



## Households in Temporary Accommodation All Party Parliamentary Group Annual Report 2023/2024

Produced by co-secretariats Justlife Foundation and Shared Health Foundation for the AGM held on 24 April 2024

The Households in Temporary Accommodation All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) held four meetings during the past reporting year and supported a campaign for the provision of cots in TA. Our aim was to explore other areas impacted by temporary accommodation after the release of our [Call for Evidence Report Findings](#) in January 2023. Details of each meeting and other activities are outlined below:

### 7 June 2023

Purpose: To discuss the impact of Temporary Accommodation on Local Authorities across London, Manchester, and Bristol.

Meeting Chair: Siobhain McDonagh, MP for Mitchem and Morden, Labour

Main issues raised:

- Extremely challenging outlook, increasing pressures with a broken homelessness framework
- Overspend in local authority budgets due to pressures from homelessness prevention and homeless services
- Concerned about prolonged stays affecting mental health
- There is a very limited, and reducing, number of social housing which is forcing many local authorities to place households out of area
- There is a need for more government investment in homelessness sector

Full minutes can be found [here](#).

### 11 September 2023

Purpose: An emergency meeting called by the APPG for Households in Temporary Accommodation and the APPG for Ending homelessness to stress the need of a national strategy on the homelessness crisis and increasing numbers of children (131,370) currently living in TA.

Meeting co-chairs: Siobhain McDonagh, MP for Mitchem and Morden, Labour & Bob Blackman, MP for Harrow East, Conservative

Main issues raised:

- The number of those in TA is at its highest point since 25 years ago
- There are 131,370 children in TA (correct at time of 11 Sept meeting), which is enough children to fill over 4000 classrooms. 1 in 23 children in London are homeless.
- Homelessness will continue to increase in the short term due to mounting pressure on households being pushed into homelessness and those already homeless forced into increasingly unsuitable TA, with insufficient amount of suitable accommodation for people to move into.
- PRS housing rates, lack of housing supply and frozen LHA rates are prime factors causing the homelessness crisis.
- There needs to be a clear national strategy on TA that addresses all forms of homelessness and the wider systemic issues of TA
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- Children experiencing continued short-notice moves as part of the TA system can develop a lot of trauma from this unsettling experience. It is difficult to make friends, integrate at school and make meaningful relationships.
- These children are less immunised, fallen out of health checks and health systems.
- 34 children have died in temporary accommodation and most were under the age of 1 with no medical problems. This can happen due to a combination of poverty, chaos and unpredictability, but a lot of times is due to lack of a cot.
- There are an estimated 70,000 households moved to temporary accommodation out of area where families are moved from familiar surroundings into the unknown
- Conditions in some TA are appalling. Damp, water in electrical appliances, carpet drenched.
- One of the speakers, Daniel Hewitt said, 'There needs to be a post-war plan to quickly re-build good social housing to accommodate all that are stuck for long periods of time in TA.'

Full minutes from this meeting can be found [here](#).

### 17 October 2023

Purpose: To discuss findings from the recently published [report](#) 'Debt Trap', written by Professor Katherine Brickell and Dr Mel Nowicki. The report reveals how debt is a major factor in why families become homeless, how it worsens during their time living in Temporary Accommodation (TA), and then continues to impact on families even when their homelessness ends.

Meeting Chair: Siobhain McDonagh, MP for Mitchem and Morden, Labour

Main issues raised:

- Debt is major factor for why families become homeless, it worsens during stays in TA and continues to impact on the families' future, even when homelessness ends.
- Rent arrears are one of the leading causes of homelessness. Many women interviewed were economically controlled, forced to rely on credit for everyday expenses and, in some cases, enrolled into coerced debt.
- Women and children remain stuck in TA until they clear or reduce their debt to a certain level, or show 'intent to pay' although rules are contingent on the local authority in which the household is homeless. Stays in TA, however, also increase the debt burden.
- One solution: scrap rules on outstanding housing-related debt determining property bidding eligibility

Full minutes from this meeting can be found [here](#).

### 22 November 2023

Purpose: To introduce the Salford Co-production group and their Good Homes presentation. Funded by Public Health on behalf of the Salford's Health & Wellbeing Board, the Co-production group brings together the local people of Salford and senior professionals to work collaboratively to improve the lives of their communities. The Good Homes project is delivered by Unlimited Potential and aims to provide useful information for young people and families navigating the homeless journey.

Meeting chair: Rebecca Long Bailey, MP for Salford and Eccles, Labour

Main issues raised:

- 15 members of Salford's co-production group presented their Good Homes magazine, with some sharing their lived experience of navigating homelessness from a young age
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- Co-production was highlighted as an important tool for local authorities and residents working together better, and can help local authorities change policies to be in line with the needs of their population
- Homes are about stability and security, the young people who were part of the Salford co-production group said they did not want any other young people to experience what they did in TA, because it was not stable or secure, which is why they want a good homes strategy, and not simply 'housing.'
- The magazine shows it isn't just about housing, bricks and mortar, but how people can be supported to create a home.

Full meeting minutes can be found [here](#).

### **Winter 2023/24 – Silent Nightmare campaign**

We supported a campaign asking the Government to change their Homelessness Code of Guidance to provide cots and Moses baskets in temporary accommodation to ensure that all homeless children under the age of 2 would have access to a safe place to sleep and a reduced risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. The campaign's petition was signed by 5,419 people.

The Government changed the Homelessness Code of Guidance on 3 March 2024, and on 5 March we handed in our petition to 10 Downing Street, calling on Rishi Sunak to set up a Homeless Families Task Force to enable cross-departmental solution development so no children need to die unnecessarily in temporary accommodation.

More information on the Silent Nightmare campaign and the petition hand-in can be found [here](#).

### **Looking ahead to 2024/25**

The APPG will continue to highlight the impact of temporary accommodation on the households stuck there. There are currently three meetings scheduled:

- 7 May 2024: NHS Response to Temporary Accommodation  
Aim: to discuss health plans around homelessness to mitigate the poor health that often comes with living in temporary accommodation, e.g. missed immunisations, no care plan, lack of health visitors and safeguarding issues
- 17 June 2024: Education's response to Temporary Accommodation  
Aim: Showcase local schools and their responses to families in TA
- 16 July 2024: Human Insights on Temporary Accommodation  
Aim: Following on from the APPG Call for Evidence report last year, this meeting will be led by those with lived experience of temporary accommodation to highlight what their experiences have been and what change they feel should be made