



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

# Preparing for the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

**Greater Norwich Homelessness Forum**

**23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018**

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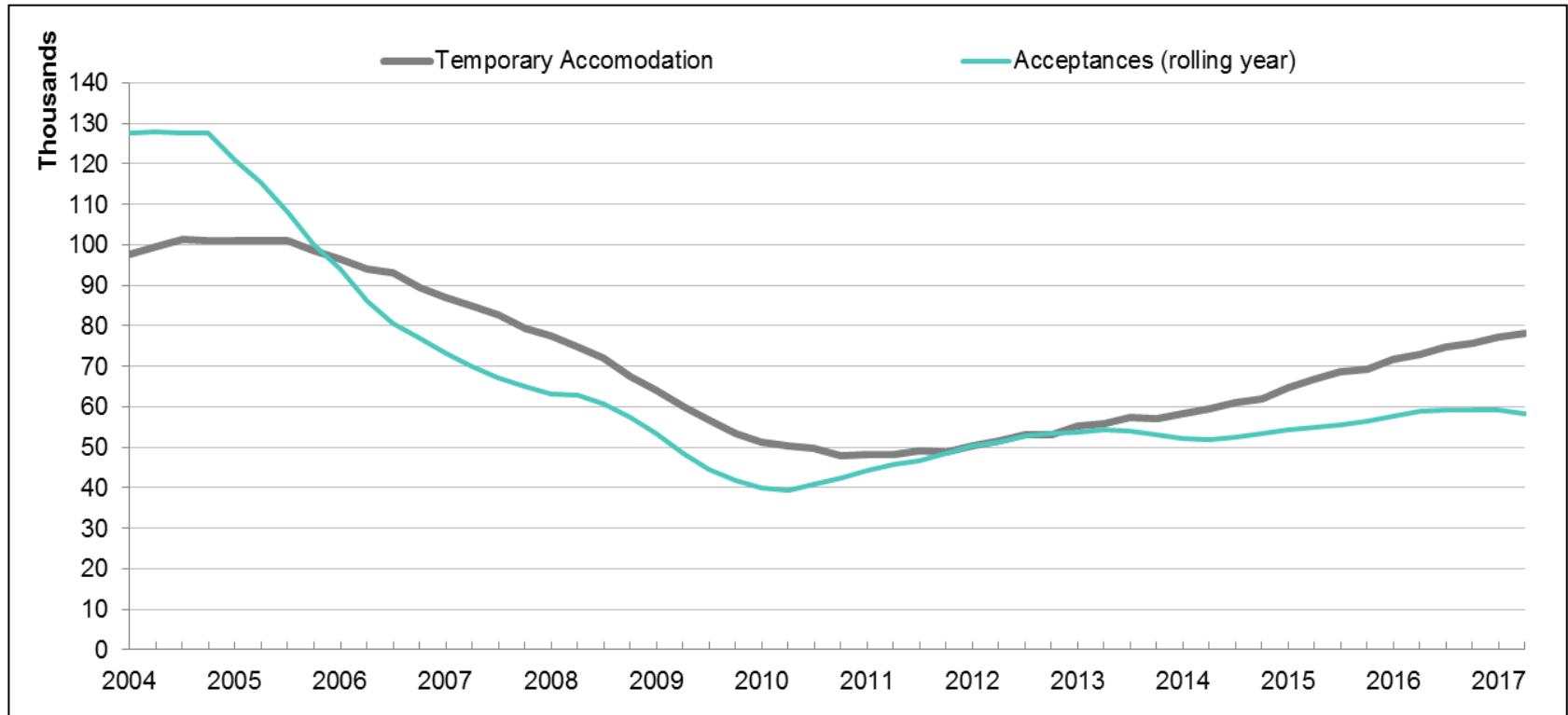


- **Context to the Homelessness Reduction Act**
- **The main changes introduced through the Act**
- **Key challenges and opportunities**
- **MHCLG Support to Local Authorities**



# Homelessness –national trends

## Acceptances and households in temporary accommodation

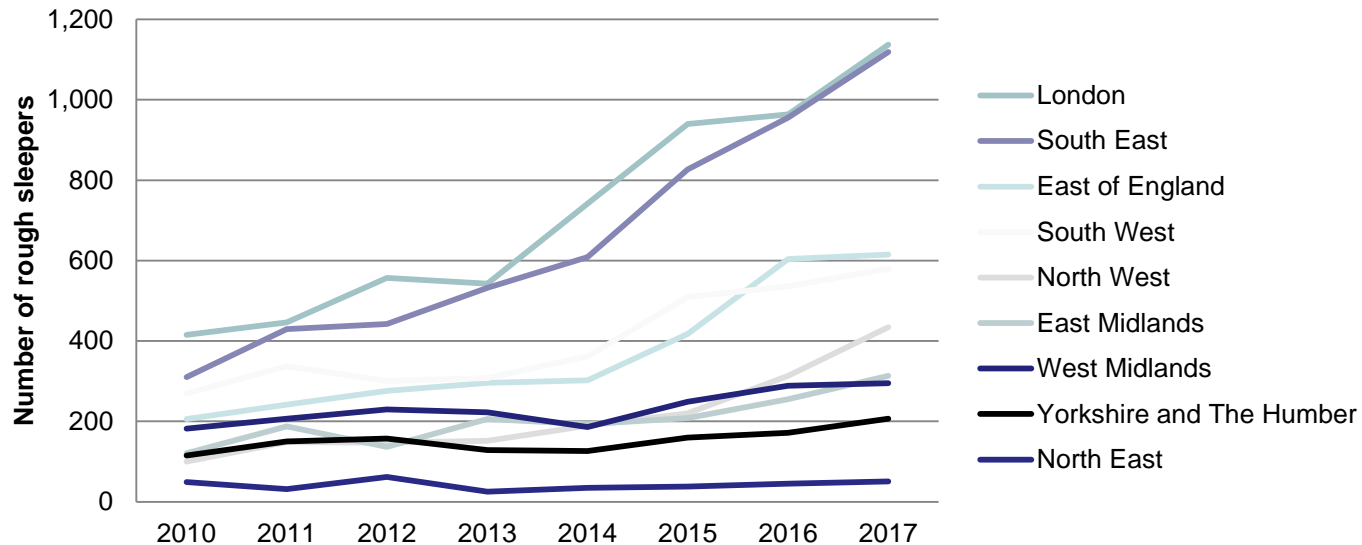


Statutory homelessness and numbers in temporary accommodation are rising. The number of households in TA is up 65% on the lowest point in 2010



# Homelessness - the current position: Rough sleeping has more than doubled since 2010

## Number of rough sleepers by region 2010 - 2017



- 4,751 people slept rough on a single night in Autumn 2017, up 15% from 2016.
- 615 people slept rough in the East of England region, a 2% increase on the previous year
- In Greater Norwich, 30 people slept rough in Norwich (down from 34 in 2016 and 2 in Broadland (up from 0 in 2016))



# The Homelessness Reduction Act: Context

- Enacted from private members bill which achieved Government and cross party support in context of rising homelessness, and lack of help for single people
- Welsh Legislation, Crisis ‘Turned Away’ Report and Expert Panel, DCLG Select Committee
- HRA key to Government response to reducing homelessness
- Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Taskforce will drive activity across Government – including delivering on manifesto commitment to end rough sleeping by 2027 and halve it by 2022
- A Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel including local authority and charity sector reps is supporting the ministerial Taskforce to develop a Rough Sleeping Strategy by summer 2018



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# The focus of Government on homelessness: £1 billion by 2020 to achieve these aims

*The Government has allocated over £1 billion by 2020 to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping...*

This was allocated at Budget 2017 for schemes that will enable better access to new tenancies or support in sustaining existing tenancies.

**£28 million for Housing First pilots**

This was allocated at Budget 2017 to pilot the Housing First approach for the country's most entrenched rough sleepers.

**£20 million for PRS access fund**

This is a visible line in the local government finance settlement to support homelessness services.

**£315 million of Local Authority Homelessness Prevention Funding until 2020**

This was announced at Budget 2016 and is to provide at least 2000 low-cost move on accommodation places to enable people leaving hostels and refuges to make a sustainable recovery from a homelessness crisis.

**£72.7 million for the Homelessness Reduction Act and £3million for IT changes**

**£100 Million Move-On Grant by 18/19.**

This new burdens allocation for the new duties in the Act.

The Social Impact Bond funding will fund eight areas to provide targeted and individually tailored support to up to 1,200 individuals with complex needs.

**£10 million for Rough Sleeping Social Impact Bonds**

**£50 million Homelessness Prevention Programme**

**£19 million for voluntary organisations by 2020.**

This is to fund various voluntary organisations including the National Homelessness Advice Service, Homeless Link (the national membership charity for organisations working directly with the homeless) and Streetlink (a national service for the public to alert services to rough sleepers).

**£20 million for Rough Sleeping Grant Fund by 18/19**

**£20 million for Homelessness Prevention Trailblazers by 18/19**

**£402 million for the flexible homelessness support grant by 19/20.**

This is funding 48 projects across the country to help those at risk of rough sleeping or new to the streets.

This is funding 28 Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer projects, working in around 86 local authorities over 24 months starting in January 2017. The projects are trailing innovative approaches to prevention.

This replaced DWP's Temporary Accommodation Management Fee. The grant is ring-fenced for two years to secure its investment in homelessness services and enable local authorities to focus on homelessness prevention



## HRA: New Duties

- **Expanded advice and information duty** to all residents AND advice designed with vulnerable groups in mind: care leavers, former armed forces, people leaving custody, victims of domestic abuse, people leaving hospital and people with mental health issues
- **All applicants who may be homeless or threatened with homelessness must have assessments of housing needs, circumstances and support needs**
- **Prevention duty** owed to all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness in the next 56 days irrespective of 'local connection' 'priority need' or 'intentional homelessness'. Includes tenants served with valid S21 notice which expires within 56 days
- **Relief duty** owed to people who are actually homeless, irrespective of 'priority need' or 'intentional homelessness'; the local authority MAY refer to another LA if the applicant has no local connection to their authority and has a safe local connection elsewhere



## HRA: New Duties

- Prevention and relief duty each last for up to **56 days** and delivered through a **personalised housing plan (PHP) agreed with the applicant**
- PHP sets out the '**reasonable steps**' that the LA and the applicant will take to prevent homelessness and/or help to secure accommodation and will be regularly reviewed
- If an applicant '**deliberately and unreasonably refuses to cooperate**' with their reasonable steps, the LA can serve notice bringing the duty to an end BUT only after issuing a warning
- New regulations will require LAs to have **written procedures** for non-cooperation notices which will involve second officer sign off
- LAs must provide **temporary accommodation** for homeless applicants they have reason to believe MAY have priority need, during the relief stage





From October 2018 certain public bodies will have a new '**Duty to Refer**' with consent, their service users who are homeless or threatened with homelessness to a local authority of their choice

**Care leavers aged 18 - 20** will have more choice on **local connection**. They will have a connection with the authority which has looked after them and with another area if they have lived there for 2 years, including some time before their 16th birthday.

**Requirements on the suitability of private rented sector accommodation** are extended to all placements of applicants who have priority need, except where they find the property themselves



**Public Bodies with Duty to Refer from October 1<sup>st</sup> 2018 are:**

- (a) prisons;
- (b) youth offender institutions;
- (c) secure training centres;
- (d) secure colleges;
- (e) youth offending teams;
- (f) probation services (including community rehabilitation companies);
- (g) Jobcentre Plus;
- (h) social service authorities;
- (i) emergency departments;
- (j) urgent treatment centres; and,
- (k) hospitals in their function of providing inpatient care.
- (l) Secretary of State for defence in relation to members of the armed forces

**Local authorities and partners are encouraged to build referral protocols and procedures with ALL service providers that can help identify and support people threatened with homelessness**



## Challenges and Opportunities

- **Increase in duties and workload for local authorities** – more applications, decisions , case loads and case management requirements
- **Increase in review points** but aim is to increase consensus and reduce formal challenge
- New **MHCLG data collection requirements** from April 3<sup>rd</sup> – the ‘H-Clic’ system – will gather much more comprehensive data on homelessness, needs, outcomes and actions taken by LAS – these will inform local and national policies on causes and remedies
- **Housing market** is particularly challenging in London and South East
- **New focus on prevention is needed.** Offers of PRS accommodation are not the only solution



## Challenges and Opportunities

- **Partners must be involved** whether through ‘Duty To Refer’ or because ‘homelessness is everybody’s business’ . Earlier identification and prevention means working better together.  
**Housing departments cannot deliver this alone**
- **Reducing rough sleeping is an urgent priority** the Act will require assessments, support, referrals where needed BUT genuine and sustainable solutions must involve contribution from partners- health and social care, employment and training, criminal justice...
- **Changing the culture is essential to improving customer experience** . This is a key challenge for partners and advocates, as well as local authorities



## Challenges and Opportunities – New Delivery Models?

### **Specialist services co-located or integrated with partners**

- St Basils Youth Hub in Birmingham – delivers prevention and relief to 16-25 year olds, 80%+ prevention rate
- Greenwich youth hub The Point – integrated service prevents homelessness and YP becoming Looked After at 16-17

### **Take the service to the customer**

Wigan Council non-office based service, with housing options officers co-located with partners (including two officers based within hospitals) and strong focus on home visits

### **Partners on board**

Southwark Council has brought partners into the office to co-deliver personalised housing plans and prevention activity – Shelter, Women's Aid – and have open referral system for ALL agencies in the borough



## MHCLG support for implementation

**The Homelessness Advice and Support Team (HAST)** is offering advice and support to LAs in preparation for, and following commencement, of the Act

**The statutory Code of Guidance and secondary legislation have been published** following a period of consultation

**Funded Trailblazers** are trying out new approaches to prevention that others can learn from, including some 'upstream' interventions

**LB Southwark** has been funded as an 'early adopter' and have implemented the Act early. LBS are hosting visits, sharing PHPS and all other tools to LAS on request

**The National Homelessness Advice Service (NHAS)** has been funded to deliver training to frontline staff

**New burdens funding** has been increased to £72.7 million following engagement with local authorities around the delivery of the Act.



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# ANY QUESTIONS?

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