

# CHAIN ANNUAL REPORT

**GREATER LONDON**

**APRIL 2025 - MARCH 2026**

SUPPORTED BY  
**MAYOR OF LONDON**



**CHAIN**

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Copies of this report are available  
from <http://data.london.gov.uk>

# 1. INTRODUCTION & KEY FINDINGS

## Introduction

This report presents information about people seen rough sleeping by outreach teams in London between April 2025 and March 2026. Information in the report is derived from the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN), a multi-agency database recording information about people seen rough sleeping, 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 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). 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.

It is important to note that people who are rough sleeping in less visible or accessible locations may be less likely to be encountered by outreach teams, and therefore recorded on CHAIN. This may affect some groups in particular, such as women, as highlighted by the [2025 Women's Rough Sleeping Census](#).

## Key findings

- A total of 12,938 people were seen rough sleeping in London in 2025/26.
- This is a 2% decrease on 2024/25, compared to a 10% increase from 2023/24 to 2024/25.
- The 2025/26 total is 60% higher than the total of 8,108 people seen rough sleeping ten years ago, in 2016/17.
- People who had also been seen rough sleeping in the previous year were the only group to show an increase in number, while the numbers of people new to, or returning to rough sleeping after at least a year away, both declined.
- UK nationals accounted for 49% of all people seen rough sleeping in 2025/26, while 20% came from other European countries, and 31% were from countries in Africa, Asia, the Americas, and Australasia.
- 21% of people new to rough sleeping who had information recorded about their last settled base prior to rough sleeping had previously been staying in asylum support accommodation.
- Homelessness services supported 4,893 people who were seen rough sleeping during 2025/26 into accommodation.

## **Use of rough sleeping category terminology in this report**

In September 2022, MHCLG's predecessor department 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 MHCLG 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 people new or returning to rough sleeping, 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, people new to rough sleeping (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 MHCLG framework expands the definition of people new to rough sleeping to include people who have previously been seen rough sleeping, but not during the last five years. The MHCLG framework defines people returning to rough sleeping 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 MHCLG definitions are used is the section covering history prior to first being seen rough sleeping.

## **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.

## **Further resources**

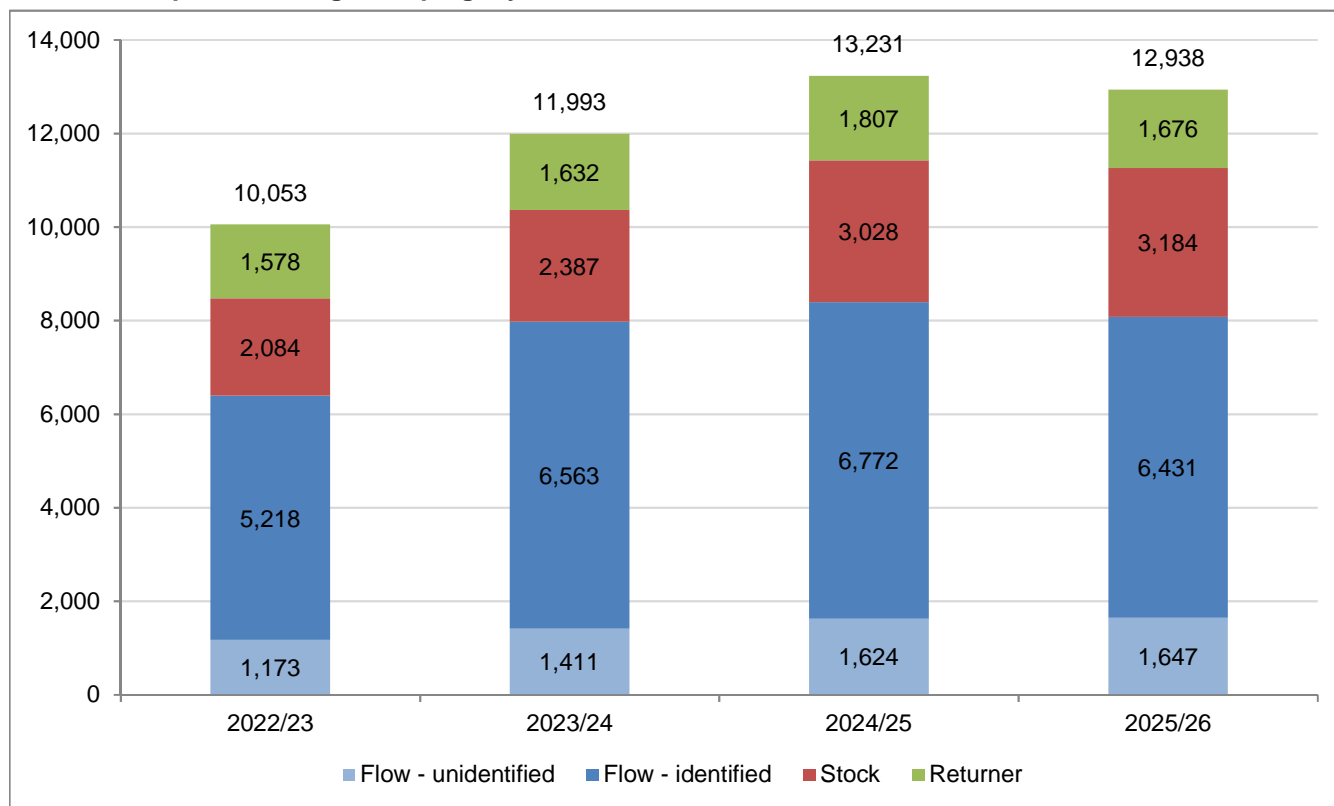
This report presents the full set of key annual data from CHAIN, for those wanting the most in-depth view. A shorter summary of findings and commentary on the figures is also available in the CHAIN 2025/26 Annual Bulletin, which can be downloaded from the GLA Datastore at <http://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports>.

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>.

## 2. ROUGH SLEEPING 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, 2022/23 - 2025/26

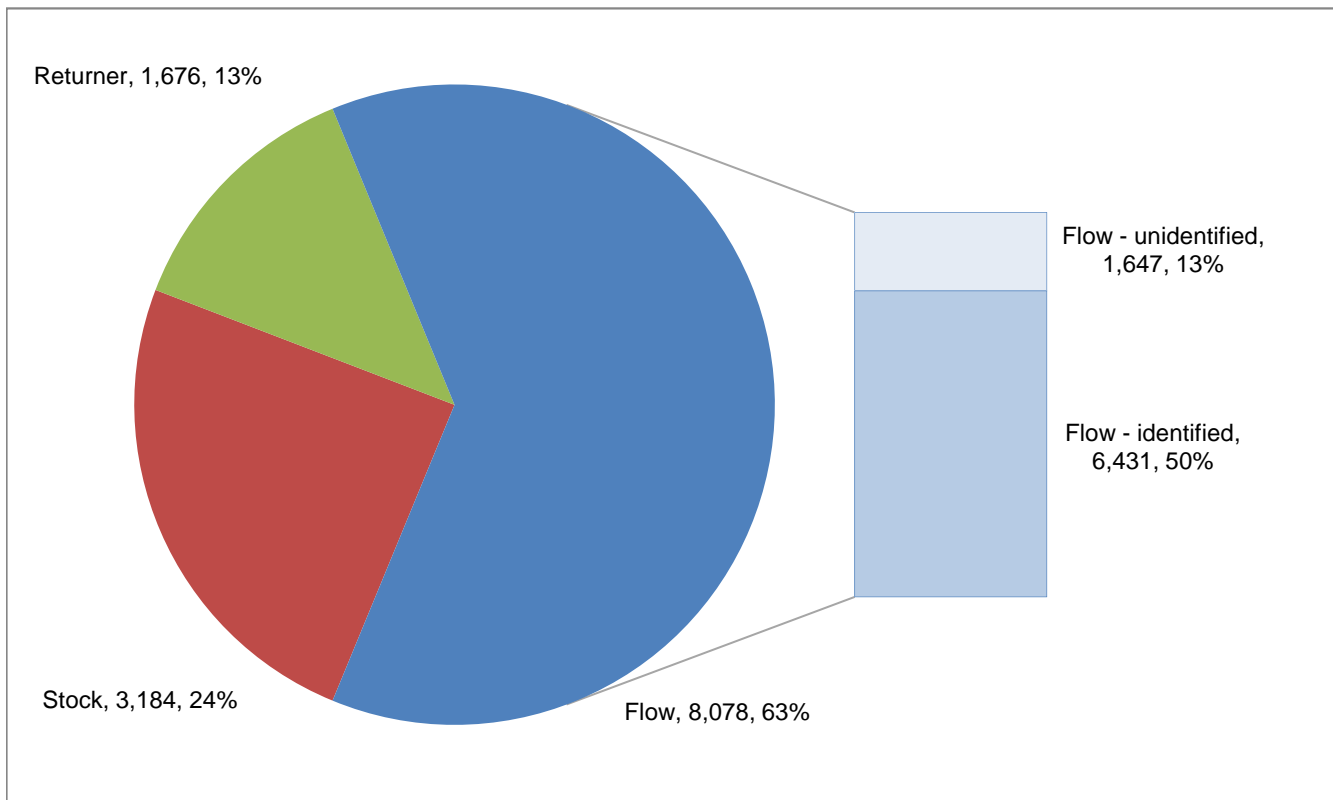


2022/23 base: 10,053  
 2023/24 base: 11,993  
 2024/25 base: 13,231  
 2025/26 base: 12,938

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	<p>People who had never been seen rough sleeping prior to 2025/26 (i.e. people new to rough sleeping). Those within this category are further subdivided as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unidentified - those people new to rough sleeping recorded without a name, and with only one contact.</li> <li>Identified - those people new to rough sleeping recorded with a name, and/or with more than one contact.</li> </ul>
Stock	<p>People who were also seen rough sleeping in 2024/25 (i.e. those seen across a minimum of two consecutive years).</p>
Returner	<p>People who were first seen rough sleeping prior to 2024/25, but were not seen during 2024/25 (i.e. those who have had a gap in their rough sleeping histories).</p>

**Chart 2: People seen rough sleeping in 2025/26, by flow, stock, returner breakdown**



Base: 12,938 people seen rough sleeping during the period.

12,938 people were seen rough sleeping in London in 2025/26, which is a 2% decrease compared to the total of 13,231 people seen in 2024/25.

8,078 people were seen rough sleeping for the first time this year (also referred to as flow), and this group constitutes 62% of the total. The number of people new to rough sleeping has decreased by 4% compared to that recorded in 2024/25.

3,184 people seen rough sleeping in 2025/26 had previously been seen rough sleeping in 2024/25 (referred to as stock), which is a 5% increase on the stock figure for 2024/25. This group constituted 25% of the overall total in 2025/26.

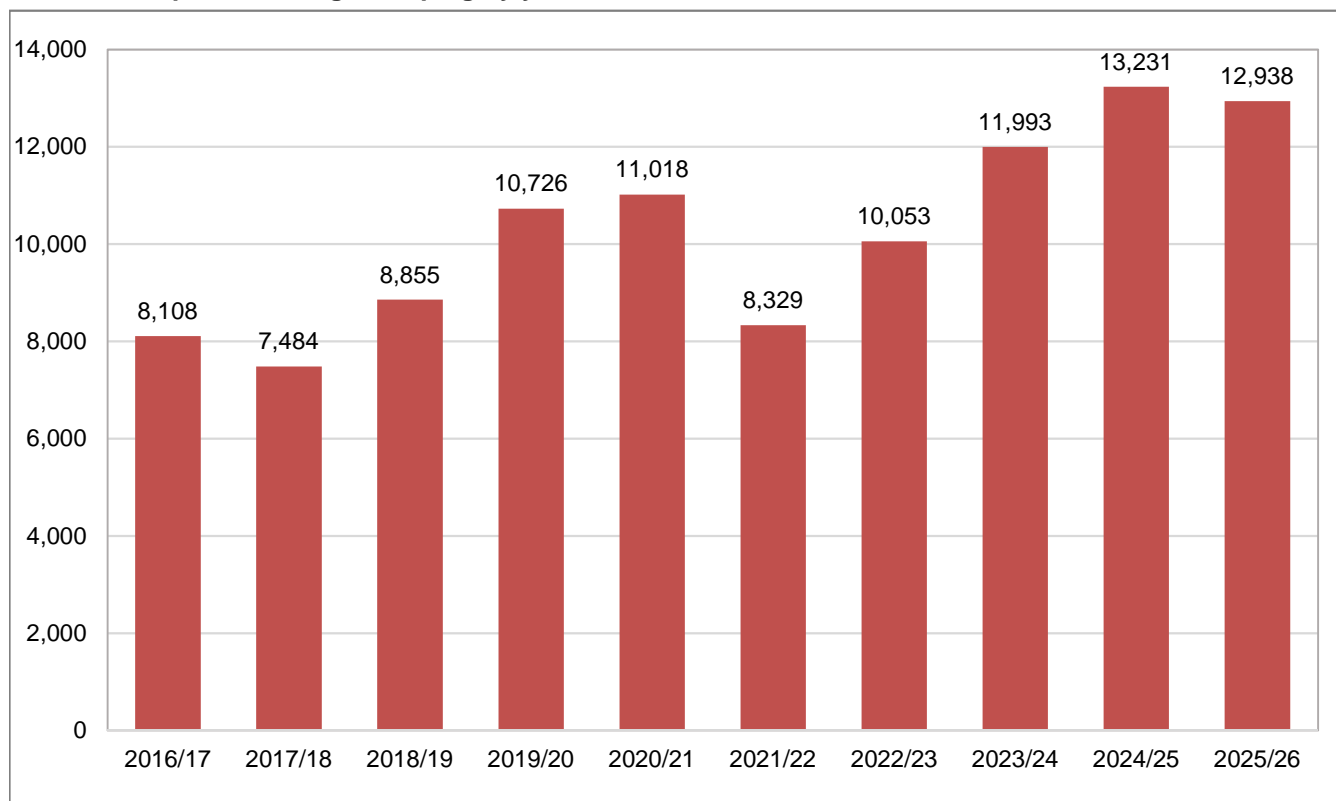
1,676 people seen rough sleeping during the year were returners. This compares to 1,807 in 2024/25, representing a decrease of 7%. Returners constituted 13% of the overall total for the year.

People seen rough sleeping across two consecutive years (referred to as stock) were the only group to show an increase compared to 2024/25, and this group also displayed the largest increase between 2023/24 and 2024/25, indicating a sustained trend. Classification within the stock group does not necessarily have an implication about overall length of time rough sleeping. Some people in this group may only have been seen across a period of a few days or weeks either side of the start of the year, while others may have been seen across a succession of years. Nearly a quarter (24%) of this group had been seen in four or more consecutive years, up to and including 2025/26.

The totals for both the flow and returner groups fell, with returners showing the greatest proportionate decrease, while the flow group contributed the greatest reduction in absolute numbers. The decrease in the flow group was the most significant determining factor in the overall total of people seen rough sleeping falling by 2%. Despite the decrease in the flow group, its total is still the second highest ever recorded.

## 2.2 Number of people seen rough sleeping: Long range trend

Chart 3: People seen rough sleeping by year, 2016/17 - 2025/26

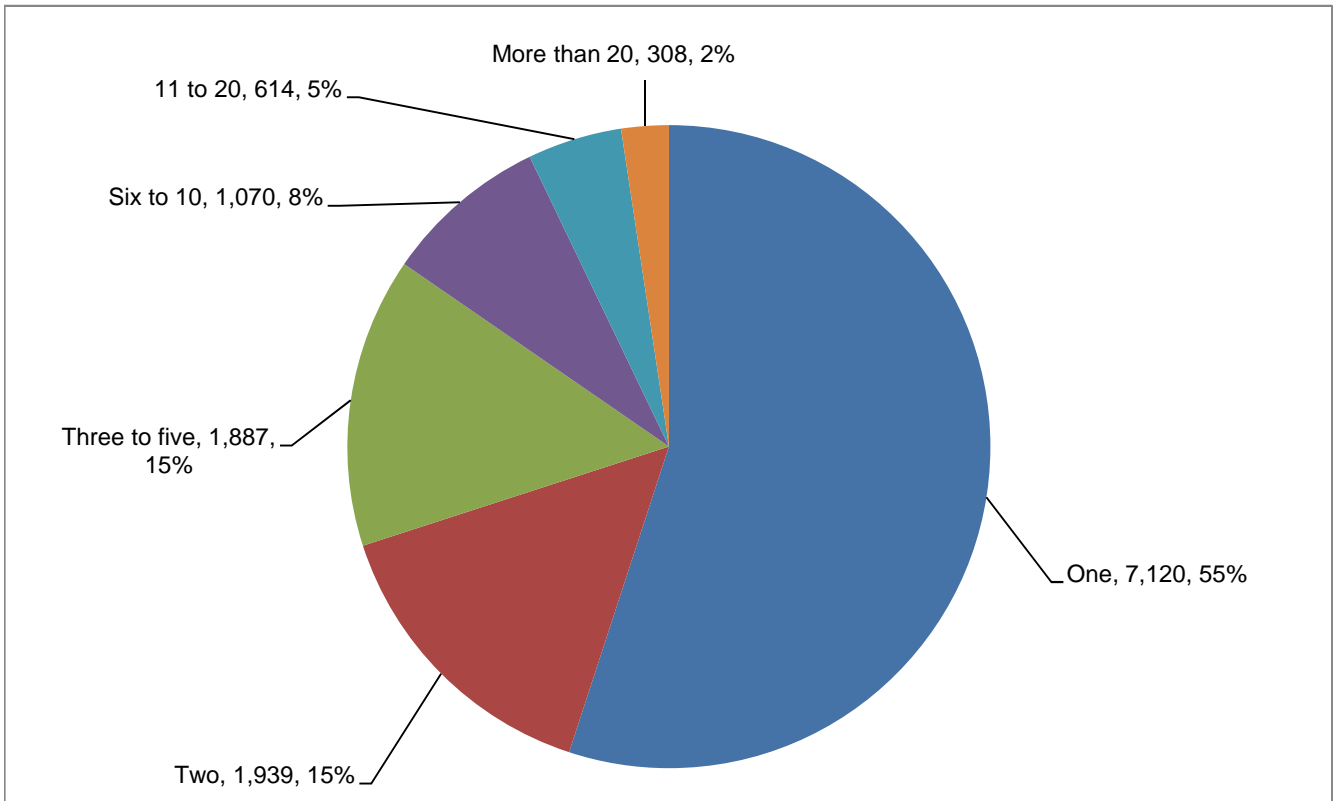


2025/26 is only the third year during the last ten in which the total number of people recorded rough sleeping was lower than the previous year. The reduction of 2% was more modest than the decreases of 8% in 2017/18 and 24% in 2021/22, however. Despite the year-on-year decrease, the 2025/26 total is the second highest ever recorded on CHAIN, and is 60% higher than the total of 8,108 people seen rough sleeping ten years ago, in 2016/17.

It is likely that the especially notable 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.

### 2.3 Number of times seen rough sleeping

Chart 4: People seen rough sleeping in 2025/26, by number of times seen rough sleeping



Base: 12,938 people seen rough sleeping during the period.

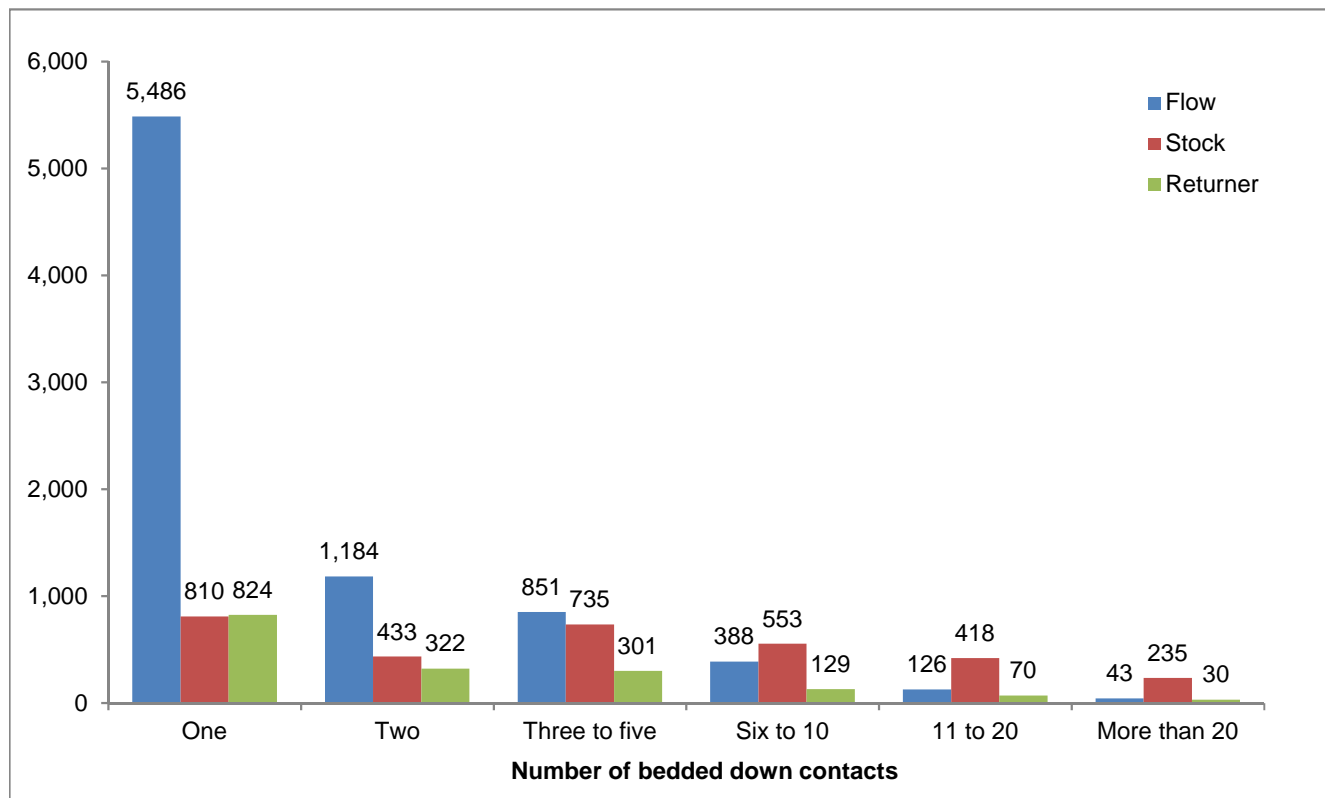
7,120 (55%) people were seen rough sleeping only once in 2025/26, which compares to 7,446 (56%) seen rough sleeping just once in 2024/25.

922 (7%) people recorded rough sleeping in 2025/26 were seen more than ten times. 28 people were seen rough sleeping more than 50 times in the year, compared to 26 people with this many contacts in 2024/25, and 18 in 2023/24.

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 Number of times seen rough sleeping: Flow, stock, returner model

**Chart 5: People seen rough sleeping in 2025/26, by flow, stock, returner model, and number of times seen rough sleeping**



Base: 12,938 people seen rough sleeping during the period.

68% of people new to rough sleeping (5,486 people) were seen rough sleeping just once, which is only marginally changed from the proportions of 69% in 2024/25 and 70% in 2023/24. Only 2% of those new to the streets were seen rough sleeping more than ten times in the year.

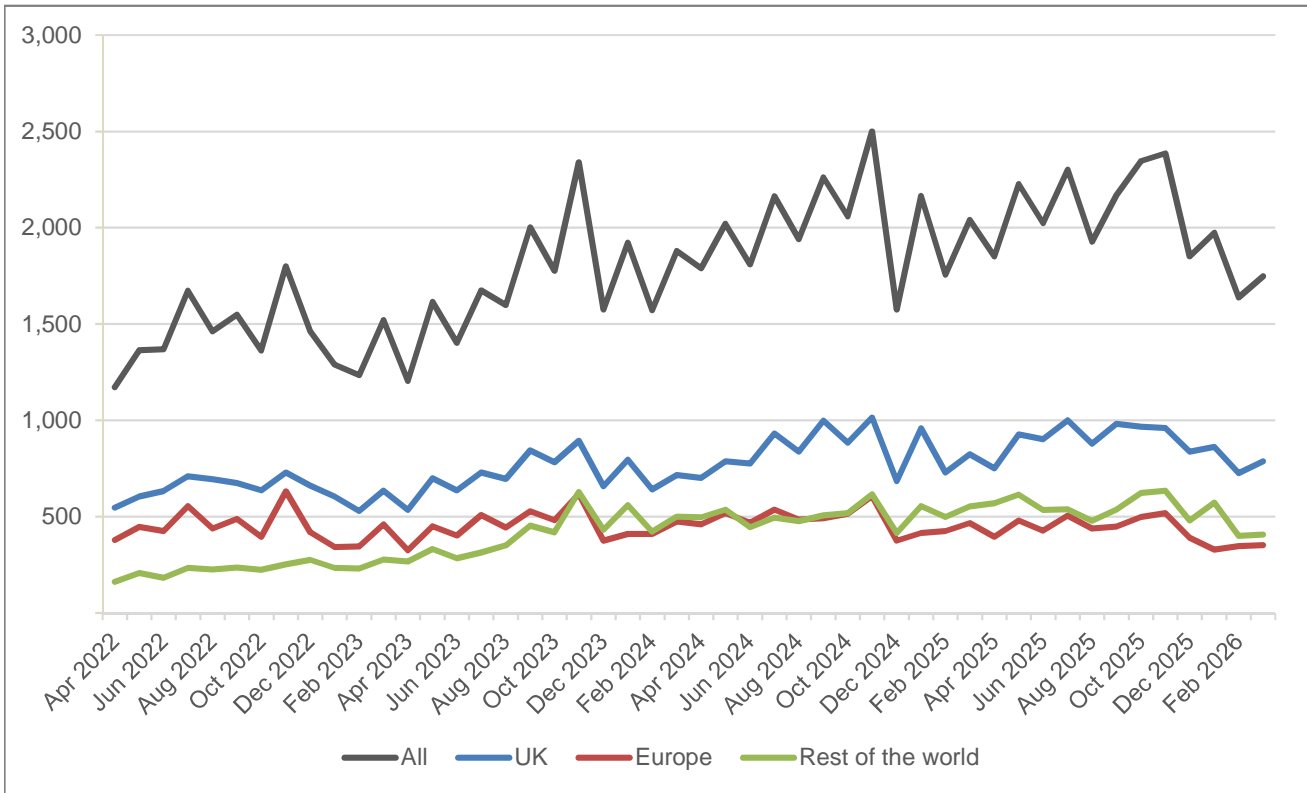
25% (810 people) in the stock group were seen just once, and this proportion is similar to that of 27% seen once in 2024/25. 49% (824 people) in the returner group were seen once, which compares to 48% in 2024/25.

The stock group account for a notably higher number of the people who were seen six or more times, compared to flow and returners.

It should be noted that, of those people new to rough sleeping seen once who were asked, 65% 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 people recorded as new to rough sleeping may well have been street homeless for some time before first being contacted by an outreach service.

## 2.5 Monthly rough sleeping trend

**Chart 6: Number of people seen rough sleeping per month, April 2022 - March 2026, by nationality**



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 typical seasonal trend shows monthly totals increasing throughout the year from their lowest point during the December to February period, when winter shelters and other additional provision are in operation, and peaking in November, when the government's annual street count takes place.

The highest monthly total during 2025/26 was recorded in November 2025, with 2,386 people seen rough sleeping that month. The lowest monthly total, 1,638 people, was recorded in February 2026. The November 2025 peak was somewhat less pronounced than in previous years, and was followed by a comparatively smaller dip in December. Seasonal trends during 2025/26 may have been affected by a relatively mild winter, with fewer periods of SWEP activation.

The nationality comparison confirms the trend of recent years, with the numbers for the 'Rest of the world' group continuing to be higher than the numbers for people from Europe (excluding the UK). The higher numbers recorded for the 'Rest of the world' group are at least partially driven by the continuing trend of people experiencing rough sleeping following departure from asylum support accommodation, as detailed in section 4 of this report.

## 2.6 People new to rough sleeping (flow): Nationality

Table 1: People new to rough sleeping in 2025/26, by nationality and period spent in UK

Nationality category		Time between date of entry to UK and date first seen rough sleeping						Total
		Less than 1 week	1-2 weeks	2-4 weeks	4-12 weeks	12 weeks - 1 year	More than 1 year	
Europe	No.	23	19	18	20	34	554	668
	%	3%	3%	3%	3%	5%	83%	100%
Rest of the world	No.	27	9	24	66	723	1,183	2,032
	%	1%	0%	1%	3%	36%	58%	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>1,737</b>	<b>2,700</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Base: 2,700 people seen rough sleeping for the first time in 2025/26 who were non-UK nationals and had a date of entry to the UK recorded.

There were 2,700 people new to rough sleeping in 2025/26 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.

64% 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 significantly lower than the proportion of 80% in 2024/25. 83% of people new to rough sleeping who came from European countries had been in the UK for more than a year, compared to 58% from non-European countries.

The proportion of people new to rough sleeping from any non-UK nationality group seen rough sleeping within two weeks of entering the country remains low, at 3%.

### 3. SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

#### 3.1 Total people seen rough sleeping by borough: Yearly comparison

Table 2: People seen rough sleeping, by borough, 2022/23 - 2025/26

Borough	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Change between 2024/25 and 2025/26	
					No.	%
Westminster	2,050	2,102	2,612	2,583	-29	-1%
Camden	719	903	975	974	-1	0%
City of London	482	656	878	757	-121	-14%
Ealing	563	710	723	642	-81	-11%
Southwark	435	549	613	613	0	0%
Lambeth	623	681	483	571	88	18%
Tower Hamlets	460	498	546	557	11	2%
Brent	373	455	551	530	-21	-4%
Croydon	373	449	469	527	58	12%
Hounslow	196	328	336	513	177	53%
Newham	503	535	545	499	-46	-8%
Hillingdon	167	296	492	480	-12	-2%
Greenwich	196	337	409	406	-3	-1%
Hammersmith & Fulham	238	462	439	391	-48	-11%
Islington	337	409	546	378	-168	-31%
Haringey	304	442	410	360	-50	-12%
Lewisham	296	353	325	345	20	6%
Hackney	246	251	298	319	21	7%
Redbridge	248	279	285	314	29	10%
Kensington & Chelsea	199	226	218	239	21	10%
Heathrow	233	308	301	227	-74	-25%
Waltham Forest	186	203	239	224	-15	-6%
Enfield	219	197	253	217	-36	-14%
Barnet	166	216	204	176	-28	-14%
Wandsworth	173	172	178	170	-8	-4%
Bromley	92	113	151	145	-6	-4%
Bexley	92	106	140	136	-4	-3%
Barking & Dagenham	139	159	144	128	-16	-11%
Kingston upon Thames	120	107	135	113	-22	-16%
Merton	63	77	81	96	15	19%
Harrow	96	128	94	93	-1	-1%
Richmond	86	100	85	84	-1	-1%
Havering	79	55	67	81	14	21%
Sutton	30	28	43	43	0	0%
Bus route	142	118	86	71	-15	-17%
Tube line	36	14	5	5	0	0%

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 prevalence of rough sleeping at and around the airport. 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 2025/26 were Westminster, Camden, City of London, Ealing, and Southwark, which is consistent with 2024/25.

Of the top ten boroughs, five recorded decreases in the number of people seen rough sleeping, and four recorded increases, while one recorded an unchanged total. The borough recording the greatest increase, both in proportion and actual numbers, was Hounslow. The increase in Hounslow appears to be related to an especially high number of people being seen rough sleeping there after leaving asylum support accommodation.

The borough recording the greatest decrease compared to 2024/25, again both in proportion and actual numbers, was Islington. The Islington total appears to represent a return to a level which is more consistent with earlier years, after an unusually high spike in 2024/25. City of London also recorded a notable decrease in numbers, albeit one that is somewhat less significant proportionately.

### 3.2 Total people seen rough sleeping by borough: Flow, stock, returner model

Table 3: People seen rough sleeping in 2025/26, by borough, and flow, stock, returner breakdown

Borough	Flow		Stock		Returner		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Westminster	1,391	54%	842	33%	350	14%	2,583
Camden	504	52%	337	35%	133	14%	974
City of London	473	62%	207	27%	77	10%	757
Ealing	371	58%	196	31%	75	12%	642
Southwark	343	56%	177	29%	93	15%	613
Lambeth	374	65%	113	20%	84	15%	571
Tower Hamlets	302	54%	170	31%	85	15%	557
Brent	316	60%	160	30%	54	10%	530
Croydon	358	68%	99	19%	70	13%	527
Hounslow	415	81%	71	14%	27	5%	513
Newham	293	59%	134	27%	72	14%	499
Hillingdon	342	71%	99	21%	39	8%	480
Greenwich	260	64%	105	26%	41	10%	406
Hammersmith & Fulham	258	66%	90	23%	43	11%	391
Islington	212	56%	107	28%	59	16%	378
Haringey	228	63%	91	25%	41	11%	360
Lewisham	216	63%	68	20%	61	18%	345
Hackney	196	61%	68	21%	55	17%	319
Redbridge	173	55%	90	29%	51	16%	314
Kensington & Chelsea	119	50%	73	31%	47	20%	239
Heathrow	179	79%	21	9%	27	12%	227
Waltham Forest	107	48%	82	37%	35	16%	224
Enfield	158	73%	32	15%	27	12%	217
Barnet	110	63%	39	22%	27	15%	176
Wandsworth	73	43%	68	40%	29	17%	170
Bromley	92	63%	36	25%	17	12%	145
Bexley	97	71%	28	21%	11	8%	136
Barking & Dagenham	73	57%	33	26%	22	17%	128
Kingston upon Thames	53	47%	43	38%	17	15%	113
Merton	70	73%	12	13%	14	15%	96
Harrow	80	86%	8	9%	5	5%	93
Richmond	43	51%	26	31%	15	18%	84
Havering	50	62%	11	14%	20	25%	81
Sutton	36	84%	3	7%	4	9%	43
Bus route	51	72%	9	13%	11	15%	71
Tube line	3	60%	0	0%	2	40%	5

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.

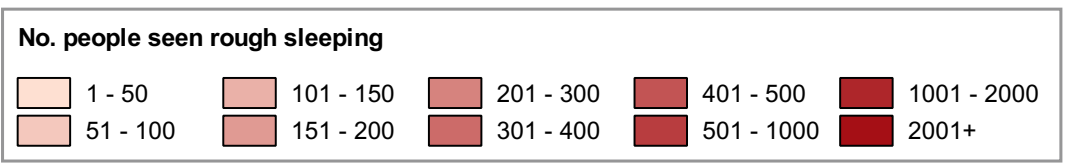
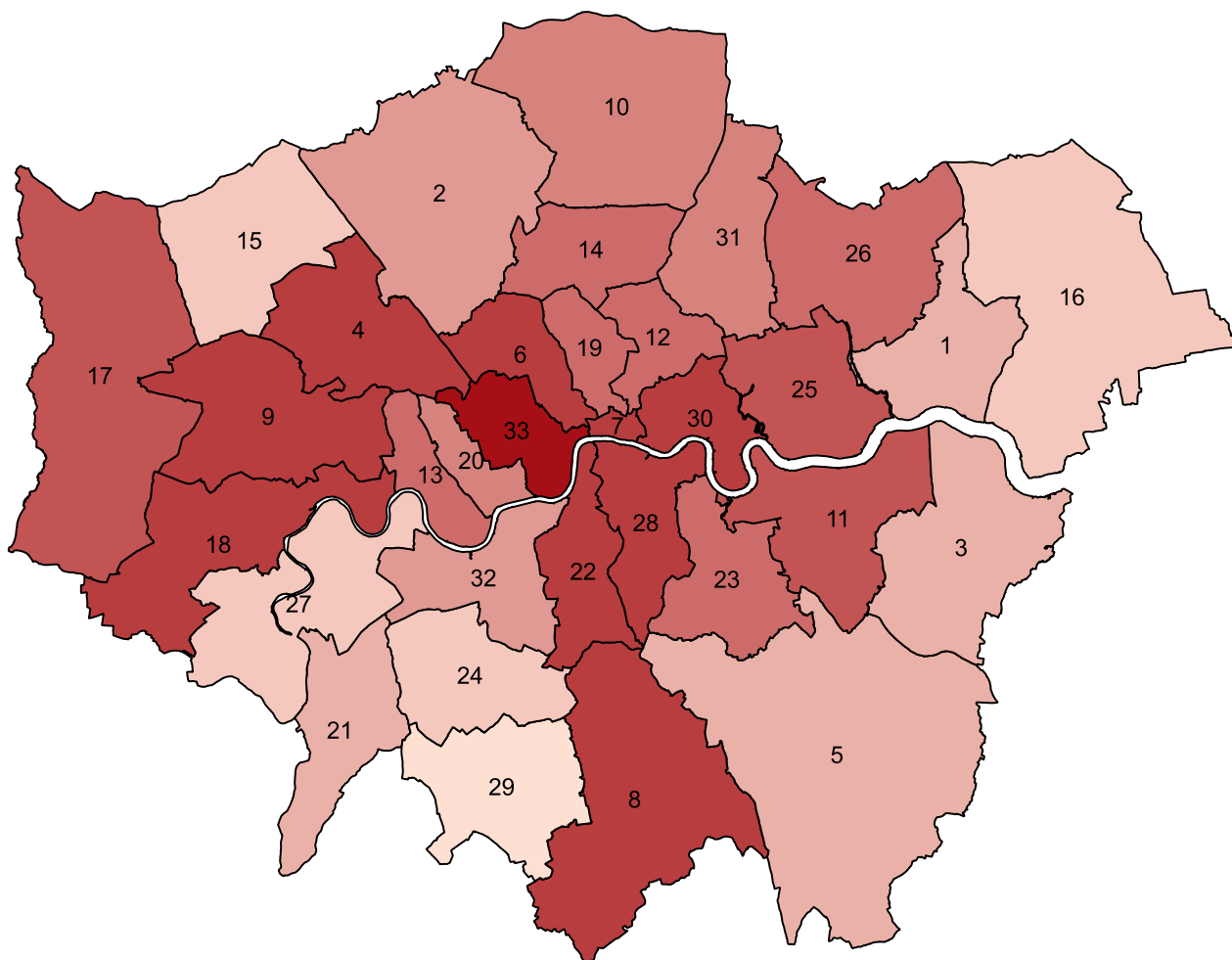
Combined borough totals will add up to a figure greater than the overall total for London, as some people will have been seen rough sleeping in more than one borough during the period.

Harrow, Sutton, and Hounslow were the boroughs which recorded the greatest proportions of people new to rough sleeping (flow) during 2025/26, although it should be noted that the overall totals in Harrow and Sutton were low. The boroughs with the lowest proportions of people new to rough sleeping were Wandsworth, Kingston upon Thames, and Waltham Forest.

Leaving aside tube lines, Wandsworth, Kingston upon Thames, and Waltham Forest recorded the highest proportions of people in the stock category, while Sutton, Harrow and Heathrow recorded the lowest. The boroughs with the highest proportions of returners were Havering and Kensington & Chelsea, while Hounslow and Harrow recorded the lowest proportions.

### 3.3 Total people seen rough sleeping by borough: Map

Map 1: Total number of people seen rough sleeping in each borough during 2025/26



Key	Borough	Total
1	Barking & Dagenham	128
2	Barnet	176
3	Bexley	136
4	Brent	530
5	Bromley	145
6	Camden	974
7	City of London	757
8	Croydon	527
9	Ealing	642
10	Enfield	217
11	Greenwich	406

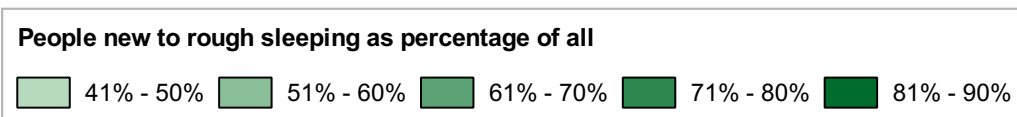
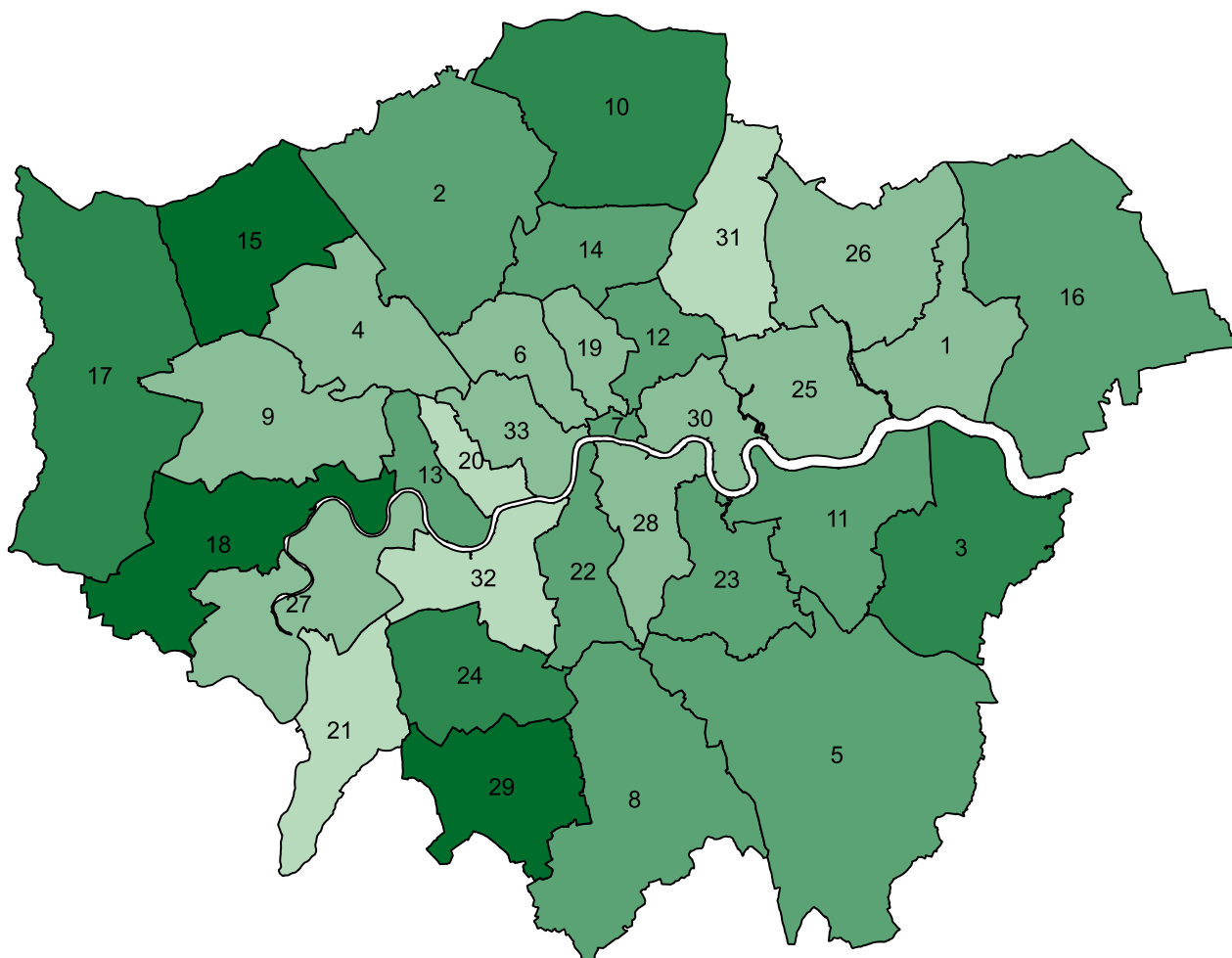
Key	Borough	Total
12	Hackney	319
13	Hammersmith & Fulham	391
14	Haringey	360
15	Harrow	93
16	Havering	81
17	Hillingdon	480
18	Hounslow	513
19	Islington	378
20	Kensington & Chelsea	239
21	Kingston upon Thames	113
22	Lambeth	571

Key	Borough	Total
23	Lewisham	345
24	Merton	96
25	Newham	499
26	Redbridge	314
27	Richmond	84
28	Southwark	613
29	Sutton	43
30	Tower Hamlets	557
31	Waltham Forest	224
32	Wandsworth	170
33	Westminster	2583
34	Heathrow	227

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### 3.4 People new to rough sleeping by borough: Map

Map 2: People new to rough sleeping as a percentage of the total number of people seen rough sleeping in each borough during 2025/26



Key	Borough	%
1	Barking & Dagenham	57
2	Barnet	63
3	Bexley	71
4	Brent	60
5	Bromley	63
6	Camden	52
7	City of London	62
8	Croydon	68
9	Ealing	58
10	Enfield	73
11	Greenwich	64

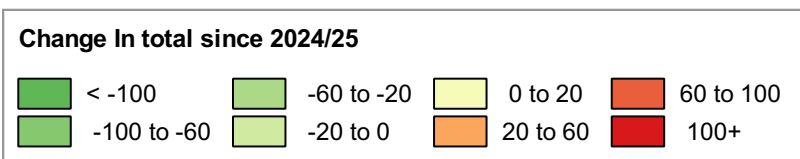
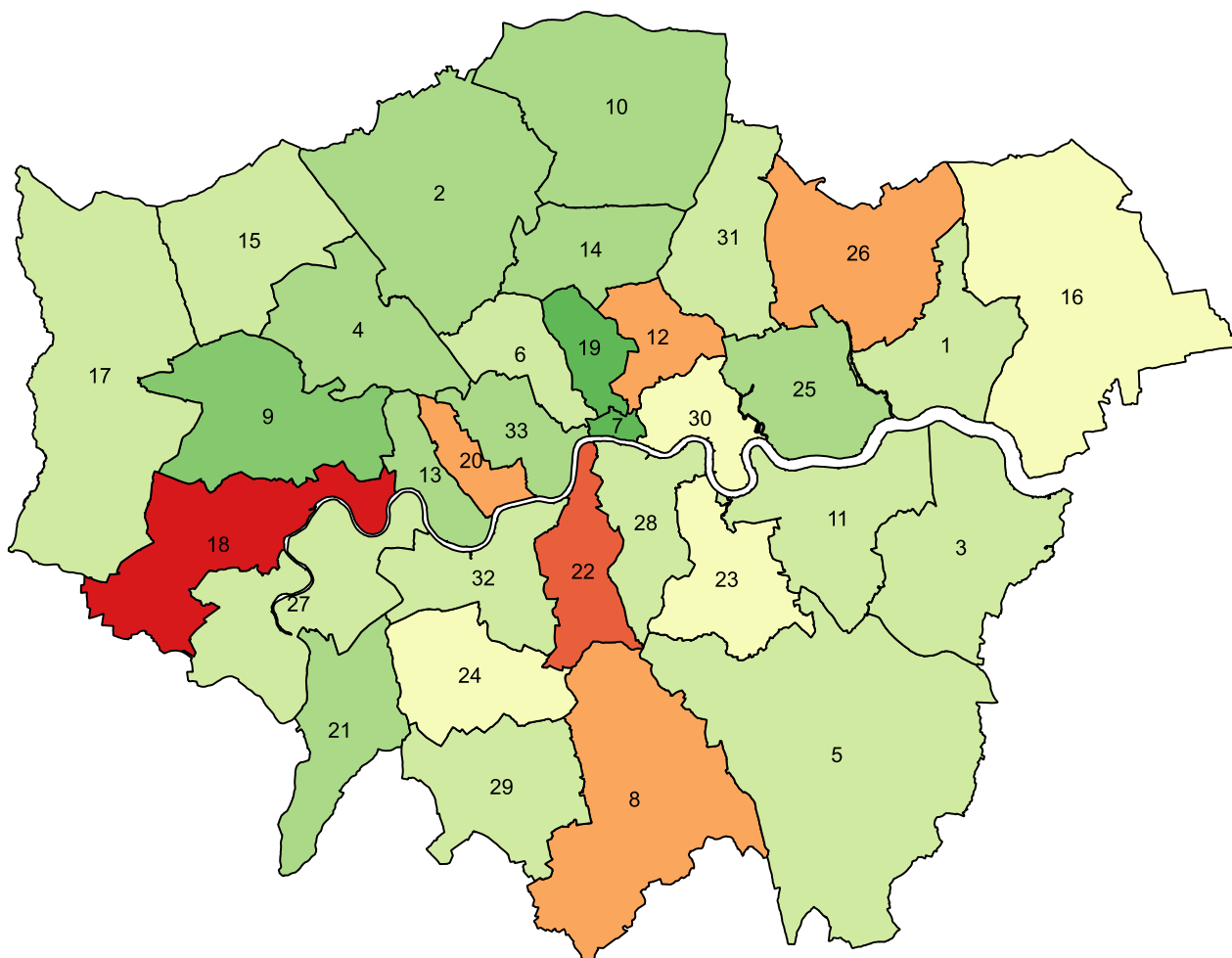
Key	Borough	%
12	Hackney	61
13	Hammersmith & Fulham	66
14	Haringey	63
15	Harrow	86
16	Havering	62
17	Hillingdon	71
18	Hounslow	81
19	Islington	56
20	Kensington & Chelsea	50
21	Kingston upon Thames	47
22	Lambeth	65

Key	Borough	%
23	Lewisham	63
24	Merton	73
25	Newham	59
26	Redbridge	55
27	Richmond	51
28	Southwark	56
29	Sutton	84
30	Tower Hamlets	54
31	Waltham Forest	48
32	Wandsworth	43
33	Westminster	54
34	Heathrow	79

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### 3.5 Change since 2024/25 by borough: Map

Map 3: Change in total number of people seen rough sleeping in each borough, between 2024/25 and 2025/26



Key	Borough	Change
1	Barking & Dagenham	-16
2	Barnet	-28
3	Bexley	-4
4	Brent	-21
5	Bromley	-6
6	Camden	-1
7	City of London	-121
8	Croydon	58
9	Ealing	-81
10	Enfield	-36
11	Greenwich	-3

Key	Borough	Change
12	Hackney	21
13	Hammersmith & Fulham	-48
14	Haringey	-50
15	Harrow	-1
16	Havering	14
17	Hillingdon	-12
18	Hounslow	177
19	Islington	-168
20	Kensington & Chelsea	21
21	Kingston upon Thames	-22
22	Lambeth	88

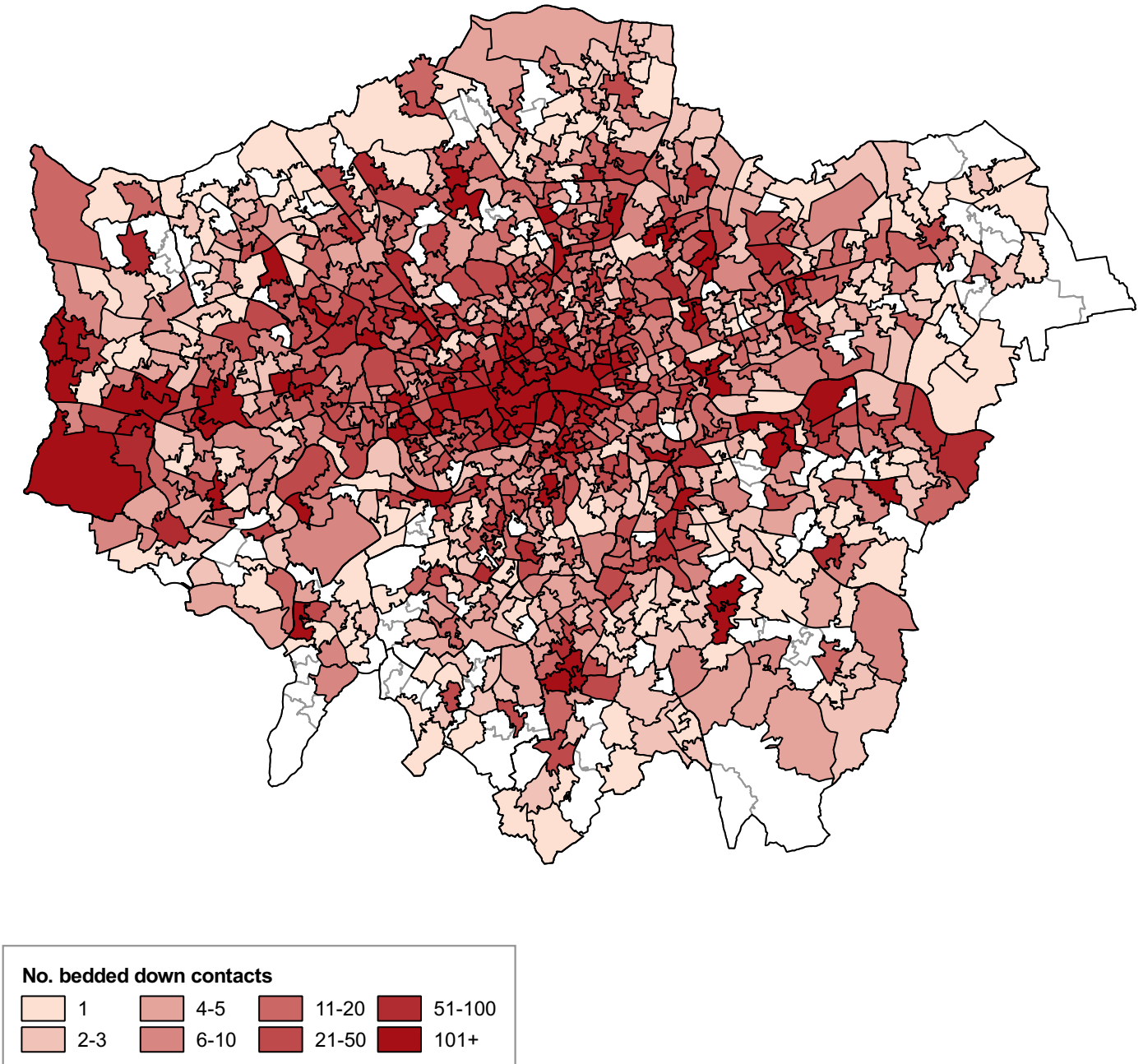
Key	Borough	Change
23	Lewisham	20
24	Merton	15
25	Newham	-46
26	Redbridge	29
27	Richmond	-1
28	Southwark	0
29	Sutton	0
30	Tower Hamlets	11
31	Waltham Forest	-15
32	Wandsworth	-8
33	Westminster	-29
34	Heathrow	-74

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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 2025/26**



## 4. HISTORY PRIOR TO ROUGH SLEEPING

This section of the report presents information about people's circumstances prior to the start of a new or repeat instance of rough sleeping in 2025/26. 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.

As explained in the introduction to this report, the definitions of people who are new or returning to rough sleeping 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 share this information. It should be noted that 42% of people new to rough sleeping and 44% of people returning to rough sleeping during 2025/26 did not have any information recorded about their previous circumstances.

## 4.1 History prior to rough sleeping: People new to rough sleeping

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 to rough sleeping' 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 people returning to rough sleeping presented in section 4.2, if they were first seen in the year as a person new to rough sleeping, had a period of at least 180 days of not being seen, and were then seen again.

**Table 4: People new to rough sleeping, by last settled base, 2024/25 - 2025/26**

Last settled base in the UK	2024/25		2025/26	
	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Long-term accommodation</b>				
Living with family/friends/partner	1,516	28.1%	1,371	27.5%
Private rented accommodation	1,226	22.7%	1,111	22.3%
Council tenancy (local authority accommodation)	188	3.5%	159	3.2%
Housing association/RSL accommodation	82	1.5%	100	2.0%
Sheltered housing/registered care accommodation	34	0.6%	14	0.3%
Employment-related accommodation (except armed forces)	34	0.6%	25	0.5%
Owner occupied accommodation	23	0.4%	17	0.3%
<i>Long-term accommodation subtotal</i>	<i>3,103</i>	<i>57.6%</i>	<i>2,797</i>	<i>56.2%</i>
<b>Short or medium-term accommodation</b>				
Hostel or other supported accommodation	234	4.3%	202	4.1%
Temporary accommodation (local authority)	146	2.7%	121	2.4%
B&B (not local authority TA)	22	0.4%	27	0.5%
Winter/night shelter	10	0.2%	7	0.1%
Clinic/detox/rehab	7	0.1%	4	0.1%
Squat	18	0.3%	17	0.3%
<i>Short or medium-term accommodation subtotal</i>	<i>437</i>	<i>8.1%</i>	<i>378</i>	<i>7.6%</i>
<b>Institutional &amp; armed forces accommodation</b>				
Asylum support accommodation (NASS/other)	944	17.5%	1,037	20.8%
Care (local authority youth care)	11	0.2%	7	0.1%
Hospital	9	0.2%	17	0.3%
Prison	131	2.4%	153	3.1%
Probation accommodation	7	0.1%	17	0.3%
Armed forces accommodation	0	0.0%	1	0.0%
<i>Institutional &amp; armed forces accommodation subtotal</i>	<i>1,102</i>	<i>20.4%</i>	<i>1,232</i>	<i>24.7%</i>
No settled base since arriving in UK	444	8.2%	336	6.7%
Other	132	2.4%	73	1.5%
Not known	172	3.2%	162	3.3%
Not recorded	3,502		3,679	
<b>Total (excl. not recorded)</b>	<b>5,390</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>4,978</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Total (incl. not recorded)</b>	<b>8,892</b>		<b>8,657</b>	

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

Of those people new to rough sleeping during 2025/26 with information recorded about their last settled base prior to sleeping rough in London, 1,037 (21% of the total) reported that they had been staying in asylum support accommodation. This compares to 18% of people new to

rough sleeping coming from asylum support accommodation in 2024/25, confirming that the asylum system continues to represent a significant route onto the streets of the capital. Section 4.3 examines this in more detail.

The majority (56%) of people new to rough sleeping had come from some form of long-term accommodation, mainly comprising people who had been living with family, friends or a partner (28%), or who had been tenants in private rented accommodation (22%). These proportions are broadly consistent with those seen in 2024/25.

153 people new to rough sleeping reported that their last settled base was prison. While this is a fairly small proportion of the overall population, at 3%, it has grown slightly compared to previous years.

336 people new to rough sleeping (7%) were recorded as not having had a settled base since arriving in the UK, which is slightly lower than the 444 (8%) in 2024/25.

**Table 5: People new to rough sleeping in 2025/26, 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	56	9	0	0	7	0	4	76	1.5%
Arrears/debts - issues with benefits	2	77	6	0	0	2	0	1	88	1.8%
Arrears/debts - living costs	13	117	28	0	0	13	0	3	174	3.5%
Arrears/debts - loss of employment	23	136	40	0	0	12	0	4	215	4.3%
Arrears/debts - other	5	67	7	0	0	4	0	1	84	1.7%
End of tenancy agreement	0	105	11	0	0	16	0	2	134	2.7%
Illegal eviction	0	117	0	0	0	5	0	1	123	2.5%
Given non-priority decision	0	17	0	0	0	4	0	0	21	0.4%
Relationship breakdown	753	0	76	0	0	39	0	4	872	17.5%
Death of relative/friend	14	2	6	0	0	25	0	1	48	1.0%
Domestic violence - victim	9	0	35	0	0	11	0	3	58	1.2%
Harassment/abuse/violence - victim	8	0	72	0	0	18	0	0	98	2.0%
Unmanaged support need	33	23	39	0	0	5	0	0	100	2.0%
Housing conditions	30	0	36	0	0	14	0	1	81	1.6%
Relocated to be nearer family/friends/community	0	0	12	0	0	1	0	0	13	0.3%
Relocated seeking work	0	0	11	0	0	2	0	1	14	0.3%
Transient/travelling around	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	1	16	0.3%
Anti-social behaviour - perpetrator	13	77	8	0	0	8	0	0	106	2.1%
Domestic violence - perpetrator	4	2	1	0	0	4	0	0	11	0.2%
Taken into custody	3	4	0	0	0	16	0	1	24	0.5%
End of time-limited stay	0	0	0	229	0	19	0	4	252	5.1%
End of asylum accommodation - positive Home Office decision	0	0	0	909	0	10	0	1	920	18.5%
End of asylum accommodation - negative Home Office decision	0	0	0	31	0	2	0	3	36	0.7%
End of asylum accommodation - withdrawal of application	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.0%
No departure - still has the accommodation	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	50	1.0%
Other	107	217	129	7	0	144	0	13	617	12.4%
No settled base since arriving in UK	0	0	0	0	0	0	336	0	336	6.7%
Not known	57	62	41	9	0	5	0	236	410	8.2%
<b>Type of departure total (no.)</b>	<b>1,074</b>	<b>1,079</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>1,186</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>4,978</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Type of departure total (%)</b>	<b>21.6%</b>	<b>21.7%</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>23.8%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

Base: 4,978 people new to rough sleeping for whom information about their last settled base was recorded. This excludes 3,679 people new to rough sleeping for whom no information was recorded.

Where a cause of departure category relates to a specific type of settled base (e.g. asylum accommodation), totals may not align exactly with those in Table 4, due to cases where the departure was due to another cause.

The most commonly recorded underlying cause of departure was leaving asylum accommodation with a positive Home Office decision, with 920 people (18%) reporting this. A further 36 people (1%) reported leaving asylum support accommodation with a negative decision.

The second most commonly recorded cause was relationship breakdown (872 people, 18%), and in the majority of these cases (753 people) the type of departure was being asked to leave by the person they were staying with.

637 people (13%) left their last settled base due to financial issues relating to arrears or debts, of which 215 (4%) had lost their employment, and 174 (3%) had struggled with living costs. 98 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 58 (1%) left to escape domestic violence.

The relative proportions of types of departure and underlying causes of departure in 2025/26 are broadly in line with those recorded in 2024/25.

## 4.2 History prior to rough sleeping: People returning to rough sleeping

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 people new to rough sleeping presented in section 4.1, if they were first seen in the year as a person new to rough sleeping, 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: People returning to rough sleeping, by last settled base, 2024/25 - 2025/26**

Last settled base in the UK	2024/25		2025/26	
	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Long-term accommodation</b>				
Living with family/friends/partner	286	16.2%	255	16.5%
Private rented accommodation	349	19.8%	346	22.4%
Council tenancy (local authority accommodation)	64	3.6%	48	3.1%
Housing association/RSL accommodation	32	1.8%	31	2.0%
Sheltered housing/registered care accommodation	25	1.4%	15	1.0%
Employment-related accommodation (except armed forces)	9	0.5%	5	0.3%
Owner occupied accommodation	3	0.2%	1	0.1%
<i>Long-term accommodation subtotal</i>	<i>768</i>	<i>43.5%</i>	<i>701</i>	<i>45.3%</i>
<b>Short or medium-term accommodation</b>				
Hostel or other supported accommodation	310	17.5%	247	16.0%
Temporary accommodation (local authority)	124	7.0%	111	7.2%
B&B (not local authority TA)	11	0.6%	10	0.6%
Winter/night shelter	17	1.0%	17	1.1%
Clinic/detox/rehab	4	0.2%	3	0.2%
Squat	13	0.7%	8	0.5%
<i>Short or medium-term accommodation subtotal</i>	<i>479</i>	<i>27.1%</i>	<i>396</i>	<i>25.6%</i>
<b>Institutional &amp; armed forces accommodation</b>				
Asylum support accommodation (NASS/other)	28	1.6%	31	2.0%
Care (local authority youth care)	1	0.1%	0	0.0%
Hospital	16	0.9%	15	1.0%
Prison	112	6.3%	99	6.4%
Probation accommodation	7	0.4%	11	0.7%
Armed forces accommodation	1	0.1%	0	0.0%
<i>Institutional &amp; armed forces accommodation subtotal</i>	<i>165</i>	<i>9.3%</i>	<i>156</i>	<i>10.1%</i>
No settled base since arriving in UK	242	13.7%	194	12.5%
Other	56	3.2%	43	2.8%
Not known	57	3.2%	58	3.7%
Not recorded	1,242		1,206	
<b>Total (excl. not recorded)</b>	<b>1,767</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,548</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Total (incl. not recorded)</b>	<b>3,009</b>		<b>2,754</b>	

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

The proportions of types of last settled base from which people returning to rough sleeping in 2025/26 had departed are broadly in line with those recorded in 2024/25. Of those people whose history prior to returning to rough sleeping was recorded, 45% reported their last settled base as having been some form of long-term accommodation (compared to 56% of people new to rough sleeping), while 26% reported short or medium-term accommodation (compared to 8% of people new to rough sleeping). 22% were tenants in private rented accommodation, while 16% had been living with family, friends or a partner. 16% had been living in a hostel or supported accommodation (compared to 4% of people new to rough sleeping), while 7% had been living in local authority temporary accommodation (compared to 2% of people new to rough sleeping).

The trend of people arriving on the streets following departure from asylum support accommodation continued to be much less pronounced amongst people returning to rough sleeping, with 2% reporting this type of last settled base, compared to 21% of people new to rough sleeping.

**Table 7: People returning to rough sleeping in 2025/26, 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	1.0%
Arrears/debts - issues with benefits	3	37	2	0	0	1	0	0	43	2.8%
Arrears/debts - living costs	2	30	6	0	0	1	0	0	39	2.5%
Arrears/debts - loss of employment	2	25	8	0	0	2	0	0	37	2.4%
Arrears/debts - other	3	29	2	0	0	2	0	0	36	2.3%
End of tenancy agreement	0	38	5	0	0	4	0	1	48	3.1%
Illegal eviction	0	23	0	0	0	1	0	0	24	1.6%
Given non-priority decision	0	15	0	0	0	3	0	1	19	1.2%
Relationship breakdown	121	0	24	0	0	7	0	4	156	10.1%
Death of relative/friend	4	0	1	0	0	3	0	1	9	0.6%
Domestic violence - victim	2	0	6	0	0	4	0	0	12	0.8%
Harassment/abuse/violence - victim	1	0	39	0	0	9	0	1	50	3.2%
Unmanaged support need	4	23	24	0	0	4	0	1	56	3.6%
Housing conditions	3	0	20	0	0	4	0	2	29	1.9%
Relocated to be nearer family/friends/community	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	7	0.5%
Relocated seeking work	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.2%
Transient/travelling around	0	0	6	0	0	1	0	0	7	0.5%
Anti-social behaviour - perpetrator	1	78	5	0	0	1	0	0	85	5.5%
Domestic violence - perpetrator	2	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	0.4%
Taken into custody	1	7	0	0	0	6	0	0	14	0.9%
End of time-limited stay	0	0	0	144	0	8	0	2	154	9.9%
End of asylum accommodation - positive Home Office decision	0	0	0	18	0	2	0	0	20	1.3%
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	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.1%
No departure - still has the accommodation	0	0	0	0	68	0	0	0	68	4.4%
Other	20	91	62	4	0	47	0	4	228	14.7%
No settled base since arriving in UK	0	0	0	0	0	0	194	0	194	12.5%
Not known	16	33	22	0	0	2	0	110	183	11.8%
<b>Type of departure total (no.)</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>1,548</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Type of departure total (%)</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>28.9%</b>	<b>15.7%</b>	<b>11.0%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

Base: 1,548 people returning to rough sleeping for whom information about their last settled base was recorded. This excludes 1,206 people returning to rough sleeping for whom no information was recorded.

Where a cause of departure category relates to a specific type of settled base (e.g. asylum accommodation), totals may not align exactly with those in Table 6, due to cases where the departure was due to another cause.

The most frequently recorded cause of departure from last settled base for people returning to rough sleeping was relationship breakdown, with 156 people (10%) having reported this, the majority of whom (121 people) had been asked to leave by the person they were staying with. This was closely followed by people who left having reached the end of a time-limited stay, with 154 people (10%) having reported this.

171 (11%) people returning to rough sleeping left their last settled base due to financial issues relating to arrears or debts, with benefits issues being the single most common cause amongst this group, reported by 43 people (3%). 85 people (5%) left their last settled base as the result of being a perpetrator of anti-social behaviour, the majority of whom were evicted (78). 56 people (4%) left due to difficulties arising from an unmanaged support need.

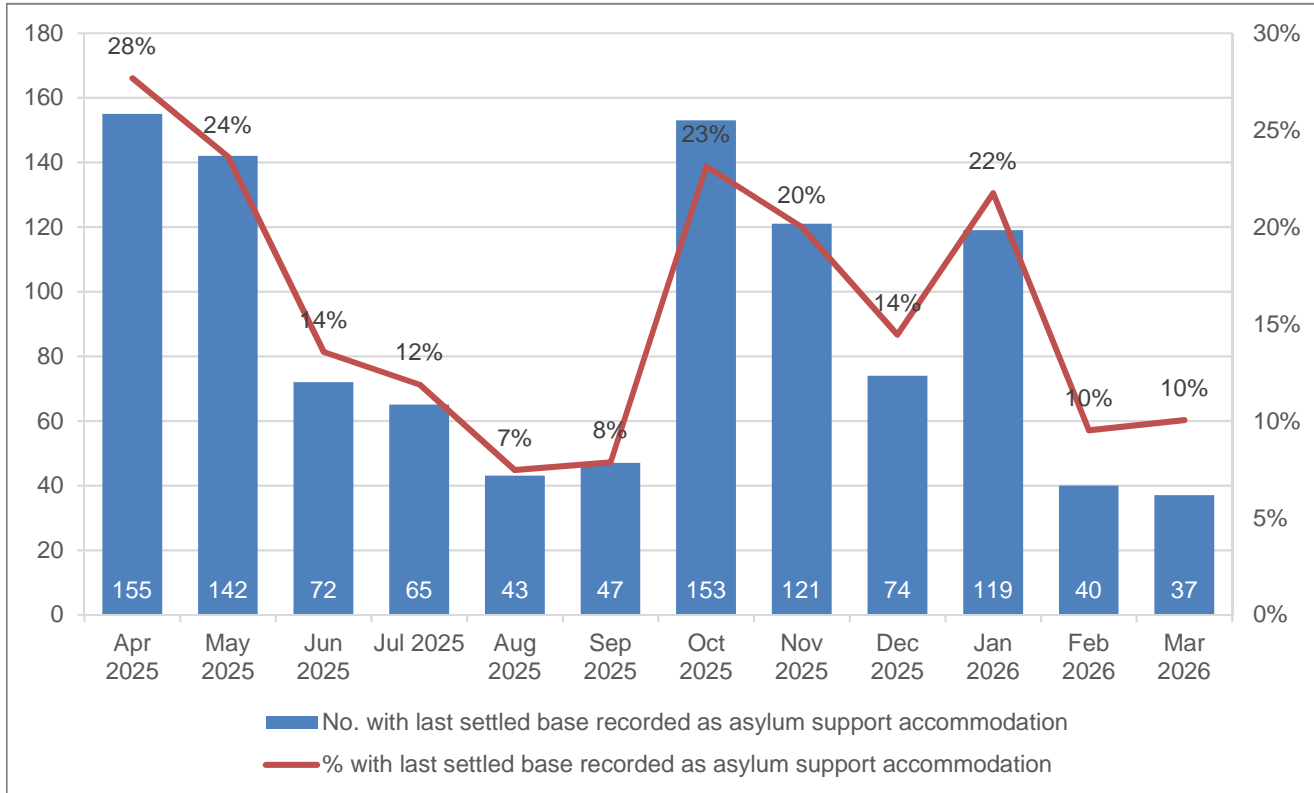
Looking at types of departure, eviction was the most common category, with 447 people (29%) having been evicted. This compares to 22% of people new to rough sleeping who had been evicted from their last settled base.

The proportions of types and causes of departure for people returning to rough sleeping in 2025/26 are broadly in line with those recorded in 2024/25.

### 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 2025/26, either as a person new or returning to rough sleeping, 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 7: People new or returning to rough sleeping during 2025/26 whose last settled base was recorded as asylum support accommodation, by month**



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

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 number of people seen rough sleeping after leaving asylum support accommodation fluctuated throughout the year. This was likely caused by a combination of factors, including changes in Home Office decision-making policy, a general downturn in decision activity over the summer (also observed in 2024/25), and pauses in evictions during SWEP and the Christmas period, alongside increased availability of winter night shelter.

Between December 2024 and March 2026, the Home Office piloted an extension to the move on period for newly recognised refugees in asylum accommodation, from 28 to 56 days.

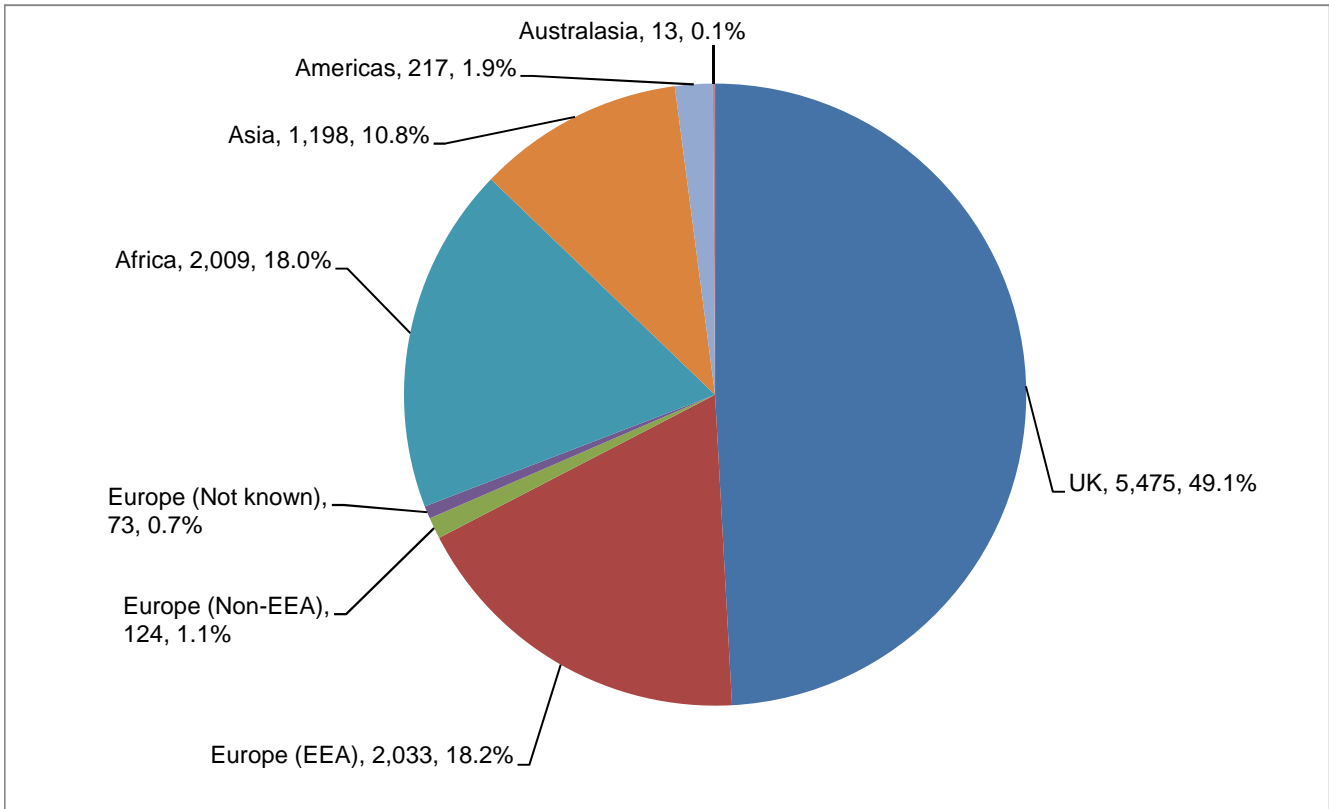
However, in September 2025, the Home Office changed its approach, which meant that single adults, aside from those with specific additional needs, would receive the 28-day move on period. The increase in rough sleeping among people leaving asylum accommodation in October 2025 is likely to be related to this change, as well as an increase in decision-making by the Home Office following the summer lull.

In December 2025, the Home Office made it possible for someone to request an extension of their asylum accommodation, if they had received the 28-day move on period and were at risk of immediate homelessness. March 2026 saw the conclusion of the 56-day move on pilot, and the Home Office's decision to implement a 42-day move on period for all newly recognised refugees. This may have contributed to the reduction in numbers of people seen in February and March 2026.

## 5. DEMOGRAPHICS & SUPPORT NEEDS

### 5.1 Nationality: Overall composition

**Chart 8: People seen rough sleeping in 2025/26, by nationality**



Base: 11,142 people seen rough sleeping during the period whose nationality was known. This excludes 1,796 people whose nationality was not known.

The nationality profile of people seen rough sleeping in London remains diverse, with a total of 142 different nationalities recorded during 2025/26. The proportion of people seen rough sleeping who were UK nationals was 49% (5,475 people), which is marginally higher than the proportion of 47% in 2024/25. The proportion of people from EEA countries was 18% (2,033 people), which is lower than the proportion of 21% in 2024/25.

People from African countries constituted the third largest nationality group, at 18% (2,009 people). This is a very slight increase compared to the 17% from African countries recorded in 2024/25. Asian nationals constituted 11% of people seen rough sleeping in 2025/26 (1,198 people), which is the same proportion as in 2024/25.

Longer-range analysis shows that the number of UK nationals has increased by 28% since 2022/23, while the number of EEA nationals has decreased by 22% in the same period. The number of African nationals increased by 134% during this time, and the number of Asian nationals increased by 68%. This is set against an increase of 29% in the overall number of people seen rough sleeping, when comparing 2022/23 to 2025/26.

## 5.2 Nationality: Yearly comparison

Table 8: Nationality breakdown of people seen rough sleeping, 2022/23 - 2025/26

Nationality	2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		2025/26	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
UK	4,265	48.6%	4,869	45.5%	5,462	47.2%	5,475	49.1%
Romania	1,031	11.7%	957	8.9%	828	7.2%	719	6.5%
Poland	550	6.3%	566	5.3%	573	5.0%	438	3.9%
Lithuania	153	1.7%	147	1.4%	153	1.3%	136	1.2%
Portugal	128	1.5%	121	1.1%	127	1.1%	124	1.1%
Ireland (Republic of)	127	1.4%	144	1.3%	133	1.2%	120	1.1%
Bulgaria	120	1.4%	107	1.0%	112	1.0%	94	0.8%
Italy	92	1.0%	113	1.1%	105	0.9%	91	0.8%
France	62	0.7%	51	0.5%	58	0.5%	51	0.5%
Spain	61	0.7%	53	0.5%	61	0.5%	48	0.4%
Latvia	65	0.7%	40	0.4%	45	0.4%	46	0.4%
Other European (EEA) countries	204	2.3%	197	1.8%	211	1.8%	166	1.5%
Europe (EEA)	2,593	29.5%	2,496	23.3%	2,406	20.8%	2,033	18.2%
Ukraine	30	0.3%	31	0.3%	39	0.3%	40	0.4%
Turkey	18	0.2%	30	0.3%	36	0.3%	39	0.4%
Other European (Non-EEA) countries	47	0.5%	46	0.4%	51	0.4%	45	0.4%
Europe (Non-EEA)	95	1.1%	107	1.0%	126	1.1%	124	1.1%
Europe (Not known)	66	0.8%	62	0.6%	62	0.5%	73	0.7%
Eritrea	259	2.9%	671	6.3%	636	5.5%	713	6.4%
Sudan	108	1.2%	393	3.7%	452	3.9%	378	3.4%
Nigeria	84	1.0%	120	1.1%	140	1.2%	162	1.5%
Ethiopia	44	0.5%	89	0.8%	110	1.0%	112	1.0%
Somalia	65	0.7%	79	0.7%	83	0.7%	94	0.8%
Ghana	36	0.4%	45	0.4%	64	0.6%	57	0.5%
Morocco	19	0.2%	29	0.3%	37	0.3%	54	0.5%
Algeria	37	0.4%	48	0.4%	55	0.5%	51	0.5%
Other African countries	207	2.4%	316	3.0%	376	3.3%	388	3.5%
Africa	859	9.8%	1,790	16.7%	1,953	16.9%	2,009	18.0%
India	255	2.9%	378	3.5%	396	3.4%	386	3.5%
Afghanistan	87	1.0%	175	1.6%	243	2.1%	186	1.7%
Iran	87	1.0%	147	1.4%	186	1.6%	151	1.4%
Pakistan	44	0.5%	50	0.5%	43	0.4%	61	0.5%
Bangladesh	36	0.4%	44	0.4%	58	0.5%	55	0.5%
Iraq	31	0.4%	41	0.4%	43	0.4%	48	0.4%
Sri Lanka	36	0.4%	46	0.4%	47	0.4%	38	0.3%
Yemen	7	0.1%	16	0.1%	24	0.2%	38	0.3%
Other Asian countries	129	1.5%	227	2.1%	275	2.4%	235	2.1%
Asia	712	8.1%	1,124	10.5%	1,315	11.4%	1,198	10.8%
Jamaica	57	0.6%	77	0.7%	66	0.6%	51	0.5%
Brazil	36	0.4%	42	0.4%	31	0.3%	46	0.4%
Other Americas countries	90	1.0%	131	1.2%	133	1.2%	120	1.1%
Americas	183	2.1%	250	2.3%	230	2.0%	217	1.9%
Australasia	8	0.1%	7	0.1%	10	0.1%	13	0.1%
Not known	1,272		1,288		1,667		1,796	
<b>Total (excl. not known)</b>	<b>8,781</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>10,705</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>11,564</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>11,142</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Total (incl. not known)	10,053		11,993		13,231		12,938	

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

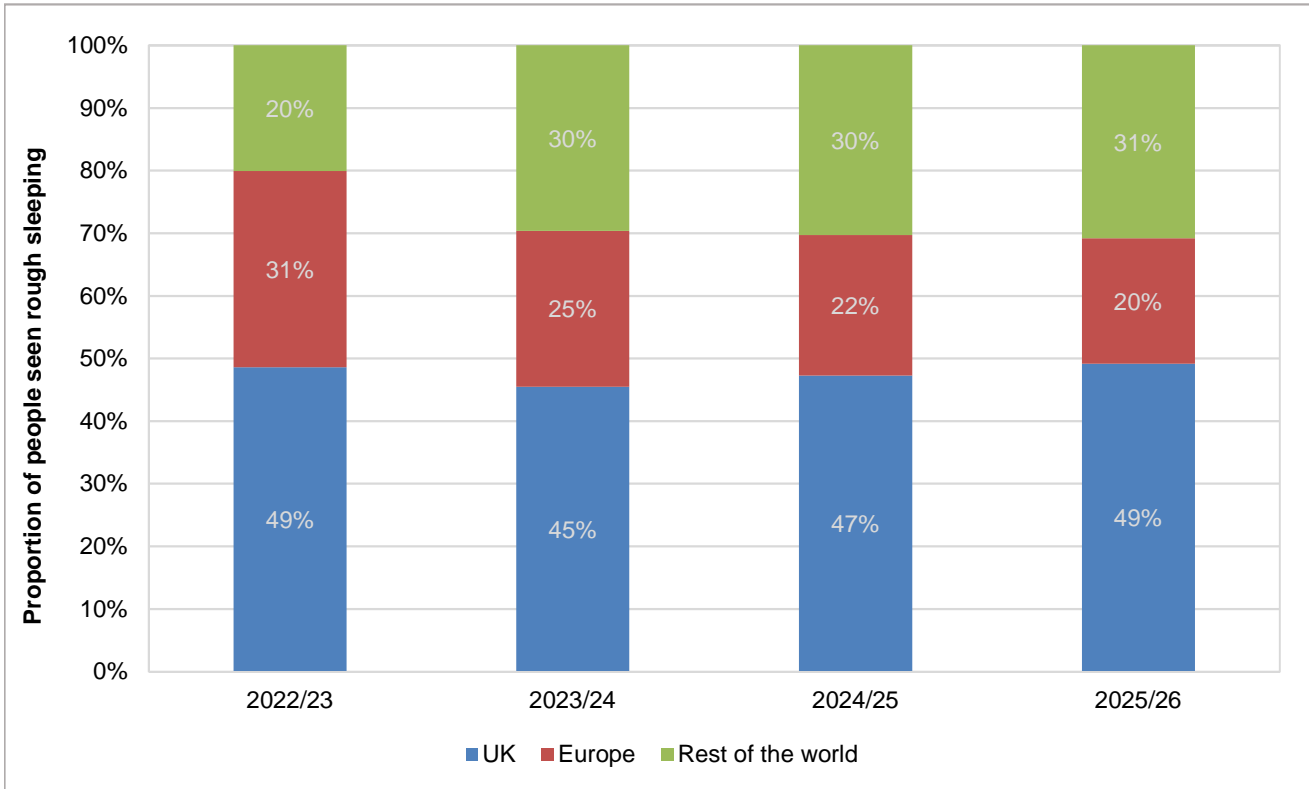
The most commonly recorded nationalities in 2025/26 have remained consistent with those in 2024/25, with UK nationals (5,475, 49%) comprising the single largest nationality. Romanians (719, 6%) represented the second most numerous nationality, while Eritreans (713, 6%) were the third. Poles (438, 4%) have continued to constitute the fourth most common nationality, while people from India (386, 3%) and Sudan (378, 3%) were the fifth and sixth most frequently seen.

Although Romanians remain the most commonly recorded non-UK nationality, there has been a continued decline in their numbers over recent years, with 312 fewer people seen in 2025/26 compared to 2022/23 (a 30% decrease). By contrast, there has been a significant increase in the number of Eritreans seen rough sleeping, with 454 more people seen in 2025/26 compared to 2022/23 (a 175% increase).

The number of people seen rough sleeping whose nationality was not known was 1,796. This is an increase of 8% compared to 2024/25, which is significantly smaller than that of 29% from 2023/24 to 2024/25. 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.

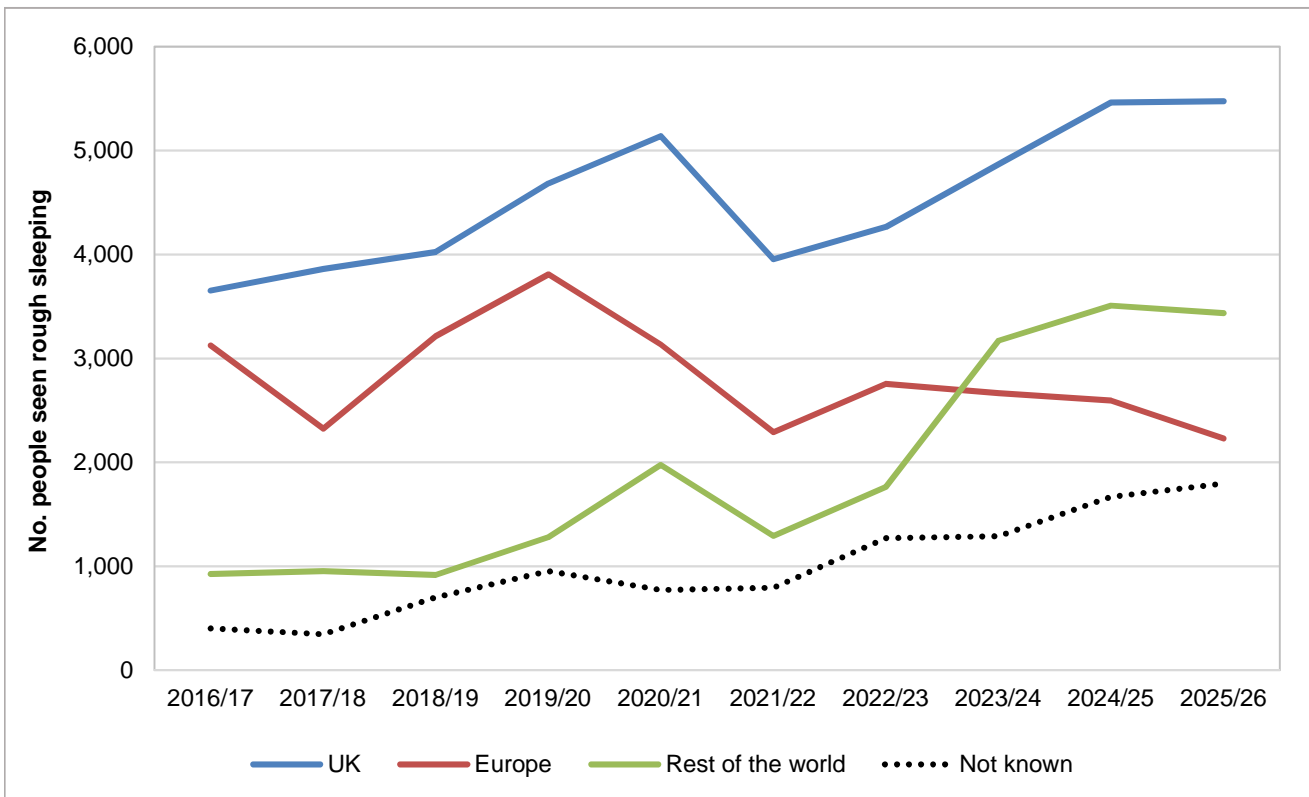
A full breakdown of all nationalities seen rough sleeping during the period can be obtained from the CHAIN Annual Data Tables file which accompanies this report.

**Chart 9: Nationality proportions for people seen rough sleeping, 2022/23 - 2025/26**



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

**Chart 10: Nationality of people seen rough sleeping, 2016/17 - 2025/26**



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 2025/26, the proportion of people seen rough sleeping from this 'Rest of the world' heading was 31%, which continues the trend first observed in 2023/24 for this group to account for a higher percentage than those from European countries (excluding the UK), who represented 20% of the total this year. The decrease in the overall total of people seen rough sleeping appears to be primarily driven by the reduction in the number of EEA nationals.

### 5.3 Nationality: Flow, stock, returner model

**Table 9: Nationality of people seen rough sleeping during 2025/26, by flow, stock, returner breakdown**

Nationality category	Flow		Stock		Returner		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
UK	2,993	55%	1,536	28%	946	17%	5,475	100%
Europe	973	44%	829	37%	428	19%	2,230	100%
Rest of the world	2,430	71%	720	21%	287	8%	3,437	100%
Not known	1,682	94%	99	6%	15	1%	1,796	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,078</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>3,184</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>1,676</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>12,938</b>	<b>100%</b>

Base: 12,938 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 44% of European nationals recorded as new to rough sleeping (flow category), compared to 71% of rest of the world nationals. European nationals have the highest proportion of people seen across two consecutive years (stock category), at 37%, while people from the 'Rest of the world' have the lowest proportion, at 21%. 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 8%. These proportions are very similar to those seen in 2024/25.

**Table 10: Flow, stock, returner breakdown of people seen rough sleeping during 2025/26, by nationality**

Nationality category	Flow		Stock		Returner		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
UK	2,993	37%	1,536	48%	946	56%	5,475	42%
Europe	973	12%	829	26%	428	26%	2,230	17%
Rest of the world	2,430	30%	720	23%	287	17%	3,437	27%
Not known	1,682	21%	99	3%	15	1%	1,796	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,078</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3,184</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,676</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>12,938</b>	<b>100%</b>

Base: 12,938 people seen rough sleeping during the period.

UK and European nationals are proportionately overrepresented amongst returners and people seen across two consecutive years (stock category), while the 'Rest of the world' group are proportionately overrepresented amongst people new to rough sleeping (flow category). As might be expected, the proportion of people whose nationality was not known was markedly higher amongst those new to rough sleeping.

## 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 2025/26, by immigration status**

Immigration status	Europe - EEA	Rest of the world	Total
EUSS settled status	738	55	793
EUSS pre-settled status	323	24	347
Pending EUSS application	52	8	60
EEA national - no status under Settlement Scheme*	12	0	12
Irish national	112	0	112
Indefinite leave to remain	144	593	737
Limited leave to remain	32	339	371
Asylum seeker	2	264	266
Refugee	2	1,183	1,185
No valid leave/undocumented	276	670	946
No clear status	322	476	798
Not recorded	18	22	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,033</b>	<b>3,634</b>	<b>5,667</b>

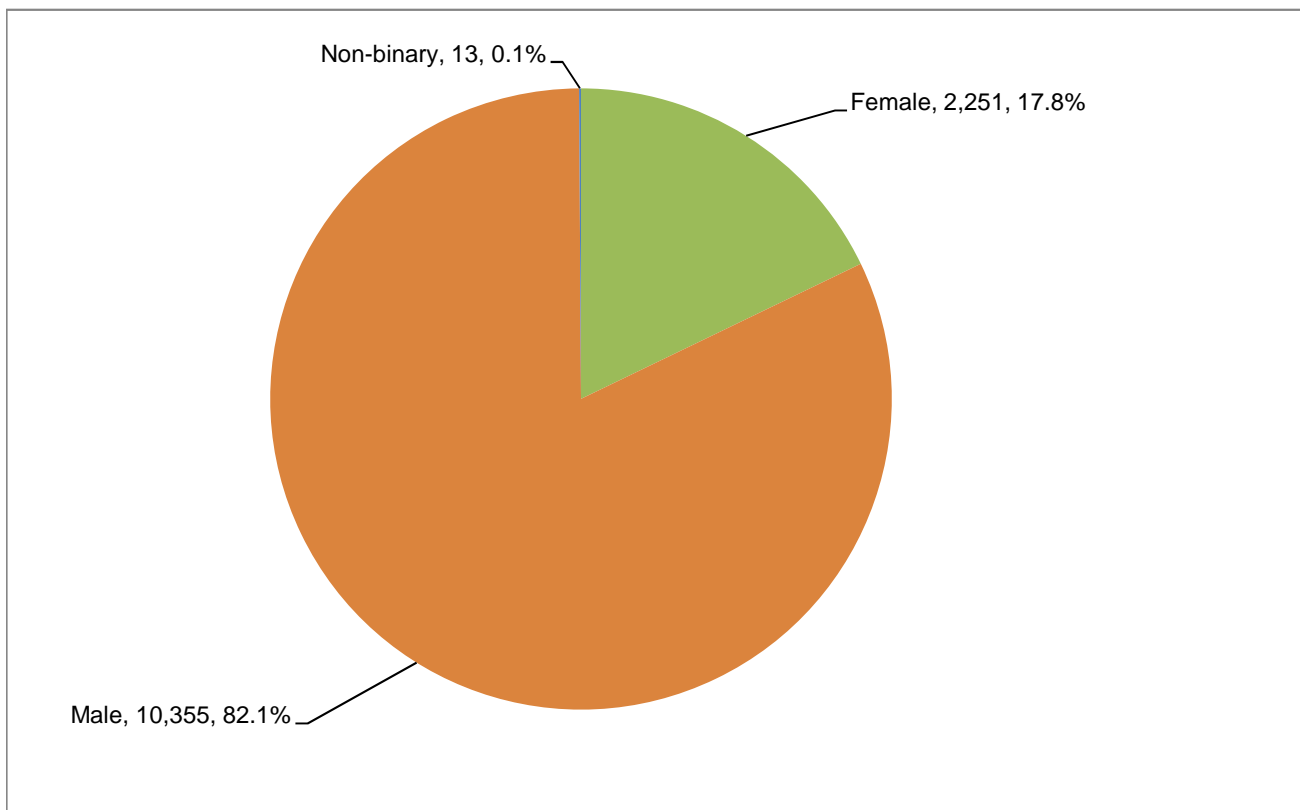
Base: 5,667 people seen rough sleeping during the period whose nationality was known and who were not UK nationals.

\*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 shows that the most commonly recorded immigration status was ‘refugee’, with 21% of non-UK nationals recorded as having refugee status in 2025/26, compared to 19% in 2024/25, and 14% in 2023/24. 27% of non-UK nationals were recorded as having either ‘indefinite leave to remain’ or ‘EUSS settled status’ (1,530 people), while 31% were recorded as having ‘no valid leave/undocumented’ or ‘no clear status’.

## 5.5 Gender

**Chart 11: People seen rough sleeping in 2025/26, by gender**



Base: 12,619 people seen rough sleeping during the period whose gender was known. This excludes 319 people whose gender was not known.

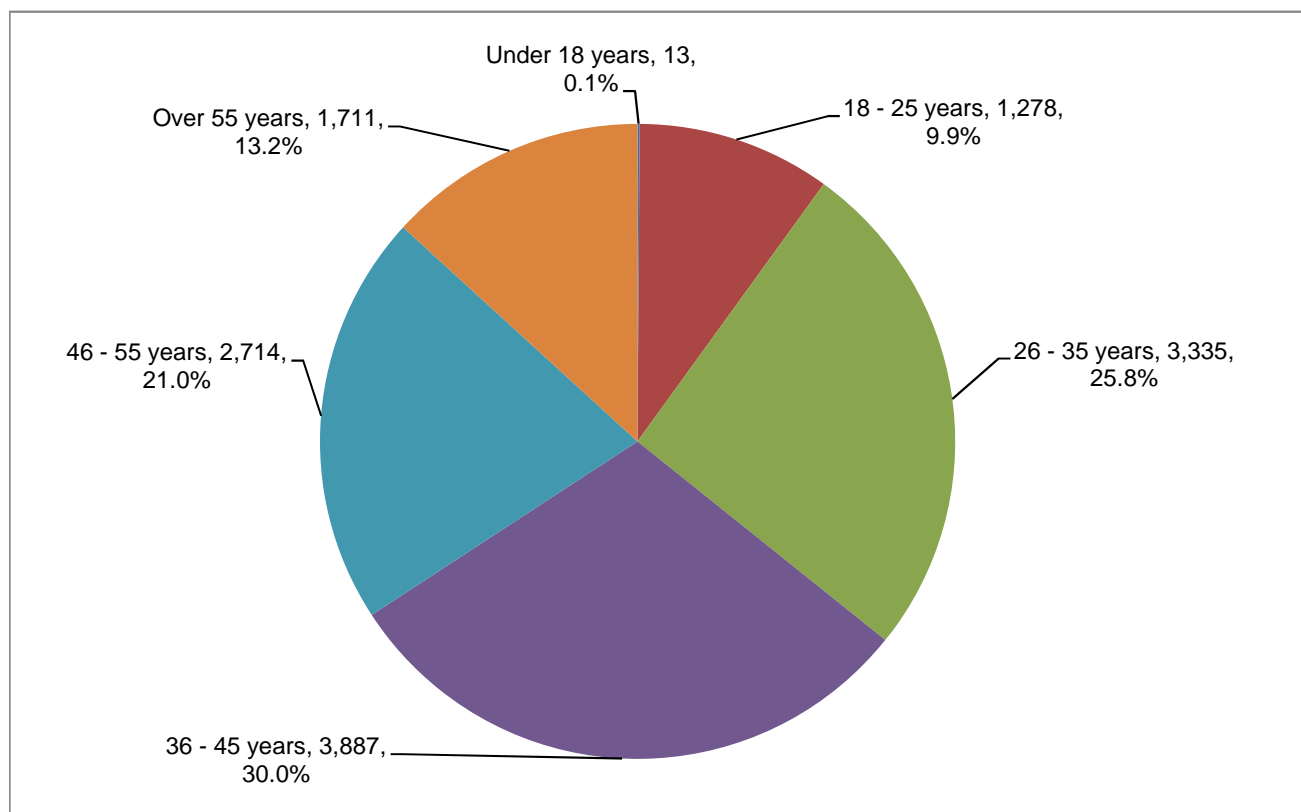
**Table 12: People seen rough sleeping, by gender, 2022/23 - 2025/26**

Gender	2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		2025/26	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Female	1,642	16.7%	1,870	15.9%	2,149	16.6%	2,251	17.8%
Male	8,175	83.2%	9,844	84.0%	10,769	83.2%	10,355	82.1%
Non-binary	11	0.1%	11	0.1%	18	0.1%	13	0.1%
Not known	225		268		295		319	
<b>Total (excl. not known)</b>	<b>9,828</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>11,725</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>12,936</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>12,619</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Total (incl. not known)</b>	<b>10,053</b>		<b>11,993</b>		<b>13,231</b>		<b>12,938</b>	

The percentage breakdown by gender has remained broadly consistent across the last four years. However, it is notable that the number of women seen rough sleeping increased in 2025/26 compared to 2024/25, while the number of men decreased. Across the broader period of 2022/23 to 2025/26, the number of women seen rough sleeping has increased by 37%, compared to an increase of 27% amongst men.

## 5.6 Age

Chart 12: People seen rough sleeping in 2025/26, by age



Base: 12,938 people seen rough sleeping during the period.

Table 13: People seen rough sleeping, by age, 2022/23 - 2025/26

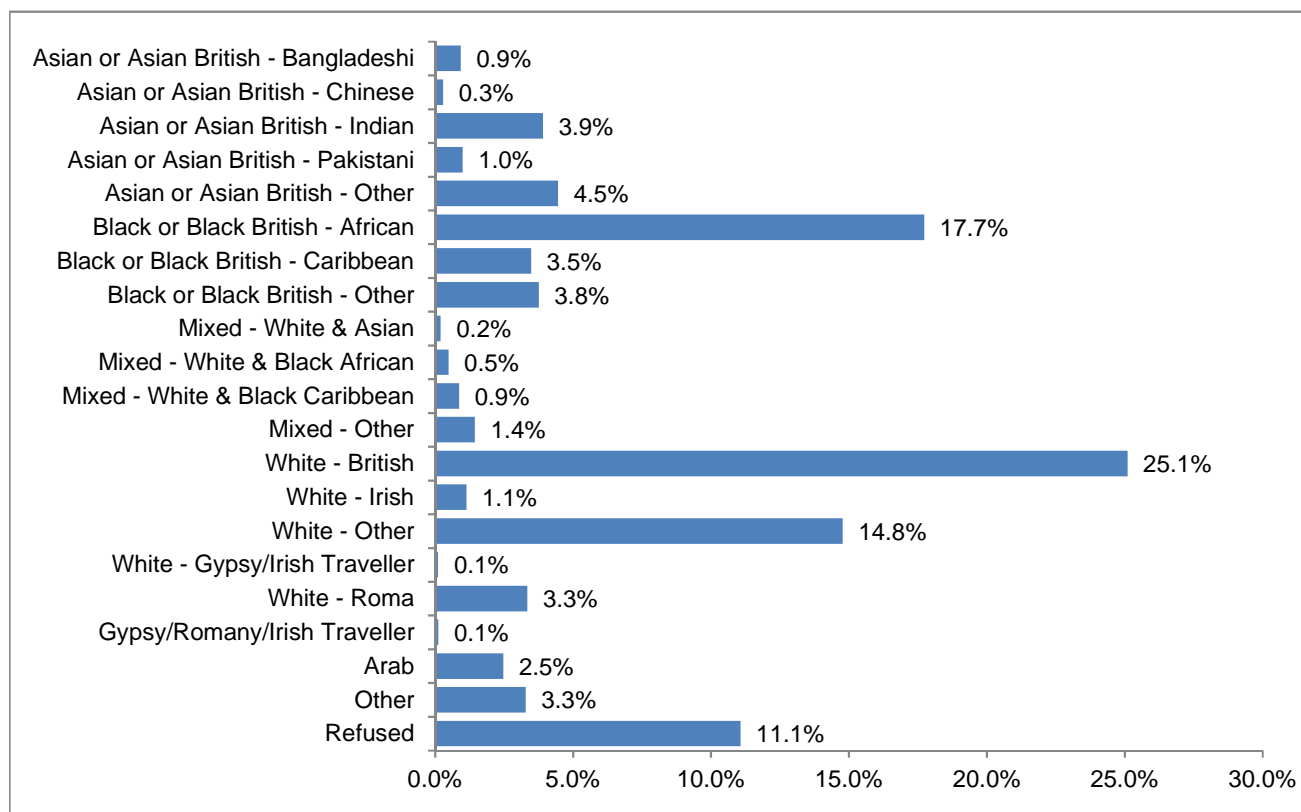
Age	2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		2025/26	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Under 18 years	9	0.1%	13	0.1%	19	0.1%	13	0.1%
18 - 25 years	847	8.4%	1,126	9.4%	1,392	10.5%	1,278	9.9%
26 - 35 years	2,616	26.0%	3,434	28.6%	3,580	27.1%	3,335	25.8%
36 - 45 years	3,229	32.1%	3,645	30.4%	3,902	29.5%	3,887	30.0%
46 - 55 years	2,146	21.3%	2,395	20.0%	2,760	20.9%	2,714	21.0%
Over 55 years	1,206	12.0%	1,380	11.5%	1,578	11.9%	1,711	13.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,053</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>11,993</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>13,231</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>12,938</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Age distribution amongst people seen rough sleeping in 2025/26 remains largely consistent with previous years. 10% (1,291 people) of those seen rough sleeping in 2025/26 were aged 25 or under. People in the over 55 age group represented 13% of the total in 2025/26 (1,711 people), which is a slight increase in proportion compared to the 12% in this group in 2024/25. The over 55 group is the only age category that saw an increase in numbers compared to last year.

There were 13 people aged under 18 recorded rough sleeping this year, which is slightly lower than the total of 19 people in this age group recorded in 2024/25, and represents a return to the level more typically seen in previous years.

## 5.7 Ethnicity

**Chart 13: People seen rough sleeping in 2025/26, by ethnicity**



Base: 12,938 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, 2022/23 - 2025/26**

Ethnicity	2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		2025/26	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Asian (incl. Chinese)	883	8.8%	1,206	10.1%	1,389	10.5%	1,370	10.6%
Black	1,916	19.1%	2,916	24.3%	3,173	24.0%	3,232	25.0%
Mixed	324	3.2%	389	3.2%	404	3.1%	389	3.0%
White (incl. Gypsy/ Irish Traveller/Roma)	5,520	54.9%	5,687	47.4%	6,058	45.8%	5,769	44.6%
Arab/Other	560	5.6%	681	5.7%	845	6.4%	745	5.8%
Missing/Refused	850	8.5%	1,114	9.3%	1,362	10.3%	1,433	11.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,053</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>11,993</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>13,231</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>12,938</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

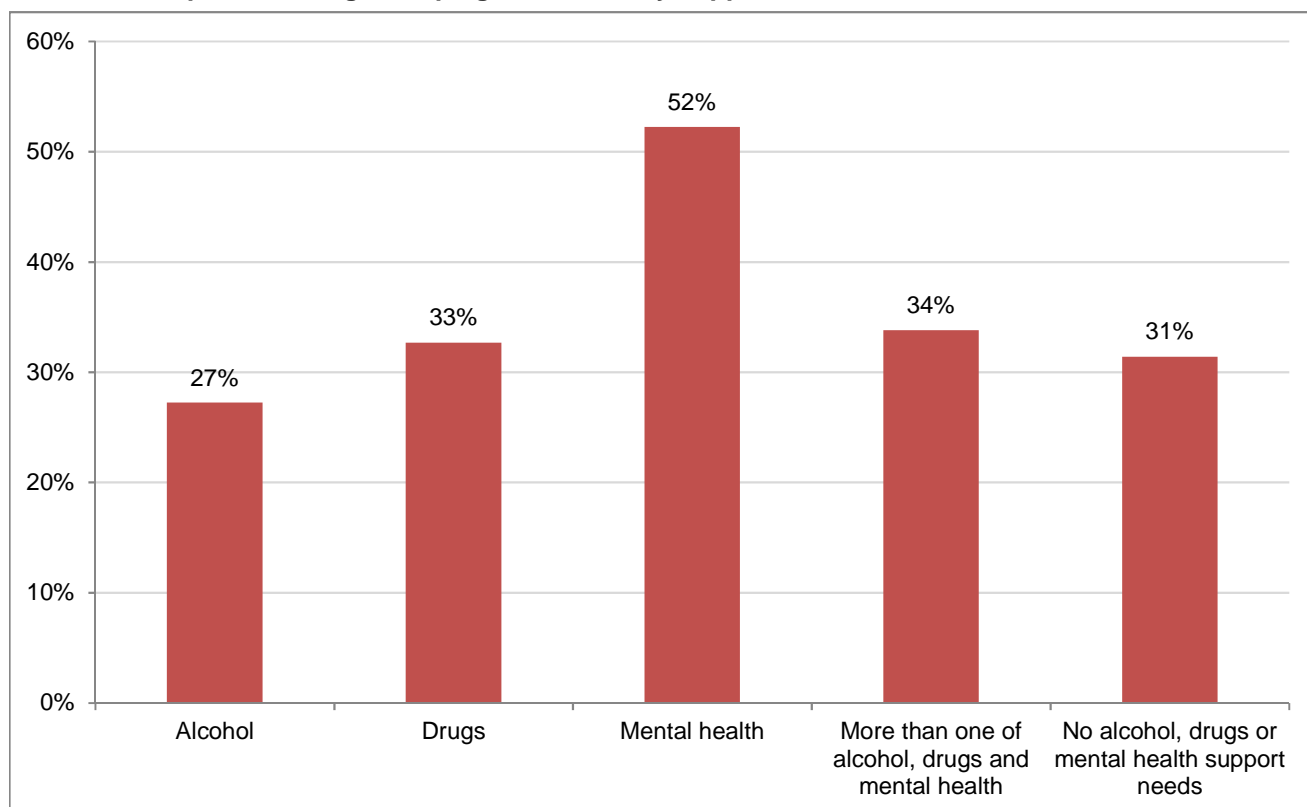
The majority of people seen rough sleeping in London in 2025/26 were White (including Gypsy, Irish Traveller and Roma), with an overall proportion of 45%, which is broadly consistent with the proportion of 46% in 2024/25, and continues the trend towards a lower proportion of people seen rough sleeping being in this group, compared to earlier years. 25% of those seen rough sleeping in the year were Black, which is again similar to the 24% recorded in 2024/25. 11% of those seen rough sleeping in 2025/26 were of Asian ethnicity, which also remains broadly consistent with the proportion of 10% recorded in 2024/25.

The ethnicity composition in 2025/26 confirms the trend first observed in 2023/24, which is 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 29% of people seen rough sleeping in 2025/26 did not have a support needs assessment recorded, the majority of these (87%) being people who had only been seen rough sleeping once or twice.

**Chart 14: People seen rough sleeping in 2025/26, by support needs**



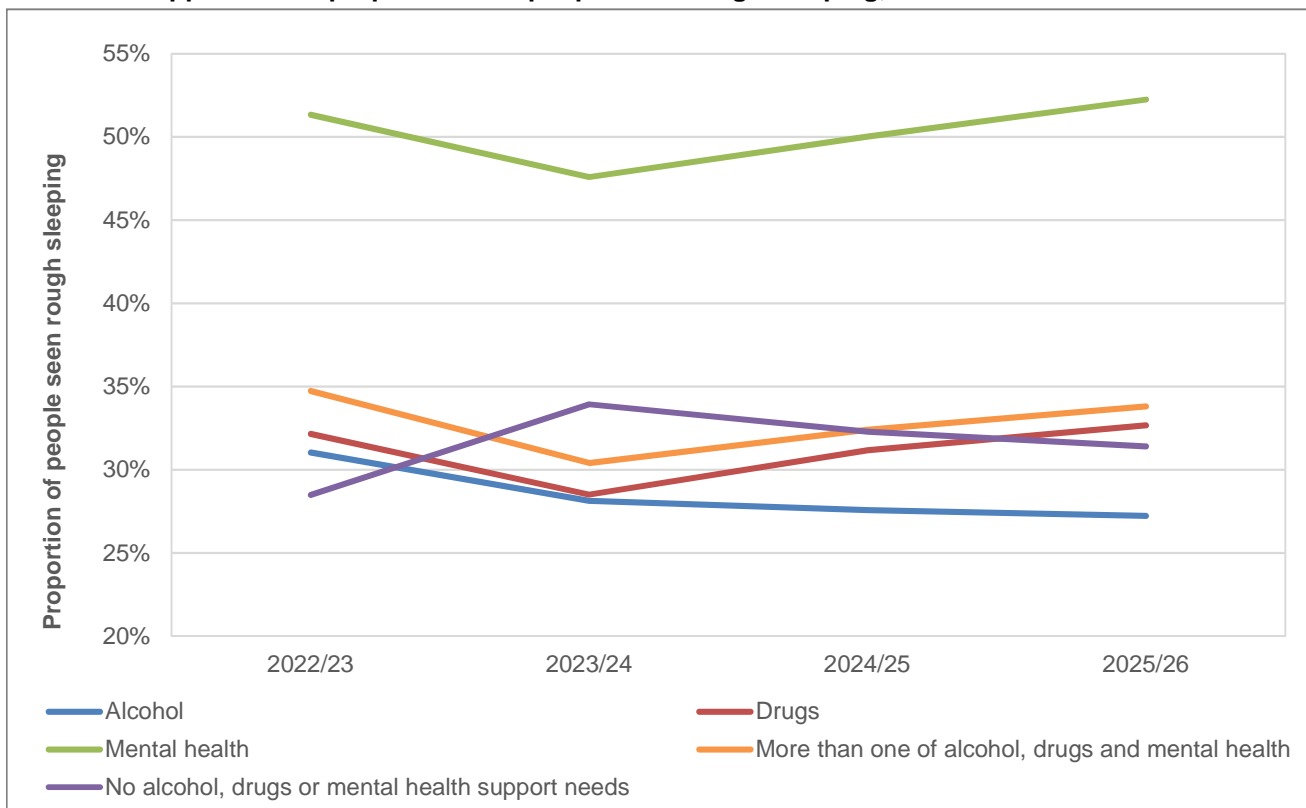
Base: 9,244 people seen rough sleeping during the period who were assessed for at least one of the three support needs. This excludes 3,694 people for whom none of the three needs were assessed.

**Table 15: People seen rough sleeping, by support needs, 2022/23 - 2025/26**

Support need	2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		2025/26	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Alcohol	2,228	31.0%	2,527	28.1%	2,650	27.6%	2,517	27.2%
Drugs	2,308	32.2%	2,561	28.5%	2,996	31.2%	3,020	32.7%
Mental health	3,685	51.3%	4,275	47.6%	4,808	50.0%	4,830	52.3%
More than one of alcohol, drugs and mental health	2,493	34.7%	2,731	30.4%	3,115	32.4%	3,126	33.8%
No alcohol, drugs or mental health support needs	2,045	28.5%	3,048	33.9%	3,104	32.3%	2,903	31.4%
<b>Total (excl. not assessed)</b>	<b>7,178</b>		<b>8,982</b>		<b>9,611</b>		<b>9,244</b>	
<b>Total (incl. not assessed)</b>	<b>10,053</b>		<b>11,993</b>		<b>13,231</b>		<b>12,938</b>	

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

**Chart 15: Support needs proportions for people seen rough sleeping, 2022/23 - 2025/26**



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

2022/23 base: 7,178  
 2023/24 base: 8,982  
 2024/25 base: 9,611  
 2025/26 base: 9,244

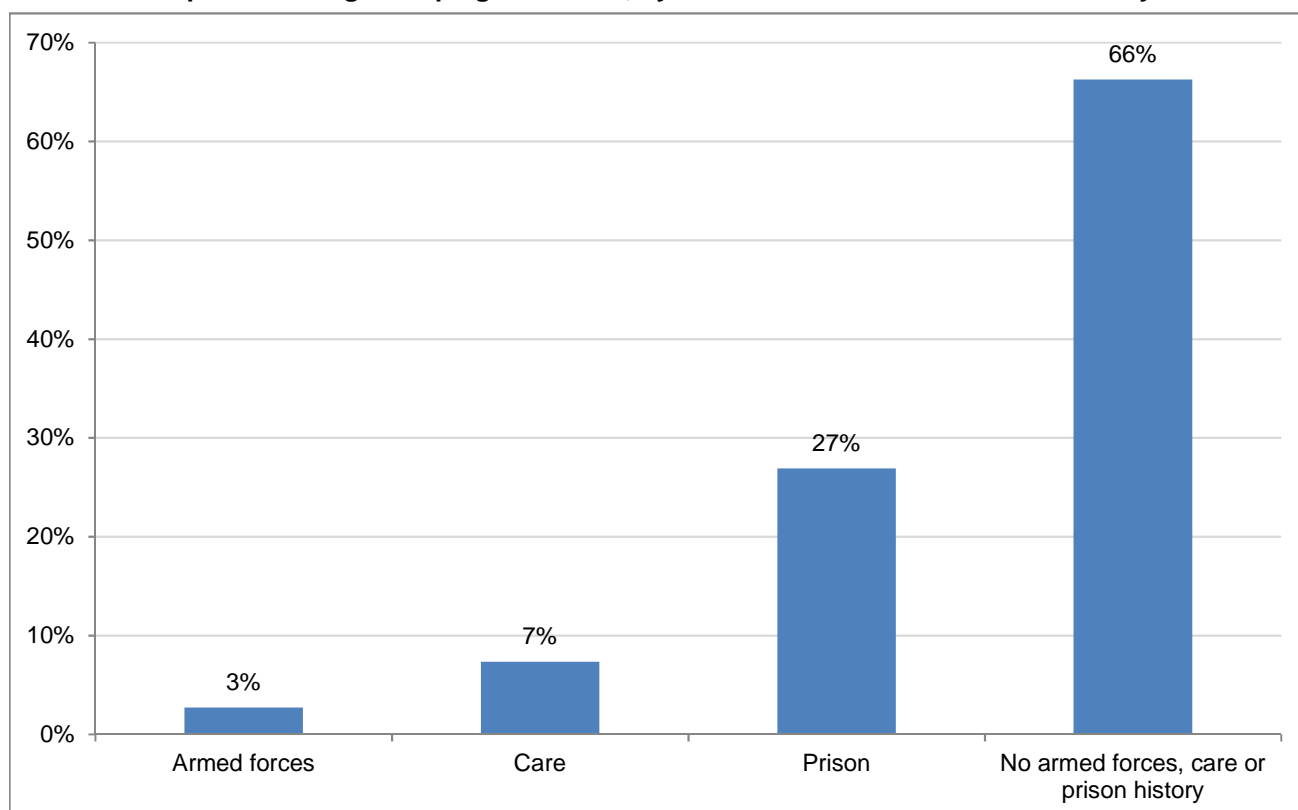
The proportions of people seen rough sleeping with drugs or mental health support needs increased very slightly in 2025/26, with 33% recorded as having a drugs support need, compared to 31% in 2024/25, and 52% recorded as having a mental health support need, compared to 50% in 2024/25. The proportion of people with a need relating to alcohol use declined very slightly, at 27% in 2025/26, compared to 28% in 2024/25.

34% of people seen rough sleeping in 2025/26 who had received an assessment had more than one of the three needs, compared to 32% in 2024/25, while 31% were found to have none of the three needs, compared to 32% in 2024/25.

### 5.9 Institutional & armed forces history

The chart below indicates the proportions of people seen rough sleeping during 2025/26 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 16: People seen rough sleeping in 2025/26, by institutional and armed forces history**



Base: 9,076 people seen rough sleeping during the period who were assessed for at least one of the three histories. This excludes 3,862 people for whom none of the three histories were assessed.

**Table 16: People seen rough sleeping, by institutional and armed forces history, 2022/23 - 2025/26**

Type of history	2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		2025/26	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Armed forces	346	4.9%	357	4.1%	328	3.5%	246	2.7%
Armed forces - UK nationals	119	1.7%	109	1.2%	125	1.3%	107	1.2%
Care	589	8.3%	639	7.3%	721	7.7%	667	7.3%
Prison	2,056	28.8%	2,175	24.9%	2,453	26.0%	2,442	26.9%
No armed forces, care or prison history	4,366	61.2%	5,733	65.6%	6,188	65.7%	6,014	66.3%
<b>Total (excl. not assessed)</b>	<b>7,132</b>		<b>8,744</b>		<b>9,419</b>		<b>9,076</b>	
<b>Total (incl. not assessed)</b>	<b>10,053</b>		<b>11,993</b>		<b>13,231</b>		<b>12,938</b>	

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

246 people seen rough sleeping in 2025/26 had experience of serving in the armed forces, of whom 107 were UK nationals. 667 people seen rough sleeping in 2025/26 had previous experience of living in care (compared to 721 in 2024/25), and 2,442 had experience of serving time in prison (compared to 2,453 in 2024/25). Of the 667 people with experience of living in care, 75 were aged 25 or under.

## 6. ROUTES OFF THE STREETS

### 6.1 Accommodation outcomes

In 2025/26, 4,893 people who had been seen rough sleeping during the year had bookings into accommodation recorded on CHAIN. This is 38% of all people seen rough sleeping during the year, compared to 39% in 2024/25. It should be noted that this does not necessarily mean that the other 62% are still rough sleeping, as many of them may have been supported into accommodation by a service other than outreach, such as local authority housing options, or may have found another solution to resolve their homelessness.

**Table 17: Accommodation outcomes achieved with people seen rough sleeping in 2025/26, compared to outcomes achieved in 2024/25**

Accommodation type	2024/25		2025/26	
	No. events	%	No. events	%
<b>Hubs, shelters and emergency accommodation</b>				
Hub	1,579	17.6%	1,906	22.3%
SWEP (Local)	1,714	19.1%	1,038	12.2%
SWEP (Pan-London)	73	0.8%	20	0.2%
Winter/night shelter	603	6.7%	510	6.0%
Other	6	0.1%	122	1.4%
<i>Hubs, shelters and emergency accommodation subtotal</i>	<i>3,975</i>	<i>44.2%</i>	<i>3,596</i>	<i>42.1%</i>
<b>Temporary accommodation</b>				
Assessment centre	580	6.4%	630	7.4%
Asylum support accommodation (NASS/other)	57	0.6%	48	0.6%
B&B (not local authority TA)	895	10.0%	555	6.5%
Clinic/detox/rehab	13	0.1%	10	0.1%
Hostel	532	5.9%	548	6.4%
Living with family/friends/partner (temporary)	59	0.7%	51	0.6%
Staging post	463	5.1%	603	7.1%
Temporary accommodation (local authority)	1,047	11.6%	904	10.6%
Other	387	4.3%	236	2.8%
<i>Temporary accommodation subtotal</i>	<i>4,033</i>	<i>44.8%</i>	<i>3,585</i>	<i>42.0%</i>
<b>Long-term accommodation</b>				
Clearing House	32	0.4%	11	0.1%
Council tenancy (local authority accommodation)	34	0.4%	16	0.2%
Employment-related accommodation	5	0.1%	7	0.1%
Housing association/RSL accommodation	4	0.0%	23	0.3%
Living with family/friends/partner (long-term)	28	0.3%	33	0.4%
Private rented sector - independent	314	3.5%	432	5.1%
Private rented sector - with some floating support	241	2.7%	300	3.5%
Sheltered housing/registered care accommodation	17	0.2%	22	0.3%
Supported accommodation (long-term)	311	3.5%	460	5.4%
Other	0	0.0%	47	0.6%
<i>Long-term accommodation subtotal</i>	<i>986</i>	<i>11.0%</i>	<i>1,351</i>	<i>15.8%</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,994</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>8,532</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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

There were 8,532 accommodation outcomes recorded for people seen rough sleeping in 2025/26, compared to 8,994 for people seen rough sleeping in 2024/25. The main contributor to the overall reduction in the number of outcomes recorded is that there were fewer periods of SWEP activation during winter 2025/26. This is likely to have affected the number of stays at B&B, in addition to officially designated local and pan-London SWEP provision.

The increase in stays recorded at hubs, shelters and emergency accommodation under 'Other' is due to the introduction of this as a recordable category at the start of the 2025/26 period. This has typically been used to cover stays at emergency bedspaces, hotels, and stepdown accommodation.

There was a notable increase in the number of stays recorded at longer-term accommodation, mainly accounted for by private rented sector provision, and supported accommodation. This may relate to an increased focus on opening up private rented sector options for people exiting rough sleeping, and the impact of the recent delivery of large-scale supported housing programmes.

## APPENDICES

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

**B&B: Bed and Breakfast**

A small lodging establishment that offers overnight accommodation and breakfast.

**CHAIN: Combined Homelessness and Information Network**

A multi-agency database recording information about people rough sleeping, and the wider street population, in London, commissioned and funded by the GLA and managed by Homeless Link.

**DELTA**

Online system developed by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to streamline its processes and systems for collecting statistical data and grant administration.

**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.

**MHCLG: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government**

Ministerial department of the Government of the United Kingdom, responsible for housing, communities, and local government in England.

**NASS: National Asylum Support Service**

A 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 which accepts referrals from outreach teams, and aims to identify and rapidly deliver a sustainable route off the street for people who are new or returning to rough sleeping. The term is also used in other contexts to refer to a wider strategy to end rough sleeping, both in London and nationwide.

**RSL: Registered Social Landlord**

A non-profit organisation, including housing associations, that owns and manages social housing, providing affordable housing and services to tenants.

**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).

**TA: Temporary Accommodation**

In the homelessness context, widely used to refer to housing provided by a local authority to individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness, under the Housing Act 1996 or another legal duty.

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