



Topical Digest

Homelessness in Northern Ireland

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6 December 2022

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This Topical Digest covers the issue of homelessness in Northern Ireland. Homelessness is a complex issue that requires a cross-departmental, multi-agency response. The full extent of the longer-term impact of the pandemic on homelessness in Northern Ireland remains to be seen. However, the Housing Executive expects that these impacts will be significant and long-lasting. This digest brings together a snapshot of some of the most recent publications and articles on homelessness with a particular focus on Northern Ireland.

Should MLAs or their constituency staff require any assistance in accessing the material listed in this digest they can contact the Library via the enquiry desk, or by email or telephone: library@niassembly.gov.uk | 028 90 521250.

1 Strategies, action plans and programmes

- [Ending Homelessness Together: Homelessness Strategy 2022–27](#) – Housing Executive, March 2022. This new five-year homelessness strategy has three central objectives focusing on the prioritisation of homelessness prevention; addressing homelessness by providing settled, appropriate accommodation and support; and assisting those transitioning from homelessness into settled accommodation. The Strategy is accompanied by a [Year One Action Plan](#). It builds upon the work of the previous [five-year strategy \(2017–2022\)](#) and [Interdepartmental Homelessness Action Plans](#).
- [Chronic Homelessness Action Plan \(2019–22\)](#) – Housing Executive, January 2020. This plan sets out how the Housing Executive intends to address gaps in service provision. It has seven objectives, including designing criteria for measuring chronic homelessness and developing mechanisms across different bodies for early identification of those at risk.
- [Strategic Action Plan for Temporary Accommodation 2022–2027](#) – Housing Executive, November 2022. The strategy explores the different types of temporary accommodation, provides data on the use of temporary accommodation, and examines projected need. It sets out four strategic ambitions including minimising the need for temporary accommodation in Northern Ireland.
- [The Way Home – Homelessness response to COVID-19](#) ('Reset Plan'), Housing Executive (March 2020)
- [Draft Housing Supply Strategy](#), Department for Communities (December 2021)
- [Strategic Framework to Tackle the Harm from Substance Use 2021–31](#), Department of Health (September 2021)
- [Supporting People Programme](#), Department for Communities website
- [Poverty Policy](#), Department for Communities website

2 Research reports

- M Corr, L Holland and A McKinstry, [A place to call home: a rights based approach to understanding the lived experience of children and families facing homelessness or housing insecurity](#), Queen's University Belfast and Northern Ireland Children's Commissioner (February 2023)
- Simon Community, [Mental Health & Homelessness](#), (January 2023)
- Housing Rights, [Putting the US into hoUSing](#), (June 2023)
- Northern Ireland Youth Forum, [KNowhere to go – a peer approach to preventing homelessness in NI](#), (February 2022)
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive Homelessness Research Publications are available to view [here](#)
- K Orr and L O'Hara, [Staffing Challenges within the Northern Ireland Homelessness Sector](#), commissioned by Homeless Connect (September 2022)

- A Hastings, M Mackenzie and A Earley, [Domestic Abuse and Housing: since the COVID-19 pandemic](#), UK Centre for Collaborative Evidence (August 2022)
- [An examination of the rates and distribution of poverty in Northern Ireland](#), Department for Communities (June 2022)
- [‘Hidden’ Homelessness in Northern Ireland](#), Simon Community and Ulster University (March 2022)
- [Experiences of Youth Homelessness](#), Fiona Boyle Associates (commissioned by the Housing Executive) (October 2021)
- [The Impacts of Chronic Homelessness for Women](#), Fiona Boyle Associates (commissioned by Housing Executive) (June 2021)
- [No way out and no way home: Modern slavery and homelessness in England, Wales and Northern Ireland](#), Crisis (May 2021)
- [Homelessness Service User Journeys](#), Fiona Boyle Associates (commissioned by the Housing Executive) (March 2021)
- [The role of day services in delivering support to those experiencing chronic homelessness](#), Housing Executive (February 2021)
- [The COVID-19 crisis response to homelessness in Great Britain](#), Fitzpatrick et al., (February 2021)
- [Strategic Review of Temporary Accommodation](#), Campbell Tickell (commissioned by the Housing Executive) (October 2020)
- E Bimpson and K Reeve, with S Parr, [Homeless Mothers: Key Research Findings](#), UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence (February 2020)
- [Northern Ireland Homelessness Monitor 2020](#), Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), January 2020. See also [here](#) for further JRF publications on poverty and deprivation in Northern Ireland.
- [Pathways to Youth Homelessness](#), Simon Community (July 2019)
- S Fitzpatrick, P Mackie and J Wood, [Homelessness Prevention in the UK: Lessons for policy](#), UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence (July 2019)

3 Statistical sources

- Department for Communities/NISRA, [Northern Ireland Housing Bulletin, July-September 2023](#)
- Department for Communities/NISRA, [Department for Communities/NISRA, Homelessness Bulletin, July to December 2022](#)
- Department for Communities/NISRA, [Northern Ireland Homelessness Bulletin January–June 2022](#)
- Department for Communities/NISRA, [Quarterly Housing Bulletins 2018–2022](#)
- Department for Communities/NISRA, [Annual Northern Ireland Housing Statistics 2017–2021](#)

4 Selection of departmental news releases

- Department for Communities, [Department publishes final EQIA report on budget allocations 2023-24](#) (3 October 2023)
- Department for Communities, [Ministers commit to addressing chronic homelessness](#) (27 October 2022)
- Department for Communities, [Minister Hargey officially launches £29m shared housing scheme](#) (21 October 2022)
- Department for Communities, [Hargey announces wider support for Co-Ownership housing](#) (21 September 2022)
- Department for Communities, [Ministers Hargey and O'Dowd host workshop to overcome challenges to delivering more homes](#) (6 September 2022)
- Department for Communities, ['Hargey comments on closure of Regina Coeli House'](#) (14 January 2022)
- Department for Communities, ['Prevention to remain focus in addressing homelessness – Hargey'](#) (2 November 2021)
- Department for Communities, ['Minister Ní Chuilín committed to improving our response to homelessness'](#) (8 December 2020)
- Department for Communities, ['Housing Statement from Communities Minister'](#) (3 November 2020)
- Department for Communities, ['Hargey pays tribute to the homelessness sector'](#) (6 April 2020)

5 Selection of media and other articles

- ['Giving young people a stake in the future can keep them off the streets, says two NI women who experienced homelessness'](#). Belfast Telegraph, 7 December 2023
- ['Well-planned interventions could make huge difference in tackling homelessness'](#). Irish News, 4 December 2023
- ['Sustaining Tenancies to offer £3 million in funding'](#). Housing Executive, 28 September 2023
- ['Over 4,500 children living in temporary accommodation in NI'](#). Homeless Connect, 21 September 2023
- ['Numbers in housing need continue to spike'](#). Homeless Connect, 24 August 2023
- ['Simon Community optimistic about ending homelessness'](#). 27 June 2023
- ['NIHE warns that budget cuts will hit those most in need'](#). 8 June 2023
- ['Homeless Connect co-signs joint letter to Department for Communities on budget allocations for 2023/24'](#). Homeless Connect, 9 June 2023
- ['New bespoke services for women experiencing homelessness secured'](#). Housing Executive, 2 March 2023

- [‘NIHE calls for legislation to prevent homelessness’](#). Housing Executive, 24 February 2023
- [Figures reveal 15,500 households sought help from Housing Executive in last year due to homelessness](#). Irish News, 29 November 2022
- [Hope Street’s Niamh McGrady among those lending support to annual Sleep Out as thousands raised for homeless youths](#). Sunday Life, 28 November 2022
- [Drug deaths: There’s not enough help and support out there, says family of young man who died on streets](#). Belfast Telegraph, 24 November 2022
- [Cases of housing threats and racist attacks greater in areas under influence of loyalist paramilitaries – report](#). Belfast Telegraph, 23 November 2022

6 Useful Links

Assembly Questions on the topic of homelessness can be accessed via [this link](#), or by navigating to the AIMS Portal on the Assembly website.

- [All Party Group on Homelessness](#)
- [RalSe e-library resources \[internal link only\]](#)
- [NI Direct pages on homelessness](#)
- [Housing Rights advice on homelessness](#)
- [Homeless Connect](#)

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