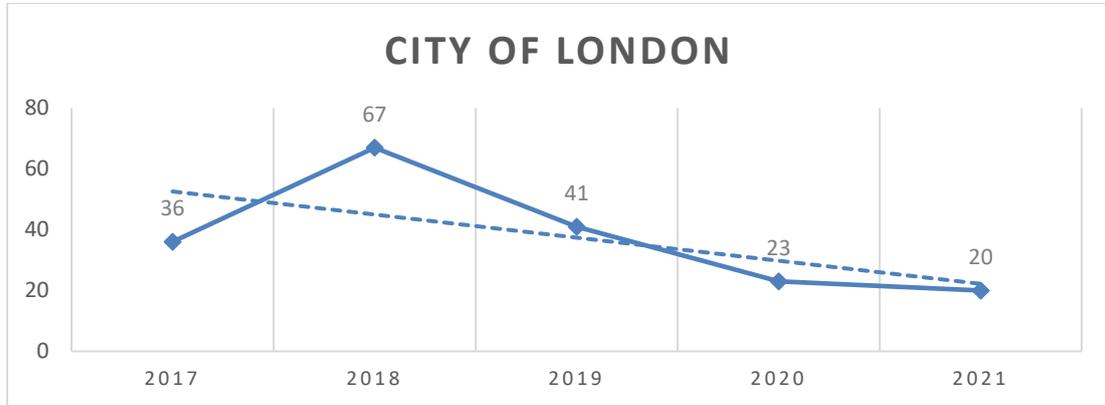


Figure 2

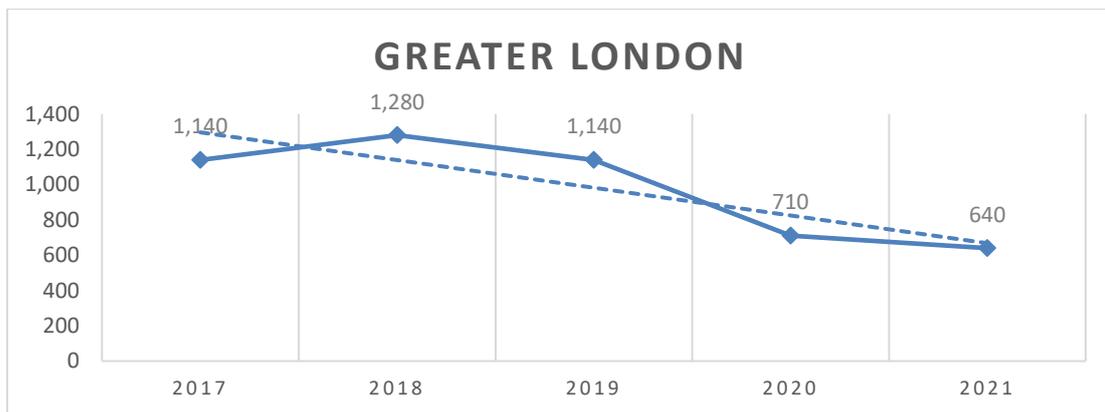
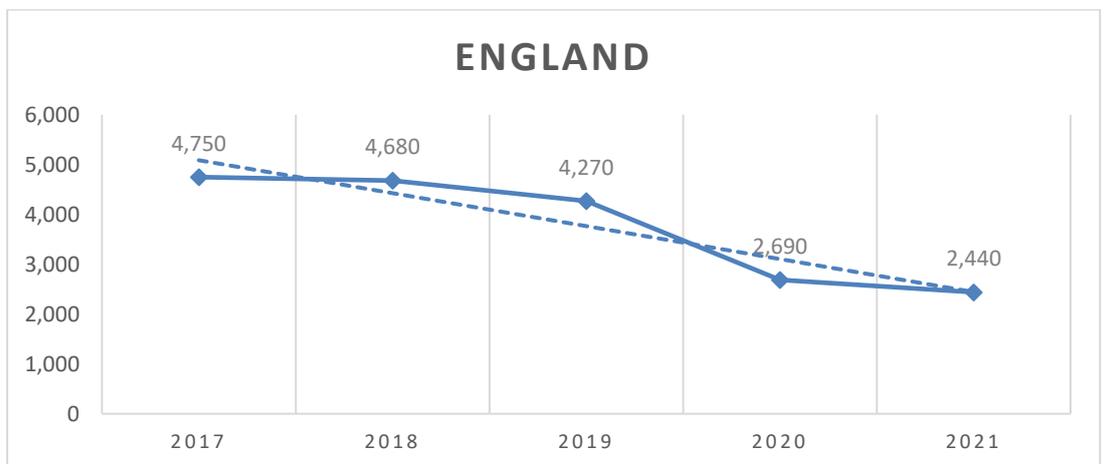


Figure 3



Figures 4–3 Data Source:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1063903/rs_statistics2021.xlsx

9. 2021 Performance compared with London boroughs

Figure 4 below shows Snapshot records for all London boroughs 2017–2021, with the table being ordered largest to smallest for 2021 data.

Figure 5

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Westminster	217	306	333	242	187
Camden	127	141	65	42	97
Lambeth	34	50	43	20	29
Kingston upon Thames	27	23	20	14	28
Tower Hamlets	21	10	17	40	28
Ealing	62	33	20	25	23
Enfield	9	78	24	19	21
City of London	36	67	41	23	20
Wandsworth	13	25	28	16	18
Brent	29	30	25	12	17
Newham	76	79	64	6	17
Redbridge	65	26	16	24	15
Barnet	21	24	24	6	13
Islington	27	43	51	20	13
Croydon	31	15	6	15	11
Hackney	18	23	14	18	11
Kensington and Chelsea	20	20	19	21	11
Haringey	43	32	33	8	10
Southwark	44	47	44	24	10
Greenwich	8	7	16	11	9
Hillingdon	36	70	106	11	9
Bexley	16	5	9	16	7
Lewisham	22	5	16	12	7
Merton	5	23	15	13	5
Waltham Forest	44	22	18	18	5

Figure 6 - Data Source:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1063903/rs_statistics2021.xlsx

Of these London boroughs, CoL is 8th on the scale for 2021 numbers, falling from 6th in 2018. This data shows CoL having single night snapshot numbers in 2021 comparable to other inner-London boroughs, such as Tower Hamlets, Lambeth and Newham. Other neighbouring boroughs, such as Islington and Hackney, saw slightly larger decreases between 2020/2021 than CoL. Many boroughs did see further decreases into 2021, as reflected in overall Greater London data.

Local authorities seeing decreases have reported that these were largely due to the extension of the 'Everyone In' programme, further 'Rough Sleeper Initiative'

(RSI) funding, and further grants such as the Protect and Vaccinate programme towards the end of 2021, allowing for continuation of pandemic response accommodation and increased resources available to outreach teams and commissioned services.⁵

For CoL specifically, the maintaining of pandemic response level single night rough sleeping numbers is due largely to reasons in line with this appraisal. CoL were able to extend the provision of the City Assessment Service (CAS) to March 2022, allowing for increased off-the-street accommodation provision. RSI funding allowed for the expansion of our City Outreach team which increased street provision, and the extension of our Mobile Intervention Support Team (MIST) service, to provide in-reach support to clients in temporary and assessment accommodation, which assists in preventing rough sleepers returning to the streets. Seasonal grants in 2021 such as the Winter Pressures Fund and Protect and Vaccinate increased capacity for agile off-the-street offers for rough sleepers into hotel accommodation in 2021.

10. Increases in London Boroughs

While the data in Figure 4 shows that many London boroughs saw falls in snapshot estimate figures in 2021, there a smaller number of boroughs also experienced increases in their numbers. Camden saw the largest increase in 2021, with the local authority reporting to DLUHC ‘this increase is thought to be due to the closure of accommodation that was provided as part of the response [to] the pandemic and an increase in people sleeping rough from the EU including those with no recourse to public funds, as well as movement of people sleeping rough from other London boroughs.’⁶

It is important to note the effect that increased footfall and economic activity post-pandemic can potentially have on rough sleeping snapshot numbers, as other local authorities have already reported.⁷ Also, due to the often fluid nature of rough sleeping in London, changes in one borough have the potential to effect the single night figure recorded in other areas of London.

As day and night-time economies across Greater London have reinvigorated with the easing of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions in 2021/22, the footfall in inner-city London has increased along with the potential draw factors for rough sleepers in London, through linked behaviours such as begging and drug use.

11. CoL Street Audits and client outcomes since 2021 Snapshot

CoL and our City Outreach team have been conducting monthly Street Audits since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. These night-time shifts are in place to emulate the process of a physical street count. The aim is to keep a regular record of a snapshot figure, to inform CoL officers and City Outreach of likely ‘on the night’ figures at a given point during the year. Figure 5 below shows

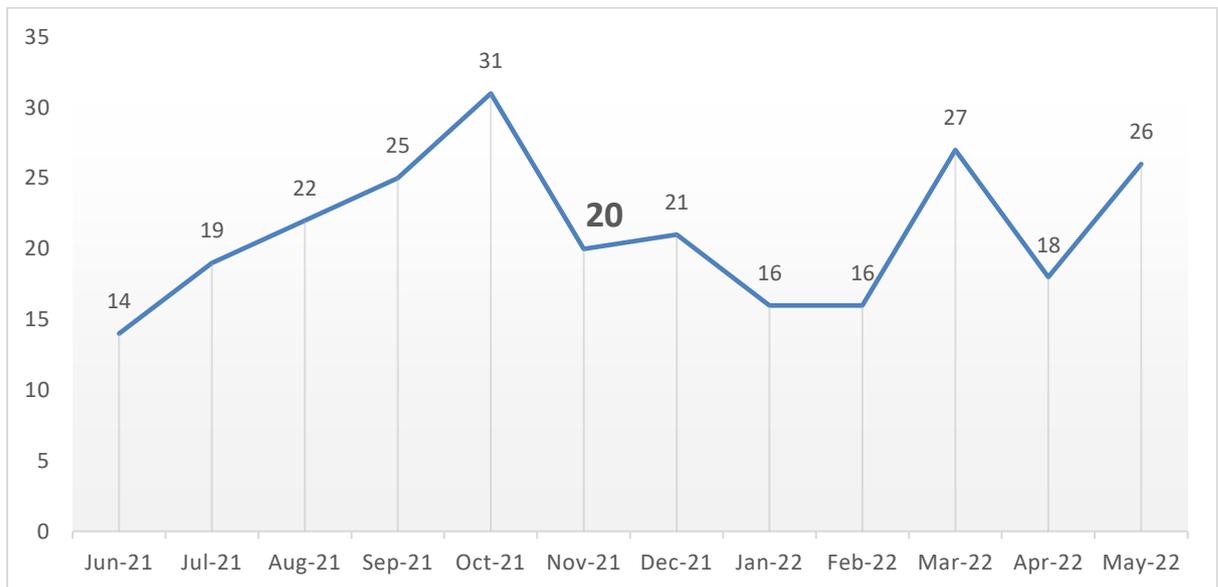
⁵ Appendix 1: Rough Sleeping Snapshot in England_autumn 2021 – GOV.UK.pdf – Page 13

⁶ Appendix 1: Rough Sleeping Snapshot in England_autumn 2021 – GOV.UK.pdf – Page 12

⁷ As above

the last 12 months of street audits, with November's Snapshot figure in bold.

Figure 7



As this chart illustrates, street audit and street count numbers are variable. While street audit numbers since November's Snapshot have largely remained in the high teens and low 20s, there have been two spikes. These spikes in March and May were mainly attributed to increased rough sleepers abandoning or being asked to leave accommodation in other local authority areas, both in Greater London and other parts of the country.

Client Outcomes

'Appendix 2 – Snapshot Outcomes', shows the 20 individuals found in November 2021's snapshot count with an estimate, and their current circumstances in June 2022. For data protection, all details have been anonymised apart from gender and nationality.

Options

12. There are no additional options arising from this paper.

Proposals

13. There are no proposals arising from this paper.

14. Corporate & Strategic Implications

There are no strategic implications directly related to this report

Financial implications – N/A

Resource implications – N/A

Legal implications – N/A

Risk implications – N/A

Equalities implications – N/A

Climate implications – N/A

Security implications – N/A

Conclusion

15. In conclusion, CoL saw its third annual reduction of Rough Sleeping Snapshot numbers in 2021. This reduction is in line with both national and Greater London data sets. 2021's fall in CoL Snapshot numbers was assisted by increased provision in CoL for rough sleepers, such as CAS, a larger Outreach team, MIST, and agile off-the-street placements. Other London boroughs have seen increases in their 2021 Snapshot numbers, which was attributed by those affected local authorities to increases in footfall in and re-opening of local economies, closure of accommodation for clients without recourse to public funds, and rough sleepers moving between boroughs. Factors such as these will be evident and monitored through ongoing analysis of upcoming CoL street audits by CoL officers and City Outreach.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Rough Sleeping Snapshot in England: Autumn 2021 – www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-snapshot-in-england-autumn-2021
- Appendix 2 – Snapshot Outcomes

Jack Deeprose

Rough Sleeping Co-ordinator

Department of Community and Children's Services

T: 075 5443 7909

E: jack.deeprose@cityoflondon.gov.uk