

## Briefing for West of Scotland

### Crisis in Scotland

#### March 2023



Crisis is the national charity for people experiencing homelessness. Our Skylight in Edinburgh offers frontline services for people who need help in Edinburgh and the Lothians, while we also work alongside partners across the country to offer our expertise and support wherever we can.

But while our expertise stems from our experience of offering frontline support, we also campaign for the changes needed to end homelessness altogether.

Almost 1 in 12 people in Scotland have experienced homelessness. In 2021/22, just under 29,000 households were found to be homeless by Scottish local authorities, or 47,000 people, including 14,000 children. The number of households found to be homeless has been increasing gradually in recent years, after many years of decline.

- The most common triggers for homelessness are a household dispute/ relationship breakdown or being asked to leave the family home. For women, it is domestic abuse.
- 2,130 households slept rough in the three months before making an application for homelessness assistance in 2021/22. (This doesn't include anyone who did not make a formal homelessness application to their council.) At 6% of all homeless households, this proportion has fallen slightly over recent years.
- There has been a very significant increase in the numbers of homeless households with support needs in recent years. The majority of homeless households (52%) now have support needs, and three in ten (29%) have mental health difficulties requiring support.
- On average it takes over 36 weeks before a homelessness case is resolved. But in some areas and for some households, particularly those with children, the wait is much, much longer.
- Last year 1 in 8 (13%) homeless households last year had already been homeless in the past five years.

While the Scottish Government have committed £100 million to supporting rapid rehousing, research shows that overall funding for homelessness in Scotland has been reducing since 2016, particularly for housing support. A recent report from the Scottish Housing Regulator (Feb 2023) found some councils are "reaching the limits of their capacity to respond effectively to the demands from people applying for help, the range of policy and statutory requirements they must meet and impacts from the wider economic context". Some councils are finding it increasingly difficult to meet their statutory duties, particularly to provide temporary accommodation.

Local authorities are keen to do more to prevent people become homeless and reduce pressure on the system, but currently this is difficult legally. A housing bill is due to come to parliament in the autumn. As well as content regarding privately rented accommodation, we expect this bill to contain legislation on preventing homelessness which should address this, and require other public bodies to support efforts to help people in housing crisis.

#### Homelessness in the West of Scotland

During 2021/22, across the seven local authorities represented with the West Scotland region:

- 3,835 households were found to be homeless or at risk (4,325 adults and 1,707 children)

- 230 households slept rough in the three months prior to making a homelessness application. 80 of these were in West Dunbartonshire.
- 1,106 households were in temporary accommodation as of 31 March 2022. Across the region, a smaller than average proportion use temporary accommodation while homeless.
- People spent most time in temporary accommodation and in the homelessness system in East Dunbartonshire (340 and 403 days respectively), and the least time in Renfrewshire (115 and 142 days). The national average is 207 days in temporary accommodation and 256 days in the homelessness system.
- The rate of homelessness varied between 267 households per 100,000 in East Dunbartonshire to 1,404 households per 100,000 in West Dunbartonshire. The Scottish average is 606 per 100,000.

	<b>No. households found to be homeless / at risk</b>	<b>Slept rough in past 3 months</b>	<b>Households in temporary accommodation</b>	<b>Ave . no. days in TA</b>	<b>Ave. no days to close homelessness application</b>	<b>Rate of homelessness per 100,000</b>
Argyll and Bute	335	30	107	202	217	451
East Dunbartonshire	240	10	109	340	403	267
East Renfrewshire	315	25	93	151	213	408
Inverclyde	265	25	65	138	158	412
North Ayrshire	950	20	261	118	165	845
Renfrewshire	710	40	191	115	142	474
West Dunbartonshire	1,020	80	280	188	207	1,404
<i>WEST SCOTLAND</i>	<i>3,835</i>	<i>230</i>	<i>1,106</i>			
<i>SCOTLAND</i>	<i>28,880</i>	<i>2,130</i>	<i>13,945</i>	<i>207</i>	<i>256</i>	<i>606</i>