

Briefing for North East 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 North East Scotland

During 2021/22, across the five local authorities represented with the North East Scotland region:

- 3,615 households were found to be homeless or at risk (3,934 adults and 1,624 children)

- 320 households slept rough in the three months prior to making a homelessness application. 170 of these were in City and Shire.
- 482 households were in temporary accommodation as of 31 March 2022. Across the region, a smaller than average proportion use temporary accommodation while homeless.
- Stays in temporary accommodation are shorter than the Scottish average, and people go through the homelessness system faster than elsewhere.
- The rate of homelessness varied between 352 households per 100,000 in Aberdeenshire to 814 households per 100,000 in Dundee. The Scottish average is 606 per 100,000.

	No. households found to be homeless / at risk	Slept rough in past 3 months	Households in temporary accommodation	Ave . no. days in TA	Ave. no days to close homeless application	Rate of homelessness per 100,000
Aberdeen City	1,115	85	264	101	99	581
Aberdeenshire	755	85	122	105	90	352
Angus	355	30	95	149	150	362
Dundee City	1,010	65	383	203	238	814
Moray	380	55	99	136	152	475
<i>NE Scotland</i>	<i>3,615</i>	<i>320</i>	<i>482</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>