

# 2020 Rough Sleeping Snapshot Statistics

## An analysis of the 2020 rough sleeping snapshot estimates

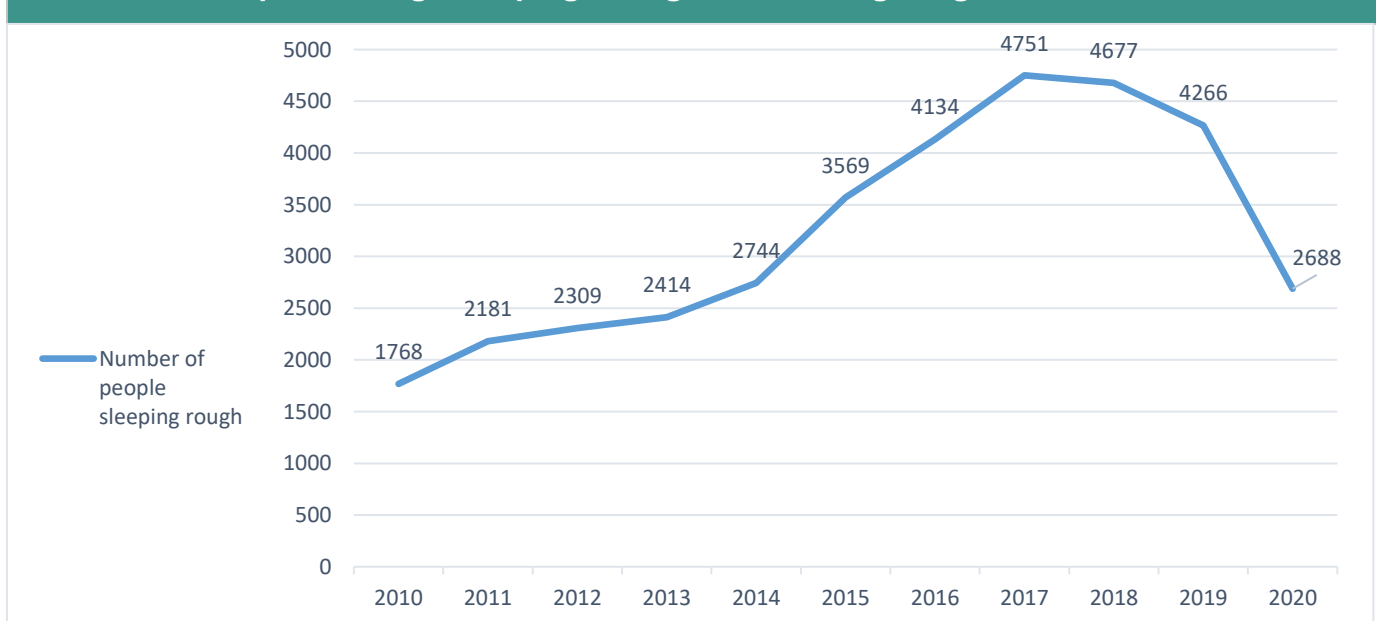
**Please note that the 2020 rough sleeping snapshot estimates were completed during a global pandemic. The snapshot coincided with a national lockdown in November and three-tier restrictions in October. Therefore, this will need to be considered when comparing the data to previous years and consequently when comparing future years to this data. Specific guidance, including any COVID-19 adjustments, was provided to all local authorities<sup>1</sup>.**

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of February 2021, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government released the autumn 2020 snapshot figures for rough sleeping. These statistics are based on either a count-based estimate, an evidence-based estimate, or an evidence-based estimate including a spotlight count, which provide a snapshot figure of the number of people sleeping rough on a single night between the 1st October and 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020. The following analysis provides a regional breakdown of the figures, and identifies the local authority areas with the largest changes compared with previous years. The concluding section features a gender-based and nationality-based analysis of the data.

### Headline figures

A total of **2,688** people were estimated to be sleeping rough in England on a single night in autumn 2020, representing a 37% decrease from the 2019 figure of 4,266. This is the largest percentage decrease since 2010.

**Graph 1 : Rough sleeping in England on a single night 2010 – 2020**



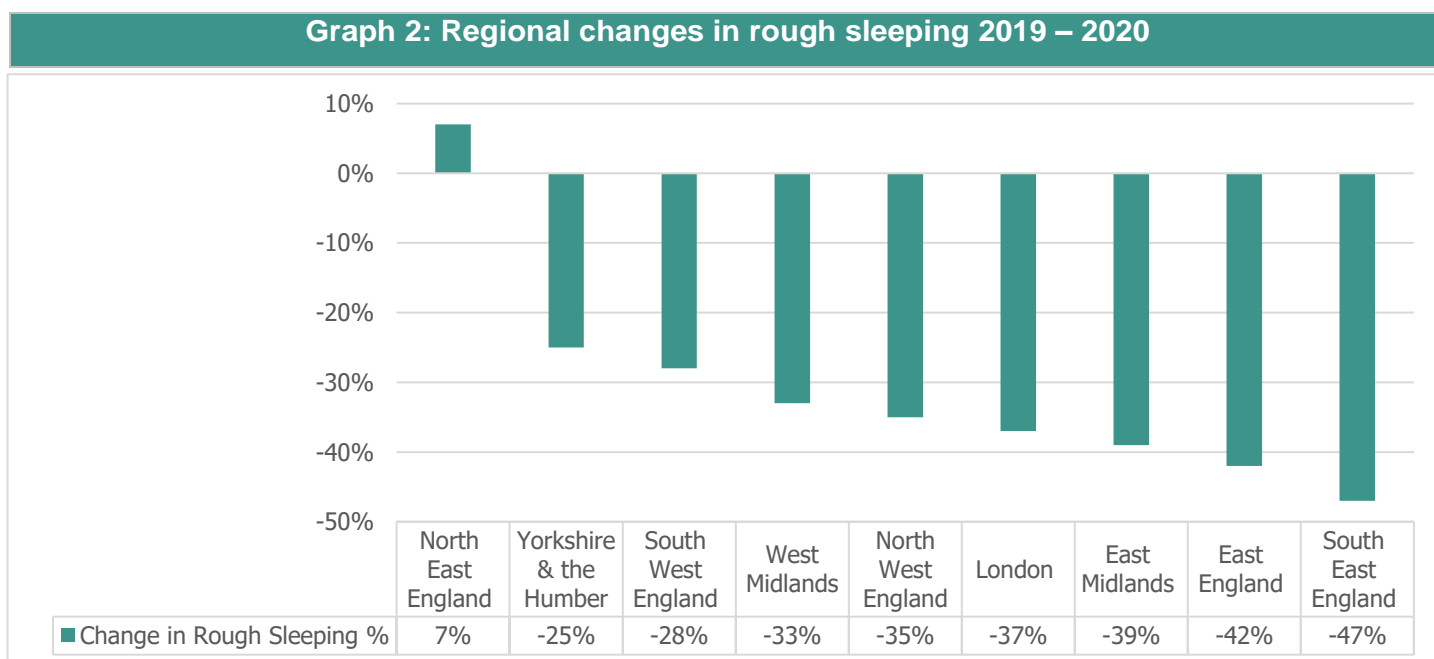
<sup>1</sup> Further information regarding the rough sleeping snapshot estimates can be found in the 2020 Toolkit. Available at: <https://www.homeless.org.uk/our-work/resources/rough-sleeping-estimates>

The number of people sleeping rough in England has decreased by 25% in the last 5 years (see Table 1). Since the current snapshot methodology for estimating rough sleeping began in 2010, an additional 920 people have been estimated to be sleeping rough in England on a single night. This represents an increase of 52% in the last 10 years.

Table 1: Changes in rough sleeping 2010 – 2020										
	2010 - 2020	2011 – 2020	2012 - 2020	2013 -2020	2014 -2020	2015 - 2020	2016 -2020	2017- 2020	2018- 2020	2019- 2020
Percentage change	+52%	+23%	+16%	+11%	-2%	-25%	-35%	-43%	-43%	-37%
Numerical Change	+920	+507	+379	+274	-56	-881	-1446	-2063	-1989	-1578

### Rough sleeping by region

In 2020, one region in England reported an increase in rough sleeping, while eight regions reported a decrease (see Graph 2). The North East of England is the only region with an increase in rough sleeping (7%). There was a significant decrease in the South East of England (-47%), where a total of 474 people were estimated to be sleeping rough on a single night.



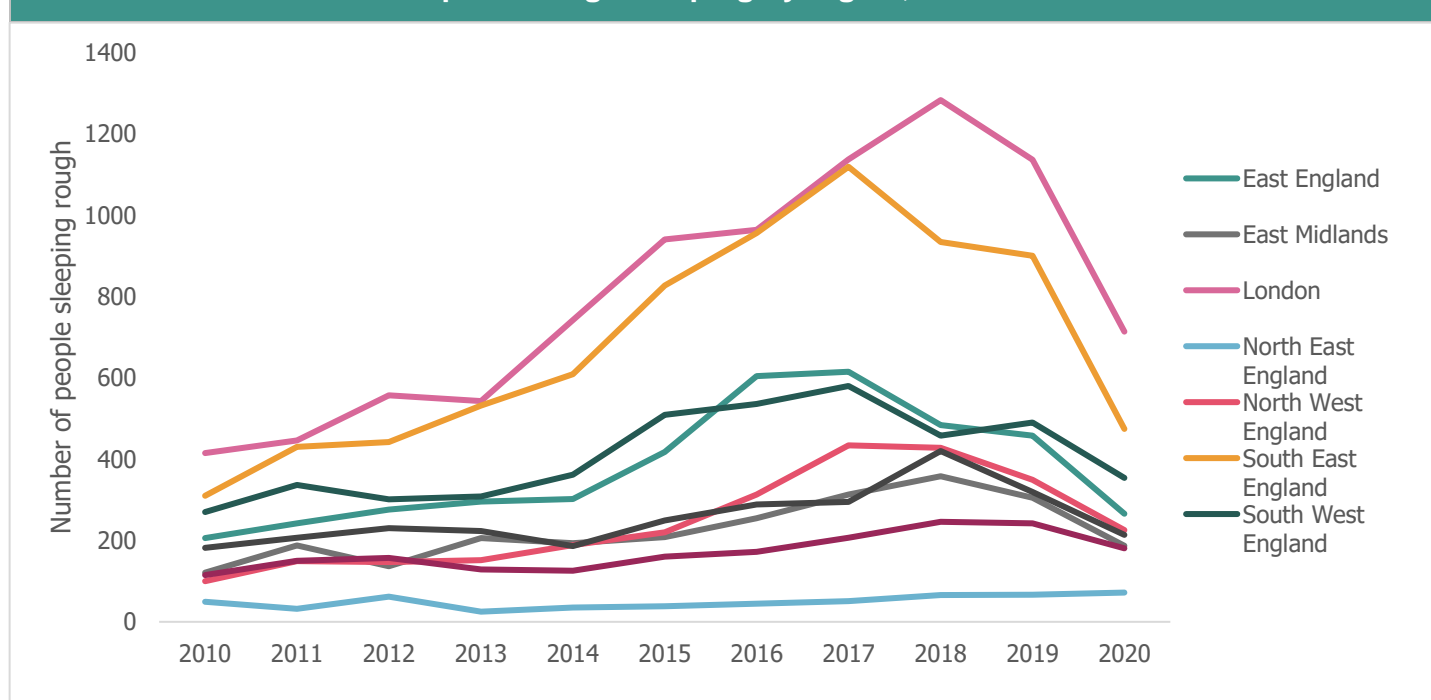
London continues to be the region with the highest number of people sleeping rough, with a total of 714 people sleeping rough on a single night (see Graph 3). The North East of England had the lowest number of people estimated to be sleeping rough on a single night.

**Graph 3: Number of rough sleeping individuals in England, by region, 2019 - 2020**



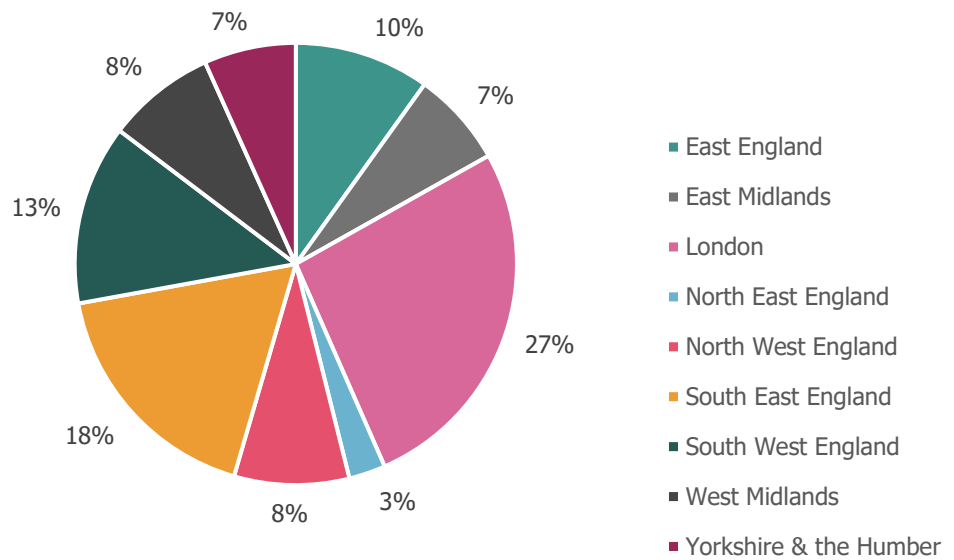
The increase in rough sleeping in England over the past 10 years has varied geographically. London has reported a 72% increase in levels of rough sleeping since 2010 (see Graph 4). The North West of England has had the highest increase in levels of rough sleeping since 2010 at 126%.

**Graph 4: Rough sleeping by region, 2010-2020**



London accounts for 27% of the total number of people sleeping rough in England (see Graph 5). The North East continues to have the lowest proportion of people sleeping rough (3%).

**Graph 5: Regional percentage of total numbers of people sleeping rough 2020**



## Rough sleeping by local authority

- Westminster consistently remains as the local authority with the highest number of people sleeping rough (242) (see Table 2).
- Manchester (-25%), Bristol (49%), Camden (-35%), and Tower Hamlets (135%) are in the top 10 for having the highest number of individuals sleeping rough. However, for Manchester and Camden, their 2020 figures have shown a reduction in numbers from the previous year.
- Tower Hamlets reported a large increase in the number of people sleeping rough (see table 2). This local authority was not in the top 10 in 2019.
- Hillingdon, Brighton & Hove, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, Newham, Birmingham, and Islington are no longer in the top 10 (based on the top 10 table from 2019). All six local authorities reported a reduction in the number of people sleeping rough from the previous year.

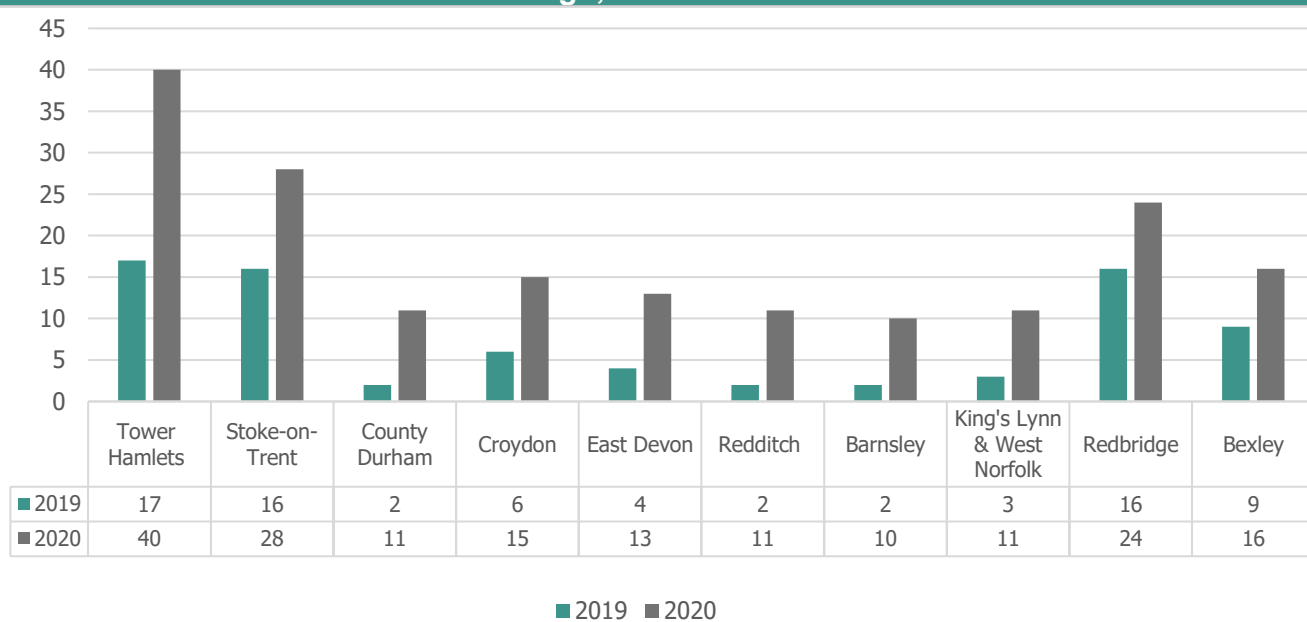
**Table 2: Top 10 local authorities with highest number of people sleeping rough, 2019 – 2020**

Local Authority	Region	2019	2020	Change from 2019	% change on 2019
Westminster	London	333	242	-91	-27%
Manchester	North West	91	68	-23	-25%
Bristol, City of	South West	98	50*	-48	49%
Camden	London	65	42	-23	-35%
Tower Hamlets	London	17	40	23	135%
Exeter	South West	31	37	6	19%
Leeds	Yorkshire & Humber	40	35	-5	-13%
Nottingham	East Midlands	30	31*	1	3%
Cornwall	South West	24	29	5	21%
Portsmouth	South East	26	29	3	12%

\* Denotes figures that were unverified by Homeless Link for 2020.

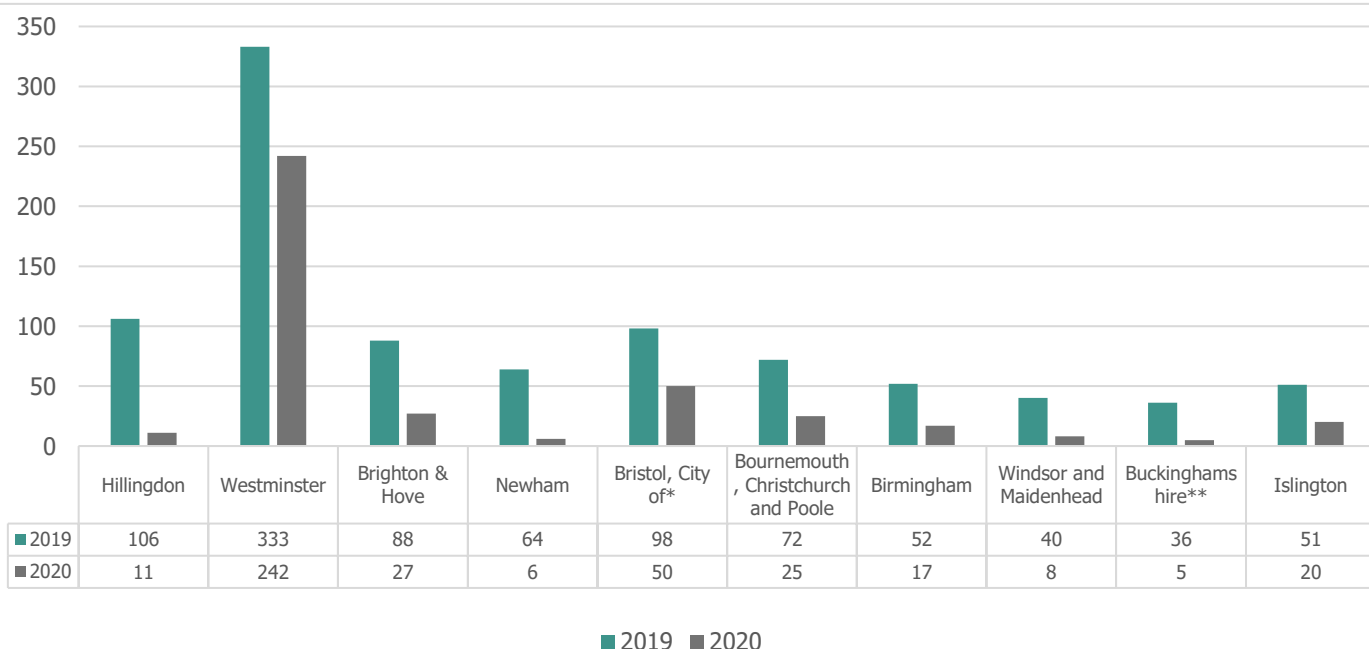
Tower Hamlets reported the largest increase in the total number of people sleeping rough (+23) (see Graph 6).

**Graph 6: Top 10 local authorities with the largest increase in the number of people sleeping rough, 2019-2020**



The largest decrease in the number of people sleeping rough was in Hillingdon (see Graph 7), where there were 11 people estimated to be sleeping rough on a single night in autumn 2020, compared to 106 last year.

**Graph 7: Top 10 local authorities with the largest decrease in the number of people sleeping rough, 2019-2020**



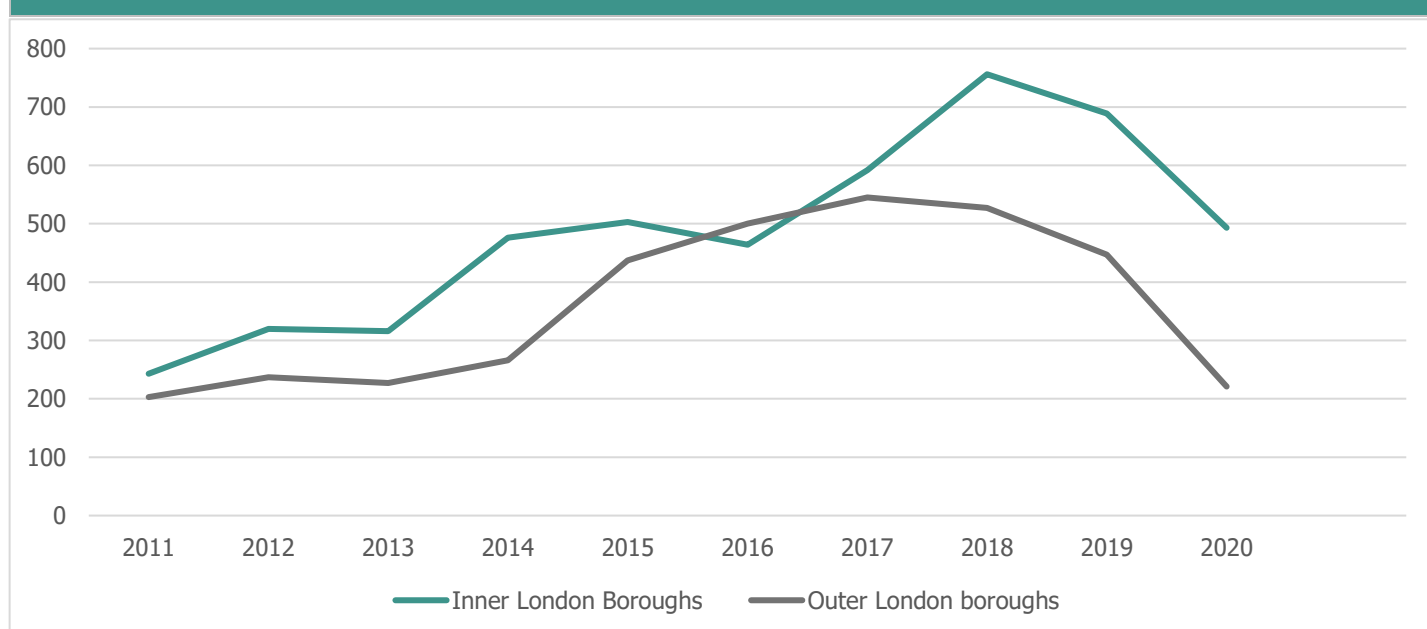
\* Denotes local authorities who were unverified by Homeless Link for 2020.

\*\* Denotes a local authority merger since the previous year.

## Rough sleeping in London

- The number of people sleeping rough has decreased from last year in London (-37%). Both Outer and Inner London Boroughs have continued to show a decrease from last year.
- This year there was a 37% decrease in final figures across London. In 2019 1,136 individuals were estimated to be sleeping rough on a single night, compared to the final figure of 714 for 2020. However, since 2010, rough sleeping estimates for London show an increase of 72%.
- In 2020, Croydon saw the biggest percentage increase in rough sleeping from the previous year (150%). This is followed by Tower Hamlets (135%), and Hammersmith & Fulham (100%).
- Newham saw the biggest percentage decrease in rough sleeping, compared to 2019 (-91%). This was followed by Hillingdon (-90%), and then Bromley (-88%) respectively.

**Graph 8: Numbers of people sleeping rough year on year in Inner and Outer London Boroughs**



## Inner London Boroughs

- A total of 493 people were estimated to be sleeping rough on a single night in the Inner London Boroughs, representing 18% of the total snapshot figure of 2,688.
- Westminster remains as the local authority with the highest number of people sleeping rough (242).
- Tower Hamlets have the largest percentage increase in the number of people sleeping rough at 135%.
- Islington have the largest percentage decrease in the number of people sleeping rough (-61%).

**Table 3: Inner London boroughs by number of people sleeping rough, 2020**

Local Authority	2019	2020	Difference from 2019	% change from 2019
Westminster	333	242	-91	-27%
Camden	65	42	-23	-35%
City of London	41	23	-18	-44%
Lambeth	43	20	-23	-53%
Southwark	44	24	-20	-45%
Islington	51	20	-31	-61%
Wandsworth	28	16	-12	-43%
Hackney	14	18	4	29%
Kensington and Chelsea	19	21*	2	11%
Hammersmith and Fulham	2	4	2	100%
Tower Hamlets	17	40	23	135%
Greenwich	16	11	-5	-31%
Lewisham	16	12	-4	25%
<b>Total (Inner London)</b>	<b>689</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>-196</b>	<b>-28%</b>

\* Denotes figures that were unverified by Homeless Link for 2020.



## Outer London Boroughs

- A total of 221 people were estimated to be sleeping rough on a single night in the Outer London Boroughs, representing 8% of the total snapshot figure of 2,688.
- Ealing is the local authority with the highest number of rough sleeping individuals (25).
- Croydon (150%) and Bexley (78%) have highest percentage increase in the numbers of people sleeping rough.
- Newham reported the most significant percentage decrease in the number of people sleeping rough (-91%).

**Table 4: Outer London Boroughs by number of people sleeping rough, 2020**

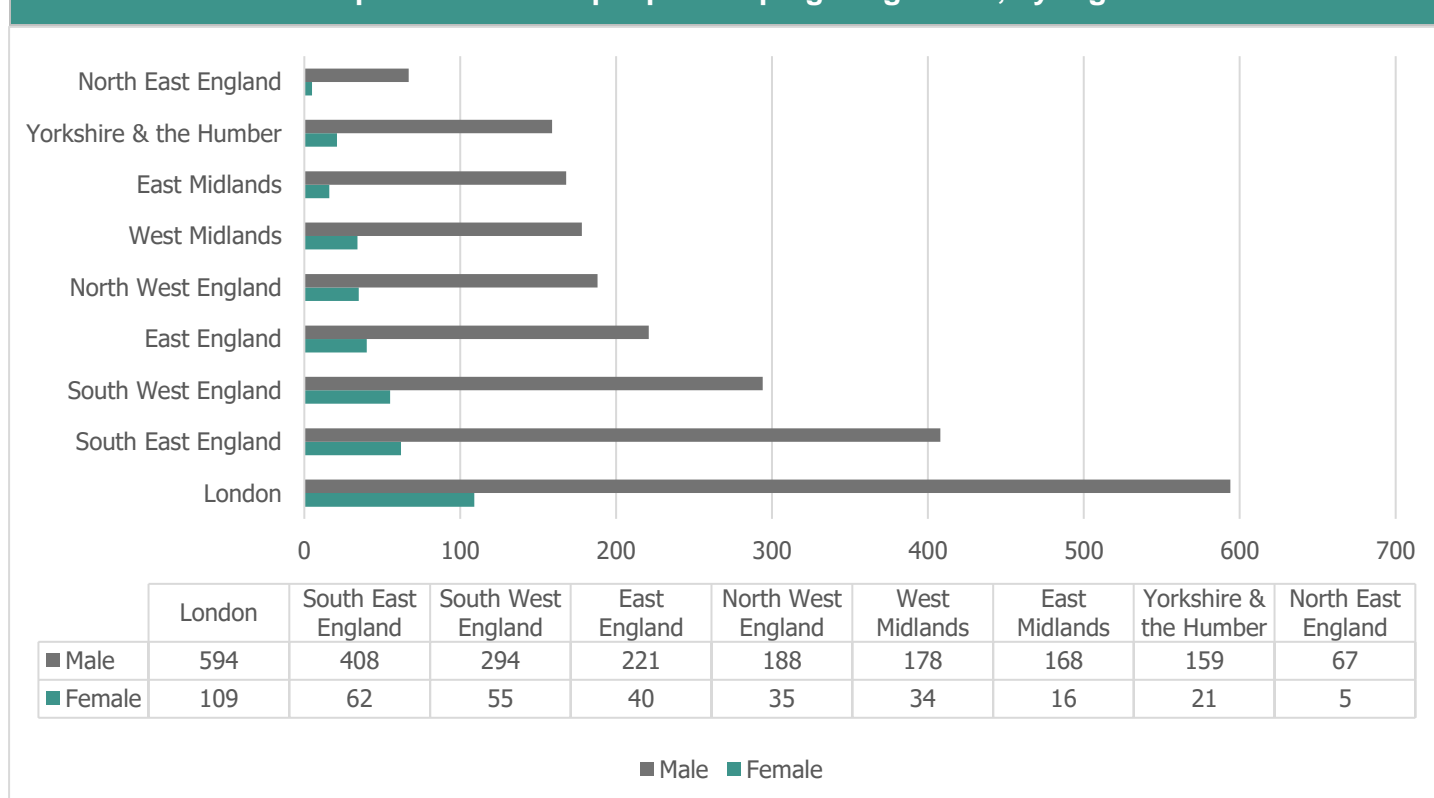
Local Authority	2019	2020	Change on 2019	% change on 2019
Newham	64	6	-58	-91%
Enfield	24	19	-5	-21%
Hillingdon	106	11	-95	-90%
Ealing	20	25	5	25%
Haringey	33	8	-15	-76%
Brent	25	12	-13	-52%
Redbridge	16	24	8	50%
Barnet	24	6	18	-75%
Merton	15	13	-2	-13%
Kingston upon Thames	20	14	-6	-30%
Waltham Forest	18	18	0	0%
Hounslow	8	6*	-2	-25%
Croydon	6	15	9	150%
Richmond	14	7	-7	-50%
Harrow	10	6	-4	-40%
Barking and Dagenham	14	10	-4	-29%
Bromley	8	1	-7	-88%
Bexley	9	16	7	78%
Sutton	5	1	-4	-80%
Havering	8	3	-5	-63%
<b>Total (Outer London)</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>-226</b>	<b>-51%</b>

\* Denotes figures that were unverified by Homeless Link for 2020.

## Demographic data (gender)

- Of the 2,688 individuals estimated to be sleeping rough on a single night in England in 2020, a total of 2,277 were male and 377 were female<sup>2</sup>. Gender was 'Not Known' for 34 individuals.
- 14% of total number of rough sleeping individuals were female.
- London estimated the largest number of women sleeping rough on a single night (see Graph 9).
- Westminster is the local authority which reported the highest number of women sleeping rough, followed by Manchester, and then Camden respectively (see Table 5).

**Graph 9: Gender of people sleeping rough 2020, by region**



<sup>2</sup> Research has however shown that women will tend to stay in 'hidden homeless' situations (e.g. sofa surfing) rather than sleep rough: Crisis (2008) *Policy briefing: Homeless Women Briefing*, Available at:

[http://www.crisis.org.uk/data/files/publications/2945Homeless\\_women\\_policy\\_recommendations.pdf](http://www.crisis.org.uk/data/files/publications/2945Homeless_women_policy_recommendations.pdf)

**Table 5: Local authorities with the highest number of females sleeping rough on a single night , 2020**

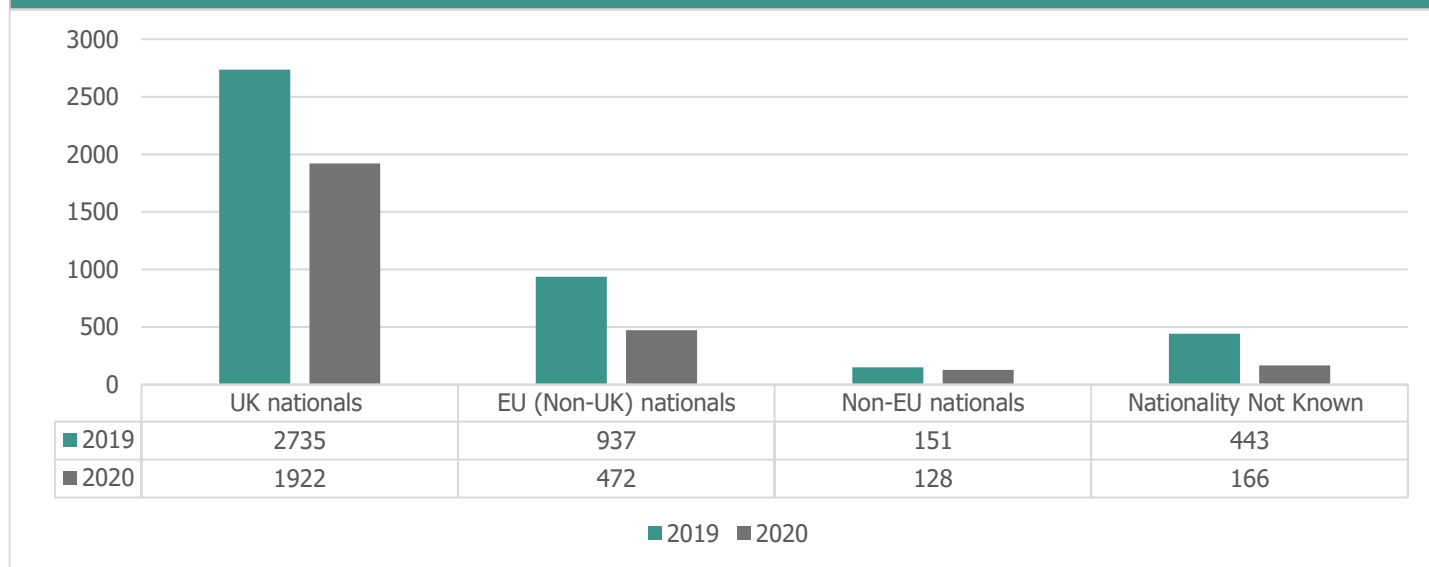
Local Authority	Region	No of females sleeping rough
Westminster	London	55
Manchester	North West	9
Camden	London	8
Bristol, City of*	South West	7
Tower Hamlets	London	7
Exeter	South West	7
Leeds	Yorkshire & Humber	5
Stoke-on-Trent	West Midlands	5
Bournemouth, Christchurch and	South West	5
Oxford	South East	5
Wandsworth	London	5
Bath and North East Somerset	South West	5

\* Denotes local authorities who were unverified by Homeless Link for 2020.

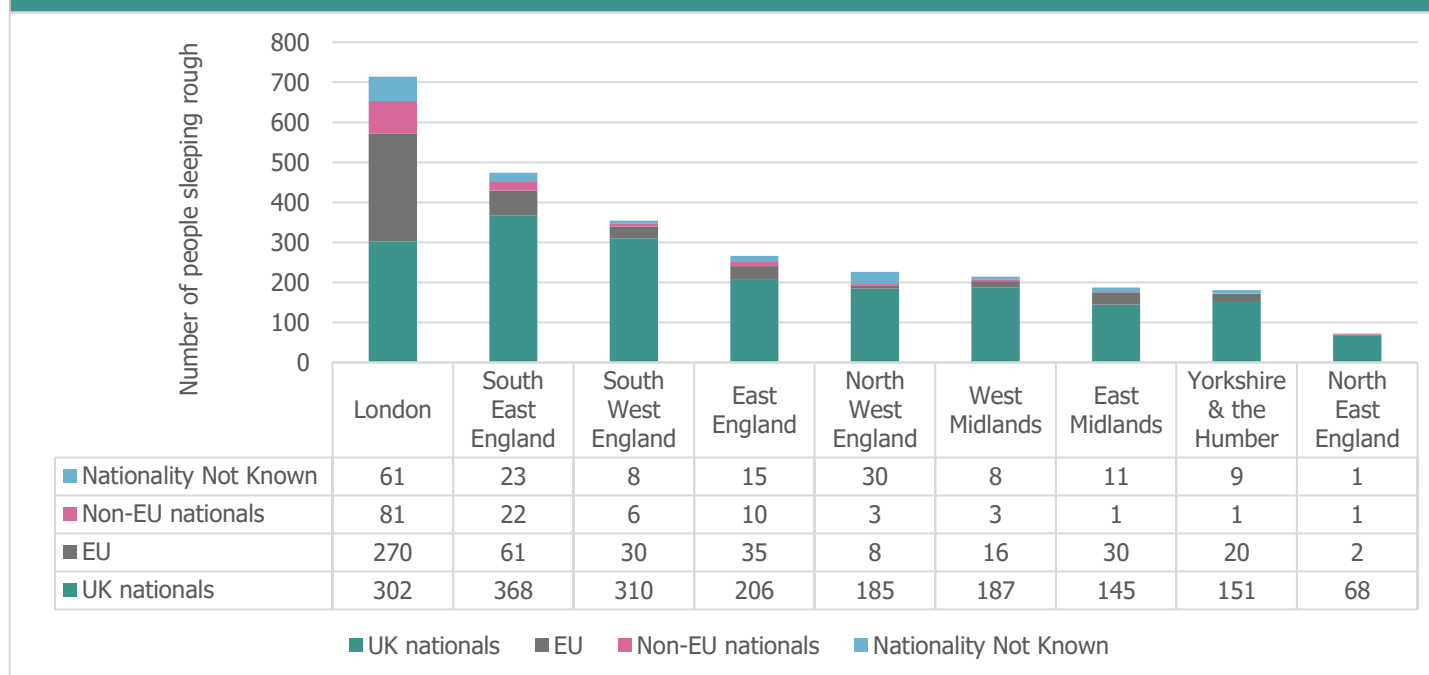
## Demographics (nationality)

- Of the total snapshot figure of 2,688, 1,922 were UK nationals, 472 of people sleeping rough were EU nationals, 128 were non-EU nationals, and 166 nationalities were 'Not Known'.
- Compared to 2019, the number of UK nationals is lower than last year (-30% ) and the number of EU (-50%), non-EU nationals (-15%) is also lower than the previous year.
- London is the region with the highest number of EU nationals (57% of the total number of people who are EU nationals) and non-EU nationals (63% of the total number of people who are non-EU nationals).
- The South East of England is the region with the highest number of UK national rough sleeping individuals (19% of the total number of people who are UK nationals).
- The North East of England has the lowest number of rough sleeping individuals in each category (see Graph 10).

**Graph 10: Nationality of individuals sleeping rough 2019-2020**



**Graph 11: Nationality of individuals sleeping rough 2020, by region**





### **What we do**

Homeless Link is the national membership charity for frontline homelessness services. We work to improve services through research, guidance and learning, and campaign for policy change that will ensure everyone has a place to call home and the support they need to keep it.

## **Let's end homelessness together**

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