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# CHAIN QUARTERLY REPORT

## GREATER LONDON

## JANUARY - MARCH 2026

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from <http://data.london.gov.uk>

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# 1. INTRODUCTION & KEY FINDINGS

## Introduction

This quarterly report presents information about people seen rough sleeping by outreach teams in London in January-March 2026.

Information in the report is derived from the 'Combined Homelessness and Information Network' (CHAIN), a database commissioned and funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and managed by Homeless Link. For more information see [www.homeless.org.uk/chain](http://www.homeless.org.uk/chain).

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 Quarterly 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 Quarterly Data Visualisations Tool at <https://bit.ly/chain-quarterly-vis-tool>.

In the rough sleeping figures in this report people are grouped into three categories:

<b>New rough sleepers</b>	Those who had not been contacted by outreach teams rough sleeping before the period
<b>Living on the streets</b>	Those who have had a high number of contacts over 3 weeks or more which suggests they are living on the streets
<b>Intermittent rough sleepers</b>	People who were seen rough sleeping before the period began at some point, and contacted in the period - but not regularly enough to be 'living on the streets'

For more information about the methods used to derive statistics for this report, and definitions of different groups, please see the Methodology section.

### Changes to CHAIN quarterly report content for 2025/26

From 2025/26 Q1 onwards, we have discontinued the use of the LOS - RS205+ population subcategory, which had been part of the overall Living on the Streets (LOS) group. This subcategory had allowed people who were members of the RS205 entrenched rough sleepers cohort to be counted as Living on the Streets during the period even if they had only been seen bedded down once, where other individuals were required to meet the criteria of having five bedded down contacts recorded across at least three weeks. It was felt that more accurate analysis could be achieved by applying the same criteria to all people seen rough sleeping in the period, regardless of prior membership of other cohorts.

This change could have the effect of slightly reducing overall Living on the Streets totals as presented in the report, although it is anticipated that the impact will be minor. The change in methodology should be borne in mind when comparing Living on the Streets totals from before and after April 2025.

## Key findings

### New rough sleepers

In the period January-March 2026 outreach teams recorded 1,762 people in London sleeping rough for the first time. Of these:

- 1,332 (76%) spent just one night sleeping rough
- 365 (21%) slept rough for more than one night but did not go on to live on the streets
- 65 (4%) were deemed to be living on the streets.

The number of new rough sleepers recorded during this period was 15% lower than the same period last year.

By comparison, of the 2,085 people recorded as new to the streets in January-March 2025, 1,520 (73%) were seen sleeping rough just once. A higher proportion (23%) went on to spend more than one night without meeting the criteria for living on the streets, and 4% went on to live on the streets.

### Living on the streets

During January-March 2026 there were 641 people recorded who were deemed to be living on the streets. This total includes 65 people who were new to rough sleeping in London and remained on the streets during the period.

The number of rough sleepers deemed to be living on the streets is 9% lower than the same period last year, and 23% lower than the immediately preceding period (October-December 2025).

### Intermittent rough sleepers

The number of people who were seen rough sleeping during January-March 2026 who were not new, and did not have enough contacts to be deemed as living on the streets, was 1,606. This is 6% lower than the same period last year, and 13% lower than the immediately preceding period.

Of these:

- 749 people (47%) were seen on just a single occasion
- 385 people (24%) were seen just twice, and
- only 4 (<1%) had six or more contacts.

### Total number of people seen rough sleeping

In total during the period January-March 2026 outreach teams recorded 3,944 individuals sleeping rough in the capital. This is an 11% decrease on the total figure for January-March 2025.

Of that total:

- new rough sleepers account for 45% of all rough sleepers
- intermittent rough sleepers account for 41% of all those recorded in the period, and
- 16% of those recorded during the period were living on the streets.

## 2. ROUGH SLEEPER POPULATION ANALYSIS

### All London Boroughs: Headlines

Table 1: People seen rough sleeping in 2025-26 Q4, by new, living on the streets, and intermittent breakdown

#### NEW ROUGH SLEEPERS

	No. this period	% change from last period	% change on same period last year
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,762</b>	<b>-22%</b>	<b>-15%</b>
New RS with no second night out	1,332	-19%	-12%
New RS with a second night out but not living on the streets	365	-29%	-25%
New RS joining living on the streets population*	65	-24%	-17%

	This period	Last period	Same period last year
Proportion of new rough sleepers prevented from spending a second night out	76%	73%	73%

#### LIVING ON THE STREETS (LOS)

	No. this period	% change from last period	% change on same period last year
<b>Total</b>	<b>641</b>	<b>-23%</b>	<b>-9%</b>
LOS - Transferred from new RS*	65	-24%	-17%
LOS - Known	576	-23%	-4%

#### INTERMITTENT ROUGH SLEEPERS

	No. this period	% change from last period	% change on same period last year
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,606</b>	<b>-13%</b>	<b>-6%</b>

	This period	Last period	Same period last year
Proportion of intermittent rough sleepers seen only once during period	47%	45%	48%

#### OVERALL TOTAL ROUGH SLEEPERS

	No. this period	% change from last period	% change on same period last year
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,944</b>	<b>-19%</b>	<b>-11%</b>

\*This cohort is listed under both new rough sleepers and living on the streets headings, but is only counted once towards the overall total

## All London Boroughs: Achieving No Second Night Out

Chart 1: New rough sleepers 2024-25 Q4 to 2025-26 Q4

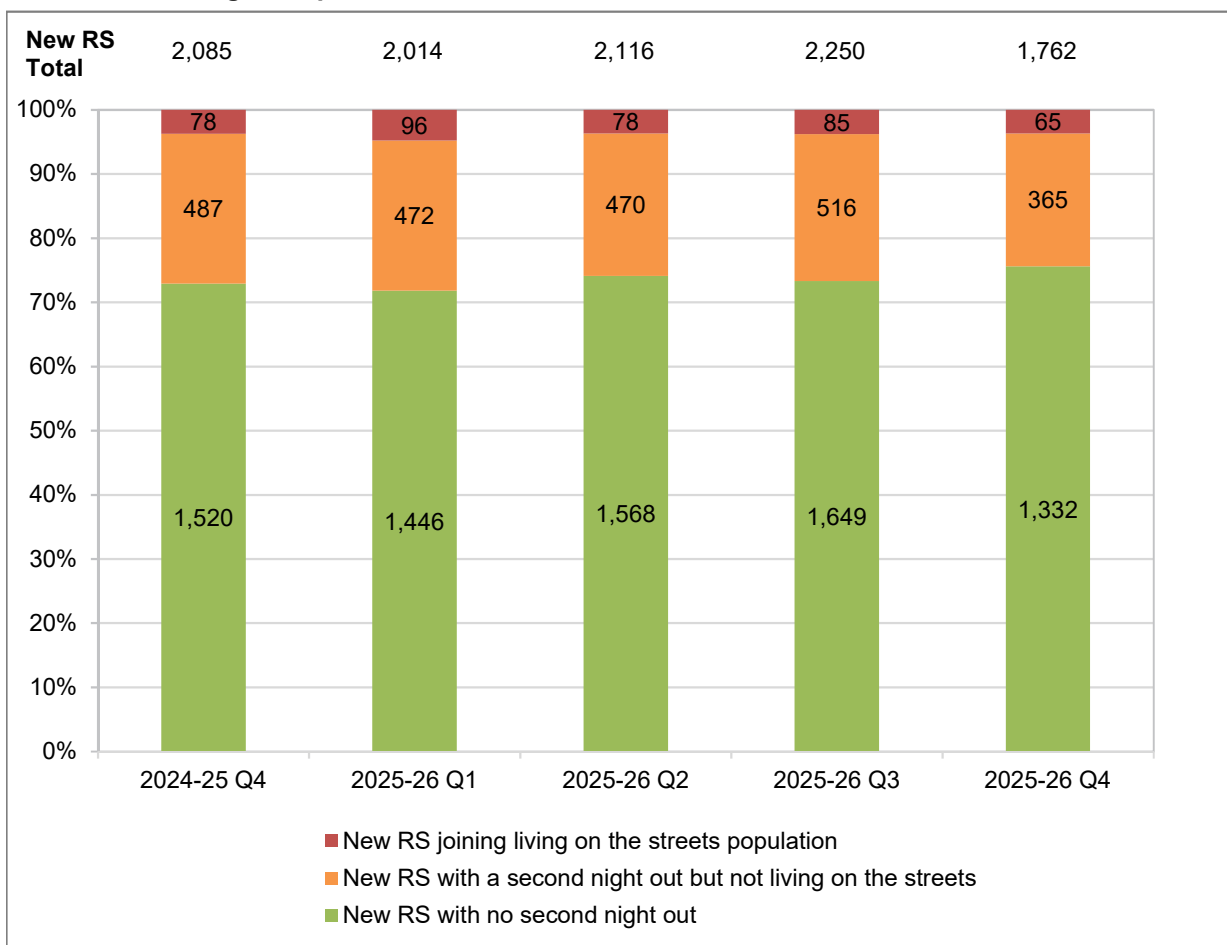


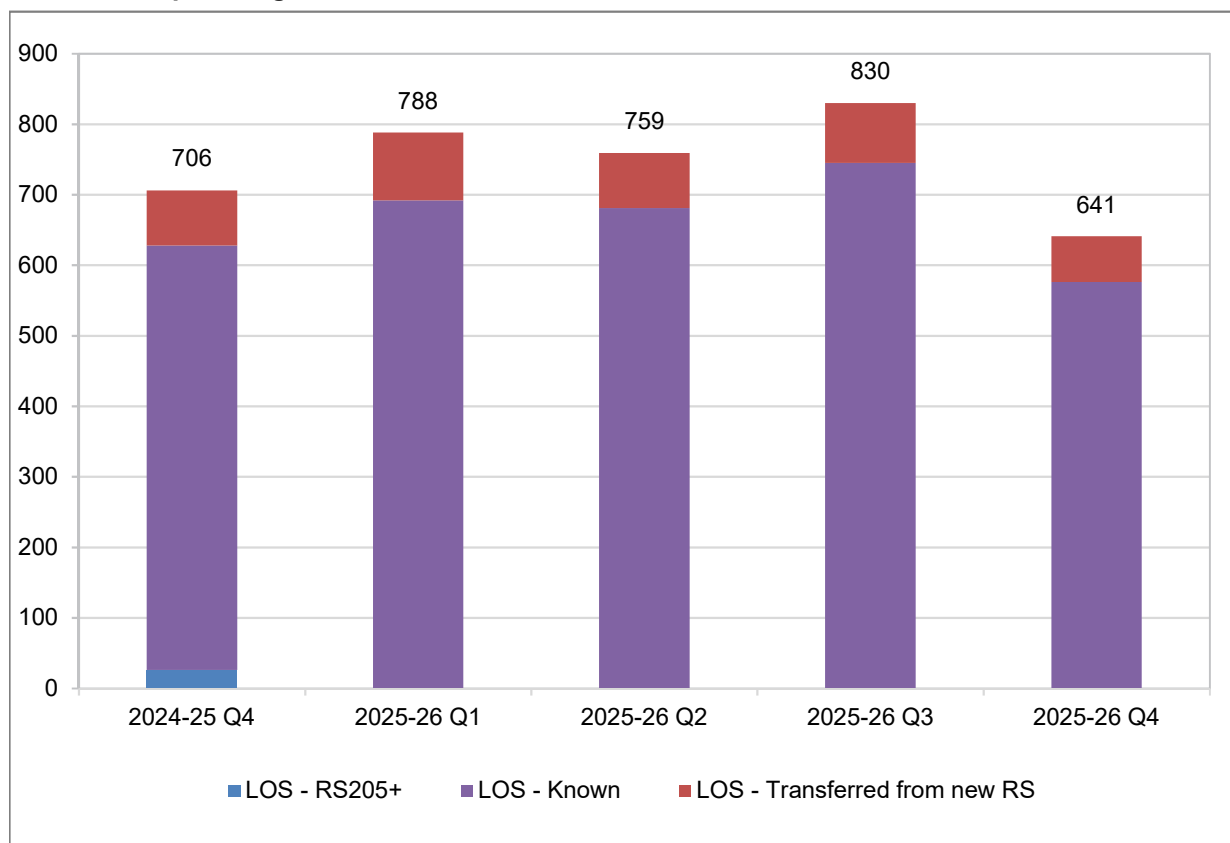
Table 2: New rough sleepers in 2025-26 Q4, by subcategory

Category	No. this period
New RS with no second night out	1,332
New RS with a second night out but not living on the streets	365
New RS joining living on the streets population	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,762</b>

New RS = New rough sleepers

## All London Boroughs: No One Living on the Streets

Chart 2: People living on the streets 2024-25 Q4 to 2025-26 Q4



The LOS - RS205+ category was discontinued from 2025-26 Q1 onwards.

Table 3: People living on the streets in 2025-26 Q4, by subcategory

Category	No. this period
LOS - Transferred from new RS	65
LOS - Known	576
<b>Total</b>	<b>641</b>

## All London Boroughs: Intermittent Rough Sleepers

Chart 3: Intermittent rough sleepers 2024-25 Q4 to 2025-26 Q4

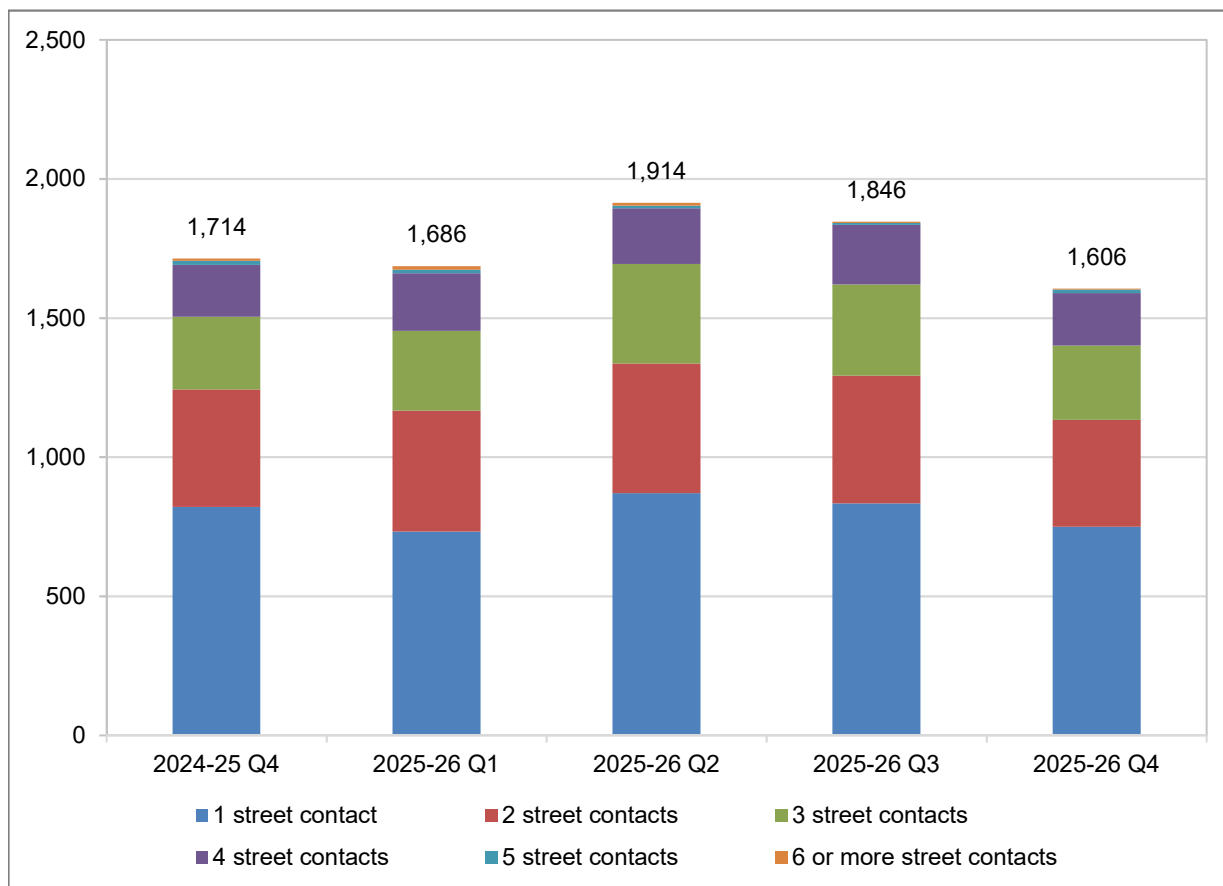


Table 4: Intermittent rough sleepers in 2025-26 Q4, by number of bedded down contacts during the period

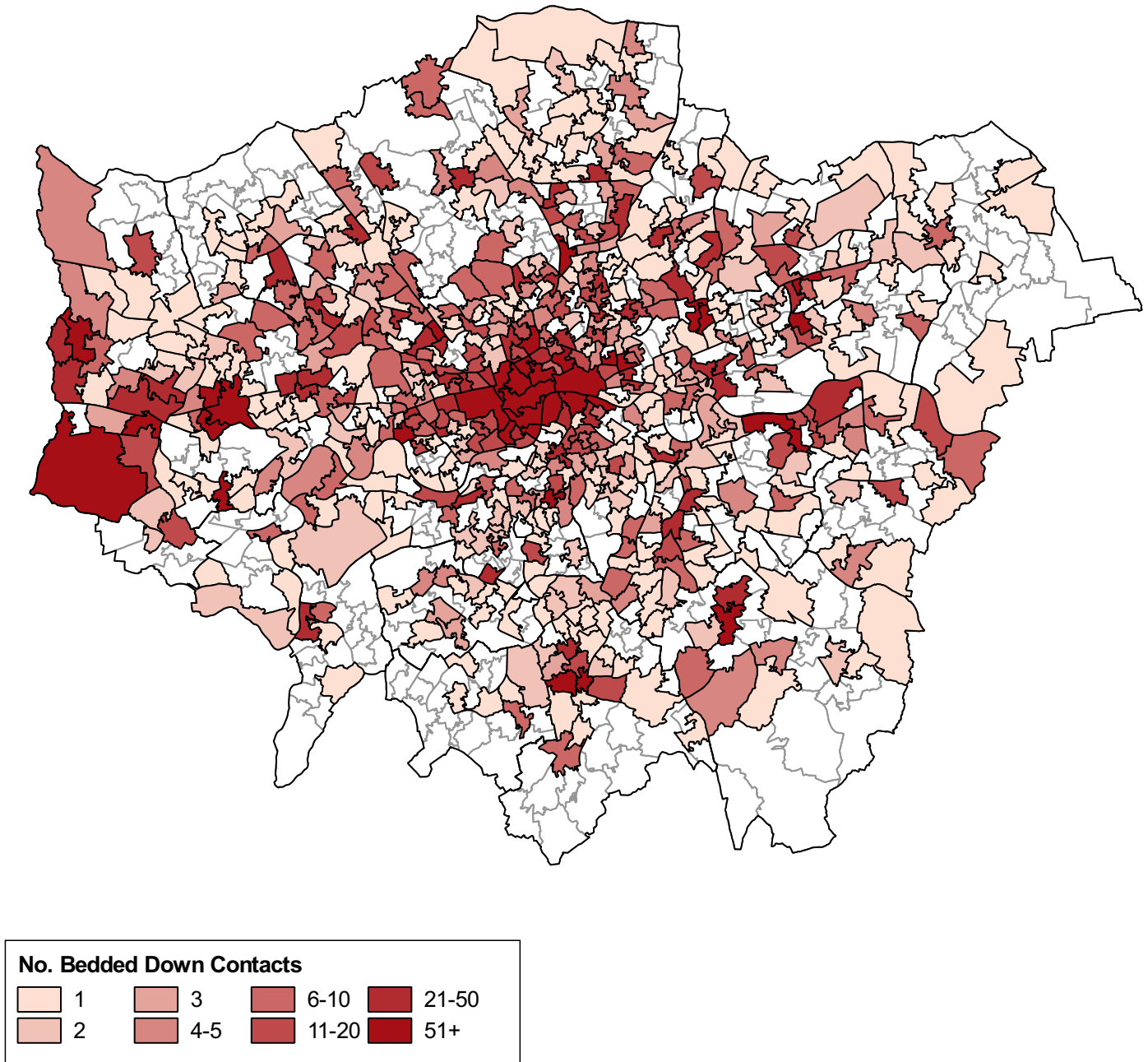
No. bedded down street contacts during this period	No. intermittent rough sleepers
1 street contact	749
2 street contacts	385
3 street contacts	267
4 street contacts	188
5 street contacts	13
6 or more street contacts	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,606</b>

### 3. SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

#### Bedded down street contacts by area: Greater London level

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 1: Number of bedded down street contacts recorded in each Middle Super Output Area across Greater London during the period**



## 4. NATIONALITY

### Nationality: Rolling figures

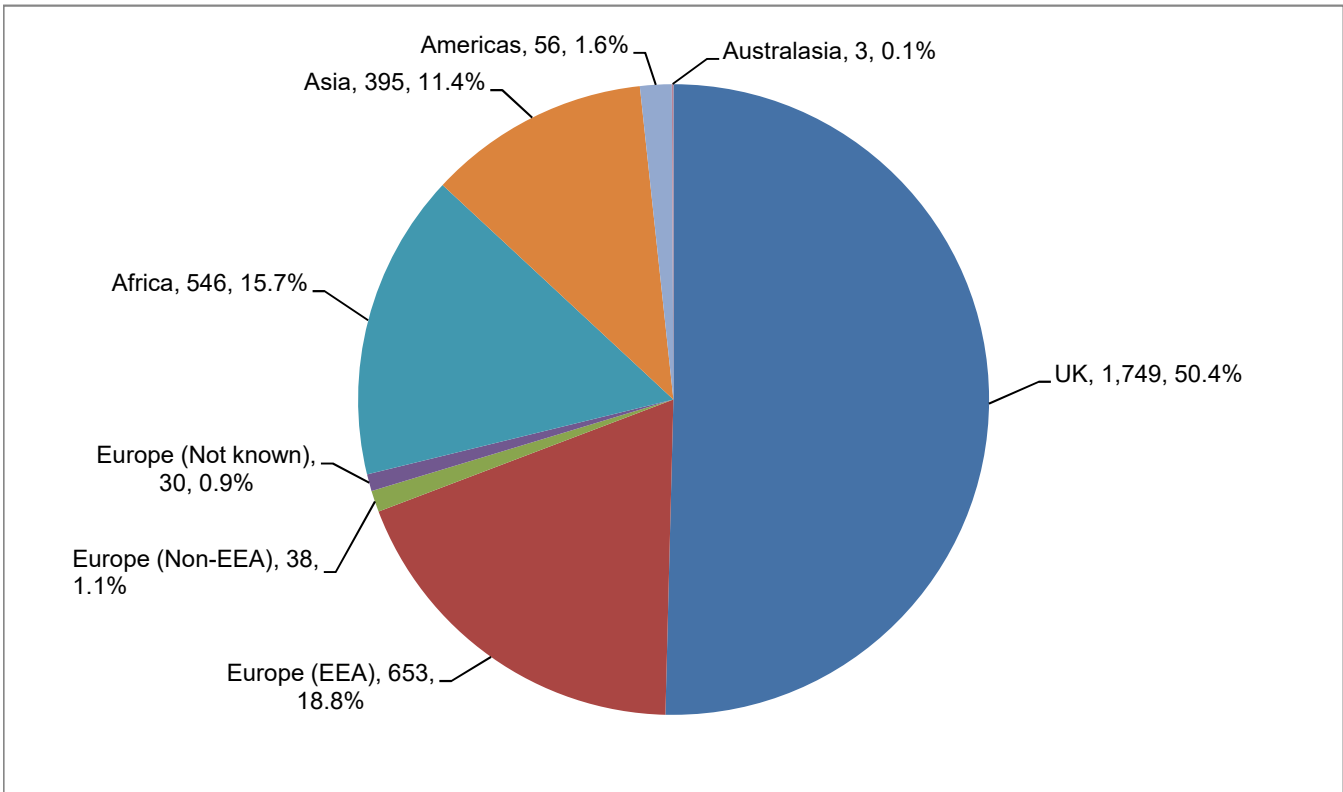
Table 5: People seen rough sleeping 2025-26 Q2 to 2025-26 Q4 by nationality

Nationality	Jul-Sep 25		Oct-Dec 25		Jan-Mar 26	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
UK	2,093	50.4%	2,016	47.5%	1,749	50.4%
Romania	323	7.8%	360	8.5%	260	7.5%
Poland	185	4.5%	163	3.8%	119	3.4%
Lithuania	56	1.3%	58	1.4%	37	1.1%
Ireland (Republic of)	50	1.2%	44	1.0%	42	1.2%
Portugal	46	1.1%	44	1.0%	34	1.0%
Bulgaria	48	1.2%	35	0.8%	35	1.0%
Italy	39	0.9%	32	0.8%	30	0.9%
Spain	16	0.4%	15	0.4%	17	0.5%
France	22	0.5%	21	0.5%	16	0.5%
Latvia	19	0.5%	18	0.4%	13	0.4%
Other European (EEA) countries	69	1.7%	62	1.5%	50	1.4%
Europe (EEA)	873	21.0%	852	20.1%	653	18.8%
Europe (Non-EEA)	50	1.2%	62	1.5%	38	1.1%
Europe (Not known)	14	0.3%	22	0.5%	30	0.9%
Eritrea	153	3.7%	259	6.1%	172	5.0%
Sudan	109	2.6%	152	3.6%	99	2.9%
Nigeria	53	1.3%	66	1.6%	49	1.4%
Ethiopia	30	0.7%	26	0.6%	25	0.7%
Somalia	33	0.8%	31	0.7%	35	1.0%
Other African countries	203	4.9%	202	4.8%	166	4.8%
Africa	581	14.0%	736	17.3%	546	15.7%
India	177	4.3%	185	4.4%	169	4.9%
Afghanistan	58	1.4%	54	1.3%	50	1.4%
Iran	56	1.3%	50	1.2%	46	1.3%
Syrian Arab Republic	10	0.2%	12	0.3%	6	0.2%
Bangladesh	23	0.6%	22	0.5%	20	0.6%
Other Asian countries	140	3.4%	128	3.0%	104	3.0%
Asia	464	11.2%	451	10.6%	395	11.4%
Americas	73	1.8%	100	2.4%	56	1.6%
Australasia	6	0.1%	5	0.1%	3	0.1%
Not known	557		597		474	
<b>Total (excl. not known)</b>	<b>4,154</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>4,244</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>3,470</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Total (incl. not known)	4,711		4,841		3,944	

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

### Nationality: Breakdown by area

Chart 4: People seen rough sleeping in 2025-26 Q4, by nationality

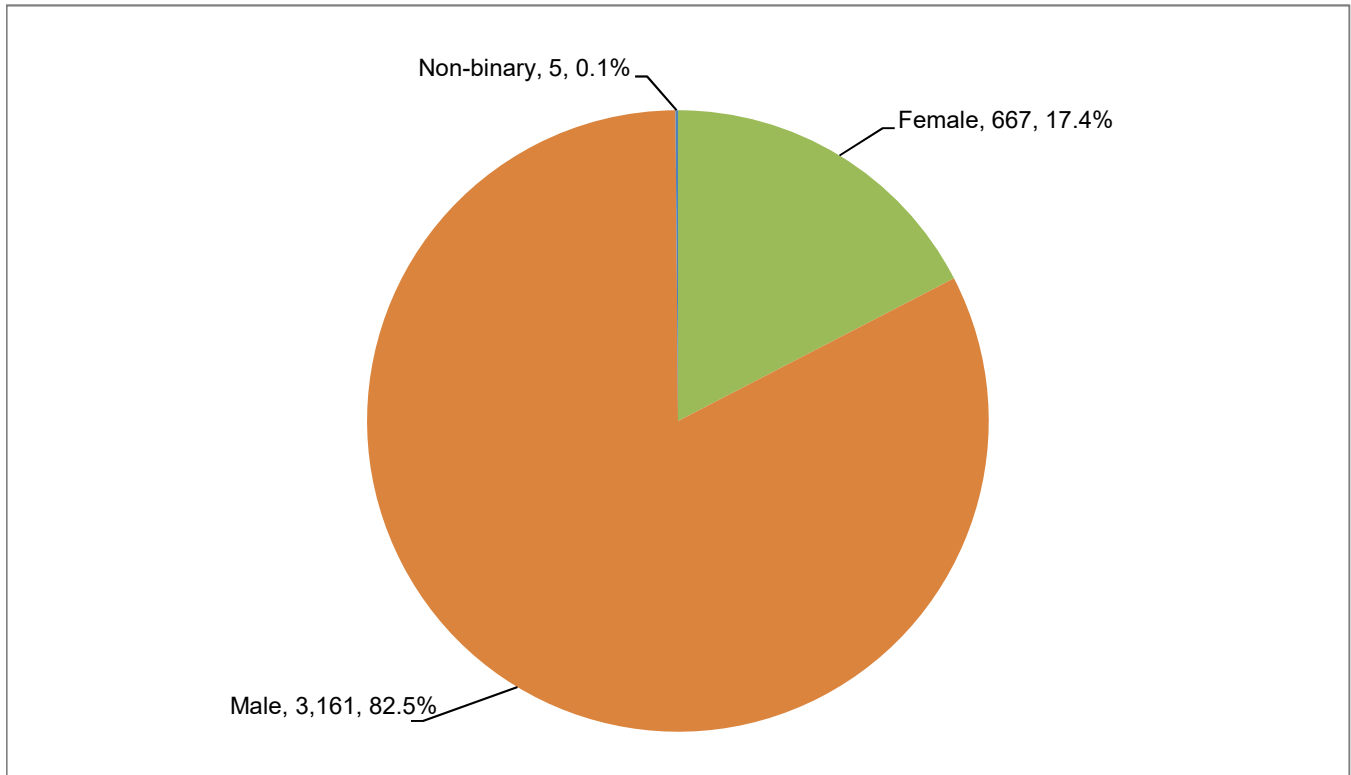


Base: 3,470 people seen rough sleeping during the period whose nationality was known. This excludes 474 people whose nationality was not known.

## 5. DEMOGRAPHICS

### Gender

Chart 5: People seen rough sleeping in 2025-26 Q4, by gender



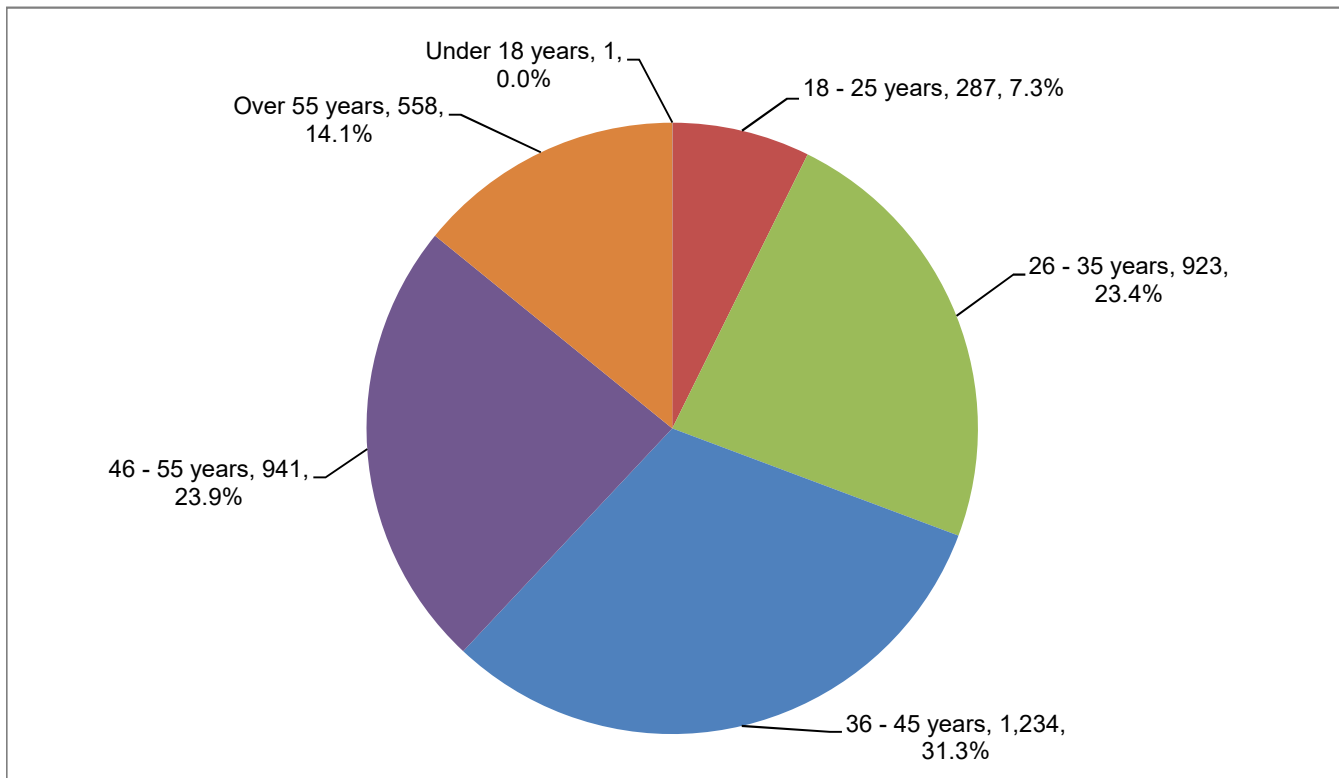
Base: 3,833 people seen rough sleeping during the period whose gender was known. This excludes 111 people whose gender was not known.

Table 6: People seen rough sleeping during 2025-26 Q4, by gender

Gender	No.	%
Female	667	17.4%
Male	3,161	82.5%
Non-binary	5	0.1%
Not known	111	
<b>Total (excl. not known)</b>	<b>3,833</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Total (incl. not known)</b>	<b>3,944</b>	

## Age

**Chart 6: People seen rough sleeping in 2025-26 Q4, by age**



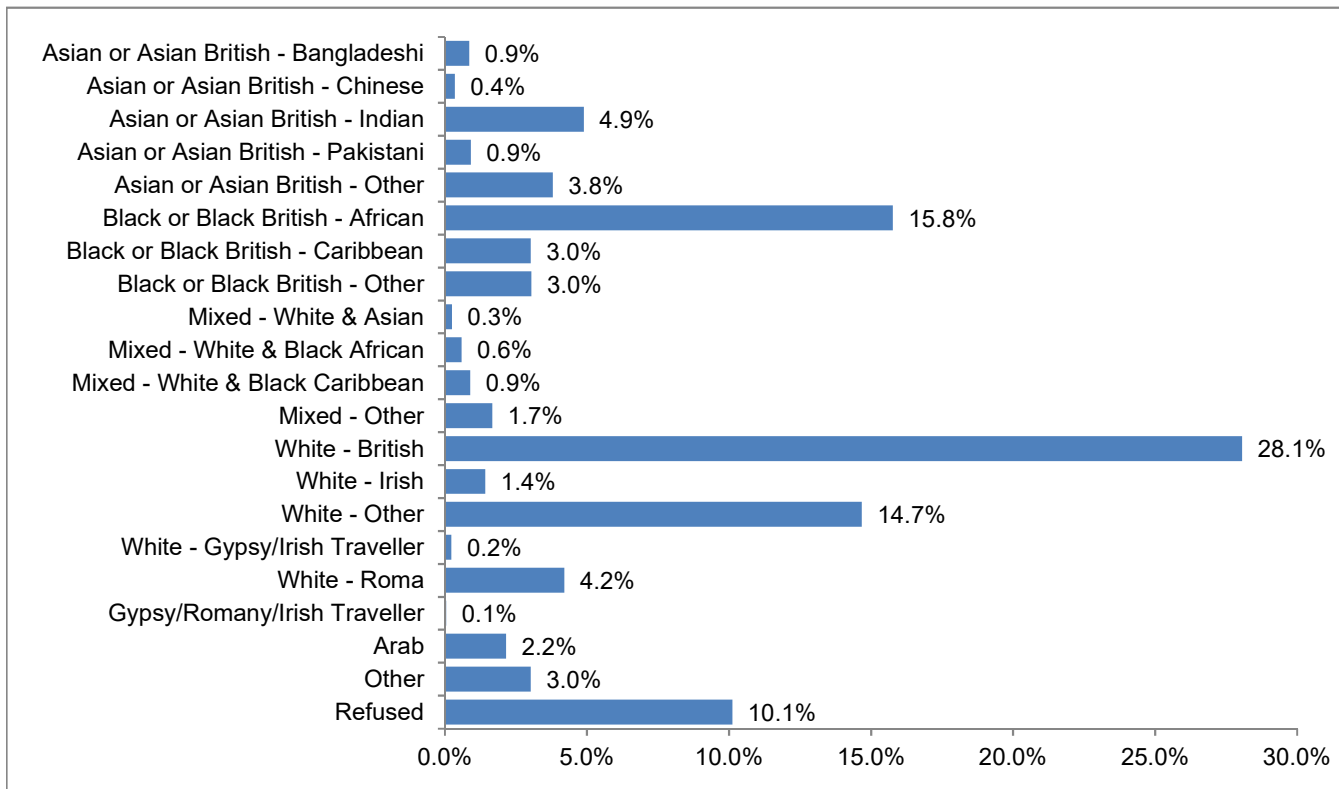
Base: 3,944 people seen rough sleeping during the period.

**Table 7: People seen rough sleeping during 2025-26 Q4, by age**

Age	No.	%
Under 18 years	1	0.0%
18 - 25 years	287	7.3%
26 - 35 years	923	23.4%
36 - 45 years	1,234	31.3%
46 - 55 years	941	23.9%
Over 55 years	558	14.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,944</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## Ethnicity

**Chart 7: People seen rough sleeping in 2025-26 Q4, by ethnicity**



Base: 3,944 people seen rough sleeping during the period.

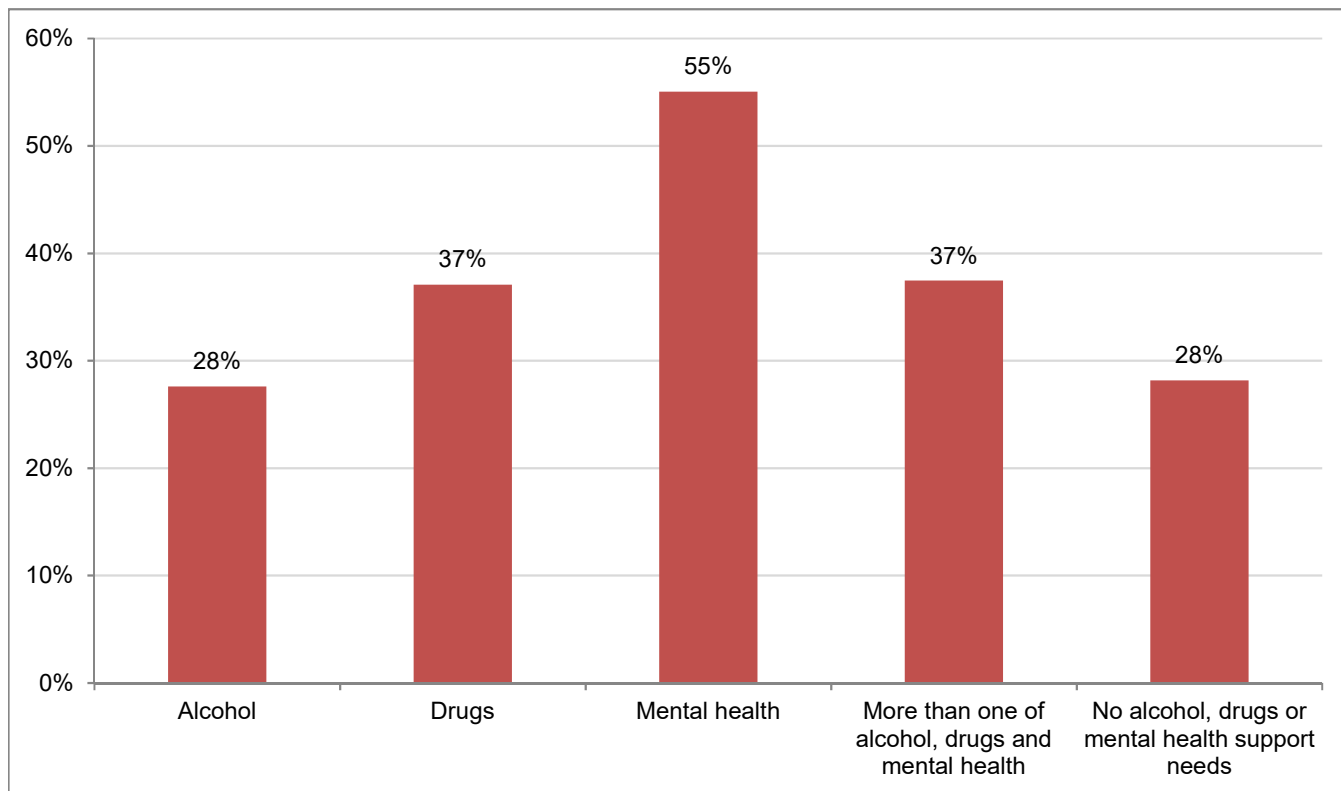
The previously employed category of 'Gypsy/Romany/Irish Traveller' was replaced with separate categories for 'White - Gypsy/Irish Traveller' and 'White - Roma' in April 2021. However, many people seen rough sleeping during the period may not have had their ethnicity information updated to reflect these new categories, so the original category is also included in the graph.

**Table 8: People seen rough sleeping during 2025-26 Q4, by ethnicity**

Ethnicity	No.	%
Asian (incl. Chinese)	427	10.8%
Black	861	21.8%
Mixed	134	3.4%
White (incl. Gypsy/Irish Traveller/Roma)	1,919	48.7%
Arab/Other	204	5.2%
Refused	399	10.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,944</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## 6. SUPPORT NEEDS

**Chart 8: People seen rough sleeping in 2025-26 Q4, by support needs**



Base: 2,916 people seen rough sleeping during the period who were assessed for at least one of the three support needs. This excludes 1,028 people for whom none of the three needs were assessed.

**Table 9: People seen rough sleeping in 2025-26 Q4, by support needs**

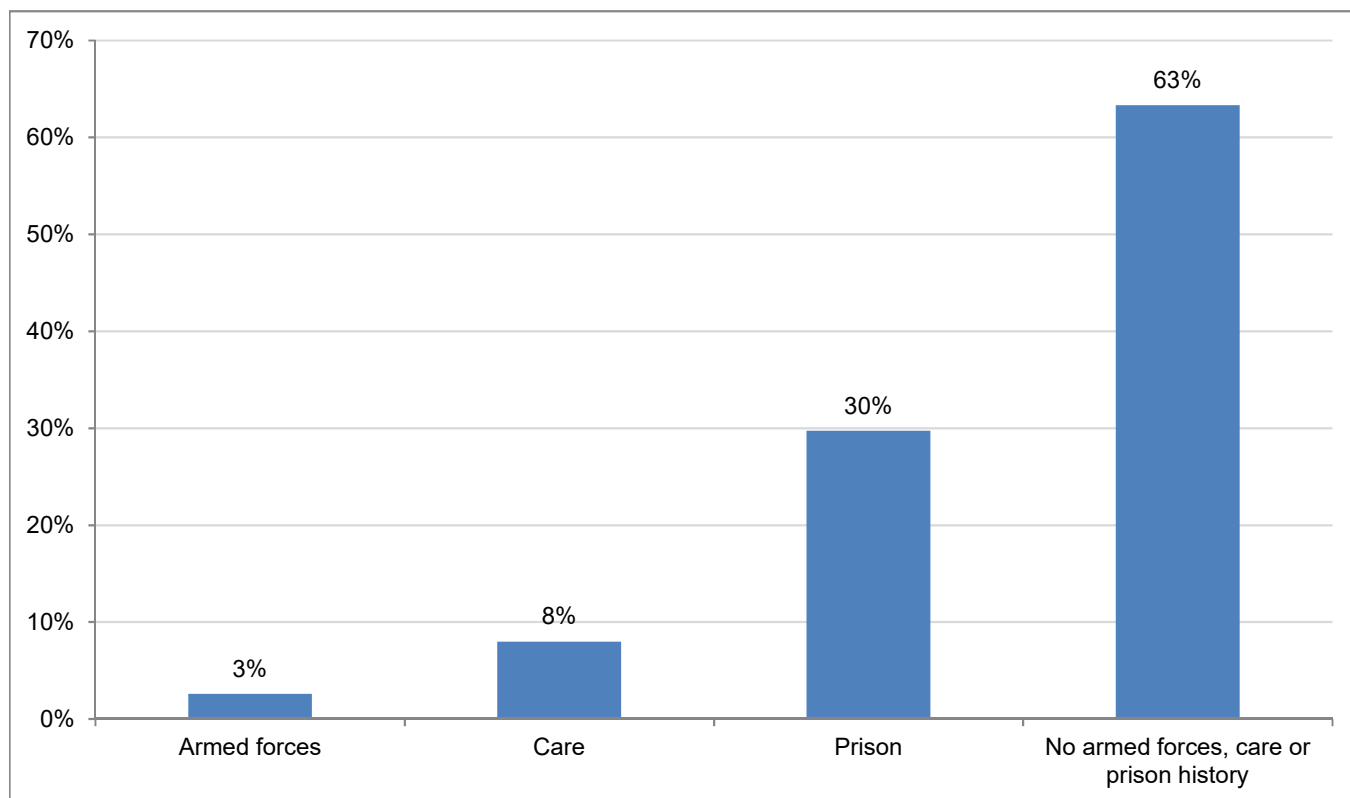
Support need	No.	%
Alcohol	805	27.6%
Drugs	1,081	37.1%
Mental health	1,605	55.0%
More than one of alcohol, drugs and mental health	1,092	37.4%
No alcohol, drugs or mental health support needs	821	28.2%
<b>Total (excl. not assessed)</b>	<b>2,916</b>	
<b>Total (incl. not assessed)</b>	<b>3,944</b>	

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

## 7. INSTITUTIONAL & ARMED FORCES HISTORY

The chart below indicates the proportions of people seen rough sleeping in Greater London during the period 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.

**Chart 9: People seen rough sleeping in 2025-26 Q4, by experience of armed forces, care or prison**



Base: 2,847 people seen rough sleeping during the period who were assessed for at least one of the three support needs. This excludes 1,097 people for whom none of the three needs were assessed.

**Table 10: People seen rough sleeping in 2025-26 Q4, by institutional and armed forces history**

Type of history	No.	%
Armed forces	73	2.6%
Armed forces - UK nationals	38	1.3%
Care	227	8.0%
Prison	846	29.7%
No armed forces, care or prison history	1,803	63.3%
<b>Total (excl. not assessed)</b>	<b>2,847</b>	
<b>Total (incl. not assessed)</b>	<b>3,944</b>	

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

## 8. ACCOMMODATION OUTCOMES

Bookings into accommodation achieved by outreach teams, No Second Night Out, and other support services during the period. People included in these figures will have been seen rough sleeping at some point in their history, but not necessarily during the reporting period.

**Table 11: Accommodation outcomes achieved during 2025-26 Q4, compared to 2025-26 Q3, by number of people**

	Oct-Dec 25	Jan-Mar 26
Outcome	No. people	No. people
Booked into accommodation	2,202	1,752
Booked into hub, shelter or emergency accommodation	1,225	980
Booked into temporary accommodation	1,049	798
Booked into long-term accommodation	441	413

Some people may have been booked into more than one type of accommodation during the period.

**Table 12: Accommodation outcomes achieved during 2025-26 Q4, compared to 2025-26 Q3, by number of outcomes**

Accommodation type	Oct-Dec 25		Jan-Mar 26	
	No. events	%	No. events	%
<b>Hubs, shelters and emergency accommodation</b>				
Hub	470	15.3%	512	20.8%
SWEP (Local)	552	18.0%	437	17.7%
SWEP (Pan-London)	3	0.1%	17	0.7%
Winter/night shelter	338	11.0%	137	5.6%
Other	42	1.4%	27	1.1%
<i>Hubs, shelters and emergency accommodation subtotal</i>	<i>1,405</i>	<i>45.8%</i>	<i>1,130</i>	<i>45.8%</i>
<b>Temporary accommodation</b>				
Assessment centre	199	6.5%	143	5.8%
Asylum support accommodation (NASS/other)	20	0.7%	16	0.6%
B&B (not local authority TA)	220	7.2%	155	6.3%
Clinic/detox/rehab	5	0.2%	5	0.2%
Hostel	196	6.4%	142	5.8%
Living with family/friends/partner (temporary)	10	0.3%	12	0.5%
Staging post	185	6.0%	149	6.0%
Temporary accommodation (local authority)	315	10.3%	245	9.9%
Other	67	2.2%	51	2.1%
<i>Temporary accommodation subtotal</i>	<i>1,217</i>	<i>39.7%</i>	<i>918</i>	<i>37.2%</i>
<b>Long-term accommodation</b>				
Clearing House	34	1.1%	37	1.5%
Council tenancy (local authority accommodation)	7	0.2%	10	0.4%
Employment-related accommodation	0	0.0%	4	0.2%
Housing association/RSL accommodation	9	0.3%	4	0.2%
Living with family/friends/partner (long-term)	5	0.2%	13	0.5%
Private rented sector - independent	129	4.2%	121	4.9%
Private rented sector - with some floating support	83	2.7%	90	3.7%
Sheltered housing/registered care accommodation	8	0.3%	9	0.4%
Supported accommodation (long-term)	165	5.4%	121	4.9%
Other	6	0.2%	8	0.3%
<i>Long-term accommodation subtotal</i>	<i>446</i>	<i>14.5%</i>	<i>417</i>	<i>16.9%</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,068</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2,465</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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

## 9. METHODOLOGY

CHAIN quarterly reports employ the methodology of assigning people seen rough sleeping during the period to categories, based on the following factors:

- Whether they were seen rough sleeping for the first time during the period
- How many times they were seen rough sleeping during the period
- Number of days elapsed between first and last time they were seen rough sleeping during the period

A further explanation of the individual categories follows.

### **New rough sleepers**

People who were seen rough sleeping for the first time during the period. The total number of new rough sleepers is broken down into those who were seen just once and did not have a second night out, those who were seen on several occasions, but as yet have not been on the streets long enough to count as 'living on the streets', and those new to the streets who remained there long enough to fulfil the criteria for 'living on the streets' (outlined below).

### **Living on the streets (LOS)**

With the designation 'living on the streets' we refer to people who have stayed on the streets after arriving, and are entrenched or at risk of becoming so. In determining who is counted as living on the streets we have used a combination of time on the streets (three or more weeks between the earliest and latest bedded down contact) and number of bedded down contacts (five or more contacts) during the period we are reporting on. If a person is seen bedded down six times, but only during one week, he or she does not count. If a person has four bedded down contacts, but spread over two months, he or she would also not count. To be counted, an individual must have both elements.

The reporting period covers three months. However, to ensure that we do not miss those whose rough sleeping crosses over reporting periods, we look back for the three weeks immediately before the start of the three month reporting period. For an individual in these circumstances, if they are not seen again, he or she will not be reported living on the streets in the next period.

The LOS total will include some who were new to the streets in the period, but whose stay extended beyond three weeks and who were seen bedded down at least five times - these are transferred from the new rough sleeper figures (shown in red in both section one and two of the report).

It is important to note that an individual who is included in the LOS total will not necessarily have been living on the streets for the entirety of the quarter in question, but they were living on the streets for a significant period during the quarter. The LOS total will also include some who are no longer on the streets, having gone into accommodation (or disappeared). They will not appear in the subsequent LOS total. An individual will only count as LOS during a period in which they meet the above criteria.

## **Intermittent rough sleepers**

Intermittent rough sleepers are those people who are not new in this period, and have not been seen rough sleeping enough to be deemed living on the streets. This group includes those who sleep rough periodically for very short periods. It also will include those who return to the streets for a longer period (but, in this period, less than the 'living on the streets' definition). Those that go on to be living on the streets will appear in that category in the next period.

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