



HOMELESSNESS IN UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND

Last updates: England & Wales: November 2016 / Scotland: October 2015 / Northern Ireland: Spring 2014.

KEY STATISTICS

Local authorities throughout the UK have a duty to collect data on information on local housing authorities' activities under homelessness legislation, which varies between England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. In England, data is collected on applications for assistance and the number of households accepted as owed a main homelessness duty (referred to as 'acceptances') according to the legislation.¹ Local authorities must also report on the number of homeless households to whom they owe a main homelessness duty and to whom they have provided temporary accommodation. The Department for Communities and Local Government publishes this data on a quarterly basis for England. See [here](#) for further information.

Local authorities in England now also report on the number of homelessness cases that take place outside of the statutory homelessness framework. These are referred to as "homeless prevention and relief statistics" which report on how local authorities have assisted people to avoid homelessness or obtain alternative accommodation who have not had a main homelessness duty owed. See [here](#) for further information.

Local authorities in England also submit counts and estimates of rough sleeping. This is published on an annual basis by The Department for Communities and Local Government. See [here](#) for further information.

In London, the CHAIN database offers extensive data on the rough sleeping population. See [here](#) for further information.

¹ Key criteria in establishing whether a main homelessness duty is owed include non-intentionality and various forms of "priority need". See the 'National Strategy' entry below for more info.

INCREASE/DECREASE IN NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE

Statistics from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) show that the Autumn 2015 total of rough sleeping counts and estimates in England was 3,569. This was up by 30% from the Autumn 2014 total of 2,744.

There had been a sustained reduction in "statutory homelessness" levels from the early 2000s until 2009. This trend has now been reversed. DCLG statistics show that the financial year 2010/11 saw an increase in homelessness acceptances by local authorities of 10%, representing the first increase since the year 2003/04. Since then, homeless acceptances have continued to increase year on year, except in 2013/14 which saw a 3% fall. During the 2015/16 financial year, there were 57,740 acceptances. This was an increase of 6% from 54,430 in 2014/15.

CHANGE IN PROFILE OF HOMELESS PEOPLE

The gender profile of the statutory homelessness population remains fairly stable. The priority need categories affect the gender profile of acceptances strongly.

More recently there has been growing interest in the levels of youth homelessness. Whilst the number of acceptances for homeless households headed by young people has been declining in recent years, many fall out of the statutory definition of homelessness. [Research](#)² funded by Centrepoin estimated that around 83,000 young people used

² http://www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk/Projects/Start-Year/2014/Estimating-the-scale-of-youth-homelessness-in-the-UK/Report/copy_of_Full-Report.

homelessness services during the year 2013/14. Furthermore, CHAIN data showed 830 rough sleepers were under-25, a number in line with previous years. Homeless Link's Annual Review also suggests that half of people using homeless hostel and supported housing projects are between 18-24.

There has also been growing concern about rising homelessness amongst migrants. This has particularly focused on rough sleeping amongst non-UK Nationals.

The situation has huge regional variation and is much more significant than some cities compared to other.

In 2015/16 the rough sleeping nationality breakdown was

- 41% UK nationals
- 37% Central and Eastern European migrants
- 22% Other migrants.

POLICIES & STRATEGIES

Throughout the UK, homeless policies are underpinned by a strong legislative basis. In England, the main legal provisions are contained in the 1996 Housing Act, the Homelessness Act 2002, and the Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002. This legislation lays out the statutory duties of local authorities, which include an obligation to provide housing in cases of homelessness where eligibility, priority need and non-intentionality are established. Priority need covers various groups including households with dependent children; households with a pregnant woman; people who are vulnerable in some way (for example through mental illness or physical disability); and those who have been made homeless or are threatened with homelessness as a result of an emergency such as fire or flood. All 16 and 17 year olds are now considered to have automatic priority need, unless they are owed a housing duty by social services as a "relevant child" or under Section 20 of the Children's Act. It is also necessary to check with all applicants aged 18, 19 and 20 whether they were being looked after, fostered or accommodated at or after the age of 16, as they will possess an automatic priority need. For those who are found not to be in priority need, but are unintentionally homeless, Section 192 of the 1996 Housing Act requires local authorities to provide advice and assistance "to support the applicant's own efforts to find accommodation."

In addition, the Homelessness Act (2002) places a duty on housing authorities to carry out local reviews of homelessness and formulate, publish and regularly review local homelessness strategies in consultation with stakeholders. The initial date by which authorities had to comply with the duty to produce a homelessness strategy was 31 July 2003. Strategies have to be reviewed and renewed within five years. The English homelessness legislation was further amended under the 2011 Localism Act and accompanying supplementary guidance was issued - (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012. The most significant change introduced by the Localism Act allows local authorities to fully discharge their housing duty through an Assured Shorthold Tenancy with a private landlord.

The tenancy must be for a minimum of 12 months. If the offer is refused, the local authority's duty comes to an end, without the need to make a further offer of suitable accommodation to the applicant.

There is a possibility this legislation maybe widened in 2017. The section on Key Policy Developments deal with this on ore detail

The government has maintained the homelessness grant to local authorities (£315 to 2019-20.) However, most prevention and support services for single person and childless couple households are funded out of Central Government Housing Benefit and local authority budgets, previously known as Supporting People. These Supporting People budgets have been cut locally since the ring-fence was removed by central government in 2009-10. This has resulted in staff redundancies, reduced support and some projects closing altogether. Homeless Link's 2015 Annual Review of Support for Single Homeless People found that 58% of homeless accommodation projects said Housing-Related Support (formerly the Supporting People fund) was their primary source 41% of accommodation projects reported a fall in funding since the previous financial year.

Over 90% of supported housing services receive some of income from Housing Benefit. The level of this for supported housing has, historically, tended to increase annually with inflation although recent Government announcements appears to break this link (more details in the Key Policy Developments section).

REMARKS ON KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Positive

The Homelessness Reduction Bill before Parliament, supported by the Government would increase the legal protection of single homeless people and childless couples in England. Based largely on legislation introduced by the Welsh Government in 2013 it would add the following new duties to local councils:

- Take action to prevent the homelessness of anyone who is eligible for assistance (eg 'habitually resident' in the UK) and threatened with homelessness within 56 days, without regard to their priority need status.
- Take steps to relieve the homelessness of anyone who is currently homeless, eligible for assistance and has a local connection to the area.

It would also add a new duty to cooperate for those seeking help from councils with their homelessness. The Government have confirmed that extra resources will be made available to address these new burdens.

The Government has announced a £40 million Homelessness Prevention Programme:

- £20 million to establish a network of Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer areas to develop innovative new approaches to prevent homelessness
- a £10 million rough sleeping grant fund to enable local areas to intervene early with rough sleepers before their problems become entrenched
- £10 million Social Impact Bond funding to turn around the lives of the most entrenched rough sleepers by getting them into accommodation

These changes will be complemented by the work of the Inter-Ministerial group on Homelessness which will look for solutions across government to the issue.

The Government has announced a reversal of a policy which would have led to Housing Benefit levels for homelessness services being capped at a level which would have made almost all financially unviable. Instead a new financial model will be introduced in 2019-20 which they promise will leave to no loss of total expenditure. However, the details of this model are yet to be clarified and a great deal of concern still remains over it.

A new Mayor of London was elected in 2016. He has announced a Rough Sleeping Taskforce to address issues of people on the streets in the Capital.

Negative

The Government has reconfirmed that rents in social housing will be reduced by 1% every year for the next four years from 2016. For homelessness services it will reduce the amount of Housing Benefit they will receive. There is a risk that agencies will be unable to fulfil their current investments and many of their individual services may become financially unviable. There is already evidence that it has led to the cessation of new developments of supported housing. Following lobbying, from homelessness agencies and others, this policy was suspended in 2016-17 but will apply from 2017-18.

From April 2017, 18-21 year olds will not have an automatic entitlement to have their rent paid through the Housing Cost element of Universal Credit (a benefit which is gradually replacing Housing Benefit across the UK). While the government has indicated that there will be exemptions to the policy, there have been few details as to how these will work in practice. There will also be a new "Youth Obligation", which will see tougher conditionality imposed from Day One of an applicant's claim for out-of-work benefits such as Jobseekers Allowance.

EEA migrants have been subject to severe benefit restrictions in recent years. This has been matched by a hardening of interpretation by the UK Government as to what constitutes a breach of treaty obligations for recent arrivals. It remains to be seen what the impact of Brexit will be on the legal status of homeless migrants.

NORTHERN IRELAND

KEY STATISTICS

In Northern Ireland, the Department for Social Development publishes a [quarterly housing bulletin](#), including statistics on statutory homelessness applications and acceptances³. In total, 4,655 households presented as homeless to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive during April - June 2016, an increase of 305 (7%) from the previous quarter (4,350). The most common reason reported by those presenting as homeless was that their accommodation was not reasonable (1,066). This was followed by those who reported a sharing breakdown or family dispute (953).

INCREASE/DECREASE IN NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE

Following an upward trend since 1999, the number of households presenting as homeless to the NI Housing Executive (the authority with statutory responsibility for homelessness) peaked in 2006/07 at 21,013 households, and then levelled off between 2006/07 to 2009/10. There was however a sharp increase from 18,664 in 2009/2010 to 20,158 in 2010/2011. In the following two years, the numbers of presenters decreased by 4% (2011-12, n=19737; 2012-13, n=19354).

In total, 19,621 households presented as homeless to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive in 2014-15, an increase of 4% from the previous year (18,862). The household types with the highest number of homeless presenters in 2014-15 were single males (35%) and families (32%).

CHANGE IN PROFILE OF HOMELESS PEOPLE

The Homelessness Strategy for Northern Ireland 2012-17 refers to the "changing nature of the homeless population which includes ex-offenders, young people, older people, those leaving care and migrant workers. Increasing numbers of homeless people are reported to "have mental health and addiction problems and other complex needs and require intensive support."

³ <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/>.

POLICIES & STRATEGIES

Homeless policy in Northern Ireland is contained in the Housing (Northern Ireland) Order 1988 as amended (April 1989). The order places a statutory duty on the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) to provide temporary and/or permanent accommodation for certain groups of homeless persons, depending upon the assessment of their case. Those who satisfy the tests of eligibility, homelessness, priority need and unintentional homelessness are considered to have Full Duty Application Status (FDA). For those not entitled to FDA status there is a statutory duty to provide advice and assistance.

The Housing (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2010 placed a duty on the Housing Executive to formulate and publish a homelessness strategy. The Act states that an extensive range of agencies are also obliged to take into account the homelessness strategy in the exercise of their functions. The Department for Social Development (DSD) has overall responsibility to ensure that the stipulations of the Housing Act are enacted. "The Promoting Social Inclusion Homelessness Partnership" - an inter-departmental, cross-sectoral working group that was established by The Department for Social Development - will implement and monitor the new strategy. This interagency body will support the four objectives of the homelessness strategy. A list of performance indicators will be used to monitor progress in implementing the strategy. These will be detailed in an implementation plan to be developed following publication of the strategy.

With regards to recent / ongoing housing policy trends, a number of strategy changes are likely to impact on homelessness and housing.

As outlined in 'Facing the Future: Northern Ireland Housing Strategy 2012-17', the Department of Social Development (DSD), which has strategic responsibility for housing, stated its intention to put a clearer policy focus on preventing homelessness and work better in partnership with other bodies to support individuals and families with particular needs to live independently. As part of this Strategy, the DSD stated that it would:

- use public funding in innovative ways to increase the supply of social and affordable housing;
- undertake a fundamental review of social housing allocations policy;
- make better use of existing social housing stock to meet a range of needs; and
- place a stronger policy emphasis on preventing homelessness and work with partners in both the public and voluntary sectors to promote a prevention agenda.

REMARKS ON KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Positive

Homelessness is mentioned in the Housing Strategy for NI, Anti-Poverty Strategy, and in Transforming Your Care.

We do have inter-departmental commitment to take cognizance of homelessness in the relevant discharge of duties across Government.

Negative

The move to discharge homelessness duty into a fundamentally unregulated and insecure private rented sector.

Reduction in opportunities for individuals to obtain full duty applicant status on grounds of extended anti-social behaviour sanctions.

There are fundamental changes proposed to the allocation of social housing with less attention paid to individual need factors, to a quota system, and a possible reduction in security of tenure through introduction of Short Secure Tenancies.

SCOTLAND

KEY STATISTICS

Homelessness data are collected by all local authorities and published by the Scottish Government on quarterly and annual bases. See [here](#) for more information⁴.

INCREASE/DECREASE IN NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE

Homelessness is decreasing in Scotland. The data for the quarter July-September 2013 shows a 13% reduction in statutory homelessness presentations and a 12% reduction in those assessed as homeless compared to the equivalent period in the previous year. For the twelve month period of 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016, there were 34,662 homelessness applications. This was 1,287 (4%) lower than the number of applications received in the same period in 2014-15. See [here](#) for more information⁵.

CHANGE IN PROFILE OF HOMELESS PEOPLE

The profile of homeless people has been steady over the last nine years, with the exception of an increase in the proportion of women under 25. The number of homeless women is reducing slightly more slowly than the number of men, possibly due to the fact that more services target mainly the latter.

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<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/RefTables>.

⁵ <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00508824.pdf>.

POLICIES & STRATEGIES

The Scottish Government in 2007 gave greater autonomy to local authorities over their spending and removed the 'ring fence' from certain funding streams. There has been an overall reduction in real terms (rather than cash terms) in the funding available to Scottish local authorities for the entire range of their spending. There has also been the introduction in a number of local authorities of competitive tendering for a number of social support and homelessness services with a view to getting 'more for less.' In addition, there is evidence that NGOs are using their own resources to fill any gaps in funding resulting from reductions.

See [here](#), page 27, for further information on current legislation⁶.

REMARKS ON KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Positive

Since December 2012 local authorities in Scotland have had a legal duty to provide every 'unintentionally' homeless household with settled accommodation.

All charges for prescribed medicines have been abolished in Scotland. All health authorities (Health Boards) must implement a health and homelessness action plan to deal with the health needs of homeless people in their area of operation.

The Scottish Parliament will be given new powers over some elements of taxation, housing benefits and some welfare benefits, including the power to create new welfare benefits in legislation due to be debated in 2015. It is unclear how this will affect homeless people.

Health and Social Care services are in the process of being integrated, which may have either positive or negative outcomes.

⁶ <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00508824.pdf>.

Self-Directed Support and personalization is slowly being extended, which gives greater control and influence to service users over the services they receive and how the budget allocated to them is spent.

Since June 2013, there has been a legal duty for local authorities to provide a housing-support assessment to homeless applicants where they have reason to believe they require housing support, and a further legal duty to ensure that the support they need is provided. (Housing Scotland Act 2010).

Negative

Welfare Reform taking place including benefits sanctions to people who do not actively pursue work or deny work offers; an upper 'cap' on welfare benefits; deductions in housing benefit where a household has more bedrooms than they 'require'.

Because of the difficulties presented by the 'bedroom tax' some local authorities are considering developing small scale hostels, primarily because there are insufficient one bedroom apartments to provide accommodation for single people.

WALES

KEY STATISTICS

Homelessness Statistics 2015-16, Wales

Published: 24 August 2016

An annual report which includes information on the number of households applying to local authorities for housing assistance under the Housing Wales Act 2014 and the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation. The Housing Act (Wales) 2014 included a number of changes to statutory homelessness legislation which were introduced on 27 April 2015. This headline data shows annual information for 2015-16 as reported by local authorities under the new legislation. The statistics can be downloaded on the Welsh Government website [here](#)⁷.

Please note: The data are not comparable with the statutory homelessness data published for 2014-15 or earlier years due to the legislative changes. Due to concerns over the data quality a temporary de-designation of the statutory Homelessness statistics for 2015-16 has been agreed. The 2015-16 data as published within this report and on StatsWales are not classified as National Statistics.

National Rough Sleeping Count, Wales

Published: 21 March 2016

The information presented in this release covers the rough sleeper monitoring exercise carried out across Wales during November 2015 and is based on the data provided by local authorities. The information is presented as experimental statistics as this is a new official statistic undergoing evaluation and the methodology used will be reviewed and may be further developed. The statistics can be downloaded from the Welsh Government website [here](#)⁸.

INCREASE/DECREASE IN NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE

Homelessness statistics

Due to changes in legislation, the Welsh Government has stated that the latest homelessness statistics are not directly comparable to the homelessness data published for 2014/15 or earlier. However, the latest statistics show that during 2015-16:

- 7,128 households in Wales were assessed as being threatened with homelessness within 56 days. For 4,599 households (65 per cent), homelessness was successfully prevented for at least 6 months.
- 6,891 households were assessed as being homeless and owed a duty to help to secure accommodation (under Section 73 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014). Of these, 3,108 households (45 per cent) were relieved of homelessness following intervention by the local authority and helped to secure accommodation that was likely to last for 6 months.
- 1,563 households were accepted as being eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need and were owed a duty for accommodation to be secured (under Section 75 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014). Of these, 1,245 households (80 per cent) were positively discharged/relieved through accepting an offer of suitable accommodation.
- At the end of March 2016 there were 1,875 households placed in temporary accommodation across Wales. 43 per cent of all households in temporary accommodation were in private sector housing, 108 households (6%) in bed and breakfast accommodation, 498 homeless households (26%) in hostels or refuges and 411 households (22 per cent) were placed in public sector accommodation.

Rough Sleepers Count

Data from the National Rough Sleeper Count (Wales) 2007 and 2008⁹:

- In March 2007 local authorities observed 69 individuals sleeping rough and a further 69 instances of other evidence of rough sleeping, leading to a total estimate of 138 rough sleepers in Wales on the night of the count.
- In March 2007, an estimate based on evidence from other sources available to local authorities shows the total

⁷ <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/homelessness/?lang=en>.

⁸ <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/national-rough-sleeping-count/?lang=en>.

⁹

<http://gov.wales/docs/statistics/2009/090917roughsleep2007en.pdf>.

number of rough sleepers could vary between an approximate range of 166 and 199.

- In March 2008 local authorities observed 65 individuals sleeping rough and a further 59 instances of other evidence of rough sleeping, leading to a total estimate of 124 rough sleepers in Wales on the night of the count.
- In March 2008, an estimate based on evidence from other sources available to local authorities shows the total number of rough sleepers could vary between an approximate range of 128 and 165.

Data from the National Rough Sleeper Count (Wales) 2015¹⁰:

- On 26th November 2015 local authorities reported a total of 82 individuals observed sleeping rough in Wales between the hours of 11pm on the 25th and 3am.
- Based on the information gathered by local agencies, health organisations and other community service groups in contact with rough sleepers in the 2 weeks between 2nd and 15th November 2015, local authorities estimate that 240 persons were sleeping rough across Wales over this period.

CHANGE IN PROFILE OF HOMELESS PEOPLE

Due to changes in legislation, the Welsh Government has stated that the latest homelessness statistics are not directly comparable to the homelessness data published for 2014/15 or earlier. However, the latest statistics show that during 2015-16:

By age:

- In the majority of cases (71 per cent) for whom homelessness was successfully prevented the applicant was aged 25 and over.
- This was also the case for those households successfully relieved of homelessness (under Section 73) at 69 per cent and those positively discharged under Section 75 (i.e. provided with suitable accommodation) at 64 per cent.

By gender:

- During 2015-16, of the 7,128 households assessed as threatened with homelessness within 56 days over half (58 per cent) of the applicants were female and 40 per cent were male. The proportions were similar for households for whom homelessness was successfully prevented, with female applicants accounting for 59 per cent of cases compared with 39 per cent of cases where the applicant was male.
- During 2015-16, of the 6,891 households assessed as homeless under Section 73, in 58 per cent of cases the

applicant was male compared to 41 per cent where the applicant was female. Again the applicant was predominantly male in over half (54 per cent) of those households who were successfully relieved of homelessness under Section 73 compared to 44 per cent where the applicant was female

- During 2015-16, the applicant was female in nearly two thirds (63 per cent) of the 1,563 households assessed under Section 75 as eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need. The applicant was also female in over two thirds (67 per cent) of the 1,245 households positively discharged and provided with suitable accommodation under Section 75 compared with 33 per cent where the applicant was male.

By ethnicity

- During 2015-16, in 6 per cent of households assessed as threatened with homelessness within 56 days and in 7 per cent of households assessed as homeless under Section 73, the applicant was from a black or minority ethnic (BME) background. In comparison, the 2011 Census estimated that around 4 per cent of Wales' population were from a black or minority ethnic background.
- In 15 per cent of both the 1,563 homeless households assessed under Section 75 and the 1,245 households positively discharged (i.e suitable accommodation was provided), the applicant was from a BME ethnic background.

POLICIES & STRATEGIES

In 2009 the Welsh Assembly Government published a ten year homelessness strategy, which can be accessed [here](#)¹¹. However, this has been in most part superseded by legislation in the form of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

Housing (Wales) Act 2014

The [Housing \(Wales\) Act 2014](#)¹² aims to improve the supply, quality and standards of housing in Wales. Some of the key elements of the Act are:

- introduction of a compulsory registration and licensing scheme for private rented sector landlords and letting and management agents
- reform of homelessness law, including placing a stronger duty on local authorities to prevent homelessness and allowing them to use suitable accommodation in the private sector
- introduction of standards for local authorities on rents, service charges and quality of accommodation

¹¹ <http://gov.wales/topics/housing-and-regeneration/publications/homelessnessplan/?lang=en>.

¹² <http://gov.wales/topics/housing-and-regeneration/legislation/housing-act/?lang=en>.

¹⁰ <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/national-rough-sleeping-count/?lang=en>

Since the Act was passed by the National Assembly, a series of housing pathways have been developed to reduce homelessness for young people, people leaving the secure estate and veterans.

Supporting People Programme

The [Supporting People Programme](#)¹³ provides housing-related support to help vulnerable people to live as independently as possible. It supports older people, households fleeing domestic violence; people threatened with or getting over a period of homelessness; and people with mental health needs, substance misuse needs or a learning disability. The Supporting People Programme continues to be ring-fenced in Wales and supports approximately 60,000 people every year to live independently. The aims of the Supporting People Programme are:

- helping vulnerable people live as independently as possible
- providing people with the help they need to live in their own homes, hostels, sheltered housing or other specialist housing
- preventing problems in the first place or providing help as early as possible in order to reduce demand on other services such as health and social services
- providing help to complement the personal or medical care that some people may need
- ensuring quality services, which are delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible through joint working between organisations that plan and fund services and those that provide services
- promoting equality and reducing inequalities.

Programme for Government

Following the National Assembly elections in May 2016, the new Welsh Government has published its Programme for Government 'Taking Wales Forward'¹⁴. It has four main themes: Prosperous and Secure; Healthy and Active; Ambitious and Learning; and United and Connected. The Programme for Government also references the importance of delivering the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Wellbeing of Future Generations Act

The [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)¹⁵ aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It requires public bodies listed in the Act think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. It contains seven Wellbeing goals: A prosperous Wales; A resilient Wales; A healthier Wales; A more equal Wales; A Wales of cohesive

communities; and A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. It also identifies five ways of working for public bodies to maximise their contribution to the seven well-being goals: Integrate; Prevention; Collaborate; Involve; and Long term.

REMARKS ON KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Positive

Housing (Wales) Act 2014

The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 has a clear focus on prevention for all people faced with the threat of homelessness. While implementation is in its early stages, the Act has been welcomed as a positive step in the right direction.

Supporting People budget

The Supporting People Programme continues to be ring-fenced in Wales and supports approximately 60,000 people every year to live independently. In the Welsh Government's recent draft budget for 2017/18 the SP budget was protected in cash terms following a campaign delivered in partnership by Cymorth Cymru and Community Housing Cymru.

Supporting People data linking feasibility study

A Research and Evaluation Steering Group was set up to aid in the development of longitudinal research to demonstrate the impact of the Supporting People Programme and to ensure effectiveness and value for money. The [feasibility study](#)¹⁶ indicated that following access to Supporting People Services, people's use of GPs, A&E and hospital admissions reduced.

Negative

Welfare reform

The UK Government's programme of welfare reform continues to have a negative impact on people's ability to maintain and access good quality, stable housing. In particular, we are awaiting the publication of the Supported Accommodation Review which could have a significant impact on the sector.

Budget constraints

The Welsh Government's budget continues to be constrained by spending decisions taken by the UK Government. As a result, the Welsh Government is having to assess spending priorities and has repeatedly warned of the need to make difficult decisions about public spending.

Brexit

The result of the EU referendum has resulted in huge uncertainty in relation to the UK economy, with the value of the pound decreasing and questions being raised about the future location of some employers currently based in the UK. If 'Brexit'

¹³ <http://gov.wales/topics/housing-and-regeneration/services-and-support/supporting-people/?lang=en>.

¹⁴ <http://gov.wales/about/programme-for-government/?lang=en>.

¹⁵ <http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/future-generations-act/?lang=en>.

¹⁶ <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/supporting-people-data-linking-feasibility-study/?lang=en>.

has a negative impact on jobs and wages, it could affect people's ability access and remain in housing and contribute to towards an increase in homelessness. In addition, Wales is a net beneficiary of EU funding and there are concerns about the loss of funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) following the UK's exit from the EU. The ESF supports employment and promotes economic and social cohesion in areas of high disadvantage - the loss of this funding could further hinder work to reduce poverty and improve the economic and social outcomes of people in these areas.