

Homeless Link 7-minute briefings

These briefings are intended to be short, snappy break-downs of written reports and briefings, designed to give the audiences a top-level view of the key findings/recommendations. This 7-minute briefing gives you a very topline introduction to the most important elements of what the annual rough sleeping snapshot estimates are, when and how they are carried out and by whom.

7. Independent partner, verification & certification

An *independent partner* is someone who is not employed or funded by the LA, they are an observer and 'critical friend'.

Verification is done by a Homeless Link verifier whose role is to ensure the method was properly followed & the final estimate figure is robust. The verifier may ask to speak to the independent partner during the verification process.

If there is no independent partner present – at the count-based estimate, or the evidence-based estimate meeting (even if there's a spotlight count) - the estimate cannot be verified.

Certification takes place once the LA submits their figures to DELTA, and Homeless Link checks their accuracy against the verified total.

1. What?

The annual rough sleeping snapshot has been carried out every autumn by all local authorities in England since 2010. It allows LAs to track progress, consider whether current measures are effective in tackling rough sleeping and if new approaches are

A snapshot records only those people seen, or thought to be, sleeping rough on a single 'typical' night.

Each year, DLUHC publishes a statistical release based on analysis of the data.

2. When?

Each local authority chooses a single 'typical' night between 1st October and 30th November for their rough sleeping snapshot

Everyone seen or thought to be sleeping rough on the single 'typical' night is included in the local authority's snapshot. It does not include everyone in an area with a history of sleeping rough. Nor does it include or everyone sleeping rough in areas across the whole October-November period.

A 'typical' night would be any night where patterns of rough sleeping would not be disrupted by, for example, a big football match, bonfire night celebrations, switching on of Christmas lights, a major festival, an organised demonstration or protest, etc.

3. How?

Local authorities use a set definition of rough sleeping. And select one of three methods to follow for their chosen typical night:

- Count-based estimate
- Evidence-based estimate
- Evidence-based estimate including a spotlight count

6. Inc a spotlight count

If a spotlight count is included, this is carried out after midnight on the 'typical night'.

One might be carried out where there is a mix of visible / accessible and hidden / inaccessible locations in the LA, or where those sleeping rough change site often.

The spotlight count might involve just the local outreach team. But depending on the area that needs covering there might be multiple teams including local partners, council workers and volunteers

5. Evidence-based estimates

There are two types:

- Evidence-based estimate (meeting-only)
- Evidence-based estimate including a spotlight count.

Both are intelligence-led assessments, led by the local authority who liaises with local partner agencies, statutory and third sector organisations to agree on a single snapshot figure that represents the number of people believed to have been sleeping rough in the LA on the 'typical night'. A local authority might choose one of these methods if sleep sites are inaccessible, hidden from sight, or dangerous to access, and if local intelligence is reliable.

4. Count-based estimate

This is the number of people *seen* sleeping rough by count teams in a local authority area, after midnight on a chosen 'typical' night.

An LA might choose this method because:

- people sleeping rough are in sleep sites that will be visible/accessible at night.
- there are often changes in the number, population or location of people sleeping rough where sites are visible.
- it is difficult to form an evidence-based estimate on the basis of the intelligence available.

