

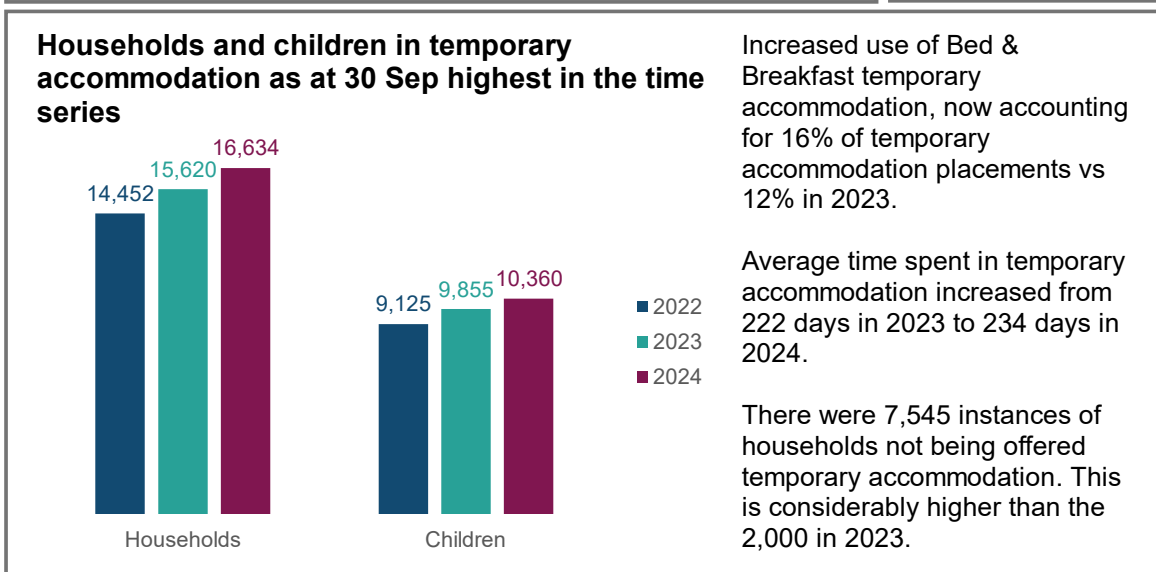
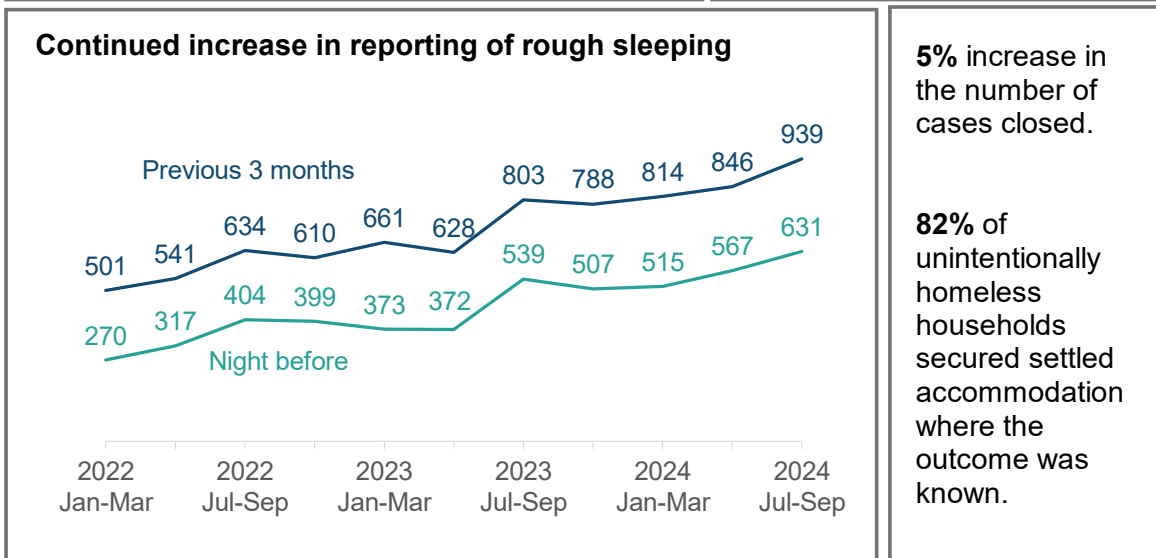
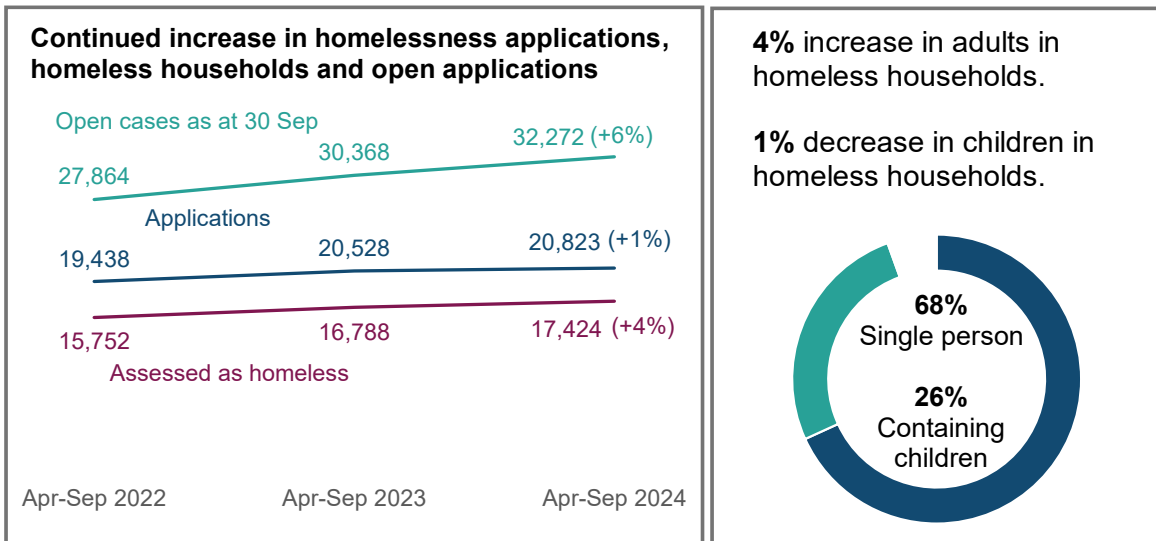
Accredited Official Statistics



Homelessness in Scotland: Update to 30 September 2024

Main findings: April to September 2024

Comparisons are with the corresponding periods in the previous years and percentage changes are shown between the latest two periods.



Introduction

This statistics bulletin provides information on homelessness in Scotland in the six-month period from 1 April to 30 September 2024 alongside comparisons with the corresponding period in previous years. Quarterly breakdowns of data are provided from 2022 in the supporting tables.

The main purpose of this publication is to provide an indication of trends for key aspects of homelessness including applications, assessments, use of temporary accommodation and outcomes ahead of the annual publication, which includes a fuller set of information.

The statistics in this publication are based on administrative data collected by local authorities in the course of processing homelessness applications. A limitation of this approach is that data is not collected for any households that are homeless but do not engage with their local authority. For this reason the statistics in this publication do not necessarily cover the entire homeless population in Scotland. More detail on the data sources we use are included at the end of this publication.

Excel workbooks containing the tables and charts referenced in this publication are available to download at our [supporting documents page](#).

These statistics are [accredited official statistics](#). The Office for Statistics Regulation has independently reviewed and accredited these statistics as complying with the standards of trustworthiness, quality, and value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).



These statistics were accredited on the 29th of November 2012. The published accreditation is also available at [Accredited Official Statistics](#)

What is the statutory duty of the local authority?

If a household is unintentionally homeless (or threatened with homelessness), the local authority must offer settled accommodation. Until this is available, the local authority must offer temporary accommodation.

If a household is intentionally homeless (or threatened with homelessness), the local authority has no statutory duty to provide settled accommodation (although they may choose to do so). There is a duty to provide temporary accommodation and advice and assistance to help the household secure alternative accommodation.

Temporary accommodation must be offered, if it is required, while the household is awaiting an assessment decision.

The statutory duty lies with the local authority the household applies to. Up until 28 November 2022, if a household had no local connection to the one to which it applied, but to another local authority, they may be referred. From 29 November 2022, local authorities no longer have the power to refer an applicant to another local authority in Scotland on the grounds of their local connection.

A household can accept or refuse offers of accommodation. A local authority's duty to secure accommodation for unintentionally homeless households would be fulfilled by an offer that is refused, provided that the offer is a reasonable one.

More information on the duties local authorities have to assist people who are threatened with or experiencing homelessness can be found in the [Code of Guidance on Homelessness](#)

A Quick Guide to the Homelessness Process

A household is homeless if they have no accommodation in the UK or elsewhere, or have accommodation but cannot reasonably occupy it. A household is threatened with homelessness if it is likely they will become homeless within two months.

There are **three stages involved in a homeless application in Scotland**:

1. The Application stage where the household first presents to the local authority.
2. The Assessment stage which determines:
 - a. If the household is eligible for assistance. Households with no recourse to public funds are not eligible for homelessness assistance, though may be provided temporary accommodation while their status is assessed;
 - b. whether the household is homeless or threatened with homelessness;
 - c. if the household is homeless, whether this is 'unintentionally' or 'intentionally'; and
 - d. if unintentionally homeless, whether there is a connection to the local authority to which the application was made and/or to any other local authority. (Note: local connection legislation changed in November 2022).
3. The Outcome stage. A case can be closed only once the local authority has fulfilled its statutory duty or contact has been lost for 28 days.

A note on interpreting the figures

It is not possible to make direct links within a reporting period for each stage of the homelessness process as households will be at a different stage at different times.

That is, not all applications made between 1 April and 30 September 2024 will have an assessment or temporary accommodation placement within that same six-month period. Similarly, some assessments made between 1 April and 30 September 2024 will relate to applications received prior to this; and some temporary placements in this period will relate to household applications and assessments prior to this also. Furthermore, there will be households who entered and exited temporary accommodation within the same reporting period, and therefore will not appear in the end of period snapshot of households in temporary accommodation.

To also note:

- it is possible for households to make an application and/or be assessed more than once in the same period (although this would be extremely unlikely in a six-month period)
- not all households assessed as homeless enter temporary accommodation

Where the publication refers to 'in the six-month period' this relates to the period 1 April to 30 September 2024, unless another year has been specified in the text. Where years e.g. 2024 and 2023 are referred to in the publication (including charts), this relates to the respective six-month period 1 April to 30 September in each of the years.

The term 'homeless households' is used throughout the publication to denote households who have been assessed as (unintentionally or intentionally) homeless or threatened with homelessness.

Impact of cost of living crisis

The [Cost of Living \(Tenant Protection\) \(Scotland\) Act 2022](#) was introduced from 27 October 2022 in response to the cost of living crisis, to protect residential tenants from increases in rent and from eviction.

Where figures are believed to have been impacted by cost of living crisis, these have been outlined within the relevant sections.

Impact of Ukrainian displaced people

There has been negligible impact on the national increase in homelessness applications from Ukrainian displaced households. Between 1 April and 30 September 2024, there were 150 applications from Ukrainian displaced households – 0.7% of the national total. Data relating to Ukrainian displaced households has been made available in a separate workbook available on our [supporting documents page](#).

Impact of changes to local connection legislation

Of the 17,425 households that were assessed as homeless between April and September 2024, 575 (3%) were reported as having a local connection to another (Scottish) local authority only. This means that 97% had either a local connection to the local authority, or no local connection to any local authority in Scotland.

Given this has been consistently between 2% and 3% for the last few years, it would appear that the change in legislation has not led to an increase in the proportion of households presenting to local authorities with only a local connection to another Scottish local authority.

Stock transfer authorities

For six local authorities – Argyll & Bute, Dumfries & Galloway, Eilean Siar, Glasgow, Inverclyde, and Scottish Borders – stock was transferred from local authority control to housing associations between 2003 and 2007. This should be borne in mind when interpreting figures at local authority level, particularly for outcomes by accommodation type.

The extent of homelessness in Scotland

Key Points



Continued increases in all of homelessness applications, households assessed as homeless, households and children in temporary accommodation, and open applications.

Applications, assessments, and households in temporary accommodation

Table A: Homelessness applications, assessments and households in temporary accommodation, April to September 2023 and 2024

Measure	2023 Apr-Sep	2024 Apr-Sep	Change	
			Number	Percent
Applications	20,528	20,823	295	1%
Assessed as homeless	16,788	17,424	636	4%
Open applications as at 30 September	30,368	32,272	1,904	6%
Households in temporary accommodation as at 30 September	15,620	16,634	1,014	6%

Over the six-month period 1 April to 30 September 2024, there have been continued increases in the number of: homelessness applications; households assessed as homeless; open homelessness applications; and households in temporary accommodation.

The number of open applications reached the highest in the time series (since 2003) in June 2024 at 32,377. The September 2024 figure is very slightly lower than this (0.3%). The number of households and children in temporary accommodation reached the highest in the time series (since 2002), with the number of children in temporary accommodation now at 10,360; a 5% increase compared to last year.

There has been a 38% increase in the number of applications from households granted refugee and leave to remain status – from 1,435 to 1,975. Applications from households across other eligibility categories decreased.

Intentionality

Of the 17,424 applications that were assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness in the six-month period in 2024, 16,958 (97%) were assessed as unintentionally homeless and 466 (3%) were assessed as intentionally homeless. The number of households assessed as intentionally homeless increased by 51% (from 309) in the most recent year, although they only account for 2% of all assessments.

Local authority differences

Applications

Fifteen local authorities experienced a numerical increase in applications between 2023 and 2024.

Glasgow experienced the largest numerical increase (766, 22%), followed by Dundee City (143, 21%). Glasgow's increase can partly be attributed to those with refugee/leave to remain status with a total of 1,250 applications received with this eligibility, an increase of 360, 40% compared to last year. Glasgow accounts for 63% of all applications received from those with refugee/leave to remain status. The next largest is Edinburgh at 15%.

The largest numerical decreases were in South Lanarkshire (164, 11%), South Ayrshire (150, 30%) and West Dunbartonshire (144, 22%).

Open homelessness applications

Large increases in the number of open homelessness applications were experienced for: Glasgow (1,035), Edinburgh (656) and Midlothian (275).

West Lothian had the largest decreases in the number of open homelessness applications (182), followed by Fife (175).

Households assessed as homeless

Large proportionate increases were experienced for: Angus (66, 26%); Aberdeen City (143, 24%); East Renfrewshire (37, 24%) and Dundee City (121, 22%).

East Dunbartonshire has the highest proportionate decrease (53, 39%).

Households in temporary accommodation

Glasgow (516, 16%) and Edinburgh (363, 10%) had the largest numerical increases between September 2023 and September 2024. East Renfrewshire has also experienced a high proportionate increase (59, 44%).

The largest numerical decrease was in Aberdeen City (102, 21%).

Reasons for Homelessness and Prior Circumstances

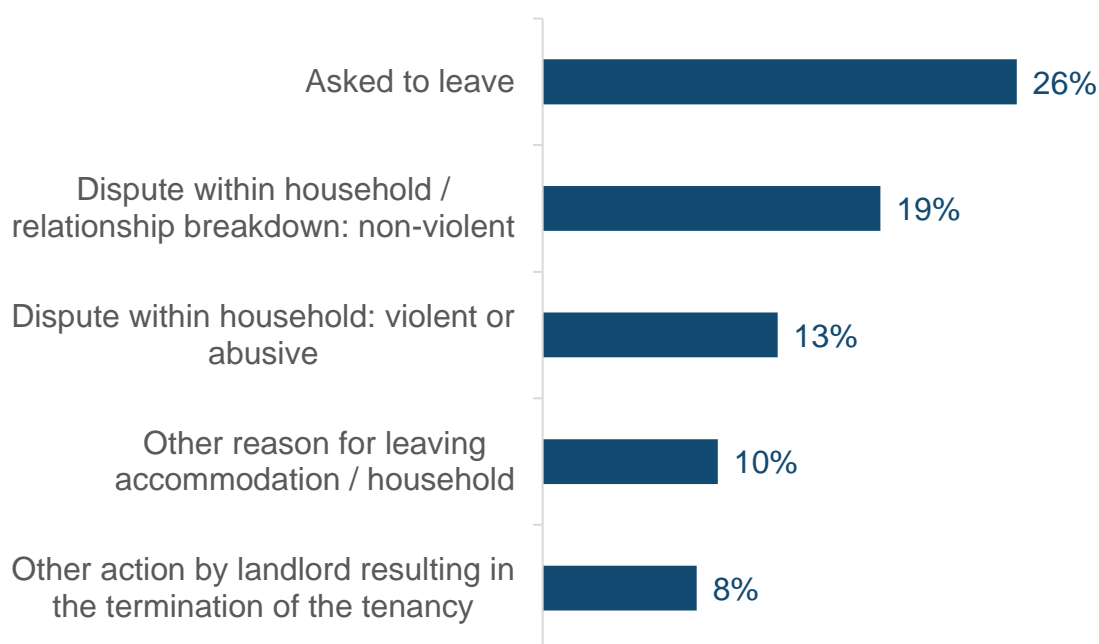
Key Points

↑ Continued increases in the reporting of rough sleeping

Reasons

Most common reasons for homelessness remain constant

Chart 1: Five most common reasons for homelessness, April to September 2024



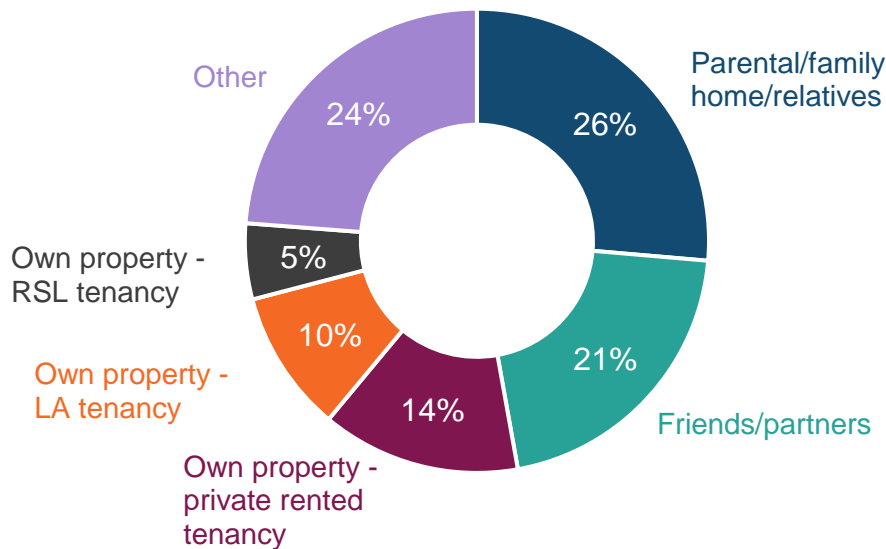
‘Other action by landlord resulting in the termination of the tenancy’ has experienced the most fluctuation over the last few years. This is likely connected to changes in legislation, as can also be seen in the proportions becoming homeless from a private rented tenancy.

Some applicants (76%) also provided additional reasons for homelessness. ‘Not to do with applicant household’ (51%) was the most common, followed by ‘mental health reasons’ (27%).

Previous property

Households becoming homeless from friends, relatives and partners account for nearly half of the total

Chart 2: Property type from which the household became homeless, April to September 2024



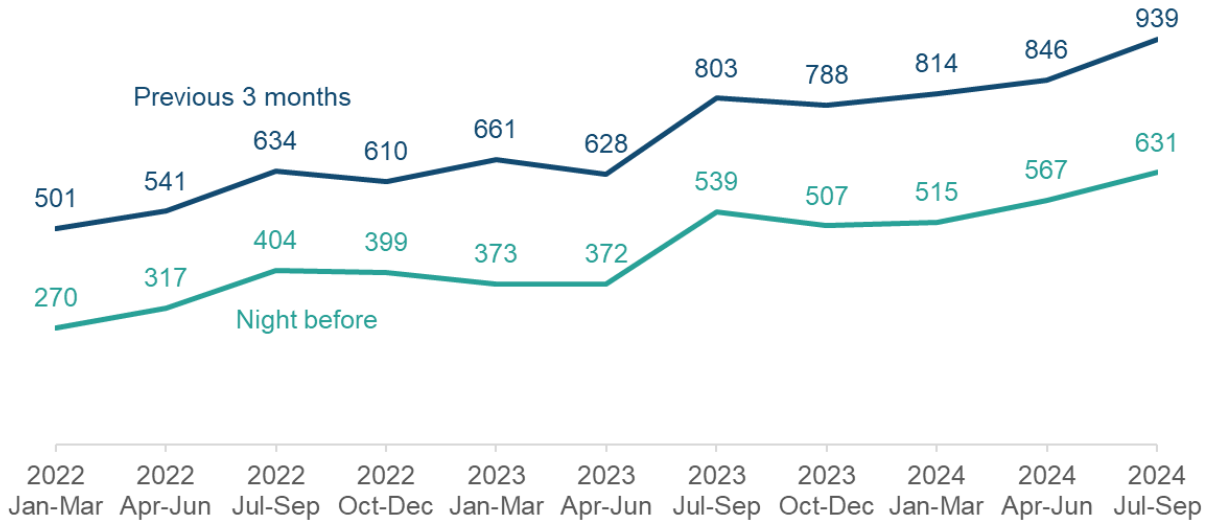
As noted above, the proportion of households becoming homeless from a 'Private rented tenancy' has experienced the most fluctuation over the last few years. This is as a result of legislation which was introduced to protect renters over the COVID-19 pandemic and through the cost of living crisis. Over these periods, there was a decline in the proportions becoming homeless from a private rented tenancy. The proportion of households homeless from a private rented tenancy has been consistently between 12% and 14% for the last eight quarters.

There has been an increase in the number and proportion of households becoming homeless from supported accommodation. This experienced an increase of 52%, from 655 to 995 between 2023 and 2024. However, it should be noted that these both experienced decreases in the last two quarters.

Rough sleeping

Continued increases in the reporting of rough sleeping

Chart 3: Households experiencing rough sleeping prior to making a homelessness application, quarterly, January 2022 to September 2024



Over the six-month period 1 April to 30 September 2024, 6% of all households reported rough sleeping the night before and 9% in the previous three months. These are both increases compared to previous quarters.

Characteristics

Key Points

↑ 4% increase in the number of adults in homeless households

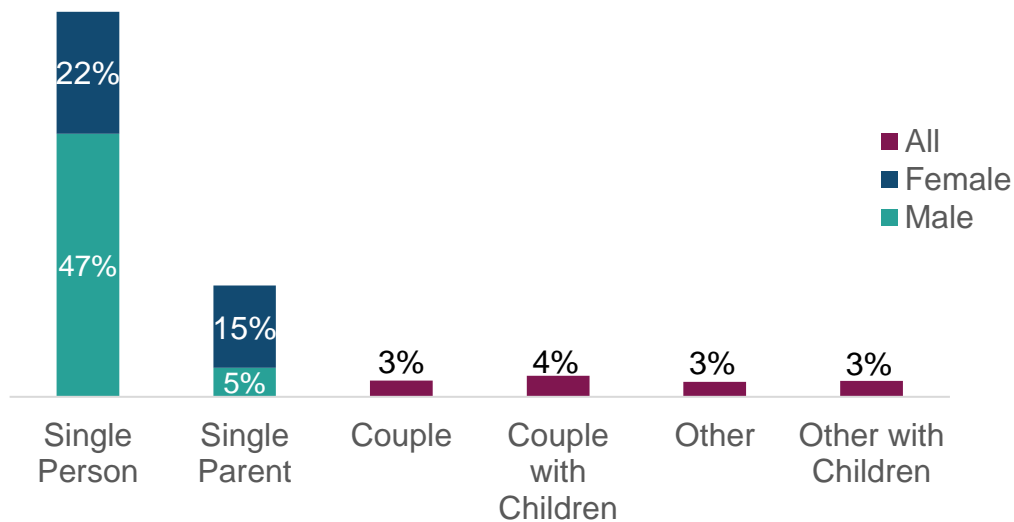
↓ 1% decrease in the number of children in homeless households

There were 19,894 adults and 8,063 children associated with households assessed as homeless between April and September 2024. This represents a 4% increase in adults and 1% decrease in children compared to 2023.

Just over half (57%) of main applicants of homeless households were male in 2024.

The majority of homeless households are single adult

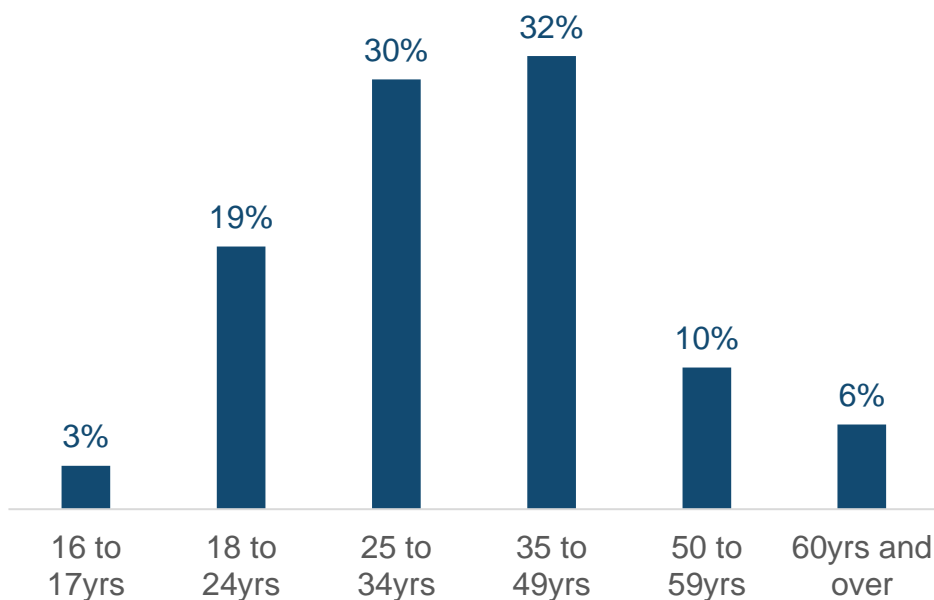
Chart 4: Household type (households assessed as homeless), April to September 2024



Just over a quarter (26%) of all households assessed as homeless contained children. This is a slight decrease from 27% over the same six month period in 2023, and corresponds to the decrease in the proportion of single parent households from 21% to 20% over the same period.

More than three-fifth of main applicants of homeless households are aged between 25 and 49 years old

Chart 5: Age of main applicant (households assessed as homeless), April to September 2024



Between April and September 2024, 79% of main applicants stated they were of 'White' ethnicity. This is notably lower than 84% in 2023. This is due to a reduction in the proportion of those of 'White Scottish' ethnicity specifically (from 71% to 67%). Meanwhile, there have been increases in the number of main applicants with an ethnicity of 'Arabian', 'Other' or 'Not known/refused' of 65%, 52% and 49%, respectively. The number of Ukrainian main applicants decreased by 15% from 137 to 116.

Temporary Accommodation

Key Points

- Increased use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation
- Increase in time spent in temporary accommodation

Sources of temporary accommodation data

Since 2002, local authorities have provided aggregate snapshot information relating to households in temporary accommodation. While this allows trends to be explored over time, understanding around individual placements and how these relate to assessed households is not possible from the snapshot data. Therefore, since 1 April 2016 placement level information on households in temporary accommodation has been provided to enable a more rounded picture of the use of temporary accommodation.

The snapshot data shows 16,634 households in temporary accommodation as at 30 September 2024. The placement level returns show that there were 17,869 temporary accommodation placements open at 30 September 2024, 1,235 (7%) higher than the snapshot returns. Differences may be explained by the returns including different types of temporary accommodation and the placement level returns experiencing a lag in cases being closed.

Both of these figures show households in temporary accommodation at a point in time and, as such, will include those who have recently entered temporary accommodation as well as those who have been in temporary accommodation for a longer period of time (including prior to the reporting period).

Reporting of temporary accommodation

Between April and September 2024, 24,759 temporary accommodation placements were entered and 24,303 were exited. This is a net difference of 456. This is not quite the same as the increase of 304 households in temporary accommodation between 31 March and 30 September 2024 from the HL2 data, however, this is likely due to the differences in the collections outlined above. Total number of placements is a useful measure for showing the overall scale of temporary accommodation usage. However, placement level analysis alone provides limited insight due to the often very transient nature of the use of temporary accommodation. It is not unusual for households to enter and exit multiple placements, with or without gaps in between.

When considering certain aspects of temporary accommodation such as number of placements, average time spent in temporary accommodation etc., the true extent of this can only be fully understood once a household's homelessness application has been closed.

How many households entered temporary accommodation for the first time? How many exited for the last time?

Between April and September 2024, 11,745 households entered a first (ever) temporary accommodation placement. This may include households who made a homelessness application prior to this. Over the same period, 9,353 households exited their last (ever) temporary accommodation placement. A household is considered to have 'exited' temporary accommodation in a reporting period only if their homelessness case has closed and their last associated temporary accommodation placement is within that period.

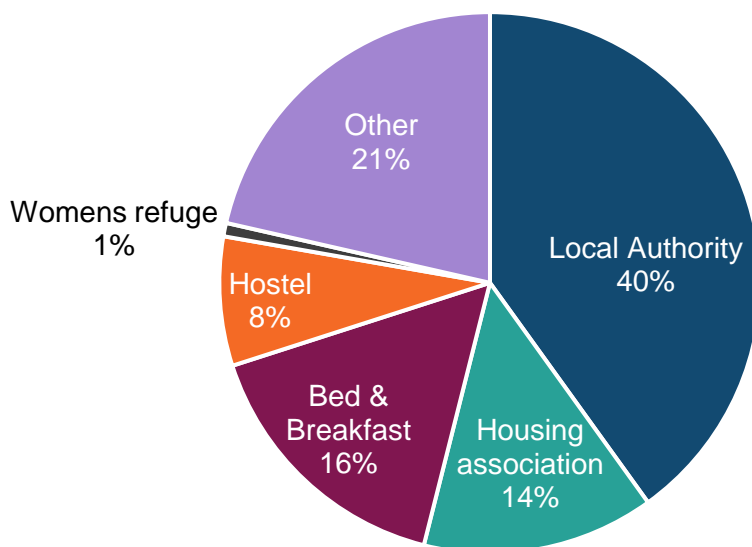
These figures give a net difference of 2,392 (20%) more households entering temporary accommodation for the first time than exiting for the last time. This relates to the increase in the number of households in temporary accommodation which can be seen in the snapshot figure, although the numbers will not match given the differences outlined above.

Edinburgh had the largest numerical difference with 533 more households entering than exiting. The next largest was Glasgow with a net difference of 450 more households entering than exiting.

What types of temporary accommodation are used?

The most commonly used temporary accommodation was local authority accommodation

Chart 6: Types of temporary accommodation used, as at 30 September 2024



The use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation experienced the largest increase from 1,905 households in September 2023 to 2,680 in September 2024 (41%). Local authority hostel has also seen a large proportionate increase of 34% (from 633 to 846).

The rise in the use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation is related to the increase in general demand for temporary accommodation.

The 'Other' category includes 'newer' types of temporary accommodation such as rapid access accommodation, community housing and shared tenancies, which can be deemed suitable.

Housing association and Other temporary accommodation remain more commonly used for households with children compared to all households. Hostel and Bed & Breakfast accommodation are used much less for households with children. However, there has been a notable increase over the last year in the number of children in Bed & Breakfast accommodation (from 130 to 420) between 2023 and 2024.

How long do households spend in temporary accommodation?

For cases that closed between April and September 2024, where there was at least one temporary accommodation placement, households spent an average of 234 days in temporary accommodation. This compares to 222 for the same six month period in 2023 and 233 for October 2023 to March 2024.

How often do applicants refuse temporary accommodation?

A household can choose to refuse an offer of temporary accommodation made by the local authority. There were 3,370 refusals of temporary accommodation between April and September 2024. This is 310 (8%) less than the same period for 2023.

How often do local authorities fail to provide temporary accommodation?

A local authority is required to indicate when they do not offer any temporary accommodation to a household and are therefore acting unlawfully.

Between April and September 2024, there were 7,545 instances of households not being offered temporary accommodation. This is considerably higher than the 2,000 in 2023. The vast majority (6,320 out of 7,545) of these were in Glasgow, where prior to July 2023 they previously reported none. Glasgow have noted that this is due to the increased demand on homelessness services. Edinburgh reported 1,015 instances over the six month period.

An additional seven local authorities reported at least one instance of not offering accommodation over the six month period in 2024. These were Aberdeen City, Clackmannanshire, Falkirk, Fife, Highland, Renfrewshire and South Lanarkshire.

How often do local authorities breach unsuitable accommodation legislation?

Between April and September 2024 there were 4,085 reported breaches of the unsuitable accommodation order (UAO) across nineteen local authorities. This compares to 3,665 in the same six month period in 2023.

Glasgow accounted for 1,650 of the breaches, and Edinburgh 945. West Lothian had a reduction in the number of breaches from 300 to 185 between 2023 and 2024.

Important!

There is still a degree of caution to be exercised when considering these figures due to reporting anomalies and inconsistencies. These are still inherent in the data as a result of uncertainty caused by the extension of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order (UAO) legislation in May 2020.

See [known data quality issues](#) for further details.

Outcomes

Key Points

- 5% increase in cases closed.
- 82% of unintentionally homeless cases secured settled accommodation as an outcome. This is the same as 2023.

Homelessness cases are closed once the local authority has fulfilled its statutory duty or contact has been lost with the applicant household for 28 days. Local authorities provide information on the circumstances and outcomes of homelessness cases once they have been closed.

Cases closed

Over the six-month period in 2024, there were 20,345 homelessness applications closed. This is an increase of 5% compared to 2023. Of those, 16,368 related to households assessed as unintentionally homeless.

Lost contact

Contact was maintained for most households assessed as unintentionally homeless (96%, the same as last year) and intentionally homeless (96%, compared to 93% in 2023, although bearing in mind these are based on relatively small numbers).

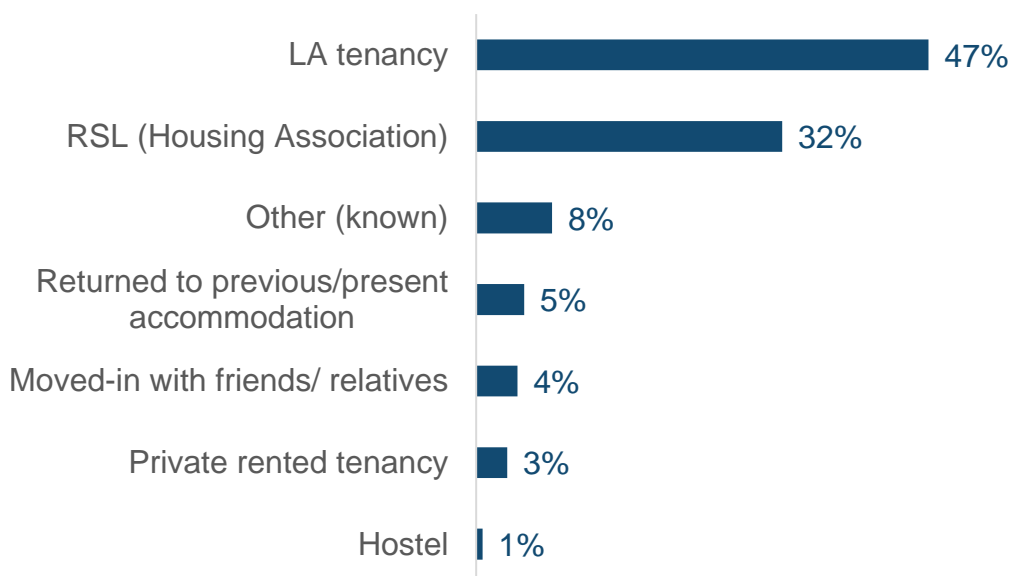
Outcomes

Of the 15,695 unintentionally homeless cases that closed in the six-month period (where contact was maintained and the outcome known), 82% secured settled accommodation. This is the same as in 2023.

Settled accommodation here is defined as a local authority tenancy, a tenancy with a registered social landlord or a private rented tenancy.

Local authority tenancy and registered social landlord accommodation account for the vast majority of outcomes for homeless households

Chart 7: Outcomes for households assessed as unintentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness, April to September 2024



The proportion of intentionally homeless households securing settled accommodation decreased from 44% to 42%. However, these are based on relatively small numbers and are therefore susceptible to natural fluctuation.

For cases that closed between April and September 2024, it took an average of 273 days from assessment to case closure. This was a decrease from 275 between April and September 2023 and 283 between October 2023 and March 2024.

Housing support assessments

Upon closing a homelessness case, local authorities are required to assess whether any housing support services are required by the household for any cases assessed as unintentionally homeless and where it has reason to believe that support would be beneficial. It also has a duty to provide that support if needed.

Across Scotland, assessments for housing support needs were carried out in 80% of cases where there was a duty to assess between April and September 2024. Support was provided for 39% of all cases, although support was not provided for 4% who were identified as needing it. In 20% of cases where there was a duty to assess, no assessment took place and no support was provided.

Data and Methodology

Data within this publication is available in electronic format within tables and charts on the [supporting documents page](#).

The statistics included in this publication are based on administrative data collected by local authorities in the course of carrying out their homelessness activities. This data is collected from local authorities and quality assured by the Scottish Government on a quarterly basis. Details about the data we collect, our quality assurance process, and how we engage with users to improve our statistics are outlined in our quality assurance statement.

[Data Protection Impact Assessment and Quality Assurance Statement for HL1, HL2, HL3 and PREVENT1 data collections](#)

Updates to previous statistics

The data we use in this publication is collected from local authorities on a quarterly basis. As a result these figures are updated on an ongoing basis and may differ from those previously published. This may be a result of delays in some cases being reported to the Scottish Government due to IT issues, quality assurance processes and delayed entry of data – particularly at the end of the financial year.

For example, this publication estimates that 10,937 homeless applications were made in January to March 2024, but our annual 'Homelessness in Scotland: 2023 to 2024' publication gave a figure of 10,686. This is a difference of 251 applications, or approximately 2%. A table comparing the annual number of applications is included in the tables accompanying this publication.

Known data quality issues

There are other data quality issues which we are aware of:

- There are a small number of temporary accommodation cases on the Scottish Government temporary accommodation placement database that are recorded as open but are linked to homelessness applications that we know to be closed. This occurs when a local authority fails to provide an update for these cases after the placement is closed. In these cases we have taken the approach of using the close date of the homelessness application as the exit date of the temporary accommodation placement. This may have the impact of inflating the length of time these households are recorded as using temporary accommodation.
- Snapshot data about temporary accommodation provided by Fife and Orkney do not include all temporary accommodation placements used, and therefore understates the number of households in temporary accommodation within these councils.
- There were previously a large number of inconsistencies between local authorities in the reporting of breaches of the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2020. From May 2020 to September 2021 exceptions were put in

place in response to the COVID-19 pandemic which caused confusion for some local authorities, particularly around when the extension of the legislation (from only households with pregnant women and/or children to all) should commence. Local authorities were able to capture different levels of information regarding breaches around this time (i.e. whether an exception could or could not be applied) which has implications for data comparability. In May 2022, enhanced guidance was issued to provide clarity around the reporting of breaches. It was anticipated that this should relate to all data from 1 April 2022, and while the vast majority of issues have now been resolved, there are still some legacy issues as well as a small number of local authorities who are yet to implement the updated guidance fully. Therefore, there remains some inconsistency and inaccuracies within the data.

Comparability with other UK homelessness statistics

Because of the substantial differences in legislative frameworks and data collection methods that exist across the UK care needs to be taken in comparing homelessness statistics across the four countries.

In September 2019 the Office for National Statistics published the [UK homelessness: 2005 to 2018 report](#), which assessed the comparability and coherence of existing UK government homelessness data sources.

Also published in September 2019, the [GSS Homelessness Interactive Tool](#) allows users to explore the similarities and differences between how key concepts relating to homelessness are defined across the four UK countries. It allows users to explore an applicants' process through each of the different homelessness systems and enables users to visualise the different definitions of homelessness currently being used for official statistics and how these compare.

Summary of current legislation

The Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977, now consolidated into [Part II of the Housing \(Scotland\) Act 1987](#), introduced statutory duties on Local Authorities to assist those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness (potentially homeless), including providing accommodation in certain circumstances.

The legislation currently requires Local Authorities to make inquiries into the circumstances of applicants to satisfy themselves whether the applicant is homeless or potentially homeless. Once the authority is satisfied this is the case, prior to 31 December 2012, it also determined whether the applicant had a priority need. However, from 31 December 2012, the [priority need test was abolished](#).

The Local Authority may then test whether the applicant became homeless intentionally and, in some cases, whether the applicant has a local connection with another authority in Scotland, England or Wales. There were changes in legislation from November 2019 which give local authorities the power to assess for intentionality, rather than it being a legal duty to do so. Local connection with an authority can be based on residency, current employment, family associations or other special reasons. From November 2022, local authorities no longer have the power to refer an applicant to another local authority in Scotland on the grounds of their local connection. However, the power to refer applicants with a local connection to an authority in England and Wales remains, provided they do not have a local connection with the authority receiving the application. Only applicants who are assessed as being unintentionally homeless may be referred to another authority.

[Section 24 of the Housing \(Scotland\) Act 1987](#), as amended, defines homelessness for the purposes of the Act as follows. A person is homeless if they have no accommodation in the UK or elsewhere. A person is also homeless if they have accommodation but cannot reasonably occupy it, for example because of a threat of violence. A person is potentially homeless (threatened with homelessness) if it is likely that they will become homeless within two months. A person is intentionally homeless if they deliberately did or failed to do anything which led to the loss of accommodation which it was reasonable for them to continue to occupy.

[Section 25 of the Housing \(Scotland\) Act 1987](#), as amended, defined the categories of household regarded as having a priority need for accommodation. Further details can be found in the [Code of Guidance on Homelessness](#).

[The Housing \(Scotland\) Act 2001](#) amends the 1987 Act and requires councils to provide a minimum of temporary accommodation, advice and assistance to all applicants assessed as homeless, regardless of whether they have been assessed as being in priority need.

[The Homelessness etc. \(Scotland\) Act 2003](#) is more long-term in scope, notably introducing a phasing out of the distinction between priority and non-priority applications. The ultimate aim of the Act was to ensure that everyone assessed as being unintentionally homeless was entitled to settled accommodation from 31 December 2012.

In November 2012, the Scottish Parliament approved the [Homelessness \(Abolition of Priority Need Test\) \(Scotland\) Order 2012](#) which gave effect to this commitment. From 31 December 2012, the priority need test for homeless households was abolished. As a result, from this date, all unintentionally homeless households are entitled to settled accommodation.

The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2004 came into force on 6 December 2004, and is intended to prevent the routine use of unsuitable temporary accommodation for households with family commitments. Under this Order, Local Authorities cannot put households with children and pregnant women into temporary accommodation which is not suitable, unless exceptional circumstances apply. Unsuitable accommodation is defined in the Order as accommodation which does not meet standards relating to the physical properties of the accommodation (the physical standard), its proximity to health and education services (the proximity standard) and its suitability for use by children (the safety standard).

The 2004 order was revoked by [The Homeless Persons \(Unsuitable Accommodation\) \(Scotland\) Order 2014](#), which came into force on the 21 November 2014. The 2014 order adds the additional requirement that the accommodation must be wind and watertight.

While the Order provides for exceptional circumstances, in which accommodation which does not meet the physical and/or proximity standards may be used, the safety standard must always be met. Further details can be found in the [Code of Guidance on Homelessness](#).

The 2014 Order specifies that the local authority may provide an applicant with temporary accommodation which does not meet the requirements set out by Article 5 of the Order, but for no longer than 14 days in total in respect of that person's application. The [Homeless Persons \(Unsuitable Accommodation\) \(Scotland\) Amendment Order 2017](#), which came into force in October 2017, reduces the number of days from 14 to 7 days before a 'breach' is recorded for the applicant remaining in such unsuitable accommodation.

The [Homeless Persons \(Unsuitable Accommodation\) \(Scotland\) Amendment Order 2020](#) extended the order to include all households, rather than just those containing children or a pregnant woman.

The [Housing Support Services \(Homelessness\)\(Scotland\) Regulations 2012](#) came into force on 1 June 2013. These Regulations make provision in relation to the duty of Local Authorities to assess whether some persons found to be homeless or threatened with homelessness ("an applicant") need housing support services.

Regulation 2 prescribes four types of housing support services which apply for the purposes of that duty. If a Local Authority has reason to believe that an applicant may be in need of one or more of these services, it must assess whether the applicant, or any person residing with the applicant, is in need of such support. If so, the Local Authority must ensure that the service is provided to the person who needs it. There is [guidance available for local authorities on their Housing Support Duty to Homeless Households](#).

Summary of Local Authority duty to homeless households:

Unintentionally homeless

Provide temporary accommodation until settled accommodation has been secured.

Settled accommodation is defined as:

- A Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST)
- A Private Residential Tenancy

If the applicants have previously been evicted for anti-social behaviour in the last 3 years, or if they are subject to an anti-social behaviour order - a short Scottish Secure Tenancy can be offered.

In some circumstances, the Local Authority can provide non-permanent accommodation. These circumstances are laid out in [the Homeless Persons \(Provision of Non-permanent Accommodation\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2010](#).

Under certain circumstances, a Local Authority may apply a local connection test and refer the applicant to another Local Authority (outwith Scotland). The receiving Local Authority must then secure settled accommodation for the applicant.

Intentionally Homeless

Provide temporary accommodation for a reasonable period of time, advice and assistance.

Potentially homeless, unintentionally so

Take reasonable steps to ensure that accommodation does not cease to be available.

Potentially homeless, intentionally so

Provide advice and assistance to help retain accommodation.

Tell us what you think

We are always interested to hear from our users about how our statistics are used, and how they can be improved.

Enquiries

For enquiries about this publication please contact:

Homelessness Statistics & Analysis

E-mail: homelessness_statistics_inbox@gov.scot

For general enquiries about Scottish Government statistics please contact:

Office of the Chief Statistician

e-mail: statistics.enquiries@gov.scot

More information about Scottish Government statistics is available on the [Scottish Government website](#).

Join our mailing list

If you would like to receive notification about statistical publications or find out about consultations on our statistics, please join the [ScotStat mailing list](#).

Future publications

Details of future publications can be found on our [forthcoming publications](#) page.