

SDR 98/2015

24 June 2015

Homelessness in Wales, 2014-15

This release provides summary information on local housing authorities' activities under homelessness legislation, collected through the quarterly homelessness statistical return. Data include the number of households accepted as homeless, reasons for homelessness and the number of households in temporary accommodation. A household is accepted as statutory homeless by a local authority if it is eligible, unintentionally homeless, and falls within a defined priority need category, such as households with dependant children. This will be referred to as a household accepted as homeless through this release.

The Housing Act (Wales) 2014 included a number of changes to statutory homelessness legislation aimed at reducing levels of homelessness, by placing prevention at the centre of local authority duties to help people at risk. These changes were introduced on 27 April 2015; prior to this, a [user consultation](#) was conducted to ask for views on proposed changes to the data collected and published on statutory homeless, in line with these legislative changes. This release is, therefore, the last to show information under the previous version of the statutory homelessness legislation. Further information is available in the Key quality information section.

The information is used by the Welsh Government, homelessness agencies and other housing organisations to monitor trends in the overall level of statutory homelessness across Wales. The information is also used to monitor the effectiveness of current policy, particularly progress against the [Ten Year Homelessness Plan for Wales](#) and the [Programme for Government 2011-2016](#) objectives and for future policy development.

Key points:

Household acceptances

- The number of households accepted as homeless continued to fall during 2014-15, dropping by 1 per cent to 5,070 households. The overall number of decisions made on homelessness applications was down by 11 per cent during 2014-15, compared with the previous year (Table 1).
- During 2014-15, the number of single person households accepted as homeless decreased by 3 per cent and accounted for 54 per cent of all acceptances, compared with 55 per cent during 2013-14.

Households in temporary accommodation

- The number of households placed in temporary accommodation has been increasing for a number of years. However, at the end of March 2015 there were 2,050 households in temporary accommodation, which is 11 per cent less than the end of March 2014.
- At the end of March 2015 there were 195 households in bed & breakfast (B&B) accommodation, which is an increase of 5 per cent compared with the end of March 2014 (Table 6). Of those in B&B accommodation at the end of March 2015, there were 10 families with children, which is similar to the previous year (Chart 5).

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1. Introduction

The first section of this release covers the decisions made by local authorities, under the homelessness provisions of the Housing Act, about households that apply for housing assistance which the authority had reason to believe were homeless or threatened with homelessness. It provides all final decisions reached during the period, regardless of when the application was made. The decisions made by local authorities fall into 5 main categories as follows:

- Ineligible household
- Eligible, but not homeless
- Eligible, homeless but not in priority need
- Eligible, homeless and in priority need but intentionally so
- Eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need

Those households which fall into the final category are 'accepted' as homeless and the local authority is obliged, under the Housing Act, to secure or help them to secure accommodation. Information is also provided on the different priority needs of these households and the main reason for them losing their home.

The second section of this release looks at households that are in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter. Information is provided on the different type of temporary accommodation provided, as well as the length of time spent in that accommodation.

The Housing Act (Wales) 2014 became law in Wales on 17 September 2014 and included a number of changes to homelessness legislation, aimed at reducing levels of homelessness, by placing its prevention at the centre of local authority duties to help people at risk. The changes to statutory homelessness legislation arising from the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 were introduced on 27 April 2015.

Limited summary information covering actions taken by local authorities to prevent or relieve homelessness has already been collected, on a voluntary basis, since 1 April 2014, as part of the regular quarterly statutory homelessness data collection. This information has not been published due to a complete and accurate dataset not being available for any quarter of 2014-15, but may be used for evaluating the impact of the new legislation, once introduced in April 2015.

Between 4 March and 1 April 2015, a consultation was conducted on proposed changes to the amount and frequency of information collected and published on statutory homelessness, in line with the legislative changes arising from the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. The proposals were designed to enable the collection of more detailed annual data relating to the new legislation, while reducing the data collected and published quarterly to headline information, in order to ensure the information being collected is proportionate and minimises the burden on providers.

Following this consultation, new quarterly and annual data collection forms were introduced for April 2015-16 onwards. The consultation also included proposals for changes to the dissemination of statutory homelessness information. For April to June 2015-16 onwards, we will publish three quarterly headlines covering summary data for April to June, July to September and October to December each year and an annual release covering the January to March quarter and the year as a whole. This release is, therefore, the last to show information under the previous version of the statutory homelessness legislation. We will continue to publish all data collected quarterly and annually on StatsWales.

Further information is available in the Key quality information section of this release.

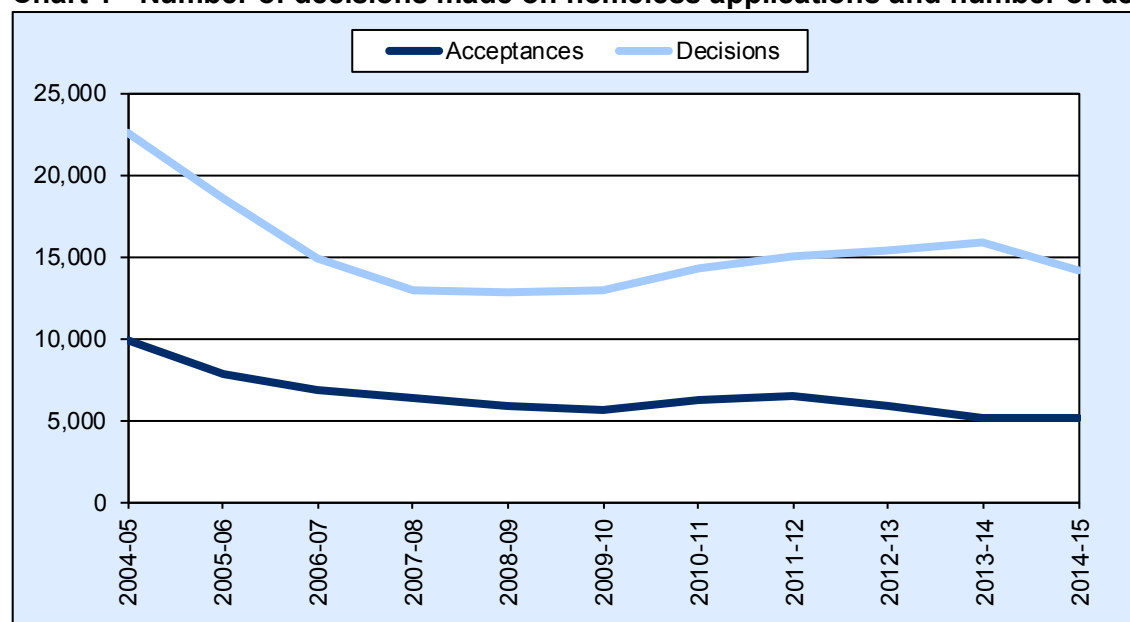
2. Household acceptances

Annually, the number of households accepted as homeless had been generally falling since the peak seen during 2004-05. Whilst numbers increased again during 2010-11 and 2011-12, around the time the country was in an economic downturn, they have since been decreasing. During 2014-15 a total of 5,070 households were accepted as homeless, which is the lowest number of acceptances recorded since 2000-01 (Chart 1). During the January to March quarter 2014-15, 1,235 households were accepted as homeless, which is a decrease of 3 per cent on the same quarter of 2013-14.

Following a general downward trend, the number of decisions being made on homeless applications, has been increasing since 2009-10. As can be seen in Chart 1 below, decisions (previously referred to as applications) and acceptances followed the same trend up to 2011-12, indicating that during this period the increase in acceptances was due to the overall increase in decisions made on applications, rather than a change in the proportion of all decisions that were acceptances. However, whilst acceptances decreased during both 2012-13 and 2013-14, the number of decisions made on applications rose each year, resulting in the percentage of decisions which were acceptances dropping to less than a third during 2013-14.

This increase in the number of decisions made on applications has not continued, with numbers down by 11 per cent during 2014-15 to 14,160. During the January to March quarter of 2014-15, a total of 3,590 decisions were made by local authorities across Wales on those applying for housing assistance, which is down by 5 per cent on the same quarter of 2013-14.

Chart 1 - Number of decisions made on homeless applications and number of acceptances (a)(b)



Source: Quarterly Statutory Homelessness data collection from local authorities

(a) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

(b) A homeless household is one that is eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need

The number of households applying for help from local authorities for housing, that were deemed to be eligible, but not homeless, increased substantially during 2012-13 and 2013-14. However, this increase has not continued into 2014-15, with numbers down over the year as a whole by 15 per cent. During the January to March quarter 2014-15, the number of applicants deemed to be eligible, but not homeless, decreased by 6 per cent compared with the previous year, though they still accounted for 40 per cent of all decisions made.







The number of decisions made, where the household was deemed homeless, but not in priority need, increased by almost a third during 2013-14, before dropping by 18 per cent during 2014-15. During the January to March quarter of 2014-15, decisions of this type were down by 10 per cent compared with the

same quarter of 2013-14 to 710 households and accounted for a fifth of all decisions made on homeless applications.

The increase seen during 2013-14 in the number of decisions where the household is found to be ineligible continued during 2014-15, with numbers up by 7 per cent to 180 households. During the January to March quarter 2014-15, the number of households deemed ineligible increased by 92 per cent, compared with the previous year, to 70 households.

On 8th March 2012, the Welfare Reform Act 2012 changed the age threshold for the shared accommodation rate of Local Housing Allowance (LHA) from 25 to 35. In order to assess the impact these changes may have on the number of single person households, both presenting and accepted as homeless, the numbers have been monitored on a quarterly basis. During the January to March quarter of 2014-15, 690 single person households were accepted as homeless, an increase of 2 per cent compared with the previous year. The percentage of acceptances that were single person households rose to 56 per cent from 53 per cent a year earlier.

Table 1 - Decisions taken on homeless applications (a)(b)
Number of households

	Ineligible household	Eligible, but not homeless	Eligible, homeless but not in priority need	Eligible, homeless and in priority need but intentionally so	Eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need (acceptances)	All applications
Annual charts:						
2010-11	100	4,365	3,010	590	6,255	14,315
2011-12	120	4,825	2,910	615	6,515	14,985
2012-13	120	6,315	2,545	580	5,795	15,360
2013-14	165	6,615	3,355	605	5,115	15,855
2014-15	180	5,650	2,745	515	5,070	14,160
2010-11:						
Apr-Jun	25	1,030	665	125	1,465	3,310
Jul-Sept	20	1,145	805	160	1,605	3,730
Oct-Dec	35	1,085	715	155	1,530	3,515
Jan-Mar	25	1,105	830	150	1,655	3,765
2011-12:						
Apr-Jun	20	1,060	660	140	1,580	3,465
Jul-Sept	40	1,285	755	185	1,905	4,170
Oct-Dec	20	1,215	740	140	1,440	3,555
Jan-Mar	40	1,265	755	150	1,585	3,795
2012-13:						
Apr-Jun	25	1,510	640	150	1,475	3,805
Jul-Sept	25	1,630	615	130	1,570	3,970
Oct-Dec	20	1,545	560	155	1,355	3,635
Jan-Mar	55	1,630	730	145	1,395	3,955
2013-14						
Apr-Jun	45	1,770	865	145	1,360	4,180
Jul-Sept	40	1,690	900	160	1,255	4,050
Oct-Dec	45	1,620	800	160	1,220	3,850
Jan-Mar	35	1,535	785	140	1,275	3,775
2014-15						
Apr-Jun (r)	45	1,495	675	125	1,250	3,600
Jul-Sept (r)	20	1,375	715	120	1,370	3,595
Oct-Dec (r)	40	1,345	645	135	1,215	3,375
Jan-Mar	70	1,435	710	135	1,235	3,590

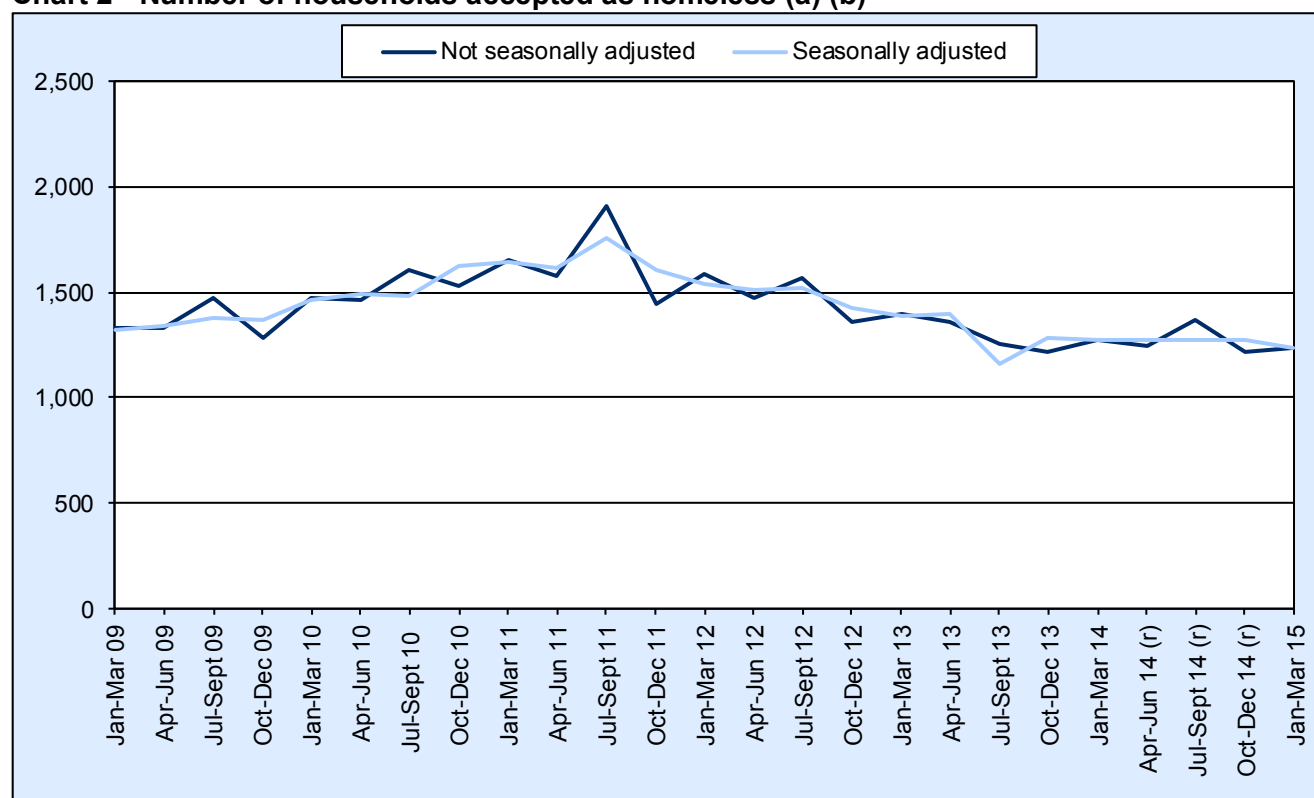
Source: Quarterly Statutory Homelessness data collection from local authorities

(a) All the figures are rounded independently to the nearest 5 to protect the identity of individuals. As a result, there may be a difference between the sum of the constituent items and the total.

(b) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

Quarterly figures for recent years show, in more detail, that the number of households accepted as homeless generally increased from the end of 2009 to a peak of 1,905 in the July to September quarter of 2011-12. Since then, acceptances have generally been falling on a quarterly basis and, with the exception of the July to September quarter, this decrease continued throughout 2014-15. During the January to March quarter of 2014-15, the number of acceptances decreased by 3 per cent compared with the previous year to 1,235 households.

Chart 2 - Number of households accepted as homeless (a) (b)



Source: Quarterly Statutory Homelessness data collection from local authorities

(a) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

(b) A homeless household is one that is eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need

2.1 Seasonally adjusted data

The number of households accepted as homeless will be affected by a number of external seasonal factors, including the weather, timing of decisions, as well as calendar and holiday periods such as Christmas and the New Year. Seasonal adjustment is the statistical technique which removes these seasonal fluctuations in the data. It allows a more accurate assessment of the general trend of the time series and for direct comparisons to be made between quarters within the same year. It may also allow the effects of other more specific factors such as the economic downturn and welfare reform to be assessed.

Chart 2 above shows the quarterly homelessness acceptances from the January to March 2009 to January to March 2015, both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted. The seasonally adjusted data follows a similar trend to data that are not seasonally adjusted; however, the quarterly variation is reduced with fewer obvious peaks and troughs in the data.

The number of acceptances generally tends to be lower during the October to December quarter each year and higher during the January to March quarter. Numbers are also often reported as lower during the April to June quarter than during July to September and again will be influenced by seasonal factors.

Table 2 - Homeless acceptances - quarter on quarter percentage change

	Percentage change (a):								
	Jan-Mar 13	Apr-Jun 13	Jul-Sept 13	Oct-Dec 13	Jan-Mar 14	Apr-Jun 14	Jul-Sept 14	Oct-Dec 14	Jan-Mar 15
Not seasonally adjusted	2.8	-2.4	-7.7	-2.7	4.4	-1.9	9.4	-11.5	1.9
Seasonally adjusted (b)	-2.8	0.1	-16.7	10.8	-0.7	0.1	-0.6	0.3	-2.7

Source: Homelessness collection from local authorities

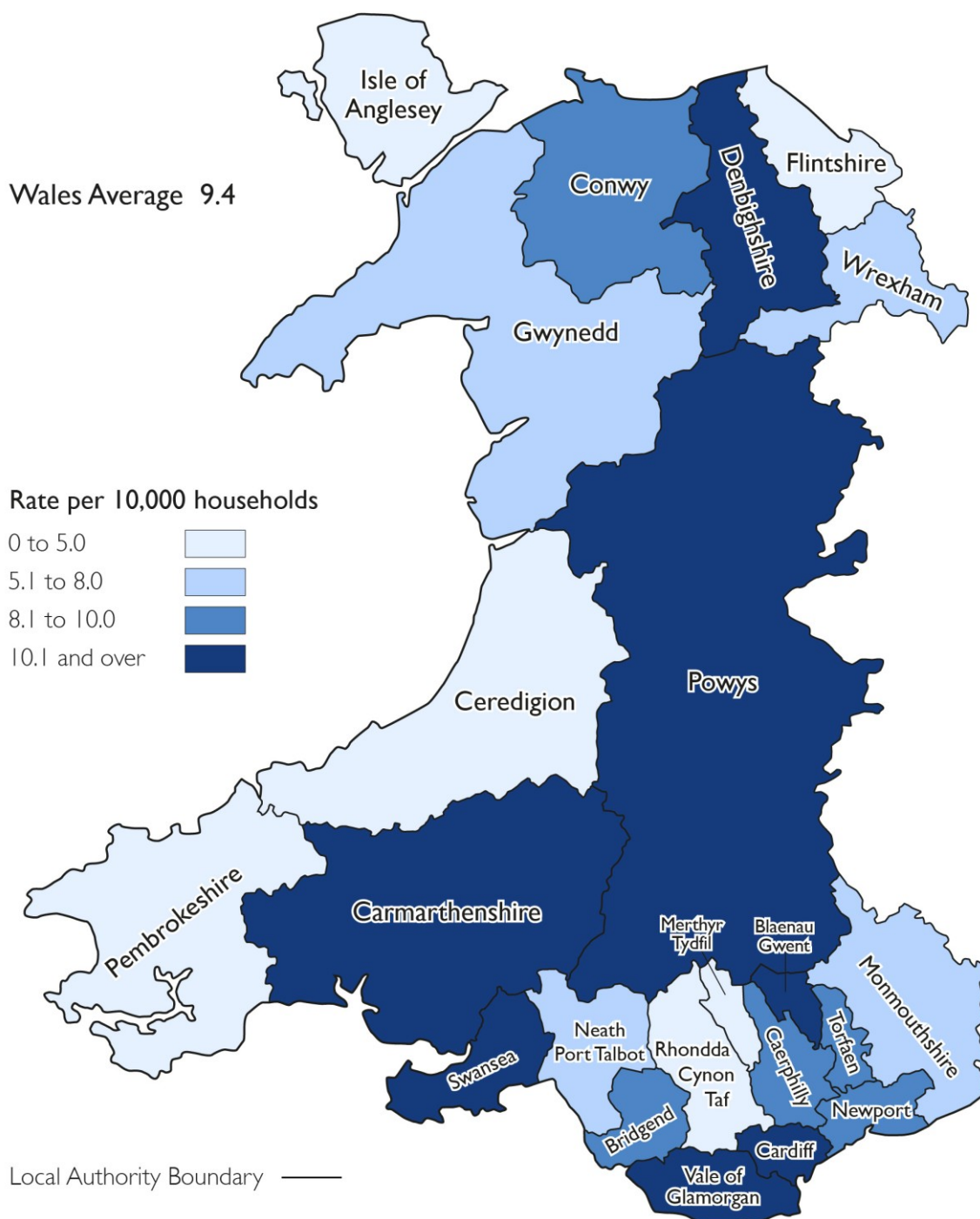
(a) The percentage change compared with the previous quarter

(b) To note the data shown for previous quarters may be subject to change following application of the seasonal adjustment model.

The table above shows the percentage change in the number of homeless acceptances quarter on quarter, from January to March 2013 to January to March 2015, both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted. This table, along with Chart 2, shows that homeless acceptances had generally been falling on a quarterly basis since July to September 2011-12. However, the direction of quarter on quarter changes for seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted data often differ. During the January to March quarter 2015, the seasonally adjusted data decreased compared with the previous quarter, whilst the data that was not seasonally adjusted showed a slight increase.

Homelessness

Map 1: Households accepted as homeless, rate per 10,000 households, January to March 2015



Cartographics ML/41/15.16 (June 2015)

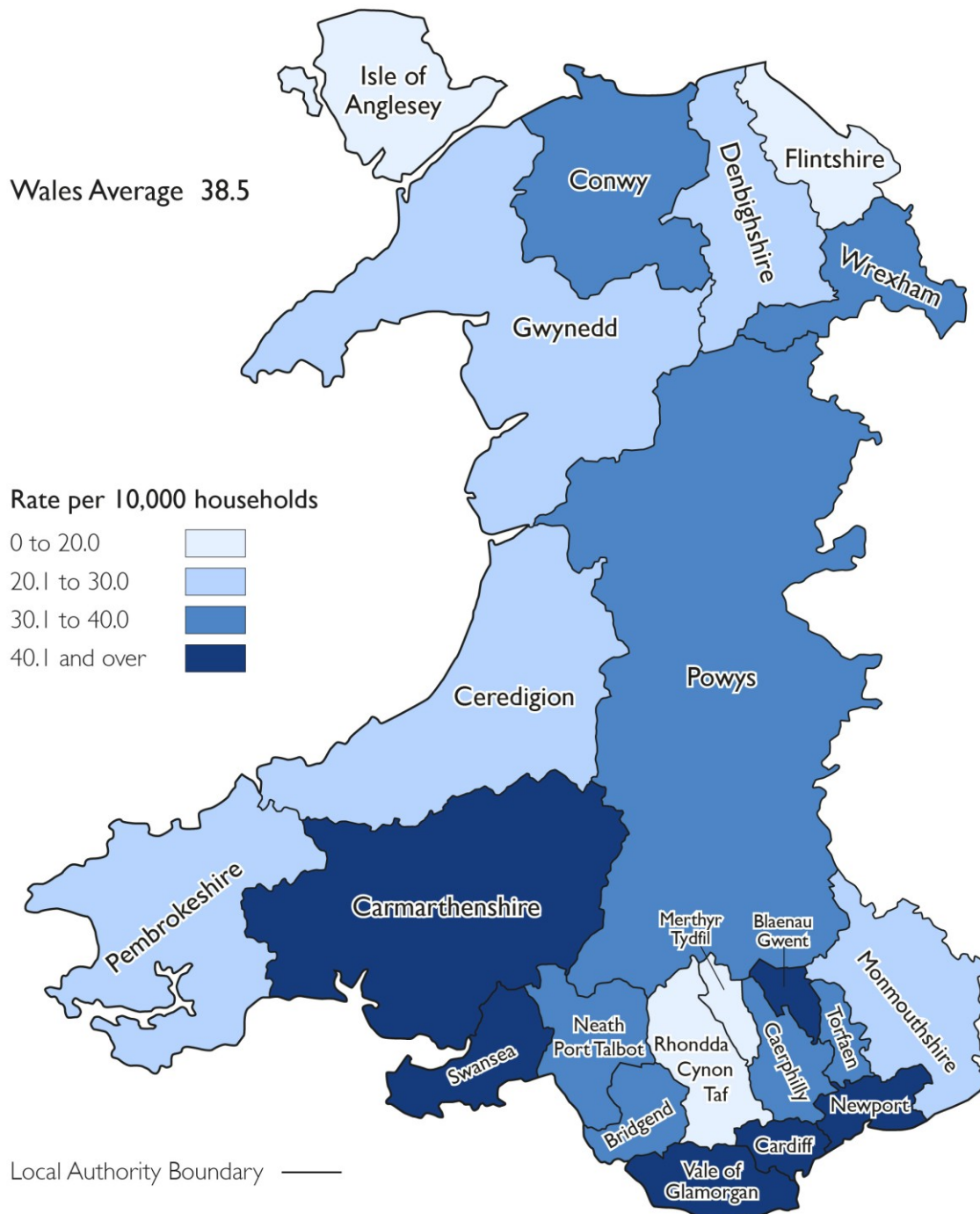
Produced by Cartographics, Welsh Government

During January to March 2014-15, Swansea continued to have the highest number of acceptances (200 households) and, taking into account the number of households in each area, the highest rate of acceptances at 19.1 per 10,000 households. Ceredigion, Merthyr Tydfil and Isle of Anglesey had the lowest number of acceptances during the quarter at just 10 households and Ceredigion also had the lowest rate at 2.5 per 10,000 households, followed by Isle of Anglesey with 3.6.

Information on number of acceptances with a local authority breakdown and numbers of households is available on the [StatsWales](http://stats.wales.gov.uk) website.

Homelessness

Map 2: Households accepted as homeless,
rate per 10,000 households, 2014-15



Cartographics ML/41/15.16 (June 2015)

Produced by Cartographics, Welsh Government

On an annual basis, Cardiff had the highest total number of acceptances during 2014-15 (820 households). Swansea had the highest rate (75.9 per 10,000 households) followed by Carmarthenshire (56.2 per 10,000 households). The lowest number of acceptances during 2014-15 was seen in Merthyr Tydfil with 35 households and also had the lowest rate (14.4 per 10,000 households)

Table 3 - Households accepted as homeless by priority need (a)(b)(c)
Number of households

	Household with vulnerable member due to:												Total Households
	Household with dependent children	Household member pregnant and no other children	Old age	Physical disability	Mental illness / learning disability/ learning difficulties	Other special reasons	Care leaver/Young person at risk 18-21	Young person 16-17 year old	Domestic violence or threat of domestic violence	Homeless after leaving the armed forces	Former prisoner with no accommo - dation to return to	Households homeless in emergency	
Annual charts:													
2010-11	2,400	485	160	380	400	150	145	460	700	30	895	45	6,255
2011-12	2,250	555	165	440	505	145	150	460	825	40	955	25	6,515
2012-13	2,025	440	160	465	495	70	130	295	740	30	895	55	5,795
2013-14	1,700	310	145	395	445	75	145	220	730	25	885	40	5,115
2014-15	1,810	285	140	365	440	90	130	200	705	15	860	30	5,070
2011-12:													
Apr-Jun	570	135	45	110	120	35	40	125	180	10	200	5	1,580
Jul-Sept	645	185	45	115	145	45	45	115	270	10	280	5	1,905
Oct-Dec	490	105	35	100	125	35	35	105	180	10	215	10	1,440
Jan-Mar	545	120	40	110	115	30	30	115	200	10	265	10	1,585
2012-13:													
Apr-Jun	565	110	45	130	125	10	35	75	175	10	195	*	1,475
Jul-Sept	555	130	45	110	135	20	40	90	200	*	235	10	1,570
Oct-Dec	445	100	35	115	115	15	25	65	185	10	225	20	1,355
Jan-Mar	460	105	35	110	115	25	30	65	185	5	240	25	1,395
2013-14													
Apr-Jun	475	95	40	110	95	25	40	55	190	5	225	5	1,360
Jul-Sept	405	65	30	100	115	10	35	65	180	10	235	10	1,255
Oct-Dec	385	85	35	95	130	20	35	45	185	*	200	10	1,220
Jan-Mar	435	65	40	95	105	20	40	55	175	5	225	20	1,275
2014-15													
Apr-Jun (r)	440	65	40	95	105	25	30	40	175	5	220	10	1,250
Jul-Sept (r)	500	90	30	85	105	25	35	60	205	5	225	*	1,370
Oct-Dec (r)	450	55	30	95	110	20	30	55	155	*	195	10	1,215
Jan-Mar	420	70	30	90	120	20	35	45	170	*	220	5	1,235

Source: Homelessness collection from local authorities

(a) All the figures are rounded independently to the nearest 5 to protect the identity of individuals. As a result, there may be a difference between the sum of the constituent items and the total.

(b) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

(c) A homeless household is one that is eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need

2.2 Acceptances by priority need category (Table 3)

- Though the number of households accepted as homeless decreased during the January to March quarter 2014-15, the percentage of homeless households in each of the priority need categories remained relatively unchanged.
- The presence of dependent children or a pregnant woman in the household continued to be the most commonly stated priority need category during 2014-15 as a whole accounting for 41 per cent of all acceptances. During the January to March quarter 2014-15, there were 490 households in this category accounting for 40 per cent of all acceptances.
- The second largest priority need category, during 2014-15, was former prisoner with no accommodation to return to accounting for 17 per cent of all acceptances. During the January to March quarter 2014-15 there were 220 households in this category accounting for 18 per cent of all acceptances during the quarter.
- The third main priority need category during 2014-15 as a whole and during the January to March quarter 2014-15 were homeless households in priority need due to domestic violence or the threat of domestic violence. They accounted for 14 per cent of all acceptances over both the year as a whole and during the January to March 2014-15 quarter.
- During 2014-15 the number of households accepted as homeless the due to the presence of a vulnerable 16 to 17 year old member were down by 9 per cent to 200 households. During the January to March quarter 2014-15, a total of 45 households were accepted as homelessness for this reason which represents a decrease of 19 per cent on the same quarter of the previous year. The decreasing numbers over recent quarters may be due to increased prevention and family mediation work being carried out by local authorities.
- Homeless households in priority need due to a member having a mental illness or learning disability/learning difficulties increased between 2007-08 and 2011-12 but has since been decreasing. During 2014-15 the numbers remained similar to those of the previous year though, on a quarterly basis, during the January to March quarter 2014-15, the number of households within this priority group rose by 16 per cent compared with the same period of the previous year.
- The number of households in priority need due to a member having a physical disability was down by 8 per cent during 2014-15 while the number of households in priority need due to old age fell by 6 per cent compared with the previous year.

2.3 Reasons for homelessness (Table 4)

- During 2014-15, loss of accommodation¹ was the main reason for homelessness accounting for a quarter of all acceptances. This was followed closely by breakdown of relationship with partner (23 per cent), parents, other relatives or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate (22 per cent) and leaving institution or care (20 per cent).
- During 2014-15 the overall number of households homeless due to loss of accommodation increased by 7 per cent compared to the previous year making this the main reason for loss of home. However numbers were still below those seen during 2012-13 and 2011-12.
- The largest increase during 2014-15 was in violence or harassment with 215 households giving this as the main reason for loss of home up by 11 per cent on 2013-14.
- The number of households homeless after leaving institution or care, during 2014-15 as whole, was down by 4 per cent to 1,025 households. Numbers were also down by 8 per cent during the January to March quarter compared with the same quarter of 2013-14 .

¹ Loss of accommodation includes loss of rented/tied accommodation and loss due to mortgage or rent arrears

Following the consultation, [‘Proposed Changes to Homelessness Data Collections’](#), more detail has been collected from 1 April 2012 for households that were homeless due to violence or harassment. Local authorities were required to state whether the violence or harassment was racially motivated, due to religion or belief, to gender reassignment (gender identity), to sexual identity or sexual orientation, to disability or due to another reason.











- During 2014-15, a total of 215 households were homeless due to violence or harassment, accounting for 4 per cent of all households accepted as being homeless. Around 3 per cent of these (7 households) reported the violence or harassment as being due to sexual identity/orientation. In 2 per cent of cases (5 households) it was reported as due to religion or belief and in a small number of cases was reported as being racially motivated, due to disability or to gender re-assignment/gender identity. The majority (91 per cent) of the homeless households stated the violence or harassment was because of other reasons.

From 1 April 2012 information has also been collected on those households who were accepted as homeless due to their current property being either unaffordable or unsuitable.

- During 2014-15, a total of 70 households (1 per cent) were homeless because their current property was not affordable and 125 households (2 per cent) because their current property was unsuitable (Table 4).
- Following the changes to the categories for main reason for loss of home, the percentage of households recorded as having an ‘other’ reason dropped from 6 per cent during 2011-12 to 2 per cent during 2012-13 and 2013-14. During 2014-15, there were 100 households (2 per cent) where the main reason for loss was reported as ‘other’ reason.

Further information is available in the glossary and in the Key quality information section of this release.

Table 4 – Households accepted as homeless, main reason for loss of last settled home (a)(b)(c)
Number of households

	Parents or other relatives/friends no longer willing or able to accommodate	Breakdown of relationship with partner (c)	Violence or harrassment (d)	Mortgage or rent arrears	Loss of rented/tied accommod-ation	Current property unaffordable (e)	Current property unsuitable (e)	Leaving institution or care	Other	Total
Annual charts:										
2010-11	1,655	1,315	230	295	1,260	.	.	1,040	460	6,255
2011-12	1,820	1,370	255	315	1,220	.	.	1,145	395	6,515
2012-13	1,465	1,270	205	280	1,105	75	220	1,055	120	5,795
2013-14	1,130	1,195	195	210	960	70	180	1,070	105	5,115
2014-15	1,125	1,165	215	180	1,070	70	125	1,025	100	5,070
2011-12:										
Apr-Jun	440	325	55	95	315	.	.	235	115	1,580
Jul-Sept	510	410	90	90	355	.	.	340	120	1,905
Oct-Dec	390	300	55	60	285	.	.	270	75	1,440
Jan-Mar	480	330	55	70	265	.	.	300	85	1,585
2012-13:										
Apr-Jun	385	320	45	90	300	15	65	235	20	1,475
Jul-Sept	425	345	55	55	320	15	65	270	20	1,570
Oct-Dec	350	295	45	70	220	20	55	265	40	1,355
Jan-Mar	300	310	60	65	265	30	40	285	40	1,395
2013-14										
Apr-Jun	315	300	50	65	275	15	40	275	20	1,360
Jul-Sept	280	300	40	50	225	15	35	280	30	1,255
Oct-Dec	275	290	50	50	220	20	40	245	30	1,220
Jan-Mar	255	305	55	40	240	20	65	265	30	1,275
2014-15										
Apr-Jun (r)	265	265	55	55	265	15	35	270	25	1,250
Jul-Sept (r)	310	330	65	35	305	20	25	265	15	1,370
Oct-Dec (r)	280	285	50	40	250	15	30	240	20	1,215
Jan-Mar	270	290	45	45	250	20	35	245	35	1,235

Source: Homelessness collection from local authorities

(a) All the figures are rounded independently to the nearest 5 to protect the identity of individuals. As a result, there may be a difference between the sum of the constituent items and the total.

(b) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

(c) Includes violent and non-violent

(d) From 1 April 2012 extra detail on the reasons for violence /harrassment have been collected. Further details are available in the Key Quality Information section.

(e) Information collected from 1 April 2012 only - further details are available in the Glossary and Key Quality information sections of the release.

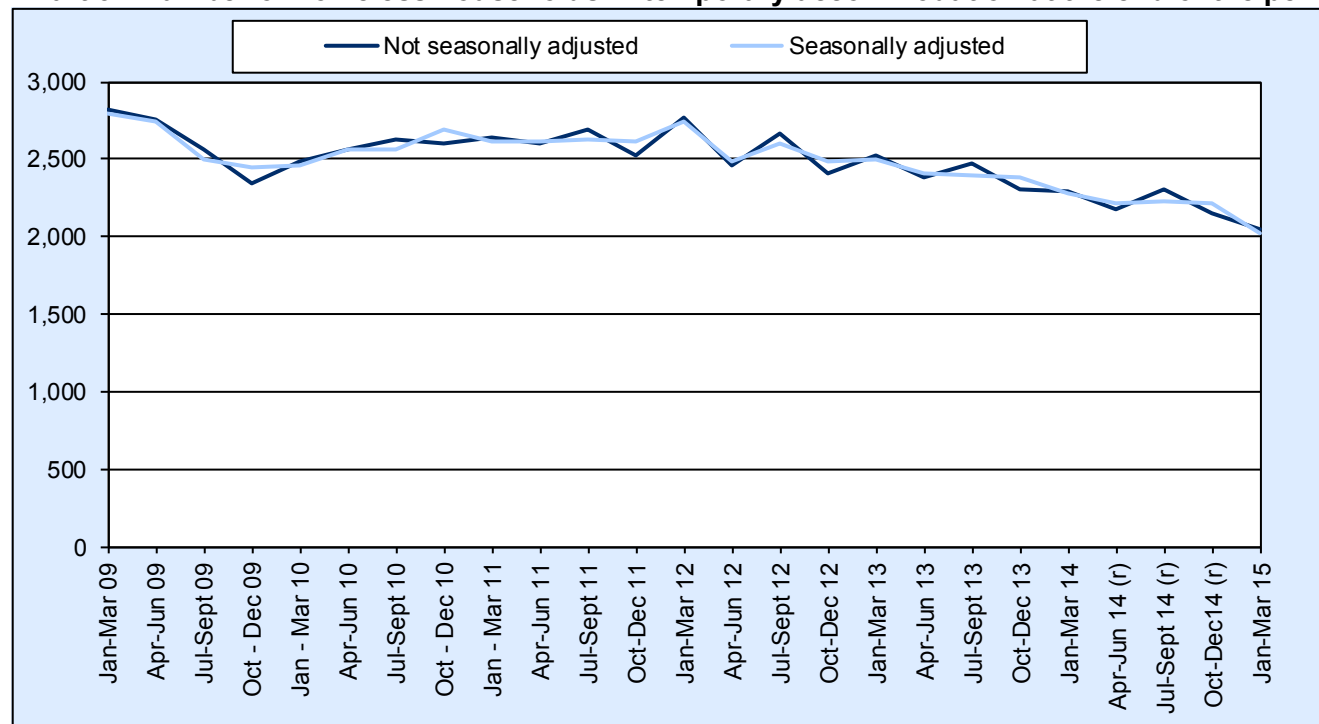
. = not applicable

3. Households in temporary accommodation

Historically, there has been a time lag between a change in direction in the number of acceptances and the change in direction in the number of households in temporary accommodation. For example, whilst acceptances peaked in 2004-05 before falling, households in temporary accommodation continued to grow and peaked a year later in 2005-06, before subsequently falling.

Following increases in the number of homeless households accommodated temporarily during 2010-11 and 2011-12, the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation has decreased again, on an annual basis, since 2012-13.

Chart 3 - Number of homeless households in temporary accommodation at the end of the period (a)



Source: Quarterly Statutory Homelessness data collection from local authorities

(a) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

Quarterly data shows that there were 2,050 households in temporary accommodation at the end of March 2015, which is a decrease of 11 per cent compared with the end of March 2014. The decrease in households in temporary accommodation reflects the overall decrease in acceptances during 2013-14 and 2014-15.

3.1 Seasonally adjusted data

As with households accepted as homeless, the number of households placed in temporary accommodation will also be affected by a number of external seasonal factors such as the weather, and holiday periods such as Christmas and Easter.

Chart 3, above, shows the number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter, for January to March 2009 to January to March 2015, both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted. As with acceptances, the seasonally adjusted data follows a similar trend to the data that are not seasonally adjusted, but with fewer obvious peaks and troughs over time.

Table 5 - Households in temporary accommodation - quarter on quarter percentage change

	Percentage change (a):							
	Jan-Mar 13	Apr-Jun 13	Jul-Sept 13	Oct-Dec 13	Jan-Mar 14	Apr-Jun 14	Jul-Sept 14	Oct-Dec 14
Not-seasonally adjusted	4.9	-5.6	3.6	-6.4	-0.7	-5.1	5.6	-6.6
Seasonally adjusted	0.8	-3.8	-0.3	-0.9	-4.4	-2.8	0.8	-0.6

Source: Homelessness collection from local authorities

(a) The percentage change compared with the previous quarter

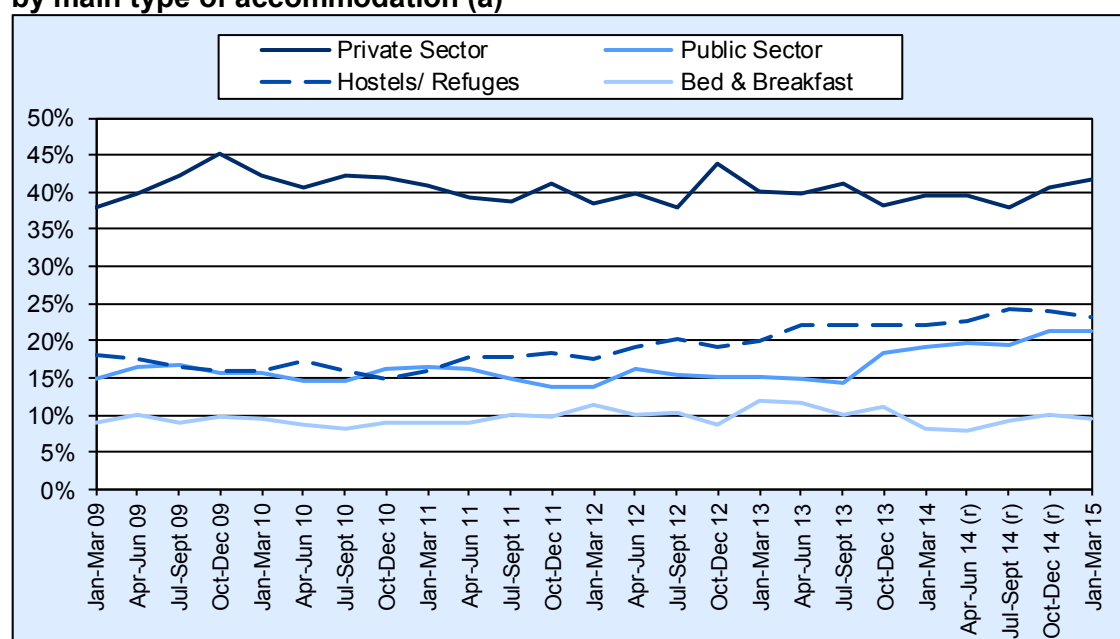
(b) To note the data shown for previous quarters may be subject to change following application of the seasonal adjustment model.

Homeless households in temporary accommodation generally follow a similar pattern to acceptances, with numbers tending to be lower during the October to December quarter each year, higher during the January to March quarter and often higher in the July to September quarter than in the April to June quarter due to seasonal factors.

The table above shows the percentage change in the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation compared with the previous quarter, from January to March 2013 to January to March 2015, for both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted figures. This table, along with Chart 3, shows that the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation has generally been falling on a quarterly basis since January to March 2011-12, though the direction of quarter on quarter changes for seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted data can differ. During the January to March quarter of 2014-15, the seasonally adjusted was down by around 8 per cent from the previous quarter and the not seasonally adjusted data was down by around 5 per cent.

3.2 Types of temporary accommodation

- Following a peak of 1,105 households at the end of September 2010, the number of households placed temporarily in private sector accommodation annually has generally been falling. At the end of March 2015 the number of households placed temporarily in private sector accommodation fell by 6 per cent compared with the previous year to 855 households. However private sector accommodation continues to be the main form of temporary accommodation used within Wales with 42 per cent of all households in temporary accommodation placed in private sector housing at the end of March 2015. This is up from 40 per cent a year earlier.

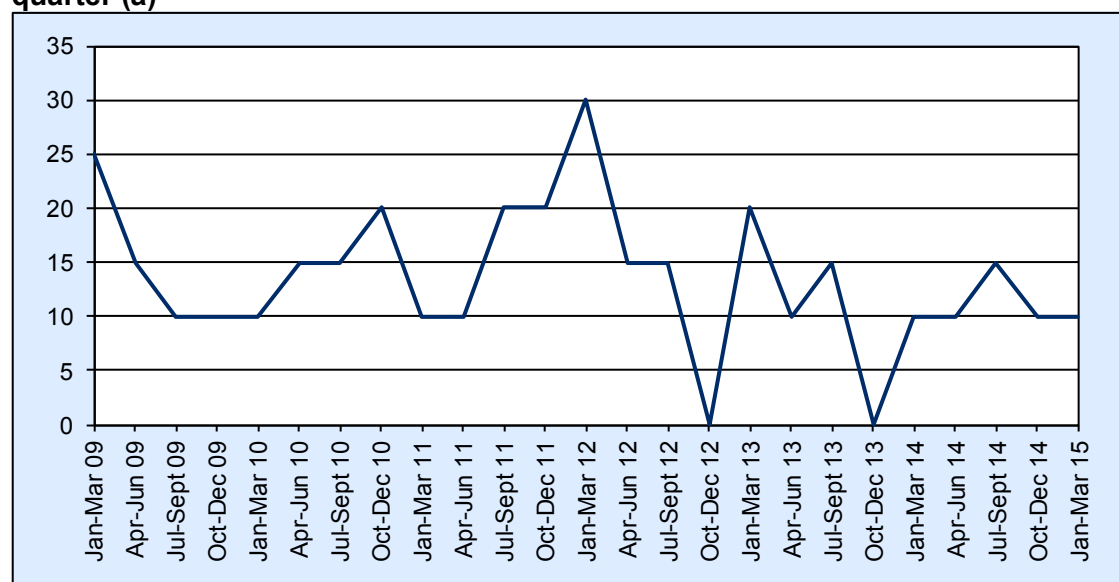
Chart 4 - Percentage of households in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter, by main type of accommodation (a)

Source: Quarterly Statutory Homelessness data collection from local authorities

(a) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

- At the end of March 2015, there were 195 households in bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation which is an increase of 5 per cent compared with the end of March 2014. The percentage of all households in temporary accommodation that were placed in B&Bs also increased to 10 per cent compared with 8 per cent at the end of March 2014.
- In recent years, a growing number of homeless households have been placed in hostels and refuges. At the end of March 2015 there were 475 homeless households placed in hostels or refuges which is almost a quarter (23 per cent) of all the households in temporary accommodation compared with 22 per cent at the end of March 2014.
- At the end of March 2015, the number of those in public sector accommodation had fallen to 440 which represents 21 per cent of all public sector acceptances and is similar to the end of March 2014.
- At the end of March 2015, the number of households who were homeless at home had decreased by almost two thirds compared with the previous year, to 85 households. This decrease was predominantly due to a change in allocations policy in just one authority.

Chart 5 - Number of families with children in bed and breakfast accommodation at the end of the quarter (a)



Source: Quarterly Statutory Homelessness data collection from local authorities

(a) All the figures are rounded independently to the nearest 5 to protect the identity of individuals. Further information is available in the Key quality information section.

- The use of bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless households with children has been generally decreasing since mid-2005. Numbers increased during 2011-12 but fell back again during 2012-13 and 2013-14 remaining well below the levels seen during 2004-05 and 2005-06.
- At the end of March 2015, there were 10 families with children placed in temporary bed and breakfast accommodation accounting for 5 per cent of all households in bed and breakfast accommodation. This is similar to the number of families in B&B accommodation at the end of March 2014.
- All of the families with children in bed and breakfast at the end of March 2015 had been accommodated for less than 6 weeks and the majority of these (78 per cent) had been there for less than 2 weeks.

Further details of comments provided by individual local authorities regarding increases in both the overall number of households and the number of households with children in temporary bed and breakfast in this quarter can be found in the Key quality information section towards the end of this release.

Table 6 - Homeless households accommodated temporarily at the end of the period (a)(b)*Number of households*

	Private Sector (c)	Public Sector (d)	Hostels / Refuges	Bed and Breakfast	Other (e)	Homeless at Home	Total Households
2008-09	1,070	415	510	255	105	465	2,815
2009-10	1,050	390	400	235	*	415	2,490
2010-11	1,080	435	415	240	*	470	2,640
2011-12	1,065	380	485	310	5	525	2,770
2012-13	1,010	380	505	300	10	320	2,525
2013-14	910	440	510	185	*	245	2,295
2014-15	855	440	475	195	*	85	2,050
2010-11:							
Apr-Jun	1,040	370	445	225	*	480	2,560
Jul-Sept	1,105	380	415	210	*	515	2,630
Oct-Dec	1,090	420	385	235	*	470	2,595
Jan-Mar	1,080	435	415	240	*	470	2,640
2011-12:							
Apr-Jun	1,020	420	465	235	5	460	2,600
Jul-Sept	1,045	400	480	270	5	495	2,695
Oct-Dec	1,040	350	460	245	5	425	2,530
Jan-Mar	1,065	380	485	310	5	525	2,770
2012-13:							
Apr-Jun	980	400	470	245	5	365	2,460
Jul-Sept	1,010	410	540	275	5	425	2,665
Oct-Dec	1,055	365	460	210	15	300	2,410
Jan-Mar	1,010	380	505	300	10	320	2,525
2013-14							
Apr-Jun	950	355	530	275	*	270	2,385
Jul-Sept	1,020	350	545	245	*	305	2,470
Oct-Dec	885	425	515	260	*	230	2,310
Jan-Mar	910	440	510	185	*	245	2,295
2014-15							
Apr-Jun (r)	860	430	490	175	*	225	2,180
Jul-Sept (r)	875	445	560	215	*	205	2,300
Oct-Dec (r)	875	460	515	215	*	80	2,150
Jan-Mar	855	440	475	195	*	85	2,050

Source: Homelessness collection from local authorities

(a) All the figures are rounded independently to the nearest 5 to protect the identity of individuals. As a result, there may be a difference between the sum of the constituent items and the total.

(b) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

(c) Includes households placed directly with a private sector landlord, private sector accommodation leased by local authorities and private sector accommodation leased by registered social landlords.

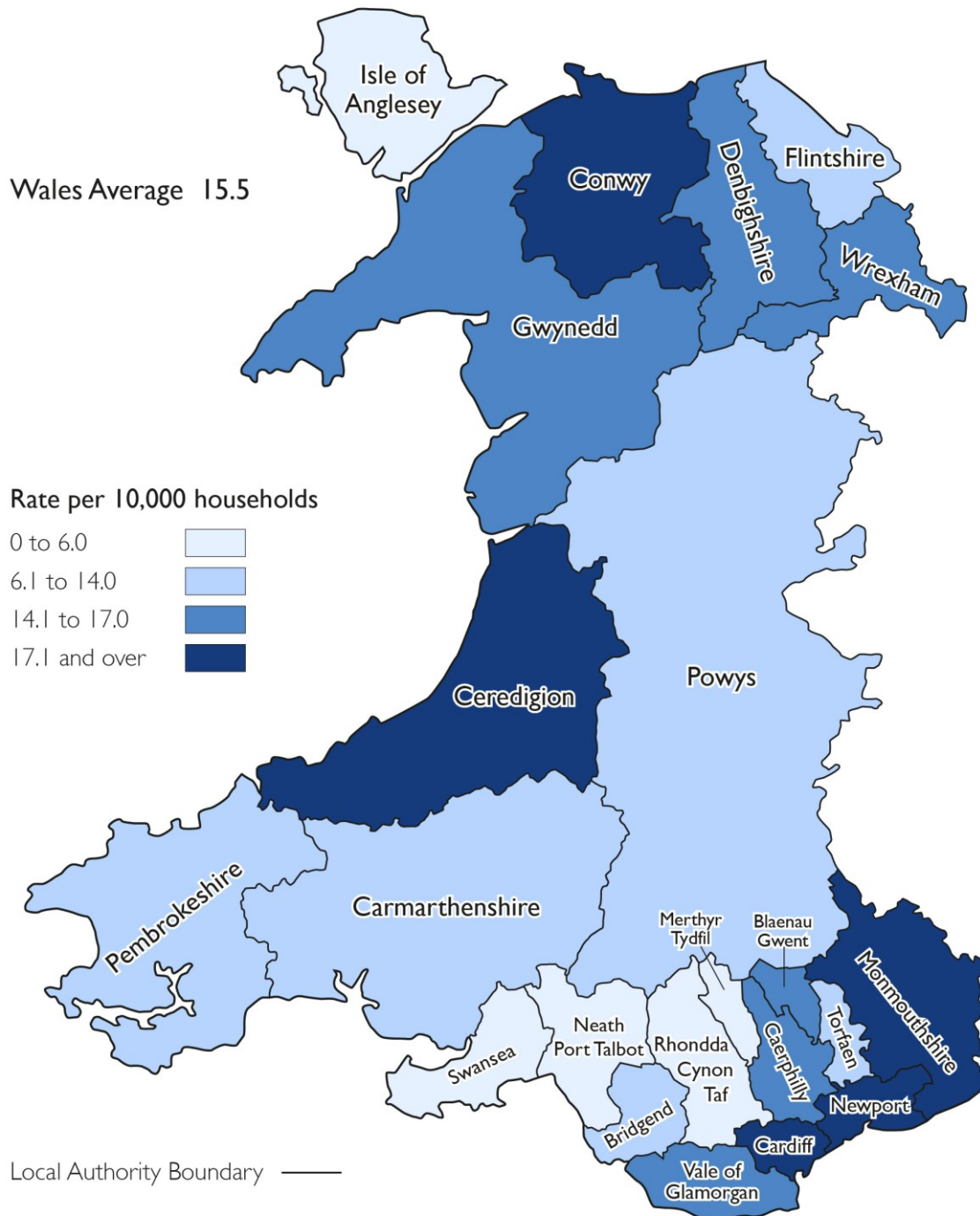
(d) Includes local authority stock and registered social landlord stock

(e) Prior to the April to June quarter 2009 the 'Other' category was used by some local authorities who were unable to distinguish the exact accommodation type for all households in temporary accommodation. Following a validation exercise most authorities are now able to provide this information though there are occasions where this category is used to cover other types of temporary accommodation such as mobile homes. Further information is provided in the key Quality Information section and Glossary.

* The data item is disclosive or not sufficiently robust for publication

Homelessness

Map 3: Homeless households in temporary accommodation at the end of March 2015, rate per 10,000 households



Cartographics ML/41/15.16 (June 2015)

Produced by Cartographics, Welsh Government

As at the end of March 2015, Cardiff had both the highest number of households in temporary accommodation (560 households) and the highest rate at 38.3 per 10,000 households. Newport had the second highest number (209 households) and the second highest rate at 33.8 per 10,000 households compared with a Wales average of 15.5 per 10,000 households. Merthyr Tydfil had the lowest number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of March 2015 (5 households) and the lowest rate at 2.9 per 10,000 households. Information on the number of households in temporary accommodation by individual local authority is available on the [StatsWales](http://stats.wales.gov.uk) website.

3.3 Length of stay in temporary accommodation

- Since 2010-11, more than two thirds of households in temporary accommodation at the end of a quarter were there for less than six months. This trend has continued with 72 per cent of households spending less than six months in temporary accommodation at the end of March 2015.
- At the end of March 2015, both the number and percentage of those households who had been in temporary accommodation for more than a year had decreased compared with previous years. At the end of March 2015, 10 per cent of households (215 households) had been in temporary accommodation for more than a year compared with 13 per cent at the end of March 2014 and the 13 per cent at the end of March 2013.
- Generally, prior to 2012-13 between half and two thirds of households in temporary accommodation for more than a year were families with children. However, by the end of 2012-13 this had dropped to below a half and this continued throughout 2013-14. At the end of March 2015, 44 per cent of the 215 households who were in temporary accommodation for more than a year were families with children.
- Since 2008 more than 70 per cent of households in temporary accommodation for over a year have been placed in private or public sector accommodation. At the end of March 2015, 87 per cent of households in temporary accommodation for over a year were in these types of accommodation. In comparison around 12 per cent of those households in temporary accommodation for more than a year were in hostels and refuges at the end of March 2015. There were no cases where households had been in bed and breakfast accommodation over a year in March 2015.

3.4 Households leaving temporary accommodation

- During 2014-15, over two thirds (68 per cent) of those households leaving temporary accommodation had been in that accommodation for less than 6 months. A further 21 per cent had been in temporary accommodation for between 6 months and 1 year and only 11 per cent for over a year.
- Over time the majority of those households leaving temporary accommodation have accepted an offer of accommodation through the local authority's allocation scheme, with between 50 and 60 per cent of households accepting such offers. During 2014-15, 58 per cent of those leaving temporary accommodation accepted an offer through the local authority's allocation scheme.

Table 7 - Homeless households at the end of the quarter, by length of time spent in temporary accommodation (a) (b)

Number of households

	Total Households					Households, of which are families with children				
	0-6 months	6 to 12 months	Over 1 year	Length of time not known (c)	Total	0-6 months	6 to 12 months	Over 1 year	Length of time not known (c)	Total
2008-09	1,735	470	615	*	2,815	740	275	405	*	1,420
2009-10	1,500	430	560	*	2,490	580	215	335	*	1,125
2010-11	1,765	430	440	*	2,640	755	240	250	*	1,245
2011-12	1,850	460	455	.	2,770	750	250	250	.	1,250
2012-13	1,695	500	330	.	2,525	615	230	160	.	1,010
2013-14	1,560	440	295	.	2,295	545	185	120	.	855
2014-15	1,475	360	215	.	2,050	490	180	95	.	765
2010-11:										
Apr-Jun	1,700	355	505	*	2,560	715	170	295	*	1,180
Jul-Sept	1,810	350	470	*	2,630	800	180	270	*	1,255
Oct-Dec	1,695	420	485	*	2,595	705	215	270	*	1,185
Jan-Mar	1,765	430	440	*	2,640	755	240	250	*	1,245
2011-12:										
Apr-Jun	1,745	410	445	.	2,600	735	185	265	.	1,180
Jul-Sept	1,825	440	430	.	2,695	750	210	230	.	1,190
Oct-Dec	1,720	375	435	.	2,530	690	180	230	.	1,100
Jan-Mar	1,850	460	455	.	2,770	750	250	250	.	1,250
2012-13:										
Apr-Jun	1,720	400	340	.	2,460	695	210	180	.	1,085
Jul-Sept	1,830	400	435	.	2,665	725	205	230	.	1,160
Oct-Dec	1,655	430	320	.	2,410	620	210	170	.	995
Jan-Mar	1,695	500	330	.	2,525	615	230	160	.	1,010
2013-14										
Apr-Jun	1,565	450	370	.	2,385	580	210	165	.	950
Jul-Sept	1,670	425	375	.	2,470	555	175	160	.	890
Oct-Dec	1,600	400	315	.	2,310	495	185	135	.	815
Jan-Mar	1,560	440	295	.	2,295	545	185	120	.	855
2014-15										
Apr-Jun (r)	1,510	405	265	.	2,180	590	165	105	.	855
Jul-Sept (r)	1,620	385	300	.	2,300	570	160	115	.	840
Oct-Dec (r)	1,510	370	270	.	2,150	530	185	95	.	810
Jan-Mar	1,475	360	215	.	2,050	490	180	95	.	765

Source: Homelessness collection from local authorities

(a) All the figures are rounded independently to the nearest 5 to protect the identity of individuals. As a result, there may be a difference between the sum of the constituent items and the total.

(b) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

(c) Length of time not known was no longer collected from April-June 2011 onwards.

* The data item is disclosive or not sufficiently robust for publication

. = not applicable

4. Key quality information

1. In addition to the information below, further information can be found in the [Housing Statistics Quality Report](#) which is available on our website.
2. Following the Welsh Government consultation '[Proposed Changes to Housing Data Collections](#)', with effect from 1 April 2011, a detailed breakdown by sex, age, ethnicity and household type is now only collected and published annually. This consultation resulted in changes to the quarterly data collection form, aimed at improving the clarity and relevance of the information collected.
3. The Welsh Government consultation '[Proposed Changes to Homelessness Data Collections](#)' which ended on 1 February 2012 resulted in further changes to the data items collected and published. These changes came into effect from 1 April 2012 and included the addition of 2 extra categories in Table 4 of the quarterly data collection return which covers the 'main reason for loss of last settled home'. These 2 categories are 'Current property unaffordable' and 'Current property unsuitable' and definitions are provided in the Glossary section at the end of this release. A further change to Table 4 including a more detailed breakdown of those cases where the main reason for loss is violence or harassment as follows:
 - Racially motivated
 - Due to religion/belief
 - Due to gender reassignment (gender identity)
 - Due to sexual identity/orientation
 - Due to disability
 - Due to another reason
4. These changes aim to further improve the accuracy and relevance of the information collected as well as ensuring comparability and consistency with 2011 Census data and other official statistical data sets which contain ethnicity information and compliance with the recent Public Sector Equality duties under the Equality Act 2010.
5. In addition, a number of other changes have been introduced to provide better information to users. This includes improved commentary, more extensive key quality information (including a glossary) and some charts have been replaced with maps. This is in response to the requirements included in the UK Statistics Authority assessment of this statistical output.

Policy and operational context

6. The figures in this statistical release are based on Welsh local authorities' actions under the homelessness provisions of the Housing Act 1996 (for further detail, see the section on legislation below).
7. This covers the decision as to whether or not there is an obligation under the Act for the local authority to help the household. That is whether the authority accepts that the household is "eligible, unintentionally homeless and falls within a priority need group". In this case the household is accepted as statutory homeless.
8. Extra information is collected about "acceptances" of these statutory homeless households. This includes information on the different types of homeless households, which are known as priority need groups, and also the reason why households lost their last settled home.
9. The Welsh Government introduced secondary legislation (starting from 1st March 2001) extending the priority need categories. The figures from October to December 2001 onwards cover the extended priority need categories.

10. This release also shows information about statutory homeless households that are in temporary accommodation; sometimes referred to as “households in accommodation arranged by authorities under homelessness legislation”. Temporary means that they have not been found suitable accommodation in a settled home. In other words the accommodation can still be in a self-contained dwelling (for example, with a private landlord, or in registered social landlord or local authority owned properties) as well as in non-self contained accommodation (for example, hostels, refuges and bed and breakfast).
11. The information is collected to establish the number and type of households that were accepted as homeless by local authorities during the period, the reasons why these households are homeless and the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation and the type of temporary accommodation provided.
12. The information is of importance to the Welsh Government in monitoring the effectiveness of current policy, particularly progress against the strategic aims outlined in the [Ten Year Homelessness Plan for Wales](#). The [Programme for Government 2011-2016](#), which is the current government programme, also outlines the Welsh Government commitment to improve housing services and support by continued implementation of the ten-year homelessness plan. There are two tracking indicators within the Programme for Government relating to homelessness, these are: 'Number of homeless families with children in bed and breakfast accommodation' and 'Number of homeless households which include dependent children'.
13. A consultation on official statistics titled ‘Proposals concerning the publication of official statistics’ was carried out between 9 December 2013 and 3 March 2014. The consultation covered a range of proposals relating to official statistics products, including housing statistics outputs. In particular the consultation proposed that homelessness information continues to be collected and published, via [StatsWales](#), on a quarterly basis, but that publication of the quarterly Statistical Release is replaced with a twice yearly Statistical Release.
14. This approach will allow users to continue to access all the homelessness information on a quarterly basis, but with a less frequently published output that would be focused more on providing greater interpretation of the data for users. The results of this consultation have been published and are available at the following link:
<http://gov.wales/consultations/statistics/proposals-concerning-publication-official-statistics/?status=closed&lang=en>
This release is, therefore, the second twice yearly release and covers the January to March 2015 (quarterly) and 2014-15 (annual) figures, as well as comparisons with figures for previous periods.

Legislation

15. Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, which came into force in January 1997, places a statutory duty on local authorities to provide assistance to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Authorities must consider all applications from people seeking accommodation or help in getting accommodation. The local authority owes a main homelessness duty where it is satisfied that the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falls within a priority need group.
16. The priority need groups include:
 - Households with dependent children;
 - Households with a pregnant woman; and
 - People who are vulnerable in some way, for example through mental illness or physical disability.
17. The Welsh Government introduced secondary legislation (starting from 1st March 2001) extending the priority need categories to include, specifically:

- Applicants aged 16 or 17;
 - Applicants aged 18 to 20 who were previously in care;
 - Applicants vulnerable because of domestic violence or the threat of violence; or
 - Applicants vulnerable as a result of leaving the armed forces, or leaving prison.
18. Where a main homelessness duty is owed, then the authority must ensure that suitable accommodation is available for the applicant and his or her household until a settled home becomes available for them. Where households are found to be intentionally homeless or not in priority need, then the authority must make an assessment of their housing need and provide advice and assistance to help them find accommodation for themselves.

Data source and coverage

19. The figures in this Statistical Release are based on a quarterly statistical return completed by local authorities in Wales, based on the management information they maintain about their actions under the homelessness legislation in relation to those households who present themselves as homeless. It covers statutory homelessness only and does not include any figures for 'rough sleepers'. Only those applications which resulted in a decision being made during the July to September quarter have been included in this release regardless of when the application was made. Only those households which fall into the final category are 'accepted' as homeless and the local authority will be obliged under the Housing Act to secure or help them to secure accommodation. Information is shown in this release on the different priority needs of these households and the main reason for them losing their home.
20. The second part of this release looks at households 'accepted' as homeless who are in temporary accommodation obtained by the local authority while they wait for suitable long term accommodation. The number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter may also include households whose applications are still under consideration or that are found to be intentionally homeless and given accommodation for a period that gives the household a reasonable opportunity to secure accommodation for themselves. Information in the release covers the different type of temporary accommodation provided as well as the length of time spent in that accommodation.
21. Information is collected quarterly via Excel spreadsheets which are downloaded from the Afon file transfer website which provides a secure method for users to submit data. Copies of the current homelessness data collection forms are available at the following link: [Data Collection form](#).

Further information on the data processing cycle can also be found in the [Housing Statistics Quality Report](#).

22. Collections for all quarters of 2014-15 achieved a one hundred per cent response rate.

Homelessness prevention and relief

23. With effect from the April to June quarter of 2014, new statistical data covering the actions taken by local authorities to prevent or relieve homelessness have been collected directly from the 22 Local Authorities on a quarterly basis. In its broadest terms, 'homelessness prevention' is where a local authority takes positive action to provide housing assistance to someone who considers him or herself to be at risk of homelessness in the near future, and as a result the person is able to either remain in his or her existing accommodation or obtain alternative accommodation providing a solution for at least the next 6 months.
24. The Welsh Government encourages local authorities to offer prevention assistance to everyone who seeks housing assistance and considers they are at risk of homelessness in the near future, including single person households and others who may not appear to the authority to fall within a priority

need category. However, it is for individual authorities to determine the scope of their homelessness prevention scheme.

25. Additionally, authorities are encouraged to take steps to relieve homelessness and record these cases where someone is homeless but is not owed a duty to secure accommodation under the homelessness legislation (Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996). These are cases where someone is found to be homeless but not in priority need and cases where someone is found to be intentionally homeless.
26. The data has been collected prior to the introduction of the new legislation relating to homelessness prevention which came into effect on 27 April 2015 in order to allow data providers with sufficient notice to make the necessary changes to their systems and to familiarise themselves with the new data requirements.
27. Workshops were held in March 2014 to provide further assistance to Local Authorities in the completion of the data collection forms and to include any suggested improvements to the prevention and relief data collection prior to its introduction.
28. The homelessness prevention and relief data collection has been incorporated as part of the current statutory homelessness data collection and is being commissioned on a quarterly basis. The information collected will be published on StatsWales and in the bi-annual releases once a complete and accurate dataset is available.
29. Further information on the data being collected on homelessness prevention and relief along with definitions and guidance is available in the quarterly and annual homelessness data collection forms available at the following link:
<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/homelessness-data-collection/?lang=en>

Housing Act (Wales) 2014

30. The Housing Act (Wales) 2014 became law in Wales on 17 September 2014. The Housing Act (Wales) 2014 included a number of changes to homelessness legislation aimed at reducing levels of homelessness, by placing its prevention at the centre of local authority duties to help people at risk. The changes to statutory homelessness legislation arising from the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 were introduced on 27th April 2015.
31. Between 4 March and 1 April 2015 a user consultation was conducted to ask for views on proposed changes to both the amount and frequency of information collected and published on statutory homelessness, in line with the changes to statutory homelessness legislation arising from the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. The proposals were designed to enable the collection of more detailed annual data, covering all aspects of the new legislation and to reduce the data collected and published quarterly to headline information, to ensure the information being collected is proportionate and minimises the burden on providers. The information to be collected annually from April 2015 onwards will include:
 - Information on all those threatened with homelessness under Section 66;
 - Equalities information covering all cases of prevention and relief, as well as households subject to duty to help secure under Section 73;
 - Actions taken to successfully prevent or relieve homelessness; and
 - Information on those homeless or threatened with homelessness because they are prison leavers.
32. The consultation documents including the response summary report is available at the following link: <http://gov.wales/consultations/statistics/proposed-changes-homelessness-data-collections/?status=closed&lang=en>

33. The majority of respondents agreed with all the proposals outlined in the consultation and these changes will come into effect from April 2015 onwards. The consultation also included proposals for changes to the dissemination of statutory homelessness information. For April to June 2015-16 onwards, we will publish three quarterly headlines covering summary data for April to June, July to September and October to December each year and an annual release covering the January to March quarter and the year as a whole. This release is therefore the last to show information under the previous version of the statutory homelessness legislation. We will continue to publish all data collected quarterly and annually on StatsWales.

Users and uses

34. The data in this Statistical Release form the basis of evidence on statutory homelessness in Wales and are used by ministers and officials in the Welsh Government in the formulation and monitoring of policy and for performance monitoring. The data are used for international comparisons and for answering Assembly Questions, ministerial correspondence, Freedom of Information Act cases and queries from the public. Local housing authorities are both providers and users of the statistics and use the data extensively in order to plan services, allocate resources, monitor performance and benchmark against other authorities. The voluntary sector also uses the statistics to monitor and evaluate housing policy and for campaigning and fundraising purposes.
35. Generally the information is used for:
- Monitoring trends in homelessness
 - Policy development
 - Advice to Ministers
 - Informing debate in the National Assembly for Wales and beyond
 - Geographic profiling, comparisons and benchmarking
36. There are a variety of users of these statistics including national and local government, researchers, academics and students. For further information on the users and uses please refer to the [Housing Statistics Quality Report](#).

Presentation

37. For the first time, Tables 1, 3 and 4 of this release include a set of 'spark lines', which refer to the series of bar charts shown in the first row of each of these tables. These bar charts have been included in order to provide users with simple annual trend information for each category of decision within Table 1, each category of priority need in table 3 and each reason for loss of home in Table 4.
38. The scales used within the bar charts will differ for each column within each table. For example in Table 1 the bar chart in the first column shows the number of ineligible households ranging from 85 in 2009-10 to 165 in 2013-14 whilst the bar chart in the final column of table 1 shows all applications ranging from 12,910 in 2009-10 to 15,855 in 2013-14.
39. All the figures shown in the tables and charts within the release are rounded independently to the nearest 5 to protect the identity of individuals. As a result, there may be a difference between the sum of the constituent items and the total. An asterisk is shown when the data item is disclosive or not sufficiently robust for publication. For example where a figure of 10 homeless households is referred to, it cannot be assumed that 10 is the actual number of households. All percentages shown within this release however have been calculated using unrounded data.

Quality

40. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political reference.
41. Welsh housing statistics adhere to the Welsh Government's [Statistical Quality Management Strategy](#), and this is in line with the European Statistical System's six dimensions of quality, as listed in Principle 4 of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Further detail on how these are adhered to can be found in the [Housing Statistics Quality Report](#), which covers the general principles and processes leading up to the production of our housing statistics. The report covers various topics including definitions, coverage, timeliness, relevance and comparability.

Symbols

42. The following symbols may have been used in this release:
- negligible (less than half the final digit shown)
 - . not applicable
 - .. not available
 - ~ not yet available
 - * disclosive or not sufficiently robust for publication
 - p provisional
 - r revised

Comparability

43. Statutory homelessness statistics for England and Northern Ireland are comparable with the figures for Wales. However, actions taken by Scottish authorities since the Homelessness (Scotland) Act 2003 to meet the target to abolish priority need by the end of 2012 mean that caution should be exercised when comparing Scotland and Wales figures or deriving a UK figure over that time period.
44. The bands used in the maps are set depending on the spread of the data across local authorities and may differ to those used in the first release for other quarters.

Seasonal adjustment

45. The number of households accepted as homeless and the number placed in temporary accommodation will be affected by a number of external seasonal factors, including the weather, timing of decisions, as well as calendar and holiday periods such as Christmas and the New Year. The effect of such factors can be seen when looking at the statutory homelessness data over a prolonged time period. Seasonal adjustment is the statistical technique which removes these seasonal effects, and therefore allows easier analysis of trends in the data, and other non-seasonal changes.
46. Following the analysis and review of work carried out in of work carried out on the seasonal adjustment of statutory homelessness data as outlined in the statistical article '[Seasonal Adjustment of Statutory Homelessness Data](#)', seasonally adjusted quarterly homelessness data has been shown in this release alongside the unadjusted quarterly data provided by local authorities.

Removing the seasonality from the time series will help improve our understanding of trends over both the short and long term including in-year comparisons. It may also allow us to more easily assess the effect of other more specific factors on the overall numbers such as the economic downturn and welfare reform.

Accuracy

47. Local authorities completed data collection forms with built in guidance and primary validation. On receipt of the data collection forms, the data collection team carried out secondary validation and

worked closely with the different types of data providers to ensure information provided was accurate and on a consistent basis. Copies of the data collection forms can be found on the website: [Data Collection forms](#).

48. We undertake a series of validation steps to ensure that the data is correct and consistent. Upon receipt of the data, we check that it is complete and internally consistent.
49. All the figures are rounded independently to the nearest 5 in order to prevent disclosure of information about individuals. As a result, there may be a difference between the sum of the constituent items and the total. Where a data item is less than 5 and is deemed to be disclosive or not sufficiently robust for publication, the figure has been replaced with an asterix.
50. The number of households accepted as homeless during the July to September quarter 2014-15 increased by 9 per cent compared with the same quarter of the previous year. Extra validation was carried out to confirm the accuracy of the data provided by local authorities. The local authorities who showed the largest percentage changes were contacted to confirm the figures they had provided and where possible to provide an explanation for the decreases in the number of acceptances reported. The explanations provided in response included:
 - An increase in presentations during the quarter leading therefore to an increase in acceptances and in overall decisions.
 - The reconfiguration of Housing Advice Services resulted in an increase of the decisions made including acceptances.
 - Priority acceptances have fluctuated over the past 12 months therefore although the increase in 12 months appears a sizable change it is not out of the ordinary looking back over 12 months.
 - There is a backlog of households in interim accommodation requiring a decision, with an experienced officer dedicated this quarter (and next) to eliminating that backlog. A consequence of this is that a higher proportion are found eligible, unintentionally homeless, and in priority need
51. The number of homeless households in temporary accommodation at the end of September 2014 was down by 7 per cent on September 2013. Extra validation was carried out to confirm the accuracy of the data provided by local authorities. The local authorities who showed the largest percentage changes were contacted to confirm the figures they had provided and where possible to provide an explanation for the decreases in the number of households in temporary accommodation reported. The explanations provided in response included:
 - An increased focus on ways to discharge our duty has led to a decrease in the number of households being temporarily accommodated by the authority.
 - Increased focus on reducing households in temporary accommodation ie. within our own stock and in private leasing.
 - Successful prevention and relief activities have lowered the number of full homelessness decisions as applicants are accessing alternative housing wherever possible.
 - Better quality prevention work fewer numbers of applicant presenting as homeless.

Revisions

52. This release contains the final homelessness data for the April to June 2014 and July to September 2014 quarters.
53. Revisions can arise from events such as late returns from a local authority or when a data supplier notifies the Welsh Government that they have submitted incorrect information and resubmits this. Occasionally, revisions can occur due to errors in our statistical processes. In these cases, a judgement is made as to whether the change is significant enough to publish a revised statistical release.

54. Where changes are not deemed to be significant i.e. minor changes, these will be updated in the following year's statistical release. However, minor amendments to the figures may be reflected in the StatsWales tables prior to that next release.
55. Revised data is marked with an (r) in the statistical release. We also follow the Welsh Government's statistical revisions policy, details of which are available at:
<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/about/statement-of-compliance/revisions-errors-postponements/?lang=en>

Accessibility

56. A full set of homelessness data including information by individual local authority is available to download from our StatsWales interactive website at the following link:
<https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Housing/Homelessness>
57. The consultation on official statistics closed on 3rd March 2014. The consultation covered a range of proposals relating to official statistics products, including housing statistics outputs. Following the consultation homelessness information will continue to be collected and published, via StatsWales, on a quarterly basis but publication of the quarterly Statistical Release will be replaced with a twice yearly Statistical Release. This release is therefore the first in a series of twice yearly homelessness releases. We will continue to:
- update quarterly data via StatsWales
 - pre-announce the publication of quarterly data on our release calendar
 - update certain headline statistics on the Statistics and Research pages.
58. This will allow users to continue to access all the homelessness information on a quarterly basis, but with less frequently published outputs. The results of this consultation including a full summary of responses is available at the following link: <http://gov.wales/consultations/statistics/proposals-concerning-publication-official-statistics/?status=closed&lang=en>

Coherence with other statistics

59. The National Strategic Indicators for local government collects information on homelessness prevention. The numerator for the indicator HHA/013 is the number of substantiated potentially homeless households. These figures will differ from those shown in this release which cover decisions made by local authorities on those who present themselves as homeless and those who are accepted as being homeless (eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need). The data for the National Strategic Indicators can be found on the StatsWales website:
<https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Local-Government/National-Strategic-Indicators-of-Local-Authority-Performance>
60. The 2013 household estimates, used within this release to calculate rates, were produced by the Welsh Government. The household estimates are estimations of historic household numbers. They are produced by making assumptions about household size and composition and applying these assumptions to the mid-year population estimates. Further information can be found via the following link: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/household-estimates/?lang=en>

Rough sleeping

61. In March 2007 and again in March 2008 national rough sleeper counts were carried out by local authorities, in partnership with other local agencies, in order to gauge the extent of rough sleeping in Wales. The information collected along with a summary of the issues associated with single-night rough sleeper counts and their likely influence on the accuracy of information on levels of rough

sleeping across Wales is shown in the statistical article [National Rough Sleeping Count, Wales, 2007 and 2008](#) published in September 2008.

62. Information on levels of rough sleeping in Wales was not collected again until this year. During the month of November 2014, local authorities and their partners were engaged in a monitoring exercise aimed at identifying the scale of rough sleeping across Wales. The first part of the exercise involved a two week data gathering process aimed at highlighting the amounts of people who claimed to be or were suspected to be sleeping rough. This information was then used to inform the local authorities of the possible locations to visit on their snapshot count. The snapshot count could be held on any date in November following the two week data gathering process.
63. All 22 local authorities were asked to provide the Welsh Government with the estimated number of people sleeping rough within their area, as well as the number of actual identified rough sleepers during a one night snapshot count. They were also asked to provide information on the number in emergency accommodation and night shelters. The closing date for returning this information to the Welsh Government was the 15th December 2014.
64. The information shown in this release covers statutory homelessness only and does not include any data on rough sleepers.

Related statistics for other UK countries

England:

65. In England local authorities are bound by the same statutory duties as those in Wales. The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) collect and publish summary information on English local housing authorities' activities under homelessness legislation, collected through the quarterly P1E statistical return. Data include the number of households accepted as owed a main homelessness duty (referred to as acceptances) during the quarter, and the number of households in temporary accommodation on the last day of the quarter. The data shown in their latest published data available for England can be accessed here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements/statutory-homelessness-statistics-england-july-to-september-2014>
66. The information presented in the CLG release includes seasonally adjusted data. The quarterly P1E statistical return also collects information on cases where positive action has been provided to prevent homelessness from occurring and cases where positive action has been provided to relieve homelessness where it cannot be prevented. The most recent publication, relating to English local authority actions in the 2012-13 financial year, can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/homelessness-prevention-and-relief-england-2013-to-2014>

Scotland:

67. In Scotland, local authorities' homelessness duties under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 have been substantially amended by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Homelessness (Scotland) Act 2003. The 2001 Act extended the duties towards non-priority homeless households, ensuring they are provided with a minimum of temporary accommodation, advice and assistance. The 2003 Act introduced many changes, of which the target to abolish the priority need test by 2012 is the most significant.
68. Data on applications are collected on the HL1 return, a continuous case level electronic data capture system. This case level data allows analysis of applications and breakdowns by combinations of characteristics which are not possible from the English local authority level P1E return. Cases can also be grouped to household level to identify instances of repeat homelessness.

69. Data on households in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter is collected on the HL2 form which is completed by local authorities and records summary snapshot details in a similar way to the P1E. The HL2 return also contains information on households at risk of homelessness as defined under Section 11 of the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003.
70. The most recent statutory homelessness statistics for Scotland are available at:
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/RefTables>

Northern Ireland:

71. In Northern Ireland statistics on homelessness are sourced from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). Under the Housing (NI) Order 1988, NIHE has a similar statutory responsibility to secure permanent accommodation for households who are unintentionally homeless and in priority need; to secure temporary accommodation in a variety of circumstances and to provide advice and assistance to those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The most recent statutory homelessness statistics for Northern Ireland are available at:
http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/publications/housing_bulletins.htm

5. Glossary

Acceptances

Households found to be eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need (as defined by homelessness legislation - see definition below), during the quarter, are referred to as “acceptances”. These households are consequently owed a main homelessness duty by a local housing authority. The main duty is to secure settled accommodation.

Applications

Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, which came into force in January 1997, places a statutory duty on local authorities to provide assistance to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Authorities must consider all applications from people seeking accommodation or help in getting accommodation. Only applications that result in a decision being made during the quarter are included within the release regardless of when the application was made.

Bed and breakfast

This will include privately owned or managed hotels/guest houses with some shared facilities. It does not include hotel annexes consisting of self-contained units of accommodation where meals are not provided – these are classified as private sector accommodation.

Ethnic categories

White:

- Welsh / English / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Any other white background

Black or Minority Ethnic background (BME)

This refers to the following ethnicity categories:

Mixed:

- White and black Caribbean
- White and black African
- White and Asian
- Any other mixed / multiple ethnic background

Asian or Asian British:

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background

Black / African / Caribbean or Black British:

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other black background

Other Ethnic Group:

- Arab
- Other

Current property unaffordable

The category 'current property unaffordable' includes cases where a person has become homeless as a result of not being able to afford the rent or mortgage on their home and have taken action before rent or mortgage arrears are incurred and eviction or repossession notices have been issued.

Current property unsuitable

The category 'current property unsuitable' should include cases where the home is no longer physically suitable. This will include for example:

- Persons returning from hospital who can no longer live in the property until it has been adapted;
- Environmental issues relating to the property preventing it from being occupied until work has been carried out;
- Overcrowding, e.g. a new born baby, returning family member, etc.

Decisions

Refers to all final decisions reached during the quarter, regardless of when the application was made, on households applying for accommodation or assistance in obtaining accommodation which the local authority had reason to believe were homeless or threatened with homelessness (as defined in Sections 175 to 178 of the Act).

Eligibility

Housing authorities will need to satisfy themselves that applicants are eligible before providing housing assistance. The provisions on eligibility are complex and housing authorities will need to ensure that they have procedures in place to carry out appropriate checks on housing applicants. Ineligible households will include households not eligible for assistance by virtue of Section 185 (persons from abroad) or Section 186 (asylum seekers) of the Act.

Homeless at home

Refers to any arrangements whereby a household remains in, or returns to, the accommodation from which they are being made homeless, or in other accommodation found by the applicant. Includes any households which moved from accommodation arranged by the local authority into this type of arrangement.

Hostels/refuges

Hostels include shared accommodation, owned or leased and managed by either a local authority, registered social landlord (housing association) or non-profit making organisation including reception centres and emergency units. Male refuges are included with hostels.

Loss of rented/tied accommodation

Where the household has lost their accommodation that was rented for example if the landlord has given them notice. Tied accommodation is occupied as part of a job; if they lose their job they will also lose the accommodation.

Other categories

Priority need – includes other violence, abuse or harassment, alcohol or substance misuse, those aged over 21 that are vulnerable to exploitation.

Main loss of last settled home – includes households homeless in an emergency, returned from abroad, sleeping rough, in hostel or refuge, with health concern (physical or mental) or where it is unreasonable to remain in property due to one or more of the following: overcrowding, physical conditions, affordability, the type of property is unsuitable

Prevention

In its broadest terms, 'homelessness prevention' is where a local authority takes positive action to provide housing assistance to someone who considers him or herself to be at risk of homelessness in the

near future, and as a result the person is able to either remain in his or her existing accommodation or obtain alternative accommodation providing a solution for at least the next 6 months. The key points are:

- the person has sought assistance from the local authority or a partner organisation;
- the person considers him or herself to be at risk of homelessness;
- the local authority may or may not have reason to believe the person is homeless or likely to become homeless within 28 days;
- the positive action is not being provided to discharge a duty to secure accommodation under the homelessness legislation;
- the local authority or partner organisation consider that the positive action provided will prevent homelessness for at least the next 6 months.
- the positive action is provided by: the local authority; or a partner organisation, or a combination of the local authority and one or more partner organisations working together;

A case should be recorded as a homelessness prevention where a local authority takes positive action to provide housing assistance to someone who considers him or herself to be at risk of homelessness in the near future and this positive action is not being provided to discharge a duty to secure accommodation under the homelessness legislation.

A case ceases to be classed as a prevention when a section 184 decision is issued. The only exceptions to this are cases dealt with under section 188(1) of the 1996 Act (Interim duty accepted) and under section 195(2) of the 1996 Act (threatened with Homelessness).

Priority need groups

The priority need categories are defined in Section 189 of the Housing Act 1996 and set out in the Homelessness Code of Guidance.

The following have a priority need for accommodation:

- Households with dependent children or a pregnant woman
- Households with a person who is vulnerable as a result of old age, physical disability, mental illness or learning disability or other special reason

Section 189 gives the Welsh Government the power to specify further descriptions. This Order specifies the following further descriptions of persons as having priority need from 1 March 2001:

- a care leaver or person at particular risk of sexual or financial exploitation, 18 years or over but under the age of 21
- a 16 or 17 year old
- a person fleeing domestic violence or threatened domestic violence
- a person homeless after leaving the armed forces
- a former prisoner who after being released from custody has no accommodation to return to.

Protected characteristics

The Public Sector Equality duties under the Equality Act 2010 exist to protect people from discrimination on the basis of 'protected characteristics'. The Equality Act 2010 defines people's protected characteristics for those using a service as:

- Disability;
- Sex (gender);
- Gender reassignment (gender identity or transgender);
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Race;
- Religion or belief;
- Sexual orientation;
- Age.

These 'protected characteristics' are used in the statutory homelessness data collection.

Relief

Positive action to prevent homelessness cannot be taken once the authority is satisfied that someone has become homeless (for example, the authority has notified the person of a decision under section 184 that they are homeless). However, following the notification under Section 184 that an applicant is homeless positive action to relieve homelessness can be taken in the following circumstances:

- where the authority has accepted a duty under Section 192 that the person is unintentionally homeless and not in priority need. In this case, the positive action could include the authority exercising its power under section 192(3) to secure accommodation through a rent guarantee bond, subject to the accommodation being made available for at least 6 months;
- where the authority has accepted a duty under Section 190(3) that the person is intentionally homeless and not in priority need;
- where the authority has accepted a duty under Section 190(2) that the person is intentionally homeless and in priority need. The authority will have a duty to secure accommodation for long enough to give the person a reasonable opportunity to secure accommodation for him or herself. However, positive action to relieve homelessness could be taken through offering for example a rent in advance payment to enable the person to secure accommodation for him or herself.

A case should be recorded as homelessness relief following notification under section 184 that an applicant is homeless and positive action to relieve homelessness is being taken. In order to record the case as homelessness relief there must be ongoing positive action from the date of the section 184 decision.

Self-contained accommodation

This includes all temporary accommodation where the household has sole use of kitchen and bathroom facilities, including property held by local housing authorities, registered social landlords and private sector landlords. A distinction is made between this type of accommodation and accommodation where such facilities are shared with other households (i.e. bed and breakfast, hostels and women's refuges).

Temporary accommodation

Households in temporary accommodation (excluding those for whom a duty is owed, but no accommodation has been secured) on the last day of the quarter, as arranged by a local housing authority as a discharge of their statutory homelessness functions. In most cases, the authority is discharging a main homelessness duty to secure suitable accommodation until a settled home becomes available for the applicant and his/her household. However, the numbers also include households provided with accommodation pending a decision on their homelessness application, households pending a review or appeal to the county court of the decision on their case, or possible referral to another local authority, and households found to be intentionally homeless and in priority need who were being accommodated for such period as would give them a reasonable opportunity to find accommodation for themselves.

6. Further information

Further information is available from the Housing Statistics web site:

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

A full set of homelessness data including information by individual local authority, some of which was previously shown in the additional tables, is available to download from our StatsWales interactive website at the following link: <https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Housing/Homelessness>

We actively encourage feedback from our users. If you have any comments please e-mail us at:

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