CHAIN ANNUAL REPORT

GREATER LONDON

APRIL 2023 - MARCH 2024

CONTENTS

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1. INTRODUCTION & KEY FINDINGS

Introduction

This report presents information about people seen rough sleeping by outreach teams in London between April 2023 and March 2024. Information in the report is derived from the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN), a multi-agency database recording information about rough sleepers and the wider street population in London. CHAIN represents the UK's most detailed and comprehensive source of information about rough sleeping, and is commissioned and funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA). The system is managed by Homeless Link.

Services that record information on CHAIN include outreach teams, accommodation projects and specialist projects such as the GLA commissioned No Second Night Out (NSNO) assessment and reconnection service. The system allows users to share information about work done with people who are rough sleeping and about their needs, ensuring that they receive the most appropriate support and that efforts are not duplicated. Reports from the system are used at an operational level by commissioning bodies to monitor the effectiveness of their services, and at a more strategic level by policy makers to gather intelligence about trends within the rough sleeping population and to identify emerging needs.

CHAIN data differs fundamentally from national street count statistics which are released by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). Information recorded on CHAIN constitutes an ongoing record of all work done year-round by outreach teams in London, covering every single shift they carry out. In this sense it is much more comprehensive than street count data, which represents a snapshot of people seen rough sleeping on a single night. However, street count data tends to be referenced more regularly when analysing trends nationwide, as most other areas of the UK do not operate equivalent systems to CHAIN for recording their general work with people who are rough sleeping.

In this report, people are counted as having been seen rough sleeping if they have been encountered by a commissioned outreach worker bedded down on the street, or in other open spaces or locations not designed for habitation, such as doorways, stairwells, parks or derelict buildings. The report does not include people from 'hidden homeless' groups such as those 'sofa surfing' or living in squats, unless they have also been seen bedded down in one of the settings outlined above.

Further resources

This report presents the full set of key annual data from CHAIN, for those wanting the most in-depth view. A shorter summary of findings and commentary on the figures is also available in the CHAIN 2023/24 Annual Bulletin, which can be downloaded from the GLA Datastore at http://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports.

The data on which this report is based is also available in an accessible tabular format, aggregated to borough and Greater London level, in a separate CHAIN Annual Data Tables file. This can be downloaded from the GLA Datastore at http://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports. A suite of interactive charts and maps based on the data can be accessed via the CHAIN Annual Data Visualisations Tool at https://bit.ly/chain-annual-vis-tool.

CHAIN developments and projects during 2023/24

In April 2023, following consultation with partners, we implemented a reorganisation of arrangements for **recording immigration information** on CHAIN. The aim of this was to streamline recording and to more closely integrate immigration information with other support needs. The new recording methodology also ensured alignment with DLUHC reporting requirements.

In September 2023, following recommendations from the Women's Rough Sleeping Census and consultation with outreach services, we expanded the scope of the **types of locations in which rough sleeping contacts could be recorded**, to include fast food restaurants, libraries, and police stations. This change was made in order to ensure that rough sleeping by demographic groups who may tend to avoid visible street locations was not being missed. A total of 168 people were recorded rough sleeping in these locations up to the end of 2023/24.

Throughout 2023/24 the CHAIN team were engaged in a significant initiative to **improve and diversify access to data and insights from the system**, both for key stakeholders and for a more general audience. This has included the development of system dashboards enabling in-depth interrogation of key elements of the data by local authority staff responsible for coordinating and planning rough sleeper services. It has also encompassed the development of a new publicly available OpenDocument Spreadsheet file providing the full dataset underlying quarterly and annual published CHAIN reports, aggregated at borough and Greater London level. Additionally, we launched a set of online data visualisation tools, providing interactive filterable charts and maps based on CHAIN data from quarterly and annual reports, which are, again, available to the general public.

During the course of this year, CHAIN also contributed data to, and participated in the testing of, a new **Strategic Insights Tool for Rough Sleeping (SITRS)**. The tool ingests and links data from a range of sources, presenting it in an aggregated and anonymised format to enable strategic decision makers working on tackling rough sleeping in London to achieve deeper insights into the pathways into rough sleeping, and the effectiveness of various interventions. The tool was developed by the London Office of Technology and Innovation (LOTI), in collaboration with London Councils, the GLA and Bloomberg Associates. Management of SITRS now resides with Homeless Link, as a sibling service to CHAIN.

Use of rough sleeping category terminology in this report

In September 2022, DLUHC launched a new data-led framework to enable partners to measure and report on their progress towards ending rough sleeping in their areas. In some cases, terminology used in the DLUHC framework is the same or similar to that previously used in CHAIN reports, but is based on different definitions.

The biggest area of overlap in terminology is in reference to new and returning rough sleepers as distinct groups within the overall base of people seen rough sleeping during a reporting period. In order to ensure consistency with previous reports, and to provide information that is most useful when examined at the level of a twelve month time period, this CHAIN annual report has continued to provide much of its analysis based on the flow/stock/returner model. Under this model, new rough sleepers (also referred to as 'flow') are defined as those people seen rough sleeping during the year who have never been seen rough sleeping in London prior to the year. Returners are defined as those seen rough sleeping during the year who had also been seen prior to, but not during, the previous year (i.e. people who have had at least a year away from being seen rough sleeping in London).

By contrast, the DLUHC framework expands the definition of new rough sleepers to include people who have previously been seen rough sleeping, but not during the last five years. The DLUHC framework defines returning rough sleepers as those who have had a period of at least six months (but less than five years) without being seen. The only part of this report in which the DLUHC definitions are used is the section covering rough sleepers' history prior to first being seen rough sleeping.

Changes to CHAIN annual report content for 2023/24

Previous editions of this report have included a section on arrivals and departures at temporary accommodation managed by homelessness support providers (primarily hostels and assessment centres). We have discontinued this section as the number of accommodation services inputting information to CHAIN has declined over recent years, meaning the dataset in this area is incomplete and could be misleading. Data on usage of and outcomes from accommodation services may be available from individual support provider organisations.

We have also discontinued the previously published section on reconnection outcomes achieved with people seen rough sleeping. This is partly because fewer services are focusing on facilitating reconnections abroad than in former years, and partly because there are significant variations across the sector in the understanding of what constitutes a reconnection, meaning it has been difficult to ensure a consistent and reliable dataset in this area.

Percentage figures in this report

Please note that, in some cases, percentage figures given in this report are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number. This may mean that individual figures in tables and charts do not add up to a combined total of 100%, or that there could be small discrepancies between percentage figures in tables and corresponding charts or commentary.

Key findings

- A total of 11,993 people were seen rough sleeping in London in 2023/24.
- This is a 19% increase on 2022/23, compared to a 21% increase between 2021/22 and 2022/23.
- The 2023/24 total is 58% higher than the total of 7,581 people seen rough sleeping ten years ago, in 2014/15.
- 2023/24 was the first year in which more than 2,000 people have been recorded rough sleeping on CHAIN in a single month, with both September and November 2023 exceeding that threshold.
- UK nationals accounted for 45% of all people seen rough sleeping in 2023/24, compared to 49% in 2022/23.
- For the first time in CHAIN's history, the proportion of people seen rough sleeping who were from countries in Africa, Asia, the Americas, and Australasia was higher than the proportion of people from Europe (excluding the UK), with 30% coming from these areas, compared to 25% from Europe.
- 17% of new rough sleepers who had information recorded about their last settled base prior to rough sleeping had previously been staying in asylum support accommodation.
- Homelessness services worked to help 4,379 people who were seen rough sleeping during 2023/24 into any type of accommodation. This represents 37% of all people seen rough sleeping during the year, but it should be noted that this does not necessarily mean that the other 63% are still rough sleeping, as many of them will no longer be in contact with services and may have found their own solutions.

2. ROUGH SLEEPER POPULATION ANALYSIS

2.1 Number of people seen rough sleeping: Flow, stock, returner model

Chart 1: People seen rough sleeping, by flow, stock, returner breakdown, 2020/21 - 2023/24
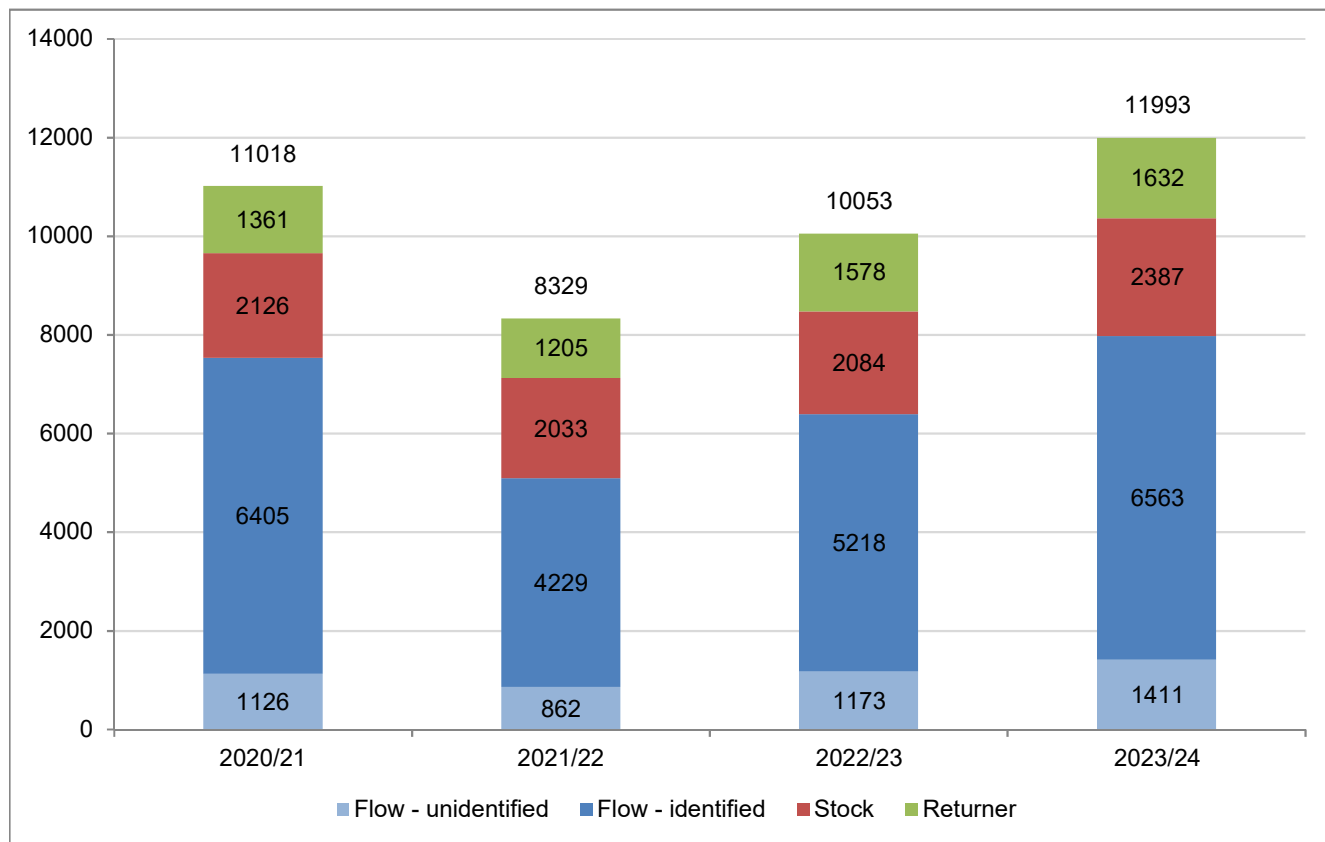
2020/21 base:	11018
2021/22 base:	8329
2022/23 base:	10053
2023/24 base:	11993

The flow, stock and returner model categorises people seen rough sleeping in the year according to whether they have also been seen rough sleeping in previous periods:

Category	Description
Flow	People who had never been seen rough sleeping prior to 2023/24 (i.e. new rough sleepers). Those within this category are further subdivided as follows: Unidentified - those new rough sleepers recorded without a name, and with only one contact. Identified - those new rough sleepers recorded with a name, and/or with more than one contact.
Stock	People who were also seen rough sleeping in 2022/23 (i.e. those seen across a minimum of two consecutive years).
Returner	People who were first seen rough sleeping prior to 2022/23, but were not seen during 2022/23 (i.e. those who have had a gap in their rough sleeping histories).

11,993 people were seen rough sleeping in London in 2023/24, which is a 19% increase compared to the total of 10,053 people seen in 2022/23. 58% of people were seen rough sleeping just once during the year, which is the same proportion as in 2022/23.

7,974 people were seen rough sleeping for the first time this year (also referred to as flow). This is a 25% increase on the number of new rough sleepers in 2022/23. 70% of people who were new to the streets were seen rough sleeping just once, which is consistent with the proportion of 71% seen once in 2022/23.

2,387 people seen rough sleeping in 2023/24 were in the stock group, which is a 15% increase on the stock figure for 2022/23. 1,632 people seen rough sleeping during the year were returners. This compares to 1,578 in 2022/23, representing an increase of 3%.

All three groups have shown increases in their numbers between 2022/23 and 2023/24. The flow group showed the greatest increase, both proportionately and in terms of numbers, while the returner group showed the smallest increase, again both in terms of proportion and numbers.

2.2 Number of people seen rough sleeping: Long range trend

Chart 2: People seen rough sleeping by year, 2014/15 - 2023/24
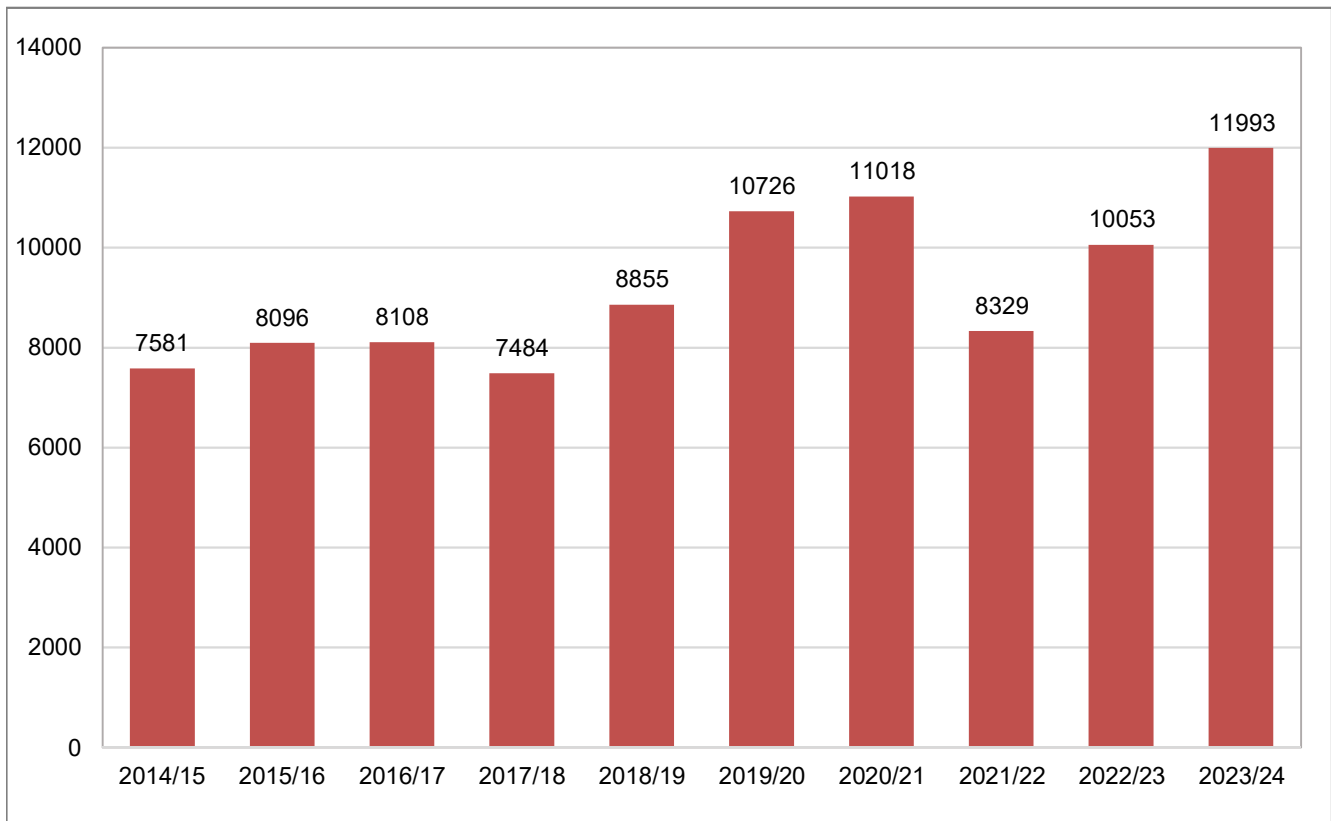
Across the last ten years, the number of people recorded rough sleeping on CHAIN has risen year on year, with the exception of 2017/18, and 2021/22. The 19% increase in 2023/24 is the third largest proportionate increase during the ten year period, being slightly smaller than the 21% increases seen in 2019/20 and 2022/23. However, it is the largest increase during the period in terms of actual numbers. The 2023/24 total is the highest ever recorded on CHAIN, and is 58% higher than the total of 7,581 people seen rough sleeping ten years ago, in 2014/15.

It is likely that the reduction in the total number of people seen rough sleeping during 2021/22 was at least in part due to the additional resources that were put into addressing rough sleeping during the Covid-19 pandemic under the government's Everyone In initiative. Although this initiative started in March 2020, the impact was masked in the 2020/21 CHAIN total by the high starting point at the beginning of that year. The higher totals in 2022/23 and 2023/24 are likely to be a reflection of the ending of the exceptional circumstances and arrangements that applied during the pandemic period.

2.3 Number of times seen rough sleeping

Chart 3: People seen rough sleeping in 2023/24, by number of times seen rough sleeping
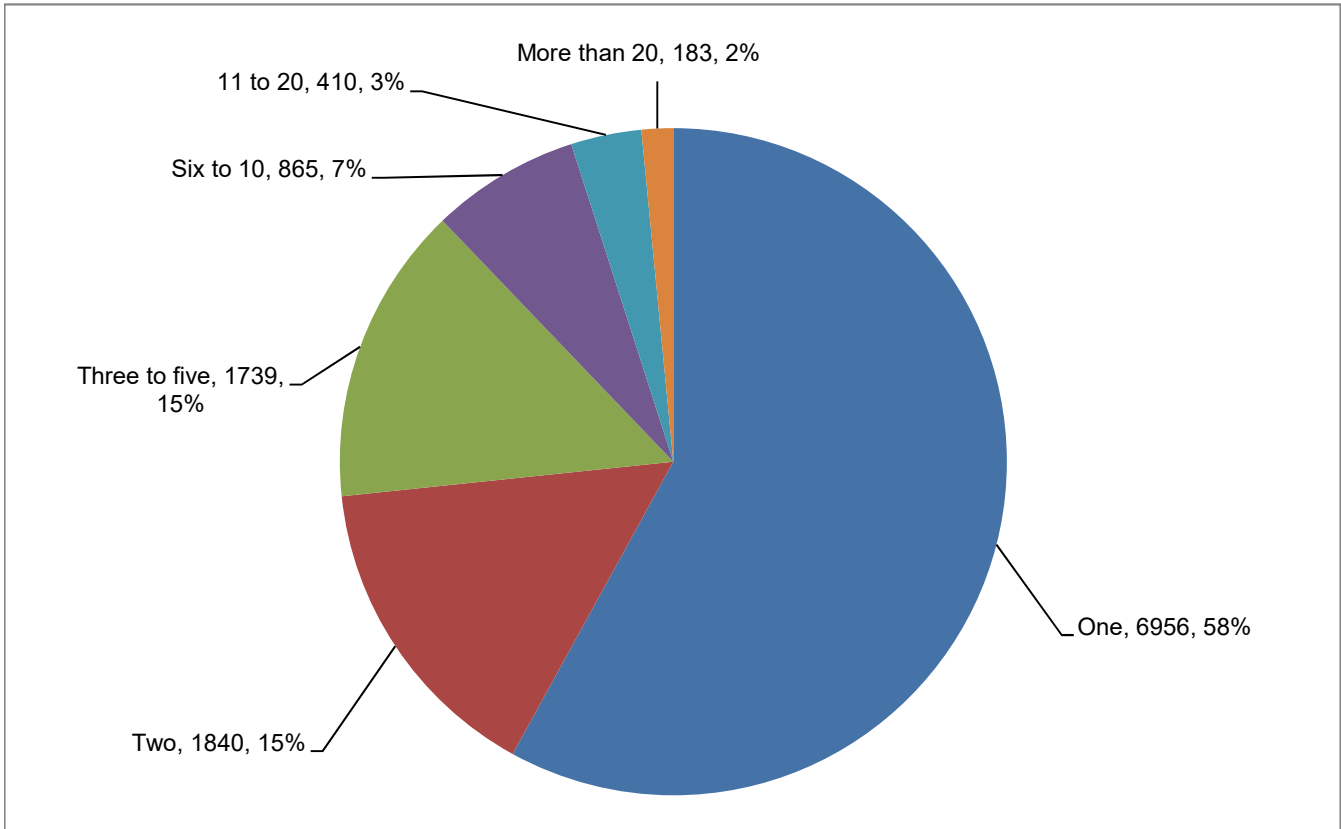
Base: 11993 people seen rough sleeping during the period.

6,956 (58%) people were seen rough sleeping only once in 2023/24, which compares to 5,866 (58%) seen rough sleeping just once in 2022/23.

593 (5%) people recorded rough sleeping in 2023/24 were seen more than ten times. 18 people were seen rough sleeping more than 50 times in the year, compared to 15 people with this many contacts in 2022/23, and 19 in 2021/22.

Outreach resources vary across boroughs, but even in places with extensive outreach coverage there may not be a shift every night. This will affect the frequency with which people may be recorded rough sleeping.

2.4 Monthly rough sleeping trend

Chart 4: Number of people seen rough sleeping per month, April 2020 - March 2024
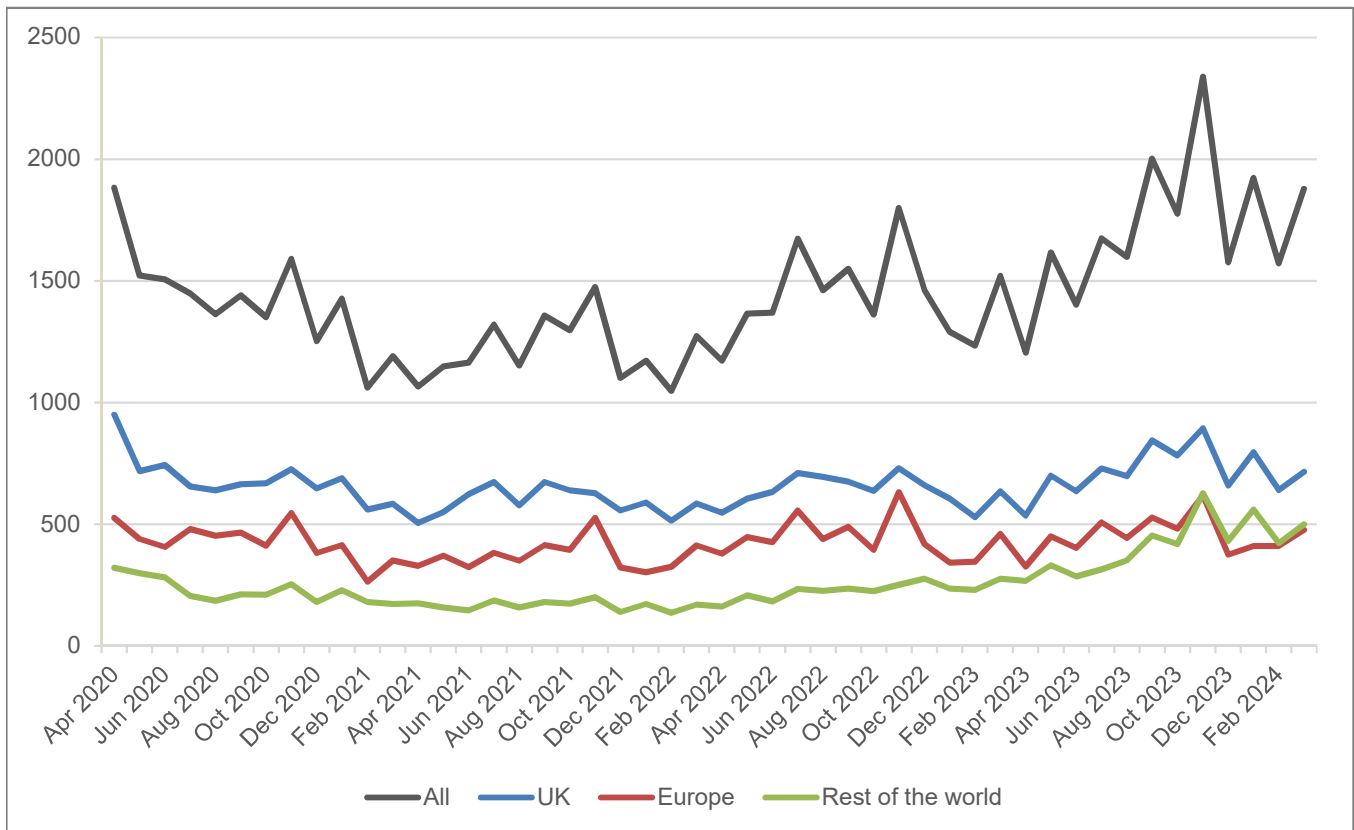
The chart above shows the monthly trend in numbers of people seen rough sleeping over the last four years, broken down by nationality group.

The 'All' line shows overall numbers seen rough sleeping per month. Historically (including periods prior to that shown in this chart), the typical trend shows rough sleeping numbers at their highest throughout the summer, although the peak month is usually November, when the government's annual street count takes place. Numbers continue at a lower level during the winter months, as winter shelters and other additional provision come into operation, before picking up again in the spring.

There was a departure from this regular pattern during the Covid-19 pandemic, as can be seen at the start of the chart, with the peak in April 2020 followed by a decline in monthly totals as the effects of the government's Everyone In initiative were felt. During the post-pandemic period, traditional seasonal patterns returned, and the effects of bimonthly street counts can also be observed, with spikes apparent in alternating months.

The lowest monthly total during 2023/24 was recorded in April 2023, when 1,205 people were seen rough sleeping. The highest monthly total was in November 2023, when 2,339 people were seen. 2023/24 was the first year in which more than 2,000 people have been recorded rough sleeping on CHAIN in a single month, with both September and November 2023 exceeding that threshold.

The nationality comparison shows that the previously observed upwards trend in the 'Rest of

the world' group became more pronounced in 2023/24, with the monthly total for this group being higher than that for people from Europe (excluding the UK) for the first time in November 2023, and remaining so until the end of the year. The inflation in the 'Rest of the world' group was at least partially driven by the increasing number of people arriving on the streets following departure from asylum support accommodation, as detailed in section 4 of this report.

2.5 New rough sleepers (flow): Number of times seen

Chart 5: People seen rough sleeping for the first time in the year (flow), by number of times seen rough sleeping during the year, 2020/21 - 2023/24
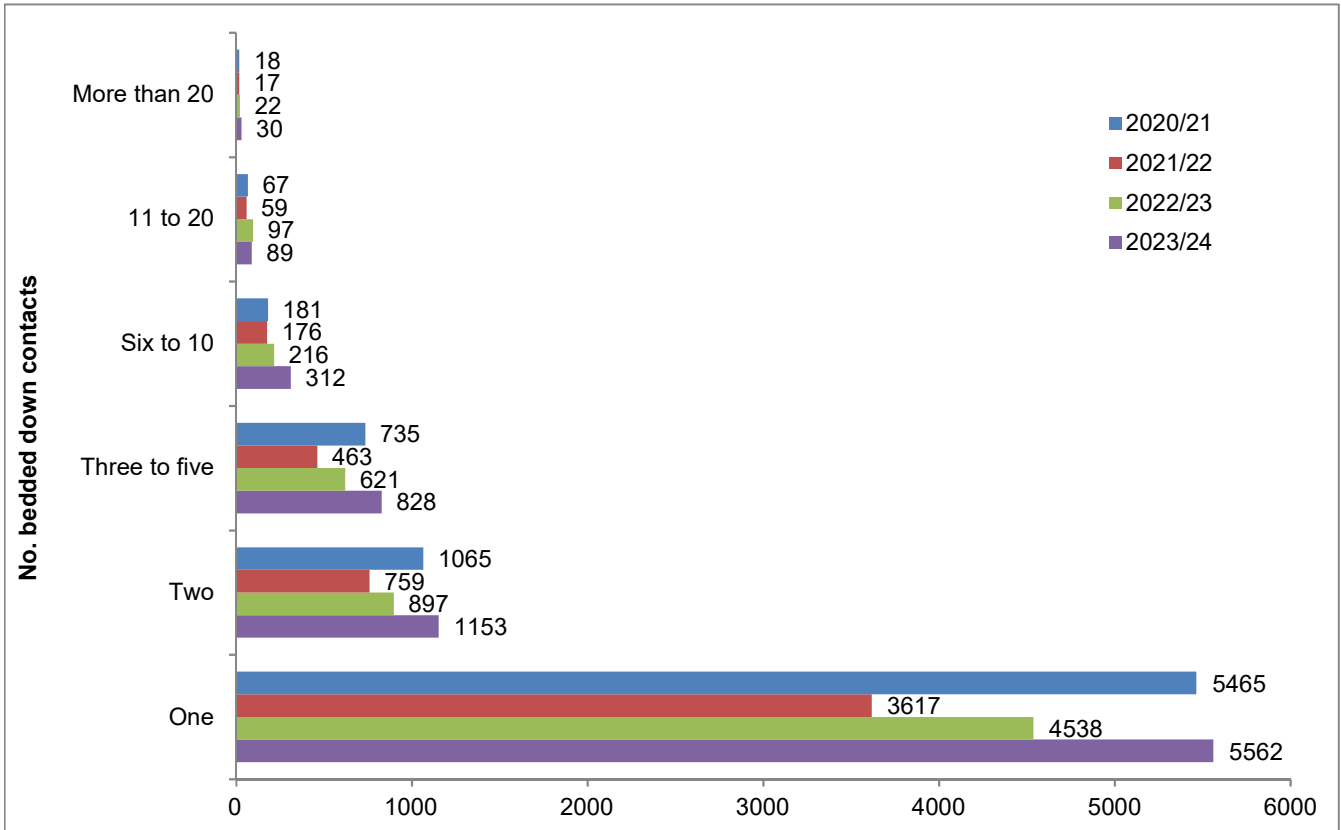
2020/21 base: 7531
2021/22 base: 5091
2022/23 base: 6391
2023/24 base: 7974

New rough sleepers represented 66% of the total rough sleeper population in 2023/24, which is slightly higher than the proportion of 64% in 2022/23. The number of new rough sleepers has increased by 25% compared to 2022/23.

70% of new people were seen rough sleeping only once, which is virtually unchanged from the proportions of 71% in 2022/23 and 2021/22. Only 1% of those new to the streets were seen rough sleeping more than ten times in the year.

It should be noted that, of those new rough sleepers seen once who were asked, 71% stated that they had already been rough sleeping for at least a week before they were first recorded on CHAIN by an outreach worker. This information should be treated with caution, as it has not been verified by outreach services, but does give some indication that new rough sleepers may well have been street homeless for some time before first being contacted.

2.6 New rough sleepers (flow): Nationality

Table 1: New rough sleepers in 2023/24, by nationality and period spent in UK

Nationality category		Time between date of entry to UK and date first seen rough sleeping						
		Less than 1 week	1-2 weeks	2-4 weeks	4-12 weeks	12 weeks - 1 year	More than 1 year	Total
Europe	No.	35	21	28	36	53	774	947
	%	4%	2%	3%	4%	6%	82%	100%
Rest of the world	No.	38	18	21	44	156	1817	2094
	%	2%	1%	1%	2%	7%	87%	100%
Total	**No.**	**73**	**39**	**49**	**80**	**209**	**2591**	**3041**
	%	**2%**	**1%**	**2%**	**3%**	**7%**	**85%**	**100%**

Base: 3041 people seen rough sleeping for the first time in 2023/24 who were non-UK nationals and had a date of entry to the UK recorded.

There were 3,041 new rough sleepers in 2023/24 who were non-UK nationals and had information recorded concerning the date they first entered the UK. The above table shows the difference between their date of entry to the UK and the first date they were seen rough sleeping in London, broken down by nationality category. It should be noted that this information is self-reported, and in most cases has not been independently verified.

85% of those represented in the table above had been in the UK for more than a year when they were first seen rough sleeping in London, which is marginally higher than the proportion of 83% in 2022/23. 82% of new rough sleepers from European countries had been in the UK for more than a year, compared to 87% of new rough sleepers from non-European countries.

The proportion of new rough sleepers from any non-UK nationality group seen rough sleeping within two weeks of entering the country remains low, at 4%.

2.7 Stock rough sleepers: Number of times seen

Chart 6: People seen rough sleeping across two consecutive years (stock), by number of times seen rough sleeping in the year, 2020/21 - 2023/24
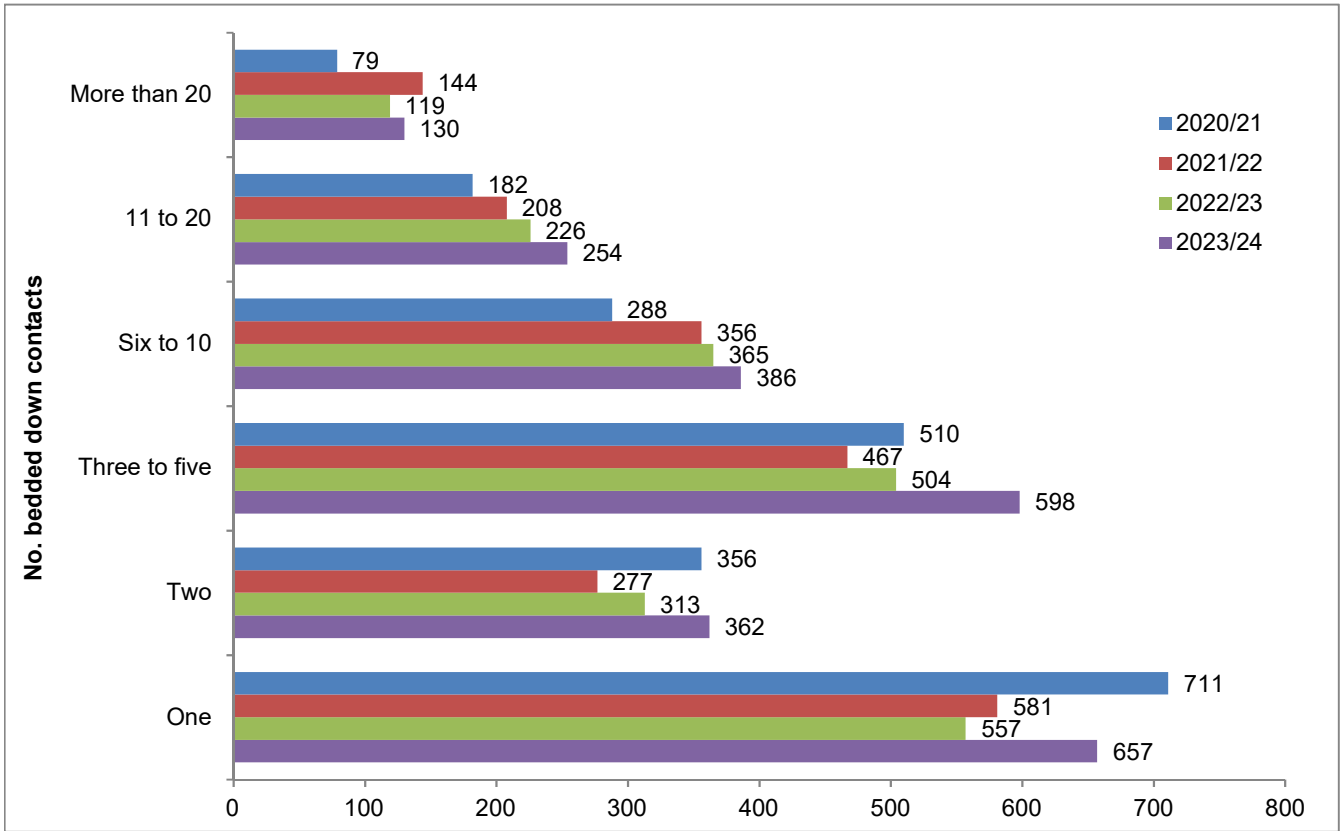
2020/21 base: 2126
2021/22 base: 2033
2022/23 base: 2084
2023/24 base: 2387

The number of people in the stock group has increased by 15% from 2022/23, and represents 20% of the total rough sleeper population in 2023/24 (compared to 21% in 2022/23). 28% of people in the stock group were seen rough sleeping only once in 2023/24, which is similar to the 27% in 2022/23.

The proportion of people from the stock group with one or two bedded down contacts has remained consistent, at 43% in 2023/24 compared to 42% in 2022/23.

2.8 Returner rough sleepers: Number of times seen

Chart 7: People returning to rough sleeping after at least a year away (returners), by number of times seen rough sleeping in the year, 2020/21 - 2023/24
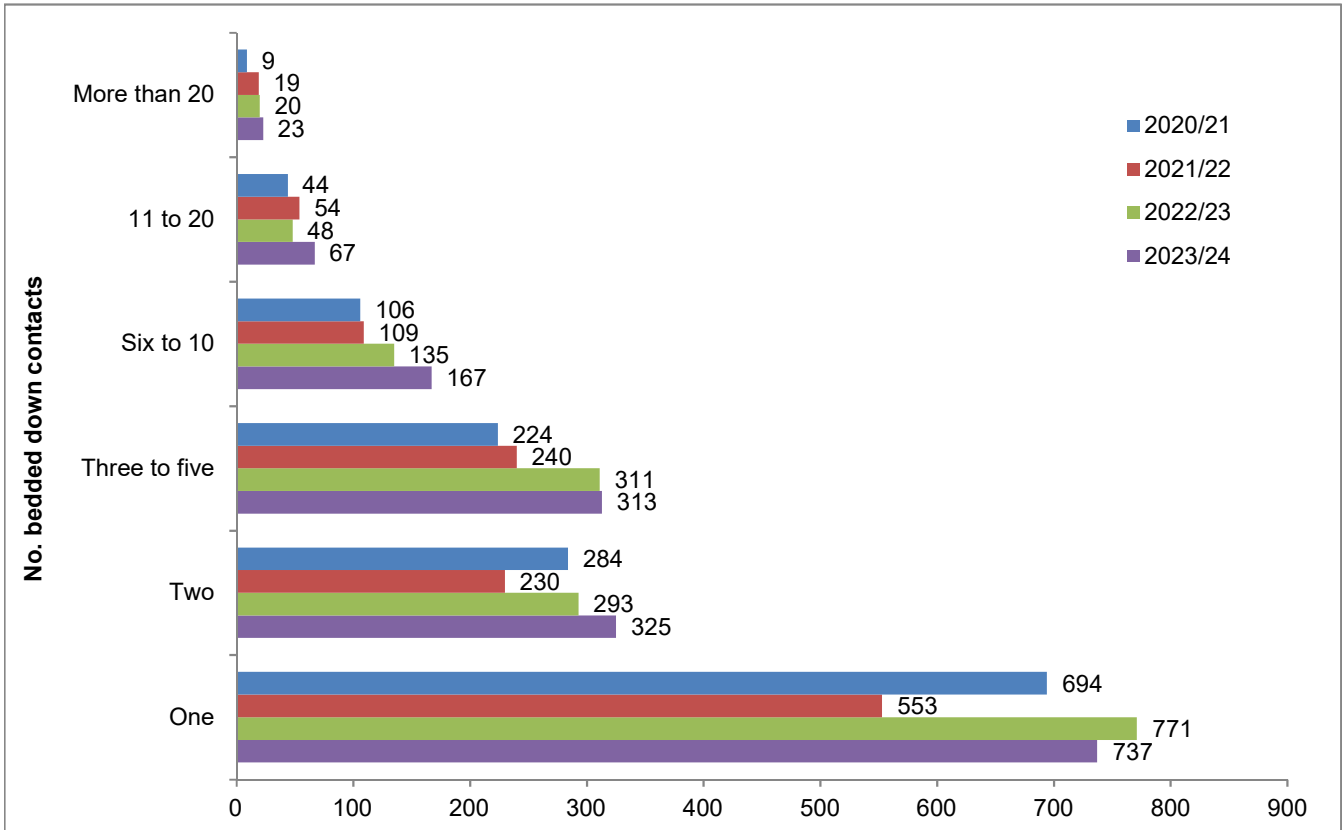
2020/21 base:	1361
2021/22 base:	1205
2022/23 base:	1578
2023/24 base:	1632

The number of people returning to rough sleeping in 2023/24 has increased by 3%, when compared to 2022/23. Returners constituted 14% of all people seen rough sleeping in 2023/24, which is slightly lower than the proportion of 16% in 2022/23.

The proportion of returners who were seen rough sleeping just once during 2023/24 was 45%. This compares to 49% in 2022/23.

3. SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

3.1 Total rough sleepers by borough: Yearly comparison

Table 2: People seen rough sleeping, by borough, 2020/21 - 2023/24

Borough	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24		Change between 2022/23 and 2023/24	
						No.	%
Westminster	2162	1698	2050	2102		52	3%
Camden	630	666	719	903		184	26%
Ealing	624	448	563	710		147	26%
Lambeth	581	438	623	681		58	9%
City of London	350	372	482	656		174	36%
Southwark	567	388	435	549		114	26%
Newham	578	428	503	535		32	6%
Tower Hamlets	400	297	460	498		38	8%
Hammersmith & Fulham	243	214	238	462		224	94%
Brent	374	283	373	455		82	22%
Croydon	322	271	373	449		76	20%
Haringey	405	268	304	442		138	45%
Islington	388	238	337	409		72	21%
Lewisham	301	264	296	353		57	19%
Greenwich	213	135	196	337		141	72%
Hounslow	223	144	196	328		132	67%
Heathrow	117	233	233	308		75	32%
Hillingdon	282	140	167	296		129	77%
Redbridge	380	247	248	279		31	13%
Hackney	350	229	246	251		5	2%
Kensington & Chelsea	271	193	199	226		27	14%
Barnet	282	173	166	216		50	30%
Waltham Forest	261	153	186	203		17	9%
Enfield	326	183	219	197		-22	-10%
Wandsworth	401	264	173	172		-1	-1%
Barking & Dagenham	161	131	139	159		20	14%
Harrow	67	58	96	128		32	33%
Bromley	54	57	92	113		21	23%
Kingston upon Thames	87	99	120	107		-13	-11%
Bexley	88	93	92	106		14	15%
Richmond	115	61	86	100		14	16%
Merton	109	45	63	77		14	22%
Havering	73	69	79	55		-24	-30%
Sutton	18	29	30	28		-2	-7%
Bus route	143	142	142	118		-24	-17%
Tube line	0	18	36	14		-22	-61%

Although Heathrow is located within the borough of Hillingdon and is not actually a borough in itself, it is counted separately for the purposes of CHAIN reporting due to the specific rough sleeping issues found there. Where people have been recorded rough sleeping on public transport, their contacts are ascribed to 'bus route' or 'tube line' rather than to a particular borough.

Combined borough totals will add up to a figure greater than the overall total for London, as some people will have been seen rough sleeping in more than one borough during the period.

The boroughs in which the greatest numbers of people were seen rough sleeping during 2023/24 were Westminster, Camden, Ealing, Lambeth, and City of London. Newham has dropped out of the top five, due to a lower proportionate increase than most of the other higher volume boroughs. City of London has returned to the top five after a period of being lower ranked during and immediately after the Covid-19 pandemic.

Of the top ten boroughs, all saw an increase on their figures from 2022/23, but three (Westminster, Southwark, and Newham) have lower totals than reported in 2020/21. Hammersmith & Fulham showed the greatest increase compared to 2022/23, both in terms of numbers (224) and proportion (94%).

3.2 Total rough sleepers by borough: Flow, stock, returner model

Table 3: People seen rough sleeping in 2023/24, by borough, and flow, stock, returner breakdown

Borough	Flow		Stock		Returner		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Barking & Dagenham	112	70%	21	13%	26	16%	159
Barnet	157	73%	33	15%	26	12%	216
Bexley	75	71%	23	22%	8	8%	106
Brent	318	70%	78	17%	59	13%	455
Bromley	91	81%	13	12%	9	8%	113
Camden	498	55%	253	28%	152	17%	903
City of London	373	57%	207	32%	76	12%	656
Croydon	336	75%	62	14%	51	11%	449
Ealing	465	65%	153	22%	92	13%	710
Enfield	154	78%	23	12%	20	10%	197
Greenwich	256	76%	54	16%	27	8%	337
Hackney	169	67%	41	16%	41	16%	251
Hammersmith & Fulham	342	74%	71	15%	49	11%	462
Haringey	286	65%	96	22%	60	14%	442
Harrow	101	79%	14	11%	13	10%	128
Havering	39	71%	10	18%	6	11%	55
Heathrow	245	80%	29	9%	34	11%	308
Hillingdon	214	72%	50	17%	32	11%	296
Hounslow	241	73%	40	12%	47	14%	328
Islington	281	69%	64	16%	64	16%	409
Kensington & Chelsea	122	54%	60	27%	44	19%	226
Kingston upon Thames	48	45%	51	48%	8	7%	107
Lambeth	435	64%	150	22%	96	14%	681
Lewisham	246	70%	46	13%	61	17%	353
Merton	61	79%	6	8%	10	13%	77
Newham	331	62%	128	24%	76	14%	535
Redbridge	174	62%	48	17%	57	20%	279
Richmond	52	52%	30	30%	18	18%	100
Southwark	360	66%	106	19%	83	15%	549
Sutton	23	82%	1	4%	4	14%	28
Tower Hamlets	316	63%	114	23%	68	14%	498
Waltham Forest	129	64%	42	21%	32	16%	203
Wandsworth	86	50%	57	33%	29	17%	172
Westminster	1145	54%	633	30%	324	15%	2102
Bus route	75	64%	30	25%	13	11%	118
Tube line	6	43%	5	36%	3	21%	14

Although Heathrow is located within the borough of Hillingdon and is not actually a borough in itself, it is counted separately for the purposes of CHAIN reporting due to the specific rough sleeping issues found there. Where people have been recorded rough sleeping on public transport, their contacts are ascribed to 'bus route' or 'tube line' rather than to a particular borough.

Combined borough totals will add up to a figure greater than the overall total for London, as some people will have been seen rough sleeping in more than one borough during the period.

Sutton and Bromley were the boroughs which recorded the greatest proportion of new rough sleepers (flow) during 2023/24, while Kingston and Wandsworth recorded the lowest proportions in this group. Kingston recorded the greatest proportion of people in the stock category, with Sutton recording the lowest proportion. Aside from the small number of people seen rough sleeping on the tube, the boroughs with highest proportions of returners were

Redbridge and Kensington & Chelsea, while the lowest proportion of returners was seen in Kingston.

Please see section 2.1 for an explanation of the flow, stock, returner model.

3.3 Total rough sleepers by borough: Map

Map 1: Total number of people seen rough sleeping in each borough during 2023/24

No. People Seen Rough Sleeping

1 - 50	101 - 150	201 - 300	401 - 500	1001 - 2000
51 - 100	151 - 200	301 - 400	501 - 1000	2001+
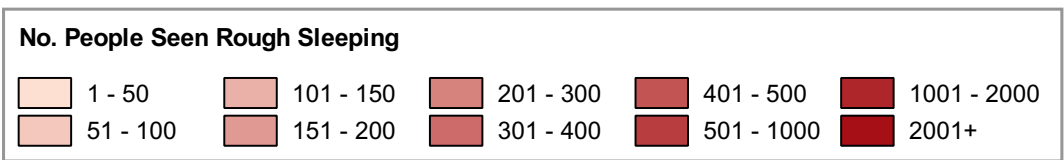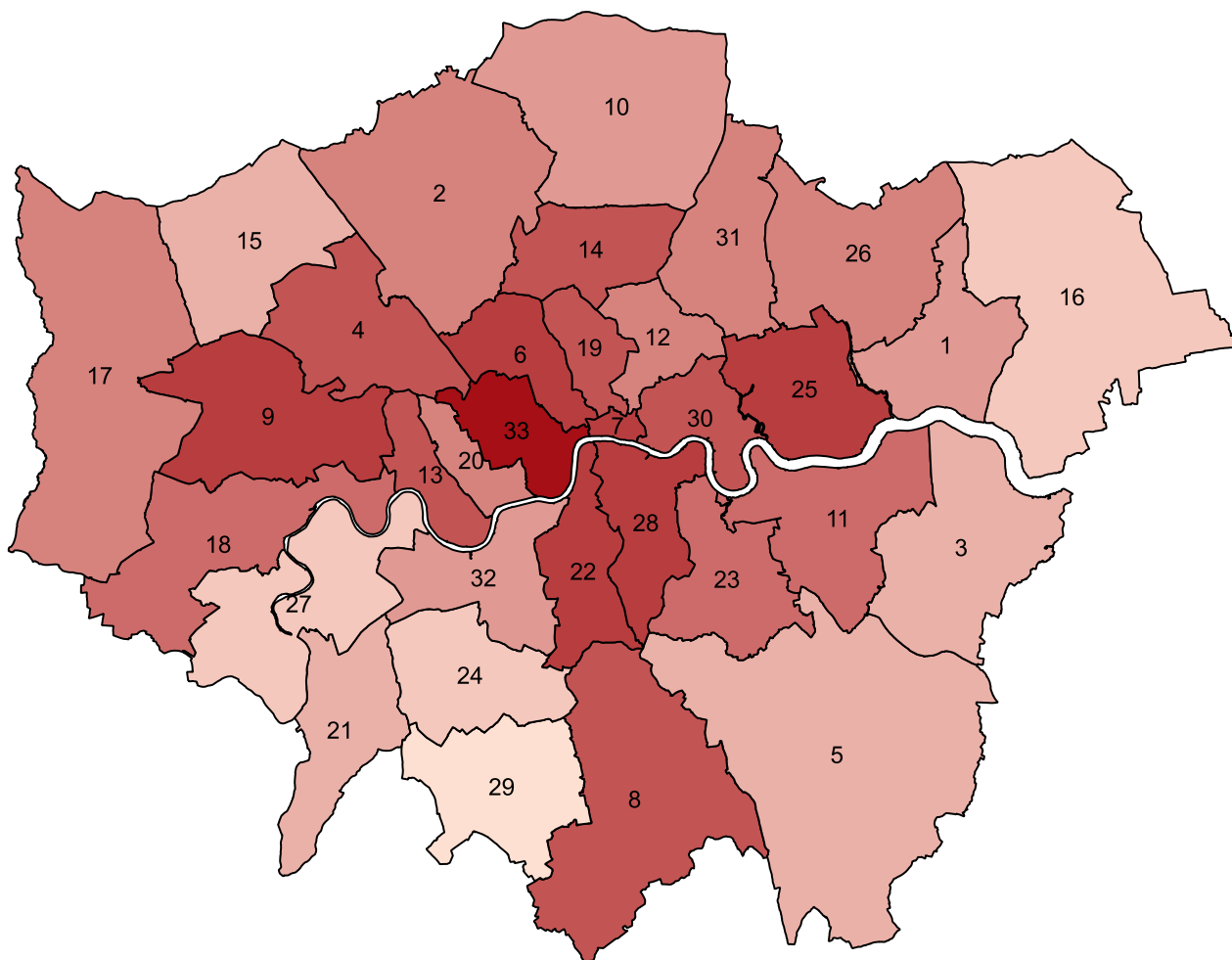
Key	Borough	Total	Key	Borough	Total	Key	Borough	Total
1	Barking & Dagenham	159	12	Hackney	251	23	Lewisham	353
2	Barnet	216	13	Hammersmith & Fulham	462	24	Merton	77
3	Bexley	106	14	Haringey	442	25	Newham	535
4	Brent	455	15	Harrow	128	26	Redbridge	279
5	Bromley	113	16	Havering	55	27	Richmond	100
6	Camden	903	17	Hillingdon	296	28	Southwark	549
7	City of London	656	18	Hounslow	328	29	Sutton	28
8	Croydon	449	19	Islington	409	30	Tower Hamlets	498
9	Ealing	710	20	Kensington & Chelsea	226	31	Waltham Forest	203
10	Enfield	197	21	Kingston upon Thames	107	32	Wandsworth	172
11	Greenwich	337	22	Lambeth	681	33	Westminster	2102
						34	Heathrow	308

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3.4 New rough sleepers by borough: Map

Map 2: New rough sleepers as a percentage of the total number of people seen rough sleeping in each borough during 2023/24

New Rough Sleepers As Percentage Of All

| | 41% - 50% | | 51% - 60% | | 61% - 70% | | 71% - 80% | | 81% - 90% |
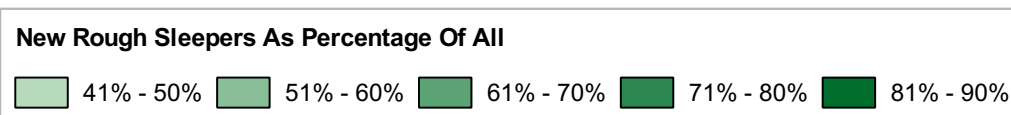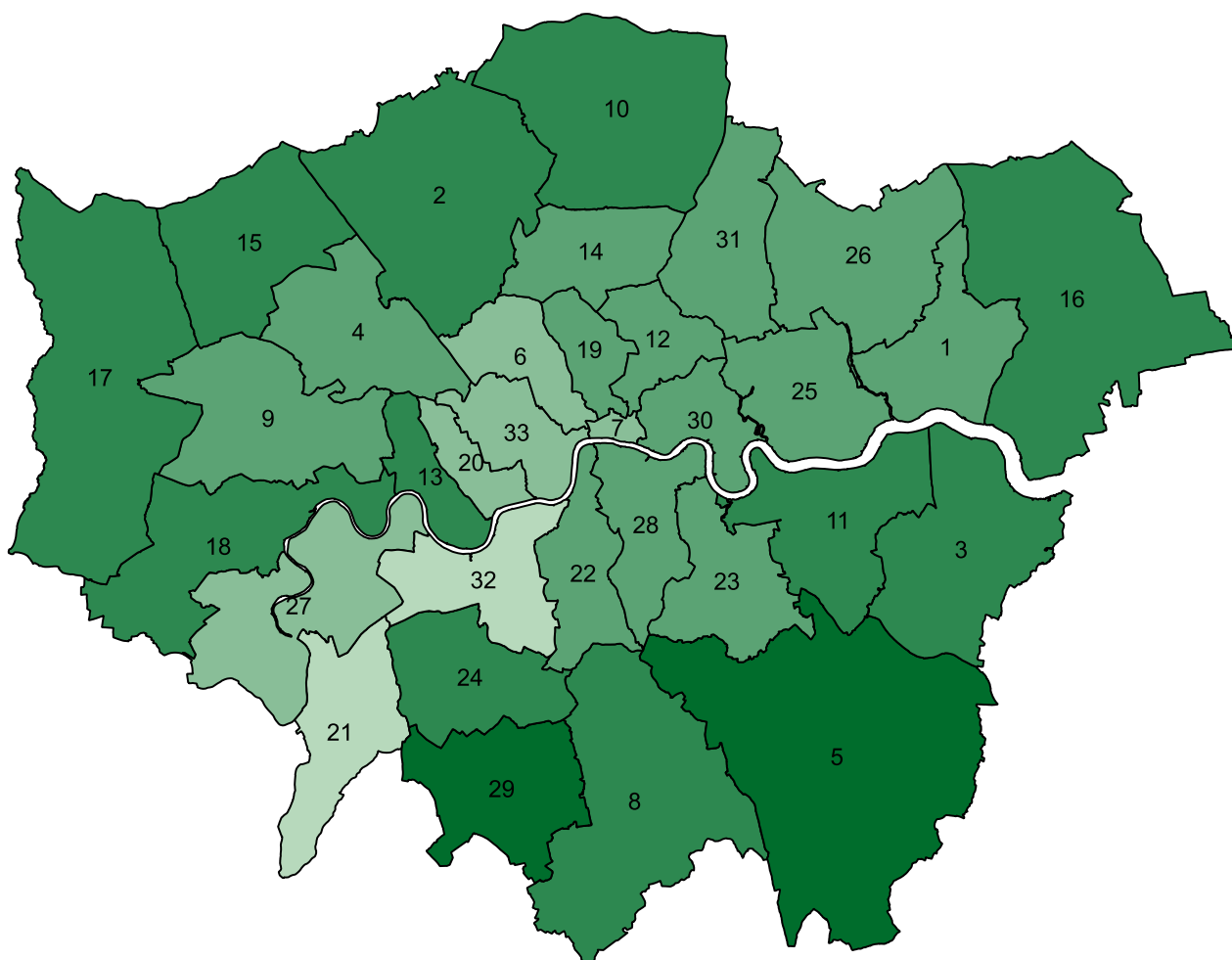
Key	Borough	%
1	Barking & Dagenham	70
2	Barnet	73
3	Bexley	71
4	Brent	70
5	Bromley	81
6	Camden	55
7	City of London	57
8	Croydon	75
9	Ealing	65
10	Enfield	78
11	Greenwich	76

Key	Borough	%
12	Hackney	67
13	Hammersmith & Fulham	74
14	Haringey	65
15	Harrow	79
16	Havering	71
17	Hillingdon	72
18	Hounslow	73
19	Islington	69
20	Kensington & Chelsea	54
21	Kingston upon Thames	45
22	Lambeth	64

Key	Borough	%
23	Lewisham	70
24	Merton	79
25	Newham	62
26	Redbridge	62
27	Richmond	52
28	Southwark	66
29	Sutton	82
30	Tower Hamlets	63
31	Waltham Forest	64
32	Wandsworth	50
33	Westminster	54
34	Heathrow	80

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3.5 Change since 2022/23 by borough: Map

Map 3: Change in total number of people seen rough sleeping in each borough, between 2022/23 and 2023/24

Change In Total Since 2022/23

■ <-20	■ 0 to 20	■ 40 to 60	■ 100 to 200
■ -20 to 0	■ 20 to 40	■ 60 to 100	■ 200+
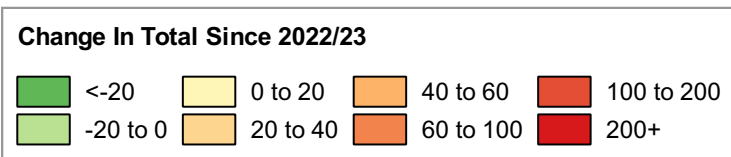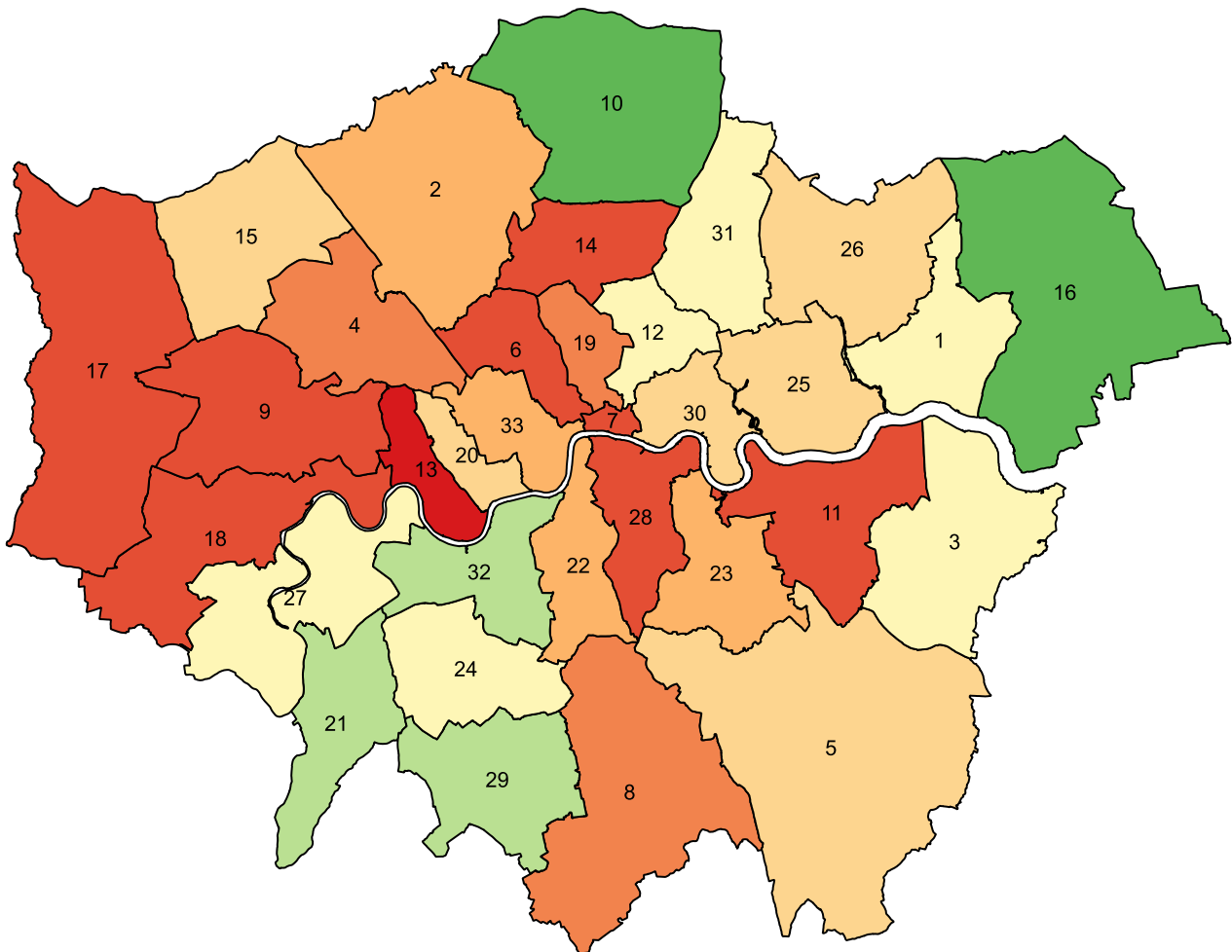
Key	Borough	Change
1	Barking & Dagenham	20
2	Barnet	50
3	Bexley	14
4	Brent	82
5	Bromley	21
6	Camden	184
7	City of London	174
8	Croydon	76
9	Ealing	147
10	Enfield	-22
11	Greenwich	141

Key	Borough	Change
12	Hackney	5
13	Hammersmith & Fulham	224
14	Haringey	138
15	Harrow	32
16	Havering	-24
17	Hillingdon	129
18	Hounslow	132
19	Islington	72
20	Kensington & Chelsea	27
21	Kingston upon Thames	-13
22	Lambeth	58

Key	Borough	Change
23	Lewisham	57
24	Merton	14
25	Newham	32
26	Redbridge	31
27	Richmond	14
28	Southwark	114
29	Sutton	-2
30	Tower Hamlets	38
31	Waltham Forest	17
32	Wandsworth	-1
33	Westminster	52
34	Heathrow	75

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3.6 Bedded down street contacts by area: Map

It is important to note that this map represents volume of contacts rather than individuals, and some people may have been seen on multiple occasions within a given area. Recording of street contacts is to some extent influenced by outreach provision and practice, which can vary across local authority areas.

Map 4: Number of bedded down street contacts recorded in each Middle Super Output Area across Greater London during 2023/24

No. Bedded Down Contacts

1	3	6-10	21-50
2	4-5	11-20	51+
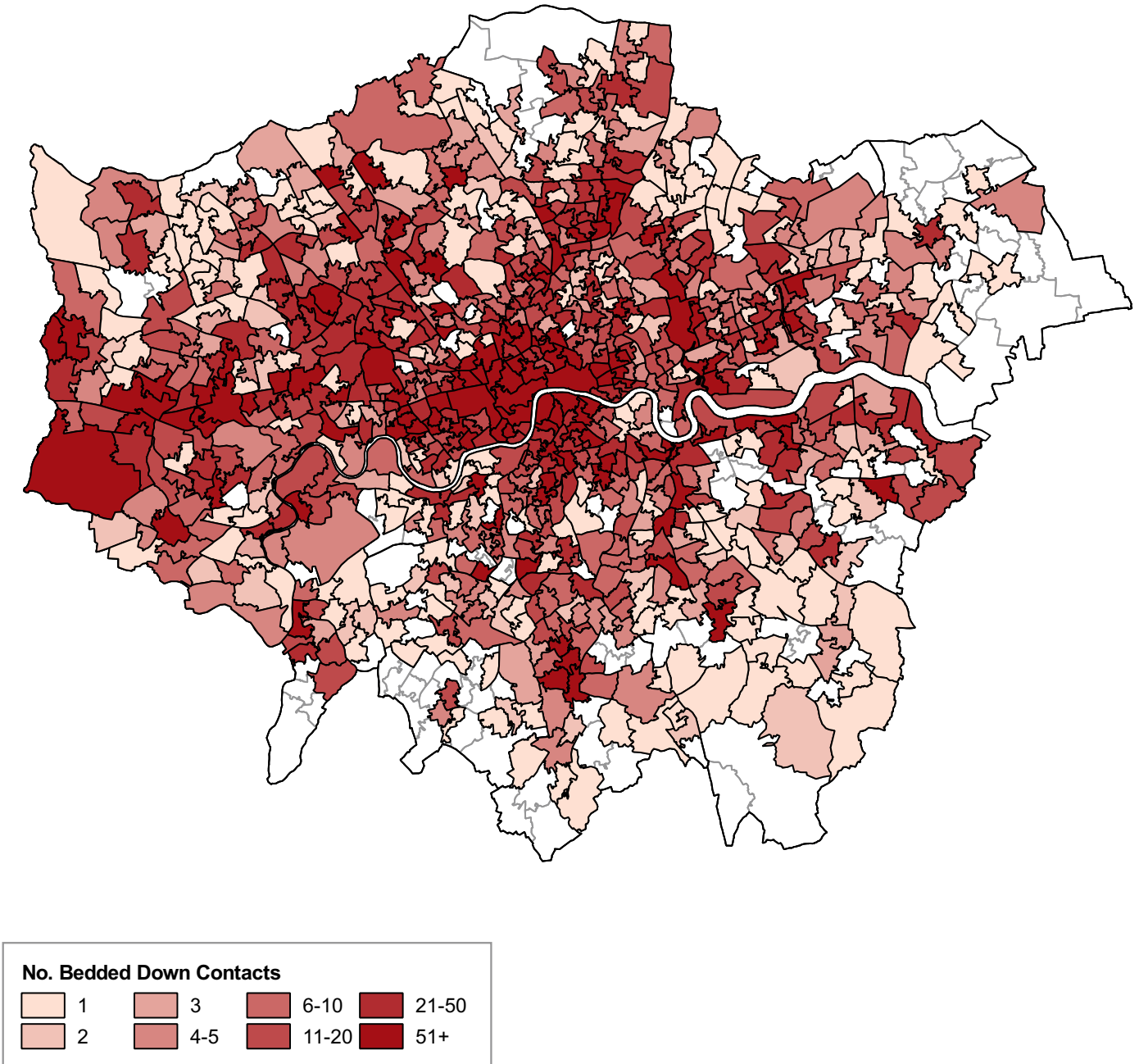
4. HISTORY PRIOR TO ROUGH SLEEPING

This section of the report presents information about people's circumstances prior to the start of a rough sleeping episode in 2023/24. This includes information about what type of accommodation people had been staying in, the type of departure from that accommodation, and the main underlying cause of the departure. The information is collected for people who were seen rough sleeping for the first time in London during the period, as well as for those who had returned to rough sleeping after a period away. Recording of this information changed fairly significantly midway through 2022/23, so it is not possible to compare data from 2023/24 to a full dataset from the previous year.

As explained in the introduction to this report, the definitions of new and returning rough sleepers used in this section are different to those used for the flow/stock/returner model referenced elsewhere in the report.

In this section, 'last settled base' refers to the last accommodation of a settled nature in which the individual lived. It may be that an individual could also have stayed at some other accommodation in an unsettled situation since leaving their last settled base. If the person was living in private accommodation of some form (e.g. private rented, council tenancy, housing association, owner occupied), and they were a sole or joint legal tenant or owner of the property, their last settled base would be recorded using the option that describes the type of accommodation (e.g. 'private rented accommodation'). If they were staying with someone who was a sole or joint legal tenant or owner of the property, but they themselves were not a sole or joint legal tenant or owner of the property, then they would be recorded as 'living with family/friends/partner'.

Collecting usable information about people's circumstances prior to rough sleeping can be difficult, especially where services have only had limited contact with an individual, or where the person is reluctant to engage. It should be noted that 33% of new rough sleepers and 43% of returning rough sleepers during 2023/24 did not have any information recorded about their previous circumstances.

4.1 History prior to rough sleeping: New rough sleepers

This section of the report presents information about history prior to rough sleeping, for people who had either never been seen rough sleeping in London previously, or whose last rough sleeping contact was over five years (60 months) earlier than their first contact in the report period. It should be noted that the definition of 'new rough sleeper' used for this information is different to the definition of 'flow' used in the 'flow, stock, returner' model referenced elsewhere in this report, and therefore the bases will not be the same.

An individual included in this section could potentially also be included in the figures for returning rough sleepers presented in section 4.2, if they were first seen in the year as a new rough sleeper, had a period of at least 180 days of not being seen, and were then seen again.

Table 4: New rough sleepers in 2023/24, by last settled base

Last settled base in the UK	No.	%
Long-term accommodation		
Living with family/friends/partner	1463	26.1%
Private rented accommodation	1231	22.0%
Council tenancy (local authority accommodation)	192	3.4%
Housing association/RSL accommodation	68	1.2%
Sheltered housing/registered care accommodation	20	0.4%
Employment-related accommodation (except armed forces)	34	0.6%
Owner occupied accommodation	21	0.4%
Long-term accommodation subtotal	*3029*	*54.0%*
Short or medium-term accommodation		
Hostel or other supported accommodation	167	3.0%
Temporary accommodation (local authority)	96	1.7%
B&B (not local authority TA)	27	0.5%
Winter/night shelter	9	0.2%
Clinic/Detox/Rehab	3	0.1%
Squat	13	0.2%
Short or medium-term accommodation subtotal	*315*	*5.6%*
Institutional & armed forces accommodation		
Asylum support accommodation (NASS/other)	951	17.0%
Care (local authority youth care)	8	0.1%
Hospital	9	0.2%
Prison	121	2.2%
Probation accommodation	5	0.1%
Armed forces accommodation	1	0.0%
Institutional & armed forces accommodation subtotal	*1095*	*19.5%*
No settled base since arriving in UK	350	6.2%
Other	108	1.9%
Not known	711	12.7%
Not recorded	2805	
Total (excl. not recorded)	**5608**	**100.0%**
Total (incl. not recorded)	**8413**	

Total excluding not recorded is used as the base for percentages.

Of those new rough sleepers during 2023/24 with information recorded about their last settled base prior to sleeping rough in London, 951 (17% of the total) reported that they had been staying in asylum support accommodation. This is a significant increase on the proportion of 4% of new rough sleepers coming from asylum support accommodation in the second half of 2022/23, and the growth in this group has had a significant impact on the overall total of people seen rough sleeping during the period, as well as on trends in demographics and other characteristics of the overall rough sleeping population. Section 4.3 examines the increase in people coming from asylum support accommodation in more detail.

A little over half (54%) of new rough sleepers had come from some form of long-term accommodation, including 26% who had been living with family, friends or a partner, and 22% who had been tenants in private rented accommodation. These proportions have both decreased compared to the second half of 2022/23, when 31% had been living with family, friends or partner, and 27% had come from private rented accommodation, but this is mainly accounted for by the effect of the increase in the proportion of people whose last settled base was asylum support accommodation.

350 new rough sleepers (6%) were recorded as not having had a settled base since arriving in the UK.

Table 5: New rough sleepers in 2023/24, by type of departure from last settled base, and underlying cause of departure

Cause of departure from last settled base in the UK	Type of departure from last settled base in the UK								Cause of departure total (no.)	Cause of departure total (%)
	Asked to leave by person they were staying with	Evicted	Left of own accord	End of time-limited stay	No departure - still has the accommodation	Other	No settled base since arriving in UK	Not known		
Arrears/debts - change in rent/mortgage	0	61	12	0	0	8	0	2	83	1.5%
Arrears/debts - issues with benefits	3	59	6	0	0	4	0	2	74	1.3%
Arrears/debts - living costs	19	76	28	0	0	9	0	4	136	2.4%
Arrears/debts - loss of employment	33	181	46	0	0	28	0	7	295	5.3%
Arrears/debts - other	12	60	4	0	0	10	0	0	86	1.5%
End of tenancy agreement	0	130	20	0	0	16	0	3	169	3.0%
Illegal eviction	0	138	0	0	0	15	0	1	154	2.7%
Given non-priority decision	0	26	0	0	0	2	0	1	29	0.5%
Relationship breakdown	699	0	109	0	0	58	0	17	883	15.7%
Death of relative/friend	15	4	5	0	0	35	0	0	59	1.1%
Domestic violence - victim	12	0	20	0	0	24	0	1	57	1.0%
Harassment/abuse/violence - victim	9	0	83	0	0	22	0	1	115	2.1%
Unmanaged support need	30	20	32	0	0	4	0	2	88	1.6%
Housing conditions	42	0	37	0	0	8	0	0	87	1.6%
Relocated to be nearer family/friends/community	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	1	21	0.4%
Relocated seeking work	0	0	26	0	0	0	0	2	28	0.5%
Transient/travelling around	0	0	16	0	0	5	0	0	21	0.4%
Anti-social behaviour - perpetrator	15	77	5	0	0	5	0	1	103	1.8%
Domestic violence - perpetrator	11	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	15	0.3%
Taken into custody	0	12	0	0	0	16	0	3	31	0.6%
End of time-limited stay	0	0	0	188	0	13	0	6	207	3.7%
End of asylum accommodation - positive Home Office decision	0	0	0	831	0	31	0	3	865	15.4%
End of asylum accommodation - negative Home Office decision	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	1	15	0.3%
End of asylum accommodation - withdrawal of application	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
No departure - still has the accommodation	0	0	0	0	63	0	0	0	63	1.1%
Other	148	180	105	6	0	142	0	15	596	10.6%
No settled base since arriving in UK	0	0	0	0	0	0	350	0	350	6.2%
Not known	59	78	38	11	0	12	0	780	978	17.4%
Type of departure total (no.)	**1107**	**1103**	**612**	**1050**	**63**	**470**	**350**	**853**	**5608**	**100.0%**
Type of departure total (%)	**19.7%**	**19.7%**	**10.9%**	**18.7%**	**1.1%**	**8.4%**	**6.2%**	**15.2%**	**100.0%**	

Base: 5608 new rough sleepers for whom information about their last settled base was recorded. This excludes 2805 new rough sleepers for whom no information was recorded.

The most commonly recorded underlying cause of departure was relationship breakdown (883 people, 16%), and in the majority of these cases (699 people) the type of departure was being asked to leave by the person they were staying with. 865 people were recorded as having left asylum support accommodation with a positive Home Office decision, while 15 had left with a negative decision, representing a combined proportion of 16% of the overall base.

674 people (12%) left their last settled base due to some form of problem with arrears or debts, of which 295 (5%) had lost their employment. 115 people (2%) had left their last settled base due to being the victim of harassment, abuse or violence by other people at the accommodation or in the local area, while 57 (1%) left to escape domestic violence.

4.2 History prior to rough sleeping: Returning rough sleepers

This section of the report presents information about history prior to rough sleeping, for people who had returned to rough sleeping after at least 180 days since their previous rough sleeping contact. It should be noted that the definition of 'returning to rough sleeping' used for this information is different to the definition of 'returner' used in the flow, stock, returner model referenced elsewhere in this report, and therefore the bases will not be the same.

An individual included in this section could potentially also be included in the figures for new rough sleepers presented in section 4.1, if they were first seen in the year as a new rough sleeper, had a period of at least 180 days of not being seen, and were then seen again. It is also possible that an individual could have been recorded as returning to rough sleeping more than once during the year. In cases where this has occurred, only the information relating to the individual's most recent return is included in these figures.

Table 6: Returning rough sleepers in 2023/24, by last settled base

Last settled base in the UK	No.	%
Long-term accommodation		
Living with family/friends/partner	243	16.1%
Private rented accommodation	294	19.4%
Council tenancy (local authority accommodation)	56	3.7%
Housing association/RSL accommodation	37	2.4%
Sheltered housing/registered care accommodation	6	0.4%
Employment-related accommodation (except armed forces)	7	0.5%
Owner occupied accommodation	3	0.2%
Long-term accommodation subtotal	*646*	*42.7%*
Short or medium-term accommodation		
Hostel or other supported accommodation	252	16.6%
Temporary accommodation (local authority)	118	7.8%
B&B (not local authority TA)	24	1.6%
Winter/night shelter	16	1.1%
Clinic/Detox/Rehab	6	0.4%
Squat	9	0.6%
Short or medium-term accommodation subtotal	*425*	*28.1%*
Institutional & armed forces accommodation		
Asylum support accommodation (NASS/other)	17	1.1%
Care (local authority youth care)	0	0.0%
Hospital	9	0.6%
Prison	76	5.0%
Probation accommodation	2	0.1%
Armed forces accommodation	1	0.1%
Institutional & armed forces accommodation subtotal	*105*	*6.9%*
No settled base since arriving in UK	131	8.7%
Other	37	2.4%
Not known	170	11.2%
Not recorded	1141	
Total (excl. not recorded)	**1514**	**100.0%**
Total (incl. not recorded)	**2655**	

Total excluding not recorded is used as the base for percentages.

Of those people whose history prior to returning to rough sleeping was recorded, 43% reported their last settled base as having been some form of long-term accommodation (compared to 54% of new rough sleepers), while 28% reported short or medium-term accommodation (compared to 6% of new rough sleepers). 19% were tenants in private rented accommodation, while 16% had been living with family, friends or a partner. 17% had been living in a hostel or supported accommodation (compared to 3% of new rough sleepers), while 8% had been living in local authority temporary accommodation (compared to 2% of new rough sleepers).

The trend of people arriving on the streets following departure from asylum support accommodation was much less pronounced amongst returning rough sleepers, with 1% reporting this type of last settled base, compared to 17% of new rough sleepers.

Table 7: Returning rough sleepers in 2023/24, by type of departure from last settled base, and underlying cause of departure

Cause of departure from last settled base in the UK	Type of departure from last settled base in the UK								Cause of departure total (no.)	Cause of departure total (%)
	Asked to leave by person they were staying with	Evicted	Left of own accord	End of time-limited stay	No departure - still has the accommodation	Other	No settled base since arriving in UK	Not known		
Arrears/debts - change in rent/mortgage	0	15	1	0	0	0	0	0	16	1.1%
Arrears/debts - issues with benefits	3	25	1	0	0	1	0	1	31	2.0%
Arrears/debts - living costs	2	19	8	0	0	1	0	0	30	2.0%
Arrears/debts - loss of employment	6	31	7	0	0	3	0	0	47	3.1%
Arrears/debts - other	4	25	4	0	0	4	0	0	37	2.4%
End of tenancy agreement	0	35	6	0	0	3	0	2	46	3.0%
Illegal eviction	0	26	0	0	0	3	0	0	29	1.9%
Given non-priority decision	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	3	25	1.7%
Relationship breakdown	88	0	23	0	0	5	0	8	124	8.2%
Death of relative/friend	2	0	2	0	0	5	0	1	10	0.7%
Domestic violence - victim	1	0	10	0	0	2	0	0	13	0.9%
Harassment/abuse/violence - victim	2	0	42	0	0	7	0	0	51	3.4%
Unmanaged support need	12	11	22	0	0	0	0	1	46	3.0%
Housing conditions	5	0	16	0	0	2	0	0	23	1.5%
Relocated to be nearer family/friends/community	0	0	6	0	0	1	0	0	7	0.5%
Relocated seeking work	0	0	5	0	0	1	0	0	6	0.4%
Transient/travelling around	0	0	11	0	0	2	0	0	13	0.9%
Anti-social behaviour - perpetrator	4	77	4	0	0	1	0	0	86	5.7%
Domestic violence - perpetrator	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.1%
Taken into custody	0	5	0	0	0	5	0	0	10	0.7%
End of time-limited stay	0	0	0	113	0	9	0	6	128	8.5%
End of asylum accommodation - positive Home Office decision	0	0	0	6	0	1	0	0	7	0.5%
End of asylum accommodation - negative Home Office decision	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	4	0.3%
End of asylum accommodation - withdrawal of application	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
No departure - still has the accommodation	0	0	0	0	61	0	0	0	61	4.0%
Other	22	90	51	4	0	44	0	9	220	14.5%
No settled base since arriving in UK	0	0	0	0	0	0	131	0	131	8.7%
Not known	14	28	33	2	0	10	0	224	311	20.5%
Type of departure total (no.)	165	410	253	129	61	110	131	255	1514	100.0%
Type of departure total (%)	10.9%	27.1%	16.7%	8.5%	4.0%	7.3%	8.7%	16.8%	100.0%	

Base: 1514 returning rough sleepers for whom information about their last settled base was recorded. This excludes 1141 returning rough sleepers for whom no information was recorded.

The most frequently recorded cause of departure from last settled base for returning rough sleepers was having reached the end of a time-limited stay, with 128 people (8%) having reported this. As with new rough sleepers, relationship breakdown was also a significant factor, with 124 (8%) people having reported this, the majority of whom (88 people) had been asked to leave by the person they were staying with.
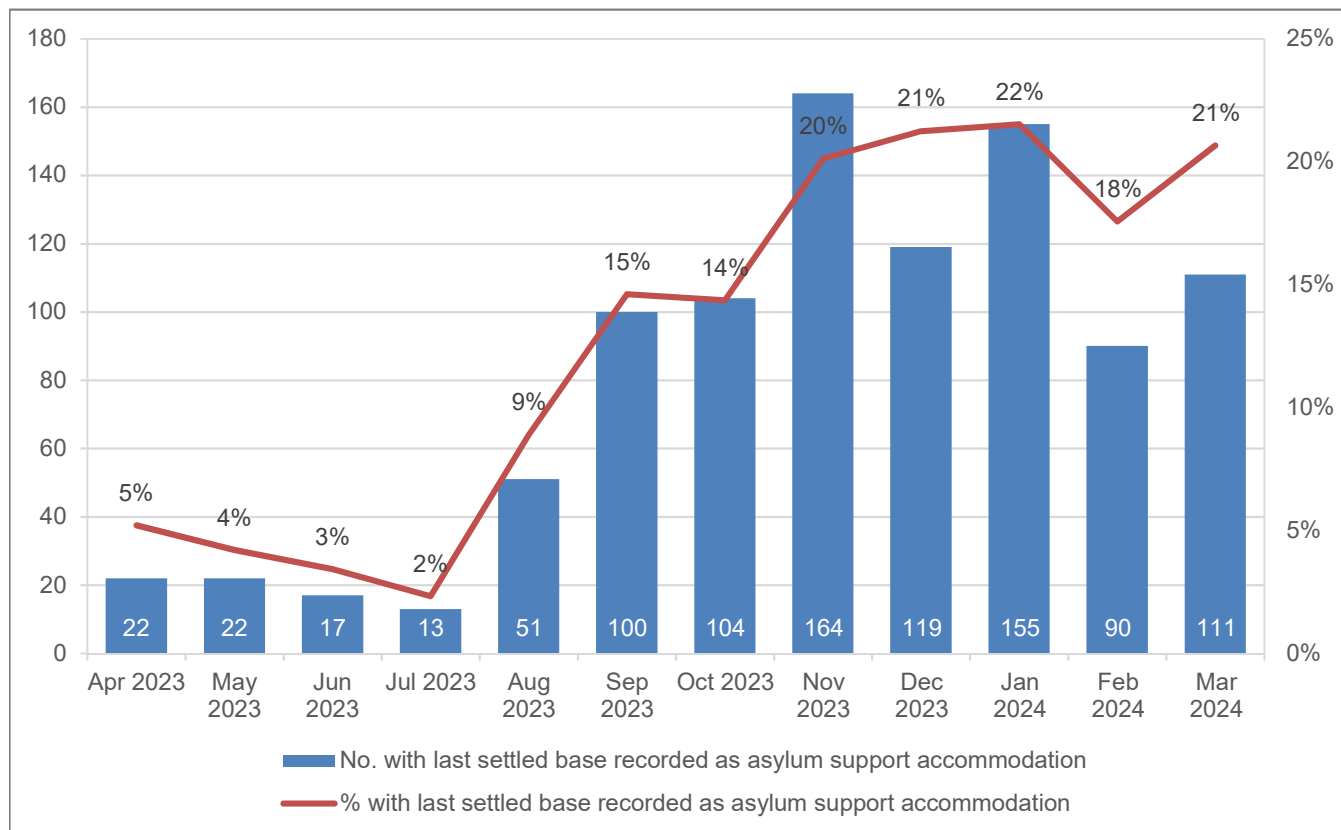
161 returning rough sleepers left their last settled base due to some form of problem with arrears or debts, with loss of employment being the single most common cause amongst this group, reported by 47 people (3%). 86 people (6%) left their last settled base as the result of being a perpetrator of anti-social behaviour, the majority of whom were evicted (77). 51 people (3%) left due to being the victim of harassment, abuse or violence (not including domestic violence).

Looking at types of departure, eviction was the most common category, with 410 people (27%) people having been evicted. This compares to 20% of new rough sleepers who had been evicted from their last settled base.

4.3 People seen rough sleeping after leaving asylum support accommodation

The chart below provides a monthly breakdown of people who started a new rough sleeping episode during 2023/24, either as a new or returning rough sleeper, whose last settled base was recorded as asylum support accommodation. The month designation is based on the month in which their rough sleeping episode started, rather than the month they left the accommodation. People included in this chart are also counted in the asylum support accommodation figures given in tables 4 and 6 in this section of the report.

Chart 8: New and returning rough sleepers during 2023/24 whose last settled base was recorded as asylum support accommodation, by month

Baseline for percentages is the total number of new and returning rough sleepers during the month who had information recorded about their last settled base (including that the last settled base was not known).

A further ten people who had their last settled base recorded as something other than asylum support accommodation were recorded as having stayed in asylum support accommodation as an unsettled situation, between leaving their last settled base and starting to sleep rough. Many people starting new rough sleeping episodes during the period did not have any information about their previous circumstances recorded, and it may be that some of these had also been staying in asylum support accommodation.

The chart shows how the number and proportion of people starting to rough sleep after leaving asylum support accommodation increased during the year. It is likely that this increase is related to Home Office policy and operational changes made in 2023. The Home Office implemented a 'streamlined asylum processing system' in February 2023, which applied to claims made before 28 June 2022 for confirmed nationals of Afghanistan, Eritrea, Libya, Syria, and Yemen. As a result of this policy, a large number of Home Office decisions were served in 2023.

Additionally, during 2023 the Home Office temporarily amended their approach to the 28-day 'move-on' period for all newly recognised refugees to vacate asylum accommodation. Operationally, the 28-day 'move-on' period had previously been linked to when a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) is issued, and commenced with the notice of asylum support being discontinued. However, in August 2023, the Home Office revised this process so that the 28-day period started from the date that the individual was served their asylum decision. This meant that, in practice, the minimum 'notice to quit' period for newly recognised refugees following receipt of their BRP was reduced from 28 days to just seven days. The Home Office has stated that the normal process was reintroduced in September 2023.

The first of these changes increased the number of evictions from asylum accommodation, while the second significantly reduced the amount of time available for those receiving a decision to make accommodation arrangements.

5. DEMOGRAPHICS & SUPPORT NEEDS

5.1 Nationality: Overall composition

Chart 9: People seen rough sleeping in 2023/24, by nationality
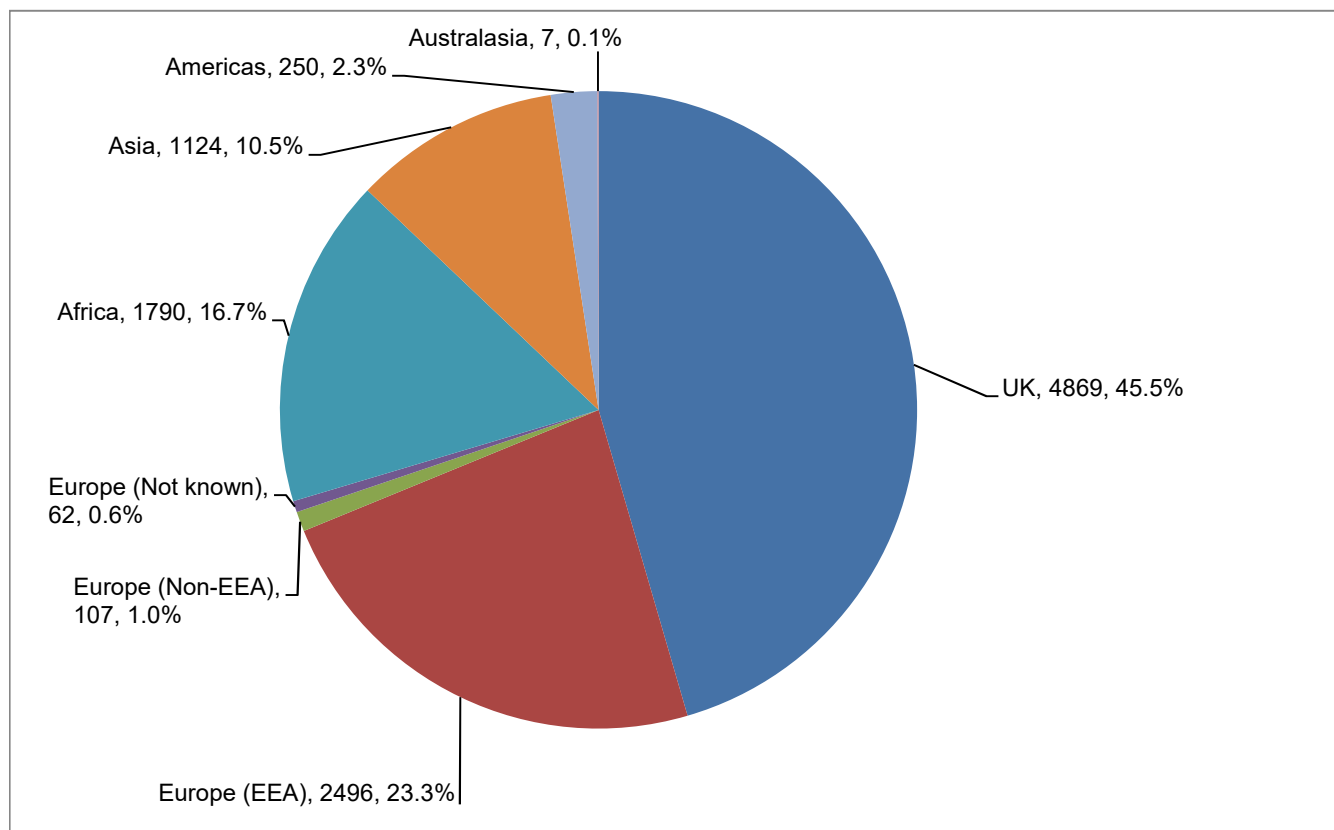
Base: 10705 people seen rough sleeping during the period whose nationality was known. This excludes 1288 people whose nationality was not known.

The nationality profile of people seen rough sleeping in London remains diverse, with a total of 146 different nationalities recorded during 2023/24. The proportion of people seen rough sleeping who were UK nationals was 45% (4,689 people), which is somewhat lower than the proportions of 49% in 2022/23 and 52% in 2021/22. The proportion of people from EEA countries was 23% (2,496 people), which is again lower than the proportions of 30% recorded in 2022/23, and 29% in 2021/22.

People from African countries constituted the third largest nationality group, at 17% (1,790 people). This has increased from 10% (859 people) in 2022/23, and 9% (640 people) in 2021/22. Asian nationals constituted 10% of people seen rough sleeping in 2023/24 (1,124 people), compared to 8% (712 people) in 2022/23, and 7% (509 people) in 2021/22.

For convenience of reporting, and due to specific implications around benefit entitlements and access to services, people from Africa, Asia, the Americas, and Australasia are sometimes grouped together under the overall heading of 'Rest of the world'. During 2023/24, the proportion of people seen rough sleeping from this 'Rest of the world' heading was 30%, which is higher than the proportion of 25% of people seen rough sleeping who were from European countries (excluding the UK). This is the first time that the proportion of people seen rough sleeping from the 'Rest of the world' has been higher than that of people from Europe. The

'Rest of the world' proportion has increased by ten percentage points from the 20% recorded in 2022/23, while the proportion of Europeans reduced by six percentage points from 31%. Europeans were the only overall grouping which showed a decrease in numbers between 2022/23 and 2023/24, with 89 fewer people seen rough sleeping.

As in previous recent years, Romanians (957, 9%) comprised the single largest non-UK nationality, but Eritreans (671, 6%) have overtaken Poles (566, 5%) as the second largest. People from Sudan (393, 4%) and India (378, 4%) were the fourth and fifth most numerous non-UK nationalities.

The number of people seen rough sleeping whose nationality was not known was 1,288, which is only a very minor increase on the total of 1,272 in 2022/23, but significantly higher than that of 792 in 2021/22. The high proportion of people whose nationality was not known means that commentary on nationality trends should be treated with caution. It should be borne in mind that non-UK nationals tend to be more likely than UK nationals to be recorded as unknown nationality.

A full breakdown of all nationalities seen rough sleeping during the period can be obtained from the CHAIN Annual Data Tables file which accompanies this report.

5.2 Nationality: Yearly comparison

Table 8: Nationality breakdown of people seen rough sleeping, 2020/21 - 2023/24

| Nationality	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
UK	5139	50.2%	3954	52.5%	4265	48.6%	4869	45.5%
Romania	1133	11.1%	895	11.9%	1031	11.7%	957	8.9%
Poland	647	6.3%	432	5.7%	550	6.3%	566	5.3%
Lithuania	163	1.6%	121	1.6%	153	1.7%	147	1.4%
Ireland (Republic of)	117	1.1%	107	1.4%	127	1.4%	144	1.3%
Portugal	169	1.6%	131	1.7%	128	1.5%	121	1.1%
Italy	130	1.3%	86	1.1%	92	1.0%	113	1.1%
Bulgaria	114	1.1%	84	1.1%	120	1.4%	107	1.0%
Spain	70	0.7%	40	0.5%	61	0.7%	53	0.5%
France	74	0.7%	33	0.4%	62	0.7%	51	0.5%
Latvia	79	0.8%	43	0.6%	65	0.7%	40	0.4%
Other European (EEA) countries	277	2.7%	186	2.5%	204	2.3%	197	1.8%
Europe (EEA)	2973	29.0%	2158	28.6%	2593	29.5%	2496	23.3%
Ukraine	13	0.1%	19	0.3%	30	0.3%	31	0.3%
Turkey	27	0.3%	14	0.2%	18	0.2%	30	0.3%
Other European (Non-EEA) countries	49	0.5%	45	0.6%	47	0.5%	46	0.4%
Europe (Non-EEA)	89	0.9%	78	1.0%	95	1.1%	107	1.0%
Europe (Not known)	71	0.7%	54	0.7%	66	0.8%	62	0.6%
Eritrea	358	3.5%	130	1.7%	259	2.9%	671	6.3%
Sudan	92	0.9%	79	1.0%	108	1.2%	393	3.7%
Nigeria	90	0.9%	80	1.1%	84	1.0%	120	1.1%
Ethiopia	75	0.7%	23	0.3%	44	0.5%	89	0.8%
Somalia	134	1.3%	58	0.8%	65	0.7%	79	0.7%
Algeria	77	0.8%	43	0.6%	37	0.4%	48	0.4%
Ghana	23	0.2%	26	0.3%	36	0.4%	45	0.4%
Other African countries	269	2.6%	201	2.7%	226	2.6%	345	3.2%
Africa	1118	10.9%	640	8.5%	859	9.8%	1790	16.7%
India	273	2.7%	181	2.4%	255	2.9%	378	3.5%
Afghanistan	88	0.9%	63	0.8%	87	1.0%	175	1.6%
Iran	83	0.8%	59	0.8%	87	1.0%	147	1.4%
Syrian Arab Republic	8	0.1%	10	0.1%	21	0.2%	66	0.6%
Pakistan	52	0.5%	36	0.5%	44	0.5%	50	0.5%
Sri Lanka	40	0.4%	30	0.4%	36	0.4%	46	0.4%
Bangladesh	27	0.3%	14	0.2%	36	0.4%	44	0.4%
Other Asian countries	131	1.3%	116	1.5%	146	1.7%	218	2.0%
Asia	702	6.9%	509	6.8%	712	8.1%	1124	10.5%
Jamaica	53	0.5%	50	0.7%	57	0.6%	77	0.7%
USA	17	0.2%	24	0.3%	29	0.3%	46	0.4%
Other Americas countries	72	0.7%	62	0.8%	97	1.1%	127	1.2%
Americas	142	1.4%	136	1.8%	183	2.1%	250	2.3%
Australasia	13	0.1%	8	0.1%	8	0.1%	7	0.1%
Not known	*771*		*792*		*1272*		*1288*	
Total (excl. not known)	**10247**	**100.0%**	**7537**	**100.0%**	**8781**	**100.0%**	**10705**	**100.0%**
Total (incl. not known)	11018		8329		10053		11993	

Total excluding not known is used as the base for percentages.

Chart 10: Nationality proportions for people seen rough sleeping, 2020/21 - 2023/24
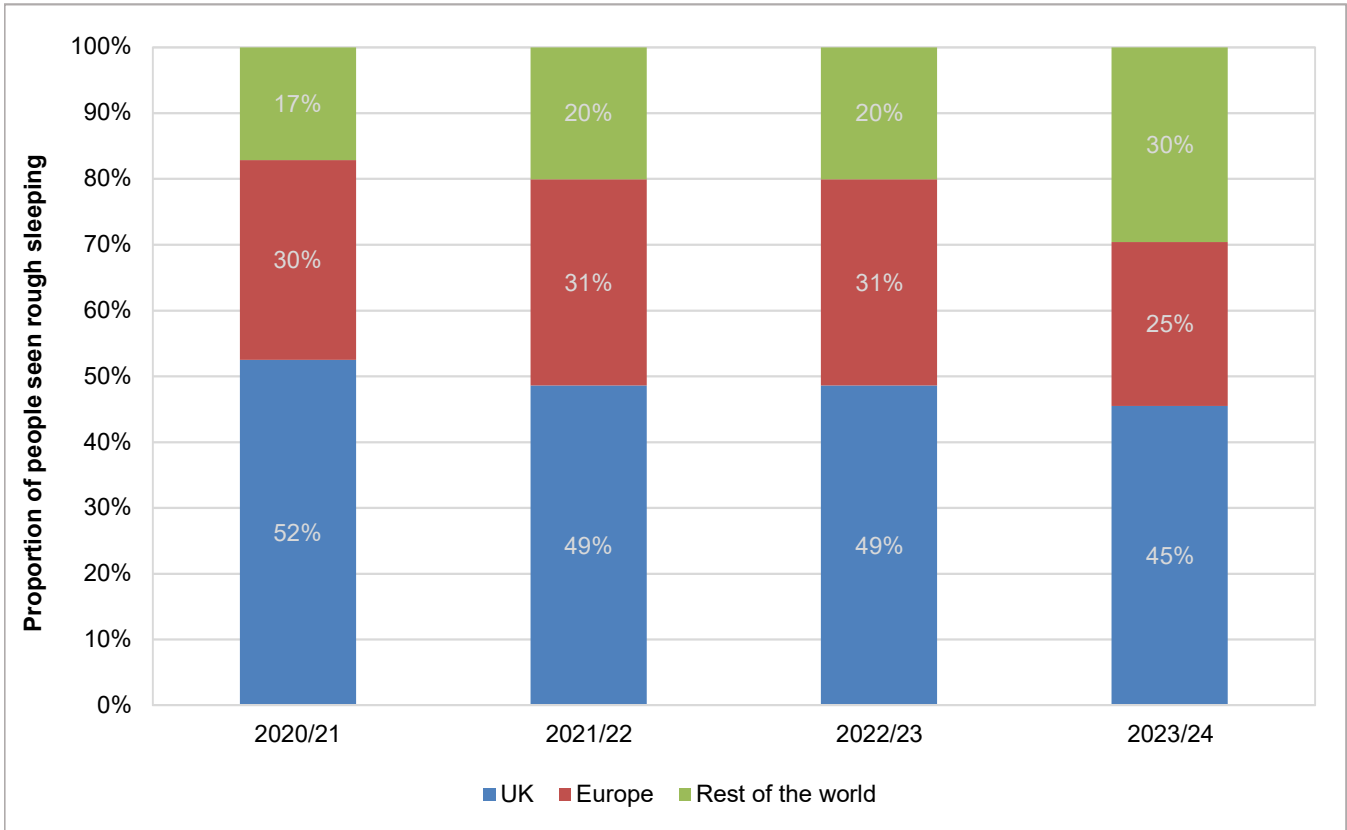
Total excluding not known is used as the base for percentages.

Chart 11: Nationality of people seen rough sleeping, 2014/15 - 2023/24
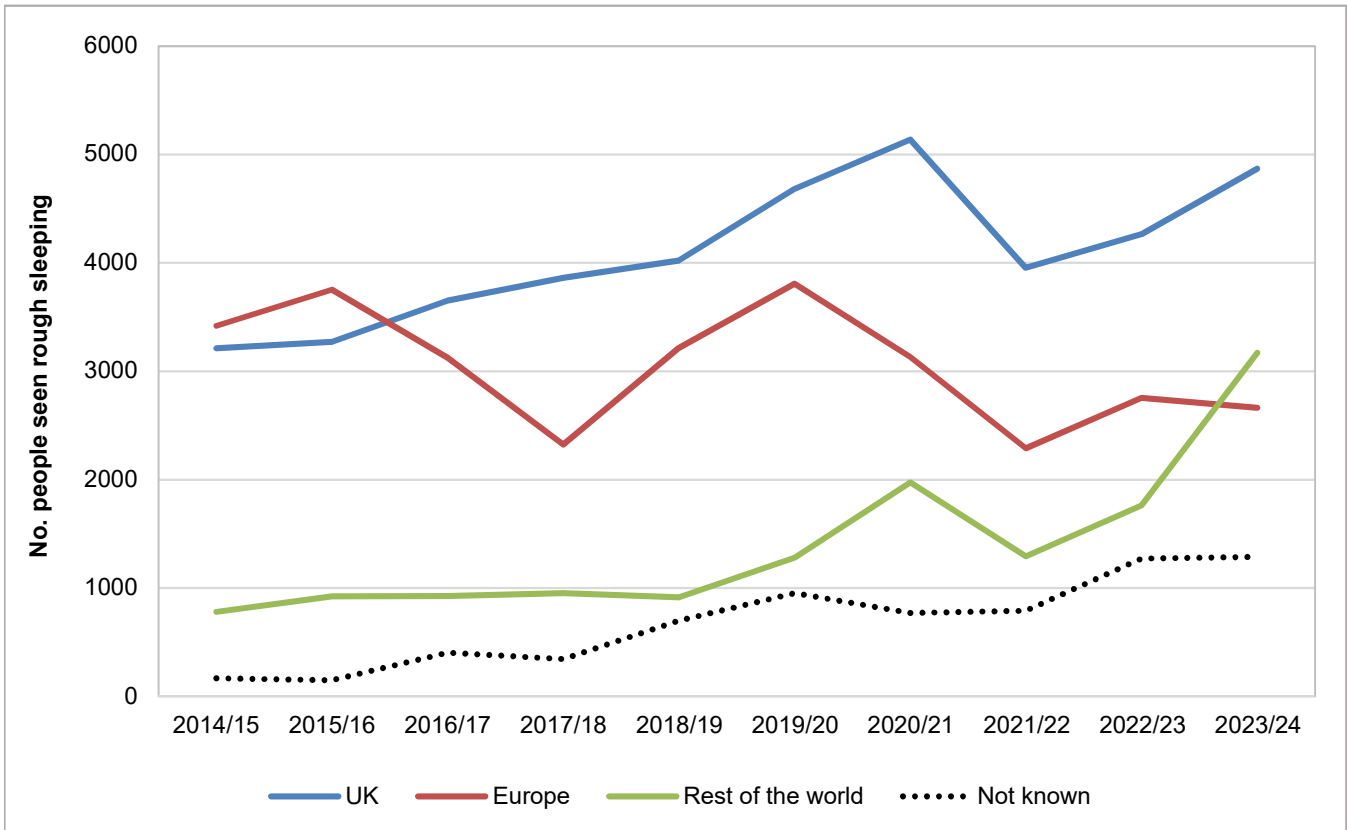
5.3 Nationality: Flow, stock, returner model

Table 9: Nationality of people seen rough sleeping during 2023/24, by flow, stock, returner breakdown

Nationality category	Flow No.	Flow %	Stock No.	Stock %	Returner No.	Returner %	Total No.	Total %
UK	2925	60%	1104	23%	840	17%	4869	100%
Europe	1301	49%	861	32%	503	19%	2665	100%
Rest of the world	2521	80%	374	12%	276	9%	3171	100%
Not known	1227	95%	48	4%	13	1%	1288	100%
Total	7974	66%	2387	20%	1632	14%	11993	100%

Base: 11993 people seen rough sleeping during the period.

The most significant variation appears between the Europe and 'Rest of the world' (i.e. non-European) nationality groups, with 49% of European nationals falling into the flow category, compared to 80% of rest of the world nationals. European nationals have the highest proportion of people falling into the stock category, at 32%, while people from the 'Rest of the world' have the lowest proportion, at 12%. UK and European nationals showed similar proportions of returners (17% and 19% respectively), while people from the 'Rest of the world' were much less likely to be returners, at 9%.

Table 10: Flow, stock, returner breakdown of people seen rough sleeping during 2023/24, by nationality

Nationality category	Flow No.	Flow %	Stock No.	Stock %	Returner No.	Returner %	Total No.	Total %
UK	2925	37%	1104	46%	840	51%	4869	41%
Europe	1301	16%	861	36%	503	31%	2665	22%
Rest of the world	2521	32%	374	16%	276	17%	3171	26%
Not known	1227	15%	48	2%	13	1%	1288	11%
Total	7974	100%	2387	100%	1632	100%	11993	100%

Base: 11993 people seen rough sleeping during the period.

UK nationals form a notably higher proportion of the returner group, while European nationals are especially overrepresented amongst the stock group. As might be expected, the proportion of people whose nationality was not known was markedly higher amongst the flow group.

5.4 Immigration status

The table below compares immigration status amongst different nationality groups, excluding UK nationals. It should be noted that this information is self-reported or based on what outreach workers could conclude from the information given, and in many cases it has not been independently verified by an immigration adviser. Therefore, immigration status data should be treated with caution.

In this table 'Rest of the world' refers to anywhere outside the EEA, whereas the general usage elsewhere in this report is for 'Rest of the world' to mean anywhere outside of Europe as a whole. This is because EEA nationals have specific immigration statuses available to them, which mostly do not apply to those from other countries.

Table 11: Non-UK nationals seen rough sleeping in 2023/24, by immigration status

| Immigration status	Europe - EEA	Rest of the world	Total
EUSS settled status	700	39	739
EUSS pre-settled status	554	33	587
Pending EUSS application	91	11	102
EEA national - no status under Settlement Scheme*	82	0	82
Irish national	135	0	135
Indefinite leave to remain	82	757	839
Limited leave to remain	46	483	529
Asylum seeker	0	166	166
Refugee	0	833	833
No valid leave/undocumented	268	506	774
No clear status	522	491	1013
Not recorded	16	21	37
Total	**2496**	**3340**	**5836**

Base: 5836 people seen rough sleeping during the period whose nationality was known and who were not UK nationals.

*This category has been discontinued following the April 2023 review of immigration recording on CHAIN, but some people recorded against it have not yet been updated with a new assessment.

The table above shows that over a quarter (27%) of non-UK nationals were recorded as having either 'indefinite leave to remain' or 'EUSS settled status' (1,578 people). The next most commonly recorded status was 'refugee', with 833 people having this status - this is almost four times higher than in 2022/23. 17% of non-UK nationals were recorded as having no clear immigration status.

5.5 Gender

Chart 12: People seen rough sleeping in 2023/24, by gender
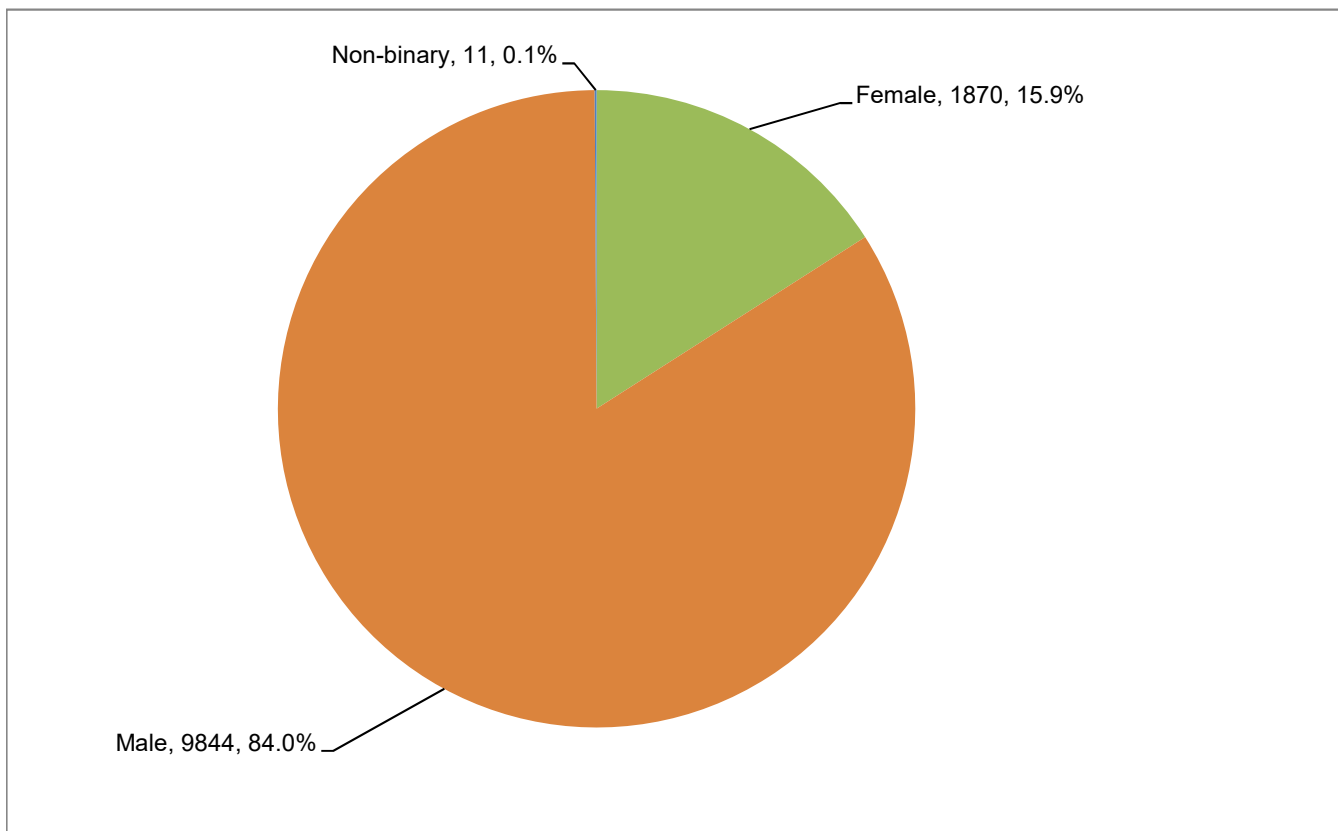
Base: 11725 people seen rough sleeping during the period whose gender was known. This excludes 268 people whose gender was not known.
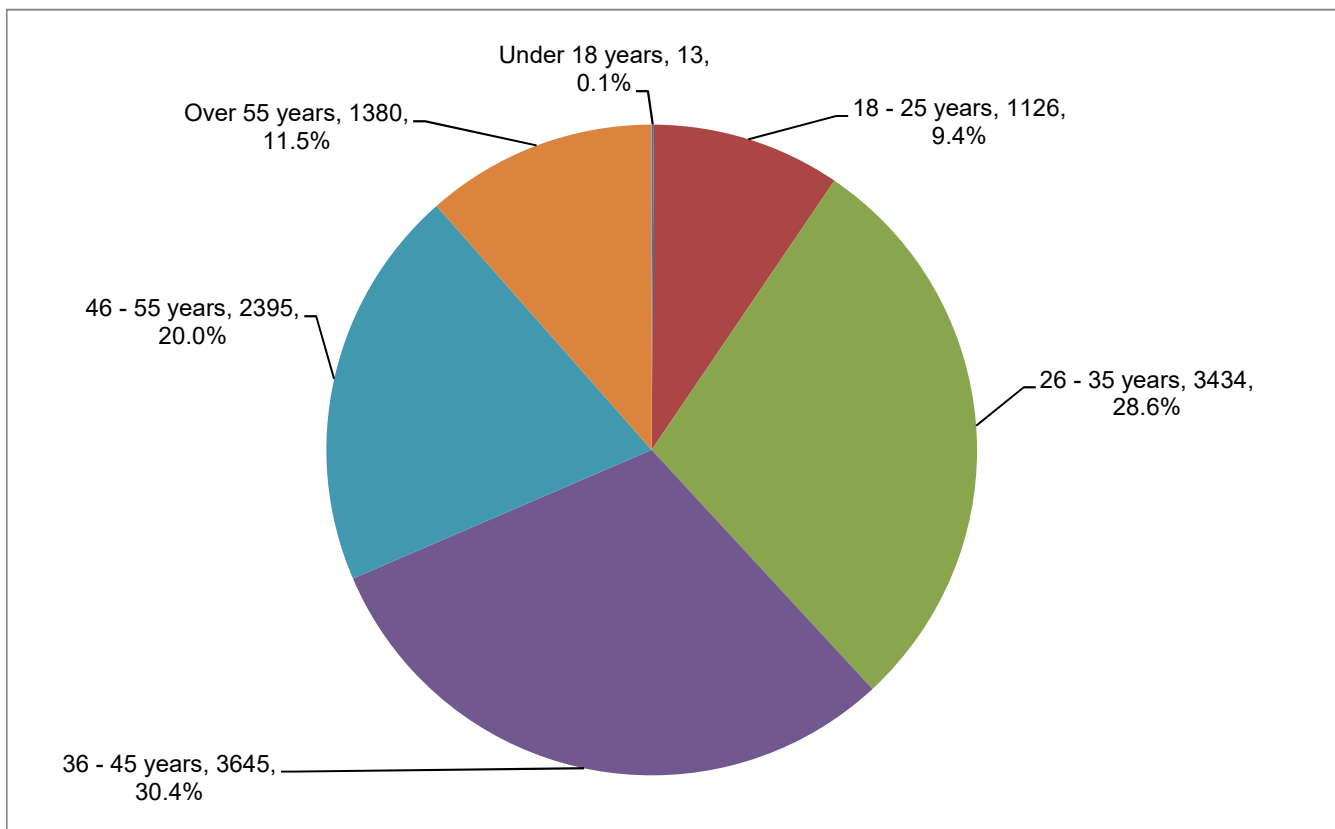
Table 12: People seen rough sleeping, by gender, 2020/21 - 2023/24

Gender	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Female	1699	15.6%	1427	17.4%	1642	16.7%	1870	15.9%
Male	9217	84.4%	6782	82.6%	8175	83.2%	9844	84.0%
Non-binary	5	0.0%	6	0.1%	11	0.1%	11	0.1%
Not known	97		114		225		268	
Total (excl. not known)	**10921**	**100.0%**	**8215**	**100.0%**	**9828**	**100.0%**	**11725**	**100.0%**
Total (incl. not known)	**11018**		**8329**		**10053**		**11993**	

The gender breakdown of people seen rough sleeping has remained broadly consistent, with 84% of people recorded in 2023/24 being male, compared to 83% in 2022/23.

5.6 Age

Chart 13: People seen rough sleeping in 2023/24, by age

Base: 11993 people seen rough sleeping during the period.

**Table 13: People seen rough sleeping, by age, 2020/21 - 2023/24**

	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
Age	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Under 18 years	7	0.1%	20	0.2%	9	0.1%	13	0.1%
18 - 25 years	1086	9.9%	687	8.2%	847	8.4%	1126	9.4%
26 - 35 years	3053	27.7%	2273	27.3%	2616	26.0%	3434	28.6%
36 - 45 years	3436	31.2%	2595	31.2%	3229	32.1%	3645	30.4%
46 - 55 years	2353	21.4%	1779	21.4%	2146	21.3%	2395	20.0%
Over 55 years	1083	9.8%	975	11.7%	1206	12.0%	1380	11.51%
Total	11018	100.0%	8329	100.0%	10053	100.0%	11993	100.0%

Age distribution amongst people seen rough sleeping in 2023/24 remains largely consistent with previous years. 9% (1,139 people) of those seen rough sleeping in 2023/24 were aged 25 or under, compared to 9% (856 people) in 2022/23. People in the over 55 age group represented 12% of the total in 2023/24 (1,380 people), which is also the same proportion as recorded in 2022/23. Looking more broadly, 38% of people seen rough sleeping in 2023/24 were aged 35 or under, compared to 35% in 2022/23.

There were 13 people aged under 18 recorded rough sleeping this year, which is slightly higher than the total of nine people in this age group recorded in 2022/23.

5.7 Ethnicity

Chart 14: People seen rough sleeping in 2023/24, by ethnicity
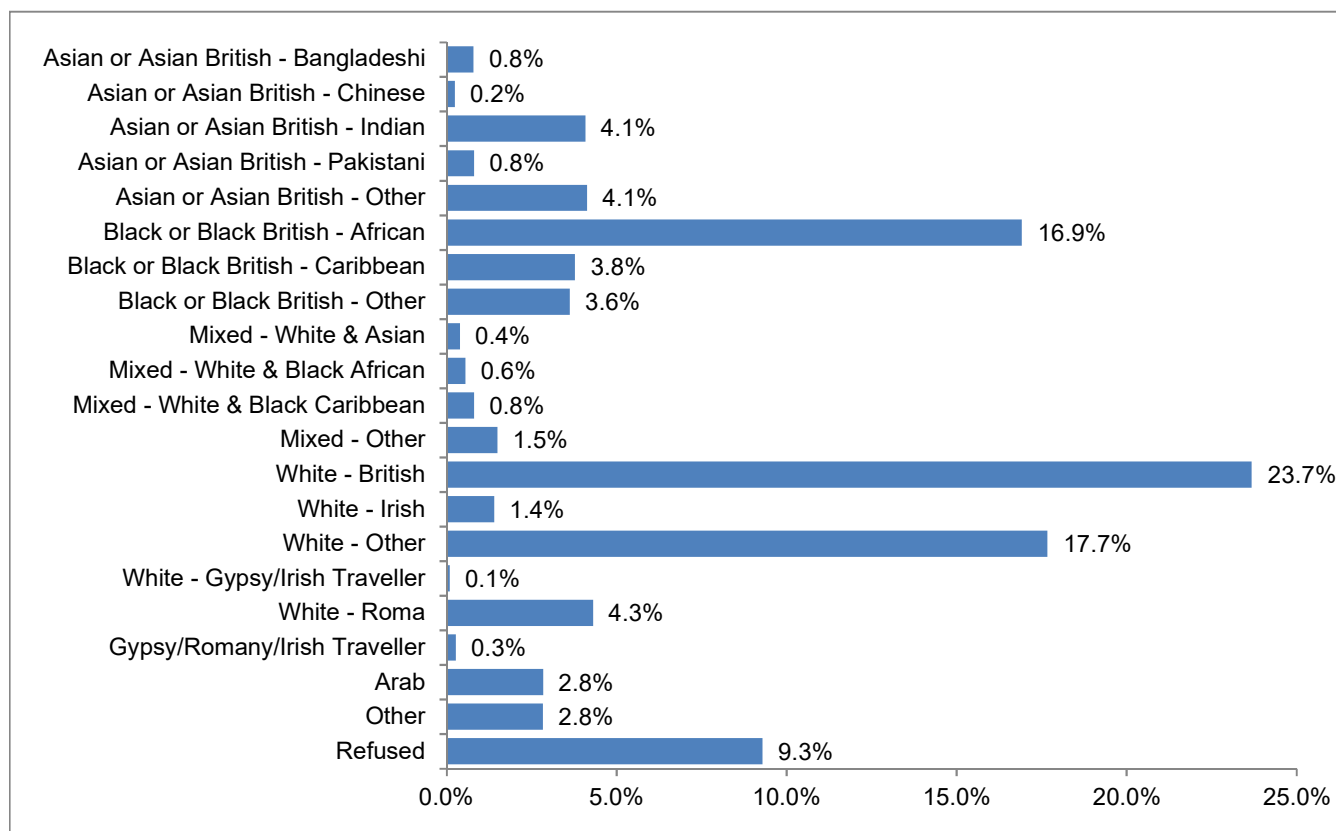
Base: 11993 people seen rough sleeping during the period.
The previously employed category of 'Gypsy/Romany/Irish Traveller' was replaced in 2021 with separate categories for 'White - Gypsy/Irish Traveller' and 'White - Roma' in order to bring CHAIN recording into line with Office for National Statistics usage. Some people seen rough sleeping during the period have not had their ethnicity information updated to reflect these new categories, so the original category is also included in the chart.

Table 14: People seen rough sleeping, by ethnicity, 2020/21 - 2023/24

| Ethnicity	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Asian (incl. Chinese)	988	9.0%	739	8.9%	883	8.8%	1206	10.1%
Black	2513	22.8%	1563	18.8%	1916	19.1%	2916	24.3%
Mixed	322	2.9%	295	3.5%	324	3.2%	389	3.2%
White (incl. Gypsy/ Irish Traveller/Roma)	6221	56.5%	4873	58.5%	5520	54.9%	5687	47.4%
Arab/Other	421	3.8%	348	4.2%	560	5.6%	681	5.7%
Missing/Refused	553	5.0%	511	6.1%	850	8.5%	1114	9.3%
Total	**11018**	**100.0%**	**8329**	**100.0%**	**10053**	**100.0%**	**11993**	**100.0%**

The majority of people seen rough sleeping in London in 2023/24 were white (including Gypsy, Irish Traveller and Roma), with an overall proportion of 47%, eight percentage points lower than the 55% recorded in 2022/23. 24% of those seen rough sleeping in the year were black, which is five percentage points higher than the proportion of 19% recorded in 2022/23. 10% of those seen rough sleeping in 2023/24 were of Asian ethnicity, which is a slight increase on the 9% recorded in 2022/23.

The changes seen in ethnicity composition compared to 2022/23 are at least in part related to the increase in the proportions of African and Asian nationals seen rough sleeping, and the related growth in the numbers of people arriving on the streets following departure from asylum support accommodation.

5.8 Support needs

Support needs data in CHAIN is derived from assessments made by support workers in the homelessness sector. It should be noted that 25% of people seen rough sleeping in 2023/24 did not have a support needs assessment recorded, the majority of these (89%) being people who had only been seen rough sleeping once or twice.

Chart 15: People seen rough sleeping in 2023/24, by support needs
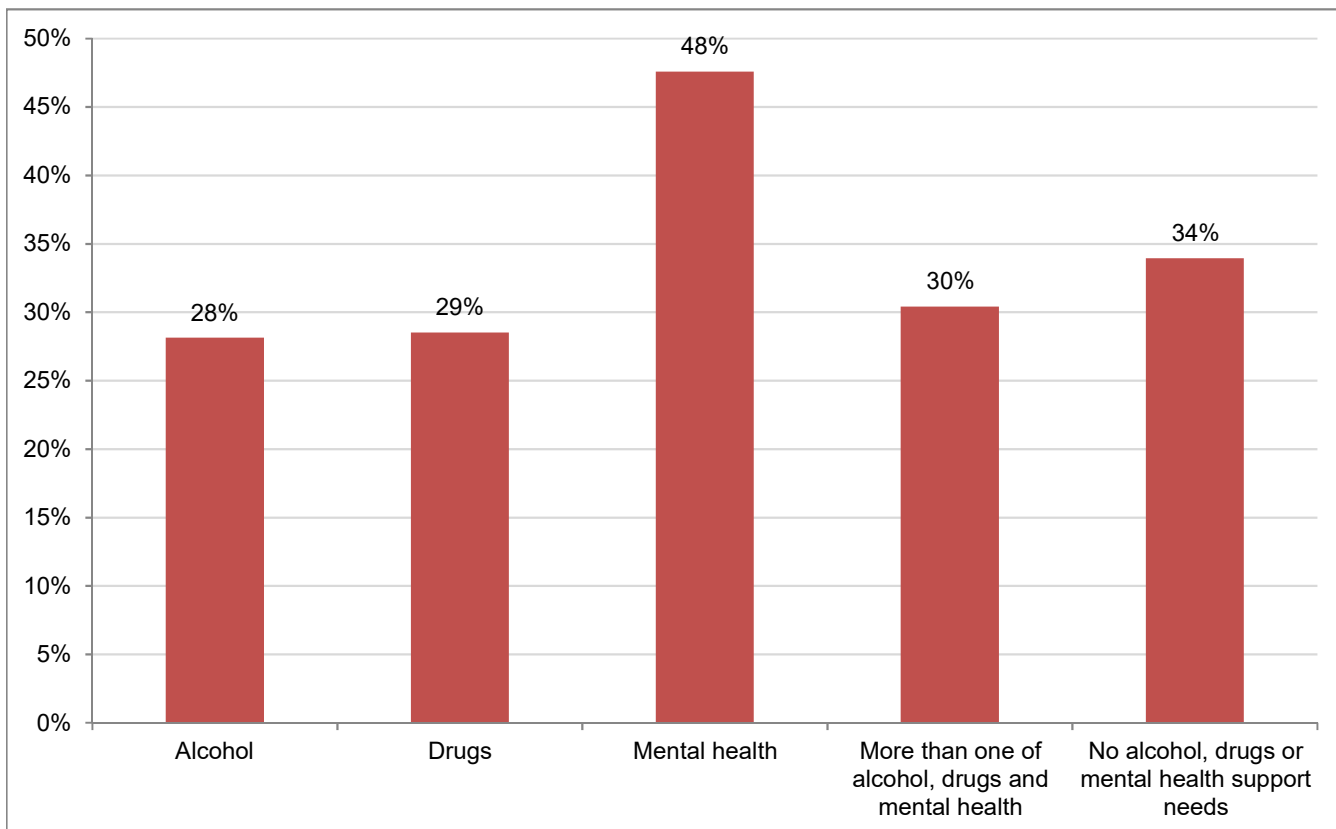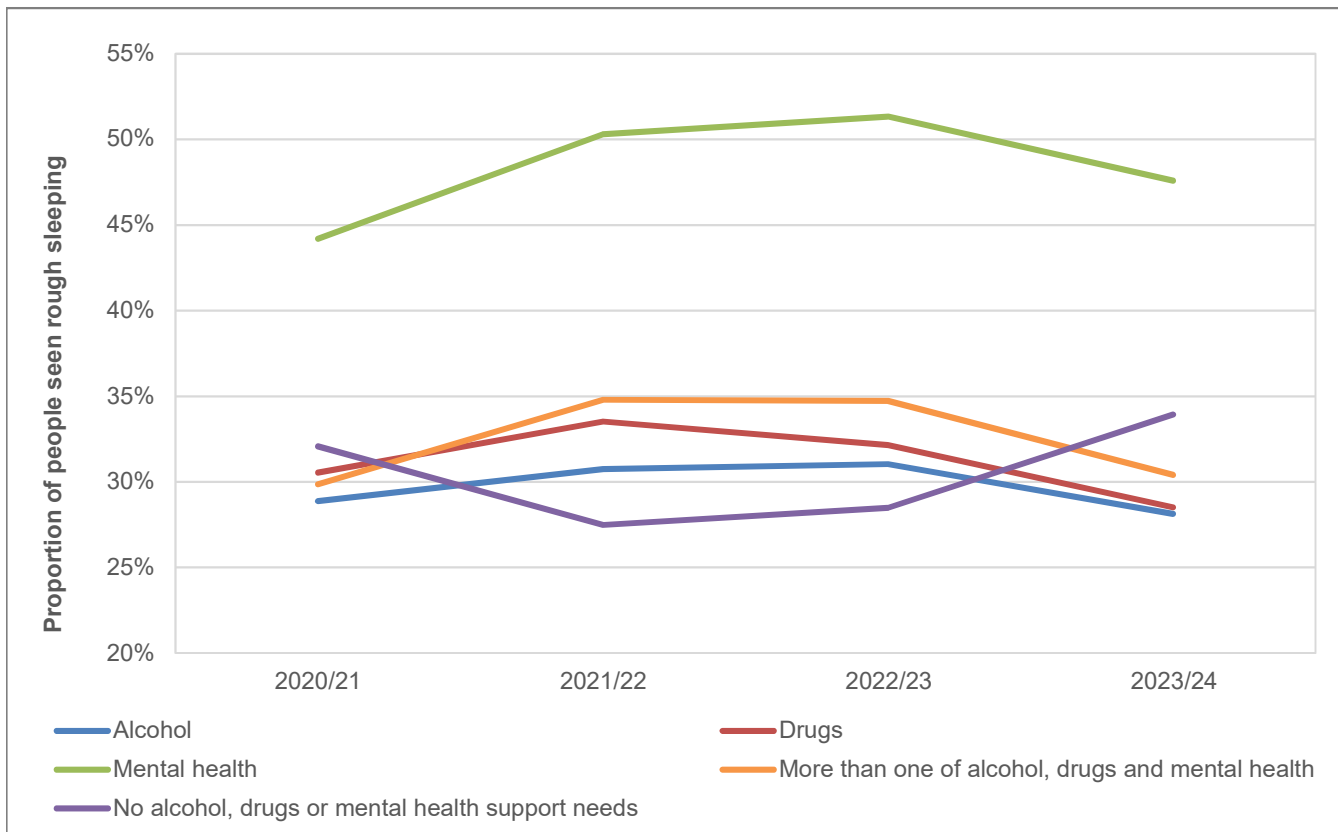

Base: 8982 people seen rough sleeping during the period who were assessed for at least one of the three support needs. This excludes 3011 people for whom none of the three needs were assessed.

Table 15: People seen rough sleeping, by support needs, 2020/21 - 2023/24

Support need	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Alcohol	2342	28.9%	1914	30.7%	2228	31.0%	2527	28.1%
Drugs	2477	30.5%	2087	33.5%	2308	32.2%	2561	28.5%
Mental health	3585	44.2%	3131	50.3%	3685	51.3%	4275	47.6%
More than one of alcohol, drugs and mental health	2422	29.9%	2166	34.8%	2493	34.7%	2731	30.4%
No alcohol, drugs or mental health support needs	2602	32.1%	1711	27.5%	2045	28.5%	3048	33.9%
Total (excl. not assessed)	**8111**		**6225**		**7178**		**8982**	
Total (incl. not assessed)	**11018**		**8329**		**10053**		**11993**	

Base for percentages is people seen rough sleeping during the period who were assessed for at least one of the three support needs.

Chart 16: Support needs proportions for people seen rough sleeping, 2020/21 - 2023/24

Percentages are based on total people seen rough sleeping who were assessed for at least one of the three key support needs.

2020/21 base: 8111
2021/22 base: 6225
2022/23 base: 7178
2023/24 base: 8982

Following a post-pandemic period in which proportions of people rough sleeping with alcohol, drugs or mental health support needs increased somewhat, 2023/24 saw a decrease in the proportions of people found to have needs in these areas. 28% of people seen rough sleeping in 2023/24 who had received a needs assessment reported a support need around alcohol, compared to 31% in 2022/23. 29% were found to have a need relating to drugs, compared to 32% in 2022/23, while 48% had a mental health support need, compared to 51% in 2022/23.

30% of people seen rough sleeping in 2023/24 who had received an assessment had more than one of the three needs, compared to 35% in 2022/23, while 34% were found to have none of the three needs, compared to 28% in 2022/23.

5.9 Institutional & armed forces history

The chart below indicates the proportions of people seen rough sleeping during 2023/24 who had experience of spending time in prison or in local authority care as a young person, or of serving in the armed forces. This information indicates whether individuals have ever spent time in one of these settings, and does not necessarily imply that this was recent. It can include time spent in one of these settings in any country, and does not necessarily imply that it was in the UK. Information on people who have recently left an institutional or armed forces setting in the UK can be found in sections 4.1 and 4.2 of this report.

Chart 17: People seen rough sleeping in 2023/24, by institutional and armed forces history
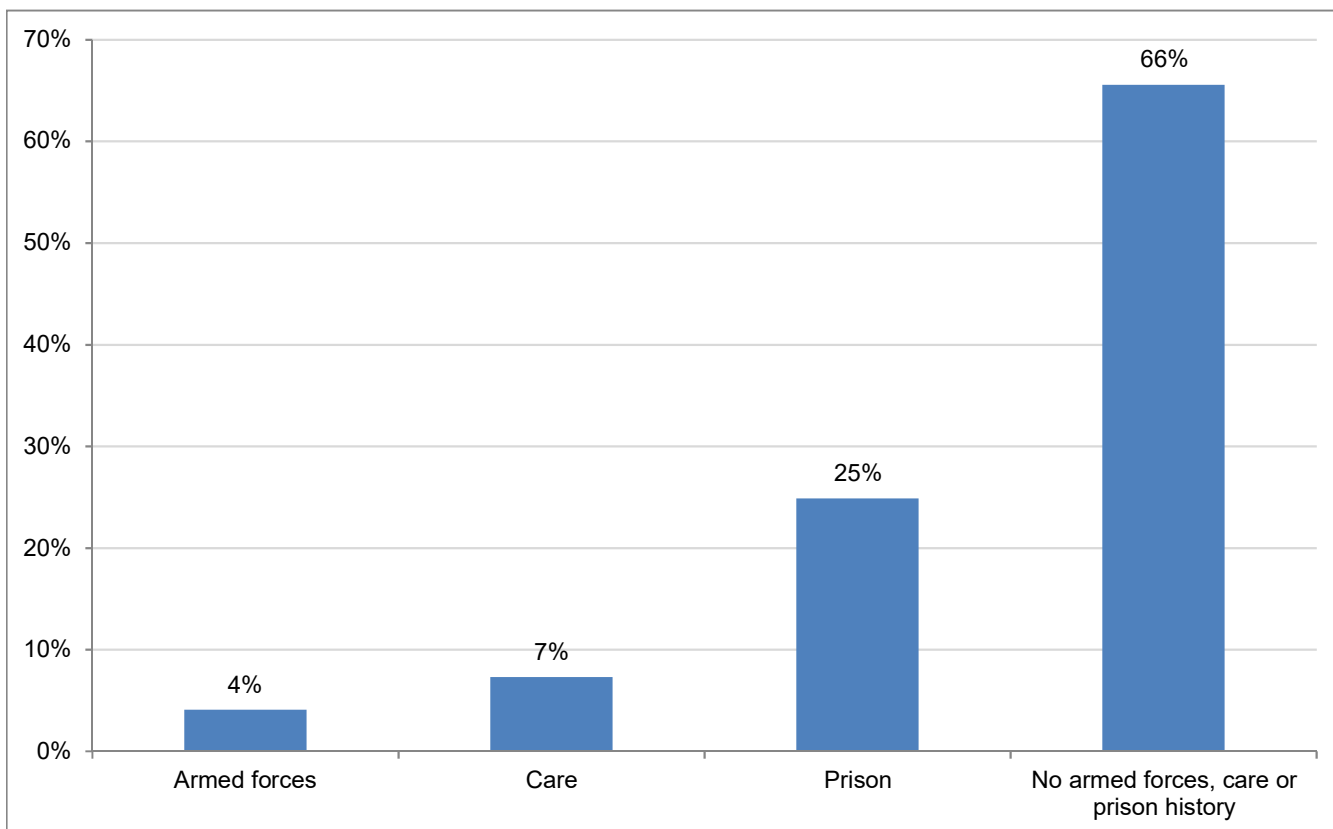
Base: 8744 people seen rough sleeping during the period who were assessed for at least one of the three histories. This excludes 3249 people for whom none of the three histories were assessed.

Table 16: People seen rough sleeping, by institutional and armed forces history, 2020/21 - 2023/24

Type of history	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Armed forces	387	4.9%	291	4.7%	346	4.9%	357	4.1%
Armed forces - UK nationals	122	1.5%	110	1.8%	119	1.7%	109	1.2%
Care	643	8.1%	554	8.9%	589	8.3%	639	7.3%
Prison	2397	30.3%	1984	32.0%	2056	28.8%	2175	24.9%
No armed forces, care or prison history	4651	58.8%	3572	57.5%	4366	61.2%	5733	65.6%
Total (excl. not assessed)	**7912**		**6209**		**7132**		**8744**	
Total (incl. not assessed)	**11018**		**8329**		**10053**		**11993**	

Base for percentages is people seen rough sleeping during the period who were assessed for at least one of the three histories.

357 people seen rough sleeping in 2023/24 had experience of serving in the armed forces, of whom 109 were UK nationals. 639 people seen rough sleeping in 2023/24 had previous experience of living in care (compared to 589 in 2022/23), and 2,175 had experience of serving time in prison (compared to 2,056 in 2022/23). Of the 589 people with experience of living in care, 84 were aged 25 or under.

Differences between proportions of people with experiences of armed forces, care or prison between 2022/23 and 2023/24 are mostly minor, although it is notable that 25% of the assessed total in 2023/24 had experience of prison, compared to 29% in 2022/23.

6. HELPING PEOPLE OFF THE STREETS

6.1 Accommodation outcomes

In 2023/24, 4,379 people who had been seen rough sleeping during the year had bookings into accommodation recorded on CHAIN. This is 37% of all people seen rough sleeping during the year, compared to 42% in 2022/23.

Table 17: Accommodation outcomes achieved with people seen rough sleeping in 2023/24, compared to outcomes achieved in 2022/23

Accommodation type	2022/23		2023/24	
	No. events	%	No. events	%
Hubs, shelters and emergency accommodation				
COVID-19 Emergency Accommodation (Local)	24	0.3%	0	0.0%
Hub	483	6.1%	171	2.4%
Nightstop	5	0.1%	17	0.2%
SWEP (Local)	1294	16.3%	1373	19.0%
SWEP (Pan-London)	470	5.9%	260	3.6%
Winter/Night Shelter	694	8.8%	719	9.9%
Hubs, shelters and emergency accommodation subtotal	*2970*	*37.5%*	*2540*	*35.1%*
Temporary accommodation				
Assessment centre	589	7.4%	564	7.8%
Bed & breakfast	720	9.1%	695	9.6%
Clinic/Detox/Rehab	19	0.2%	12	0.2%
Friends & family	30	0.4%	69	1.0%
Hostel	667	8.4%	533	7.4%
Local authority temporary accommodation	1256	15.9%	1081	14.9%
Staging post	379	4.8%	491	6.8%
Other temporary accommodation	374	4.7%	404	5.6%
Temporary accommodation subtotal	*4034*	*50.9%*	*3849*	*53.2%*
Long-term accommodation				
Care home	7	0.1%	8	0.1%
Clearing House/RSI	139	1.8%	69	1.0%
Local authority tenancy (general needs)	48	0.6%	40	0.6%
Private rented sector - independent	302	3.8%	301	4.2%
Private rented sector - with some floating support	126	1.6%	123	1.7%
RSL tenancy (general needs)	10	0.1%	6	0.1%
Sheltered housing	13	0.2%	11	0.2%
Supported housing	223	2.8%	256	3.5%
Tied accommodation	3	0.0%	4	0.1%
Other long-term accommodation	47	0.6%	24	0.3%
Long-term accommodation subtotal	*918*	*11.6%*	*842*	*11.6%*
Total	**7922**	**100.0%**	**7231**	**100.0%**

An individual may have been booked into accommodation more than once during the period.

There were 7,231 accommodation outcomes recorded for people seen rough sleeping in 2023/24, compared to 7,922 for people seen rough sleeping in 2022/23. Types of accommodation outcomes recorded have remained proportionately similar, with 35% of outcomes in 2023/24 being for hubs, shelters, or emergency accommodation, compared to 37% in 2022/23, while 53% of outcomes in 2023/24 were for temporary accommodation, compared to 51% in 2022/23. The proportion of outcomes for long-term accommodation was 12% in both years.

The reduction in the number of bookings into hub accommodation mainly relates to the closure in early 2023/24 of the NSNO Waterloo assessment hotel, which was classed as a hub for reporting purposes.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Glossary of acronyms and terms used in this report

ASB: Anti-Social Behaviour
Defined in the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) as acting 'in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as the perpetrator.'

CEE: Central and Eastern European
Used to denote the ten A8 and A2 European Union accession countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia).

CHAIN: Combined Homelessness and Information Network
A multi-agency database recording information about rough sleepers and the wider street population in London, commissioned and funded by the GLA and managed by Homeless Link.

DELTA
Online system developed by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to streamline its processes and systems for collecting statistical data and grant administration.

DLUHC: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Government department responsible for housing, communities, local government in England, and the levelling up policy.

EEA: European Economic Area
The 27 countries of the European Union (EU), plus a further three countries that are part of the EU's single market (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway). Common usage generally also includes Switzerland, whose citizens have the same rights to live and work in the UK as other EEA nationals.

GLA: Greater London Authority
The top-tier administrative body for Greater London, consisting of a directly elected executive Mayor of London, and an elected 25-member London Assembly.

NASS: National Asylum Support Service
Section of the UK Visas and Immigration division of the Home Office, responsible for supporting and accommodating people seeking asylum while their cases are being dealt with.

NSNO: No Second Night Out
A GLA commissioned 24/7 pan-London assessment and reconnection service for people rough sleeping. It accepts referrals from outreach teams and aims to identify and rapidly deliver a sustainable route off the street for those it supports. Since August 2022, the service has worked with both those who are new to rough sleeping, and existing rough sleepers who do not already have a route away from the streets identified by an outreach team. The term is also used in other contexts to refer to a wider strategy to end rough sleeping, both in London and nationwide.

RSI: Rough Sleeping Initiative
Cross-government plan of action, announced in March 2018, to significantly reduce the number of people sleeping rough in England and Wales. The RSI acronym has also previously been used to refer to the 1990s Rough Sleepers Initiative, which was successful in reducing

rough sleeping at that time.

SWEP: Severe Weather Emergency Protocol
Emergency accommodation provided by local authorities or the GLA for people sleeping rough during periods of increased risk due to extreme weather conditions (e.g. freezing temperatures or heatwaves).

CHAIN